



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

LPB 242/15

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Address of Property: **Seattle Times Building Complex – Printing Plant**
1120 John Street

Legal Description: Lots 7 Through 12 In Block 110, D.T. Denny's Fifth Addition To North Seattle, As Per Plat Recorded In Volume 1 Of Plats, Page 202, Records Of King County; And Together With Those Portions Of The Donation Claim Of D.T. Denny And Louis Denny, His Wife, And Government Lot 7 In The Southeast Corner Of Section 30, Township 25, Range 4 East, W. M., Lying Westerly Of Fairview Avenue North, As Condemned In King County Superior Court Cause No. 204496, As Provide By Ordinance No. 51975, And Described As That Portion Lying Southerly Of Thomas Street As Conveyed By Deed Recorded Under Recording No. 2103211, Northerly Of John Street, And Easterly Of The Alley In Said Block 110; And Together With The Vacated Alley In Block 110 Of Said Plat Of D.T. Denny's Fifth Addition, Vacated Under Seattle Ordinance No. 89750; Situated In City Of Seattle, County Of King, State Of Washington.

At the public meeting held on April 15, 2015 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Seattle Times Building Complex – Printing Plant at 1120 John Street as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- C. *It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation; and*

DESCRIPTION

Location and Neighborhood Character

The former Seattle Times complex is located in what is generally regarded as the greater South Lake Union area. The subject site is northeast of Seattle's Central Business District, about four blocks west of Interstate 5, and approximately one-third mile south of Lake Union. The immediate area has since the 1990s undergone rapid change from redevelopment of older properties, primarily by the Vulcan Development Company. Nearby City of Seattle Landmarks include: the Troy Laundry Building (311-329 Fairview Avenue N), Supply Laundry (1265 Republican Street), the New Richmond Laundry (224 Pontius Avenue N), Immanuel Lutheran Church (1215 Thomas Street), the Boren Investment Company Building (334 Boren Avenue N), the Fashioncraft Building (2022 Boren Avenue), and the

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

Jensen Block (601-611 Eastlake Avenue E).

A relatively small landscaped garden with large evergreen trees is located directly to the south of the site across John Street at the northwestern corner of Fairview Avenue N and John Street. The remainder of the block to the south is presently a paved parking lot. Presently the block to the north of the site is a construction site for a redevelopment that includes the Troy Laundry and the Boren Investment Company Building.

Site and Building Complex

The present complex takes up the entire block extending between John Street on the south, Boren Avenue on the west, Thomas Street on the north, and Fairview Avenue on the east. The north-south alley originally splitting the block is now vacated. The block slopes down to the north approximately 17 feet along Fairview Avenue N, up approximately 3 feet to the west along John Street, and down approximately 11 feet to the north along Boren Avenue N, and down approximately 9 feet to the west along Thomas Street. All right-of-ways surrounding the site have paved sidewalks and street trees are planted along Fairview Avenue N and additional street trees are located at the southwestern corner of the site at the intersection of John Street and Boren Avenue N.

The 1930-31 Seattle Times Complex consisted of three units: an office building, printing plant and garage, all of which were designed by architect Robert C. Reamer. The original two-story office building (City of Seattle Landmark, 1995) portion was situated at the northwest corner of Fairview Avenue and John Street measures approximately 135 feet east-west and 68 north-south. The original three-story printing plant building is adjacent to the office building to the north and measures approximately 135 feet east-west and 170 feet north-south. The original garage portion was located on the northeastern corner of the site and was demolished around 1948.

The original two-story office building (City of Seattle Landmark) of the original complex, situated at the northwestern corner of Fairview Avenue North and John Street, is considered an excellent American interpretation of Art Deco design. It had a footprint of 135 feet east-west by 68 feet north-south. The building was constructed of reinforced concrete and the exterior walls have a veneer of cream-colored Indiana limestone above a granite base. The original southern primary facade consists of the central entrance vestibule and the three window bays symmetrically placed to each side. Typical bays consist of two floors of windows with transoms, set in groups of four along the southern façade and in groups of five along the eastern façade. The windows were originally separated by turned wood mullions, but presently have contemporary commercial rectangular aluminum with double glazing. The groups of windows at each level are separated by spandrels, faced with decorative panels in cast aluminum. Vertical piers, clad in Indiana limestone with shallow and wide fluting, separate the bays. Across the southern and eastern façades and above the fluted piers is a continuous, horizontal band of stone. Above the main south-facing entrance, this band is incised with large letters, which spell out "SEATTLE TIMES." Above the band, a simple cresting with repeated anthemion motifs distinguishes the parapet level. The recessed main entrance, situated along John Street, includes an aluminum grill, decorated with octagons and spirals, in addition to floral and wave motifs. Floral patterns are also carved in the limestone bas-reliefs to each side of the entrance. An Art Deco pendant light fixture is set just outside the recessed entry vestibule. The original lobby walls and floors are clad in a light tan Bottichino marble.

A contemporary sheet metal sign is mounted at parapet level on the eastern façade at the southern end of the original 1931 office building. The sign has a central plaque spelling out "The Seattle Times," with an upper clock and lower digital temperature display.

In addition to the two remaining original 1931 buildings, the complex has six other major additions: a

western office addition to a original office building (1947) (subject building), northern addition to the printing plant (1949-50), a replacement utilitarian reinforced concrete garage located at the northwestern corner of the site (1949-50), a reinforced concrete printing plant and newsroom addition at the northern end of the vacated alley (1963), a four-story reinforced concrete addition running from the southern property line along Boren Avenue N up to and abutting the garage building (1967), and a remodel and addition to the 1967 addition that completely covered the vacated alley.

The 1947 office addition extended the original southern façade two structural bays to the west, approximately 37 feet 6 inches, and was approximately 68 feet deep, north-south. The addition was constructed of reinforced concrete. The southern façade is finished nearly identically to the original office building. The addition's western façade was obscured by later additions. The northern façade is utilitarian facing the east-west light well.

The one-story garage building is constructed of reinforced concrete and measures approximately 120 feet north-south and 65 feet east-west.

The 1963 three-story pressroom and office addition, located west of the printing plant, was constructed of reinforced concrete, and covered the vacated alley. The addition measures approximately 32 feet wide east-west and 136 feet 7 inches north-south. Only the addition's northern façade remains visible, and it is strictly utilitarian.

The 1967 addition was constructed to the west of the expanded office building to house a new pressroom and the classified advertising department. The two-story building with two basements was constructed of reinforced concrete, and was 56 feet wide east-west and 238 feet long north-south, running from John Street on the south and abutting the 1949 garage building. A second-floor pedestrian bridge spanned the vacated alley, with the lower basement floor extending under the alley. The southern façade of the building was a stripped-down version the original 1931 office building, although largely blank. What remains of the western façade is strictly utilitarian.

The 1979 remodel of and addition to the 1963 addition filled in the exiting alley and created a contemporary concrete and curtain-walled façade at the southwestern corner of the site measuring approximately 135 feet 7 inches east-west along John street, and 81 feet seven inches north-south along Boren Avenue N. This façade has a lower stem wall of concrete and upper parapet of concrete, and an intermediate glazed curtain wall of three bands of commercial aluminum-sash windows. The southern façade portion has a projecting four-bay portion with a parapet section that cantilevers eastward and westward to the extent of the addition.

All interior spaces within the complex have been reconfigured and remodeled several times over the years and very few original interior finishes or building fabrics exist, with the exception of the printing presses, which remain in place.

Subject Building—1931 Printing Plant and 1950 Addition: Form, Structure, and Exterior Features

The subject building is composed of the original 1931 printing plant building, and the 1950 northern addition.

The original three-story with basement printing plant building measures approximately 171 feet 11 inches east-west and 133 feet 4 inches north-south, running along Fairview Avenue N. The building has six structural bays running east-west and nine bays running north-south, with square reinforced concrete columns with octagonal corbelled capitals supporting structural reinforced concrete slabs. The building has a flat roof punctuated by four large east-west-running monitor skylights, as well as

numerous rooftop mechanical equipment installations, and a small penthouse at the roof's southwestern corner. The northern two monitor skylights have been modified to shorten their length. The entire roof has membrane roofing.

The building has only one primary façade, the eastern façade, as the southern façade is utilitarian facing into a light well, and the other two building sides have been incorporated into newer additions.

The eastern façade was designed to harmonize with the office building, although it was executed in a simpler and more utilitarian manner with simple exposed painted concrete, rather than limestone cladding. It has seven wide fluted pilasters supporting a broad lintel band or parapet. The upper parapet has a simple cresting with repeated anthemion motifs, similar to but more rudimentary than the adjacent 1931 office building. Due to the northward-sloping street grade along Fairview Avenue N, it shares a common roofline with the office building. The six window bays on the two exposed floors and basement originally had industrial steel window sash, although this glazing has been replaced by contemporary commercial rectangular aluminum sash with double glazing in a non-original configuration. The windows spandrels also are concrete with incised accent verticals. The northern and southern window bays are less wide than the four central bays. There is a sidewalk-level entrance to a vestibule at the second bay from the north.

