

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall  
Other names/site number: Gardner Hotel; Melba Valley Museum  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 310 Carrie Rex Avenue  
City or town: Melba State: Idaho County: Canyon  
Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

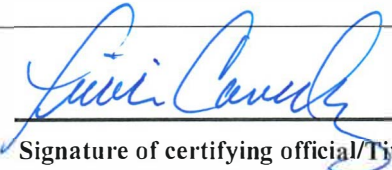
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  nomination  determination of eligibility meets the  
documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places  
and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I  
recommend that this property be considered significant at the following  
level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Tricia Canaday, Deputy SHPO Date 12-15-23  
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property  X  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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**Signature of commenting official:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District

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Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Hotel (1919-1926)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall (1927-1999)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION & CULTURE: Museum

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Wood

Roof: Composition

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall sits facing west on three slightly sloping lots near the intersection of Carrie Rex Avenue and Third Street in Melba, a community located in Canyon County in southwestern Idaho. The lot, which slopes down from the adjacent alley to the east, features a gravel parking area and driveway on the north side. The two-story, front-gabled wood building is rectangular-shaped with deep, overhanging eaves supported by triangular knee braces on the east and west. Originally constructed as a hotel in 1919, the building was significantly altered for the Odd Fellows beginning in 1927 and retains integrity across the seven aspects from that period. It retains good integrity of design, workmanship, and feeling, and excellent integrity of location, setting, materials, and association.

### Narrative Description

#### Location and Setting

Melba (2021 population 581) is situated in the Snake River Valley, a fertile agricultural area in southwest Idaho. Located in Canyon County, Idaho, the small farming community is nestled among fields of beans, corn, grain, onions, potatoes, and sugar beets. Increasingly, suburban developments outlying the fast-growing Treasure Valley to the north are encroaching on area farmland. Caldwell, the county seat, is located approximately 26 miles to the northwest, while the state capital, Boise, lies approximately 33 miles to the northeast.

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Located at 310 Carrie Rex Avenue, the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall sits on a 0.21-acre property in the commercial section of Melba. The community's small commercial district stretches along Carrie Rex Avenue and Broadway Avenue to the west and primarily consists of one-story vernacular buildings constructed between 1913 and 1969. The Lodge Hall, together with the nearby Melba Valley Tower Theater, built in 1946 at the southwest corner of Carrie Rex Avenue and Murphy Road, dominates its immediate surroundings as one of the largest buildings in the commercial district in terms of height, scale, and massing. The Melba Post Office, constructed in 1969, sits directly north of the Lodge Hall.

Bounded by the post office to the north, an unpaved alley to the east, a gravel parking lot to the south at the northeast corner of the intersection of Carrie Rex Avenue and Third Street, and Carrie Rex Avenue to the west, the property is roughly rectangular in shape. The Lodge Hall building occupies the southwest section of the property and is oriented towards Carrie Rex Avenue. An unpaved parking area and driveway occupies the northern half of the property while a larger dirt area with scattered shrubs and trees at the southeast corner of the lot abuts the rear of the building. The property features no formal landscaping. It borders a concrete sidewalk along Carrie Rex Avenue to the west. On the north side of the building, a concrete walk extends east from the sidewalk to a side entrance and intersects with a set of three concrete steps leading from the parking area and drive abutting the adjacent post office.

## **Building Description**

### Exterior

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall is a two-story, front-gabled wood frame building with a rectangular-shaped footprint. It features deep, overhanging eaves supported by triangular knee braces on the east and west and exposed rafter tails on the north and south. The building sits on a poured concrete foundation, with exterior walls finished in wood clapboard siding. The window and door frames are painted dark grey. The windows have an uneven fenestration pattern. The roof is clad in composition shingles.

The façade faces west, featuring six window openings on the first story. Four of the windows that were originally double-hung wood windows have been modified with the lower half boarded over. The other windows are covered with wood siding. The windows and the window openings are surrounded by trim. Two signs for the Melba Valley Museum are mounted on the first-floor level. One is mounted over the wood covering the lower half of the windows near the southwest corner of the building. The second sign is centered over the windows and features a gable pitch roof outline trimmed in green. A third sign, displaying information about the building's history and its use as the I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall, is located between the covered windows and the southwest corner of the building. On the second story, the outlines of a pair of windows that have been covered with wood siding remain discernable. These windows remain in place behind the wood siding. The deep eaves of the gable feature five knee brace brackets, and there is a horizontal wood gable vent centered below the roof peak.

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The north elevation faces a parking area and the Melba U.S. Post Office next door. This elevation has an irregular fenestration pattern. The first story features one fixed-wood window, and one paired double-hung window. Wood slats cover two tall rectangular windows and two square windows that flank either side of a metal entry door, which accesses the former kitchen. A metal light surmounts the door. A white-painted brick chimney is visible on this elevation. An entrance at the northwest corner has been filled in. The 1922 rear addition is identified by a change in the width of the wood siding. The roof rafter tips are visible under the deep eaves. A second entrance at the northeast corner has also been filled in. The second story originally had seven double-hung windows, today four windows are exposed and the remaining three have been covered.

The east (rear) elevation has no fenestration on the first story. A five-part wood door, painted grey, is centered on the wall, and formerly accessed the southeast exhibit room. If there were steps leading to the door, they have been removed and the door appears to “float” above the foundation. The second story features a second door, placed slightly off-center, leading from the second-floor interior stair landing. This door is also not accessible as there is no exterior stairway. There are windows on either side of the door. The window to the south of the door is an original double-hung wood window. The window on the north side is boarded over. Above the second story, there are two louvered attic vents below the peak of the roof and four knee brace brackets under the roof eaves.

