

Snohomish County Register of Historic Places

Register Application

Submittal of the completed application will begin the process of evaluation for listing a property or district on the Snohomish County Register of Historic Places. Please fill out the application as thoroughly as possible and attach any supporting documentation. If an item does not apply, please enter "NA" rather than leave a blank line. Please type or print clearly.

Return this application and supporting documentation to:

Snohomish County Historic Preservation Commission
Snohomish County Cultural Resources Division, Gretchen Kaehler
14405 179th Ave, MS 602
Monroe, WA 98272

I. Property Identification

Property Name: **Shannahan Cabin**

Property Address:

**Evergreen State Fairgrounds
14405 179th Ave SE
Monroe, WA 98272**

Property Owner:

Snohomish County

Property Owner Address (if different than
above):

Legal Description of Property:

Township 02 North, Range 06 East, Section 36

Tax Parcel Number: 28063600300100

II. Descriptive Information Regarding Property

Classification of Property:

Private
 Public-local
 Public-State
 Public-Federal

Historic Use of Property: Residence

Current Use of Property: Public education and living
history museum

Category of Property:

Building

Structure

Object

District

Cemetery/burial site

Historic site (site of an important historic event)

Property of cultural importance

Cultural or historical landscape (habitation, agricultural, industrial, recreational)

Age of Property: (Property must be at least 50 years old; or, in the event that it has exceptional historical significance, 40 years old)

The cabin was built in 1885 making it 134 years old currently.

If property is not 50 years old, list characteristics which contribute to exceptional historical significance:

The Shannahan Cabin is over 50 years old

Property Integrity: Please check all that apply

Location (building, structure, or object has remained on same site for 50 yrs. or more)

Materials (materials used in the building, object, or structure are either original or have been reproduced to replicate, as closely as possible, the original materials.)

Design (design of a building, object, or structure, or the buildings contributing to a district, have remained unchanged for 50 years or more.)

Workmanship (Building exhibits original workmanship; or if repairs or reconstruction of a building, structure, site or object have been or need to be carried out, the methods used as similar to the original construction methods as possible.)

Ordinance Criteria Met: Please check all that apply

(Explain exactly how one or more of the criteria (A-K) below is met in an attachment.)

A. Property is associated with events that made an important contribution to national, state, or local history.

B. Property embodies architectural characteristics of a distinctive and defined type, period, style or method of design or construction.

C. Property is an outstanding work of a recognized designer, builder, or architect.

D. Property exemplifies or reflects elements of Snohomish County's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering or architectural history.

E. Property has an association with the life of a person of documented importance in national, state, or local history.

F. Property yields, or is likely to yield, important archaeological information related to history or prehistory.

G. Property has been removed from its original location, but has significant and documented architectural value, or is the only surviving building or structure associated with a historic person or event.

- H. ____Property is the birthplace or grave of a historical figure of documented importance.
- I. ____Property is a cemetery which derives historical significance from age, design features, or association with historic events or possesses cultural relevance.
- J. ____Property is a building that has been reconstructed in a historically accurate manner on the original site.
- K. XProperty is an example of folk architecture and design which is creative and unique but which does not fit into formal historical or architectural categories.

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, application may be strengthened by the following factors: (Explain how in an attachment.)

1. Property has outstanding potential for teaching, research, tours, and public education regarding Snohomish County history.
2. Property is a good example of historic landscape and environmental conservation features and processes.
3. Property has unique and historic features and processes having future relevance to Snohomish County.
4. Property has compelling and irreplaceable bio-archaeological features (of plant or animal origin) and/or evidence of changing land forms.
5. Property exemplifies historic man-made land-form design and utilization, evolution, and compliance with legislated statutes.
6. Property has compelling features of prehistoric topography, and/or biological evolution for research and public enlightenment.

Present Condition of Property: Good

Architectural Style of property: Vernacular

Materials of Construction:

Foundation: Log

Walls: Hand-hewn log **Roof:** Cedar shake

Acreage: < 1 acre

Site characteristics: [Place summary statement here, with more detailed information attached]

The property is located at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. There are mature trees and some Ornamental plantings onsite. The Shannahan Cabin is accessible by the public.