The northern 1950 addition is similarly constructed in reinforced concrete with round columns supporting reinforced concrete slabs. The addition is L-shaped with a wing extending northward from the addition's western end. The addition extends the eastern façade by three window bays, and is nearly identical to the original eastern façade, although the addition is recessed approximately 8 inches to the west. The eastern side of the northern façade has seven window bays on three floors spaced over an otherwise blank painted concrete wall. The windows originally had industrial steel window sash, although this glazing has been replaced by contemporary commercial rectangular commercial aluminum sash with double glazing in a non-original configuration. The basement floor has a covered loading dock extending westward from the building corner to the western edge of the sixth upper window bay. The northern leg has two window bays on the first and second floor. The northern façade of the leg is blank, with the exception of a projection of a blank concrete stair tower. The western façade is generally blank or obscured by later additions, with the exception of two third floor windows with non-original sash.

Plan & Interior Features

The subject building was originally arranged with the central two east-west bays open between the basement and second floor ceiling to allow for the installation of a large newspaper printing press (LNPP). Most of the remainder of the two lower floors in the original and later addition was used for paper handling, storage, loading operation, and mechanical and electrical equipment. These floors were industrial in character, with bare concrete floor, walls, and ceilings. The lower floors retain the original rails intended for moving paper and newspaper carts.

The upper (third) floor of the original 1931 plant building was divided into several spaces, including a large newsroom at the southeastern corner, an art room and photo department with darkrooms at the northeastern corner, an engraving department at the northern side, and a large room devoted to linotype machines on the southwestern corner of the building. The linotype room also had peripherally-associated rooms for monotype casting, re-melting, and machine shops. Toilets and locker rooms were near the art department and at the northwestern corner of the building. Stairways were located at the northern side of the building near the art department, and at the southwestern corner of the building. The large linotype room and pressroom both received natural light from the monitor roof lights.

The 1950 addition's third floor was generally divided into offices, redistributing or expanding on specialty areas contained in the original plant building.

All interior finishes in the third floor of the original 1931 printing plant and 1950 addition have been removed, and current finishes are a mixture of contemporary finishes including carpeting, glued or suspended ceiling tiles, and painted gypsum wall board.

Documented Building Alterations

Exterior alterations to the original 1931 printing plant and the 1950 addition include replacement of all original glazing and entrance doorways with contemporary commercial aluminum sash, and alterations to two of the roof monitor skylights. Interior alterations include reconfiguring all interior spaces and replacement of all finishes on the third floor.

Nearly 100 permits have been issued for the entire Seattle Times building complex. Only the permit for the original printing plant has been identified. The permit for the 1950 addition could not be identified. Other permits issued do not indicate where the work was performed within the complex.

Date	Designer	Description of work	Permit #
1930	W. C. Reamer	Foundation for plant building	294609
1930	W. C. Reamer	Erect Printing Plant (172x135)	295659
1950		Install shower room (bsmt.) plant bldg.	405627
1951		Install 2 sprinkler heads in ex. bldg., printing plant	408599
1955		Build foundation for presses, printing plant	437886
1956		Alter Exist Bldg. per plan, newspaper plant	451515
1957		Later Bldg. 1 Hr partitions 2nd flr, newspaper plant	452572
1957		Install Duct work on 2nd flr., newspaper plant	461410
1958		Alter portion of 3rd floor, newspaper plant	471860

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Neighborhood Context: South Lake Union

The subject building is located in Seattle's South Lake Union District, here defined for this report by Fairview Avenue N to the east, Denny Way to the south, Lake Union to the north, and Aurora Avenue (SR 99) to the west. The neighborhood is often associated with the Cascade Neighborhood to the east and the northern portion of Denny Triangle Neighborhood to the south, with the general collective area often grouped as South Lake Union. This more general area's historical context is described below.

The immediate site area once lay near the bottom of a shallow valley between Denny and Capitol Hills that drained into a marsh at the southern end of Lake Union. The lake was called *meman hartshu* by the Duwamish tribe, who had a traditional summer camp on a meadow on Denny Hill near the present Seattle Center.

The first industrial use of the immediate site area was a narrow gauge railroad built by the Seattle Coal and Transportation Company in 1872. The rail was supported on trestles that extended from the southern end of Lake Union to the Elliott Bay waterfront along what is now Westlake Avenue. From mines in Newcastle, coal was barged across Lake Washington, transported over the Montlake Isthmus, and loaded on barges for transport to the loading dock on South Lake Union that is now the site of the Center for Wooden Boats. This railway line was abandoned in 1877 when a new railway south of town was built. David Denny built his Western Mill sawmill at the southwestern corner of the lake in 1882.

The mill would later become Western Mill Company and eventually the Brace Hergert Mill.

From the 1890s through the early 1900s, the general area was predominantly residential, mainly composed of immigrant worker housing. The Cascade School (1894, John Parkinson, destroyed 1955) was built in 1894 at the intersection of Pontius Street and Harrison Avenue, with several churches of various ethnic groups scattered through the greater neighborhood. The largest commercial enterprise in the immediate area was the North Pacific Brewery (1889, later Hemrich Brothers Brewing Company), located between Lincoln (now Pontius) and Ward (now Yale) streets, and Mercer and Republican Avenues.

The development of streetcar lines by competitive companies spurred residential and commercial neighborhood growth in the late 1880s and 1890s. Seattle businessman L. H. Griffith purchased the former Seattle Coal and Transportation right-of-way for his Seattle Electric Railway and Power Company, and in 1889 built a street railway extending along the western side of Lake Union over a bridge at the northern end of the lake to the town of Fremont. In 1893, in expectation of serving the new state university and reaching the commercial area supporting it, David Denny ran the northern extension of his Rainier Power and Railway Company streetcar line along Howell Street, up Pontius and Howard (now Yale) avenues, along the eastern side of Lake Union along what is now Eastlake, over a trestle he built at Latona, and through Brooklyn northward to William and Louise Beck's private Ravenna Park.

As the neighborhood grew, the Cascade School was expanded in 1898 with northern and southern wings (Saunders & Lawton), and the brewery became the Hemrich Brothers Brewing Company with a major brew house expansion (1903-04, Theobald Buchinger, destroyed). Residential development in the area remained the predominant use, although housing grew denser as blocks were developed. Westlake was paved for wagon and auto traffic in 1906, and extended northward from Pike Street to Lake Union. The Westlake Avenue and Pike Street intersection was the location of the first Interurban Depot—Seattle to Everett. The Seattle Electric Company, owned by the Stone and Webster cartel, bought the line in 1909, and made various improvements to this and their consolidated system of electric street railways. The Ford Motor Company constructed a five-story assembly plant (1913, John Graham Sr., City of Seattle Landmark), at the south end of Lake Washington in 1913.

Several churches were built in the neighborhood, catering to the various nationalities of its mainly immigrant population, including Scandinavians, Greeks, and Russians. A Norwegian Methodist Episcopal church was built on the northeastern corner of the intersection of John Street and Howard (now Yale) Avenue prior to 1893. In 1912, Immanuel Lutheran Church (Watson Vernon) was built on the northwestern corner of Thomas Street and Pontius Avenue, and in 1921, St. Demetrios Church (destroyed), serving the Russian and Greek communities, was completed on the corner of Yale Avenue N and N Thomas Street. The Russian Orthodox contingent eventually broke off and built St. Spiridon Orthodox Cathedral (City of Seattle Landmark, 1976) at the southeastern corner of Harrison Street and Yale Avenue between 1938 and 1941. The Bethany Lutheran Free Church (destroyed, ca. 1980) was built at the southeastern corner of John Street and Fairview Avenue in the early 1920s.

A number of apartment buildings were constructed throughout the neighborhood between 1900 and the 1920s, including the Jensen Block (1906, City of Seattle Landmark), the Grandview Apartments (1907, Henderson Ryan), the Hollister Apartments (ca. 1910), Carolina Court (1915, John A. Creutzer), all on the western side of Eastlake; the Brewster (1916, Warren H. Milner) at the southeastern corner of Minor Avenue and John Street; and the Carlton (1926, Emil Guenther with Charles Saunders) at the northwestern corner of Mercer Street and Pontius Avenue, among others.

By the early 1920s, the Great Northern Railway built railroad tracks along Terry Avenue, serving the

growing industrial warehouse district north of the Central Business District. The tracks also looped around Lake Union, serving the water-dependent industries along the shoreline made possible by the construction of the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks and the Lake Washington Ship Canal constructed between 1911 and 1917. The small freight depot located on Terry Avenue North between Harrison and Thomas streets was a far cry from the massive central station called for at South Lake Union in Virgil G. Bogue's 1911 "Plan of Seattle," prepared for the Municipal Plans Commission.

