

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name National Guard Armory - Olympia  
other names/site number Olympia Armory

## 2. Location

street & number 515 Eastside Street SE  not for publication  
city or town Olympia  vicinity  
state Washington code WA county Thurston code 067 zip code 98507

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria

X A     B X C     D

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
WASHINGTON STATE SHPO  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

    entered in the National Register     determined eligible for the National Register  
    determined not eligible for the National Register     removed from the National Register  
    other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

| <u>Contributing</u> | <u>Noncontributing</u> |              |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1                   |                        | buildings    |
|                     |                        | site         |
| 2                   |                        | structure    |
| 1                   |                        | object       |
| 4                   |                        | <b>Total</b> |

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

None

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DEFENSE – arms storage

VACANT/NOT IN USE

SOCIAL – meeting hall

SOCIAL - civic

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT – PWA Moderne

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: CONCRETE

roof: SYNTHETICS: Rubber

other: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### Summary

The National Guard Armory in Olympia, Washington, is a two-story building constructed with reinforced, cast-in-place concrete. Offering vestiges of the PWA Moderne style, rhythmic alternating vertical bays emphasize the verticality of the facades and convey the architects' use of the Art Deco style with the cost-effective simplicity of a government-funded project. The central block and wing form is highlighted by a prominent projecting entry bay with an arched, recessed entry. Above is the word "ARMORY" engraved in a Deco script, and at the very top, rising above the central parapet, is a golden eagle sculpture integrated into the parapet walls with its wings spread. This detail slightly obstructs views towards the barrel-vault roof of the drill hall. Inside, the building continues its theme of simplicity, with the two-story drill hall space surrounded by office spaces on the north, east, and south wings of the first story and north, south, and east wings of the second story.

### Location and Setting

The Armory is located at the eastern end of Olympia's downtown commercial area, at the southwest corner of the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Eastside Street. Eastside Street is a two-lane, two-way paved road with bike lanes and street parking separating the concrete sidewalks on either side of the road. It serves as a general demarcation between the commercial downtown and the Eastside residential neighborhoods. The nominated site includes all of Block 49 of Swan's Addition, and the main building, roughly centered on the block, facing east. The lot rises up towards the middle of the block forming a mound for the Armory to rest upon. Fronting the south and east sides of the building is a grassy lawn. The south side of the lot is a canopy of trees next to Legion Way. A semi-circular driveway directs visitors to the main entrance approximately 40-feet east of the sidewalk. Directly in front of the main entry in the lawn area, is a metal flagpole, original to the Armory's 1939 construction. In front of the flagpole is a concrete landscape block, circular raised planter bed which holds a metal signpost. The rear of the site (west side) is lower, held back by a concrete retaining wall which creates a daylight basement for the building. This area is enclosed by a chain link fence and is paved with asphalt. Here a c.1948 vehicle storage building and small Butler shed add additional storage space to the property.

### Olympia Amory Building (1939) - Contributing

#### Exterior

The Olympia Armory is a poured-in-place concrete building that stands two stories tall on a finished, below-grade basement. The building is generally square in plan and is capped with a flat roof with crenellated parapets hiding at the perimeter of three sides of the building. The drill hall, the primary feature of the building with its barrel-vault roof, rises above the flat roofs at the center and rear of the building. The building's poured concrete is finished with a "rubbed" parge coating, as noted in the original architectural plans.<sup>1</sup> Each exterior elevation features fenestration in a rhythmic pattern of alternating wide, flush concrete panels and narrow, recessed windows and fluted concrete panels. Most of the original steel windows have been retained, composed of either metal casement sashes (above a fixed pane ¼ height of the window opening) or metal multi-light hung sashes. One window on the first story of the north end of the east façade has been replaced. The west elevation, at the rear of the drill hall, originally featured distinctive grouped columns of glass block

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<sup>1</sup> Wohleb, Joseph, and Roland Borhek, "National Guard Armory, Olympia, Washington, Front & Rear Elevations," original architectural drawings, on file, City of Olympia, July 1938.

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windows that extended nearly the full height of the first floor. In 1964 these windows were removed and the openings were filled with concrete block.

The east/main façade hosts the building's most decorative exterior features. Here the main entry is defined by a projecting bay which features fluted pilasters rising from the ground to the parapet. Between is a recessed entry housing a set of three segmented-wooden doors under a semi-circular arched lintel. A row of nine, small cast concrete shields define the arched opening. The entry doors are constructed of heavy timber with recessed block patterns and metal studs. The doors are subdivided by thick mullions, the far south one is removable to allow access to extra wide items that need to be rolled in or out of the building. Above the arched lintel is distinctive incised Art Deco/Moderne-style lettering which spells out "ARMORY". Above are three windows.

At the top of the entry bay, spanning the full width at the parapet, is a sculpted cast stone eagle with a radiating sunbeam motif (a common emblem for the National Guard). Executed by Seattle-based artist, John W. Elliott, the stylized eagle is painted in gold. Elliot's sculptural work can be found on numerous buildings throughout the Pacific Northwest including at the State Capitol Campus.

The entrance to the building is comprised of four raised concrete steps above ground level that terminates in a scored concrete vestibule with integrated walk off floor mats at the exterior. The original mats have been removed. Flanking the entry pad are concrete ADA ramps at each end which span the width of the main façade. The ramps have metal tube railings and were added in 1990.

Flanking the entry bay are equal sized side wings. These contain 5 bays highlighted by narrow windows with fluted spandrel and parapet panels. Recessed at each end are secondary entry vestibules. These are accessed by raised steps and single-doors, rendered with an arched top and heavy timber design with block patterns and metal studs (matching the main entry doors). Above each door, on the main façade, is the decorative emblem of the 248<sup>th</sup> Coastal Artillery unit. This consists of a shield with a fleur-de-lis, capped with a crown and a resting side profile of an eagle. The small ribbon below the shield is void of their Latin motto "Facillmie Princeps". These secondary entries contain stairs which are lite with narrow slots of glass block.

Entry vestibules can be found on all four corners of the building. The rear corner entries have modern metal doors, and no decorative entry shields. Instead, these are highlighted by flat concrete canopies and where needed, simple pipe railings.

The north and south elevations are similar in detail to the main façade with original windows and fluted spandrel and parapet panels. These elevations also boast exterior pilasters which rise to a level just below the parapet line. The north elevation features a fluted chimney which rises above the exterior side wall of the drill hall.

The west elevation features an exposed basement wall with various openings. It hosts a newer large metal rolling garage at its center, flanked by metal single-doors and original metal multi-light windows, as well as a newer metal "man door". The shape of the barrel vault roof is exposed and is framed by pilasters and faux windowless corner towers. The rear façade originally boasted rows of vertical glass block windows (infilled in 1964). Window openings now are limited to sets of original nine pane fixed aluminum units, equally space across the drill hall between pilasters.

While the various facades are vertical in nature due to the crenelated parapet walls, pilasters, and vertical windows, the facades are also divided horizontally into five layers. The first layer serves as a raised foundation wall, slightly projecting from the rest of the smooth concrete walls.

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## Interior

### *First Floor*

The first floor housed a variety of offices including the upper command structure of the guard. It also housed a plotting and instrument room, as well as an infirmary and surgeon's room, and mess hall. Inside decorative features are limited to the main entry vestibule. Here, original tile floors, in various shades of brown, are laid in a "Opus Roman" pattern. Smooth plaster walls are terminated in a shallow coffered flat ceiling frame. To the north and south of the vestibule are various offices and workspaces down a single loaded corridor. Floors are covered with vinyl tiles and carpet in some of the office spaces. Walls are simple white plaster with wood-painted floorboards and door trim. Office ceilings have been hidden by dropped acoustical ceiling in most of the rooms, while the first-floor hallways remain open to their ceiling heights. While various doors have been replaced with hollow core units, some original half-lite wood doors remain in various locations. Some boast safety glass panes. The kitchen space in the north wing is altered and has modern fixtures and floor coverings.

Directly across from the entry vestibule is the drill hall, a large open two-story space with various basketball hoops. The barrel vault roof is hidden by a flat ceiling which was never exposed, per historic images. The original architectural drawings note that the ceiling was originally designed to be covered with fiber board; this has since been supplemented with acoustic tile. At the east end, a small balcony projects above that historically hosted a shallow balcony viewing area. The original metal tube railings remain, and remnants of the historic seating are still visible in the flooring. The space now serves as home to heating and air conditioning units. The drill hall floor is covered in end-grain wood blocking, with painted basketball court markings. Lighting is limited to non-original florescent fixtures.

### *Second Floor*

The second-floor footprint is U-shaped and is slightly smaller than the first-floor office plan. The various rooms housed additional offices and classroom spaces as well as private separate club spaces for officers and enlisted men. The building has no elevator and the second floor is accessed by stairs at each corner of the east side of the building that lead to landings. The dogleg-style stairs are cast-in-place concrete and have metal pipe railings and are lite by the aforementioned vertical slots of single stacked glass block windows. The second floor has single loaded corridors, albeit access to the balcony. Floors are a combination of carpet and vinyl tile. Walls are simple white plaster with wood-painted floorboards and door trim. Office ceilings have been hidden by dropped acoustical ceiling in most of the rooms, while the hallways remain open to their ceiling heights.

While various doors have been replaced with hollow core units, the second-floor spaces retain more original half-lite wood doors at various locations. Some boast safety glass panes, others translucent privacy glass. Ghost images of former office use names can be found on some of the doors. At least one original hanging sign pole can be found. This is a simple metal sign bracket with a scroll on the end.

### *Basement*

The full-sized basement has 10' tall ceilings and housed a large garage, locker rooms, laundry room, storage and maintenance space, a rifle range, and a small caretaker's living quarters. These are utilitarian in design and are divided by poured concrete walls, hollow clay tile walls, and wood frame walls. The spaces have been altered and are mostly vacant. The southwest corner of the garage area was closed off with wire fencing for tool storage at an unknown date. The rifle range area is a 14'x 75' concrete box with a stepped concrete floor. At the northwest corner of the basement was a small living quarter. This double room area has a combination living and bedroom area with a small separate kitchenette space, a single bathroom, and one closet. Accessed from the interior and exterior, the space retains some original trim, wood doors, and light fixtures as well as a built-in vertical bookcase in the kitchenette. All kitchen and bathroom fixtures have been removed. The ceiling is plaster and the floor is covered in vinyl tile.

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### **Motor Vehicle Storage Building (1948) - Contributing**

Located to the west of the main Armory building, at the rear of the lot, is the Vehicle Storage Building. It was designed using standard National Guard plans and was constructed c.1948. The 60' x 128', poured concrete building is rectangular in plan with a gable roof (oriented to the north/south). The exterior is covered in a painted parge coat of concrete. The roof has no eaves and has a steel truss system with concrete decking, covered with a synthetic membrane. The east and west elevations exhibit pairs of separated metal rolling garage doors. Three of the four are modern replacement doors. Above each door are metal louvered vents. Both the east and west elevations each feature a series of seven, six-over-six metal hung window sashes which are set high on the facades adjacent to the eave line. Support for the concrete walls is located inside, and is via a series of concrete pilasters. Entry to the building is on the north and south elevations with a single metal man-door on each side. The east elevation features a concrete block chimney between the second and third windows from the north elevation.

Inside the building is divided into two spaces. The south 2/3 of the building is a large open room with exposed concrete floor and roof structure, and unpainted wall surfaces. The northern 1/3 of the space is partitioned to include a workshop area. Here painted walls and a wooden workbench are found as well as a stick built -two story office and storage area.

The wall facing the workroom features a period painted mural depicting two WWII soldiers. Believed to be "Willie and Joe", stock characters that were featured in GI publications, the mural is unsigned. These comic characters were initially created by U.S. Army soldier and cartoonist Bill Mauldin and first appeared in the February 1944 edition of Stars and Stripes, the Army's daily newspaper. They gained immediate popularity with rank-and-file soldiers for their authenticity and unvarnished rendering of the war experience, including at times the vagaries of military leadership.

### **Butler Storage Building (c.1952) - Contributing**

Situated at the northwest corner of the lot is a standardized, metal storage building. Constructed by the Butler Manufacturing Company in c.1952, the 6' x 12' shed has no windows and a single door on the south façade. Constructed with a simple rigid steel frame, the walls and roof are clad in single-skin aluminum panels. Based on the panel design, this is a first-generation Butler building and features the Butler BR1 panel system.

### **Flagpole (c.1939) - Contributing**

Original to the building and central to its function as an Armory is a metal flagpole. The pole is located at the arch of the circular driveway directly outside the main entrance to the building.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our 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 or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MILITARY

SOCIAL HISTORY

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

#### Period of Significance

1939 – 1964

#### Significant Dates

1939 – date of construction

1948 – vehicle storage building constructed

1952 – Butler Shed constructed

1964 – glass blocks removed

#### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

#### Cultural Affiliation

#### Architect/Builder

Wohleb, Joseph – architect

Borhek, Roland – architect

A.F. Mowat Construction Co. – builder

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## Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### Summary

The National Guard Armory in Olympia, Washington, is historically significant under Criterion "A" for its direct association with broad patterns of military defense and connection to Depression-era Federal relief programs. The building is emblematic of a long history of Army National Guard and Military, a presence in Olympia, and has itself played a central role in military and community history. The building served as the headquarters of the Coast Artillery units during World War II and more recently was the headquarters of the 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery Regiment of the 81st Infantry Stryker Brigade. Over the last 80 years, the Armory has played host for numerous community events including Washington State Inaugural Balls in the 1960s, political events, sports tournaments, fundraisers, community dances, and religious gatherings.

The Armory is also historically significant under Criterion "C" as a resource that embodies the distinct characteristics of its type, period, and method of construction. Completed in 1939, the Armory is a landmark example of late 1930s architecture and is the most ornate of the PWA Moderne armories built in Washington state during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Additionally the building represents the work of master architect Joseph Wohleb, who made a profound impact on the built environment in Olympia and the South Sound region. Noted Tacoma architect Roland Borhek provided design assistance as an associate on the project.

The building has minimal alterations and has retained a high level of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The Period of Significance begins in 1939, the year the building was completed, and ends in 1964, the year that glass block windows were removed from the rear of the building affecting the light penetration into the main drill space.

*Note the nomination text is largely based off of the work of local historian Shanna Stevenson, who researched the building and history of the guard for a historic structures report in 2020.*

### Origins of the National Guard in Olympia

The organization of troops into a local protective force for the community of Olympia dates to establishment of the community itself, before statehood was granted. Authorized in the first session of the Washington Territorial Legislature in 1855 the territorial militia was initially established to protect local citizens during the Puget Sound Indian War (1855-56). At the time, Olympia was the Territorial Capital and Washington Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens served as the official commander. Surveyor James Tilton was appointed Adjutant General.<sup>2</sup> Reportedly there were two militia companies in the Olympia area who oversaw two blockhouses, with one used as a weapons depot, and the other as a safe haven for local citizens.<sup>3</sup>

During the Civil War, Thurston County (Olympia area) had an "enrolling officer" for the Union army. Captained by former Governor Isaac Stevens, his task was to compile a list of eligible men between age 25 and 45.<sup>4</sup> From those lists, the provost marshal's office would determine a quota for each district. If a community could meet its quota through volunteers, no draft would be held. Numerous local residents volunteered to join the so-called called "*Puget Sound Rifles*," and the quota for Thurston County was meet. They were never called into combat service during the war. Instead during the Civil War they substituted in for regular Army personnel at Fort Steilacoom and Fort Colville and later joined Company K, First Territorial Infantry.<sup>5</sup> After the war, by 1873 a local militia group called the "*Olympia Light Guard*" had formed and reportedly was called out to quell a labor

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<sup>2</sup> Virgil F. Field, *The Official History of the Washington National Guard* (Camp Murray, WA, Tacoma, WA: Washington State Military Department, Office of the Adjutant General, 1961), Vol. II, 8, 19, 22. (hereafter, *Official History*); Early Chronology: "Olympia's New Rifle Company Recalls Historic Past," *Sunday Olympian*, June 7, 1959, 1, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. II, 17, 131; Field, *Official History*, Vol. III, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. III, 21.

<sup>5</sup> "Olympia's New Rifle Company Recalls Historic Past," 5.



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disturbance of railroad workers in Tacoma.<sup>6</sup> Early militias like these were privately funded as a sort of “club” where members drilled, usually weekly.

