

**Historic Property** Jeffers Studio  
**Inventory Report for** 500 Southeast Washington Street Olympia, Thurston, 98501

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**LOCATION SECTION**

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Historic Name: Jeffers Studio Field Site No.: 728  
Common Name: (#34-707) OAHP No.:  
Property Address: 500 Southeast Washington Street Olympia, Thurston, 98501  
Comments: OLYMPIA

County Township/Range/EW Section 1/4 Sec 1/4 1/4 Sec Quadrangle  
TUMWATER T18R02W 14 SW TUMWATER

UTM Reference  
Zone: 10 Spatial Type: Point Acquisition Code: TopoZone.com  
Sequence: 0 Easting: 507700 Northing: 5209840

Tax No./Parcel No. Plat/Block/Lot  
78502500100 Sylvester L1 Blk 25

Supplemental Map(s) Acreage  
City of Olympia Planning Department .03

**IDENTIFICATION SECTION**

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Field Recorder: Shanna Stevenson Date Recorded: 10/16/1985 Survey Name: OLYMPIA

Owner's Name: Richard A Panowicz Owner Address: 4040 Sunset Beach Drive NW City/State/Zip: Olympia, WA 98502

Classification: Building Resource Status Comments

Within a District? Yes Survey/Inventory

Contributing? Yes National Register  
State Register  
Local Register

National Register Nomination: JEFFERS STUDIO

Local District:

National Register District/Thematic Nomination Name: OLYMPIA DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

**DESCRIPTION SECTION**

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Historic Use: Commerce/Trade - Business

Current Use: Commerce/Trade - Business

Plan: Rectangle No. of Stories: 2

Structural System: Brick

Changes to plan: Intact

Changes to interior: Slight

Changes to original cladding: Intact

Changes to other:

Changes to windows: Slight

Other (specify):

Cladding Stucco

Foundation Concrete - Poured

Style Spanish - Mission

Form/Type

Roof Material Asphalt / Composition - Rolled

Roof Type Unknown

**NARRATIVE SECTION**

Study Unit

Other

Date Of Construction: 1913

Architecture/Landscape Architecture

Architect: Joseph Wohleb

Arts

Builder:

Engineer:

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places:

No

Property is located in a historic district (National and/or local):

No

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local):

**Statement of Significance**

Another of the most important of downtown Olympia buildings, the Jeffers Studio was built in 1913, one of the first works of Joseph Wohleb in a distinctive mission style. Joseph Jeffers came with his parents to Olympia in 1881. He worked in lumber mills as a young man and began an interest in Kodaks, cleaning and trading them until 1902. He then began work as a traveling photographer and returned to Olympia in 1904 to found his own studio, with his brother H. W. Jeffers. They first worked in a wooden studio at this site. Jeffers died and untimely death from a fall in the Olympic Mountains in 1924 while on a photographing expedition. His wife and son Vibert continued his work and created an excellent archive of Olympia photographs until Vibert's death in 1971. The Jeffers photographed state legislators, babies, weddings, graduations, businesses and all scenes of Olympia life creating an impressive archive of Olympia's past. Listed on the Olympia Heritage Register.

**Description of Physical Appearance**

The Jeffers Studio is a rectangular, two-story stucco structure built in the Mission Revival style on a poured concrete foundation. Its flat roof is bordered by a crenellated parapet with a central arch on the front (west) facade which has raised letters reading "JEFFERS STUDIO 1913." The front facade has three double-hung sash windows on the second story, topped by a wide tiled hood with ornamental brackets. The north wall has two similar windows with individual hoods; to the rear of the north facade is a tall, sloped window (now partially covered with corrugated fiberglass) recessed in the parapet, which admitted light to the photography studio. The ground floor has a wide storefront on the front facade with recessed double entry doors and plate glass windows with multi-colored tile kickplates. Above the windows is a flat metal canopy hung from chains, which wraps around onto the north facade above a similar window with a tile kickplate. The transoms above have been filled in on the front, but remain open on the north wall. At the rear of the north wall is another plate glass window and a side entry door. One of the front entry doors leads into a ground floor art gallery with an upper balcony, while the other opens to a foyer with a graceful curved staircase leading up to the former photography studio, now a shop. The building is maintained in excellent condition.

**Major Bibliographic References**

Hunt, Hubert, Washington West of the Cascades, S.J. Clarke Co., Tacoma: 1917.

"Olympia," Lee Printing Company, Olympia, 1926.

Maddox, Dawn, "Joseph Wohleb: resident architect of the state Capital," Landmarks, Vol. IV. No. 4.

**PHOTOS**



View of NW corner

taken 10/16/1985

Photography Neg. No. (Roll No./Frame No.):

26-21A

Comments: