

ORDINANCE NO. 1168

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCATA AMENDING SECTION 1-203 OF ARTICLE 2 CHAPTER 1 OF THE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AS ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE NO. 1071 RELATING TO AN LHP DESIGNATION OF THE OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING.

The City Council of the City of Arcata does ordain as follows:

Section 1: The property described in Exhibit "A" is hereby rezoned from CBD Central Business District Commercial to CBD:LHP Central Business District: Landmark and Historic Preservation and is described as follows:

The Old Post Office Building; 735 Eighth Street; AP# 21-108-04 [portion], with features to be preserved and conditions to be met as described in the attached Exhibit "A."

Section 2: Section 1-0203 of Article 2 of Chapter 1 of the Arcata Land Use and Development Guide, the Districting or Zoning Map, is hereby amended in accordance with Section 1 above.

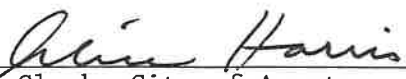
This Ordinance will take effect thirty (30) days after its approval by the Mayor.

INTRODUCED: November 7, 1990

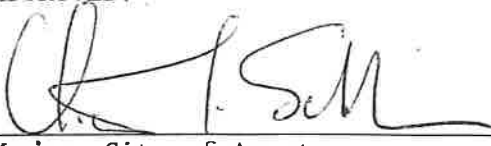
DATED: November 21, 1990

ATTEST:

APPROVED:



City Clerk, City of Arcata



Mayor, City of Arcata

Clerk's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Ordinance No. 1168 passed and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Arcata, Humboldt County on the 21st day of November, 1990, by the following vote:

ORDINANCE 1168

EXHIBIT "A"CONDITIONS

1. Design Assistance Committee approval will be required for all changes proposed to the exterior of the structure.
2. Features to be preserved are identified as follows:
 - a. Existing front facade including four (4) pilasters; transom lights; recessed entranceway; pedimented frontispiece with brackets; inset cornice with frieze, dentils, modillions, fascia and crown molding; parapet wall with six (6) small pilasters.
 - b. Rear facade including two (2) existing double hung windows with embedded wire mesh glass; steel bars over doors.
3. The following feature shall be removed within one year of the approval of the historical designation, or prior to use of any of the benefits of the historical designation, including use of the historic building codes, or approval shall expire:
 - Existing neon "Cost Cutters" sign over pedimented frontispiece.
4. Signs for the building, including signing to replace existing sign noted in Condition 2., shall be architecturally unobtrusive, as determined by the Design Assistance Committee, and shall be hung or placed in store front window.
5. In the event of restoration of the building's front facade, the following elements shall be replaced with the help of an architect, building designer or contractor with restoration experience, or in consultation with a historian;
 - a. The sidelight on the east side of the entranceway to match the existing sidelight on the west side of the entranceway.
 - b. The second pilaster from the east wall to match the three existing pilasters.
 - c. Remove the existing doorway on the west side of the facade between the two pilasters and replace with a stationary, narrow, rectangular glass window.
 - d. Remove the existing storefront window on the east side of the facade between the two pilasters and replace with a stationary, narrow, rectangular glass window.

Historical and Cultural Chronology for 735 8th Street

- 1884- Odenheimer's Shoe Shop demolished and a new store built.
- 1893- Odenheimer died and George Marken takes over business.
- 1905- Marken's shoe business closes.
- 1907- U. S. Post Office opens.
- 1912- Addition added to Post Office.
- 1916- Building to the east demolished and Shoe-Shop-turned-Post-Office building moved to that site.
- 1917- New Post Office Building completed on west parcel.
- 1917- 1884 Odenheimer's Shoe Shop building remodeled to look like the new Post Office building.
- 1926- Post Office business moved to west side of Plaza.
- 1927- White City Market.
- 1928- New Cash Market.
- 1928- L & K Cash Market.
- 1933- Arcata Trading Post.
- 1942- Greyhound and Humboldt Motor Stages.
- 1946- Arcata Pump and Electric Company.
- 1946- Walt's Club.
- 1956- Boot Club.
- 1983- Tiffany's Ice Cream Parlor.
- 1987/88- Cost Cutter's Hair Salon.

RECEIVED
DEC 01 1989
City of Arcata
Planning & Building Dept.

OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING
735 8th Street
Arcata, CA.
AP# 21-108-04
021-108-004

Historical Research and Architectural Analysis
for LHP Designation

Report Prepared for: City of Arcata
Planning Department

Report Prepared by: Katie Stanton, M.A.
Historian
20 November 1989



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(prepared by Susie Van Kirk)

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Architectural Significance

The Old Post Office is a fine example of the Classic Revival Style that was based on a symmetrical composition of Greek and Roman architectural orders. This architectural style was characterized by projecting pediments, parapet walls with balustrades, and columns or pilasters, that were joined to produce a grandiose composition. Buildings of this style are notable for their solidity, verticality, and pretentious ornamentation.

