

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

*Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Third Floor
808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, Washington 99201-3337*

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Fred & Winona Adams House
Common Name: Adams House

2. Location

Street & Number: 11 W. 26th Ave.
City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA 99203
Parcel Number: 35304.2630

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public <input type="checkbox"/> both	<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"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<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: Mia and Timothy Theis
Street & Number: 11 W. 26th Ave.
City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number/E-mail: 510-684-9679 (Mia); 415-879-1780 (Tim)

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 in Existing Surveys

Title: none
Date: Enter survey date if applicable Federal State County Local
Depository for Survey Records: Spokane Historic Preservation Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Condition

- excellent
- good
- fair
- deteriorated
- ruins
- unexposed

Check One

- unaltered
- altered

Check One

- original site
- moved & date _____

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 category: 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 of 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.
- E Property represents the culture and heritage of the city of Spokane in ways not adequately addressed in the other criteria, as in its visual prominence, reference to intangible heritage, or any range of cultural practices.

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: 0.17 acres
Verbal Boundary Description: 30-25-43: CANNON HILL 1ST ADDITION LOT 3
TOGETHER WITH THE WEST 5 FEET OF LOT 2
BLOCK 4.
Verbal Boundary Justification: Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title: Mia Theis, owner
Organization: n/a
Street, City, State, Zip Code: 11 W. 26th Ave. Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number: 510-684-9769
E-mail Address: theismia@gmail.com
Date Final Nomination Heard:

12. Additional Documentation

Additional documentation is found on one or more continuation sheets.

13. Signature of Owner(s)

14. For Official Use Only:

Date nomination application filed: _____

Date of Landmarks Commission Hearing: _____

Landmarks Commission decision: _____

Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: _____

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.

Megan Duvall
City/County Historic Preservation Officer
City/County Historic Preservation Office
Third Floor – City Hall
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

Date

Attest:

Approved as to form:

City Clerk

Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Adams House, built in 1914, is an excellent example of a one and a half story Craftsman-style bungalow. Its rectangular shape, low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves and front gable, and partially covered porch are typical exterior features. Inside, its oak floors with decorative inlay, beamed ceilings, and its built-in bookcases, dining buffet and hutch are all in the Craftsman style. The house, one block from Manito Park, is located in an area of Spokane's South Hill containing a variety of well-maintained homes built mostly from the early 1900s to 1945.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Site

The Adams house is located at 11 W 26th Ave. The home was built in 1914, making it the second-oldest home on the block. The Adams home is located at the eastern edge of First Addition to Cannon Hill -- Block 4 Lot 3, one block from the south end of Manito Park. The neighborhood features homes built mostly between 1911 and 1941, in a variety of architectural styles. The property measures 54 feet wide and 135 feet deep. The home is centered on the north-facing sloped lot and sits approximately 8ft above 26th Ave. The front of the house faces north onto a paved public sidewalk and 26th Ave. A trim lawn, mature evergreen and deciduous trees, and border plant beds accent this charming home. The curb strip has been planted with drought-tolerant and native plants to reduce water usage. A paved driveway runs south on the east border of the property to a one-car garage located behind the home.



Figure 1: Adams House facing south in 2024

House Exterior

The Adams House has an irregular rectangular footprint of 31 feet wide and 40 feet deep. It is one and a half stories tall, with a low-pitched front-gabled roof and a separate, partial-width front-gabled porch roof. The roof has widely overhanging eaves with decorative rafter tails under the gables and is covered in composition asphalt shingles.



Figure 2: Rubblemix column at west end of front porch

Exterior, front (north)

The foundation is irregularly textured and sized basalt rock. This extends to two low retaining walls on either side of the front steps. The retaining walls have flat concrete tops edged in brick ends.

Two tapered rubblemix columns support the porch roof, and two more support the pergola. The columns' spacing and repetition evoke pilasters that flank the windows and front door. These columns feature more basalt rock studded with brick odds and ends. Many bricks are clearly marked 'AFB Co Spokane WA' which indicates they were manufactured locally at the American Firebrick Company (American Firebrick Company is on the National Register of Historic Places). The 8-foot-wide poured concrete porch runs the entire 30-foot width of the house; the west 16 feet are topped with a pergola, while the east 14 feet are covered by a porch roof. The pergola's beams and joists have diamond-cut ends, as does the porch railing that appears to skewer the rubblemix columns. A

large fixed picture window dominates the front of the home under the pergola, between the columns. From under the covered porch, four concrete steps descend to a sloped walkway and three more steps terminate at the public sidewalk.

The home's exterior is covered in narrow-width horizontal clapboard siding on the first floor, a wide belly band, and stucco infill covering the gable fields at the second level. Window and door casings on the first floor feature decorative trapezoidal top trim.

The ceiling of the beamed porch roof is clad in narrow horizontal beadboard, with a centered flush-mount light. The exposed beams also have diamond-cut ends, as do the rafter tails under the gable. Above the beams is a belly band topped by stucco infill that extends to the porch gable. To the right of center under the porch roof is the front entry door. To the left of center is a small tilt sash 8-light window.



Figure 3: Brick in front porch column stamped with 'AFB Co Spokane WA'

Centered under the front gable at the second floor is a tripartite window, with 8-pane casement windows on either side of a fixed center 8-pane window.



Figure 4: Porch roof and gable in 2024



Figure 5: Adams House, northwest corner in 2024. 'Skewered' porch columns visible.

Exterior, west

The windows on the first floor of the west side are all single pane original wood windows, having better protection from the elements thanks to mature trees on this and the adjoining property. A rubblemix chimney with two unique decorative brick patterns laid in a sun or star design is flanked by two fixed 12-light bookcase windows. A center square bay, measuring nearly 8 feet wide, projects 17 inches from the planar wall, flanked by two single-hung 9/1 windows. In the center of the bay is a fixed 12-light window. Centered above the bay at the second floor is a cross gable with exposed rafter tails with diamond-cut ends. A single slider window with 9 lights per pane is centered under the gable. South of the bay, a pair of original single-hung 6/1 windows was removed during a recent remodel, and are now patched with narrow-width clapboard siding to match the existing siding.



Figure 6: Decorative brick inlay in chimney

Exterior, east

The east side of the house features continuous narrow clapboard siding, overhanging eaves, and replacement fiberglass and wood double pane windows. Between two sets of paired single-hung 12/1 windows is a pair of small casement windows. Near the southern end is a coal chute door, now inoperative.

Exterior, rear (south)

From the driveway on the east side of the house, a set of 4 concrete steps leads to a 52” W x 115” L mudroom. A back entry door to the home’s kitchen, a small tilt sash 9-light window, and the exterior’s clapboard siding are on the north wall of the mudroom; originally these formed the rear eastern exterior of the home. The mudroom has a fixed 1:1 window on the west side and a sliding glass door that leads to an expansive deck. To the west of the mudroom is a fiberglass and wood replacement single-hung 10/1 window; below this are concrete steps leading to a basement door. The mudroom is covered by a shed roof, covered in the same asphalt shingles as the main roof. The gabled roof, overhanging eaves, and exposed rafter tails with diamond-cut ends all match those on the front of the house. At the second floor, a single slider window with 9 lights per pane is centered under the gable. Four deck steps align with the center of the gable and back entry, and lead to the backyard.



Figure 7: Rear steps to mudroom and back entry in 2024



Figure 8: Adams House, rear view (facing north) in 2024

Interior

Through the front entry door, which features a brass doorknob and mail slot, and a 12-light beveled glass window, is a small entry hall with gumwood baseboards and crown molding. A door to the primary bedroom forms the majority of the south wall of the entry hall. The living room and dining room have oak hardwood floors with dark-stained knot-style inlay around the perimeter. Both rooms have original plaster on the walls. Both feature unpainted gumwood beams/box beams, trim, and built-ins, all of which have been polished and well maintained for 110 years. The west wall is dominated by built-ins: bookcases that run the entire length of the wall flank a gas fireplace in the living room, with high fixed windows above the bookcases. The wall above the fireplace projects one foot from the planar wall to the ceiling. The 4-inch-thick mantel is shallow, and connects seamlessly to the bookcase tops.



Figure 9: Decorative inlay in front entry hall of Adams House in 2024



Figure 10: Living room of Adams House, facing west, in 2024



Figure 11: Living room of Adams House (facing north) in 2024. Beamed ceiling visible



Figure 12: Fireplace and built-in bookcases of Adams House in 2024

The wide entry to the dining room features two 8-inch-wide square support columns with top and bottom rounded trim. Along the west wall of the dining room is a built-in buffet and hutch, flanked by two single-hung 9/1 windows with original brass hardware. Above the hutch is a fixed window. The buffet has two large middle drawers flanked by two sets of three smaller drawers; all have original brass pulls. The buffet's 4-inch-thick top matches the thickness of the mantel and bookcases. A beveled mirror is framed into the wall above the buffet, and a shelf sits atop the mirror, just below the window. The hutch cabinets are each supported by a 3-inch thick square pillar. The 6-light cabinet doors have clear glass, and original brass hinges and latches. Two small brass and glass wall-mounted lights are hard-wired into the hutch; the current fixtures are replacements. A plate rail extends around the room. There is an interior door to the upper half-story in the dining room.



Figure 13: Built-in buffet and hutch in dining room of the Adams House, facing west, in 2024



Figure 14: Detail of plate rail in dining room of the Adams House



Figure 15: Continuation of flooring and wood cabinetry from dining room to kitchen of Adams House, facing south, in 2024



Figure 16: Dining room, facing north, of the Adams House in 2024. Box beam ceiling visible.



