



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue • 4th floor • Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 684-0228

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 308/02

Name and Address of Property: **Henry Owen Shuey House**  
**5218 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE**

#### Legal Description:

At the public meeting held on October 2, 2002, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Henry Owen Shuey House at 5218 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25. 12.350:

- (D) *It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*
- (F) *Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.*

### DESCRIPTION

Built in 1908, the Henry Owen Shuey house is located on 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue between NE 52<sup>nd</sup> and NE 53<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The house is located in a residential district, developed in a grid pattern at the crest of a gently rising hilltop in the heart of the University District, just north of the University of Washington campus. The neighborhood is comprised of early twentieth century homes, built closely together with an eclectic range of Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman style, and Neo-Classical styles. The neighborhood's streetscape is richly landscaped with manicured lawns and mature plantings, including large mature trees.

The large, imposing and formal house is the only one in the immediate area that sits on more than one building lot. Built on southernmost portion of a three-lot plot, the house sits up from the street level following the gently upward grade to the east, which is divided by a low, scored concrete retaining wall and metal fence. At the street level is a sidewalk with a grassy planting strip containing three small, evenly spaced, Queen Anne Cherry trees. Concrete steps and a walkway lead to a large concrete staircase at the base of the porch. The northern half of the site contains a lawn area with a garage stylistically

similar to the house and a small storage shed. A poured concrete driveway divides the site from the street to the service alley at the east end of the site. Tall wooden fencing in a variety of styles runs the perimeter of the north, east and southern boundaries of the property, with the exception of the southeast corner which contains an indentation with a concrete slab parking area and access to the basement stairs. The east end of the property contains an area with raised decking and a ground level paved brick patio. A classically inspired pergola sits atop the fencing in this area.

## **Architectural Description**

### **Exterior**

Designed by architect E.S. Bell for banker H. O. Shuey, the 1908 house is a large, two-story, wood-frame, Neo-classical style single-family residence with a three-bay rectangular plan, hipped roof and a large projecting, classically inspired front porch. The house is sited in a north-south orientation with the west, or primary, elevation facing the street. The poured concrete foundation, punctuated by window wells, is parge-coated with a cement veneer, scored to mimic rectangular, coursed ashlar stone blocks. A water table runs the perimeter of the house. The exterior walls are clapboard sided in cedar with engaged red-brick chimney stacks that terminate above the roof line. All the siding and trim are painted white. The windows are mostly one-over-one, wood-frame double hung sash. Decorative windows include stained-glass panels in the dining room and stair hall, and stylistically similar beveled-glass leaded windows in the front parlor (living room), dining room (dining/family area), and entrance hall. Large overhanging eaves at the roofline, dining room bay window, and northeastern porch area all feature beveled board soffits with elongated modillions. The roof, with large hipped dormers, is covered in composition shingles.

An offset, full-height projecting porch flanked by fluted columns and capitals, crowned by a classical pediment, dominates the asymmetrical west elevation. At the northern half of the first floor porch is a single-panel front door, with an egg and dart trim molding. Flanking the door are decorative beveled-glass

leaded sidelights that sit on paneled, pedestal-type moldings. The southern portion of the porch consists of a one-over-one wood-frame double hung sash; the top sash made up of a beveled-glass leaded window. The hollow, two-story, old-growth fir columns are comprised of three pieced sections. An entasis, or slight bulging in the lower middle section, was incorporated into the columns to minimize the optical illusion that occurs with tall columns, creating a “thinning” effect in the middle section. A hollow, cylindrical load-bearing member is contained within the interior space of the column. The Greek Ionic capitals atop the columns are cast plaster, the design modeled on the capitals from the Erechtheion temple in Athens, considered the most important monument of the Greek Ionic style. The raised porch has a painted wood floor and a beaded board ceiling with two brass “lantern” style light fixtures. Italian Renaissance style balustrades run between the columns and the house on either end of the porch, capped by oversized handrails. The second floor of the porch is enclosed by clapboard siding and has a double, one-over-one wood-frame double hung sash. The pediment has a deeply recessed tympanum with a bulls-eye window and a pitched course of composition shingles along the roofline. The southern portion of the remainder of the west elevation consists of a single one-over-one wood-frame double hung sash at each floor level. The first floor window has a beveled-glass leaded window in the upper sash. At the first floor level of the northern portion of the west elevation is a large bay window with a picture window topped by a decorative leaded-glass fixed transom in the central portion. It is flanked by double-hung sash with similarly decorative upper sash. The entire bay is covered by an overhanging eave, the underside of the bay finished in beveled boards. Above the bay window on the second floor level is a paired double-hung sash.

