

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



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

**1. Name**

historic  Bessie Poe Hall

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Wilson and Faculty Drives, Murray State College  not for publication

city, town Tishomingo \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 3

state Oklahoma code 40 county Johnston code 069

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> otherStorage

**4. Owner of Property**

name State of Oklahoma Jurisdiction of Board of Regents for Murray State College

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Tishomingo \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Oklahoma 73460

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Johnston County Courthouse

street & number Capitol Avenue

city, town Tishomingo \_\_\_\_\_ state Oklahoma 73460

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Spring 1981 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Oklahoma City \_\_\_\_\_ state Oklahoma 73105

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built to house 130 students, Bessie Poe Hall has a sand colored pebble stucco exterior. Red brick was used for the first story and window trim. One of the interesting features of the four story structure is a half timber design embedded in the pebble stucco on the fourth floor exterior. There are two red brick chimneys. The bannisters on the steps from the second floor front porch are also of red brick.

Interior characteristics included six inch thick walls, plaster over a lath of wire and mesh and hardwood floors, which are presently covered with linoleum. There is a three room apartment with bath, which was originally designed for the house parents, to the right of the foyer. Across the foyer is the reception area.

The structure is a simplified Queen Anne style, with finials at the top of each of the six gables and half timber decorative features. Also included are eyebrow windows and a skylight which lights the interior stairwell. Currently a composition roof covers the structure, but it is believed that originally it was concrete asbestos.

The building is presently in fair condition.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1917-1919

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of Bessie Poe Hall is found in the cooperative efforts of tribal, federal, state, and local governmental agencies to assist an Indian nation in their quest for educational facilities for their children. Although the Chickasaws benefited most from the erection of the dormitory, other Indian and white students were housed there also. Bessie Poe Hall continues to be a reminder of the interest the Chickasaws exhibited in the future of their children. They believed that a good education was the best method for surviving in the white man's world.

Murray State School of Agriculture (now Murray State College) was established in 1908. It provided an education which revolved around an agricultural economy. Early enrollment was made up primarily of Chickasaw and Choctaw boys. Out of town students were housed in private homes and boarding houses in Tishomingo. The need for campus housing was great.

In 1917, William H. Murray introduced a bill in Congress, whereby two Indian dormitories would be erected at Murray State School of Agriculture, one of which was Bessie Poe Hall. The 64th Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to credit \$50,000 to the Chickasaws for the purpose of building the dormitories for Chickasaw children. One of the restrictions on the bill was that the City of Tishomingo would deed the land necessary to the Chickasaw nation. Bessie Poe Hall and her companion dormitory were built between 1917 and 1919. Bessie Poe Hall is the solitary reminder of this past congressional, city, and tribal effort as the other dormitory burned in 1957.

The school was raised to the status of a junior college in 1924, but continued to educate high school students until 1943. In 1939 the State of Oklahoma purchased the dormitories and land from the Chickasaw nation.

Murray State College plans to restore Bessie Poe Hall and return it to a functional role on the college campus.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview with Mrs. Margaret Lokey, Spring 1981  
Oklahoma Preservation Office, Building Structure Inventory Form, 1981.  
Lokey, Margaret H., and Wyatt, Beverly J., Chickasaw Education and Murray State College unpublished manuscript.

# 10. Geographical Data

AGENCY NOT VERIFIED  
UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property . Less than one acre  
Quadrangle name Tishomingo, OK, Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A	<u>114</u>	<u>711381910</u>	<u>31781931010</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

From the southeast corner of Wilson Avenue and Faculty Drive on Murray State Campus proceed south 150 feet, then 50 feet east, then 150 feet north, and 50 feet west to the point of origin.

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sandra S. Stratton, Preservation Planner

organization Oklahoma Preservation Office date 25 June 1981

street & number Oklahoma Historical Society telephone 405 521 2491

city or town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma 73034

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Cempetco* date 7/22/81

For NCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*William H. ...* 9/11/81

Chief of the National Register

date

Chief of Registration