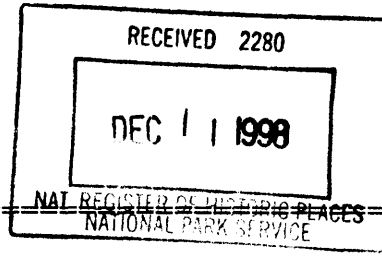


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1590

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Okmulgee Stock Pavilion

other names/site number _____

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number NE corner jct. Lagonda & Okmulgee Sts. not for publication N/A
city or town Okmulgee vicinity N/A
state Oklahoma code 040 county Okmulgee code 111
zip code 74447

=====
3. State/Federal Agency Certification
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this XX 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 XX meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 23 November 1998
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
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.)
=====

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register [Signature] 1/25/99
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of 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
- 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: RECREATION AND CULTURE Sub: fair

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: OTHER Sub: storage

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER--WPA Standardized Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
walls STONE--limestone
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)

- ECONOMICS
- ARCHITECTURE
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance 1941-1942

Significant Dates 1942

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

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Davis, Joseph I., Architect

Work Projects 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: _____

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

Acreage of Property less than 1 (one) acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>230640</u>	<u>3947610</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 Dianna Everett, for the City of Okmulgee
organization Everett Research Services date 25 May 1997
street & number 2510 Countrywood Lane telephone 405-348-4272
city or town Edmond state OK zip code 73003-6433

=====
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 Okmulgee
street & number 111 E. 4th telephone 918-756-4060
city or town Okmulgee state OK zip code 74447

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, OK
county and State

=====

SUMMARY:

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion, located at the northeast corner of the junction of Okmulgee and Lagonda Streets, is a self-contained, horizontal building measuring 147 feet north to south and 103 feet east to west. Built in 1941-42 by the Works Projects Administration (WPA), it was constructed of native Oklahoma limestone blocks, in rectangular shapes, rock-faced, and irregularly coursed. The building's strongly horizontal massing, its roofline, and its fenestration identifies it as an exposition or exhibition-type building. Two main entrances exist on the west (main) facade of the building, along Okmulgee Street. Vehicular entrances and pedestrian entrances also lie in the north and south elevations. These walls also have large window openings. There are no entrances or windows on the east elevation. Architectural detailing is minimal. In a manner suggesting the influence of Art Deco vernacular style, the parapet is stepped slightly upward twice at each of the west facade entrances, as the wall projects to emphasize the door surround. Other decoration on this building consists of the smooth stone caps of the parapets, smooth stone lintels over the window and door openings, and curving, smooth stone door surrounds at the main (west) entrances. The building sits in an area that was historically and currently park land on the north, east, and south. Until the 1970s the area also encompassed the fairgrounds, and although the county fair has a new location farther north, the plan of the former fairgrounds remains as it was historically. There are historic residential areas on the west. The building has been altered by the removal of all window frames in the exterior walls and by the removal and infilling of all except one vehicle door. Pedestrian entrances have new steel doors. Additionally, a small concrete-block addition has been constructed on the north side of the building. Despite these alterations, the building still retains the requisite integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to enable it to convey its past history and to be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

DESCRIPTION:

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion is a self-contained, horizontal building measuring 147 feet north to south and 103 feet east to west. The building sits in an area that was historically and currently park land on the north, east, and south. Until the 1970s the Stock Pavilion was the centerpiece of the fairgrounds, on the west side of the park. Although the county fair has a new location farther north, the old fairgrounds area remains the same in layout, with the Stock Pavilion being the only historic building, and with new metal buildings to its north and south. A large park still lies to the north, east, and south, and residential areas dating from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s lie to the west. Built in 1941-42 by the WPA, the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion was constructed of native Oklahoma limestone blocks, in rectangular shapes, rock-

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 10

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, OK
county and State

=====
faced, and irregularly coursed. The building's exterior gives it the appearance of having two stories; however, the open interior plan reveals that it is one-story, with two ranks of window openings. The main entrances lie on the west side, facing Okmulgee Avenue. The Stock Pavilion's strongly horizontal massing, its roofline, and its fenestration identifies it as an exposition or exhibition-type building.