Site Location Description (Access information if applicable):

The Shannahan Cabin is currently located on the Evergreen State Fairgrounds Park property which is public. The outside of the cabin is available for viewing however the interior is only available for viewing during specific public events and during the Evergreen State Fair.

Descriptive information property owner wishes to provide: [Place summary statement here with more detailed information attached]

The Shannahan Cabin is a representation of Snohomish County's pioneer heritage and is one of the only remaining intact pioneer cabins in the county that is accessible to the general public. It possesses an important association with the history of an early pioneer family, the Shannahans, and with early pioneer engineering, architecture and lifeways. Blanche Shannahan, one of the daughters settled in Monroe and had her childhood cabin moved to the Monroe area before donating it to the Evergreen State Fairgrounds as a public exhibit and educational display.

1. To what extent has the original appearance of the property been altered? : [Place summary statement here with more detailed information attached]

The original log foundation has been removed. The wood floor has been replaced by concrete. The rear of the cabin includes a lean-to porch cover. Historical photographs and statements indicate the rear part of the cabin was originally the kitchen and pantry addition rather than a porch.

2. What architectural features contribute to the historical character of the property? : [Place summary statement here with more detailed information attached]

Hand hewn logs

Half Dovetail Corners

Dry moss chinking

Split cedar shake roofing

Maps (Please attach a USGS map showing the location of the building, structure, site or district).



Period of Significance: 1967-Present

The period of significance for the Shannahan Cabin is the approximate 52 years from when it was installed at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds to the present.

Narrative (historic context):

The first Evergreen State Fair was held in its current location, the site of the old Monroe Poor Farm, in the town of Monroe in September of 1949. From a population of about 325 in 1902, Monroe continued to grow bolstered by successful lumber, agriculture and dairy industries. Dairies produced milk to be processed by two local creameries and berry farms thrived in the rich soils around Monroe producing raspberries, blackberries, and strawberries (Whitfield 1926). Agriculture was an integral part of early life in Snohomish County and in Monroe. Early fairs were held to showcase agriculture, livestock, dairy and handmade and home crafts such as canning, jam and jelly production, needlework and knitting and arts and sciences. Arts and sciences at an agricultural fair usually were limited to the latest advances and inventions in agriculture and animal husbandry but also included advances in personal hygiene products, beauty creams and lotions and home products and appliances.

Early fairs were held by granges and small towns or districts. Monroe held its first fair in September of 1904 as the Monroe District Fair showcasing agriculture, livestock and home crafts as well as entertainments such as horse racing, baseball and other sporting events (Wojciechowski 2004). Other small agricultural fairs were held intermittently until the Evergreen State Fair was firmly established as the regional fair. In 1949 the Evergreen State Fair ran for four days between September 8 and 11. By 1967 a 7,000 seat covered grandstand was built on the site followed by fire-proof horse barns in 1971. The fair run was expanded to 5 days ending on Labor Day. Additional buildings and upgrades have been continually added so that the fairgrounds could host year-round events outside of the annual State Fair. By 1997 the fair run was expanded by 7 days to its current run of 12 days, still ending on Labor Day.

When the Evergreen State Fair began in 1949, several of the old fair buildings from Monroe were moved to the fairgrounds. The Shannahan Cabin was moved to the fairground twenty years later in 1967. The cabin is an excellent example of an early Snohomish pioneer cabin and was built in 1885 by John Shannahan and later expanded to house his young wife Elizabeth Smallman. The couple eventually went on to have eight children, Blanche, Kathryn, Anne, Martha, Elizabeth, Wallace, Harriette and Robert J. Shannahan.

John Shannahan was born in Ontario in 1863. At 15 he left home and worked a series of jobs in logging camps, a brick kiln, on threshing crews and driving freight (Wojciechowski 2002). In the spring of 1880 he began working as a teamster for a freight line from Fargo to Winnipeg. John continued to drive freight until 1883 when he and two friends boarded a Northern Pacific train to Tacoma, Washington which at the time was the end of the line. From there he made his way to Seattle and finally to the Snohomish River Valley where he worked running a hop kiln for Charles Taylor of Park Place, which eventually became Monroe. Hops were a large cash crop in western Washington in the 1800s with the average yield of an acre of hops in Washington being 1,600 pounds (New York Times 1891). John Shannahan was much in demand as a hop kiln manager in the Snohomish Valley as his experience working in a brick kiln translated well to the hop kiln. John Shannahan worked for a number of hop farmers in the valley including a Robert Smallman. Elizabeth Smallman, Robert's daughter, became John's wife in 1889.