The south elevation faces the parking lot and features the main entrance to the building, the fire escape, and windows on the first and second stories. The first story has seven original double-hung wood windows, all of which have been fully or partially covered. The main entrance to the building is at the southwest corner. A six-panel metal door is reached via a concrete step with metal railings and mesh fence. A corrugated metal shed roof supported by metal poles has been placed over the door. Originally, the fenestration on the second story was seven double-hung wood windows. Of the seven windows, four remain. Two of the windows have been covered with siding, and the remaining opening has been converted to any emergency exit. A metal exterior stairway is aligned with and against the south side of the building. A brick exterior chimney is located between the entry door and the fire escape. A 1922 rear addition to the building is visible, identified by a change in the width of the wood siding.

### Interior

The interior layout and features of the former hotel building date to the Odd Fellows period. Common features include plywood paneling, plaster walls, and wood trim. The first floor has three primary rooms, including a large main room (formerly the I.O.O.F. recreation hall), a kitchen, and the southeast exhibit room (formerly the I.O.O.F. dining hall). A hallway provides access from the main room to the southeast exhibit room. The second floor contains a large exhibit room (formerly the I.O.O.F. lodge room) and two small former hotel rooms now used for storage.

Through the front entry at the southwest corner of the building, visitors enter a large rectangular main room used for museum exhibits, office, and work area. The I.O.O.F. used this space as a

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recreation hall. Wood posts and “Y” wood braces support the high ceiling. The wall that encloses the furnace room and limited storage is smooth and painted white. The remaining walls are covered with wood paneling. Schoolhouse light fixtures mounted on the ceiling illuminate the room. The museum recently installed supplemental track lighting in this space.

There are two doorways in the main room, one on the south leading to a hallway with a bathroom and storage closet, then into the southeast exhibit room. The latter is L-shaped in plan and formerly served as the I.O.O.F. dining hall. This room has a dropped ceiling with acoustic tiles, which hides metal ducting, and wood paneled walls. The second doorway, on the north, leads into the former kitchen, which now houses kitchen-related exhibits. A pass-through window provides access from the southeast exhibit room from the kitchen. Located in the northeast corner of the building and accessed through a short hallway via doors from the kitchen and southeast exhibit room, a staircase provides access to the second floor.

The rectangular kitchen, which visitors access from the main room through a five-panel wood door, has a high ceiling and smooth plastered walls. The sink is on the south wall. Built-in wood cabinets line the east wall below the pass-through. Tables provide exhibit space for a variety of kitchen implements. A non-operational historic refrigerator and a functional modern refrigerator are installed on the south wall. As visitors exit the kitchen on the east, they have access to the short hallway leading to the stairway to the second floor.

The carpeted stairway has wood handrails on both sides. At the tenth step, there is a landing where the stair turns to the south (right), and the stairway extends another six steps to the top, where there are two extant hotel rooms from the 1922 addition. The rooms have their original plaster walls, wood trim, and wooden doors. On the north side of the landing, a carpeted ramp with wood handrails leads to the second story exhibit area, formerly the I.O.O.F. lodge room. The latter is a large rectangular space with wood paneled walls and a high ceiling with acoustical tiles. A mixture of modern track lighting and three pendent lights illuminate the room. Two of the latter are glass pendant lights, the other is a modern flared globe light. The room also has two ceiling fans. During the period of significance, the Odd Fellows covered many of the windows with wood paneling; those that remain feature light-blocking shades and maintain their original wood trim. One-foot wood risers, once used for lodge activities, line the north and south walls. The risers now serve as an exhibit space. Small exhibit cases occupy the remainder of the large, open room.

### Change Over Time

The current appearance of the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall dates to the Odd Fellows' ownership. Prior to the 1927 to 1974 period of significance, the previous owners of the property completed several major alterations to the building during the time it functioned as a hotel. As built in 1919, the building originally had a flat roof. The hotel operators completed a renovation in 1922 that included the construction of a large rear addition, enlarging the facility from ten to fifteen guest rooms on the second floor, and the replacement of the original flat roof with a gabled roof.

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Following their acquisition of the former hotel in 1927, the Odd Fellows completed a series of major interior alterations to the building over time to accommodate their activities. These alterations involved the demolition of most second-floor hotel rooms to create the lodge room. Odd Fellows also gradually covered many of the building's windows during the 1960s as a cost-saving measure due to repeated vandalism from local children; the windows remain behind the coverings. Downstairs, known alterations during the period of significance include the removal of the original hotel kitchen and the creation of the recreation hall. First-story rooms, possibly the former living quarters of the Gardner family, made way for the construction of a new kitchen. The Odd Fellows also installed a series of successive fire escapes on the south elevation of the building between 1928 and 1970.

Known alterations, maintenance, and repairs since the period of significance have been minor, these include:

- 1999: Aluminum windows and wall paneling installed on the first floor.
- 2012: Exterior sign installed at southwest corner of the building.
- 2015: Low-density attic insulation installed.
- 2015-2016: Re-wiring of the electrical system.
- 2016: Rotten joists under the first-floor landing replaced.
- 2016-2019: Original wood windows refurbished.
- 2017: Metal fire escape installed on the south wall.
- 2020-2022: Interior track lighting installed to better illuminate museum exhibits.<sup>1</sup>

### **Integrity Statement**

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall retains integrity across each of the seven aspects from the 1927-1974 period of significance when it housed the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs. It retains integrity of location, as it has not been moved, as well as its integrity of setting since it still sits in a rural community. Despite the minor changes noted in the previous section, its integrity of design and workmanship remain intact as it continues to embody the elements of a vernacular style building, built with minimal elaboration as a utilitarian structure. It retains its integrity of materials as the exterior wood siding has not been covered or replaced. The I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall's location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship contribute to its integrity of feeling. Although it no longer serves as a fraternal lodge hall, the building retains its association as a rural community meeting hall. Overall, the property maintains good integrity of design, workmanship, and feeling, and excellent integrity of location, setting, materials, and association.

