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

CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE

2. Location Street & Number City, State, Zip Code Parcel Number

1212 North Summit Boulevard Spokane, WA 99201 25141.0203

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
X_building site structure object	public X_private both Public Acquisition in process being considered	X_occupied work in progress Accessible X_yes, restricted yes, unrestricted no	agriculturalmuseum commercialpark educationalreligious entertainment X_residential governmentscientific industrialtransportation militaryother

4. Owner of Property	
Name	Kevin Hekmatpanah
Street & Number	639 N. Riverpoint Blvd. Apt. J-202
City, State, Zip Code	Spokane, WA 99202
Telephone Number/E-mail	hekmatpanah@gonzaga.edu and 624-1223

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 S	Surveys		
Title	City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey		
Date	Federal State County Local 1979		
Location of Survey Records	Spokane Historic Preservation Office		

Final nomination recommended by Landmark Commission on November 15, 2006

7. Description		
Architectural Classification (see nomination, section 8)	Condition excellent	Check One unaltered
	X_good fair	X altered
	deteriorated ruins	Check One X_original site
	unexposed	moved & date

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:

- <u>X</u>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.
- <u>X</u> 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

8.

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of Property	Less than one acre.
Verbal Boundary Description	Sherwood Addition, Block 2, Lots 4-7
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	15 Nov 2006
12. Additional Documentation	
Map	City/County of Spokane current plat map.
Photographs	black & white photos, color digital prints on CD

13. Signature of Owner(s)	
Name	
Name	
14. For Official Use Only	
Date Received	_Attest
Date Heard	City Clerk
Commission Decision	Approved as to Form Assistant City Attorney
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 Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 1

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Built in 1907, the Charles & Elsie Thomas House and garage are fine examples of the Mission Revival style. Located in the Sherwood Addition in northwest Spokane, Washington, the property is sited on the corner of Boone and Summit Boulevard, one of the busiest intersections in the neighborhood. The house and garage are built on four large west-facing lots along Summit Boulevard and command a panoramic view of the Spokane River and distant forested hills along the river's west bank. The Thomas House features character-defining shaped parapet bays and dormers, a low-pitched cross-gable hip roof with widely overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails, a symmetrical façade design, an arcaded full-height center entrance, and smooth stucco walls that cover brick masonry construction. Unique multi-paned quatrefoil and oriel windows, a heavy vertical wood plank front door with custom-forged wrought-iron straps, and red Mission roof tiles complete the aesthetic look of the Mission-style which is so well illustrated on the Thomas House. The property has had some modifications over the last century of use, including the addition of a single-story wing in 1967. Even with modifications, the house retains good exterior architectural integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as an early 20th-century residence built in Spokane, Washington.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION

Site

The Thomas House and garage are located at the crest of a high bluff on the northeast corner of the intersection of West Boone Avenue and North Summit Boulevard in northwest Spokane. The house is built in the center of Lots 4, 5, 6, and 7 on Block 2 in the Sherwood Addition and faces west. A one-story garage is located behind the house in the northeast corner of the property. A paved driveway leads back to the garage from Summit Boulevard and curves around the back of the house, exiting at the southeast boundary of the property at Boone Avenue. The entire parcel of four lots measures 200 feet wide and 150 feet deep, and the southwest corner of the parcel is curved to accommodate the wide intersection at Boone and Summit Boulevard. The house is framed by mature deciduous trees, evergreen shrubs, and a manicured lawn. The neighborhood surrounding the property is composed of tree-lined curvilinear streets and large, architect-designed, custom-built single-family homes which were erected from about 1900 to 1945 for prominent Spokane homeowners. The most prominent feature of the Sherwood Addition in which the Thomas House and garage are located is Summit Boulevard and the steep bluff along the roadside's west edge. The bluff rises more than 100 feet above the Spokane River to Summit Boulevard and affords homes that parallel it a commanding view of west Spokane.

Garage Exterior

The garage is a single-story stucco-clad brick masonry building with a rectangular footprint. It is 22 feet wide and 32 feet deep, and faces south behind the house. A prominent front-facing shaped parapet marks the gable front of the garage. With a design

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 2CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 2

and materials that mimic those of the Thomas House, the garage is covered with red metal Mission tiles on the roof, the walls are clad with smooth stucco, and windows are original multi-paned units with curved muntin bars. A pair of metal folding garage doors open from the south façade of the building (the original wood doors were replaced in the 1970s). The garage is well-preserved in good condition with good exterior integrity.

