

WASHINGTON HERITAGE REGISTER

A) Identification

Historic Name: Summit Grove Tavern and Park or Summit Service Station
Common Name: Summit Grove Lodge

Address: 30810 NE Timmen Road

City: Ridgefield County Clark
:

B) Site Access (describe site access, restrictions, etc.)

Summit Grove Lodge is located on Timmen Road three miles south of NW Lcenter Road in unincorporated Clark County, Washington.

C) Property owner(s), Address and Zip

Name: Richard Colf
Address: 6816 NE Etna Road
City: Woodland State: WA Zip: 98674

D) Legal boundary description and boundary justification

Tax No./Parcel: Property Identification Number: 211447005. LOT 2 SP 2-222 4.74A.

Boundary Justification: The property includes the current parcel associated with Summit Grove Lodge.

FORM PREPARED BY

Name: Bradley D. Richardson
Address: 8512 NE Sunnyside Drive
City / State / Zip: Vancouver, WA 98662
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Nomination Date: 05/07/2019

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E) Category of Property (Choose One)

- building structure (irrigation system, bridge, etc.) district
 object (statue, grave marker, vessel, etc.) cemetery/burial site
 historic site (site of an important event) archaeological site
 traditional cultural property (spiritual or creation site, etc.)
 cultural landscape (habitation, agricultural, industrial, recreational, etc.)

F) Area of Significance – Check as many as apply

- The property belongs to the early settlement, commercial development, or original native occupation of a community or region.
- The property is directly connected to a movement, organization, institution, religion, or club which served as a focal point for a community or group.
- The property is directly connected to specific activities or events which had a lasting impact on the community or region.
- The property is associated with legends, spiritual or religious practices, or life ways which are uniquely related to a piece of land or to a natural feature.
- The property displays strong patterns of land use or alterations of the environment which occurred during the historic period (cultivation, landscaping, industry, mining, irrigation, recreation).
- The property is directly associated with an individual who made an important contribution to a community or to a group of people.
- The property has strong artistic, architectural or engineering qualities, or displays unusual materials or craftwork belonging to a historic era.
- The property was designed or built by an influential architect, or reflects the work of an important artisan.
- Archaeological investigation of the property has or will increase our understanding of past cultures or life ways.

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G) Property Description

Summit Grove Lodge is located on Timmen Road three miles south of NW LaCenter Road in unincorporated Clark County. It is typical of the rustic style that characterized many buildings in National Parks and auto parks, with a log construction aesthetic, exposed hewn trusses and heavy timber construction, exterior brackets and fieldstone chimney. The original lodge site has seen two major stages of additional construction to the north and west of the original lodge that are very much in keeping with the original lodge's style. Constructed in 1927, the main lodge portion of Summit Grove Lodge represents the last remaining structure in Clark County built in rustic style in line with the "Naturalism" movement that was commonly utilized for auto parks.

Summit Grove Lodge has an irregular massing as the result of waves of additions. The main lodge space has a high gable oriented almost east-west.

On the northeast corner of the building is a room that forms an L-shape with the main lodge space and an intersecting gable roof. This space is constructed with the same materials and methods as the main lodge space and is presumably either a part of the original construction of the lodge or a very early addition. Continuing to the north from this space, a garage can be seen in historical photos and site plans but is no longer extant. An addition to the west of unknown age extends the building to the west. It has a gable roof aligned with the roof of the main lodge. However, the addition has a wider footprint than the main lodge space gable which results in the two gable peaks being out of alignment with each other. This addition has a crawl space and currently has a basement space; however, it is unclear if the current basement space is original to the addition, as the exterior entrance is not in historic photos.

