

# NOTICE OF RECOMMENDATION

*Si necesita ayuda para comprender esta informacion,  
por favor llame 503-588-6173*

## RECOMMENDATION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION LOCAL HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION CASE NO. HIS24-22

**APPLICATION NO.:** 24-118986-PLN

**NOTICE OF RECOMMENDATION DATE:** November 26, 2024

**SUMMARY:** A proposal to designate the Criterion Schoolhouse as a Salem Local Historic Resource.

**REQUEST:** Class 4 Legislative Major Historic Review of a proposal to designate the Criterion Schoolhouse (c.1912), as a local historic resource, zoned PA (Public Amusement), and located at 2330 17th Street NE 97304; Marion County Assessors Map and Tax Lot number: 073W14DA00100.

**APPLICANT:** Robin Bodey, Criterion Schoolhouse Committee, on behalf of the State of Oregon

**LOCATION:** 2330 17th St NE, Salem OR 97301

WHEREAS, a Council priority is Welcoming and Livable Neighborhoods which includes ensuring that Salem residents have access to historic and cultural opportunities by supporting Salem's historically and culturally significant buildings and sites; and

WHEREAS, the Salem City Council adopted the updated 2020-2030 Salem Historic Preservation Plan (Plan) as components and support documents to the Salem Area Comprehensive Plan in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Plan's adopted Goal 6 is: Survey and Designate Historic Resources; and

WHEREAS, the City of Salem is a Certified Local Government and has a historic preservation program that includes a preservation ordinance and a local Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) that meets regularly and maintains a register of locally designated historic resources; and

WHEREAS, the Criterion Schoolhouse Committee and the State of Oregon submitted an application to the HLC to designate the Criterion Schoolhouse as a local historic resource in November 2024 for its associations with: the development early 19<sup>th</sup> century education in Oregon, the United States' Bicentennial Celebration, and as an example of the one-room schoolhouse architectural building type; and

WHEREAS, the HLC voted unanimously to recommend approval of the local historic resource designation of the Criterion Schoolhouse at their November 21, 2024 meeting; and

PLANNING DIVISION  
555 LIBERTY ST. SE, RM 305  
SALEM, OREGON 97301  
PHONE: 503-588-6173  
FAX: 503-588-6005



WHEREAS, the Historic Landmarks Commission is required to provide appropriate public notice, consider the matter at a public hearing and make a recommendation regarding the findings relating to the applicable criteria for local historic resource designation in SRC 230.010 to the City Council pursuant to SRC 300.720(e); and

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SALEM, OREGON:

Section 1. FINDINGS:

The Historic Landmarks Commission hereby adopts as its findings of fact the staff report on this matter dated November 21, 2024 herewith attached and by this reference incorporated herein.

Section 2. ORDER:

Based upon the foregoing findings and conclusions, the Historic Landmarks Commission RECOMMENDS the City Council take the following action:

That the City Council accept first reading of an ordinance bill for the purpose of designation of the Criterion Schoolhouse as a Local Historic Resource.

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION VOTE**

**YES 8      NO 0      ABSENT 1 (Strong)      ABSTAIN 0**



---

Kirsten Straus, Chair  
Historic Landmarks Commission

The City Council will make a final decision on the proposal. The appeal of the Council decision would be to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals. The appeal period is 21 days from the mailing date of the Council decision.

The case file and copies of the staff report are available upon request at Room 305, Civic Center, during City business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Contact Jake Morris Case Manager, at 503-540-2417 or [jjmorris@cityofsalem.net](mailto:jjmorris@cityofsalem.net) to review the case file.

<http://www.cityofsalem.net/planning>

## RECOMMENDATION OF THE SALEM HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

**CASE NO.:** Local Historic Resource Designation Case No. HIS24-22

**FINDINGS:** Based upon the application materials, the facts and findings in the Staff Report incorporated herein by reference, and testimony provided at the first evidentiary Public Hearing of November 21, 2024 to consider the local historic resource designation of the Criterion Schoolhouse, the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) finds that the applicant adequately demonstrated that their proposal complies with the applicable provisions of the Salem Revised Code (SRC) 230.010(e) as follows:

1. **SRC 230.010 (e) (1) Age:** *The proposed historic resource is at least 50 years old, or demonstrates exceptional significance if less than 50 years of age.*

**Findings:** The resource was constructed in 1912, over 50 years ago; therefore, the HLC finds that this criterion has been met.

2. **SRC 230.010 (e) (2) Significance:** *The proposed historic resource demonstrates significance in at least one of the following areas:*

- a. **Cultural Significance:** *(i) Contributes to the character and historic identity of the neighborhood or City; (ii) Makes a contribution to the historic character of a historic resource, neighborhood, district, or City as a whole*

**Findings:** The HLC finds that the potential resource is culturally significant as defined under SRC 230.010 (e)(2)(a)(ii), for its contribution to the historic character of the Oregon State Fair in Salem. The Criterion Schoolhouse is culturally significant as an embodiment of the early history of education in Oregon, and as part of the educational section of the Oregon State Fair, the Criterion Schoolhouse building and associated activities and exhibits conducted there during Oregon's State Fair every year educate the public about the history of education in Oregon so that generations of Oregonians can learn about how children in rural Oregon communities were educated from 1912-1925.

- b. **Human Significance:** *(i) Is associated historically with the life or activities of a person, group, organization or institution that has made a significant contribution to the local community; or (ii) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history; or (iii) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information concerning prehistory or history.*

**Findings:** The HLC finds that the Criterion Schoolhouse is a significant resource under SRC 230.010 (e)(2)(b)(i) for its association with the efforts of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) who conducted a large statewide search for intact one-room schoolhouses as part of Oregon's bicentennial (1976) celebration in Oregon. ODE facilitated the relocation of the Criterion Schoolhouse to Salem which included mobilizing the National Guard to move the structure to Salem from central Oregon, and then coordinated volunteers to restore the schoolhouse on the grounds of the Oregon State Fair in 1976.

The HLC finds that the resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history because it serves as an example of early settlement-era education in rural Oregon communities, and a symbol of the enormous effort that went into planning and celebrating America's bicentennial. It is connected to both the development and implementation of early American education in rural communities, an event that drastically changed education in the American West, as well as the large-scale celebration of America's bicentennial, a nation-wide, regional, and local celebration of all things Americana.

- c. **Architectural Significance:** *(i) Is significant as an example of a particular architectural style, building type, structural type, or method of construction; or (ii) Is the work of an acknowledged master or architect, or possesses high artistic values.*

**Findings:** The HLC finds that the Criterion Schoolhouse is significant under SRC 230.010 (e)(2)(c) as an excellent example of an increasingly rare vernacular one room schoolhouse building. Very few of these buildings still exist in a well-preserved and unaltered form. The asymmetrical arrangement of windows allowing for continuous chalk boards along one side of the school room is unusual and distinctive.