House Exterior

The Thomas House is large with an irregular footprint that measures approximately 88 feet wide and 70 feet deep. The house has two stories with a low-pitched cross-gable hip roof which is covered with red Mission-style metal roof tiles.¹ Wide eaves overhang the sides of the house and are embellished with tongue-in-groove soffits and decorative exposed scroll-sawn rafter tails. The cross-gables terminate with prominent gable ends that are articulated with shaped parapets. The parapets are covered with protective metal coping and are highlighted with center multi-paned quatrefoil windows that have deep corbelled sashes. Arched dormers with shaped parapets and quatrefoil windows project from all four elevations at the roof. Three large chimneys rise from the center of the roof and are clad in stucco. The house is completely clad in smooth-textured stucco which is painted a pale crème/terra cotta color. Fenestration patterns are symmetrical and windows are original 1/1 and 7/1 double-hung wood-sash units, some with unusual curved muntin bars that divide the lights. Invisible at grade, the foundation is made of basalt rock which is covered with a continuation of the smooth stucco cladding on the exterior walls of the house.

The façade of the house faces west at Summit Boulevard with a wide view of distant forested hillsides and the meandering Spokane River. The west façade of the Thomas House is distinguished with a symmetrical design and a prominent center forwardprojecting cross-gable with an arcaded center entrance bay. The cross-gable bay measures 18 feet wide and nine feet deep, rises the full height of the house, and has a prominent shaped parapet with galvanized metal coping. The parapet is embellished with a center multi-paned, corbelled-sash quatrefoil window in the gable peak. Three arches, which are supported by massive round columns, are prominent features of the center bay. They extend the full height of the house, forming a balcony at the second floor. An enclosed porch wall protects the balcony and the balcony's arched window openings are enclosed with plate glass. The second-floor balcony overhangs the first floor, forming a covered front porch at the first floor. An enclosed porch wall protects a concrete terrace which spans the width of the house. A center front door is located at the front porch. It is flanked by two original plate-glass picture windows which measure 36 inches wide and 53 inches high.² Two larger plate-glass picture windows (52x53 inches) flank the smaller windows at the north and south ends of the west facade of the house. Two beveled oriel windows are located at the second floor above the larger first-floor picture windows.

¹ Phillips, Steven J. *Old House Dictionary*. Washington DC: NPS, 1994, pp. 142-143.

² Eastern Washington State Historical Society. *Cutter Collection- L84-207.92*. Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA.

They are supported by scroll-sawn, decorative corbelled brackets and have original double-hung wood-sash windows with unusual curved divided lights in the upper sash. A wood door with the same unusual divided lights opens from the second floor onto the enclosed second-floor balcony.

The *south elevation* is considered a secondary façade of the house as it faces south onto West Boone Avenue at the corner of Boone and Summit Boulevard. It features symmetrical fenestration patterns, twin second-floor beveled oriel windows with corbelled brackets, a center arched dormer with a shaped parapet and multi-paned corbelled-sash quatrefoil window, and a deep overhang produced by widely overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails. The deep overhang produces a wide horizontal shadow across the planar wall surface of the house, effectively shading the second-floor windows.

The *north elevation* is punctuated by a center full-story forward-projecting cross-gable bay. Like the center bay at the west façade, the north elevation bay has a shaped parapet with metal coping and a multi-paned, corbelled-sash quatrefoil window in the gable peak. Fenestration includes multi-paned window pairs with curved muntin bars like those in the beveled oriels. Located at the north elevation between the driveway and the main house, a one-story rectangular wing with a low mansard roof and plain stucco wall cladding was built in 1967. It measures 30 feet wide and 48 feet deep, and is partially hidden from the street at Summit Boulevard by landscaping and mature trees and shrubs.

The *rear, east elevation* of the house abuts a paved driveway which curves around the home at the northeast and southeast corners (egress at Summit Boulevard and Boone Avenue). It features a two-story cross-gable bay, symmetrical fenestration patterns, an arched dormer with a shaped parapet and quatrefoil window, and two covered porches at the first floor at the southeast and northeast corners. The southeast corner porch is formed by the overhang produced by the second floor, which extends over the first floor. The second-floor overhang is supported by massive round columns which are anchored to an enclosed porch wall. The columns and porch wall are made of stucco. The porch at the northeast corner is covered by a low-pitched hip roof at the first floor and is supported by two massive round columns that match those used at the southeast porch and the front porch at the west façade. An enclosed porch wall protects the porch.

