TACOMA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NOMINATION FORM

This form is required to nominate properties to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places per Tacoma Municipal Code 13.07.050. Type all entries and complete all applicable sections. Contact the Historic Preservation Office with any questions at 253-591-5220.

PART 1: PROPERTY INFORMATION

Property Name

Historic Name	Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library
Common Name	Mottet Branch Library

Location

Street Address 3523 East G Street   Zip 98404

Parcel No(s). 2087270011	Legal Description and Plat or Addition: Section 09 Township 20 Range 03 Quarter 44 : Tacoma Land Company 1st Addition SE of SE 9-20-03E Lots 1 thru 4, Block 8727

Nominated Elements

Please indicate below significant elements of the property that are included in the nomination by checking the appropriate box(es) below. These elements should be described specifically in the narrative section of this form.

☒	Principal Structure	☐	Site
☒	Historic Additions	☐	Historic Landscaping, Fencing, Walkways, etc.
☐	Accessory Buildings/Outbuildings	☐	Interior Spaces/Other (inventory in narrative)

Owner of Property

Name Tacoma Public Library

Address 1102 Tacoma Avenue S   City Tacoma   State WA   Zip 98402

Is the owner the sponsor of this nomination? If not, please provide evidence that the owner has been contacted.

Yes ☒   No ☐

Owner Signature, if possible:

Form Preparer

Name/Title Marshall McClintock   Company/Organization Historic Tacoma

Address 701 North J Street   City Tacoma   State WA   Zip 98403

Phone 253-627-4408   Email marshalm@q.com

12/22

Landmarks Preservation Commission
Planning and Development Services Department

Nomination Checklist—Attachments

☐ $100 Filing Fee (payable to City Treasurer)

☒ Site Map (REQUIRED)

☒ Photographs (REQUIRED): *please label or caption photographs and include a photography index*

☐ Last Deed of Title (REQUIRED): *this document can usually be obtained for little or no cost from a titling company*

☐ Continuation Sheets

☐ Historical Plans

☐ Other (please indicate): _____

FOR OFFICE USE

Date Received _____

Fee Paid _____

Narrative (continued)

PART 2: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Extent of Changes

Please summarize the changes that have been made to the original plan, exterior, materials, cladding, windows, interior, and other significant elements by selecting the choices below. If the property has been previously documented, these may be indicated on the Washington State Historic Property Inventory Form. These changes should be described specifically in the narrative section of this form.

	Original Materials Intact			Original Materials Intact	
Plan (i.e.: no additions to footprint, relocation of walls, or roof plan)	Yes ☐	No ☒	Interior (woodwork, finishes, flooring, fixtures)	Yes ☐	No ☒
Original cladding/exterior materials	Yes ☒	No ☐	Other elements	Yes ☐	No ☐
Windows (no replacement windows or replacement sashes)	Yes ☒	No ☐			

Physical Description Narrative

Describe in detail the original (if known) and present <u>physical appearance</u>, condition and <u>architectural characteristics</u> of the site (context, location), exterior (all four walls), and interior. Please include a list of known alterations and their dates (use additional sheets if necessary).

See Physical Description, continuation sheet page 5

PART 3: HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria for Designation

Tacoma Municipal Code recognizes seven criteria of eligibility for inclusion on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places. Please select any that apply to this property, for which there is documented evidence included in this nomination form.

⊠ A   Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

☐ B   Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

⊠ C   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 may lack individual distinction; or

☐ D   Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or

☐ E   Abuts a property that is already listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places and was constructed within the period of significance of the adjacent structure; or

☐ F   Is already individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or

⊠ G   Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or City.

Historical Data (if known)

Date(s) of Construction   1930   Other Date(s) of Significance   1963, 1976

Architect(s)   Silas E. Nelsen   Builder   Standard Construction Co.   Engineer   n/a

Architectural Style(s)   French Eclectic   Material(s)   Brick

Statement of Significance

Describe in detail the chronological history of the property and how it meets the criteria for the Register of Historic Places. Please provide a summary in the first paragraph that lists the relevant criteria (use additional sheets if necessary). This section should include a thorough narrative of the property's history, context, occupants, and uses. If using a Multiple Property Nomination that is already on record, or another historical context narrative, please reference it by name and source.

See Statement of Significance, continuation sheet, p. 7.

Narrative Continuation

Physical Description Narrative

The 1930 Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library is located at 3523 East G Street in the McKinley Hill Business District and Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center. The building was recommended for listing on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places in the 2021 McKinley Hill Mixed-use Center Inventory Report. In several neighborhood surveys, the Mottet Library was cited as one of the historic buildings that defined the McKinley Hill neighborhood. Note that no interior elements of the building are included in this nomination.

