United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 23 1985

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic   Salt Lake County Library

and or common   Midvale City Hall

2. Location

street & number   80 E. Center   ___ not for publication

city, town   Midvale   ___ vicinity of

state   Utah   code   049   county   Salt Lake   code   035

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	_X_ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_X_ building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	_X_ government	___ scientific
N/A	___ being considered	_X_ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name   Midvale City Corporation

street & number   80 E. Center

city, town   Midvale   ___ vicinity of   state   Utah

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.   Salt Lake City and County Building

street & number   400 South and State Street

city, town   Salt Lake City   state   Utah

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title   Utah Historic Sites Survey   has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes _X_ no

date   January 1981   ___ federal _X_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records   Utah State Historical Society

city, town   Salt Lake City   state   Utah

7. Description

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Salt Lake County Library Building is a good example of the abstract classicism associated with the PWA Moderne architectural style in Utah. It has a sprawling plan consisting of two flat-roof sections varying slightly in their two-story height. Although the entire building is constructed of the same light colored terra cotta, the front section is taller and fancier. It has an irregular rectangular plan that is distinguished by a projecting front wing containing a recessed entrance and flat-roofed octagonal bay window. There is a highly stylized entablature that is nothing more than a molded cornice and plain frieze. Small indented markings occur regularly in groups of three at a line below the frieze, giving the impression of dentiling. Below a dark tiles string course are inset window panels. Again, the impression of dentiled cornices is achieved through the use of flat-arched heads above the windows. The muntins are widely spaced and geometric, and there is a small canopy over the transomed front door. Through the design, classical principles are implied rather than overtly stated.

The rear section of the building appears to be original. It has a flat roof and a rectangular plan. Stylized classical motifs are again in evidence, though in a more simplified form than those found on the front section. A heavy molded coping is found along the edge of the roof, and the symmetrically placed windows are capped with highly abstract cornices. There is a large c.1970 addition on the rear, which does not severely affect the historic integrity of the building, because of its location, and because it is sympathetic to the original design in terms of its materials, scale and massing.

8. Significance

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1940-41 as a WPA project, the Salt Lake County Library is exceptionally signific as the original headquarters of the Salt Lake County Library System, and as part of the Public Works Buildings Thematic Resources nomination. It helps document the impact of New Deal programs in Utah, which was one of the states that the Great Depression of the 1930s most severely affected. In 1933 Utah had an umemployment rate of 36 percent, the fourth highest in the country, and for the period 1932-40 Utah's unemployment rate averaged 25 percent. Because the depression hit Utah so hard, federal programs were extensive in the state. Overall, per capita federal spending in Utah during the 1930s was 9th among the 48 states, and the percentage of workers on federal work projects was far above the national average. Building programs were of great importance. During the 1930s virtually every public building constructed in Utah, including county courthouses, city halls, fire stations, national guard armories, public school buildings, and a variety of others, were built under federal programs by one of several agencies, including the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the National Youth Administration (NYA), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), or the Public Works Administration (PWA), and almost without exception none of the buildings would have been built when they were without the assistance of the federal government. The construction of this library marked an important step in the development of a county library system for Salt Lake County. As headquarters of that system, this building was the center for processing and distributing books for the entire 19-branch system.

Midvale is located approximately seven miles south of Salt Lake City. Together with the nearby area of Murray, Midvale became a center in Utah's mining industry, serving as a central location for the smelting of metal ores. In 1902 the United States Smelting, Refining, and Mining Company completed its smelter at Midvale, and rendered the town as a primary settlement for southern and eastern European immigrants who were utilized as labor for the plant. "Americanization' and educational efforts among the state's foreign-born population, especially during the 1919 national Americanization movement, became important as Utah became one of few states to pass an Americanization law. This act was part of the 1919 Utah Educational Program which also included provisions for county library systems. The reading and writing of English was seen as paramount to Americanization, and as such, libraries became of special significance.

Until 1919, only incorporated cities and towns in Utah could raise taxes for libraries. Consequently, unincorporated areas had no publicly supported library service. In 1919, however, the Utah State Legislature passed legislation providing that county commissions could levy taxes up to one mill

(See Continuation Page)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Clement, Yvonne D., and Hepworth, Bobbee M. <u>Utah Libraries: Heritage and Horizons.</u>
    Salt Lake City: Utah Library Association, 1976.
Evans, Max J. "A History of the Public Library Movement in Utah." M.S. thesis, Utah
    State University, 1971.   (see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property __1.05__

