Clark County, Washington
Historic Preservation Commission

Clark County Heritage Register Nomination Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. **This form is similar but not exact to the National Register of Historic Places nomination form. Some sections of the National Register form were not applicable to the local register therefore were not included. When using the National Register Bulletin 16A to fill out the form, look for the section names for information on completing the specific section.** 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name **Luepke Florist**

Other names/site number Luepke Flowers and Finds

2. Location

street & number 1300 Washington Street ____ not for publication

city or town Vancouver ____ vicinity

State Washington code WA county Clark code 11 zip code 98660

3. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
- ___ public-local
- ___ public-State
- ___ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box

- X building(s)
- ___ district
- ___ site
- ___ structure
- ___ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the Clark County Heritage Register

0

4. Owner Consent for Nomination, Designation and Listing

I (we) consent ☐ do not consent ☐ to the nomination, and designation of the above property on the Clark County Heritage Register. I (we) also certify that I am/we are the legal owner(s) of the above property.

Owner signature ____ Date 5/19/15

Owner signature ____ Date

5. Functions or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/TRADE	Specialty store

6. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof

other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

Luepke Florist is an L-shaped Moderne building set at the northwest corner of the intersection of Washington and 13th streets in downtown Vancouver, Washington one block west of Main Street and a block south of the major east-west corridor (a couplet formed by W. 15th and Mill Plain Boulevard) connecting Interstate 5 to the Port of Vancouver. Commercial buildings of a variety of sizes provide an urban context, yet the building to the north (rear) of the building is a small Craftsman home which is now a beauty salon and the buildings across Washington to the east are also former residences which are now in commercial use (the c. 1913 Foster Hidden House, and c. 1885 Lowell Hidden House, both on the National Register of Historic Places). Directly south of the building and occupying the entire block is St. James Cathedral (built 1885, and listed in the Washington Heritage Register) and Rectory. A c. 1970 brick office building is across the intersection to the southeast. A c. 1940 building is to the west on the same block.

The 1.5 story concrete building designed by Donald Stewart was built in two separate stages, with the original portion, at the corner of 13th and Washington, being completed in 1937, and the addition to the west being completed c. 1945. A major remodel took place in 1959 to mark the 50th anniversary of the business. The horizontality, smooth wall surfaces, flat roof, curving lines, and round window make the building typically Moderne, a style seen in Washington state from the mid-1930s to early 1940s which derived from industrial design trends which were determinedly sleek and evoked

motion. The level of integrity is high, and amount of alteration reflects the normal changes of a business updating itself over time.

Original Building – The original portion measures approximately 54' east-west and 38' north-south and has the southwest corner sliced off to form a dramatic diagonal façade that is about 13' 9 " wide and has a large, central round plate glass window that is about 7' wide. The round window is flanked by large round lights on slender vertical metal supports which date to the 1959 remodel. Prominent neon signage stating the name of the business is set above the cornice line, which is outlined with a band of metal on the east and south facades. The word "flowers" is outlined in neon letters on both sides of the central "Luepke" and rose sign.

The diagonal sign façade is flanked by recessed plate glass and aluminum swinging entry doors with transoms and side lights which date to the 1959 remodel, and large original plate glass display windows about 11' 8 " wide which provide equal quality viewing from both the interior and exterior. The large rectangular display windows are topped by curvilinear marquees which were orginally clad in dark metal with linear chrome accents and are now clad in corrugated metal. On the south elevation, a 16-light steel sash window measuring approximately 4'6" x 5' 8" is located to the west of the large display window. The central four panes of the window open; the remainder are fixed. Further to the west is a wooden entry door set flush with the wall plane and accessed by one concrete step. The door is formed of diagonal boards and has a small diamond-shaped window set in the upper portion. Originally, there was a small marquee as above the display windows. Today, there is a small shed roof. Two lines of narrow wooden boards wrap around the original portion of the building above (like a belt course) and below the windows (like a water table). Originally, these were chrome strips. Six semi-circular cut-outs in the concrete sidewalk allowed for exterior plantings. They are not in use at present.

Interior – original building:
Approximately 2/3 of the open floor plan is occupied by a shop area to the east, while most of the west 1/3 is occupied by a work room which is mostly open to the rest of the space. The southwest corner has a doorway to the addition, a small lavatory, and wooden stairs to the basement and up to the half-story office. (The stairs and lavatory were in opposite positions prior to the 1959 remodel.)