Site

The 3857 SF building sits on a 13,000 SF parcel and faces east toward East G Street between East D Street (formerly the alley between E. Harrison and E. Morton) and East Morton Street. Behind it is a small parking lot (~ 6, 200 SF) that now is largely given over to four large mobile storage containers. To the north immediately across East D Street is the former 1920 parsonage (3521 East G St.) of Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church, beyond which is the 1906 church building itself, now Iglesia La Roca Church. To the south and catercorner across East G Street is the 1908 McKinley Park Methodist Church, now the Tacoma Indian Baptist Church (3526 E G. St.).

A small lawn area fronts the building and its south end. In line across the front of the building are four mature trees: two maples at the outside and two hawthorns to the center. On the northeast front, near the exterior door into the north wing, is a magnolia. At the southwest corner of the building by the parking lot entry is another mature maple.

Exterior

As built in 1930, this one-story, French Eclectic style, library building was asymmetric with a small hip roofed wing on its north side. Today it is symmetric with a compatible east wing added in 1964 and the north wing enlarged in 1976 to match the south wing. The steep hip-on-hip roof is clad in composition singles with the roof of each wing slightly lower than that of the central section. The cladding is brick. All the windows have diamond-paned leaded glass sashes.

Central section (1930)
The front (east) façade of central section is the primary structure from 1930. Its front and rear walls are about one foot proud of the wings on either side and are clad in a brick of variegated color. Decorative brick quoins project slightly from the corners of the central section's front façade.

The centered main entry is a front gabled, through-the-cornice dormer with a centered, inset entry. The entry is a semi-circular brick arch with a decorative soldier course surround and saw-toothed edge surmounted with a decorative brick header course hood. The brickwork here is quite remarkable. Recessed in the arch is a half-round, wrought iron decorative panel with the library's name. The entry doors are recessed further and consist of two-leaf, single-panel, glazed metal doors surmounted by a half-round window with curved leaded lights. Earthquake bolts are positioned symmetrically across the older central portion. To the left and right of the entry are two mullioned windows with leaded, diamond panes and sandstone sills.

A low concrete open porch with a plain, wrought iron balustrade stretches across the front façade from the north wing to the south wing providing a wheelchair ramp and separate access to the north wing meeting room. Three steps lead up to the primary main entrance.

The rear (west) façade of the central section has two small, mullioned windows set high on the south side. On the north side is a similarly sized three mullioned windows. Both sets of windows have sandstone sills.

South wing (1964)
The south wing (33 x 31 ft.) was added in 1964. It follows the design of the central section but has a slightly lower roof line and brick cladding of variegated color with somewhat more light color than the central section. On all three sides of the hipped roof of the south wing are centered simple triangular dormers with ventilation louvers. On the front (east) façade are two pairs of mullioned windows of the same height and width as those on the central section but with brick sills. Decorative brick quoins project slightly from the edge abutting the central section and the southeast and southwest corners as well as the sides of windows on the front facade. The south end of the wing has no windows.

On the rear (west) façade are a pair of mullioned windows similar in size and placement to those on the rear of the central section. Both pairs have brick sills. There are no decorative brick quoins on the rear.

North Wing (1976)
Expanded in 1976, the north wing (38 x 31 ft.) incorporated and extended the existing north wing of the 1930 building adding a meeting room and extending the basement. Also, the window on the original wing nearest main entrance was converted into a door for exterior access to the meeting room. Consequently, most of the north wing was re-clad with red brick except for a portion of the rear façade. The front (east) and rear (west) slopes of the wing's hipped roof features a simple triangular dormer with ventilation louvers. On the north slope is a skylight.

On the front façade towards the central section is an entry with a brick, segmental arch with a single-leaf, one panel glazed door and a glazed fixed transom in the arch. To the north about six feet are two separate windows of the same size as those in the central section with diamond-paned leaded glass and sandstone sills. Beneath these windows at the foundation is a stairwell to a basement door. Decorative brick quoins project slightly from the northeast and northwest corners of the north wing. The north end of the wing has no windows.

At the northwest corner of the rear façade of the north wing is a single-leaf metal door into the basement as well as a concrete stair with a plain, wrought iron balustrade rises to a stoop with plain entry with a single-leaf, one panel glazed door. To the south of this door is the original variegated brickwork of the original 1930 wing and its two separate windows of the same size as those on the front façade of the north wing with diamond-paned leaded glass and sandstone sills.

Interior
As might be expected, the interior of the Mottet Branch Library has seen considerable change over the years. The librarian's desk has been relocated, and the height of the shelving has been reduced. There is now more seating and space for computers. While the original western hemlock woodwork, trim, and trusses have been retained, the vaulted wood ceiling has been painted white.