House Interior

According to Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the Thomas House has 4,234 finished square feet on the first floor and 2,988 finished square feet on the second floor.³ A 40-inch-wide vertical wood plank door at the west façade front entrance opens into a spacious formal reception hall in the center of the house. Measuring about 18 feet wide and 36 feet deep, the reception hall is a large room with a 10-foot-high ceiling. The floor is made of oak, the walls and ceiling are plaster-and-lathe construction, and the ceiling is articulated with massive oak boxed beams. Original circa 1907 wallpaper lines the

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

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 4

ceiling between the beams. The wallpaper has a grid design and reveals deep rust, red, and copper coloration. Five-foot-high solid oak-paneled wainscoting encircles the walls Above the wainscoting is original circa 1907 leather-like embossed of the room. wallpaper in hues of copper and brown with flecks of iridescent copper and gold leaf. A papered border design separates the embossed wall paper from the wainscoting and features a stylized Glasgow Rose motif (a Craftsman-style element). Two large oakpaneled double pocket doors open from the north and south walls. All of the woodwork in the central hall is made of the finest ebony-finished oak which was artificially darkened with ammonia fumes. The end product of the process is called "fumed-oak" which is sometimes called "Mission Oak."⁴ The fumed-oak wainscoting, paneled pocket doors, ceiling beams, woodwork, and original rust, red, copper, and gold leaf-flecked wallpapers simulate a dramatic Moorish atmosphere which is enhanced by the focal point of the room: a wide arched spandrel at the east wall which frames an arched fireplace and inglenook and a four-foot-wide open staircase that winds up and behind the fireplace to the second floor. The widely arched spandrel is supported by two large thick, tapered fumed-oak columns, and frames the entrance to a fireplace and inglenook. The fireplace surround is made of molded smooth-faced concrete with egg-and-dart border detailing and floral-patterned rosettes in the corners. Two built-in fumed-oak settles with high curved arms flank the fireplace and protect seated patrons from drafts. A balustrade with a closed stringer embellishes the staircase which has deep treads and one-inch-square fumed-oak balusters which are staggered with seven balusters to each tread. An oak railing anchors the balusters.

The south wall of the reception hall has double pocket doors which open to a library, and a hallway that leads to a bedroom, powder room, and a back door that opens to a covered porch at the southeast corner of the house. The bedroom has a fireplace with an unusual surround and hearth. The surround is made of two-inch-square matte-glazed ceramic tiles in hues of light to dark salmon-shaded terra cotta. Bas relief rabbits, cats, and small animal caricatures made of cast concrete dot the fireplace surround in random order. The hearth has a beveled footprint and is covered with small hexagonal-shaped glazed ceramic tiles. The woodwork is fumed oak, the floor is oak, and the ceiling is 10 feet high in the bedroom. The library features built-in bookshelves on three walls and a large fireplace on the east inside wall. The fireplace has an oak mantel with scroll-sawn brackets and a square-shaped firebox. The firebox entrance is protected with handhammered solid brass and copper coping with brass studs. The fireplace surround is made of matte-glazed mottled ceramic tile in shades of green (perhaps Grueby tiles). Center tiles above the firebox reflect a multi-colored Spanish galleon with furled sails, a popular Craftsman motif. The ceiling is embellished with oak boxed beams and is 10 feet high.

⁴ Made popular at the 1915 California Exposition which showcased California missions and the Mission Revival style, the dark fumed-oak was called "Mission Oak" and today refers to woodwork, built-ins, and Craftsman-style Stickley and Stickley-like furniture that resembles it.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 5CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 5

The north wall of the reception hall has a door which opens to a formal dining room, and two pocket doors which slide open to a large living room. The living room and dining room were remodeled in 1967 with a dropped ceiling, new floor and wallcoverings, and painted woodwork. A door on the east wall leads to a butler's pantry, cook's pantry, and kitchen. The pantries retain original Shaker-style casework which is white-painted pine. The kitchen was remodeled in 1967 with built-ins, appliances, and a vinyl floor. A door on the north wall of the dining room leads north to a one-story addition at the north end of the house. The addition has seven bedrooms, a bathroom, and an office.

A 40-inch-wide U-shaped staircase in the center reception hall winds up to the second floor. Originally open as a gallery-style staircase at the second floor, the west and north balustrades were closed in 1967 by the construction of temporary interior hallway partition walls. The second floor contains seven bedrooms (two in the northeast corner were designed for use by domestic help), two bathrooms, numerous closets, an enclosed sun porch at the northwest corner, and an enclosed balcony at the west wall. The woodwork is painted white, the floors are fir plank, the ceilings are eight feet high, and an enclosed staircase designed for use by domestic help is located at the east wall. The basement is unfinished with storage rooms and a boiler/mechanical room.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