The eastern shop area has its original concrete floor (covered with vinyl during the 1959 remodel and later removed) and walls, and an accoustical tile ceiling dating to the 1950 remodel. (The original ceiling was a fiberboard product called Fir-tex, which was used extensively in the building). The north and east walls are now sheathed about ¾ from the floor up toward the ceiling with white subway tile and black grout laid in a diagonal pattern. An original (currently non-functioning) radiator has been preserved in the northeast corner. The north wall was originally bare except for a large round mirror. During the 1959 remodel, it was covered with redwood walls and shelving which was recently removed. The large globular light fixtures illuminating the southern portion of the room date from 1959. The silver metal flattened disk lights in the north portion of the room are original to the building but were removed at an unknown date and kept on site. They were re-installed recently.

Low display pieces sheathed in new black plastic laminate extend out into the sales space from each window. The one at the round window is curvilinear and, with two levels, appears like a rounded stage. Decorative wooden display shelves of varying sizes line the walls flanking the round window. The east window's display piece is original but the south one dates from the 1959 remodel, although there was a display surface and shelving there previously. A curvilinear movable counter designed by Stewart stands on the sales floor. It has been re-surfaced with silver plastic laminate on the sides, and black plastic laminate on the top.

The Marmoleum-floored work room, which measures approximately 19′ x 21′, has concrete and plywood walls and is delineated from the sales floor by the refrigerated cool room on the east side, and by two counter/shelving units on the south side. One of the counters which is rectangular and measures approximately 7 ′ long x 2′ wide extends from the wall to an opening about 3′ wide, beyond which stands another unit which is about 4′6″ long and 2′ wide. The western end of the second unit is squared off, while the eastern one is curvilinear. They are both sheathed in the same laminate as the movable counter unit. Shelving, counters, and a non-original utility sink are located on the west wall. Pebble-finished plastic sheaths the wall near the sink. A large central table provides the primary work surface and is readily visible to customers. Steel sash windows on the north wall allow natural light to enter.

A large refrigerated curvilinear cool room/display case measuring approximately 12′ 9″ by 14′ 8 ″ stands in the northwest corner. The double-plate insulating glass sheets are placed at slight angles to one another to form an overall curving display window. (This technique was repeated by Stewart on an exterior window in his 1941 Pepsi Cola Bottling Plant.) An original door on the east side near the north wall was removed at an unknown date. Sole access is now through a large metal door from the work room. The storage portion of the cool room has shelving on the north, east, and west walls and a roof-mounted refrigeration unit. The southeast flower display area is accessed through wooden doors inside.

A small mezzanine office located upstairs has wooden walls with built-in storage on the east wall and two sets of built-in small flush cabinets on the north wall. Five small rectangular 3-light clerestory windows light the space from the roof, and there is a small window on the east side. The north side of the office has an opening through which one can observe the work room below. A door on the west side leads to the ½ story of the addition. The existing blueprints do not indicate whether the office is original, or, as is likely, was added later, as Stewart produced plans in July, 1942 to change the stairs to their current location and also included office window details.

A basement under the original portion has a concrete floor and walls. Currently used for storage, it has wooden shelving and a small closet with a glass and wood door.

c. 1945 Addition

The rectangular concrete garden shop and warehouse addition to the west measures approximately 106′ deep and 27′ wide and contrasts somewhat with the original portion but flows from it and does not overwhelm it. The street-side shop area measures about 40′ x 27′ while the warehouse to the rear (north) measures about 66′ x 27′. The original plans provided for an upstairs office and conservatory

to the west to be added later, which they were, though at an unknown date. The conservatory has not been in use for a number of years and has not been maintained. It will be removed.

The primary façade on West 13th has a grand 1 ½-story recessed entrance which projects slightly above the roof of the original building. A central multi-light display bay window at the ground level is surmounted by a block of nine structural-wire glass windows flanked by steel and glass entry doors. All are surrounded by a squared projecting concrete arch with a rounded profile which is flanked by large vertical display windows to the west and east.

The west façade has a large 16'-wide overhead metal receiving door at the north end, a centrally-placed man door, and a row of three 9-light rectangular steel sash windows set high in the wall plane.

Interior – The ground floor is divided into two main spaces – the shop area to the south, and a storage and receiving warehouse area to the north which is set at a slightly lower grade and is accessed by a ramp.