The building's domed roof, covered with built-up-type roll roofing similar to the original, rises gently upward from all four walls. The roof is visible over the north, south, and east walls. The west wall has a high parapet that conceals the dome. In a manner suggesting the influence of Art Deco vernacular style, the parapet is stepped slightly upward twice at each of the west-elevation entrances, as the wall projects to emphasize the door surround. The parapet wraps around the northwest and southwest corners of the building and continues about one-third of the distance on the north and south elevations, at the end rising slightly higher as the wall takes in a buttressing pier near the center, on the north and south. The upper edge of the parapet bears a cast stone cap. The roofline is also marked by a flagpole, in the southwest corner, a stone internal chimney rising from the roof in the southeast elevation, and an identical internal chimney similarly placed in the northeast. A ventilator strip, which lies along the top, in the center, is concealed by the high parapet and is only visible from a distance of several hundred feet away.

The west elevation consists of five bays. The window openings, presently concealed by sheets of corrugated metal, are ranked in two levels. Beneath the sheathing, the openings once contained steel casings that held an unidentified pattern of window glazing. Moving south to north, the first bay consists of a window on each "story," or level. The second bay, stepped outward from the wall two steps, contains a window opening on the upper level with a surround of broad vertical strips of smooth-faced, square-cut stone blocks. On the lower level is a pedestrian door that is surrounded by a curving stone surround and is shaded by a flat concrete panel that projects outward. The original double doors have been removed, and the opening was infilled with board-and-batten panels on either side of a weathered steel door. The broad central bay contains five window openings on each level. The upper-level openings are taller. The fourth bay is stepped outward from the wall two steps and contains a window opening on the upper level with a surround of broad vertical strips of smooth-faced, square-cut stone blocks. On the lower level is a pedestrian door opening. The opening has been infilled with board-and-batten panels around a standard-door-sized piece of plywood. This pedestrian opening also has a curving stone surround and has been altered identically to its counterpart to the south. The fifth bay has a window opening on each level. The west entrances originally gave access to small exhibit rooms along the inside west wall. The west elevation has four new metal downspouts that use the original drain holes in the wall.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 11

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, OK
county and State

=====
The north elevation of the building contains both pedestrian and vehicle entrances that give access to the arena inside. There are three bays, with the westernmost bay slightly recessed. The westernmost bay has two window openings on the upper level. East of them is a pedestrian door, raised up above ground level and accessed by a set of concrete steps with stone side walls having concrete caps. The second bay consists of a large vehicle opening. This entrance can be closed by a new steel overhead door. The opening is accessed by a gently sloping concrete driveway. To the left of this door is a lower-level window opening. The easternmost bay contains a lower-level window opening identical to the opening in the second bay. To the left of the window was originally a vehicle entrance to the outside. A one-story, gable-roofed, concrete-block extension was placed in front of this door at an unknown date. Its roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and the rafter tails are exposed; wall cladding in the end gable is lapboard. The extension has a steel pedestrian door in its west side but no other openings in any other exterior wall, although the original vehicle door has been infilled and a pedestrian door added to access the extension from the Stock Pavilion interior. The north wall of the original building has one new metal downspout that uses the original drain hole in the stone wall.

The building's east elevation is one long expanse of stone masonry. There are no openings, because the builders wanted to reduce reflected light that impeded the view of the arena from the bleachers set against the west interior wall. The expanse of the east wall is broken only by three new downspouts that use the original drain holes in the roof-wall junction. The east side of the concrete block extension is flush with the original east wall of the building.