3. **SRC 230.010 (e) (3) Integrity:** *The proposed historic resource retains sufficient original design characteristics, craft work, or material to serve as an example of an architectural period, significant building type or structural type, or recognized architectural style.*

**Findings:** The HLC finds that that the school retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and that SRC 230.010(e)(3) has been met. While the school no longer retains integrity of location or setting, as it has been moved from its original location, the school retains enough integrity to be eligible as a local resource in Salem's Register of Historic Places due to its ability to convey its significance and association with Oregon's bicentennial celebration. The school remains an intact example of early educational buildings, as well as a symbol of the effort put into the celebration of America's birthday.

Staff recommends that the HLC find that the resource retains its original design characteristics and materials, serving as a significant example of the one-room schoolhouse building type, thereby meeting this criterion.

The Historic Landmarks Commission **RECOMMENDS APPROVAL** of HIS24-22, authorizing City Council designation of the Criterion Schoolhouse as a Local Historic Resource.

**VOTE: Yes 8    No 0    Absent 1 (Strong)    Abstain 0**

Attachments: A. Vicinity Map  
B. Excerpt from Applicant's Submittal Materials

Prepared by Jake Morris, Preservation Planner, on behalf of Kimberli Fitzgerald, Historic Preservation Officer



# Vicinity Map Criterion Schoolhouse 2330 17th Street NE (Oregon State Fairgrounds)



## Legend

- |  |                       |  |                           |
|--|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|
|  | Taxlots               |  | Outside Salem City Limits |
|  | Urban Growth Boundary |  | Historic District         |
|  | City Limits           |  | Schools                   |

Parks

**CITY OF Salem**  
AT YOUR SERVICE  
Community Planning and Development

This product is provided as is, without warranty. In no event is the City of Salem liable for damages from the use of this product. This product is subject to license and copyright limitations and further distribution or resale is prohibited.

0 100 200 400 Feet



City of Salem  
LOCAL HISTORIC RESOURCE NOMINATION FORM

## A. OWNER/CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name: *Oregon State Fair Foundation*Mailing Address: *2330 17<sup>th</sup> St. NE*City/State/Zip: *Salem, OR. 97301*Phone number: *971-701-6567*E-mail: *mindy@oregonstatefair.org*

Date Submitted:

## B. PROPERTY INFORMATION:

Historic Name, if known: *Criterion School House*Date of Construction: *1912*Street Address: *2330 17<sup>th</sup> St. NE*Salem, Oregon *97301*County: *Marion / Polk*

## C. EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

1. Siding material(s). Original or replacement?

*Wood lap siding; original*

2. Window type(s) &amp; material(s). Original or replacement?

*Wood Sash Windows; original*

3. Significant architectural features; other descriptions:

*1912 one room school house with bell tower.*

4. Alterations and Approximate Dates:

*new roof 2017**new paint 2021*

## D. WHY IS THE PROPERTY SIGNIFICANT?

*The Criterion Schoolhouse stands on the Oregon State Fairgrounds as a tribute to public education.*

**NOTE:** Current exterior (all facades) and interior photographs of significant features are required for evaluation. (Please indicate if you wish to have the photos returned.)

Photo Log

Photo No.	Direction	Description
<i>1</i>		<i>Front of Schoolhouse</i>

### Authorization by property owner(s)/applicant

\*If the applicant and/or property owner is a Limited Liability Company (LLC), please also provide a list of all members of the LLC with your application.

**Copyright release for government entities:** I hereby grant permission to the City of Salem to copy, in whole or part, drawings and all other materials submitted by me, my agents, or representatives. This grant of permission extends to all copies needed for administration of the City's regulatory, administrative, and legal functions, including sharing of information with other governmental entities.

**Authorizations:** Property owners and contract purchasers are required to authorize the filing of this application and must sign below.

- All signatures represent that they have full legal capacity to and hereby do authorize the filing of this application and certify that the information and exhibits herewith submitted are true and correct.
- I (we) hereby grant consent to the City of Salem and its officers, agents, employees, and/or independent contractors to enter the property identified above to conduct any and all inspections that are considered appropriate by the City to process this application.
- I (we) hereby give notice of the following concealed or unconcealed dangerous conditions on the property:

**Electronic signature certification:** By attaching an electronic signature (whether typed, graphical or free form) I certify herein that I have read, understood and confirm all the statements listed above and throughout the application form.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (include ZIP): \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (include ZIP): \_\_\_\_\_

(For office use only)

Received by

Date:

Receipt Number:

Not using Internet Explorer?

Save the file to your computer and email to [planning@cityofsalem.net](mailto:planning@cityofsalem.net).





# CRITERION SCHOOL

A little bit of Wasco County history that graces the state fairgrounds.

Children first attended classes at the one-room Criterion School in 1912. The Criterion was the first school in Wasco County to obtain the classification of "Standard" and served up to 25 children at a time.

Although it ceased to operate as a school in 1925, the building continued to serve the surrounding community as a Sunday school, Grange Hall, voting place, and other public events. In 1969, the building was sold to a local rancher and used for hay and grain storage.

In 1976, the Criterion Schoolhouse began a new life and a 200-mile journey to the Oregon State Fairgrounds in time for the celebration of the Bicentennial of the United States. The schoolhouse was chosen from more than 50 schools from around Oregon, to serve as a tribute to Oregon public education. Today, it's a must-see for fans of Oregon history.





## **The Future of the Criterion School**

The Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center congratulates the Oregon Retired Educators Association (OREA) for its ongoing efforts to preserve, restore, and enhance the Criterion Schoolhouse. Each year, OREA provides over 70 volunteers to host thousands of visitors to this historic treasure.

OREA has played an ongoing part in fundraising to replace the roof, refurbish the windows, install gutters, and paint the building. Last summer, a siding workshop put on by the Historic Preservation and Restoration Program at Clatsop Community College addressed dry rot issues in the exterior walls of the building.

## **See the Criterion Schoolhouse During the Fair**

The Criterion Schoolhouse typically opens each year during the Oregon State Fair where visitors can learn about the interesting history and see the artifacts. Children can color in pictures of Oregon while others look at the books used at the time of Criterion School. Some date back to the 1800's.

Stay tuned for the Criterion School's hours of operation during the 2024 Oregon State Fair.

# CRITERION SCHOOLHOUSE PLACED ON NATIONAL SCHOOLHOUSE REGISTER

RECOGNITION CEREMONY ON AUGUST 10, 2023

The Criterion Schoolhouse, located in Salem on the Fairgrounds at the Oregon State Fair and Exposition Center, was placed on the National Schoolhouse Register by the Country School Association of America (CSAA) on December 2, 2022. The Oregon Retired Educators Association submitted the nomination through its Save the Criterion School Committee. CSAA lists former or current school buildings considered worthy of recognition on a national level for their preservation. The Criterion Schoolhouse is the first Oregon school building to receive this designation!