The Classic Revival Style was an offshoot of the Beaux-Arts Architecture. Beaux-Arts buildings were grand in scale, monumental, symmetrical and richly ornamented with classical details and statuary. This architectural form originated from the French school of design known as the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. There many famous American architects were trained at the turn of the century and were influenced by the design principles of the Ecole which emphasized the study of symmetry in Greek and Roman structures. The Beaux-Arts Style was heralded as the preferred architectural style at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 and the Panama Pacific Exposition at San Francisco in 1915.

Its style represented the City Beautiful theme proported by visionary city planners who sought to build a new society at the turn of the century based on reform, progress, and urban perfection. Courthouses, state capitols, museums, Carnegie libraries, universities, homes, memorial buildings, and fire and police stations were built in this style from 1895 to 1915. These buildings were painted light, bright colors, usually white, and specialty metals were used for ornamentation.

The Classical Revival style was a less pretentious and less dramatic form of the monumental Beaux-Arts style. Classical Revival architecture is found primarily in suburban mansions and civic buildings constructed after 1910. The aftermath of World War I halted the civic ambitions of the City Beautiful planners and the grandiose Period Revival styles lost popularity to the streamlined and practical Art Deco and Moderne styles.

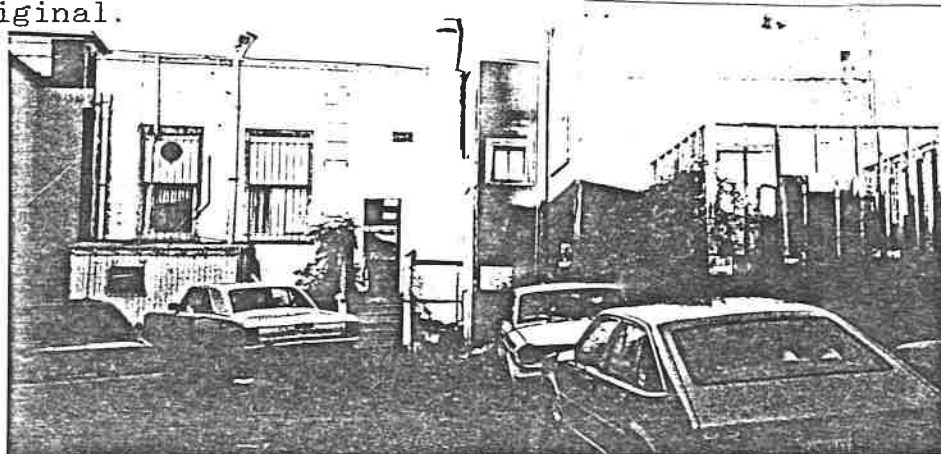
At the time this Post Office building was constructed in 1917, Arcata was well known as the White City. Although the building was mistakenly reported as "Gothic" in style, it is the author's belief that its modern, classical, pristine white exterior was synonomous with a sanctuary as many churches were built in the Gothic Style during the late Victorian era. The erection of a "Modern, Class A, reinforced fire and earthquake proof post office building" with classical motifs reflected Arcata's urban aspirations to be part of the national trend to create a City Beautiful. According to the times, the building was heralded as "in keeping with the progress the White City is making along all lines." The steel bars over the windows on the rear facade, the flagpole atop the roof, and the gun metal electric lamps on either side of the front entrance were all decorative elements associated with the classical nature of the architectural style for the period.

Architectural Description

The symmetrical front facade of the Old Post Office is Classic Revival in style and divided by four pilasters of Doric design. The base of each pillar projects from the wall to give the appearance of massiveness and solidity to the structure. Between each pilaster is a set of windows that originally were composed of a rectangular permanent window with a leaded glass transom light above. Each transom pivoted open for air circulation. A modern wood panel door with 6 glass lights pierces the center of the facade. A pedimented frontispiece supported by two brackets projects above the recessed entranceway. A modern neon sign above the pediment obscures the transom light behind. An inset cornice richly decorated with a frieze, dentils, modillions, fascia, and crown molding projects above the pilasters. A parapet wall at the roofline is divided by six small pilasters which repeat the square design found on the base of each pilaster at the ground level.



The rear facade was originally three windows with a basement entrance in the southwest corner of the building. The basement was used for fuel storage for the wood heated furnace. Presently only two windows remain as the third has been converted to a rear entrance. Steel bars remain over the windows and woven wire embedded in the window glass was installed originally to increase security. A shed enclosure over the basement entrance may be original.