For a detailed account of changes to the building, see the Building History Section in Part 3: Historical or Cultural Significance below.

PART 3: HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance

The Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library was built in 1930 with sensitive and compatible additions in 1964 and 1976. It is a fine and somewhat rare Tacoma example of the French Eclectic stye by noted Tacoma architect Silas Nelsen (Criterion C).

Being the city's third and second oldest extant branch library, it is strongly associated with the development of the branch library system of the Tacoma Public Library. It is also associated with the development of the McKinley Hill neighborhood. Additionally, the building is closely associated with noted pioneer Tacoma and regional businessman Frederick Mottet. Very active in civic affairs, in 1906 he became the first president of Tacoma's Library Board and again from 1926 to 1933. He was instrumental in the development of Tacoma's branch library system. He donated the money for the land, building and furnishings for the new branch library on McKinley Hill in memory of his wife Charlotte White Mottet. (Criterion A).

Lastly, since its construction, Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library has been an established, familiar, and much-loved visual feature of the McKinley Hill business district and neighborhood (Criterion G). Given these associations, the building is eligible for listing on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

The Mottet Branch Library is in the McKinley Hill neighborhood, an underserved area of Tacoma in terms of historic preservation, with only four buildings listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places: East 34th Street Bridge (1937 & 1943), Rhode Holgerson house (1890, 618 E 35TH St.), Engine House #11 (1908, 3802 McKinley Ave.), and McKinley Elementary (1909, 3702 McKinley Ave.). In 2024, the neighborhood lost the Gault Middle School (1926, 1115 E. Division Ln) that was proposed for register listing, to fire. Repeatedly in surveys and online forums, the neighborhood has pointed to the Mottet Branch Library as a defining building for the neighborhood and of the highest priority for preservation.

While the Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library has seen considerable change since 1930, it retains substantial integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The 1964 south wing addition is over 50 years old. The 1976 expansion of the original north wing is now 48 years old. Both additions were sensitively designed to continue Silas Nelsen's original vision.

Neighborhood Context – McKinley Hill

Following the founding of New Tacoma in 1873 by the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR), commercial and industrial activity grew up around what is today the Thea Foss Waterway.[1] Demand quickly increased for more industrial and commercial space around the east end of the waterway. In 1884 the NPRR's Tacoma Land Company made its "First Addition" to the city of New Tacoma. The addition, which includes the site of the Mottet Branch Library, ran from the Thea Foss to East Division Lane between Pacific Avenue to west and the Puyallup Reservation to the east.

The workers at the new businesses and industries near the waterway were eager for nearby housing, which quickly spread up the steep slope of McKinley Hill, making it among Tacoma's oldest neighborhoods. Due to the steep hillside, access to the hilltop was difficult. By 1894, trestle bridges had been built on East 34th Street across the Tacoma Eastern Gulch and the smaller gulch to the west, allowing access via the less steep Pacific Avenue.[2,3] Later Interstate 5 would bisect the neighborhood, separating it from the rest of the city.

McKinley Hill is the highest point in the city of Tacoma and takes its name from McKinley Park that donated to the city by the NPRR and named for President William McKinley following his assassination in 1901. In 1903 the Tacoma Railway and Power Company extended a streetcar line up McKinley Hill and along McKinley Avenue to East 30th Street. It was later extended to East 36th Street and eventually terminated at East 64th Street at the Bismarck neighborhood. Rapid development followed along the streetcar line. In 1904, the NPRR constructed the Northern Pacific Beneficial Association Hospital (demolished) for its employees at 801 East Wright Street just above McKinley Park.[4]

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[1] Hunt, Herbert. *Tacoma: Its History and its Builders*, Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1916, pg. 184ff.

[2] "Matters at the city hall," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 09/06/1893, pg. 2

[3] The shorter E. 34th Street bridge was replaced with a concrete bridge in 1936, The longer bridge was replaced in 1943. Both spans are city designated landmarks.

[4] "Building will begin at once," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 06/19/1904, pg. 4

McKinley Hill's public schools also reflect the rapid residential development. The 1886 Hawthorne Elementary School (519 East 28th St., demolished) was enlarged in 1913. The 1889 Bismarck Elementary School was enlarged in 1908 with the building of Sheridan Elementary (5317 McKinley).[5] In 1907 Rogers Elementary (1301 East 34th) was opened.[6] In 1910, McKinley Elementary (3702 McKinley) opened (now a city listed landmark).[7] In 1913, Lincoln High School (701 South 37th) opened (now a city listed landmark).[8] Gault Middle School (1115 E. Division Ln, demolished) would be added in 1926.[9]

