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1/28/70

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington	
COUNTY: Whatcom	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Whatcom Museum of History and Art**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Old City Hall**

WH/194

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**121 Prospect Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Bellingham, Was**

STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53** COUNTY: **Whatcom** CODE: **73**

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/>	Private <input type="checkbox"/>	Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/>	Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/>
Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/>	Government <input type="checkbox"/>	Park <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial <input type="checkbox"/>	Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Religious <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Art-Culture</b>
Entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Museum <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scientific <input type="checkbox"/>	

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNERS NAME:  
**City of Bellingham, Washington**

STREET AND NUMBER:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
**Whatcom County Auditor's Office**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Whatcom County Courthouse**

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53**

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Replat of Central Whatcom**

DATE OF SURVEY: **March 4, 1907** Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**City Engineer's Office**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**City Hall**

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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sq ft.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/>	Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)	
	Altered <input type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building was completed in May, 1892, for use as a city hall. It was built on a sandstone ledge overlooking Bellingham Bay. The foundation is reinforced concrete and the main structure is red brick, with local Chuckanut sandstone trim. The roof was terne metal roof cladding over wood rafters and the present roof is a recent (1966) replacement of the original. The earlier laminated wood beams have been replaced with new structural steel beams and wood rafters during renovation began in 1966. The building has been found in sound condition by two groups of structural engineers. No bearing walls have been replaced, but some non-bearing walls have been removed in areas to allow for larger display galleries and installment of walk-in glass cases. Heating, plumbing, and electrical systems have been replaced with new materials. The basement and first floor; have been completely renovated, using as much authentic material where possible, or with tasteful substitution of new materials. The center bell tower, which was destroyed in the fire of 1962, has not been replaced yet, but it is a future goal. The original hand-carved wood staircase, panellings, and moldings have been refinished. Period chandeliers have been installed, and modern display lighting is utilized. The second and third floor renovation awaits further funds from private and public sources. In October, 1966, Bellingham was presented the Annual Award of the Washington State Arts Commission for its efforts to preserve and restore the old City Hall, now called the Whatcom Museum of History and Art.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/>	16th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	18th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	20th Century <input type="checkbox"/>
15th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	17th Century <input type="checkbox"/>	19th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Building completed May, 1892.**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Historical</u>
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Architecture</u>
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The significance of the old City Hall as a historic landmark is mainly as an architectural type and as a local heritage of our past. Built in 1892, during the last years of the Victorian era the building was in the center of the boom and bust times often common to newly settled territories of the United States. The first settlers had reached Bellingham Bay in 1852, and others followed soon after them. Alfred Lee was a late pioneer to this area, arriving in 1890. He established an architecture office, and began to design public and private buildings for the area, including the old City Hall, and some buildings of Western Washington State College in Bellingham, established as the Normal School in 1899. Bellingham was still a cluster of little towns, all seeking to outdo each other in growth and economic expansion. The western terminus of several intercontinental railroads had bypassed them, and the last of the gold rush miners had left for the Fraser River, British Columbia country. Coal, timber, and fishing were the remaining large industries in this area, and with the labor force they attracted, this was a raw town, experiencing waves of boom and bust with every rumor of new industrial interest. The construction of the City Hall was a major achievement during the "civilizing" of the area, and was the building where important plans were made concerning the future of this "Fourth Corner" of the State of Washington. At present, it is one of the remaining few examples of the late Victorian public buildings that has been left in relatively original condition in this area. It has been in operation as a public museum since the

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

(see Continuation Sheet)

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

city fathers vacated it in 1939, and has also become a vital community center since the renovations began in 1966. (A fire in 1962 essentially closed down the building to the public for six years, but a determined group of friends kept the idea going, and renovation has reawakened the public interest in the history of our community.) The first public opening after renovation was in June of 1968, with the comprehensive exhibit of the "Arts of a Vanished Era", an account of the Pacific Northwest Coast's early inhabitants, the Indians. This show closed in December of 1968, with a total attendance of more than fifty-five thousand people, and a new show of the early white settlement of the "Fourth Corner" opened in January of this year. The next show of historic interest, scheduled to open late in 1969, will show the contribution of the early industries to the rapid growth of the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Bibliographical References Continued:

Steinbruek, Victor. Story in "The Seattle Post-Intelligencer", Seattle, Washington, April 10, 1966.