The Criterion Schoolhouse was the first school-in Wasco County to be declared 'standard' and was used as a school from 1912-1925. The Oregon Department of Education searched statewide for abandoned one-room schoolhouses from 1975-1976. Criterion was chosen out of 50 candidates to be moved 200 miles to the Oregon State Fairgrounds for the 1976 Bicentennial Celebration. The historical treasure still stands on the Oregon State Fairgrounds as a symbol and tribute to Oregon's public education.

Placements on the CSAA registry are awarded to school buildings that are at least 50 years old, have been restored, renovated, or reconstructed to retain the integrity of their original design, and are well maintained. The hope of CSAA is that this registry will identify the historical and architectural significance, recognize the preservation achievements, and encourage the continual care of the Criterion School.

**Planning/Permit Application Center**

City Hall / 555 Liberty St. SE / Room 320 / Salem, OR 97301-3513

503-588-6173 \* [planning@cityofsalem.net](mailto:planning@cityofsalem.net)

If you need the following translated in Spanish, please call 503-588-6256.

Si usted necesita lo siguiente traducido en español, por favor llame 503-588-6256.

(For office use only)  
Permit #:

**Application type**

Please describe the type of land use action requested:

Type IV Local Landmark Designation

**Work site location and information**

Street address or location of subject property	Oregon state Fairgrounds, Salem OR
Total size of subject property	159.05 acres
Assessor tax lot numbers	073 W 14 D A 00 100
Existing use structures and/or other improvements on site	Fairgrounds
Zoning	Public Amusement
Comprehensive Plan Designation	POS - Parks open space
Project description	Type IV Local Landmark Designation of the criterion schoolhouse at the fairgrounds

**People information**

	Name	Full Mailing Address	Phone Number and Email address
Applicant			
Agent			
Paid By			

**Project information**

Project Valuation for Site Plan Review	
Neighborhood Association	N/A
Have you contacted the Neighborhood Association?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No N/A
Date Neighborhood Association contacted	N/A
Describe contact with the affected Neighborhood Association (The City of Salem recognizes, values, and supports the involvement of residents in land use decisions affecting neighborhoods across the city and strongly encourages anyone requesting approval for any land use proposal to contact the affected neighborhood association(s) as early in the process as possible.)	N/A
Have you contacted Salem-Keizer Transit? <a href="mailto:planning@cherriots.org">planning@cherriots.org</a>	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Date Salem-Keizer Transit contacted	N/A
Describe contact with Salem-Keizer Transit	N/A
Type the name and address of the Homeowners Association (If none, type "N/A".)	N/A

---

The Criterion Schoolhouse was constructed between 1912 and 1913, to educate children in the homesteading area near Wasco.

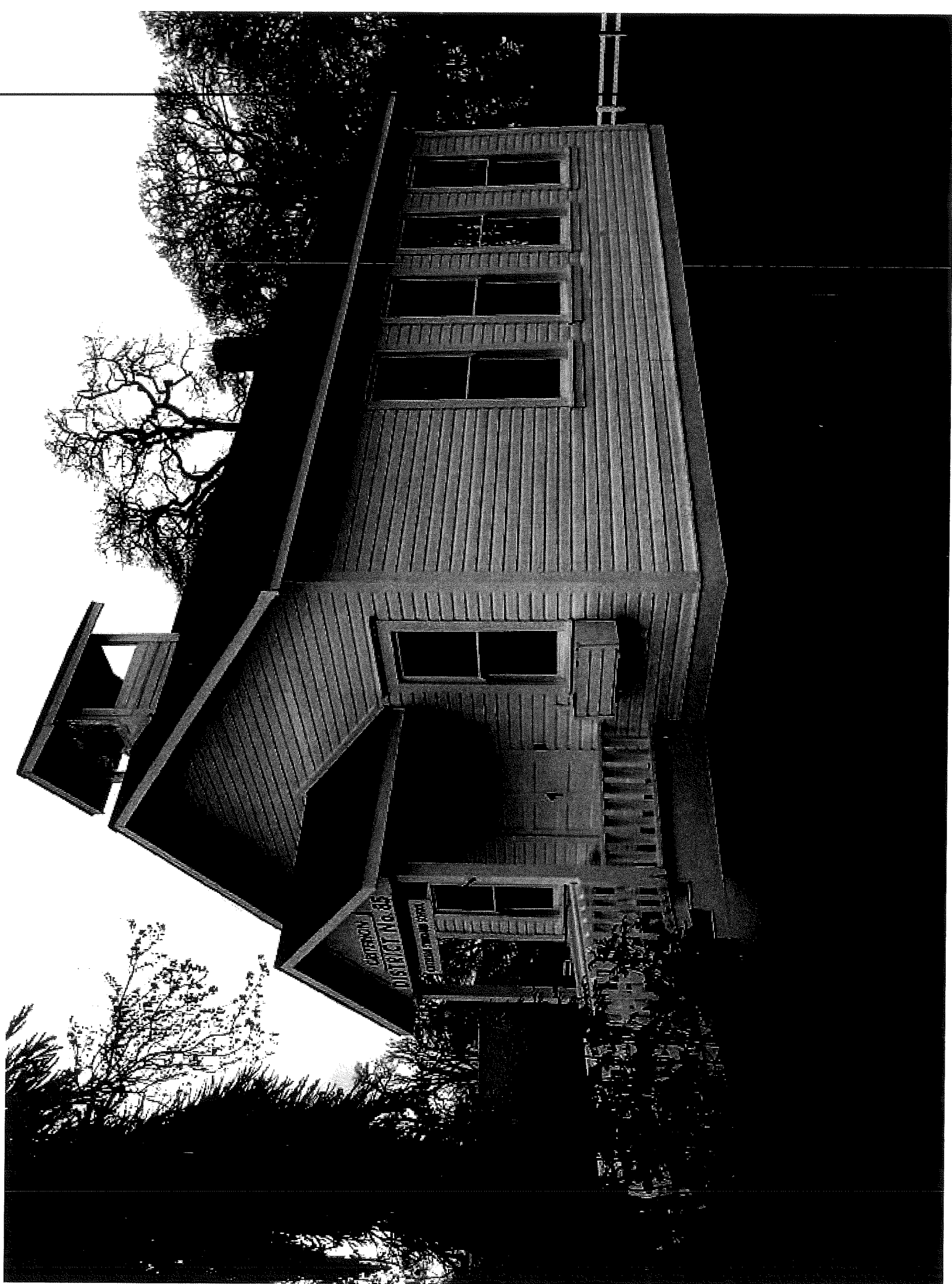
Criterion was the first school in Wasco County to be declared "standard", meaning the schoolhouse met all minimum standards set by the county superintendents. The school remained in operation until 1925, when the Dalles-California Highway was completed to Maupin.

