

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| RECEIVED | MAY 23 1979 |
| DATE ENTERED | JUN 18 1979 |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
United States Post Office, Roseburg, Oregon

AND/OR COMMON
Federal Office Building, Roseburg, Oregon

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
704 S.E. Cass Ave.

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Roseburg

__ VICINITY OF 04

STATE Oregon CODE 41 COUNTY Douglas CODE 019

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 AGENCY

General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
Regional Headquarters Building

STREET & NUMBER
GSA Center, 10PG

CITY, TOWN Auburn VICINITY OF Washington STATE 98002

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Douglas County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
1036 Douglas Avenue

CITY, TOWN Roseburg STATE Oregon

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Inventory Form of Historic Places, GSA Region 10

DATE
July 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Regional Headquarters Building, GSA Center, 10PG

CITY, TOWN Auburn STATE Washington 98002

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Only a narrow strip of grass with assorted juniper, rhododendrons, and hydrangea (all planted in 1965) separates the Roseburg Federal Office Building from the sidewalks along Cass Avenue and Stephens Street and from a concrete driveway. At the rear of the building is a parking lot for 21 cars. The building is 91' wide and 70' deep.

The original specifications called for structural steel and reinforced concrete floor slabs, wood studs and furring, and metal lath. On May 10, 1916 the contractors requested permission to use reinforced concrete construction and terra cotta partitions and furring. Permission was granted.

The general style of the building is a subdued Beaux Arts classicism with, originally, some Georgian Revival elements. The two storeys and a basement are capped with a flat roof. Light cream colored, smooth surfaced face brick is laid in a Flemish bond with 1/4" recessed joints over the common brick walls. The trim is of sandstone from Boise, Idaho and granite from Mistletoe, Oregon.

Five window bays are symmetrically distributed across the south-facing main (Cass Avenue) facade. In the first storey are four tall 14' X 6 1/2' windows with stilted arches, sandstone sills and sandstone keystones and imposts. Beneath each window is a diamond-shaped brick pattern and a grilled basement window. In the center bay is a similar arched opening over the main entrance. Double sets of brick pilasters frame the windows and extend vertically between a sandstone string course at the first floor level and another at the level of the second floor. The pilasters have sandstone bases and sandstone Roman Doric capitals.

In the second storey are five sets of two 4 1/2' X 2 1/2' rectangular windows separated by square brick panels in low relief. A denticulated sandstone cornice interrupts the panels which continue on the brick parapet above to the sandstone coping. The parapet is broken by a stone balustrade above each window bay.

Five granite steps with sandstone cheek blocks lead up to the entrance. On either side of the landing are lamps 8' tall. White glass globes are supported by cast iron stands with a Corinthian column theme.

The original Palladianesque windows had 30 lights and a radiating fanlight with mullions painted a little darker than the building's face brick. These were destroyed by an explosion in downtown Roseburg on August 7, 1959. They were subsequently replaced by silver colored aluminum windows with porcelain enameled steel panels.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings
1970 State
Department of Transportation
State Historic Preservation Office
Parks & Recreation Branch
525 Trade Street, S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97310

Survey of Federal Government Buildings in Oregon
1968 State
Department of Transportation
State Historic Preservation Office
Parks & Recreations Branch
525 Trade Street, S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97310

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The east and west facades are similar to the main facade but narrower and with only four window bays.

The rear facade is similar also, with five window bays, but a small mailing vestibule covers the lower half of the central bay. The vestibule is brick with a flat roof, two doors on the north side, one door on the west side and a single small window on the east. A small canopy cutting across the second window from the western corner of the rear facade was added about 1968.

The original interior painting and decorating was done by the Inman Company of Danville, Illinois. The Dysinger Planing Mill of Roseburg did the woodworking.

The 910 postal lock boxes were contained in an oak screen with five arched window bays reaching almost to the full 20' height of the lobby. The entrance vestibule, bulletin boards, and desks were also of oak. The floor was white terrazzo, the wainscot of Tokeen marble and the base and borders of Gravina marble. (The specifications had originally called for the use of red quarry tile and pink Tennessee marble.) The walls and ceiling were light colored plaster with dark wood beams and trim. White glass lamps were suspended by brass chains and trim. Round arrises, 6" from the windows, were framed by elliptical head arrises. Kick and push plates and window screens were brass. A simple marble stairway led up to the second floor from the west end of the lobby.

The postal workroom behind the service screen had a wood floor, trim and base with a cement wainscot to 6'8" with plaster above. An enclosed gallery of wood and plaster with lookout louvres passed above, allowing the postal inspector to supervise the employees unseen.

