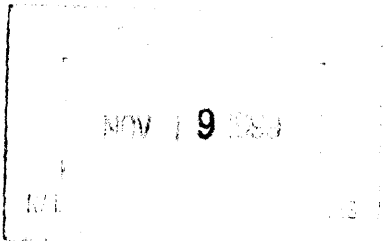


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1566

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Tulare Union High School Auditorium and Administration Bldg.

other names/site number Tulare Joint Union High School Auditorium

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 755 East Tulare Avenue _____ not for publication
city or town Tulare _____ vicinity _____
state California code CA county Tulare code 107 zip code 93274-4363

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Harriet Alvey
Signature of certifying official

Nov. 16, 1999
Date

California Office of Historic Preservation

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is

Paul A. Ball 12/17'99

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Paul A. Ball

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====
5. Classification
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 2 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<u> - </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<u> - </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<u> - </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<u> 2 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:education Sub: school

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:education Sub: school

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne_____

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof asphalt

walls stucco

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheets.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the

past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance 1937

Significant Dates:

Significant Person:

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above) _____

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Coates, W.D. & Ochs, W.J.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	11	289800	4009460	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Bill Ingram, Auditorium Restoration Committee
organization Tulare Union High School date May 3, 1996

street & number 755 East Tulare Avenue telephone (559) 686-4761
city or town Tulare state CA zip code 93274-4363

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state CA zip code _____

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).
=====

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Narrative Description

The Tulare Union High School Administration Building, Auditorium, Corridor, and East Classroom wing is located on State Highway #137 (Tulare Avenue) in the city limits of Tulare, California. The school faces single-family residences to the north and south, an elementary school to the east, and commercial/business property to the west. The buildings are a result of Public Works Administration project (PWA) No. 1131. Construction began at the end of 1935 and completion was about June 1st, 1937.

The administration and auditorium building are built together as a total unit. The facility currently houses our principal and assistant principal offices, and two large classrooms located on the second level along with the entry to the balcony. The classroom on the west has been the drama room for many years due to the original thirties construction of a small theatre-type stage in the room. The auditorium lobby acts as a thoroughfare to all offices and classrooms on the interior, and the main passage for students and teachers to pass from east to west, west to east classrooms.

The auditorium is a large 1362 seat theatre with a balcony, upstairs men and women's dressing rooms, and restroom facilities located on both sides of the auditorium. A projection room is located in the upper balcony area but has not been operational in about forty years.

An east classroom wing is part of the same PWA project. It is connected to the main administration/auditorium facility by a long 'open' portico/corridor. The east wing contains eight classrooms, a student store, clerical/copying room, and the band room, which was originally constructed and used for twenty years as the school library.

The main high school building prior to the existing facility was built and opened to students in 1908. On Friday, March 10th, 1933, a devastating

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earthquake hit California – the Long Beach Earthquake. The quake was felt from Imperial Valley to the south, and as far north as San Francisco. Many houses, government buildings, and school buildings were damaged and declared unfit and unsafe for public use. Tulare High School was one of those damaged and unsafe facilities. Temporary classrooms were used throughout the city while the main school building was torn down, and new construction began. Blue prints were finalized in November of 1935 and construction started immediately after.

The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works furnished about forty percent of the finances for the new facility, and also closely supervised and checked the construction every step of the way. W.D. Coates of Fresno was the architect for the project and also designed many other schools and auditoriums throughout California. Quoting from the first day opening dedication handbook, Mr. Coates designed the building so that it would “truly combine simple beauty and usefulness.” It was stated after completion that the facility was one of the best planned and best appearing school buildings in the state.

W. J. Ochs and Midstate Construction Company of Fresno were the general contractors on the new buildings. They also built, about the same time, the new Tulare city hall and memorial building, and Avenal, Coalinga, and Porterville schools. American Electric Construction Company of San Francisco did the electrical and stage lighting in the auditorium. Scot and Company furnished and installed all the auditorium seats, and General Seating Company of San Francisco supplied all the stage equipment.

The new administration building was officially dedicated on May 30th, 1937, and the first commencement in the building was the Tulare Union class of 1937 on June 1st, 1937. The first senior class to use the new facility for the entire year was the class of '38. Among the graduates of that class was Elmo “Bud” Zumwalt, who later became Admiral of the U.S. Navy and

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chief of naval operation's in Vietnam. In 1970, Admiral Zumwalt became the top uniformed officer in the United States Navy.

Other famous graduates of Tulare High were Bob Mathias, winning a Gold medal at the age of seventeen in the 1948 Olympic decathlon, and then again in 1952! Roger Nixon, class of 1938, is a world renown music composer, conductor and arranger. His high school and college compositions are regarded as some of the best contemporary musical pieces performed in the nation today.