Drawings and photographs of the original exterior design of the Thomas House appeared in many documents, including a circa 1907 elevation rendered by Cutter & Malmgren, the architectural firm responsible for the home's design, and in photographs taken in 1908⁵ and 1959.⁶ The photographs revealed the west façade and south elevation which look nearly the same today (except for glass in balcony arches). A photograph in the September 1908 edition of *The Western Architect* pictured the original north elevation of the Thomas House which revealed a forward-projecting two-story bay with a shaped parapet, a multi-paned quatrefoil window in the gable peak, two windows on the second floor, and three windows at the first floor. The single-story covered porch at the rear, northeast corner of the house was supported by four round columns anchored to an enclosed porch wall. Another single-story porch was located at the northwest corner of the house with a design that matched the porch at the northeast corner. The northwest porch was enclosed in the 1930s-1940s, rendering the modification historic with its own significance.

According to Spokane City building permits and Spokane County tax assessor records, modifications to the house included:

• *1930s-1940s:* Northwest corner porch was enclosed at first floor and sun porch was constructed at second floor.

⁵ Eastern Washington State Historical Society. *Thomas House, L84-207.4.39.* Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA.

⁶ Spokane County Tax Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 6CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 6

- *1940:* Northeast back porch was partially enclosed.
- 1967: Addition/wing built at north elevation; interior cosmetically remodeled in kitchen, dining room, living room on first floor, and bedrooms and bathrooms on second floor—remodeling included a lowered first-floor ceiling, new kitchen built-ins, and new wall and floor coverings and fixtures in the kitchen, dining room, living room, bathrooms, second-floor bedrooms. Second-floor balcony window openings enclosed with glass. The original floor plan was not changed.

Although modifications were made to the Thomas House during the last 99 years, the property still retains good exterior architectural integrity in original location and in most of its original design, materials, and workmanship which preclude it as a fine example of the Mission Revival style. Although used as a group home for a time, alterations to the Thomas House were mostly cosmetic. The property retains its original plan as a single-family house with original reception hall, library, living room, dining room, kitchen, bathrooms, and bedrooms intact.

In conclusion, the Thomas House reveals changes but still retains the essential physical features that help convey its significance as a fine example of a single-family residence designed in the Mission Revival style.⁷ Those essential features include:

- home's two-story symmetrical design and form
- floor plan
- low-pitched hip roof
- Mission-style roof tiles
- widely overhanging eaves with scroll-sawn exposed rafter tails
- tongue-in-groove wood-paneled soffits
- prominent shaped parapets found on projecting two-story bays and on arched dormers
- covered front and back porches with massive round porch columns and enclosed porch walls
- multi-paned quatrefoil windows with corbelled sashes
- beveled oriel windows with corbelled brackets
- double-hung wood-sash windows with unusual curved divided lights in the upper sash
- wood plank front and back doors with custom-forged wrought-iron strap hinges
- smooth stucco cladding
- fumed-oak "Mission-style" interior woodwork
- original garage, grounds, and setting which are associated with single-family residential architecture

⁷ NPS Bulletin 15.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 7CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 7Page 7

Due to an attached single-story addition built on the north elevation of the house in 1967, the original design at the north elevation does not easily convey its historic significance as a fine example of the Mission Revival style (stucco cladding, prominent shaped parapet, and original windows are still intact at this elevation as defining features of the Mission Revival style).

In contrast, the other three elevations of the house—the primary west façade, secondary south façade, east elevation, and the garage all embody essential defining features of the Mission Revival style and overwhelmingly convey the property's significance as an excellent example of the Mission Revival style. In addition, historic photographs and documentation of the property help confirm the home's historical and architectural significance as one of the finest Mission Revival-style homes built in Spokane. The Thomas House and garage retain good exterior architectural integrity and are eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

Areas of Significance	
Period of Significance	
Significant Dates	
Architect	

Architecture, Community Design & Development 1907-1956 1907 Cutter & Malmgren, architectural firm

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas House and garage were built in 1907 in the Sherwood Addition neighborhood in northwest Spokane. They are excellent examples of the Mission Revival style and were erected for prominent Spokane physician and surgeon, Dr. Charles Thomas, and his wife, Elsie Thomas. Sited on the bluff at Summit Boulevard with a breathtaking view of the meandering Spokane River and timbered hillsides along the river's west bank, the property was custom-designed by Cutter & Malmgren, one of Spokane's most celebrated architectural firms. Construction of the Thomas House was foretold in a February 16, 1905 feature in the Spokane-Review newspaper. The article reported that Dr. Thomas and his wife "will build a \$30,000 residence...of brick and stone, and there will be a large lodge for automobiles." The article further indicated that "Dr. Thomas selected the site not only because of its delightful view, but because of its convenience to St. Luke's Hospital" where he "expects to spend much of his time."⁸ Especially during its period of significance, 1907-1956, the Thomas House achieved historic significance in the context of "community design & development" as one of the largest homes built in the Sherwood Addition and as a tangible expression of the prominent urban development and settlement that occurred in the area, especially along the bluff's edge at Summit Boulevard. The property is further significant in the context of "architecture" as a fine rendition of the Mission Revival style and as a product of architects Kirtland Cutter and Karl Malmgren. The Thomas House and garage are eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Categories A and C.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Summit Boulevard in the Sherwood Addition