Although the students were being bused into Maupin, the schoolhouse was still used for Sunday School, for voting, and for dances and other community events. Eventually the site was purchased by a local rancher in 1969, and the building was used for hay and grain storage.

In November of 1975, through Spring of 1976, the Oregon Department of Education searched statewide for an abandoned one-room schoolhouse to showcase an eventual Tribute to Public Education. The Criterion School was chosen because it is a typical example of an early schoolhouse. The building was in excellent condition due largely to the dry climate. The school was donated to the State of Oregon by its owners, and in July 1976, the men of the National Guard, Company B, 1249th Engineer Battalion traveled to eastern Oregon to prepare the building to be moved to Salem. The school was cut into two sections, loaded, moved onto two flatbed trailers, and traveled 200 miles to the Fairgrounds. With both labor and construction materials donated, the work progressed daily to restore the school in time for the 1976 State Fair.

All restoration and repair work performed on the Fairgrounds site has been in keeping with period appropriate materials and standards.









## Criterion School

Local Historic Resource Nomination  
Kirsten Straus and Juliana Inman  
March 2024

### *Narrative description of the proposed resource including:*

*(A) Significant features of the site to be covered by the designation; and*

*(B) Significant people and events connected with the proposed resource.*

The Criterion School is a one-room school house originally erected in Criterion, Oregon in 1912. Criterion was once located about twelve miles south of Maupin, Oregon and served the children of local ranches until 1925. Upon the completion of the Dalles-California Highway (now Hwy. 197/97) from The Dalles to Klamath Falls in 1925, the school was no longer needed as officials decided to bus students north to Maupin using the newly completed road.<sup>1</sup> In 1976, State officials moved the abandoned school house to Salem as part of the bicentennial celebrations for the state where it became an exhibit to learn about the history of education in Oregon at the State Fairgrounds.

### **Description:**

The Criterion Schoolhouse is a rectangular plan single story, raised foundation, wood frame building first constructed in 1912. This vernacular gable front building possesses a single prominent entrance topped by an open wood frame belfry and bell. The moderately pitched roof has been re-roofed with composition shingles. Historic photographs show a smooth wood shingle roof. Metal ogee gutters and downspouts have been added to the building. The simply boxed soffits and eaves are closed with smooth one inch thick painted wood. The painted horizontal wood siding is a drop siding style with a routed center groove giving the appearance of narrower horizontal siding pieces. The defining exterior feature is a front façade with a gable front roof, topped by a bell and belfry.

The entry doors consist of a pair of solid raised wood five panel doors topped by a four light glass transom band. The doors and windows have flat wood trim with small flat caps at their heads. The top of the door transom band aligns with the tops of the one over one windows flanking the small single story open sided gable roof entry portico. Currently this portico or porch has a staircase with five risers and an added switchback ramp. One side of the building is blank and has no windows, while the opposite side has four one over one windows which are symmetrically arranged to light the classroom area. The rear gable end wall has two one over one windows which align with the entry windows. A wood burning stove is centered at the rear of the classroom, with the metal flue extending directly through the roof.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Pessimism banished," *The Bulletin* (Bend, OR), July 31, 1925, p. 4 for information about date of road completion and "School bus cost told by outside school man," *Maupin Times* (Maupin, OR), March 27, 1930, p. 1 for information on timing of the bus.



Unlike many “one room schoolhouse” buildings, the Criterion Schoolhouse has a solid sidewall instead of a solid rear wall. This feature allows a large interior wall to accommodate three long and well lit chalkboards. The interior spaces have high ceilings. The Criterion Schoolhouse has an entry vestibule which protects the classroom space from winter chill. The belfry bell pull is located in this vestibule. The interior of the building is intact original painted wood paneling on walls and ceilings throughout. The interior wood floors are original.

The Criterion Schoolhouse was relocated from Maupin, Oregon to its current location at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem, Oregon in 1976. During this relocation from Maupin, the building was cut apart and reassembled on its new foundation.

This designation covers the one-room schoolhouse in its location in Salem. The historic boundary for the designation is the dripline of the building. There are no other associated buildings covered under this designation. The school is under public ownership and is available for viewing at the Oregon State Fairgrounds.

The Criterion School is associated with the history of education in Oregon and is a representative example of early school house construction in the State during the early twentieth-century. It is also associated with the history of bicentennial celebrations in Oregon and across the USA as citizens gathered to celebrate 200 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

*(1)Age. The proposed historic resource is at least 50 years old, or demonstrates exceptional significance if less than 50 years of age.*

The proposed historic resource was constructed in the summer of 1912.<sup>2</sup> As of this writing (2024), the building is 112 years old, more than double the minimum of fifty years. This criterion is met.

*(2)Significance. The proposed historic resource demonstrates significance in at least one of the following areas:*

*(A)Cultural significance. The proposed historic resource:*

---

<sup>2</sup> “Criterion has standard school,” *Weekly Chronicle* (The Dalles, OR), December 31, 1914, no page listed, as viewed in John H. Lundell, *History of School Districts & School Houses, Wasco County, Oregon* (Wasco County Historical Museum Press and John Lundell, 2009), p. 481-483.

- (i)Contributes to the character and historic identity of the neighborhood or City; or*
- (ii)Makes a contribution to the historic character of a historic resource, neighborhood, district, or the City as a whole.*

The School House is culturally significant as a resource within the Oregon State Fairgrounds. It is part of the educational section of the fair where many people can go to learn about the history of education in Oregon.

*(B)Human significance. The proposed historic resource:*

- (i)Is associated historically with the life or activities of a person, group, organization or institution that has made a significant contribution to the local community; or*
- (ii)Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local history; or*
- (iii)Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information concerning prehistory or history.*

The Criterion School is a significant resource in the City of Salem for its connections to both the history of education in the State and the history of the bicentennial celebration in Oregon and across the USA.

Newly arriving Euro-American settlers erected one-room schoolhouses all over the American West as they arrived in the mid-nineteenth century. Though many urban communities had moved on to larger schools by the twentieth-century, many small communities continued to erect one-room schoolhouses for the children of local ranchers and farmers. The one-room schoolhouse was and continues to be a symbol of newly-settled, rural life.<sup>3</sup>

Residents of the area of Criterion, south of Maupin, erected the Criterion School in 1912. In 1916, the local paper reported the school was painted white with a green roof, which received “much favorable comment.”<sup>4</sup> It was the first school in Wasco County to be declared “standard,” which meant that it met all the minimum standards set by the county superintendents.<sup>5</sup> The school operated as an educational center for the community until 1925 when the completion of the local highway made bussing children to a local, larger school in Maupin a more economical option.

---

<sup>3</sup> Paul Rocheleau, *The One-Room Schoolhouse* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2003). See this book for a general history of one-room schoolhouses in America.