By 1882, the *Capitol Guards* had been formed under the leadership of R. G. O’Brien at Olympia - one of the six companies recognized by then Governor Watson Squire as the “Washington National Guard,” the first in the Territory.<sup>7</sup> The *Capitol Guards* were part of the group who met for training at “Five Oaks” on Chambers Prairie near Olympia in 1885 along with the *Seattle Rifles* and other units.<sup>8</sup> For reasons unknown, the *Capitol Guards* likely disbanded within a year and were initially not part of the Company A, First Regiment of Washington when it was organized in 1886.<sup>9</sup>

After Washington statehood in 1889, the legislature established funding for the Military Department of Washington which enabled regular summer training for militias.<sup>10</sup> One of the leaders of the effort was Olympia *Capitol Guards* leader R.G. O’Brien—sometimes called the “Father of the Washington National Guard.”<sup>11</sup> He reconstituted the *Capitol Guards* around 1891 just prior to the first official summer guard training encampment in 1892 at Camp Murray.<sup>12</sup> The *Capitol Guards* continued and were reported as being part of the training camp near what is now Lacey in 1894 along with troops from North Yakima and Spokane Falls.<sup>13</sup>

### Federalizing the National Guard

A major change which federalized state militias was enacted by Congress in 1903 - called the “Dick Act” or the “Militia Act” of 1903. The measure changed the organized state militias into a “National Guard” that was a federal reserve, to be mobilized for national service as needed. The Act also created the dual nature of both state and federal service of the organization which remains today. The law brought with it federal funding and standardized gear. In turn, state guards were required to have regular drill periods, a yearly summer encampment and to undergo training with the regular Army.<sup>14</sup>

Although the Washington National Guard as a whole was involved in World War I, the Olympia unit only had a “Home Guard” in 1917. Authorized by the State Adjutant General and supported by legislative funds with Captain Robert G. Ross in charge, they annually meet in an unnamed downtown facility.<sup>15</sup>

### The Coast Artillery Program

During this early period on the federal side, in the 1880s an entity called the “Endicott Board” was organized to plan for coastal defenses on the East and West Coasts. In Washington State the Puget Sound area defenses were mainly established to protect the Bremerton Navy Yard and their surrounding cities. The result was an extensive building program to construct artillery emplacements in the coastal areas of Puget Sound as well as the Columbia River. Numerous forts were established including those at Fort Casey on Whidbey Island, Marrowstone Point, Fort Worden, Fort Port Townsend, Fort Lawton, and Fort Columbia. These forts were

<sup>6</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 3 and <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/timeline/detail.aspx?id=89>.

<sup>7</sup> Field *Official History*, Vol. IV, 75. In 1884 the unit was commanded by Captain John C. Ten Eyck with J. Frank Brown and Able B. Brown and first and second Lieutenants and consisted of 35 non-commissioned officers and privates.

<sup>8</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 76.

<sup>9</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 107.

<sup>10</sup> *The Camp Murray Story*, The Command Post, Washington National Guard, (Olympia: Washington State Adjutant General’s Office, 1959), 9-10 (hereafter *The Camp Murray Story*).

<sup>11</sup> Rossell G. O’Brien was a native of Ireland, born in 1846. He served in the Civil War with the Ellsworth Zouaves in Chicago in 1862 and later with Co. D. 134th Illinois Volunteer Regiment. Mustered out in 1864, he was then with Chicago Governor’s Guards from 1865 to 1870. He came to Washington Territory with Governor Edward Salomon. In Washington, O’Brien was Deputy Director of Internal Revenue 1871; Chief Clerk in House of Territorial Assembly; a member of the City Council of Olympia from 1886 to 1888 and Mayor in 1891. He was also Clerk of Supreme Court and Quartermaster and Adjutant General of Territorial Militia from 1880 to 1895. O’Brien is called the “Father of the National Guard of Washington.” Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 78.

<sup>12</sup> State of Washington, Military Department, Office of the Adjutant General. Prepared under the direction of Brigadier General Liiburn H. Stevens, Adjutant General and Maj. Reginald Heafield, Chief, Bureau of Records, “A Brief History of National Guard of Washington” unpublished manuscript, 2008, 117 (hereafter *Brief History*) and Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 166.

<sup>13</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. IV, 166. See also for photographs and description: *The Camp Murray Story*, 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> William Andrew Leneweaver, Richard G. Patterson and Dr. William H. Woodward, Jr., *Washington National Guard*, (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2019), 8. See also: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Militia\\_Act\\_of\\_1903](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Militia_Act_of_1903).

<sup>15</sup> *Morning Olympian*, March 20, 1917; *Olympia Daily Recorder*, March 21, 1917; *Morning Olympian* April 4, 1917, 1.

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developed between 1890s and the turn of the twentieth century. Some became permanent artillery sites. However, the needs for manpower at these fortifications quickly outstripped the resources of the regular Army.<sup>16</sup> In 1902, the U.S. Secretary of War instituted a policy that created a partnership between State troops and the regular Army for these installations.<sup>17</sup> Due to the uniqueness of the mission, in 1907 the Coast Artillery Corps was created as an independent force. That year the 2nd Infantry Washington National Guard went into training to determine if they could, with adequate training, man the coastal defenses along with the regulars. The War Department made each state a partner in the coast defenses with half of the manpower coming from the states and the other half from the Army. The two groups trained together with a mission to guard the land approaches to the emplacements as well. After the initial determination that the National Guard could man the defenses, several companies of Coast Artillery were organized in Washington, including one in Olympia.<sup>18</sup>

The new Olympia unit was originally the Third Company of the Coast Artillery and was mustered into the National Guard December 21, 1921. Known as the 248th Coast Artillery the unit, they had three officers and 72 men enlisted as Battery B.<sup>19</sup> The unit initially utilized the newly completed American Legion Building (219 Legion Way), as an Armory with the auditorium used as a drill floor.<sup>20</sup> Captain Edward C. Dohm, a World War I veteran and later a long-time leader of Olympia artillery units, was appointed as a provisional captain and recruited for the company. The First Lieutenant was William Rogers; and Second Lieutenant was Neil R. McKay — all initially had offices in different buildings in downtown Olympia.<sup>21</sup> Dohm would later to become one of the primary advocates for a new Olympia Armory (the nominated building).

### **248th Coast Artillery Battalion and Reorganization**

The various units assigned to the Olympia National Guard went through further reorganization from 1925 to 1928, but still remained as the 248th Coast Artillery. When Olympia became the Headquarters for the 1<sup>st</sup> Provisional Battalion its case for building a permanent armory became greater, however ten more years passed by before funds could be secured.<sup>22</sup> The Battalion trained at Fort Worden at Battery David Kinzie.<sup>23</sup> By September 1935, the unit was officially named Battery B 248<sup>th</sup> Coast Artillery, (Harbor Defense), Type A.<sup>24</sup>

The Olympia unit continued to follow the prescribed regimen of 1907 unit with home armory training and drilling, and annual summer encampments – Olympia unit at Fort Worden. At the summer training, the Coast Artillery Guard Units were closely paired with regular Army Coast Artillery Units. Each guardsman shadowed a regular army member learning individual responsibilities at the artillery installations. After this intensive training, the Guard unit was in charge of a specific coastal gun emplacement, learning the equipment and coverage area of the guns.<sup>25</sup>

The Olympia National Guard also maintained its state deployment role. According to the 1939 National Guard Pictorial, the battalion was called out several times for state service. This included going to Montesano during the International Workers of the World (IWW) “riot” (May 1922), and then again in March 1933 during the Hunger March in Olympia which saw a group of unemployed persons marching to the governor to ask for

<sup>16</sup> Hansen, *Battle Ready*, 114.

<sup>17</sup> David Hansen, *Battle Ready: The National Coast Defense System and the Fortification of Puget Sound, 1894-1925*, (Pullman, WA: WSU Press, 2014), 115.

<sup>18</sup> David Hansen, “The Regulars and the Militia in the Coast Defenses of Puget Sound,” in *Military Influences on Washington History: Proceedings of a Conference*, William Woodward and David Hansen eds., March 29-31, 1984, Camp Murray, Tacoma Washington, 122; Hansen, *Battle Ready*, 117.

<sup>19</sup> *Brief History*, 117 and Washington State Adjutant General’s Office, *Historical and Pictorial Review, National Guard of the State of Washington, 1939: a tribute to the Military of the State in Observance of the 50th Anniversary of the State of Washington*, (Baton Rouge, LA: Army and Navy Pub. Co., c 1938), 173 (dates vary), (hereafter *1939 Washington National Guard Pictorial*).

<sup>20</sup> *Morning Olympian*, August 7, 1921. For National Register documentation of the American Legion see: <https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail?assetID=c76486da-3406-4d16-ba0f-cebd13160f8e>.

<sup>21</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 60.

<sup>22</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 66; *Brief History*, 117. For more information about the Medical Detachment see: *1939 Washington National Guard Pictorial*, 177, 184.

<sup>23</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 93; *1939 Washington National Guard Pictorial*, 173.

<sup>24</sup> *1939 Washington National Guard Pictorial*, 173.

<sup>25</sup> Hansen, *Battle Ready*, 116.

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assistance.<sup>26</sup> In July and early August 1935 the 248th Coast Artillery was called yet again during labor unrest in lumber mills in Tacoma, Aberdeen, Everett, and Olympia, however they were not actively engaged.<sup>27</sup>

### **New Armory**

Calls for a dedicated armory for the unit persisted. But movement finally came to fruition after the Adjutant General officially called for a permanent armory for Olympia in his 1934-36 biennial report. Funding followed in 1937 with a specific appropriation by the State legislature.<sup>28</sup> The Olympia Armory was to be part of a larger construction effort to build new armories and to expand existing facilities statewide. Projects funded included a garage in Walla Walla, new armories in Pullman (1938), Centralia (1938), Seattle (1939), and Olympia (1939), as well as a remodeling of Tacoma Armory. Additional funds were sought with the help of the Federal Public Works Administration program.<sup>29</sup>

After looking at several sites around the city, the proposed new Olympia National Guard Armory would be built on a full city block on the east side of Olympia (Eastside Street). Fittingly, it was bounded on the south side by "Legion Way" (named in 1927), an avenue of sweet gum and oak trees dedicated to the war dead of the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I.<sup>30</sup>

Known as Block 49 of the Swan's Addition to Olympia, the site was one of the early plats of the city in an area that was once known as "Swantown." By 1872, the block was owned by James O. Pattison. He retained ownership until 1880, when the land is listed under the ownership of his brother, Nathan Pattison. Pattison sold a portion of the block to the Olympia School District on May 7, 1889, who constructed a school on site - Washington School in 1891.<sup>37</sup> After moving to a new building in 1924, the School District sold the building to F.J. Bissell for \$3,000 in 1925. He planned to turn the school into apartments. However, the building sat empty for several years until it was eventually condemned and demolished by WPA crews in 1936.<sup>31</sup> Bissell lost the property to the city after failing to pay back taxes on the site. After condemnation proceedings, the city quitclaimed the property for the State of Washington.

The architect for the new armory building was noted local architect Joseph H. Wohleb. Per the drawings he was assisted by Tacoma architect Roland E. Borhek. The plans for the Armory were completed by the summer of 1938 and an official groundbreaking was held in September 1938.<sup>32</sup> Built at a cost of \$150,000 (\$135,000 for the building), the general contractor for the building was A.F. Mowat of Seattle with W.A. Wilson the resident engineer. Mowat had a long track record of constructing a variety of government buildings across the state. The construction provided much needed local jobs and the materials were sourced locally, according to the construction manager.<sup>33</sup> During construction, the local newspaper noted that building was "fitting for a Capitol City."<sup>34</sup>

The state officially accepted the completed building on May 1, 1939, with local and state dignitaries present, calling it "one of the finest in the state."<sup>35</sup> Newspaper accounts of the acceptance noted that it was built to

<sup>26</sup> 1939 *Washington National Guard Pictorial*, 173. It is unclear from documentary sources at State Archives what the relationship of the National Guard was to the American Vigilantes of Thurston County—a local paramilitary group called into action to face the Hunger Marchers; no other documentation has been located. The *Seattle Daily Times* noted that the Olympia unit was in Montesano for special practice work at the rifle range in 1922. *Seattle Daily Times*, May 29, 1922, 8. For more on the "Hunger March," see: Shanna Stevenson, "The 1933 Hunger March," and associated articles in *Totem Tidings*, *The Olympian*, January 16, 1983, 4-6.

<sup>27</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 84-90. See also: Leneweaver, Patterson, and Woodward, Jr., *Washington National Guard*, 66; *The Camp Murray Story*, 37.

<sup>28</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 90. Appropriation: Session Laws of the State of Washington, Twenty-Fifth Session, Convened January 11, Adjourned March 11, 1937, (Olympia: State Printing Plant, 1937), Chapter 230, page 1197.

<sup>29</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 92.

<sup>30</sup> <https://olympiahistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HistoricID-0868-Legion-Way-Trees.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> "WPA Projects to Hire More Men" *The Daily Olympian*, Nov 6, 1935.

<sup>32</sup> "Ground Broken for Olympia's New Armory," *The Daily Olympian*, September 9, 1938.

<sup>33</sup> "National Guard Troopers Proud of Big New Armory," *Daily Olympian*, May 5, 1939, 1.

<sup>34</sup> "Work on National Guard Building to Start Presently," *Daily Olympian*, August 31, 1938, 6.

<sup>35</sup> "National Guard Plans Move to Big New Armory: Coast Artillery Units Will March Thursday Evening from Present Quarters in American Legion Building, Announced Commander" *Daily Olympian*, May 3, 1939, 1.

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specifically serve the resident Olympia National Guard units. The Guard moved into the new Armory in a special ceremony on May 4, 1939, where they marched from the American Legion building on Legion Way to the new Armory facility. The march was accompanied by the Olympia American Legion Band. Remarks by Major Edward Dohm headlined the event.<sup>36</sup> The insignia for the 248th Coast Artillery is featured over both the side front entries to the Armory. However, in November 1939, not long after the Armory opened, the Military Department reorganized the unit. The new unit was recast as Regimental Headquarters of the 205th Coast Artillery Anti-Aircraft (AA) which included a medical detachment and band, however the insignias remained.<sup>37</sup>

The new building housed a variety of functions related to the Guard unit. The basement was mainly a storage and maintenance area, however it did house a small gun range and a caretakers apartment. Other spaces included supply vaults for the original three batteries; a coal-fed stoker heating system; laundry, showers, dressing room areas, and garage shop—all of which remain, although they have been upgraded. While the basement of the building had a shooting range (removed in 2016), rifle practice was often at Fort Lewis.

The main space on the first floor was the drill hall, used for bayonet practice, hand-to-hand combat training, formation drilling, band practice, etc.. the large drill hall was the central space for the entire building. Additionally the main floor had six different office spaces for staff at the east end of the building. The north side originally housed a kitchen (permit records indicate was updated in the early 1980s); a mess hall; a band leader's office; a school space; and a small library. The south side of the building housed spaces for the medical unit, including an infirmary, a surgeon's room, and supply space. Additional spaces were allowed for artillery plotting and instruments, Non-commissioned officers' offices, and instrument storage.

The second floor, designed to accommodate later additions, housed various office quarters and classroom spaces, as well as separate club rooms for commissioned and non-commissioned officers. The south wing had a radio room and electricians' school and on the north side were quarters for a ladies' lounge. Reportedly at each end of the balcony in the drill room were standard range finding stations which were used for practicing plotting and spotting of faux targets.<sup>38</sup> Reportedly the equipment was the same instruments that were used at various harbor defense fortifications in an effort to create actual field conditions. The equipment is no longer extant, and today the balcony remains as a storage space. Most of these spaces have been altered as the mission and technology of the Guard units changed over time.

### **Guard Usage of the Building**

For the proceeding 80+ years, the building facilitated the training of hundreds of guardsmen in a variety of units. Conforming to the longtime charge of the National Guard as both a federal and state organization, Guard members train one weekend a month for four periods (harkening back to the militia era when volunteers drilled one day a week) at the Armory known as the "home station" or at nearby Joint Base Lewis-McChord. An annual two-week training was held in the summer in the field, generally at the Yakima Firing Range.

The Guard used the Armory's large drill hall for formations, ceremonies, and the distribution of material. The building also functioned as storage space for weaponry and the Guard members' individual gear. Used as a debarkation point for training at Yakima Firing Range or Joint Base Lewis-McChord, larger pieces of artillery used by the unit were stored off-site.<sup>39</sup> The building's peripheral rooms were also utilized for family services and outreach programs as well as personnel matters. The Armory was also used as the main recruitment center, following the Guard's tradition of attracting recruits from the local area. Equipment for the Guard was provided by the federal government while furnishings in the Armory were owned by the State of Washington. Salaries for Guard members were paid through federal funds except when they are called out by the Governor for state service, then payroll reverts to state payment.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> "Troopers Proud of Big New Armory," 1.

<sup>37</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VI, 94-95 and *Brief History*, 117.

<sup>38</sup> *1939 Washington National Guard Pictorial*, 172, 173.

<sup>39</sup> Information from author telephone interview with Gordon P. Jay, August 3, 2020.

<sup>40</sup> Information from author telephone interview with Gordon P. Jay, August 3, 2020.

