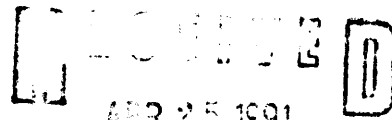


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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sunnyside Main Post Office
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 713 East Edison Avenue
city, town Sunnyside
state Washington code WA county Yakima code 077 zip code 98944

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing, Noncontributing, Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic U.S. Post Offices In Washington, 1893 - 1941

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official, Date, State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official, Date, State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

U.S. Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Moderne

Other: Starved Classicism

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Tar composition

other Terra cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sunnyside Main Post Office is a two-story red brick building on a raised concrete basement platform. The footings, basement walls, and floor slabs are reinforced concrete. Steel columns and beams provide structural support to the first and second stories. The exterior walls are constructed of Common-bond red-brick facing. The front elevation is flat, symmetrical, and Classically-proportioned. Seven flat-arched bays divide the front facade. The five central bays, with centered entry, are articulated by flat brick piers which divide the recessed bays which extend through the first and second stories. Above a stone belt course is a plain brick parapet which terminates the facade. A flat roof of tar composition covers the building.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The front facade (north) is symmetrically-arranged and horizontally-oriented. Divided by seven bays, the facade is flat and stripped of historical architectural detailing. Although there is no articulation dividing the facade into sections, the five central bays are divided by four flat brick piers (suggesting pilasters) which rise from the terra-cotta water table and extend to a terra-cotta belt course which extends across the entire facade. Flat terra-cotta capitals top the piers. The centered entry bay contains double aluminum-framed glass doors (originals replaced). Above the doors is a wooden transom bar over which is an eight-light wooden-sash transom window. Five granite steps and a granite landing provide access to the entry. Square concrete buttresses and wrought-iron railings flank the steps and landing. Flanking the entry bay are two window bays, a blank brick wall (one bay in width), and the single end bays. Recessed between the piers, the first floor windows of the center section are double-hung wood sash with eight-over-twelve-lights. The windows of the end bay are double-hung wood sash with six-over-nine-lights. Terra-cotta sills mark the bottoms of the windows and plain brick panels are between the sills and water table. The second story windows, separated from those of the first floor by plain aluminum span-

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture
Politics/Government

Period of Significance
1937-1941

Significant Dates
Site acq.-1936
Const.-1937

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Simon, Louis A., Supervising Archi-
tect/Federal Government

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Sunnyside MPO, a combined post office and federal office building, is architecturally significant as the only example of Starved Classical design in city. It is also one of the most prominent of the downtown buildings and dominates the city's other public buildings. The building is the first and only federally-constructed post office in Sunnyside. It represents the federal presence and the successful lobbying efforts of local citizens through their elected officials in Washington. Finally, it is a legacy of the public building programs of the Depression era.

ARCHITECTURE

The Sunnyside Post Office well-maintained and is essentially unaltered from its original design (expansion of loading platform does not affect integrity). Classical in its symmetry and proportions, the modern influence is exhibited in the building's flat facade and simplification. The front facade, divided into seven bays, is defined by flat brick pilasters with flat capitals and belt-course architrave of stone. The entry bay lacks the Classical architrave, a common element of federal architecture even in the Depression-era buildings. The front facade exemplifies the Starved Classicism design mode. Although the design of the Sunnyside MPO is unique to the body of federal architecture in the state, it is a standard design from the repertoire of the Office of the Supervising Architect. Despite its outward differences, the Sunnyside building is very similar to the Okanogan Post Office. The scale, proportion, and bay arrangement is quite similar in both examples, but Okanogan is American Colonial and Sunnyside is "starved" Neo-Classical. The building is locally significant under Criterion C.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. The Sunnyside Sun; various articles 1933 - 1938.
2. Original Building Plans; 1936.
3. Plans for Loading Dock Expansion; 1984.
4. Construction Progress Photographs; 9 January 1937 - 26 October 1937.
5. Sheller, Roscoe. Sunnyside At 60. (no publisher or date; on file at Sunnside Public Library).

