

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How 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 St. Albans Post Office

other names/site number Old St. Albans Post Office

2. Location

street & number 202 Sixth Avenue not for publication

city or town St. Albans vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Kanawha code 039 zip code 25177

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.)

William G. Farmer
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/29/94
Date

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 certifying 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

Entered in the National Register 11.4.94
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
(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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government - Post Office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival
Late 19th and early 20th century
revivals : Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
walls brick
roof metal
other

Narrative Description

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

(see continuation sheet)

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.)

Property is: N/A

- 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.

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Development

Period of Significance

1937

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Louis A. Simon- Supervising Architect

Neil A. Melick- Supervising Engineer

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

N/A

Old St. Albans Post Office
Name of Property

Kanawha, West Virginia
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	4 2 70 0 0	42 4 8 82 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 Kim A. Valente, preservation consultant
organization Cameras In Architecture date August 1994
street & number 226 A. Bradford Street telephone 304-344-5149
city or town Charleston state WV zip code 25301

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 H & S Property Management
street & number 808 B Street telephone _____
city or town St. Albans state WV zip code 25177

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 ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia

The Old St. Albans Post Office is located within the central business district of the town of St. Albans, West Virginia (population 12,500). The building sits on the northeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Second Street, facing Sixth Avenue. Built in 1937, the building measures 60' x 56'. An ell addition to the rear was built circa 1955 and measures 33' x 59'. The building is being nominated under criteria A and C. Its method of construction is associated with the classification system for construction of federal buildings, specifically post offices, built during the first 40 years of the 20th century. It is also associated with the city's development and was the first building built specifically to house the post office functions.

The Old St. Albans Post Office was constructed under the direction of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury and James A. Farley, Postmaster General of the Federal Government. The post office is classified as a Class D building under McAdoo's 1915 Classification System for Federal Buildings. This classification system was established to regulate the amount of moneys spent on the construction of new federal buildings, specifically post offices. A Class D post office is defined as one having annual receipts of less than \$15,000. The basic formula for the construction of such a building would be one built of brick facing, little or no stone or terra cotta, stock sash, frames, doors, and fireproof first floor.

The Old St. Albans Post Office is a one - story, five - bay, brick building with metal hip roof. The 14" thick brick foundation is raised above the street level, and is visually defined by a 20" wide water table constructed of stone. The brick walls are 12" thick and laid in a common bond of alternating rows of headers and stretchers. The hip roof is metal with a standing seam. A wood belvedere sits atop the roof. The overall architectural characteristic of this building is of a Colonial Revival style.

The front facade is five bays wide with an inset arched center entry bay accessed by six granite stairs. The segmental arched brick entry is crowned with a single row of bricks in an alternating pattern of stretcher and headers on end as accent. The door is a standard issue interior aluminum frame door with air lock entry. The granite stairs are flanked by wrought iron handrails and decorative lantern polls. A poured concrete handicap accessible ramp is located along the front facade. The windows are double hung 12/12 sash metal casing. The sills and lintels are stone. These windows were standard issue stock components for post offices of this classification. A wood cornice runs along the roof line, detailed with dentils.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia

The belvedere has double hung, wooden 6/6 sash windows on all four facades. These small windows are flanked by square fluted doric pilasters. The belvedere is capped with a metal roof and topped with a single arrow weather vane. The side facades are the same in window detail, cornice treatment and water table, but the roof line changes at the junction of the second and third bay of the total of five bays on the side facades. At this junction, the roof plan changes and flattens out (see sketch map of building footprint). Also at this junction are exterior stair wells to the basement.

The interior of the building contains the original vault, installed in 1938 and manufactured by the Vault Herring-Hall Marvin Safe Company, Hamilton, Ohio. It is 8' x 9' in size and is surrounded by 12" thick concrete walls. The front lobby area is covered with quarry floor tile and wainscoting. The non-public space is floored with maple tongue and groove flooring. The interior floor plan and distribution of public and private space were also a part of the formula for a Class D post office.

The building retains its integrity of design in construction, materials used and site location.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia

The Old St. Albans Post Office embraces the characteristics of a period of construction design prevalent of Federal Building construction and style during the first 40 years of the 20th century. The Old St. Albans Post Office is the only example of a class D post office in the Kanawha Valley region, and was the city's first built post office building. It is being nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C.

