

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Sixth Floor
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

1. Name of Property

Historic Name **GEORGE & BLANCHE CHRISTENSEN
HOUSE**

2. Location

Street & Number 1329 E. Overbluff Road
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Parcel Number 35291.1930

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both		<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other

4. Owner of Property

Name Sara M. Weaver-Lundberg & Russell Lundberg
Street & Number 1329 E. Overbluff Road
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number/E-mail 999-5292 (Sara), 993-9747 (Russ)

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse
Street Number 1116 West Broadway
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99260
County Spokane

6. Representation of Existing Surveys

Title City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey
Date Federal___ State___ County___ Local 1979
Location of Survey Records Spokane Historic Preservation Office

Final nomination reviewed by SHLC on Sept. 19, 2007

7. Description

Architectural Classification (see nomination, section 8)	Condition __excellent <u>X</u> _good __fair __deteriorated __ruins __unexposed	Check One __unaltered <u>X</u> _altered Check One <u>X</u> _original site __moved & date_____
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8. Spokane Register Categories and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places Categories: Mark “x” on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:

- X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane history.
- __B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method or construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- __D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory history.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property	Less than one acre.
Verbal Boundary Description	Rockwood Terrace Addition, Lot 37, Block 3.
Verbal Boundary Justification	Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title	Linda Yeomans, Consultant
Organization	Historic Preservation Planning
Street, City, State, Zip Code	501 West 27 th Avenue, Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number	509-456-3828
Email Address	lindayeomans@comcast.net
Date Final Nomination Heard	September 19, 2007

12. Additional Documentation

Map	City/County of Spokane current plat map.
Photographs and CD	CD, black & white photos

13. Signature of Owner(s)

Name Ara H. Heaver-Lundberg

Name Russel E. Lundberg

14. For Official Use Only

Date Received _____ Attest _____

Date Heard _____ City Clerk _____

Commission Decision _____ Approved as to Form
Assistant City Attorney Michael P. Pugh

Council/Board Action _____

Date _____

We hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

DEPUTY MAYOR, City of Spokane
or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners

CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

OFFICER, Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Officer
Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office
Third Floor, City Hall, W. 808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Built in 1926, the George & Blanche Christensen House is a fine example of the Tudor Revival tradition with Storybook-style influence. It is located on the South Hill in Spokane, Washington in a prominent historic residential neighborhood called the Rockwood Terrace Addition. Sited at the east end of Overbluff Road at the crest of a steep north-facing rocky bluff, the Christensen House commands a panoramic view of north Spokane and a horizon line of snow-capped mountain peaks. Stylistic Tudor Revival Storybook features represented by the home's custom design include prominent steeply pitched gables with flared crockets at the gable peaks, a massive full-height front-facing tapered brick chimney, smooth crème-colored stucco wall cladding, an arched recessed front entrance, a wrought iron balconette and deck, and tall multi-paned leaded-glass wood casement windows. Interior appointments reveal Tudor Revival details in an arched front door made of solid oak and oak veneer with leaded-glass lights, solid oak floors, solid oak woodwork, multi-paned leaded-glass French doors, and an oak staircase with an open stairwell design. Original landscape features include black basalt rock walls, a basalt rock fireplace/barbeque pit, and a two-tiered basalt rock fountain. Although modifications to the Christensen House include interior remodels, a wood deck at the rear northwest corner of the house, and window replacements, the property retains good exterior integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as a single-family residence built in 1926 in Spokane, Washington.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION***Site***

Facing east, the Christensen House is built in a uniquely sited cul-du-sac at the east end of Overbluff Road at the top of a north-facing rocky basalt bluff on Lot 37, Block 3, in the Rockwood Terrace Addition (located adjacent to and east of the Rockwood National Register Historic District). The property is sited in the center of Lot 37 which measures 50 feet wide and 272.2 feet deep, and is surrounded to the south, east, and west by tree-lined streets and prominent historic homes built from about 1910 to 1950. The house is set into the lot's northwest-facing slope and is framed by basalt rock walls, a manicured lawn, mature evergreen and deciduous trees, and an in-ground swimming pool which is located at the north end of the lot in the back yard. A paved walkway abuts the property at the east. Regarded as a public pedestrian right-of-way in the location of vacated Perry Street, the paved walkway and a paved staircase, called the Perry Street Stairs, lead north over the edge of the bluff to East 20th Avenue, located 200 feet below the bluff's edge. A paved driveway runs north from Overbluff Road to a garage which is exposed and located beneath the southwest corner of the Christensen House.

Landscape Features

Built around 1926, a four- to six-foot-high black basalt rock wall, made of both vesicled and non-vesicled basalt, borders the property to the west and north. The rock wall features both blind and exposed mortar construction and is distinguished with a

soldier course of pointed basalt rocks along the top edge. A basalt rock fireplace is located in a circular patio/barbeque pit in the northeast corner of the backyard, and is surrounded by basalt rock walls. A basalt rock staircase climbs up from the patio/barbeque pit to a manicured lawn which is at grade behind the house. A circular two-tiered basalt rock water fountain in the center of a basalt rock reflecting pool is located along the east border in the backyard and is sheltered by a group of trees, shrubs, and shade-loving plants. A water pump allows water to flow and re-circulate from the fountain throughout the reflecting pool, and back through the fountain. Along with the house, the original circa-1926 man-made basalt rock features *are nominated* to the Spokane Register in this nomination report.

Swimming Pool

An in-ground concrete (Gunite) swimming pool is located behind the house at the far north end of the property. It was installed in June 1983, and a pool deck, spa, and retaining wall were built next to the pool in 1984.¹ The swimming pool, spa, deck, and retaining wall are included in this report but are *not* nominated to the historic register at this time.

House Exterior

Documented in Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the Christensen House was built in 1926 and has an irregular footprint which measures approximately 54 feet wide and 34 feet deep. It is a two-and-one-half-story single-family dwelling with a steeply pitched side gable roof and multiple cross gables. The roof is covered with wood shakes and is articulated with distinctive pointed, flared, galvanized metal crockets at the gable peaks. Eaves are boxed with a shallow overhang at the roof's edge and little-to-no overhang at the rake in gable peaks. The house is completely clad in smooth-textured crème-colored stucco which covers a poured concrete foundation wall. Fenestration patterns are mostly asymmetrical and include tall, vertical multi-paned leaded-glass wood casement windows (exceptions include wood casement windows with wood muntins in basement and garage, and at two 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows in kitchen). Due to a drop in grade along the west and southwest border of the property, a single-car garage is exposed beneath the southwest corner of the house along with basement windows at the west elevation.

East Façade

The front (façade) of the house faces east and abuts a manicured front lawn adjacent to a paved public sidewalk which runs north and south in front of the property. The home's facade design is dominated by a steeply pitched prominent side gable roof, a steeply pitched front-facing lower cross gable, a very tall tapered brick chimney, an arched recessed front entrance, and asymmetrical fenestration patterns. A shed dormer is located adjacent next south of the cross gable and has a pair of multi-paned casement windows which open outward. A small dormer with a shed roof is located next north of the

¹ Spokane building permits. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

chimney and has a small window. The prominent front-facing cross gable is located just south of center at the east façade and is embellished with a very steeply pitched roof and an arched recessed entryway. The arched entryway is distinguished with radiating brick voussoirs in a corbelled red brick surround. The front entry porch deck (stoop) is curved and clad in random-shaped glazed red ceramic tiles applied in a random pattern. Red bricks form a border around the outside curve of the porch deck. A full-height brick chimney is located to the north of the front recessed entrance, and projects through the roof eave at the second floor. Made of coarsely textured raked bricks laid in stretcher bond with excess mortar joints, the chimney is tapered and seems unusually tall as it rises uninterrupted two-and-one-half stories from grade to past the highest point on the roof. South of the recessed front entrance is a small recessed side entrance at the southeast corner of the first floor of the house. The entrance is arched and protects a side door which opens into a kitchen. A three-foot-tall wrought iron entrance gate protects the recessed entry. The east façade like the rest of the house is clad with smooth stucco which also covers a poured foundation wall. Punctuating the smooth stucco wall cladding is a combination of mostly tall, vertical, multi-paned casement windows with leaded-glass lights. A small wrought iron balconette articulates a second-floor window which is just south of the front entrance. A small wing at the first floor projects out from the northeast corner of the house. A flat deck is located on top of the wing and is protected by a black wrought iron balustrade. French leaded-glass doors open from the deck into a second-floor sitting room.

South Elevation

The south elevation of the house faces onto Overbluff Road and is visible from the street, a public right-of-way. It features the gable field and gable peak of the main side gable roof. Fenestration patterns are nearly symmetrical with multi-paned casement windows at the basement, first, second, and third floors (third floor is attic). Due to a drop in grade at the southwest corner of the house, the southwest corner is exposed and features a double-car garage which is built beneath the first floor. The overhead garage door mimics original carriage house doors (replaced in 2006) and is made of wood with inset panels and multi-paned leaded-glass lights in the upper third of the door. A window at the west end of the first floor replaced an original casement window pair (1990s).