In 1928, work commenced on the second and final Denny Regrade, which focused on a trapezoidal area bounded by Virginia Street to the south, Fifth Avenue to the east, Thomas Street to the north, and Westlake Avenue to the west, resulting in the lowering of the grade throughout that area, as well as Denny Park, which had for years loomed over the surrounding commercial district.

After the 1920s, the South Lake Union Area slowly evolved into a mixed residential and commercial district. Several commercial laundries were located in the greater neighborhood, including the Metropolitan Laundry Building (1917, later called the New Richmond Laundry, City of Seattle Landmark), built in 1917 at Pontius Avenue N and Thomas Street; the Supply Laundry (City of Seattle Landmark), initially completed between 1908 and 1912, at Yale Avenue North and Republican Street; and the Troy Laundry Building (V. W. Voorhees, with additions by Henry Bittman, City of Seattle Landmark), built in 1927 at the northwestern intersection of Fairview Avenue and Republican Street.

In the mid-to-late 1920s, Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company was converting their interurban lines to bus service and created a bus garage and repair facility for their North Coast Lines on the former site of the former Pontius mansion at Pontius Avenue N and Denny Way.

Between the mid-1920s and the beginning of World War II, several other major commercial business operations were located in the neighborhood. The Seattle Times relocated to a new site at the northeastern corner of the intersection of John Street and Fairview Avenue N in 1930, into an Art Moderne building (1930, Robert Reamer, City of Seattle Landmark). George Horluck built a large brewery at Westlake and Mercer in 1933, responding to the end of prohibition.

The Aurora Speedway was constructed in the early 1930s, east of Dexter Avenue, with the George Washington Memorial Bridge crossing high above the Lake Washington Ship Canal near Lake Union's northern end.

The United States Navy built a Naval Reserve Armory (1942, William R. Grant w/ B. Marcus Priteca, City of Seattle Landmark), serving as an advanced training facility, on the site of the Brace Hergert Mill between 1941 and 1942, using funds provided by the Works Progress Administration.

Fairview Avenue N continued to be the primary commercial street of the neighborhood. The Washington State Game Department built their new International style headquarters (James C. Gardiner and Associates) on Fairview Avenue N near Mercer in 1948.

The neighborhood in many ways lost its center in 1949, when a major earthquake severely damaged the Cascade School. The School District closed the school and demolished the building in 1955, replacing it with the district warehouse, while retaining the old playground between Pontius and Minor streets as a city park. Further residential development within the neighborhood was officially discouraged in 1957, when the city's new zoning ordinance eliminated new residential uses in the Cascade neighborhood.

By the 1960s, Interstate 5 severed the area from Capitol Hill. In 1964, PEMCO built the first tower of its Eastlake Avenue office complex, with further construction continuing through 1983. REI built its new flagship store (Mithun Partners) in 1994 on an entire block on the western side of Eastlake Avenue between John and Thomas streets.

The area remained fairly stable until property values increased as result of major land acquisition stimulated in the 1990s by the “Commons” proposal and redevelopment of these properties by major area developers. A new streetcar line running down Westlake now connects the South Lake Union, Cascade, and Westlake areas with the CBD.

Site and Building History: 1120 John Street

Prior to the construction of The Seattle Times Building complex on the eastern half of two city blocks running along Fairview Avenue N between Denny Way to Thomas Street, the subject property was undeveloped. Single-family houses or duplexes occupied the western half of the two blocks.

The subject site was cleared beginning on September 26, 1929. Construction of the new Seattle Times Building commenced in 1930, and was completed in early 1932, with the newspaper publishing its first edition from the building on March 2, 1932. As originally constructed, the 1930-31 Seattle Times plant complex consisted of three related buildings: the office building, the printing plant, and a truck garage. Architect Robert C. Reamer, then head of design for the Metropolitan Building Company, designed all three buildings.

The original two-story office building (City of Seattle Landmark) of the original complex, situated at the northwestern corner of Fairview Avenue North and John Street, is considered an excellent American interpretation of Art Deco design. It had a footprint of 135 feet east-west by 68 feet north-south.

The original three-story with basement printing plant portion of the original complex was situated to the north of the office building and was connected to it by a bridge spanning a light well. It had a footprint of 171 feet 11 inches east-west by 133 feet 4 inches north-south running along Fairview Avenue N.

In 1947 the office building was extended two structural bays to the west. This addition was designed by W. Henry Fey and is nearly identical in character and detail to the original 1931 façade design. A new plant addition including a new pressroom wing was added to the northern end of the original printing plant building in 1950. This addition extended the eastern façade northward by three window bays. This addition was designed by architect William H. Fey and is compatible in character with the original six-bay design.

As part of the overall post-war expansion of the complex, the original garage on the southwestern corner of Boren Avenue and Thomas Street was demolished and a new larger reinforced concrete garage measuring 120 feet north-south and 65 feet east-west was constructed from designs prepared by William H. Fey. A new paper receiving platform was also constructed as part of this expansion. By 1963, the Seattle Times (Blethen Corporation) owned the entire block extending between John Street to the south, Boren Avenue to the west, Thomas Street to the south, and Fairview Avenue to the east. The north-south alley originally splitting the block had also been vacated. The addition was designed by Albert Kelly & Associates, consulting engineers. The reinforced concrete addition measures approximately 32 feet wide east-west and 136 feet 7 inches north-south. At that time, Kelly oversaw interior renovation to the upper floors of the printing plant and added a new vault to the west of the existing office building.

In 1967, a major addition was made to the west of the expanded office building to house a new pressroom and the classified advertising department. The two-story building with two floors of basements was 56 feet wide east-west and 238 feet long north-south, running from John Street on the south and abutting the 1949 garage building. A second-floor pedestrian bridge spanned the vacated

alley, with the lower basement floor extending under the alley. Arnold G. Ganges was the architect for the project and the contractor was Howard S. Wright.

The 1967 addition was further modernized in 1979, when the architectural firm of Naramore Bain Brady & Johanson completely refaced the southwestern corner of the building with reinforced concrete and glass curtain walls, and reconfigured the existing 1967 addition to include a large ground floor reception area and auditorium, as well as new stairways, restrooms and open office interiors.

Original Building Developer and Owner: The *Seattle Times* and the Blethen Family

The *Seattle Times* had the subject building, the Printing Plant, constructed between 1931 and 1932 as part of a complex of three buildings, also including the administration building and garage building.

Alden J. Blethen (1845-1915) founded the *Seattle Evening Times* in 1896, when he purchased the *Seattle Press-Times*, a four-page newspaper with a daily circulation of 3,500.

Blethen, a native of Maine's Waldo County, was a former teacher and lawyer who became a successful newspaperman in Kansas City, Missouri during the 1880s, owning a fifth interest in the *Kansas City Journal*. Blethen sold his interest in the newspaper in 1884, moving to Minneapolis where he purchased an interest in the *Minneapolis Tribune*, a morning paper, and with his partner, Edwin Haskell, eventually took control of the *Minneapolis Journal*, the city's afternoon paper, publishing both from the new state-of-the-art eight-story Tribune Building in downtown Minneapolis. In 1888 Blethen sold his interest in the Minneapolis newspapers and tried unsuccessfully to run for political office on the Republican ticket. After attempting to purchase the *Washington Post* and the *St. Paul Globe*, he repurchased the *Tribune* in 1889, becoming editor-in-chief. A disastrous fire that destroyed the Tribune Building eventually led to the loss of the newspaper to a creditor in 1891. In 1892, Blethen made an unsuccessful bid to gain the Republican nomination for mayor, losing to a dark horse candidate. His support of the party led to his gaining the appellation "Colonel," as a member of Governor Knute Nelson's honorary military staff. Blethen briefly turned to banking, but was severely impeded by the financial crisis of 1893. Turning once again to publishing, Blethen founded his own newspaper, the *Penny Press*, but was too financially strapped to remain in control. In 1896, Blethen sent his family to Seattle to stay with relatives while he sorted through his financial situation and attempted to raise money to buy the *Denver Times*. Alden's son, Clarence B. Blethen, corresponded with his father regarding Seattle's newspapers, encouraging Blethen to travel to Seattle to seek new opportunities in a relatively open field. At that time, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, whose politics was solidly behind the Republican party, was the leading local daily newspaper, with a daily circulation that equaled all the other state newspapers combined. Sensing opportunity, Blethen purchased the *Seattle Press-Times* for \$30,000 in August of 1896, with the financial backing of wealthy attorney and mining entrepreneur Charles Fishback. In addition to the printing presses owned by the paper, the former owners of the *Seattle Press-Times*, C. A. Davies and T. A. Hughes, had also possessed the valuable rights to an Associated Press franchise.

Blethen was determined "to make the [*Seattle Press-*] *Times* the most popular publication in the state of Washington" by publishing a cheaper paper with more content that that would attract more readers, and as a result gain more paid advertising. The *Times* moved into space in the Boston Block at Second Avenue and Columbia Street. Blethen installed the press below street level, and combined business, composing, news, and editorial offices on the ground and balcony levels. He then ordered two new linotype machines from New York, and lowered the street price to three cents "to place the newspaper more largely in the hands of the common people."