Before it was platted in 1889, the Sherwood Addition was a high wooded plateau at the top of a bluff which commanded spectacular views of the Spokane River and wooded hills. John Sherwood, for whom the addition is named, was a Harvard graduate who came to Spokane with an interest in mining and real estate speculation. He opened a real estate office with F. Rockwood Moore, William Pettet, and other noted businessmen, and helped organize the city's first electric light company. In 1888 he built the first cable-system street railway which ran north and south along Monroe Street and west along Boone Avenue to the river. After 1891, Sherwood changed his railway system from cable power to electric power, and in his pursuit of public utilities, Sherwood helped organize the Washington Water Power Company for which he was named vice president.

⁸ "Dr. Thomas Builds Home." *Spokesman-Review*, 16 Feb 1905.

"He was a public-spirited man" and "contributed liberally to enterprises of public benefit."9

Sherwood purchased the acreage that comprises Sherwood Addition, platted it for use as residential property, and built a sprawling home on the bluff at 2941 W. Summit Boulevard. An article in the September 28, 1887 edition of the *Spokane Falls Review* described the addition's panoramic vistas and the planned design for Summit Boulevard along the crest of the bluff:

The road is to be...wide and when completed, will be one of the most beautiful drives in the country. It will follow the course of the river, winding along the crest of the bluff which forms the river bank and commanding a view, which for picturesqueness and beauty, is unsurpassed.

The...river fronts are admirably adapted for the location of fine residences, which will front on the magnificent driveway. The lots along the [bluff]...have been platted with a view to make them equitable for the erection of fine mansions as they are remarkably wide and deep. If the city ever attains the growth so confidently anticipated, there is little doubt but that [Summit Boulevard]...will be lined with beautiful residences.¹⁰

The prediction reported in the newspaper article proved true. Summit Boulevard was developed with "beautiful residences" which were architect-designed and custom-built for successful businessmen and socially prominent Spokane families. Sherwood Addition was improved with paved tree-lined streets, underground sewer and water service, and with the construction of Summit Boulevard along the crest of the bluff. Designed by well-known Spokane architects such as William Ballard, W. W. Hyslop, Harold Whitehouse, and Kirtland Cutter, homes built on Summit Boulevard spanned a plethora of styles from Arts & Crafts designs to revivals that depicted Colonial, Tudor, and Mission styles. One of these homes was the Thomas House, a fine rendition of the Mission Revival style.

Thomas House

One of the first homes built along Summit Boulevard was for Frances & Charles Richardson, a mining engineer, lawyer, and real estate manager for Elmendorf & Elmendorf Real Estate Company in Spokane. Individually listed on the Spokane, Washington State, and National Registers of Historic Places in 2005, the Richardson House, a large American Foursquare with Craftsman-styling, cost \$6,000 when it was completed in 1906.

⁹ Durham, N. W. *The History of the City of Spokane and the Spokane Country, Washington, Vol. 2.* Spokane: Clarke Publishing Company, 1912, pp. 445-46.

¹⁰ "New Addition: A Large Tract of Valuable Property Put Upon the Market." *Spokane Falls Review*, 28 Sept 1887.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet **CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE** Section 8 Page 3

In 1905, the Richardsons sold Lots 4 and 5 next south of their property in Block 2, Sherwood Addition, to Elsie Thomas, wife of Dr. C. P. Thomas, a Spokane physician and surgeon. The cost of the property was \$2,000.¹¹ That same year, John Finch sold adjacent Lots 6 and 7 to the Thomas's for \$1,800.¹² View lots on Summit Boulevard in the up-scale Sherwood Addition were expensive in 1905 as evidenced by the \$3,800 total price tag for the Thomas property—a sum that exceeded more than half the construction cost attributed to the Richardson House.

Apparently sparing no expense, the Thomas's planned for the design and construction of their home at 1212 N. Summit Boulevard. The Spokesman-Review made the following report on February 16, 1905:

Dr. Thomas Builds Home Expects to Spend About \$30,000 on Place Automobile Lodge a Feature

Dr. C. P. Thomas and Mrs. Thomas have bought...lots on Summit Boulevard...overlooking the Spokane River...and will build a \$30,000 residence. It will be of brick and stone, and there will be a large lodge for automobiles.