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

USPS Facilities Service Center
San Bruno, CA 94099-0330

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.52

UTM References

A 1 0 7 3 0 1 8 0 5 1 3 4 1 4 0
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7, Block 32, Sunnyside. The site is on the South-east corner of Edison Avenue and Seventh Street. Beginning at the North-west corner, thence E180', S125', W180', N125' to point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property originally purchased by the federal government for the post office site.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title H.J. "Jim" Kolva, Project Manager; Steve Franks, Research Assistant
 organization Institute For Urban & Local Studies date March 1989
 street & number West 705 First Avenue telephone (509) 458-6219
 city or town Spokane state WA zip code _____

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drels are double-hung, wood sash. Those of the central section are eight-over-eight-light and those of the end wings are six-over-nine-light. A terra-cotta belt course defines the tops of the windows and terminates the bays. A plain brick parapet, capped with terra-cotta coping terminates the facade. Centered over the entry and on the parapet are the raised bronze letters "United States Post Office" and beneath "Sunnyside Washington."

The west facade consists of the main building with three equally-spaced window bays, a one-and-one-half-story loading vestibule, and a one-story loading platform. (The vestibule is recessed 25 feet from the facade plane and the platform is recessed 25 feet from the vestibule.) The facade and window detailing is the same as described for the front facade. A terra-cotta belt course defines the tops of the bays which rise through the first and second floors. The first floor windows are double-hung wood sash with six-over-nine lights. A painted aluminum spandrel divides the first and second floor bays. The second-floor windows are double-hung wood sash with six-over-six-lights and are smaller in vertical dimension than those of the first floor. The loading vestibule contains one centered window bay which is identical to the other first floor windows. The side of the loading platform contains a single fixed wood sash window with eight lights.

The east facade is identical to the west except that the vestibule is recessed only four feet from the main building and the platform is on the same plane as the vestibule.

The rear facade consists of the main building from which projects the loading vestibule and loading platform. The westerly 25 feet of the first story of the main building contains a single window bay set near the juncture of the vestibule. This bay is configured with a double-hung, wood-sash window with six-over-nine-lights, as are the three bays of the vestibule west of the platform. The second story contains ten equally-spaced window bays with six-over-six-light, double-hung, wood sash. The rear of the platform is brick-enclosed and contains a double loading door and a single pedestrian door. Extending further rearward is an open concrete platform covered with a flat metal roof. The platform and a concrete ramp, descending to the west and covered by a flat metal roof, were added in 1983.

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POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

As the city's first and only federally-constructed post office, the building symbolizes the presence of the federal government and its massive public building programs of the Depression era. Because of this association, the building is locally-significant under Criterion A. The acquisition of the appropriation to fund the federal building required that local civic groups form a united front from which to lobby their elected representatives in Washington D.C. Congressman Knute Hill and the local leadership of Dr. Elwood Mead were credited with securing the federal building when it was announced on August 15, 1935.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Sunnyside is in southeastern Washington's Yakima County. It is approximately 200 miles from Seattle, Spokane, and Portland and 36 miles from Yakima. Irrigated farmlands provide the basis for the local as well as the county-wide economy. Fruits, hops, grapes, vegetables, and hay are major crops. In 1980 Sunnyside had a population of 9,225.

The first white man to come to the lower valley was probably Ben Snipes, who was seeking additional ranges for his cattle. In 1859 Snipes built a headquarters on the banks of the Yakima River southwest of present-day Sunnyside. Other cattlemen follow and before long the valley, with its fertile soil and bunchgrass, was overgrazed. The arrival of the railroad through the valley in 1884-85 delivered another blow to the waning cattle business but led to the founding of Sunnyside. Thomas F. Oakes, president of the Northern Pacific Railroad, while on an inspection trip noted the exceptional crops that were being grown near Union Gap and envisioned a canal carrying water to the arid lower valley to create crops for the railroad to carry. Oakes sent for Walter N. Granger, an engineer, who arrived in 1889 and envisioned a city at the base of the mountain. Granger formed the Yakima Land Canal Company that year; in 1893 the canal was completed, a townsite company was formed by the irrigation company, and Sunnyside and Zillah were platted. Unfortunately, the irrigation company went broke and the railroad company also went into the hands of a receiver.

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By 1898 only a few of those who had followed the water to Sunnyside remained and the townsite was claimed through foreclosure.

At the same time the Progressive Brethren Church was planning to colonize a community that would prohibit the sale of alcohol and gambling. In 1898 the church's Christian Cooperative Colony, with S. J. Harrison, H. M. Lichty, and Christian Rowland as its leaders, purchased the Sunnyside townsite and began to settle the "vice-free" town. By 1900 the town's population was 122, which more than doubled to 252 in 1901. Also in 1901 the town's first newspaper was established, the long-vacant Sunnyside Hotel was reopened, and three churches and a one-room school were constructed. (Churches were added so quickly that before long Sunnyside had the nickname "Holy City.") In 1902 the town was incorporated and the first wood sidewalk appeared. Three years later Sunnyside had an estimated population of 600, the Commercial Club was formed, and postal receipts reached \$3,500. But many canal breaks and increased amounts of irrigation had brought a rising water table to the area; as the first train crept over new tracks into Sunnyside in 1905, it pushed rails, ties, and grade deep into mire and gently rolled over on one side. The rising water table and creeping alkali would plague Sunnyside for many years.