The building's south elevation offers both pedestrian and vehicle entrances, and the placement of elements is identical to that of the north side, in three bays. The easternmost bay has a vehicle entrance, with new steel overhead door. The threshold of this entrance is elevated two feet above ground level, and a six-foot concrete driveway accesses it. Also in this bay is a large window opening. The central part of the window is covered with a louvered steel panel, utilizing the original window for ventilation, and a ventilator fan sits inside the mesh. The center bay also has a large window opening, in which the central part of the window is covered with a louvered steel panel, utilizing the original window for ventilation. The center bay also has a vehicle entrance that has been infilled with wood panels, leaving openings for one pedestrian door opening (covered by plywood) and two side lights (infilled with plywood). The concrete driveway is still in place. A metal awning shades the doorway. The westernmost bay, which is slightly recessed, has a new steel pedestrian door, elevated above ground level and accessed by concrete steps with stone side walls having stone caps, and two upper-level window openings infilled with metal. There is new guttering and one new downspout on the south side.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 12

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, OK
county and State

Decorative detailing on this building is minimal. It consists of the stone cap of the parapet, stone lintels over the window and door openings, and curving stone door surrounds at the main entrances. Very minimal elements influenced by Art Deco style are used to break up the strongly horizontal massing: the stepped parapet around the north, west, and south sides, and the steps that rise above the regular parapet line at the two main entrances on the west side.

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion's interior is an open expanse. The floor is concrete. The walls are the same load-bearing walls visible on the exterior. The north, south, and west interior walls reflect the same openings as on the exterior. The east wall is a long expanse of stone masonry, but along the wall, buttressing piers project slightly from the surface every ten feet. On the other side of the room, the vertical face of the west wall is broken by an eight-foot-high, twelve-foot-deep colonnade created by square stone posts that support a wood-frame platform on top. Under this colonnade were exhibit booths. In the wall above the wood-frame platform are slits in the stone work, set with metal brackets that once supported bleacher-type arena seats, now gone. The concrete floor under the colonnade is one step down from the entry doors, and a visitor entering through the main entrance would step down, pass directly under the projecting colonnade, and step up in order to get into the arena proper. Entirely visible is the steel bowstring truss system that holds up the domed roof. In the center of the roof is a raised rectangular section, running north and south, which is a ventilator with intact steel window frames and 3x3 lights, most of which have been painted over. The Stock Pavilion presently serves as storage for city street department equipment.

ALTERATIONS:

Alterations to the original Okmulgee Stock Pavilion building include: replacement or infilling of the four overhead vehicle doors (one covered by a concrete-block addition and infilled with a pedestrian door; two replaced with new steel doors, and one infilled with plywood); addition of small concrete-block extension on the north side; three new steel pedestrian doors, on the west, north, and south sides; and infilling of one pedestrian door on the west. The dewatering system of gutters and downspouts is new but uses the original drains placed in the parapets where the roof joins. Interior alterations appear to be limited to removal of the bleacher seats.

These changes do not seriously impeach the building's ability to reflect its past history. It still retains the appropriate degree of integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to enable its listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 13

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, OK
county and State

=====

SUMMARY:

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion is eligible under Criterion A within the economic context of the Works Projects Administration in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, 1941-1942. It is also eligible under Criterion C within the architectural context of WPA building style and methodology locally and in Oklahoma. The pavilion is an excellent representation of WPA activity in the Okmulgee community. Built in 1941-1942 by area unemployed men, the project brought \$32,000 in federal money into the Okmulgee economy by employing an average of 84 men for almost two years. It is the only fairgrounds building that was ever constructed under the city's multi-building fairgrounds expansion plan; the plan was essentially canceled because of the outbreak of World War II. The WPA building program constructed relatively few livestock exposition-type buildings in the state of Oklahoma, this being one of nine. It is also one of the three largest projects conducted by the WPA within the city of Okmulgee between 1935 and 1942, the others being the National Guard Armory and Harmon Athletic Field. The building of the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion represents the last major effort of the federal government to enhance the economy of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, at the close of the pre-war era, and the building retains the requisite amount of integrity of feeling and association to convey this information about its past.

