

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 17 1987
DATE ENTERED MAY 19 1987

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Kemmerer Main Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

Kemmerer Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Sapphire Avenue and Cedar Street

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Kemmerer

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

NA VICINITY OF

NA

STATE

Wyoming 83101

CODE
056

COUNTY

Lincoln

CODE

023

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thematic	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Group	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*

United States Postal Service, Western Regional Headquarters

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Avenue

CITY, TOWN

San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

California 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lincoln County Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Lincoln County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Kemmerer

STATE

Wyoming 83101

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>NA</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Kemmerer Main Post Office is a two story red brick building on a raised basement. Neo-Classical in design, the front facade is classically proportioned and symmetrical in arrangement. Although the five-bayed facade is relatively flat, it displays a degree of detailing which is more typical of the Beaux-Arts tradition of the early-1900s rather than the "Starved Classicism" of the mid-1930s. The first floor is impressive with its centered entry bay, framed by a sandstone Gibbs surround, and flanking Palladian windows. Five flat-arched windows, aligned over the first floor bays, occupy the second floor. Brick corner quoins and a sandstone entablature which supports a solid brick parapet complete the facade. The roof is flat built-up tar composition.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rising from a raised basement of reinforced concrete, the two story building is framed by structural steel and faced with red brick. Sandstone is used for trim detailing.

The front facade (north) is relatively flat and symmetrical in elevation. The facade is faced with red brick. A dressed sandstone belt course defines the water table, and a sandstone entablature with projecting cornice tops the second floor. A solid brick parapet capped by a sandstone coping course rests atop the cornice. The facade is divided into five equally spaced bays with brick quoins marking the corners of the building.

The bays of the first floor consist of the centered main entry flanked on either side by two semicircular-arched window bays. The entry bay is approached by 11 concrete steps with intermediate and approach landings, also of concrete. A wrought iron balustrade runs along the sides of the stairs. The entry consists of double wooden-paneled doors with a 6-light glass panel in each. A wooden transom bar detailed with an alternating

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Meschter, Daniel Y and Ruth Dolezal, "The Post Offices of Wyoming: Part XVIII, Lincoln County." LA Posta (April 1977): 17-19.
2. Williamson, Norma B. "Lincoln County Courthouse", March 27, 1984.
3. The Kemmerer Gazette, various articles, 1928-1936.
4. Kemmerer Post Office various floor plans 1935 and 1961.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.48

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 2	5 3 8 3 50	4 6 2 6 8 3 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 4, 5 and 6, Block 8, Kemmerer Town.
 The site is rectangular with 140 feet frontage along Sapphire Street (northern boundary) and a depth of 150 feet with frontage along Cedar Avenue (western boundary).

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

H. J. "Jim" Kolva, Senior Associate

ORGANIZATION

Institute for Urban & Local Studies

DATE

June 1986

STREET & NUMBER

W. 705 1st Avenue

TELEPHONE

(509) 458-6219

CITY OR TOWN

Spokane

STATE

WA 99204

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

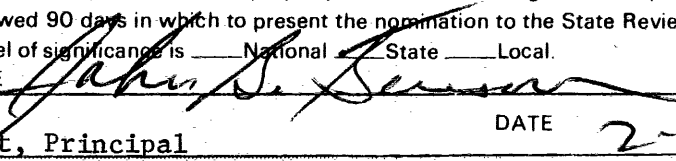
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES NO NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE



DATE

2-9-87

TITLE
 Realty Acquisition Specialist, Principal

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

MAY 19 1987

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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triglyph and diamond pattern separates the door and overlying transom window, which consists of five lights framed in an arcade motif. The entry is framed by a Gibbs surround. Molded and quoined sandstone jambs and molded lintel frame the ornate entry. A pronounced tripart sandstone keystone extends from the bottom of the lintel up to the horizontal cornice of the triangular pedimented frontispiece which completes the entry. Both the horizontal and raking cornice of the pediment are embellished with dentils. Single wrought iron lanterns are affixed to the wall on either side of the entry.

The window bays are recessed slightly and framed in brick. The semicircular arches are framed with a single course of gauged brick with a pronounced sandstone keystone. The windows are wood sash in a Palladian motif, 6-over-6 light double-hung wood sash flanked by double-hung 2-over-2 sidelights. The fan light consists of a 4-light semicircular interior section separated from a 6-light outer arch by a thickened molded wood arch. A 3-section wooden panel is set beneath the window sills and extends down to the water table.