Quadrangle name __Midvale__   Quadrangle scale __1:24000__

UTM References

A | 1 2 | 4 2 3 2 1 0 | 4 4 9 5 6 7 0 |
   Zone   Easting   Northing

B | | | |
   Zone   Easting   Northing

C | | | |

D | | | |

E | | | |

F | | | |

G | | | |

H | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification Commencing 24.5 rods E and 45.5 feet N from SW corner
Sec 25 T2S R1W Salt Lake Meridian, thence N 262 feet, E 45 feet, N 97 feet, N 84° E 120.08
feet, S 0°34' W 368.1 feet, S 89°58' W 10.2 rods to beginning. Also commencing 24.5 rods
E and 23.9 rods N from SW corner of said Sec 25, N 84° E 45.25 feet, S 97 feet, W 45 feet,
N 92.5 feet to beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   John McCormick/ Historian

organization   Utah State Historical Society   date Spring 1982; updated June 1985

street & number 300 Rio Grande   telephone 801-533-6017

city or town   Salt Lake City   state Utah

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national   ____ state   __X__ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89–
665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated
according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

                                            May 25, 1982 (original)

title A. Kent Powell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date June 26, 1985 (update)

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet Salt Lake County Library   Item number 8   Page 2

Salt Lake County Library
History (Cont.)

to establish and support a county library system. Between May 1919, when the
law took effect, and August, 1919, ten counties established library systems:
Cache, Grand, Iron, Morgan, San Juan, Tooele, Uintah, Wasatch, Washington, and
Wayne. Salt Lake County did not establish its own system until nearly 20
years later. Until then, it had public libraries in only two cities, Murray
and Salt Lake City. The rest of the county either had no libraries, or
inadequate private library "associations."

In the fall of 1938, Calvin Smith, Superintendent of the Granite School
District, and C. N. Jensen, Superintendent of the Jordan School District,
headed a drive for a Salt Lake County Library system, and in the spring of
1939, it was established, with a budget of $33,822; Ruth Vine Tyler as the
head; and a staff of four people. The first Library Board was made up of the
following members: Superintendents Smith and Jensen, Mrs. Alf G. Gunn, J. R.
Rawlins, and J. Hollis Aylett, Mayor of Midvale. Temporary quarters were
established in two rooms of the Midvale Elementary School at 575 East Center
Street, and plans were laid to construct a new building. The Library Board
decided to build it in Midvale, at least partly because Midvale City donated a
piece of land 178 feet x 910 feet at the southeast corner of Main and Center
Streets on which to construct the building.[1] The project became a WPA
effort, illustrationg the federal government's role and concern not only in
public works, but also in funding buildings to be used for public and
educational needs.

The architectural firm of (Raymond J.) Ashton and (Raymond L.) Evans designed
this PWA Moderne-style building. Ashton and Evans, a prominent firm, also
designed several other public work buildings during the 1930s and '40s,
including the Wayne County High School, the Thomas Library at the University
of Utah, and the Wasatch County Library in Heber City, the design of which is
very similar to this building.

The architectural drawings for the building were completed by the end of 1939,
the building contract was awarded to Jense Bros. in the spring of 1940, and
construction began in June of that year. Construction was completed in August
1941 and a grand opening held August 9, 1941. The building was intended to
serve as the Midvale City Library, and as the center for processing and
distributing books for the entire Salt Lake County system, which by that time
had 19 branches: Bacchus, Bingham, Copperton, Draper, East Millcreek,
Garfield, Granger, Herriman, Holladay, Magna, Millcreek, Riverton, Sandy (2),
South Salt Lake (2), Taylorsville, Union, and West Jordan. Its facilities
included an adult reading room, a children's room, a board meeting room,
several offices, a work and stack room, and shelves for 30,000 volumes.[2]

The building served as a library until 1976, when it became the Midvale City
Hall.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet Salt Lake County Library   Item number 8   Page 3

The Salt Lake County Library is one of 233 public works buildings identified
in Utah that were built during the 1930s and early 1940s. Only 130 of those
233 buildings are known to remain today and retain their historic integrity.
This is one of 20 buildings constructed in Salt Lake County, of which 10
remain. It is one of six public works library buildings constructed in Utah,
of which five are known to remain. Libraries were included in at least five
other public works buildings in the state, but the primary function of those
buildings was as a city hall.

Notes

[1]Information to this point is from three sources: Max J. Evans, A History
of the Public Library Movement in Utah, M.S. Thesis, Utah State University,
1971, 74-91.; Yvonne D. Clement and Bobbee M. Hepworth, Utah Libraires:
Heritage and Horizons, Salt Lake City: Utah Library Association, 1976, pages
26, 46; and Ruth Vine Tyler, Salt Lake County Library System History,
1938-1969.

[2]Midvale Sentinel, August 8, 1941, 1, August 12, 1941, 3.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet Salt Lake County Library   Item number 9   Page 2

Midvale Sentinel, August 8, 1941; August 12, 1901.
Salt Lake Tribune, October 21, 1963.
Tyler, Ruth Vine. "Salt Lake County Library System History, 1938-1969."