10. Odenheimer's Shoe Shop, 8th Street

The Post Office, 8th Street

In 1917 these two little buildings had identical facades, but one was newly-constructed and the other was over thirty years old. The one on the west retains its original architecture of pilasters, entrance pediment, balustrade-topped cornice with block brackets and dentils, and a row of transom windows. While the building on the east appears to be newer because of alterations, it is actually the older structure, having been constructed in 1884 on the other lot.

Built as a shoeshop for William Odenheimer and used for that purpose until 1905, it became the Arcata Post Office in 1907. Although an addition was made in 1912, the building wasn't large enough to handle the increased volume of mail from the new Humboldt Normal School and Brizards' parcel post mailings. In preparation for construction of a new post office, the building on the east lot was demolished and the post office was moved onto that lot so that service could continue during construction of the new facility. When it opened in February 1917, the post office was hailed as "one of the finest privately owned Post Office buildings in northern California, and one so secure, that any attempt at illegal entry would be a "good deal like trying to break into a well-protected jail." After the Post Office moved into the new building, the old one was remodeled so that the two would look "as if they had been built at the same time."

The Post Office was at 735 8th until 1926 when it was moved to the west side of the Plaza. Over the years the building has had a variety of uses-meat market, second hand store, bus depot and bars, notably the Boot Club. The old shoe shop housed the Arcata Electric Shop in the 1920's when local residents were invited down for evening concerts on a "good radio set." Cafes, including the Arcata Sportsmen's Club which had a gym at the rear, occupied the building during the 1930's.

In 1917 the two buildings at 725 and 735 8th Street had identical facades, but one was newly-constructed and the other was over thirty years old! So how did that come to be?

In the spring of 1884, William Odenheimer, a shoe maker, tore down his old store on Lot 7, which is the west half of this parcel, and had a new building constructed for his shoe shop. He died in 1893, but his business was continued until 1905 by George Marken, who had worked for Odenheimer. The little building became the Post Office in August 1907, and despite an addition in 1912 to accommodate Arcata's growing postal business, it eventually became necessary to build a new Post Office.

Marken undertook construction of a Class "A", reinforced fire and earthquake proof building, 25'x50', in the summer of 1916. But in order to continue the postal business while the building was under construction, Marken had the building on the east demolished and the shoe-shop-turned-Post-Office moved onto that lot!

Eureka Architect Franklin Georgeson drew the plans and contractor Englehart was awarded the contract for construction. By February 1917, the people of Arcata and vicinity were being served in what was "one of the finest privately owned Post Office Buildings in northern California and the only Post Office building built for that purpose in Humboldt County." The architecture of the new Post Office was described as "Gothic" with classic lines and a balustrade and flagpole at the top of the building. Two artistic electric lamps finished in gun-metal were placed on either side of the front entrance and the windows were of heavy plate glass. The row of transom windows was fitted with prism glass to reflect the light into the interior and each had a tilting ventilator. Rear windows were fitted with heavy fire-resistant glass with embedded wire netting. Steel bars on the windows were to make any attempt to force an entrance a "good deal like trying to break into a well-protected jail." Across the front of the building, in steel lettering, were the words "U.S. Mail Arcata Cal."

As soon as Marken was settled in the new Post Office at 735 8th, he set Georgeson to work drawing the plans for remodeling the front of the building on the east--the one Odenheimer had built in 1884 for his shoe shop. The Arcata Union noted in its June 14, 1917 issue that the two buildings would soon look "as if they had been built at the same time." August Schwab was in charge of the work, which was completed in the summer of 1917.

The first tenant was the Arcata Electric Shop, owned by Earl Brand and Frank Anderson. The business had several different owners over the next few years: Calvin Armstrong, John H. Hilfiker, Husted Heinrici, and Ernest Knutz. During National Music Week in May 1924, Knutz invited local residents to come down every evening to hear concerts on a "good radio set." And Knutz was the first to put up a neon sign in Arcata in front of this store in the spring of 1928. The Arcata Electric Shop moved to the Waite Building on the northeast corner of 8th and G in the summer of 1928. The Arcata Cafe, run by J. Malonos and George Chilos opened in the vacant store. The Cafe struggled along for several years, becoming the Sportsmen's Club sometime before the end of 1933. It, too, had several different owners: Harry Wyatt, Dec. 1933; W.S. Fisher, Aug. 1935; Archie Forson, April 1936; and Larry Shanklin and Forson, 1940.