Various-sized windows punctuate the asymmetrical north elevation, all simple double-hung sash. The western section contains a large sash at the first floor and a slightly smaller one offset to the west at the second floor. At the east-central section of the first floor is a triple set of small sash. Above these windows, offset to the east, is a bay window with paired sash flanked by single sash. The underside of the bay contains decorative modillions similar to the eaves. Directly to the west of the bay is a very small sash. The easternmost portion of the elevation contains an integrated porch defined by individual overhanging eaves at both floor levels, distinct from the primary roofline eaves. The first floor level contains a single, double-hung sash, the second level, paired sash. At the roof is a centrally placed hipped dormer with paired sash.

A symmetrical, two-story projecting porch described in the north elevation dominates the northern portion of east. A door-frame, centrally placed at the first floor level, contains two single-light store doors flanked by sidelights. The southern portion of the façade has a triple, double-hung sash, while the northern part has a paired sash with a single store door at the southern end. The second level contains three sets of triple-sash interspersed with and terminated by classically-inspired, recessed panel pilaster moldings. The return section contains paired sash on both levels. Centered with the porch on the roof is a centrally placed hipped dormer with paired sash. The remainder of the southern portion of the east elevation is dominated by an engaged red brick chimney stack, stepped in on the southern side at both the first and second levels, punched through the eave and roof, and terminated by three symmetrical, square, decorative molded concrete chimney caps. To the south of the chimney stack at the first floor level is a fixed, single light, horizontally oriented window protecting stained-glass windows behind. Adjacent to the porch return section and directly north of the chimney stack at the second level is a small double-hung sash.

The south elevation contains elements all stylistically identical to the north and east elevations. The chimney stack on the west end is stepped at the second level and is flanked by sash windows at both levels, except the first floor easternmost, which is a fixed, decorative beveled leaded-glass pane. A bay window at the easternmost end sits atop a paired double-hung sash.

### Interior

The single panel front door with decorative sidelights opens to an entrance hall that has a simple paneled dado capped with a bolection mold chair rail, cavetto cornice molding and a large open passage leading to the front parlor (living room) on the south elevation. To the east is the focal point of the entrance hall, a passageway to the stairhall that features carved wooden Ionic columns on pedestals, topped by a broken entablature that is bridged by a flattened elliptical arch. The centerpiece of the arch is a simple keystone with a raised, carved letter "S". The arch spandrels are made up of recessed panels. The north elevation consists of a small doorway, offset to the east, leading to the dining room (family room).

The front parlor (living room) is a large rectangular room with a nine-section coffered, or boxed beam ceiling with a centrally mounted decorative stained glass hanging light fixture surrounded by four identical smaller fixtures mounted to the beams. The symmetrically placed windows on the south and west elevations all have decorative leaded beveled glass top sash. Centered on the south elevation is a fireplace made up of ashlar cut, rectangular cut stone blocks with rusticated block quoining and mantel course, crowned by a simple dark-stained, classical molding. The east elevation has a large opening with two double-panel pocket doors.

The back parlor (dining room) is stylistically similar to the front parlor. Four identical small, glass shade fixtures mounted to the beams surround a centrally placed hanging chandelier. The south elevation consists of a centrally placed, paired double hung sash. The east elevation has a passage door on the north end, a decorative three-section stained-glass window on the south end, and at the center a white-painted, stylistically similar fireplace to the front parlor. The north elevation contains a passage on the west end leading to the stairhall.

