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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

FEB 02 1993

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name U.S. Post Office--Magnolia, Mississippi

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 205 Magnolia Street n/a  not for publication

city or town Magnolia n/a  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Pike code 113 zip code 39652

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Hee Ree Adams, Historic Coordinator 9/31/92  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

United States Postal Service, Memphis Inhabitation Service Center  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth H. P. Pool Jan. 28, 1993  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Maq M. Way 3/18/93

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

Mississippi Post Offices  
Thematic Resources, 1931-1941

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government: Post Office

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Government: Post Office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

Limestone

roof not visible

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Please see 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.)

Property is: N/A

**A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** a birthplace or grave.

**D** a cemetery.

**E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

**F** a commemorative property.

**G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Politics/Government

Art

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1936-1937

1939

**Significant Dates**

1936-1937

1939

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Office of the Supervising Architect

Pittman Brothers (New Orleans, LA)

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- 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:

U.S. Postal Service

U.S. Post Office-Magnolia  
Name of Property

Pike County, Mississippi  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than 1 acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	5	7	42	2	90	3	4	48	2	7	0
	Zone		Easting			Northing						
2												

3												
	Zone		Easting			Northing						
4												

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan M. Enzweiler / Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Private Practice date 15 August 1992

street & number 1356 Seminole Avenue telephone (504) 834-9024

city or town Metairie state LA zip code 70005

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name U.S. Postal Service, Real Estate Division (Contact: Ila Lee Odom)

street & number 1407 Union Avenue telephone (901) 722-7421

city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38166-0330

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

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

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## #7 Narrative Description

The United States Post Office in Magnolia is located near the central business district. It is Colonial Revival in style. A concrete basement level rises above grade to a single course limestone water table. The elevated main floor is accessed by a flight of granite steps with cast iron railings that terminate at the sidewalk in a pair of lanterns on standards. The exterior brick walls consist of one full story with a wooden frieze accented with dentils and a cornice which is capped by a brick parapet and limestone coping continuous on all four facades. The roof cannot be seen from the street. Basement windows are partially exposed on all sides by means of areaways and some are covered in iron bars. The street facade consists of five bays reading window-window-door-window-window. The central doorway is comprised of modern, glass and aluminum, double doors with a modern transom above. However, the doorway is flanked by wooden, Doric pilasters supporting an architrave with dentils. Above the architrave is a recessed panel with a brick voissior surround in which is centered a cast stone eagle one foot tall. The windows in this facade are twelve over twelve, double hung sash with limestone lintels and sills. A recessed brick panel below each sill extends down to the water table. Two brick piers are positioned between the window bays to the left and right of the doorway. The east and west (side) elevations each consist of five bays of windows which are similar in treatment to the windows on the front facade. A loading bay and vestibule extend from the rear (north) elevation flush with the west facade. A full basement level exists. Brick masonry laid in the common bond is used throughout.

The interior plan (see attached plan drawings) consist of an L-shaped public lobby with the postmaster's office on the southwest corner. The remaining area is given over to a large workroom and the aforementioned loading bay and vestibule. A partial mezzanine level forming a serving room and lookout is located over the vault area. The lobby contains a glazed tile floor and wainscoting, and the original screenline and entry vestibule.

Three murals by John H. Fyfe entitled "Magnolia, 1880", "Cotton Harvest", and "July 4th Celebration", created under the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts program, were completed and installed in 1939 at a cost of \$1,120.00. All three murals were temporarily removed from the post office from early June to early August 1992 for restoration. They were restored by Stewart-Treviranus Associates of McLean, Virginia (The original nomination and interview with the current postmaster 7/20/92).

