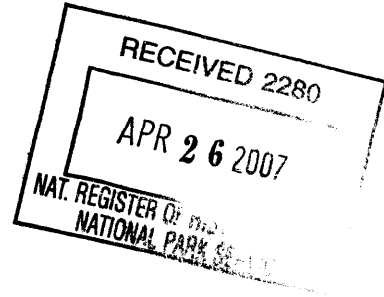


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



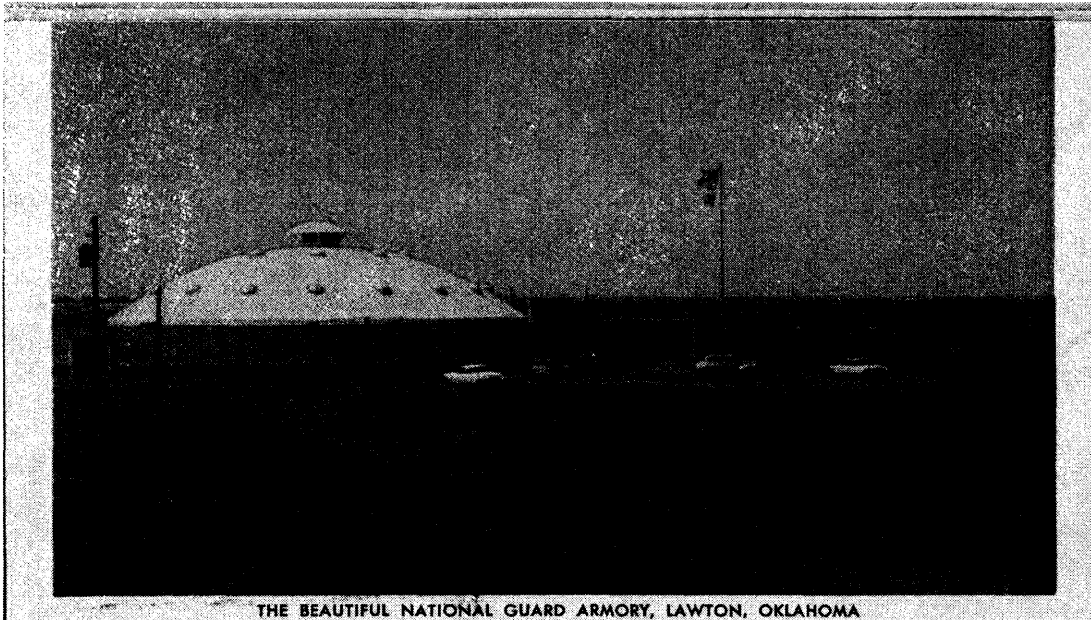
1. Name of Property

historic name Lawton National Guard Armory

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

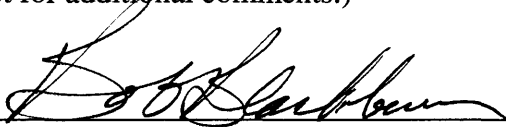
2. Location

street & number 600 Northwest Cache Road not for publication N/A  
city or town Lawton vicinity N/A  
state Oklahoma code OK county Comanche code 031  
zip code 73507

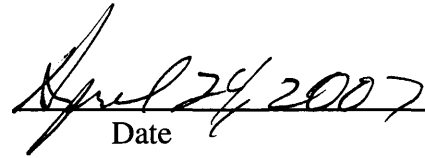


3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally X statewide \_\_\_ locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)



Signature of certifying official



Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO  
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

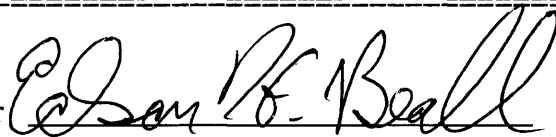
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the  
National Register  
\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the  
National Register
- removed from the National Register



6.5.07

\_\_\_ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Keeper

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>2</u> structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>4</u>	<u>5</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sub: arms storage  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DEFENSE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sub: arms storage  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Modern  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
roof CONCRETE  
walls METAL:aluminum  
CONCRETE  
other skylights: SYNTHETICS; plastic  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

=====

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.)

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 (Enter categories from instructions)

MILITARY

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance 1954-1955

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

=====  
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)  
=====

Significant Dates \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Harris, Paul; architect  
Frederickson-Parks, Inc.; contractor

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

=====  
9. Major Bibliographical References  
=====

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

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 5 acres MOL

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

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>14</u> <u>555240</u> <u>3831150</u>	3 <u>    </u> <u>    </u> <u>    </u>
2 <u>    </u> <u>    </u> <u>    </u>	4 <u>    </u> <u>    </u> <u>    </u>

N/A 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 Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for the Oklahoma Military Department

organization Architectural Resources and Community Heritage Consulting date January 2007

street & number 346 County Road 1230 telephone 405/459-6200

city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079

=====  
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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Oklahoma Military Department

street & number 3515 Military Circle telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Oklahoma City state OK zip code 73111



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Lawton National Guard Armory  
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SUMMARY

The Lawton National Guard Armory in Lawton, Comanche County, Oklahoma, was constructed in 1954-1955. The three buildings of the armory plant were designed by local architect, Paul Harris, and constructed by Frederickson-Parks, Incorporated, of Oklahoma City. The striking, Modern style, main building, the armory proper, has a large, circular area covered by a concrete dome roof. The circular area contains the large assembly room surrounded with storage, locker and classrooms. The dome has numerous, round, plastic skylights and an unusual, center, roof ventilation fan that lends to the distinctive 1950s feel of the building. Attached to the domed area by a glass-wall vestibule is a rectangular, flat-roofed, brick, office area. With a concrete foundation, the walls of the building are predominately vertical, metal, panel with light-colored brick walls on two of the entryways, on both sides of the vestibule and portions of the office section. The metal windows are fixed in the office section and hopper in the circular portion. The windows in the domed section of the building are not visible from the exterior as they are located on the bottom side of the metal, paneled overhang of the circular walls. The majority of exterior doors are nonoriginal, aluminum, glazed, slab. The large drill hall opening on the west side has a metal, overhead door and the pedestrian entry to the north of this has double, metal, slab doors.

To the west of the main armory building are two matching, Modern style, concrete buildings with wave-shaped roofs that extend to the ground on the north and south sides. The smaller, front building was designed for vehicle repair and the larger, back building for vehicle storage. Both concrete buildings also have round, plastic, skylights along their undulating roofs, matching the skylights on the domed section of the main building. Metal down spouts on both buildings are the only narrow vertical elements on the buildings. The repair building has one, large, metal, overhead door and one metal, slab, pedestrian door on the south side of the facade. To the north of the overhead door are two metal, three-over-three, fixed windows with a third hole to the north punched through the wall at the same height and containing a vent. Centrally located on the north side of the facade is a high, window opening that contains a six-over-one metal window. On the back of the repair building are two, metal, overhead doors separated by a single, metal, slab, pedestrian door. The storage building facade originally had three window openings above each of the three, large, metal, overhead doors. The windows are now boarded with metal exhausts protruding. Between the three garage doors are two, gray, metal, slab, pedestrian doors. On the back of the building, there were only three window openings high on the wall, now filled with louvers.

The exterior of all three buildings retain a good degree of integrity. On the main building, the three, main, metal, slab entries in the vestibule have been replaced by a set of double, glazed, slab doors with tall transoms and multiple, full-height, windows on both sides. The windows in the office section are also now modern, metal, fixed but retain the dimensions and location of the original windows. The interior of the building has undergone more change, most notably a drop ceiling was installed in the drill hall and the roll-down gate separating the drill hall from the vestibule has been replaced with double glazed slab doors with a narrow transom and full-height sidelights. The vehicle repair

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building has been altered by addition of the vent which was added to the facade via a hole cut in the wall. The vehicle storage building has been insignificantly changed only by the boarding of the windows on the facade.

In front of the main building on the south side, there is a small grassy island with a contributing, tall, metal, flag pole. Early images of the armory show the island and flag pole (see postcard, page 9). Northeast of the main building, towards the entry to the park from Cache Road, there are two self-propelled howitzers with their crossed guns. The 8" howitzers are included in the resource count as noncontributing structures. In front of this, is a small brick planter (see photograph 14). At the corner of Cache Road and the park road, there is a large, red and white, wood sign which reads "National Guard Armory/Army National Guard/Recruiting Office/Lawton." North of this there is a small, yellow and red sign which reads "OKARNG/RECRUITING/STATION" (see photograph 18). Due to their insignificant scale, the signs and planter are not included in the resource count. Around the west side of the circular portion of the main building and scattered around the other buildings, there are several temporary, metal buildings and containers (see photograph 6). Because these buildings and containers are not permanent, they are not included in the resource count. To the north and west of the main building, the area is enclosed with a chain link fence(see photograph 6, 13 and 16). The fenced area contains numerous vehicles, as well as five buildings, including the two contributing maintenance and storage buildings. On the northeast side of the fenced area is a noncontributing, modern, metal building. In the far northwest corner of the armory grounds, there is a small, noncontributing, corrugated metal, storage building. To the south of this, there is a small, noncontributing, cinder block building used for explosive storage. The three noncontributing buildings are all at least nineteen years old but were not present during the period of significance and, thus, are not contributing to the significance of the armory . Due to their dispersed locations, smaller scales, different building materials and vernacular design, the noncontributing buildings are easily differentiated and do not interfere with the armory's historic integrity.