Dr. Thomas selected the site not only because of its delightful view but because of its convenience to St. Luke's Hospital, as he expects to spend much of his time at the hospital in connection with his work there.¹³

The Thomas's commissioned the architectural firm of Cutter & Malmgren to design their home. The house was designed and built in the Mission Revival style and became one of the showplaces along Summit Boulevard. Regarded as a noteworthy property, the house was featured in several newspaper articles about Spokane, and was prominently pictured in the September 1908 edition of The Western Architect, a nationally circulated architectural journal published in Minneapolis.

Subsequent Homeowners

In 1912, Adolfus Fielding McClaine and his wife, Maude B. McClaine, bought the Thomas House. A. F. McClaine was president and general manager of the petroleum firm, Bar-Mac Production Company. Maude McClaine gained notoriety in the Spokane region as the "first woman in Washington to receive a private pilot's license"—quite a feat when "each trip involved turning the prop and handling other man-sized chores."¹⁴ According to her obituary, Maude McClaine "soloed to become Spokane's first graduated

¹¹ Spokane County public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA. ¹² "Dr. Thomas Builds Home." *Spokesman-Review*, 16 Feb 1905.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ "First in State: Petite Pilot Recalls Testing." Spokane Daily Chronicle, 7 May 1965.

woman pilot. She received a limited commercial license in 1930, thus becoming one of only 25 women in the United States to hold such a license at that time."¹⁵

In 1927, Angela and Otis Carroll, a Spokane physician, bought the property. After Angela Carroll's death in 1953, and Otis Carroll's death in 1963, the property was sold to the "Grotto Foundation for Spastic Children & Handicapped Persons" in 1967.¹⁶ A wing was built onto the north elevation of the house as dormitories for the children, and in 1970, the name of the organization was legally changed to the Grotto Children's Home.¹⁷ A *Spokesman-Review* newspaper article printed an artist's rendering of the Thomas House with the proposed new wing at the north elevation and reported that "the [Spokane] City Plan Commission…approved a request of the Grotto Foundation, a non-profit institution of master Masons, to use the [Thomas House]…as a cerebral palsy center…a [place for] children suffering from cerebral palsy, regardless of creed or color…"¹⁸ Describing the Thomas House, a director for the Masons stated that "these old mansion are gradually disappearing from Spokane but this one we plan to preserve and further beautify."¹⁹

After the Grotto Children's Home sold the property in 1980, it changed hands again before being purchased in 2006 by the current owner, Kevin Hekmatpanah. An accomplished musician and professor at Gonzaga University, Kevin plans to restore the house for use as a private residence.

HISTORICAL SIGNFICANCE

Category A

The Thomas House achieved historic importance during its period of significance from 1907 to 1956 in the area of significance, "community design & development." The property is representative of the high-style architect-designed homes that illustrate the pattern of architectural residential design and development that occurred along Summit Boulevard in the Sherwood Addition in the early 20th century in northwest Spokane. Attracted to the bluff-top views and investment potential of the building sites along Summit Boulevard, affluent doctors, surgeons, lawyers, miners, merchants, engineers, entrepreneurs and other businessmen purchased prominent view lots along Summit Boulevard from Boone Avenue to Mission Avenue in the Sherwood Addition. They commissioned architects and builders to design and build houses and carriage houses on their multiple lots. Like the Thomas House and garage, the homes were erected as large and sometimes grandiose residences that befitted their owner's social status and financial stature in the community. With its large multiple-lot corner site at Boone and Summit Boulevard and its fine Mission Revival styling, the spacious Thomas House, built for Dr.

¹⁵ "Pioneer Woman Pilot Succumbs at Age 90." Spokane Daily Chronicle, 12 Mar 1980.

¹⁶ Spokane County Warranty Deed #278310C, dated 30 March 1967.

¹⁷ Spokane County Warranty Deed #493153C, dated 16 June 1970.

¹⁸ "Early Mansion to Serve as Cerebral Palsy Home." *Spokesman-Review*, 1967.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 5CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 8Page 5

Thomas, a prominent Spokane physician/surgeon, well depicts this design/development phenomenon, and helped maintain by example the quality, style, and architectural equilibrium in homes built along Summit Boulevard. The documented history of the Thomas House illustrates the historic significance of the home and the succession of prominent businessmen and women who owned the property and who helped settle the neighborhood.