When the auditorium was finished in 1937, the theatre had a seating capacity of 1400, which at the time was about twenty percent of the population of the city. It was an incredible building at its time, and was regarded by other communities as the place-to-go for concerts, plays, dance recitals, 16mm movies, and numerous other programs and events. It was praised by high officials as "one of the most beautiful auditorium buildings constructed in the state at the time". The building/s were the attention in Tulare and the surrounding area for many years. The project was constructed at a cost of \$175,000, of which \$77,000 was furnished to the district under a grant from the Public Works Administration.

The main building and classroom wing have been labeled Art Moderne, characterized by flat roofs, rounded corners, 'ribbed' accents on the exterior columns and walls, the use of 'multiples' on the six large interior house lights which are tear-drop in style and have to be lowered by a crank to the auditorium floor for bulb changing and servicing.

The main entry of the administration building and auditorium, facing Tulare Avenue (north) has a majestic Streamline Moderne style with its tall square columns and curved upper facade. All the windows in the main facility are original – numerous large square units with a pull-chain opener and closer. The windows in the east classroom wing have all been replaced with new rectangular dark-tint style units.

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Located on the second level of the auditorium above the dressing rooms are ceiling mounted sky-lights which give the area sufficient light during the day and early evening. Floors, walls, and ceilings are all cement construction.

The main entry to the lobby of the administration building are large steel doors with leaf designs sculptured into the stucco borders of the trim, giving the opening a more decorative look. On the lobby ceiling, and centered directly above the long metal v-shaped light panels, are gold deco designs that run continuously the full length of the lobby corridor. A wood ornamented corner strip runs between the walls and the ceiling throughout the lobby interior. Large gradual curves at every corner – inside and outside.

The auditorium and administration building have a total square footage of 28,000 square feet. This includes the basement, which still houses the original swamp cooler that cools only the auditorium. The cooler forces air through cement ducts that run under the entire floor of the auditorium, and enter by way of 'pot' diffusers under the seats. This air-cooling process is still used today, but a study is being done at the present time on a modern air-conditioning system.

All the restrooms in the facility retain all the original toilets, sinks, and even the paper towel dispensers of the 1930's. The upstairs dressing rooms still have shower stalls for girls and boys, which probably were used after play productions by the students. The wooden cabinetry, wooden make-up tables, and mirror frames are still in their original state.

The main stage light-board was replaced a few years ago because of burnt wiring and old reostat type light handles that caused sparks when used.

Ninety percent of the original stage flooring was recently replaced with oak hard wood, which gave the theatre a safer stage, newer wood, but still the original look of the day it opened in 1937. The south (back border) and the

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west (side border) fir wood strips were not replaced and are part of the original stage.

A new mini-gym was constructed on the Tulare Union campus four years ago. In order for the newer facility to blend with the other buildings, many of the Moderne characteristics of the administration/auditorium building were used on the exterior of the new gym. The square 'logo' units were used on all four sides of the new gymnasium (see picture #12), the larger square units with vent holes as seen in picture numbers 3 & 4 were copied, the 'columns' with the ribbed tops as seen in picture #9 and #12 were duplicated, and the extended and protruding-type lines that run from end to end of the new gym are the same as the auditorium and administration buildings' exterior décor.

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Statement of Significance

The Tulare Union High School administration building, auditorium, and East classroom wing, are eligible for membership in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion "C". The facility is an excellent example of Art Moderne/Streamline Moderne architecture. It is a large, attractive building that deserves historic recognition because of its beautiful design, tall multi-level units, long curve accents, and majestic openings. It has a unique style that brings attention to the Streamline Mderne design of the 1930's. It was a Public Works Administration (PWA) funded project, a federal government recovery program under President Roosevelt's "New Deal". The architecture of the building/s was responsible to the economics of the time, and the special funding program provided by the U.S. Government.

HISTORY:

Tulare Union High School

The present Tulare Union High School administration building and auditorium was built over a two-year period (1935-1937) due to the earthquake-damaged 1908 school that was condemned in 1933. Construction laws were changed and people became more earthquake-conscious. This great facility has proven the test-of-time for sixty plus years. This uniqueness of a PWA project, still standing tall and solid, is admired and applauded by the entire community. PWA project No. 1131 was approved in 1935, and blueprints were ready for construction purposes by November of the same year.

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The PWA

President Franklin Roosevelt came into office during the worst depression the nation had ever known. Fulfilling a campaign promise to put people to work, he instituted the 'New Deal'. Intended to bring economic recovery to the depression-wrought country, it included the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) authorized by the United States Congress on June 16th, 1933. The NIRA was one of the federal government's major programs undertaken for this purpose. Title II of the NIRA authorized the formation of the Public Works Administration. The PWA was a direct work relief agency. The legislation allocated 3.3 billion dollars to provide jobs, stimulate business activity, and increase purchasing power through the construction of permanent and socially useful public works. The Federal Government and local city, county and state governments formed a working partnership resulting in the greatest single construction program in history.