McKinley Avenue between E. 34th Street and E. Division Lane emerged as the neighborhood's commercial corridor with many grocery, bakery, and butcher shops, variety stores, and drug stores as well as restaurants and bars. In 1915, Tacoma Public Library opened a storefront "station" at 3510 McKinley Avenue. Apartment buildings appeared along McKinley Avenue with the Post Apartments (now McKinley Apts., 802 East 34th Street) and McKinley Hall (3407 McKinley) in 1921 and Porter Apartments (3502 McKinley) in 1928. A popular destination was The Park Theatre (3510, then 3506, later 3508 McKinley), a vaudeville and movie theater that opened in 1910 and operated until 1961.[10] The neighborhood continued to grow slowly primarily along McKinley Avenue with small truck farms across the outlying area.

World War II brought a new population influx to Tacoma. In 1943, for example, the federal government opened the 2000 unit, racially integrated Salishan housing development to the southeast of McKinley Hill to house workers. Later it was transferred to Tacoma's Housing Authority, which eventually converted it to low-income housing, where more recently it would serve families immigrating to America. Starting in 2002 and completed in 2015, Salishan was redeveloped into a mixed-income neighborhood of 1,400 housing units, single-family and rentals.[11]

In 1943 the 43rd and McKinley Playfield Association was founded to improve the playground (now Verlow Playfield), building a clubhouse and pool by 1946. This would become the East Side Boys Club, eventually becoming East Boys & Girls Club, which continues today at the Eastside Community Center (1721 East 56th).[12] Many of the new residents stayed on following the war, and residential and commercial development extended further south of McKinley Hill eventually to Parkland. Timber and wood products industries flourished, and Boeing expanded rapidly with facilities nearby. Starting in 1956, Interstate 5 construction would cut through Tacoma. The Tacoma section was opened in 1962, but subsequent construction would continue for the rest of the decade. It would cut off McKinley Hill from the easy access it had to downtown and the Tideflats with its many industries.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, McKinley Hill, along with the city, experienced urban decline. The railroad hospital closed its doors in 1968, replaced eventually by a senior housing project. By the mid-1970s, the devastating impact of the Tacoma Mall (built in 1965) on the downtown commercial core and neighborhood business districts like McKinley Hill was apparent. Neighborhood shops struggled to compete with national chain stores. The National Bank of Washington branch that opened in 1965 was closed by 1982. The Safeway supermarket closed its doors in the mid-1990s. During the 1980s Tacoma was caught up in a wave of gang crime and violence, much of it centered in nearby Salishan and spilling across East Tacoma. This fueled more flight from the area and a decline in property values and investment. By the mid-1990s social and educational interventions had reduced crime.

More recently, the neighborhood has experienced a revival with an influx of new residents. The McKinley Boosters, organized in 1973, to carry out neighborhood improvement and historic preservation projects. In 1982, they staged the "McKinley Hill Recognition Festival".[13] The idea caught on and the first McKinley Hill Street Fair and Street Dance was staged in 1988 and has occurred every year since. Currently, the Dometop Neighborhood Alliance continues that work.

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[5] "Erection of new buildings begun," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 06/07/1908, pg. 22

[6] "Open Rogers school," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 12/15/1907, pg. 31

[7] "Erection of new buildings begun*," Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 06/07/1908, pg. 22

[8] "Lay new school stone on Monday, *"Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 08/31/1913, pg. 4

[9] "School opening to mark close of big problem," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 03/07/1926, pg. A1

[10] *Tacoma City Directory*

[11] *"Salishan, Tacoma, Washington." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 05/23/2020, //en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salishan, Tacoma, Washington*

[12] *Kaleidoscope: A History of McKinley Hill,* 1988, pg. 5-6

[13] *Ibid., 1988, pg. 1-4*

Institutional Context: The Tacoma Public Library [14]

The public library movement in the United States largely began after the Civil War. In larger cities, wealthy philanthropists often provided the money for large often monumental, centrally located libraries. These often operated on a subscription basis with little or no public access. However, libraries quickly became seen as worthy public amenities supported by taxation and free of charge. This effort received a major boost in 1883 when steel magnate Andrew Carnegie began his philanthropic effort to build public libraries in smaller cities and towns throughout the United States, Canada, Britain, and other English-speaking countries. He would offer to build and equip public libraries on the condition that the local authority would provide the land and a budget for operations. Ultimately, he would donate some $60 million and establish over 3,000 libraries.

