

Weather Station at Priest Point Park—or—Sometimes We Can't Find the Answers

Part of the "Adventures in Research" Series with Tracy Rebstock



Image from the Port of Olympia Collection, Southwest Regional Archives.

We receive a wide variety of questions on a multitude of topics at the Washington State Archives. Part of what makes the job so fun is never knowing what mystery we will get to help solve on any given day. Often, however, we get questions that we cannot answer for a researcher. This month I thought I would share an example of one of these questions and what we were unable to find.

A visitor came to the archives in search of the exact location of a weather station located at Priest Point Park from about 1929 to 1956. This was based on a document

shown here. http://www.webmet.com/Data/STATIONINFO/24227_info.pdf He was also interested in any pictures we would have of the weather station.

To help us on our search we used the sources he had found for evidence that the weather station had been at Priest Point Park. There was an online source from the Western Regional Climate Center that showed readings from the Priest Point Park weather station. A search in Google Books also showed readings from Olympia, Washington and that the Priest Point Park weather station had not been in use since 1955.

Coordinates from the resource about the weather station were helpful in pointing out where the weather station was in general, but nothing specific. These weather stations can be rather rustic and small.

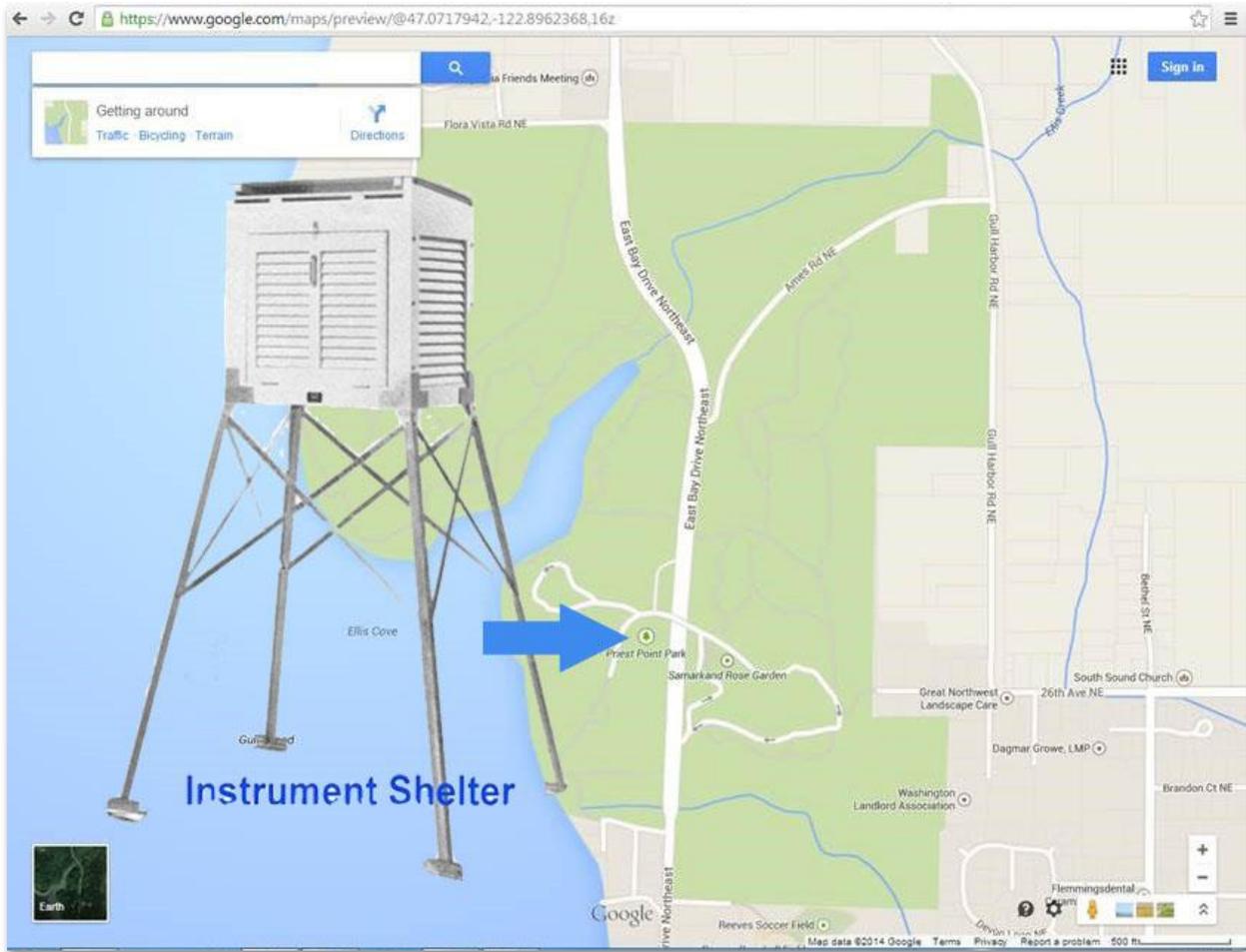


Image from <http://i4weather.net/shelter.jpg>
accessed 9/15/2014.

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Ideas for where to find mention of it in our records included Port of Olympia records or the City of Olympia minutes for a possible request for permission to place the weather center. We also suggested records from the United States Weather Service from the National Archives. The researcher felt that this was not an option for the timeframe he was working on.

Based on the coordinates he gave us, I was able to send him a map of the approximate location of the weather station in Priest Point Park. We were unable to find an image of the weather station.



Currently there is a weather station located at the Olympia Regional Airport in Tumwater, WA.

It's disappointing when we can't give the customer exactly what they are looking for, but we love getting the challenges of new and unique requests! It's a great way to learn more about collections and the area's history! Why not see if can stump an archivist. Visit your local branch with that question you've been wanting to have answered! We love a good challenge!