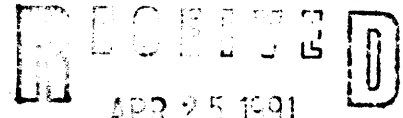


650

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 Okanogan Main Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 212 Second Avenue North N/A not for publication
city, town Okanogan N/A vicinity
state Washington code WA county Okanogan code 047 zip code 98840

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<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. [Signature] 5/30/91
 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:)
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)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Terra cotta shingle

other Tar composition

Sandstone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Okanogan Main Post Office is a two-story red brick building on a raised concrete basement platform. It is constructed with reinforced concrete footings, floor slabs, and support columns with walls of brick. Red brick in common bond faces the exterior. Divided into seven flat-arched bays with a centered entry bay, the front facade is flat and symmetrical. With the exception of the sandstone entry architrave, detailing is nominal. A gable roof clad with terra-cotta tile shingles covers the front portion of the building and a flat tar composition roof covers the rear. Brick chimneys rise above the roof's ridge at each end.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade (west, facing Second Avenue) is horizontal in orientation and symmetrically-arranged. Seven flat-arched bays divide the facade--a centered entry bay with three window bays on each side. The entry bay contains two aluminum-framed glass doors (originals replaced) with a single-light transom window above. Surrounding the doors is a sandstone architrave consisting of flat pilasters supporting a plain frieze topped with a molded cornice. The architrave projects slightly from a flat sandstone field. "OKANOGAN WASHINGTON" is incised in the frieze. Bronze lanterns, affixed to the wall, flank the entry. Three granite steps and a granite landing provide access to the entry. Wrought-iron railings flank the stairs and landing. The window bays of the first floor consist of double-hung wooden sash with six-over-six-lights. Narrow sills and wide lintels of cast concrete frame the bottoms and tops of the windows. The seven second floor window bays, aligned over those of the first floor, are the same width as but shorter than the first floor windows. The second floor windows are double-hung, wood sash with six-over-six-lights. Immediately above the second floor lintels is a copper gutter extending the width of the facade. The tile shingle roof slopes back from behind the gutter. The ends of the gable roof are defined by brick chimneys topped with hipped, tile shingle caps.

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1 OKANOGAN MPO

The south side (Oak Street) is flat and consists of the main building, over which is the gable roof, and a rear wing which is recessed one brick-width from the front and rises slightly above the gutter line of the gable roof. A flat built-up tar composition roof tops the rear wing. Concrete faces the exposed basement wall with red brick above. The gable end and chimney are undifferentiated from the first and second stories. Three window bays divide the main building and one bay is centered in the square rear wing. Both the first and second-floor windows in the main building are configured identically to the corresponding windows of the front facade. Although the sash of the first and second story windows of the rear wing are also identical to those described, they do not have lintels.

The north side is identical to the south, except that the center first floor window bay is filled with brick to form a niche (original construction). Centered within the lower portion of the niche is a fixed, six-light, wood-sash window.

The rear facade is configured in a 'U' shape--formed by the two-story rear wings with a one-story center section and, centered on the facade and extending rearward, the brick-enclosed loading platform. Approximately four feet lower in height than the center section, the loading platform is covered by a flat built-up tar composition roof. The rear wall is brick with a roll-up metal loading door in the east corner. The north side of the platform contains three equally-spaced window bays of wood sash with two-over-four-lights. The platform opens to the south and a flat metal marquee projects over the loading area. Two six-over-six-light, double-hung, wood sash windows flank each side of the loading platform. The end wings each contain a single, centered window bay. The first-floor windows are identical to those flanking the platform; the second-floor windows are also double-hung, six-over-six-light, wood sash, but are smaller in vertical dimension. Visible between the wings and above the single-story center section, the second story of the main building contains five equally-spaced window bays (identical to other second-story rear window bays). Finally, a square brick chimney, centered in the facade, rises from the juncture of the platform and center section.

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

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1940-1941

Significant Dates

Site acq.-1939

Const.-1940

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Simon, Louis A., Supervising Architect/Federal Government

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

Though not yet 50 years old the Okanogan Post Office is significant on the local level as an unaltered example of a small town combined post office and federal office building. Although the Colonial style was used in several other Washington post offices, this particular interpretation is rare. Only Okanogan's "sister city," Omak, has a similar building, though on a reduced scale. Further, these are the only examples of this particular design-type in the Northwest. The design is simple, yet conveys a sense of dignity--one that befits the federal building of a county seat. This building and the Spanish-Colonial County Courthouse are the city's most imposing buildings. Finally, the building symbolizes the Federal presence, the process by which the citizens of Okanogan obtained their building, and the massive public buildings programs of the late Depression era.

