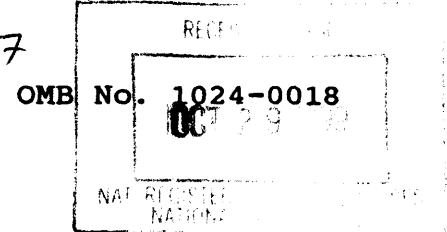


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1427



=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Duncan Public Library

other names/site number Old Duncan Library

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 301 North Eighth Street not for publication N/A
city or town Duncan vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code OK county Stephens code 137
zip code 73533

=====

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
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: library

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: library
SOCIAL meeting hall

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Asphalt
walls Brick
other _____

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 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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Architecture

Economics

Period of Significance 1938-1939

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
=====

Significant Dates 1939

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Kenneth T. Price, Sr., Architect
Works Progress Administration, builder

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

=====
9. Major Bibliographical References
=====

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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: Anita Gail Loafman, Duncan, OK

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	595810	3818480	3	_____	_____
2	N/A	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

N/A 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
=====

name/title Anita Gail Loafman

organization _____ date 8/16/99

street & number 1608 E Chestnut telephone (580) 255-7693

city or town Duncan state OK zip code 73533

=====
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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Duncan

street & number 720 W. Willow telephone (580) 252-0250

city or town Duncan state OK zip code 73533

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

The Duncan Public Library is an excellent example of a brick Colonial Revival style building built by the Works Progress Administration in Duncan, Stephens County, Oklahoma. Built in 1939, the library exhibits few of the standard vernacular characteristics evident in other New Deal era buildings throughout Oklahoma. Breaking from the norm, this WPA building was built in the Colonial Revival style rather than the typical native-stone, rustic style. Its Colonial Revival influence is shown on the central, pedimented porch with its four Corinthian columns, the balanced facade with sidelighted central entry, and the multi-pane, double hung windows. It is a single story building with a gabled roof and buff brick walls. The footprint of the Duncan Library is "L" shaped. The building is oriented to the east on a corner lot, surrounded by mature trees, and is located immediately north of Duncan's Junior High School building and three blocks north of Main Street. The Duncan Public Library retains a great deal of its integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Duncan Public Library is an L-plan, single story, buff brick building built in a restrained Colonial Revival style. Its buff brick, laid up in a running bond, is harmonious with other buildings in the neighborhood. The roof is side-gabled with cornice returns and a centered, pedimented portico. The roof is clad in asphalt composition shingles. The foundation is poured concrete.

The front, or east, elevation features a 13' wide, centered portico. The portico features a pedimented roof with a cameo in the tympanum. The frieze and architrave are supported by four round, and two square, wooden engaged Corinthian columns. A decorative wrought iron balustrade is woven between the columns and down the four red brick steps. The entry features an eight-panel door with an added brass kick plate, six pane sidelights, and a tripartite transom. A cornice hood with consoles caps the entry. The east elevation is seven bays wide - a central entry and six 9/9 double hung windows. The windows feature corbeled header sills and soldier bond lintels. A wooden frieze board caps the wall and

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an architrave mold.

The south elevation of the library is accented by the treatment of the 9/9 window centered in the gable-end wall. The window sits in a round-arched opening with corbeled header surround and an elongated keystone. The arch is in-filled with a wooden sunburst panel. A wrought iron balconette frames the lower third of the opening. Centered in the gable is a four-light octagonal window. A triangular vent is located in the apex of the gable. Two widely spaced 9/9 windows flank the centered, round-arch window. The rear wing is set back 13" from the gable-end wall and features two 9/9 windows.

The north elevation is highlighted by a decorative octagonal window and triangular vent identical to those found on the south elevation. Triple nine-pane hopper style windows are located off-center; they have a corbeled sill and soldier bond lintel. A single 9/9 window is offset to the west. The hopper windows are still workable, but have been unused since the installation of central heat and air conditioning.

The west elevation features an offset stoop with a small, wooden awning and three different window openings. The northernmost is a single 9/9 window; the southernmost is paired 9/9 windows. Between these is a single 6/6 window. The rear ell projects off of the south end of the west elevation. The gable-end of the ell has two 9/9 windows. Its northern wall has a single 9/9 window and two doors. One door is an original five-panel wooden door while the other is a steel security door added in the mid 1980's.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The 2,984 square foot floor plan of the Duncan Public Library was laid out in an "L" plan. The reference desk is centered in the plan, facing the entry vestibule. Paired two-panel, six-light doors with transoms separate the 6' X 8' vestibule from the main reading room. The vestibule features the only original globe light fixture in the library. Behind the original oak reference desk are similar doors leading to storage rooms and the original librarian's office. These currently house computers and research materials for the Stephens County Genealogical Society. The north half of the building was utilized as the reading room; it now houses the Stephens County Genealogical Society's collection stored on original free-standing and built-in oak bookshelves. The south half of the library, which

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originally housed the library's collections is now utilized as storage space for the new Duncan Library.

