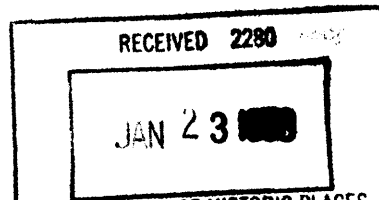


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. **NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NATIONAL PARK SERVICE** to complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University

other names/site number Visual Arts Building

2. Location

street & number Keeny Circle, Louisiana Tech University N/A not for publication

city or town Ruston N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Lincoln code 061 zip code 71272

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jon Fricker 1/14/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of 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 official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 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:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 2/20/98

Prescott Memorial Library

Name of Property

Lincoln Parish, LA

County and State

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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education / library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education / college

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof asphalt

other concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University, Lincoln Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 1

Louisiana Tech's former Prescott Memorial Library (1926) is a brick Colonial Revival building located adjacent to the university's original main quadrangle. The one story building is set on a high basement capped with a cast concrete belt course. Despite the loss of its cupola and rooftop balustrade, the library makes a strong architectural statement.

The architects of the elegant, well-proportioned library drew upon various trends in eighteenth century American architecture. The building's brown and red brick resembles the textured effect found on colonial buildings where burnt headers were used. The Palladian Revival taste can be seen in the building's five-part articulation consisting of a central block with a pavilion to each side connected by a hyphen. The pavilions are set at right angles to the main block. This juxtaposition combined with gabled parapets in the Federal tradition on both the main block and end pavilions yields a particularly interesting massing.

The richly articulated main block has virtually identical front and rear elevations. Each has a medium weight entablature with a denticular cornice and a handsome swan-neck doorway flanked by two large round arch windows. The windows are quite pronounced because of their size, their multiple panes of glass set above a panel, and keystones and end blocks in contrasting cast concrete. The recessed swan-neck doorways feature paneling, a modillion cornice, a dentil band, and an urn in the broken pediment. The only difference between the two elevations is the staircase. The one on the front of the building has a graceful curving stair to each side. The rear elevation has a simpler straight stair to each side.

The end pavilions are particularly well proportioned. The numerous windows on the main story are strongly articulated, featuring twelve panes to each sash, fairly thick frames, and a jack arch with a prominent keystone in cast concrete. A tablet with a swan neck pediment accents the gables of the end pavilions. The gables of the main block feature a fan form.

There have been the following alterations since construction:

(1) As mentioned in the first paragraph, the library originally had a cupola and a rooftop balustrade (see attached). These features were removed sometime between 1946 and 1947, per photos in yearbooks.

(2) The interior has been largely modernized, although it appears that it was always functional rather than decorative. Surviving are some of the wall surfaces and some of the openings with their simple surrounds.

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University, Lincoln Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

Assessment of Integrity:

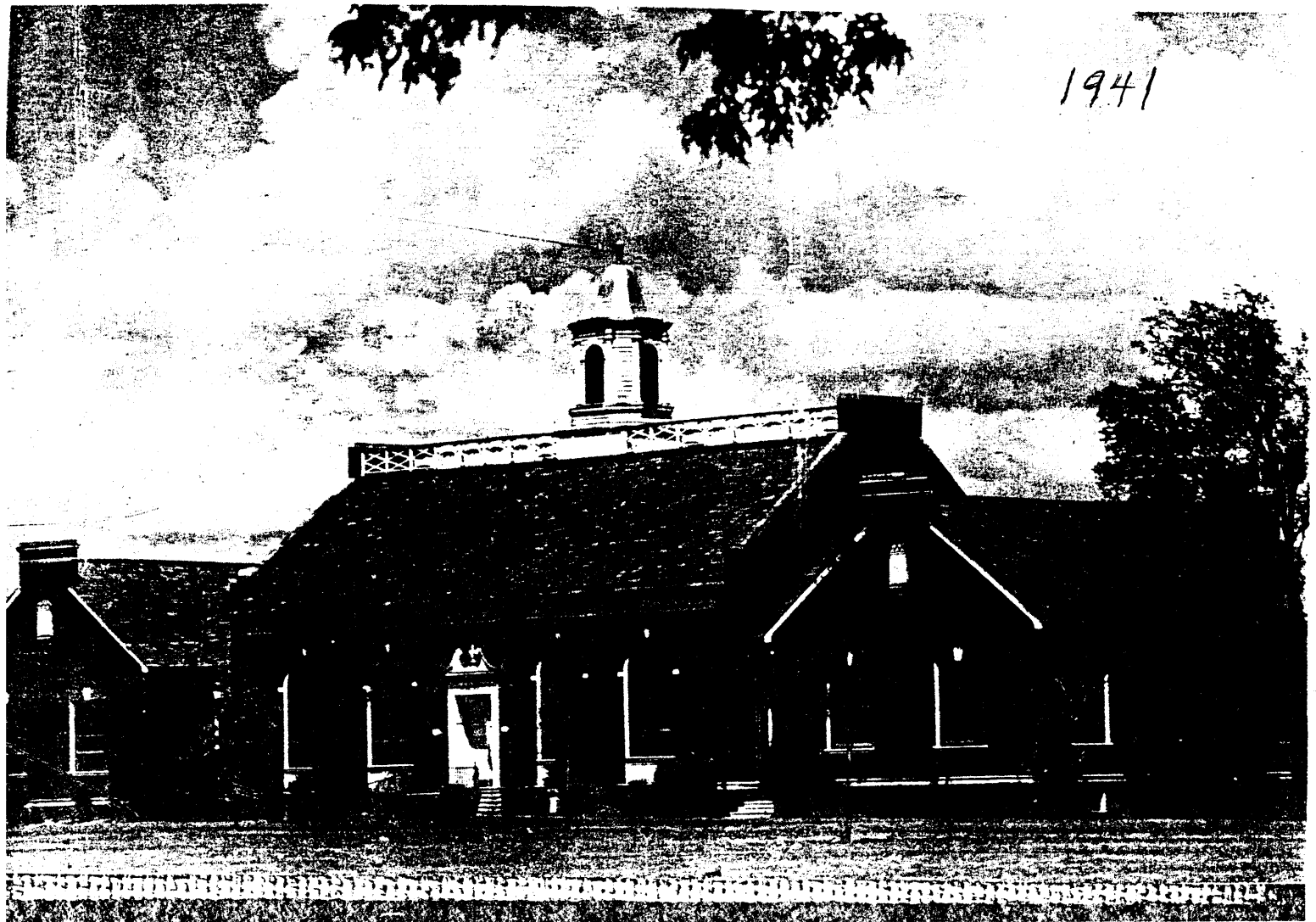
The loss of such a handsome cupola is admittedly a notable one; however, the library is so strongly and intensively articulated that it can absorb the loss better than most. In short, it retains all the rest of its original character-defining features and they are quite numerous, including its striking five part articulation, gabled parapets, great round arch windows, swan-neck doorways, twelve over twelve end pavilion windows, and various decorative accents. Also, it is worth noting that the library does not look as if it is missing something (as some buildings do when they have suffered a similar loss). As a consummate example of the Colonial Revival style of the 1920s, the former Prescott Memorial Library is a strong candidate for National Register listing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University, Lincoln Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 3



