

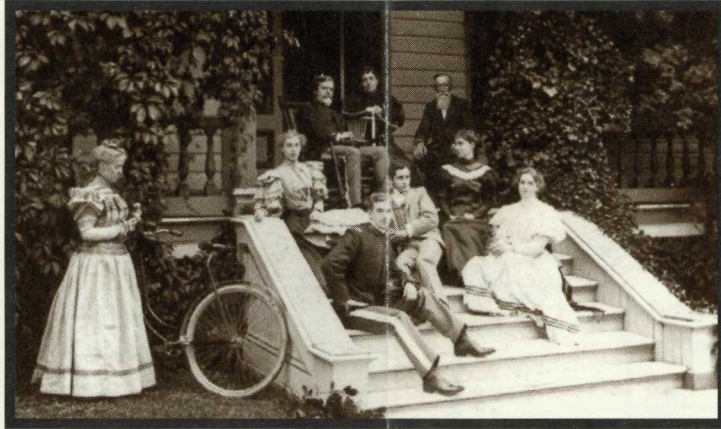
General O.O. Howard House



## General O.O. Howard House

O.O. Howard – a Civil War recipient of the Medal of Honor, a proponent of higher education for African Americans and a leading founder of Howard University in Washington, D.C. – ordered this house built in August 1878. Howard served as Commander of the Department of the Columbia from 1874-1880. During the last two years of his assignment, he lived here with his wife, Elizabeth and six youngest children.

The *Vancouver Independent* described General Howard's new home, which was equipped with a telephone, as "the finest dwelling house north of



General Thomas M. Anderson Family HH Neg #96100

the Columbia." Howard recalled in his *Autobiography* that when he and Lizzie moved in the second week of January 1879, they occupied it with "comfort and satisfaction."

This graceful residence saw many social events during its early years. General Howard's oldest daughter, Grace, married riverboat captain, James T. Gray here in the west parlor on September 17, 1879. It was a large and elaborate wedding. General U.S. Grant visited October 13, 1879 near the conclusion of his round-the-world tour with his wife, Julia. The following year (Oct. 1-3), Howard welcomed U. S. President Rutherford B. Hayes who stayed two nights.

Typical of Commander's domiciles throughout the United States, the house included work rooms and servant quarters at the rear. The building plans indicated \$10,000 was

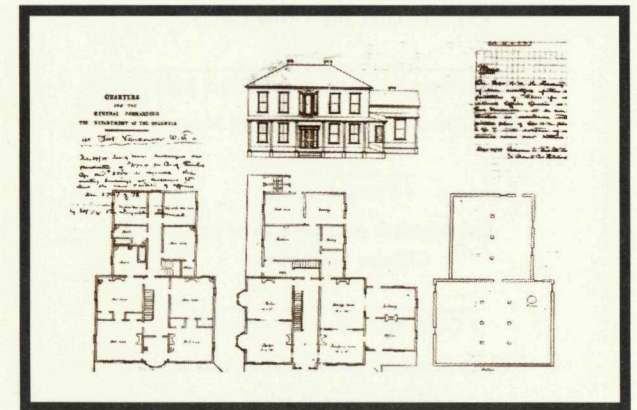
authorized for construction. J. T. Goss of Vancouver was the contractor. After 1887, when the Commander of the Department of the Columbia occupied what we now call the Marshall House, this became the residence of the Post Commander. Colonel Thomas M. Anderson, Post Commander, moved in with his wife Lizzie in 1887 and lived here with their four daughters and two sons until 1898.

The Army made alterations to the structure in 1934, to accommodate housing for several officers. Major remodeling occurred during World War II to enlarge the building for use as an Officers' Club. A fire in 1986 left it vacant. The City of Vancouver completed renovating the house in 1998 to use as a visitor center for the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

## One Place Across Time Exhibit at the O.O. Howard House

The exhibit presents a chronological view of this historic site (the Vancouver National Historic Reserve) over time through stories of individuals and events reflecting themes that position it in a broader perspective. The stories reflect the contributions of many women and men who lived and worked here, in a landscape remarkably unchanged in the last 150 years.

Offices that support the educational purpose of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve are located on the second floor of the Howard House. These include the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust, the Center for Columbia River History, a City of Vancouver office and the National Park Service, which operates an interpretive program at the Howard House.



