

# Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

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

## 1. Name of Property

Historic Name **DR. CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE**  
and/or Common Name

## 2. Location

Street & Number 527 E. Nora Avenue  
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99207  
Parcel Number 35083.4007

## 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 Mylissa A. Coleman & Elizabeth C. deViveiros  
Street & Number 527 E. Nora Avenue  
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99207  
Telephone Number/E-mail 509-995-2924, ebeth928@comcast.net

## 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

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (see nomination, section 8)	<b>Condition</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> ruins <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<b>Check One</b> <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered  <b>Check One</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site <input type="checkbox"/> moved & date _____
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*Narrative statement of description is found on one or more continuation sheets.*

**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:**

- 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.
- 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	Lot 7, Block 40 in Heath's Fourth Addition.
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 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number	509-456-3828
Email Address	lindayeomans@comcast.net
Date Final Nomination Heard	March 16, 2011

**12. Additional Documentation**

Map	City/County of Spokane current plat map.
Photographs	Black & white prints, CD-ROM color images.

Melina A. Coleman 02/16/11  
Elizabeth C. deVivier 02-16-11

Date nomination application filed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Landmarks Commission Hearing: 3/16/11  
Landmarks Commission decision: Approved  
Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: 4/4/11  
City Council/Board of County Commissioners' decision: Approved

**I hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places based upon the action of either the City Council or the Board of County Commissioners as set forth above.**

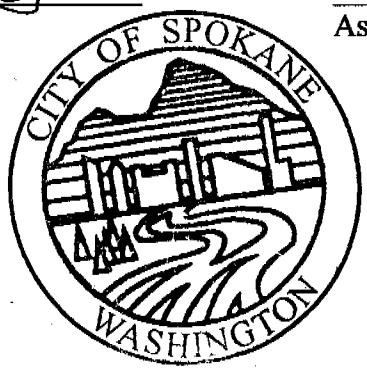
Kristen Griffin 4-7-2011  
**Kristen Griffin** Date  
**City/County Historic Preservation Officer**  
City/County Historic Preservation Office  
Third Floor—City Hall  
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.  
Spokane, WA 99201

Attest:

Approved as to form:

Lerri Ruffalo  
City Clerk

B. Baum  
Assistant City Attorney





*2011 photograph of the historic Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House,  
527 E. Nora Avenue, Spokane, WA 99207*

***DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY***

Built in 1902,<sup>1</sup> the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House is a fine example of the Free Classic Queen Anne style. Located just north of Gonzaga University and the Mission Avenue National Register Historic District in northeast Spokane, Washington, the Thomas House is particularly distinctive for its highly visible corner site, asymmetrical design and fenestration patterns, prominent 2-story round corner tower with conical roof and curved windows, irregular roof lines with multiple dormers and flared eaves, modillion courses, covered front porch, wood shingle siding, decorative ceramic tile/brick quoin window and door surrounds in different sizes and thickness, and a rubble

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<sup>1</sup> Although Spokane County Tax Assessor records indicate the house was built in 1906, it can be proven through a 1902 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Spokane city directory listings, and other public records that the Thomas House was built four years earlier in 1902.

mix of salt-and-pepper-colored granite stone veneer. The openness<sup>2</sup> of the home's interior illustrates typical Queen Anne-style characteristics, including an asymmetrical floor plan, high ceilings, oak floors, leaded-glass windows, wood paneled bench seat and inglenook, spooled spandrels/fretwork designs, and a 42-inch-wide winding staircase in a spacious center reception hall. With few exterior modifications, the Thomas House retains a high level of exterior integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as a single-family home built in the early 1900s in the Logan neighborhood in Spokane, Washington.

### ***CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION***

#### ***Site***

The Thomas House is built on Lot 7, Block 40 in Heath's 4<sup>th</sup> Addition in the Logan neighborhood. The lot measures 50 feet wide and 142 feet deep, maintains a level grade, and is highly visible on the northwest corner intersection of West Nora Avenue and North Standard Street. It is framed by a manicured lawn, mature deciduous trees, and a black wrought-iron fence which encloses a back yard. Paved sidewalks and streets front the property along the south and east borders, and a paved alley abuts the property at the north border. The house is surrounded by mostly well-kept Queen Anne-style 1.5 and 2-story residential homes built during the late 1890s and early 1900s; many of these homes were altered for use as student (Gonzaga University) and multi-family apartment homes, and some houses were demolished and replaced by multi-level apartment blocks built in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

#### ***Garage and Fence***

Built in 2009, a double-car frame garage is located behind the house on the property along the alley. It has a low-pitched front gable roof which is covered with composition shingles, horizontal Hardi-plank siding (concrete-based composite), an overhead metal garage door, and faces east onto a stamped concrete driveway that leads east to the street. Between the garage and the house is a back yard which is surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence, installed in 2009. Not historic, the fence and garage are *not* nominated to the Spokane historic register.