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## Reorganization and World War II

The 205th Coast Artillery Regiment from Olympia was officially inducted into federal service in February 1941 and assembled for their first training at the 41st cantonment area at Fort Lewis. Reportedly by August 1941 they were training for bomber attacks using anti-aircraft munitions.<sup>41</sup> The unit then went on to Camp Haan, California, in late 1941 as part of anti-aircraft defense training for the city of Los Angeles.<sup>42</sup> For reasons unknown, in September 1943, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 205th Coast Artillery, was inactivated and its various units based out of Olympia were re-designated again. The original 2nd Battalion became part of the 530th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Weapons Battalion which was then sent to Scotland in 1944. In April 1945 they joined the 15th Army in Germany, before being deactivated late in 1945.<sup>43</sup>

During wartime the State Guard duties were fulfilled by volunteers who drilled and trained weekly. They were under the call of the Governor for any domestic service—harkening back to the World War I Home Guard in Olympia.<sup>44</sup> Also during the war years the Olympia Armory became home to a branch of the Aircraft Warning Service which recruited women volunteers starting in 1941. Organized around a large “filter board” or table surrounded by staffers with phone equipment, the volunteers received and relayed reports of aircraft from a variety of coastal and other observation posts via telephone calls. They followed “the trails of approaching airplanes with markers on a giant table map” and relayed the information to the larger center at Ft. Lawton in Seattle, which could deploy fighter planes to intercept any enemy aircraft if needed. Judy Pryde, wife of the then-head of the Washington State Patrol, was in charge of recruiting volunteers along with Irene Barriclaw and Gwin Hicks.<sup>45</sup>

## Post-World War II

After World War II, nationwide National Coast Artillery units were deemed obsolete as airpower took over, and they were officially disbanded in 1949.<sup>46</sup> In response to this change, units stationed at the Olympia Armory were changed out to the 115<sup>th</sup> Operations Detachment; Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 115th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Brigade; and Battery C, 700th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons (AW) Battalion in 1947.<sup>47</sup> Among their earliest assignments was deployment for flood relief assistance in southwest Washington in 1948 – “Operation Woodland”.<sup>48</sup> In response to Korean peninsula tensions, the Olympia 115th AAA Operations Detachment was also ordered into federal service August 14, 1950, and stayed at various stations. The detachment was released from Federal Service July 1952.<sup>49</sup>

In 1959, the Olympia Guard was reorganized yet again and brought Company C, 2nd Battle group, 161st Infantry and Headquarters/ Headquarters Battery 115th Artillery Brigade (A-D) to the Olympia Armory.<sup>50</sup> Additional units and a variety of reorganizations followed. In the early and mid-1960s, another reorganization brought the Headquarters/Headquarters Battery 205th Artillery Group to the building. It was during that time that tanks were stored on the property. The 205th Artillery Group was phased out in early 1965 as part of a

<sup>41</sup> Gordon Newell, *Rogues, Buffoons and Statesmen*, (Seattle: Hangman Press, Superior Publishing, 1975) 417; Fields, *Official History*, 188; “Hornet Defends Olympia from Bombers,” *Daily Olympian*, August 26, 1941, 1.

<sup>42</sup> 205th Coast Artillery in National Guard Special Orders Box 14, Washington State Archives.

<sup>43</sup> <https://mil.wa.gov/news/the-guard-during-world-war-ii-a-look-back-at-the-coast-artillery>. See also: Leneweaver, Patterson, and Woodward, Jr., *Washington National Guard*, 74. *The Camp Murray Story*, 25 states that the 205th Coast Artillery (AA) Regiment performed duty in Alaska and Los Angeles until August 1944 when it was ordered to Camp Bowie, Texas inactivated that same month and personnel transferred to other Coast Artillery units in the 4th Army area.

<sup>44</sup> “Olympia State Guard Unit Gets New Uniforms, Rifles for Drill. Olympia Guards are On-Your-Toes Group Ready for Emergency,” *Sunday Olympian*, September 28, 1941, 1, 5.

<sup>45</sup> <https://mynorthwest.com/837901/honoring-washingtons-aircraft-warning-service/>; Newell, *Rogues, Buffoons and Statesmen*, 417-418; “Olympia Women Get Defense Role,” *Daily Olympian*, September 3, 1941, 1; “Women Needed for Air Service,” *Daily Olympian*, September 7, 1941, 1; “Olympians Train for Defense Work,” *Daily Olympian*, September 11, 1941, 1. For 1943 Olympia Filter Center Maps see: [http://www.willhiteweb.com/washington\\_fire\\_lookouts/aircraft\\_warning\\_service/olympia-filter-center.JPG](http://www.willhiteweb.com/washington_fire_lookouts/aircraft_warning_service/olympia-filter-center.JPG) and [http://www.willhiteweb.com/washington\\_fire\\_lookouts/aircraft\\_warning\\_service/olympiacenterdates.JPG](http://www.willhiteweb.com/washington_fire_lookouts/aircraft_warning_service/olympiacenterdates.JPG).

<sup>46</sup> “Coast Guard Artillery Units in Guard to be Disbanded”, *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, August 26, 1949.

<sup>47</sup> *Brief History*, 117.

<sup>48</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VII, 12-20. See also: *The Camp Murray Story*, 37-40.

<sup>49</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VII, 38.

<sup>50</sup> Field, *Official History*, Vol. VII, 127-128.



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merger plan and the Armory became home to Col C. of the 1st Battalion of the 303<sup>rd</sup> Infantry only to become part of the 161<sup>st</sup> again within a year.<sup>51</sup>

After the Vietnam War in the 1970s, the National Guard changed to become part of the "All-Volunteer Total Force Doctrine," that would integrate the Guard more fully into the regular Army. It included better funding and equipment for higher operational and readiness standards.<sup>52</sup> Various Units and Brigades in Olympia came and went over the proceeding years. These included the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 146th Field Artillery (1980) who reorganized in June 1989, under the U.S. Army Regimental System and remain in that system today.<sup>53</sup> The unit stationed at the Olympia Armory were deployed for a variety of operations across the state and beyond including: for security operations in manning roadblocks and checkpoints during the 1980 Mt. St. Helens eruption;<sup>54</sup> assistance with fires in the Leavenworth area as part of "Firestorm '94" deployment (1994);<sup>55</sup> mobilization for "Iraqi Freedom" deployment in Kuwait (2003); assistance with Hurricane Katrina (2005);<sup>56</sup> help with flooding near Centralia. (2007);<sup>57</sup> deployed as part of "Operation Iraqi Freedom" (2008-2009);<sup>58</sup> and most recently to support relief efforts around the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>59</sup>

### Community History of the Armory

Since its opening the Armory has been more than a military installation. It has been an integral part of Olympia's history and has been a center for a variety of community and social activities. These span a wide range of events from educational activities, political rallies, community shows, religious gatherings, and sporting events. Rentals for the Armory (generally the drill floor only) were arranged through the Washington Military Department for times when Guard members are not using the building for duty and began to occur as soon as the building opened.

Among the first events at the facility was a multi-day training school by regional FBI agents to teach police officers from Pierce, Thurston and Mason Counties in modern police practices (Sept 1, 1939). The drill hall quickly became a popular venue for community dances. Initially sponsored by the Guard, during the war years, dances were held every Saturday night. Free to all women, men in uniform, or civilians paid 50 cents admittance fee. Later community dances were sponsored by the Olympia Elks Club, the Olympia Recreation Council, the Dance Club of Olympia<sup>60</sup>, and the Olympia Council of Parents and Teachers. Benefit dances were held by various groups such as the Lyons Club, the Shriners, and the Thurston County Orthopedic Association. The Armory also served as a polling/voting venue and even hosted a Democratic fundraiser for Senator Henry M. Jackson (1958). For numerous years Saint Michael's Catholic Church held their annual Harvest Festival at the Armory, lavishly decorating the drill hall. The Child Guidance Association Annual Arts & Crafts Fair at the Armory brought hundreds of community members, young and old, to the building each fall.

<sup>51</sup> Biennial Report of Adjutant General of Washington/State of Washington, Military Department (Fort Lewis, Wash?: The Department.? 1952-) 1964-1974 Reports and "Tanks for the Memory," *Daily Olympian*, November 15, 1964, 1. "Olympia Units Out in Guard Shift," *Daily Olympian*, March 12, 1965, 1.

<sup>52</sup> Leneweaver, Patterson, and Woodward, Jr., *Washington National Guard*, 105.

<sup>53</sup> "Guard Plays Host to the Public," *Daily Olympian* March 23, 1980, B1. See also: <https://mil.wa.gov/history-of-the-1-303rdcavalry-regt> and <https://mil.wa.gov/history-of-the-2-146th-field-artillery-regiment>.

<sup>54</sup> E-mail to author from Gordon P. Jay, July 22, 2020.

<sup>55</sup> History of 81st Brigade Combat Team, <https://mil.wa.gov/about-the-81st>.

<sup>56</sup> Jennifer Larson, "Guard Unit carries powerful memories of New Orleans—Olympia-based Guard members home from Katrina," *The Olympian*, November 7, 2005, 01A, accessed through Newsbank.

<sup>57</sup> Information from author telephone interview with Gordon P. Jay, July 22, 2020.

<sup>58</sup> Christian Hill, *The Olympian* online, April 13, 2008. Accessed through Newsbank. "Soldiers say goodbye before next deployment", *The Olympian* online, August 20, 2008. Accessed through Newsbank. [https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&t=pubname%3AOLPB%21Olympian%252C%2BThe%2B%2528WA%2529&sort=YMD\\_date%3AD&fld-base-0=alltext&maxresults=20&val-base-0=%22Olympia%20Armory%22&docref=news/122AFF2155F448F8](https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&t=pubname%3AOLPB%21Olympian%252C%2BThe%2B%2528WA%2529&sort=YMD_date%3AD&fld-base-0=alltext&maxresults=20&val-base-0=%22Olympia%20Armory%22&docref=news/122AFF2155F448F8). See also: <https://mil.wa.gov/about-the-81st>.

<sup>59</sup> Author Conversation with Armory staff, July 15, 2020.

<sup>60</sup> Keri Brenner, "All Ages Can Channel '50s at Sock Hop," sponsored by the Dance Club of Olympia, *The Olympian*, May 8, 2008, news section. Accessed through Newsbank. [https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&t=pubname%3AOLPB%21Olympian%252C%2BThe%2B%2528WA%2529&sort=YMD\\_date%3AD&page=1&fld-base-0=alltext&maxresults=20&val-base-0=%22Olympia%20Armory%22&docref=news/1208BA611C877780](https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AWNB&t=pubname%3AOLPB%21Olympian%252C%2BThe%2B%2528WA%2529&sort=YMD_date%3AD&page=1&fld-base-0=alltext&maxresults=20&val-base-0=%22Olympia%20Armory%22&docref=news/1208BA611C877780).

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Sporting events were also a mainstay at the facility. Friday night boxing and wrestling matches were a common scene during the 1940s and 50s. The rifle range was often used by the local Rifle and Pistol team for regional matches. The Armory also served as the home basketball court for the St. Martin's High School and Collegiate teams during the 1950s, until the college opened their own gymnasium in 1960.<sup>61</sup> St. Martins also used the Armory as a dance facility for their season football opener, and Washington State University held booster dances there as well.

The large drill hall was also a perfect venue for the annual Automobile Show which showcased the latest car models. It hosted boat & sportsman shows, home shows, classic car shows, and an Industrial Expo. Special events included the annual All-Breed Dog shows, blood drives, reunions for the Olympia Brewing Company, and the Boy Scouts Circus events.

From 1941 to 1965, the Governor's inaugural balls were held at the Armory, most likely due to the fact that it was one of the largest venues in the community at the time. Held every four years after the swearing in of the Governor, the balls have been held since territorial days and are an important part of Olympia's social and community history. Organized through Olympia community efforts at no cost to taxpayers, historically the balls were themed, formal occasions. At the building, balls were held for Governors Arthur Langlie (1941), Mon Wallgren (1945), Arthur Langlie (1949), Albert Rosellini (1957 and 1961), and Dan Evans (1965). Afterwards the inaugural balls moved to St. Martin's Pavilion, later the Tye Motor Lodge, and most recently to the Legislative Building and Temple of Justice.<sup>62</sup>

More recent events have included recreational basketball, volleyball, and ballroom dancing as well as weekend swap meets, antique shows, and sales. Patrons of South Sound Cultural Activities (POSSCA) also staged a variety of benefits at the Armory.<sup>63</sup> These included the Olympia Ski Club Ski Swap, Artists' Garage Sale, and Capital Antique Show.<sup>64</sup> Cat shows, Toys for Tots, high school graduations, job fairs, bird shows, and rock concerts have all found a home at the Armory.<sup>65 66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> St. Martin's College v. Seattle University, College, *Catholic NW Progress*, December 19, 1949; St. Martin's College v. Seattle Pacific College, *Catholic NW Progress*, February 10, 1956. Armory Rental Receipt Book at the Olympia Armory.

<sup>62</sup> "Spirit of Patriotism Pervades State Inaugural Ball," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 16, 1941, 2; June Almquist Anderson, "All in Readiness for Ceremonies," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 10, 1965, 61; June Almquist Anderson, "Inaugural Balls Usually Follow Formula," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 10, 1965, 6S; "Legislative Ball on Jan. 12," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer (PI)*, January 6, 1955, 15; "Governor's Ball Set for Jan. 14th" *Seattle PI*, January 6, 1959, 9; "3000 at Inaugural Ball for Gov. Rosellini," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 12, 1961, 21; "2000 Attend Legislative Ball," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 13, 1955, 30; "Social Gayety Returns to Olympia with Governor's Ball Set for Wednesday," *Seattle Sunday Times*, January 12, 1947, 39; "Biennial Legislative Ball to be Held Wednesday," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 6, 1955, 35; "Inaugural Ball January 11 in Olympia Armory," *Seattle PI*, November 16, 1960, 16; "Governor's Ball Draws Over 1500," *Seattle PI*, January 15, 1959, 11; Legislative Ball, *Seattle Daily Times*, January 9, 1963, 19; "Governor's Wife to Waltz in Blue," *Seattle PI*, January 11, 1959, 42; "Legislative Ball to have Them of 'Winter Fantasy,'" *Seattle Daily Times*, January 9, 1963, 19; "Ball, Reception for Governor Set In Olympia," *Seattle PI*, January 10, 1959, 4; "Olympia Ball is Colorful," *Seattle PI*, January 13, 1955, 14; Legislative Dance in "About People," *Seattle Daily Times*, February 15, 1953, 62; Legislative Ball, *Seattle Daily Times*, January 9, 1955, 55; "Inauguration Activities Set At Olympia," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 7, 1945, 23; Biennial Ball, *Seattle Daily Times*, January 17, 1963, 23; Legislative Ball 1949, "About People," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 27, 1949, 30. See also: Gordon Newell, "Inaugural Ball: a 96-year Tradition shared by Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater," *Olympia News* 52, January 16, 1989.

<sup>63</sup> Molly Gilmore, "Elevating the Garage Sale to Art Form," *Weekend, The Olympian*, May 23, 2014, 6. Accessed through Newsbank. "9 Things to do This Weekend," "Around South Sound," *The Olympian*, November 9, 2012. Accessed through Newsbank.

<sup>64</sup> Ski Swap and Sale, *The Olympian*, November 9, 2009; Capital Antique Show, Patrick Sullivan, *The Olympian*, March 2, 2009; Artists Garage Sale Events, *The Olympian*, May 29, 2008. Accessed through Newsbank.

<sup>65</sup> "Furious Fists Bring Cash for Armory" Sports, *The Olympian*, January 15, 2008; Rachel Young, "Feline friends meet at Pageant— Annual Show Brings Cat Lovers Together," *The Olympian*, October 15, 2006, 01C; Toys for Tots, "South Sound Briefs," *The Olympian*, December 18, 2006, 01B; Avanti High School Graduation, "Graduation 2003," *The Olympian*, June 13, 2003, B2; Scott Guitierrez, "Birds Seek Good Owners At Armory," *The Olympian*, June 12, 2005, 01C; wrestling, February 24, 2001, *The Olympian*; all accessed through Newsbank. Sportsman Show sponsored by Olympia Salmon Club, 1957, poster in Olympia Historical Society Collection. Wrestling and boxing matches are detailed in the Armory Rental Receipt Book at the Olympia Armory.

<sup>66</sup> Rolf Boone, "Stand down helps more than vets: Record number of employers attend. Information on social services also provided." *The Olympian*, November 19, 2011, 1A. Rolf Boone, "594 look for work at job fair." *The Olympian* March 24, 2011, 1A.

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The hall also hosted the Olympia City Centennial Ball in 1950 and a banquet for the Olympia Masonic Lodge's Centennial in 1952.<sup>67</sup>

### **PWA Moderne**

Architecturally and statewide, the Olympia Armory is the best example of its type constructed during the 1930s. Referred to a "semi-modernistic" in local newspapers, created to "dispel the severe lines and aspects of the usual armories," several new Armoires were built during this time. These include armories in Pullman, Seattle, Everett, Centralia, and Olympia. All completed in the late 1930s, today architectural historians note these buildings were executed in a modified Art Deco style, often referred to as PWA Modern. The Olympia Armory is the textbook example of this sub-type. All were designed by noted local architects.