Figure 17: Door to stairway to upper half story of the Adams House (dining room, facing east) in 2024

Through the dining room is the kitchen, in the southwest corner of the house. It was remodeled down to the studs in 2023. Left intact are the walls, two interior doorways to the kitchen, the doorways' wood trim, and a brick chimney that originates in the basement and continues into the attic. While nearly everything in the kitchen is new, its components were chosen to complement the era and unfussy style of the home, and the dominant woodwork in the adjoining rooms. A back door leads to the mudroom.



Figure 18: Remodeled kitchen of the Adams House, facing west, in 2024

Figure 6: Original brick chimney and northeast doorway in kitchen of the Adams House in 2024

The northeast doorway from the kitchen opens to a small, angled hallway leading to the second bedroom, main floor full bathroom, primary bedroom, and basement. The hallway and bedrooms have narrow-width oak hardwood flooring, painted woodwork, and five-panel wood doors (entry and closet) with brass hardware. The bathroom has been remodeled at least twice since 1914, and currently features black-and-white basketweave floor tile, subway wall tile, wainscoting, and fiberglass and wood replacement windows.



Figure 19: Original brick chimney and northeast doorway in kitchen of the Adams House in 2024



Figure 20: Angled hallway, facing northeast, of the Adams House in 2024

Up the shallow pie stairs is the upper half-story, with a small nursery/office space at the southern end. This room has a single-slider window on the south wall, and a shallow bench seat in front of the window. In the crawl space along the east wall is the central air conditioning unit, installed in the 2010s.

In the middle is the space under the cross-gable, including a single-slider window on the west wall. This space is currently used as a home office, though can be used as a bedroom. The north end of the space under the front gable is currently configured as a $\frac{3}{4}$ bathroom and storage area, with fiberglass and wood casement windows on the north wall.

The basement is fully finished. The southeast corner contains a full bathroom and laundry room. The gas hot water heater and furnace are housed between the laundry room and small southwest bedroom; the latter contains a fixed vinyl window and exterior door leading to the concrete steps to the backyard. The northeast portion of the basement features a basalt rock fireplace surround with brick firebox and hearth. At some point the basalt rock was covered with a plaster-like substance to create a smoother surface and was painted black. There is a non-egress bedroom in the northeast corner of the basement with a single-slider window.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

A 1959 Spokane County Tax Assessor photograph shows the Adams House in nearly identical form, though in the photo some of the exterior features are obscured by trees and foliage.



Figure 7: The Adams House in 1959

Modifications to the Adams House include:

- 1917: -Electrical wiring for a kitchen range was installed (permit #56192)
-A single-car garage was built on the east side of the property (permit #8232)
- 1947: The single-car garage was moved forward on the lot (permit #86736)
- 1974: Gas furnace installed (permit #5622)
- 2000s: -Vinyl replacement single-slider windows were installed in the upper half story on the south and west sides. One single-slider and 3 fixed vinyl replacement windows were installed in the basement.
-Replacement picture window installed in living room
- 2012: Gas furnace and thermostat replaced (permit #B1213217MECH)

2014: -New architectural composition asphalt roof installed (permit #B1413875RFSW)

2016: Gas insert fireplace installed in living room (permit #B1618092MECH)

2021: Backyard deck replaced (permit #B2118522BLDR)

2022: -Concrete front steps replaced

-Main floor bathroom remodeled: Flooring tile replaced, plastic tub/shower liner replaced with subway tile and small porcelain enameled steel tub, new toilet, vanity, lighting, and fan installed, wainscoting installed.

2023: -Kitchen remodeled: Pair of single-hung 6/1 windows removed on west wall. New hardwood flooring to closely match existing flooring on main floor. New electric wiring, gas line for dual-fuel range, new lighting, new cabinets installed. (Permits B222619BLDR, B222620PLMB, B2300369ELEC)

-Replacement fiberglass and wood dual-pane windows installed in primary and second bedrooms, kitchen, and north wall of upper half story. Replacements replicate form, style, and size of original windows, except for interior hardware.

-Exterior repainted, with accent color to highlight decorative rafter tails.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION

Few exterior modifications have been made to the Adams House in its 110-year existence. The most significant changes appear to be at the rear of the home: the garage was moved forward several feet on the lot, a pair of windows on the west wall was removed, and the back porch was enclosed at some point to form a mudroom. Despite this, the home's overall footprint appears to be the same as originally built.

The replacement windows on the front of the house are made of fiberglass on the exterior, with wood on the interior. When compared to the aforementioned 1959 photo, they appear to exactly replicate the size, style and function of the original windows: a large, unadorned fixed picture window on the first floor, and a tripartite casement/fixed/casement set on the upper half-story. The vinyl windows under the west cross-gable and the rear gable have faux muntins to replicate the style of the original windows. However, with no historic photos of the side or rear of the home to refer to, it is difficult to tell whether or not the size or exterior trim of these has changed.

