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Contact: Jason Tippeconnic Fox, National Register & Tax Incentive Program Coordinator, ISHS (208) 488-7468

Secondary Contact or Day-Of Contact: Mark Breske, Marketing & Communications Officer, ISHS (208) 514-2330

Boyd and Alta Hamilton House Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

Boise, ID – On October 28, 2021, the Boyd and Alta Hamilton House in Coeur d’Alene, popularly known as the “Hamilton House,” was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Built in 1908 for Boyd and Alta Hamilton, the city’s second mayor and his wife, the Hamilton House is today the home of the non-profit Music Conservatory of Coeur d’Alene.

“The Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is excited to see the Hamilton House listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It is an excellent example of Colonial Revival style architecture and represents the work of George H. Keith, a notable regional architect based in Spokane and the designer of mail order architectural plans sold across the country,” said Jason Tippeconnic Fox, National Register Coordinator at SHPO, which administers the NRHP program.

Located at 627 N. Government Way, the Hamilton House occupies a corner lot in the Forest Heights Subdivision, one block north of the Kootenai County Courthouse. In 1910, less than three years after the Hamilton House’s completion, the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad purchased the property from Boyd and Alta Hamilton and relocated the house within its original lot to make way for the construction of a new railroad line. Despite this change, the Hamilton House has undergone few alterations since its original construction and maintains a high degree of historic integrity.

Learning of plans to replace the Hamilton House with a parking lot in the spring of 2019, local historians Deborah Mitchell and Cindy Nunn participated in a two-year effort to establish the home’s historical significance, gain community support for its preservation, and find a buyer willing to preserve the property, all of which was made more challenging by the ongoing pandemic.

Mitchell recalls that many in community said, “it’s not historic, it’s just an old house.” Nunn notes that “thousands of hours went into the research required to prove that it was of enough historic significance to make it worth saving.” Coeur d’Alene Mayor Steve Widmyer and Don Smock ultimately stepped in to purchase the property. The Hamilton House’s future secured, Mitchell and



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Nunn worked with staff at the Idaho SHPO to prepare a National Register nomination for the property.

“It was fulfilling when the house was finally saved from demolition and validating when our hard work paid off with the Hamilton being listed in the National Register of Historic Places,” Nunn said.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places considered important in our past and worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is the cornerstone of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Register program is honorific and does not restrict the right of private property owners to change or dispose of their property as they choose.

For more information about the National Register of Historic Places, contact Jason Tippeconnic Fox, NRHP program coordinator: jasontippeconnic.fox@ishs.idaho.gov.

For more information about the Hamilton House, contact Deborah Mitchell and Cindy Nunn at dmitche2@yahoo.com and cindy.nunn@snjgg.com

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The Idaho State Historical Society is an extraordinary system of cultural and historic resources comprised of the Idaho State Museum, State Archives, State Historic Preservation Office, and Historic Sites Program. We seek to inspire, enrich and engage all Idahoans by leading the state in preserving, sharing, and using history and cultural resources relevant to today to inform and shape the future. Learn more at www.history.idaho.gov.