The location of the former garage has another, more recent addition that forms a new main entrance to the lodge with an interior space and a porta cochere. This addition has a gable roof aligned with the adjoining space. This addition includes stonework bearing the date 2010. The southwest addition has received another subsequent second floor addition with an intersecting gable roof. This addition is accessed by a set of stairs through an opening in the southwest corner of the main lodge space. The materials and construction of this addition are consistent with those of the northeast addition and both are described in a Certificate of Appropriateness application from 2009 (see attached staff report)

The main lodge space and adjoining room to the north are the oldest part of the lodge. They are constructed of heavy timber post, beam and truss construction. The ceiling is open to the underside of the roof and the trusses exposed. The lower walls are composed of horizontal logs that may be solid or may be split logs on frame construction facing both the interior and

exterior. The upper gable walls have vertical split log facing. The main lodge space has two fireplaces and chimneys, one in the middle of the southeast wall and one in the northwest corner. Both are constructed of random rubble stone, but the stone and construction are different, suggesting that they may be of different vintages. The southeast fireplace stone has an engraving of the year 1927. The exterior gables have wide overhangs formed by purlins that extend from the interior. The rake of the gable has whole logs that serve as decorative trim and are connected to brackets at the corners of the building. This main lodge space has a series of double-doors on the southeast and northeast walls that open to the exterior. These are flat-panel doors that are composed mostly of eight lights of glazing in a two-over-four pattern divided by muntins. Windows are also flat panel construction with lights divided by muntins.

H) Significance

The building today known as Summit Grove Lodge was completed in 1927 by William and Mary Marshall as the centerpiece for their auto park on a recently established section of the Pacific Highway. Upon its completion, the auto park included the main lodge, 15 acres of park land, bandstands, picnic areas, eight matching cabins, and gardens. Today, the 1927 lodge is the only remaining physical historic element of what was once a thriving auto park on the Pacific Highway in Clark County. Additionally, all other auto parks in Clark County on the Pacific Highway, or elsewhere in the county, have been demolished and developed. Summit Grove Lodge is the last existing physical structure in Clark County related the development of the county's portion of the Pacific Highway, the local auto park movement, and representing a local example of a rustic-style structure in line with the "Naturalism" movement that was frequently utilized for auto parks.

The 1920s saw an explosion in car ownership as the economic prosperity of the "roaring '20s" provided more disposable income, and assembly-line practices brought down prices. In 1910, Ford produced 12,000 Model Ts, and by 1925 production had risen to over 2 million per year. This expansion in ownership resulted in the construction of many "auto trails," or highways, throughout the country. One key route in the West was the Pacific Highway, built between 1913 and 1926, which stretched from California to Canada and provided drivers access to vacation and tourist locations. The expense of gasoline, especially in rural areas, fostered the rise of lodging arrangements. Before the widespread adoption of motels, "auto" or "tourist" camps provided affordable accommodations.

Many auto camps were simply areas where tourists could park their cars and set up camp. They were often created by cities or the US Forest and National Park Services to both manage and benefit from auto campers. Over time, private individuals created businesses around this model, and these camps gained amenities; by the 1920s, it was common to find auto camps with places for tents, cabins, and central lodges. Since gasoline was a critical part of auto tourism, these camps were often filling stations as well. This larger national and regional trend provided context for the development of Summit Grove Lodge, a private endeavor that began as a service station and was transformed into an auto camp, providing broader amenities for travelers along the Pacific Highway.

Many auto camps adopted what became a signature rustic architectural style. Log construction was an economical choice, especially in the Pacific

Northwest. The "Naturalism" movement of the early 20th century focused on experiencing nature, a contributing factor to the auto tourism phenomenon. The desire to maintain the natural appearance of national parks also led to the widespread use of rustic architecture in auto camps. Summit Grove Lodge was built in this rustic mode and is the last representation of a rustic style auto park in Clark County.

Summit Grove Lodge silently witnessed the expansion of the population and nurtured the spirit of travel that helped build the region. The lodge is the only remaining site in Clark County, along what previously was the Pacific Highway to represent the cultural and architectural phenomena related to early to mid-20th-century service stations and auto camps. In addition, those who owned and operated the service station and auto park were persons of historical note in Clark County and Southwest Washington.