The second floor was occupied by the Postal Inspector, the Land Office, and the Indian Office. The corridor had a floor of Port Orford cedar. The trim and base were of wood and the walls were plastered. The offices had wood floors, base, door trim, doors and window stools. The toilets had white terrazzo floors, Gravina marble borders and base, and marble partitions.

When the present windows were installed in 1960, the marble above the base on the south wall of the lobby was removed and stored. The round arrises around the windows were removed.

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In 1962 the architectural firm of Balzhiser, Seder, and Rhodes of Eugene, Oregon was retained for general renovation and modification of the entire building. The Postal Service moved to a new building and the vacated ground floor was converted into offices. Suspended acoustical tile lowered the ceiling on the ground floor to 10'. The glass in the windows above ceiling height was removed and replaced by enameled asbestos board. Vinyl asbestos tile, brown rubber base, metal door frames, fire doors and cement plaster replaced all the marble and much of the wood trim. Fluorescent lights were installed. Only the marble stairway in the lobby remains unchanged. The maintenance crew has accented it with brightly colored geometric supergraphics.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES Built 1916-1917 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Office of the Supervising Architect (J. A. Wetmore, Acting)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Roseburg was born in 1851 when Aaron Rose and his family settled near the Umpqua River and built "a home that became a tavern and stopping-place for the many travelers who followed the old Oregon-California."¹ The settlement became a terminal on the stagecoach line between Portland and Sacramento and in 1864 "was linked to the outside by telegraph."² The Oregon and California Railroad came through Roseburg in 1872. The construction of the Post Office/Federal Building 45 years later was an important milestone in the development of the city.

The Roseburg Review of April 13, 1911 reported:

"SITE IS SELECTED
FEDERAL BUILDING AT CORNER OF CASS AND STEPHENS STREETS
GOVERNMENT PAYS \$10,000.00
NEIGHBORING PROPERTY OWNERS PAY \$5,000.00 MORE AS BONUS"

D. R. Shambrook and his wife, Molly, and James O. Newland and his wife, Cassia, had to invest in parts of neighboring lots to meet the size requirement for a Federal Building site. Their grateful neighbors pledged an extra \$5,000 anticipating the economic benefits of a Federal Building in their own back yards.

The site, running 135 feet along Cass Avenue and 130 feet along Stephens Street, was "located near the heart of the business district and only 600' from the Southern Pacific depot."³ (One of the requirements for any Post Office site was a location within 80 rods, or 1,320', of a railroad depot.)

The contract for the construction of the Roseburg Post Office was awarded to the Stebinger Brothers of Portland, Oregon on May 3, 1916. Their low bid was \$83,745. The work was to be completed within 16 months.

Two frame houses, formerly rented by Mrs. Anna Veatch and W. T. Wright, and assorted outbuildings were moved or demolished by the summer of 1916 to prepare the site for construction. Carl M. Stebinger moved to Roseburg for the duration, as did the Treasury Department's Superintendent of Construction, J. A. Kirk.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet number 7.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 135' X 130'

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------|---------|----------|
| 471-875 | | 4783-725 | | | |
| A 1 0 | 4 7 2 0 0 5 | 4 7 8 4 0 2 0 | B | | |
| ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | D | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

TLS 305-2, 306-2, 307-2, 308-2, 317-1 LOT PTS. 1, 2, 3, 4, & 13;
 TLS 318, 319, & 320 LTS 14, 15, & 16 B37
 Railroad Addition to Roseburg, Douglas County

The boundary of the site of the Roseburg Federal Office Building is shown on the accompanying survey plat map.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| None | | | |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kristine Bak Operational Planning Staff

ORGANIZATION

General Services Administration, PBS

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

GSA Center, 10PG

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Auburn

STATE

Washington 98002

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X

NO

NONE

[Signature]
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

[Signature] - GSA-HPO

DATE 5/15/79

TITLE Historic Preservation Officer, GSA, Region 10

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 6-18-79

ATTEST:

[Signature]
 BILL DEWICH

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

June 6, 1979

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The Roseburg Juvenile Band, Laurel Lodge #13, A.F. and A.M. and assorted Congressmen in black top hats and tails took part in the cornerstone-laying ceremony on November 7, 1916. The cornerstone was inscribed with the names of William Gibbs McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, and James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect.

James A. Wetmore supervised the design and planning of at least 2,000 buildings during his 45 year tenure in the Office of Supervising Architect. Many of these were similar, and some probably identical, to the Roseburg building.

