



Community Planning & Economic Development

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Thurston County Historic Register Nomination Form

This form is required to nominate properties to the Thurston County Historic Register of Historic Places. Type all entries and complete all applicable sections. Contact the Historic Preservation Office with any questions at 360-867-2117.

Staff Use Only	Date Stamp
LABEL	

PROPERTY INFORMATION

1. Historic Property Name: Mima Prairie Cemetery
2. Historic Property Address: 15025 Mima Road, Olympia, WA 98512
3. Tax Parcel Number: 09550005090

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Owner: Thurston County Parks Email:

Address: 9605 Tilley Road S, Box D, Olympia, WA 98512

Signature: _____ Date: _____

FORM PREPARER

Name: Shanna Stevenson Phone: 360-798-8778 Email: heritageservicesolympia@hotmail.com

Address: 3515 Kensington Ct. SE City: Olympia State: WA Zip Code: 98501

Signature: _____ Date: August, 2024

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.

<input type="checkbox"/> Principal Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Historic Additions	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessory Buildings/Outbuildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior Spaces/Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Landscaping, Fencing, Walkways, etc.

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

Plan (i.e.: no additions to footprint , relocation of walls, or roof plan)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Original cladding/exterior materials	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Windows (no replacement windows or replacement sashes)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Interior (woodwork, finishes, flooring, fixtures)	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Other elements	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION NARRATIVE

Describe in detail the original (if known) and present physical appearance, condition and architectural characteristics 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)

The cemetery is located on a 2.28 wooded plot within the Weyerhaeuser Tree Farm. It is reached down a dirt road from Mima Road. There is an entry sign which reads "Mima Pioneer Cemetery, Deeded to Thurston County in 1869, By John and Polly Laws. Maintained by Weyerhaeuser Corp.,. For Information contact Thurston County Parks at 360-786-5595." There is also a sign with the names of those interred with birth and death dates as well as a plot map.

The cemetery is an open grass area with several large Douglas fir and apple trees along with lilac and other bushes. Some of the family grave sites are enclosed with metal mesh fencing and also wrought iron fencing. Some gravesites have concrete curbs. Most of the markers are granite. The Laws marker is metal. There are a few flush stones but mostly upright markers which are mostly located near the entry road. The markers generally are in fair condition, with several broken markers.

These are the features that contribute to the property's historical significance and which should be preserved and maintained as it is kept up over the years.

Historic Features from Thurston County Historic Register Listing

1. 2.28 acres cemetery on John Laws Donation Land Claim
2. Historic tombstones; historic orchard trees, and Douglas fir trees.

HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

The County Historic Register recognizes properties that are at least 50 years old (or of lesser age if of exceptional importance), and which are important for one or more of the following reasons:

- xHistorical Importance -- the property is: the site of an historic event with an effect upon society; identified with a person or group who had some influence on society; or exemplifies the cultural, social, religious, economic, political, aesthetic or engineering history of the county.
Architectural Importance -- the property is: (a) an individual building that embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type, period, style or method of design or construction; is the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the county; or (b) a group of buildings that may lack distinction individually but together are easily distinguished as a unit and characterize an earlier era, way of living, and construction of the built environment.
- Archaeological Importance -- the property has yielded or may be likely to yield archaeological information important in pre-history or history.
- xBirthplaces, Graves , Cemeteries -- the property is: a birthplace or grave of a person of outstanding historical importance; or a cemetery significant because of its age, distinctive design features or association with historic events or cultural patterns.

HISTORICAL DATA (IF KNOWN)

Date of Construction established in 1869 Other Significant Dates: _____

Architects: _____ Builder: _____

Architectural Styles: _____

Materials: _____

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.

The Mima Prairie Pioneer Cemetery, located on 2.28 acres of the John and (Mary) Polly Goen Laws Donation Land Claim, is historically significant and is listed on the Thurston County Historic Register. John Laws was from South Carolina and Mary Goen Laws was from Virginia. They married in Illinois in either 1821 or 1822. They came from Lawrence County, Illinois to Vancouver in 1852 then to Olympia in 1853 where they kept a hotel for a time. They filed for 320 acre Donation Land Claim in 1854. The 1860 census list John Laws as a farmer. Although it is known that there were at least two internments in the cemetery before 1869, the Laws deeded the site to the county in 1869.

Among the interments are John Laws and his wife Mary Goen Laws, William Packwood and his wife Rhoda Prothero Packwood, Jacob and Samatha Packwood Croll and the first wife of Robert Bruce Dodge, Mary Shaser. The first burial was in 1864. A comprehensive history of the cemetery, including obituaries, was done by Linda Howerton in 1990, published by the Thurston County Historic Commission. At that time there were 47 recognized burials. Subsequently, according the Find a Grave Site for the cemetery, there are another 11 burials, including some scattering of ashes. Several of the internments were identified by obituaries, although there are no extant markers. Others are markers discovered or installed since 1990. Those additions to the 1990 publication, per the Find a Grave site are listed below.