During the 1896 election, Blethen, acting as a political chameleon, transformed the new *Seattle Evening Times* into a populist voice, backing the Democratic presidential candidate, William Jennings

Bryan, and speaking on behalf of the working man against the wealth of the establishment's "silk-stockings gentlemen." In Minneapolis Blethen had learned that controversy sells newspapers, and his goal was to build circulation by taking the *Post-Intelligencer* head on, spreading exaggerations and falsehoods as dubious news, and criticizing the *Post-Intelligencer* for low journalistic standards. His strategy worked, and during the heat of the campaign, the *Times* doubled its daily circulation, but dropped sharply after Bryan lost the election and Seattle settled back to being a out-of-the-way frontier town.

Although unable to meet the newspaper's payroll, Blethen secretly bought up all available shares of the *Times*, with the 50-year-old Blethen becoming editor-in-chief. Blethen brought in his eldest son A. Joseph Blethen as 25 percent owner and the paper's drama critic. In May 1897, the Blethens formed the Times Printing Company and secured the rights to the new Associated Press "day report," a news service catering to the evening newspapers on the West Coast, where the daily political and financial news of the East Coast was three hours behind. This allowed the *Times*, with its afternoon delivery, to scoop the *Post-Intelligencer*. Nevertheless, the *Times* continued to lose money. The *Post-Intelligencer* generally avoided attacking Blethen directly, preferring to wait out the inevitable collapse of the upstart newspaper. However, the *Argus*, a weekly newspaper owned by A.T. Ambrose and Henry Chadwick, personally accused Blethen of selling his editorial influence by revealing that he had received loans from both Washington state senator Watson Squire and James J. Hill, owner of the Minneapolis-based Great Northern Railway, to purchase the newspaper. A bitter feud arose between Chadwick and Blethen, who regularly used their editorial positions to publically attack each other.

The *Times* continued to be unprofitable until July 1897, when the steamer Portland docked in Elliott Bay carrying 70 miners and a half-ton of gold. During the Klondike gold rush, tens of thousands of people from Seattle (and everywhere else in the country) journeyed north from Seattle to the Canadian and Alaskan goldfields. Seattle became the portal to those gold fields, and between 1898 and 1902 Seattle's new federal assay office, run by Joseph Mayer, processed \$174 million in gold. Although several miners struck it rich, Seattle businesses that equipped eager prospectors—or entertained them in what would become Seattle's notorious Tenderloin District—were more likely to make fortunes. All Seattle's newspapers capitalized on the boom, and the *Times* finally turned a profit, as circulation and advertising revenues soared.

By 1898, the *Times* had a circulation of nearly 12,000, running five editions a day emphasizing hot news, sports, local crime and politics, humor, entertainment reviews, as well as beauty tips and society news that aimed to bring in women readers. The Saturday edition of the *Times* outsold every other Saturday newspaper in the state. At the turn of the last century, the *Times* shared the market with the two other dailies, the *Post-Intelligencer* and the *Seattle Star*. The newspapers had all profited due to the gold rush and the coverage of the Spanish-American War, often sinking to yellow journalism to increase circulation.

In 1900, Blethen formed the Times Investment Company, which would become the Blethen family's financial holding company, protecting the family from financial losses similar to what they had suffered in Minneapolis.

By 1902, the newspaper's circulation had climbed to nearly 30,000, and the *Times* moved into the Denny Building at Second Avenue and Union Street, a new building built to specifications by the Denny family, and equipped with the some of the best production machinery in the West. In February of that year, the *Times* produced its first Sunday edition, offering it free to its daily subscribers. An early adopter of colored printing, the newspaper purchased its own four-color press in 1904, and prided itself on publishing photographs taken mere hours before publication.

Blethen's youngest son, Clarence Brettun Blethen (1879-1941) or "C.B.," became managing editor of the *Times* in 1903, overshadowing his older brother Alden Joseph Blethen, Jr. (1870-1937), who generally preferred a literary career. "Colonel" Alden Blethen, however, remained in complete control of the paper and its editorial policy.

Over the next several years Blethen would use his editorial platform to support friends while making fierce enemies, including *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* editor Erastus Brainerd, city engineer R. H. Thompson, and the influential Reverend Mark Mathews. The latter hired the William J. Burns Detective Agency to investigate Blethen and his allies, including Seattle councilman (later mayor) Hiram Gill, police chief Charles W. Wappenstein, and several others for corruption related to encouraging illegal activities in Seattle's "Tenderloin District." Blethen would eventually be indicted by a grand jury in 1911 for criminal charges of libel and conspiracy. He was eventually found not guilty.

Although Blethen supported organized labor, he actively took on the labor radicals, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), or Wobblies, calling them "bums," and describing them as "too lazy to work and too cowardly to steal." Shortly after a call by the *Times* for vigilante attacks on "anarchists," a fire destroyed much of the *Times'* physical plant and archives on February 13, 1913. The following July, the *Times* essentially incited a riot during the Potlatch celebration, calling for physical attacks on the Wobblies. A crowd of hundreds stormed and burned the offices of the IWW, moving on to destroy the Socialist Party's office. The Denny Building again suffered a destructive fire in October 1913.

In March 1914, Blethen broke ground for a new home for the *Seattle Times* on a triangular lot between 4th and 5th Avenues at Stewart and Olive Streets, almost in the "suburbs." The *Times* had purchased the property in 1912, hiring C. B. Blethen's new father-in-law to design a Classically inspired building. Later the architectural firm of Bebb & Gould gained the commission, initially designing a Gothic inspired building, before Carl F. Gould joined Bebb, transforming the building into a Renaissance Revival building clad in rose buff terra cotta. Blethen hoped that the new Times Square Building would be a "material expression of his years of competition and achievement, the monument to his life's work." Only a little more than a year later, however, on July 12, 1915, Alden Blethen died after a period of deteriorating health.

After Blethen's death the Times Square project continued after a brief interruption, allowing the newspaper to move into the new building with a state-of-the-art printing plant in September 1916. At Alden Blethen's request, Joseph Blethen became president and general manager of the paper and the Times Investment Company, with C. B. Blethen as vice president. This arrangement continued for a number of years, until C. B. was called into active service in the Washington National Guard during World War I, rising to the rank of brigadier general before resigning his commission in 1921, allowing him devote more time to the management of the newspaper. Daily circulation at that time was 56,460, and Sunday circulation was at 83,703.

In April 1921, William Randolph Hearst purchased the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, putting the *Times* in direct competition with the most sophisticated newspaper chain in the country. The *Times'* revenues slid as the paper attempted to meet the challenge. Later that year, Joseph Blethen left the newspaper, selling his interest in the *Times'* printing and investment companies, and relocating to San Francisco to work at an advertising firm. Now as editor-in-chief and publisher of the *Seattle Times*, C. B. Blethen moved the *Seattle Times* toward being a modern, objective mass-circulation metropolitan newspaper.

In many ways, C. B. sanitized the *Times*' editorial posture, eliminating sensationalized crime news from the front page, prohibiting reporters from using words such as "gun" and "blood" in their published accounts of the daily news. Additionally, the newspaper's orientation was altered to embrace the tastes of the more cautious middle class.

By 1929, the area surrounding the Times Square Building had become a busy commercial neighborhood inappropriate for manufacturing purposes, and daily circulation had grown to around 100,000, with Sunday circulation near 140,000. The large "Basco" color presses used for the rotogravure printing were also housed off-site in another building, causing logistical difficulties. Anticipating building a new facility, the *Times* purchased the eastern half of two city blocks running along Fairview Avenue N between Denny Way to Thomas Street. The company announced that it would move to the new site in August 1929, and C. B. broke ground for the proposed new building in September of that year. The newspaper had hired Robert C. Reamer, then head of design at the Metropolitan Building Company, to design the initial development that would eventually include an office "tower of twenty stories or more in height."

The *Times* moved into their new building in February and March of 1931, beginning publication on March 2, 1931. Over 2,000 tons of equipment was moved, including presses weighing a total of 600 tons, 57 tons of typesetting machines, and 70 tons of metal used for typesetting. The new facility consisted of three units: the administration building fronting Thomas Street; the plant located along Fairview Avenue N containing the newsroom, circulation offices, rotogravure plant and mechanical equipment; and a repair garage located on the site's northwestern corner. The space between the buildings was used as "Times Alley," allowing for truck delivery and distribution traffic.

The new Times Building was finished during the bleak days of the economic depression of the 1930s. C. B. Blethen was known for extravagant spending, and the new building's construction, largely financed through the issuing of corporate bonds, stretched the finances of the *Times*, leading C.B. Blethen to sell a minority interest in 1930 to the newspaper chain owned by Ridder Brothers (later known as Knight Ridder Inc.; the McClatchy Company presently holds the former Knight Ridder's 49.5 percent voting common stock). Although the move saved the newspaper and the Blethen's family ownership, it led to a number of hostile takeover attempts, ending in the Blethens' favor in 1949.