ARCHITECTURE

An example of a small town combined post office and federal office building, the two-story brick building is unaltered. American Colonial in its design, the building is Classical in its symmetry and proportion. Simple and uncluttered in the execution of its front facade, the strict formality of the building conveys a sense of subtle dignity and solidity. While the basic form of the building is standardized and relatively common, the overall composition is unique in the state and Northwest. Though elements such as the sandstone entry architrave and wide window lintels are common, the gable roof with gable-end chimneys are used only in Omak--the city next door. As a distinctive style in the city and as an example of a particular period of federal architecture, the building is locally-significant under Criterion C.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Okanogan Independent; various articles 1938 - 1940.
2. Original Building Plans; 1940.
3. Construction Progress Photographs; 29 March 1940 - 2] October 1940
4. Ramsey, Guy R. Postmarked Washington: Okanogan County. Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1977.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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 0.34

UTM References

A 11 309040 5359830
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

Quadrangle Name: Okanogan
Quadrangle Scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, Block 2, Pogue Addition to Okanogan. The site is on the Southeast corner of Second Avenue and Oak Street. Beginning at the West corner, thence NE150', SE100', SW150', NW100' to point of beginning.

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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POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The building is the city's first and only Federally-constructed post office. A large building for such a small community (Okanogan, with a 1940 population of 1,732, was the smallest city in the state to receive a Federal building) and nearly twice the size of the Omak Post Office (Omak's 1940 population was 2,918), the Okanogan Federal Building symbolizes the importance of the city as a governmental center for the vast, isolated region of northcentral Washington. The building is also a legacy of the Federal government's massive public building programs of the Depression era. Finally, it represents the efforts of local citizens through their elected officials in Washington to secure a Federally-constructed post office for their city.

September 20, 1940 was a big day for the citizens of Okanogan. Thousands of people jammed the area around the federal building as the Masons performed their ancient rite; the first time ever in Okanogan. The cornerstone was laid, Mayor Clair Ward spoke, and "America" was sung. Okanogan had received both recognition from and a formal symbol of the federal government. For its local importance and as a legacy of the Depression era public buildings programs, the building is significant under Criterion A.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Okanogan, the seat of Okanogan County, is in northcentral Washington, four miles southwest of Omak. The local economy is based on timber, agriculture, and recreation. In 1987, Okanogan's estimated population was 2,320.

The story of Okanogan begins with Frank J. "Pard" Cummings' trading post and ferry on the Okanogan River. The settlement that grew there was originally called Alma. The first post office was established on May 26, 1888; Cummings was postmaster. The first plat was filed by J. W. O'Keefe on July 15, 1904. At the time the town had a harness shop, a restaurant, general store, meat market, barber shop, and a real estate office and served as the trading center for all of the mid-Okanogan Valley. So many Almas were in the Postal Guide, however, that Doctor J. I. Pogue, a local booster who was the first to irrigate in the area, was

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honored by having his name used when the town's name was changed to Pogue in 1905. Two years later the name of the town was changed a second and final time--to Okanogan (after which Dr. Pogue stopped giving support to the town). Okanogan was incorporated in 1907 with Harry Kerr as the first mayor; from 1900 to 1910 its population grew from 174 to 611.

While cattle and sheep ranching played an important role in the development of Okanogan County (originally an Indian reservation; opened to settlement in 1886), the county was also a significant mining area of Washington, starting in the 1880s with the mining of silver and gold. Irrigation also made possible the start of extensive fruit production.

Stern-paddle riverboats provided transportation for the town of Okanogan until 1914, when the Great Northern Railroad arrived. Also in 1914 a county seat battle ended in an election which moved the seat from Conconully to Okanogan. From 1920 to 1930 Okanogan's population grew from 1,015 to 1,519. It continued to grow, from 1,735 in 1940 to 2,013 in 1950. Its population since then has remained constant, dipping to 2,001 in 1960, growing slightly to 2,015 in 1970, and growing to 2,302 in 1980.

The Okanogan Main Post Office is on the northeast corner of Second Avenue, the city's primary business and through street, and Oak Street. The Post Office is at the north edge of the downtown business district and one block east of the County Courthouse. Adjacent to the north is a one-story brick dental office and adjacent to its north, a one-story brick drug store. A one-story frame insurance office is across the alley to the east (rear) of the post office. Across Second Avenue is a gas station with two single-family residences and a flower shop to its north. Across Oak Street to the south is a gas station with one- and three-story commercial buildings to its south. Kiddy-cornered from the post office is a one-story brick tire shop/garage with brick commercial buildings to its south.