The National Guard Armory is located directly off of Cache Road in Lawton's Elmer Thomas Park. The land for the park was acquired by the city of Lawton in 1951 for the purposes of establishing a community recreational area. The five acre armory site is located on a high point in the north central section of the park. The concept of the armory was included in the early 1953 planning effort for the park but was not the first building erected on the site. The Lawton High School, designed by Noftsgger and Lawrence, was constructed on the southwest corner of the park in 1953-1954 and, shortly after this, the McMahan Auditorium, also a Paul Harris design, was started towards the south central section of the park. Notably, many of the amenities in the original park design, including a swimming pool to the immediate west of the armory where the Army Reserve Armory was constructed in 1957, never came to fruition. Over the years, the high school has grown remarkably in size but is fairly well contained to the southwest corner. Near the McMahan Auditorium, a building for the Museum of the Great Plains was erected in the early 1960s and, more recently, the Percussive Arts Museum building was completed in 1992. The overall setting of the armory remains much the same with a large body of water to the east and an open, grassy area to the south.

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION: ARMORY BUILDING

The armory building is composed of three sections, a visually-dominant circular area attached to a rectangular office area via a small vestibule. The foundation of the building is concrete, as is the circular, domed roof over the drill hall. The other sections of the concrete roof are flat with a built-up, tar and gravel covering. The round, plastic, domed skylights on the dome roof are placed in a systematic circular pattern with sixteen on the outside and eight on the inside. The skylights are not flush to the roof, instead extending from a short concrete base. In the center of the roof is the large, concrete, circular, roof ventilator. Below the concrete cap of the ventilator are several square openings, two with louvers and the remaining having screens. According to the plans for the building (see page 17), the roof of the office section had three skylights. In keeping with the form of this portion of the building, these skylights were plastic squares. More recently, four, large, heating/cooling units have been added to the office area roof.

The walls of the circular section are predominately insulated aluminum panels with a recessed, concrete base below this (see photographs 1, 3 through 7). On both sides of the circular portion where the vestibule connects is a small section of brick wall. At the intersection of the brick wall and projected metal paneled wall on the south side, there is a suspended, metal light. Around the circular portion only, the metal paneled section of the wall overhangs the lower concrete section. Set in the bottom of the overhang, where they are not readily visible, are the metal hopper windows which allow the central roof ventilator to pull air into the building. On the front side of the lower, circular, concrete wall are a handful of round light fixtures (see photographs 1 and 2). The fixtures are painted red with a red, diamond-shaped back.

There are three exterior entries to the assembly room, all on the west side. Each of the entries are inset within a squared-opening. In the center of the west elevation, there is an oversize, vehicular entry. The walls of this entry are concrete with a central, large, metal, overhead door and a single, suspended, metal light to the north side (see photograph 6). On both sides of this are two shorter pedestrian entries. Both of these entries have brick walls that match the brick of the office section walls. The inset door on the southwest entry is nonhistoric, single, aluminum, glazed, slab with a transom and three-quarters sidelights (see photograph 7). Above the entry is a red and yellow sign which reads "HHS 1/158 FA (MLRS)/Home of the Dragons." To either side of the entry are small, free-standing, yellow and brown signs. The inset door on the northwest side is double, metal, slab (see photograph 5). There is a suspended, metal light high on the north side of the entry wall. Between the northwest entry and the vehicular entry are three, metal, portable buildings. As the buildings are not permanent, they are not included in the resource count.

The vestibule connecting the circular portion to the rectangular section has glass walls (see photographs 1 and 4). The historic back wall is composed of two unequal rows of five, fixed, metal windows. The bottom row of windows is taller than the top row. Originally, the south, or front wall, of the vestibule was similar to the north wall but contained three, metal, slab doors flanked by equal-sized fixed windows. Along the top of the doors and windows

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was a row of five fixed windows. However, the front vestibule wall has been replaced. Now there are two, central, aluminum, glazed slab doors topped by tall transoms. To either side of both doors are two full-height windows.

Connecting the vestibule to the office section of the building is a narrow, brick, perpendicular wall (see photographs 1 and 4). Like the brick walls at the east end of the office section, the wall extends past both of the vestibule walls. On the south side of the brick wall, near the glass vestibule wall, there is a small metal plaque which reads "Frederickson-Parks/Inc./Engineer (Masonic Symbol) Contractor." On the wall above this, in a more central position, is a red sign which reads "Oklahoma Army National Guard/1-158 FA/(MLRS)/Lawton/Unusual Efforts Expended." The sign is ornamented with the symbols of the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the local unit.

To the east of the perpendicular dividing wall, on the south side of the office section, the western three-quarters of the wall is insulated, aluminum, panel wall that is inset (see photographs 1 and 2). The narrow, horizontal band of original, twelve, metal windows along the upper wall has been replaced with a row of six, metal, fixed windows that fit into the historic openings. The concrete ledge of the roof overhangs this section of the south wall and a landscaping bed extends the width of the inset wall. The remaining portion of the wall is brick and flush with the roofline. The wall is ornamented with a large red sign that is identical to the sign on the brick wall to the west. As on the other sections of the office area, the brick wall extends past the roofline. The shorter east wall of the office section is all insulated aluminum panel (see photograph 2). The wall is recessed with the concrete roof providing a ledge above and a landscape bed between the projected brick walls of the north and south elevation. The row of windows along the top of the wall is now composed of six, metal, fixed windows separated by an I-beam. The office area's north wall is identical to the south wall with the exception of no signage on the brick portion (see photographs 3 and 4).

The exterior of the building has undergone minor modification. The windows in the office section of the building have been replaced. However, the new windows fit within the historic openings so this alteration only minimally impact the building's integrity. The south vestibule wall has also been modernized, including replacement of the historic, triple, metal, slab doors. This change is also more notable as none of the dimensions of the original divided glass wall were retained. Critically, the wall was left as glass so the vestibule retains its overall historic feel. The southwest entry to the assembly room has also been modified with a modern single, aluminum, glazed, slab door with a transom and three-quarter sidelights. Due to its recessed placement, this change is not readily seen. Overall, the building retains a fairly high degree of integrity, including the characteristics of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association.

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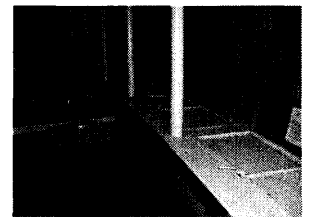
Lawton National Guard Armory  
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INTERIOR DESCRIPTION: ARMORY BUILDING

Of note within the interior of the building is the assembly room (see photograph 8). The room has been altered by the addition of a dropped ceiling; however, the original lights and skylights remain intact above (see photograph 9). The room retains its concrete floor and walls, as well as the original acoustics which allowed a sound made in the center of the room to be heard throughout the room. A number of window air conditioning units have been placed in the upper wall to cool the various rooms circling the assembly room. Originally all of the rooms in this portion of the building were cooled by the roof ventilator pulling air into the building through the hopper windows located along the exterior wall. The air was brought into the assembly room via the systematic openings in the upper, concrete wall. This system has been adversely effected by the dropped ceiling and non-use of the windows, necessitating the air conditioning units which had to be added to the interior as there are no usable exterior windows. Other changes to the assembly room include the replacement of the historic, metal, overhead door between the assembly room and vestibule. The entryway is now filled with double, glazed, slab doors with a narrow transom and divided, wide sidelights. This change occurred in about the last seven years when the office and vestibule underwent asbestos abatement. In all, there were sixteen rooms around the assembly hall (see floor plan, page 16). The materials of several of the rooms have been changed but the majority retain their concrete floors and the unusual ledge composed of metal hopper windows (see photograph to side this page). The individual function of some of the rooms has also changed but, from the assembly room, the configuration of doors remains relatively intact.

Also an open, public area the vestibule of the building has retained its historic configuration. The tile floor of this area and the office hallway were installed in about 2001 with the guardsmen doing the work. The office area has undergone more change, including replacement of the doors, as well as modernization of the wall and floor materials. On the east end of the office area, the large classroom which was originally divided by a folding partition has been permanently divided. While the interior has undergone more alteration, it still conveys much of the historic feeling of the building. Due its concrete construction, many of the features and elements of the interior must remain despite the addition of new materials. For example, the doors in the office have an original concrete frame. The new, metal, glazed, paneled doors have required a new metal door frame be inset in the historic frame; thus, allowing the original door frames to remain in place.