North Elevation

The north elevation serves as the rear of the house and can only be seen from the property's private backyard. It is distinguished with two lower cross gables and flared crockets at the gable peaks. The lower cross gable resembles a square tower wing at the northeast elevation and has a gable-on-hip roof with overhanging eaves. Fenestration patterns are asymmetrical and feature vertical multi-paned leaded-glass wood casement windows. French doors with plate-glass glazing open from the north elevation onto a wood deck. The north elevation, like the rest of the house, is clad in stucco.

West Elevation

The west elevation is the true rear of the house (façade faces east) and is difficult to see from either the property's private grounds or from the public-right-of-way at Overbluff Road. A shed dormer extends across part of the roof slope at the south end of the west elevation. The west elevation features stucco cladding, symmetrical fenestration patterns, multi-paned leaded-glass wood casement windows (basement and garage windows are an exception with wood muntin bars), and a wood deck with a plain wood balustrade which was built in 1959 at the first floor.² Due to the lower grade at this elevation, basement and garage windows are exposed under the deck. A single door opens onto the deck from the dining room.

House Interior

According to Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the Christensen House has 1,337 finished square feet on the first floor, 1,232 finished square feet on the second floor, 240 finished square feet in the basement, and about 300 unfinished square feet in the attic on the third floor.³ An arched door made of solid oak with prominent inset "tiger oak" veneer panels opens from the front recessed entrance into a center reception hall. The door has a round window with leaded-glass lights, an original brass door knocker, original brass handle and door knob, and measures 40 inches wide. The reception hall has a solid oak floor, oak woodwork, and an oak staircase that ascends to a landing, turns, and winds up to the second floor. The open staircase is embellished with an open stringer and features three turned balusters to each tread. An ebony-finished oak handrail is joined and supported by square Newell posts at the landing and second floor, and by a round Newell post at the first floor. In a unique design, the handrail and balusters encircle the round Newell post which is anchored to a curved, flared first step of the staircase. The oak floor, woodwork, and staircase are finished in a medium golden color which has deepened with age to a rich honey-colored golden oak.

The reception hall leads north to a formal living room, dining room, and library, and south to a kitchen, powder room, and covered back porch (southeast corner of house). From the front reception hall, leaded-glass oak French door open west into a formal dining room. A single door in the dining room opens out onto a wood deck at the west elevation of the house. The reception hall leads north to a living room which has an east wall focal point: a white marble fireplace. The living room leads north to a small library in the northeast corner of the house. Plain French doors with plate-glass glazing open from the living room onto a wood deck in the northwest corner of the house. The dining room, living room, and library are undergoing extensive interior remodels and are currently unfinished with exposed wood wall studs and ceiling joists. The original oak floor remains intact. The kitchen is located in the southwest corner of the first floor and is finished with built-in wood cabinets, range, sink, dishwasher, and oven. The floor is

² Spokane City building permit. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

³ Spokane County Tax Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

made of ceramic tile. The powder room features original white porcelain toilet and wash basin. Ceiling heights at the first floor are eight feet.

The second floor features a central hallway, three bedrooms, a sitting room, two bathrooms, and a laundry room (originally a bedroom, changed to laundry room in 1980s). Except for a bedroom in the southwest corner, the entire second floor is undergoing a renovation and remodel and has exposed wood wall studs and ceiling joists. The original oak floor remains intact. The attic is on the third floor and has exposed wall studs and ceiling joists with a fir floor. The basement is partially finished with a recreation room which has original lathe-and-plaster construction, multi-paned wood casement windows, and a fireplace on the east wall with a black basalt rock surround and mantel. Other basement rooms are not finished and include storage, utility, mechanical spaces, and a two-car garage which is built under the first floor in the southwest corner of the house. Due to a drop in grade, the basement has daylight windows (multi-paned wood casement) at the south, west, and north elevations.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The exterior appearance of the Christensen House is nearly exactly like its original appearance when the house was built in 1926. Differences include a wood deck built on the rear, west elevation of the house in 1959, a few window replacements, and a new garage door which replaced original carriage house doors.

Exterior Modifications⁴

1937 Small casement window adjacent south of chimney replaced with larger casement windows to match those at north side of chimney.

1959 Wood deck installed at west elevation at first floor.

1970s Original carriage doors on garage removed and replaced with temporary plywood covering (not a garage door).

1974 Small shed dormer installed at east façade.

1981 Roof replaced with cedar shakes.

1990s First-floor kitchen windows at south and west elevations replaced. Attic window in gable peak at north elevation replaced with contemporary aluminum sash window.

⁴ Spokane building permits. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

2006 Second-floor window pair at south elevation replaced with contemporary aluminum sash windows. Plywood sheets covering replaced original carriage doors in 1970s were replaced with an overhead door that mimics original carriage house doors pictured in an historic photograph of house.

Interior Modifications

1970s Kitchen remodeled.

1974 Bathroom installed in attic.

1980s Kitchen remodeled again.

2006-07 First, second, and third floors (attic) undergoing current remodel to include new wiring, new plumbing, new fixtures, new sheetrock (walls and ceilings), refinished or cleaned original oak floors, restoration of original oak woodwork, built-in cupboards-cabinets-appliances-fixtures in kitchen and bathrooms, new paint and finish materials, period appropriate light fixtures.

Although the Christensen House has had some exterior alterations, it retains good exterior architectural integrity and is easily able to convey its original location, original Tudor Revival Storybook-style design, original materials, original workmanship, and original association as a single-family residence built in the 1920s in the Rockwood Terrace Addition, a prominent South Hill neighborhood in Spokane, Washington.

Areas of Significance	Architecture, Community Development
Period of Significance	1926-1957
Built Date	1926
Designer/Builder	John E. Anderson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Statement

The George & Blanche Christensen House was built in 1926 on the edge of a steep bluff in a prominent, tree-lined historic neighborhood in the Rockwood Terrace Addition in Spokane, Washington. Mimicking Tudor Revival-style elements borrowed from medieval architecture, and reminiscent of the whimsical dwellings and cozy cottages illustrated in children’s nursery rhymes and storybooks of the 1920s, the Christensen House is an eclectic mix of Tudor Revival and Storybook styling. Characteristic architectural features include the home’s irregular rambling footprint, steeply pitched roof with multiple lower cross gables, pointed and flared gable peak crockets, a front-facing full-height tapered brick chimney, an arched recessed front entrance, smooth stucco wall cladding, and leaded-glass casement windows. The home was built by celebrated Spokane master craftsman, stone/brick mason, and home designer/builder, John E. Anderson. At his death in 1950, the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper reported that Anderson was “a leading building contractor for many years” in Spokane and “was one of the first to develop the Rockwood district,” including the Rockwood Terrace Addition.⁵ “He built the original Rockwood Clinic...as well as many of the outstanding residences in that district of the city.”⁶ As he was building it, Anderson sold the Christensen House to the home’s first owners, Blanche & George Christensen, the president/general manager for Western Piggly Wiggly grocery stores in the area. The home was pictured in numerous advertisements and newspaper articles, including a 1926 real estate advertisement poster for R. W. Grinnell & Company, the developer of the Rockwood Terrace Addition. The neighborhood was touted as the “last of the improved South Hill bluff sites...in a setting of tall, stately pines, with a commanding view of the city, valley, and surrounding mountains.”⁷ After construction was completed, the Christensen House was described in a 1926 *Spokesman-Review* article which stated the design of the home was “English,” the construction cost for grounds and house totaled \$25,000, and the property was “one of the finest homes built this year” with a “commanding view site on Overbluff Road at the head of Perry Street.”⁸ The Christensen House was also featured in a book of house plans published by John E. Anderson, called *Artistic Homes of the Period, Spokane, Washington*. The caption by the photograph noted that “beauty plus individuality are featured in all...Anderson-built homes” and that “Mr. Anderson’s years of experience, coupled with a corps of expert

⁵ “Anderson Rites Set Wednesday.” *Spokesman-Review*, 23 Dec 1950.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ R. W. Grinnell & Company Advertisement, May 1926. Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Drawer B-11, Spokane, WA.