Tacoma followed this pattern on a smaller scale. In 1886 Ms. Grace R. Moore started a subscription circulating library out of her house. By 1890 this library had moved to a space in a commercial building downtown. In 1893 A. C. Mason built and funded a substantial library of 7,000 volumes at 4203 N. Stevens (now demolished) that he donated to the city in 1898. The city operated the library for only a year before passing it to nearby Whitworth College. The first public library supported by city funds started in 1894 and was located on the fifth floor of the Tacoma City Hall building. Needing more space by 1901, the city began considering a separate building and applied for a Carnegie donation. The result was the 1903 Tacoma Carnegie Library at 1102 Tacoma Avenue South.

In 1905, the Women's Christian Temperance League opened a small library in South Tacoma. Their goal was to provide the young men working in the Northern Pacific Railroad Shops and other industries with an alternative to the many saloons in the area. By 1910, however, area families were clamoring for a larger, more accessible public library. In 1911, Tacoma's first branch library, designed by noted Tacoma architect George Gove, was opened at 3411 South 56th Street. It was demolished in 1958 to make way for a larger, modern facility.

Between approximately 1910 and 1920, Tacoma City Library would open temporary storefront branches called "stations" in various locations around the city. From 1915 to about 1928, the McKinley Hill library station was in a commercial building at 3510 (formerly 3518, 3520, & 3508) McKinley Avenue.

Jacqueline Noel at the city library was instrumental in supporting efforts for the Proctor branch. When she became City Librarian in 1924, she became the driving force in the effort to create branch libraries across Tacoma. In 1927, the Anne E. McCormick Branch Library opened in Proctor and in 1930, the Charlotte White Mottet Branch Library. Other branch libraries opened in other parts of the city under Ms. Noel's guidance.

Building History

From 1915 to 1927 the Tacoma Public Library operated a library "station" in a storefront at 3510 McKinley (formerly 3518, 3520, & 3508). Perhaps inspired by Anna E. McCormick's 1927 gift to fund the Proctor branch library, pioneer Tacoma businessman and then Library Board president Frederick Mottet (1854 – 1934) began discussions in 1928 for a new branch library on McKinley Hill. Mottet would donate the $9,800 (~ $182,107 today) for the land, building and furnishings for the new library in memory of his wife Charlotte (1858 – 1918) and the happy hours they spent horseback riding in the area.[15] Miss Jacqueline Noel, City Librarian, was credited with obtaining funds for the McCormick and Mottet branch libraries.

Tacoma architect Silas Nelsen (1894 – 1987), who had recently completed the Anna E. McCormick Branch Library in Proctor, was selected as architect. Whether specified by Mottet or chosen by himself. Nelsen designed the building in the French Eclectic style building to reflect Mottet's French Huguenot heritage.[16] Referencing older European rural buildings, Nelsen had the brick whitewashed except at the corners, giving the building an antique aspect. The building was small: the main reading room was 32 x 50 ft. with a small 14 x 32 ft. wing on the west side. The roof was clad in cedar shakes. Standard Construction was the builder.

By 1961, the McKiney Hill area had grown significantly in population during the post-WWII boom, adding many more patrons of the small Mottet Branch Library. The Tacoma Public Library board began considering an addition to the Mottet

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[14] This section is a summary of articles and summaries in the Tacoma Public Library clipping file in the NW Room of the Tacoma Public Library.
[15] "Library memorial to founder's wife," *Tacoma News Tribune,* 11/24/1970, pg. 3.
[16] "Will dedicate Charlotte Mottet Library," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 11/26/1930, pg. 1.

and Fern Hill Branch Libraries as well as a new library on Portland Avenue (Swan Creek Branch, 3828 Porland Ave., decommissioned 2011).[17] In 1963 citizens approved a $65,000 bond for additions to the Mottet and Fern Hill libraries.[18]

Local architect Ben Lee Wilson (1930 – 1980) was selected for both additions.[19] The new south wing would add 1200 sf. to the Mottet building. Berrens Construction was the builder. Construction was completed in April 1964.[20] The light-colored brick used in the south wing was a reference to Nelsen's original vision of whitewashed brick.

In 1974, the McKinley Hill Booster Club pushed for an expansion of the Mottet Branch Library's north wing to house a community meeting room. The Mottet Branch was the only city library lacking such a space. The projects estimated cost was $50,000.[21]

In 1976, local architect Bob Jones was selected to design the 2000 sf, 25 x 32 ft. expansion of the north wing. Leo Finnegan Construction was the builder. The design would include an 800-sf basement and meeting room as well as a small staff lounge, new restrooms, and a small kitchen area. The wheelchair ramp and entrance steps were added at this time. The $140,000 cost was covered by a grant from Tacoma Community Development and HUD.[22]

In 1989, the library building received seismic upgrading as part of the system-wide project. The earthquake bolts seen on the central section were added at this time. The parking lot at the rear (north) of the building was added as well.[23] . Seifert & Forbes of Tacoma were the architects.