Window Ledge

CS/06

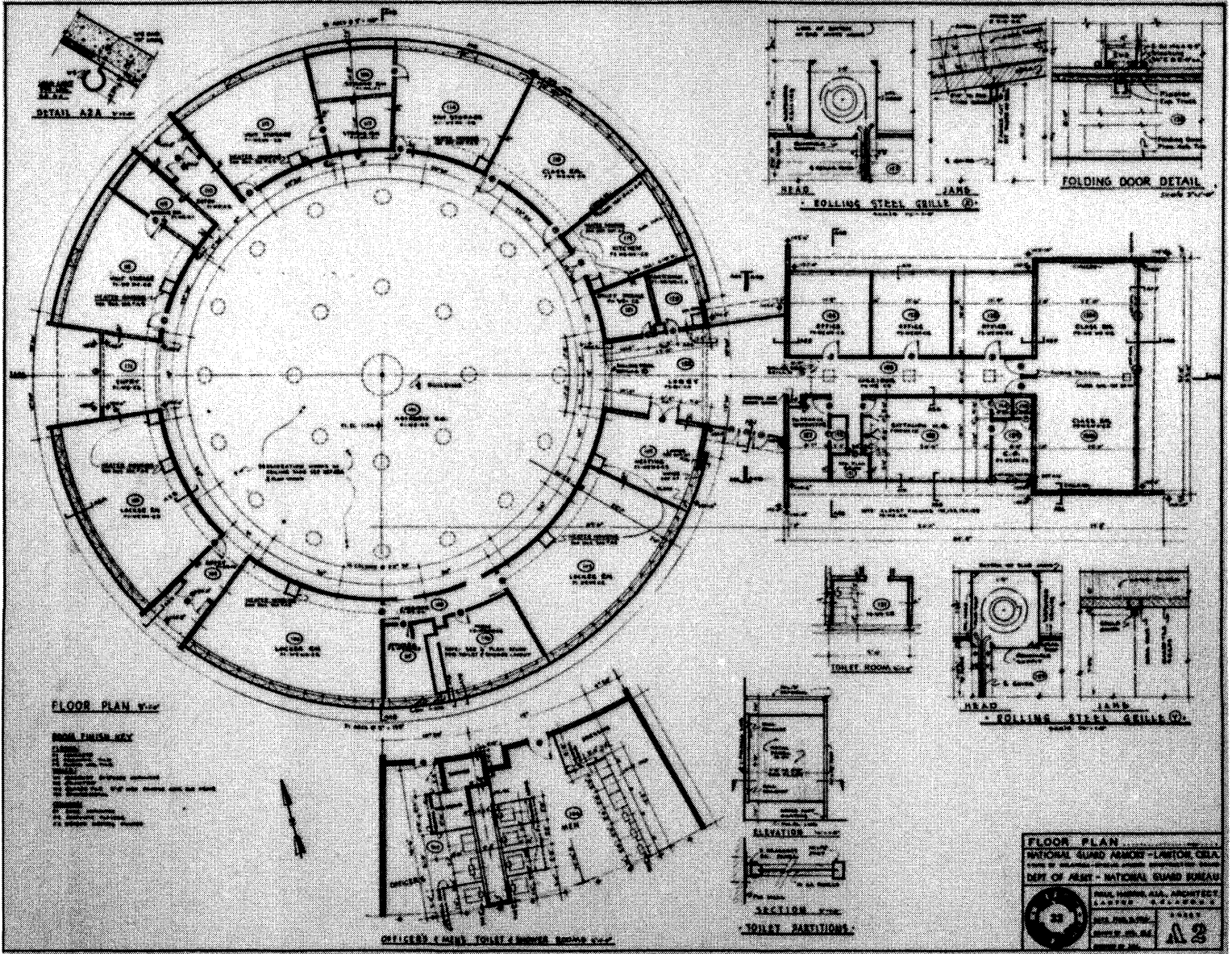


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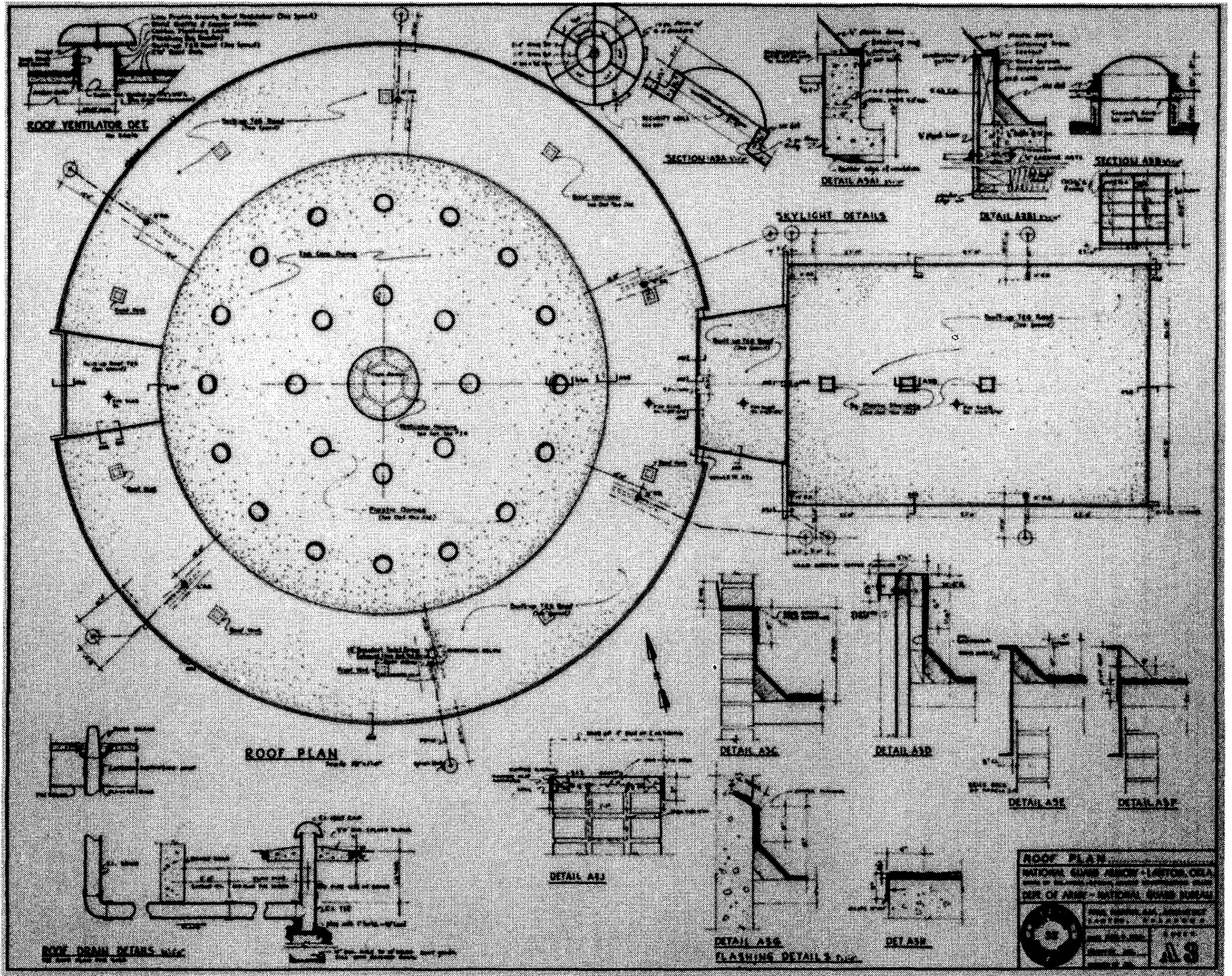