<sup>4</sup> “Criterion,” *The Maupin Times*, July 14, 1916, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> “Criterion School,” *Oregon’s One and Two Teacher Schools* (Board of Directors of Oregon’s Small Schools Association, 1988), available to view in Criterion School Library.

Marie Bassoni, the woman who donated land for the Criterion School, asked that building also be used for community events.<sup>6</sup> Sunday school, literary meetings, Independence Day Celebrations, dances, and Christmas events were held at the school building.<sup>7</sup> A resident and student of the school, Vera Caufield DeHays, remembers Sunday school and church services “once in a awhile.” She also noted that one of the teachers, Miss Herrling, began a custom of serving hot cocoa or hot bouillon with lunch, one of the first teachers in the state to do so.<sup>8</sup> One debate which happened at the school in 1923, between the residents of Dist. 85 and 87, argued the benefits of the income tax bill which would soon come up for a vote. Though the paper didn’t report who won the debate, it did report that the districts had agreed to a joint Christmas tree for that year and that Loris Bonney was elected the literary society president.<sup>9</sup>

After the school closed in 1925, the building continued to be used for community events. Though, in 1926, the newspaper reported that someone had robbed the school of its desks; a reward was offered for information about the crime.<sup>10</sup> It was used off and on until 1953 when it was abandoned.<sup>11</sup> In 1969, it was used as hay and grain storage.<sup>12</sup> The owners, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Hunt, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Justesen, and Mrs. Shirley Rugg, were all from the area and agreed to donate the building when asked.<sup>13</sup>

The fate of the school would change drastically in 1976, the bicentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in America and a huge year of celebration all across the United States. The Oregon State Department of Education acquired the school after a large search for well intact schools that the department could move to the Oregon State Fairgrounds for the bicentennial celebration. According to some recollections about the process recorded in the Criterion School History binder, the state had a few requirements: the school had to be donated; it had to be small enough to be relocated to the fairgrounds; it had to have an entry and be in good enough condition to restore, and it had to have windows on one side.<sup>14</sup> These conditions were met by the Criterion School House and the state made the decision to move the schoolhouse to the State Fairgrounds in Salem, Oregon in the summer of 1976.

---

<sup>6</sup> “Criterion news... Mrs.Ella Bassoni...,” *The Maupin Times*, September 12, 1929, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Don Schmidt, “Criterion School History (incomplete preliminary draft),” self-published, July 2001, available in the Criterion School Research library.

<sup>8</sup> Schmidt, “Criterion School.”

<sup>9</sup> “Criterion,” *The Maupin Times*, November 22, 1923, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> “Reward Offered,” *The Maupin Times*, June 24, 1926, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> “Criterion School,” *Oregon State Fairgrounds*, <https://oregonstatefair.org/attractions/criterion-school/>, accessed April 2024.

<sup>12</sup> Criterion School brochure, published by Oregon Retired Educators Association and the Oregon State Fair Association, available at Criterion Library.

<sup>13</sup> “Criterion School,” *Oregon’s One and Two Teacher Schools* (Board of Directors of Oregon’s Small Schools Association, 1988), available to view in Criterion School Library.

<sup>14</sup> “History of the Schoolhouse,” notes available in Criterion School History Binder, unknown date.

In order to move the schoolhouse, the building had to be cut in half. Though administrators considered moving the building by helicopter, the logistics would not pencil out and they made the decision to move the building by highway.<sup>15</sup> In July of 1976, the National Guard, Department of Education and other volunteers dismantled the roof and carefully cut the building in half so it could be moved on trucks across the Santiam Pass.<sup>16</sup> The school had to reroute around several overpasses and a few electrical wires had to be raised so the school could pass safely to the State capital.<sup>17</sup> Some newspapers reported that officials would transport the woodshed and outhouse with the building.<sup>18</sup> The outhouse was installed near the schoolhouse, and the woodshed was stored at the School for the Deaf. The outhouse deteriorated and was eventually removed, and the woodshed was discarded at an unknown date.<sup>19</sup> The seam where the schoolhouse was cut in half is still visible.

Once the building arrived in Salem, volunteers from many organizations donated time and materials to restore the building to good condition, including rebuilding the bell tower at the top. The work happened relatively quickly as the building was ready to host visitors just about a month later, in August of 1976.<sup>20</sup> Some of the volunteers, like Sharon and Frank Case of the Education Department, were painting the school up until the day before the fair opened!<sup>21</sup> Because of all the volunteers involved, the cost to the state to move the school over 200 miles was estimated at around only \$1,200.<sup>22</sup>

Despite efforts to move the school, the fairgrounds had not necessarily agreed to allow the school to stay there permanently. In 1976, newspapers reported that officials had allowed the school to stay another year, and that they “didn’t want to encourage other organizations to seek to establish shrines on the fairgrounds.”<sup>23</sup> However, events at the school went on, including the 1977 Oregon State Fairgrounds Spelling Bee.<sup>24</sup> In the spring of 1978, the building moved again, to its final placement, still on the Oregon State Fairgrounds.<sup>25</sup>

The school remains as an example of early settlement-era education in rural Oregon communities, and a symbol of the enormous effort that went into planning and celebrating

---

<sup>15</sup> “Move by copter?,” *History* photo documentation of the school project, posted in the front hall of the Criterion Schoolhouse, viewed and documented by author in 2023.

<sup>16</sup> “Move and Restoration,” photo documentation of school project, posted in the front hall of the Criterion Schoolhouse, viewed and documented by author in 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Jacobs, “Saving a rare species,” July 9, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> “Schoolhouse made ready for journey,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, July 12, 1976, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Paul Eck, October 29, 2024.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Gloria Bledsoe, “It’s hunting season, and the hunting stories come out of hiding,” Capital life editorial, *Statesman Journal*, October 13, 1980, p. 16.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> “School to stay on fairgrounds,” *Albany Democrat-Herald*, December 17, 1976, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> “56 in fair spelling bee,” *Corvallis Gazette-Times*, September 3, 1977, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*



America's bicentennial. It is connected to both the development and implementation of early American education in rural communities, an event that drastically changed education in the American West, as well as the large-scale celebration of America's bicentennial, a nation-wide celebration of all things Americana.