The Oregonian's Handbook of the Pacific Northwest, Oregonian Publishing Company, Portland, Oregon, 1894.

The Whatcom Museum of History and Art, a brochure prepared by the Director and Staff of the Museum, containing an article by Director Susan Barrow, published in the periodical, "Museum News", March, 1967.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Mahlberg, Blanche. Story in "The Bellingham Herald", Herald Publishing Company, Bellingham, Washington. February 28, 1966.

Roth, Lottie Roeder, supervising editor. History of Whatcom County, two volumes, with Volume One being historical, and Volume Two being biographical. Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois and Seattle, Washington, 1926.

(see Continuation Sheet)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 48 45 10	W 122 28 48	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY** under supervision of Susan H. L. Barrow, Liason Officer

NAME AND TITLE:  
by: **Charlotte V. Schneider, Research Assistant**

ORGANIZATION: **Whatcom Museum of History and Art** DATE: **March 25, 1969**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**121 Prospect Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Bellingham** STATE: **Washington** CODE: **53 48**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

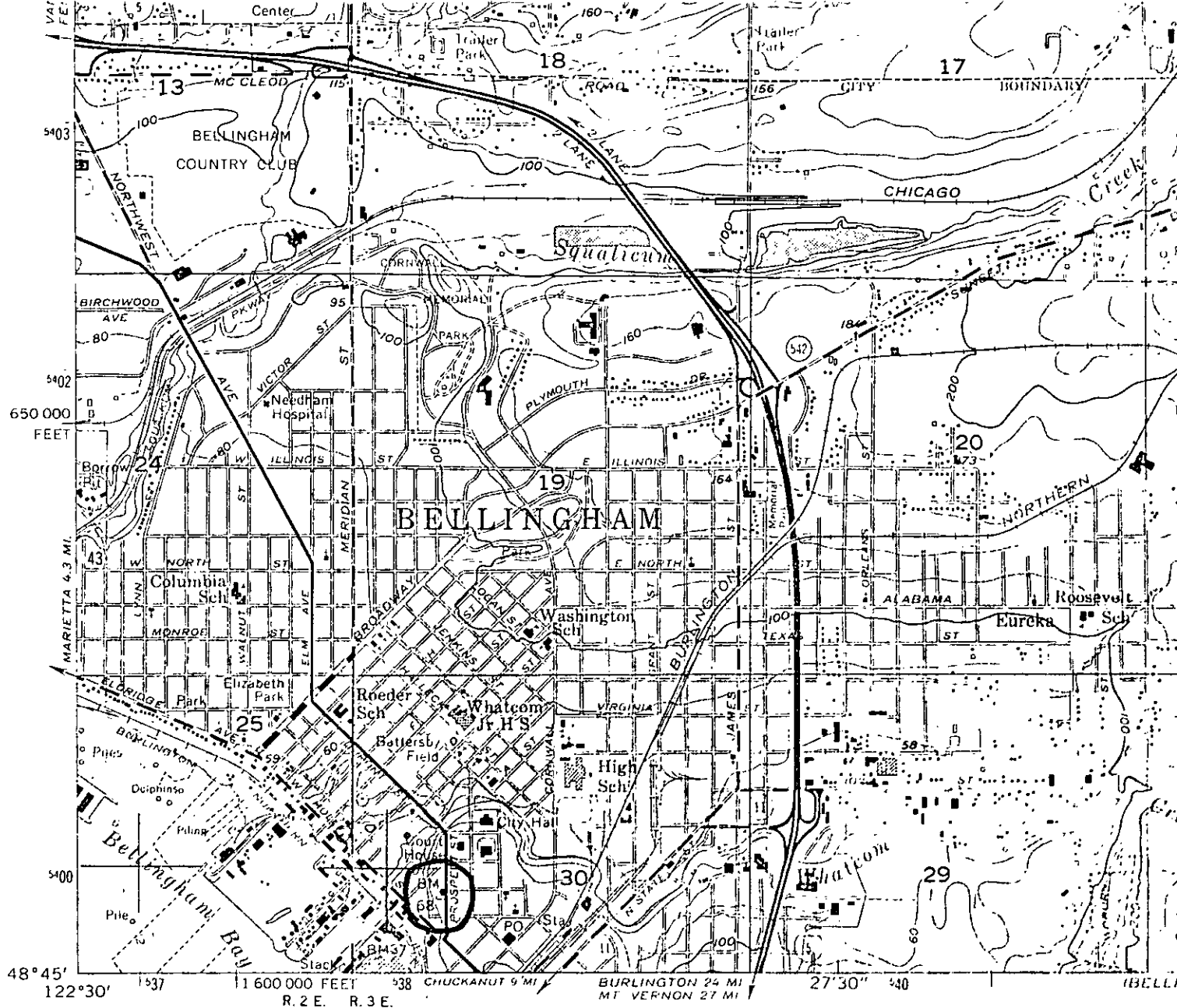
**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

