

Forest Grove Historic Resource



2434 15TH AVE - Watts/Payne House

Description:

The 2-1/2 story vernacular Colonial Revival house at 2434 15th Avenue was built around 1904. It has a square plan and sits on a concrete block foundation. The truncated hip roof is covered with composition shingles and has multiple gable dormers of various sizes. The walls of the house are clad in wood lap siding with corner boards and wide frieze boards with dentils under the eaves. One-over-one double-hung wood windows with lambs tongues are the primary type. A round arched window is located in the central dormer on the north façade and a round bay window is located on the east elevation. The non-historic entry door is located in the center of the front façade and is covered by a hip roofed porch that wraps the front of the house. The porch has round classical columns and a low wood rail. The wood deck is enclosed underneath by lattice. Two decorative brick chimneys exist; an exterior chimney on the west side of the house and another projecting from the southeast corner of the roof. A metal fire escape is attached to the west elevation. This house is in excellent condition and its integrity is excellent.

A small period garage is located to the east of the house. Large oaks surround the house. One standing in the northeast corner of the lot is accompanied by a monument marking the 1842 site of Pacific University.

History:

Originally this property was the site where a log cabin was built in 1842 by Harvey Clark as a school for Native American children and orphans. There is a stone historical marker commemorating this as the site of a log cabin where Pacific University was originally founded. This house was built for Lavina Lyon Watts, a sister of the heir to the Dr. Lyons Tooth Powder fortune. He built the house for his sister in 1905, where she lived for 24 years when it was sold to Harley Armfield, a Forest Grove businessman and manager for the local J.C. Penney store. Ray and Norabel Miller lived here from 1944 until 1948. Mr. Miller started the Rotary Youth exchange program in Forest Grove, served as Rotary President, was on the Forest Grove City Council and the Chamber of Commerce. He was elected County Commissioner. Mr. Miller was a member of the Forest Grove Fire Department and was on the fire lines in three Tillamook forest fires. He purchased Forest Grove Hardware in 1935, which later became Ace Hardware. It was occupied by the Alpha Zeta Fraternity from 1948 until 1954.