

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### SHOSHONE HISTORIC DISTRICT

By Arthur A. Hart

Number 976

March 1975

#### SIGNIFICANCE

Shoshone started in 1882 as a rail center, and is one of a dozen or so such communities in Idaho. More than almost all of the others, Shoshone preserves the atmosphere of an early rail, farm, and ranching community, with evidence of a frontier past still clearly visible in most of the buildings of a compact historic district. Population has been highly stable for decades--a condition conducive to historic preservation.

When the Oregon Short Line was constructed across southern Idaho, under an arrangement to connect with the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company just west of the Idaho line so that the Union Pacific could obtain an outlet to Portland, rapid expansion of the Wood River mines induced the company to build a branch line to serve that important new lead-silver region. Since the Portland connection could not be completed for another two years anyway, the Wood River branch was completed before the main line was continued west. Shoshone grew up at the junction, and served as a gateway to Sun Valley after that pioneer ski resort was developed in the Wood River mining country in 1936. Shoshone's depot--one of the more modern important structures in the district--symbolizes this later aspect of community development.

As a fine example of the use of local lava for building material in a group of related structures in southern Idaho, Shoshone historic district is outstanding. The mayor and community are interested in historic preservation, and they have excellent possibilities for retaining an attractive historic setting as a community center.

#### PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Shoshone Historic District embraces twelve blocks of the original town plat of the railroad and farm center of Lincoln County, Idaho.

- A. General Characteristics of the town's older buildings included in the district are:
  1. Commercial structures were of locally available basaltic lava-rock, usually faced with locally made

- brick on street facades.
2. Commercial structures sometimes employed stamped galvanized and cast iron fronts from Eastern companies like Mesker Brothers of St. Louis.
  3. Dwellings were of wooden balloon-frame construction, in styles characteristic of the turn of the century when most were built.
  4. Later intrusions are compatible in material and form with the above.
- B. Individual buildings worthy of note within the district (located on attached map and shown in photographs) include:
1. Lincoln County Courthouse, 1904  
This large cubical brick building with truncated hip roof has two stories, an attic and a raised basement. The projecting central bay dominates the front of the building, cutting the roof line as it rises to three stories in height, topped with a gable. The double main doors are flanked and topped by small windows. On the third floor above the door is a pair of round-arched windows with a round window above. Brick quoins decorate the bay, and brick arches with trusticated stone terminations top double-hung sash windows. Simple cornice has dentil design. Alterations include lowering of roof and removal of original dormers, removal of front porch.
  2. Methodist Church, 1905  
Built of native basalt, this small church is rectangular, with steeply-pitched gable roof covered with fish scale composition shingles. Double-hung sash windows are bordered with tiny panes of glass and accented with wide concrete sills and lintels. A small round window with petal design punctuates the shingled gable. The commanding attraction is the functional belfry with three open sides topped with gingerbread arches. Each opening is capped with a short gable roof running back into the tall, eight-sided steeple. Altered only by addition on west side.
  3. Masonic Hall, 1902  
This massive two-story native basalt structure is rectangular in plan. The gable roof is hipped just at gable peak, giving facade the appearance of a truncated gable. Red brick covers the facade and is stuccoed from the base of the first floor windows to the top. Because the facade has been bricked over, ten double-hung sash windows and door are deeply recessed. Masonic symbols hang above the arched central doorway. Several double-hung sash windows on both floors break the side walls, each window has a stone arch above it. Unaltered.