⁸ “Grinnell Sales Total \$43,525.” *Spokesman-Review*, 30 May 1926, part 5, p. 2.

craftsmen...make each structure 'The Home Beautiful.' ”⁹ The Christensen House achieved importance in the period of significance from 1926 to 1957 in the context of “architecture” as an excellent embodiment of the Tudor Revival style with Storybook influence, and as a product of master Spokane home designer/builder, John E. Anderson. The property is further historically significant as a tangible demonstration of the prominent domestic architectural development that took place in the Rockwood Terrace Addition, and illustrates the type of home planned by the developer. The George & Blanche Christensen House is nominated under Categories A and C to the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Rockwood Terrace Addition

Located 1.5 miles southeast and uphill from Spokane’s downtown central business district, the Rockwood Terrace Addition was platted in 1910. It contains three long city blocks and is bounded by East Nineteenth Avenue to the north, East Overbluff Road to the south, South Perry Street to the east, and Arthur and Syringa Streets to the west. The addition was developed by Robert W. Grinnell & Company, one of the developers of the Rockwood National Register Historic District which is located adjacent next west to the addition. When it was platted, the Rockwood Terrace Addition was a wild tangle of grasses, shrubs, and tall pine and fir trees that characterized the area and grew in profusion along the steep slopes of a basalt bluff just below Overbluff Road. The crest of the bluff is located on top of a plateau which is bounded by the bluff’s edge at the north, Overbluff Road to the south, and Arthur and Perry Streets to the west and east.

As a real estate speculation, Spokane home designer/builder, John E. Anderson, and his wife, Bertha Anderson, purchased Lot 37, Block 3, in the Rockwood Terrace Addition in 1925. Located at the northeast end of East Overbluff Road along the bluff’s edge just west of the Perry Street Stairs, the site had a panoramic view with a breathtaking vista of Spokane and northern mountain peaks. Anderson developed a house plan, and began building a two-and-one-half-story home on the site.

Christensen House

During this time, Robert W. Grinnell & Company was busy developing the Rockwood Terrace Addition. A firm believer in advertising, Grinnell placed advertisements in Spokane newspapers and printed large 18-by-24-inch advertisement posters which were distributed throughout Spokane. An advertisement in the May 16, 1926 edition of the *Spokesman-Review* filled a half-page of the newspaper with a map and bird’s eye view of the Rockwood Terrace Addition. Headlines read, “Rockwood Terrace—One of Spokane’s Most Exclusive Residence District...Jewel-Like Settings on the South Hill Bluff.”¹⁰ The map pictured an artist’s rendering of the house John Anderson was

⁹ Covely, A. Thatcher. *Artistic Homes of the Period, Spokane, WA*. 1930, p. 17.

¹⁰ R. W. Grinnell & Company Advertisement & Map. *Spokesman-Review*, 16 May 1926, part 1, p. 16.

erecting at the top of the bluff, and referred to the residential area around Rockwood Boulevard

and Overbluff Road as the “beauty spot” and “show place” in which to “take visitors.”¹¹ A large poster pictured photographs of homes built in the area and claimed that “Rockwood Terrace” was the “last of the improved South Hill Bluff sites.”¹² A photograph of Anderson’s partially-built house was pictured with a caption that read, “New Home Being Erected by John E. Anderson at Overbluff Road & Perry [Street].”¹³

Blanche & George Christensen, general manager of Western Piggly Wiggly grocery stores in Spokane, purchased the house John Anderson was building. A May 30, 1926 *Spokesman-Review* newspaper article described the Christensen’s real estate transaction with Anderson and other sales contracts made during an open house which was given by R. W. Grinnell & Company, the developer of the Rockwood Terrace Addition.¹⁴ Headlines read, “Grinnell Sales Total \$43,525” with the construction cost of the Christensen House and grounds at \$25,000.

One of the finest homes built this year was sold Wednesday by John E. Anderson, contractor and builder, to George B. Christensen, president and general manager of the Western Piggly Wiggly company. The home and the landscaping of the grounds will represent an investment of \$25,000. The home occupies a commanding view site on Overbluff Road at the head of Perry Street... The house is of English design. Mr. Christensen will move in July 10th.¹⁵

Subsequent Homeowners

At the eve of the Great Depression, the Christensens sold the house in August 1929 to W. S. Higgins, a Spokane dentist, and his wife, Lucille Higgins. Dr. Higgins’ dental practice was located in Room 424 in the Old National Bank Building on West Riverside Avenue in downtown Spokane. Dr. Higgins was a prominent Spokane dentist and “Pacific Coast Conference football official. He served on the Washington Board of Dentil Examiners for eight years, was a captain in the National Guard, and was active in various civic, social, and philanthropic clubs and organizations in Spokane.”¹⁶ The Higgins family resided at the property for five years during which time their home was featured in a planbook published by John E. Anderson. The planbook was called *Artistic Homes of the Period, Spokane, Washington*, and the Christensen House was pictured in a photograph

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² R. W. Grinnell & Company Advertisement & Map, May 1926. Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Spokane, WA.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “Grinnell Sales Total \$43,525.” *Spokesman-Review*, 30 May 1926, part 2, p. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ “Death Summons Dr. W. S. Higgins.” *Spokesman-Review*, 26 Sept 1944, p. 1.

on page 17. A caption read, “Home of Dr. & Mrs. W. S. Higgins, E. 1329 Overbluff, Designed and Built by John E. Anderson.”¹⁷

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
GEORGE & BLANCHE CHRISTENSEN HOUSE Section 8 Page 4

In 1936, Spokane physician, Michael J. O’Connor, and his wife, Chonita Bovet O’Connor, purchased the property for \$17,325. They sold it in 1941 for \$14,000 to Elsa & James M. Nelson, another Spokane physician, with offices in the Paulsen Medical & Dental Building. According to city directories, the Nelsons apparently leased the house for one year in 1941 to John G. Reinhardt, an insurance agent for Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, and his wife, Helen W. Reinhardt. After 1941, the Nelsons resided in the home for 17 years until 1958, when they rented the house to Robert H. & Zouri Gamman. In 1959, the Nelsons sold the property for \$28,375 to Christine & Kirby Torrance, Jr., manager of D. K. MacDonald & Company Insurance Brokers in Spokane. In 1964, John H. & Marjorie Hurley bought the house. Dr. John Hurley was an orthopedic surgeon with offices in the Medical Center Building at 820 S. McClellan, Suite 226. Sara Weaver-Lundberg, a certified public accountant who is part owner and vice president of Metals Fabrication Company, bought the property in 1999. She and her husband, Russell Lundberg, and their children reside in the house.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category A

The Christiansen House gained significance from 1926 to 1957 in the local context, “community development,” as an excellent example of well-constructed homes which were built in the Rockwood Terrace Addition during the first half of the 20th century. Specifically planned as an upscale residential neighborhood adjacent east of the Rockwood National Register Historic District, most of the Rockwood Terrace Addition was protected with subdivision regulations and design covenants which were intended to control the architectural and urban development of the neighborhood. The subdivision covenants ran in perpetuity with the land thus affording the neighborhood protection from inappropriate construction or intrusions that might occur regarding future land use decisions. When the covenants were recorded in 1910, domestic architecture was the intended use, and buildings could not be erected for use as hotels, lodging houses, boarding houses, or for business purposes of any kind. All homes were required to cost at least \$4,000 and be designed in what was then referred to as “modern architecture.” In order to maintain a uniform streetscape design, all homes were required to be set back at least 35 feet from the curb.¹⁸ The Christensen House illustrates the intent of the developers of the Rockwood Terrace Addition and conforms to the stipulations recorded in the covenants. To wit, the Christensen House was developed as a custom-built single-family home designed in a “modern” style of architecture in 1926. At \$25,000, it cost more than five times the required \$4,000 minimum expenditure, and like its neighbors, survives as a prominent, well-preserved well-crafted historic home. The Christensen House is historically significant for its association with the prominent architectural

¹⁷ Anderson, p. 17.

¹⁸ Spokane County public records. Spokane County, Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

domestic development and subsequent settlement of the Rockwood Terrace Addition and demonstrates the single-family residential type, “modern” style, size, and quality of home which was intended to be built in the neighborhood.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category C

Tudor Revival Style

The Christensen House is an excellent example of the Tudor Revival style with Storybook-style influence. Whether expressed as a grand baronial manor house or a small cozy cottage, the Tudor Revival style is one of America’s best-loved architectural traditions and was built throughout the country between 1890 and 1940.¹⁹

The English (not American revival) Tudor style was adopted throughout the British Isles and developed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603) and the reign of James I (1603-1625), reaching a period that fostered the construction of many of England’s great manor houses in both countryside and urban settings. Reminiscent of illustrations associated with English nursery rhymes and bedtime stories, smaller “storybook” cottages were also built throughout England and also in northern Europe, especially in France, Holland, and Denmark. In the English Cotswold region, peasant-like homes and wool carder’s cottages were made of indigenous limestone and stucco with moss-covered slate roofs. Similar to Cotswold cottages, quaint farmhouses in rural France, Holland and Denmark were constructed with whitewashed stucco walls and thick roofs made of brushy thatch.