The concept behind the program was that construction projects, in addition to providing employment for the skilled, generated a volume of jobs for the unskilled. The PWA provided loans and grants up to forty percent of the total cost of the project to states, and many other public bodies, including schools.

During its initial years (1933-1935) the PWA underwrote projects in 3,040 of the 3,073 counties in all forty-eight states. Of the 3.76 billion dollars of the NIRA fund, 2.56 billion dollars was spent on 19,004 construction projects.

Architectural Style

W.D. Coates, architect for the Tulare Union High School project, designed the school in the then-popular Streamline Moderne style. It is the best example of this style of the 1930's in the county and surrounding areas. The

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Streamline Moderne style suited PWA projects because of the simplicity of its lines and details, and the economy of its construction. Among the compliments was one paid by C.M. Kromer, principal structural engineer in the State Department of Architecture who stated that the new auditorium building was the best planned and best appearing school building that had been constructed recently. (Dedication, 1937)

The Tulare school buildings incorporate nearly all of the defining characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style; rounded corners, porthole windows on lobby doors, flat roof, large sections of glass, smooth walls, metal lighting V-style covers, and a large mosaic on the auditorium east wall depicting the first high school of 1891, second of 1908, and the new (current) of 1936/37.

Integrity

Tulare Union High School has had very few alterations. The exterior is original in every respect except for color. The east classroom wing looks exactly as it did in 1937 except for the remodeling of the interior – air-conditioning, new windows, lowered ceilings, acoustic wall coverings, steel doors, and more. The main building (Administration/Auditorium) has not changed exterior wise, and only the interior as indicated above with the classroom wing. Everything is in its original location, and original type landscaping still exists. The Auditorium of 1362 seats, down from the original 1400, still is adequate and suitable for programs and concerts of today. It retains a strong historic significance and historic association.

Summary

Representing the best in Moderne style, Tulare Union High School is a beautiful result of the energetic construction done by our federal government. The PWA came at a time when our country was in dire need of

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reconstructing our people into the work force, and it also came at a time when our state architects were realizing that earthquakes make a difference in how buildings are built, especially public school buildings.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Tulare Union High School Auditorium
Tulare Co., CA

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Bibliography:

- California Historic Resources Inventory, Tulare, September, 1987.
- Gebhard, David & Robert Winter, ***A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles & Southern California***, Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, 1977.
- Tulare Joint Union High School District Records.
- Tulare Union High School and City of Tulare, "Building Dedication Program," May 30, 1937.

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Geographical Data:

*Verbal Boundary Description / Boundary Justification

Parcel #: 176-134-01 and 176-143-01

The Tulare Union High School Administration Building, Auditorium, Corridor, and east "V" Building Classroom wing is located at 755 East Tulare Avenue. The structures face Tulare Avenue to the north, Kern Avenue to the south, "O" Street to the west, and Bob Mathias Stadium and Wilson Elementary School to the east.

These are the historic boundaries of the property.

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*additional documentation (photographs)

RE: **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Tulare Union High School Administration Building, Auditorium, covered corridor, and east classroom wing.

755 East Tulare Avenue
Tulare, California 93274-4363

Photograph #1. Tulare Union High School Administration Building and Auditorium. North elevation, facing Tulare Avenue (Highway 137)

Tulare County, Tulare, California; Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – July 11, 1997. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

North elevation, camera looking south.

Photograph #2. Tulare Union High School Auditorium. Tulare County, Tulare, California; Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – July 11, 1997. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

South elevation, camera looking north.

Photograph #3. Tulare Union High School Administration Building and Auditorium. Tulare County, Tulare, California. Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – July 11, 1997. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

West elevation, camera facing east.

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Photograph #4. Tulare Union High School Administration Building and Auditorium. Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – July 11, 1997. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

East elevation, camera facing west.

Photograph #5. ‘Mosaic’ (original construction) located on east wall of Auditorium. Mosaic showing the original, old, and new high school main fronts. Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – July 11, 1997. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

East wall, camera facing west.

Photograph #6. Tulare Union High School ‘corridor’ connecting Administration/Auditorium Building to east wing classroom’s. Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – August 10, 1999. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

Corridor/Portico facing south, camera facing north,.

Photograph #7. Tulare Union High School ‘corridor’ connecting Administration/Auditorium Building to east wing classrooms. Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – August 10, 1999. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

Corridor/Portico facing north (Tulare Avenue-#137), camera facing south.

Photograph #8. Tulare Union High School “V” building, classroom wing. Built at the same time and under the same PWA project number as the main building. (Connected by ‘corridor’) Gainsborough Studio, Jeff Killion, photographer – August 10, 1999. Negative at Gainsborough Studio.

East elevation, camera facing west.