

INVENTORY SHEET FOR GROUP NOMINATIONS: IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, BOISE, IDAHO

NOMINATION: (TOURTELLOTTE AND HUMMEL ARCHITECTURE ~~IN IDAHO~~ 72)

SITE NAME: Boise Junior High School SITE NUMBER: 129

Boise
LOCATION: 1105 North ^{13th} Thirteenth Street, Ada County (001), ~~Idaho~~

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

Independent School District of Boise City
1207 Fort Street
Boise, ID 83702

QUADRANGLE AND SCALE: Boise North, 7.5 minute ACREAGE: ^{0, Seven acres} ~~less than one~~ (mic) 11/2/83

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the Boise Junior High School and the property on which it stands, block 3, Lemp Triangle addition to Boise. Legal description on file at the Ada County Courthouse, Boise, Idaho.

UTM(S): 11/5,64,300/48,30,420

DATE OR PERIOD: 1937

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture

EVALUATED LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: State

CONDITION: excellent unaltered original site

DESCRIPTION:

Boise Junior High School (now North Junior High) is a two-story, flat-roofed, brick and concrete structure built to a long, angular W-shaped plan, a 318 feet, 7 inches block with a single long hallway and classrooms on either side extending along North Thirteenth Street; and three wings, the outer two with their own front-to-back corridors, extending to the rear. The maximum depth of the original structure is 161 feet, 9 inches at the rear of the central section, which contains the gymnasium.

On the front elevation, end pavillions emerge as shallow ells; and the two main entrances, at either end of a centered brick terrace, are also slightly outset. However, the primary articulation of the long brick facade is vertical. Brick pilasters rise between each vertical pair of tall eight-light windows to form bays and sets of bays and to crest above the flat cornice. Within the relatively flat plan embraced by the end pavillions there are three sets of five bays on either side of the entrance group, which itself is made up of eight window bays between the two broad entry bays. These broader bays, which crest at the highest level of any elements along the cornice line, have each a double set of wooden doors, cofered below and with six square panes at eye level and an eight-light transom above. The doors are framed by broad cast concrete pilasters, vertically scored

and with a linear deco panel at the top. Between these pilasters, and forming the top of a square archway, is suspended a peaked pediment-like form with "Junior High School" incised on it and a denticulated lower margin. Above the entry arches, the bays are trisected by narrow rib-like pilasters separating a central twelve-light window and narrow side lights, all framed between two pilasters of brick.

The mild polychromy of the red-orange brick is enhanced by the stepping out from the surface of the vertical elements and by the diamond patterning of the broad pilasters which form the outer frame of the first bay on either side of the entry group. The use of light-colored concrete and stone trim further sets off the predominantly brick surface. It appears not only in the entryways and the continuous, crested coping at roofline, but in the window sills at both levels; in the coping of the broad, stepped brick parapet walls that flank and the flights of brick steps at either end of the terrace; and in the heavy cross-hatch forms between the stocky brick piers of the lateral wall of the terrace.

The exterior of the building has experienced almost no change, except the superficial one of adding the word "North" to the signage and the more substantial one of a highly compatible cafeteria addition, in similar brick and at a sensitive scale, facing Fort Street at left rear.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Boise Junior High School (now North Junior High) is of exceptional architectural significance as the finest of the numerous school buildings designed by the firm under the WPA federal financing program of the 1930s. It is one of the few finished in brick and in a clearly articulated art deco style (another is the Boise High School Gym, which is included in the Boise High Campus group, site 49).

Substantial school buildings were designed between 1935 and 1941 for Cascade, Melba, Jerome, Gooding, Marsing, Parma, Adrian, Homedale, New Plymouth, Salmon, Bruneau, and Caldwell, in addition to remodelings and additions and a number of gymnasiums. A number of these schools have considerable merit, but due to the large number of these resources it was decided to include only the most notably distinguished of them in the Thematic Group in advance of age-eligibility.

The fact that Boise Junior High is located in the capital city, and in one of the wealthier school districts of southwest Idaho, probably accounts for the more expensive materials and elaborated detail; many of these schools are of radically simplified reinforced concrete construction and surface. It is interesting that the more elaborate the material possibilities, the more deco the flavor; some of the simpler schools seem to tend toward the moderne style, but this is perhaps by default. Though designs in the streamlined moderne manner do appear in the late work of the firm, they are generally in commercial commissions (see site 136). The more traditional underpinnings of the art deco style may have seemed more appropriate to educational buildings. Boise Junior High is clearly within the deco aesthetic. J. O. Jordan and Son were the contractors; projected price on the building permit was \$228,258.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Boise, Idaho. Boise City Building Permit. March 6, 1936.

Boise, Idaho. Hummel Jones Miller Hunsucker P.A. List of Volume of Work by Year, 1937. Drawings signed Tourtellotte and Hummel.