The first floor interior of the addition which correlates with the shop portion is currently under construction. The original small fish pool, two central display counters, and two rear wrapping counters were removed at unknown dates.

The mezzanine half-story office correlates with the shop space below and is currently used for storage. Wooden dividers delineate an office area on the east wall. The north wall has a bank of wooden shelves and cabinets underneath the windows. The windows on the south wall are flanked by two storage closets. This area is intended for office usage in the future.

7. Statement of Significance

Applicable Clark County Heritage Register Criteria

X	1	It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state, or local history.
X	2	It embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of design or construction, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
X	3	It is an outstanding work of a designer, builder, or architect who has made a substantial contribution to their field.
X	4	It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the county's history.
X	5	It is associated with the lives of persons significant in national, state, or local history
	6	It has yielded or may be likely to yield important archaeological information related to history or prehistory.
	7	It is an historic building or cultural resource removed from its original location but which is significant for architectural value, or association with an historic person or event, or prehistory.
	8	It is a birthplace of grave of a prehistoric or historical Figure of outstanding importance and is the only surviving structure or site associated with that person.
	9	It is a cemetery or burial site which derives its primary signifcance from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events, or cultural patterns.
	10	It is a reconstructed building that has been executed in a historically accurate manner on the original site.

11 It is a creative and unique example of folk architecture
and design created by persons not formally trained in the architectural or design professions, and which does not fit into formal architectural or historical categories.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)
Commerce
Architecture

Period of Significance
1937-1969

Significant Dates
1937, c. 1945, 1959

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion 2 is marked above)
Rudolph A. Luepke (1907-1969)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Donald J. Stewart
William Donald Cassady

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property.)

Summary Statement of Significance

Luepke Florist is eligible for the Clark County Heritage Register for its direct association with local civic and commercial leader Rudolph Luepke, and for its locally-excellent representation of Moderne architecture, created by locally-prominent architect Donald J. Stewart.

Narrative

The Early History of Floristry - Literary naturalist Loren Eiseley claimed in *The Immense Journey* that humans would not exist had not flowers evolved – the flowers which lead to, for example, fruit and seeds packed with enough nutrition to support human life and influence the beginning of agriculture. Certainly, the use of flowers for ornament of self and spaces, in funerary and other rituals, and for gift purposes dates back millennia and was worldwide in scope. From the celebratory wreaths and garlands favored by ancient Greeks and Romans, to Egyptians engaging in floral offerings to deities,

flowers held meaning for cultures around the globe and influenced life and arts in innumerable ways. The famous Shanidar Cave Paleolithic burial with flowers in northeastern Iraq (Kurdistan), dates back possibly as much as 60,000 years, and is an example of even primitive humanoids likely engaging in floral ritual. Pollen analysis indicates that the body of a 40-year old Neanderthal man appears to have been entombed purposefully with a garland around his head, and with hollyhocks, ragworts, grape hyacinths, yarrow, and Barnaby's thistle next to and underneath his body – flowers typical of the area in June.

Certainly, cultivation of flowers has been a common practice for centuries around the world. The Dutch are given credit for the development of greenhouses in the 1600s. Although the term "florist" today refers to a person who arranges and sells flowers and ornamental plants professionally, the word had a more general meaning in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it was also used to mean someone who appreciated flowers and engaged in skilled gardening. For example, artisan laborers residing and working in London's east end area known as Spitalfields were especially regarded for their botanical pursuits, whether in window boxes, indoor and outdoor pots, yards, and roof gardens, or on larger rented garden allotments. Growing of flowers for personal enjoyment, competitions, and for sale continued into the 1840s when residential pressures overcame garden land.

Cut flower production began in the United States as early as the mid-1700s with the first American greenhouses. The first American florist, in the contemporary sense of the word, may have been a man whose name is not recorded but who lived in New York in the late 1700s and is known to have sold decorative cut flowers and containers, including a "large bunch of flowers for table" which might have been a commissioned arrangement. Certainly, Jacob Sperry, a Swiss immigrant who operated a garden and greenhouse in New York in the late 1700s, sold bouquets and decorative plants. The popularity of gardening and creating arrangements grew over time as both avocational enthusiasts and professional engaged in horticultural pursuits on small and large scales. The 1800s were a time of great growth in the commercial availability of flowers, and Queen Victoria's well-known fondness for them helped keep them popular. The increasing professionalization of the field in the United States result in the formation of the Society of American Florists in 1884, an outgrowth of the American Association of Nurserymen, Florists, and Seedsmen. Although created to provide hail insurance for members, the organization evolved into providing educational opportunities and cooperative marketing for its members. The organization created telegraphic delivery in 1892, a practice which grew into today's FTD.