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<sup>1</sup> Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge No. 150, transcribed minutes 1923-1994; personal communication with Linda Morton-Keithley, Melba Valley Historical Society, 2022.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Social History

### Period of Significance

1927-1974

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**Significant Dates**

1927 (I.O.O.F. Purchase)

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall is significant under National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criterion A, at the local level of significance. It is eligible under Criterion A in the area of significance of SOCIAL HISTORY for its association with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, a significant fraternal organization, in Melba and the surrounding area. The lodge hall was a community center, the scene of many social activities as well as the local meeting place for the Odd Fellows and the Rebekahs. The period of significance for the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall is 1927-1974, beginning with the Odd Fellows acquisition of the building and ending roughly fifty years from the present. This endpoint reflects the property's continued use as a fraternal building until 1999 and the fifty-year age convention of the NRHP.

**Settlement and Early History of Melba**

Melba is located in Canyon County, just west of the Ada County border and six miles north of the Snake River. The region is within the Snake River Plain that stretches for hundreds of miles across southern Idaho. Bands of Shoshone and Paiute hunted and fished as they followed the waterways through the area. In the early 19th century fur trappers entered the region, following rivers to trap beavers. The Hudson's Bay Company established a fur trading post, Fort Boise, in 1834, where the Boise and Snake Rivers meet near present-day Parma. It served as a trading post and a stop on the Oregon Trail from 1834 to 1854.

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The discovery of gold in 1862 in the Boise Basin northeast of the Boise Valley brought an explosion of miners and settlers to the region. In 1863, the federal government established Fort Boise to protect the interests of the miners and pioneers traveling on the Oregon Trail. Fort Boise was a detriment to the Native Americans in the region who were forcibly removed from the Boise Valley to reservations by the mid-1860s.

The mining boom of the 1860s led to the founding of Boise City, as it was first known, on July 7, 1863. Ada County was established on December 22, 1864, with Boise City as the county seat. Miners and others followed roads that were conduits to the mining areas around Idaho City northeast of Boise and Silver City in the Owyhee Mountains to the southwest. Stage service in the area began in 1864. Boise was connected to Salt Lake City by Ben Holladay's Overland Stage Company which provided a four-day schedule between the cities. In 1867, the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific railroads were in a transcontinental race across the country, but rail lines did not reach southwest Idaho Territory until 1883.<sup>2</sup>

By the late 1880s, the extension of the Oregon Short Line from Granger, Wyoming, to Huntington, Oregon, led to the establishment of communities along the line across southern Idaho, including Nampa and Caldwell west of Boise. The growth of these towns and the rural population of the surrounding countryside led to the establishment of Canyon County, split from Ada County, in 1891. Mining in the Owyhee mining district had slowed down, but cattle ranching had grown, giving a boost to the area until the severe winters of the 1880s impacted, but did not destroy the livestock industry. Large-scale mining operations resumed in the 1890s when improved rail access and major investments in mines producing lower-grade ore than the earlier mines led to a new mining boom and the construction of the Boise, Nampa, and Owyhee Railway (BN&O) from Nampa to Murphy. The mining boom lasted into the second decade of the twentieth century, at the same time irrigated agriculture began to grow, thanks to projects supported by the 1902 Reclamation Act, including Deer Flat Reservoir (1909) and Arrowrock Dam (1915) which brought people to the area even before the water was available.

Founded in 1912, Melba's early settlers hoped to capitalize on the area's promise of agricultural prosperity.<sup>3</sup> Despite the availability of land and the planned availability of irrigation water, it was several years before the early homesteaders in the area were able to generate income from their small acreages. As they waited, the earliest homesteaders often worked at jobs in Nampa and Caldwell, traveling back and forth to their claims, where their families remained to establish the residency requirements. The first water was delivered in 1914.<sup>4</sup>

Clayton C. Todd, who had relocated from California in anticipation of southwestern Idaho's coming irrigation boom, established Melba on forty acres of his own land. Born in 1857 in Pike County, Missouri, Todd had already found success as a citrus farmer and phosphate miner in Florida, and with investments in Texas and California oil fields. When his oil investments in

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Arrington, *History of Idaho* (Univ of Idaho Press, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Merrill Beal, *Intermountain Railroads: Standard and Narrow Gauge*, First Edition (The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1962); "The Owyhee Country," (Idaho State Historical Society, 1964) accessed December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, <https://history.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/0200.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup>Madge Cook Wylie, *Melba Our Home Town*, (Ron & Pam Wright, 1987).

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California began to yield lower returns, he determined to move on to Alaska before learning about the potential in Idaho. The land he purchased was near a site known as Rock Spur on the BN&O. He platted a town of ten blocks, northeast of the railroad tracks, with four north-south running avenues, and four east-west running streets. He named the longest avenue for the daughter of his first marriage, Carrie Rex, and named the town Melba for the young daughter of his second wife, whom he had adopted.

As the water supply increased, the community began to grow with the construction of homes and commercial buildings, including the Gardner Hotel (now the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall), a two-story building on Carrie Rex Avenue built in 1919. Ben and Mary Eckley Gardner and their daughter Iva Gardner Sturm built the building in 1919 to provide housing for construction workers building ditches, canals, and roads. Mary Gardner cooked for the boarders and Iva and her husband Tom Sturm managed the boarding house. The building originally had a dining room and kitchen on the first floor with bedrooms upstairs. A 1922 addition to the rear of the building provided additional rooms. The rates were \$1.00 a night for a room or \$2.50 for two people. If a person was working on the ditches or roads, the rooms would rent by the month for \$25.00.