In the 1920s, a revival of English and northern European cottage designs surged into favor throughout America, especially with returning World War I American GIs who remembered the romantic rural farmhouses that dotted the European countryside, a bucolic landscape which helped frame American GI hopes for a peaceful and much sought-after tranquil lifestyle. Architecture and travel books with photographs of British and European cottages helped spark the cottage movement in America, and the advent of American veneering techniques in the 1920s and 1930s helped promote the construction of frame cottages with exterior veneers made of brick, stone, and stucco. In addition, plans and blueprints were published in builder’s catalogues and houseplan books, and artists’ conceptions of romantic sleepy cottages were used in home decorating magazines, greeting cards, advertising logos, children’s nursery rhymes, and storybooks like *Hansel & Gretel*. Before long, both large and small cottage homes were built throughout the country with “antiquated” appearances that approximated 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th-century dwellings built throughout England and Europe. In America the style has been called the Storybook-influenced Tudor Revival style.²⁰

¹⁹ McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf Publishers, 1989, p. 355.

²⁰ Gellner, Arrol and Douglas Keister. *Storybook Style: America’s Whimsical Homes of the Twenties*. New York: Viking Studio, 2001.

Stylistic Features

Defining features of the Storybook-influenced Tudor Revival style include the following:

- Construction dates from roughly 1920-1945
- Artificially aged materials and designs that evoke appearance of antiquity
- One or two-stories
- Irregular footprint, sometimes meandering
- Asymmetrical façade design and fenestration patterns
- Steeply pitched roof with front-facing gables
- Stone, stucco, brick or wood exterior wall cladding
- False half-timbering
- Massive chimneys, sometimes tapered with ornamental chimney pots
- Recessed entryways, sometimes arched or corbelled
- Wooden doors with leaded-glass lights, sometimes stained glass
- Tall narrow windows with multi-paned glazing, sometimes metal casements and/or leaded windows
- Sloping sidewalls that extend from roof of house (catslide roof), sometimes built with a concave-curved swoop
- Roof with glazed ceramic tile, slate, or wood shingles or shakes, sometimes with rolled edges to simulate the look of thatched roofs
- Whimsical, storybook designs: pointed crockets in gable peaks; flared rooflines; swooped catslide rooflines; eyebrow dormers; exterior cladding with combinations of stucco, brick and/or stone; casement windows; wrought iron work (balconies, balconettes, light fixtures)
- Interior appointments: ebony or honey-colored woodwork; wood floors; built-ins; wood and/or ceramic tile floors; plaster walls (some with heavily textured hand-troweled work); wrought-iron light fixtures, wall sconces and door handles; large fireplaces; beamed ceilings

The Christensen House reflects the noted built dates and some of the above-mentioned forms and architectural elements that characterize the Storybook-influenced Tudor Revival style. At the Christensen House, these include the home's built date of 1926, irregular footprint, asymmetrical façade design and fenestration patterns, steeply pitched side gable roof, steeply pitched front-facing lower cross gable, prominent pointed and flared roof crockets in gable peaks, stucco cladding, massive front-facing full-height tapered brick chimney, recessed front and side entrances, glazed ceramic tile front porch deck, tall multi-paned casement windows (some with leaded-glass lights), and wrought iron balcony, balconette, and side entrance gate. Storybook-influenced Tudor Revival interior features and finishes include hardwood floors, woodwork, staircase and front door made of rich golden oak, open staircase, and multi-paned leaded-glass French doors.

John E. Anderson, Home Designer & Builder

The Christensen House was constructed by John E. Anderson, one of Spokane's most noted home designers and builders. According to family records, Anderson was born in Sweden in 1878, served in the Swedish Army for two years, and migrated alone to the

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United States in 1897. He spoke no English when he arrived in the America, but soon learned the language and received his Certificate of Naturalization on August 31, 1908.²¹

As told by his family, John Anderson came to Spokane in 1904. At that time he was listed as a carpenter and a stone/brick mason in city directories and resided temporarily at 204 W. Riverside Avenue in downtown Spokane. After his business began to grow, he sometimes moved from house to house, living on the property as he built it. By 1930 he was described as a designer and builder.²² With no specialized training or certification, John Anderson worked in Spokane for 46 years as a self-taught stonemason, bricklayer, home designer, and general contractor. The homes in Spokane that he constructed are regarded as some of the city's finest and survive as testaments to his accomplishments as a designer, contractor, and craftsman. His work and reputation were publicly praised in a 1930 advertisement and promotional publication called *Artistic Homes of the Period, Spokane, Washington*:

John E. Anderson, experienced artisan in the designing and building of outstanding homes of the period for the past quarter century in and about Spokane, Washington, has established a high reputation for artistic designing, workmanship, and quality in his homes.²³

It is not surprising that the name of "ANDERSON" is brought up when the finest in brick construction is mentioned.²⁴

Mr. Anderson's years of experience, coupled with a corps of expert craftsmen using the highest grade of building materials, make each structure "THE HOME BEAUTIFUL."²⁵

As documented to date in various Spokane City/County building permits and warranty deeds and in house plans and construction trade publications, John E. Anderson was responsible for the construction of the following homes in Spokane from 1904 to 1950:

W. 1023-7th Avenue

W. 822-21st Avenue

W. 507-22nd Avenue

W. 310-20th Avenue

E. 511-21st Avenue

E. 723-24th Avenue

²¹ Material provided by John Anderson's daughter, Betty Ann Anderson Hunter.

²² Covely, A. Thatcher. *Artistic Homes of the Period*. Spokane, WA, 1930.

²³ Covely, A. Thatcher. *Artistic Homes of the Period*. Spokane, WA, 1930.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

W. 520-23rd Avenue
W. 929-24th Avenue
E. 325-19th Avenue
E. 411-19th Avenue

E. 309-25th Avenue
E. 633-25th Avenue
E. 725-25th Avenue
E. 615-26th Avenue

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E. 612-19th Avenue
E. 1203-19th Avenue
S. 1321 Ferris Court
S. 2418 Garfield Road
E. 722 Highland Boulevard
E. 742 Highland Boulevard
S. 1818 Jefferson Street
S. 2203 Lincoln Street
S. 1616 Maple Street
E. 1006 Overbluff Road
E. 1015 Overbluff Road
E. 1329 Overbluff Road
E. 1409 Overbluff Road
E. 1431 Park Lane
E. 2024 Park Lane
S. 2029 Perry Street

E. 742-26th Avenue
E. 752-26th Avenue
S. 250 Rockwood Boulevard
S. 408 Rockwood Boulevard
S. 527 Rockwood Boulevard
S. 616 Rockwood Boulevard
S. 621 Rockwood Boulevard
S. 716 Rockwood Boulevard
W. 637 Shoshone Avenue
E. 1703 Upper Terrace
E. 1709 Upper Terrace
E. 1717 Upper Terrace
E. 1720 Upper Terrace
E. 1729 Upper Terrace
E. 1815 Upper Terrace
E. 1830 Upper Terrace

John E. Anderson's family described him as a "man of integrity" who had "much love and respect for people," many with whom he made "gentlemen's agreements" through a simple, friendly hand-shake.²⁶ He was well-respected in the construction trade as evidenced by a list of 20 pallbearers who officiated at his funeral service, many of whom were noted Spokane builders and designers. They included such names as Berquist, Carlson, Hokanson, Holstrom, Hultman, Person, and Gus Benson,²⁷ men who built homes in the Rockwood National Register Historic District.²⁸ Anderson and his wife, Bertha Thulon, were married in January 1924, and raised two children, Morris and Betty Ann Anderson. John Anderson attended Salem Lutheran Church and was active in the North Star Lodge of Vasa, the Scandinavian Fraternity, Odin Club, and the Swedish American League.²⁹

The George & Blanche Christensen House is architecturally and historically significant in the contexts of "architecture" and "community development" during the period of significance from 1926 to 1957, and is nominated for listing on the Spokane Register under Categories A and C. The property is a fine representation of the Storybook-influenced Tudor Revival style and is a product of master Spokane home designer/builder, John E. Anderson. It is a tangible demonstration of the type, size, style,

²⁶ Material provided by John Anderson's daughter, Betty Ann Anderson Hunter.

²⁷ "Anderson Rites Set Wednesday." *Spokesman-Review*, 23 Dec 1950.

²⁸ Yeomans, Linda. *Rockwood Historic District Historic Resources Inventory*. Spokane, 1997.

²⁹ "Anderson Rites Set Wednesday." *Spokesman-Review*, 23 Dec 1950.

and quality of home prescribed and built in the Rockwood Terrace Addition and is associated with the prominent domestic architectural development and subsequent settlement in the neighborhood.

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“Grinnell Sales Total...” *Spokesman-Review*, 30 May 1926.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1989.

Polk, R. L. *Spokane City Directories, 1900-2007*.

R. W. Grinnell Advertisement. *Spokesman-Review*, 16 May 1926.

R. W. Grinnell Advertisement and map, 1926. Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room, Drawer B-11. Spokane, WA.