The original hardwood floors are covered in linoleum in the public areas of the library. The offices and storage areas retain the original floors. The ceilings are fifteen feet in height, covered with original Celotex acoustical panels. The textured plaster walls have a continuous picture rail and cove molding. A number of original pieces of furniture remain in use, including two large and one small oak study tables and a number of chairs.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATION

The Duncan Public Library retains a high degree of its interior and exterior integrity. The changes made to the building have been superficial and do not detract from the original workmanship, feeling, design, or association. Interior lighting is the most dramatic change; the original globe light fixtures having been replaced by suspended florescent fixtures in 1985. In 1954 or '55, central heat and air were installed and the hardwood floors were covered in linoleum. In recent years, a brass kickplate was added to the original front door and one rear door was replaced with a steel security door. Plumbing fixtures have been updated. The changes are minor and superficial. The Duncan Public Library retains its integrity of design, setting, site, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Duncan Public Library is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Works Progress Administration's relief program in the City of Duncan. As one of the "Alphabet Soup" programs of Roosevelt's New Deal, the WPA was created to bolster the economy at the national, state and local level. Through its programs, the WPA provided not only a living wage for those employed in its service, but its projects left a lasting legacy to the built environment. The Duncan Public Library is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent example of a brick Colonial Revival style, WPA built building, designed by a local architect.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Founded in 1892, Duncan has enjoyed a long history of prosperity. It was named for The trader William Duncan, who originally settled in the area in 1879 after marrying a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation. In 1889, when it was learned that the Rock Island Railroad was to come through from the north, Mrs. Duncan exercised her tribal rights and chose a five hundred acre tract farm in the path of the rails. Three years later, with the depot built and the town site laid out, Mrs. Duncan began selling lots with the understanding that the owners would get their titles when it was legally possible. Duncan's economy and growth since then has been based on stock raising, agriculture, and oil.

By 1920, Duncan was said to be the home of about 3,000 people. The cotton industry was strong and cattle raising continued. After the first oil well, the O Nahdy Magnolia No. 1, came in on March 10, 1918, over nineteen hundred producing well were drilled in the area. The rich oil and gas reserves led to the inception of the now world famous Erle P. Halliburton Oil Well Servicing Company in 1921. Duncan's cultural interests were growing at that time as well. Mrs. G.W. Womack and Mrs. R.H. Brown led a community push to open a library. By 1921, city officials had appointed a library board and had chosen Mrs. Mary D. Browder as the first librarian for the Duncan Public Library. The original library was housed in two small rooms above the old City Hall and Fire Station in the 700 block of

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Main Street.¹

Soon after the stock market crash of 1929, the American economy plunged into a recession which grew steadily for the next three years. By 1932, the downward spiral was compounded by the severe drought in the Midwest plains. Oklahoma suffered in the midst of the Dust Bowl. The oil industry, farming and stock raising were in critical condition.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt made several proposals to help pull the country out of its economic depression. Between March 9 and June 16, 1932, fifteen acts were passed, constituting Roosevelt's New Deal. New agencies were developed and enlisted to aid U.S. citizens by providing them pay for the services they provided their communities. These agencies were usually referred to by their acronyms; they were often called the "alphabet soup" agencies. One of the first agencies put into effect was the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) in 1932. This administration channeled money to state and local agencies which then passed it down to local public works programs in the communities. The Civil Works Authority (CWA) was established in late 1933 to help with large-scale unemployment.² Roosevelt signed legislation that created the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in May, 1935. It was intended to provide jobs for the unemployed, but skilled and unskilled. Believing that "work rather than direct relief should be the keystone of Federal Policy with respect to needy employable" the WPA hired people who qualified through their local Public Welfare Department "working through the National Re-employment Service."³

In Oklahoma, Governor Marland was close to the Roosevelt administration and helped the state accomplish much during his term in office. At one time there were 93,000 people on relief rolls in Oklahoma. Through the influence of Oklahoma's politicians and due to the ravages of the Dust Bowl on the agricultural economy of the state, Oklahoma attracted a large number of projects generated through the

¹ History of Stephens County, Stephens County Historical Society, Duncan, Oklahoma, pp. 163-165.

² The Volume Library, A Modern and Authoritative Reference for Home & School, Nashville, 1978

³ "Mangum Community Building," National Register of Historic Places nomination, Cynthia Smelker, 1995

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“alphabet soup” agencies. From the numerous Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps throughout the state to the myriad projects undertaken by the WPA, evidence of the New Deal abounds in Oklahoma. During its almost eight year tenure, the WPA expended over \$185 million dollars on projects large and small in the state.