The establishment, building and control of post office facilities and postal roads has historically been under the direction of the United States Congress. In 1829, the Post Office Department gained cabinet level status and began a 90 - year building and spending spree. The post office department increased its role of delivering goods to incorporate the use of railroads to transport the mail (1838 Congress declared all railroads post routes) as well as provide postage stamps, Pony Express service, city delivery services, money orders and rural free delivery all within this time. With the increase of these services, facilities needed to expand as well. Buildings specifically designed to carry these functions were erected. By the 1850's the architectural style in which Federal Buildings took shape came under the direction of the Office of Supervising Architect of the Treasury. From 1897-1912, Supervising Architect of the Treasury James K. Taylor helped change the perception of public architecture throughout the United States. Taylor felt that federal buildings should be built on a grand scale, on the level of being a monument to democracy. The majority of Federal Buildings built during his tenure were constructed on a grand scale, using the finest of materials and employing professional architects to design and oversee the projects. The designs were classical in nature and cost was not a main concern.

In 1902 the first Omnibus Public Law was enacted and increased the number of public buildings built throughout the country. The appropriation of money and distribution of buildings were regulated by Congress, and often allowed special interests to bias selection and approval of construction and location of federal buildings. It was not unusual for a thinly populated area to be granted a new federal building, which was large in scale, high in architectural style and expensive to build and maintain.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia

This type of funding and distribution of federal building sites however, came to a halt in 1913 with the establishment of the Public Building Commission (PBC). The PBC's function was to oversee, make recommendations and standardize the procedures in the determination of location and building of federal buildings, especially post offices. The first chairman of the PBC was Secretary of the Treasury William McAdoo. One of the most important contributions he made during his tenure with the PBC was his classification system for the construction and location of new post offices. This classification system was based on the annual receipts of the local post office in question (this system is still in effect under 39 CFR 241).

The history of the post office in St. Albans is one which goes back over 177 years. The Old St. Albans Post Office was not the first post office established in St. Albans, but was the first post office building built specifically to house the post office functions.

The St. Albans post office was first established in March of 1817 when, as Coalsmouth, Kanawha County, Virginia, Post Master Benjamin Cole received compensation for services based on annual receipts. It was located at what was locally call "Wilson's Tavern", at the mouth of the Coal River. The location of the post office changed throughout the 1800's and early 1900's from taverns to drug stores to store fronts. The first star route was started in 1903. The first Rural Free delivery route was started in 1909 and a second one in 1915. In 1910 the post office moved to the First National Bank Building and moved again in 1926 to the Loyal Order of Moose building.

By the 1930's the population of the St. Albans area reached a point where its services couldn't meet the needs of its citizens. This was due to the increase of population to the area as a result of the economic growth of the surrounding Kanawha Valley. Because of St. Albans' close proximity to the large chemical plants in the valley and to the county seat and state capital, Charleston, St. Albans' popularity as a residential community grew. In 1935 the population of the city was 3,254 and annual postal receipts were \$14,838.89. At the insistence of Postmaster Harry E. Riddleberger, with the help of political leaders and based on the community's need St. Albans was awarded a new federal building specifically for the purpose of conducting postal service functions. In 1937 the post office opened with Mr. Riddleberger serving as postmaster. Annual receipts under \$15,000 determined that a Class D post office was to be built. The building served the community until 1986, when a new facility opened to accommodate the growing number of citizens in need of an upgraded and expanded facility.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10, & Page 5
Photo

Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Craig, Lois, ed., and the staff of the Federal Architecture Project. The Federal Presence: Architecture, Politics, and Symbols in the United States Government Building, Cambridge, MA: the MIT Press, 1979.

Ellis, Garland H. "Dart". St. Albans, WV: It's Origin and Development. WV 1977.

Grosvenor, Beth. National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 13: How to apply National Register Criteria to Post Offices, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service: Washington, D.C. 1984.

Map of St. Albans, W. Va: Sanborn Insurance Co.: New York, 1931, 1948, 1961.

State Gazetteer 1890 through 1940.

Public Buildings Act of 1926 as amended.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The old St. Albans Post Office is located at the northeast corner of Sixth Avenue and Second Street, St. Albans, West Virginia. The lot size is .273 acre. (see sketch map and red line)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property boundary is the current legal boundary for which the building is located as recorded in as parcel 248 of Tax Map 2 of the Kanawha County real estate assessment tax records for the City of St. Albans, West Virginia.