The cemetery represents a distinctive part of Thurston County's past as early immigrant settlers sought to honor their dead by setting aside land on their own farms so that they could be buried near their homes and families. Placed on the Thurston County Historic Register in 1989. The cemetery was closed to burials in 2011. Major work to clean the cemetery was done in 1990 and the cemetery was again cleaned in 2016 and in 2017. The cemetery information has been submitted to DAHP for the state cemetery database.

Cemetery Burials (* indicates a marker)

*BURGER, GLENNY 1902-1909
*BURGER, NORMAN d.1889
*BURGER, OCIAI 1896-1909
*CLARK, E.S. 1876-1912
*CLARK, EBER 1876-1940
*CROLL, GEORGE 1868-1909
*CROLL, JACOB 1828-1886
*CROLL, SAMANTHA 1836-1920
*DOANE, MABEL 1880-1906
*DODGE, ALACE 1866-1866
*DODGE, B.R. 1871-1871
*DODGE, MARY & JULIUS (baby) d. 1876
*DURHAM, SARAH JANE LANGLEY 1856-1915
*FARQUHAR, WILLIAM 1916-1979
*GIBSON, NINA 1896-1929
*KERBER, JOHN 1864-1907
*KERBER, VERLAND 1900-1901
*LAWS, JOHN d. 1871
*LAWS, MARY (POLLY) d.1886
*LAWS, SARA 1843-1873
*LOVERING, THAD 1894-1973
*LOZIER, CORNELIUS 1883-1906
*MARCY, LUCELIA E. d. 1864
*McKAY, MARY 1859-1893
*McKAY, ANDREW 1849-1913
*McKAY, EGBERT 1881-1902
*McPHERSON, HAZEL 1894-1901
*PACKWOOD, RHODA PROTHERO 1818-1899
*PACKWOOD, WILLIAM 1813-1897
*PORTER, IDA C. 1858-1917
*SARE, JOHN 1852-1901
*SCHRIVER, DAISEY d. 1901
*SHOTWELL, EMMA 1874-1874
*SMITH, JAMES 1857-1914
*STOLTENBERG, MATHILDA 1849-1909
*STUBBS, JAMES (baby) d.1924
*TAYLOR, BERTHA 1875-1915
TRYSLER, ESTELLA 1871-1943
*WATSON, DAVID 1902-1909
*WATSON, EZRA 1896?-1901

*WATSON, IRA 1884-1906
*WATSON, JEFFERSON 1855-1930
*WATSON, RHODA 1864-1944
*WILLETT, ALONZO 1858-1932
*WILLETT, BERTHA 1895-1906
*WILLETT, JOSEPH 1833-1923

UNKNOWN DATES
INFANT (KERBER)

Additional Burials per Mima Cemetery Find A Grave:

Rose Mary J. Brandli Anderson, September 8, 1869- February 9, 1914. (no documentation)
Ann E. O'Dell Armstrong, 1855-October 25, 1897. Obituary
Ora Burger, August 10, 1885-March 25, 1915 (no documentation)
*Milton Bruce Dodge, January 8, 1898- November 7, 1990 (marker)
*Sylvia Irene Jenkins Dodge, January 6, 1906-April 17, 1991(marker)
Adell Cheryl Teeter Hembry, January 9, 1914-January 12, 2019 (ashes?)
Glenn Marshal Hembry, January 12, 1969-January 4, 1994 (ashes?)
*Ella F. Kerber Huston, January 28, 1874- January 11, 1930 (on the back of marker for husband John Kerber)
Glenn January, January 1, 1901-January 1, 2001 (no documentation)
William Alexander "Bill" January, July 7, 1875-January 21, 1927 (no documentation)
Thomas Laws, April 25, 1837-May 28, 1905 (obituary)
*Lottie Kerber Lovering, March 21, 1895-December 12, 1989 (marker)
Nicholas Polynsky, d. January 22, 1906 (obituary)
Infant Stephens, February 9, 1914-February 13, 1914 (obituary)
Glen Elton Wallace, May 3, 1920-June 6, 1920 (obituary)

Bibliography:

Linda Howerton, ed. "Mima Prairie Pioneer Cemetery", Thurston County Historic Commission, 1990.

Deed from John and Polly Laws to Thurston County,
Thurston County Deeds, Volume 6, Page 503.

<https://www.chronline.com/stories/preserving-history-at-mima-prairie-pioneer-cemetery,51449>

<https://www.thurstontalk.com/2016/06/08/mima-pioneer-cemetery/>

<https://www.thurstontalk.com/2017/05/22/thurston-realtors-help-local-seniors-and-refresh-historic-cemetery/>

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2242739/mima-prairie-pioneer-cemetery>

Thurston County Pioneers Before 1870 Collection:

Laws: <https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/pioneers/id/315/rec/1>

Croll: <https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/pioneers/id/303/rec/2>

Packwood: <https://www.washingtonruralheritage.org/digital/collection/pioneers/id/10/rec/2>

["United States Census, 1860", , FamilySearch \(https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MC6W-82F : Tue Jul 09 00:21:20 UTC 2024\), Entry for Jno Laws and Mary Laws, 1860.](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MC6W-82F)