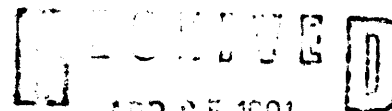


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bremerton Main Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 602 Pacific Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Bremerton N/A vicinity
state Washington code WA county Kitsap code 035 zip code 98310

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic U.S. Post Offices In Washington, 1893 - 1941
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 1-11-90
Signature of certifying official Date
U.S. Postal Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 12/15/89
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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:)

Antoinette Free 2/7/91
[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Neo-Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
Sandstone
roof Tar Composition
other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bremerton Main Post Office is a one-story building on a raised basement platform. Its footings, floor slabs and basement walls are reinforced concrete. Steel framing provides structural support for the main floor and roof. The walls are common brick with an exterior of red face brick in Common bond (the exposed basement and main floor walls are divided by a broad sandstone water table course). The front elevation is flat, symmetrically-arranged and strongly horizontal in orientation. Nine flat-arched bays divide the facade, including the centered entry bay. Other than Ionic pilasters articulating the entry bay and a pedimented parapet, the facade is nominally embellished. The building is covered by a flat built-up tar composition roof.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade (west, facing Pacific) is flat, symmetrical, and strongly horizontal. Nine bays divide the facade --a centered and recessed entry bay, and four window bays flanking each side. Approached by three granite steps and a granite landing, the entry bay dominates the facade. Massive square columns with Ionic capitals rise from the landing to the terminating entablature (all are wood). Set inboard of the bay corners and on the same plane as the facade, the columns frame the entry architrave which is slightly recessed. The area above the entry is recessed to form an alcove (above the interior entry vestibule). A double-hung fifteen-over-ten-light wood sash window faces outside. Facing each other in each side of the alcove are single double-hung nine-over-six-light wood sash windows. The entry architrave consists of wood jambs with a wood lintel (with ends extending slightly outside of the jambs). Atop the lintel is a dentil cornice topped by a low flat wooden pediment. The entry doors are double aluminum-framed glass, with a glass transom overhead. It should be noted that the entry, unlike the typical post office, does not provide immediate access to the lobby. Instead, the vestibule is entered at the entry level and stairs (lateral run) ascend to the lobby area (which is about three feet above the exterior entry level).

See continuation sheet

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The four window bays flanking the entry are equally-spaced and identical to each other. The exposed basement windows are three-over-six-light wood sash. Their tops are formed by the water table. Aligned on these windows are those of the first floor which are double-hung wood sash with twelve-over-twelve lights. Their tops are formed by a sandstone belt course which corresponds to the entablature architrave and their sills are sandstone. The wooden entablature is painted red, white and blue. The plain frieze contains "UNITED STATES POST OFFICE BREMERTON, WA 98310". Above the frieze is a slightly projecting molded cornice. A wooden parapet with a low pediment over the three central bays completes the facade.

The south facade consists of brick-faced basement and first floor walls divided by a sandstone water table, five equally-spaced window bays, sandstone belt course, wooden entablature, and wooden parapet (without pediment). The windows are identical to the corresponding windows of the front. Only the front portion of the basement wall is above grade and exposed. A concrete stairwell provides access to the Postal Inspector's office in the basement.

The north facade is divided into two sections -- the front with three window bays and the rear, consisting of the loading platform. The front section is detailed the same as the front and south facades. The window sash and detailing are identical to those of the front; however, the center first floor window has been filled with brick to form a slightly recessed niche. Within the lower portion and centered in the niche is a two-over-four wood sash window. The loading platform, recessed 14 feet from the front section, is concrete and divided into three open bays. It is covered by a projecting metal marquee. Above the platform is the north side of the mezzanine floor. Three window bays and a louvered metal grille are set in the plain brick wall (the wooden entablature and parapet have been omitted; the grille replaced two original window bays). The windows are three-over-six-light wood sash.

The rear facade (east) is plain brick with four window bays. The grade has been filled to the sill level of the windows and the entablature and parapet have been omitted. The windows are identical to those of the front and sides.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Art
Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1937-1941

Significant Dates

Site acq.-1936
Const.-1937

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Carter, Harry B., Consulting Archi-
tect; Simon Louis A., Supervising
Architect/Federal Government

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Bremerton Post Office is an unaltered example of a medium-sized, single-purpose post office. Essentially a modern building to which Classical detailing elements have been attached, the design is unique rather than being stamped from standardized plans. The building is locally significant for the political process in which the site selection became mired. The basic process of "majority rule" was ignored by the government in selecting the site for its post office. And, the press lamented that fact. As a product of the massive public building and arts programs of the New Deal, the building and mural within symbolize the assistance given by the Federal government to communities during the Depression. The mural, through its visual presentation, relates to the history of the locality and represents a significant period and type of American artistic expression.