The northern portion of the first floor consists of a large open area, which contains the dining room (family room), and a contemporary kitchen. The dining room (family room) is stylistically identical to the front hall with the exception of a two-thirds height dado paneling. The west elevation reflects the bay window projection described in the west elevation exterior description above. The walls are covered in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century wallpaper. The rectangular kitchen area to the east consists of a long service island and bank of pantry space on the south elevation. A passage on the eastern portion of the south elevation leads to the basement stairs and an 'L' shaped powder room that runs behind the main staircase.

Running the length of the eastern portion of the first floor from the kitchen to the back parlor (dining room) is a sun room with dark-stained china cabinetry and bar sink on the west elevation, a bank of windows and doors on the east. The northernmost area contains a mud room.

The stairhall is a continuation of the entrance hall with dado paneling running the length of the walls up to the landing and continuing up through to the upstairs passage hall. At the base of the staircase are two passage doors opposite each other to the north and south, leading to the kitchen and back parlor (dining room). The doorway to the south of the staircase leads to the powder room described above. The staircase consists of a wide flight leading to a wide landing and a smaller reverse flight continuing to the second floor. At the landing is a small fixed door on the north elevation. The stair ends of the return flight are finished in with a simplified, applied scroll pattern, typical of the Georgian and Colonial Revival style. The newel posts are square with recessed panels trimmed with an egg and dart molding and wrapping the post towards the top is a small Greek key molding. The balusters are simple, with Colonial Revival type turnings. The east elevation of the stair hall is dominated by a concave set of five rectangular, identical stained-glass windows set atop a curved, bull-nosed window seat. The majority of the panels consist of Kokomo glass from the famed specialty glass company in Kokomo, Indiana. The window seat has a large radiator grill comprised of wide, interwoven metal strips. The decorative pattern of the polychrome windows consists of a flame atop an elongated pole surrounded by a laurel wreath.

The upstairs hall is 'L' shaped by virtue of the staircase and is oriented to serve the bedrooms to the north and south through the use of Craftsman inspired passageways. The framed passageways feature tapered, square columns on pedestals. Above the dado on the west elevation is a small, paneled access door. On the south end of this elevation is a doorway with a single light transom window. The doorway leads to a bedroom that features a door on the west end leading to the front porch. The south passageway leads to a set of unfinished doors that lead to a small anteroom off which sits a large bedroom to the west and a large bathroom to the east. The bedroom has a single window on the south elevation and a door on the west elevation leading to the porch. A small passage with a closet on the east elevation leads to the large bathroom whose floor is entirely covered in tile. In the projecting bay window area at the south end of the room is a large free-standing contemporary bathtub and on the northern end of the east elevation is a fireplace with a French Rococo style surround. At the north elevation is a separate water closet on the west end and a glass-enclosed shower stall to the east.

The northern passageway in the second floor hallway leads to bedrooms on the northwest and to the northeast, with a bathroom between. A door on the east elevation in the northeast bedroom leads to the porch extension on the east end of the house, connects to a larger room of the porch in which the back portion of the stairhall stained glass windows are placed. A door at the southwest end of the room leads back to the large bathroom described above.

The attic area is accessed through a door adjacent to the north passageway in the upstairs hall. The full staircase opens to a central space that reflects the roof structure above. To the north and south are two bedrooms with headroom provided by the large dormers. On the east end is a small, full bathroom with bathtub. A large storage area in the porch gable is accessed through a small door on the west elevation.

The majority of the basement consists of a series of finished living space, rental rooms with a common kitchen and living area. The service portion of the basement has mechanical equipment room, and a separate storage room.

### Evolution

The majority of the exterior of the house remains intact, with some exceptions. On the interior, the majority of the formal rooms remain intact, the most notable changes occurring in the kitchen and back porch areas. The remainder of interior changes have been made to the southern end of the second floor.

