



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

919

1. Name of Property

historic name **Owensboro Armory**
other names/site number **Da-Ob-131**

2. Location

street & number **1501 Parrish Ave.** not for publication **N/A**
city or town **Owensboro** vicinity **N/A**
state **Kentucky** code **KY** county **Daviess** code **059** zip code **42301**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

David L. Morgan
Signature of certifying official **David L. Morgan, SHPO / Excutive Director** **6-18-02**
Date

State Historic Peservation Office/ Kentucky Heritage Council

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 *Elson H. Beall*
 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):

for
Signature of Keeper of Action **9/6/02**
Date

8. Statement of Significance

OWENSBORO ARMORY
DA-OB-131; Daviess County, KY

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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 **MILITARY**

Period of Significance **1948-1949**

Significant Dates **1948**

Significant Person **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **Elswick, Fred, architect**

Wehr Construction Co., builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (begins p. 8-1)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 6.6 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	16	488	880	4179	100	3	Owensboro West Quad
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description and Boundary Justification (see p. 10-2)

11. Form Prepared By
name/title Kate Carothers

organization Kentucky Archaeological Survey date 4-16-99

street & number 1020A Export St. telephone (606) 257-1944
city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40502

Property Owner

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

name Commonwealth of Kentucky

street & number Boone National Guard Center telephone (502) 564-0269

city or town Frankfort state KY zip code 40601

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Continuation SheetOWENSBORO ARMORY
DA-OB-131; Daviess County, KY

Kentucky's National Guard Facilities: 1931-1951 MPS

Section number 7 Page 1**Narrative Description**

The Owensboro Armory (DA-OB-131), is located on a major residential thoroughfare at 1501 Parrish Avenue, is similar in design and plan to the Ashland Armory. A plaque in the entrance hall names Fred Elswick of Louisville as the architect, and it was built by Wehr Construction Company out of Louisville. The armory, completed in 1948, is a large two-story red brick building on a raised concrete basement; it sits on over 6 acres of land. At the rear of the U-shaped administration building is the barrel-vaulted drill hall, which rises above the administration section of the building. A difference between the Ashland and Owensboro armories is the use of darker brick around the first-and second-story windows on the exterior of the Owensboro Armory. The north elevation features an entrance flanked on either side by two round "towers" with dentil molding above the doors. The symmetrical facade features a central section flanked by the two four-bay "wings". In the middle section, small windows are placed between the towers on either side of the doors, on both the first and second floors. A thin limestone band runs directly above and below the first-and second-story windows on the armory's administrative section.

The Owensboro Armory consists of five floors, including first and second floors, the drill hall floor, which sits midway between the first and second floors, a basement, and a sub-basement.

The windows on the administrative section consist of twelve-paned metal casements and multi-light windows. All of these windows are original to the building. The original windows in the drill hall have been replaced with glass block for the most part. On the lower level (basement) of the drill section are four garage bays and metal light windows - this area serves as the OMS shop. The sub-basement is immediately below the basement; it does not have any windows or exterior doors, and was intended for use as a bomb shelter. The sub-basement is not used for anything due to the fact that it floods during heavy rains.

The interior of the building features tiled and concrete floors, concrete block walls, plaster and acoustic tile dropped ceilings (replacement). Some of the larger rooms and offices have been divided into two smaller rooms. The light fixtures have been replaced with florescent light fixtures, in most cases. The first and second floors are mainly offices and classrooms. The walls in the entry hall are covered in ceramic tiles, as is the entry at Ashland.

The drill hall is a very large room with its original hardwood drill floor. The wooden floor sits in a shallow pit supported underneath by crossbeams. The wooden floor is surrounded by concrete. There are no wooden bleachers in the drill hall, as there are at the Ashland Armory. The Owensboro and Ashland armories are identical, except for some differences on the interior. An elevator was added to the building in the 1970s to satisfy the terms of the American Disability Act, making the building handicapped-accessible.

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OWENSBORO ARMORY
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Kentucky's National Guard Facilities: 1931-1951 MPS

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Owensboro Armory (DA-OB-131) meets criteria A (historic association) and C (type of construction) of the National Register of Historic Places, and is a significant physical representation of the National Guard in Kentucky during the period of significance: 1934-1952. The armory meets the registration requirements of established for the armory property type because it possesses integrity of location, setting, materials, design, and association. The building meets the registration requirements because it has not been moved and it remains in a residential setting. The building has not been heavily altered, so it retains its original design and materials, and is recognizable as an armory. The armory is still owned by the National Guard, so it has integrity of association. The armory has served as both a military and community center in Owensboro.

The Owensboro Armory is significant to the community because of the many activities which took place there. On opening night of the armory, a teen dance was held in the drill hall. Other dances were also held there after the first one. Currently, the drill hall/gymnasium serves as the home basketball court of the Majesty High School, and Owensboro High School uses the floor for basketball practices. The state police gives physical fitness classes in the drill hall, and a karate class uses classroom space for practices and classes. In addition, the YMCA, intramural basketball and volleyball leagues use the drill hall. High school ROTC groups, Boy Scouts, and veterans organizations are all groups which use the armory for meetings on a regular basis.

A National Guard unit has been in Owensboro since the 1940s, when they were known as Company I, 149th Regimental Combat Team (Infantry). Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 201st Engineer Battalion were stationed in Owensboro until 1959, when the units were transferred to Ashland. Company A of the 240th Tank Battalion was in Owensboro from 1955-1959, and former Senator Wendell H. Ford was Commander of the unit. The National Guard from Owensboro was activated during the Berlin crisis, but otherwise has not been activated for overseas combat. Currently, the unit in Owensboro is the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 2/123rd Armor.

Verbal Boundary Description - The parcel designated by the Daviess County PVA as tax map/parcel #5-7-2-2.

Verbal Boundary Justification - The chosen boundary encompasses the armory, related motor pool and parking lot, and front yard, for a total of 6.60 acres, the area historically associated with the Owensboro Armory.

Bibliography

Owensboro: The City on the Yellow Banks. Dew, Lee A. and Aloma W. Bowling Green: Rivendell Publications, 1988.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Kentucky's National Guard Facilities: 1931-1951 MPS

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Historical Annual of the National Guard of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Author unknown.
Baton Rouge: Army and Navy Publishing Company, 1938.

Interview with SGT. Ray Westerfield, January 28, 1998.