



Carnegie Library, Pacific University (see story p. 2)

Preserving Forest Grove

Newsletter of the Historic Landmarks Board

Grant Program Makes a Difference

The owners of three Forest Grove historic landmarks will be the first recipients of incentive grants for maintenance, repair, and/or restoration work.

The City Council allocated \$2400 of enhancement funds to the Historic Landmarks Board in June for the grant program.

Marilyn and Dean Mason, owners of the Alanson Hinman House, 1651 Hawthorne Street, applied for grant funds to replicate the original front double doors and transom which had been removed in an earlier remodeling. The doors will have to be custom-made.

"It is something that may not have been done unless the grant had been given because it is a spendy project," said Marilyn. "[The grant program] is wonderful. I feel an obligation to give back to the community by improving my older home."

"I was surprised and very pleased that the city would help us do this. [Forest Grove] needs more of this type of thing."

Charlotte and Ernest Powell own the John E. Bailey House at 2422 15th Avenue. They will use grant funds to refloor the existing porch, replace rotted and missing pillar bases, and paint.

Charlotte thinks the grant program is "really neat." She continues, "The front porch had to be done before we painted (the house), so this is really good. It's bringing us one step closer to getting done what needs to be done. It's nice to give people a boost or incentive. Restoring an old house can be a daunting thing."

Carolyn and Don O'Nion, antique dealers and owners of the Holroyd Building, 1933-37 Pacific Avenue, applied for a grant for painting. This work has already been completed, so pass by and see our funds at work.

"I was surprised and very pleased that the city would help us do this," said Don. "[Forest Grove] needs more of this type of thing."

Historic Districts Enhance Cities

In communities across the country, more than 1200 national historic districts play vital roles in enhancing tourism and protecting residential and commercial areas from insensitive change and demolition.

First to be established was the district in Charleston, South Carolina in 1931. Five years later, New Orleans took the plunge. The resulting Vieux Carré Commission is widely credited with saving the French Quarter. Jacksonville was the first historic district established in Oregon.

In order to establish district regulations, typically, a city council approves the district concept, along with detailed regulations and guidelines which often track the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation. Local guidelines are administered by a citizens' board.

When a national historic district is established, owners of contributing properties become eligible for numerous benefits: a 15-year property tax freeze, a 20 percent tax credit for rehabilitating a commercial structure, low interest loans, increased avenues to technical resources, and grant money. One significant aspect is that buildings which might not qualify for individual designation are eligible for the National Register (and its benefits) as contributing elements to the historic district.

Forest Grove has the potential to qualify at least two historic districts, the downtown area and the so-called "Old Town" neighborhood.

Our architectural assets give Forest Grove an opportunity that many other small cities lack. Bob Gibbs, a consultant on our Town Center Plan, noted that Walt Disney spends millions of dollars duplicating Small Town, USA, of which "Forest Grove is a classic example."

"Your town should be a museum," he added.

(see Grant on page 4)

Forest Grove's Own Carnegie Library on the Campus of Pacific University

Andrew Carnegie, the famous steel magnate from Pittsburgh, is sometimes called the "Patron Saint of Libraries." That's because he contributed over \$40 million towards the erection of 1676 public and 108 academic libraries in the United States. Forest Grove – and more precisely Pacific University – received one of these special gifts. The Carnegie Library building on the southwest corner of campus, now called Carnegie Hall, was the university's first library. Completed in 1912, Pacific was honored with the *only* academic library in the Northwest, one of only three on the west coast.

A challenge to the community

The university received the initial grant offer of \$20,000 in April 1905. Carnegie always offered a challenge to the recipient institution in order to make the local community prove support for such an endeavor. The matching amount was to be earmarked to insure ongoing maintenance of the new structure. It took about six years for Pacific University to raise their match of \$20,000 for the project. The largest donors were non-Forest Grove citizens: Mrs. Henry Failing and Mrs. Cabell of Portland (total of \$10,000), Mrs. Frederick Billings of New York (\$5,000), and Henry Pittock of Portland (\$2,000).