Photographs by Kim A. Valente (July 19, 1994)
negatives on file:
Cameras In Architecture
226 A. Bradford Street
Charleston, WV 25301

1/4 Front and west side facade
2/4 Front facade

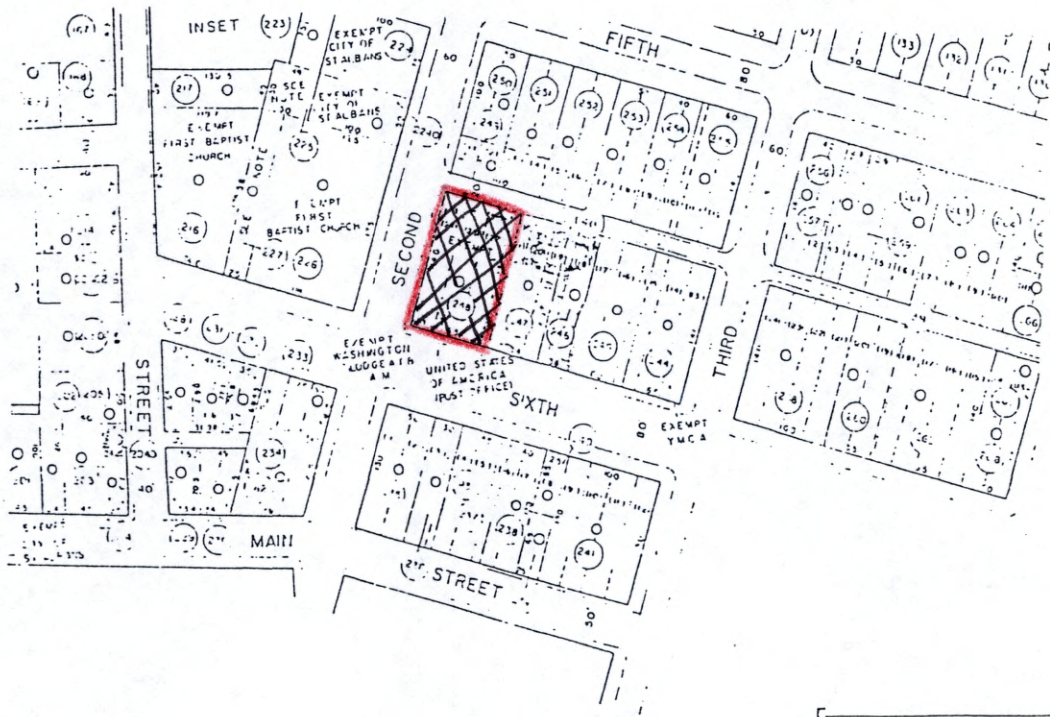
3/4 Front entry detail
4/4 Window and cornice detail

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Map Page 6

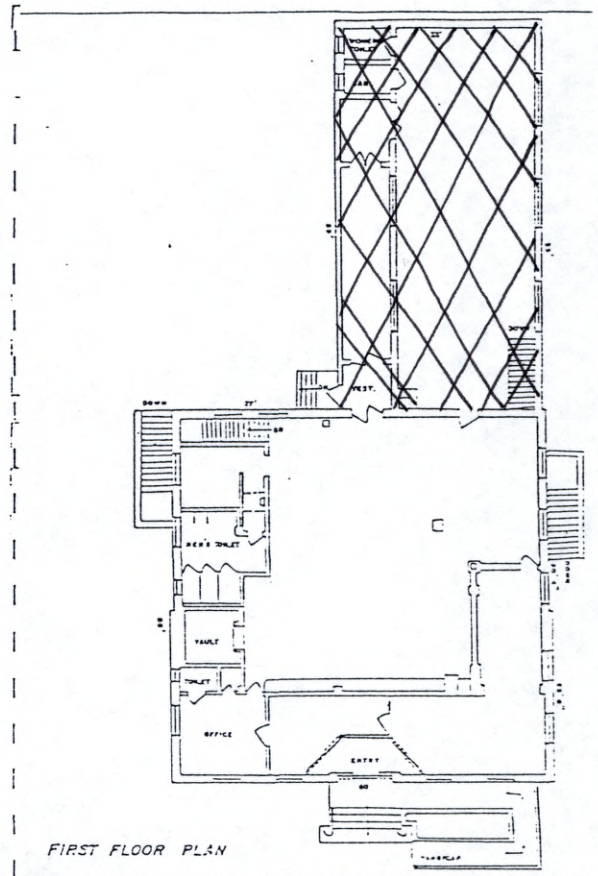
Old St. Albans Post Office
Kanawha County, West Virginia



19-14

Firm, Flood Insurance Rate Map 1982
building location ###

Sketch Map of Old St. Albans Post Office
circa 1955 addition ###



FIRST FLOOR PLAN