The Summit Grove property changed ownership and function for many decades before becoming a stop for travelers. The recorded history of the Summit Grove property began with John Johnson (aka Johnston) and his Donation Land Claim patent filed on July 2, 1866, for 80 acres directly north of the Summit Grove property. By 1870, the federal census listed Johnson living on 160 acres of land, 12 of which were listed as "improved" -- likely used for agriculture or husbandry -- and 148 acres listed as "wooded land." That year, it is recorded that Johnson owned a horse and a couple of cattle and produced 50 bushels of oats. He listed the value of his farm as \$500, his tools and machinery at \$15, and the animals at \$75.

The next owner of the Summit Grove site with significance for its progression into an auto park was Thomas Headley. On August 3, 1891, Thomas Headley purchased 40 acres of the land, including the future Summit Grove parcel, from Thomas Kane for \$650.

Headley was an early and prominent figure in the history of La Center, Washington, which is situated just a few miles northeast of the Summit Grove site. The 1910 federal census also listed the Headleys living in La Center on 3rd Street. Thomas Headley was still listed as a blacksmith, with his and Rebeca's son, Thomas, now age 23, listed as a partner in a grocery store, and their daughter, Margaret, now age 22, as a grocery store clerk. In addition, George, age 13, and Marjorie, age 8, were now listed as "adopted son" and "adopted daughter."

On January 5, 1915, the Vancouver Weekly Columbian stated that the State Highway Board had announced plans to finance the construction of the Pacific Highway from Salmon Creek to La Center; the cost, including later paving, would be \$87,000. On January 30, 1917, an Oregonian article announced a new bridge to be built over the Lewis River into La Center. Overnight Headley's property at the Summit Grove site became a prime section of real estate for this new portion of the ever-expanding Pacific Highway.

In an Oregonian article that appeared on May 20, 1917, a Portland-to-Seattle driving log detailing the trip described the area south of La Center to be in poor shape. The article calls the last few miles into La Center "dangerous and difficult when wet." Later that year, on October 18, 1917, The Vancouver Weekly Columbian reported that 3.5 miles of the Pacific Highway south of La Center were to be changed to lessen the grade. The first indication of the building of this section of the Pacific Highway comes on May 20, 1919, when Thomas Headley signed a right-of-way with the State of Washington for the Pacific Highway project. He deeded a strip of land 60 feet wide, with 30 feet

on each side of the road's center. On September 10, 1921, the Pacific Highway to La Center from Salmon Creek was formally opened. According to the deed index, Headley signed another right of way on December 12, 1921.

The next year, on November 22, 1922, The Oregonian reported a bridge replacement over the Lewis River into La Center. During this same period, Thomas Headley, Sr. was elected mayor for the City of La Center. His son, Thomas Headley, Jr., was also involved in local government as the town clerk. Headley, Jr., remained in his role as a clerk through at least 1922. Both father and son held positions of prominence in the early 20th century in La Center and the surrounding area.

On November 16, 1924, The Oregonian ran a full-page article with pictures announcing the opening of the new bridge in La Center. According to The Vancouver Columbian, on November 24, 1924, the long concrete bridge over the East Fork of the Lewis River at La Center was opened with a formal ceremony. This ushered the way for the Headleys to establish a new business in the La Center area.

By this time, roads had improved dramatically and the Pacific Highway made the Headley property an ideal location for an auto park. From 1923 to 1924, the ring of a service bell could be heard as drivers arrived to fuel their cars with hand-pumped gasoline at the Headley Auto Camp. Sometime later, Thomas Headley and his son established an auto business in the La Center area. They are noted in The Morning Oregonian under the name Headley & Son as one of a handful of Star Motor Car dealers in Clark County. This business paired perfectly with their operations at the Summit Grove site along the newly minted Pacific Highway and would make their endeavor one of the earliest service stations and auto dealers along this stretch of road in North Clark County.

On December 21, 1925, Thomas Headley sold 7.5 acres of his land to Melvin F. Curtis where the Summit Grove Lodge currently stands. Melvin was described as a mechanic at a garage, and his wife, Delma, as a bank clerk. Reportedly together they opened a "fountain and barbeque", along with a new diner, believed to seat only eight patrons, called the "Boston Barbeque and Weinberg's Maid O' Beverages." However, it appears that Curtis did not hold the property for very long.