In 1885 John filed a land claim for 160 acres under the Homestead Act of 1862 and built a small, one-room cabin at Mount Forrest District, Township 27 North, Range 06 East, Section 35. The cabin was built out of logs hand hewn with a broad axe (Wojciechowski 2002). The cabin corners were joined by half dove-tail notching rather than saddle notching which was more common. The half-dove tail notching meant that not only was the cabin exceptionally sturdy but that rainwater that struck the top of the notch would drain out to the exterior of the cabin. The roof was clad in hand cut split cedar shakes. The final land patent was issued to John Shannahan on October 25, 1897 (Bureau of Land Management 2019). John lived in the cabin intermittently depending on where he was working. Prior to 1889, perhaps because he was thinking of marriage, John expanded the cabin to add another room on the south side and elevated the roof to allow for two bedrooms in a loft above. Around 1896, John added a new kitchen and pantry to the back of the house to accommodate his growing family. This allowed the old room used for the kitchen to become another bedroom. The cabin was close to a hillside and when the kitchen and pantry lean-to were built. "This caused a problem for (if John) had extended the roof for a porch covering it would rest on

the log wall that held the terraced land in place. So he solved this problem by making the porch high at the back, making a trough-like affair. To keep the rain off the porch he made the first gutter known in these parts from hollowing out a long cedar pole and securing it under the jointure of the roofs. A huge barrel caught rain water at the south end” (Shannahan ND). In addition to the cabin the homestead included a milk house, wood shed, barn, chicken yard and orchard.

Katherine Shannahan Shrum (1990) describes the cabin:

“The house was built in parts. The first part was fourteen by eighteen. Then in 1889 another room was added at the south twelve by fourteen; the building was made three logs higher and an upstairs of two rooms made possible. The stair steps were narrow and steep. A closet, the only one in the house was under the stair landing. under the lower steps was the wood box part. These two rooms had a ceiling of beaded lumber painted a French blue. The door and windows and frames and wainscoting were the same material and paint. The upstairs bedrooms were papered with newspaper. I used to lie in bed and count the advertisements for Cascarets. There were hundreds it seemed. The kitchen was very modern in that it was up a step from the living room. It was of split vertical battens and lined with the same material and papered with newspaper.”

Five of the Shannahan children were born in the cabin at Mount Forrest. In 1904, the Shannahans sold their homestead and moved to the Tualco Valley where they had three more children. The cabin was lived in for several years by the Shrum family before it was passed on to a series of hired hands and renters until 1912 when it was owned by the White family. The cabin remained un-lived in until 1936 when Blanche Shannahan became concerned about the cabin’s preservation. With the current owner Mr. White’s permission, Blanche had it moved by horse and wagon to her home one mile south of Monroe (Shrum 1990). The log foundation was found to be decayed and had to be removed which lowered the ceiling and windows from their original height. In 1967, the cabin was moved to the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. The cabin was dismantled and all logs and beams were numbered so they could be reassembled at the fairgrounds. The floor and roof were replaced in 1968. While the floor was replaced by concrete, the roof was replaced in a historically accurate manner with hand-cut cedar shakes. The chinking was replaced with dry moss which is also a historic chinking material.

The Monroe Historical Society, established in 1976, exhibits the Shannahan Cabin during the Evergreen State Fair and community events.

Physical Description:

The Shannahan Cabin is composed of hand-hewn, squared logs in a rectangular plan (Figures 1, 2 and 4). The roof is clad in split cedar shakes. The floor is concrete. Originally the cabin floor was dirt although it was replaced by a wood floor in 1900 (Shannahan ND). The log walls exhibit half-dove tail notching of the building’s corners (Figure 3). Half dovetail notching is somewhat less common than saddle notching and has benefits in terms of rainwater shedding. The roof overhangs to form eaves.