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE:

Oklahoma suffered severely during the initial years of the Great Depression, 1929-1933. In a predominantly rural state, where in 1930, 65.7 percent of the population lived in rural areas, and twenty-seven of the state's seventy-seven counties had no towns of more than 2,500 persons, drought, general agricultural failure from 1932 through 1938, and a downturn in the petroleum industry exacerbated the general economic depression. Rural communities, towns, and cities, which functioned as agricultural or petroleum service centers, consequently foundered.

Oklahoma's state and local governments were unable to provide much help for citizens, whether urban or rural. Limited relief offered by counties did not alleviate the suffering, nor did meager annual relief appropriations by the state legislature. No public funding was available to maintain the existing infrastructure, and private charity failed to create or to support relief initiatives. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, established in March 1933 by the Roosevelt administration, provided some direct relief, in terms of food, clothing, stipends, and some state-controlled work relief programs, but until the inception of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 only a few Oklahomans received adequate assistance. The urban unemployed and displaced farm families combined to create a situation in which 33 percent of all

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 14

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

Oklahoma families were on the direct relief rolls by the time that Roosevelt created the WPA by executive order in May, 1935. By July 1935 there were 127,416 jobless men certified in Oklahoma.¹

The inauguration of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 stands as one of the benchmarks of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" for the United States. Administered on the national level by Harry Hopkins, the program was designed to assist in lifting the nation from the depths of severe economic depression. Make-work projects provided work-relief for literally millions of individual citizens whose lives had been devastated by the near-collapse of the American economy. The infusion of cash into work-relief projects all over the state made a significant economic impact on hundreds of communities. During the seven-and-one-half-year life of the WPA, more than \$10.75 billion were expended, of which Oklahoma received more than \$185 million for projects ranging from school lunch programs, flood control, and archeological excavations, to major construction projects such as armories, highways, bridges, schools, stadiums, and museums.²

Localities competed for WPA funds from the outset. Chambers of Commerce and planning committees drew up specifications to meet three major criteria established by the administration: 1) projects must meet a well-defined community need; 2) each project must be sponsored by a public body, such as a city or county government or school district, which was required to provide from 10 to 25 percent of the project cost in cash and/or materials; and 3) 90 percent of those hired must be unemployed employable workers who were carried on the relief rolls. Compensation was to be based on 130 hours of work for \$21 (later \$23) per month for unskilled labor.³ In June 1935 Oklahoma WPA Director (Gen.) William S. Key estimated that there were already "70,000 employable unemployed" ready to work on his agency's projects throughout the state; by November of that year, 67,973 people were at work for the WPA, and by January 1936 WPA rolls reached an all-time high of 94,281.⁴

The WPA program in Oklahoma provided a wide variety of public buildings for communities all across the state. In addition to the more obvious projects --libraries, schools, auditoriums, gymnasiums, armories, and hospitals--WPA crews also erected hundreds of agricultural buildings for many purposes. Among these were 33 barns and stables, wholly built, and 164 reconstructed and improved. Three fairgrounds/rodeo grounds were constructed and 5 others were reconstructed or improved; this particular effort totaled nearly 300 acres.⁵

Okmulgee County received many benefits from the WPA program. A predominantly rural area, the county had once been part of the Creek Nation. The city of Okmulgee served as the capital of the Creek Nation from 1869 until the dissolution of tribal government at the turn of the century. Agriculture--cotton farming--became an important economic activity. Okmulgee became a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 15

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====
prominent service center for the predominantly agricultural and ranching region. An oil boom beginning in 1907 brought prosperity to the city and county of Okmulgee, and by 1930 the city of Okmulgee had grown into a community of 18,040. Oil production, equipment manufacturing, and processing/refining became a staple of the economy; by 1920 the county produced one-sixth of all the oil produced in Oklahoma, and the town became known as "the hub of industrial Oklahoma."