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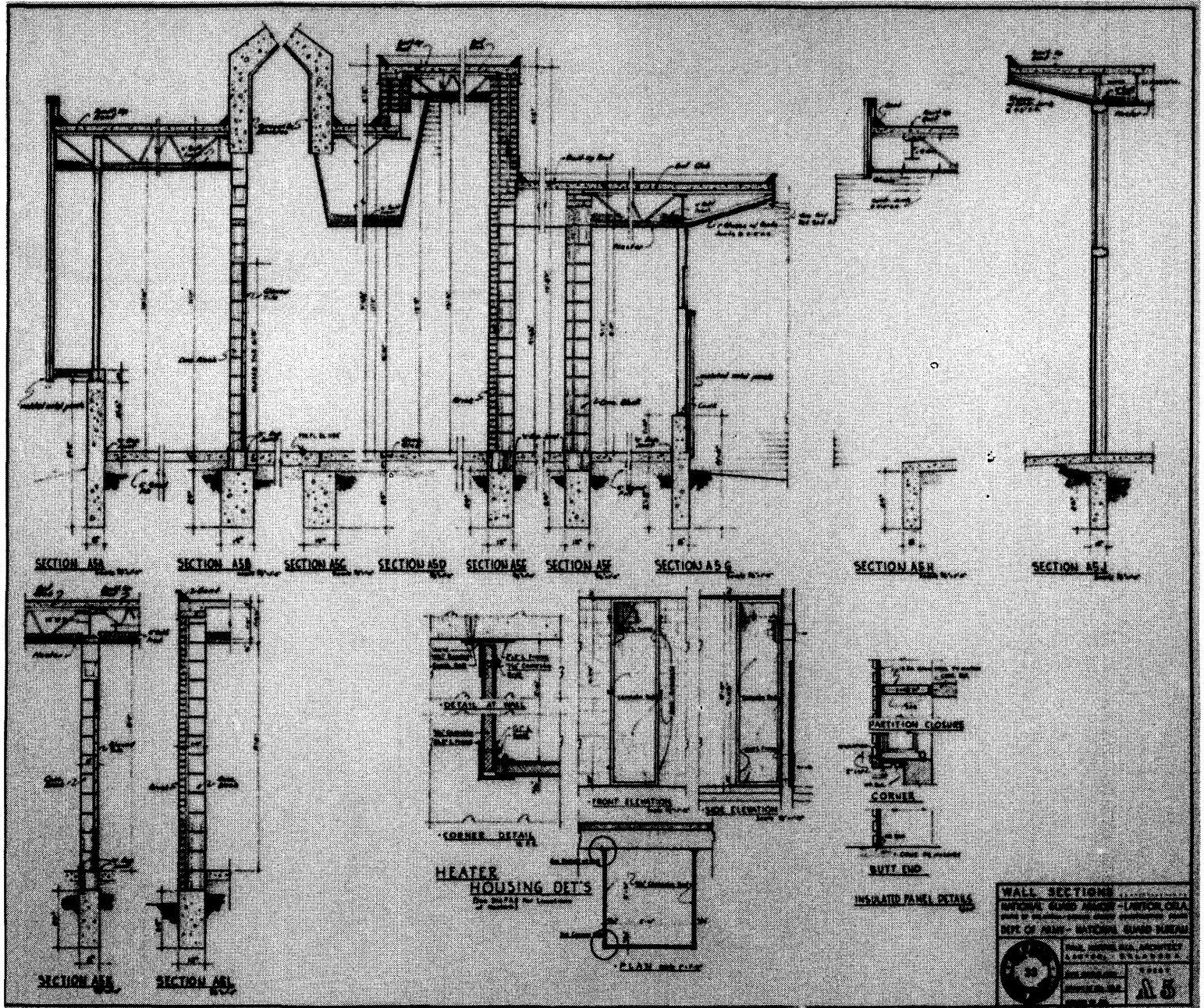


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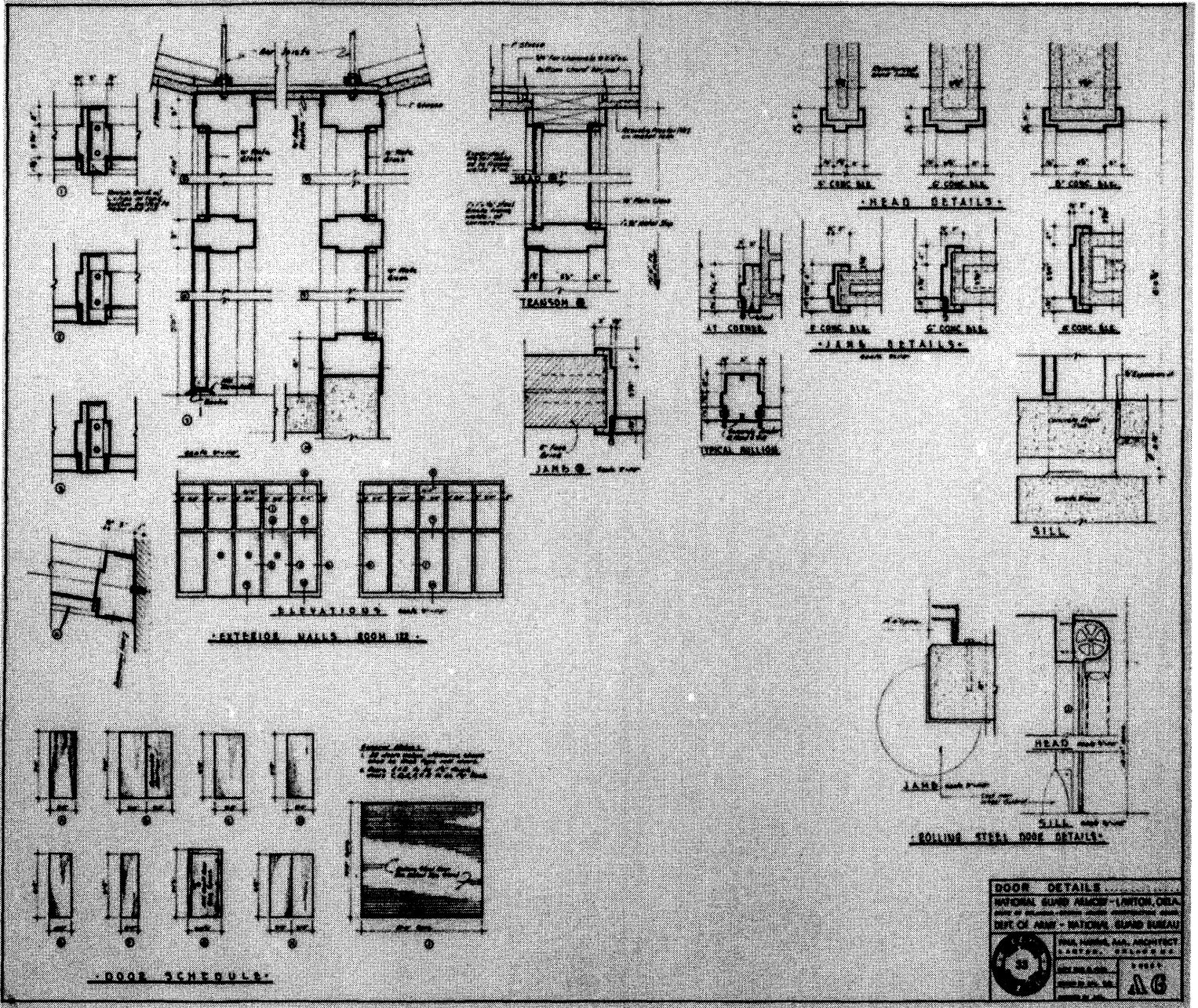


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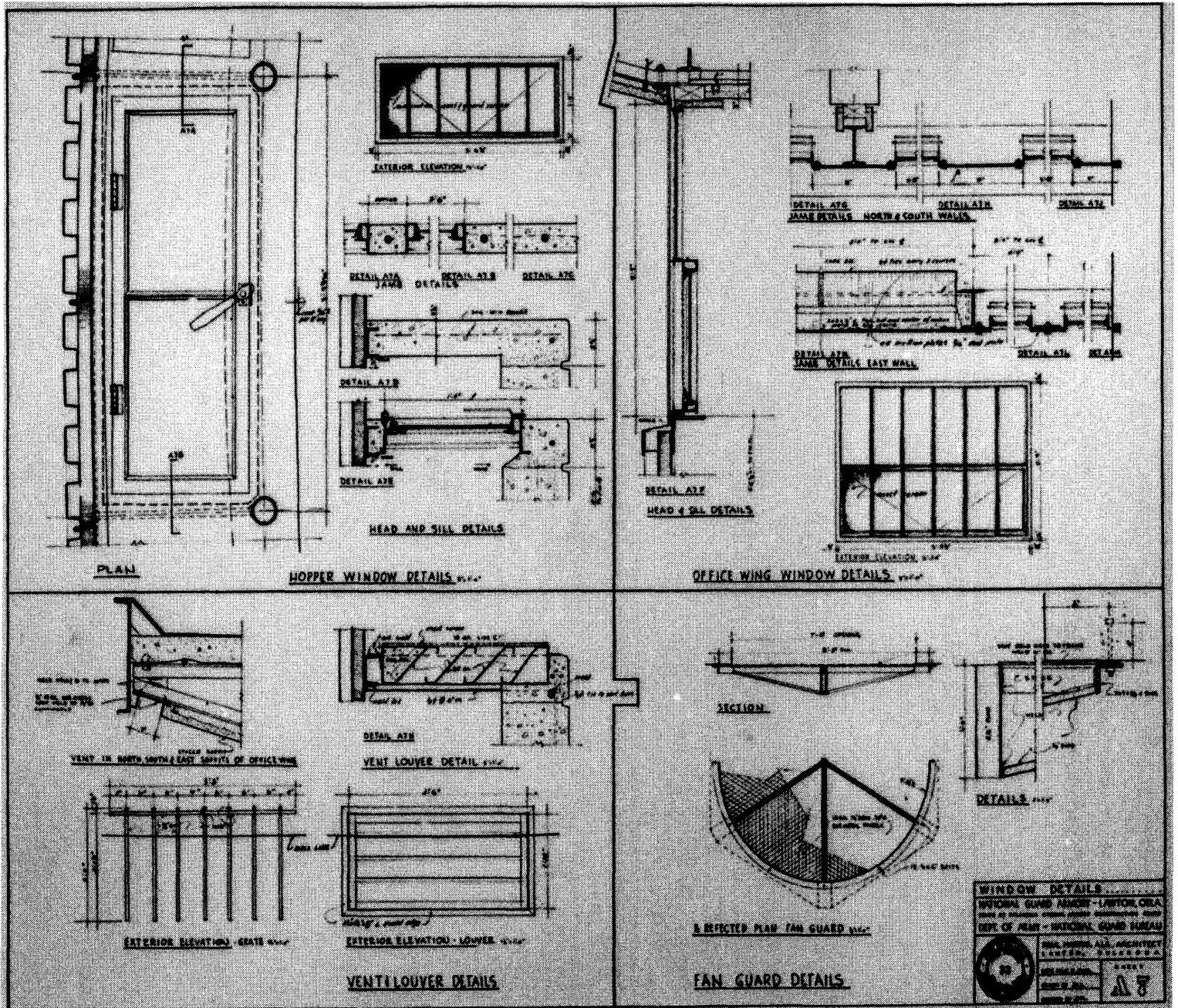
DOOR DETAILS  
UNIVERSAL SLIDING WINDOW-LAWTON, OKLA.  
DEPT. OF ARMY - NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU  
1918  
1918  
1918  
1918