#### ***Exterior***

The Thomas House is well-preserved in excellent condition in 2011. It has an irregular rectangular footprint, measures approximately 30 feet wide and 40 feet deep, and faces south onto Nora Avenue. The house is set back 24 feet from a paved sidewalk that wraps around the corner of Lot 7, and is sited seven feet from the property's west border. The home is platform wood frame construction with an asymmetrical design, and is 1.5 stories with a steeply pitched hipped roof. The roof is covered with composition shingles and flares outward at the eaves which are boxed and have a wide overhang. Tongue-in-

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<sup>2</sup> Architectural historian/author Paul Duchscherer writes, "Queen Anne house plans are often noted for the openness of their interior planning, which contributed to their popular perception as being modern houses." *Victorian Glory*, p. 93.

groove narrow-width wood boards cover the soffits, and scroll-sawn modillions and wide frieze bands articulate the eaves. Four hipped dormers project from south, east, west, and north roof slopes, and a buff-colored brick chimney pierces the roof at the ridge crest. The house has a partial-width covered front porch at the south façade and is clad with a rubble mix of granite stone veneer at the first floor and wood shingles at the second floor. Brick flat arches and multi-sized/multi-colored tile and brick quoins surround windows and doors that punctuate the stone veneer. The most prominent exterior focal point of the house is a large circular tower at the southeast corner. Windows in the tower are curved to follow the curve of the tower, and the tower roof is conical with flared eaves, mimicking the appearance of a witch's hat. Windows are mostly original with a combination of fixed wood sash and double-hung wood sash units that are composed of plain and multi-paned 1/1, 6/1, 7/1, and leaded-glass windows with diamond patterns. The upper sashes of the multi-paned windows have lights that are divided by wood muntin bars arranged in diamond patterns similar to the diamond patterns of the leaded-glass windows.

#### *South and East Façades*

The south and east facades of the house face onto Nora Avenue and Standard Street, and represent two primary facades. The *south face* of the house is distinguished by a partial-width covered front porch at the first floor. The porch is covered with a nearly flat hip roof and like the house, has widely overhanging flared eaves, modillions, and a wide frieze band. A small gabled pediment is located in the center of the roof and marks a center opening to the porch deck. Six round tapered wood columns with Doric capitals are anchored to round porch piers made of curved light gray and crème-colored radius bricks. The piers and columns together support the porch roof. A turned-post balustrade surrounds the porch deck on the east and west sides of the center porch entrance, and protect the porch deck. The porch deck is made of concrete, and the ceiling is clad with original tongue-in-groove wood boards. Four concrete steps rise to the level of the porch deck and are flanked by porch walls. The front stair-flanking porch walls are made of salt-and-pepper-colored granite stone veneer and are capped with molded concrete coping. A foundation wall made of granite supports the porch deck. A center hipped roof dormer is located above the porch roof. Like the house and porch, the dormer is distinguished with widely overhanging flared eaves and modillions. A 7/1 double-hung, wood sash window with diamond patterns is located in the center of the dormer.

A large, full-height, 2-story round tower dominates the southeast corner of the house, and is located adjacent east of the covered front porch. The tower is covered with a steeply pitched conical roof that is highlighted with a copper finial, and has widely overhanging flared and boxed eaves with scroll-sawn modillions and tongue-in-groove wood board soffits. The first floor of the tower is clad with a veneer of granite stone which extends to

grade.<sup>3</sup> Grout lines between the stones are defined by a rope pattern (a popular design used when the house was built in 1902). The second floor of the tower is clad with square-cut wood shingles and is punctuated by three 7/1, double-hung, wood sash windows. The windows are double-pane vertical units, the upper sashes have divided lights with leaded diamond patterns, and each window's glazing and sash are curved to correspond to the curve of the tower.<sup>4</sup> At the first floor, the granite stone veneer is punctuated by three windows set below the three windows at the second floor. Like the windows at the second floor, the first floor windows are curved double-hung vertical units with wood sashes, and follow the curve of the tower. In contrast to the second floor, they are 1/1 units with undivided lights. The windows at the first floor on the south, east, north, and west faces of the house are all surrounded by decorative quoins made of smooth and striated orange and crème-colored glazed ceramic tile, and smooth gray and crème-colored bricks. Positioned on end above the windows, brick soldier courses form straight arches, and window sills at the lowest edge of the windows are made of molded concrete.

The *east face* of the house is distinctive for the 2-story round tower and curved windows, granite stone veneer, decorative glazed ceramic tile and brick window surrounds, and multiple flared roof eaves at the house, dormer, bays, and tower. The flared eaves are widely overhanging with modillion courses, the dormer is clad with square-cut wood shingles, the first floor is clad with a veneer of granite stone, and the windows are a combination of vertical 1/1 units, 6/1 multi-paned units, and a fixed horizontal "piano" window with diamond-patterned leaded lights. A square bay projects from the first floor and has two windows and a nearly flat hip roof. Echoing the rest of the house, the eaves of the bay are widely overhanging with a course of modillions.