The first and most dramatic change to the exterior occurred in 1954-55, when the second floor of the front porch was enclosed. Originally an open-air porch, the area was enclosed by Italian Renaissance balustrades matching those remaining on the first floor. At some point a stylistically similar roofline balustrade was removed from the bay window on the west elevation.

Minor changes over time include the removal and replacement of a “wheel” window in the pediment bulls-eye opening, replacement of numerous interior and exterior light fixtures, removal of bull-nose edges on the concrete front porch steps, and changes to finishes. At some point the north elevation of the entrance hall was altered, a small door put in place of pocket doors, similar to the doors separating the front and back parlors (living/dining room). Over the course of the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, walls dividing portions of the interior have been added and removed, serving to divide the large spaces into individual dwelling units.

In 1991 a major attempt to rehabilitate the house was undertaken. From 1991 to 1999, deteriorated areas of the exterior were repaired, especially the eaves on the southeast corner of the house, where extensive water damage from the roof had occurred. Soffit boards and modillions were fabricated to match the originals. The house was completely stripped and repainted. The owner removed and replaced the handrails on the front porch balustrades.

The current owners have undertaken significant structural and mechanical upgrades since they purchased the house in 2000. In addition, numerous deteriorated windows were replaced, using care in retaining the original architectural character. Repairs to the inlaid floor perimeter detailing were undertaken as well as the replacement of damaged planks. In the kitchen area an interior chimney was removed, and a new contemporary kitchen was built with new cabinetry, doors and windows

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Henry Owen Shuey played a significant role in the growth of Seattle in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a very successful banker and developer of residential properties. Philanthropic by nature, his success came largely through the trust he engendered with a reputation for integrity. During his career in Seattle, Shuey assisted more than a thousand families in securing reasonable loans with which to purchase or build homes. He built a home for his family in the University District, utilizing two and a half building lots. Unique to the neighborhood, the large, formal Neo-Classical house stands as an excellent example of the period, utilizing elements of the Craftsman style on the interior.

### University District

The house sits in the most upscale residential neighborhood in the University District. Home to the University of Washington since 1895, it is located in the northeast section of the city, north of the Portage Bay part of Lake Union. Its major developments were spurred on by developer James Moore (1861-1929), the 1895 move of the Territorial University from downtown to what was then called Brooklyn, and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition on the University of Washington campus in 1909. In recent years, the downtown area has been threatened by the development of nearby malls. It is a neighborhood of restaurants, cafes, a renowned street fair, and a farmer's market. Significant landmarks include the University Book Store, University Inn, and the Meany Hotel.

In 1890, Harry Cowan, a specialist in clearing townsites, cleared 100 acres of what would become the University district for developer James Moore. The district streets were graded and lots sold quickly. In the spring of 1891, the state legislature's campus committee had recommended section 16 as the new home for the University, which at the time was located in downtown Seattle. Not originally incorporated within the city of Seattle, the inhabitants of the new development voted to join the city on May 4, 1891. While the expansion did not include Ballard, Laurelhurst, and part of Ravenna, it more than doubled the territory of Seattle.

By 1906, it was clear that the University of Washington campus would be the chosen location for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, This provided a tremendous impetus

for development of the district and the city as a whole. Seattle had grown more than five-fold by 1910, mostly to the north in the direction of the University District. The University Park Addition was platted by Charles Moore in 1906. A scheme to boost to the development of the University District was the brainchild of English-born capitalist Charles Cowen. Cowen spurred on efforts at cleaning up the appearance of the district, in anticipation of the expected millions of visitors to the Exhibition.

### Henry Owen Shuey (1861-1932)

Born in Bainbridge, Indiana on April 29, 1861, Henry Owen Shuey was one of three boys born to Daniel and Nancy Own Shuey. The Shuey family is of French Huguenot descent, some of whom relocated to Germany and emigrated to America in 1734. Henry was raised on a farmstead where his father raised stock and crops. His father died when he was only seven years old, but he remained on the farm with his mother, attending country schools and working on the farmstead. He worked his way through school, attending both Valparaiso University (then the Northern Indiana Normal School) and the Central Indiana Normal College. In 1884 he married Lucina Hestletine (Hessie) Sherrill, a local woman, and soon moved

to Kansas where he established a town. The name of town is not known but he is known to have erected a livery stable, hotel, and other first buildings.