The interior room walls and the staircase to the second floor has been removed. The flooring for the second story has been removed on the north side. There is a remainder of wainscoting with cloth and wall paper above on the southwest wall. This area would have been the living room.

There is a porch on both the front (west) and rear (east) sides. The porch on the east side is in place of the 1896 kitchen/pantry addition (Figure 5). The porches have shed roofs clad with split cedar shakes and supported by hand-peeled logs. The porches are likely replacements in kind after the cabin was moved to the fairgrounds in 1967.

The cabin has four wood frame, double-hung, 4-over-4 windows. The windows may be original however the glass panes are replacements. The glass is uniform and clear without irregularities indicating that the glass is machine-made and dates to 1959 or after.

Significance Statement (describe how the property meets integrity and ordinance criteria for significance above):

The Shannahan Cabin was constructed over 100 years ago and dismantled and then reconstructed at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds in 1966-67. The Shannahan Cabin retains integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship.

The Shannahan Cabin has been in location as an exhibit at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds for over 50 years.

The design of the cabin has remained unchanged for at least 50 years.

All replacement of materials has been in kind or replicative of historic materials. This includes the use of dry moss for chinking.

The Shannahan Cabin retains the original logs hand-hewn by John Shannahan. When the roof was replaced in 1966, new cedar shakes were cut and hand split to replicate historic technology and workmanship.

Describe how the property meets the Ordinance Criteria for designation of the Snohomish County Register of Historic Places:

A) The Shannahan Cabin is associated with the evolution of the Evergreen State Fair which is significant in Snohomish County history. In the 1860s and 1870s the circus was the most popular entertainment (Sutherland 2000). The circus as a form of entertainment and escapism brought the exotic and unusual to an otherwise routine existence. Small and rural towns looked forward to circuses, which generally followed the railroad line, and annual fairs for entertainment. Early fairs were sponsored almost entirely by local agricultural societies and fulfilled a specific purpose; dissemination of agricultural information. "Exhibits of prize cows, pigs and the tastiest pies; and plowing contests all ostensibly focused attention on the merits of scientific farming: crop rotation, careful breeding, seed selection and proper fertilizers" (Sutherland 2000:259).

After the end of Civil War, fairs slowly shifted to amusements and a more carnival-like atmosphere. While there were still plenty of agricultural exhibits, science and demonstrations, the fair also included horse racing, snake charmers, weight-lifting contests, shows and shooting galleries.

Museums on the other hand supplied urban centers with the exotic in the form of curiosities and antiquities which were dubbed as educational exhibits. These early "museums" were less about the dissemination of science and history and more resembled the circus sideshow and included fossils, animal and human deformities, mummies, paintings, and fine china among other items. Some museums did exhibit artifacts of historical and cultural interest and promoted the educational potential of history.

Annual large fairs became a culmination of early fairs and museums. The educational aspect of both was undeniably an overlapping interest and the occasion of the fair brought in a large audience. Items of historical importance and displays, exhibits and competitions showcasing the traditional way of doing things i.e. log rolling, wood cutting, produce canning, spinning, weaving etc. This was both educational as well as competitive and allowed fair patrons to see and experience pieces of early life in their area.

The Shannahan Cabin was donated to the Evergreen State Fair in 1967 and quickly became a valued educational component of the fair experience showing the early technology and living conditions of Snohomish Valley pioneer families. The Monroe Historical Society was established in 1976 and in the 1980s began staffing the Shannahan Cabin during the Evergreen State Fair annual run adding to the educational and interpretational factors. In 2006 the Western Heritage Museum was added to the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. The museum, run and founded by Jerry Senner, allowed the public to have hands-on encounters with logging, mining and agricultural implements and equipment. Later on rope-making, gold-panning, tractor, wood-working demonstrations and other interactive displays were added. The Shannahan Cabin and subsequently the Western Heritage Museum secured the educational and historical preservation aspect of the Evergreen State Fairgrounds which began approximately 50 years ago when the Shannahan Cabin was moved to the site.

D) The Shannahan Cabin reflects the elements of Snohomish County architectural and economic history. The cabin is an example of the Euroamerican residences built by the Snohomish Valley pioneers during the early settlement period and reflects some of the first iterations of Snohomish County architecture. There are few extant settler period cabins in Snohomish County that retain integrity of materials and condition.