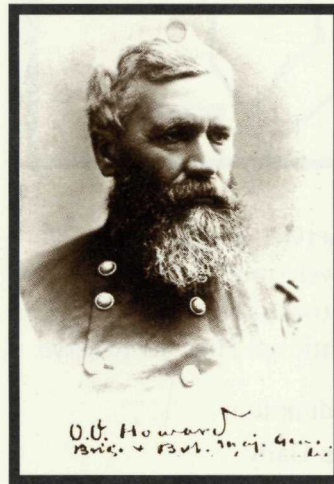
Original floor plan of house, 1878. HH Neg #98124

## General O.O. Howard 1830-1909

Howard, known as Otis, was born November 8, 1830 in Leeds, Maine. Attending Bowdoin College and West Point, he spent his entire career in the U.S. Army, save for a few years following the Civil War. President Lincoln chose Howard to lead the Freedmen's Bureau, a new agency providing education and assistance to former slaves. Howard's efforts to support education for African Americans is his greatest legacy.

Howard believed in the importance of education as a means to achieving success in life. He knew French, Latin and Greek and typically worked 16 hours a day. He learned the value of education from his mother, Eliza. Known as the "Christian General," he began each day with prayers. Howard was a popular speaker, lecturing on the Civil War and recounting such topics as "Loyalty." He lectured and wrote to supplement his soldier's income.

Following Howard's tenure here, he was appointed Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1881. Next, he was assigned to the Department of the Platte and the Division of the Pacific at the Presidio in San Francisco before returning east in 1888.



Gen. O.O. Howard, Commander, Department of the Columbia HH Neg #98125

After his retirement from the Army in 1894, Howard moved to Burlington, Vermont to be near his son, Guy, an army engineer. He spent his time writing and traveling about the country, speaking to Veteran's groups. Howard's audiences enjoyed his lectures. According to one account, every so often he would forget that he no longer had a right arm (lost in the Civil War Battle of Fair Oaks) and would vigorously attempt to drive home a point by thrusting his stump into the air. He visited Portland again in 1905 and saw the Lewis and Clark Exposition. He died suddenly at home on October 26, 1909. An African American cavalry regiment laid him to rest in a cemetery by the shores of Lake Champlain in Burlington.

## Vancouver National Historic Reserve

For centuries, the north shore of the Columbia River near its confluence with the Willamette has been the setting of human activity of far-reaching import.

This site – home to native peoples, focus of British and American exploration, objective of traders, destination of American settlers, western outpost of United States military operations, a birthplace of northwest aviation, and supplier of critical resources for two world wars – is truly an enduring legacy of one place across time.

In 1996 Congress established the Vancouver National Historic Reserve in recognition of the significance of this site, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve is a unique partnership between the U.S. Army, City of Vancouver, National Park Service and State of Washington with private sector support from the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust.

### Start your tour of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve at the O. O. Howard House and visit these Reserve Sites

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- Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

*Hudson's Bay Company's  
Fort Vancouver and Visitor Center*

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- Vancouver Barracks and Officers Row

*U.S. Grant House and Marshall House*

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- Pearson Field

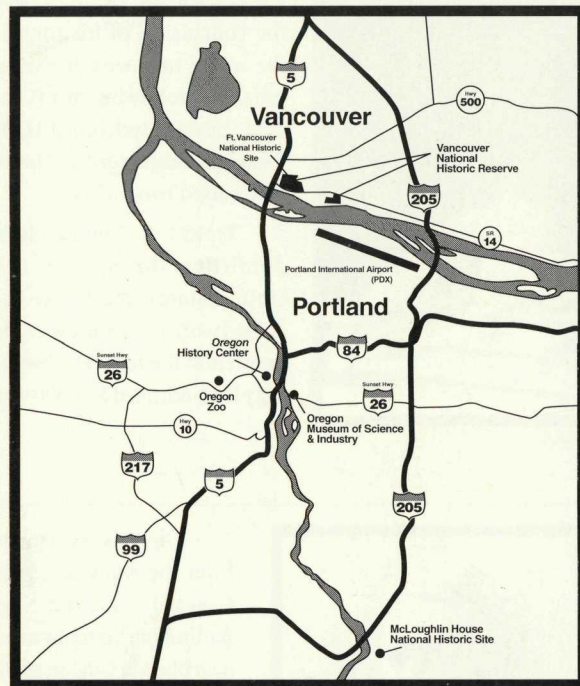
*Jack Murdock Aviation Center and  
Chkalov Monument*

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- Columbia River Waterfront

*Water Resources Education Center and  
Kaiser Shipyard Tower*

Tour and School Groups are encouraged to make reservations by calling 360/992-1820

Donations are welcome and are used to help support the operations and programs of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust.



National Park Service interpreters and volunteers welcome visitors to the O.O. Howard House and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

**Free Admission**

**Open Daily**

9 a.m.- 4 p.m. November 1 to February 28

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. March 1 to October 31

Closed Thanksgiving, December 24 & 25

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750 Anderson Street

Vancouver, Washington 98661

360/992-1849