ARCHITECTURE

The building was designed by Harry B. Carter, a consulting architect to the Department of the Treasury. The volume of the service required by the city dictated a building larger than the bulk of those completed in the state during the late-1930s. Therefore, the plans and design offered a relatively unusual solution to the city's needs. Still, the building is a rectangular brick box to which Classically-inspired decorative elements have been attached. The building, strongly horizontal in front elevation, is distinguished by its entry. Massive square wooden columns with stylized Ionic capitals provide a monumental character to the entry. A low triangular pediment, centered over the entry, details the otherwise plain wooden entablature. The design is formal but, even with the decorative elements, somewhat stark in appearance. As the only example of its design-type in the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Bremerton Daily News Searchlight; various articles 1935-1937.
2. Original Building Plans; 1936.
3. Haddon, Lawrence E. "The History of the Bremerton Post Office." 14 November 1980.
4. Kitsap County Historical Society. Kitsap County History. Seattle: Dinner & Klein, 1977.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

USPS Facilities Service Center
San Bruno, CA 94099-0330

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.42

UTM References

A 10 528180 5268120
Zone Easting Northing

B _____
Zone Easting Northing

C _____

D _____

Quadrangle Name: Bremerton West
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The PTN of Govt Lot 2 in Section 13-24-1E DAF BAAP 234' North & 105' East of Northwest corner of Block 5 Town of Bremerton, thence N140.5', thence E105', thence S140.5', thence W105' to point of beginning. Also, Lot 1. The site is on the Northeast corner of Sixth Street and Pacific Street.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property originally purchased by the federal government for the post office site.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title H.J. "Jim" Kolva, Project Manager; Steve Franks, Research Assistant
organization Institute for Urban & Local Studies date March 1989
street & number West 705 First Avenue telephone (509) 458-6219
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99204

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City, the building is locally-significant under Criterion C.

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

For Bremerton citizens of the 1930s, the process of locating a site for their Federal Building was, according to press accounts, probably more significant than the actual completion of the building. Indeed, the battle that was waged in the selection of the site caused the press to devote a front page editorial to "Does Majority Rule Mean Anything?". The editorial, which stated the matter "shows an apparent disregard for the desires of the people", was a response to the selection of a site not at all favored in a sample ballot that the paper had published. Interest in the site was at a "fever pitch" and the city hall was packed for a site meeting. Although the work of local citizens in lobbying their elected representatives for the building had been successful, their efforts in lobbying the Postal Department by ballot for the citizen's site failed. The building is Bremerton's first and only Federally-constructed post office. Construction coincided with several other Federally-sponsored projects in the city, particularly the Naval Shipyard. The building stands as a legacy of the public works programs of the 1930s and to the democratic process that had mixed success in the Bremerton Post Office site wars. Accordingly, the building is locally significant under Criterion A.

ART

Above the doors to the administrative offices on the north wall of the lobby is a mural entitled "Northwest Logging" (4' by 24'). Oil on canvas, the mural was completed by Ernest Norling in 1938. The mural depicts a logging crew falling massive trees presumably on the Kitsap Peninsula.

Ernest Norling was born in Pasco, WA in September 1892. He studied at Whitman College, and the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts. He is represented in collections at the Seattle Art Museum and White House. He also completed a post office mural in Prosser, WA. He illustrated various magazines, children's books (including the "Pogo" series which his wife wrote), and worked with the Boeing Aircraft motion picture unit during World War II. Norling died in Seattle in 1974 at the age of 81. He is listed in Who Was Who in American Art.

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The Bremerton MPO was one of eighteen in the state of Washington to receive a mural under the auspices of the Federal Works Agency Section of Fine Arts. Thus, it is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with the New Deal arts programs. The building is also significant under Criterion C in that the mural, as an integral part, represents a significant type, period and style of artistic expression.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Bremerton, located on one of Puget Sound's protected harbors and known as the "Welcome Aboard" city, is the regional business center for Kitsap County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and other military installations in the area play a vital role in its economy. In 1987 Bremerton had an estimated population of 32,390.