Luepke Family History – According to family and other records, Rudolph Luepke came from a long line of family involved in the horticultural world. His great-grandfather, Charles Leopold Luepke, worked in the florist trade in Germany. His grandfather Robert T. worked as a horticulturist at the Royal Palace Gardens in Potsdam. Robert was born in December 1846, 1847 or 1848 in Germany, and emigrated to America in 1882, leaving Hamburg on August 23 aboard the *Wieland*, and traveling on the Zwishchendeck, or, in steerage. His ethnicity was listed as Prussian, residence as Berlin, and occupation as gardener. He arrived in New York City September 7, 1882. Records consulted did not indicate whether or not his wife, and Rudy's grandmother Minna/Mina Hermann Luepke, born November, 1857 in Saxonia, Germany, traveled with him. Rudy's father Frank Robert, was born in Germany in 1876, but records do not indicate when he emigrated. While project research did not indicate specific reasons for the family's decision to emigrate, they were part of a large group of

almost three million Germans who left their country during Bismarck's service as minister president from 1862-1890.

Robert and Minna Luepke fit the mold of many of the emigrants from Germany at that time – they were living in the northeast portion of the country, were from a family which made its living working for others at a wage with small prospect of saving enough to obtain land for themselves, were Catholic, and chose the United States as their destination. Horticultural knowledge from Europe was sought after in Victorian America, and the Luepkes may have been aware of this as they considered job possibilities abroad.

Robert was in Houston, Texas by 1895 but arrived there at an unknown date, which is also true of Minna. (It is possible that they lived in Ohio for a time.) By 1896, he was already in operation as a florist, as the *Houston Daily Post* noted that he had over 2000 chrysanthemums in full bloom and ready for viewing. From 1897 on, he is listed in the city directory as a florist through at least 1920. Robert became a citizen in 1882, and Minna in 1887, although they do not appear in any federal census until 1900, by which time they were recorded as living in Houston and having a floral business there. Frank was not listed as living with them, although they had two boarders, one of whom was employed as a saleswoman in the business.

Family records show that Frank married Edla Mathilda Jacobson, who was born in Michigan in 1889 to parents who immigrated from Sweden. They were living in Texarkana, Texas in May, 1908 when Rudolph, "Rudy," was born.

The Luepkes Arrive in Vancouver – Frank moved to Vancouver in 1909 after first checking out Portland, Oregon. Family lore holds that Frank was intending to travel to Vancouver, British Columbia but took the Vancouver, Washington street car instead and liked what he saw as that was a time of population growth in the town. He first sold flowers from a push cart downtown, and brought his family from Texas soon after his arrival. He acquired or built business premises fairly quickly at essentially the current location. By 1910, the family was living at 209 W. 14th behind the shop and greenhouse at 206 W. 13th. Daughter Gertrude was born in December of 1911. The earliest shop was a modest gable-front wood-framed building with a central front door framed by large windows. The wood-frame, gable-front greenhouse adjacent to the east had glass walls and roof set above low wooden walls of horizontal boards.

The area where the Luepke business was established was a mix of residential and commercial, although of course the enormous brick cathedral was a major physical presence. The Luepkes built their shop and greenhouse – the latter about twice as big as the shop – on what had been a vacant lot to the west of a residence at the corner of Washington and 13th, and to the east of a carpentry and paint shop. Initially, they had one competitor, Eugene Zimmer, but he appears to have only been in operation since 1907, according to city directories. Zimmer and the Luepkes were soon joined by Abram Axtell in town, and also Fritz Braun and Mrs. D.L. Russell in Washougal. As the decade went on, the city directory began differentiating between florists and nurserymen and showed that the quantity of the latter were outstripping florists over time. In 1912, Axtell and Zimmer appeared to have left the floral business, but a new competitor, Andrew Hanson, had established a presence at F

and 27th in what is now the Shumway neighborhood. Camas had gained a florist, Fred Palmer; Mrs. Russell continued in Washougal.