Inside the home, the main floor retains much of its original Craftsman-style character, style, and hardware. Its most striking feature is its intact gumwood woodwork with its rich warm tone and polished shine. In addition, it retains the original floorplan, not having fallen victim to the "open floor plan" trend of the last few decades.

Area of Significance **Category B: Agriculture, Government**
Category C: Architecture
Period of Significance **Category C: 1914; Category B: 1919-1933**
Built Date **1914**
Architect **Unknown**
Developer/Builder **J. Oscar Johnson**

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Adams House is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Categories B and C.

Category B: Fred Adams, the first resident owner of the home, was a Stanford Law graduate and junior partner at the Davies & Adams law firm in Spokane. He was elected to the state House of Representatives from 1917-1921, and was Speaker of the House from 1919-1921. After serving in the legislature, he played a significant role in the development of the Columbia Basin Project, which transformed the economy of the central and eastern Washington regions.

Category C: The Adams House is architecturally significant as a well-preserved example of a Craftsman-style bungalow. Its organic and locally sourced materials, overhanging eaves, prominent support columns, and porch with pergola are defining exterior features of the style. Its rich woodwork, beamed ceilings, hardwood floors with inlay, and built-in cabinetry are significant interior features. It was constructed by J. Oscar Johnson who constructed several houses in the neighborhood.

HISTORIC CONTEXT, CATEGORY B

Eastern Washington, on the Columbia Plateau, is a semi-arid region, with unique geologic features formed by glaciers, ice-age floods, and flood basalts. Average annual rainfall ranges from 15-30 inches in the Spokane area to a mere 7-9 inches near the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers¹. Despite this, agriculture has become central to Washington state, accounting for 13 percent of the economy², particularly east of the Cascades.

How? The Columbia Basin Project.

Irrigation techniques have existed for millenia in human settlements worldwide. In the Pacific Northwest, Native groups have inhabited areas along rivers, including the Columbia, for about 11,000 years. In their more recent history, they used localized irrigation to cultivate crops such as corn and potatoes. Notably, these Native groups

¹ https://wrcc.dri.edu/Climate/narrative_wa.php

² <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/issues/agriculture>

avoided much of the Plateau specifically because of its dryness (Simonds p. 3). PNW rivers were also full of a rich food source: fish.

In the late 19th century, few white settlers came to the Columbia basin, with its to-be-avoided dry terrain dominated by bunchgrass and sagebrush; those who did used the land for grazing. Around the turn of the 20th century, homesteaders settled in the basin in larger numbers, using dryland farming techniques (USDOI p. 29), which rely on available soil moisture, groundwater, and any rainfall that occurs.

These homesteaders planted fruit orchards, among other crops. To meet water demand, several large-scale irrigation projects were developed in the region. Some were completed and others were abandoned due to cost, and all failed to meet the high demand for water. Thus, the basin settlers' early large-scale agriculture attempts were defined by repeated failure and slow death of crops, trees, and livestock, as well as mass exodus by 1930 (*ibid*, and 39-40).

During this period the Washington Legislature created the Columbia Basin Survey Commission in 1919. With a budget of \$100,000 it was tasked with studying two proposed irrigation plans for central and eastern Washington: the "gravity plan" and the "pumping plan." The gravity plan would divert water from the Pend Oreille River in Idaho and channel it through a network of canals and tunnels to the Big Bend area. The pumping plan required a dam to be built on the Columbia River, which would raise the water level behind the dam, creating a reservoir. Water from the reservoir could be pumped out and uphill through a network of canals, using power generated by the dam (Simonds p. 7).

Both plans had avid supporters from various groups and interests. The gravity plan's biggest backer was the Washington Water Power Company, which was: a) Spokane's largest employer at the time; b) the most influential supporter of the Chamber of Commerce; c) directly threatened by the development of power in the pumping plan. In other words, the WWPC wanted to protect its economic interests by backing the plan that didn't compete with it (*ibid*).

After more than a decade of debates, studies, follow-up studies backed by special interest groups, and cost projections for both plans that were unfathomable, bringing water to the region seemed impossible. For a time, Congress was unwilling to fund the project. But when the Dust Bowl and extreme economic hardship reached the region, the desire for irrigation brought new attention to the pumping plan and dam at Grand Coulee. In 1932, President Franklin D. Roosevelt included Grand Coulee Dam in his Public Works Administration program aimed at stimulating economic growth (*ibid*, p. 9).

Construction began in 1933 and took eight years to complete. It is one of the largest man-made structures ever built and is the largest water reclamation project in the United States. It helped power production of aluminum for planes and ships during WWII, as well as plutonium at Hanford Site, which was integral to the creation of the atomic bomb.