The style has its roots in the Art Deco period of the mid to late 1920s. Art Deco was the successor to and reaction against Art Nouveau. In its first iteration, during the late 1920s, it was more flowery and flamboyant with stylized flora and fauna, found on column capitols and cornices. By the 1930s, during the Great Depression, the style became more subdued and angular; and is often referred to as Zig Zag Art Deco. Simple cubic forms and flat surfaces are emphasized for modernity. Favored motifs were faceted surfaces, zigzags, chevron patterns, and octagon shapes. Later it became more sleek and rounded, with the introduction of new building products such as glass block and Vitrolite tile. This later period is called Streamlined Moderne.

During this period President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to stimulate the national economy. He legislated twenty-nine different acts between 1933 and 1939. Collectively, these bills formed President Roosevelt's New Deal for the American people program as was pledged in his 1932 campaign speeches. The programs were structured to sustain various parts of the economy with most programs seeking to provide some type of relief for the unemployed. Prominent among these programs was the Public Works Administration (PWA). Initially known as the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, the PWA was enacted in June of 1933 to prepare a comprehensive program of public works. In doing this, the PWA was intended to create employment and aid industry by the construction of useful public works of enduring social value through grants.

As the most popular architectural style of the day, many of the PWA projects during the 1930s and 40s utilized the Art Deco style in a more restrained version. However, the extravagance that can only be attributed to Art Deco-styled buildings could not be achieved with a government budget, and thus a variation of the style was created. Some architectural historians refer to the style as PWA Moderne (or Classical Moderne). Although these buildings are similar to those of the streamline period, PWA Moderne buildings display a distinct monumental feeling to them. They often incorporate a form of a central block with two subservient wings, cast concrete walls, symmetry, flat roofs, ribbons of windows, and a focus on horizontality. PWA Moderne structures are always public structures and facilities including such buildings as courthouses, city halls, post offices, schools, armories, water treatment plants, bridges, and dams.

The PWA and Works Progress Administration (WPA) programs rebuilt Washington State. Projects ranged from various facilities in state and national parks, bridges, various city parks, backcountry trails, and infrastructure. In its first year the regional state relief agency received \$10 million in federal aid to support the construction of bridges and county roads, as well as money to expand the state penitentiary and finance scientific mineral and natural resource surveys. Public works projects soon expanded to include locally proposed, small-scale projects in counties across the state. The \$150,000 Olympia Armory project was awarded a \$67,500 PWA grant and provided employment for an average of 54 skilled and unskilled laborers.

As of 2019, the Olympia Armory and Centralia Armory were the last of the PWA Moderne Armories still in use by the military in the state.<sup>68</sup> Other Washington Armories from the same era in Seattle and Pullman have been

<sup>67</sup> "Masonic Lodge Will Observe Centennial," *Seattle Daily Times*, November 12, 1952, 5. "Olympia's Centennial Ball to be Friday," *Seattle Daily Times*, April 16, 1950, 34.

<sup>68</sup> "National Guard Armories in Washington," HistoryLink File 10452 <https://www.historylink.org/File/10452>; Ron Judd, "A Call to Armories," *Seattle Times Pacific NW Magazine*, June 30, 2019, 10-17.



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sold or repurposed and heavily modified. While the Centralia Armory features an eagle motif over the entry with Moderne-style lettering and horizontal fluting as part of its concrete exterior design, the Olympia Armory has more stylized, ornate, and expressive features of the PWA Moderne style executed in a more cohesive design on a more monumental scale.

### **Joseph Wohleb**

To design the Armory the Military Department hired noted local architect Joseph Wohleb. During his career of nearly 50 years, he carved out one of the most productive and influential architectural practices in Washington State. Born in Waterbury, Connecticut, on September 14, 1887, Wohleb grew up in northern California in the community of Vallejo. For unknown reasons, he left Vallejo High School at the age of fifteen to enlist at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, where he became an apprentice boat builder. For the next five years, he worked as a cabinetmaker and patternmaker. After more than three years at the shipyard, Wohleb requested a discharge effective January of 1907. He then worked for a year in a private boatbuilding operation in San Francisco. By 1911, he was listed in the Vallejo city directory as a carpenter, residing at his parents' home. Later that same year he moved to Olympia, Washington.

What motivated Wohleb to settle in Olympia is unknown, but it must have seemed a promising location for a young man determined to advance himself in the building trades. He evidently calculated that there was work for more than one architect in the community. According to city directories, the year of his arrival in Olympia, the city already had two practicing architects: Samuel G. Ward Jr. and Howard E. Gray. Until WWII, three more architects, in addition to Wohleb, would come and set up practice in Olympia, however none remained longer than a couple of years leaving Wohleb's practice to thrive.

When he arrived in Olympia at the age of 26, what Wohleb lacked in education, he made up for with a clever mind and a strong grasp of construction and engineering concepts. He quickly began making a successful living by billing himself as an architect, first listed as such in the 1913 city directory.

On February 12, 1912, Wohleb was married in Olympia to Matilda Gresl. Together they had three children, Robert Henry, George Gresl, and Joseph Wensel. The next year also saw Wohleb's first documented design, the Jeffers Photographic Studio at 500 S. Washington Street in Olympia. The building's Mission Revival style with its stucco walls, red tile roof, and sculpted parapet walls would become signature features in much of Wohleb's work in the early part of his career.

In the mid-teens, he concentrated on houses in the Tudor and Craftsman styles and designed several industrial structures. He also completed the Neo-Classical Carnegie Library in Olympia, with the Seattle architectural firm of Blackwell & Baker, which raised his public profile. The decade of the teens closed with Wohleb turning out an impressive range of buildings for residential, public, and commercial use. Success was further marked by receipt of his architectural license (#197) on November 29, 1919. That year, the State of Washington had passed its first law requiring the licensing of architects.

For a short time, Wohleb took on a partner, J. Charles Stanley, but the relationship was dissolved mutually. Wohleb continued to work independently until he was joined by his son, Robert, in 1946. During the peak years of his practice, he employed an office force of young assistants ranging from high school graduates to licensed architects, all of whom reportedly found Wohleb a strict taskmaster who could react explosively when his high standards were not met.

Between 1913 and 1940, Wohleb had designed over 150 buildings in Washington. Many of his designs during the 1930s and 40s are reflective of the era when they were constructed. These stripped-down buildings were mainly executed in the Art Deco style. The detailing includes stucco or poured concrete exterior walls, hard edged pilasters, metal multi-pane windows, and glass block. Wohleb's Art Deco examples include the Thurston County Courthouse (1930); the Shelton Junior High (1931); the Shelton City Hall (1932); Highways Building on the Capital Campus (1934); the Streamline Moderne Spar Restaurant Building (1935); the Baretich Building (1936); Wildwood Grocery & Market (1938); Washington State Highways Material Testing Lab (1938); the

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nominated building (1939); the Rockway-Leland Building (1941); and the Shelton Gymnasium (1941). Other designs during this time include the IOOF Lodge (1937, unbuilt); two office buildings on the State Capitol (1937-38); Traveler's Rest on Snoqualmie Pass (1938); an addition to Washington School Addition (1938); several regional Department of Highway Offices (1936-39); and Packwood School (1937).

Wohleb continued his architectural practice until shortly before his death at age 70 on June 11, 1958. He was buried in Olympia's Calvary Cemetery. His son continued the firm as Robert Wohleb & Associates until his untimely death in 1966.<sup>69</sup>

### **Roland Borhek**

To help design the Armory, Wohleb partnered with Roland Edward Borhek from Tacoma. A contemporary of Wholeb, Borhek had prior experience in designing large buildings. At the time of the commission, Wohleb's office was extremely busy with numerous other projects, many of which were PWA and WPA funded.

Born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1883, Roland Borhek grew up in the city and attended Lehigh University. Upon graduation he worked for a variety of architects and eventually became the chief draftsman for Boston architect A. Warren Gould. In 1905 Borhek followed Gould to Seattle, where they would design the American Savings Bank building and the Empire building. Soon after, he took a position with architect James Schack and remained there for three years. In 1908 he relocated to Tacoma and took a job with the prominent local firm Heath & Twitchell. While there, Borhek is credited for design of the National Realty building and First Church of Christ Scientists.<sup>70</sup>

With practical experience at hand, in 1910 he established his own independent architectural firm. According to the Pacific Builder & Engineer, "doing a job alone appealed to Borhek and seldom does he need outside help." As a solo architect, Borhek would proceed to design some of Tacoma's most notable historic buildings including the Hiroshimaya Hotel, (built 1914, demolished); the Rialto Theater (1918, NRHP listed); the First National Auto Lease (1919); the Colonial Theater (1920, demolished); the West Intermediate (Jason Lee) School (1924, AIA Award); and the Walker Apartment Hotel (1927).<sup>71</sup>

Actively involved in professional circles, Borhek served as president of the Tacoma Architects Association for ten years, last serving in 1925 and then became vice president of the Washington Chapter of American Institute of Architects in 1926. Later he served as President (1931). He was also president of the Young Men's Business Club of Tacoma and the First Congregational Church Brotherhood. While president of the Young Men's Business Club, he assisted in the relocation of the Hudson's Bay Company structures from Fort Nisqually to Point Defiance Park and helped create many of the missing buildings from the fort era. Borhek retired in 1942 and passed away on May 7, 1955, in Gig Harbor, Washington.<sup>72</sup>

### **John W. Elliot**

Assisting with some of the specific sculptural details of the design was noted Seattle artist John W. Elliot. A repousse craftsman, John W. Elliott (1883-1971) was born and educated in Sheffield, England. He was the son of a stone carver and modeler and began his apprenticeship as a silversmith when he was thirteen before he went on to formally study design at the Sheffield Technical School of Art (now part of the University of Sheffield). Elliott emigrated to the United States in 1906. He initially settled in New England and worked for Gorham Silver in Rhode Island and later the International Silver Company in Connecticut.

<sup>69</sup> Houser, Michael. "Joseph H. Wohleb." *Architect & Builder Biographies*, Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-joseph-h-wohle> (accessed February 22, 2024).

<sup>70</sup> Hilsendeger, Sarah. "Notable Architects in Tacoma." *Historic Tacoma*. <https://historictacoma.org/historic.hemisphere.site/historic.hemisphere.site/historic.hemisphere.site/historic.hemisphere.site/notable-architects> (accessed February 22, 2024).

<sup>71</sup> Hilsendeger.

<sup>72</sup> Hilsendeger.

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After moving to Seattle in 1924, Elliott worked as an architectural sculptor for Gladding, McBean & Company from 1927-1932. He later opened his own home studio at 7515 California Avenue SW in West Seattle and specialized in metal repousse, modeling for ornamental plaster, ecclesiastical metalwork, and silversmithing. His work includes the metal panels at the entrance to the Northwestern Mutual Fire Association Building, thirty-four repousse panels in the Seattle City Light Building, panels on the Washington Athletic Club Building in Seattle, the metal grate-work at U.S. Post Office in Longview, and the sculpted "Heads of Lawgivers of the World" on Condon Hall at the University of Washington. Other work in Olympia includes the 6-foot brass sundial on Capitol Campus.

Elliott was an active member of the Seattle arts community. He was one of the twelve founding members of the Craftsmen's Guild of Washington, organized in 1938. He was appointed to the Seattle City Art exhibition committee in 1940. In addition to his career as a craftsman, he also worked as District Supervisor for the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation during the 1940s and 1950s. Elliott was awarded a Certificate of Superior Craftsmanship in Architectural Sculpture and Repousse in Metal by the Washington State Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>73</sup>

Per architectural drawings for the Olympia Armory, the main design of the eagle above the entry and the shields on the side entries were worked out by Josphe Wohleb and the execution was handed over to Elliott.

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<sup>73</sup> Elliott, John W. drawing and photograph collection, approximately 1928 – 2004. Archives West.  
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<https://mil.wa.gov/about-the-81st>

<https://mil.wa.gov/2-146th-field-artillery-regiment>

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_



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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.96 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References** NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 Zone Easting Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing

2 Zone Easting Northing

4 Zone Easting Northing

**Or Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 47.044779° -122.889786°  
Latitude Longitude

3 47.044098° -122.888451°  
Latitude Longitude

2 47.044861° -122.888553°  
Latitude Longitude

4 47.044023° -122.889667°  
Latitude Longitude

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is located in Section 41 of Township 18, Ranch 02, West of the Willamette Meridian in Thurston County, Washington. It is legally described as Block 49, lots 1-10 of Swans Addition bounded by 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East to the north, Eastside Street to the east, Union Avenue to the south, and Quince Street to the west. It is otherwise identified as Tax Parcel # 78204900000.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary encompasses the full legal block on which the Armory was originally constructed, and includes all features associated with its history - the Armory, Vehicle Storage Building, Butler Shed, and Flag Pole.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Holly Borth (Olympia Historic Preservation Officer) (Edited by DAHP Staff)

organization City of Olympia date June 2024

street & number 601 4<sup>th</sup> Avene E telephone 360-688-0419

city or town Olympia state WA zip code 98507

e-mail [hborth@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:hborth@ci.olympia.wa.us)

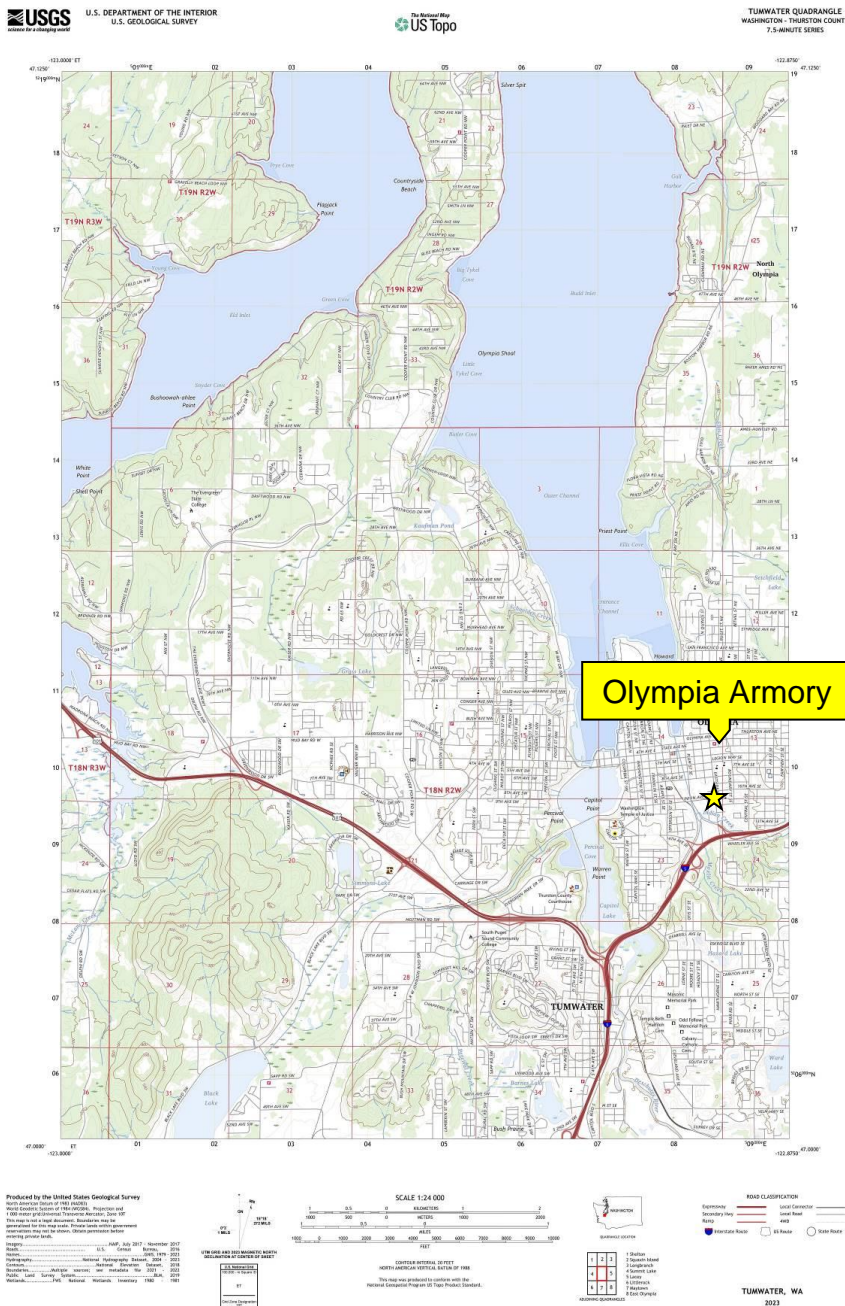
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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