The Vancouver floral scene continued to grow into the late 1920s, by which time there were five florists in town, including J.E. Larson, which would remain in business into the 1990s. Some nursery operations were also close at hand to the downtown population center, such as Villa Nursery, at 10th and Washington, and the Clark County Nursery at 2301 Main, and presumably consumers bought plants from them, and perhaps cut flowers if not arrangements. Economic conditions, with plenty of jobs and burgeoning construction, seemed to warrant the growth. The Evergreen Highway (State Route 14) was built between 1921-1926. The new Shumway Junior High and the Evergreen Hotel opened in 1928, and Clark General Hospital at 33rd and Main in 1929 to serve a population which had grown to 19,000.

The Luepkes were operating a very successful business which had expanded by 1928 over much of the block. They had built several additional greenhouses, including one where the dwelling to the west formerly stood, added a boiler house for the greenhouses, and were cultivating extensive floral gardens. By this time, Rudy had joined the business as a florist.

Frank died in September of 1930, and was buried at Park Hill Cemetery. Edla, Rudy, and Gertrude carried on the business, with Gertrude also serving as a florist. Rudy married Louise Zumsteg (1910-1990), a local dance instructor, in 1933.

Gertrude married Tilden Randall (1912-1963) in 1934. The firm joined the Florist's Telegraph Delivery (FTD – now Florist's Transworld Delivery) network and advertised cut flowers, floral designs, and potted plants. Edla died in 1936; Rudy and Gertrude continued to operate the store jointly.

New Store Constructed - A fire in the shop on July 2, 1937 was a major stimulus to build the current building. The small blaze was thought to have been started by a prowler as the building had been entered and sales tax receipts rifled through several times recently. A relatively small amount of damage occurred, although many flowers were wilted, but the construction decision was made quickly, as architect Donald J. Stewart had the plans done by the end of August, and was advertising for contractors to bid on the project the following September. Even given that the first set of bids were rejected, construction was completed around December 2, and the grand opening was held on December 4. In addition to Rudy and Gertrude, the firm employed two other florists full-time, and also had a part-time employee.

This type of speed was probably possible due to labor being readily available as few construction jobs were underway during the heart of the Great Depression, and many of them were very small. Building permits were being issued at a higher rate than in 1936 – but the overall total value was lower than the previous year. The local paper, the *Columbian*, contained far more notices of work on minor remodelling jobs, such as a roof replacement or a small addition, than construction of an entire building. Presumably, too, the Luepkes were trying to complete the building prior to winter weather.

An existing dwelling was demolished to create space for the new store. Local businesses supplied the construction and most of the materials, as was the intent of the owners. The firms involved were

Johnson Construction Company as general contractor, Vancouver Sign Company, Olson Electric Service, Columbia Feed and Fuel Co. (cement, lath, plaster, and steel), Vancouver Sheet Metal Works, Paulsen Plumbing, Sparks Hardware (builders hardware), and R.J. Odne (painting and decorating). One Portland company, Baldwin Refrigeration, was probably selected over someone from Vancouver because the refrigerated storage unit was the largest in the region, and perhaps required installation expertise not available in Vancouver.

The 28-year old firm occupied the old shop during construction, but it was razed after the move to the new quarters to make way for a new, much larger greenhouse with 10,000 feet of glass. In contrast, the old greenhouse, which was retained, had only 400 square feet of glass. The *Columbian* hailed the new cast-concrete building as "one of the most modern of its type in the Pacific Northwest" and declared it "strikingly modern in its design and appointments." Specifically noted were the unusual arrangement of the display windows and design which allowed for equal viewing from both interior and exterior, modern indirect lighting, the large, intricate neon sign, and the chrome-trimmed marquees. It may seem surprising that such a relatively elaborate building was constructed in the 1930s. However, the floral business was less impacted by the Great Depression than some others. Many practitioners cut wages and prices to survive. Lower prices for flowers meant that they made a popular, affordable gift, and sales typically increased as the decade continued. Lower labor costs overall meant that greenhouse construction was relatively inexpensive, and businesses could expand their output close to home. The Luepke store, with its curving Moderne lines, bold signage, sleek chrome trim, displays that curved out into the shop, glamorous refrigerated display, and modern lighting fixtures inside and for displays was on the cutting edge of 1930s floral shops. Given Rudy's civic boosterism, it seems logical that the shop was also meant to inspire optimism among Vancouver residents and downtown businesses.