In 1909 electricity arrived from Spokane and 101 new homes were built. In 1910 Sunnyside had a population of 1,379. The mud brought on by the rising water table along with the alkali, however, began to slow the town's growth. Morale was boosted in 1917 when over \$62,000 was spent to pave Sunnyside streets for the first time. In 1918 a new U&I Sugar Company plant was constructed. By 1925 30% of the tomatoes and 50% of the rutabagas grown in Washington were produced in the Sunnyside community and the Chamber of Commerce began to announce that Sunnyside was emerging from the mud and alkali. In 1926 sewer mains could be laid for the first time.

Sunnyside's population grew from 1,863 in 1920 to 2,113 in 1930. In the early 1940s the Hanford Project added to the town's economy and population. From 1940 to 1950 Sunnyside grew from 2,368 to 4,194. Sunnyside since then has continued to grow steadily, from 6,208 in 1960 to 6,751 in 1970; by 1980 it had jumped to 9,225.

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The Sunnyside MPO, on the southeast corner of Edison Avenue and Seventh Street, is on the northeast corner of the Sunnyside central business district. Adjacent to the east is the Police Department (former City Hall, one-story, concrete, 1948) and to its south the City Fire Station. Across the alley to the south of the Post Office is a one-story stucco commercial building. Across Seventh to the west is a one-story stucco and metal commercial building with one-and two-story commercial buildings to its east. Kitty-cornered to the northwest is a gas station with one-and two-story commercial buildings to its east. Across Edison to the north are one-story commercial buildings. None of the surrounding buildings are architecturally or historically remarkable.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE
SUNNYSIDE MAIN POST OFFICE

In 1934 the Sunnyside Sun reported that Sunnyside had its first "postmistress": Mrs. Jessie Severyns (June 7th). On October 11th it reported an open house would be held at Sunnyside's new high school (the old high school had burned in 1933). An article of January 4th, 1935 reported that the value of Yakima Valley's ranch produce (fruit, vegetables, grain, hops, livestock, dairy products, poultry) had reached a total of \$29,582,137 in 1934. Postal receipts had also increased, from \$13,686.57 in 1933 to \$16,278.30 in 1934 (January 10th article). On February 14th the Sun revealed that 4,490 families and 592 singles were on relief in the county, for a total number of people estimated at 23,042 (the 1930 county census was 77,394). A total of \$84,599 had been disbursed to those on relief in January. On July 4th it was reported that a \$5,000,000 Roza reclamation project would cover 72,000 acres in upper Yakima Valley.

"Federal Building for Sunnyside" read a Sun headline on August 15th. Congressman Knute Hill and Dr. Elwood Mead were given credit for securing the necessary appropriation for the building, which would house the post office and the headquarters for the Bureau of Reclamation, which was headquartered in Sunnyside. "Government men" had been in town "many months ago" looking at sites. Just one week later, on August 22nd, it was reported that site bids were requested, to be opened September 4th. An article of September 5th reported that

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seven bids had been submitted, ranging from \$1,885 to \$6,900. September 12th brought the news that Inspector E. A. Wohlfrom of Seattle was in Sunnyside to select two locations for final recommendations and would listen to local input.

On October 17th the Sun reported that a site at the corner of 7th and Edison had been selected. (The September 5th article listed the site as consisting of lots 10, 11, 12, and 13 in Block 18 owned by C. D. Merwin costing \$4,400; lot 14 owned by J. E. VanHorn costing \$1,100; and lot 16 owned by G. A. Kirchner costing \$1,400.) In November it was reported that a new modern garage would be built at the corner of Franklin and 6th, 500 cars of spuds had been lost by freeze (November 7th issue), and a PWA program to oil Sunnyside streets had been approved (November 14th issue). Additional news of the federal building was reported on November 21st: construction bids were expected for the first part of December and the cost was estimated at \$100,000. Also on the 21st it was reported that "Never before in the history of the city has so much work got underway at one time." The following projects were listed: the new garage, demolition of the Globe Hotel, construction of a school bus garage, the \$11,200 WPA Lincoln School playground project, remodeling of the West Store, moving and rebuilding of Smith's Bike Shop, rebuilding of the S.L. & Cos. block (which had burned), remodeling of Oddfellows Hall, government improvements on City Park, the \$100,000 federal building, and the Roza project.