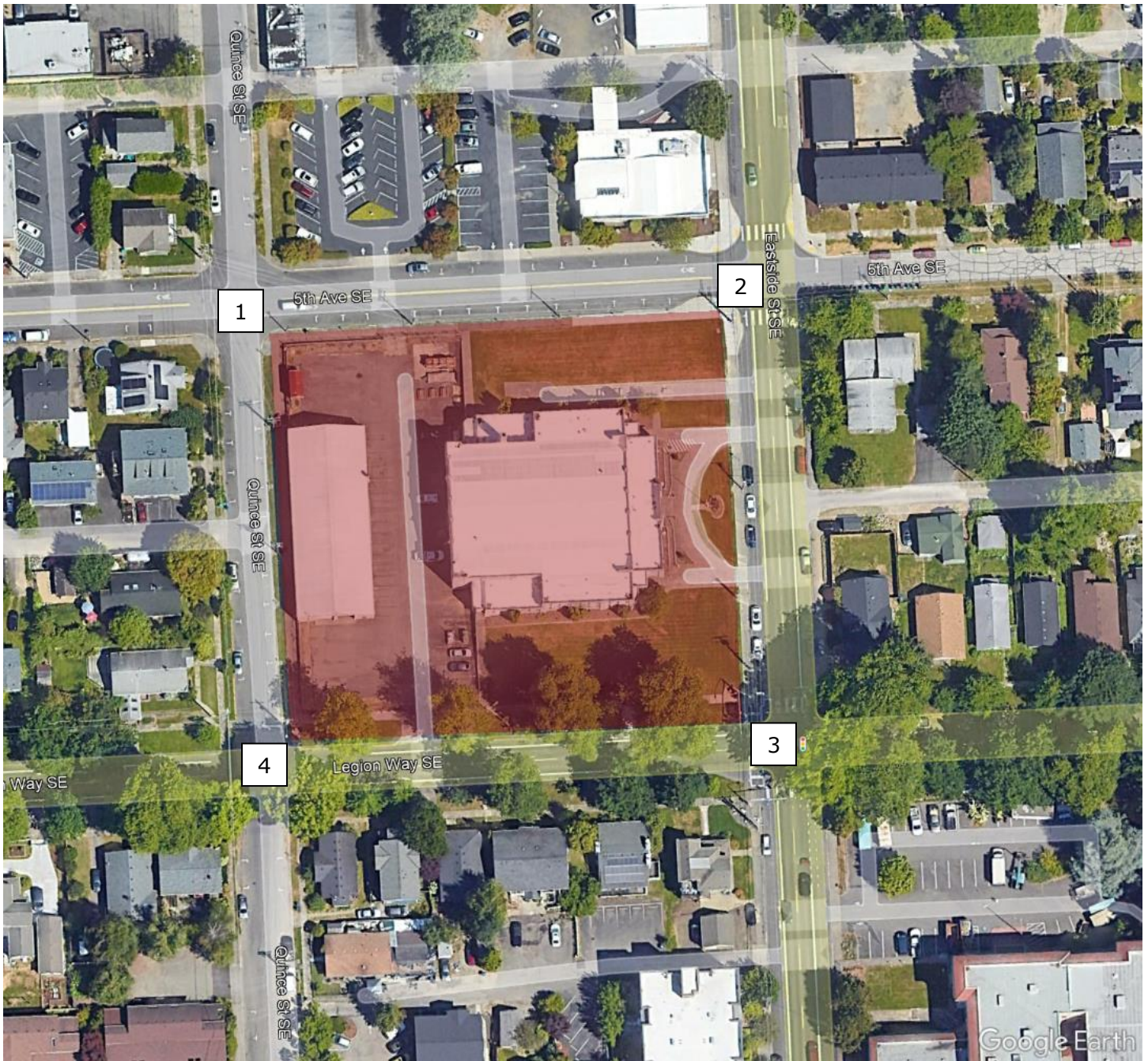


Tumwater 7.5-minute topographic map showing the location of the Olympia Armory, 2023.



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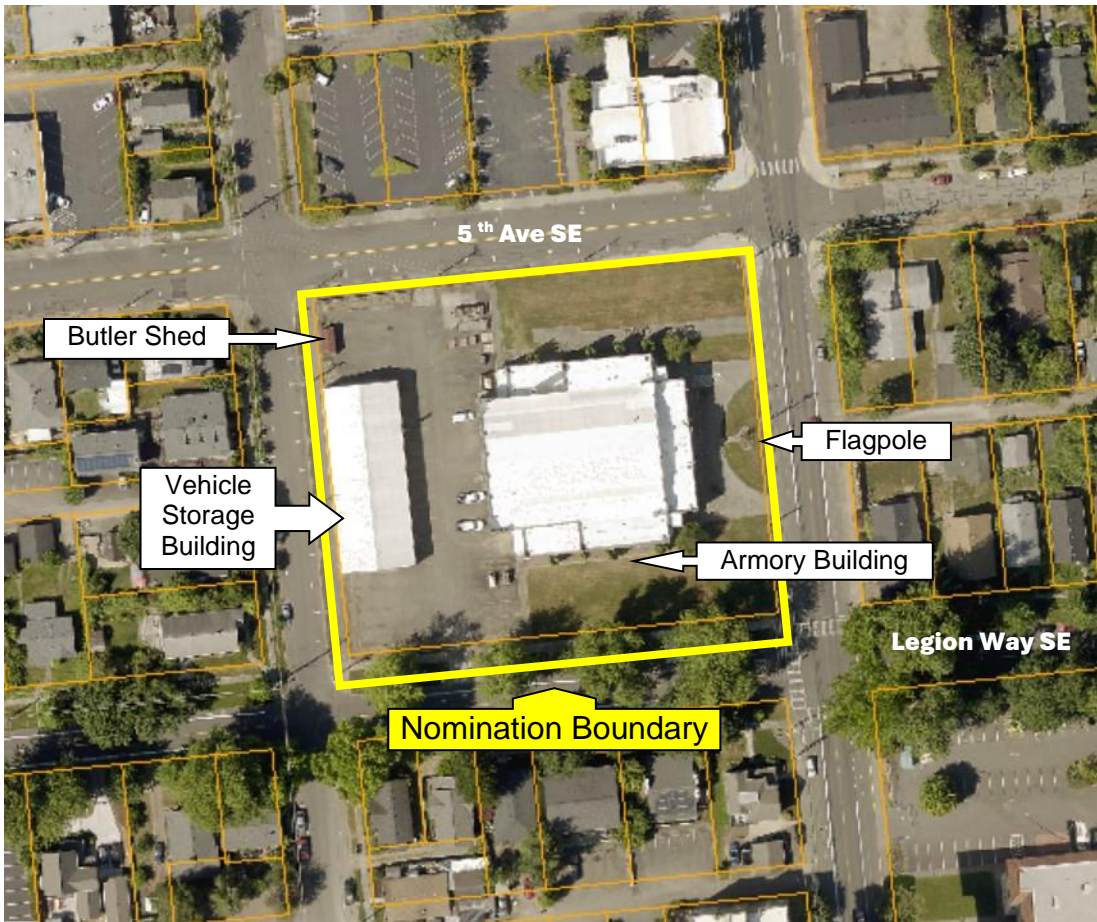
|   |                   |                     |   |                   |                     |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | <u>47.044779°</u> | <u>-122.889786°</u> | 3 | <u>47.044098°</u> | <u>-122.888451°</u> |
|   | Latitude          | Longitude           |   | Latitude          | Longitude           |
| 2 | <u>47.044861°</u> | <u>-122.888553°</u> | 4 | <u>47.044023°</u> | <u>-122.889667°</u> |
|   | Latitude          | Longitude           |   | Latitude          | Longitude           |

**Google Earth Map**  
 National Guard Armory  
 515 Eastside St. SE  
 Olympia, WA



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**Site Map**

National Guard Armory  
515 Eastside St. SE  
Olympia, WA

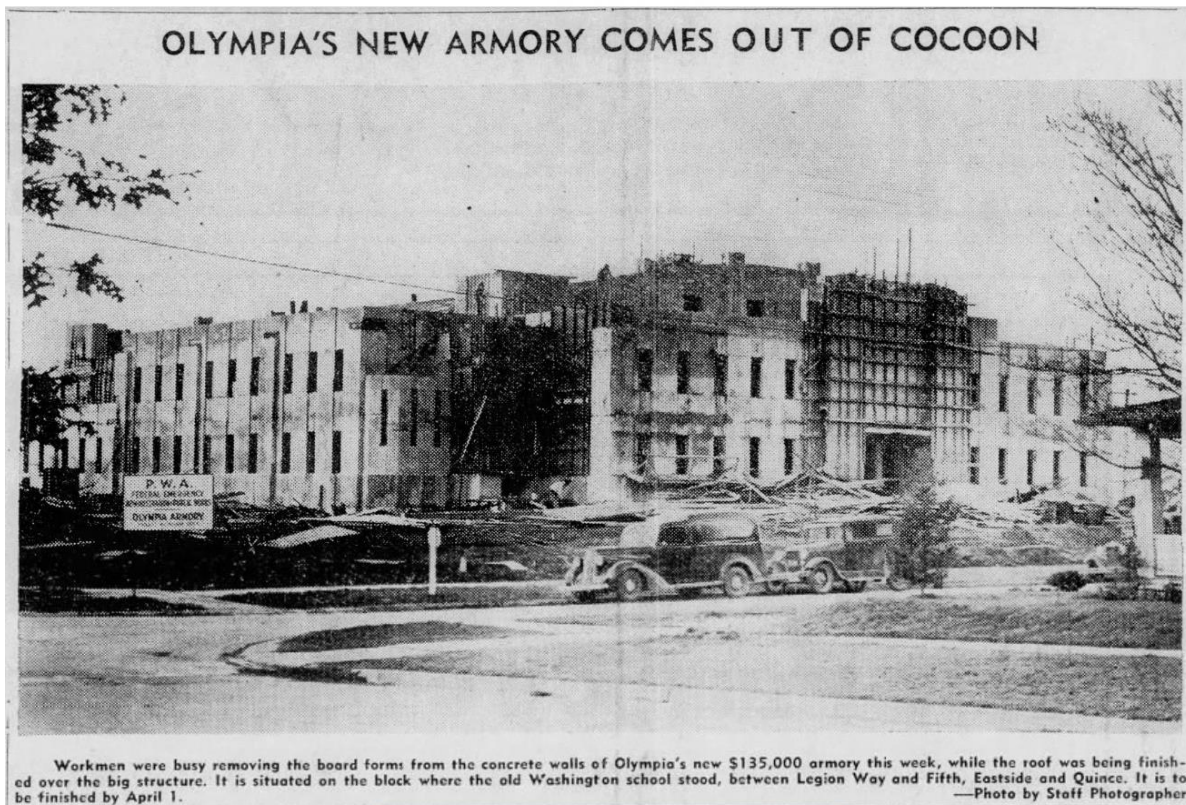


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Architect Rendering – The Olympian – August 31, 1938.

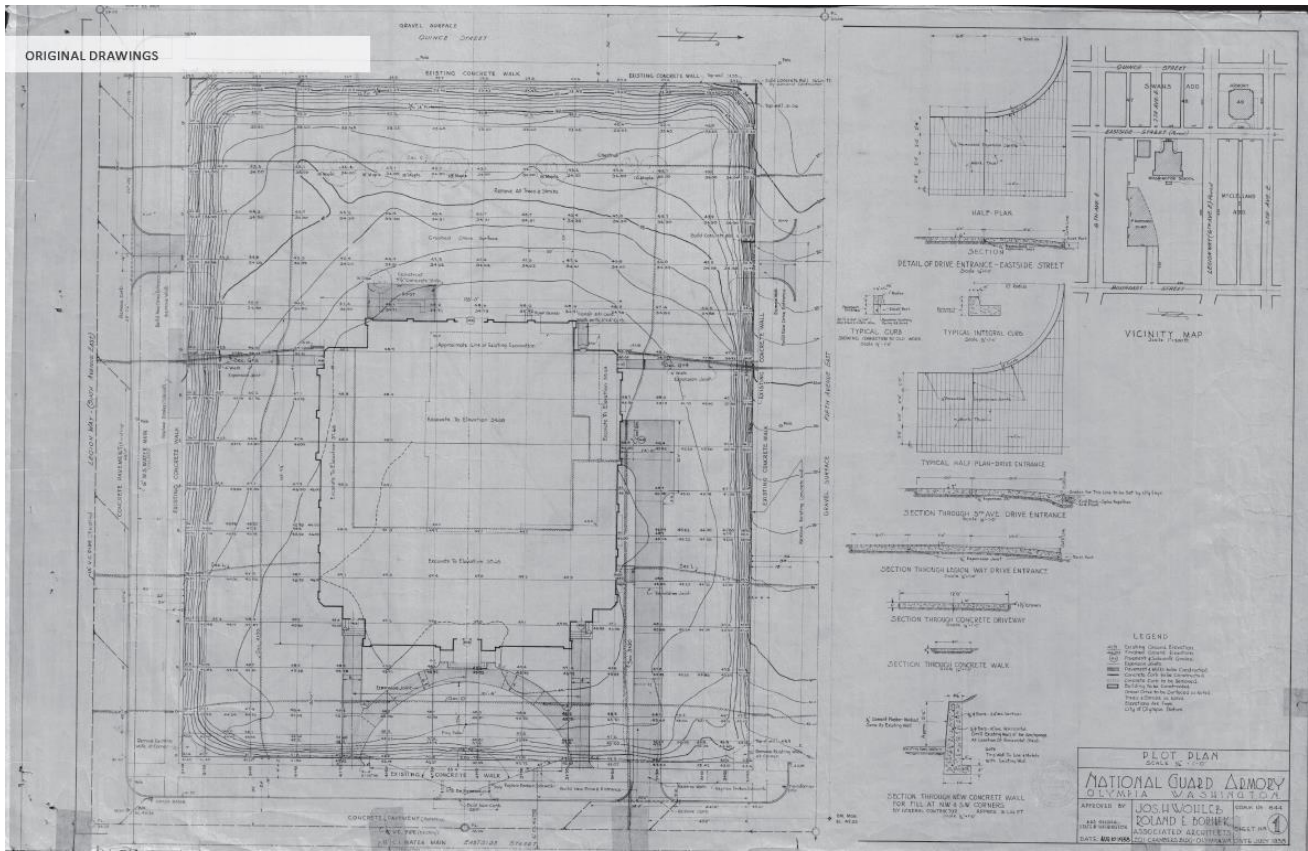


Construction Image – The Olympian – January 24, 1939.

