



Sentinel makes several moves

The newspaper's location has moved around town during its long life. A photograph of the then Herald building suggests its original location was on Main Street next to the Coquille River. Later, J.C. Savage reports that "during this week (date unknown) the office moved its location. The new site being the office of the old pharmacy building which was leased from J. L. Thompson." That location is unknown. An undated photograph (top photo) shows The Sentinel at the intersection of Central and Second streets, about where the present U.S. Bank is located. In 1926 it moved – probably from that location – into a new concrete building at what is now First and Birch streets (which now houses Tadd's Restaurant).

The paper stayed there for 50 years and in 1976 moved into its present home.

The history of The Sentinel spans the history of modern printing. When the paper was started, type was set one letter at a time, by hand; The Sentinel still has some of the original type cases in its lobby. Later the Linotype vastly speeded up the typesetting process. Today the paper is composed on computers.

In its earlier days, the paper also had its own printing press; photographs in the lobby show the early composing room and press.

Building's origin shrouded in mystery

The date of construction of the Coquille Valley Sentinel's current building, and even its original location, have been lost in the mists of time. It is known that it was occupied by the First National Bank of Coquille from 1903 until 1910. At that time it was located on the corner of First and Central streets, directly south of its present site.

An historic resource inventory by the City of Coquille states that, "Although the bank purchased the lot on which the building as originally sited, it is unclear if the building was extent or if the bank built it. Physical evidence suggests that the building may have been constructed at an earlier date, and local informants believe it was built as early as 1888 -- maps indicate that the site was occupied by a large stable and feed company from 1891 through 1898."

The inventory statement also says, "Although the bank



may have built it in 1903, it is quite possible it was moved to the site from another location. Further confusing the issue is the fact that the building looks as though it may originally have been a residence as evidence by interior spatial arrangement and finishes such as picture molding."

The inventory calls The Sentinel building "the last remaining early wood commercial building in the his-

toric downtown area."

What is known is that in 1910, First National Bank of Coquille built the brick building now on the corner of First and Central streets (which now houses Whoozit's and a martial arts classroom) and moved what is now the Sentinel building to its present location. The building, of white cedar, still rests on the skids upon which it was moved. The fanlight over the front door still bears the leg-

end "Bank," and the paper occasionally receives strangers who want to cash a check. The vault, with its heavy steel door and combination lock, remains.

Use of the building from the time First National Bank vacated it until the 1930's is unknown. In the 1930's the Barton family of Coquille bought it as offices for their title company and it was used for title-company offices until 1965 when Ticor Title Company, which then owned the business, closed the office. From 1965 until 1976, it housed various businesses, including an antique store. In 1976, Fred Haas, then owner of The Sentinel, bought the building and it has housed the newspaper's offices ever since.

An arson fire in August of 1991 led to extensive repairs and remodeling, which were completed in 1992, almost exactly on the 110th anniversary of the newspaper's founding.