C. B. Blethen passed away in 1941, and control of the newspaper was passed on to Elmer Todd, C. B.'s friend and attorney. Todd was succeeded in 1949 by two of C. B.'s sons, William Kingsley Blethen (1913-1967), who was named publisher, and Francis (Frank) Alden Blethen (1904-1967), who became president.

After World War II, the *Times* expanded its operations with several additions to the original three buildings and, anticipating future operational expansion, increased its real estate holdings in the immediate area. The post-war expansion was driven by increased circulation due both demographic trends and aggressive business practices. Between 1940 and 1950, Seattle's population grew at fairly modest rate of approximately eight percent, from 368,302 to 467,591. However, the population of the greater Seattle metropolitan area increased from 504,980 to 726,462, or approximately 44 percent, due to the influx of workers drawn to employment opportunities during and after the war and the development of new suburban areas surrounding Seattle and its major employment centers. The *Times*'s management exploited this rapid population growth by expanding its circulation into these newly developed areas. Additionally, the *Times* absorbed Seattle's third-largest newspaper, the *Seattle Star*, in 1947, acquiring the offices, printing presses, and circulation lists for \$360,000. Driven by these factors, the paper's daily circulation increased from 101,662 in 1940, to approximately 215,000 in 1950, a gain of 81 percent.

As a result, the *Times* expanded its original office building in 1947, and between 1950 and 1951, acquired the western half block adjacent to the complex and added a large addition to its printing plant. In 1963, the *Times*, with a daily circulation of around 233,000, once again expanded its complex with a three-story pressroom and plant addition to the western side, adding a new press line boosting its capacity approximately 40 percent.

John Alden Blethen (1918-1993) succeeded the two Blethen brothers in 1968. By then the *Times* had a daily circulation of slightly more than 250,000, or nearly 50,000 more than the *Post-Intelligencer*, while the Sunday edition had a circulation of 310,000, 52,000 more than the *P-I*. Even more importantly, the *Times* carried over ten percent more advertising than the *Post-Intelligencer*. By the early 1980s, however, intense competition had become destructive to Seattle's two remaining dailies, particularly to the *Post-Intelligencer*, which was slowly losing its market position to the *Times*. In May of 1983, after surviving legal challenges, a 50-year joint operating agreement between the *Times* and the *Post-Intelligencer* was executed, enabling the two newspapers to cooperate legally in order to ensure their mutual survival in the marketplace. While the two newspapers remained editorially separate, the Seattle Times Company took control of all related production, advertising, and circulation matters of the *Post-Intelligencer*. Under the joint operating agreement, the *Times* ceased publication of its daily morning edition (begun in 1980), and split profits, with two-thirds going to the *Times*, and one-third going to Hearst.

W.J. Pennington, a non-family member, took over the management of the *Times* in 1983, but died unexpectedly in 1985. This allowed Frank A. Blethen, Jr. (1929-), the current and sixth publisher of the *Times*, to take control. Under his leadership and buoyed by the boost from the joint operating agreement, the *Times* entered a period of unprecedented financial growth, allowing the company to develop several spin-off niche publications, acquire three regional weeklies, and in 1989, acquire the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, a daily newspaper with a circulation of more than 40,000. Three years after the purchase of the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, the Seattle Times company opened a \$175 million, state-of-the-art satellite printing plant in Bothell. The company also owns the *Walla Walla Union-Bulletin*, and several regional weekly newspapers in the state of Washington.

As the *Times* entered the mid 1990s, it represented one of the last independent and locally owned metropolitan newspapers in the country, one of the few newspapers to avoid absorption by large publishing chains. As Washington State's largest newspaper, in 1995 it had daily circulation of 232,371, and 504,897 for its Sunday edition.

The *Times* switched to morning deliveries in March 2000, placing it in direct competition with its joint operating agreement partner, the *Post-Intelligencer*. In 2003, the *Times* announced its intention to cancel the joint operating agreement, leading to several years of legal disputes. The agreement was formally ended in 2009, when the *P-I* became an online-only publication.

In 2013, The Seattle Times Company agreed to sell two full blocks of its holding in South Lake Union, including its former administrative building and printing plant to Vancouver, B.C.-based high-rise developer the Onni Group. The company had moved to an adjacent building to the west the previous year.

The *Seattle Times* presently has a daily circulation of approximately 236,929, and 346,589 Sunday circulation. The *Times* has been awarded nine Pulitzer Prizes for excellence in journalism.

Historical Architectural Context: Art Deco

The subject property contains cast stone ornaments (finials, caps, spandrels and piers) designed within an Art Deco motif of flowers and stems.

The Art Deco style was born out of the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* held in Paris in 1925. Literature promoting the expo prohibited imitations, reproductions and counterfeits of ancient styles. The new style strove to meld artistic expression and the machine age in a complementary, forward-looking manner. Polychromy and the celebration of decoration were the chief tenets of the Art Deco style. Art Deco is a style of ornamentation with motifs found on cars, trains, kitchen appliances as well as buildings. These motifs were low-relief geometrical designs in straight lines, chevrons, zigzags and stylized floral or fountain shapes. The inspiration for these shapes came from Native art in the Americas and Cubism in Europe.

Exterior finish materials of metal, smooth stone and concrete were typically accented with terra cotta, glass and colored mirrors. Some of the most famous examples in the United States are the Rockefeller Center (Raymond Hood, 1940) and the Chrysler Building (William Van Alen, 1930) in New York City, and the historic district in Miami Beach.

In Seattle, most of the buildings designed in the Art Deco style were built between the late 1920s and the onset of the Great Depression. Some examples of this style include the US Marine Hospital Building (Bebb & Gould, Graham, 1932), Firestation #6 (Architect Unknown, 1931), the Seattle Tower, (Albertson, Wilson & Richardson, 1928), the Exchange Building, (Graham, 1930), the Seattle Art Museum at Volunteer Park (Bebb & Gould, 1933), the MGM/Loews Building at 2331 2nd Avenue (Edmund W. Denle, 1936), the RKO Distributing Building (Earle Morrison, 1928), and the Seattle Times Building (R.C. Reamer, 1931).

Historical Architectural Context: Newspaper Office and Printing Buildings

Newspaper buildings have traditionally followed the prevailing popular architectural style. The tallest building in the world between 1890 and 1894 was the *New York World* newspaper building. It had printing presses in the basement, retail space on the first floor and mezzanine, and the news offices in the top six floors of the building, with other floors rented to commercial tenants. *New York World* was just one of a number of newspaper office and printing buildings on New York's newspaper row, on Park Row near City Hall, including the *New York Times*, the *Tribune*, and the *New York Sun*. These buildings were all designed between 1858 and 1890 in different eclectic styles incorporating Renaissance revival, Romanesque and French-inspired forms. The buildings were intentionally clustered around City Hall; in addition to the proximity to newsmakers, the buildings were designed to express monumentality and civic values. The influence of eclectic designs are reflected in the *Seattle Times*' classical revival Times Square building (1916, Bebb & Gould) in Seattle, and in the *Spokesman Review*'s Romanesque forms in Spokane, WA (1891, Kirtland Cutter). The *Seattle Times*, along with other newspapers, chose to keep their linotype machines on the first floor, open to public viewing. The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* moved from a solid brick building at 2nd Avenue and Cherry Street to a gothic inspired terra cotta building at 6th Avenue and Pine Street in 1921.

In Chicago, the 1922 Chicago Tribune Building was inspired by the "Butter Tower" of the cathedral at Rouen. It was designed by Raymond Hood and John Mead Howells, who won a widely publicized competition for the design of the building. Eliel Saarinen submitted an Art Deco entry, and Walter Gropius an International Style scheme, but the paper ultimately chose the more traditional eclectic design. The Art Deco style was being used in the design of other newspaper buildings, including the Detroit Free Press Building by Albert Kahn, built in 1925. Although the Chicago Tribune building influenced the design of other newspaper buildings across the country, including the San Antonio Express-News building (1929, Herbert S. Green), Art Deco became the predominant mode.

The Chicago Tribune design differed radically from Hood's later design with Andre Fouilhoux and John Mead Howells for the Daily News Building (1929-30) in New York, which reflects a mature Art Deco style. Many other newspaper buildings followed in this style including Reamer's Seattle Times Building and the Los Angeles Times Building (1935, Gordon B. Kaufmann). When the *Seattle Times* moved to their new Art Deco building they abandoned the idea of having the machinery on display, choosing to house the printing presses and other machinery in the basement. In Seattle, the *Post-Intelligencer* completed a new building in 1948, (Lockwood Greene with Henry Bittman) choosing Art Deco style for their iconic building.

Soon after World War II, the International Style became the preferred mode for buildings, such as the Chicago Sun-Times building by Naess & Murphy, built between 1955 and 1958. In 1975 the architecture firm SOM won the AIA National Honor Award for its 1971 design for the *Republic* newspaper plant and offices in Columbus, Indiana. These later buildings also demonstrated a shift to separating the printing plant from the rest of the operation, and locating it in more remote suburban areas, while keeping their newsrooms in town.