In 1994 the Tacoma Public Library board proposed to close the library due to a citywide budget shortfall. McKinley Hill patrons and the Booster Association protested the move vigorously.[24] In the end extra monies were found to keep the library open.[25]

In 2011, the library's interior was remodeled. However, there were some repairs made to windows and exterior brick as well as a new roof with skylights. The library was receiving increased usage to the permanent closure of the Swan Creek Branch Library. The interior remodel included updating the restrooms for ADA compliance, installing wiring for computer workstations, lower shelf heights, adding lighting and sadly painting the Western Hemlock clad vaulted ceiling and trim white.[26]

Biographies

Silas E. Nelsen (1894-1987)[27]

Nelsen, who had no formal architectural training, had worked with the premier Tacoma architectural firm of Heath, Gove, and Bell for five years before starting his own practice is 1917. He was granted a architectural license in 1924. His first known project as an architect is a 1925 Tudor Revival style house at 2420 N. Union. However, he also designed St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church that same year. In this early period and through the 1930s, his designs were largely in the popular revival styles, such as Tudor and Colonial. His projects were mainly residential, but he also designed several libraries, churches, and commercial buildings as well. In 1930, he designed the Charlotte White Mottet library in the French Revival style.

By the end of the 1930s, Nelsen's work became more modernist with buildings such as Fire Station No. 2 (2701 Tacoma Ave. S.) and Fire Station No. 5 (222 E 26th St.), both listed on the National Register, and the Mueller-Harkins Buick Dealership (455 St. Helens) and the Johnson Candy Company Building (924 M.L.K. Jr. Way).

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[17] "Expansion of library held needed," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 05/18/1961, pg. 19.

[18] "Branch library needs cost nickel yearly," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 03/06/1963, pg. 1.

[19] "Trustees OK library pact," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 06/14/1963, pg. 36.

[20] "Special events for library week planned," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 04/14/1964, pg. 4

[21] "Wing for library given approval," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 03/21/1974, pg. 13.

[22] "McKinley Hill library will gain expansion," *Tacoma News Tribune,* 07/04/76, pg. 81.

[23] "Special events planned for library reopening," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 07/29/1989, pg. 10.

[24] "East side holds rally for library," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 09/25/1994, pg. 15.

[25] "2 councilmen hope to double police additions in city's budget, *Tacoma News Tribune*, 12/08/1994, pg. 20.

[26] "Mottet Library renovations to close branch," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 10/13/2011, pg. A4

[27] Houser, Michael. Silas E. Nelsen," Architect Biographies, 2007, www.dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/research-and-technical-preservation-guidance/architect-biographies/bio-for-silas-e-nelsen

In the 1950s and 1960s, he primarily worked in the internationalist style. He designed several new Tacoma branch libraries, such as Grace Moore, South Tacoma, and Fern Hill libraries as well as the 1952 addition to the Main Library (1102 Tacoma Ave. S.) and the Tacoma Public Utilities Center (3628 S. 35th St.). He also designed several buildings at the University of Puget Sound. He had a prolific career, designing over 150 residences, 15 churches, and five libraries. Many of his buildings are listed on the local, state, and national landmark registers.

Frederick Mottet (1854 – 1934)

Frederick Mottet[28] was of French Huguenot heritage, and his parents, Joseph and Phillipine (1816 – 1894), were living in Baden-Baden, Germany, when he was born in 1853. However, his family immigrated to the United States the next year, living in New York City. He had two older brothers: Henry (1845 – 1929) and Louis J. (1846 – 1878). Henry Mottet would become the Rector of the Church of the Holy Communion in New York City, serving in that role for 50 years.

Frederick attended public schools and entered the City College of New York City at 13. Whether by necessity or talent, he became a young astute businessman, entering the woolen goods trade at 16. He soon switched to the grain trade where he excelled, obtaining a seat on the New York Stock Exchange before he could vote.[29] By his twenties Frederick was becoming a wealthy young man. In 1879, he married Charlotte White (1858 – 1918), daughter of Charles White, a shipping merchant he met through business. White was a relative of Sir Edward White of the Cunard Shipping Line.

Mottet also had an early interest in politics. By 1883 he was president of the Young Men's Republican Club of New York City. He was also president of the 12th Ward Republican Club. Mottet, however, was a progressive reformer and opposed the corruption he saw rife in the Republican party of the day. In the presidential election of 1884, Mottet joined the "Mugwumps," a reform group that opposed the corrupt Republican presidential nominee James G. Blaine, in favor of then New York Governor Grover Cleveland, the Democrat candidate, who won the election.[30] His support for Cleveland may have been one reason he left New York for Tacoma. His anti-corruption reputation was certainly a reason he was urged to run for Tacoma's mayor three times, all of which he declined.