The Shannahan Cabin also reflects elements of early economics in Snohomish County. The cabin was constructed to fulfill the basic subsistence needs of the family. John Shannahan worked in many occupations to support his family. Much of their food was grown and produced at home with little extra money for store-bought food, luxuries or building materials. The window pane glass, metal fixtures, nails, wainscoting and paint were likely the only outside purchases for the cabin, excluding some furnishings. This pioneer self-reliance and thriftiness is reflected in the use of local building materials and the utilitarian design of the Shannahan Cabin.

K) The Shannahan Cabin is an example of folk architecture and design that is creative and unique which does not fit into formal architectural or historical categories. The Shannahan Cabin is an example of vernacular or folk architecture and design using local materials and innovation to resolve issues of rainwater dispersal, storage, heating and cooling. The Shannahan Cabin is notable for its hewn log construction. While log cabins were usually constructed with round logs, logs were sometimes hewn to provide a flat surface both inside and out. Constructed with half dovetail notching, the Shannahan Cabin provided a dry and sturdy residence for the family. Established corner notching techniques include saddle-notching, steeple or "V" notching, half dovetail and full dovetail. Saddle notching requires the least time and skill while full dovetailing requires the most. Half dovetailing, while not requiring the most skill and time was not the least complex and was probably chosen for its water shedding abilities. Other unique attributes included gutters from hollowed out logs and other rainwater conveyances.

Additional Factors:

1) The Shannahan Cabin is used for public education and the promotion of history and preservation. The Shannahan Cabin is a historic cabin originally built by an early Snohomish Valley pioneer, John Shannahan. The property has outstanding potential for teaching, research, tours and public education regarding the early lifeways and technology of early settlers in Snohomish County.

Bibliography

Bureau of Land Management

2019 General Land Office (GLO) Records Automation. glorerecords.blm.gov. Accessed 09, May, 2019

New York Times

1891 Hops in the Northwest. *The New York Times*, 22, August.

Shannahan, Blanche

ND *A History of a Homestead on the Western Hill. As built by a Lad from Ontario, Canada.*
Unpublished manuscript on file at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds.

Shrum, Katherine Shannahan

1990 It was Only Yesterday: Sponsored by the Monroe Historical Society. *The Cascade Community Billboard*, 27, September.

Sutherland, Daniel E.

2000 *The Expansion of Everyday Life 1860-1870.* The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville.

Whitfield, William (editor)

1926 *History of Snohomish County, Washington.* Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, Chicago.

Wojciechowski, Bill (compiler)

2002 *Shannhan Cabin, Local History Series.* Monore Historical Society, Monroe, Washington.

2004 *Snohomish County Fairs (1874-2008), Local History Series.* Monroe Historical Society, Monroe Washington.

Supporting Documentation

Attach photographs of property for nomination (required).

Please attached copies of any supporting documentation such as historical information, written sources (books, articles, newspapers), interviews (oral histories), etc.

Applicant Address and Organization:

Snohomish County Parks, Recreation and
Tourism, 6705 Puget Park Dr. Snohomish, WA
98272

Gretchen Kaehler _____

Please Print



Applicant Signature

5/30/2019 _____

Date of application

For Commission use only:

I certify that the Snohomish County Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed the following application for the following nomination and that the property meets criteria to be listed in the Snohomish County Register of Historic Places.

Shannahan Cabin-SCRHP-001 _____
Nomination and Designation



Snohomish County CLG Coordinator

June 20, 2019 _____
Date



Figure 1. Shannahan Cabin west façade (view northeast)



Figure 2. Shannahan Cabin east façade (view west)



Figure 3. Half dovetail notching southwest corner



Figure 4. Hand hewn log detail (west façade)



Figure 5. Sketch of original Shannahan Cabin showing kitchen addition.



Merry Christmas to
John and Elizabeth Erickson
In memory of John & Elizabeth Shannahan
by Blanche Shannahan
10 Dec 1914

Figure 6. Undated Shannahan Cabin photo in original location. Likely around 1900.



Figure 7. Cabin interior detail (east wall)



Figure 8. Cabin interior (view north)



Figure 9. John and Elizabeth Shannahan, 1889