**NAME**

HISTORIC Superintendent's Residence

AND/OR COMMON Former Superintendent's Residence

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Munson Valley Vicinity 

CITY, TOWN Crater Lake National Park

STATE Oregon

**CLASSIFICATION**

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<td>__UNOCCUPIED</td>
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<td>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</td>
<td>ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td>__GOVERNMENT</td>
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<td>__YES: UNRESTRICTED</td>
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**AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service - Pacific Northwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER 835 King Street, Suite 212

CITY, TOWN Seattle

STATE Washington

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE Klamath County Courthouse

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Klamath County Courthouse

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

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The Superintendent's Residence is an impressive structure of massive boulders and heavy-handed woodwork. The building's site is on a gentle hill overlooking the other period residences and administrative and maintenance facilities in the Munson Valley.

The building is one-and-a-half stories in height. The foundation is stone and concrete. The first floor exterior walls are boulders with cement mortar that have poured-in-place concrete behind the boulders providing an even thicker wall. An unusual construction technique was used in building the structure. First, a heavy wooden formwork for the first floor was constructed, braced by the wood framing of the second floor and the roof structure. As the boulders walls were mortared into place the masons left a space of several inches between the boulders and the formwork where they poured concrete. While the masons worked on the first floor, carpenters continued work on the second floor and roof. When the stone and concrete wall reached the eave line and had sufficient time to cure, the workers removed the wooden formwork and the load of the roof and second story automatically transferred to the masonry walls. For the most part larger boulders were used in lower sections of the wall but the builders could not help adding even more interest to the masonry by hoisting enormous stones up higher—such as the one on the front elevation to the left of the front door that was placed about three feet above the terrace floor and measures approximately five feet across.

The stonework is battered and retains a strong visual tie with the steeply pitched gable roofs. The intersecting roofs, and the dormers and pent roofs that pierce the main roof are finished with wood shingles in a staggered pattern known as "hit-or-miss" that provides texture to the surfaces. The verticality of the roofs reflects that found in the surrounding evergreen forest. Gable ends are finished with vertical board-and-batten siding. The eave detailing on the gable ends adds a finely finished touch to the building. The barge boards at the gable ends are pierced by purlin ends shaped like nailheads that give the roof a tightly constructed feeling. A concrete beam finished with stucco spans the distance over the garage door where the heavy stonework would have been inappropriate. The building's front door is a handsome heavy wood door with wrought-iron hardware.

Windows throughout the structure are original metal sash multi-light casements. Windows on the first floor have stone sills and heavy timber framing around the other three edges. Windows on the second story have simple wood frames. Double French doors, also
The Crater Lake Superintendent's Residence is of national significance in architecture because it depicts the best elements of the rustic style of architecture developed by the National Park Service during the late 'twenties and 'thirties. The building's high level of integrity is unusual in National Park structures that remain from that period. Also the method in which the building was constructed is an unusual solution to the thorny problem of building substantial structures in extremely short construction seasons.

The importance of an architecture appropriate for national park areas was of great concern in the early days of the agency established in 1916. The very first "Statement of Policy" issued to guide the management of the parks stated that utmost care must be exercised in harmonizing any improvements—roads, trails, and building—with the landscape. This policy led to the employment of talented architects and landscape architects who, under the direction of landscape architect Thomas C. Vint, developed a design ethic based on harmonizing buildings with the landscape. Often referred to as the "Rustic Style" even though not all of the structures built could be classified under that one "style" category, this type of park architecture followed certain precepts. As described by its practitioners:

Successfully handled, [rustic] is a style which, through the use of native materials in proper scale, and through the avoidance of rigid, straight lines, and over-sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. It thus achieves sympathy with natural surroundings, and with the past.

Individual parks required an individual architecture. At Crater Lake, for example, the designers emphasized verticality in the buildings not only to connect them with the steep terrain and the tall evergreens but also for practical reasons like shedding the heavy snow loads. The use of stone and concrete for the first
**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See attached

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The landmark boundary line is a line 25 feet out from the building, parallel to all of the building's exterior walls.

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**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

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**FORM PREPARED BY**

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<th>NAME / TITLE</th>
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<th>STREET &amp; NUMBER</th>
<th>CITY OR TOWN</th>
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<td>Laura Soulliere Harrison - Architectural Historian</td>
<td>National Park Service</td>
<td>P. O. Box 728</td>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
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**CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION**

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES  NO  NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

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**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
of metal sash and wood framing, lead from the living room to the
terrace at the front of the building. The path leading up to the
terrace on the front elevation and the terrace flooring itself are flagstone. The low wall bordering the terrace is constructed of the same huge boulders as the rest of the building.

The partial basement contains the garage space and the furnace. Rooms on the first floor of the building include the living and dining rooms, an entrance foyer, a kitchen, a pantry, and a large bedroom and bath. Upstairs are four bedrooms and two additional baths. Floors throughout the interior are oak with the exception of the basement floor which is concrete. Those in the kitchen and pantry are covered with linoleum. One wall of the living room contains a rubble masonry fireplace with a cut-stone mantle and hearth. The living room ceiling is finished with two-foot squares of scored wood tiles laid in a checkerboard pattern, that may not be original.

The interior is filled with period furnishings including overstuffed couches and chairs in the living room, and a trestle table, corner cabinet, and matching chairs in the dining room. Wrought-iron light fixtures throughout the building are original.