In 1888 Shuey relocated to Seattle, working as an insurance salesman for forty dollars a month. He then began selling fire insurance and expanded into loans, building a thriving business. He also became secretary and manager of the Equitable Building, Loan, and Investment Association in 1894. Eventually he worked his way into banking circles establishing himself as a receiver for the Seattle Savings Bank in 1897 and was president of the Home Builders Finance Company. In addition to establishing the H.O. Shuey & Company banking firm and the Bank of Ballard, he was one of the principal organizers of the Citizens National Bank of Seattle, which later obtained a national charter.

Clarence B. Bagley's *History of Seattle* describes the basis for Shuey's success as one man's commitment to the welfare of the community as a whole by encouraging saving practices for wage earners, providing easy terms for payment and, as a developer, providing options for home buyers. As a man of considerable means, H.O. Shuey owned a substantial amount of land both in Seattle and within the state. He was in a position to loan money to have a house built by a private contractor on one of his properties, or have it built for the buyer. His business interests included mortgage loans, real estate sales, insurance, rents, collections, and investments, and helped people start businesses of their own.

Details of Shuey's successes are lauded in numerous write-ups of the period. Early in his career he was asked to straighten out a situation in which the secretary of the Home Builders Finance Company had embezzled a large sum of the shareholder's money. He ultimately became president of the firm. In 1903 he was earning over twenty-five thousand dollars per year, and in 1907 it was reported that he had never had a loss or any claim against him. By 1916, after 22 years as president, the Equitable Building, Loan, and Investment Association had never paid investors less than 6% return per year.

H.O. Shuey's philanthropic tendencies were also greatly lauded. His association with numerous charities and organizations shows that his professed commitment to the well-being of the community was not in vain. He was a director of the Young Man's Christian Association (YMCA), and served as a trustee for of the Washington Children's Homefinding Society. A member of the Christian church, he was known to have been instrumental in the building of several mission churches in the city and helped to build numerous churches in the state. He also served as a church elder and held numerous posts in his church. He appears to have had no political ambitions and never held any office.

In 1922, thinking he was retiring to Southern California, Shuey quickly became active in Los Angeles, once again developing homes for people with moderate incomes. He was instrumental in forming the Home Builders Finance Company of Los Angeles and served as president for several years. He died on December 16, 1932 from injuries caused by being struck by an automobile while crossing the street in front of his house in Los Angeles.

Shuey's family life is not well-documented. His first wife, Lucina Hesteline Sherrill, was actually a cousin of A.A. and D.T. Denny, the founders of Seattle. Together they had two boys, Charles E. who died at six years old, and Clyde Sherrill, who survived him. He married a second time, in 1925. His wife, Olga Odessa (Williams) Miller had also graduated from Valparaiso University in Indiana. Shuey's brother, Thomas J., came to Seattle in 1906 from Abingdon, Illinois and served as the first full-time minister of the University Christian church in Seattle. His son, R.F. Shuey is listed as cashier for the H.O. Shuey Company in a 1907 biography.

Quoted in a 1916 *Collier's* article, Shuey sums up his life philosophy... “my one ambition has been to help people to build homes and pay for them...It’s sort of a religion with me to help a man get a home.” Noted Seattle historian Clarence Bagley, in a literary flourish, describes H.O. Shuey’s contribution: “He possesses in large measure that enterprising spirit that recognizes no obstacles, which has dominated the west and which has made possible the marvelous development of Seattle.”