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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION: VEHICLE REPAIR BUILDING

Located southwest of the armory building, within the fenced portions of the grounds, is the two bay, concrete, Modern style, vehicle repair building (see photographs 10 and 11). This building is the smaller of the support facilities designed and constructed at the same time as the main armory building. The distinctive building has a concrete, hyperbolic paraboloid roof which extends to ground level on both sides. In the center, the roof ripples, creating a wave effect. On both upsides of the sinusoidal roof are two, plastic, domed skylights, matching those on the main building. The skylights have the same concrete bases which raise them upwards noticeably. There is also a metal vent located on the north side, between the skylights.

The east elevation of the building is white, concrete, panel which contrasts with the silver paint of the roof and the gray metal of the doors. In the south bay of the east side, there is a single, central, oversize, metal, overhead door. Centrally located above the door is a single, metal light. To the immediate south of the vehicular door is a single, metal, slab, pedestrian door. On the north side of the door, there are two, metal, fixed windows separated by a metal down spout that also visually separates the elevation's two bays. To the north of the windows at the same level, a hole has been cut into the wall, allowing for the addition of a vent. Centrally located on the upper wall on the north side of the east wall is a single, metal, six-over-one window. Wires to a satellite dish on the northeast edge of the building extend to this window. To the north of the window is another metal down spout.

The west elevation of the building contains two, metal, overhead doors. Both doors are centrally located in the building's two bays. Metal lights are located above each door. In the center of the elevation, there is a single, metal, slab, pedestrian door. A metal down spout is located just off-center between the two bays. There are no windows on this side of the building.

The vehicle repair building has a high degree of integrity. The only discernible alteration to the building is the addition of the vent through the original wall on the east side. This change has minimal impact on the building's integrity. Overall, the property retains the historic characteristics of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION: VEHICLE STORAGE BUILDING

Located directly west of the vehicle repair building, the vehicle storage building is larger but otherwise emulates the form and appearance of the repair building (see photographs 10, 12 and 13). The three-bay, concrete panel building has a concrete, hyperbolic paraboloid roof. As with the repair building, each wave of the roof is topped by three round, plastic, domed skylights on raised concrete bases. The undulating roof extends to the ground on both the

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north and south side, obliterating the need for fenestration on those elevations. Unlike the repair building, the storage building has doors only on the east side. The west side fronts on to the perimeter of the guard plant with access restricted by a chainlink fence. There are three window openings on the west side, filled with metal louvers and located high on the wall of each of the three bays. Two metal down spouts evenly divide the west elevation bays. On the east side of the building, each bay has a large, centrally located, metal, overhead door. Above each door is a metal light and a boarded, window opening. Metal exhausts protrude from each of the covered openings. Symmetrically located between the bays are single, metal, slab doors. To the south of the north pedestrian door, there is a metal down spout. The building retains a high degree of integrity with the only notable alteration being the boarding of the east side windows. As the openings remain readily discernible, this change is inconsequential to the building's integrity. The building possesses all the attributes of historic integrity, including location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association.

**EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION: OTHER OUTBUILDINGS**

On the northeast side of the enclosed grounds of the armory plant, there is a modern, brown, metal, outbuilding used as a supply annex (see photographs 15 and 16). The building has a low-pitched, side-gabled roof and a concrete foundation. The only openings to the building are located on the south side and consist of two pedestrian, metal, slab doors flanking two metal, overhead doors. The overhead door on the east side is larger than the overhead door to the west. The doors, the coping encircling building and the metal down spouts on the north and south elevations are a contrasting darker brown than the majority of the building. The building is noncontributing due to insufficient age. Located at some distance from the historic buildings of the complex, the supply annex does not interfere with the ability of the plant to convey its significance.

To the north of the historic vehicle storage building there is a small, cinder block building (see photograph 17). This noncontributing building has a concrete foundation and an asphalt-covered, side-gabled roof. On the roof are two metal exhausts. Located off-center on the east elevation, there is a single, metal, slab door. Symmetrically located on the lower wall are two vent openings. The building was added at an unknown date to store explosives. Due to its small size and blending construction material, the building has little impact on the integrity of the complex despite its proximity to the vehicle storage building,

On the far northwest edge of the plant, obscured by vehicles, there is a small, corrugated metal building. The building has a gabled metal roof. The building is noncontributing due to insufficient age; however, due to its size, placement and differentiated building materials, it has marginal effect on the armory's significance.

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SUMMARY

The Lawton National Guard Armory in Lawton, Comanche County, Oklahoma, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Oklahoma National Guard in Lawton during the early years of the Cold War. The three building complex, constructed in 1954-1955, was one of fourteen new armories constructed in Oklahoma in a two-year period between 1953 and 1955. The armory-building program was financed through a federal and state partnership with the local communities providing the land. The buildings were needed to "...provide a place for training and classrooms for young men...to learn to become citizens, leaders and good soldiers." While the country was then at peace, the "...constant tug of war in high diplomatic circles" necessitated "...a strong defense organization." The Lawton Armory remains in use by the Oklahoma National Guard. Additionally, the armory is architecturally significant in Lawton under Criterion C as the work of well-known local architect Paul Harris and as an unusual, 1950s, Modern style, concrete, armory complex. The period of significance for the property extends from 1954 through 1955. This corresponds largely with the construction of the plant which commenced in early June 1954 and was completed in November 1955.<sup>1</sup>

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Located in the southwest part of Oklahoma, Lawton was situated in what was Kiowa, Comanche and Apache land. The federally-platted town initially covered a total of 320 acres. Selected as the county seat of the newly organized Comanche County, the 1200 lots in the town were auctioned off on August 6, 1901. On the same day, the remaining surplus lands of the Kiowa, Comanche and Apache were divvied out in 160 acre homesteads via a land lottery. The total proceeds from the town lot auction raised over \$500,000. By law, the money was to be used to build a court house, high school, sewer system and water works for the new county seat. Any remaining money was to be spent on county roads and bridges.<sup>2</sup>

With 25,000 persons attending the August 6, 1901, auction, Lawton immediately blossomed with tents initially lining the streets. By December 1901, the population numbered roughly 8,000 and tents occupied only about half the lots in town. The number of residents, however, continued to fall so that by statehood in 1907, the town's population stood at 5,562. Growing by slightly over 2,200, Lawton had 7,788 citizens in 1910. Representing a modest increase, the 1910s bought 1,142 new persons to the community so the 1920 United States Census recorded a total of 8,930. By

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<sup>1</sup>The Lawton (Oklahoma) News-Review, 8 September 1955.

<sup>2</sup>Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, "Final Survey Report: Reconnaissance Level Survey of a Portion of Lawton," (Available Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 1992, 13-14.

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1930, the Lawton population had risen to number 12,121 persons. Another 5,934 people moved to Lawton during the 1930s, creating a total of 18,055 at the time of the 1940 census. Spurred largely by national events, Lawton's population in the 1940s underwent its first major explosion. During that decade, 16,702 citizens moved to Lawton, bringing the total population to 34,757 in 1950.<sup>3</sup> Continuing to experience explosive growth, by 1960 Lawton's population reached 60,608, an increase of nearly 26,000 residents. Although a more modest development, the number of residents in the city equaled 71,288 in 1970.