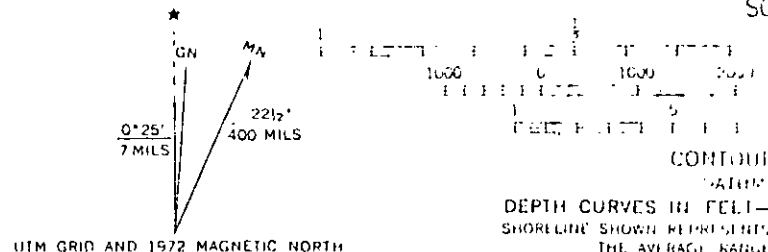
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Bellingham North  
 7.5 min.  
 Photorevised 1972



ANACORTES 1:62 5000  
 1481 II

Mapped by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USC&GS, International Boundary Commission,  
 and USGS  
 Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
 Aerial photographs taken 1949. Field check 1954  
 Hydrography compiled from USC&GS chart 6378 (1954)  
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Washington coordinate system,  
 north zone



UTM GRID AND 1972 MAGNETIC NORTH

DEPTH CURVES IN FEET—  
 SHORLINE SHOWN REPRESENTS  
 THE AVERAGE RANGE







TRY THE LEADER  
THE GROWING STORE  
FOR DRY GOODS  
M. J. FURNACE - CLACK

GO TO J.C. HILL



(3)

 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

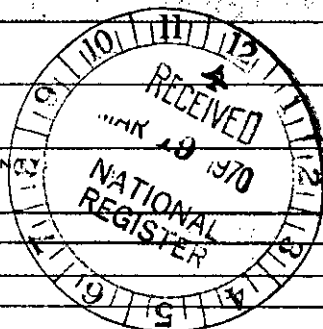
## PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Washington	
COUNTY Whatcom	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>			
COMMON:		Whatcom Museum of History and Art	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Old City Hall	
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
121 Prospect Street			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Bellingham			
STATE:		CODE	COUNTY
Washington		46	
			CODE
			73
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>			
PHOTO CREDIT:		Photographer unknown	
DATE OF PHOTO:		Prior to fire of 1962	
NEGATIVE FILED AT:		Mr. Galen Biery, 1023-13th Street, Bellingham, Washington 98225	
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			
<p>Interior view of second floor,, large room which was the original council chamber when the building was still the city hall. Now it is a museum, and the photograph shows the early displays as they were prior to the fire and subsequent renovations. The photographer is positioned on the Mezzanine overlooking the council chamber.</p>			





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 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

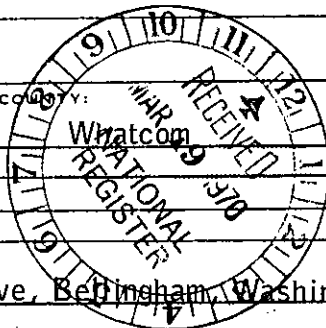
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AND/OR HISTORIC: Old City Hall			
<b>2. LOCATION</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: 121 Prospect Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Bellingham			
STATE: Washington	CODE 46	COUNTY: Whatcom	CODE 073
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>			
PHOTO CREDIT: Mr. Mark Flanders			
DATE OF PHOTO: Summer 1968			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Mr. Mark Flanders, 3912 Cliffside Drive, Bellingham, Washington 98225			
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  The exhibit case of new acquisitions in Gallery I is shown after the opening in June of 1968. Most of the articles in this case are from early pioneering families of Whatcom County. Our mannequins were made by Miss Karen Werner, a sculptress from Seattle, Washington			