Built seven feet from its west property line, the *west face* of the Dr. Thomas House is sited close to a 2-story, turn-of-the-century Queen Anne-style frame house. No longer used as a single-family home, the next west house was altered with apartments sometime during the last 50 years. The west side of the Thomas House repeats building materials and designs used on the south, east, and north faces of the home. The house has a center hipped roof dormer and a small square bay at the first floor which projects outward from the planar wall surface of the home. The dormer is clad with square-cut wood shingles, the first floor is clad with a veneer of granite stone, and the eaves are boxed, flared, and widely overhanging with scroll-sawn modillions. The dormer has a row of three original vertical 6/1 double-hung wood sash windows, and the bay has one horizontal diamond-patterned leaded-glass window.

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<sup>3</sup> Professional Spokane rock mason, Mike Rail, discovered just one course of stone veneer beneath grade. The stone is located outside of the foundation wall, resulting in the belief that the cut-granite stone at the first floor of the house is a veneer. The house appears to be constructed with a platform wood frame.

<sup>4</sup> Due to severe deterioration of the windows, they were remade in 2009 to match the original windows.

The home's *north face* is located at the rear of the house and looks onto a fenced back yard and frame garage built in 2009. A center dormer with two windows projects from the hipped roof slope. The dormer eaves are wide and flared with a course of modillions. The dormer is clad with square-cut wood shingles while the first floor is clad with a veneer of granite stone. Windows at the first floor feature glazed ceramic tile surrounds and brick flat arches. A square bay projects outward at the first floor and is covered with a very low-pitched flared hip roof with wide eaves and a modillion course. A small back porch was enclosed at the northeast corner of the house at the first floor in 2004. The enclosure is clad with wood shingles and has a single exterior French door (new door installed in 2009).

### *Interior*

With original brass hardware intact, an original fir door with three raised panels at the lower leaf and leaded-glass lights with diamond patterns at the upper leaf opens to a center reception hall. Sometimes called a "great hall" for its large size and multiple built-ins, the reception hall is spacious and finished with built-in bench seats and inglenook, and a wide, grand formal staircase that winds up to the second floor. The staircase is flanked at its stair entrance by twin paneled wood newel posts and paneled half-walls. The half-walls are adorned with spooled fretwork that matches a curved spooled fretwork spandrel by the front door. Rising past the half-walls to the second floor, the staircase has an open stringer with a turned-post balustrade. The floor is made of oak planks, the walls are a combination of original lathe-and-plaster and contemporary sheetrock construction, and the ceiling is 9.6 feet high. Featured in the reception hall and throughout the house, woodwork is original and is made of a combination of painted and golden-colored finished fir, floor molding is more than eight inches deep, window and door surrounds measure six inches in width, and Classic-influenced crowns cap windows and doors.

The reception hall opens through a pair of paneled pocket doors into a formal living room which is located at the southeast corner of the first floor in the 2-story tower. The living room is open to a formal dining room which is located in the northeast corner of the house. The focal point of the living room is the curved walls and windows of the tower, and the focal point of the dining room is a fireplace located on a west inside wall. The fireplace is clad with wire-raked brick veneer and has a hearth covered with glazed ceramic tiles. A wood mantel on the fireplace is supported by twin brackets.

The center reception hall leads north to a kitchen and original butler's pantry. The kitchen has original tongue-in-groove wood wainscoting and five-paneled wood doors. A door in the northeast corner of the kitchen opens to an original butler's pantry which has built-in cupboards and cabinets made of honey-colored fir. A door in the southwest corner of the kitchen opens to an interior staircase that descends to a basement. A third door in the northwest corner of the kitchen was originally designed as an exterior door



that opened to an open-air back porch. In 2004 the porch was enclosed and finished with a ¾ bathroom (toilet, basin, shower), a hallway, and exterior door.

The formal staircase in the reception hall winds up to a central hall in the center of the second floor. The hall is finished with original honey-colored fir woodwork, the floor is oak, and the walls are original lathe-and-plaster construction. The hall opens to original five-paneled wood doors that each open to a bathroom (clawfoot tub, basin, toilet) in the northwest corner, two bedrooms (northeast corner and east wall), and a master bedroom in the southeast tower. The southeast bedroom has curved walls and windows which follow the curve of the tower. The master bedroom opens to a bathroom and closet located in the southwest corner of the second floor.

### ***ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS***

The Dr. Thomas House has had few modifications to the exterior and interior during the home's current lifetime of 109 years. The home's footprint is pictured on 1902, 1910 and 1953 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, and except for the back porch which was enclosed in 2004, matches the existing footprint of the home today. Black & white photos taken in 1957 and 1961 each picture the southeast corner of the house which is how it appears today in 2011. The property is well-preserved with the majority of its original exterior design and materials intact.