The farmers, after waiting for water, now faced the challenge of what to grow. Like many others, the first crop was hay to feed their own livestock and to sell to the local cattle and sheep ranchers. As the water supply became more secure, in the 1920s, potatoes became an important cash crop, with Melba's shipments making the news for the large quantity of potatoes produced. By the late 1920s, seed production began when Henry and Clifford Haynes planted the first sweet corn for seed production for the Crookham Seed Company in Caldwell. Other Melba Valley farmers joined that effort and production grew until Melba grew the majority of hybrid seed corn in the United States, along with other crops, and became known as the Seed Heart of America. Agricultural production continues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with farmers in the area growing a wide variety of crops.<sup>5</sup>

## Criterion A: Social History

### History of the Odd Fellows in Melba

Melba Lodge #150, chartered in October of 1920, was the latest outpost of an international fraternal organization that first expanded into Idaho in 1864.<sup>6</sup> One of the founding members recalled that several Melba residents were interested in having a local lodge so they would not have to travel to Nampa, where the nearest I.O.O.F. lodge was located. By the time of the annual Grand Lodge meeting later in 1920, the new Melba Lodge had 24 members.<sup>7</sup>

The new organization rented space from C.C. Todd in an unidentified building for \$45.00 a month, an amount partially paid by rent collected from the Grange and the Melba Modern

<sup>5</sup> Madge Cook Wylie, *Melba—Seed Heart of America, An Historical Overview*, (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., n.d); official website, City of Melba, <https://cityofmelba.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> The first I.O.O.F. lodge in Idaho was the Pioneer Lodge #1 in Idaho City

<sup>7</sup> Waletta S. Morrow, *Idaho's Century of Triple Links: A History of Idaho's 100 Years of Odd Fellowship*, (Caldwell Idaho: Grand Lodge of Idaho, 1963).

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Woodmen which each met twice a month in the space rented by the Odd Fellows. As early as 1924 the lodge members were discussing building or buying their own lodge hall, but it would be several years before this would occur.

With origins in 18<sup>th</sup> century England, the Odd Fellows organization is similar to the Freemasons, but with an emphasis on service. The term “Odd Fellows” may refer to the original groups being made up of members of work guilds who functioned as general contractors rather than specialists with a particular skill such as masonry. The first lodges in the United States were organized in the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by recent immigrants from England to Baltimore, Boston, and New York City. The founders sought to organize the new lodges under the auspices of the English organization. In 1826, Manchester Unity granted the American Odd Fellows lodges a charter as the Grand Lodge of America, Order of Independent Odd Fellows. In 1843, the American Odd Fellows formally broke away from the English organization and became the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F). Eight years later, in 1851, the Odd Fellows became the first fraternal organization to allow women to become members with the founding of the Daughters of Rebekah, now known as the Rebekahs. The three links symbol associated with the group stands for “Friendship, Truth, and Love.”<sup>8</sup>

### The Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall

In 1927, the Melba Lodge found a permanent home in the old Gardner Hotel. The hotel changed hands in 1924 when Ben Gardner traded the hotel to D.M. Cox of Cascade for an 80-acre ranch near Shoshone. Mr. Cox then leased the hotel to J.M. Nichols who managed it. In 1925, Cox sold the building to P.E. Lawler, another resident of Cascade. Mr. Lawler offered to sell the building to the Lodge in 1927, who purchased the hotel for \$300 cash, with \$100 put up by the Rebekahs. By May 16, the building had been dedicated as the new lodge hall.

The building required extensive repairs and major remodeling to serve as a lodge hall. According to founding member John Kannegaard, the members did the work and raised the money to do it:

“We remodeled the building. There were rooms upstairs and rooms downstairs, plus a kitchen in what is now known as our recreation room. We tore those rooms out of the whole upstairs. We left the posts upstairs like we have in that recreation [room], but eventually that was not good enough. We were younger at that time and many of the brothers liked to dance, and their wives liked to dance. And there we had the hall, but the posts in the middle were in the way, so with volunteer labor, we put a gable roof on it. So, we gave dances and made a little money; and our finances were so that we put a little money away in U.S. Savings bonds.... The building was swaying too much to hold public dances, so we quit. Then, also, the music was too expensive to make any money at it.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “History of American Odd Fellowship,” Independent Order of Odd Fellows, March 8, 2019, <https://odd-fellows.org/history/wildeys-odd-fellowship/>; “The Odd Fellows and Freemasons: Different Paths to the Same Goal,” <https://oddfellowsguide.com/2017/09/22/the-odd-fellows-and-freemasons-different-paths-to-the-same-goal/>.

<sup>9</sup> Wylie, Home Town, p. 17.

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Through the years, the lodge was remodeled to meet the changing needs of the Odd Fellows and the Rebekahs, as well as to improve the structure and keep it stable. A particular challenge was keeping up with the repair of the many windows, which were frequent targets of vandalism. In the lodge minutes, the topic came up for discussion at many meetings. The problem was finally resolved when the lodge room was paneled in the late 1960s and the windows were covered on the inside with paneling and blocked on the exterior, resulting in the building's current appearance.

The Odd Fellows were active in Melba for many years, providing financial and practical support to fellow lodge members and their families, as well as the community in general. The members raised money to support the "Home on the Hill," the Odd Fellows Home for the Aged located in Caldwell; they raised money for the Children's Home in Boise and the National Eye Bank as well as raising funds to support the I.O.O.F. United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth, which provides opportunities for high school seniors to visit the United Nations.

### Recent History

In 1999, as lodge membership declined, the Melba I.O.O.F. transferred ownership of the building to the Melba Rebekah Lodge No. 105 who continued to use the building. The Rebekah's gifted the building to the Melba Valley Historical Society (MVHS) in 2013 to be used as a local history museum. Since that time, the MVHS has completed necessary repairs, including installing a metal fire escape salvaged from the Melba High School.

### **Summary**

The Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall remains a landmark in the community. Fraternal halls are often the center of a community's social life, and the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall was no exception. For more than seventy years, the lodge members were active in the community and made the community welcome to activities at the lodge. The property is eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level under Criterion A in the area of SOCIAL HISTORY for its association with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, a significant fraternal organization, in Melba and the surrounding area. Largely unaltered since its 1927-1974 period of significance, the Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall retains good overall integrity and clearly conveys its former fraternal function, historic associations, and period of construction.

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall  
Name of Property

Canyon, Idaho  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Arrington, Leonard. *History of Idaho*. University of Idaho Press, 1995.

Beal, Merrill. *Intermountain Railroads: Standard and Narrow Gauge*. First Edition. Caxton Printers Ltd., 1962.