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

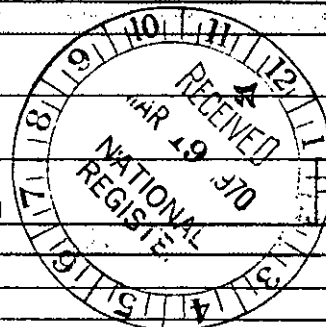
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STREET AND NUMBER: 121 Prospect Street			
CITY OR TOWN: Bellingham, Washington			
STATE: Washington 98225	CODE 46	COUNTY: Whatcom	CODE 73
<b>3. PHOTO REFERENCE</b>			
PHOTO CREDIT: Photographer unknown			
DATE OF PHOTO: prior to fire of 1962			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Location unknown			
<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. The Ella Higginson Corner of the Bellingham Public Museum is shown, prior to the fire of 1962. The display of Higginson mementoes was on the second floor, northwest corner, on the mezzanine. Ella Higginson was the poet laureate of the State of Washington, and she settled on Bellingham Bay in 1888.			





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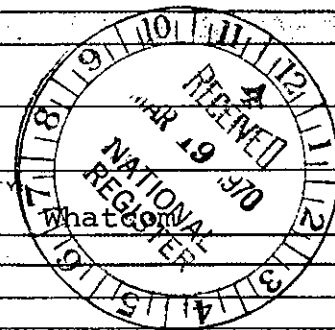
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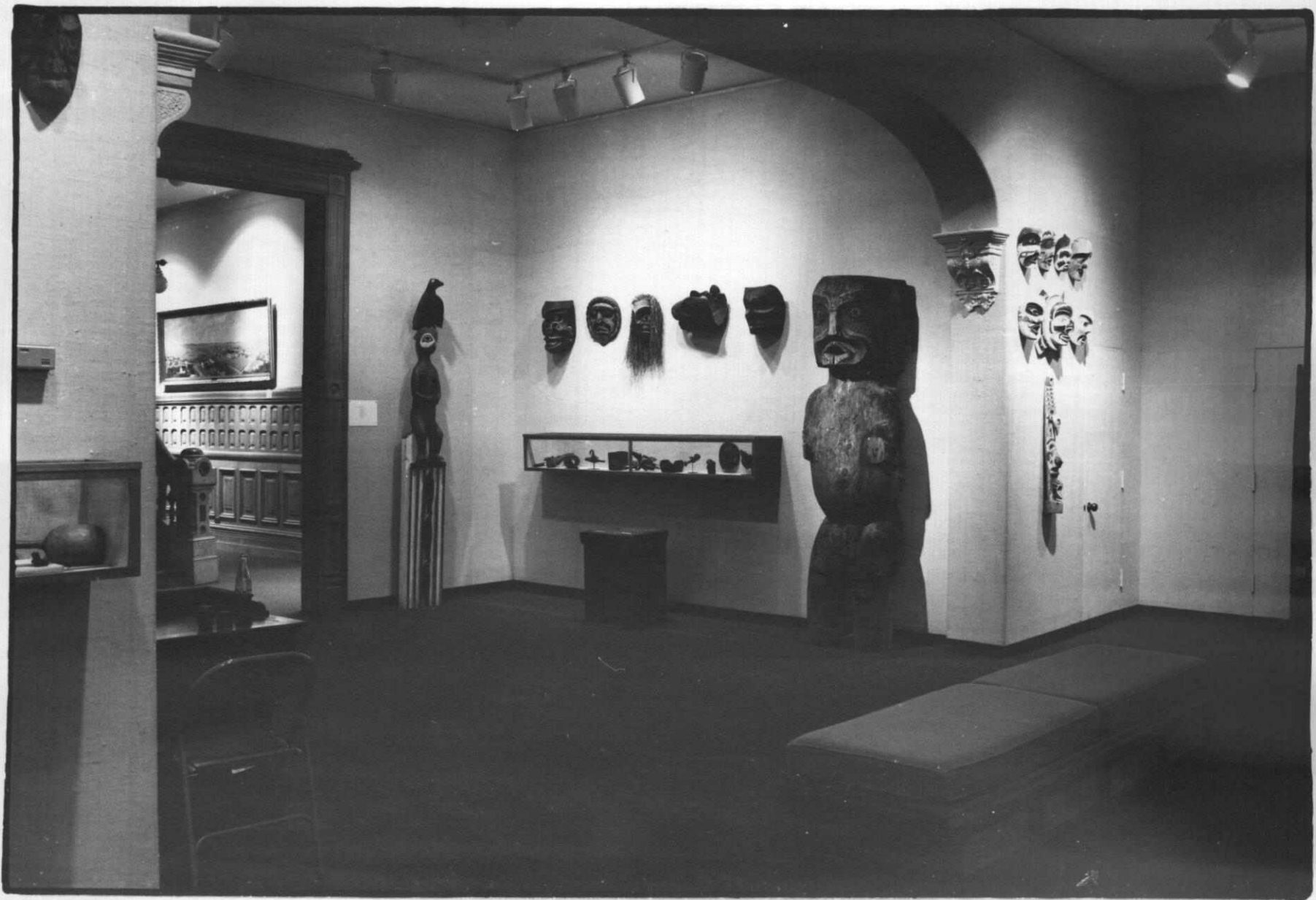
STATE Washington	
COUNTY	
Whatcom	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(9)