Modifications to the house include:

- *1907-1920s* Second-floor bathroom enlarged.
- *1939* House re-roofed, Spokane building permit #57250.
- *1970s* House re-roofed, aluminum siding installed at second floor (permit #1653), most original modillions removed, electrical system updated (permit #6474), kitchen remodeled with built-in cupboards, cabinets, and center island.
- *1999* House re-roofed with composition shingles (pieces of original 1902 green-stained wood roof shingles discovered).
- *2004* Back porch enclosed and finished with bathroom, hallway, and exterior door.
- *2009-2011* *At house interior,* walls and woodwork repainted/refinished, floors refinished, walls/ceilings repaired, plumbing/electrical systems repaired, HVAC system upgraded with new gas-fired furnace and heat pump, bathroom with toilet-shower-basin installed in southwest corner of second floor, recessed lighting installed in kitchen.

- *2009-2011*                      *At house exterior*, aluminum siding removed, roof repaired, wood modillions manufactured to match original modillions that were found on house, new modillions installed at shadows left by original modillions (original modillions were removed in 1970s when wood shingles at second floor were covered with aluminum siding), cut-granite stone ashlar veneer at exterior walls, porch foundation walls and exterior staircase walls repaired/tuck-pointed with grout and rope pattern that matches original design and coloration, round tapered wood porch posts repaired and repainted, c. 1950s wood balustrade replaced with period-appropriate balustrade, due to severe deterioration beyond repair all six original curved windows in tower replaced with curved windows that match original windows (1/1 windows at first floor and diamond-paned leaded-glass windows at second floor), c. 2004 exterior door at back porch replaced with exterior French door.

<i>Areas of Significance</i>	Architecture
<i>Period of Significance</i>	1902-1961
<i>Built Date</i>	1902
<i>Architect</i>	Unknown
<i>Builder</i>	John Hunz

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Summary Statement

Built in 1902 by John Hunz, a Spokane building contractor and stone mason, the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House is an excellent example of the “Free Classic” Queen Anne tradition, a blend of Classic details and Queen Anne-style architecture. Identifying Queen Anne-style elements include the home’s 1902 built date, asymmetrical design, steeply pitched hipped roof with irregular roof slopes, vertical and leaded-glass windows, multiple bays, “salt-and-pepper” granite stone veneer, and a prominent circular, 2-story tower with curved windows and a flared “witch’s hat” conical roof. Free Classic-style details (a subtype of the Queen Anne tradition) at the Dr. Thomas House are depicted in boxed eaves, prominent modillion courses, wide frieze bands, covered front porch, center porch pediment, round tapered wood porch columns, and radius brick porch piers. Some of the most decorative, almost whimsical features of the home include the granite stone veneer that covers the first floor, and crème-colored brick flat arches and orange/brown/terra cotta-colored glazed ceramic tile window and door quoins of differing sizes and thickness that surround first-floor windows and the front door. Perhaps influenced by Marie Antoinette’s small French chateau, *Petit Trianon*, in Versailles, France,<sup>5</sup> the irregularly shaped quoins and granite veneer of the Dr. Thomas House create a look which is similar to the rustic stone walls and tile/brick quoins of the 1783 French dwelling. The first significant owners of the nominated property were Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas who bought the house the year it was built in 1902. Dr. Thomas practiced medicine in Spokane with offices in the Fernwell Building in downtown Spokane and as a surgeon at St. Luke’s Hospital (now Ogden Hall). The property gained importance during a period of significance from 1902 to a 50-year closing date of 1961<sup>6</sup>, and retains a high degree of exterior integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as a prominent single-family home built in 1902 in Spokane, Washington. Architecturally significant, the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House is nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.apartmenttherapy.com/ny//retrospect/marieantoinettes-village-119458>

<sup>6</sup> According to NPS Bulletin 16A, page 42, “50 years is used as the closing date for periods of significance where activities begun historically continued to have importance, and [when] no more specific date can be defined to end the historic period.”

***HISTORICAL CONTEXT******Heath's 4<sup>th</sup> Addition***

Before it was platted in 1887,<sup>7</sup> Heath's 4<sup>th</sup> Addition was undeveloped level land located just north of East Mission Avenue and Gonzaga University in northeast Spokane. Gonzaga University is a nationally acclaimed scholastic institution of higher learning, an independent Roman Catholic and Jesuit university with a student population of more than 6,000. It was established in 1887 by Jesuit (Society of Jesus) pioneer missionaries led by Father Joseph Mary Cataldo, and is currently ranked among the top comprehensive universities in the country.<sup>8</sup>

In 1881, Father Cataldo purchased 320 acres just north and west of the Spokane River between North Division Street and East Mission Avenue, land which was designated for the erection of a college, a church, and homes for parishioners. The first campus buildings were built as early as 1883 but were soon outgrown and replaced in the late 1890s and early 1900s. St. Aloysius Church was built in 1909, the official name of the college was changed to Gonzaga University in 1912, and more than 80 single-family homes were built around the university and church campus. Most of the historic university buildings and many of the single-family homes were designed by two of Spokane's most prominent historic architects: Herman Preusse and Julius Zittel, principals of the firm known as Preusse & Zittel Architects.