Building Architect: Robert C. Reamer (1873-1938) and the Metropolitan Building Corporation
Seattle architect Robert C. Reamer designed the subject building.

Robert Chambers Reamer was born on September 12, 1873 was born in Oberlin, Ohio on October 5, 1869, the second son of Chamber D. and Francis F. (Cole) Reamer. Community life in Oberlin was dominated by Oberlin College. Robert Reamer attended local school until he was 12, whereupon he withdrew, ostensibly for health reasons, and was privately tutored in art for approximately a year after that. Although Reamer's family relocated to Birmingham, Alabama, in 1887, he chose to move to Detroit, Michigan, at age 12, to stay with relatives. He found work in the architectural office of Mortimer L. Smith and Sons, before being reunited with his parents in booming Fort Payne, Alabama, around 1888, where he may have received additional formal education before moving to Chicago in 1890 at age 17.

In Chicago, Robert and his older brother Daniel both found work at A. H. Andrews & Company, a large and prestigious furniture manufacturer and interior design firm, with Robert working as a draftsman out of the Monadnock Building. Robert stayed in Chicago for at least four years, and would have witnessed and possibly been involved with designing exhibits for the World's Columbia Exposition in 1893.

Reamer moved to San Diego, California, in 1895, joining with Samuel Blaire Zimmer (1869-1937) to form the architectural firm of Zimmer & Reamer. The two young architects formed a relationship with well-connected architects James E. Reid and Merritt J. Reid, designers of the grand Hotel del Coronado (1888), for developers Elisha S. Babcock (1848-1922) and John D. Spreckles (1853-1926). When the Reid brothers moved to San Francisco in 1891, Zimmer and Reamer oversaw the construction of the Reid brothers' projects in San Diego, bringing them into contact with local developers, including William Hawkings, who commissioned the firm to design a Spanish Mission style building for his Diamond Carriage and Livery Company (demolished 1910) in 1896. The same year the firm designed a large Spanish Mission style mansion (demolished) for Col. Thomas J. Bryan in Lemon Grove, south of San Diego, and a three-story brick masonry building for George H. Hill Block (contribution building, Gas Lamp Historic District).

The loss of two major commissions to a competing architectural firm, Hebbard & Gill, probably caused the dissolution of the Zimmer & Reamer in 1898, after which Reamer worked from 1898 to 1903 for Spreckles' Coronado Beach Company, under the direction of Elisha S. Babcock. During this

period Reamer oversaw renovations to the Hotel del Coronado, and resort projects patterned from the successful Avalon Beach on Santa Catalina Island, including a dance and music pavilion (1900, demolished 1916), relocation and remodeling of a bath house (1900, demolished 1938) an employee dormitory (1901, demolished), portable beach cottages (1901, demolished 1939), renovation of a ferry boat into a casino (1901, demolished), the “rustic” Coronado Golf Club House (1901, demolished), and an arcade building (1902, demolished 1940). During this period, Reamer also took a position with his former competitors, Hebbard & Gill, to supplement his income, having married Maple Wilcox (1875-1906) in 1898. A 1902 visit to the Golf Club House by Harry W. Child (1857-1931), president of the Yellowstone Park Association (Y.P.A.), however, led to Reamer’s relocation to Montana and his employment by Child’s company. The Y.P.A. and its later manifestations held the exclusive concession for housing and transportation within Yellowstone National Park from 1892 to 1980.

Reamer arrived in Yellowstone, Montana early in 1903, with a one-year, \$3,000 contract for architectural services. On the railroad trip from San Diego Reamer completed some schematic designs for Child’s Old Faithful Inn, featuring the rustic concept that his client desired. Child had previously set aside plans for a large Queen Anne style hotel, and had settled on a group of nine rustic log cabins, before enlisting Reamer. Reamer’s scheme called for a four-story large central gabled entry hall with symmetrical two-and-a-half story wings. The large 160-foot high vaulted entry hall featured an enormous freestanding rough-stone fireplace, with surrounding peeled-log galleries. Completed and opened in the summer of 1904, the hotel had 140 rooms with electric lights and modern plumbing, accommodating 316 guests.

In addition to the Old Faithful Inn (1904, National Historic Landmark), Reamer designed a handful of other major projects during his initial two years in Montana, including the Gardiner Depot (demolished 1956) for the Northern Pacific Railroad, which controlled railroad accessed to Yellowstone and was the financier of most of Child’s projects; renovations to the Lake Yellowstone Hotel, including the addition of massive classical porticos; new buildings for the Thumb Lunch Station and the Mammoth Hot Springs Commissary for the YPA; the Mammoth Hot Springs Transportation Building for the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company; and a rustic addition to a general store owned by H. E. Klammer in Upper Geyser Basin.

During the summer of 1904, with no additional commissions in Montana, the Reamers moved to Birmingham, Alabama, where Robert joined his brother’s architectural practice. Reamer’s stay there was brief, and by 1906 Robert Reamer was once again practicing architecture in California, this time in Los Angeles. Very little is known about his work in Los Angeles, probably due to a period of depression and alcoholism aggravated by his wife’s illness and eventual death in 1906. His former employer Harry W. Child, traveled to Los Angeles in early 1906, once again enlisting Reamer as his architect with plans to develop a major new hotel at Mammoth Hot Springs.

In 1906 Reamer developed two proposals for new grand hotels in Mammoth, although both plans were ultimately abandoned. In the same year he designed two complexes of rustic buildings for the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company (Y.P.T.C.), one in Mammoth (demolished) and one in Gardiner (demolished except the bunkhouse and mess house, altered slightly), during 1906. That year Reamer also competed for and won a competition to design the Masonic Home (completed 1909) in Helena, Montana. After his wife’s death in August, however, Reamer appears to have left Montana, and was inactive for a period, possibly moving to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where his brother was practicing architecture and his father was developing property.

In 1908, Reamer returned to Yellowstone, designing three additional buildings for the Y.P.T.C. in Canyon, as well as developing two residential projects in Mammoth for Harry C. Child. The first was

an impressive Prairie style residence influenced by contemporary residential work by Frank Lloyd Wright. The second proposal, now known as the Executive House, is a more modest one-story hip-roof house.

Early the following year, Child again asked Reamer to return to the Mammoth Hot Springs hotel project, only to see the park administrators (then the United States Army) reject the proposal due to disagreements in siting. The same year he completed plans for a small rustic bungalow located between Mammoth and Gardiner.

Child and Reamer spent the latter part of 1909 traveling to northern Europe, visiting sites in England, Scotland, Switzerland, and Germany. On their return, Child commissioned Reamer to design a large new hotel in the Grand Canyon area of Yellowstone Park. Construction of the hotel began in June 1910. A construction crew of approximately 200 worked in sub-zero temperatures through a Montana winter, thus enabling the hotel to open in June 1911. The 400-room New Canyon Hotel (demolished and destroyed by fire in 1960) featured a grand portico with a long lobby/staircase ascending to the hotel proper. While overseeing work on the Canyon Hotel, Reamer also completed plans for Child for a rustic style garage (1910, altered) in Gardiner, and three unrealized projects: a federal administration building in Mammoth, a hotel for the Riverside area in the Park, and a residential project for Helena businessman C. B. Power.

Reamer married Clara Louise Chase in the fall of 1911.

In 1912, Reamer briefly joined his brother Daniel in Cleveland, Ohio, before moving to Boston, where he took a position in the engineering department of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railway. His first project was developing a proposal for a large hotel at the summit of Mount Washington, New Hampshire, a grand scheme that would never move beyond his drawing board. Between 1912 and 1913, two railroad stations that Reamer designed were constructed in New England. The concrete and brick Maine Central Depot (demolished 1961) in Augusta, Maine, featured a hexagonal rotunda with upper panels of stained glass. The Union Station Depot (altered) in Clinton, Massachusetts was designed more conventionally, but was equally well detailed. Although engaged with the railroad, Reamer did return to Yellowstone to design additions to the old Mammoth Hot Springs hotel, and his own Old Faithful Inn, where he completed plans for a 100-room flat-roofed wing.

When the railroad management ran into financial difficulties, Reamer returned to Yellowstone in 1914 to oversee construction at the Old Faithful Inn and to work on additional projects for Harry Child, including an addition to the Mammoth General Store and the Green River Ranch complex (destroyed by fire except for the bunkhouse, granary, and blacksmith shop).

Between 1915 and 1917, Reamer and his wife lived in Cleveland, Ohio. Reamer designed two entrance stations for Yellowstone for the National Park Service in 1917, but the projects were abandoned due to lack of funding. As the United States became engaged in World War I, Reamer attempted to enlist in the Army Corps of Engineers, but received a medical deferment. At the advice of his recruiting officer he sought civilian employment in Bremerton, Washington. By the fall of 1918, he was working for J.F. Duthie & Company, a shipbuilder and engineering firm in Seattle, Washington.