Canyon County, Idaho. "Canyon County | Idaho," 2022. Accessed December 18, 2022. <https://www.canyoncounty.id.gov/>.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows. "History of American Odd Fellowship," March 8, 2019. <https://odd-fellows.org/history/wildeys-odd-fellowship/>.

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge No. 150, Minute books (1923-1994), collection of the Melba Valley Historical Society.

Morrow, Waletta S. *Idaho's Century of Triple Links: A History of Idaho's 100 Years of Odd Fellowship*. Caldwell Idaho: Grand Lodge of Idaho, 1963.

"The Odd Fellows and Freemasons: Different Paths to the Same Goal." Heart in Hand, January 8, 2019. <https://oddfellowsguide.com/2017/09/22/the-odd-fellows-and-freemasons-different-paths-to-the-same-goal/>.

Wylie, Madge Cook. *A Centennial Scrapbook of Melba 1912-2012, Including Stories from Glendale & Melmont*. The author, 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Melba, Our Home Town*. Ron & Pam Wright, 2987.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Melba—Seed Heart of America, an Historical Overview*. (The author, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., no date.)

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- \_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- \_\_\_ previously listed in the National Register
- \_\_\_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- \_\_\_ designated a National Historic Landmark
- \_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ State Historic Preservation Office
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other State agency
- \_\_\_\_\_ Federal agency
- \_\_\_\_\_ Local government
- \_\_\_\_\_ University
- Other

Name of repository: Melba Valley Historical Society

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** less than 1 acre (.21 acre)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 11

Easting: 538094

Northing: 4802584

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Section 36, T1N R2W, SW ¼, Melba Original Townsite, Lots 14-16, inclusive, Blk 1

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is based on the legal description for Parcel R17540, as described in the Canyon County Assessor's records.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Barbara Perry Bauer, M.A. and Elizabeth Jacox, B.A.  
organization: TAG Historical Research & Consulting a/b/n of The Arrowrock Group, Inc.  
street & number: P.O. Box 7333 /401 W Idaho LL-3  
city or town: Boise state: ID zip code: 83707-1333  
e-mail: [bpbauer@taghistory.com](mailto:bpbauer@taghistory.com) / [ejacox@taghistory.com](mailto:ejacox@taghistory.com)  
telephone: 208-338-1014  
date: December 21, 2022

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5- or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and does not need to be labeled on every photograph.

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**Figures**

- 1 of 9 Vicinity Map
- 2 of 9 USGS Map
- 3 of 9 Property Boundary Map
- 4 of 9 Exterior Photo Key
- 5 of 9 Interior Photo Key
- 6 of 9 Gardner Hotel under construction, 1919
- 7 of 9 Gardner Hotel addition under construction, 1922
- 8 of 9 I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall circa 1970s after windows had been covered to prevent breakage.
- 9 of 9 I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall visible to the left in this c1945 aerial view of Melba.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall

City or Vicinity: Melba

County: Canyon State: Idaho

Photographer: Barbara Perry Bauer

Date Photographed: March 1, 2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0001  
West (front) façade, Camera facing east.
- 2 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0002  
West (left) and south (right) elevations, Camera facing northeast.
- 3 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0003  
North (left) and west (right) elevations, Camera facing southeast.
- 4 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0004  
North elevation, Camera facing southeast.
- 5 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0005  
East (left) and north (right) elevations, Camera facing southwest.
- 6 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0006  
East elevation, Camera facing west.

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- 7 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0007  
South elevation, Camera facing northwest.
- 8 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0008  
West elevation (left) and south elevation (right), Camera facing northeast.
- 9 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0009  
Interior First Floor, main room, Camera facing northeast.
- 10 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0010  
Interior First Floor, main room, Camera facing southeast.
- 11 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0011  
Interior First Floor, center hall, Camera facing east.
- 12 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0012  
Interior First Floor, southeast exhibit room, Camera facing east.
- 13 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0013  
Interior First Floor, southeast exhibit room, Camera facing west.
- 14 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0014  
Interior First Floor, kitchen, Camera facing west.
- 15 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0015  
Interior Stairway, Camera facing west.
- 16 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0016  
Interior Stairway first landing from second floor, Camera facing north.
- 17 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0017  
Interior Second Floor southeast hotel room, Camera facing southeast.
- 18 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0018  
Interior Second Floor ramp to exhibit area, Camera facing north.
- 19 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0019  
Interior Second Floor exhibit area, Camera facing west.
- 20 of 20 ID\_CanyonCounty\_MelbaIOOFHall\_0020  
Interior Second Floor exhibit area, Camera facing northwest.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct, or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall  
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Tier 3 – 230 hours  
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering, and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall  
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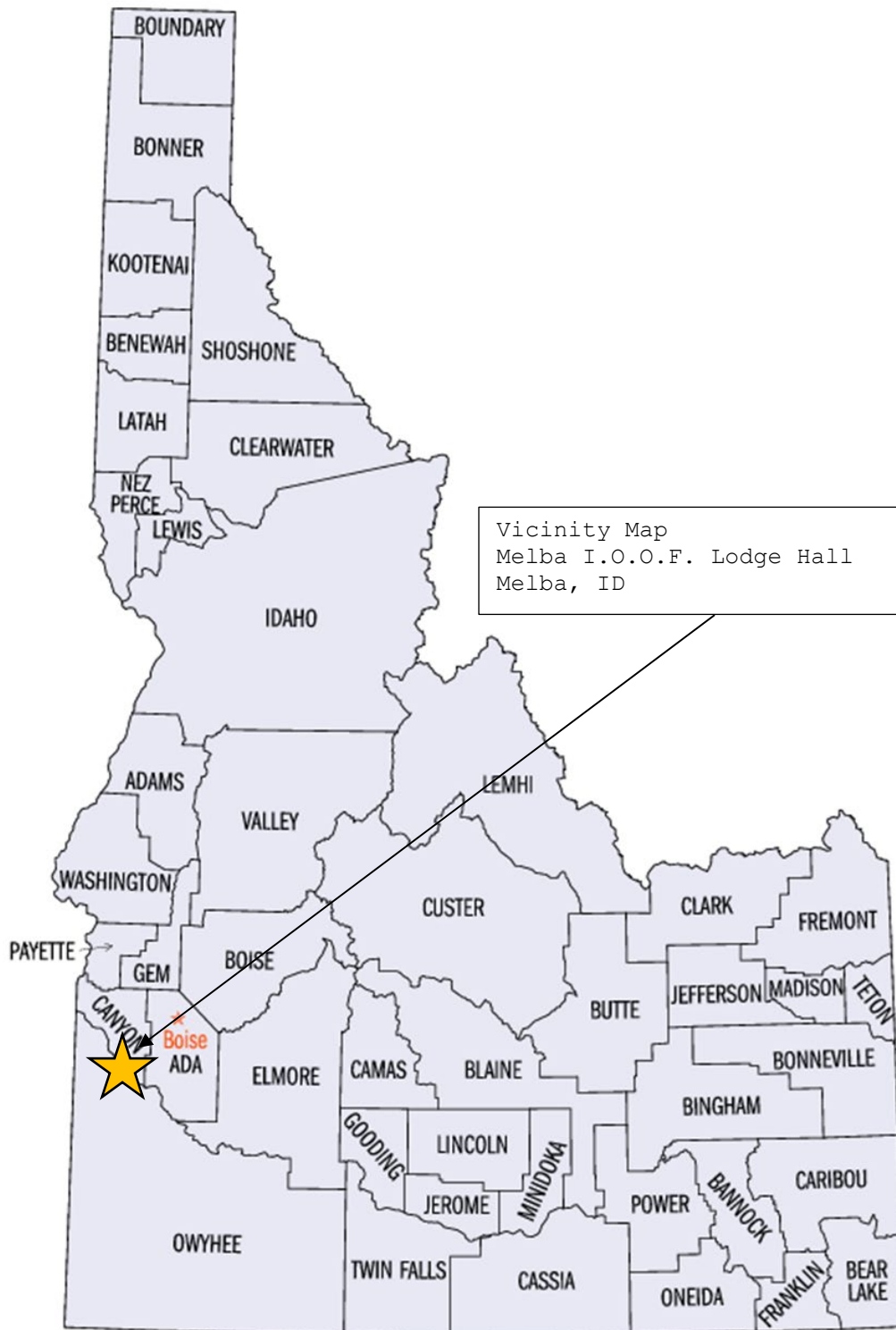