Lawton's continued expansion from its incorporation in 1901 through the 1950s was due largely to its varied economic base. With both the Rock Island and Frisco railroads completing lines to Lawton within a month of the 1901 opening, the city quickly became a trade center in southwestern Oklahoma. By 1903, the town possessed three ice plants, two grain elevators and two cotton gins, among other industries. Thirty-plus years later, eighteen industries operated in Lawton and the city was a major wholesale marketing, distributing and manufacturing center. Also contributing to Lawton's healthy economy was Cameron State Agriculture College. Established in 1908 by the first state legislature, the school was originally one of six agricultural high schools. In 1927, the school added junior college curriculum and in 1941 formally became a junior college, dropping the high school classes. In 1966, Cameron was designated a four-year college. The school remains a valuable element of Lawton's economic and educational facilities.<sup>4</sup>

The most significant economic stimulus in Lawton, however, pre-dated the town itself. Fort Sill, a military reservation established in 1869 and located four miles north of Lawton's original townsite, is responsible in large part for Lawton's overall continued economic well-being, as well as the major boom in the 1940s through the 1960s. In 1911, the School of Fire for the Field Artillery was founded at Fort Sill. This remains a vital function of the fort under its current name of the United States Army Field Artillery School. Beginning in the 1930s, the installation was the focus of a \$4.4 million building program. The program continued through the 1940s with more than \$14 million being expended. After World War II, Fort Sill was not subject to post war reductions and continued to grow, taking Lawton along with it, as part of the federal response to the Cold War.<sup>5</sup>

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 13, 18-20.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 13 and 22



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In June 1951, the city of Lawton approved a \$313,500 bond issue to buy 310 acres of land on the north side of the city. The sale of the Fort Sill Indian School land was authorized by Congress but, because it was Indian land, the transaction also required the approval of the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache tribes. At the time of the bond issue, the city leaders had no specific plans for the area but it was anticipated that "...a municipal auditorium, possibly one or two schools, public playgrounds, softball and baseball fields, and other recreational facilities" would be constructed on the site. In November 1951, Oscar L. Chapman, Secretary of the Interior, signed the deed transferring ownership of the surface rights of the property to the City of Lawton, subject to existing rights-of-way and easements. Additionally, the deed required that the city only use the property for public purposes. In the event this condition was breached, the deed stipulated that the land reverted to the federal government.<sup>6</sup>

In early 1953, legislation to provide funding for construction of thirteen armories in Oklahoma was approved at both the state and federal levels. The buildings were badly needed as "For years, since the reorganization of the entire 45<sup>th</sup> infantry division in Oklahoma following World war (sic) II, and the addition of the 137<sup>th</sup> fighter bomber wing of the air national guard in Oklahoma in 1946, some units of the guard have pursued their readiness mission in makeshift quarters." Construction of the new armories would result in state-owned facilities for all but one of Oklahoma's National Guard Army and Air units. Cities slated to receive the new armories included Lawton, El Reno, Shawnee, Ponca City, Seminole, Henryetta, Vinita, Bristow, Poteau, Broken Arrow, Chilocco, Fairfax and Stilwell. As with the armory-building program of the 1930s, the federal government was prepared to provide the majority of the program cost. The state legislature approved a twenty-five percent match with the local communities typically providing land and extension of utility lines. Lawton was awarded the largest appropriation with the initial state cost estimated at \$58,750 and the federal government to provide around \$176,250.<sup>7</sup>

Oklahoma's acclaimed 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry ("Thunderbird") Division, originally consisting of groups from Oklahoma, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico, was organized in 1923 under the authority of the National Defense Act of 1920. The 45<sup>th</sup> was preceded by the state and territorial militia which respectively served in World War I and the Spanish-American War. Prior to World War II, Oklahoma's National Guardsmen responded during times of disasters, as well as political turmoil. Mobilized in September 1940 for federal service, the "Thunderbirds" arrived in South Africa in June 1943 and participated in their first amphibious landing in the European Theater on July 10, 1943. Serving with distinction, the division engaged the enemy from Sicily to Italy to France and, finally, Germany. After World War II, the division reverted to National Guard status and became an Oklahoma-only organization. In the early 1950s, the Thunderbirds were one of only two National Guard divisions that experienced combat during the Korean War.

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<sup>6</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 6 June 1951. See also Grantor/Grantee Records (Available Comanche County Clerk's Office, Lawton, Oklahoma), various dates.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 25 March 1953 and 8 December 1954.

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Arriving in Korea in December 1951, the 45<sup>th</sup> participated in four campaigns with the guardsmen spending 429 days in battle. Although the division remained in Korea until the war's end in 1953, the majority of personnel returned to the United States in the spring of 1952. Reverting again to National Guard status following their Korean War service, the division underwent a reorganization in 1959. Ten years later, the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was disbanded with the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, an artillery group and support command taking its place.<sup>8</sup>

In the mid-1950s, Lawton was the headquarters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Lieutenant Colonel Milton Worley was the commanding officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry, as well as president of the Armory Board. With the exception of Ardmore, all of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was located in the area to be served by the new armory. Other local National Guard units included a rifle company, Company F, 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry, and an ordinance company forward, Company A, 700<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Battalion Forward, which performed field service. The service center at Lawton was to serve an area within 50 to 60 miles of Lawton.<sup>9</sup>

The armory-building program of the 1950s resulted in large part from "...deficiencies in the quality of US military equipment, readiness, training, and ability to mobilize" revealed by the Korean War. Even after a truce ended the Korean War in July 1953, continued Cold War tensions reinforced the desire for a strong, well-trained, ready reserve. The construction of adequate armories was vital to this goal. The size of the various armories depended upon the number of units to be stationed there. In addition to a drill hall, the armories often included an indoor rifle range, motor storage, kitchen space, supply room, arms vault, shower and locker rooms and sufficient offices and classrooms for necessary administrative and class work. Importantly, many of the buildings also served as civil defense and disaster relief centers, as well as in various public-use capacities. In towns willing to provide a portion of the cost, community centers and recreational facilities were included in the original design.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>"History of the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry," 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Museum, <http://www.45thdivisionmuseum.com/History/>, retrieved 11 January 2007. See also Mary Jane Warde, National Register Nomination for the "Pawnee Armory," (Available Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: 1992), 14; W. David Baird and Danney Goble, The Story of Oklahoma, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 403; "45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division," Combat Chronicle-45th Infantry Division, <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/lineage/cc/045id.htm>, retrieved 4 February 2007.

<sup>9</sup>The Lawton (Oklahoma) Morning Press, 25 June 1954. See also The Lawton (Oklahoma) Constitution, 15 February 1955.

<sup>10</sup>"The "Nickell's Armories:" Post-war Armories Spring Up Throughout Kansas," Kansas Preservation 24:4 (July/August 2002), 9-10. See also Daily Oklahoman, 25 March 1953 and 8

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The procurement of an armory at the community-level was typically the result of effort by the Chamber of Commerce. In addition to providing a building available for community use, the armories represented a long-term payroll to boost the local economy. For example, Lawton's three National Guard units in the mid-1950s had a potential yearly payroll of almost \$150,000. In the short-term, the armory projects were desirable as the construction effort itself also aided the economic well-being of the area. As one of their long-range planning efforts, the Lawton Chamber of Commerce accomplished the selection of the town for an armory in 1953. Notably, local businessman Ron Stephens served as chairman of the long-range planning committee and president for Lawton's Chamber of Commerce at various times in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Stephens was uniquely familiar with building programs financed through federal and state partnerships to benefit the local community. From 1937 through the program's 1943 demise, Stephens served as state administrator for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program. Previous to 1937, Stephens held the position of assistant state administrator of this New Deal-era program. Under the auspices of this make-work program, fifty-three armories were constructed in Oklahoma.<sup>11</sup>

In late July 1953, state military officials inspected the proposed site for Lawton's armory. By that time, the estimated cost of the three unit armory had risen to more than \$400,000. Just over a month later, the city's planning committee for long range development approved the master plan for the city's new metropolitan park developed by the Institute of Community Development of the University of Oklahoma. Although actual plans for the armory had not been developed at that time, the report noted

The Armory Building has been planned for the high promontory of land situated immediately east of the swimming pool. This is an ideal location from the standpoint of requirements established by the National Guard Armory Committee, and it will permit integration of armory facilities with the active sports program whenever the building is available for such use.

Additionally, the report recommended "...that local officials confer with the architect responsible for the armory construction so that, in so far as possible, the building will harmonize with other structures and landscaping planned for the park."<sup>12</sup>

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December 1954.

<sup>11</sup>The Lawton (Oklahoma) Constitution and Morning Press, 20 June 1954. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 15 January 1947, 6 September 1955 and 2 February 1958.