As explained in the Department of the Interior's 1964 report:

[T]his... continuing quest for water to make the land productive was the driving force behind the building of Grand Coulee Dam. The electric power potential of the proposed dam was secondary. Primarily it was the belief that water from the Columbia River would turn the desert lands of the Columbia Basin into a prosperous and productive region that was responsible for the building of Grand Coulee Dam and the huge Columbia Basin Irrigation Project. (p. ix)

Today, Grand Coulee is the largest hydropower producer in the US.³ Its irrigation network supplies water to more than 2000 farms totaling over 670,000 acres. The crops produced have an annual cash value of approximately \$630 million.⁴ The Columbia Basin Project changed the economic and agricultural outlook of central and eastern Washington, with north-central Washington becoming one of the largest and most productive tree fruit-producing areas in the world.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, CATEGORY B

Area of Significance: Agriculture; Political Government

Period of Significance: 1919-1933

Fred Adams spent much of his childhood in Spokane and graduated from South Central High School, the current Lewis and Clark High School. He attended Stanford Law School, graduating in 1908, and worked in the newspaper industry in several major cities on the west coast before returning to Spokane. At the time of his first marriage in 1910, he was on the editorial staff of the Spokane Chronicle.⁵ By 1916, he had shifted to a career in law in Spokane, and also ran for a seat in the state legislature.

The Washington Legislature created the Columbia Basin Survey Commission in 1919. Beginning in the same year, Speaker of the House Fred Adams held three roles related to the survey: first as the educational director for the Commission, then as a statistician for the survey, and ultimately as the supervisor of the survey in 1921. From his office in Spokane, he spoke of a clear vision:

The first steps of the policy of this division...will be to seek the cooperation of the United States reclamation service in getting the federal government to take over the Columbia basin as a government project. We shall also endeavor to gain the cooperation of the federal service in drilling for a dam site on the Columbia River at Grand Coulee (*Spokane Chronicle* 17 Feb 1921).

As early as 1921, then, Adams was a backer of the "pumping plan." Ten years later, he was heavily involved with the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, an early backer of the "gravity plan" thanks in part to its aforementioned ties to the Washington Water Power

³ <https://nps.gov/articles/washington-grand-coulee-dam.htm>

⁴ <https://www.nwcouncil.org/reports/columbia-river-history/columbiabasinproject/>

⁵ *Spokane Chronicle* 2 July 1910.

Company. It is unclear whether the Chamber changed its plan preference due to Adams' influence or some other factor. Either way, by 1931 the Chamber had developed its own Columbia basin committee, with Fred Adams as its chairman.

Reflecting the economic and environmental hardships of the Dust Bowl and Great Depression, Adams lobbied hard for the Columbia basin project. Knowing the plan needed unprecedented financial backing from Congress, he pushed other influential citizens to speak up too. In a July 1931 address to the Spokane Lions Club, Adams proclaimed:

If we tell our congressmen: 'We want the Columbia basin before you do anything else,' the basin authorization bill will be passed at the next session of Congress... Senators from the northwest say there will be no trouble about passage in the Senate. If the administration gives us its backing, and we remember President Hoover included Columbia basin as one of his 16 great public improvements, we will be successful in the House. Even so, we will not get our bill unless we go to Washington, militantly organized and demanding Columbia basin (*Spokane Chronicle*, 2 July 1931).

Less than 18 months later, Grand Coulee Dam and the Columbia basin project's "pumping plan" was included in FDR's Public Works Administration program.

A project as massive as Grand Coulee cannot be undertaken by one or two individuals. Instead, Adams' political clout as Speaker of the House gained him entry into the project, and progressively more involvement during his term. When he returned to Spokane from Olympia, his political connections earned him continued leadership in the project. It is likely that his years spent in the newspaper industry, particularly as a writer for the *Spokane Chronicle*, granted him steady media attention in the form of newspaper articles and speaking engagements. In this way, he was an early 20th century "influencer," helping direct local and regional resources toward one plan over the other, and eventually toward financial backing from the federal government. This influence helped create permanent change to the environment and economy of the region.

HISTORICAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

No account of historical events is complete without examining their effects on all people, not just those who benefitted. Therefore, the current owners of the Adams House acknowledge the cultural and economic devastation on Native tribes caused by the Columbia Basin Project.

Government and private development of dams in the region, including Grand Coulee, was in violation of treaties with tribes, and was "part and parcel of the historical transfer of land, natural resources, and wealth away from the tribes."⁶ While white settlers and corporate interests have gained economically from hydropower, irrigation, mining and

⁶ <https://www.doi.gov/media/document/tribal-circumstances-analysis>

improved river navigation, tribes have lost hundreds of thousands of acres of land, traditional fishing areas, and the endangerment or extinction of native fish stocks.⁷

In a 2024 report, the US government acknowledged the dams' harm to the tribes. As of this writing, litigation between the federal government and tribes of the region is ongoing, as are studies on how to bring economic, cultural, and environmental justice to tribes.

