

HISTORIC NAME:	Rice County Courthouse and Jail	COUNTY:	Rice
CURRENT NAME:		CITY/TWP.:	Faribault
LEGAL DESC.:	See continuation sheet	ADDRESS:	3rd Street and 2nd Avenue NW
CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local <u>X</u>	Primary Politics/Government
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State _____	Secondary Architecture
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	
District _____	Deteriorated _____		
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:	Yes <u>X</u> No _____ Restricted <u>X</u>	PRESENT USE:	
VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD:	Yes <u>X</u> No _____		Courthouse, jail,
OCCUPIED:	Yes <u>X</u> No _____		county facilities
DATE CONSTRUCTED:	Courthouse: 1932-4 Jail: 1910	ORIGINAL USE:	Courthouse/jail
ORIGINAL OWNER:	Rice County	ARCHITECT/BUILDER:	Courthouse: Naire Fisher, St. Cloud. Jail: Albert Schippel, Mankato
OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS:	Rice County; Courthouse; 3rd Street NW; Faribault, MN 55021	ACREAGE:	Less than one acre approx. <u>5 acres</u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.:	Rice County Historical Society, P.O. Box 5, Faribault, MN 55021	UTM REFERENCE:	Faribault Quad. 7.5 15 / 478340 / 4904340
FORM PREPARED BY:	Britta Bloomberg		
DATE:	April 1981		

DESCRIPTION:

The Rice County Courthouse and Jail are located two blocks west of Faribault's principal business district, off of Third Street NW and Second Avenue. The buildings are situated in a neighborhood of commercial buildings, residences, schools, and churches in the block south of Highway 60 (Fourth Street NW). The individual buildings are described below.

The Rice County Courthouse is situated towards the south side of the block bounded by Fourth and Third Streets and Second and Third Avenues on a sloped site with three stories on the north side and two stories on the south. The building is set off by a large landscaped area which includes a Civil War soldier statue and flagpole on the north side of the building. The courthouse was designed by St. Cloud architect Naire Fisher in the Art Deco style and was constructed in 1934. The rectangular structure is constructed of light colored Faribault stone in alternating horizontal bands of rock-faced and smooth-faced stone. St. Cloud granite is utilized for additional highlighting. The plan is symmetrical with a higher center section and flanking side sections; the bays flanking the entries are slightly projecting. The center entry bays on the north and south facades feature double doors with stone framing and ornamental polished aluminum grills in transoms above the doors. A large ornamental grill extends from the top of the door framing to the tops of the upper floor windows, and narrow vertical grills also flank the doorway bays. The building name is mounted on the smooth faced stone at the top of the building; a clock is located over the center bay as well as on the north facade. Large bronze lanterns on stone bases decorated with low relief carving flank both entries. The verticality accentuated by the composition of the center bays and the aluminum grills is repeated throughout the building by the dark contrast of the window bays against the light stone. Windows are rectilinear and grouped in vertical bands on all facades with aluminum spandrels between first and second story windows; four window bays flank the entry bay on the north and south and nine on the side facades (east and west). Decorative panels and bands of low relief carving are located in the upper smooth faced portion of the building and at the tops of the Upper floor windows.

The Art Deco motif is carried throughout the interior. Interior features include the utilization of black and grey polished marble; floors are pastel with black borders and inlaid designs. In the central rotunda area is a small dome with steel supports and glass designs in leaded bars. There has been some remodelling in the office areas.

(See continuation sheet)

Description - continued

The Rice County Jail is located southeast of the Courthouse on the northeast corner of Third Street and Second Avenue NW. The two story brick jail was designed by Mankato architect Albert Schippel and constructed in 1910. The building sits on a rusticated stone foundation, and the stone sills and lintels of the irregular rectilinear fenestration contrast with the brick. Dominant features of the building are the three story tower at the southwest corner and the red tile combination hip and gable roof. The tower features third story arched windows, continuous stone bands, and a brick corbel course, and terminates in a flared conical tile roof with hipped dormers and finial. Hipped dormers are located on the south, west, and east facades, and a two story three-sided window bay is at the southeast corner. The front facade entry portico has been glassed in and entry is now through a glass partition connecting the building to a recent brick addition to the east.

Exterior alterations to the jail are limited to the enclosed entry portico, glass partition and new east addition. The 1910 building was recently preserved and the interior remodelled as part of the general improvements to the facilities which included the east addition. The new addition is attached to the original jail building only by the glass partition and does not detract from the original design integrity.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Rice County Courthouse and Jail are significant as the buildings most clearly associated with Rice County government. Both are "replacement" type structures which represent the continuum of county government and are linked by a traditional functional relationship. Architecturally, the courthouse is a well-preserved example of the type of courthouses constructed in a few Minnesota counties in the 1930s; the jail is a good example of jail facilities constructed by county governments after the turn-of-the-century (a nearly identical building, also designed by Schippel, is found in neighboring LeSueur County). Rice County comprised a much larger area when it was organized in 1853; in 1854 the village of Cannon City was platted three miles northeast of Faribault and designated the county seat. In the fall of 1855, however, county boundaries were redrawn, and the county seat was removed to the city of Faribault where it has since remained. In 1857 buildings for the offices of the register of deeds and treasurer and the county jail were erected on the block now occupied by the courthouse alone. In 1873 the corner lots where the jail now stands were purchased, and more permanent quarters for courthouse and jail were constructed on the sites of the present county buildings in 1874. The jail was condemned in 1910 and replaced by the present structure the same year. In 1931, a disastrous fire destroyed the towering French Second Empire courthouse that had been constructed in 1874. After a bitter controversy over whether to use the 1923 fireproof wings as a nucleus for a new building, the ruins were demolished and the present building constructed. The new courthouse was completed in 1934. The replacement structures of 1934 and 1910 reflect the continuum of Rice County government and the ways that the county has responded to pressing needs and tragedies of the past in order to continue to provide a focus and adequate facilities for county government.

Legal Description:

All of Block 43 and part of Block 44, Original town, described as follows: begin at the NW corner of lot 6; commence Sly 165 ft.; thence Ely 262 ft.; thence Nly 50 ft.; thence Wly 34 ft.; thence Nly 50 ft.; thence Ely 16.9 ft.; thence Nly 65 ft.; thence Wly to point of beginning.

Bibliography:

- Curtiss-Wedge, Franklyn ed., History of Rice and Steele Counties Minnesota, Chicago: 1910.
 Jeffreys, Marcie D., "The Rice County Courthouse: the Art Deco Style", Carleton College, 1974, unpublished paper, copy on file at SHPO.
 Swanberg, L.E., ed., Then and Now, a History of Rice County, Faribault and Communities, Faribault: 1976.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 2 Page 1

REFERENCE NUMBER: 82003016

STATE: Minnesota

COUNTY: Rice

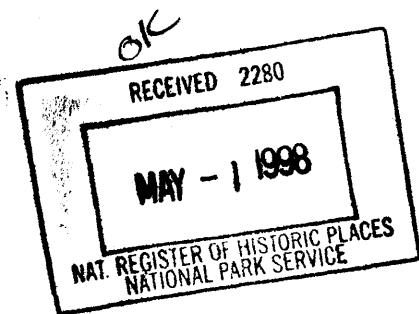
RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC): Rice County Courthouse and Jail

CITY/TOWNSHIP: Faribault

VICINITY OF:

ADDRESS: 218 3rd St. N.W.

COMMENTS: Address Correction
Rice County MRA



Ian R. Stewart
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

4/24/98
Date