Figure 1. Vicinity Map

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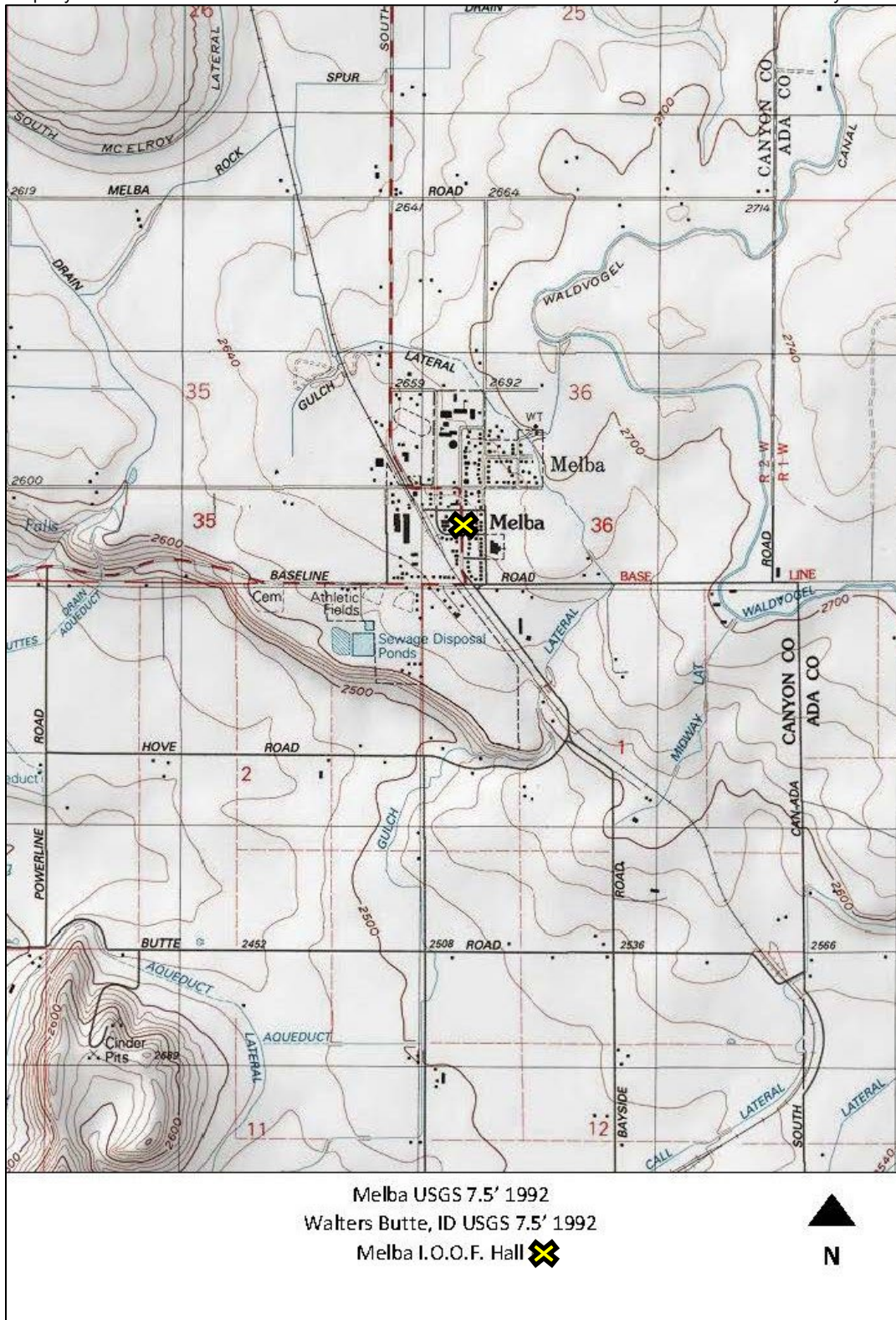


