



United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Shawano Post Office  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number	235 South Main Street	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Shawano	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Shawano	code 115 zip code 54166

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_ nationally statewide  locally. (\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Alicia Z. Cochran*  
Signature of commenting official/Title

*July 27, 2000*  
Date

*Deputy SHPO - WI*  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Shawano Post Office

Shawano County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the 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.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ other, (explain):

*Edson H. Beall*

*10/24/00*

*for*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

\_\_\_ private  
 \_\_\_ public-local  
 \_\_\_ public-State  
 public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

building(s)  
 \_\_\_ district  
 \_\_\_ structure  
 \_\_\_ site  
 \_\_\_ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	0 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

US Post Office Construction 1913-1943  
State of Wisconsin - Milwaukee District

**Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
 Government/Post Office

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
 Government/Post Office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)  
 Modern Movement

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation brick  
 walls brick

roof

other sandstone

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Art  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1939  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1939  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Simon, Louis A.  
Melick, Neal A.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Shawano Post Office  
Name of Property

Shawano County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

- 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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** Less Than One Acre

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>3/7/2/6/6/0</u>	<u>4/9/5/9/4/3/0</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

<b>name/title</b>	Charles W. Causier, AICP and Robert J. Gosse, Architect I			<b>date</b>	12-29-93
<b>organization</b>	HNTB			<b>telephone</b>	414-359-2300
<b>street &amp; number</b>	11270 West Park Place			<b>zip code</b>	53244
<b>city or town</b>	Milwaukee	<b>state</b>	Wisconsin		

Shawano Post Office  
Name of Property

Shawano County  
County and State

Wisconsin

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	John S. Sorenson, Historic Preservation Program Manager		
<b>organization</b>	US Postal Service, Customer Service Facilities		
<b>street&amp;number</b>	475 L'Enfant Plaza	<b>telephone</b>	202-268-3107
<b>city or town</b>	Washington	<b>state</b>	D.C.
		<b>zip code</b>	20260-6235

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Shawano County, Wisconsin

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**Narrative Description**

The Shawano Post Office is a one-story, red brick building with sandstone trim. It is located in the central business district of the seat of Shawano County, Wisconsin.

This building is an example of the modern abstraction of the classical styles. The plan is rectangular, with the public entrance and lobby on the Main Street façade. The elevation is organized symmetrically about the entry doors. The windows of the front elevation are set in recessed panels with sandstone trim. Sandstone relief panels over the front doors and two central windows show a train, a boat and a plane. The two corner windows are narrower and only have sandstone lintels, rather than decorative panels. All of the windows have a sandstone panel below. A sandstone watertable is located below the window panels. A sandstone beltcourse and cornice demarcate the brick frieze, which wraps around the building. The entry stairs are granite with sandstone sidewalls.

The cornerstone reads: "Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, James A. Farley, Postmaster General, Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer, 1937."

The side elevations carry on the theme of the front elevation. The windows at each corner have sandstone panels extending to the watertable. The four windows of the central portion of each side elevation do not have these panels. All six windows have sandstone lintels. All of the windows of the building are aluminum replacements. The rear of the building features an original one-story loading dock.

The interior has the original tile floor and wainscot. The walls and ceiling are of plaster. The original wood trim and vestibule remain. Modern lighting has been added, as well as a glass panel with a door to separate parts of the lobby.

Above the door to the postmaster's office is a mural titled "The First Settlers." It is signed and dated "Eugene Higgins, 1939." The painting depicts a pioneer setting. In the left foreground, a man is felling a large tree. To the right, a second man is preparing the felled trees for transport. Also in the foreground is a mother with two small children. They sit with their backs to the viewer and are observing a passing wagon train in the background. In the far distance, partially obscured by a hill, is a complex of large farm buildings.

The building at Shawano is of similar design to the post offices in Kewaunee and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, which date from the same period. While the interior of the Shawano Post Office has remained largely intact, the exterior retains less integrity than the two similar examples.

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Section 8      Page 2      Shawano Post Office, Shawano County, Wisconsin

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Shawano Post Office is an example of a small, Federal post office with an intact, Depression-era mural. It is nominated in the context of the "United States Post Office Construction from 1913-1940, State of Wisconsin - Milwaukee District" Multiple Property Nomination. The Shawano Post Office is eligible for listing under Criterion C for Art.

