



A Quick Check List for Learning the Age of Your House

BEGIN YOUR SEARCH USING THE INTERNET. If you are researching a house probably built before the 1940s, you may be able to glean some good information from an internet search.

- A. Check the Oregon SHPO online database to see if your building or house is listed. <http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/>. The easiest way to find information is to search under Milwaukie or Gladstone and then by street name. Most of the listings in the database came from surveys completed in the 1980s to identify likely historic buildings. Only a few of the buildings have been registered as a historic landmark. Be sure to look at the original “Inventory form” as there may be additional information of interest on it.

The database is a bit funky to use. It is also possible to see the reprinted surveys in book form at the Gladstone or Oak Lodge library. However, some updating of information has taken place in some online listings.

- B. Use the Clackamas County’s Surveyor’s database to learn the possible age of your home and other useful information. Go to <http://cmap.clackamas.us/maps/cmap>. Type in the street address of the house or building, and then look at the first section, “Assessments.” A date for construction of the building will be listed. It may or may not be correct – but it’s a good start. Sometimes the date listed relates to when a building was remodeled.

- C. Determine the date of when property was platted if you believe your home is the oldest or one of the oldest houses in your area. How does one determine the plat and the date for platting?

Again, go to <http://cmap.clackamas.us/maps/cmap> and type in address of house or building. Then open the “documents” section at the bottom right side of the page. Choose one of the listings – it may say “Plat” or just give a number. It may take several tries before you get the oldest document. If this does not identify the plat and the date it was recorded, try one or two of the adjacent properties and look for the same information.

It is unlikely any house was built prior to the platting of land unless it was the constructed by the owner of the Donation Land Claim or a relative. The Portland to Oregon City Electric Interurban arrived in 1893, and the building boom was on. Oak Grove was platted earlier than Jennings Lodge, in 1890, and the first plat for Jennings Lodge was filed in 1904.

If you are unable to find information giving date the property was platted, or the date of its construction, try looking the full Clackamas County Surveyor’s Information system site at <https://cmap.clackamas.us/ccsis/>. If you use this site you may need your Clackamas County Tax Statement.



SEARCHING FURTHER AT CLACKAMAS COUNTY OFFICES. If the building was built after the early 1960s, there are county offices which may have helpful information.

D. Perform a deed search to confirm initial ownership and thus the likely construction date.

Where does one conduct a deed search?

If the building was probably built after 1960, go to the Clackamas County Tax Assessor's office located in the Development Services Building at 150 Beaver Creek Road, Oregon City. The computers set up for public use allow a visitor to search for property ownership on a property built between the early 1960s and today. Try to pick a time when the staff is not busy (which is early in the day or late in the day, or during the time property taxes are being paid). Staff is always very willing to assist visitors when not too busy. However, it could still be necessary to look at the actual deeds at the County Clerk's office.

If the building is likely built prior to the 1960s, a deed search will identify the original owner and likely provide a clue about the date of construction. Go to the County Clerk's office in Oregon City located at 1710 S Red Soils Court, Suite 100. Be sure and check on the days and hours the office will be open.

At the Clerk's office, there are two ways to search: from the beginning, e.g. move forward from the date the property was originally platted, or if you have a good idea who owned the property, start backwards with that information. Allow time for the search. It does go faster with two people: one to write, and one to read the information from the microfiche machine. Take cash with you to pay for any copies of deeds you decide to print.

E. Perform a newspaper search for more information about the property.

There are several ways to search for this information. For access to the *Historical Oregonian*, one needs a Multnomah County library card or to visit a Multnomah County library. Another site, open to anyone using the internet, is maintained by the University of Oregon Library, <https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/>. Beyond those two, it's a matter of online research AND/OR visiting Clackamas County libraries, e.g. the Oregon City Library has local historic newspapers, as does the City of Milwaukie Library.

F. Talk to neighbors. Someone may know a lot about the property.

G. Discuss your project with a member of Oak Lodge History Detectives for further ideas. There may also be oral histories available, or locally available books which might contain information about the property. When the new Oak Lodge Library opens, there will be a space for local Oak Lodge history which will contain many of the OLHD printed resources being donated to the Library.