In 1921, Reamer was approached by the Metropolitan Building Company (M.B.C.), which leased the ten-acre University Tract in downtown Seattle, to prepare preliminary plans for a large downtown hotel. Reamer's plans were set aside, however, when the firm slated to operate the new hotel insisted on hiring their own architect, George Post of New York City. Reamer was disappointed to lose the

commission to design what was to become the Olympic Hotel. In 1923, however, the M.B.C. hired Reamer as a house architect, and by 1924 he was named the head of the M.B.C. architecture department, eventually overseeing 22 other architects and draftsmen on M.B.C. projects. Reamer also pursued additional private projects over the next several years.

Reamer's Pacific Northwest pre-Depression projects can be generally classified into hotel, theater, and commercial buildings, both designed for the M.B.C. and for other private clients.

Reamer designed eight hotel projects, six of which were constructed. The first was the Hotel Emerson (1923-24, now Emerson Manor) in Hoquiam, Washington, completed in 1924 for a group of local investors. The five-story masonry building featured a two-story lobby with large square columns adorned with stenciling of logging and maritime themes sandblasted into Douglas fir panels. In 1925, Reamer and Joseph L. Skoog, an architect working under Reamer at the M.B.C., completed plans for the Lake Quinault Lodge (1926, National Historic Register), also on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. Of all of Reamer's Northwest projects, this rustic-style wood-shingled hotel most resembled his early Yellowstone projects, with its wide U-plan centering on a massive central fireplace. In late 1926, Reamer was commissioned to design the Lewis-Clark Hotel (1927) in Centralia, Washington. The eight-story 102-room brown brick masonry hotel was completed by July of 1927. In the fall of 1928, the M.B.C. decided to build an addition to the Olympic Hotel in Seattle, completing the George B. Post's 1923 architectural design. Reamer oversaw the construction of the hotel's eleven-story eastern wing. Reamer set aside a Spanish Renaissance style hotel to be built in Bellingham, Washington, and embraced Modernism with a 1929 design for a 15-story hotel tower of reinforced steel and concrete, sheathed in light tapestry brick masonry and spare concrete and terra cotta spandrels and banding. Reamer's last Pacific Northwest hotel project was the Edmond Meany Hotel (1931) in Seattle's University District, completed as the country was becoming aware of the true depth of the economic depression of the 1930s. The 18-story hotel with its 14-story tower was constructed of 12-inch slip-formed thick reinforced concrete walls. Each of the 158 hotel rooms within the tower was a corner room with three windows. The Art Deco motif was carried through on the interior in the lobby and restaurant areas.

Between 1925 and 1931, Reamer designed four grand movie theaters, the Fifth Avenue Theater (1925-1926, restored 1980, National Historic Register) in Seattle's Skinner Building; the Mount Baker Theater (1926-27, restored 2002) in Bellingham, Washington; the Majestic Fox Theater (1931, w/ Harold Whitehorse and Ernest Price, restored 2007, National Historic Register) in Spokane, Washington; and the Fox Theater in Billings, Montana (1931, altered). The Fifth Avenue Theater is probably Reamer's most recognized building besides Yellowstone's Old Faithful Inn. While the Skinner building is a subdued sandstone-clad Renaissance Revival office building, the theater within is an exuberant fantasy combination of the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and the Summer Palace, actual 15th to 18th century imperial buildings in China. Traditional Chinese timber architecture was emulated in painted plaster within the lobby and auditorium, with the dome of the auditorium suspended on steel cables from the Skinner Building's seventh floor. Joseph L. Skoog, who worked with Reamer on the Lake Quinault Lodge, also assisted Reamer with the theater design. Reamer chose a Spanish/Moorish theme for the Mount Baker Theater. The building is executed in reinforced concrete with a stucco-clad 110-foot tall octagonal tower crowned with a tiled dome dominating the interior. Although not rising to the ebullience of the Fifth Avenue, the interior is highly decorated with Spanish Baroque ornamentation, and featured an eighty-foot wide thin shell concrete auditorium dome suspended from the roof of the building. While Reamer drew from eclectic historical styles for his previous theaters, both Spokane's Majestic Fox Theater and the Billings Fox Theater were designed in the Art Deco style. The Majestic Fox Theater was executed in slip-form reinforced concrete featuring cast-in-place large butterfly panels, and the interior featured a grand lobby staircase with alternating panels of etched aluminum and glass. The more modest Billings Fox's

auditorium featured fanciful murals of Native Americans pursuing silver and gold gazelles across the walls, and was technologically state-of-the-art, with air conditioning, a specialized sound system, and auditorium-quality special effects and variable lighting.

Besides the Skinner Building and other minor projects designed for the M.B.C., Reamer completed three major projects in Seattle's Central Business District prior to the near-cessation of construction resulting from the Great Depression: the 1411 Fourth Avenue Building (1928, Nation Historic Register, City of Seattle Landmark), the Great Northern Building (1928-1929, City of Seattle Landmark), and the Seattle Times Building (1931-32, Administrative Building City of Seattle Landmark). In 1928 major M.B.C. stockholder C. D. Stimson commissioned Reamer to design the steel-framed fifteen-story 1411 Fourth Avenue Building. It was designed in the Modern style and clad with stone, with decorative spandrels carved in Celtic and Art Deco motifs. The Great Northern Building is comparatively small, being only four stories. It was completed in 1929 as the headquarters of the Great Northern Railway. Its form is a simple rectangle with slightly inset windows, but also is clad with Indiana Limestone featuring horizontal banding of foliated friezes on the first floor spandrel and upper parapet. The Seattle Times Building was designed as the new home of the *Seattle Times*, an independently owned local newspaper. As originally developed it comprised three interconnected Art Deco style buildings, the finely detailed administration building, the stripped-down printing plant, and a nondescript garage. The two-story administrative building is a reinforced concrete structure faced with Indiana limestone with cast aluminum spandrels. The deeply recessed entry doorway also has cast aluminum screens as sidelights and the entry returns have incised foliate panels.

Reamer also designed a handful of residential projects in Seattle, including an apartment for Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Blethen on the top floor of the Olympic Hotel in 1930, a six thousand square foot French Normandy style house in Broadmoor for Donald Graham in 1931, a Modern style experimental house prototype for Weyerhaeuser in 1934, and a Swedish style house on Queen Anne Hill for Paul Carlson, contractor of many of his projects, in 1936.

Despite having an established base in Seattle, Reamer often returned to Yellowstone, usually making one or two trips every summer. He designed major additions and alterations to each of the four large hotels within the parks, as well as designing relatively minor buildings for Child's Y.P.A., the federal government, and one building for the Park Boat Company.

Reamer's wife Louise passed away in 1933, and his health began to fail in 1935. Reamer passed away on January 7, 1938.

Addition Architect: William H. Fey (1886-1977)

Seattle architect David H. Fey designed the 1950 addition to the Seattle Times Printing Plant. William Henry Fey was born on July 14, 1886, in Butler Valley, Pennsylvania. He arrived in Seattle in 1906. He was employed by Howe & Stokes, a New York architectural firm that was hired by Metropolitan Building Company to design the White Henry Stuart Building (1907-15, demolished), the Cobb Building (1909-1910), the Metropolitan Theater (1910-1911, demolished), and the Henry Building in 1910. Fey was working as a draftsman for the Seattle School District under architect Edgar Blair in 1918. He served briefly in the United States Army during World War I, and was thought to have been employed by John Graham by 1919. He received his architectural license from Washington State in 1927.

By 1927, Fey was working for Robert C. Reamer and the Metropolitan Building Company. They worked together on a wooden inlay map of the United States measuring 210 feet by 17 feet for the "map Room" at Yellowstone National Park's Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel. After Reamer's death in 1938, Fey became lead architect at the Metropolitan Building Company. He and Paul Thiry

collaborated on projects between 1941 and 1948. As architect for the Metropolitan Building Company, Fey designed an addition to the office building of the *Seattle Times* in 1947, a garage for the *Seattle Times* in 1947, and an addition to the company's printing plant in 1948. He also designed a 100,000 square foot addition to Seattle's Medical Dental building in 1949.

Fey later worked for the Richardson Associates, retiring in 1972 at age 86. He became a member emeritus of the American Institute of Architects after his retirement. Fey died at age 91, on December 17, 1977.

Original Building Contractor: Teufel & Carlson

The Seattle-based construction company Teufel & Carlson built the original Seattle Times Building complex at Fairview Avenue North and John Street.