Spokane City building permits. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

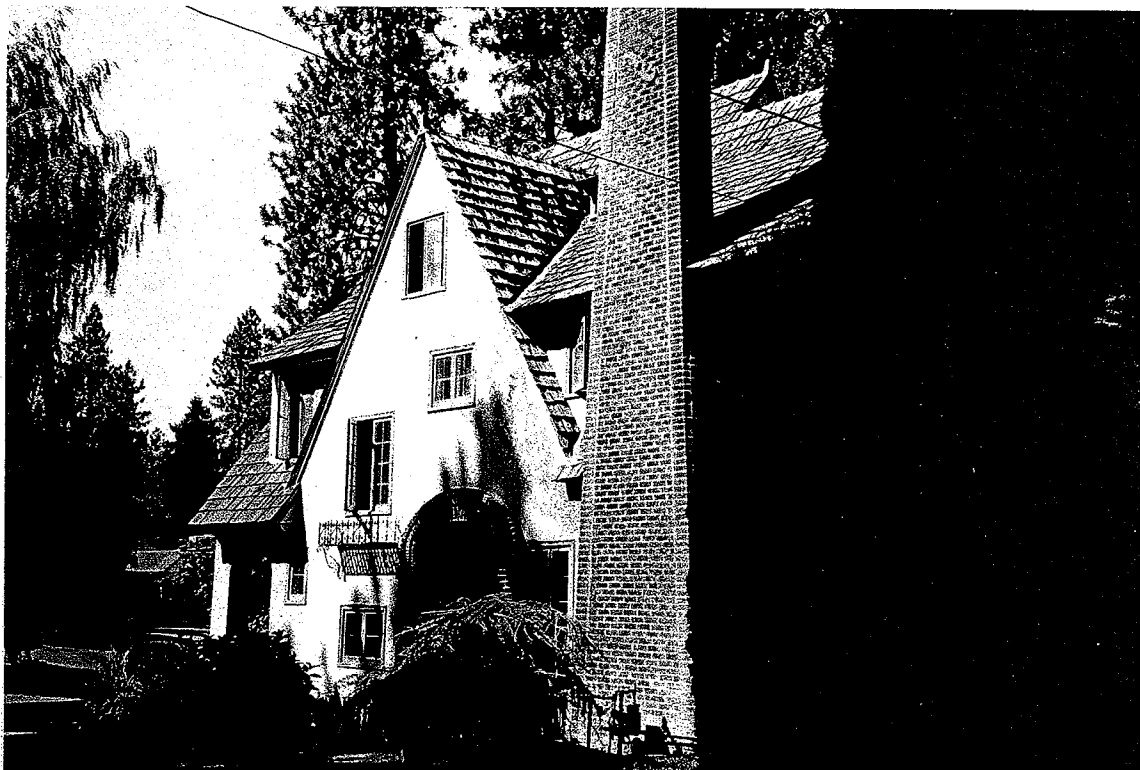
Spokane County public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

Yeomans, Linda. *Rockwood Historic District Historic Resources Inventory*. Spokane, WA, 1997.

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GEORGE & BLANCHE CHRISTIANSEN HOUSE Section 10

Photos 1 and 2

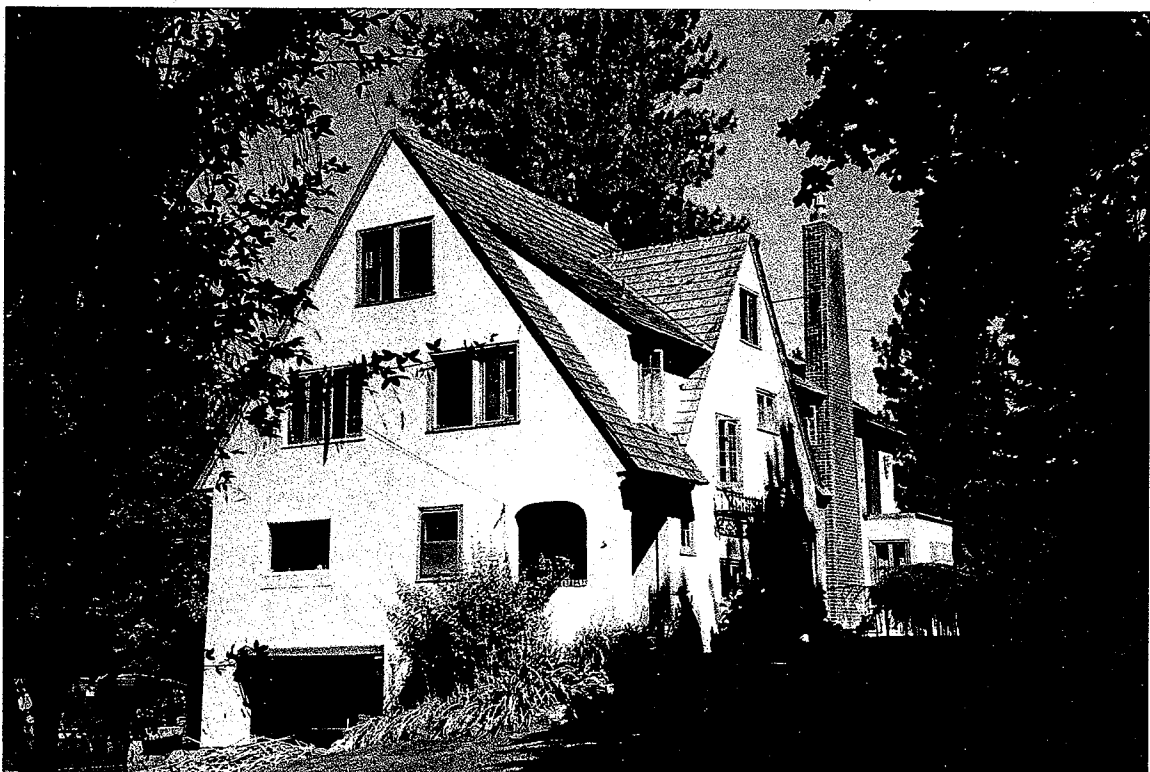
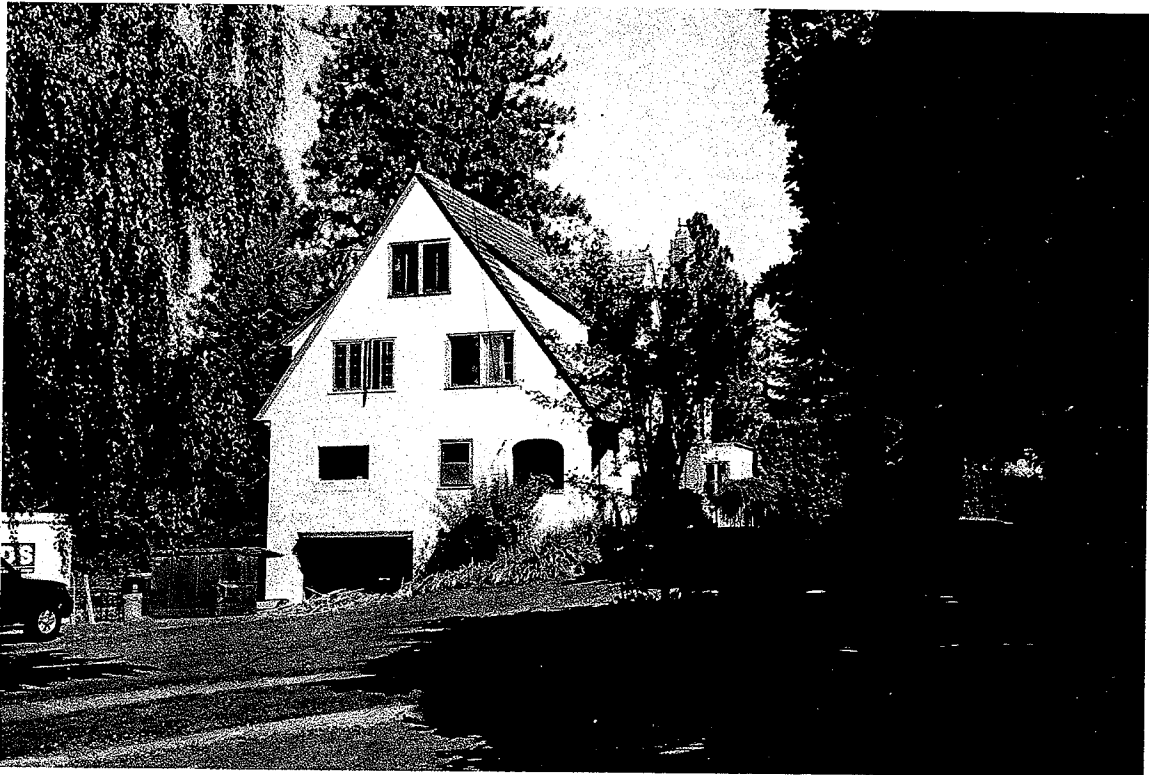
East façade of house in 2007.