<sup>12</sup>The Lawton (Oklahoma) Constitution, 24 July 1953 and 31 August 1953. See also Institute of Community Development of the University of Oklahoma, "A Master Plan for the Development

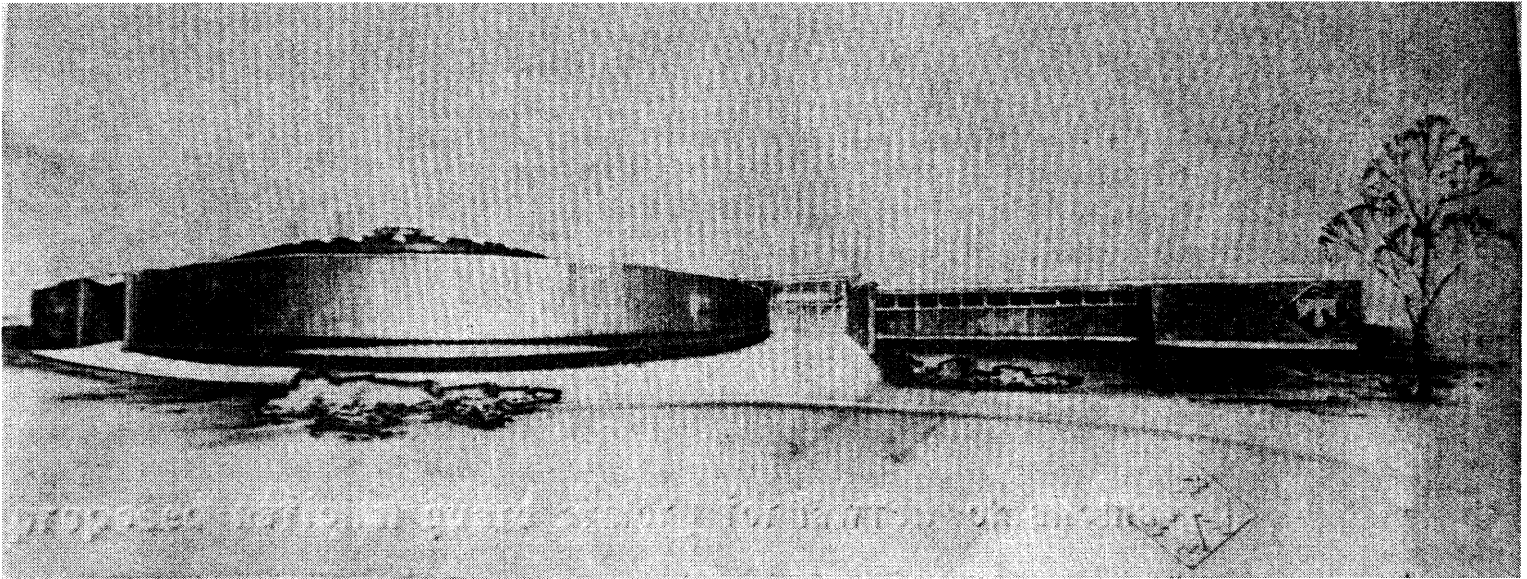
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Moving rapidly, the preliminary plans for the armory were approved in mid-December 1953. By the end of January 1954, the final plans for the \$260,000 armory had been submitted to the federal authorities with final approval expected within two weeks. At that time, the armory layout, designed by local architect Paul Harris, consisted of two



The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 31 January 1954

buildings, the armory proper and a vehicle storage building. Dominating the design was the circular portion of the main building which also included an office wing attached via an eighteen foot glass vestibule. Measuring 146 feet in diameter, the concrete, metal and brick building was to have a central, circular drill field that measured 100 feet in diameter. Along the rim of the interior drill field were various spaces to accommodate needed functions, including three large locker rooms, three supply rooms, three storage rooms, one classroom, a kitchen, toilet and shower facilities and a boiler room. The rooms encircling the drill field were to be about twenty-two feet deep. With no openings in the exterior walls, lighting for the drill hall and adjacent rooms was to come from a series of plastic skylights in the concrete dome. To provide ventilation for the building, windows were located in the overhang between the aluminum wall and concrete base. On the center of the dome, an eight-foot, three speed attic fan provided needed air circulation. The entire building was to be heated through a circulating hot water system. The circular section of the building was to have unit type heaters and the office section baseboard heaters. The office area

of the Lawton Metropolitan Park, prepared for the Metropolitan Park Planning Committee of Lawton, Oklahoma” (Norman, Oklahoma: 1953), 23-23.

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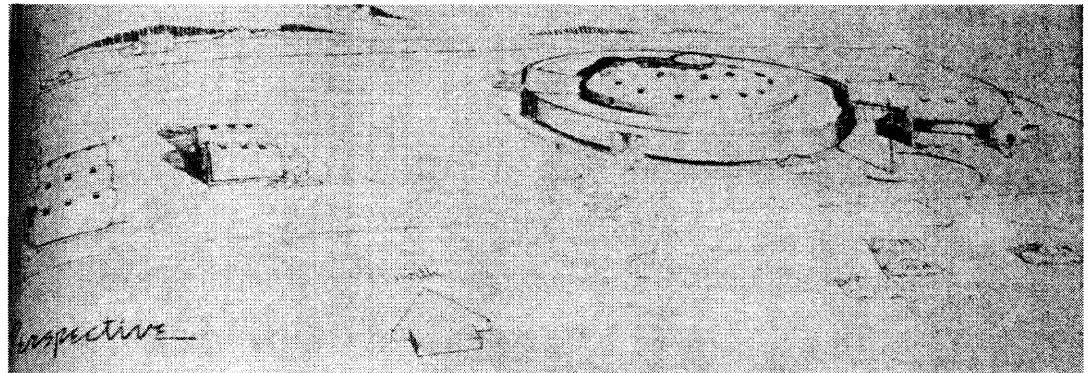
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was to include two classrooms that could be opened onto each other, six offices and toilet facilities.<sup>13</sup>

The unusual, circular armory building quickly garnered national attention. Even as the final plans were being approved, it was noted that "The new structure possibly may set a new trend in the style of armory buildings in Oklahoma and throughout the U.S." Initially hired to draw "conventional" plans, Harris submitted the Modern style plans instead that "met with favor" at the local, state and national levels. Importantly, the atypical plans would result in "...an armory building which (would) conform to the architectural scheme of buildings on the 310-acre metropolitan park area, where it (was) to be located."<sup>14</sup>

The contract for construction of the main building was awarded in mid-April 1954. Frederickson-Parks, Incorporated, of Oklahoma City received the project with a bid of \$199,100. At that time, Harris anticipated the contractor would have materials on the site by the end of the month. The plans for the vehicle storage building, however, were not finalized so construction would not start on this unit of the armory at the same time as previously anticipated. Slower than expected, the concrete footings of the armory were not poured until the first week of June 1954. Work on the grade beams and foundation walls were to start the following week. While work got underway on the main building, the preliminary plans for the \$30,000 vehicle storage building were approved but the final design still awaited submission to the Installations Branch of the National Guards Bureau in Washington, D.C. Included in renderings of the armory complex was a vehicle repair building. Nearly identical to the vehicle storage building, construction of the vehicle repair building had not yet been



The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 6 June 1954

<sup>13</sup>The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 31 January 1954. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 17 December 1953.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 31 January 1954. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 17 December 1953.

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approved.<sup>15</sup>

Around mid-June 1954, final approval for the vehicle storage building was granted and Harris expected approval of the vehicle repair building at any time. With work progressing on the grade beams and foundation walls of the armory, it was anticipated that the concrete piers to support the dome would get underway by the third week of June 1954. Notably, it was at this same time that it became known that the plans for the complex had been purchased for possible use elsewhere. According to Major General Roy W. Kenney, adjutant general of the Oklahoma National Guard, on site to inspect progress of the building, "The Lawton Armory will be one of the most beautiful in the U.S."<sup>16</sup>

Four months later, the majority of the armory's concrete had been poured and work was progressing on the light steel frame to enclose the rooms ringing the assembly room. Work on the vehicle storage building had not yet begun and the building permit for the vehicle repair building had also not been received. In mid-February 1955, the keys to the main building were turned over to the local guard units. Scheduled to move in immediately were the headquarters and headquarters company, Second Battalion, 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry; Company F, 179<sup>th</sup> Infantry; and, Company A, 700<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Battalion Forward. Headed by Lieutenant Colonel Harold S. Johnson, Army Advisor, seven full-time employees would work in the building. Dedication of the building was scheduled for later in the summer, after the remaining buildings were completed. However, the Armory Board quickly voted to rent the finished building to non-profit organizations for \$50 a night and to profit organizations for \$100 a night. The money raised was to cover utilities and janitorial costs.<sup>17</sup>

By the end of July 1955, work on the remaining buildings was nearing completion. Additionally, local leaders and National Guard authorities were planning an armory dedication to be held on Labor Day, September 5, 1955. In conjunction with a barbecue and dedicatory services at the armory, the dedication of the state's first three-level highway interchange, located north of Lawton at the intersection of U.S. highways 277 and 62, was also to be feted. Among other dignitaries, Oklahoma Governor Raymond Gary attended the dedication services. Gary "...climaxed the "dedication day" by pledging the nation's most modern armory to the twin causes of peace and good citizenship."

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<sup>15</sup>The Lawton Morning Press, 13 April 1954. See also The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 6 June 1954.