Figure 2 – USGS Map

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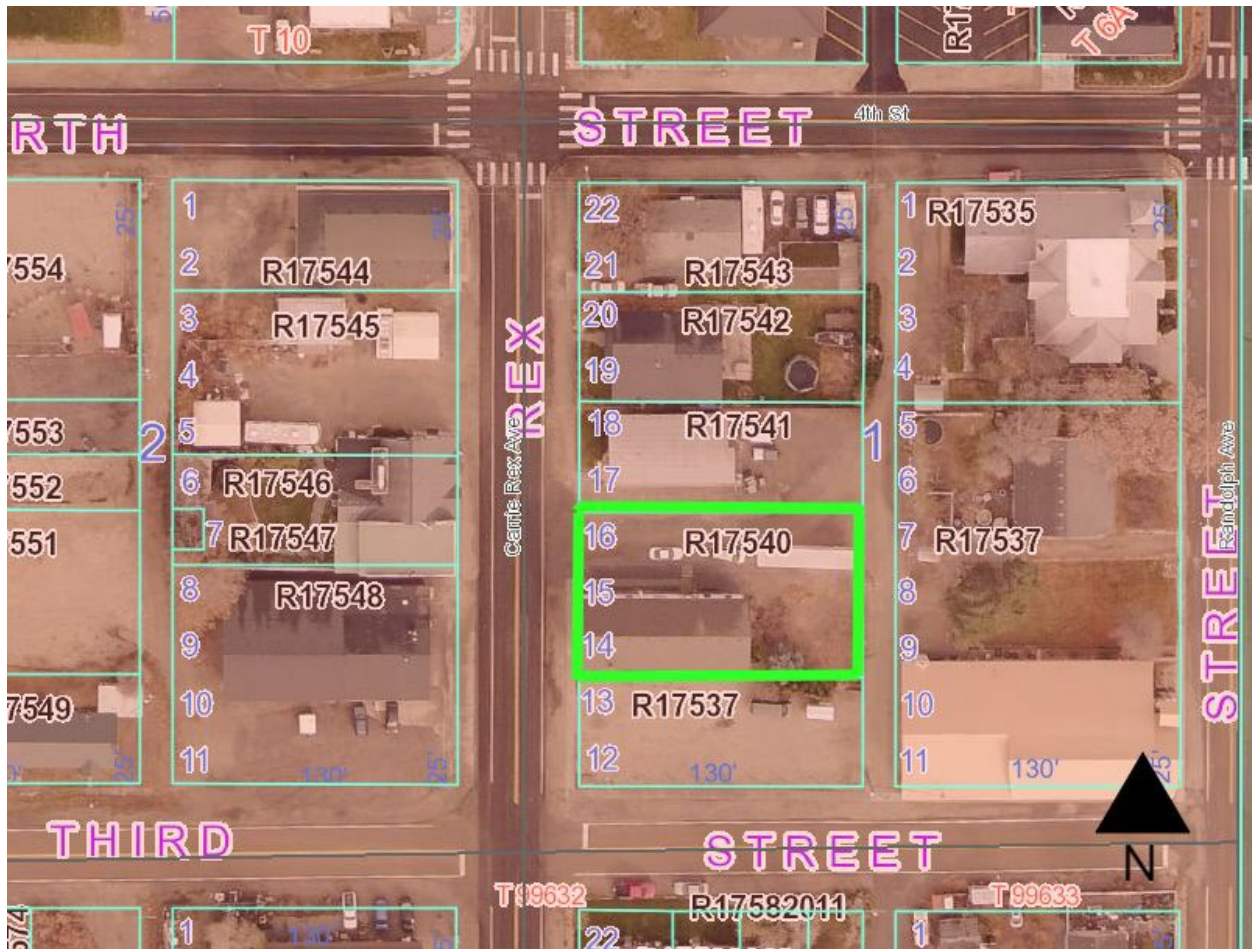
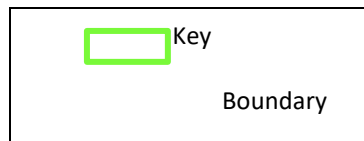


Figure 3. Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall Property Boundary  
UTM: 11/538094/4802584  
Canyon County Assessor's Interactive Map  
<https://rb.gy/l8q30u>



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Exterior Photo Map  
Melba I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall, 310 Carrie Rex Avenue  
Google Earth Pro, accessed December 21, 2022