The high-style residential urban design/development and prominent settlement along Summit Boulevard illustrates a trend in Spokane that favored upscale residential development in neighborhoods with view lots in the late 1890s and early 1900s. This was especially evident on Spokane's South Hill where terraced basalt bluffs with spectacular views were in natural abundance as they traversed steep hillsides from east to west. Upscale residential development tied to view sites was undertaken in Browne's Addition, the Marycliff-Cliff Park National Register Historic District, the Rockwood National Register Historic District, and the Rockwood Terrace Addition. Some of the city's first elegant mansions were built in Browne's Addition along West First Avenue and Coeur d'Alene Street at the edge of a high bluff. Grand estates and landmark homes were built along the bluff at Seventh Avenue, Cliff Drive, and Sumner Avenue in the Marycliff-Cliff Park National Register Historic District. The Rockwood National Register Historic District claimed numerous view sites which were developed with large homes and home sites along Rockwood Boulevard, Upper Terrace, Crest Road, and Highland Boulevard. Eligible as a National Register Historic District, houses built along Overbluff Road and Nineteenth and Twentieth Avenues in the Rockwood Terrace Addition were also prominent homes built on bluff-side view sites. Like the Thomas House and those homes built along Summit Boulevard, the view site homes in the comparative neighborhoods were designed by architects and were built for some of Spokane's most influential and socially prominent citizens.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category C

Mission Revival Style

The Thomas House is architecturally significant as a fine example of the Mission Revival style.

California was the birthplace of the Mission style and many of its landmark examples are concentrated there. The earliest were built in the 1890s; by 1900 houses in this style were spreading eastward under the influence of fashionable architects and national builders' magazines. Although never common outside of the southwestern states, scattered examples were built in early 20th-century suburbs throughout the country. Most date from the years between 1905 and 1920.²⁰

²⁰ McAlester, Lee & Virginia. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Knopf, 1989, pp. 409-10.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetPage 6CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 8Page 6

Identifying elements of the style include Mission-shaped dormer and/or roof parapets, red tile roof covering, usually a low to medium-pitched hip roof, widely overhanging eaves (usually open), porch roofs supported by large columns or piers (commonly arched above the first-floor porch), and a smooth stucco wall surface. Scroll-sawn exposed rafter tails, quatrefoil windows, corbelled sashes and brackets, vertical board doors, wrought iron door straps and hinges, wrought-iron light fixtures, carved stonework, and ebony-colored "Mission Oak" woodwork comprise architectural details revered in the Mission style aesthetic. The Thomas House reflects these elements and details found in its low-pitched hip roof, wide overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails, red roof tiles, prominent Mission-shaped parapets and dormers, smooth stucco walls, arcaded porch, quatrefoil windows, corbelled sashes and brackets, vertical wood plank doors, wrought-iron hinges, and ebony-colored Mission oak woodwork. The Thomas House is the only Mission Revival style home built along Summit Boulevard. With its large edifice and expansive four-lot building site at the corner of Boone and Summit Boulevard, the Thomas House is a prominent residence and serves as an anchor at the southwest corner of the neighborhood.

Kirtland K. Cutter, Architect (1869-1939)

As documented by architectural historian, Henry Matthews, in his book Kirtland Cutter: Architect in the Land of Promise, the Thomas House was designed by the architectural firm of Cutter & Malmgren. A 1905 elevation drawing of the west façade of the house lists the company's name.²¹ It is widely thought that Cutter rendered the designs for buildings and houses while his partner, Karl Malmgren, engineered them. Cutter was born in Ohio, studied at the Arts League of New York, traveled to Europe where he studied drawing, painting, and sculpture, and came to Spokane in 1887 to work for his uncle at the First National Bank. Drawn to architecture instead of banking, Cutter began designing homes and commercial buildings in earnest for his uncle's wealthy friends after the devastating "Spokane Fire of 1889." Cutter practiced with fellow architect, J. C. Poetz, for a short time and partnered later with Karl G. Malmgren. Cutter's designs, alone and with partners, include some of Spokane's most unique residences and buildings: the Davenport Hotel, Fairmont Cemetery Chapel, F. Lewis Clark House & Gatehouse, Glover House, Humbird House, J. P. Graves "Waikiki" House, D. C. Corbin House, Austin Corbin House, Wilbur House, Campbell House, J. A. Finch House, Patsy Clark House, Wakefield House, and the Thomas House. All of the homes were designed and built as large landmark examples of high styles with a twist of Cutter's own personal eclecticism which resulted in versions of popular revival styles from Colonial, Tudor, and Italian Renaissance to Mission Revival.²²

²¹ Eastern Washington State Historical Society. *Cutter Collection, L84-207.92.* Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA.