Gonzaga University and its surrounding acreage became the Catholic center for Spokane. East Mission Avenue—a wide street developed with a tree-lined boulevard—became one of the city's most prominent avenues in the center of a prominent residential suburb, and was later listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Mission Avenue National Register Historic District. Modest to large homes and elegant mansions were constructed along Mission Avenue and throughout the immediate surrounding neighborhood. Residential architectural styles used demonstrated popular designs of the day, which included Second Empire, Stick, Richardson Romanesque, and the most popular style, Queen Anne. One of the largest and most stylistically prominent Queen Anne mansions was owned by Sylvester Heath at 613 East Mission Avenue. The home was later destroyed and replaced by St. Aloysius Catholic School.

Regarded by many historians as one of Spokane's "founding fathers,"<sup>9</sup> Sylvester Heath purchased 360 acres of land adjacent to and north of Mission Avenue. Heath platted multiple additions, developed them with mostly residential housing, and saw one of the strongest building booms in the area occur between 1901 and 1903—the same time the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House was built at 527 E. Nora Avenue, a few hundred feet from the Heath Mansion. Two decades later, the area began to change as settlement increased:

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<sup>7</sup> Spokane County Assessor's Records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

<sup>8</sup> Gonzaga University Undergraduate Catalogue.

<sup>9</sup> *Mission Avenue National Register Historic District Nomination*. HPO, City Hall, Spokane, WA.

By the 1920s, there was a distinctly more middle class identity in the neighborhood. These were more doctors, teachers, sales managers, store owners, and business proprietors. A review of the building permits reveals how the neighborhood began to lose its suburban character as barns gave way to garages, and chicken houses began to be unnecessary...<sup>10</sup>

Heath was also responsible for the Heath Library (built in 1913 on Mission Avenue) and the Heath Building in downtown Spokane. Sylvester Heath's 1925 obituary declared him a "pioneer businessman who saw Spokane grow from [an] open field prairie to a city of the first class."<sup>11</sup>

#### ***Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House***

In May 1901, Sylvester & Ida Heath sold Lot 7, Block 40 in Heath's 4<sup>th</sup> Addition to John & Maria Hunz for \$675. John & Maria Hunz lived in East Central Spokane where John was a building contractor and stone mason who specialized in masonry work. He secured two mortgages—one for \$1,600 and one for \$600, and began erecting the house. During construction of the home, he was served with a contractor's lien for \$400 from the Spokane lumber yard/miller, Sawmill Phoenix. Hunz settled the lien, finished building the house, and sold the property for \$3,700 to Spokane investors, James & Louise Batterton, in May 1902. Four months later in September, Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas purchased the property for \$4,000.<sup>12</sup> Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas lived at the property until June 1906 when they moved a few miles west to a residence that was built for them in West Central Spokane at 1212 N. Summit Boulevard. The house on Summit Boulevard was within walking distance from St. Luke's Hospital where Dr. Thomas practiced surgery.

#### ***Subsequent Property Owners***

In 1906, Edith & George Miller, an engineer for the Northern Pacific Railroad, bought the Thomas's house on Nora Avenue for \$5,000. Three years later in 1908, the Millers sold the property to Henry & Ella Ludwig for \$6,000. Owner of a saloon at 327 W. Front Street (Spokane Falls Blvd), Henry Ludwig quit-claimed the property at 527 E. Nora Avenue in 1909 to his wife, Ella Ludwig. A few years after the quit claim transaction, Henry Ludwig died and his widow, Ella Ludwig, sold the house in 1911 for \$6,500 to building contractor, John B. Albi, and his wife, Maria T. Albi.

In 1914, John Albi was listed in the city directory as a "bartender" at the Albi Saloon, 230 N. Washington in the Albi Building (owned by Albi family relatives). In 1917, John Albi sold "soft drinks" at 337 W. Trent Avenue (Spokane Falls Blvd) and "fuel" at 120 E.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "S. Heath, Early Pioneer, Dies." *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 10 Oct 1925.

<sup>12</sup> Public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

Augusta Avenue.<sup>13</sup> By 1922, Albi owned a fuel company called Ideal Fuel at 501 E. Trent Avenue in Spokane, and was no longer listed as a bartender.

In 1928, John & Maria Albi sold the house on Nora Avenue to Michellina & Amedeo Bombino, a confectioner who specialized in candy and ice cream. When her husband, Amedeo Bombino, died in 1936, Michellina Bombino leased space in the house for a short time to Maurice Catlow, owner/driver of Catlow Transport Company in Spokane. In 1971, Michellina Bombino sold the property for \$13,000 to Isabelle K. Coleman, a registered nurse at Sacred Heart Hospital. Isabelle Coleman's daughter, Mylissa Coleman, currently the home with Elizabeth deViveiros in 2011.