*(C)Architectural significance. The proposed historic resource:*

*(i)Is significant as an example of a particular architectural style, building type, structural type, or method of construction; or*

*(ii)Is the work of an acknowledged master or architect, or possesses high artistic values.*

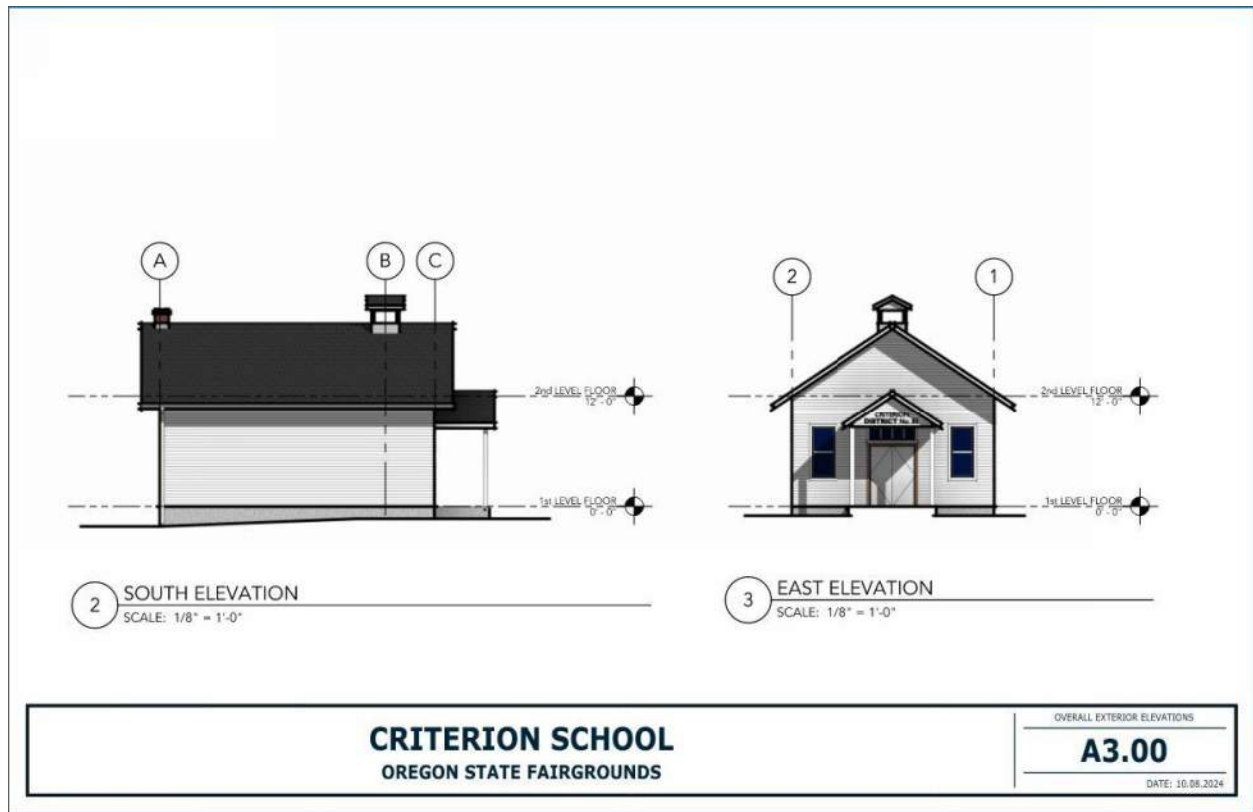
The Criterion Schoolhouse is an excellent example of an increasingly rare vernacular one room schoolhouse building. Very few of these buildings still exist in a well-preserved and unaltered form. The asymmetrical arrangement of windows allowing for continuous chalk boards along one side of the school room is unusual and distinctive.

*(3)Integrity. The proposed historic resource retains sufficient original design characteristics, craft work, or material to serve as an example of an architectural period, significant building type or structural type, or recognized architectural style.*

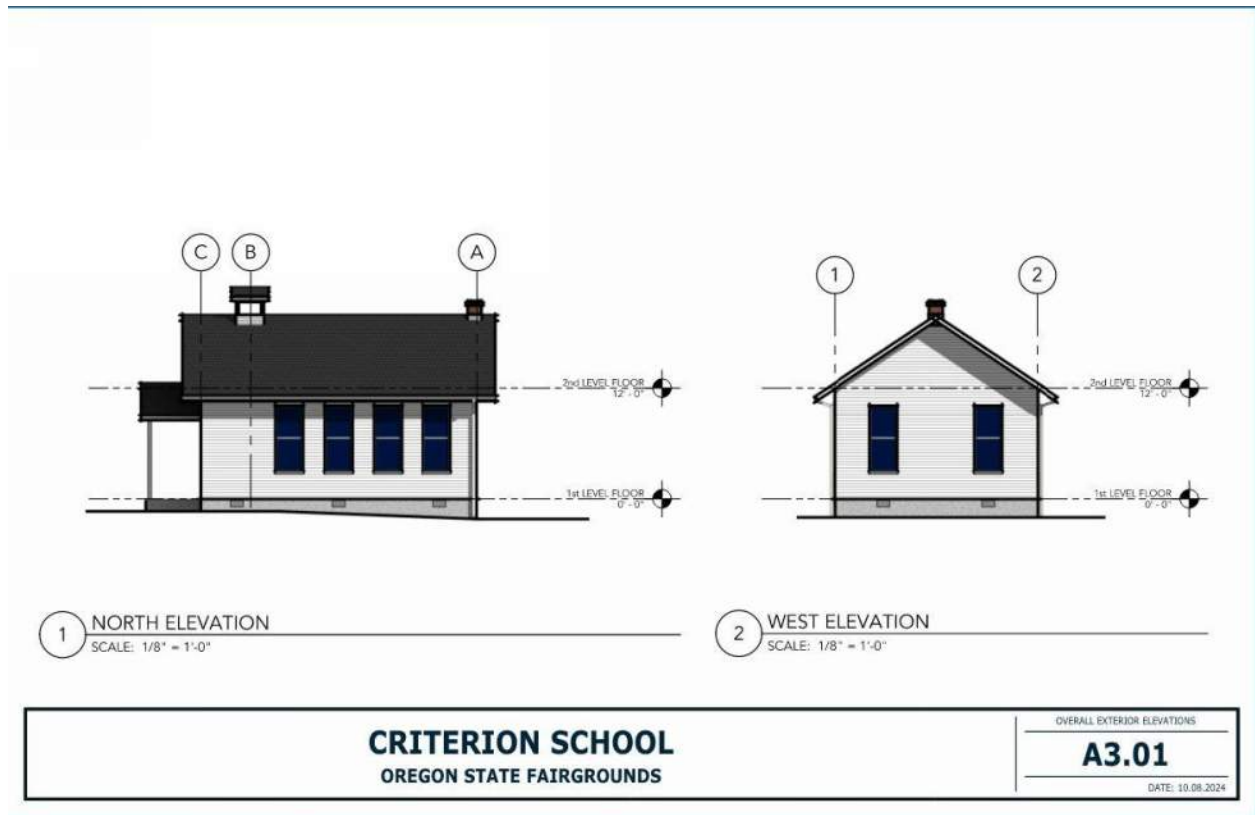
The school retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The school no longer retains integrity of location or setting as it has been moved from its original location. Although the setting is different, the current setting does allow natural light to enter the interior and demonstrate the manner in which the windows were arranged to use daylight to facilitate learning by making the chalkboards visible without glare. .