The Superintendent of Construction made his final report to the Supervising Architect on January 26, 1918. Although the building had not been ready for occupancy until December 1, 1917, 88 days beyond the specified completion date, and the final cost had overrun the budget by nearly \$600, the report was favorable.

"In view of the difficulties experienced by the contractor in getting material transported to the building site on account of shortage of cars and disorganized transportation facilities, shortage of skilled labor, etc., all due apparently to war conditions, loss of time due to unseasonable weather, and in consideration of the excellent quality, character and workmanship supplied under the contract, it is recommended that all damages be waived."

The delayed delivery of furniture for the second floor prevented the U.S. Forestry Service officials from moving into their offices until December 15. Later came the Postal Inspector, the Land Office, and the Indian Office. The Post Office moved from its rented building on the southeast corner of Cass and Stephens on January 15, 1918, to occupy the ground floor of the new building.

Minor changes occurred over the next 40 years.

"After the close of WWII the city quadrupled in size due to the influx of the lumbering industry. With all the service windows in the far corner of the lobby the congestion became acute, especially at Christmas time. This necessitated moving some of the service windows more to the center of the lobby."⁴

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Then, before dawn on August 7, 1959, the biggest event since the founding of Roseburg shook the town. A truck from Tenino, Washington, carrying an explosive fertilizer mix exploded only two blocks from the Federal Building. The explosion created a crater 25' deep and 55' across. Thirteen people were killed and many others injured. Eight blocks of Roseburg were leveled completely and all glass was broken in a 40 block area.

Clyde W. Carstens was Postmaster at the time. He described the aftermath of the blast:

"The only thing wrong with the Post Office lobby after the blast was the front windows being blown out into the street and the ornate screen line of sash and glass above the box sections being dumped into the workroom in a tangled mess of broken sash, glass and twisted metal rods. . . All the doors and windows were blown out both outside and inside. . . There was no apparent structural damage. . . which attests to the excellent quality of construction. . . In spite of the mess, mail delivery was only one-hour late the next day."⁵

The Federal Building has served as a node of community activity for 60 years, or half of the history of Roseburg. It is a visual reminder of that history. Although the windows and the interior have been altered, the building's exterior remains a handsome example of government architecture of the period. The building is structurally sound and both its interior and exterior have been maintained with obvious pride. It is the first real landmark building encountered by a visitor entering Roseburg via Stephens Street, which is largely occupied by small commercial buildings. Along with the 1911 Pacific Building on the corner of Cass and Rose Street it is a gateway to the busy downtown shopping area one block east on Jackson Street. As the summary statement of a 1968 survey by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office says, "(The building) should be recognized for what it is: an anchor point of good design."⁶

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

- 1 George B. Abdill, "History of Roseburg, Oregon," Douglas County Museum, Roseburg.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Roseburg Review, April 13, 1911.
- 4 Clyde W. Carstens, Notes on photos of Roseburg Federal Building, Douglas County Museum, Roseburg.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 "Survey of Federal Government Buildings in Oregon," State Historic Preservation Office, Salem, 1968.

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ARTICLES AND ABSTRACTS:

Abdill, George B., "History of Roseburg, Oregon," Douglas County Museum, Roseburg, Oregon

Carstens, Clyde W., "Federal Building Data," 1972, Douglas County Museum.

Roseburg Oregon Blast, August 7, 1959, (Bound Collection of newspaper and magazine articles) Douglas County Library, Roseburg, Oregon

BOOKS:

Withey, Henry F., and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles, Hennessey & Ingolls, 1970.

INTERVIEWS:

George B. Abdill, Curator, Douglas County Museum, Roseburg, June 14, 1978.

Clyde W. Carstens, Retired Postmaster, Roseburg, June 14, 1978.

Del Chastain, GSA Building Maintenance, Federal Building, Roseburg, June 15, 1978.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION SOURCES, GSA FILES:

Architectural drawings for "Post Office at Roseburg, Oregon."

"Community Plan for Housing Federal Agencies, Roseburg, Oregon," prepared by the Operational Planning Staff, Public Buildings Service, GSA, Region 10, October 8, 1959.

Construction and Inspection Photographs, Roseburg Federal Building.

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Correspondence from the Office of the Supervising Architect to the Superintendent of Construction in Roseburg, 1916-1918.

"Inventory Form of Historic Places," prepared by the Public Buildings Service, GSA, July 1972.

Site Acquisition Documents.

"Specifications for Construction of the U.S. Post Office at Roseburg, Oregon," 1916.

STATE SURVEYS:

"Survey of Federal Government Buildings in Oregon," Department of Transportation, State Historic Preservation Office, Parks & Recreation Branch, Salem, 1968.