Architect and Architecture – Spokane native Donald J. Stewart, FAIA (1895-1996) became a registered architect in 1931 in Washington, after education at Washington State College (now university), military service as an engineer, work at Washington State and with various architects including Thompson and Churchill and Benjamin Wister Morris in New York City, A.E. Doyle in Portland, and John Graham in Seattle, and European travel. Beginning an architectural practice in 1931 Vancouver was an uphill battle due to the Great Depression, but his career developed to make him one of the city's two most prolific and prominent architects, along with Day Hilborn, of the twentieth century. In just the same year of the Luepke commission, the prolific Stewart also designed the Sparks Motors Building at 6th and Broadway (also Moderne), prepared remodelling plans for Sparks Hardware at 607 Main, and the Elks Lodge, additions to the Vancouver Ice and Coal Company, a new commercial building near 14th and Main, and several residences. He also was elected chair of the Vancouver Planning Commission, and received an award for the design of a cold storage plant near Tillamook, Oregon.

Among Stewart's solo or joint efforts with other architects were designs in Vancouver for Hudson's Bay and Vancouver high schools, and Hough Elementary School, Deer Hall, the Boy's Dormitory and Hunter Gymnasium at the Washington School for the Deaf. Works outside Vancouver include Camas (Washington) High School, the Skamania County Courthouse in Stevenson, Washington, and Portland, Oregon's First Methodist Church and the Blue Cross Building. Stewart considered his most

significant accomplishment, however, to be the design for Vancouver's First Presbyterian Church, dedicated in 1959, of which he was a parishioner.

Volunteer activities included service on the Vancouver and Clark County planning commissions, and as president and long-time member of the Fort Vancouver Historical Society. In the latter capacity, he was also a supporter of plans to reconstruct Fort Vancouver. Stewart's civic-mindedness was also evidenced by his and wife Elizabeth's donation of 12 acres of land to the city in 1974 for use as a park.

The most notable other example of Moderne architecture remaining in Vancouver is the 1941 Pepsi Cola Bottling Plant by Stewart, although there are several significant buildings of the general period which fall more clearly in the realm of the Art Deco style. Day Hilborn's 1941 Clark County Courthouse and 1936 Kiggins Theater complex, are among these, as is the c. 1934 Vancouver Telephone Exchange by Albertson, Wilson, and Richardson – all of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Vancouver in the late 1930s and early 1940s – The modern floral shop was constructed during a time of preparation in Vancouver for a future that was unknown but rapidly unfolding on a national and international scale. President Franklin Roosevelt visited the city in September of 1937 while on a trip inspecting construction of the Columbia River dams which were helping bring the region out of the Depression and extend electric power to more remote areas. Their eventual power production would enable the building of major industries like Alcoa Aluminum in Vancouver which would play an important role in national defense during World War II. Other 1930s WPA projects of a local nature, such as significant improvements to the city water system and construction and extension of power transmission lines, would also stand the city in good stead after the United States entered the war as a combatant in December 1941, and Henry Kaiser swiftly brought defense shipbuilding to the city the following year, and the population increased rapidly and exponentially.

First Major Remodel – The business continued to operate successfully through the war years, and easing of wartime materials restriction allowed for the 1945-46 addition of a Stewart-designed garden and gift shop west of the 1937 floral shop. This would have been the first post-war opportunity for expansion as building materials restrictions during the war would not have allowed for an addition. The war boom in population meant that the town would remain significantly larger than before the conflict, and business prospects looked positive. Stewart's plans for the addition are dated October 8, 1945. Therefore, the owners moved into action to expand very quickly after the Japanese surrender in August, and formal signing of the document on board the *U.S.S. Missouri* on September 2.

The 1949 Sanborn map shows the building as it currently is, but with only one greenhouse still remaining to the west, and the rest of the block built up commercially and residentially and no longer containing any floral gardens. These had been replaced by large greenhouses constructed on 80 acres of property near Dollar's Corner called Cedar Lawn Farms where the firm raised flowers and plants to sell to their customers, and to other floral businesses. The three greenhouses measured 150 x 30 feet each, and were constructed without interior supports. The open space allowed room for a small tractor to enter and place plants and remove them. The farm also had several simpler and smaller greenhouses. In 1949, two of the large greenhouses and several of the smaller ones were completely dedicated to growing chrysanthemums, and the business was also known for raising asters.