When Stacey Fisher bought the Arcata Sportsmen's Club in 1935, he extended the building 20 feet at the rear and made interior improvements. The restaurant was billed as having "excellent meals and beverages." In 1939 boxer Archie Forson opened a gym in the rear of his chili bean and hamburger place. Sometime in the early 1940's, the Sportsmen's Club closed and Henry Sorenson opened an insurance and real estate office at 725 8th. In the early 1950's, the Chili Bowl Cafe was again advertised at this location, but in a few years the business directories listed several jewelry stores: Lee's Jewelry Co., 1956; De Fino's Jewelry, 1957; and Sequoia Jewelers, 1963. Beneficial Finance Co. was the next tenant in 1975, followed by the current occupant, People's Records about 1982.

Meanwhile, the Post Office continued in the building on the west half of this parcel until the fall of 1926 when it moved to the west side of the Plaza. The building was purchased by Charles Grotzman in the spring of 1927 and the White City Market moved here from 876 G Street. Under the ownership of Antone Rasmussen (joined in May 1928 by Oley Hansen), it was renamed the New Cash Market. Langer and Kretner took it over in August 1928 and it got another name, L & K Cash Market. In October 1933, Seely and Titlow bought the stock and moved it to their store on H Street. The Arcata Trading Post, owned by Mr. and Mrs. L.E. Holmes, was the next business in the building. It lasted at least into 1938 and possibly later. In the fall of 1942, the Greyhound and Humboldt Motor Stages depot moved into the old Post Office. A. A. Pialorsi temporarily used the depot for his Arcata Pump and Electric Co. in early 1946. After construction of his new building that summer at 10th and G, the depot moved with him to that location. Walt's Club was the next occupant, followed by the Boot Club about 1956 and the present business, Tiffany's, moved in about 1983.

The building at 735 8th retains its original architecture--pilasters; entrance pediment; and balustrade-topped cornice, lined with block brackets and dentils, identify the building's classic style. The recessed entrance is flanked by windows and topped by a row of transom windows. Restoration of this building would simply call for replacing the door with one more appropriate to the architecture and general facade renovation, otherwise, the building, architecturally speaking, is in good shape.

Unfortunately, the building at 725 8th has suffered rather major alterations, but the balustrade, corner pilasters and the basic form remain. Most of the front facade, i.e., windows, transom windows and entrance pediment, has been replaced with a brick facing and new windows. The building does, however, have restoration potential and with a little effort, it could once again look like its twin next door.

Historical and Cultural Chronology for 735 8th Street

1884- Odenheimer's Shoe Shop demolished and a new store built.

1893- Odenheimer died and George Marken takes over business.

1905- Marken's shoe business closes.

1907- U. S. Post Office opens.

1912- Addition added to Post Office.

1916- Building to the east demolished and Shoe-Shop-turned-Post-Office building moved to that site.

1917- New Post Office Building completed on west parcel.

1917- 1884 Odenheimer's Shoe Shop building remodeled to look like the new Post Office building.

1926- Post Office business moved to west side of Plaza.

1927- White City Market.

1928- New Cash Market.

1928- L & K Cash Market.

1933- Arcata Trading Post.

1942- Greyhound and Humboldt Motor Stages.

1946- Arcata Pump and Electric Company.

1946- Walt's Club.

1956- Boot Club.

1983- Tiffany's Ice Cream Parlor.

1987/88- Cost Cutter's Hair Salon.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Old Post Office Building is recommended for historic designation based on the architectural integrity of the building and its use as a civic and social building for many years. The following features need to be preserved or removed for Landmark Historic Preservation status:

Preserve:

- 1.) Existing Front Facade including four (4) Pilasters; transom lights; recessed entranceway; pedimented frontispiece with brackets; inset cornice with frieze, dentils, modillions, fascia and crown molding; parapet wall with six (6) small pilasters.
- 2.) Rear Facade including existing two (2) double hung windows with embedded wire mesh glass; and steel bars over the windows.

Remove:

- 1.) Existing neon "Cost Cutters" sign over pedimented frontispiece. Replace with a less architecturally obtrusive sign hung in store front window.
- 2.) Existing front door and replace with one appropriate for the period.

Should the building's front facade be restored, the following elements need to be replaced with the help of an architect, residential designer or contractor with restoration experience:

Restore:

- 1.) The side light on the east side of the entranceway to match the existing sidelight on the west side of the entranceway.
- 2.) The pilaster located to the east of the front entrance to match the existing three pilasters.
- 3.) Remove the existing doorway on the west end of the front facade and replace with a narrow, stationary, rectangular glass window.
- 4.) Remove the large, picture window on the east end of the front facade and replace with a narrow, stationary, rectangular glass window.



Project Site

CITY HALL

1" = 400'

AP-21-108-04
LOCATION MAP
FILE NO. LHP-89-06