Charlotte and Frederick arrived in Tacoma in 1887. While his reasons for leaving New York City are unclear, he did not leave his business acumen behind. That same year, he bought out Samuel A. Wheelright's ownership in the heavy hardware and mill supply business of Wheelright & Hunt.[31] Under his leadership the firm grew steadily as the Hunt-Mottet Company into one of the largest wholesale businesses in the Pacific Northwest. Frederick assumed full ownership when his partner, Edward M. Hunt, died in1895.[32] The Hunt-Mottet Company would continue in business until 2012.

Mottet also became involved in civic affairs. In 1888 he was a founding vestry member of Tacoma's Church of the Holy Communion (demolished), for which he would donate two parcels for the parish house that still stands today (407 South I St.).[33] He was elected president of the Tacoma Chamber of Commerce, the first of three terms, in 1896. He also served as president of the Tacoma School Board. By 1906, he retired from the management of Hunt-Mottet Companay, and devoted himself to further civic activities.

In 1906 Mottet served as the first president of the newly formed library board, a position he would hold again from 1926 to 1933.[34] He would oversee the development of the Tacoma Public Library's branch library system. He would also serve on the Tacoma Park Board from 1916 to 1926, serving twice as its president. He is considered the "father of the public playground system" in Tacoma.

His wife Charlotte was struck by illness leaving her wheelchair bound for 12 years before her death in 1918. Frederick passed away in 1934. Following simultaneous funeral services in Tacoma and New York City, he was interred with Charlotte and other family members in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, New York

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[28] The first name often appears in Tacoma newspapers as "Frederic" but it is "Frederick" in U.S. Census records.

[29] "In memory of Mottet," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 09/30/1998

[30] "Declines to support Blaine," *Monmouth Democrat*, 07/03/1884, pg. 2

[31] "Dissolution of co-partnership," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 06/04/1887, pg. 6

[32] Susan Johnson, "Hunt-Mottet Warehouse," Nomination to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, 2013

[33] "New Episcopal parish," *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 01/01/1888, pg. 10

[34] "First meeting of new board," Tacoma Daily Ledger, 08/10/1906, pg. 7

Jacqueline Noel (1886-1964)[35]

Jacqueline Noel was born in Washington, DC, in 1886 to Jacob and Eleanor Noel. Jacob was a civil engineer and involved with mining businesses in Tacoma. Jacqueline would attend the Pratt Institute in New York City and graduate in 1913, after which she returned to the Pacific Northwest.

She would work as a librarian in La Grande, OR, and Portland, OR, before joining the staff of the Tacoma Public Library in 1914 where she worked as an assistant reference librarian. In 1924 she became City Librarian. Noel was the driving force behind creating the branch library system in Tacoma. She was actively involved in efforts to create a Proctor and a Mottet branch library, the first under her tenure. By the time of her retirement in 1947, more new branches were opening, and by her death in 1964, many more were operating.

Interestingly, Noel is credited as the originator of the name "Almond Roca" for the chocolate-coated hard toffee with a crust of almonds developed by Tacoma confectioners Harry Brown and J. C. Haley in 1923. Noel suggested using the Spanish word "roca" or "rock" for the candy. Almond Roca was selected to be distributed to U.S. military facilities during World War II and the Korean War.

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[35] "Jacqueline Noel" *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, 08/01/2019, accessed 09/16/2019, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacqueline_Noel

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Beautiful McKinley Hill Branch Library