Second Major Remodel - To celebrate the 1959 50th anniversary of the business operating in Vancouver, Luepkes secured the services of architect W. Donald Cassady (who was to later design the 1963 Vancouver Community Library) to update the appearance of the building within the bounds of the existing footprint.

Rudolph Luepke – Rudy, who started work in the business at a young age, grew up to be a man whose professional and civic activities were legion. Recreationally, he played city league basketball as part of the Crimson Ramblers, and other teams, and was also on the softball team fielded by the Vancouver Gyro Club (a social and service organization). Professional volunteer stints included service as director of region 11 (comprised of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and British Columbia) and district representative of the FTD Association, director of the Society of American Florists, and director of the U.S. Florist Information Council. He was also national president of FTD – the only Pacific Northwesterner to have served in that position by 1957. His work with these professional organizations included evaluation of potential members, public speaking, and convention planning. A founder of Royal Oaks Country Club, he served as chair of the Regional Planning Commission, held a lifetime membership in the Jaycees, was president of the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, and was an active member of Kiwanis and the Elks. Rudy was presented with Vancouver's First Citizen Award in 1951, but his public contributions did not stop then. Political involvement included service on the Vancouver City Council beginning in 1957, and a stint as mayor from 1962 to 1966. Rudy passed away in 1969. His grave marker at St. James Acres states: "Mayor of Vancouver, Friend of All, Dedicated His Life to the Town He Loved, " and he is memorialized by the Luepke Senior Center.

The Floral Business in the Late 20th Century - The floral industry changed significantly in the late 20th century as cut flowers and potted plants became increasingly available in supermarkets. Consumers became more likely to purchase them for themselves or as gifts along with their regular groceries at a lower price than was typical of florists. Improvements in packing, refrigeration and transportation technology resulted in increasingly economical, high quality and faster shipment of flowers from abroad. Florist operations were challenged by these pressures and many went out of business.

Luepke's Today - Rudy and Louise's three sons Bart, Nick, and Rudy did not elect to stay in the family business but Gertrude's (who had married Benjamin Gerstein in 1964) daughter and son-in-law, Diane and Ronald Frichtl, purchased Rudy's portion of the business and became the third generation of the family to be involved. Gertrude retired about 1974, and died in 1983. The Frichtls remained active in the business until about 2004, and then sold it to Maria and Alan Adler, who operated it until the end of 2014, when they sold it to current owner Bruno Amicci, who also bought the building. Amicci is continuing to operate the floral portion of the business and is actively rehabilitating the building with plans to add a coffee bar, brew pub, offices, and art space.

8. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Previous documentation on file (CCHR): n/a

___ Preliminary determination of individual listing has been requested
___ Previously listed in the Clark County Heritage Register
___ Previously determined eligible by the Clark County Heritage Register
___ Recorded by Clark County Cultural Resources Inventory Survey #_____

Primary location of additional data: n/a

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other

Name of repository:

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately .66 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1	Zone	Easting	Northing	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	Zone	Easting	Northing	4	Zone	Easting	Northing

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

#289 OF E 1/2 OF SHORT CLAIM; NW 1/4,S27,T2N,R1E and VANCOUVER 1ST ADDN LOTS 8 & 9; NW 1/4,S27,T2N,R1E

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are the same as the legal property lines of the two parcels on which the building sits.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title Holly K. Chamberlain
organization _____ date 2/4/2015
street & number 2223 G St telephone 360-921-5992
city or town Vancouver state WA zip code 98663

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative photographs of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the CCHPC Staff)

Property Owner

name Bruno Amicci
street & number 1300 SW Park Ave, Apt. 1201 telephone 503-810-9547
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97201

4b. **CLARK COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

In my opinion, the property ☑ meets / ☐ does not meet the Clark County Heritage Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet.)

Signature of commenting staff — Date: 5/05/2015

4c. **CLARK COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION / DECISION**

IN THE OPINION OF THE CLARK COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION, THE PROPERTY MEETS ☐ / DOES NOT MEET ☐ THE CLARK COUNTY HERITAGE REGISTER CRITERIA. (☐ See continuation sheet.)

CHAIRPERSON,
Clark County Historic Preservation Commission — Date: 5/5/2015