²² Eastern Washington State Historical Society. *Spokane Skyline: A Century of Architecture, 1889-1989.* EWSHS, 1989.

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 8Page 7

Karl G. Malmgren, Architect (1862-1921)

Karl Malmgren was born and educated in Sweden, received further education in Germany, and practiced architecture in Europe for eight years before coming to America in 1888. He arrived in Spokane in 1889, worked for architect John Poetz, and upon Poetz's retirement in 1894, partnered with architect Kirtland Cutter. The architectural firm of Cutter & Malmgren (1894-1917) were responsible for numerous Spokane buildings such as the Washington Water Power Substation, Steam Plant, Davenport Hotel, Spokane Club, First Church of Christ Science, Robertson Building, Sherwood Building, and many prominent Spokane homes such as the Thomas House. Malmgren designed his own house at 709 W. Sumner Avenue in Spokane.

The Thomas House is a fine example of the Mission Revival style and is similar to the Cutter-designed W. J. C. Wakefield House (built in 1898 at 2328 W. First Avenue). Both homes are excellent examples of the Mission Revival style, both homes are large landmark-quality residences, both homes were built at the turn of the century, and both homes were built for prominent Spokane residents (Wakefield was an attorney, Thomas was a physician/surgeon). Interestingly, both homes were featured in the September 1908 edition of The Western Architect. Nationally circulated, the magazine published an illustrated edition which highlighted Spokane, its beautiful architecture, and distinctive homes-two of which were the Thomas House and Wakefield House. Perhaps the magazine thought the Thomas House and the Wakefield House represented regional home styles in Spokane. The two homes did represent some of the finest high-style, architect-designed domestic architecture in Spokane at that time, but they did not represent common architectural styles associated with Spokane homes. Incidence of the Mission Revival style is infrequent in the Spokane region and was considered an uncommon style in Spokane, a style that was borrowed from California, Texas, and the desert Southwestern United States.

Conclusion

The Thomas House is architecturally significant as a fine example of the Mission Revival style and as the product of Cutter & Malmgren, one of the Spokane's most noted architectural firms. It is historically significant for its strong association with the design, development and settlement of Summit Boulevard in the Sherwood Addition in northwest Spokane. The Thomas House retains good exterior architectural integrity and is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Durham, N. W. *The History of the City of Spokane and Spokane Country, WA, Vol. 2.* Spokane: Clarke Publishing Company, 1912.
- Eastern Washington State Historical Society. *L84-207.92 and L84-207.4.39*. Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane, WA.

______. Spokane Skyline: A Century of Architecture, 1889-1989. Spokane: EWSHS, 1989.

- Matthews, Henry. Kirtland Cutter: *Architect in the Land of Promise*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998.
- McAlester, Lee & Virginia. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Knopf, 1989.
- Phillips, Steven J. Old House Dictionary. Washington DC: NPS, 1994.

Polk, R. L. City Directories, 1900-2006.

National Park Service Bulletins 15 and 16A.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1902-1952. Spokane Public Library, Spokane, WA.

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

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

Newspaper Articles

"Dr. Thomas Builds Home." Spokesman-Review, 16 Feb 1905.

"Early Mansion to Serve as Cerebral Palsy Home." Spokesman-Review, 1967.

"First in State: Petite Pilot Recalls Testing." Spokane Daily Chronicle, 7 May 1965.

"New Addition: A Large Tract of Valuable Property Put Upon the Market." *Spokane Falls Review*, 28 Sept 1887.

"Pioneer Woman Pilot Succumbs at Age 90." Spokane Daily Chronicle, 12 Mar 1980.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet **THOMAS-McCLAINE HOUSE** Section 10

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet THOMAS-McCLAINE HOUSE Section 10

Site Plan Site plan from Spokane County Assessor's Records.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE Section 10

Photos 1 and 2 West façade of house (top picture) and south elevation (bottom).





Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE Section 10

Photos 3 and 4 East elevation (top photo) and north elevation (bottom).





Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 10

Photo 5 North elevation of c. 1967 addition in 2006.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 10

Photos 6 and 7 North elevation in 2006.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE Section 10

Photos 8 and 9 Windows in 2006.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation SheetCHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSESection 10

Photos 10 and 11 West façade of house and front door in 2006.





Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE Section 10

Photos 12 and 13 Roof eave detail and back door in 2006.



 \cap

Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE Section 10

Photos 14 and 15 Garage in 2006, west elevation.





Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet THOMAS-McCLAINE HOUSE Section 10

Site Plan Site plan from Spokane County Assessor's Records.



