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

In the spring of 1938 the Okanogan Independent published encouraging news for Okanogan. "Many fine homes" were being

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built in a surge of building that belied "all talk of recessions and depressions." In addition, the old Grainger School was being demolished under a \$2,600 WPA grant. Wagnir Mill began its "sawing season" and employed 50 men. In April a \$21,118 WPA school grounds improvement project was approved. And on May 14th the Independent reported that Okanogan would get a \$147,000 federal building if Congress passed the emergency spending bill and if the Post Office Department got the PWA funds it requested. Mason City (\$75,000), Chelan (\$70,000), and Omak (\$73,000) were also included in the bill.

"Federal Building Allocated Here By Postmaster Gen'l" headlined the Independent on July 5th. A message had been received from Congressman Leavy that the federal building, which had been "in line" for several years and would include the post office, forest service, soils office, and other agencies, had been approved. Clarkston (\$73,000), Seattle (\$2,000,000), and Tacoma (\$450,000) would also get buildings. Within two weeks, the government was seeking site bids for the building; specifications were at the post office and bids would be opened on August 5th. Another article that day reported that the Plan Council was considering the site issue and was encouraging property owners to submit bids.

Other government allocations were reported on July 26th: Methow received \$252,000 of PWA funds for six small bridges and resurfacing work, Colville received a \$50,000 grant for irrigation on the reservation and \$22,5000 for Winthrop School, and \$13,005,000 was allocated for Grand Coulee Dam. On August 9th it was reported that 12 sites had been offered for the federal building, ranging from \$1,950 to \$10,000. In September the preparation of the banks along the Colville River for the backwaters of Grand Coulee Dam was underway and there was a good outlook for the price of the '38 apple crop.

"Federal Building Site Selected" told a headline of October 8th; a site at 2nd and Oak offered by B. E. Gregory for \$4,000 had been selected. Congressman Leavy had visited the site and was pleased with the choice. Three days later the paper confirmed the site selection; the site had been discussed at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon. The Boardman Building would be removed and it was noted that, while there was no information yet, from the size of the allocation it would be the biggest federal building in northcentral Wash-

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ington outside of Wenatchee. On November 5th it was reported that construction was not expected until the next Spring. Also in November it was reported that 15,000 carloads of apples had been shipped from the district and the local Arlington Mine had shipped 53,778 ounces of gold, 66,005 ounces of silver, and 28,580 ounces of copper since 1937.

In the beginning of 1939 it was reported that over 20,000 acres of land in the county had been sold at a tax sale, the Washington Water Power would spend \$1,425,000 on improvements in the region, and, in a summary of 1938 news, the federal building was cited as "Big News" (January 3rd issue). Postal sales had been increasing and were now at \$20,000 a year (January 14th). News of WPA projects were reported in May: the WPA had approved a project to help oil 100 miles of county roads for several years, WPA labor would help in a \$25,000 water works extension project and a \$11,140 Alma Park project, and a \$72,603 WPA project to improve the Oroville-Tonasket irrigation system was approved.

Also in May, the post office site was purchased and the deed recorded. In June, Leavy advised that the plans were being drawn, bids would soon be sought, and the project would "provide some very sorely needed employment this fall." As the summer ended, work on the \$150,000 Okanogan Growers Union plant was being rushed and Leavy wired that tentative plans for the federal building had been approved (August 12th). December brought additional news of the federal building: plans and specifications showed that the structure would be two-story, Colonial-style with a pitched shingle tile roof similar to that of the courthouse (December 16th). More description was given on December 19th, when a picture of the building was published. W. E. Reynolds, Commissioner of Public Buildings, was quoted as saying:

Its symmetrical facade recalls the forthright simplicity and dignity of our public buildings along the Eastern Seaboard in Colonial and early Federal years. Here is the same honest use of brick walls unbroken by panel or pilaster; the same double-hung windows of wood, which carrying the main burden of adding beauty to a strictly functional building, have evidently received the designer's most careful study in proportion and spacing.

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Soon, bids were called and in January, Leavy requested that local materials be used for the structure. An article of February 3rd reported that A. F. Mowat was the low bidder at \$99,984. Work would start in a few weeks.

"Work to Start Monday on Federal Building" announced an Independent headline on March 9th. A sketch of the building highlighted the front page. On March 23rd it was reported that excavation work for the building had just been completed. In April, 21 men working in 3 shifts poured the floor slab, which was 18 inches thick with 2 courses of reinforcing steel. By May 11th the building was one-fourth completed. The day's article noted that "carrying out the Boston post road architecture of the building, sweeping iron railings will be installed on each side of the steps." On May 25th the paper reported that bricklaying had started (the walls would be 12 inches thick) and the cornerstone would be laid in the fall, with the Masons in charge. In June, 26 men were on the job, which was over half done. On June 29th it was reported that the county's population had grown from 18,519 in 1930 to 24,619 in 1940, though the number of farms had decreased from 2,539 in 1935 to 2,429 in 1940.