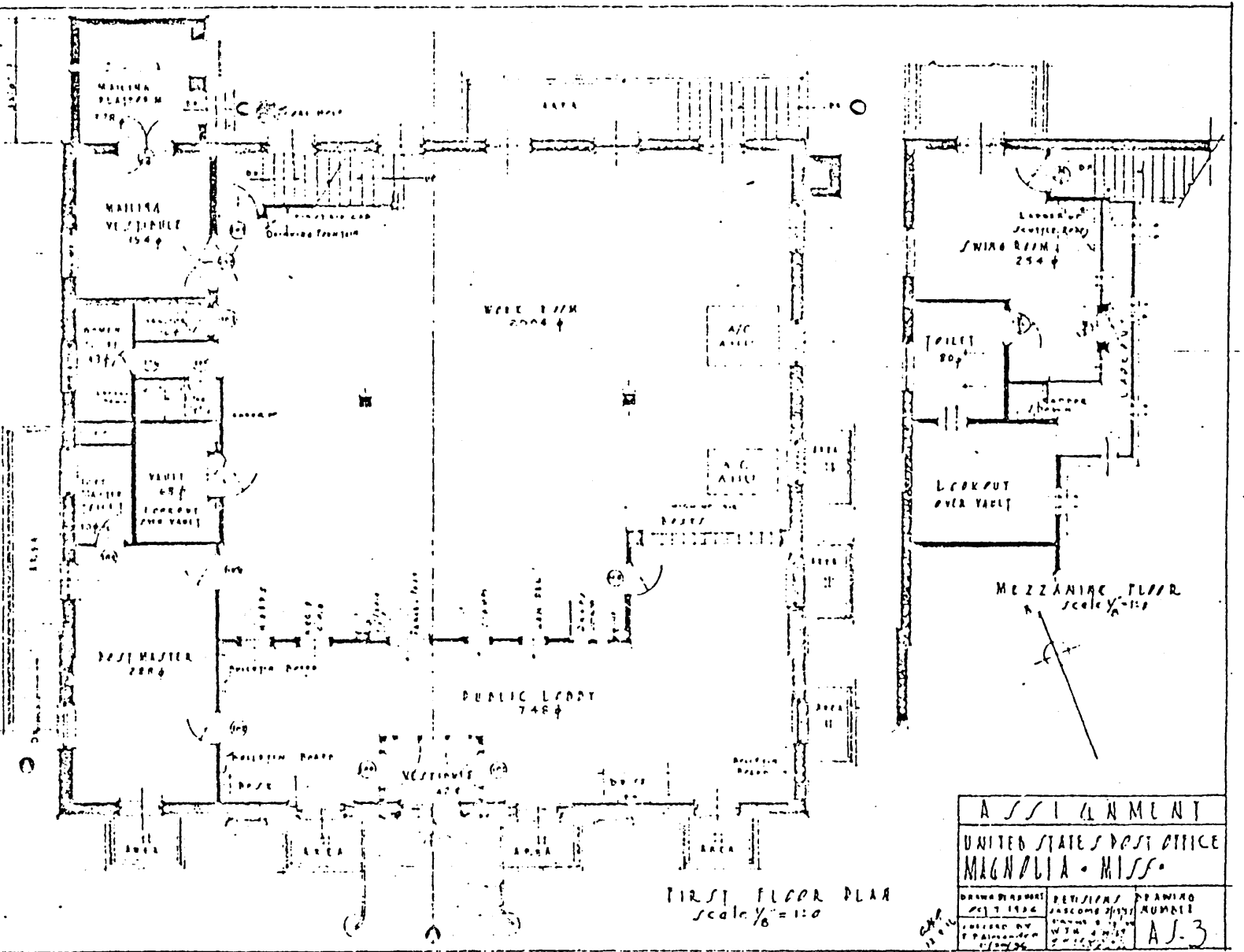
"Magnolia, 1880" depicts a cotton broker inspecting a farmer's wagon load of cotton in downtown Magnolia. "Cotton Harvest" shows African-American field workers loading cotton onto a wagon. "July 4th Celebration" illustrates people gathered around a holiday feast in the early nineteenth century. For more information about these murals please see the Statement of Significance.