By August 9, 1927, an article in The Columbian, titled "Summit Service Station is Sold to Vancouver Man," reported that Melvin Curtis had sold his acreage to William and Mary Marshall. The Marshalls had plans to build modern cabins at the site.

Marshall, the most significant figure in the development of the Summit Grove auto park, was a figure of prominence in early 20th-century Clark County. He served two terms as Clark County auditor. After his last term as auditor, he spent one term from 1915 to 1917 as State Representative from District Number 23.

In addition to his work as a politician, Marshall was involved in the establishment of the Vancouver Community Hotel efforts, which resulted in the construction of the Evergreen Hotel. He was also formerly an instructor at the Washington School for the Deaf from 1895 to 1910.

After Marshall purchased the service station from Curtis, business flourished

as more travelers ventured along the scenic Pacific Highway. The 1930 federal census lists William Marshall, age 54, and his wife, Mary, age 40, as proprietors of a tourist resort valued at \$4,000. It was at this time that the iconic structure with its rustic architectural style was built and the amenities historically associated with auto parks during this period were installed. The Marshalls built the lodge, a curio shop, a picnic area, a large gazebo, a kidney-shaped indoor fish pond, and eight cabins with hot and cold running water. An advertisement for the Summit Grove Tavern appeared in a 1935 Chamber of Commerce tourist pamphlet establishing Summit Grove as a prominent stop along the Pacific Highway in Clark County.

An undated brochure from the lodge offers some insight into the growth of this site:

"Plans were completed in 1926 for Summit Grove Tavern and Park, which would include 15 acres of park land with bandstands, picnic areas, cabins and gardens. It took six miles of cedar logs, tongue and grooved for tight fitting; 400 panes of glass; 3 miles of pipe, and other timbers and materials to build the Summit and eight matching cabins. In 1931, it was a two-pump Shell station. The Summit, as seen today, was difficult to construct. The structure is of 12x12 beams. A large quantity of cedar, gray stone and brick were used to construct the fireplace and barbecue."

Summit Grove was a popular tourist site and is noted as a stop for some prominent figures; stories have been passed down of famous people patronizing Summit Grove. Rumored guests included Cornelius Vanderbilt and Clark Gable. Margaret Colf Hepola, North Clark County historian, verified that the darling of the silver screen herself, Shirley Temple, graced the lodge with her presence. An employee, Wilma Soehl of Summit Grove, provided an oral history of her memories of working there from 1935 to 1938; she remembered Shirley Temple visiting. She also recalled visits from Oliver Hardy, George Brent, and many actors and moviemakers from the film: God's Country and the Woman, which was being made in Longview, Washington.

By 1940, the federal census listed William Marshall, age 64, a restaurant owner, and his wife, Mary, age 54, a cook. Mary Gray, mother-in-law, age 76, was also still living with them. Also listed at this address was Edwin Lippert, age 18, chore boy in the restaurant, and Robert Brown, lodger, doing construction work.

On December 3, 1956, The Columbian ran the death notice for William Marshall, age 81. The record of the lodge falls relatively silent for a matter of years after his passing. One item of note during this period is the 1962 Columbus Day Storm, which toppled trees and destroyed many of the cabins. Mary Marshall repaired the damage and kept the Summit Grove going until she was 80 years old.

In 1971, Roy and Cathy Giffin purchased the property and began an extensive restoration. They bought another old log cabin and used the logs to match the exterior.

On January 17, 1972, The Columbian ran the death notice for Mary Marshall. It states, "She was formerly a music teacher at the Washington School for the Blind; co-owner and proprietor of the Summit Lodge for many years."

On December 24, 1973, The Columbian published an article on the history of Summit Grove, relating that in the fall of 1973 it reopened under its fourth

set of owners, Scottie and Clara Heath. In 1980, a fire at the Summit Grove partially destroyed the landmark. An Oregonian article dated November 13, 1980, reported that "the fire may have been electrically caused." Just as after William Marshall's passing, the historical record is quiet for some time in regard to activity at Summit Grove.