Depressed oil and agriculture prices in the 1920s and drought in the early 1930s caused an economic decline in Okmulgee County, as elsewhere. Various manufacturing plants also closed down, and unemployment grew.⁶ In an effort at private aid, Mayor D. C. Kennan led local citizens in setting up a "One Per-Cent Club" in which financially sound Okmulgees donated 1 percent of their pay to a fund to aid local families; at one time 150 families benefitted. Private efforts, sadly, were not enough to stop the trend toward joblessness and homelessness in the wake of a major national depression. By September of 1934, 4,006 families, comprising 29.7 percent of the county population, were on direct relief. The WPA had a significant impact, reducing the number of families on relief to 3,178, or 25.2 percent of the county population by September of 1935. WPA jobs employed 503 persons by late December of 1935.⁷

Between late summer, 1935, and mid-1937, Okmulgee city commissioners had submitted proposals for several WPA projects, including sidewalks, a rose garden, tennis courts, an athletic stadium, a community building, an armory, and fairgrounds buildings. The fairgrounds project, totalling over \$52,000 of WPA money, was to include an administration building, auditorium, four exhibits buildings, three livestock buildings, a caretakers's cottage, and landscaping. Plans, drawn by Walter Popham, landscape architect, included "tearing down of present buildings at the fair grounds and replacing them with native stone structures."⁸

Reduction in unemployment numbers continued to decline through 1937, but in 1938 an economic downturn spurred President Roosevelt and Congress to rededicate WPA efforts toward make-work projects.⁹ In the years 1939-41 fewer WPA projects were developed, due to the nation's increased need for defense-related construction and industrial development, but nevertheless in September of 1942, the WPA still had 4,200 men certified for employment on its rolls for District 3, southeastern Oklahoma.¹⁰ Still in the planning stage, the fairgrounds project was to become an important portion of this later effort of the WPA to improve the economy of the city of Okmulgee.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 16

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion project hit numerous snags over the years between its creation and its implementation. At first, the city proposed a bond issue to fund the sponsor's share of the WPA projects set for the fair buildings, a recreation center/lake/golf course project at the old country club, a new civic auditorium, and a baseball park.¹¹ In an election held on July 15, 1936, three bonds proposed a city share of \$130,000 for the combined projects, to be matched by \$404,000 by the WPA. The public rejected all three bonds, even though the WPA had already approved expenditure of its share of the funds. More than a year passed before the bond election surfaced again, and in June 1937 it failed once more.¹² The idea again resurfaced in July 1938, with a new bond issue set for the fairgrounds alone. The livestock buildings were now estimated to cost a total of \$8,296, with most of the expenditure to be for two exhibit halls and an auditorium.¹³ Nothing material transpired on the project until 1941, when the city submitted new, larger plans to the WPA and budgeted existing city and county funds for the required match, thereby avoiding another bond election. The Stock Pavilion budget included \$9,203 provided by the city and county in materials, equipment, and cash, with the balance to be provided by the WPA for labor. Designed by Oklahoma City architect Joseph I. Davis, the building was projected to be the first of a series of fairgrounds buildings to be constructed each year for the next several years. The dissolution of the WPA in 1943-45, the advent of World War II, and the paucity of city funds precluded the construction of additional fairgrounds buildings.¹⁴

WPA projects in 1935-1942 propped up the sagging rural economy of Okmulgee County, hard-hit because of extended agricultural depression and severe drought. Major projects in and near Okmulgee included several farm-to-market roads, two large schools, a swimming pool, a community center, and the customary WPA road repair and paving, Harmon Athletic Field, the National Guard Armory, tennis courts, and the Stock Pavilion. The WPA's cost on the Stock Pavilion project was \$32,000 for labor costs, of which only a scant \$818 was intended for skilled labor (plumbers and electricians; the rest was for unskilled labor).¹⁵ In human terms, thousands of person-hours of labor went into the pavilion's construction. Most significantly, an average of 84 men were employed each month on the project. As with most WPA projects, the fairgrounds project was labor-intensive, designed to provide as much work as possible for those on relief rolls. Most of the hours were consumed in hand labor, cutting and placing stone. Construction began on April 25, 1941. Some delays were encountered because the Roosevelt administration was diverting funds into WPA defense-related construction in 1941, but on April 7, 1942, the building was completed. The Okmulgee County Free Fair used the new building for the first time for the annual autumn fair and exposition, September 23-26, 1942.¹⁶

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 17

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In several important ways the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion typifies the WPA's community building program and architecture in Oklahoma. The WPA preferred to use locally acquired materials, such as stone, usually quarried locally, or brick, manufactured locally or within the state. The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion was built of limestone quarried within Okmulgee County.