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 N/A

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Period of Significance

1926

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Neild, Somdal & Neild, Architects

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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

Acreege of Property less than an acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	5 3 3 2 2 0	3 5 9 8 8 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date September 1997

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Louisiana Tech University, Office of the President

street & number P. O. Box 3168 telephone 318-257-3785

city or town Ruston state LA zip code 71272

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University, Lincoln Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Prescott Memorial Library is locally significant in the area of architecture as a superior example of the Colonial Revival style within Lincoln Parish. In addition, it is one of few high-style, architect-designed buildings in the parish. The library was named in 1942 for Colonel A. T. Prescott, the first president of Tech. Prescott made the original donation of books for a library housed at that time in a room in the school's main building.

Lincoln is a predominantly rural parish with Ruston, where Louisiana Tech is located, being the only town of any size. And with a population of about 7000 in 1940, it obviously was not a large urban center. The parish was first settled in the 1830s and '40s by individuals from the Upland South who built log structures. A second phase of settlement came in the late nineteenth century when the Vicksburg, Shreveport and Pacific was built across northern Louisiana and railroad towns such as Ruston came into existence. Today's historic building stock is almost entirely from the 1890 to 1940 period and consists mainly of low-key vernacular buildings representing the commercial Italianate (only two or three examples), the Queen Anne Revival, the Colonial Revival, and the Bungalow styles. There are only about ten to twelve high-style, architect-designed buildings.

Among these, Prescott Memorial Library is a particularly convincing example of a distinct phase of the Colonial Revival. After World War I, the Colonial Revival entered an academic phase in which architects designed buildings which actually resembled real colonial buildings. Some produced archeologically correct copies while others borrowed from various periods of colonial architecture to produce buildings strongly evocative of the period. And, of course, this more scholarly phase of the Colonial Revival was given great impetus by the restoration work being undertaken by the Rockefeller Foundation at Colonial Williamsburg.

It is against this background that the main architectural significance of the Prescott Memorial Library emerges. It is a well-done, textbook example of the above described 1920s and '30s phase of the Colonial Revival, with the only competition being a handful of buildings at Louisiana Tech constructed in the 1930s. (These buildings clearly took their inspiration from the library and other buildings then on campus but since demolished.) The 1930s buildings are being nominated for their historical significance using the Register's multiple property format. Some of the 1930s buildings are more strongly styled than others, but in the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, none are as convincing and as consummate as the old library. The library is also significant within the overall context of the Colonial Revival in Lincoln Parish -- i.e., in all its phases and permutations. By way of contrast, almost all examples are fairly low-

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Prescott Memorial Library, Louisiana Tech University, Lincoln Parish, LA

Section number $\frac{8}{9, 10}$ Page $\frac{2}{1}$

key residences with hesitant touches of the style -- usually a cottage with a one story Colonial Revival gallery. The only major examples, besides the buildings at Tech, are two houses with two story columnar galleries.

Bibliography

The Lagniappe (Louisiana Tech yearbook), various issues in 1930s and '40s.

Pearce, Ruby B., Robinson, Sallie, and Graham, Helen, editors. *Alma Mater, 1895-1945: A Memorial History of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute.* n.p., 1945.

Personal communication with Robert E. Middleton, Manager Partner, Somdal Associates. Mr. Middleton, using firm records, was able to confirm that the firm of Neild, Somdal and Neild designed the library.

Lincoln Parish Historic Structures Survey, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Boundary Description: Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

Justification: Boundaries were chosen to discretely encompass the nominated resource. Because it is located on a college campus, following property lines obviously was not an option.

Prescott Memorial Library
LA Tech University
Lincoln Parish, LA

1" = 30'

--- BOUNDARY