A December 19, 2012, an article in Oregon Live is headlined "Clark County's Historic Summit Grove Lodge Restored as Event and Retreat Center. The article notes, that in 1988, George Miller purchased the building. He lived in it and partially restored it until Margaret Colf Hepola and her sons, Dick and Bob Colf, purchased it in 2009. The Oregon Live article further explains "The new Summit Grove aims to host weddings, reunions, private parties and corporate meetings." The Colf family maintains a thriving event and restaurant business at the site and continues to preserve the history and memory of the prominent local and national figures associated with Summit Grove.

Since its completion in 1927, the main lodge portion of Summit Grove Lodge has remained intact and retains the majority of its original elements despite changes in ownership and a nearly devastating fire. As a result, the structure continues to represent the signature rustic architectural style from its original construction. It continues to be the singular remaining example in Clark County of the rustic style and "Naturalism" movement of the early 20th century tied to the manifestation of the auto tourism phenomenon. Additionally, for more than 90 years the main lodge has continued to be identified with its historic use as an auto park and roadside restaurant while all other buildings associated with this part of Clark County history have been demolished.

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I) Documentation

Xerox and attach any information or evidence that supports the property's significance.

Written Sources (books, articles, newspapers):

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2. Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Auto Camps to Motel, 1910-1945*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1979)
3. Merrill Ann Wilson, "Rustic Architecture: The National Park Style," *Trends*, (July August September, 1976)
4. William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, Henry G. Law. *Rustic Architecture: 1916 - 1942*, (National Park Service, 1977).
5. John Johnson, 1870, U.S. Federal Census, Clark County, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://digitalarchives.wa.gov>, 11/01/2018.
6. Thomas Kane, 1870, U.S. Federal Census, Clark County, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://digitalarchives.wa.gov>, 11/01/2018.
7. William Marshall, Department of Health, Death Index, 1907-1960; 1965-2017, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov>, 01/08/2019.
8. 1910, 'Clark Strong for M'Credie. Home County Gives Him 2153 Votes-Poindexter Leads All', *Oregonian*, 15 Sep, p. 7, (online NewsBank).
9. "Steel Bridge Authorized Structure Will Be Built Across East Fork of Lewis River." *Oregonian* (Portland, Oregon), January 30, 1917: 8. NewsBank. <https://proxy.multcolib.org:2489/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=image/v2:11A73E5827618330@EANX-NB-11C58DD68DB64CB8@2421259-11C54EEA572C6750@7-12E92815C30EF198@Steel+Bridge+Authorized+Structure+Will+Be+Built+Across+East+Fork+of+Lewis+River>.
10. "Highway Being Improved. Stretch between La Center and Woodland Closed to Traffic." *Oregonian* (Portland, Oregon), July 6, 1914: 4. NewsBank. <https://proxy.multcolib.org:2489/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=image/v2:11A73E5827618330@EANX-NB-11C1A5BEB4587F58@2420320-11C1A5BEEA533868@3->

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21. Land Deed Between Thomas Kane and Thomas Headley dated August 1891.

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32. Land Deed Between Melvin Curtis and William Marshall dated August 16, 1927.

33. Thomas Headley, 1930, U.S. Federal Census, La Center, Clark County, U.S. Census Bureau.

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35. "Anyone See Clark Gable Around?" Oregonian (Portland, Oregon), June 25, 1933: 1. NewsBank. <https://proxy.multcolib.org:2489/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=image/v2:11A73E5827618330@EANX-NB-12A2B5B6AC3DBE5D@2427249-1299E1E2CE78D1E3@0-1299E1E2CE78D1E3@>.

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Oral History/Interviews:

Wilma Soehl Green. My Memories of Summit Grove, 2013.

J) Map and Photographs

Attach copies of historic maps or photos if available, and current photos (5 x 7 B & W). Include a current map – appropriate U.S.G.S. map and parcel map – with the location of the property and its boundaries clearly marked. (see instructions)