The Spokane Tribe of Indians is one of eight tribes most affected by the dams⁸, and it is the ancestral land of the Spokane Tribe upon which the Adams House sits.

HISTORIC CONTEXT, CATEGORY C

The Craftsman

The Arts and Crafts movement in the United States was a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, in which cheaply made mass-produced goods began to replace previously hand-made goods. On the one hand, the middle class could now afford these goods, previously accessible only to the wealthy. On the other hand, the working class was being heavily exploited and subjected to appalling factory conditions to produce these goods. The Arts and Crafts movement, then, was aimed in part at improving pay and conditions for skilled workers, as well as bringing a high level of craftsmanship to home building, without all the embellishment of the Victorian era. As Jane Powell puts it in *Bungalow Details: Interiors*, Arts and Crafts was not just a style, but also a political movement (p. 13-14).

Homeownership, too, became attainable to the working and middle classes, with Craftsman-style homes that were “economical, artistic, and practical” (*ibid* 16). These practical and reasonably priced homes were usually constructed in the bungalow form, which is generally defined as a small, one-storied house with a low-pitched roof; some variations include one and a half stories with upper rooms set in the roof (*ibid* 12).

Inside, Powell notes, bungalows aimed to maximize their modest sizes, through elements such as built-in furniture and tricks to the eye. One such illusion is the way rooms are laid out:

Bungalows by and large are laid out informally, with rooms often opening into one another for the illusion of more space... [many] have the living room, dining room, and kitchen on side and the bedrooms and bath(s) on the other... Dining and living rooms are often open to one another, separated by an arch or colonnade, or possibly by a wide doorway. (p. 23).

⁷ <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2024/06/21/dams-devastated-northwest-tribes-and-fish-stocks/>

⁸ *Ibid*.

According to John Baker in *American House Styles*, the Craftsman style is “characterized by the rustic texture of the building materials... Stone was never laid in a coursed ashlar pattern, but in a more random texture of rounded cobblestones... The color and tone of the house derive from natural materials and an earth-toned stain applied to the wood” (p. 96).

Cannon Hill and Manito Park

Spokane’s South Hill was once known as Manito Plateau, covered in basalt formations, native pines and grasses. Early development efforts in the 1880s-90s included streetcar lines along Grand, Bernard/Browne, and Monroe/Lincoln Avenues. A 160-acre plot of land was called Montrose Park, but otherwise the Plateau was largely undeveloped by the turn of the 20th century⁹.

Land speculator J.P. Graves began investing heavily in the South Hill, acquiring large sections of land at bargain prices after the 1893 Depression. This included the 160-acre park called Montrose, so named by a previous developer. In 1902, Graves also purchased an existing streetcar line, the Spokane & Montrose Railway. With other successful projects under his belt, Graves recognized the benefit that city services and a public park would bring to his latest residential development. So, he and his company donated over 90 acres to the city for a park, in exchange for infrastructure: water and sewer lines, and paved roads.¹⁰ In 1904, present-day Manito Park was established.

By 1909, residential development was underway. Cannon Hill (Park) Addition was advertised by Arthur D. Jones & Co as “A distinctly high-grade residence district. Building restrictions prohibit the erection of dwellings costing less than \$3000 to \$4000, and prohibit stores or apartments.”¹¹

Around the same time, development extended into First Addition to Cannon Hill, which consisted of 194 residential lots situated between Division and Bernard streets, with north-south boundaries at 25th and 29th avenues. On March 7, 1909 the newly platted lots went on sale, with one-third of them selling in a single day!¹²

Today, Manito Park is perhaps Spokane’s most iconic park. The Cannon Hill and Manito neighborhoods are in demand just as they were in 1909, with many historic homes still standing and in excellent condition.

⁹ <https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/shapingspokane/neighborhood-profiles/manito-cannon-hill-neighborhood-profile.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://historylink.org/File/7721>

¹¹ "April 4, 1909 (Page 44 of 72)." *The Spokesman-Review (1894-)*, Apr 04 1909, p. 44. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Sep. 2024.

¹² "March 8, 1909 (Page 7 of 14)." *The Spokesman-Review (1894-)*, 08 March 1909, p. 7. *ProQuest*. Web. 17 Sep. 2024.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, CATEGORY C

Area of Significance: Architecture

Built: 1914

Neighborhood in 1914

The Adams House is within the First Addition to Cannon Hill, one block south of Manito Park.

When the residential lots went on sale on March 7, 1909, developer J. Oscar Johnson bought Lots 2 and 3 of Block 4. He built a Craftsman-style bungalow home on each lot; both homes featured rich interior woodwork, oak hardwood floors with dark inlay, and the widely overhanging eaves so indicative of the style.¹³ The home on Lot 3 (now the Adams House) was completed in 1914, and in 1919 Johnson sold the home to attorney Fred Adams and his wife Winona.