### ***ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE***

#### ***Category C***

##### ***Free Classic Queen Anne Style***

The Queen Anne style dominated domestic building in Spokane and the United States from about 1880 to 1910. It is an eclectic interpretation of residential architecture which is based on 18<sup>th</sup>-century "country house and cottage Elizabethan architecture" in England and on a blend of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Tudor Gothic, English Renaissance, Flemish, and Colonial Revival styles in America.<sup>14</sup>

The style was named and popularized by a group of 19<sup>th</sup>-century English architects led by Richard Norman Shaw. The name is rather inappropriate, for the historical precedents used by Shaw and his followers had little to do with Queen Anne or the formal Renaissance architecture that was dominant during her reign (1702-14). Instead, they borrowed most heavily from late Medieval models of the preceding Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. The half-timbered and patterned masonry American subtypes are most closely related to this work of Shaw and his colleagues in England. The spindlework and Free Classic subtypes are indigenous interpretations...in the 1890s, the Free Classic adaptation became widespread. It was a short step from these to the early, asymmetrical Colonial Revival [style] houses which, along with other competing styles, fully supplanted the Queen Anne style after about 1910.<sup>15</sup>

The *American Queen Anne style* used anything and everything at the exterior to avoid plain flat walls. This was achieved through square/bevel/round bays, towers and turrets, insets and overhangs, wall projections and cantilevered floors and gables, a variety of

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<sup>13</sup> 1918 *Spokane City Directory*.

<sup>14</sup> Harris, Cyril M. *Dictionary of Architecture & Construction, Third Edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000, p. 736-37.

<sup>15</sup> McAlester, Lee & Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf Publishing, 1989, p. 268.

window shapes and sizes, and differing wall materials and textures aligned both vertically and horizontally.

Identifying features of the American Queen Anne style include a steeply pitched irregular roof, multiple cross-gables, dominant front-facing gable(s), asymmetrical façade design, a conspicuous partial or full-width front porch, wrap-around porches, and towers and turrets. According to architectural historians Lee & Virginia McAlester (*A Field Guide to American Houses*), “towers are a common Queen Anne-style feature...and towers placed at a front façade corner are most often Queen Anne.”<sup>16</sup> Other identifying features of the Queen Anne style are patterned shingles, bays, and masonry. About 5% of Queen Anne-style houses have masonry walls with patterned brickwork or stonework. Decorative panels (name plates, panels, sometimes French-inspired quoins) made of terra-cotta, ceramic tile, and stone are frequently inset into the walls.<sup>17</sup>

The “*Free Classic*” subtype of the Queen Anne tradition occurs in about 35% of all Queen Anne-style homes across the country and was influenced by Classical architectural styles like Early Colonial Revival and Greek Revival.<sup>18</sup> It is characterized by the dominant use of Classical motifs such as round or square porch columns and piers, gabled pediments, boxed eaves, modillions, brackets, and dentils which were applied to Queen Anne-style homes. To summarize, the Queen Anne style resulted in homes that are usually a mixture of two or more traditions, which are often articulated with robust and fanciful designs.

#### ***Identifying Free Classic Queen Anne Features at the Thomas House***

The Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House presents a rhythmical blend of classical elements and Queen Anne-style details, and is an excellent example of the Free Classic Queen Anne tradition.

Identifying features of the Free Classic Queen Anne style at the Thomas House include:

- 1902 built date
- Asymmetrical form and facade design
- Asymmetrical fenestration patterns
- Irregular roof
- Multiple dormers
- Boxed eaves
- Modillion courses
- Wide frieze bands
- Partial-width covered front porch

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 266.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 264.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 264.

- Round, tapered porch columns
- Round porch piers
- Porch pediment
- Vertical windows, some with diamond patterns in leaded-glass units
- Square-cut wood shingles (exterior wall cladding)
- Granite stone rubble mix exterior wall veneer
- Decorative brick and tile window and door quoins
- Prominent full-height circular corner tower with conical roof
- Spacious interior floor plan
- Golden-colored fir woodwork and painted woodwork
- Grand staircase
- Spooled fretwork/spindlework
- “Great Hall” with built-in bench seats and inglenook

In addition to the above-mentioned stylistic features, the Dr. Thomas House has a whimsical “storybook” look which is similar to a small chateau built for Marie Antoinette in 1873. Called *Petit Trianon*, the building was constructed in Versailles, France as part of an artificial rustic village, a popular construction pastime of royal courts and wealthy landowners during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in France. The irregular-shaped “salt-and-pepper” granite stone veneer and the terra-cotta-colored bricks and tiles of different shapes and thickness that surround windows and doors at the first floor of the Thomas House render a rustic look which is similar to the stone walls and window quoins of the French chateau. The construction of the buildings and villages helped pave the way for the edification and emulation of home designs which led to the American Storybook style, popular during the 1920s-1930s.<sup>19</sup>

Although the name of the architect responsible for the design of the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House remains unknown, the house was most probably designed by a professional architect, and maybe one that was familiar with European domestic architecture. Perhaps the architectural firm of Pruesse & Zittel who worked extensively with Gonzaga University, or Julius Zittel who lived just a few blocks from the Thomas House at 402 E. Mission Avenue, designed the Thomas House. Both Pruesse and Zittel were born in Germany and would have been familiar with domestic vernacular peasant architecture.