The second floor contains five flat-arched window bays which are aligned over the first floor bays. A belt course of slightly projecting brick extends along the facade beneath the window bays. The windows are double-hung wood sash with 8-over-8 lights. The center window bay is flanked on each side by a garland of flowers (bas relief sandstone). "United States Post Office, Kemmerer, Wyo" in raised bronze letters is located in the frieze centered over the entry.

The side facades are both flat and nearly identical. Both consist of the main two-storied portion of the building and an elongated single storied wing to the rear. The wall treatment is similar to that of the front facade: the basement and upper floors are faced with red brick; brick quoins mark the corners; and sandstone is used for water table, entablature, and coping courses.

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The west facade is divided into three equally spaced bays in the main building and a single centered bay in the rear wing. The loading vestibule and platform extend to the rear of the wing (south). The bays consist of an entry bay (added in 1942) located in the northwest corner and two window bays (identical to those of the front facade).

The entry bay is approached by three concrete steps and a concrete landing. Wrought iron balustrades run along the edges of the stairs and landing. The entry is enclosed by a square porch with a flat roof. Double wood paneled doors identical to those of the front provide access. The doors are framed with flat fluted wooden pilasters which support a slightly projecting molded wooden cornice. The capitals are flat and embellished with a bas relief circle. "U.S. Post Office" in raised bronze letters is located in the frieze. Dentils adorn the lower band of the cornice.

The sides of the porch are enclosed with paneled wood. A semicircular arched window, identical to the arched portion of the window bays, is located above the porch. Raised circular medallions of sandstone flank the arch, one on each side. The second floor windows, which are aligned over the first floor bays, are identical to those of the front facade.

The south wing is faced with red brick and other than the window bay is unembellished. The wall terminates with a cornice consisting of a vertically aligned brick course topped with a sandstone coping course (at the level of the projecting brick course on the main portion of the building). The window bay is identical to the other first floor bays of the side and front facades.

The east facade is identical to that of the west except that the grade of the site slopes down to the east, and exposes approximately one-half of the basement wall. The wall is faced with red brick with a sandstone water table dividing the basement from the upper floors. A concrete entry well protected by iron pipe railing provides access to a single wooden panel door with a

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9-light glass panel. A double-hung wood sash window with 8-over-8 lights is located adjacent to the door. Two other 8-over-8 lights double-hung wood sash windows (one with the upper part replaced by a wood panel with a circular vent) are located in the remainder of the wall.

The rear wing contains a single window identical to the other basement windows previously described. The first floor contains two Palladian window bays identical to the front facade flanked by one small flat-arched (fixed 8-light wood sash) on either side. The windows of the second floor and their arrangement is identical to the west facade. The single-storied wing to the south is also identical to that of the west facade.

The rear facade is dominated by the loading platform which is centered on the single-storied wing. The platform consists of a concrete dock covered by a flat metal roof with rearward projecting metal marquee. A single pedestrian door and double (hinged) loading door provides access to the brick-enclosed loading vestibule. A single brick chimney, which extends above the roof line of the building, is located to the left of the loading platform. The rear facade of the single-storied wing contains two window bays on either side of the platform. The windows are double-hung wood sash with 8-over-12 lights. A fixed 8-light transom window is located over each. The second floor of the main building contains five window bays identical to those of the front and side facades.

The lobby of the post office also contains three murals executed in 1938 by Eugene Kingman. The murals depict prehistoric animals, fish fossils, and the excavation of animal fossils. In addition, a long narrow painted band which depicts the general east/west geological profile of the United States is located along the lobby, beneath the murals.

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The building was the city's first federally constructed post office. It was constructed during a period of national economic emergency and one in which the local economy, though not quite as bad, was stagnant and depressed. The efforts to secure a federal building in Kemmerer spanned a period of more than a decade and involved the lobbying efforts of local citizens through their representatives in Washington. Fraught with tidings of both despair and elation, the events leading to the completion of the building were major local news events. The completion of the building symbolized not only the federal presence, but also the efforts of the federal government to aid local communities during a period of economic crisis. As stated by Charles T. Hansen, U.S. Postal Inspector, in the dedicatory address: "In dedicating this building, which joins us more closely to the general Government, we must also try to dedicate our hearts and our minds to the great work being now carried on to lift the nation once more to heights of happiness, prosperity and peace. The President of the United States, with our help is erecting an edifice of justice and quality." The building is locally significant under Criterion A as an example of the federal government's massive public building programs and assistance to small communities during the Depression era.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Kemmerer, the county seat of Lincoln County, is located in southwestern Wyoming. With a 1983 population of approximately 7,400, Kemmerer is the center of local gas, oil, and coal production. Retail trade and governmental services comprise other major sectors of the local economy.