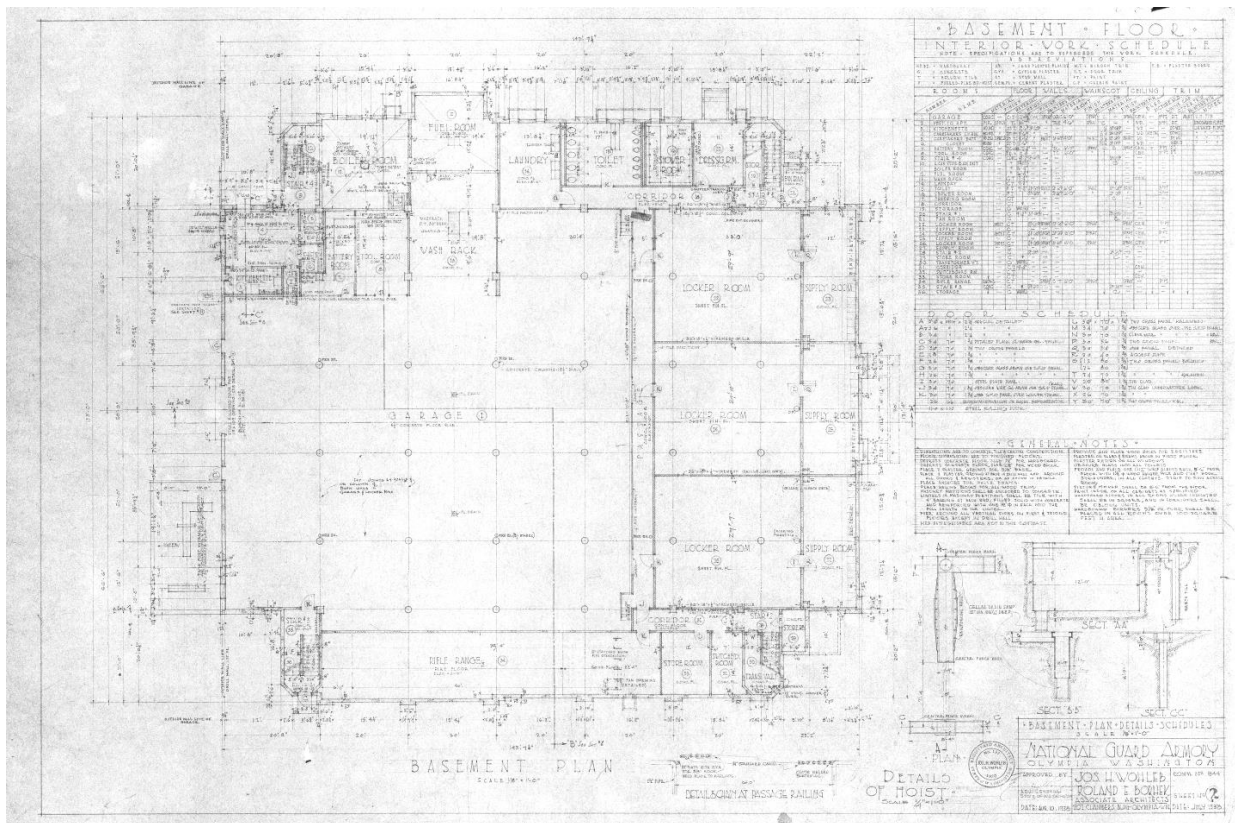


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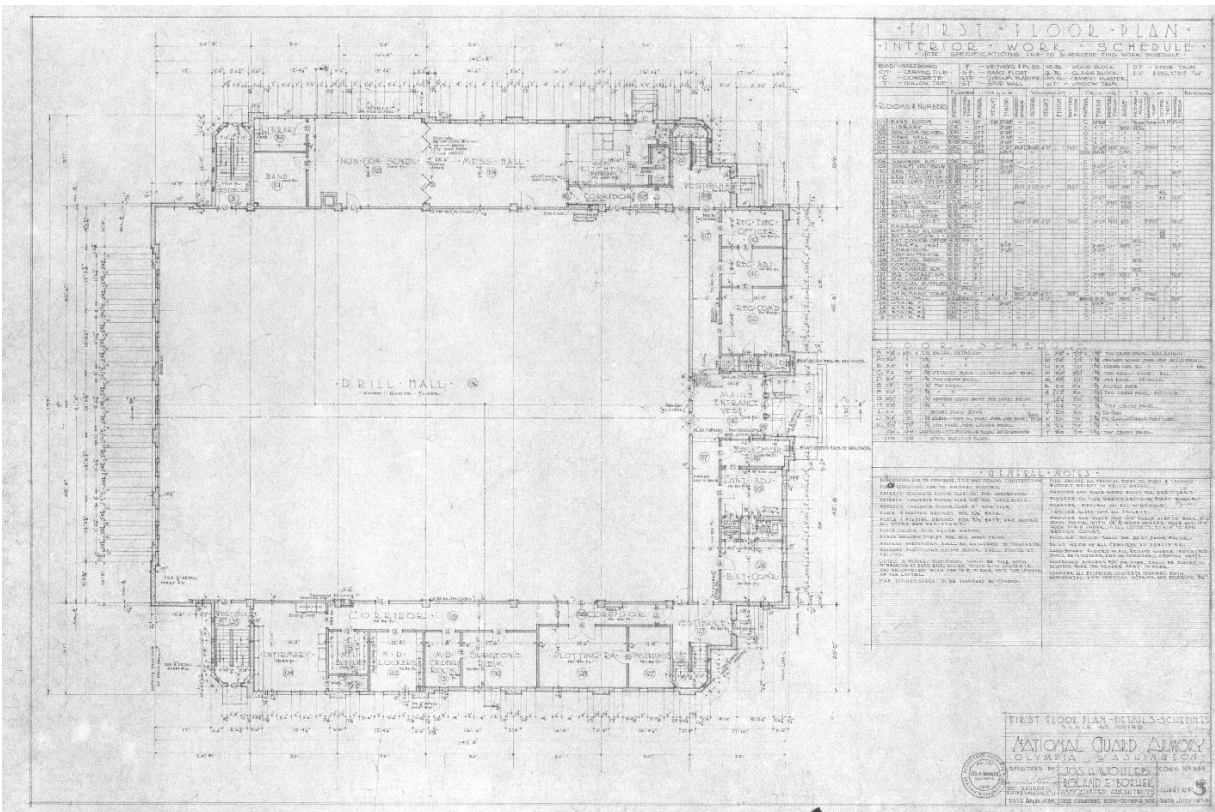
Site plan of the Olympia Armory - 1938.



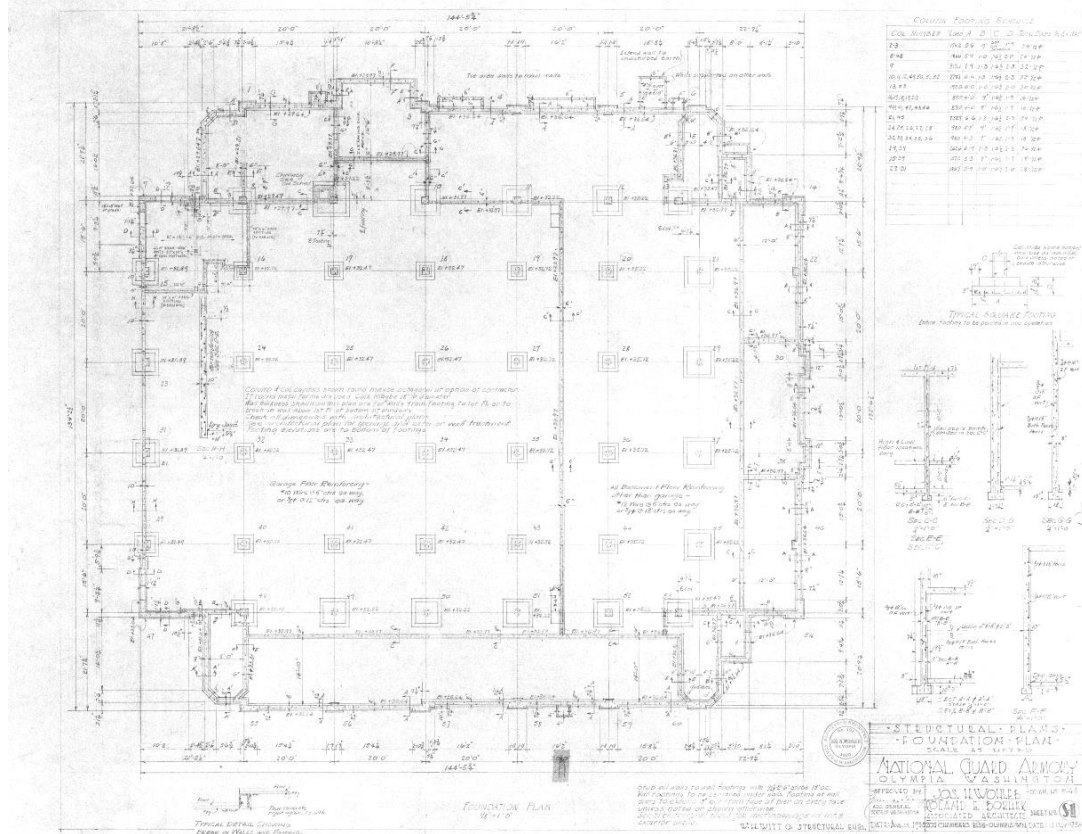
Basement floor plan of the Olympia Armory - 1938.

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First floor (Drill Hall) plan of the Olympia Armory - 1938.

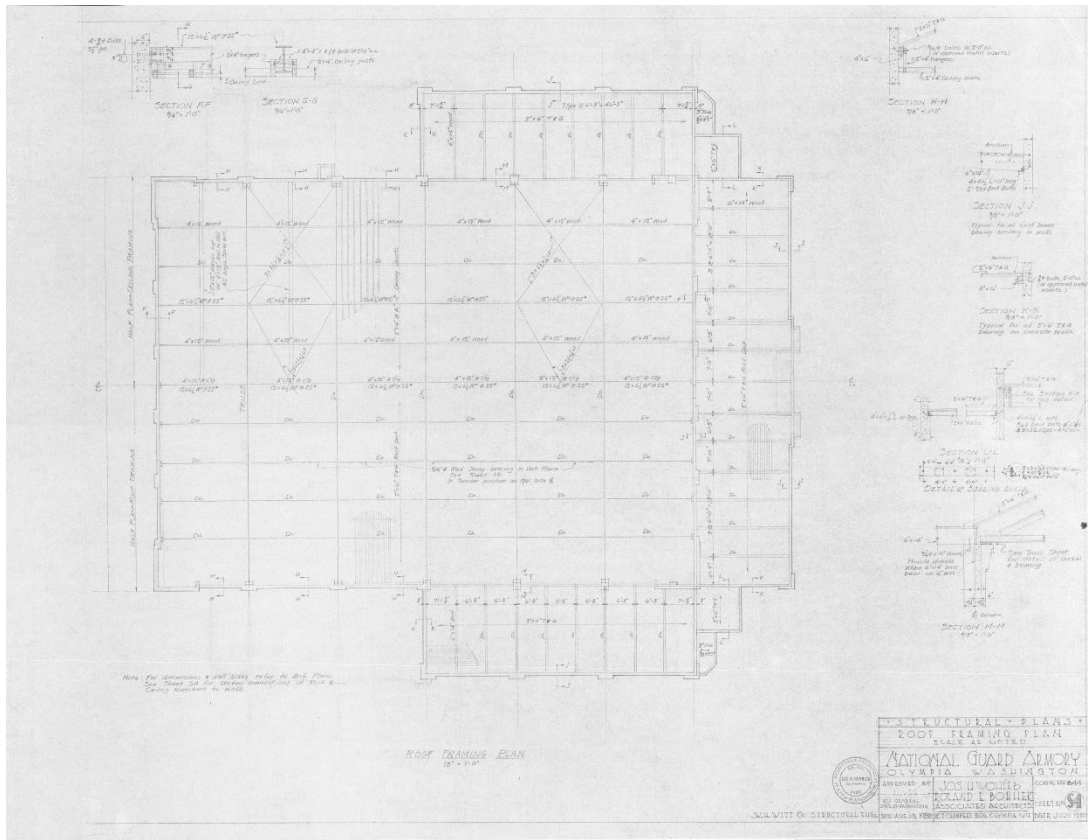


Foundation plan for the Olympia Armory - 1938.

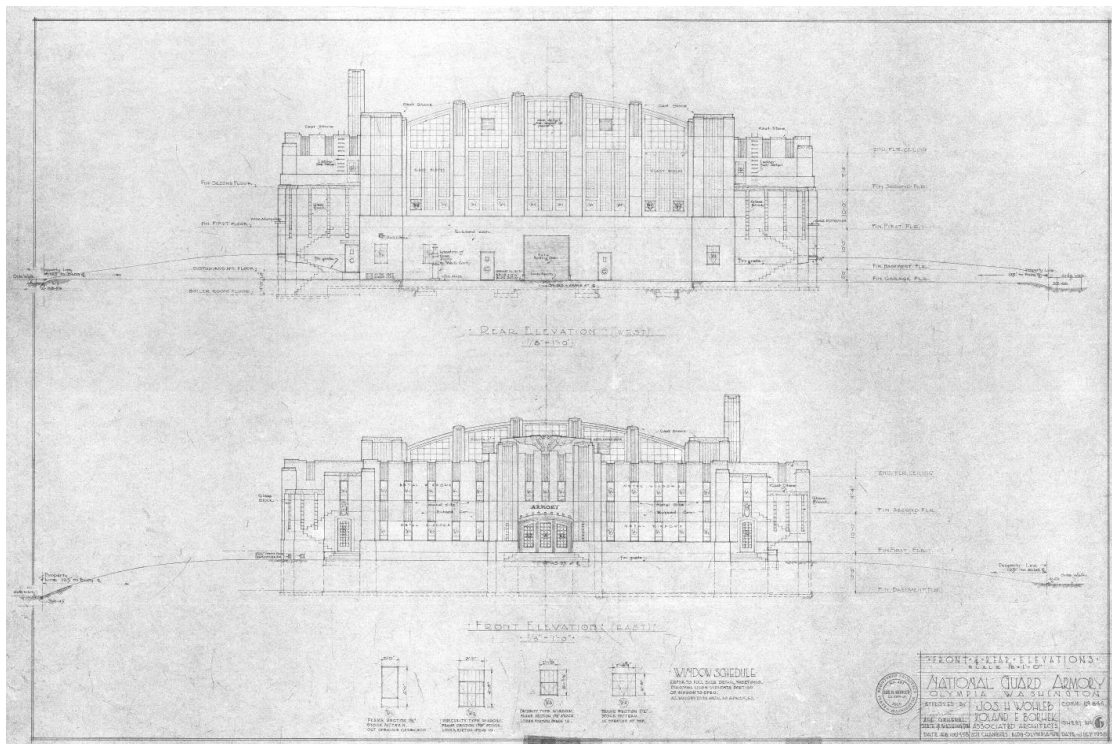


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Roof framing plan for the Olympia Armory - 1938.

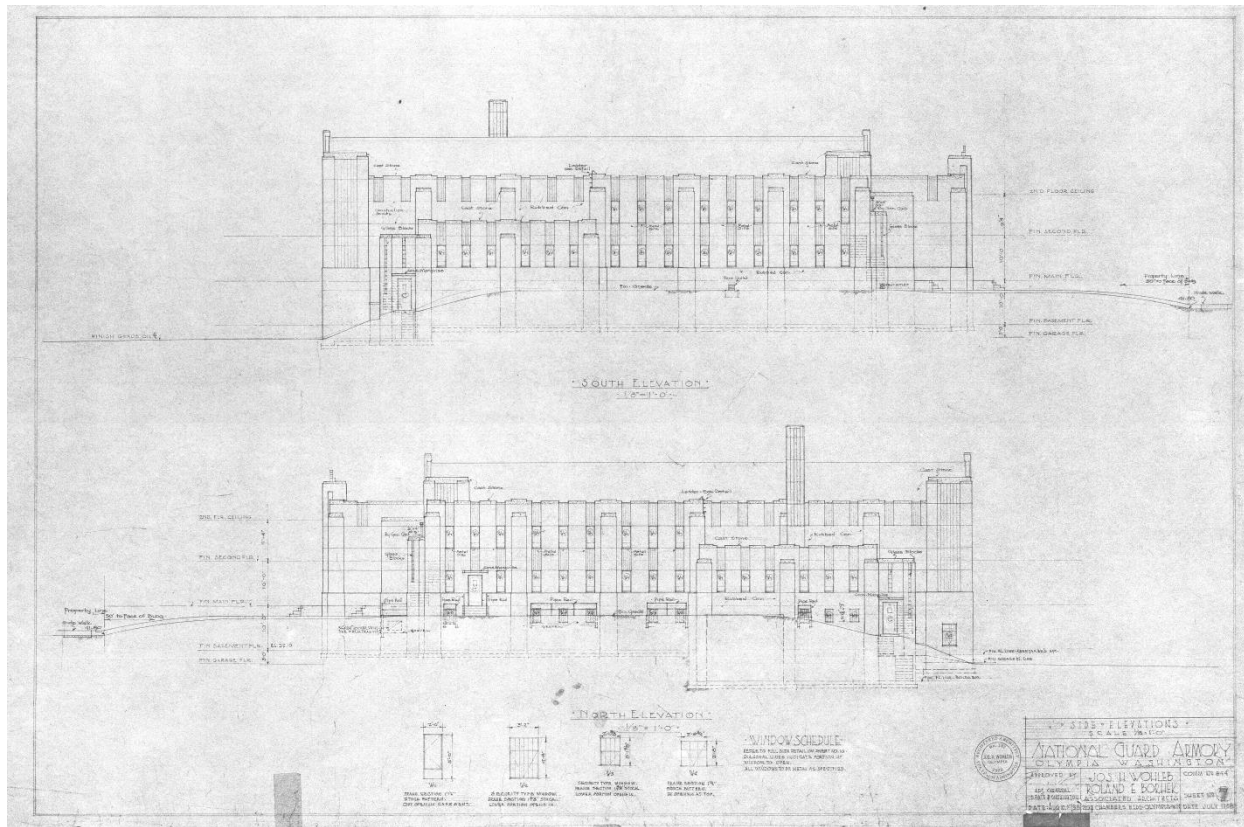


Architectural drawings of the front (east) facade of the Olympia Armory - 1938.