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Will Dedicate Charlotte Mottet Library
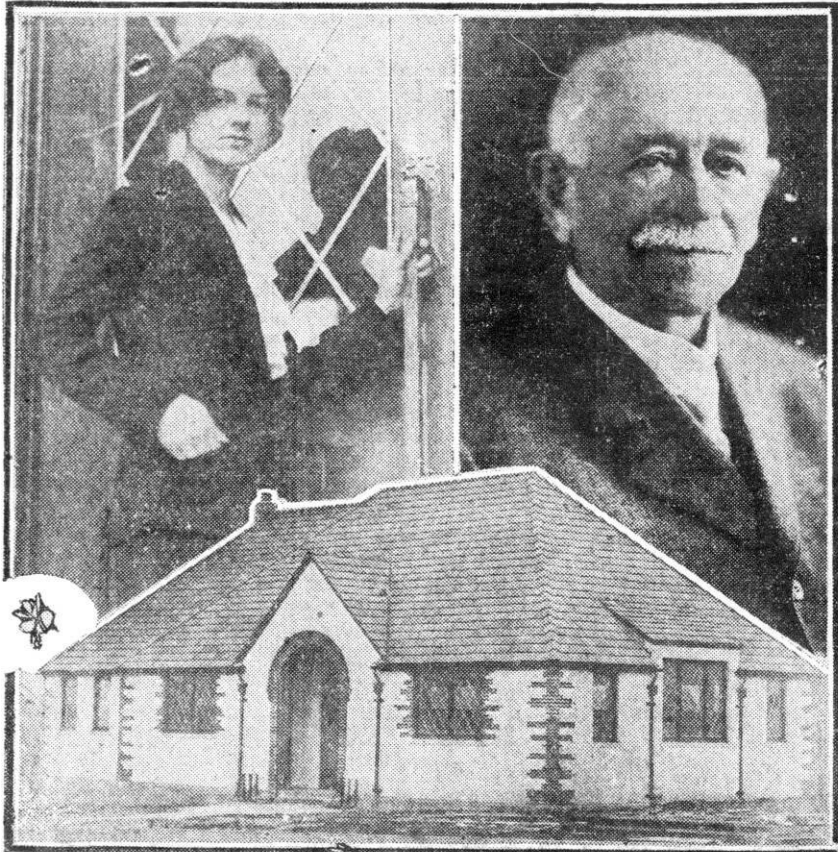
The recently completed Charlotte Mottet branch library, 3617 East G street, will be formally dedicated this evening at 8:15 o'clock, when Frederic Mottet, donor, will present the modern, French cottage type structure to the library board. The public is invited to the dedication ceremony, and the building will be opened for use Saturday at 2 o'clock. Mr. Mottet and Miss K. Doris Olson, librarian in charge of the branch, are shown above, with a view of the new structure below.

Figure 4. Dedication announcement, *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, 11/26/1930, pg.1

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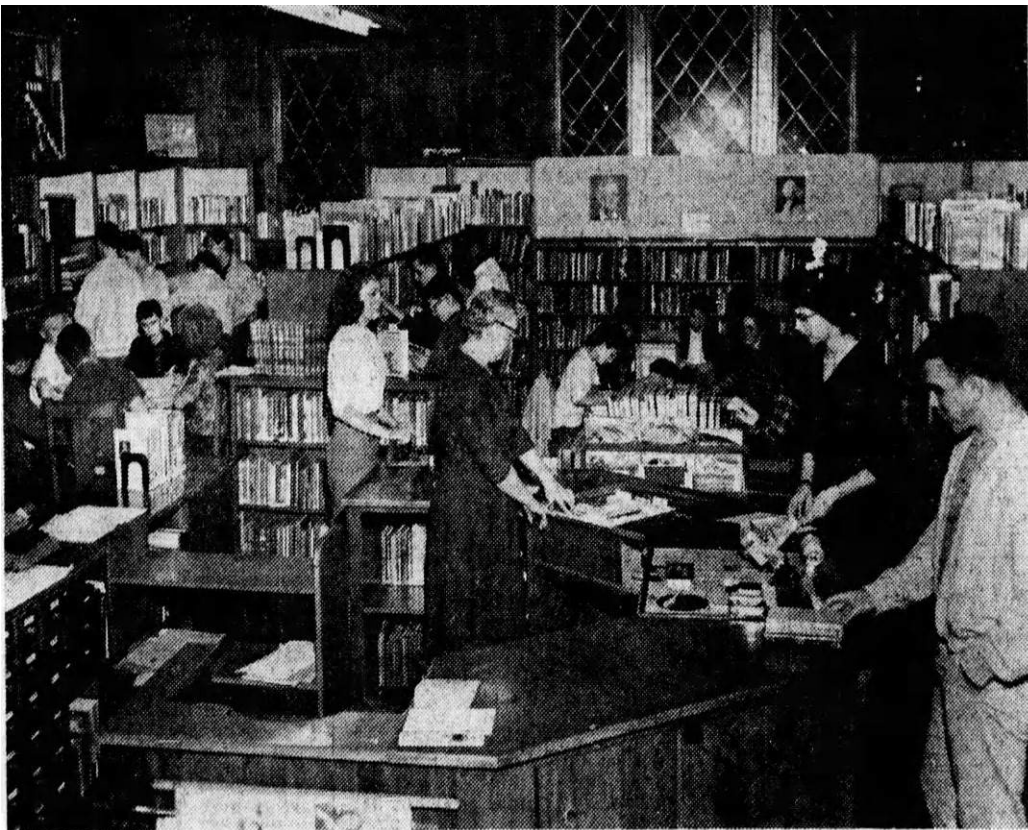

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CROWDED MOTTET LIBRARY
"Standing Room Only" with But 25 Chairs

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