The area was settled in the late 1880s and the first post office was established on June 14, 1887 with the name of Ham's Fork, Uinta County. Brigham Y. Randall served as the first postmaster. With the opening of the first coal mine in nearby Diamondville in 1894, the

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area attracted the interest of eastern capitalists including M. S. Kemmerer who founded the Kemmerer Coal Company. In 1897, the name of the town was changed to Kemmerer in honor of M.S. Kemmerer. The town grew slowly and by 1910 reached a population of 843. In 1911, when the new county of Lincoln was formed, Kemmerer became the county seat. The population nearly doubled in the next decade to 1,517. Growth tapered off in the 1920s but the city had 1,884 residents in the 1930 census. The population peaked in 1940 at 2,026 then declined in 1950 to 1,667 before gradually rising to 2,292 in 1970. Since that time, Kemmerer has grown substantially with the boom in local coal and oil exploration.

The Kemmerer Post Office is located at the corner of Cedar Avenue and Sapphire Street one-half block west of Pine Avenue, the main business street. The Kemmerer Town Hall, a two-story sandstone block building (1913), is located across Sapphire Street to the north. Adjacent to the post office's east is a three-story brick commercial building and adjacent to its east is the three story sandstone Kemmerer Hotel (constructed in 1898 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places). Adjacent to the south (rear) of the post office is a brick structure (insurance agency) with a single family residence further south. Single family residential structures are located across Cedar Avenue to the west.

LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE KEMMERER
MAIN POST OFFICE

After several years of effort by local citizens and Congressman C.E. Winter, the prospect of obtaining a federal building in Kemmerer seemed a step closer as reported in a May 23, 1928 article of The Kemmerer Gazette. Postmaster J. H. Mantle received a letter from the District Postal Headquarters in Denver that Kemmerer might have the new building in the next two to three years and that Triangle Park was the probable site of construction.

Hopes for the federal building were set back when The Kemmerer Gazette reported on March 22, 1929, that a

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federal building was not yet in sight. While several other communities in Wyoming would be receiving federal buildings, Kemmerer was not on the list of towns where Congress had appropriated funds for such purposes. An article of December 13th reported that Congressman Carter submitted a bill seeking \$75,000 for a federal building in Kemmerer. New federal buildings in Green River, Thermopolis, Torrington, and Greybull were also included.

On April 11, 1930, it was reported that Congress passed a bill authorizing the construction of federal buildings in three Wyoming towns (Thermopolis, Torrington, and Green River). The bill also provided an extra \$115 million for federal buildings throughout the United States. With the additional funds, Wyoming was to have two more federal buildings in towns yet to be named. Chances of a federal building in Kemmerer seemed brighter.

Then, in a March 6, 1931 article, Congressman Carter announced that Kemmerer would be getting a federal building. It finally appeared, after a dozen years of local lobbying and promises from Washington, D.C., that Kemmerer would receive the federal building. Some \$90,000 had been appropriated and it was just a matter of choosing a site and beginning to build. Few people felt that Triangle Park would remain in contention as the site for so large a federal building. Other locations were being considered. The prospects for the federal building ended in the summer of 1932 when the project was cancelled. Feeling that the money could be better spent, Kemmerer's citizens made no further attempt to obtain new appropriations (according to an October 27, 1933 article).

Despite the economic hardships other areas were experiencing, Kemmerer was a growing city. The Kemmerer Oil Refinery began operations, a new mine employing 100 men was opened, several groups including the Wyoming American Legion held their conventions in Kemmerer, and the city council approved an airport for the city.

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In June of 1934, plans for a new federal building were again underway. An article appearing in The Kemmerer Gazette on June 8th stated that \$84,000 had been allotted for a post office. By July 13th bids for the post office site had been taken and two weeks later they were opened. The bids were then sent to Washington, D.C. for review. On September 28, 1934, it was announced that the vacant lots owned by Chapin and Rogers behind the Kemmerer Hotel would be the location of the new federal building. As the four lots across from City Hall were being cleared, bids for construction were being taken.