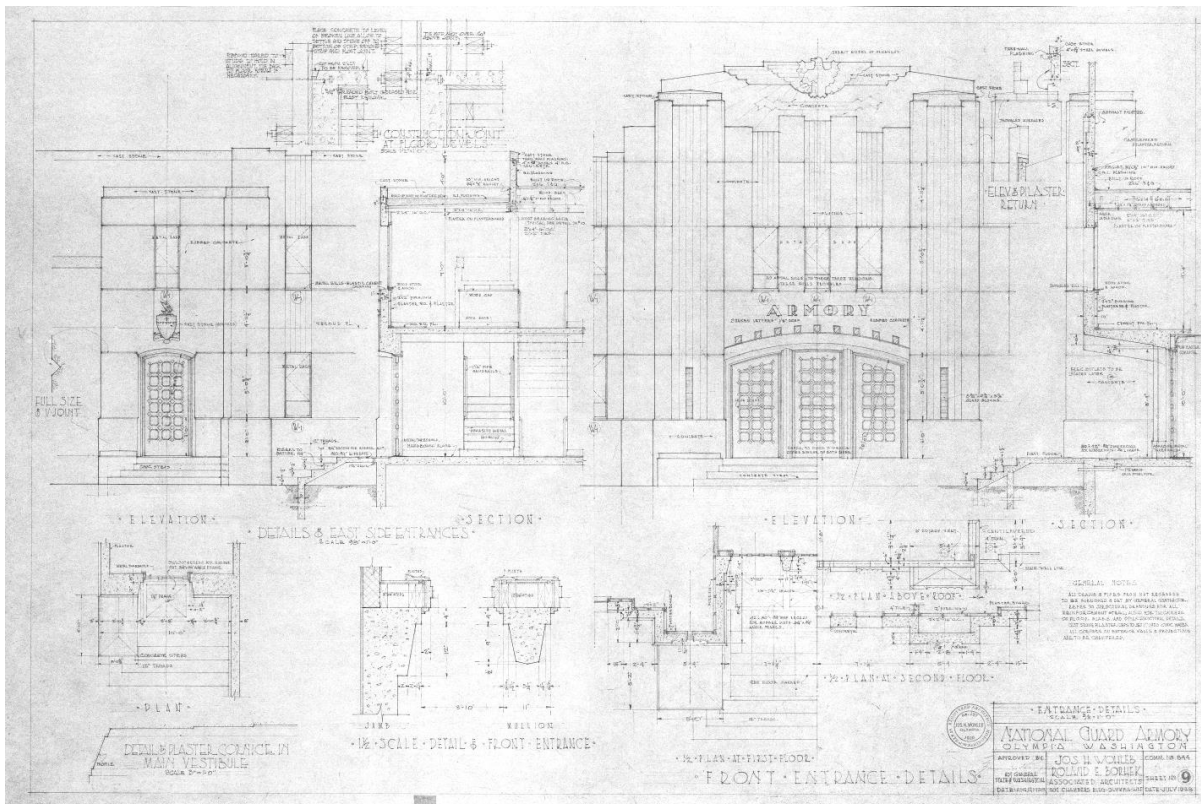


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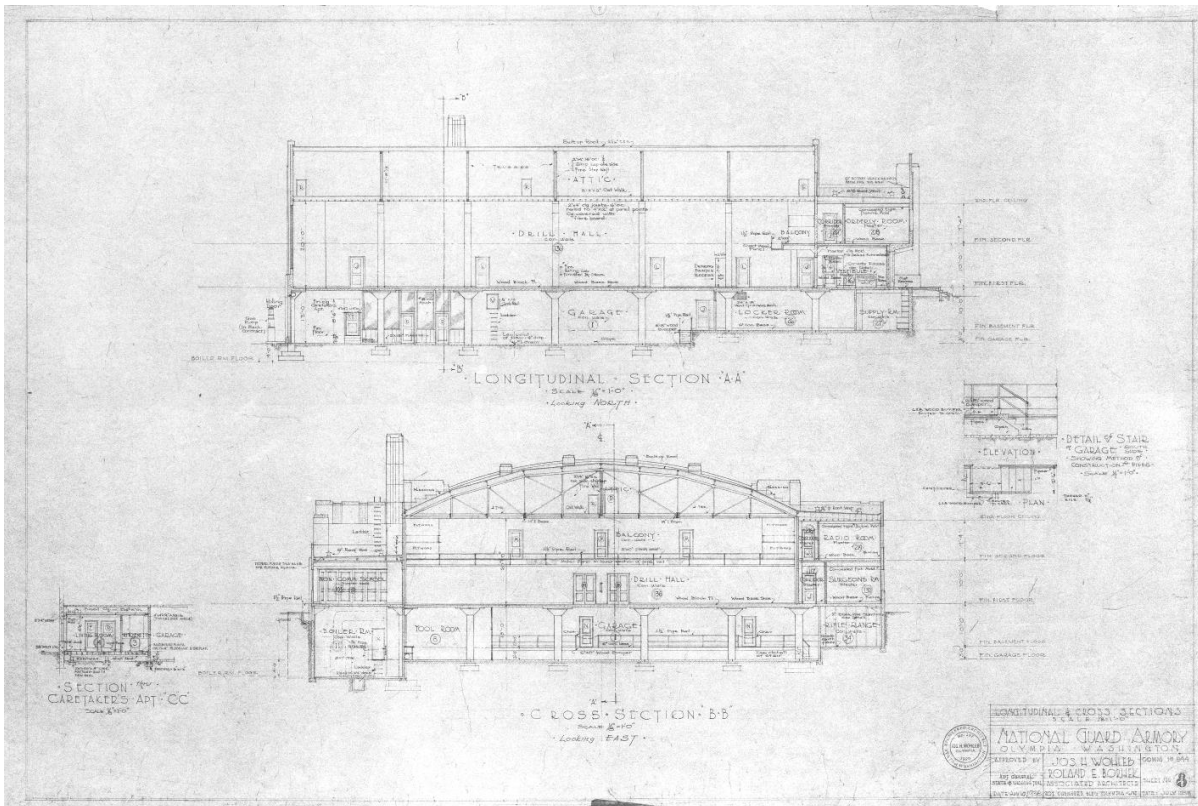
1938 original architectural drawings of the north elevation of the Olympia Armory.



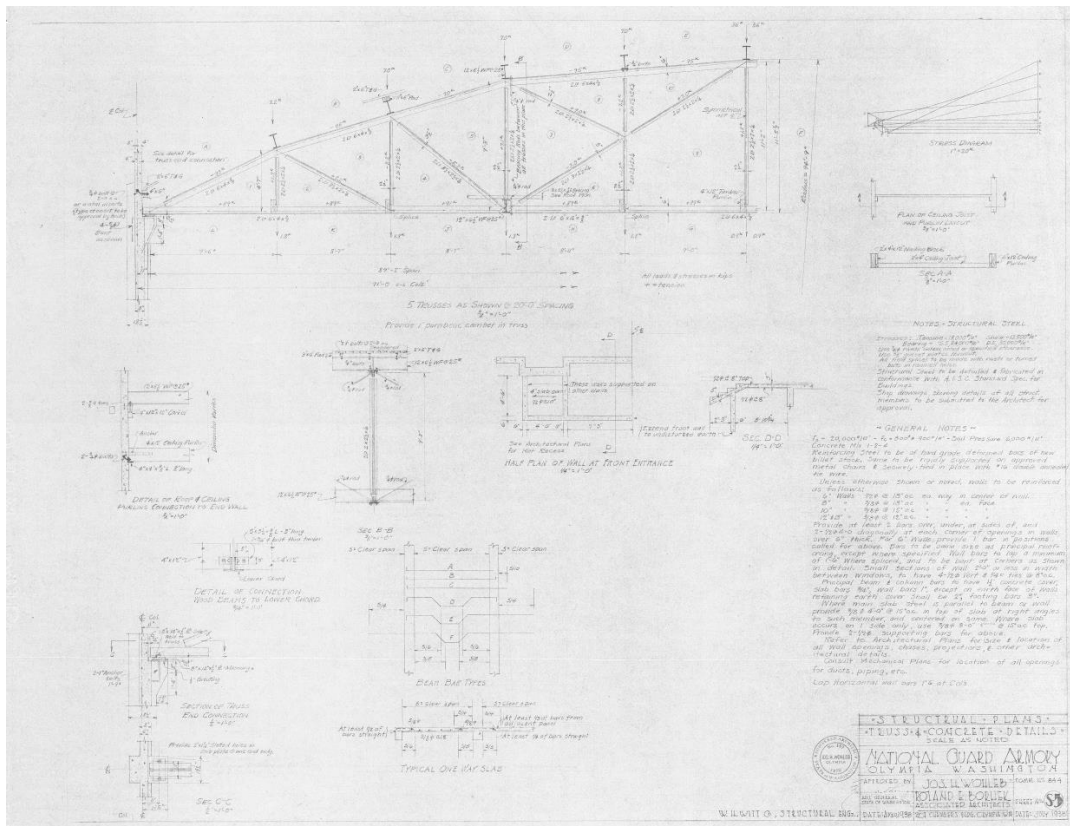
Architectural drawings showing entrance details of the Olympia Armory - 1938.

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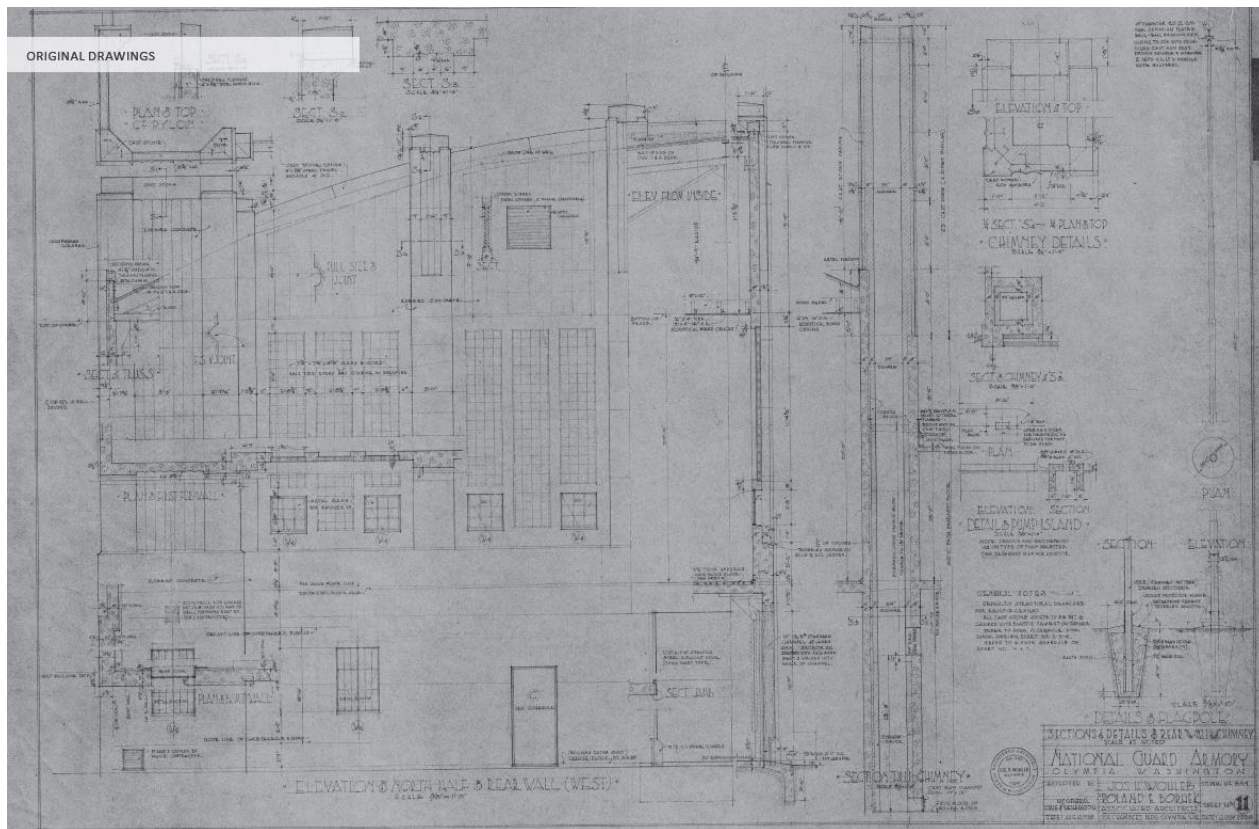
1938 Original architectural drawings showing a longitudinal cross-section of the Olympia Armory.



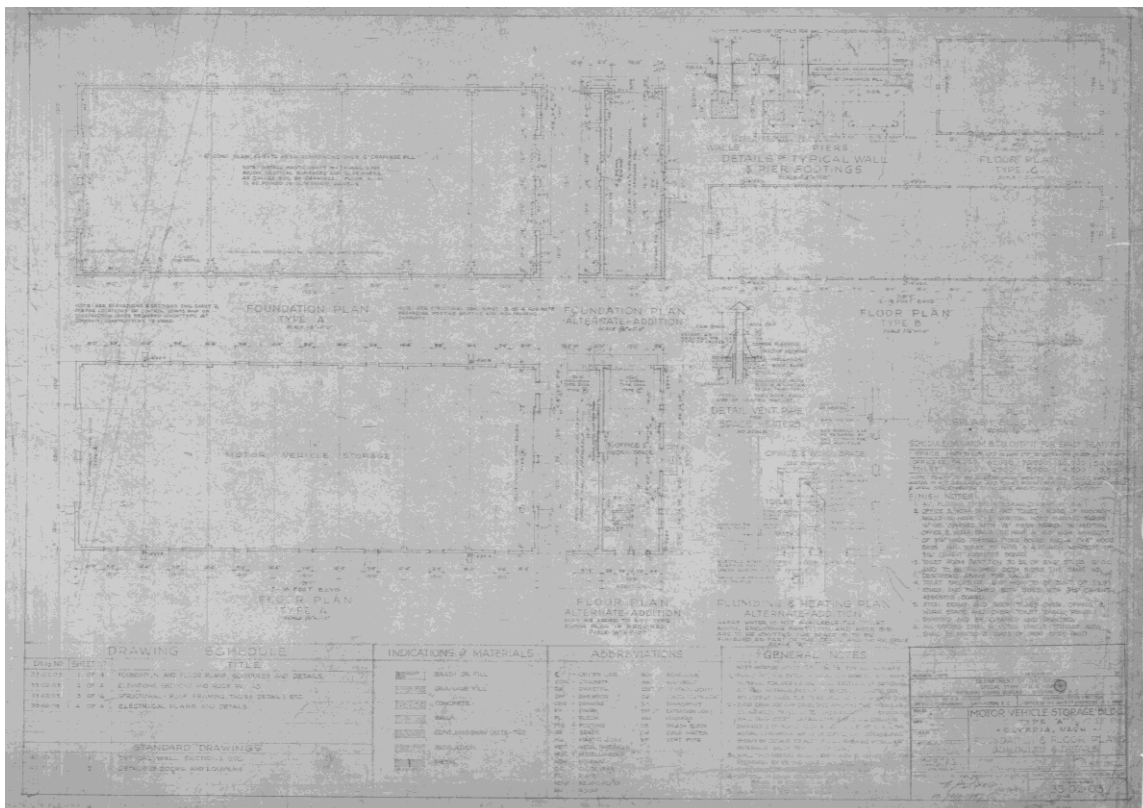
Roof truss details for the Olympia Armory - 1938.

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Architectural drawing of Armory, north half of the rear (west) elevation showing the original glass block windows (removed in 1964) - 1938.

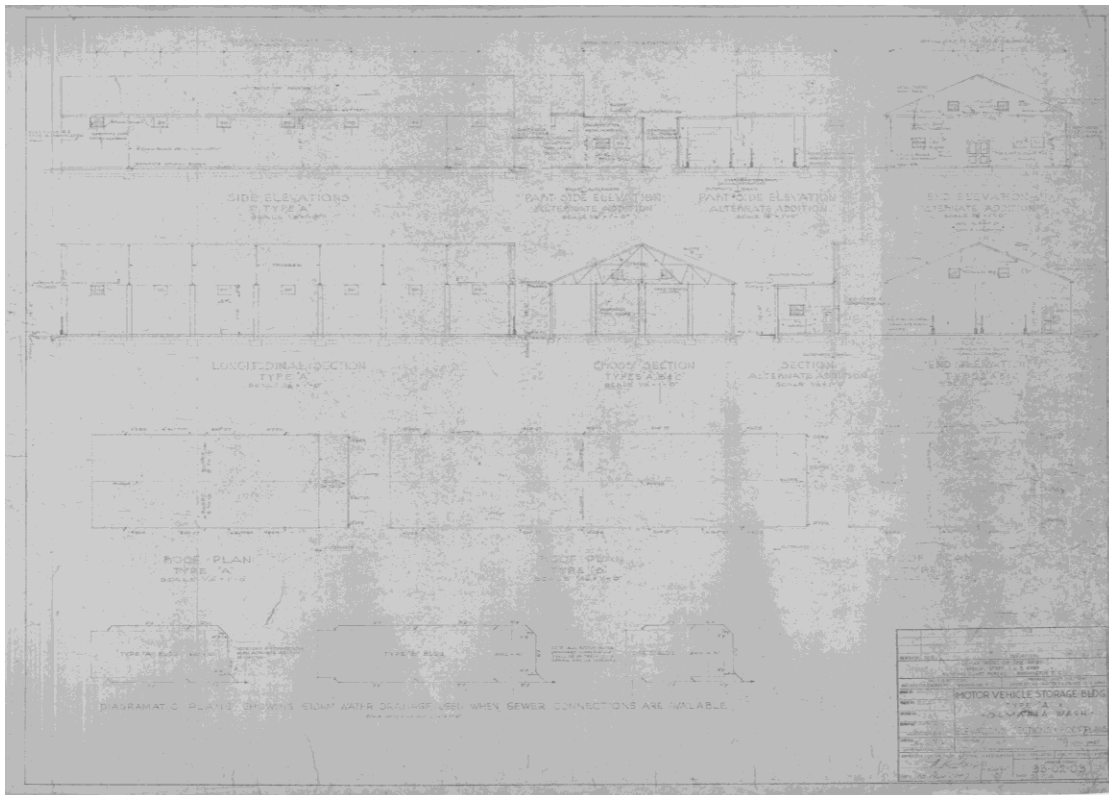


Architectural drawings of floor plan for the Olympia Armory Vehicle Storage Building – Nov. 1947.