Figure 4 – Exterior Photo Key

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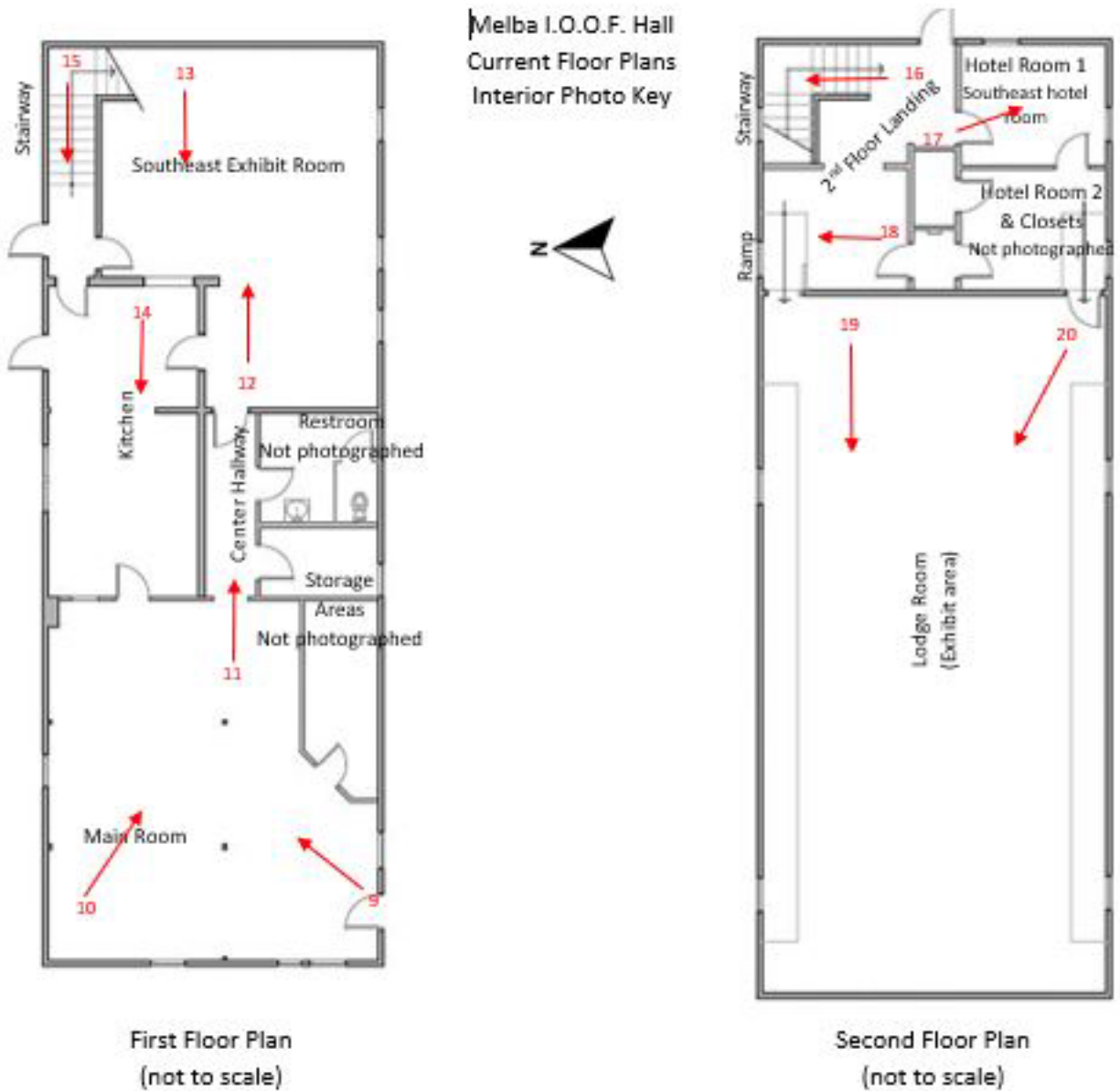


Figure 5. Interior Photo Key

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Figure 6. Gardner Hotel under construction, 1919.

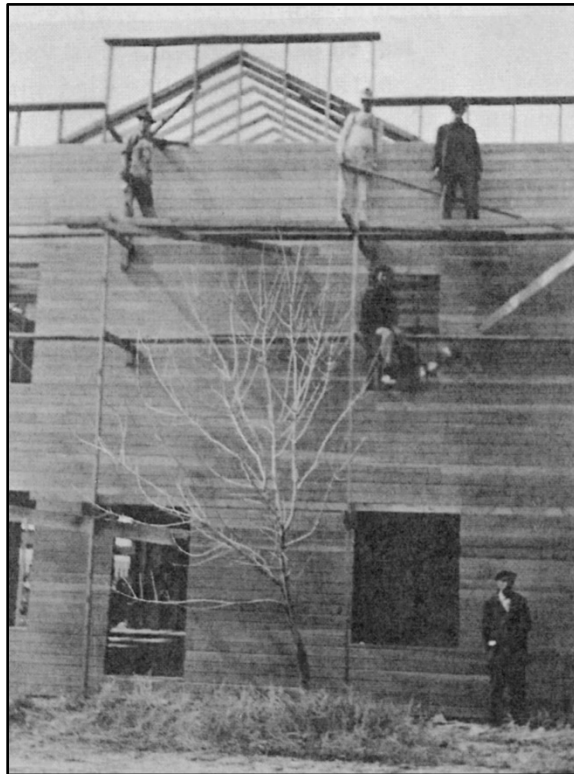


Figure 7. Gardner Hotel addition construction, 1922.

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Figure 8. I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall circa 1970s after windows had been covered.



Figure 9. Aerial view of Melba, c1945. The I.O.O.F. Lodge Hall is number 3, located on the left, just below number 1, the Friends Church and to the left of number 4, the LDS Church building.

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Photograph 1. Façade (west elevation), camera facing east.



Photograph 2. Façade and south elevation, camera facing northeast.

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Photograph 3. North elevation (left) and façade (right), camera facing southeast.



Photograph 4. North elevation, camera facing southeast.

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Photograph 5. East (left) and north (right) elevations, camera facing southwest.



Photograph 6. East elevation, camera facing west.

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Photograph 7. South elevation, camera facing northwest.



Photograph 8. Façade (left) and south elevations, view looking northeast.

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Photograph 9. Interior, first floor, main room, camera facing northeast.



Photograph 10. Interior, first floor, main room, camera facing southeast.

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Photograph 11. Interior, first floor, center hallway, camera facing east.



Photograph 12. Interior, first floor, southeast exhibit room, camera facing east.

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Photograph 13. First floor, southeast exhibit room, camera facing west.



Photograph 14. Interior, first floor, kitchen, camera facing west.

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Photograph 15. Interior, stairway from first landing, camera facing west.



Photograph 16. Interior, stairway from second floor, camera facing north.

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Photograph 17. Interior, second floor, southeast hotel room, camera facing southeast.

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Photograph 18. Interior, second floor, ramp to exhibit area, camera facing north.



Photograph 19. Interior, second floor, exhibit area, camera facing west.

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Photograph 20. Interior, second floor, exhibit area, camera facing northwest.