### ***Summary***

To summarize, the Dr. Charles & Elsie Thomas House achieved importance during its period of significance from 1902 to 1961. The home is well-preserved with few exterior alterations, retains a high degree of exterior architectural integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and single-family dwelling association, and is nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C.

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<sup>19</sup> Duchscherer, Paul. *Storybook Style*. New York: Viking Studio, 2001, pp. 2-3.



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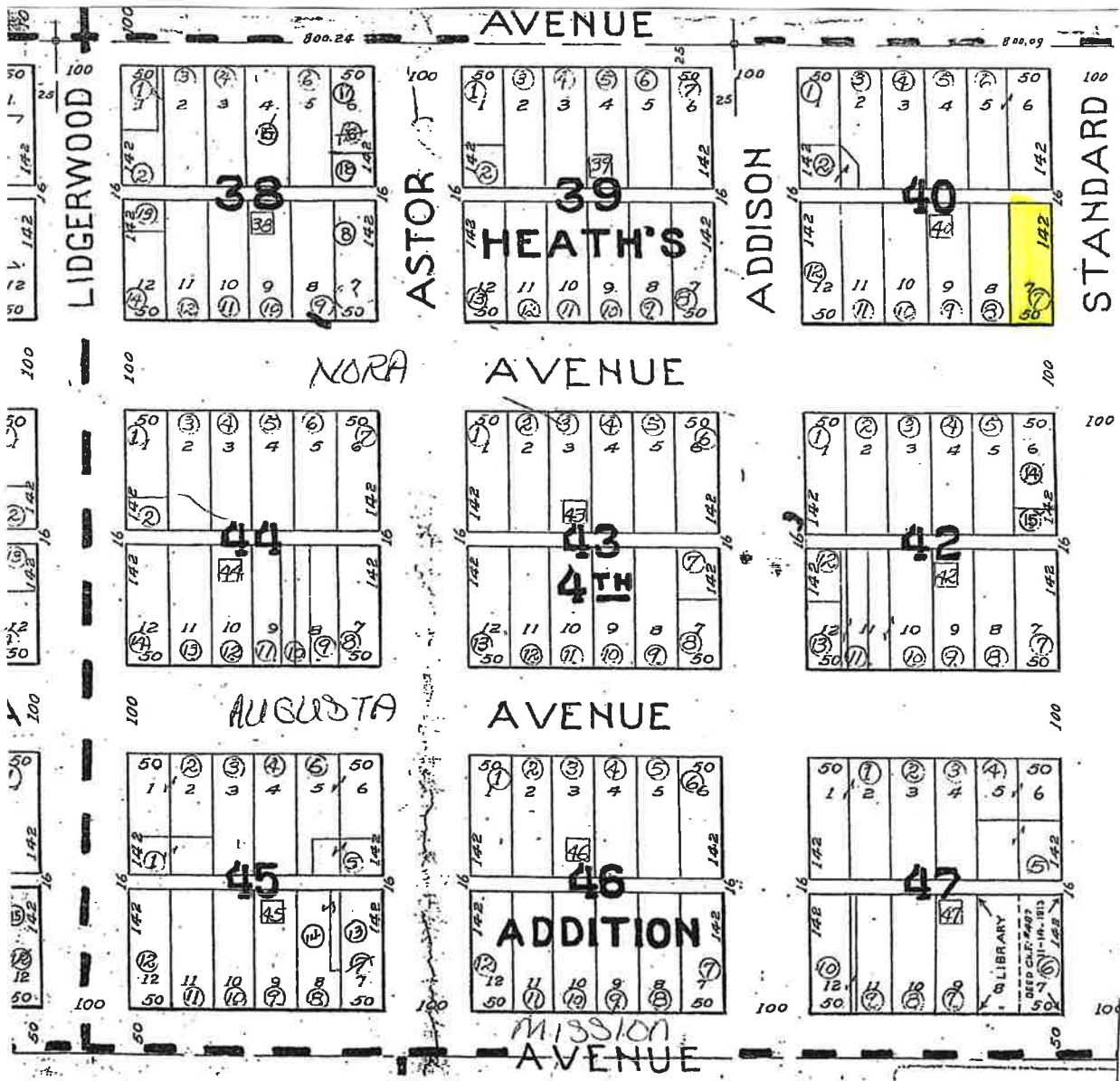
Spokane County public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