The site of Bremerton was originally the 168 acre homestead of Andrew Williams, who received the government patent in 1875. Other early pioneers of that time who settled the primeval forest area include Warren Smith, Jesse Phillips, O. Blanchard and Kieran Daly. In 1891 William Bremer purchased the Williams' homestead; on December 10th, 1891 he platted part of it under the name "Bremerton." Also in 1891 the U.S. government purchased 86 acres to establish a naval station; in 1892 it began construction of a drydock, wharf and other facilities. In 1892 Bremer also built a substantial wharf at which ocean-going vessels could safely land.

Herbert W. Linsley purchased the first lots sold by Bremer and erected the town's first building. When the Bremerton Post Office was established on November 19, 1892, Linsey was postmaster and it was in his building. In 1895 a two-room school was erected, donated by the early pioneers. 1901 was a big year for Bremerton: Alvyn Littler Croxton was elected as the town's first mayor, the first volunteer fire department was organized, the first newspaper published, an electric light system installed and the Town of Bremerton was incorporated. In 1902 piped water and telephones arrived.

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C. P. Kimball, Bremerton's fourth postmaster, served from 1902 until 1911. Kimball raised the post office to second class and operated it from his general store. It was the center of life in Bremerton, where people gathered to discuss topics of the day. By 1908, with the Atlantic fleet docked in Bremerton, post office receipts had jumped to more than \$23,000. Mail carrier service started in 1909. The same year, the post office moved to a new red brick building provided by the town benefactor and namesake, William Bremer. By 1910 Bremerton had a population of 2,993. Rural mail delivery was instituted in 1912. Bremerton's population climbed from 8,918 in 1920 to 10,170 in 1930 to 15,134 in 1940. Growth resulting from World War II pushed the population to 27,678 in 1950. Growth then since then has been steady; from 1960 to 1970 the city grew from 28,992 to 35,307. In 1980 its population was 36,208.

The Bremerton Main Post Office, on the northeast corner of Sixth Street and Pacific Avenue, is on the north edge of the Bremerton downtown business district. Adjacent to the north of the MPO is a one-story brick and stucco commercial building with commercial uses to its north. Adjacent to the east of the MPO is a one-story stucco office building and to its north, a single-family house. East of the office building is a two-story brick apartment building and to its north, a single-family house. North of the houses is a Postal Service parking lot. South of the MPO and Sixth Avenue is a parking lot and, further south, a six-story office building with commercial uses to its south. Kiddy-cornered from the MPO to the southwest is a former gas station now used for retail use. Commercial uses are to its south and west. Across Pacific Avenue, west of the Post Office is a parking lot and, further west, a modern bank building (brick and glass). Kitty-cornered from the Post Office to the northwest is a one-story stucco office building with commercial uses to its west and north. Two blocks north of the MPO, on Pacific Avenue, is the Fire Station (concrete, circa 1940).

LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE
BREMERTON MAIN POST OFFICE

"Bremerton Moral Cleanup Demanded" reported the Bremerton Daily News Searchlight on July 31, 1935. Rear Admiral T. T. Craven wanted Bremerton "cleaned up" of "vice

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and moral delinquency" or it would be off limits to enlisted men (the Naval Yard employed 4,000 people). In August the Searchlight reported news about the site for the city's proposed post office. The government was favoring a site at the corner of 6th and Pacific (August 7th article); the Navy Yard Hotel site and other sites had been rejected as too expensive (the postal inspector's first choice cost \$28,700). The Sixth and Pacific site was directly across from the inspectors' first choice and was offered free to the government, though additional land costing \$9,000 was needed. Two days later it was reported that the free site was complicating matters since the additional land costing \$9,000 was only \$4,000 less than a site at the corner of 5th and Park "which is favored by a great majority of Bremerton people." Petitions had previously been signed asking for the 5th and Park site and its owners had three times reduced its price.