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## #8 Statement of Significance

## ARCHITECTURE

The Magnolia Post Office, built in 1936-1937, is a locally important work of mid-twentieth century Colonial Revival architecture, and is a well-executed and well-maintained example of the colonial style post offices built in Mississippi by the Federal government during the Great Depression. It is the only known institutional building in Magnolia that is designed in the Colonial Revival style. The courthouse, which was constructed in 1918, is of a Classical Revival design but has been unsympathetically remodeled. Magnolia's city hall appears to date from the 1950s or early 1960s and lacks architectural merit. Therefore, the post office is the most imposing governmental building in the community. As a prominent architectural landmark near the central business district, it represents not only the Federal presence in Magnolia but also the town's participation in the Union.

The Magnolia Post Office is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architecture constructed under various New Deal Programs in Mississippi during the 1930s and early 1940s and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

## ART

The oil-paint-on-canvas murals were created by John Hamilton Fyfe, a native of Gilby, North Dakota. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Art Students League and the Society of Illustrators School. Fyfe designed magazine covers for The New Yorker and Saturday Evening Post, and illustrations for Colliers and Saturday Evening Post. He also painted a mural for the post office in Camden, Tennessee but it is not known if he created murals for any Mississippi post offices besides Magnolia ("Composite Biographical Sketches of Artists").

John H. Fyfe's murals which are entitled "Magnolia, 1880", "Cotton Harvest" and "July 4th Celebration" are representative of the type of art work generated by the Treasury Department's Section of the Fine Arts in the 1930s and early 1940s. They depict in a realistic style "the American scene" as it would have been understood by a community like Magnolia. Two of the murals, "Magnolia, 1880" and "July 4th Celebration" illustrate historical themes, which was common for the Section's art, and which were significant to Magnolia itself. "Cotton Harvest" was of significance to Magnolia because of cotton's importance to the town's economy. The three murals were completed and installed in 1939. The recent restoration of the murals indicates the community's commitment to their preservation.

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### POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The U.S. Post Office in Magnolia, built in 1936-1937, is significant for being one of the thirty-two post offices constructed in Mississippi during the Great Depression as part of an overall work relief program. Its murals by John H. Fyfe, were funded by a New Deal program for artists which was administered by the Section of Fine Arts, an agency of the Treasury Department.

The Magnolia Post Office and murals illustrate how the Federal government through Franklin Delano Roosevelt's leadership transformed its role from one of "neutral arbiter to social welfare activist", a role the government has retained down to today. Magnolia, along with the rest of rural Mississippi, suffered greatly during the Great Depression. The construction of Magnolia's post office and the painting of its mural demonstrate how the Federal government sought to alleviate the economic hardships of an American community through work relief while also attempting to inspire and encourage that community through public beautification (Craig 1979: 343).



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### #9 Bibliography

"Composite Biographical Sketches of Artists." A report submitted with the original National Register nomination for the Mississippi Post Offices.

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

Magnolia Postmaster. Interview, 20 July 1992.

Original National Register nomination for the Mississippi Post Offices.

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### #10 Geographical Data

#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That property lying and being situated in the Town of Magnolia, Pike County, Mississippi, which is more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at a point where the eastern boundary of Cherry Street intersects the northern boundary of Magnolia Street (which point is the southwest corner of Lot 12 of Square 10), and running thence in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of Cherry Street (which is also the western boundary of said Lot 12), 170 feet to a point, and running thence in an easterly direction along a line parallel with the said northern boundary of Magnolia Street (which said northern boundary of Magnolia Street is also the southern boundary of Lots 10, 11 and 12 of said Square 10), 120 feet to a point, and running thence in a southerly direction along a line parallel with the said eastern boundary of said Cherry Street, 170 feet to a point on the northern boundary of said Magnolia Street and running thence in a westerly direction along the said northern boundary of said Magnolia Street, 120 feet to the point of beginning; said parcel of land being a part of Lots 10, 11 and 12 of Square 10 of the Town of Magnolia, according to the official map of said Town (Deed recorded in Book 67, page 163, 14 February 1936).

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries described in this nomination are historically associated with the U.S. Post Office in Magnolia, Mississippi.