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Photos 3 and 4

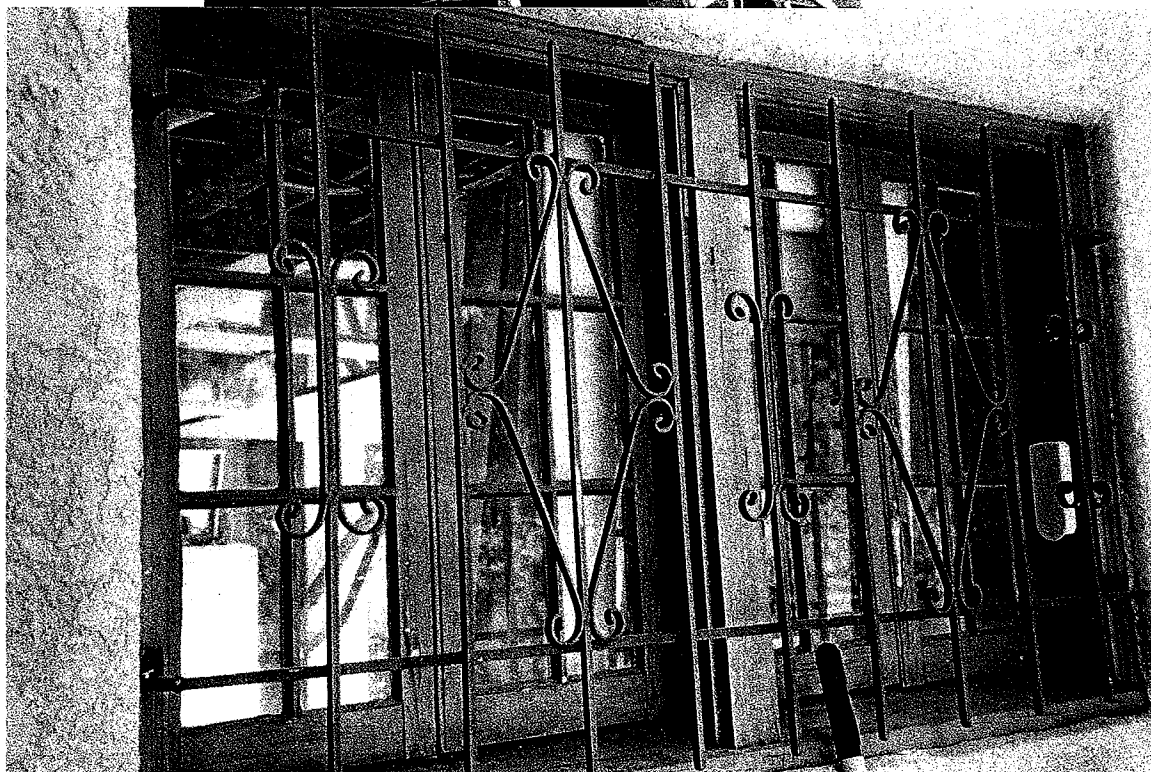
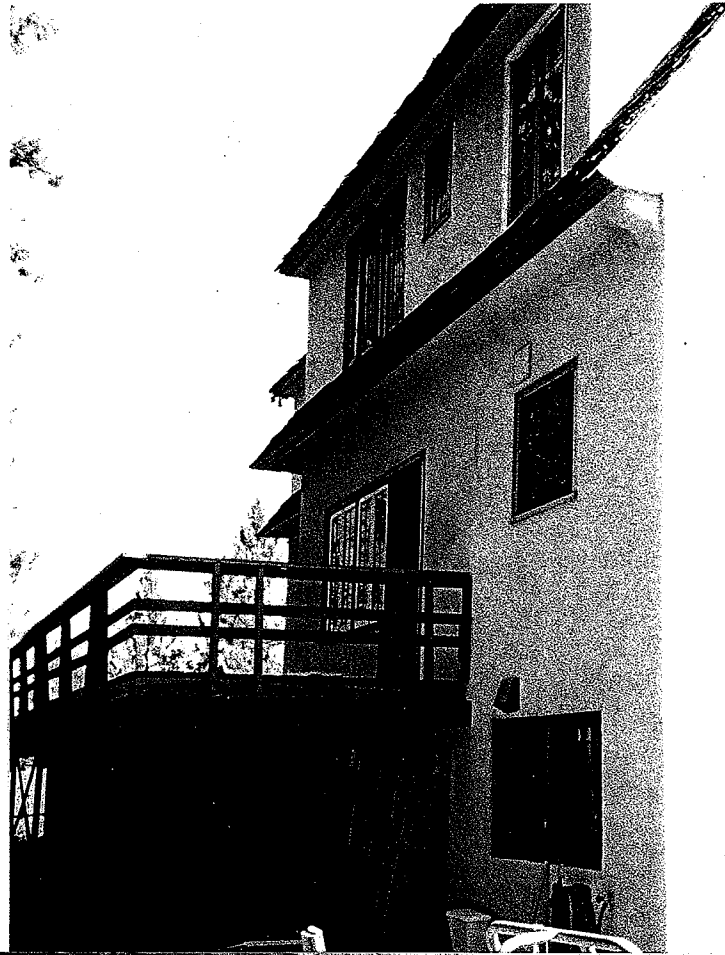
South elevation of house in 2007.



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Photos 5 and 6

West elevation of house in 2007.



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Photos 7 and 8

Rear, north elevation of house in 2007.



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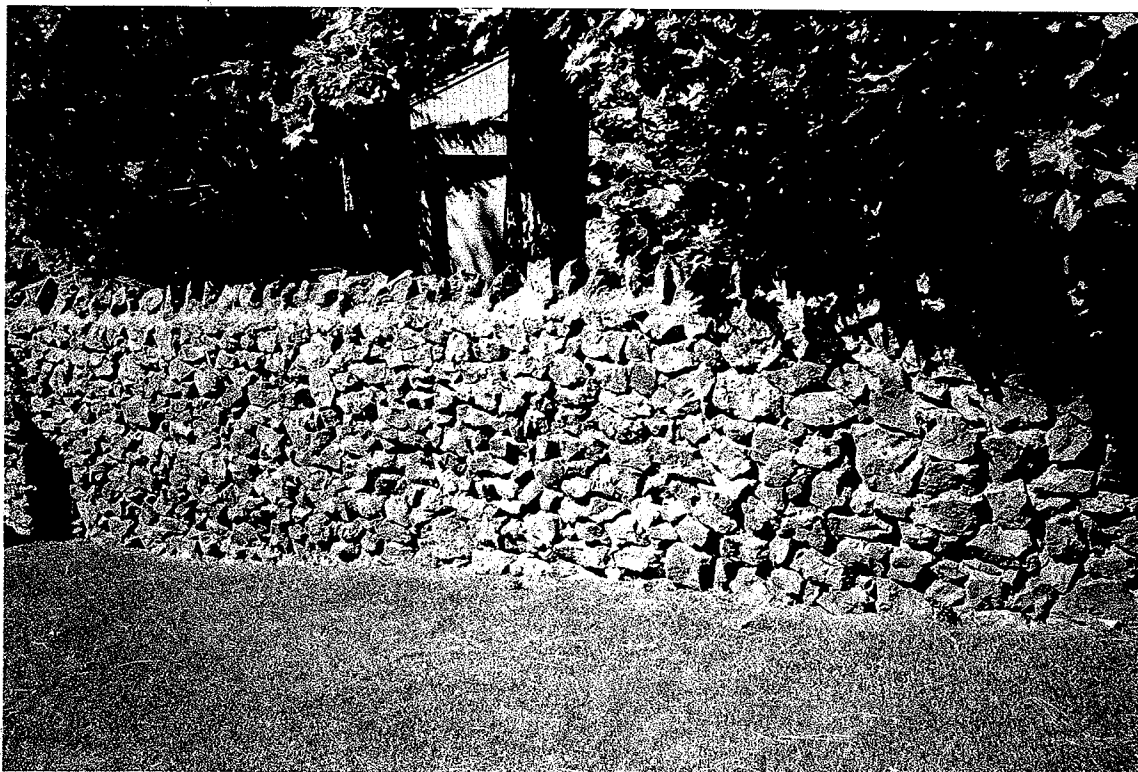
Photo 9

Front door of house in 2007 (east façade).