The building was used as the superintendent's residence, then as seasonal housing, and now is used for housing visiting scientists and other dignitaries during the summer months. Changes to the building have been relatively minimal. The kitchen has undergone some minor alterations. The double garage door that was originally wood has been replaced with a single overhead door and a small side door. Removable wooden shutters have been placed on all windows for use when the building is closed up in winter. The snow depth around the building consistently exceeds more than 15 feet.
floor was only common sense in that cold, wet climate where rot
and pressure exerted by the snow could destroy less substantial
buildings quickly; but the choice of such enormous boulders for
the walls was an aesthetic one governed by the rustic design
ethic and the architectural strengths of the designers.¹

The entire development in the Munson Valley district of Crater
Lake of which the Superintendent's residence is a part fell under
the supervision of landscape architect Merel Sager. Sager joined
the design staff of the National Park Service in 1928 after
completing his Master's degree in landscape architecture at
Harvard University. He had worked seasonally at Yellowstone and
Glacier National Parks which, he felt, made him a "natural" for
NPS work. As one of the core members of the early landscape
division he, Vint, and the others worked by trial and error in
designing structures that fit with the landscape. To him it was
"a source of satisfaction to build something that was not garish,
but fit into the landscape." He noted that at Harvard he
received no training in this type of environmental design, but
often brought back information to his professors about his
experiences in designing in the west. When new architects were
brought on to the NPS staff, Sager noted:

...they had no background in the sort of thing we were
trying to work out in the parks. They had always been
taught to build structures which stood out and
attracted attention. So they had to unlearn most of
their formal background when they started with use.
The landscape architects had veto power over anything
the regular architects did.²

Sager's responsibility at Crater Lake included laying out the
administrative, residential, and maintenance developments and
establishing the basic design parameters to be followed. The
administrative core included a ranger dormitory and an
administration building forming two sides of an impressive plaza
where visitors could park and have their first extended contact
with Park Service personnel. The rustic image the buildings

¹ William Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law,
National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942 (San

² Interview with Merel Sager conducted by William Tweed,
August 18, 1976.
presented was continued through the hierarchy of small stone cottages that became progressively larger until it peaked in the Superintendent's residence at the top of the hill. In general, the residential area was hidden from view, as was the rustic maintenance area tucked away below the plaza.

One exception to the lack of architects trained in rustic design was A. Paul Brown, the man who completed the working drawings for and probably designed the Superintendent's residence following the course laid by Sager. Brown was an Englishman who had worked for private-sector architect Gilbert Stanley Underwood before joining the Park Service. Underwood's monumental rustic buildings included the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite, Grand Canyon Lodge on the North Rim, as well as Bryce and Zion Lodges. Underwood's work stressed various types of stone-and-concrete construction with plenty of log detailing. Brown could not have worked for an architect of Underwood's importance without being influenced by his design ideas.

The building's unusual method of construction is noteworthy. The builders constructed a formwork to hold poured concrete, braced by the second-floor joists and the roof structure of the building. As the stone masonry was constructed in stages and the concrete poured in place into the formwork behind the boulders, work on the upper wood-frame portion progressed at the same time. As the masonry walls reached the height of the eaves and after the concrete was sufficiently cured, the formwork was removed and the wooden structure of the roof and upper story automatically transferred to the stone and concrete walls. The construction season at Crater Lake could be as short as twelve weeks during a particularly harsh year. By using this method the entire exterior of several buildings could be erected in one summer. This construction technique also allowed the use of huge large stones in the exterior walls while at the same time providing a flat wall on the interior.

At one time the entire Munson Valley group was undoubtedly the handsomest group of rustic structures in the entire National Park System; however, the heavy winter snows forced changes to many of the Munson Valley structures to accommodate the harsh climate. Over time only the Superintendent's residence remained in nearly

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3 Telephone interview with William G. Carnes conducted by William Tweed, August 31, 1976.
original condition. The cedar shake roofs on the other buildings became too costly to maintain, so that most were covered years ago with metal roofs that shed the heavy snows even more quickly. As new housing was constructed those with families preferred the flat-roofed apartments that had more square footage and lower utility costs than the tiny stone cottages of the 'thirties. Those who remained in the stone cottages needed additional storage space, so over time they enclosed the terraces with wood-frame sheds. Access into the rustic administration building was difficult during the winter because of the snow shedding off the steep gable roof, so the park staff had an A-frame constructed over the entrance to make winter access easier.

Although the other structures of the Munson Valley group were determined eligible for the National Register, these changes—most of which were completed during the 1960s—lessened their architectural integrity making them of less than national significance. Plans are underway to reverse many of these architectural changes or to make alterations more compatible with the original design. The Superintendent's residence remains an architectural gem—a remnant of an ambitious development project that gave a strong architectural identity to a large park.

National Park Service files including Pacific Northwest Regional Office Inventory, Crater Lake National Park.

Telephone Interview with William Carnes, retired NPS landscape architect, conducted by William Tweed, August 31, 1976.

Telephone Interview with Merel Sager, retired NPS landscape architect, conducted by William Tweed, August 18, 1976.

Superintendent's Residence, looking Northwest

Crater Lake National Park

NPS Photo by Laura Soullière Harrison 8/85
Side Elevation

Crater Lake Superintendent's Residence
Crater Lake National Park

NPS Photo by Laura Soullière Harrison
8/85
Front door with original hardware

Superintendent's Residence
Crater Lake National Park

NPS photo by Laura Soullière Harrison
8/85
Original furnishings in dining room

Crater Lake Superintendent's Residence
Crater Lake National Park

NPS Photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison
8/85
Looking from living room into dining room,
Superintendent's Residence

Crater Lake National Park

NPS photo by Laura Soullière Harrison
8/85
Original Dining room furnishings
Superintendent's Residence

Crater Lake National Park

NPS photo by Laura Soullière Harrison
8/85
Living room fireplace
Superintendent’s Residence

Crater Lake National Park

NPS photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison
8/85
Living Room Fireplace

Crater Lake Superintendent's Residence
Crater Lake National Park

NPS Photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison 8/85