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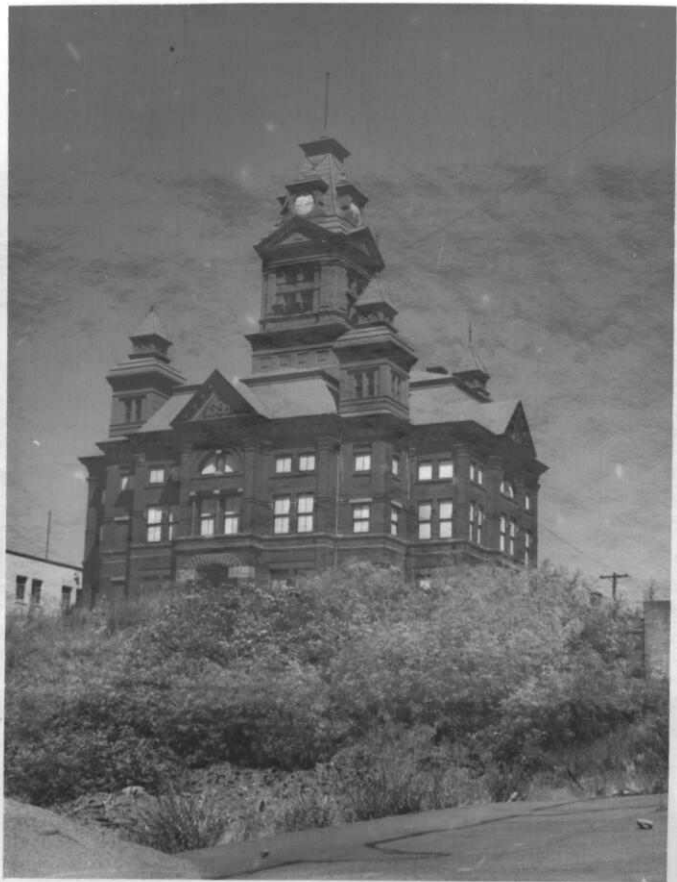
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<b>4. IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  Gallery V of the Museum is shown, after reconstruction and opening of the Museum to the public in June of 1968. The exhibits are part of the Northwest Coast Indian show, "Arts of a Vanished Era".			











PHOTOGRAPH BY  
WERNER LENGGENHAUER  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

JUN 13 1971

Bellingham early 60's  
VIEW N.E.



PHOTOGRAPH BY  
WERNER LENGGENHÄGER  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Bellingham City Hall  
AS IT WILL APPEAR AFTER  
RESTAURATION. (hopefully so)