Construction began in February 1912 and was finished later that fall. At that time the university library held about 18,000 bound volumes. The Carnegie Library served the campus until 1967 when the current Harvey W. Scott Memorial Library was added. Carnegie Hall currently houses faculty offices and classrooms for the School of Education and the World Languages Department in the College of Arts and Sciences.

A leading Portland architectural firm, Whidden and Lewis, designed the building following guidelines issued by the Carnegie Foundation. (This firm had designed Marsh Hall in the 1890s.) The general contractor for the Carnegie Library project was Wineland Building and Engineering Company of Portland. The subcontractor for heating, plumbing, and wiring was Coast Engineering Company, also of Portland.

...thoroughly modern in every respect

The *News-Times* reported on the details of the new Carnegie Library in an article dated February 22, 1912: "... On the first floor will be a general reading room, a periodical reading room, reference room, the large stack rooms proper, cataloguing and librarian's rooms, besides commodious corridors throughout. In the basement are to

be a stack room the same dimension as on the first floor, two large lecture rooms, packing and boiler rooms.

"All vestibules and corridors are to be tiled and decorated with marble. The exterior of the walls is to be finished with white-faced brick. The completed building, which will be approximately 85 by 65 feet in dimension, is to be thoroughly modern in every respect, such as fire-proof floors and the latest methods for the handling of books with dispatch."

In addition to the bound volumes and periodicals, the library housed a large collection of government documents. Pacific became an official documents depository in March 1897 as the result of efforts made by U.S. Rep. Thomas Tongue, an 1868 graduate.

Carnegie's gift offer and subsequent library construction occurred during the administration of Pacific's fifth president, William N. Ferrin (1900-1913). However, it is probable that the preceding president, Rev. Thomas McClelland (1891-1900), had an important role in acquiring the library funds. In 1900 McClelland moved on to the presidency of Knox College in Galesburg, Ill. A respected educator and a native of Ireland, he struck a personal friendship with Andrew Carnegie and joined the Board of Trustees for the Carnegie Foundation. He served on the board from its inception, in 1905 to 1920.



Preserving Forest Grove is a quarterly newsletter for owners of historic and culturally significant properties in Forest Grove. The newsletter is published by the Historic Landmarks Board to help fulfill its duty of public education relating to historic and cultural resource preservation. If you would like to be on the mailing list, please call James Reitz at 359-3233.

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How to Avoid Eight Common Mistakes in Restoring Old Houses

Based on an article published by the American Association for State and Local History written by Morgan W. Phillips. Used with permission from the Albany Old House Forum News, Winter 1996.

The following suggestions provide basic guidelines to anyone whose concern with older, historically valuable or interesting buildings involves restoration or repair work beyond ordinary maintenance.

1. Don't destroy the evidence. Keep records.

A common mistake is to proceed with restoration work before gathering all the evidence. Look for telltale fragments of missing woodwork or paint layers that indicate where missing pieces were before they are removed, obliterated by sanding, or thrown away during the cleanup. In addition, keep records of your current restoration work for the future owners.

2. Don't over restore.

Don't replace old material just because it shows the signs of age and, thus, looks a little too rough to suit the tastes of a perfectionist. A building restored in this manner loses the patina of age that made it appealing in the first place and loses the material that makes it genuinely old. Also, don't strip away more recent additions of architectural value, such as a 1920 fireplace, if it contributes to the character of the building. The more recent addition helps to tell the story of the building and the 1920s material has more historic value than the "new" material substituted during restoration.

3. Don't make a building that never was.

This common mistake occurs when a new owner purchases a vernacular building and adds newer pseudo-Victorian elements to make it look like a Queen Anne style. Another example would be an 1870 house that was added on to in 1890 altered so that both additions are made to look like an 1870 house.