As some of the oldest homes on the block, these two Craftsman-style bungalows helped anchor the block and the First Addition to Cannon Hill. With stately Manito Park an enticing feature of this new neighborhood, the “life-changing design” and resultant “wholesome life” that the Arts and Crafts advocates predicted (Powell 16) appeared to be found here.

The Craftsman Style of the Adams House

Powell notes that bungalows were “often set atop an embankment, which...gives them a certain stature” (p. 20). The homes on Lots 2 and 3 were set this way: the buildable area on the south side of 26th Avenue is up an embankment, giving the homes visual prominence over those on the north side. When viewing the Adams House from the north side’s sidewalk, the angle belies the modest one-and-a-half story size of the home.

The Adams House’s space-saving interior layout matches Powell’s description exactly:

- a modest one-and-a-half story home with upper rooms set in the eaves
- a small entryway
- living and dining rooms that are open to one another, separated by a colonnade
- bedrooms and a bathroom on one side of the home; living, dining, and kitchen on the other
- a stairway to the upper floor set in the dining room

¹³ https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/7-W-26th-Ave-Spokane-WA-99203/23534659_zpid/



Figure 22: Colonnade separating living and dining rooms in the Adams House in 2024



Figure 23: Stairway to upper half story set in the dining room of the Adams House in 2024

Elements of the Adams House are consistent with Baker’s description above. Its rubblemix columns, though uniform in size, appear to be randomly assembled, with brick bits sticking out at odd angles or that seem accidentally frozen in place. Its current exterior color scheme is lightened up from its previous iteration, featuring warm earth tones. Inside, its rich warm woodwork and dominant built-ins are “economical, artistic, and practical”: now, as then, their original purpose still applies, and are in use daily.



Figure 24: Vertically oriented, misshapen brick in rubblemix column

In the remodeled kitchen, white cabinets with inset doors are mounted to the ceiling, as was common in bungalow kitchens of the era (Powell p. 28). Lower cabinets are walnut with brass pulls, and though not an exact match, do suggest a visual continuation of the wood built-ins from the dining room. Warm-toned subway tile forms the backsplash, also common in bungalows (*ibid*). As with the AFB brick on the exterior, kitchen materials were sourced as locally/domestically as was practical: the subway tile was manufactured in Spokane Valley, the cabinets were built in South Dakota, and the replacement window was manufactured in the US. New oak hardwood floors are closely matched in color and board width to the existing floors in the other rooms.

Neighborhood today

For over a century, the homes on Lots 2 and 3 embodied the style and politics of the Arts and Crafts movement. After years of deferred maintenance and the death of its long-term owners, the house on Lot 2 was demolished in 2021 by new owners. In its place, a new build dominates the now-double corner lot.

The Adams House thus gains architectural importance two ways: first, it is an excellent example of the Craftsman-style bungalow, featuring locally sourced materials and an organic, back-to-nature emphasis. Second, of the two homes on the lots purchased and built by J. Oscar Johnson, it is the only one that remains.

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“Fred Adams placed at head of Columbia Basin survey.” *Spokane Chronicle*, 17 February 1921.



Figure 25: Fred Adams in 1931¹⁴



Figure 8: Advertisement for the Adams House in the Spokane Daily Chronicle, 1913¹⁵

¹⁴ Charles Libby Collection, <https://ferrisarchives.northwestmuseum.org/Item/Index/10119>

¹⁵ "September 30, 1913 (Page 13 of 16)." *The Spokesman-Review (1894-)*, Sep 30 1913, p. 13. *ProQuest*. Web. 23 Oct. 2024.

ADAMS WILL RUN FOR LEGISLATURE

Local Attorney Announces
Candidacy on Republican
Ticket From Sixth.

Fred A. Adams today announced his candidacy for state representative from the Sixth district on the republican ticket. He expects to file in a few days.

"There are no strings to my candidacy nor hope of reward other than that I believe that I am well qualified to serve the people of the Sixth district and of the state to good advantage," said Mr. Adams.

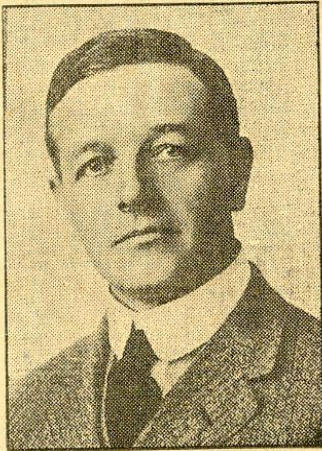
"If nominated and elected I propose to fight for state reapportionment, neglected by the last legislature, and at this time so necessary to equal representation if the state is not to become modeled after the old 'rotten borough' system of English history fame.

"The republican party is pledged to state constitutional revision, and believing that our present constitution has outlived its usefulness, I will, if nominated and elected, support the party's pledge.