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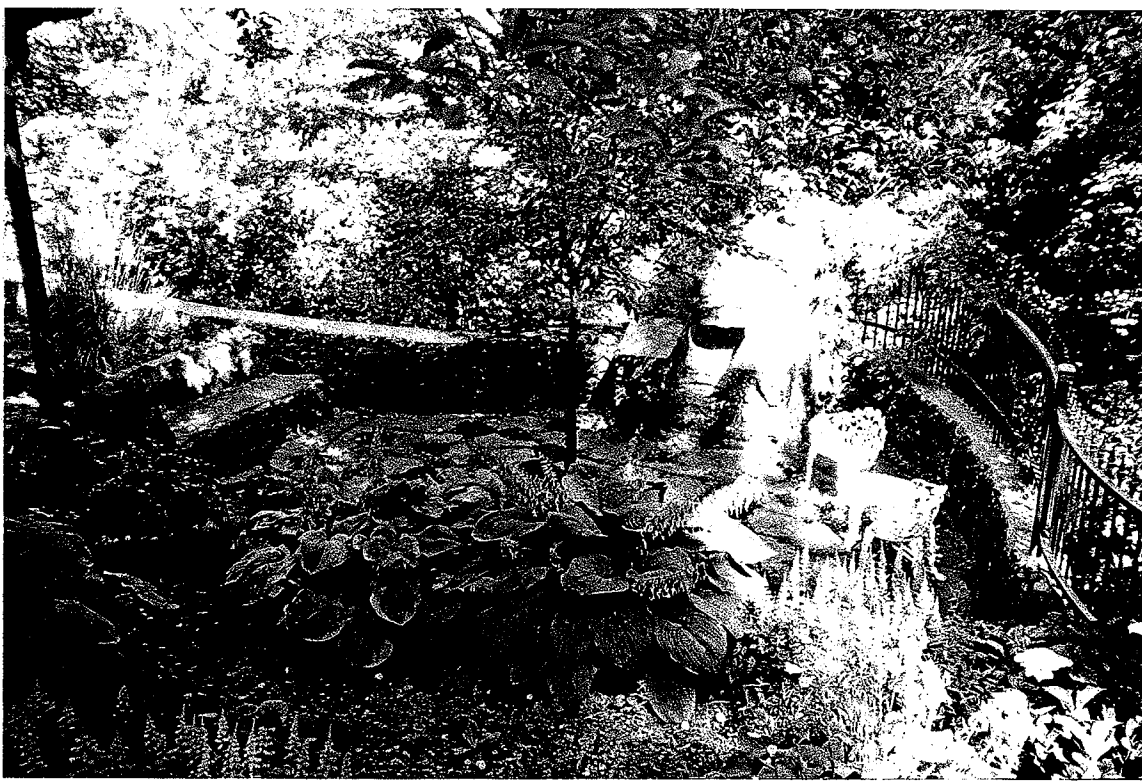
Photos 10 and 11 Basalt rock wall (west border) and basalt rock fountain (east border) in back yard in 2007.



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Photos 12 and 13

Basalt rock wall and fireplace/barbeque pit/patio in 2007.





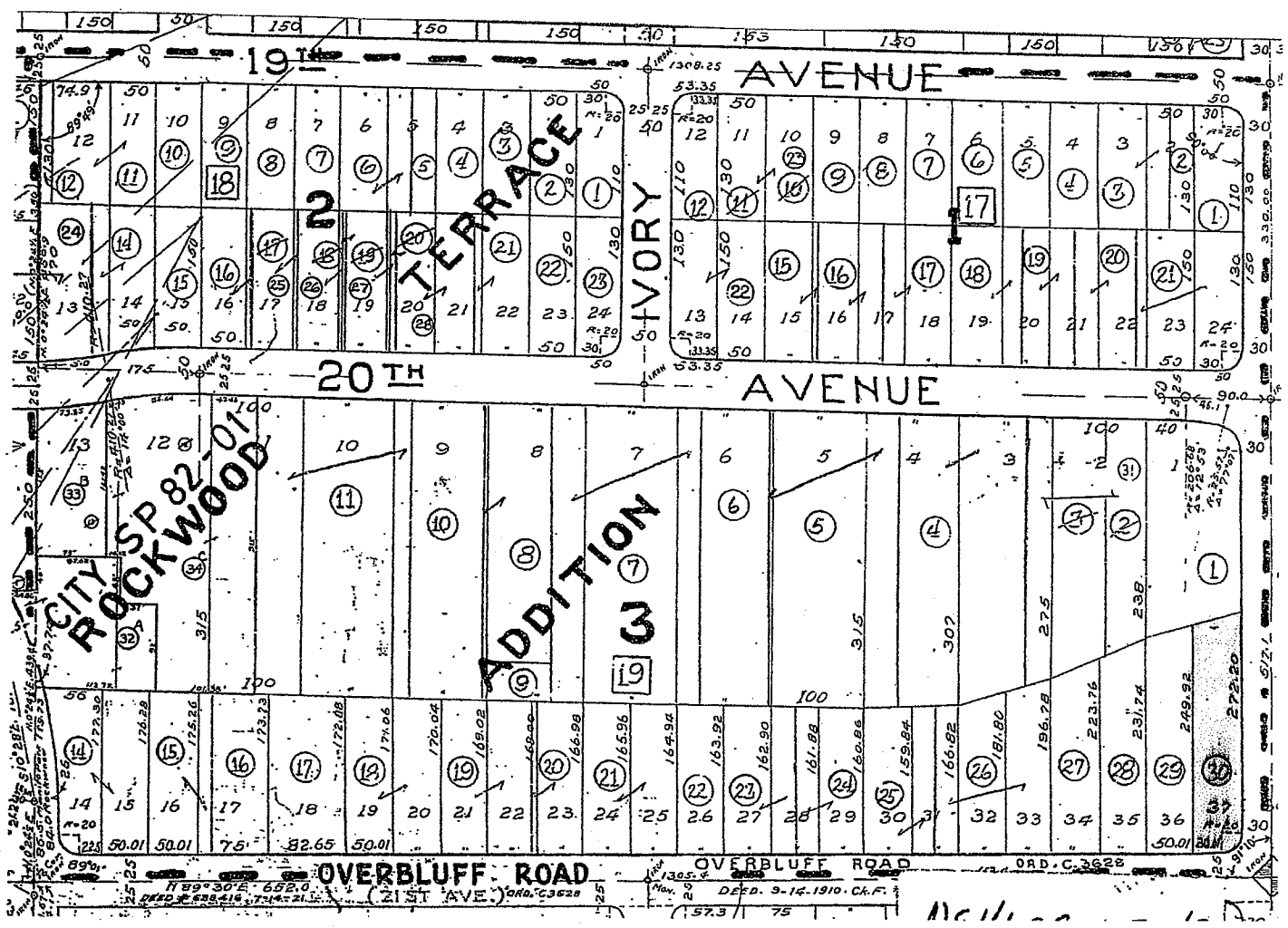
To wish you happiness

Mother dear

For every day throughout the year

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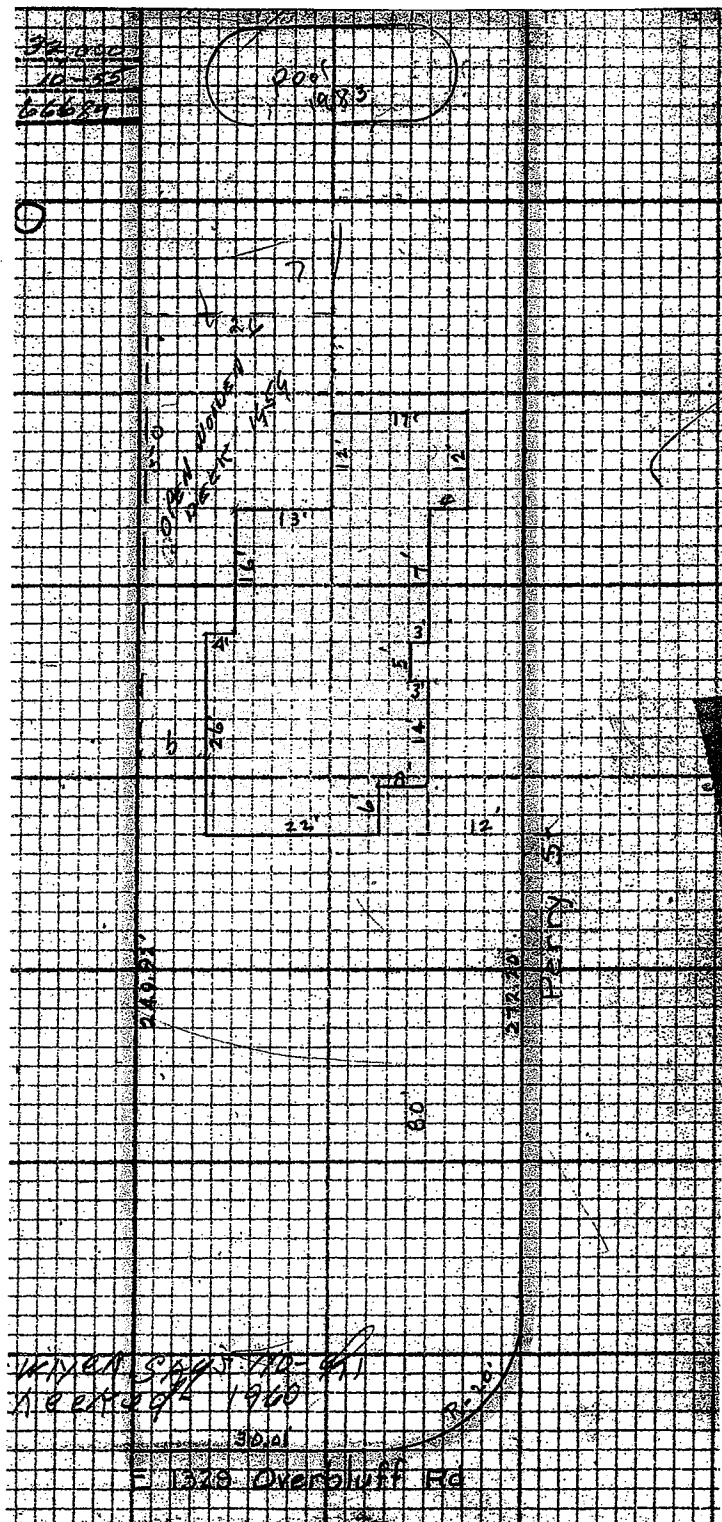
Plat Map Spokane Plat Map, 2007