The WPA facilitated public works projects; it did not initiate them. WPA guidelines required that a tax supported public body sponsor a project which had to result in a permanent and useful addition to the community. The sponsor provided the plan and specifications as well as the materials and equipment. The WPA provided the labor and administration. The sponsor's cost generally ran between twenty and thirty percent of the total. The sponsoring agent would own the project upon completion. In Duncan, there were several projects completed with the use of WPA labor prior to the construction of the library. Playday Park in southwest Duncan and the two public swimming pools were built; numerous city sidewalks still carry the imprint of “WPA.” Locally quarried stone from the John Taliaferro farm was used for the National Guard Armory and the “new Douglas Negro High School and other projects;” the school project costing \$6,000, according to the *Duncan (Oklahoma) Banner* on February 6, 1939.⁴ The National Guard Armory was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 and is now home to the Stephens County Museum & Historical Society.

Progressive civic leadership has been a key to Duncan's success. Civic leaders over the years have continued to press for good schools, playgrounds, churches, hospitals, libraries, and related community services. Duncan's first library building was established in a frame house located at 301 North Eighth Street. The house was later moved to another location and the current library building was constructed in its place in 1939.⁵ The deed stipulates that the property must be used for public library purposes or revert to the original owners or their issue. (The original owners were Mr. and Mrs J. A. Blades, Mr. and Mrs. R.K. Wooten, and Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Kilgore.)⁶

⁴ *Duncan (Oklahoma) Banner*, Feb. 6, 1939

⁵ History of Stephens County, Stephens County Historical Society, 1992, p. 111

⁶ Marilyn Fennel, Stephens County Clerk, Interview with Gail Loafman, 5/6/98

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The Duncan Library represents the last large WPA project in the city. The large sandstone National Guard Armory was built in 1936-37; the Duncan Public Library was built in 1938-39. Between those projects, the city gained a new sewer system, additions to schools, and improvements to the city's parks. Building permits in the city began to rise in 1938, signaling an improvement in the local economy. The economy of the area and the state began to pick up as the agricultural situation began to improve and as the country's industrial base began to grow in reaction to the dark events brewing overseas.

The Duncan Public Library project had a rocky start. In the summer of 1938, the original frame building had to be removed; it was divided into two sections and hauled off of the site to be used for other purposes. The lot then stood empty for a short time while awaiting WPA funding for the construction of the new building. In the meantime, the books were housed in temporary quarters at the Junior High gymnasium. Another WPA project involved repairing and rebinding many of the books.

Soon, just over \$16,000 was allocated by the WPA for the construction of the new library building. Local architect Kenneth Price was hired to design the building, deviating from the WPA's usual practice of modifying standard plans. Ground was broken late in the summer and the experienced WPA crew quickly got to work. The foundation was poured and the superstructure was constructed. Buff brick from the Acme Brick Company was used to sheath the exterior. The interior and details were finished by December. The books were relocated from their temporary storage at the Junior High and the Duncan Public Library had its grand opening on December 12, 1939.⁷

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Duncan Public Library is architecturally significant as good example of a locally designed, WPA constructed, Colonial Revival style building in the City of Duncan. With its classical details, formal balance, and buff brick, the Duncan Library does not follow the norm for most of Oklahoma's WPA buildings. It was designed by local architect Kenneth T. Price, rather than utilizing

⁷ Duncan (Oklahoma) Banner, December 13, 1939

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federally issued, standardized plans.

For the most part, WPA constructed buildings in Oklahoma utilized native stone for construction material and were organic or vernacular in style. Duncan's Public Library was constructed of native buff brick. It expresses the Colonial Revival style, carried throughout the interior and exterior of the building. The Colonial influence is visible externally in the use of a pedimented portico with Corinthian columns, octagonal windows in the north and south gables, by the transom and sidelight details on the main entry, and by the multi-pane windows and gable returns. The spare interior featuring cove molds, globe lighting fixtures, hardwood floors, and simple oak furniture also suggest the Colonial Revival.

Kenneth T. Price, the architect of the Duncan Public Library, arrived in Duncan with his parents in 1907. He served his country during the First World War and then attended the University of Illinois School of Architecture. He had his own design firm and was joined later by his son Stuart. Together or separately, the Prices were responsible for a number of commissions in the Duncan area, including residences and public buildings. Kenneth Price also worked for Halliburton Services for many years while continuing to design buildings like the Duncan Public Library.

The Duncan Public Library retains a high degree of its historic integrity. It is still used for library purposes and continues to serve the educational needs of the citizens of Duncan and Stephens County. It is one of the few unaltered or extant WPA buildings left in the area and retains its integrity of design, feeling, association, location, workmanship, and materials. It is a good example of the Colonial Revival style, designed by a local architect and constructed with WPA labor.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 29, 30, 31, and 32; Block 119, Original Town of Duncan; Section 5, T1S, R7W.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the area historically associated with the Duncan Public Library.