"Work Starts on Our Federal Bldg" reported the Sun on February 6th, 1936. A truckload of 50-foot poles had arrived and Harry A. Cotton of Port Townsend's Olympic Pile Driving Company was in charge of the initial work. The construction contract was expected to be let that month. A week later the paper reported that tests were complete and a 2,200 pound hammer had found bedrock 23-26 feet deep. In that spring of 1936 it was expected that 1,700 men would be at work on the Roza project by July and an appeal was made for better mail service in Sunnyside (articles of March 12th and April 16th). On April 30th it was announced that the property owners of the federal building site had been paid and Postmaster Severyns was made custodian of the property.

In September the federal building blueprints arrived and it was announced that bids would be opened October 30th

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(September 17th and 24th issues). On November 12th the Sun revealed that the federal building was "short a few thousand dollars": seven bids had been opened and the lowest bid was for \$97,126, submitted by the West Coast Construction Company. While \$100,000 had been allotted, that included the money for acquisition of the site. (Better news reported on the 12th was that Sunnyside was now the largest turkey center in the state.) Just a week later, however, the Sun reported that \$26,700 extra had been allocated for the federal building and construction could now begin. On December 3rd it was reported that excavation would soon start and 330 days had been allotted for construction. "Now Busy on New Federal Bldg" read a headline on Christmas Eve; John Matheson, the subcontractor for excavation, was at work and it was noted that "The \$125,000 building will house the Post Office, Reclamation Office and other federal agencies that spring up from time to time."

By February 1937 pilings had been driven, forms set, and concrete was being poured (February 18th article). On March 18th the paper announced that "quite an elaborate program is being planned" for a cornerstone-laying program scheduled for May 6th. An article of April 8th reported that the basement forms were finished and "A crew of 35 men are making things 'hum' around this real state of the two-story structure." On April 22nd the Sun published a photograph of the steel framework of the building and a program for the upcoming cornerstone ceremony. Program participants included the Sunnyside High School band, the Masons, Congressman Knute Hill, Postmaster Severyns, Mayor Albert Amundson, the vice-president of the Commercial Club, and construction representatives. An editorial that day titled "All Stand for Greater Sunnyside" stated "The building of the Federal Building--improvements at Lincoln School and at the City Park--more building projects for business places and homes--new firms starting up--all stand for a greater Sunnyside." A brief article of May 13th reported that close to 1,000 people had attended the ceremony the previous week.

The total "relief costs" for April in the county was \$84,302, which included \$39,926 for general assistance to 7,563 people and \$35,302 for old age pensions for 1,681 people (June 17th article). That summer \$1,500,000 was added to the Roza fund to allow continuance of the irrigation

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project (July 8th article). On July 22nd the Sun reported that the post office (which would be "one of the outstanding small town federal buildings in the northwest") was nearing completion and was expected to be occupied by late September. On the 29th it was announced that a new Sunnyside pool, estimated to cost \$25,000, had been assured by the WPA. On August 5th the Sun reported that the post office would be done about October 1st (the plasterers were almost finished); the post office would be on the 1st floor and the Bureau of Reclamation on the 2nd. The paper wrote: "It will be a thing of beauty and a very welcome addition to our city."