On August 13th the Searchlight reported that the Central Trades and Labor Council would hold a public meeting to discuss the site situation. Two days later, with interest in the site at a "fever pitch", the paper published a ballot polling Bremerton citizens on their site preference. On the 17th it was revealed that while the government was favoring the 6th and Pacific site, "the crowd which packed the City Hall" for the recent site meeting greatly favored the Fifth and Park site (the newspapers' poll also showed people preferring it). A front page editorial titled "Does Majority Rule Mean Anything?" noted that the majority of locals had long favored that site, but "other factions" and Congressman Zioncheck's championing of the Navy Yard hotel site had delayed the choice. The paper noted that the matter "shows an apparent disregard for the desires of the people" and "has held up employment for worthy men."

On August 27th it was reported that, "whether it likes it or not," Bremerton's new post office would be at 6th and Pacific. The property was owned by the William Bremer Estate and T.O. Huffington, and would cost \$11,500, leaving \$109,500 for construction. The paper observed that "announcement of the decision ... apparently ends long controversy that has frustrated all efforts to get a new federal building here during the past three years."

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In early 1936 it was reported that an "early start" on the "long-awaited" post office construction was seen; bids would be called within 30 days. On March 7th the Searchlight published a front page sketch of the building, but reported that it would now be two to three months before bids would be called. On April 7th it reported that action was further delayed: the rejected Navy Yard Hotel site had to be returned to the Navy before the selected 6th and Pacific site could be acquired. (Congressman Zioncheck, acting "on behalf of labor organizations," had previously had the property transferred from the Navy to the Treasury Department (May 27th article.) Finally, on May 27th it was announced that bids would be opened on July 3rd, "after months and months, even years, of conflict between opposing factions." An article of June 1st confirmed that bids would be opened on the 3rd, but construction would still have to wait until the Navy Yard site was transferred back to the Navy. On July 3rd it was reported that the MacDonald Building Company of Tacoma had submitted the low bid, of \$79,793.

In July it was also reported that a \$25,000 hospital wing and \$15,000 store were beginning construction, the city was applying for a WPA grant for its new junior high school and a pumping plant, a \$300,000 WPA street paving project (2-1/2 miles) was announced, and seven new buildings were to be added to the Navy Yard as part of a \$525,000 relief project (articles of July 9th, 15th, 16th, and 23rd). On the 24th it was reported that Elmer J. Braendlein would replace R. R. Staub as Bremerton postmaster.

"PO Site Bought," read a headline of September 4th; the title had been transferred that morning and \$10,500 had been paid to T.O. Buffington. But yet another setback was reported on October 2nd: MacDonald had canceled his contract after the government asked for construction to be delayed until October 30th. The paper noted that this was "only one in a long series of incidents" which had delayed construction for more than four years, including the struggle over the site which had resulted in the selection of the 6th and Pacific site as a compromise. But on October 12th it was reported that MacDonald had signed again; the building would cost \$80,000, the site had been virtually cleared and work would start on November 1st. An article of November 2nd reported that excavation had indeed begun. At year's end it

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was reported that 1936 building permits had shown a \$70,000 gain over 1935 and that Bremerton's business had been "good."

On April 1, 1937 an elaborate cornerstone laying ceremony was announced for April 10th. The Masonic Lodge would conduct the ceremony and fraternal and veterans organizations and federal, city and naval officials would participate. More detailed plans were revealed on April 8th; the widow of William Bremer, who donated a large portion of the site, would place a history of the city in the cornerstone.

On April 12th it was reported that the ceremony, which was "another step forward in the progress of the city," had gone as planned, with a parade preceding the program. Brief speeches were given, including a history of Bremerton's post office by Postal Inspector Paul Bentley and a speech by federal judge John Bowen; he characterized the erection of the building as an important stride in the city's development.

"Post Office Will Hold Open House" was the headline in the issue of Friday, November 19th. All offices, work rooms, and mailing divisions were to be "thrown open" to the public for one time only on Saturday evening. The entire staff would be on hand to explain postal operations. The old post office would close Sunday and the new one would open Monday.