George Teufel (1884-1961) and Paul N. Carlson (1885-1969) formed the general construction firm of Teufel & Carlson in 1925. Both had previously worked on the construction of the original Olympic Hotel (1924, George P. Post & Sons), under the direction of Robert C. Reamer acting as the on-site architect. Teufel and Carlson would complete many projects designed by Reamer, including the Skinner Building and Fifth Avenue Theater (1925-26), the Lake Quinault Lodge (1926), the Gallatin Gateway Railroad Station in Yellowstone (1927), 1411 4th Avenue (1928), The Great Northern Railway Building (1929), the Olympic Hotel east wing addition (1929), The Seattle Time Building (1931-32), and the Edmond Meany Hotel (1931-32). Other projects include the Rhodes Building (1926-27, Harlan Thomas, demolished), the Bon Marché Department Store (John Graham, Sr., 1928-29), The Umpqua River Bridge (1934, Conde McCullough, National Historic Register), and the Gorge Powerhouse for Seattle City Light (1937, National Register District). The firm also completed buildings for the United States Army during World War II, after which the two partners went separate ways, both continuing to complete local building projects.

George Teufel was born in Muscatine, Iowa in 1884. He claimed to be self-educated, and obtained a civil engineering license. He came to Seattle in 1906, and first worked for the Seattle Electric Company and later for Gran, Smith & Company, builders of the original Olympic Hotel. After his partnership with Paul N. Carlson, Teufel completed school and church projects.

Paul N. Carlson was born in Kansas in 1885. He graduated from Bethany College, coming to Seattle in 1906. He then worked for the Great Northern Railway as a surveyor, before attending the University of Illinois. During World War I he supervised a shipyard in Portland, Oregon. Prior to his partnership with George Teufel, Carlson was superintendent of construction for the original Olympic Hotel, the White-Henry Stuart Building, and the Cobb Building. Carlson later served as chairman of the board of Swedish Hospital and of the Riverton General Hospital. He was a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albert Kelly & Associates. "New Pressroom Addition, The Seattle Times." August 1963, shts. 1-4.

Architect and Engineer. "The 'Seattle Times' Building." June 1931, Vol. 105, No. 3.

Associated Press. "Circulation numbers for the 25 largest newspapers." *Seattle Times*, May 1, 2012.

http://seattletimes.com/html/business/technology/2018114207_apusnewspapercirculationglance.html, accessed September 23, 2014.

- Bhatt, Sanjay. "Seattle Times Co. reaches \$62.5M deal for SLU parcels." *Seattle Times*, July 31, 2013. http://seattletimes.com/html/businesstechnology/2021509200_dennysalexml.html, accessed September 23, 2014.
- Blanchard, Leslie. *The Street Railway Era in Seattle: A Chronicle of Six Decades*. Forty Fort, PA: Harold E. Cox, 1968.
- Bogue, Virgil G. "Plan of Seattle," *Report of the Municipal Plans Commission*, pp. 78-83, 128-129. Seattle, WA: Lowman & Hanford Co, 1911.
- Booth, T. William and William H. Wilson. "Bebb & Gould," in *Shaping Seattle Architecture: A Historical Guide to the Architects*, edited by Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, p. 176. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1994.
- Boswell, Sharon and Lorraine McConaghy. *Raise Hell and Sell Newspapers: Alden Blethen & The Seattle Times*. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 1996.
- Cesar, Maria Louisa. "Cityscape: San Antonio Express-News Building." My San Antonio.com, September 15, 2012. http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Cityscape-San-Antonio-Express-News-building-3868924.php, accessed November 26, 2014.
- ChicagoArchitecture.info. "Tribune Tower." <http://www.chicagoarchitecture.info/Building/376/Tribune-Tower.php>, accessed November 26, 2014.
- Crowley, Walt. "South Lake Union: The Evolution of a Dream." HistoryLink.org, posted June 8, 2003. http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=4250.
- Fey, W. William. "Addition to Office Building for the Seattle Times, Metropolitan Building Company." sht. 1-5.
- Fey, W. William, "Addition to Plant Building for the Seattle Times, Metropolitan Building Company." sht. 4-9.
- Fey, W. William, "Garage Building for the Seattle Times, Metropolitan Building Company." November 1948, sht. 1-3.
- Fiset, Louis. "Seattle Neighborhoods: Cascade and South Lake Union—Thumbnail History." HistoryLink.org, posted April 9, 2003. http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=3178.
- Funding Universe. "Seattle Times Company History." <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/seattle-times-company-history>.
- Kjelland, John R. "Adhesive Transfer of 24,520 Square Inches of Marquetry." 1997. <http://woodenobject.tripod.com/AICMap.pdf>.
- Krafft, Kathryn H. Krafft & Krafft Architecture & CRM, letter to Mr. Steven Wood. December 29, 1994.
- Kreisman, Lawrence. "Landmark Nomination Form, Seattle Times Building." July 14, 1978.
- Link, Karin. "2003 Cascade Historic Survey: Buildings, Objects & Artifacts, Context Statement." pp. 13-14. <http://www.cityofseattle.net/neighborhoods/preservation/ContextCascade04.pdf>.
- Naramore Bain Brady & Johanson, "Seattle Times –SW Addition." January 1979, shts. A-1–A-18.
- NYC Architecture.com. "Daily News Building." <http://www.nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID014.htm>, accessed November 25, 2014.

- Phelps, Myra L. *Public Works in Seattle, A Narrative History The Engineering Department 1875-1975*, edited by Leslie Blanchard. Seattle WA: Kingsport Press, 1978.
- Poppeliers, John C. and Allen S. Chambers Jr. *What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.
- Quinn, Ruth. *Weaver of Dreams: The Life and Architecture of Robert C. Reamer*. Gardiner, MT: Leslie & Ruth Quinn, 2004.
- Reamer, R.C. "Office Building for the Seattle Times." July 1930, shts. 1-3.
- Reamer, R.C. "Plant Building for the Seattle Times." September 1930, shts. 5-9.
- Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Map of Seattle, Washington*. New York: Sanborn Perris /Map Co. Limited, 1893. Volume 2, pp. 68 and 75.
- Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Map of Seattle, Washington*. New York: Sanborn Perris /Map Co. Limited, 1904-05. Volume 3, pp. 259, 260, 282, 283.
- Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Map of Seattle, Washington*, 1917-1950, Volume 4, pp. 469, 470, 484, 485.
- Seattle Architectural Club Year Book 1910*. "Members of Seattle Architectural Club." n.p.
- Seattle Sunday Times*. "Moving of Times to New Home Gigantic Task." March 1, 1931, p. 16.
- Seattle Times*. "Splendid New Home Of The Times To Be Erected In Times Square." August 18, 1912, p. 5.
- Seattle Times*. "Seven Architects Are Granted Licenses." January 2, 1927, p.15.
- Seattle Times*. "Times Plans New Home On Fairview." August 29, 1929. pp. 1-2.
- Seattle Times*. "Work Begins On Times' New Home." September 26, 1929. pp. 1-2.
- Seattle Times*. "Junior Partners Join Col. Blethen in Times." January 5, 1930, p. 1 and 5.
- Seattle Sunday Times*, "Moving of Times to New Home Gigantic Task." March 1, 1931, p. 16.
- Seattle Times*. "Times Publishes In New Home With Moving Nearly Over." March 2, 1931. pp. 1, 3.
- Seattle Times*. "Crary Building To Be Replaced." March 2, 1941, p. 18.
- Seattle Times*. "Times Matches City's Progress." March 4, 1947, p. 3.
- Seattle Times*. "The Perfect Answer To Your Dream of a Waterfront Home of Your Own." August 1, 1948, p. 14.
- Seattle Times*. "\$1,750 Addition To Double Space." June 24 1949, p. 1.
- Seattle Times*. "Memorial For George Teufel Set." February 19, 1961, p. 34.
- Seattle Times*. "Seattle Times Expansion To Cost \$6 Million." March 26, 1967, pp. 1, 39.
- Seattle Times*. "Rites Set For Paul N. Carlson Seattle Builder." April 29, 1969, p. 29.
- Seattle Times*. "William Fey dies; retired architect." December 19, 1977, p. 49.
- SOM. "The Republic-Newspaper Plant & Offices."
http://www.som.com/projects/the_republic__newspaper_plant__offices, accessed November 25, 2014.
- United States Draft Registration Card. June 5, 1917.

Wikipedia. "The Seattle Times." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Seattle_Times, accessed September 23, 2014.

Williamson, Hill. "\$2 Million Expansion Program For Times." *Seattle Times*, April 7, 1963, p. 1.

Wilma, David. "St. Spiridon Orthodox Church in Seattle holds first service on September 18, 1895," p. 1. HistoryLink.org, posted October 12, 2001.
http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3608, accessed September 30, 2010.

Young, Michelle. "The History of New Yorks Newspaper Row." 6sqft.com, October 10, 2014
<http://www.6sqft.com/the-history-of-newspaper-row-on-downtowns-park-row/>, accessed November 25, 2014.

The features of the Landmark to be preserved include: The exterior of the building.

Issued: April 28, 2015

Karen Gordon
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Larry Johnson, The Johnson Partnership
Evan Lewis, Onni
Rich Hill, McCullough Hill Leary PS
Alison Walker Brems, Chair, LPB
Diane Sugimura, DPD
Alan Oiye, DPD
Ken Mar, DPD