4. Don't scrape.

The most common procedure in reproducing old paint colors is to scrape clean a sample of the old paint and then match its color with new paint. In many cases the color thus achieved is incorrect because the old sample has discolored with time. The best way to determine the original colors is by a professional chemical analysis.

5. Don't sandblast. Avoid destructive repointing.

Sandblasting old brick removes the hard skin of the bricks, exposing the much more porous and weaker interior which often will not stand up to the weather. Repointing brick with Portland cement mortar is very damaging because it is extremely strong and suited to the best modern brick which is also very strong. Old brick is weaker and can be damaged by very strong, hard mortar. A basic principle is that mortar should always be weaker than the bricks or stones embedded in it.

6. Don't assume it can't be fixed.

With the advent of all kinds of modern products, it has become possible to recondition partly deteriorated woodwork, plasterwork, and other architectural materials which 20 years ago it would have been necessary to replace. Save old features and repair them; an old building that retains more of its authentic material retains more of its historic value.

7. Get the design right.

Sometimes there is no alternative but to replace something or a portion of something that is missing or decayed beyond repair. A basic objective in such work is to avoid making the new piece a poor parody of the original.

8. Get help. Don't barge ahead.

Often an owner, eager to "restore" a newly-acquired house, rushes in and tears out large portions of the interior and exterior surfaces only to discover that the original finishes are long gone and cannot be accurately reconstructed. A professional is then brought in to make sense of a confused jumble of architectural remnants, and the owner sadly discovers, too late, that he has stripped and thrown away valuable portions of the house.

All the points discussed above should make it clear that a restoration or repair going much beyond ordinary maintenance involves many technical and historical questions. Two simple rules can be followed at little or no cost to improve the quality of repair work. The first is to seek professional advice. Second, allow the maximum time possible to make a decision. Don't be in a hurry.

Your Historic Landmarks Board is available to assist with restoration advice and suggestions. If you have questions, call Janet Lamb at 359-4814.

Grant (continued from page 1)

All work planned by owners exceeded the \$1000 grant limit, but, as the recipients testified, the grant funds provided a significant contribution to the projects. The HLB was gratified to receive such appropriate and prompt applications from residents who prize their historic landmarks.

The HLB anticipates that more funds will be available next year for further restoration work on other deserving buildings. Besides city enhancement funds, the HLB was awarded a small CLG (certified local government) grant which will expand this incentive program. We also encourage owners of properties on the local historic register to lobby your city council members to continue (and increase) the enhancement grant.

Events with Friends of Historic Forest Grove

“Produce & Poultry” – Saturday, November 16.

At their fall meeting, Friends of Historic Forest Grove (FHFG) will host lecturer and author Erica Calkins of Nigglety-twist, a nursery specializing in heirloom gardening. Calkins will present a storytelling program: **Produce and Poultry – Pioneer Cooking**. She will cook and share old recipes. The meeting will be at the Carlson home beginning at 1 p.m.

Parlor Tour – Friday, December 13. FHFG will host their annual Parlor Tour beginning at the Mayor House in Cornelius at 7 p.m. This event is for members only.

For program information, contact Mary Jo Morelli, 357-0223. To become a member, send \$5 to FHFG, PO Box 123, Forest Grove, 97116.

100 Years Ago

School Funding

An apportionment of school funds on the basis of 25 cents per child will soon be made.

Weather Report

November weather broke the record rainfall. In ten days 13.40 inches fell in Forest Grove and for the 24 hours of Nov. 14, 3.98 inches. November 27 was the coldest day in years, 7 degrees above zero.

Haines & Bailey Prices

Men's suits \$4.00 and upwards

Ladies' shoes75 and upwards

Groceries

Arm and Hammer Soda 6 cents

Coffee –Arbuckle's 18 cents

Lion 18 cents

Best Green 25 cents

Good Vinegar 25 cents

50 lbs Liverpool Salt 40 cents

This information taken from the Washington County Hatchet-Forest Grove Times.

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