Despite the removal of the building from its original location, the school retains overall integrity necessary for eligibility as a local resource in Salem's Register of Historic Places. Especially because of the school's connection to the bicentennial celebration, the school remains a well-intact example of early educational buildings, as well as a symbol of the effort put into the celebration of America's birthday.

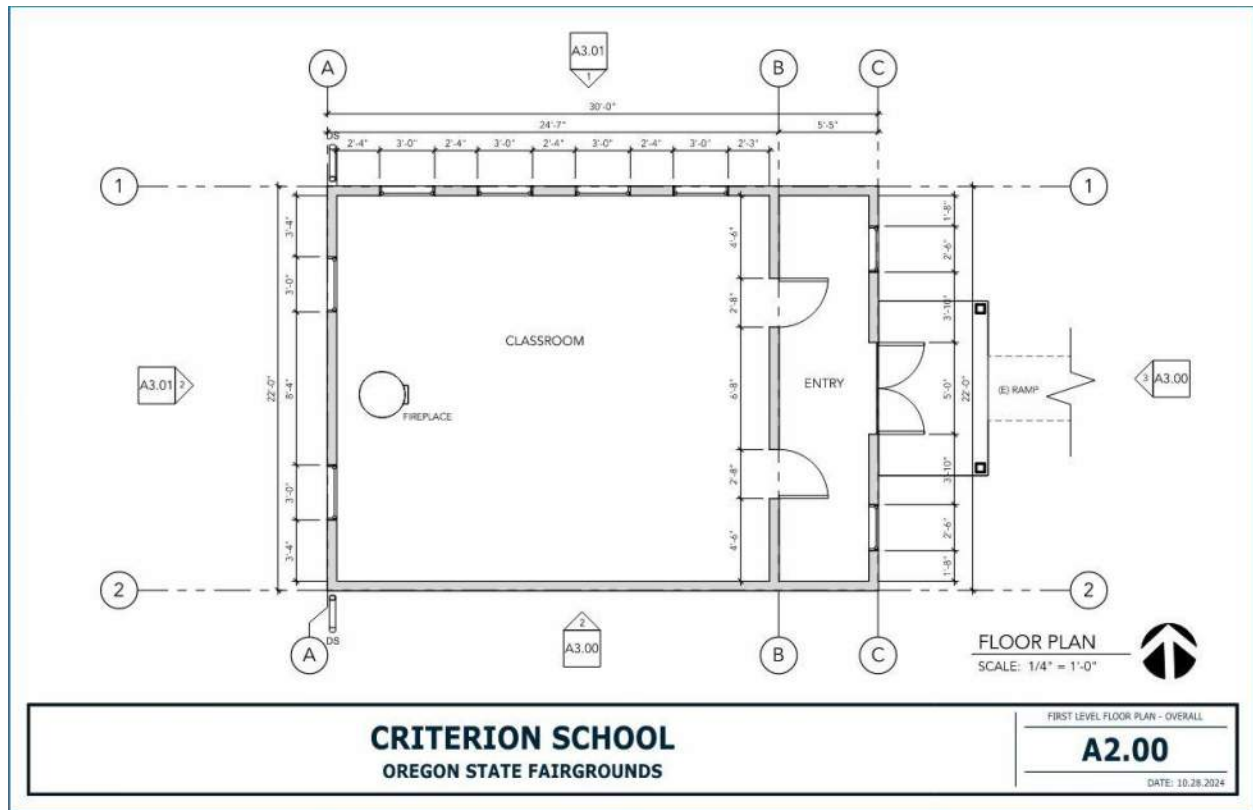
**PLANS & ELEVATIONS:**



Elevation 1: South and East Elevations of the Criterion Schoolhouse. Source: Russell Schutte.



Elevation 2: North and West Elevations of the Criterion Schoolhouse. Source: Russell Schutte.



Plan 1: Floor Plan of the Criterion Schoolhouse. Source: Russell Schutte.



**HISTORIC PHOTOS:**

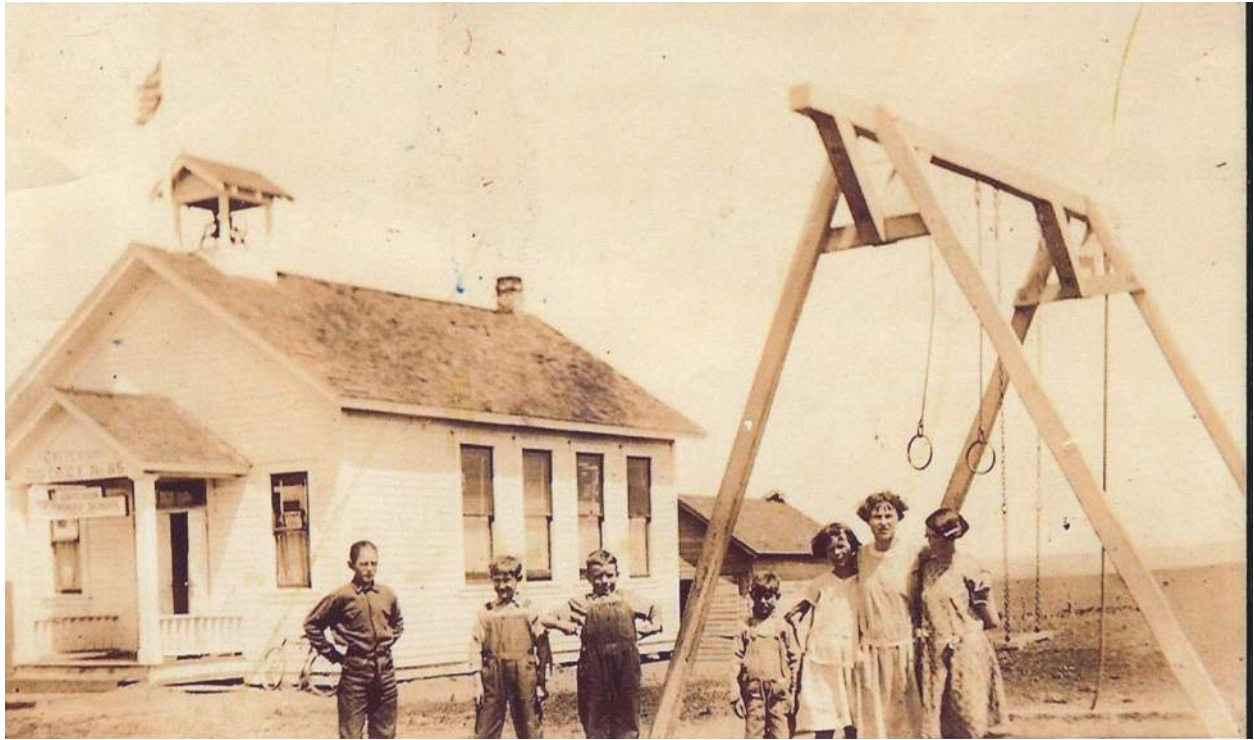


Image 1: Undated image of the Criterion Schoolhouse with playground equipment in foreground.  
Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



Image 2: Undated image of the Criterion Schoolhouse showing outbuildings, windmill, and site.  
Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



Image 3: Undated image of the Criterion Schoolhouse with playground equipment in foreground.  
Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



#### MOVE BY COPTER?

The Department of Education considered the idea of moving the building by air over the mountains, but the distance (200 miles) and hazards were too great. The National Guard loaned a helicopter for a preliminary inspection trip to the school site. Helping calculate the airlift are Capt. David Parsley, Capt. Herb Simms, August Koenig (Salem), Sgt. Richard McKown, State Sen. Ken Jernstedt (Hood River), Frank Case (Salem), Lt. Doug Pritt.

