

# Spokane Register of Historic Places

## Nomination Form

City/County Historic Landmarks Commission  
Fourth Floor - City Hall  
Spokane, Washington 99201-3333

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

### 1. Name

historic Groshoff's Apartments

and/or common Same

### 2. Location

street & number West 1608-10 Main

city, town Spokane, \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Washington county Spokane

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: apartments

### 4. Owner of Property

name Wells and Company

street & number East 911 - 20th Avenue

city, town Spokane \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Washington 99203-3429

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Spokane County Courthouse

street & number West 1116 Broadway

city, town Spokane \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Washington 99201

### 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None (however, it is listed in the Peaceful Valley National Register Historic District, 1984).

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date 1909

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This large, square, two-story red brick apartment house is located on the second lot west of the northwest corner at the intersection of Maple Street and Main Avenue. It is in the neighborhood commonly known as Peaceful Valley, just west of downtown Spokane along the riverbank. The structure has a Primary (Contributing) designation in the Peaceful Valley National Register District (1984). It was constructed in 1909 by George Groshoff, pioneer brickmason and contractor. It is essentially a simple, commercial-style structure with some elements of Victorian Romanesque evident in the arches and brick patterning.

Originally the land at this intersection was higher and flatter, with steep sides to the west and north that sloped down to the river. In 1910, the City of Spokane graded down Main Avenue, necessitating the huge coarse rock retaining walls on the south side of the street and underpinning the basement level of Groshoff's building; hence, the basement facade has a different color of brick covering the coarse stone foundation.

The building has a flat roof with square brick corner posts and a front brick parapet. The facade is divided into three bays; the second floor bay has three double hung six over one windows with arch voussoirs. The first floor has three double hung one over one windows topped by flat voussoirs. There are two arched door surrounds with brick labels. There is a dentil belt course, quoined corners, and some rustication on the facade; two recessed brick designs add interesting relief to the facade on the second floor level. A stone belt spans the building at ground level, below which is the coarse stone foundation, the facade of which is covered in brick. There is a full, open concrete front porch on the first level with concrete steps to the east side leading to the street. The porch has a decorative wrought iron balustrade. Originally, the building had a wraparound porch on the first floor, rear, that extended from the middle of the west side across the back of the structure, and another full porch across the rear at the second level. The double porch remains on the rear at both levels, but the portion along the west side is missing.

The building has been vacant for several years and has suffered from vandalism. It is presently boarded up, but the owners plan to renovate the building. This will be a major contribution to Peaceful Valley's design plan, because it is the largest early building of its kind still remaining.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) ethnic, construction
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

**Specific dates** 1909 **Builder/Architect** George Groshoff

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

This apartment building was designed and constructed in 1909 by George Groshoff, pioneer contractor and brickmason. It is listed in the Peaceful Valley National Register District as a Primary (Contributing) structure (1984). It is historically important for several reasons: first, it is located in an area recognized nationally as an ethnic neighborhood that grew out of a demand for the skills of immigrants during a period of rapid growth and development in Spokane; second, it is the only remaining building of several large structures built in the valley to house the influx of single men who came to work in the mines, lumber camps, railroad yards, and construction trade; third, because it is associated with a man who made a name for himself as a skilled craftsman, George Groshoff.

Peaceful Valley is a small, isolated neighborhood just west of downtown Spokane on the south bank of the Spokane River. Traditionally the area was a seasonal camp of the Spokane Indians, who fished in the river and hunted game. The land became part of the large grants to the Northern Pacific, the first railroad to enter Spokane; this portion was sold to the Riverside Land Company in 1891.

After the fire of 1889 and the depression of 1893, Spokane experienced a major boom. Real estate dealers and railroad companies promoted Inland Empire lands and jobs. Immigrants by the hundreds poured into the region; many of these, especially from the northern European countries, settled in Peaceful Valley. Cut off as it is by the natural barriers of the river and bluffs, Peaceful Valley resembled a small village. The large Finnish population built a hall that became a gathering place and center of social life for the residents. There were saunas, grocery and meat markets, and livery stables. There was a hotel, a laundry and several boarding houses. Peaceful Valley appealed to those in the building trade, many of whom built their own homes. The single men who worked the lumber and mining camps spent their off-season with their countrymen who had homes in the valley. The single row houses and boarding houses catered to these men.

The Groshoffs first visited the valley during the 1890's when the tree-dotted site was a favorite picnic ground. Mrs. Groshoff was so entranced with the natural beauty of the place that she persuaded Groshoff to purchase lots and build. At that time, the area at the intersection of Main and Maple was like a high, flat island, with steep slopes dropping to the river on both north and west sides. Groshoff's first house was at 1607 W. Main, with a barn behind. By 1900, he had constructed the brick home across the street at 1604 W. Main. In 1908, Groshoff built the apartment house to capitalize on the heavy demand for housing for the single men who were swarming into the area.

George Groshoff began his career as a brickmason in Spokane Falls by working on buildings constructed after the 1889 fire that included the Review building and the County Courthouse. Opening his own contracting business, he obtained contracts for the Armory, Sacred Heart Hospital, Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, the Colonial, and Del Rey buildings and high schools at Cheney, Pullman, Harrington, and St. Maries, Idaho. He did a number of buildings at Washington State College (University) and in Oakesdale. He was co-owner of the Sandpoint Brick Company. At his early death in 1921, he was recognized as one of Spokane's finest craftsmen and contractors.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Compau, Nancy Gale. Peaceful Valley, The History of a Neighborhood, 1985.

Interview, Lawrence "Dutch" Groshoff, January 19, 1983.

Spokesman-Review, October 21, 1921.

The Spokane Daily Chronicle, October 22, 1921.

Ticor Title Company Tract Books, Sanborn Insurance Maps, Spokane City Directories.

## 10. Geographical Data

~~Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre.~~

Lots 35-36, Block 5, Riverside West-Second Addition

Northwest corner, Main Avenue at Maple Street, Peaceful Valley, Spokane, WA.

### Verbal boundary description and justification

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

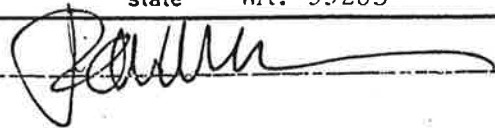
name/title Nancy Gale Compau, Historian

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date November 28, 1989

street & number 424 W. Jefferson Court telephone (509) 624-4927

city or town Spokane state WA. 99203

## 12. Signature of Owner(s)



For Office Use Only:  
Date Received: 11/28/89  
Date Heard: 12/20/89  
Commission Decision: Approved  
Council/Board Action: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: Priscilla J. Montgomery  
City Clerk  
Signed: Jan. 16, 1990  
Approved as to form:  
Anthony J. Schubert  
Ass't. Corporation Counsel

We hereby certify that this property has been listed on the Spokane Register of Historic Places:

Sheri S. Barnard  
Mayor, City of Spokane or Chair, Spokane County Commissioners  
Craig Holsten  
Chair, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission  
Sally R. Reynolds  
City/County Historic Preservation Officer