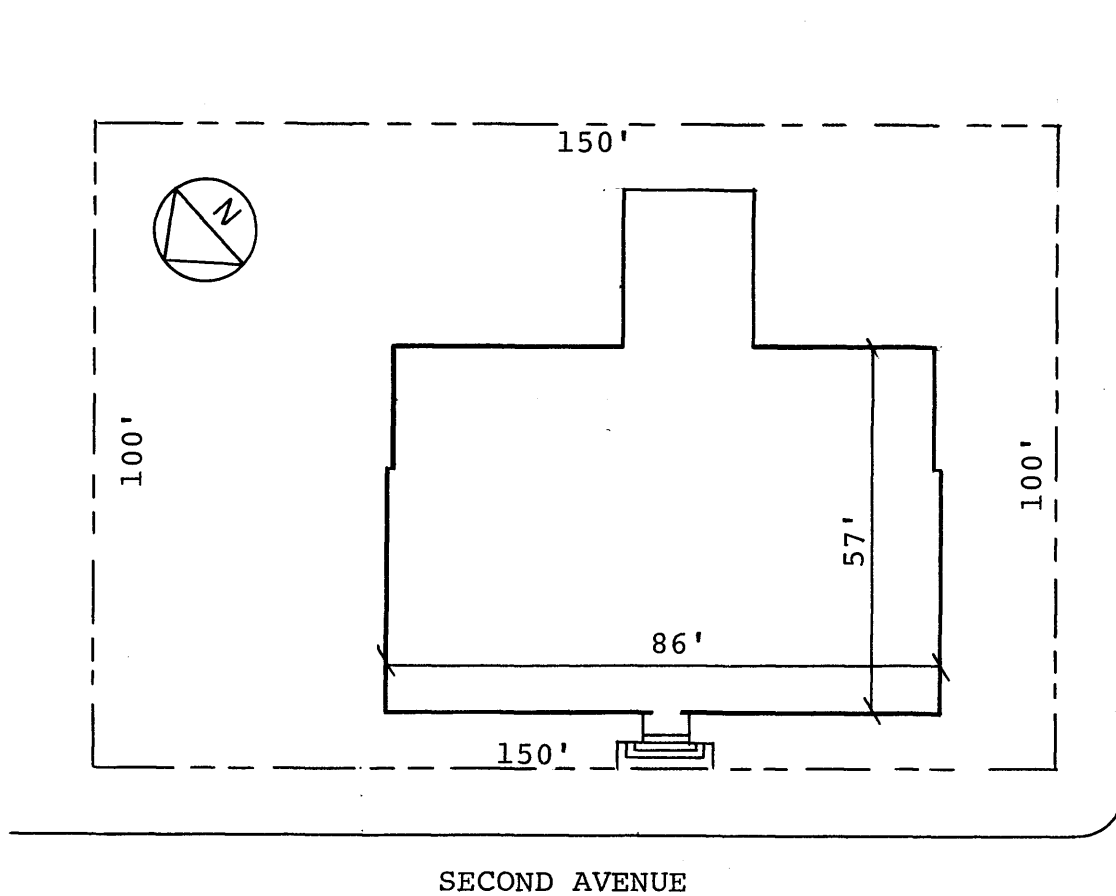
On August 3rd it was reported that, according to Mat Hill, Grandmaster of the Masonic order of Washington and Alaska, the cornerstone ceremony was scheduled for 5:00 Friday, September 20th. On September 10th it was reported that the Masonic Grand Lodge would be coming; this was a "rare occasion for a town the size of Okanogan." The September 24th Independent reported that thousands had "jammed" the area around the federal building for the ceremony, which was the first such event in Okanogan's history. Postmaster Brinkenholf presided at the ceremony. "Many items of historic note" were put in the cornerstone and the paper published a history of the Okanogan's post office.

By late October the structure was nearly complete and expected to open soon. A photograph of Okanogan's new post office was published on December 3rd along with the news that the post office had occupied the structure the previous day and would open to the public the following Monday.

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Section number Photos Page 1 OKANOGAN MPO

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

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

Photo No. 1 (negative #15)

6. View to south

Photo No. 2 (negative #7)

6. View to southeast

Photo No. 3 (negative #8)

6. View to east