"I believe that the present unwieldy membership of the legislature, which presents the spectacle of a two-ring circus, should be cut down to a working basis, where responsibility can be placed to better advantage. I believe in a closer scrutiny of the expenditure of the taxpayers' money; that legislative appropriations should be governed by necessity and not pork.

My residence in Spokane has been long enough to fully acquaint me with the needs of the Sixth district, eastern Washington and the state as a whole."

Mr. Adams is the junior member of the law firm of Davies & Adams in the Columbia building. He has been a resident of Spokane for more than 30 years, having been educated in the Spokane public schools and later attending the law school at Stanford university. Before entering the practice of law he was engaged in newspaper work in Spokane and on the Coast.



Fred A. Adams, candidate for state representative.

Figure 27: Article in Spokane Chronicle announcing Adams' candidacy, 1916

FRED ADAMS PLACED AT HEAD OF COLUMBIA BASIN SURVEY

Spokane Man Is Named by Director Scott to Carry On the Project Work.

Fred A. Adams of Spokane has been named supervisor of the Columbia Basin survey by Dan A. Scott, director of conservation and development in Governor Hart's administrative cabinet.

Mr. Adams, former member of the state legislature and speaker of the house in 1919, has been serving as

statistician of the Columbia Basin survey commission and has been closely identified with all the operations of the commission.

The office to which he was appointed yesterday was created by the new administrative code in recognition of the importance of the Columbia Basin project.

Office to Remain Here.

"So far as I know," Mr. Adams said in speaking of his appointment, "the office of the Columbia basin survey will remain in Spokane. This was indicated by Director Scott when he was here last week.

"The first steps of the policy of this division," Mr. Adams declared, "will be to seek the cooperation of the United States reclamation service in getting the federal government to take over the Columbia basin as a government project. We shall also endeavor to gain the cooperation of the federal service in drilling for a dam site on the Columbia river at Grand Coulee."

Director Scott also announced yesterday at Olympia the appointment of F. E. Pape, state forester and fire warden, as state supervisor of forestry, and Dr. Solon Shedd, professor of geology at Washington State college, as supervisor of geology. Dr. Shedd will succeed Henry Landes of the University of Washington as state geologist.

Survey



Fred A. Adams, named chief of the Columbia survey work in the state.

Figure 28: Clipping from Spokane Chronicle, February 21, 1921¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/clipping/id/14379>

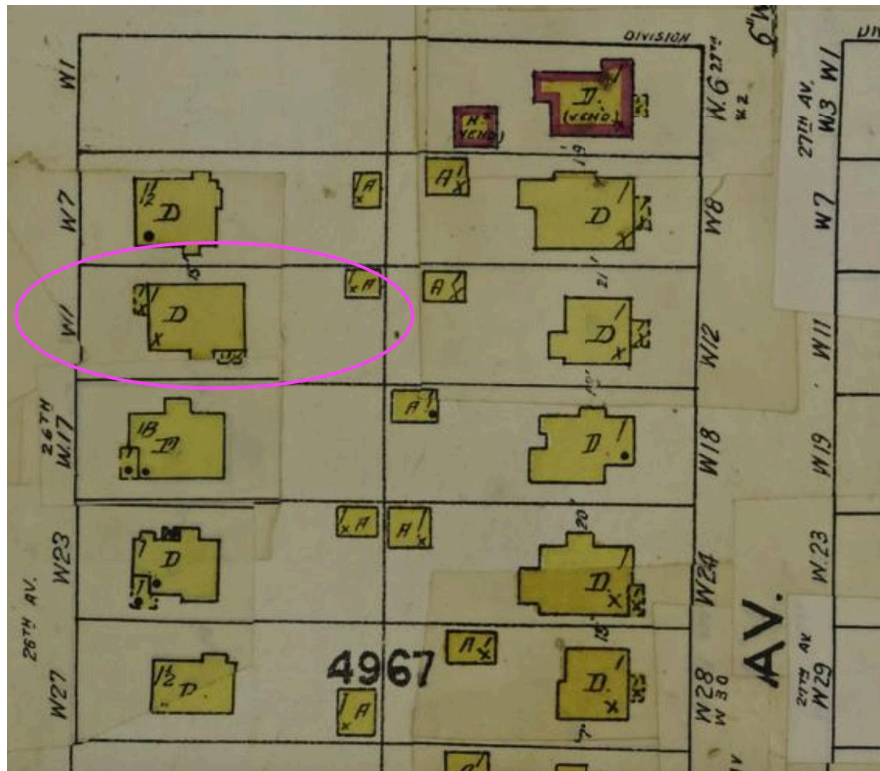


Figure 29: Sanborn fire insurance map of the Adams House, 1950¹⁷

¹⁷ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Spokane, Spokane County, Washington. Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 3, - Jun 1950, 1950. Map. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/sanborn09331_014/.