**Historic Context**

This building is the first federally owned post office in Shawano. Prior to its construction in 1937, postal services were conducted in various locations selected by a series of local postmasters. This post office is one of several constructed in Wisconsin by the Public Works Administration in the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> The history of post office construction in Wisconsin in this period and under this program is explained in the multiple property nomination.

The design of the Shawano Post Office is similar to those in Kewaunee and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. In Shawano the original windows have been replaced, affecting its architectural integrity. The lobby area has been somewhat altered, although many original features remain, preserving much of the context for the mural.

**Significance**

The Shawano Post Office is significant for the public works program mural in its lobby. The history and context of the federal arts program is discussed in the multiple property nomination. In 1939 artist Eugene Higgins completed the mural titled "Early Settlers."<sup>2</sup> Higgins also painted murals in post offices in Beaver Creek, Pennsylvania, and Mount Pleasant, Tennessee.<sup>3</sup>

Eugene Higgins was one of the older painters working for the federal arts program and did not attempt mural painting until the competitions sponsored by the Section of Fine Arts.<sup>4</sup> Higgins was born in Kansas City, Missouri. His artistic training was at the School of Fine Arts in St. Louis and then in Paris at the Julian Academy and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts from 1897 to 1904. Higgins was an exhibitor at the 1917 Independents show in New York and was later elected to the National Academy of Design.

Eugene Higgins obtained the Shawano commission as a result of the high quality of his submission to the national mural competition for the Post Office and Justice Department buildings. The mural in Shawano is

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<sup>1</sup> America Builds: The Record of the PWA (Washington, DC: National Archives, 1939).

<sup>2</sup> Karal Ann Marling, Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post Office Murals in the Great Depression (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 135.

<sup>3</sup> Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 225, 229.

<sup>4</sup> Exhibition of Mural Designs for Federal Buildings (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1940), 15.

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Section 8 Page 3 Shawano Post Office, Shawano County, Wisconsin

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the result of correspondence with the local postmaster and the Section of Fine Arts in the Treasury Department. The executed mural was one of two studies presented by Higgins for the work. In April 1939 the mural went on display at Grand Central Galleries. After its installation in May 1939, Higgins changed the name of the work from "First Settlers" to "Early Settlers" after a logger pointed out that the first settlers had arrived by boat rather than by covered wagon.<sup>5</sup>

Although it has had some modern alterations, the Shawano Post Office retains a largely historic setting for its Works Progress Administration mural. The work is representative of government sponsored art during the Depression, as a way to employ America's artists and as a means to bring art to the general population via commissioned works in public buildings. The building meets the registration criteria for a post office with an intact public works program mural.

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<sup>5</sup> Virginia Mecklenburg, The Public as Patron (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Department of Art, 1979), 72.



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Section 9/10 Page 4 Shawano Post Office, Shawano County, Wisconsin

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**9. Major Bibliographic References**

America Builds: The Record of the PWA, Public Works Administration. Washington, D.C.:  
National Archives, 1939.

Exhibition of Mural Designs for Federal Buildings. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1940.

Krug, Merton Edwin. History of Reedsburg and the Upper Baraboo Valley. Madison: Krug, 1929.

Marling, Karal Ann. Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post Office Murals in the Great  
Depression. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Mecklenburg, Virginia. The Public as Patron. College Park, MD: University of Maryland, Department of  
Art, 1979.

Park, Marlene and Gerald E. Markowitz. Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal.  
Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984.

Shawano Post Office. Building cornerstone.

State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Reconnaissance files.

Woodson, Leigh Yankey. Wisconsin's New Deal Art. 1980.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property corresponds to the following legal description: City of Shawano, Danks and Richmond  
plat; the east 150 feet of lot 8 block 5, lot 1 block 6, the east 150 feet of lot 5 block 6.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary encompasses the Shawano Post Office, parking lot, and surrounding yard, which is the limit  
of the original property holding.

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Section photos Page 5 Shawano Post Office, Shawano County, Wisconsin

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**Photographs**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Shawano Post Office  
Shawano County, Wisconsin  
Photographs by Joseph Jurkiewicz  
1993

Negatives in the possession of HNTB, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1. General view of lobby
2. Interior mural
3. Side elevation, looking south
4. Back elevation, looking east
5. Side elevation, looking north
6. Front elevation, looking west
7. General view