A WPA goal was to follow "the newer tendencies toward simplification in architectural style," because "simplicity of design was best suited to the limited skills usually available for WPA work."¹⁷ WPA architectural philosophy prohibited the use of ornate features, intricate structure, and elaborate trim; therefore, many WPA buildings tend to be straightforwardly utilitarian. They often have a strong horizontal massing that is relieved only by vertical Art Deco detailing or by virtue of being a provincial interpretation of a romantic style, such as Tudor.¹⁸ In the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion is seen a very minimal example of vernacular Art Deco applied to civic architecture, primarily in the stepped parapet.

Like other WPA buildings, it reflects the skills of designers and supervisors and the minimal funding for design and materials; its uncomplicated nature also reflects the criteria for using unskilled labor as stonecutters, masons, and so forth. While these buildings may not be architectural masterpieces, they served the WPA's economic and architectural purposes--to make work, and to provide space for such civic programming as livestock expositions and sales at local fairgrounds. WPA buildings such as the massive Okmulgee Stock Pavilion exemplify the New Deal's practical determination to "do something--and do something now." As David Baird notes in his survey of WPA resources of Oklahoma, WPA buildings are "the architecture of the poor," "mute reminders of the emotional distress and physical pain many Oklahomans suffered during the 1930s and of the enlightened relief effort by the federal government that alleviated much of the suffering."¹⁹

The Okmulgee Stock Pavilion is the only example of WPA architecture for fairgrounds exposition purposes in the city of Okmulgee, and it is also the only such building in Okmulgee County. In the 1980s, a total of nine livestock exposition buildings were identified by a statewide survey of WPA projects. Only three of these are of a size and integrity comparable to that of the Okmulgee building. The Bryan County Livestock Exposition Building (1940, vicinity of Durant), is close to the Okmulgee facility in size and style; the building is intact but it is one-story. The Major County Fair and Livestock Building (1938, 1940, in Fairview) is smaller than the Okmulgee facility but is an intact two-story constructed of poured concrete, in a style minimally reminiscent of Art Deco. The FAA Stock Barn, at the old State Fairgrounds (1940, Oklahoma City), is a two-story stone building with elaborate decoration;

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 18

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

the building is much larger than the one at Okmulgee, and it is intact. The Grady County Fair Livestock Building (1941, Chickasha), is a two-story in a style that reflects the Moderne style, but due to insensitive modifications to the roofline the building does not retain sufficient integrity for National Register consideration. The four others are smaller, of less permanent construction, and less elaborate than Okmulgee: Beaver (1935, Beaver County), Clinton (1940, Custer County), Mangum (1942, Greer County), and Dustin (1936, Hughes County).²⁰ Only one of these WPA agricultural buildings, the Dustin, Oklahoma, Agricultural Building, in Hughes County, is listed on the National Register (NR 88001385/1988).²¹

Within the former Okmulgee County fairgrounds area, the Stock Pavilion is the only remaining original building of any kind. Although it has been somewhat altered by removal of the original windows and doors, in type, style, scale, materials, and workmanship, it is a good example of buildings that as a class are unique when compared to the rest of the built environment, both in Okmulgee and across the state.

