

PH 36182X

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Alaska
COUNTY: Southcentral
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE AUG 2 1977

1. NAME

COMMON:
Cordova Post Office and Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

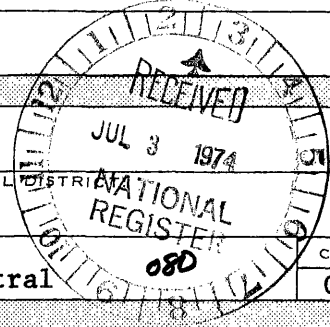
STREET AND NUMBER:
Second Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cordova

STATE:
Alaska

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
Southcentral

CODE:
02



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
U.S. Postal Service

STREET AND NUMBER:
Second Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cordova

STATE:
Alaska

CODE:
02

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
District Recorder

STREET AND NUMBER:
Cordova Post Office and Courthouse, Second Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Cordova

STATE:
Alaska

CODE:
02

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Alaska Heritage Resource Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: **1970**
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Alaska Division of Parks

STREET AND NUMBER:
323 East Fourth Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Anchorage

STATE:
Alaska

CODE:
02

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER:

DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

Senators: Mike Gravel/Ted Stevens Congressman: Don Young

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original appearance of this structure is described in The Cordova Daily Times for Thursday, July 24, 1924, whose headline read: "CORDOVA'S NEW FEDERAL BUILDING Post Office and Court House Finished".

A front page article "Brief Facts About the New Building Inside and Outside" states:

The building is 84X49, located on the southeast corner of Second street and Federal avenue, the site having been blasted out of solid rock.... On the ground floor is located the main entrance with a wide stairway to the second floor. There is also the heating plant and a large fuel room, as well as one unassigned room. The main post office occupies the entire second floor. The public lobby is unusually commodious while the lock-box space presents a formidable appearance with its array of bright and modern 680 key lock-boxes. There is also a private office for the postmaster, also a money order and registry room, with a large vault in connection. The work room for handling the mail is large as a similar room in the Seattle post office. There is also a mail receiving vestibule storage room and lavatories for the employees. The work room has fifteen large windows which provide ample light by day, and eleven large electric chandeliers in the ceiling, with twelve electric lights over the receiving desks, in all affording light for night work equal to day light.

The third floor has a court room 26X26, divided by rail and supplied with an elevation for the judge. Adjoining is a library or consultation room with a private office for the judge. Across the corridor are offices for the district attorney and the clerk of the court. In the rear on this floor are the jail rooms for men and women, supplied with toilets and bath and hot and cold running water. The men's department is also supplied with a cell. The marshal's office and jail kitchen are at the extreme rear and entered from the alley as well as from the main corridor. ...Bush hammering...on the outside wall of concrete. This is a special feature and gives the building an appearance of being one solid piece of granite.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The newspaper article cited in Item 7 also said:

Men who are familiar with public buildings and who have examined the new work of art and convenience that is so creditable to Cordova and Alaska, declare that it is the best and finest Post Office Building erected north of Bellingham, Wash, and in fact there is no better in the U.S. for a town the size of Cordova.

Although the Cordova Post Office and Courthouse is not architecturally dramatic, and no significant historical events are known to be associated with it, it does have the distinctive air of an early 20th Century government institutional building and is therefore recommended for listing in the National Register as a structure of local significance. It is reported to be the oldest Post Office building in Alaska still in use.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cordova Daily Times, July 24, 1924.

Henrichs, Hollis (retired Cordova Postmaster appointed 10-20-42), personal communication, 1974.

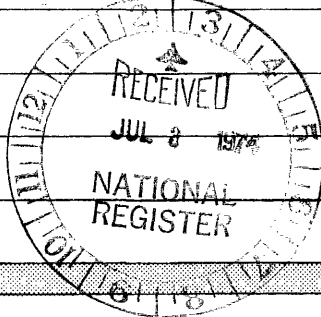
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		60 ° 32 ' 42 " N	145 ° 45 ' 19 " W	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "		UTM Zone 06 6712565mN	300 568315mE	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: + 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Lavon Branshaw, Secretary; Glenn Mast, Curator; Hollis Henrichs

ORGANIZATION: **Cordova Historical Society** DATE: **May 6, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 391

CITY OR TOWN: **Cordova** STATE: **Alaska** CODE: **02**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

Owner notified

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name William Skanabel

Title Deputy SHPO

Date 6-24-74

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]
~~Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation~~
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Date 8/2/77

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date 7-19-77

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Alaska	
COUNTY Southcentral	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	AUG 2 1977

(Number all entries)

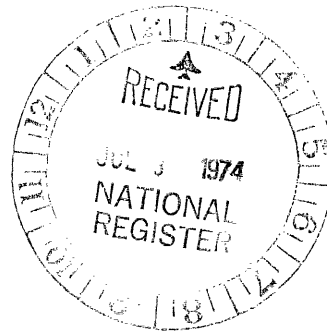
Cordova Post Office and Courthouse
Item 7, Page 2

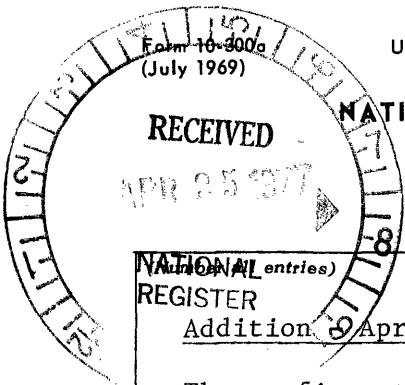
Photographs taken over the years indicate that the building is approximately the same as it was when finished in July of 1924.