The bids that had been asked for on February 1, 1935 were opened in Washington, D.C. on March 7th. The construction job was awarded to A.M. South of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The June 14th issue of The Kemmerer Gazette included an artist's sketch of the proposed building and an accompanying article described the building as it was planned. The federal building would be 62 feet long and 55 feet deep. It would be a three-story building with a total of 21,000 square feet of space, and would cost \$58,800 to build.

Finally on July 19, 1935, The Kemmerer Gazette reported ground breaking for the \$80,000 federal building. "It is an assured fact, even the most skeptical must admit that Kemmerer will soon boast a federal building because ground has been broken for the erection of the long-awaited structure. ..." An article of February 7, 1936 reported that construction was completed and that a committee appointed by Mayor Marquis was planning the dedication and formal opening ceremonies for the federal building.

The dedication ceremonies took place on February 15, 1936, and was reported on February 21st. Senator Platt Wilson was the master of ceremonies for the "gala" event that began at 2:00 in the afternoon and lasted until 8:00 p.m. Andrew Morrow, the postmaster and custodian of the building, accepted the structure and thanked the Wyoming Congressional delegation for their support and effort during the past decade to obtain a

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federal building. Mayor J. R. Marquis also spoke at the ceremonies. He expressed his appreciation and that of the citizens for a "building which cannot help but be the pride of our people through many years to come, even after those of us now here may be gone." The history of Kemmerer, a listing of the past postmasters, and a history of the building procurement and construction were recounted by various speakers.

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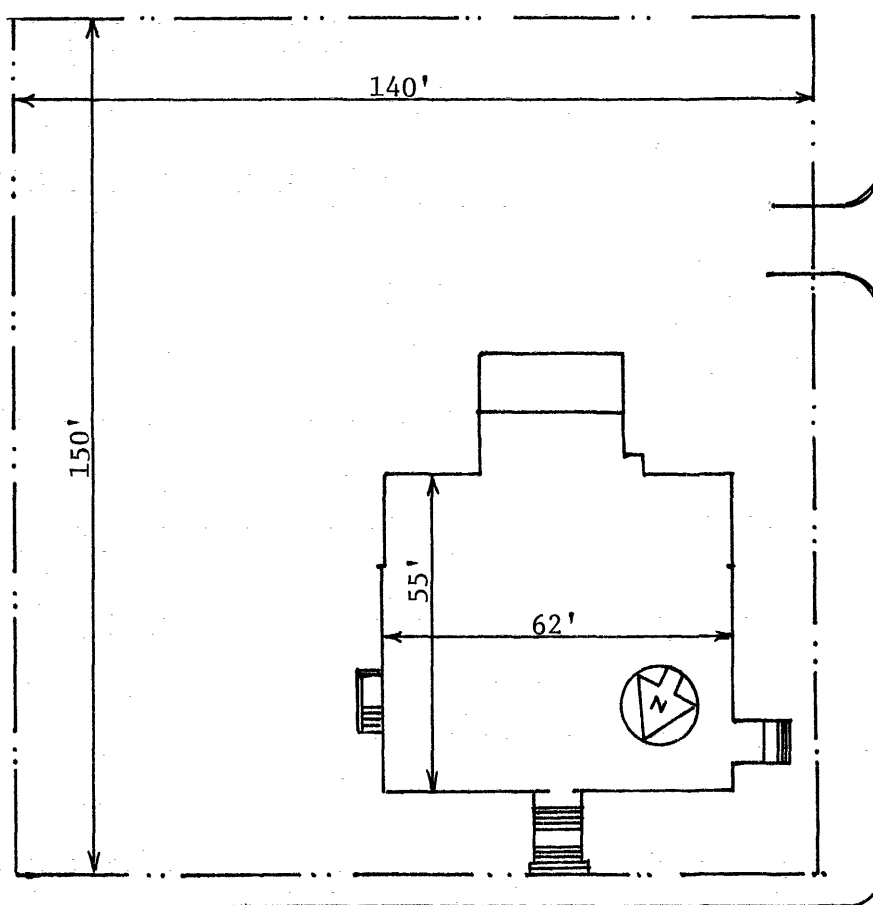
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Sapphire Street

Cedar Avenue