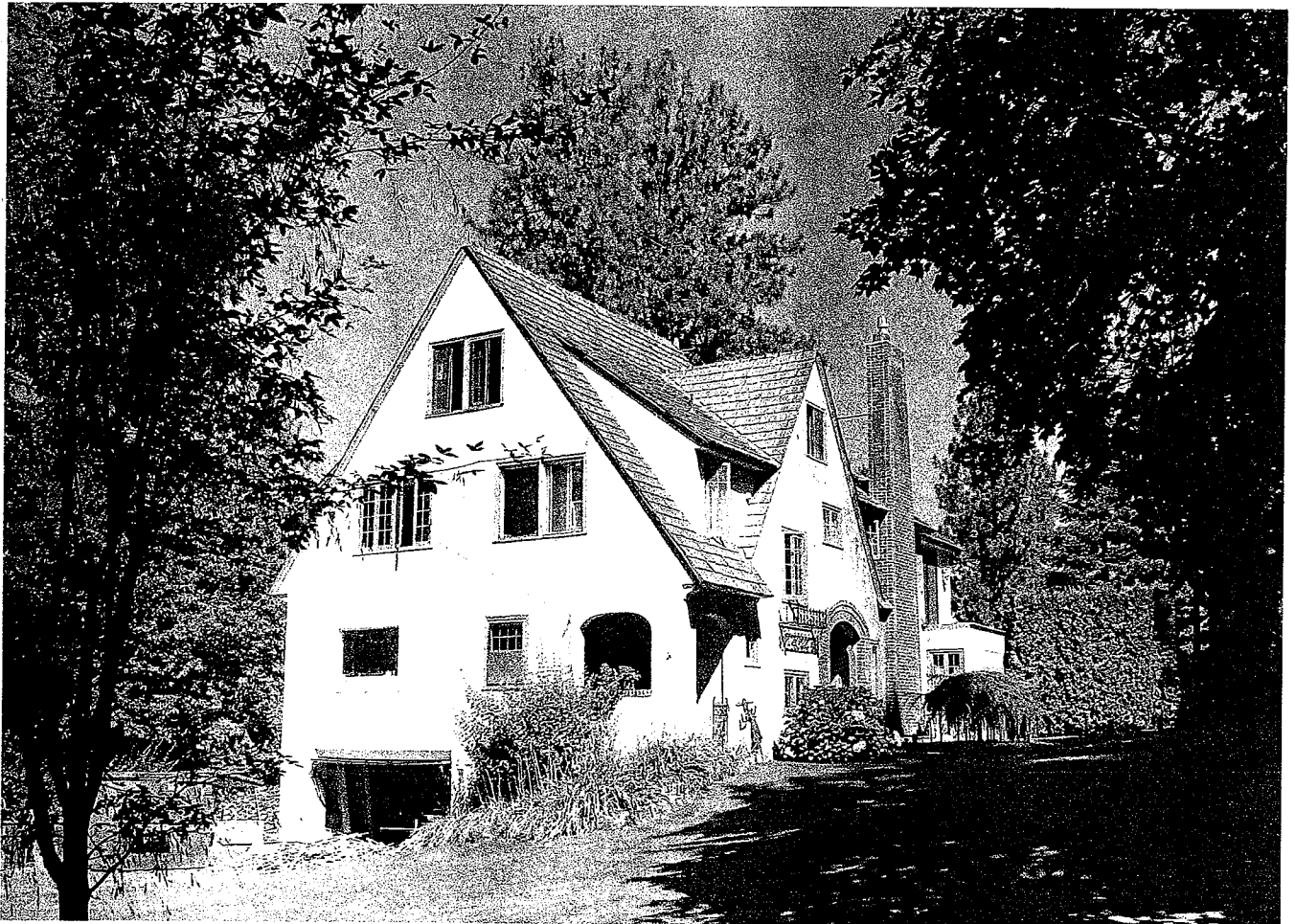


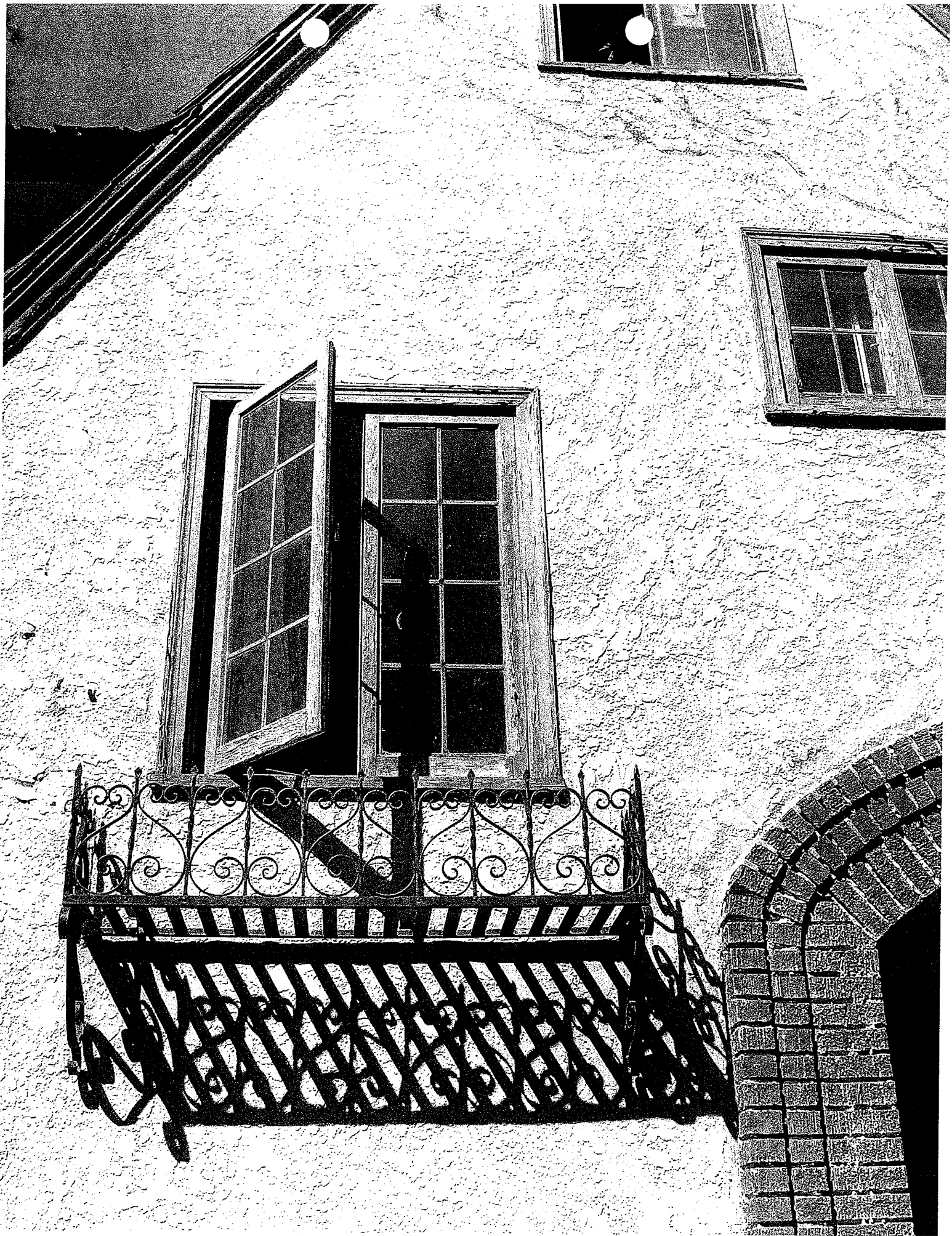
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Site Plan
Records, 2007.

Site plan of property from Spokane County Assessor's









TAX ASSESSOR
PHOTO
C-1961
1929 E. Overbluff