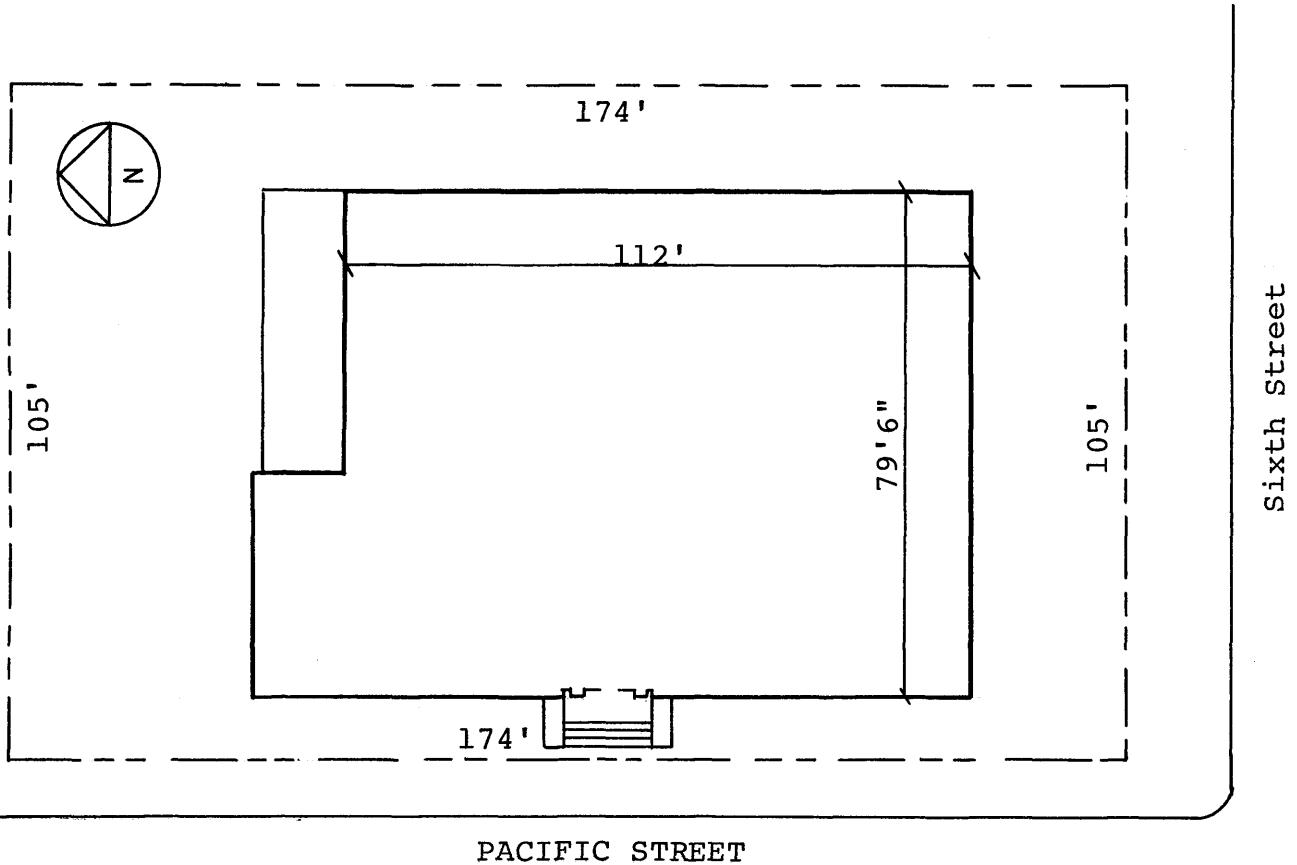
An article of November 20th revealed that construction on the city's new library, financed by a \$26,506 WPA grant and a special levy of \$31,000, would soon begin. (Another article that day noted that many postmasters had seen snakes in the mails and the following notification from Washington, D.C. was published: "Live snakes of any kind, whether harmless or not, are prohibited in the mails. Postmasters should watch this more carefully, and refuse to accept any parcels containing live snakes.")

On Monday, November 22nd the Searchlight reported that 3,000 people had viewed the "fine features" of the "beautiful new post office." The "two large built-in burglar-proof vaults" were noted along with the offices of the postmaster and assistant postmaster, which were described as "spacious and tastefully decorated, and ... quite in contrast with their former dingy offices in the old building.

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The following information is the same for all the
photographs listed:

1. Bremerton MPO
2. Bremerton, Washington
3. Jim Kolva
4. August 1987
5. Negatives on file at USPS Facilities Service Center,
San Bruno, CA.

Photo No. 1 (negative #14A)
6. View to southeast

Photo No. 2 (negative #12A)
6. View to east

Photo No. 3 (negative #11A)
6. View to northeast

Photo No. 4 (negative #9A)
6. Lobby mural