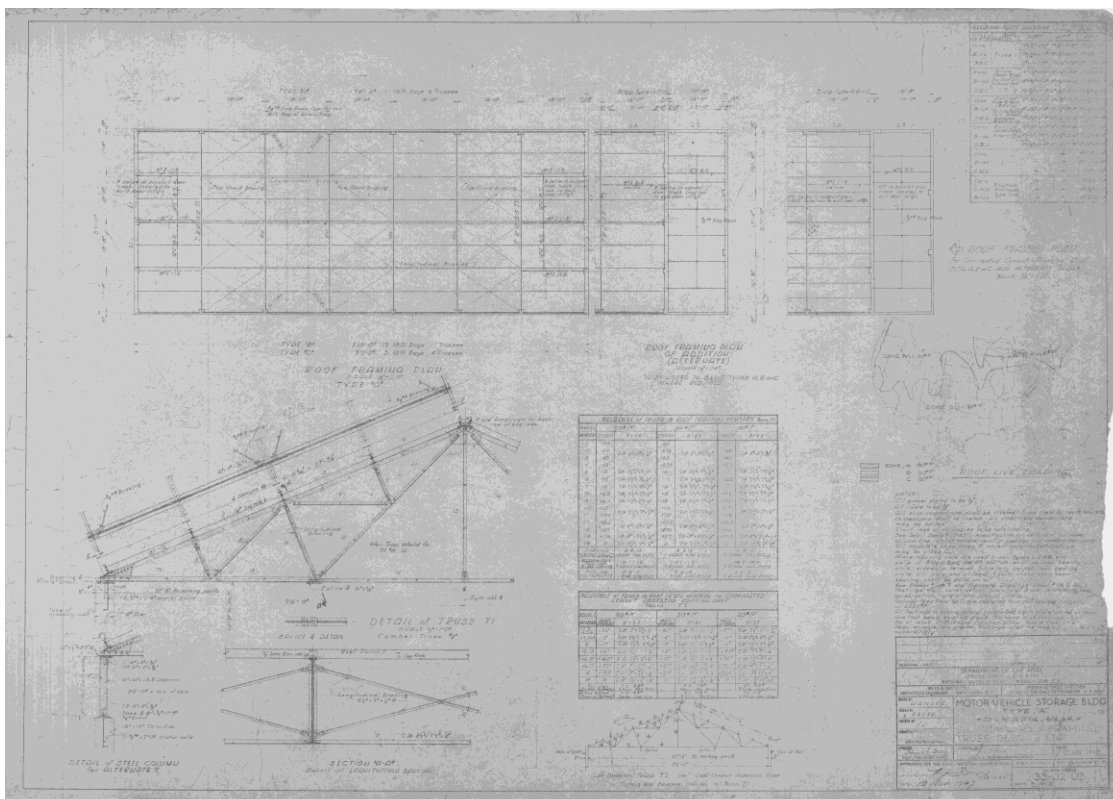


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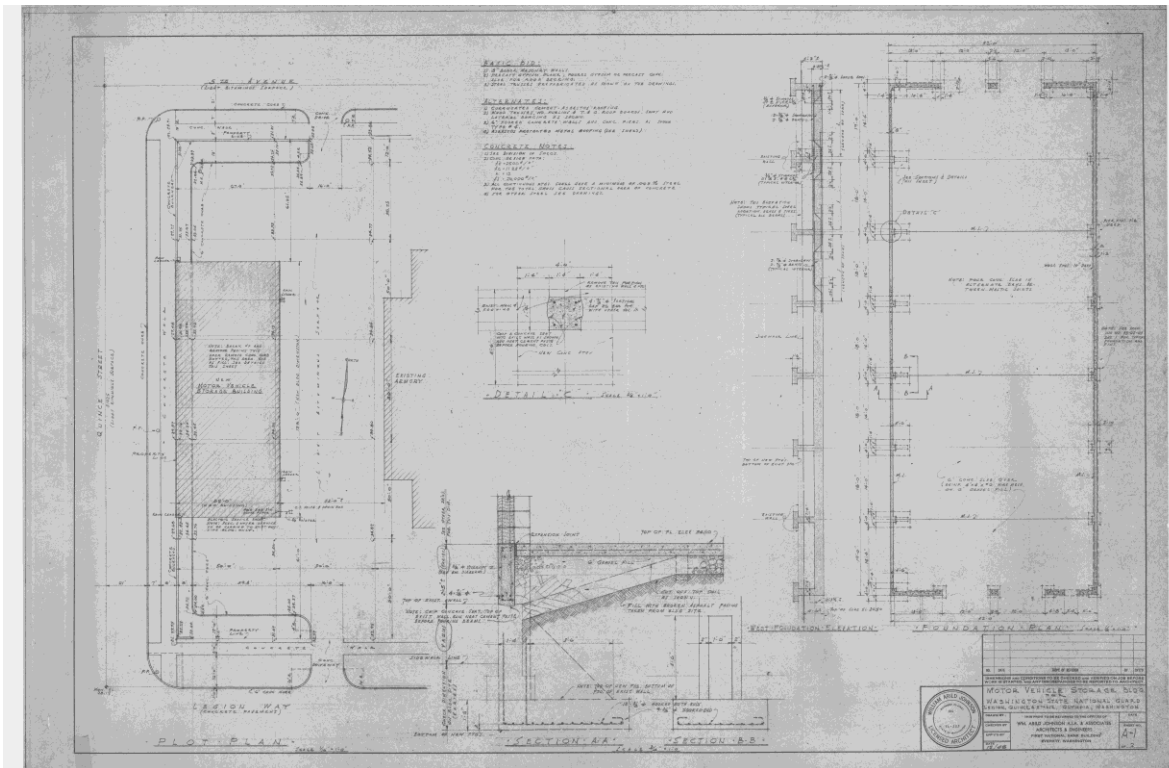
Architectural drawings showing cross-sections and diagrammatic plans for the Olympia Armory Vehicle Storage Building – Nov. 1947.



Architectural drawings of roof framing and truss plan for the Olympia Armory Vehicle Storage Building - Nov.1947.

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Architectural drawings of site plan and floor plan for the Olympia Armory Vehicle Storage Building – Dec. 1948.



Newly completed Olympia Armory, looking southwest towards the east facade and south elevation, 1939 Photo courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.

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Newly completed Olympia Armory, looking northeast towards the west and south elevations, 1939.  
Photo courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.



Coast 248 Artillery Update – The Olympian – April 27, 1939.

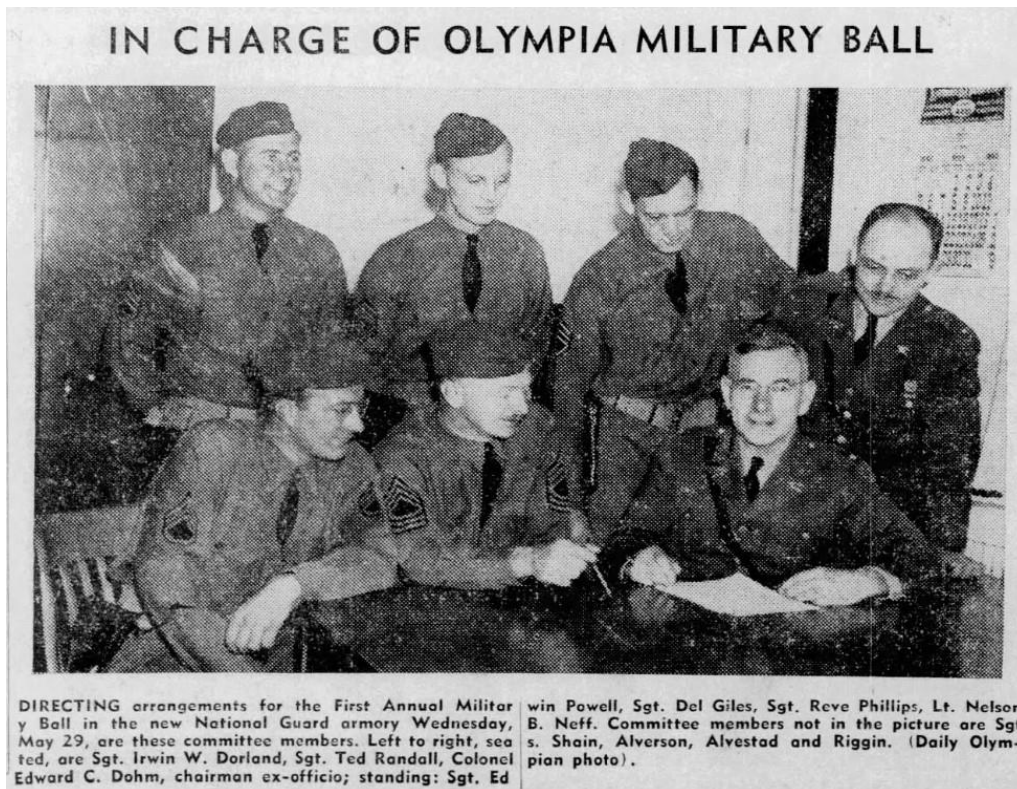


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First Annual Military Ball – The Olympian – May 20, 1940.



Governor's Inaugural Ball at the Olympia Armory, 1941  
(Pictured Right to Left) Governor Langlie and First Lady and others in the receiving line. Album10 (T. Times, 1-16-41, p. 10), Richards Studio D10721-B, Tacoma Public Library.

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Soldiers in front of the Olympia Armory, 1954  
courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.



National Guard in the drill hall of the Olympia Armory, 1947  
courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.



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1950 image of the Olympia Armory drill hall.  
Photo courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.



1954 Auto show being held inside the Olympia Armory,  
courtesy of the Olympia Historic Society - Bigelow House Museum.

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1958 Olympia Dog Fanciers Association competition at the Armory, showing Frances Rice with her winning Great Dane, Long Crest March Wind.



Olympia Armory showing 146<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery sign and M109 self-propelled artillery display, c1980 courtesy of the Washington State Archives.



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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** National Guard Armory - Olympia

**City or Vicinity:** Olympia

**County:** Thurston      **State:** Washington

**Photographer:** Holly Borth & Michael Houser

**Date Photographed:** February 23, 2024; May 30, 2024

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**



1 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0001)  
View of the Olympia Armory looking northwest.

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**2 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0002)**  
View of the Olympia Armory's east façade looking west-southwest.



**3 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0003)**  
Close-up view of the Olympia Armory entry.



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**4 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0004)**  
View of the Olympia Armory looking southwest.



**5 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0005)**  
View of the Olympia Armory looking northeast.

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**6 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0005)**  
View of the Olympia Armory entry vestibule.



**7 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0005)**  
View of the secondary entry, northeast corner.



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**8 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0005)**  
View of the first floor hallway, looking north from entry.



**9 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0006)**  
View of the Olympia Armory drill hall looking west.

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**10 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0007)**  
View of the Olympia Armory drill hall looking east.



**11 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0009)**  
View of the Olympia Armory drill hall from the second floor balcony looking southwest.



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**12 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0008)**  
View of the second floor east hallway looking south.



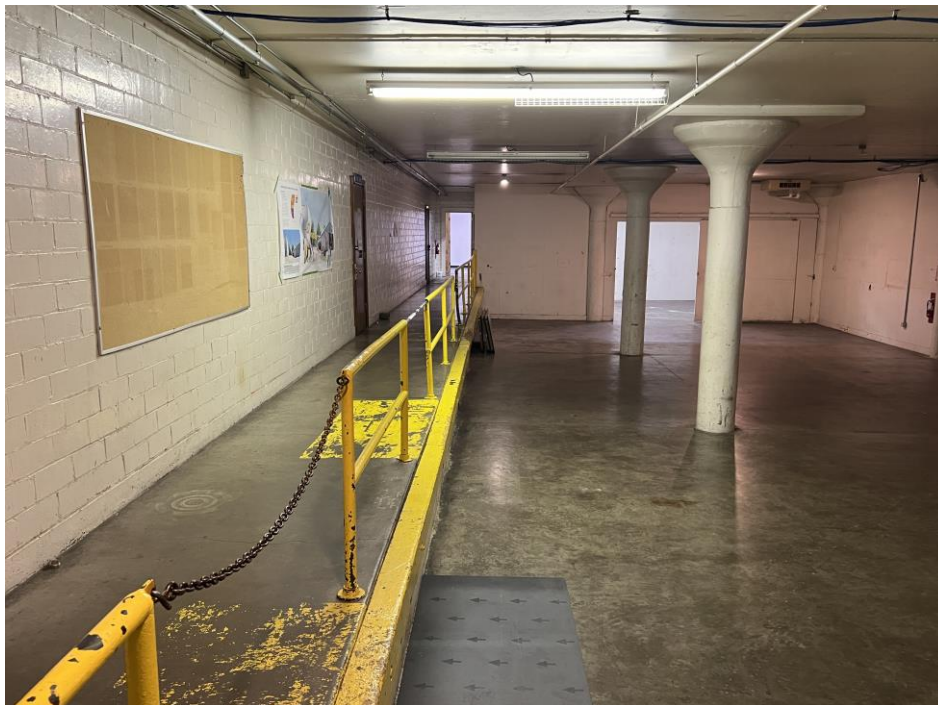
**13 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0008)**  
Typical second floor office area.

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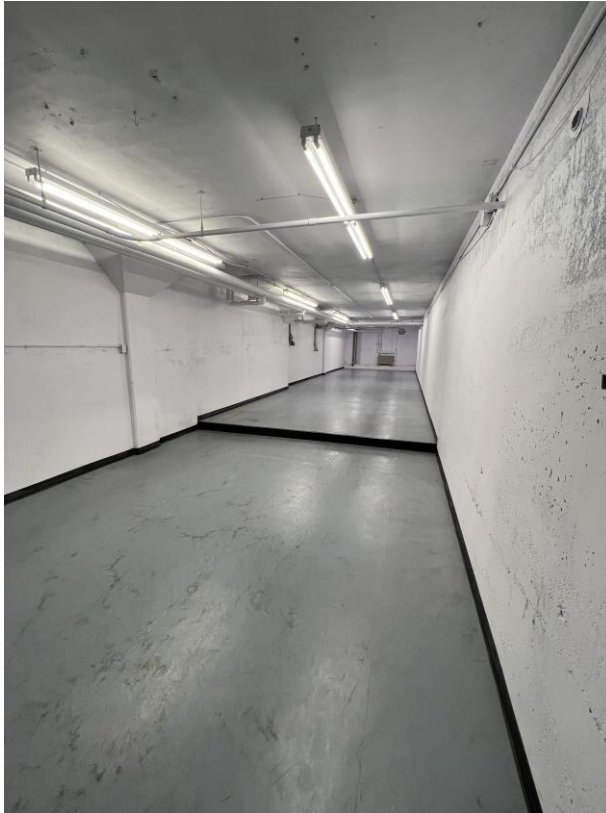
**14 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0010)**  
View of basement garage area looking west.



**15 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0010)**  
View of basement garage loading dock looking south.

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16 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0010)  
Basement firing range - looking west.



17 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0010)  
Detail of basement caretaker apartment.



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**18 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0011)**  
View of the Vehicle Storage Building looking southeast.



**19 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0011)**  
Interior view of the Vehicle Storage Building looking south.

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**20 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0011)**  
Interior view detail of the Vehicle Storage Building showing "Willie & Joe" artwork.



**21 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0011)**  
Butler Shed at northwest corner of site.



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**22 of 22 (WA\_Thurston\_NationalGuardArmoryOlympia\_0012)**  
Interior of Butler Shed at northwest corner of site.

**Property Owner:** (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Olympia CO: Valerie Roberts  
street & number 601 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue E telephone (360) 753-8468  
city or town Olympia state WA zip code 98507

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.