Picture No. 8 (attached) shows the loading zone without a roof, whereas Picture No. 12 (attached) shows a roof has been added. Picture No. 9 (attached) shows no roof over the other entrance, while a small one is seen in Picture 12.

There appear to have been to alterations affecting the character of the building, although some modernization has been accomplished in the interior.

Legal Description: Lots 7, 8, and 9, Block 11, Original Cordova Townsite.





Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Alaska	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	AUG 2 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER

Additional ³ April 13, 1977 - Page 3

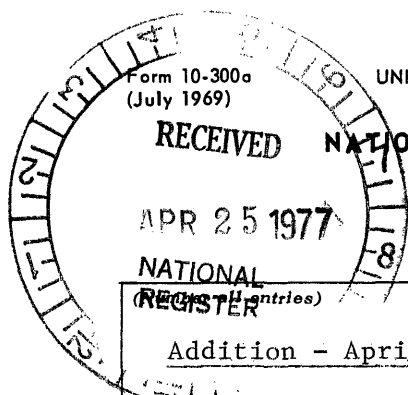
The configuration and appearance today is little different from its appearance at the time of its completion in July 1924. The building is L-shaped, measuring 49 feet across the front and 84 feet deep. It is set into a hillside rock formation that was only partially excavated, so that the basement floor is the full width, but only part of the depth, of the upper two floors. The roof is in the form of a low hip, with a squared brick chimney rising from the center of the triangle formed by the rear triangle and another similar chimney rising from the angled crease at the bend of the L.

Due to the configuration of the building as it is set into the hillside, the front, as it faces the street, is three stories high. At the left is a double leaf outward-opening pair of entry doors, with an overhead panel light. Originally this was crested by an unadorned entablature. Recently this was replaced by a permanent type canopy covering the outside space above the entranceway. To the right are four window sashes, spaced out at 1/6th across the building width, of 1/4 scale to the main central windows on the upper two levels of the building face.

On the second tier (the main floor) the left hand window, above the entranceway, consists of a double hung 12-light sash, while the center three windows in line consist of double hung 24-light sashes. Carrying out both scale and classical balance, the right hand window of the second tier consists of a double hung sash with 18 lights. The third row of windows, for the second upper main floor, contains three center windows matching the three center windows of the second row and end windows matching the right hand window of the second row.

The left and right sides of the building are well lighted by series of double hung windows which reflect the functions of each interior space. On the left side of the building the basement floor has only one opening, a door, since the rear of the lot was not excavated. On the right side of the building the tip of the L has two windows and a service door, but the main service door is at the far end of the right wall. Originally that was a double leaf panel and glass door with a hinged transom light set in an unadorned doorway. Some years later a permanent canopy was built outward to protect unloading mail trucks from rain and snow, and that loading dock area was permanently enclosed in 1974 or 1975.

Entering the building through the front doorway, onto the ground floor, one comes upon a wide stairway, which leads to the main floor, which has been occupied by the Cordova Post Office since 1924. In the basement (ground) floor are service spaces, including the furnace room, a fuel storage area, and a supply room. The heating plant was renewed and the radiators throughout the building replaced by convectors in 1974.



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Alaska	
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	AUG 2 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER (entries)

Addition - April 13, 1977 - Page 4

The entire main floor above the ground floor is occupied by the Post Office. While no structural changes have been made, the postal facility has been upgraded from time to time. The second (or upper) floor is occupied by the state court, and provides space for a courtroom and judges' chambers. Originally part of this floor was used to house prisoners. That segment of the upper floor was altered some years back, including removal of the external window bars, and the space is now utilized by the Cordova Office of the U.S. Forest Service. The top floor was described in 1924, as follows:

The third floor was a court room 26 x 26, divided by a rail and supplied with an elevation for the judge. Adjoining is a library or consultation room with a private office for the judge. Across the corridor are offices for the district attorney and the clerk of the court. In the rear on this floor are the jail rooms for men and women, supplied with toilets and bath and hot and cold running water. The men's department is also supplied with a cell. The marshal's office and jail kitchen are at the extreme rear and entered from the alley as well as from the main corridor.

The outer skin of the building appears to have been made up of layer upon layer of concrete poured into wooden forms in place. This was a technique then being used experimentally, and a few years later refined for high rise buildings by the addition of steel-rod reinforcements and the development of moveable forms. This technique is still in widespread use for construction of high-rise commercial and apartment buildings, combined with concrete slab flooring and cantilevered balconies. More recent buildings produced by this methodology are usually finished by a non load bearing skin or veneer of recent technological origin, such as steel or aluminum sheets in polychrome or geometric designs. Some buildings of this origin have proven equally attractive with the concrete left bare to weather. One example is the Cadman Plaza North Development in Brooklyn Heights, New York, built in 1967.

This building was constructed to conform to the needs of its community, of a scale which provided needed space and utility, and of design and materials which were then experimental, have proven durable during the past 53 years, and appear to have many more years of useful life remaining.