

**HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM**  
University of Oregon Cultural Resources Survey  
Eugene, Lane County, Oregon  
Summer 2006

**RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION**

Current building name: Straub (John) Memorial Hall

Historic building name: John Straub Memorial Building, Men's Dormitory

Building address: 1451 Onyx Street

Ranking: Secondary

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

Architectural style classification: Colonial Revival

Building plan (footprint shape): "E"-shaped

Number of stories: Four

Foundation material(s): Concrete

Primary exterior wall material: Brick-faced concrete

Secondary exterior wall material: Stucco attic half-story

Roof configuration/type: Gabled roof of medium pitch

Primary roof material: Composition shingle

Primary window type: Eight-over-eight, double hung sash

Primary window material: Wood

Decorative features and materials: running bond brick pattern, terracotta quoins, lintels, keystones, triple-arched entry portico with urns.

Landscape features: Foundation plantings; two rear courtyards each with lawn and various plant materials.

Associated resources: Attached to Earl Hall; Straub Hall Green and Onyx Axis to the west; Promenade to the north & 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. Axis to the south.

Comments: Six of the fourth floor windows are pedimented through-the-cornice, balustraded and project from the main building plane; terracotta swagged escutcheons; copper canopies over the four secondary entries; two rear courtyards; pedimented projecting main entrance with an oculus window in the tympanum.

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

Date of construction: 1928

Architect: Lawrence & Holford. Primary architect: E. F. Lawrence

Builder/Contractor: Hanson & Hammond, Portland, OR

Moved? (yes/no): No      Date of move(s): N/A

Description/dates of major additions/alterations: 1955 Earl Hall constructed and attached to East (rear) side of Straub Hall; 1975 interior remodeled for classrooms and offices for Psychology Department, The Amundson Associates, Springfield; 1980s various basement and first floor remodels; 1998 installation of fire alarm system, Balzhiser & Hubbard Engineers; 2001 courtyard and interior remodel for fMRI facility, L.A. Kersh Architecture Inc, Eugene.

**HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS & SIGNIFICANCE**

Original use(s) or function(s): Men's dormitory  
Linguistics and Psychology; also houses Public Safety

Current use(s) or function(s): Classrooms, labs and offices for

Area(s) of significance: Architecture, Education

Period of significance: 1928

Statement of Significance (use continuation sheet if necessary):

Ellis Lawrence designed the Men's Dormitory in the Colonial Revival style, the style reserved for his secondary campus buildings (ie, those not on the Memorial Quadrangle) such as Education West and East. This is also seen in his design work in the East (possibly Whitman College). This building was one of seventeen of Lawrence's works to be selected to be shown in an Oregon AIA exhibit in 1929. Originally, the dormitory was built to be self-sustaining per Oregon's Enabling Act (1859), which was enacted to finance new university buildings. Total cost was \$375,000 including construction, lands and furnishings. To make the new dormitory comply with the self-sustaining rule, room rents were raised higher than they had been at its predecessor, Friendly Hall; rooms in Straub were \$36 per term plus \$1.00 per day for board.

The new Men's Dormitory was completed in seven short months in 1928, with six residential units, a central kitchen and dining room, six additional dining rooms which could be opened to create a large hall, an ice plant, sewing room, linen room, laundry, an electric engine room and storage rooms in the basement. During WWII women students were moved into half of Straub Hall. In 1946, temporary housing arrived to handle the 47% increase in students returning from the war. The women were later moved into their own new dormitory, Carson Hall, in January of 1949.

The Men's Dormitory was renamed the John Straub Memorial Hall in 1933 for John Straub (1853-1932), former Greek Professor, Dean of Men, College of Liberal Arts. In 1955, Earl Hall was attached to the rear (east) of Straub Hall. This and the universal accessibility ramp on the west side have been the only major changes to the exterior. After 5 years of debate, Straub Hall was remodeled in 1975 to house the Psychology Department. It was one of the pioneer projects using the Oregon Experiment "patterns" for diagnosis and analysis. Now this building holds the Psychology Department, the Psychology Clinic, the Lewis Center for Neuro-Imaging (MRI) (2001 remodel), the Brain Development Lab, and the Electrophysiology Lab. Vines were allowed to grow up the brick exterior and caused a good deal of damage; the vines were removed in 1985. Current exterior wall issues include large areas of salt to leaching, some spalling and organic growth on the brick façade, and ferns and mosses are growing from the grout lines at several of the entrance stairs.

Straub Hall has good integrity and is in fair condition. The entry lobby's original wood paneling, lunette paintings by K.E. Hudson and the ceramic tile floor are still intact and in good condition. It may be eligible individually for the National Register under Criterion C for its fine architecture and celebrated design by Ellis Lawrence. Straub Hall is listed as a secondary resource for its good integrity and medium level of significance.

**NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT**

Historic Significance (check one):  High  Medium  Low  Very Low or None

Integrity (check one):  Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

Condition (check one):  Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

Building designation:  City Landmark  National Register  National Historic Landmark  Not listed

Preliminary National Register eligibility findings

Building is potentially eligible:  Individually or  As a contributing resource in a district only

If eligible individually, applicable criteria (check all that apply):

- A. Associated with significant events  C. Distinctive architecturally  
 B. Associated with significant persons  D. Archaeologically important

If applicable, building qualifies under NR Criterion Considerations:  Yes  No If yes, which apply:

Building is NOT eligible:  Intact but lacks distinction or  Altered/loss of integrity or  Not 50 years old

**DOCUMENTATION**

Indicate resources consulted when researching this building (check all that apply):

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University archives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UO Planning Office files | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn maps                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Building permits                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO files                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives                 | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library                       | <input type="checkbox"/> State Historic Society            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Historic Society         | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal interviews                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic photographs              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical encyclopedias     | <input type="checkbox"/> Obituary indexes                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>see below</u> |

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

## Archived Materials

Old Oregon, vol. 10, 1927-1928  
 Old Oregon, vol. 11-12, October 1928-June 1930

Alphabetical Subject Files, Box 1 of 12  
 Alphabetical Subject Files, Box 2 of 12

Ellis Lawrence Building Survey, vol. 2

## UO Planning Office &amp; Facilities Services files

Construction set of building plans  
 Straub Hall building file

UO Building Records – Projects and Improvements, February 2006 disc

## Handout

Shellenbarger, Michael. *University of Oregon Architecture: A Personal Tour*. Historic Preservation Department, 1986.

**RECORDING INFORMATION**

Researched: Kathryn Burk, Melissa Stoller, Winter 2006  
 Recorded: Susan Johnson and University Planning Office, Summer 2006  
 Photo number or name: Straub Hall

**PHOTOGRAPH**



**SITE PLAN**