### House and Property

Two permits were issued to H.O. Shuey on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 1908 to build a two-story frame dwelling, and 18’ x 20’ garage. Shuey had the house built and lived there with his wife and son until 1917, when he sold the University Park house and moved to the Queen Ann neighborhood. In 1918, he sold the house to S.A. Cardz for \$17,000 in cash, one of the largest real estate transactions in the University District that year.

The house was sold again in 1924 to Robert & Ola D. McClelland. In 1928, after Robert’s death, his widow converted the house to a rooming house. While no records of change of use from a single-family residence to a duplex are recorded until 1967, tax records from the 1930s identify the house as a two-story rooming house. In

1952, the house was sold to Flora C. Brown, who continued to use it as a rooming house. In 1971, the house was purchased by Ralph Patrick, who was issued a permit to alter the basement unit that same year. From 1973 to 1980 the house was owned by Russell Bucklin, and from 1981 to 1991, owned by Eileen Shaw. In 1991, Dave and Sheri Berglund purchased the house, utilizing the space as a Christian boarding house and undertaking the first serious rehabilitation. The house was sold to the current owners, Steve Schellings and Rebecca Geisler, who live there with their two sons. The house remains a boarding house, but is limited to the basement and the attic, which is utilized as a bed and breakfast.

The fact that the house sits on more than two building lots, only one of a few to do so in the University Park neighborhood, is indicative of the resources of H.O. Shuey. The large, imposing house is by far the most formal and grandiose amidst its more restrained architectural neighbors. The stylistically similar garage, and driveway cutting through the wide property to the back alley speaks to the importance of the owner as someone special, someone of means. Interestingly, however, it is known that Shuey could have afforded a far more expensive and elaborate home by 1908. Despite its stance, the house is restrained and not overly showy. It reflects the values of a self-made man who was grounded in moral values and yet well-educated enough to want to express himself through a tasteful, traditional design. It can be argued that it is the perfect bankers home – tasteful and well-appointed, but not garish or wasteful. The house was featured in Frank Calvert’s 1913 publication, “Homes of the Pacific Coast.”

The most typical aspect of the Neo-Classical style in the design of the exterior of the house is the full-height central entry porch that does not encompass the entire façade. Other common elements of the style found on the house are bay windows, bay window roof balustrade (removed), and an oculus window. Classical decorative elements include a pediment supported by classical columns, Italian Renaissance balustrades, dentil moldings, modillion brackets, paneled pilasters, a perimeter frieze above the first floor and a full entablature at the roof line.

The architectural expression of the interior is primarily a hybrid mix of Neo-Classicism and Craftsman styles. In plan, the first floor reflects more of a 19<sup>th</sup> century pattern with the placement of the more



traditional front and back parlors (living and dining rooms), divided by a large opening with doors. Elements of Neo-

Classicism in the design are include the carved classical columns on pedestals in the entrance hall, egg and dart moldings, and decorative stained glass and beveled-glass window panels. The Craftsman style is evident in the plain, dark-stained dado paneling, three-quarter height paneling in the dining room (dining/family room area), dark-stained coffered, or box beam ceilings in the front and back parlors (living and dining rooms), and tapered square-column passages on the second floor. Common to the formal living areas of the interior is fir flooring with repeating perimeter inlay in polychrome hardwoods, dark stained woodwork, egg & dart trim moldings, tall ceilings, and smooth textured, painted walls. The most important interior spaces retain an unusual amount of original fabric and have weathered numerous changes while retaining its most significant interpretive, historic qualities.

The 1908, No-Classical style Henry Owen Shuey house retains a high degree of historic as well as architectural integrity. The role it played was short-lived, but remains as a testament to the man who played such a significant role in providing affordable homes to so many people. The house retains the unique characteristics of the combination of prevailing period styles and reflects the nature of the man who built it. The house represents the involvement of a man who contributed significantly to the development of the City of Seattle.

***The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include:***

The exterior of the house and the garage, and the site, and the following features of the interior: the main entry hall, the stairwell to the second floor, the front and rear parlors, and the original dining room (family room)

Issued: October 16, 2002

Karen Gordon  
City Historic Preservation Officer

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