Image 4: Newspaper clipping of helicopter visit to the Criterion Schoolhouse site. Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



Image 5: Undated image of Criterion Schoolhouse with roof removed. Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.





Image 6: Image of Criterion Schoolhouse cut in half and braced for transport. Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



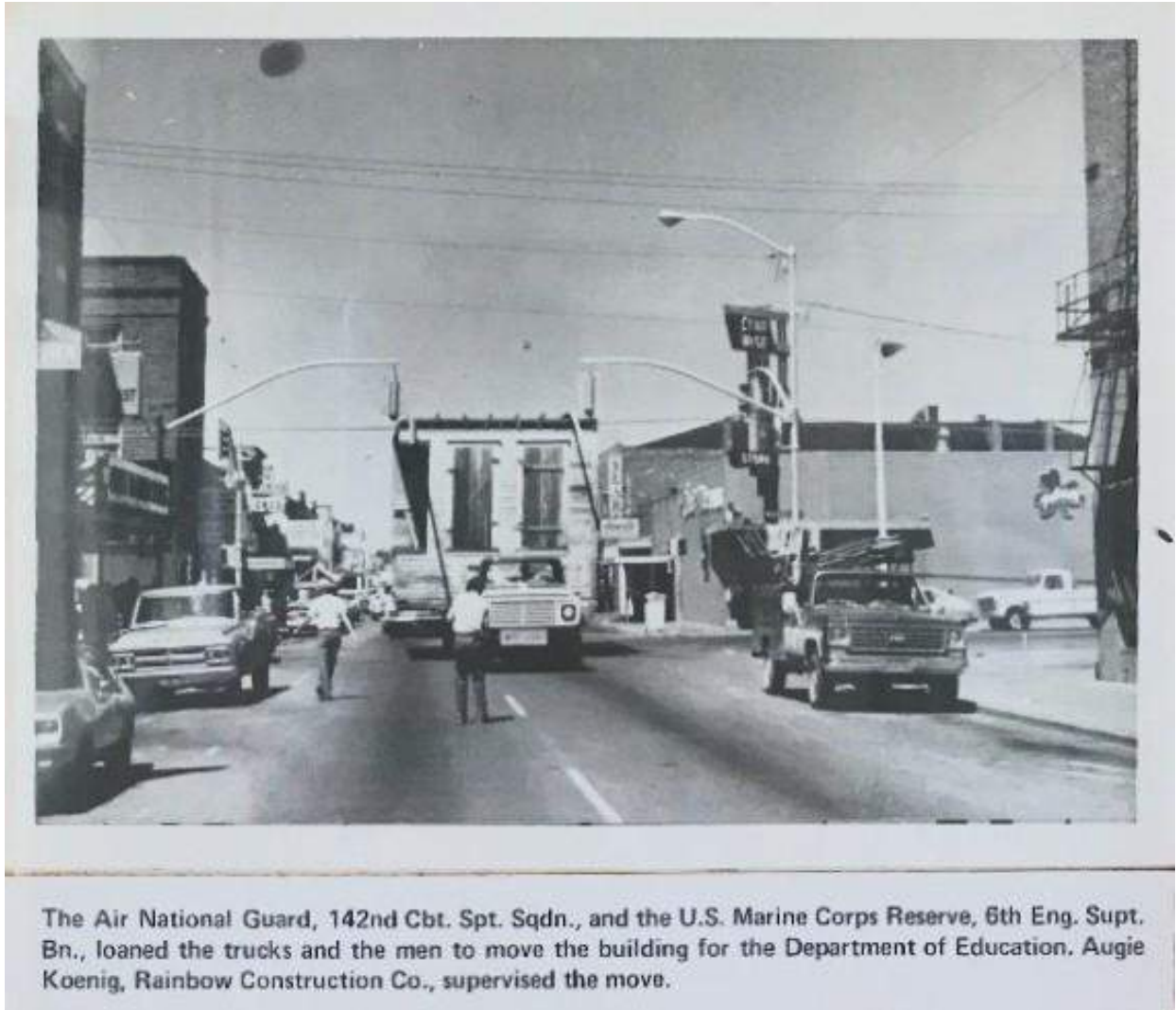


Image 7: Image of Criterion Schoolhouse being relocated by truck to the Oregon State Fairgrounds. Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



### End of Journey

Old Criterion School heads for State Fairgrounds via Lancaster Drive NE, ending 200-mile trek that began in Maupin in North Central Oregon. The school, built in

1911 and last used in 1953, will be on display during the fair in August as the Bicentennial project. (Statesman Journal photo by Russ Strohmeier).

Image 8: A view of the Criterion Schoolhouse as it reaches Salem. (Photo by Russ Strohmeier, *Statesman Journal*, July 17, 1976, p. 4).



Image 9: Image of Criterion Schoolhouse after relocation to the Oregon State Fairgrounds.  
Source: Criterion Schoolhouse Committee (Oregon State Fair Foundation) image collection.



**CURRENT PHOTOS:**



Image 10: East elevation of Criterion Schoolhouse. Source: Kirsten Straus 2023.





Image 11: Image of Criterion Schoolhouse taken from the northeast. Source: Ryan Prochaska 2023.



Image 12: Image of Criterion Schoolhouse taken from the southwest. Source: Ryan Prochaska 2023.





Image 13: South elevation of Criterion Schoolhouse. Source: Kirsten Straus 2023.



Image 14: Detail of structural system taken during repairs made by Clatsop Community College volunteers. Source: Ryan Prochaska 2023.



Image 15: Interior image taken from the northeast corner of the classroom . Source: Ryan Prochaska 2023.





Image 16: Interior image taken from the southeast corner of the classroom . Source: Ryan Prochaska 2023.



Image 17: Interior image of the east wall of the classroom . Source: Kristi Jenkins-Smith 2023.



Image 18: Interior image of the door to the entry vestibule . Source: Kirsten Straus 2023.