<sup>16</sup>The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 20 June 1954. See also The Lawton Morning Press, 20 June 1954.

<sup>17</sup>The Lawton Constitution and Morning Press, 19 September 1954. See also The Lawton Constitution, 15 February 1955.

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Gary went on to explain “There is only one reason in building a building such as this because we as a people want peace and contentment – and this way we are guaranteed of it.”<sup>18</sup>

With little fanfare, the keys to the two-bay vehicle storage unit were presented to Lieutenant R. A. Belzung, commanding officer of Company A, 700<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Battalion at the end of November 1955. Completion of the vehicle repair building did not make the news but it was likely finished within a short period.<sup>19</sup>

#### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The National Guard Armory at Lawton is architecturally significant as a unique collection of 1950s, Modern style, concrete buildings. Despite early expectations, the striking design of the armory was apparently not emulated elsewhere. Additionally, as the work of Oklahoma master architect Paul Harris the buildings merit recognition. Harris designed numerous buildings in Lawton in the early to mid-1950s, as well as several landmark buildings in nearby Chickasha. Although “One of Oklahoma’s most prominent architects” at the time of his death just three years after completion of the armory, Harris’ significance has been largely unrecognized.<sup>20</sup>

The armory buildings at Lawton are emblematic of 1950s architecture. The form of the buildings, while functional, were an artistic expression in of themselves. At the time, both circular and hyperbolic paraboloids were popular geometric forms for buildings. The application to an armory was unprecedented but, as revealed by the interest in the building plans by the National Guard at both the state and federal levels, not disdained. While there are no identified buildings in Oklahoma similar to the vehicle buildings, there are several corresponding buildings to the domed portion of the armory complex. Probably the most well known concrete dome in Oklahoma is the “Church of Tomorrow” in Oklahoma City. Designed by Oklahoma City architect R. Duane Conners, the contractor for the building was the same as the Lawton armory, Frederickson-Parks Inc. of Oklahoma City. The large church building was completed in 1956 at a cost of \$1.3 million. Described as egg-shaped, the dome on this building is markedly contrasted to the armory dome. However, the same year the Church of Tomorrow was finished, Conners designed concrete, domed gymnasiums for schools in Amber and Marlow, Oklahoma. Like the armory building, various rooms ringed the central gymnasium space that was covered with a low-pitched roof; however, other features of the armory, including the wall materials and lighting and ventilation systems were not duplicated. The gymnasium at Amber

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<sup>18</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 1 August 1955 and 6 September 1955. See also The Lawton News-Review, 8 September 1955.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 27 November 1955.

<sup>20</sup>The Lawton Morning Press, 21 November 1958.

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remains in use by the Amber-Pocasset school district.<sup>21</sup>

The primary reason for the Modern style of the armory buildings was so they would conform with the other buildings in Lawton's new metropolitan park. It is notable that the plans for the park developed by the Institute of Community Development in 1953 included several building that were never constructed. Among these were a recreation pavilion and a large community building attached to several museums. Both of these buildings were predominately circular in shape with a wing extending off one side. Harris, as architect for both the armory and auditorium buildings in the park, would surely have been aware of these preliminary plans. Harris is not referenced in the report so it is undetermined who was influencing who. The report does note

The large capital investment which will be represented upon the ultimate completion of the park should be preserved by insuring the highest quality of design and construction of every large and small unit within the park. There should be integration of design between the building groups. The overall character that will be achieved will not come only from the large buildings, but also from the quality of design and construction of the smallest units, such as picnic tables, roadways, foot paths, and from the general and detailed employment of landscaping. The planners feel that the people of Lawton have an opportunity to produce one of the finest metropolitan park and recreational areas in the Southwest.<sup>22</sup>

Harris, at that time, had made a clear mark on southwest Oklahoma's built environment, in particular Lawton and Chickasha. Born in Denton, Texas in January 1902, Harris graduated from the Chickasha, Oklahoma, high school in 1919. Although both Harris and his brother, M.E. "Pat" Harris, also an architect, have been described as Chickasha natives, their parents operated the Cornish/Ringling Orphans Home from about 1907 through the mid-1940s. Ringling is located some distance away from Chickasha in Jefferson County in the south central portion of Oklahoma. After high school, Harris attended the School of Architecture at Oklahoma A&M in Stillwater, graduating with a Bachelors of Science degree in architecture in 1925. In about 1927, Harris joined the Chickasha architectural firm of E.H. Eads and Company. It was this firm that designed the Home Management House on the Oklahoma College for Women (OCW: National Register listed 2001) campus in Chickasha in 1929. This building is noteworthy as the first building on the campus not designed by Oklahoma's powerhouse architectural firm of Layton, Hicks and Forsyth. Five years later, Harris designed the three cottage dormitories on the east side of the campus. In the later 1930s, Harris was the local architect for construction of Addams Hall, also on the OCW campus. At the same time, Harris

<sup>21</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 27 May 1956, 16 December 1956 and 23 December 1956.

<sup>22</sup>Institute of Community Development, "A Master Plan," 29-30.



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was engaged in the design and construction of the new Chickasha City Hall and the Chickasha Junior High School Auditorium. Harris' use of "architectural concrete" in the Chickasha City Hall merited his inclusion in Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State, compiled by the Writers' Program of the Works Progress Administration. The city hall was cited as one of "...the most notable..." concrete buildings in the state that was "...excellent in design and permanent in construction." The city hall remains in use by the city of Chickasha and was included in the boundaries of the Chickasha Downtown Historic District (National Register listed 2005). Also mentioned as "An unusual and practical application of this (concrete) method of construction..." was a Harris-designed barn at the Cameron Agricultural College at Lawton.<sup>23</sup>

Continuing his work on the OCW campus, Harris designed the Student Union addition to Senior Hall and, in alliance with Bruce W. Berry, the school's first library building, Nash Library, in the mid- to late-1940s. In 1951, Harris designed alterations to several of the pre-1920 buildings on the OCW campus. More notably, it was also around this time that Harris designed the Comanche County Hospital in Lawton. The hospital was selected in 1951, while still under construction, as "Hospital of the Year" by The Modern Hospital. In May 1952, Harris moved his architectural office from Chickasha to Lawton. At the time, Harris was preparing plans for Lawton's eight-story, 105-room, "community hotel," subsequently called the Lawtonian, and planning a \$4 million academic building at Fort Sill, Snow Hall.<sup>24</sup>

In March 1953, Harris "...held most of the honors at the close of the first Oklahoma owners competition." Judged by three members of the American Institute of Architects, Harris received an award for the Cameron State College library addition, the Fort Sill elementary school, the Comanche County Hospital and a residence in Chickasha. In addition to the preliminary plans for the National Guard armory in 1953, Harris was at work on the McMahon Auditorium in the park and a design for the First Methodist Church of Lawton. In the years following, Harris prepared designs for the Lawton Constitution-Press Building, the Comanche County Fair Buildings in Lawton, the First Presbyterian Church of Lawton, the headquarters for the Southwestern Stationary and Bank Supply Company in Oklahoma City, the Lawton Clinic, the city Dial Telephone Exchange Building for Southwestern Bell Telephone in Lawton and the headquarters for the East Central Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, Inc., located south of Okmulgee. At unspecified times, Harris also designed the auditoriums at Lawton's McKinley and Washington schools; additions to the Officers' Club and Fort Sill National Bank; the gymnasium, Home Economics building, auditorium and a

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<sup>23</sup>The Lawton Morning Press, 22 November 1958. See also The Daily Oklahoman, 2 December 1956; The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma, (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 97.

<sup>24</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 19 March 1951. See also The Lawton Constitution, 25 April 1952.

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residential hall at Cameron State College; Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church; and, St. John's Lutheran Church.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of his death in November 1958, Harris was "...generally credited with bringing a "new meaning" of architecture to Lawton and Southwest Oklahoma" by his associates. A member of the American Society of Professional Engineers and the American Institute of Architects, Harris was "...prominent in State architectural circles." Although there is more to learn about Harris' career, his contribution to Lawton and southwest Oklahoma is clearly notably. The National Guard Armory was also one of Harris' more celebrated buildings as his obituary notes its inclusion in state and national magazines.<sup>26</sup>

Overall, the National Guard Armory in Lawton, Oklahoma, is an excellent, unusual example of 1950s Modern, concrete architecture. The building is also noteworthy as the work of well-known Lawton architect, Paul Harris. Additionally, the building is historically significant due to its association with the Oklahoma National Guard during the early years of the Cold War. The readiness of the National Guard, as influenced by its facilities, during times of disasters, distress and national security obviously contributed significantly to the broad patterns of our history.

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<sup>25</sup>The Daily Oklahoman, 18 March 1953. See also The Lawton Morning Press, 22 November 1958.

<sup>26</sup>The Lawton Morning Press, 22 November 1958.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Five acres located in the Northeast 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4, Section 30, Township 2 North, Range 11 West.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the property historically associated with the National Guard Armory.