ENDNOTES

1. C. Roger Lambert, "Dust, Farmers, and the Federal Government," Hard Times in Oklahoma: The Depression Years, ed. K. E. Hendrickson, Jr. (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1983), 71-72, 78-79, 81; Guthrie (Oklahoma) Daily Leader, July 9, 1935; W. David Baird, "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)" (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1987), 5.
2. Baird, "Final Report", 10; "Final Report of the Oklahoma Work Projects Administration, February 27, 1943," Archives of the Work Projects Administration and Predecessors, 1933-1943, Series One: The Final State Reports, 1943 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1987), 1; "Building Construction Report, February, 1943," *ibid.*, 5-6.
3. "Questions and Answers on the WPA [brochure]," (Washington, D.C.: Work Projects Administration, December 1, 1939), Vertical File, Oklahoma Historical Society; Baird, "Final Report," 11; Kingfisher (Oklahoma) Times, July 9, 1936.
4. Guthrie (Oklahoma) Daily Leader, June 23, 1935; Daily Oklahoman, Oklahoma City, September 12, 1937.
5. "Final Report of the Oklahoma Work Projects Administration," 1-2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 19

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and state

6. John W. Morris, "The Smaller Cities," Cities of Oklahoma, ed. John W. Morris (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1979), 11, 16; History of Okmulgee County (N.p.: Okmulgee County Historical Society and Heritage Society of America, 1985), 96, 134; Garry Nall, "King Cotton in Oklahoma, 1825-1839," Rural Oklahoma, ed. Donald E. Green (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1977), 38-43, 51-52.
7. History of Okmulgee County 283, 286; Daily Oklahoman, September 29, 1935; Okmulgee Daily Times, 27 December 1935,
8. Okmulgee Daily Times, 8 September 1935, 3 December 1935, 27 May 1936, 12 May 1937, 17 June 1937.
9. Daily Oklahoman, September 12, 1937.
10. Okmulgee Daily Times, 20 September 1942.
11. Ibid., 2 August 1935, 7 August 1935, 23 August 1935, 3 March 1936, 26 May 1936, 27 May 1936, 14 July 1936, 15 July 1936.
12. Ibid., 1 April 1937, 30 June 1937; "Index to Reference Cards for Work Projects Administration Project Files, 1935-1942," (Washington, D.C.: WPA, c. 1942), Micro T-935, reel 54, reel 55.
13. Okmulgee Daily Times, 16 July 1938, 11 August 1938, 13 September 1938.
14. Okmulgee Daily Times, 11 January 1941, 1 February 1941, 29 March 1941, 24 April 1941, 10 October 1941, 10 December 1941; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, 1924, 1924/Corrected to 1944.
15. Ibid., 19 March 1941, 24 April 1941.
16. Ibid., 24 April 1941, 20 September 1942.
17. Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43 (Washington, D.C.: G. P. O., c. 1943), 52.
18. Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43 (Washington, D.C.: G. P. O., c. 1943), 52; Baird, "Final Report," 15, 21, 23.
19. Baird, "Final Report," 17; *ibid.*, 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8, 9 Page 20

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and state

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20. Baird, "Final Report," passim; "Final Report of the Oklahoma Works Projects Administration for Oklahoma (typescript, Works Projects Administration, c. 1943, Edmon Low Library, Stillwater, Oklahoma), n. p. The 1943 WPA "Final Report" mentioned that 7 livestock exposition buildings had been constructed in Oklahoma, but Baird's 1987 "Final Report" of survey identified nine such buildings.

21. "WPA-Related Resources Listed on the National Register of Historic Places," (Rev. 2 July 1997, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society).

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9, 10 Page 21

Okmulgee Stock Pavilion
name of property
Okmulgee County, Oklahoma
county and state

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City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1977.

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Administration, December 1, 1939. Vertical File, Oklahoma Historical Society.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Okmulgee, Oklahoma, 1924, 1924/Corrected to 1944.

"WPA-Related Resources Listed on the National Register of Historic Places."
Rev. 2 July 1997. State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical
Society.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Beginning at the southwest corner of the building, proceed due west for 10 feet
to find the point of beginning. From the point of beginning, proceed north 164
feet; turn due east and proceed 135 feet; turn south and proceed 174 feet; turn
west and proceed 135 feet; turn north and proceed 10 feet to the point of
beginning, having described an enclosed polygon measuring 174 feet north to
south and 135 feet east to west.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

This boundary encompasses the Okmulgee Stock Pavilion building and extension
and includes the concrete driveways on the north and south. As such the
boundary includes the property directly historically related to the Okmulgee
Stock Pavilion.