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

Section 10

PLAT MAP

Spokane County Plat Map, 2011

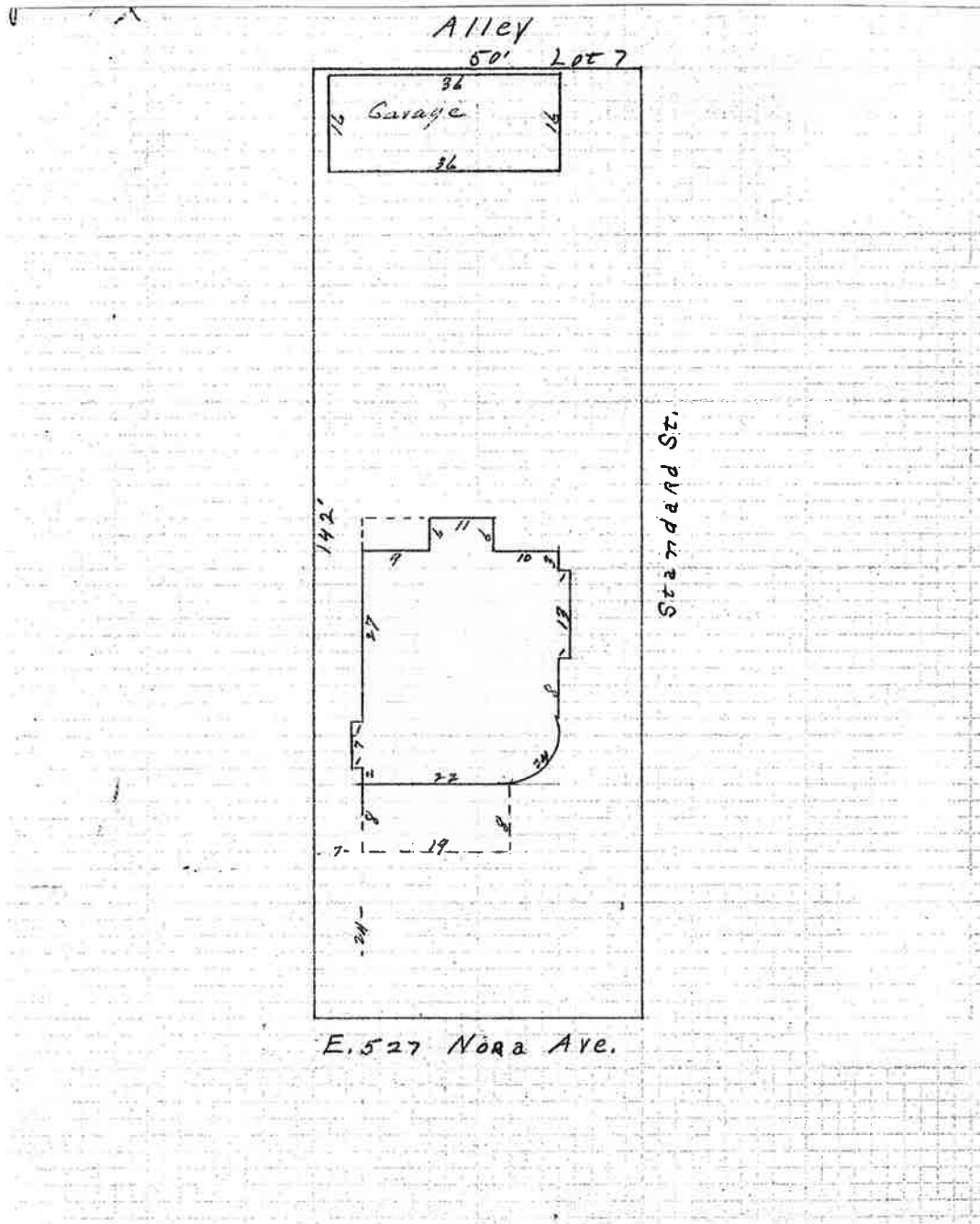


Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
DR. CHARLES & ELSIE THOMAS HOUSE

Section 10

SITE PLAN

Spokane County Tax Assessor plan.



**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 1 & 2

Circa 1961 and 1957 photos of SE corner of house.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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Section 10

*PHOTOGRAPHS*

Photos 3 and 4

South face of house and southwest corner of house in 2011.



**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 5 and 6

Southeast corner of house in 2011.



**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 7 and 8

Porch details on south face of house in 2011.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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*PHOTOGRAPHS*

Photos 9 and 10

East side of house in 2011.





**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 11 and 12

East side of house in 2011.



**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 13 and 14

Northeast corner of house in 2011.



**Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet**  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 15 and 16

Rear north elevation of house in 2011—notice garage on property which was built in 2009-2010.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photo 17

Front door as seen from inside of house in 2011.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photo 18 and 19

Central formal reception hall, facing SW and facing NW in 2011.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photos 20 and 21

Living room, looking SE, and dining room fireplace, looking SW in 2011.



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet  
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***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Photo 22

Looking down the reception hall staircase from second floor in 2011.



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

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photo 23 and 24

SE bedroom on second floor (turret room), looking SE.

Same bedroom, looking west...INTO BATH ROOM in 2010.