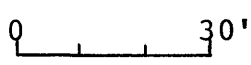
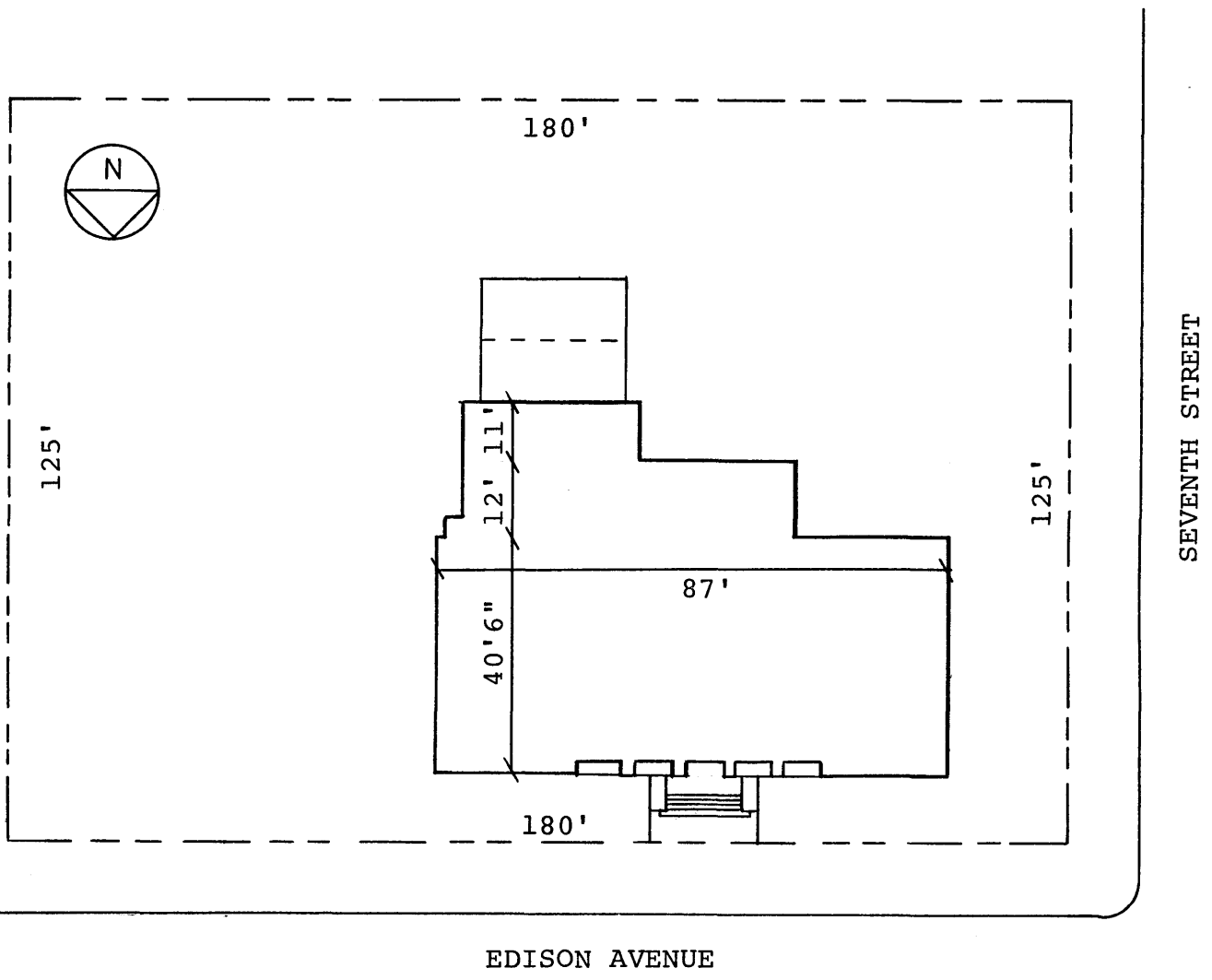
"City General Obligation Bonds Now Only \$17,000" read a September 9th headline. The city was expected to be on a cash basis by 1943 (it was "really surprising and remarkable what has been accomplished in past 5 years. City was almost bankrupt, as it were). Also in September it was reported that 3,000 people were employed picking hops south of town, the new post office would have 801 boxes, and a program was being prepared for the post office opening scheduled for October 27th (articles of September 16th, 23rd, and 30th). On October 28th it was reported that the dedication would be held on Tuesday, November 2nd at 3:00; the Boy Scouts would raise the flag, the high school band sing "America," an address would be given by Congressman Hill, and short talks would be given by others.

"Big Crowd Attend Dedication Ceremony" headlined the Sun on November 4, 1937, which also published a description of the lobby and interior. On November 11th it was reported that the post office would open the following day and the dedication ceremony was described. Mayor Albert Amundson had noted the differences between the 1894 post office and today's, Postmaster Severyns spoke for the postal department and Walter Fry for the Commercial Club, and Senator A. M. Murfin and Carl Hayden of the West Coast Construction Company had also talked. Congressman Hill gave the main address.

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The following information is the same for all the photographs listed:

1. Sunnyside MPO
2. Sunnyside, Washington
3. Jim Kolva
4. September 1987
5. Negatives on file at USPS Facilities Service Center, San Bruno, CA.

Photo No. 1 (negative #7)

6. View to southwest

Photo No. 2 (negative #6)

6. View to south

Photo No. 3 (negative #5)

6. View to southeast