4. Episcopal Church, 1902  
The steeply-pitched roof and two narrow stained glass gothic windows set near the corners give this small rectangular church a much larger presence than it actually has. Accenting this white clapboard structure is a unique front entrance consisting of a short-pillared portico with a Roman arch supporting a steep gable roof. Alterations are in addition of aluminum siding.
5. Fred Gooding House, 1901, W. S. Campbell, architect.  
Called "Colonial" at the time, this large square two story frame house had a hip roof with hip-roofed dormers. There is a porch across the front, also hip-roofed, and a bay window on the south side. Detailing is "Colonial" only in Tuscan porch posts and an ox-eye window in the center of the second story facade. Fancy cut shingles add textural interest to the dormers and porch. The exterior is unaltered and in good condition.
6. Ed Gooding House, ca. 1912  
A handsome bungalow of a type common in Idaho, this house has a wide veranda across the front paralleling the gable roof which covers the full two stories and attic. A large gable dormer also faces the street and gives space to the second story bedroom it encloses. A similar dormer balances on the rear. Presence of a right-hand staircase and landing is revealed by the unusual fenestration on the east side of the house, with two double-hung sash windows placed midway between floors. The porch is screened, and the house appears to be in an excellent state of repair without major exterior modifications.
7. Sid Smith House, ca. 1915  
The Smith House, like its neighbor the Ed Gooding House, completes a row of three spacious dwellings which retain the flavor of Shoshone's second period of residential growth. A bungalow also, this one has a shed dormer rather than a gabled one, glassed-in front porch, and an open side porch on the east side with balcony above. The house appears to be little altered from its original appearance.
8. Frank R. Gooding House  
Most famous of three brothers who built houses in Shoshone, Frank R. Gooding served as Idaho Governor from 1905 until 1908, and United States Senator from 1921 until 1928. The city and county of Gooding are named for him. His house is typical of the big square box-like "Colonials" built in the early years of the century. It much resembles the one built by his brother Fred (see above) but has been altered by the

addition of asbestos shingles and the glassing in of the Tuscan porch. A feature of the second-story windows is the use of beveled leaded glass in the upper halves. The condition of the house is excellent, with the modifications noted.

9. St. Peter's Catholic Church  
A stuccoed Tudor-style church, this building has a small room projecting at right rear and a small covered and partially enclosed entry at left front. The gabled roof has a steep pitch, changing to a more gentle slope at the eaves. The wide flaring barge boards accentuate this curving effect of the roof. The main feature of the facade is the series of slender windows with a diamond pattern, trimmed with wooden tracings. Gables are half-timbered. The low belfry has two arched openings and is covered with a gabled roof topped with a cross. Unaltered.
10. Hotel Shoshone (former Columbia Hotel, 1901)  
Once apparently a two-story structure of native basalt, this building now has a third story of brick, with evenly-spaced double-hung sash windows on the sides. The shed roof is concealed by stepped side walls. The front of the building above the first floor store fronts is a facade of cast stone marked by unbroken terra cotta bands at window level of the second and third stories. A wide multi-lined terra cotta cornice with dentils accents the upper facade. At top center is an ornamental terra cotta gable with the date 1901. Basically unaltered.
11. McFall Hotel, ca. 1896-1912  
Although considerably added to through the years, this big shingled wooden hotel retains its "Colonial" character, primarily because of prominently placed details. In the gabled third story facades of two balancing wings are an ox-eye window and a palladian window. The interior is a labyrinth, expressive of the many additions and alterations made in the years when Shoshone was the principal railroad junction from the Oregon Short Line to the Wood River towns of Bellevue, Hailey, and Ketchum, and the stagecoach route to famed Shoshone Falls on Snake River to the south. Condition is fair, but the present owner hopes to do a careful restoration of the exterior to its 1912 state.
12. Union Pacific Depot, 1929  
A modest but pleasing example of Mission style, this depot probably reflects the great popularity of Union Pacific's Boise station of 1925. Replacement of the original tile roof somewhat detracts from the character of the building. The east half was the baggage and railway express wing, and is equipped with wide double

doors of rustic design. The agent's bay window is half-timbered and tiled, and the passenger wing on the west end has a baroque pedimented doorway with urn finials and the Union Pacific emblem in terra cotta. Engaged columns support the entablature above this doorway. Brick quoins and lower walls contrast with the rough white stucco of the upper portions. The roof change noted above is the only alteration.

13. Sugg House, 1886

One of Shoshone's earliest brick houses, this structure dates from the first years of the Oregon Short Line railroad in Idaho, and was built of materials brought in by rail. Essentially a one-and-one-half story house with hipped roof, it gains space by means of two recessed dormer windows on each of the four sides. Balancing square brick bay windows flank the porch, creating a recessed entryway. Detailing in the woodwork of these bays and the porch is Italianate. Local porous basalt is used for foundation, but since brick was not manufactured locally until 1902, we know that this was imported. Segment-arched windows have stone keystones. Since early photos of this building do not exist, one must speculate that the roof detailing is recent, even though there were probably eight dormer windows in the same location as the present ones.

(This information has not been edited.)