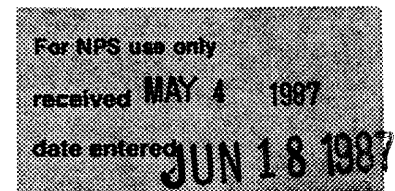


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Curry County, Clovis
County Courthouses of New Mexico

1. Name: Curry County Courthouse
(County Courthouses of New Mexico)
2. Location: 700 Block Main Street
Clovis, New Mexico
3. Owner: Curry County Commission
Box 1168
Clovis, New Mexico 88101
7. Description: The 1936 Art Deco Style Curry County Courthouse is a three and a half story, cruciform plan building with PWA era bas relief embellishments. Designed by Schaefer and Merrell, the courthouse occupies a Shelbyville style court square where it fronts the east edge of the square adjacent to the street. This location was determined by the existing courthouse which occupied the center of the square until its destruction in 1954.

This three and a half story, blond brick and cast concrete building has a flat roof, geometrically designed cast concrete cornice, symmetrical facade and a chimney projecting above the northwest corner. The third story which is smaller and recessed behind the front plane of the structure, is the jail. Windows are 1-over-1 double hung wood sash, in pairs, and evenly spaced. Entry is up a short flight of broad stairs and through double wood and glass doors centrally located on the east facade. Vertically fluted, engaged pilasters frame the entry area and surround the second floor window above. Zia form cast concrete spandrels embellish the slightly projecting north and south wings between the first and second floor windows.

The first Curry County Courthouse was located directly behind the 1935 structure in the central portion of the court square, and remained there until 1954 when it was demolished to make way for a two story addition to the 1936 courthouse, also designed by Robert E. Merrell.

The interior of this courthouse structure has terrazzo floors, grey marble wainscot, and plaster walls and ceiling. Etched glass decorates the main entry with a simple linear pattern. The second floor courtroom is modern with vinyl tile floors, wood paneled walls, and an acoustical tile ceiling. Doors throughout the building are glass and wood, with

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transoms.

The building has limited handicap access and an elevator. The structure is in good condition with only minor remodeling.

8. Significance: The 1936 Curry County Courthouse in Clovis is architecturally significant as a good example of Art Deco Styling designed by architect Robert E. Merrell; and is historically significant for its association with the Public Works Administration era of courthouse construction.

Curry County was created from parts of Quay, De Baca and Roosevelt counties in 1909, and named for New Mexico Governor George Curry. The location of the county seat was competed for by Clovis, Texico and Melrose. In 1906, Clovis had been selected to be the location for the new Santa Fe Railway division point known as Riley's Switch. This event was the birth of Clovis as a town, and brought population and jobs into the area. By the time the county seat election was held in April, 1910, Clovis had become the most powerful municipality in the region. The county seat battle was bitter, but on April 30, 1910, Clovis was declared the winner, and a \$35,000 courthouse was built.

This first Curry County Courthouse was soon outgrown, and in 1935 Curry County obtained PWA funding to build a new structure. The second courthouse was built in front of the 1910 structure, and utilized the earlier courthouse as an annex. Construction of this PWA funded building cost \$150,000. Its Art Deco Styling was said to "epitomize the steady march of progress, nowhere better exemplified than in this region".

Robert E. Merrell, architect for the courthouse, was also the designer of the Roosevelt County Courthouse. Although better exemplified at the Roosevelt County Courthouse which had twice the budget, Merrell included a variety of appropriate Art Deco details. Merrell also designed the 1954 addition to the courthouse which stands where the 1910 courthouse was located.

9. Major Bibliographical References:

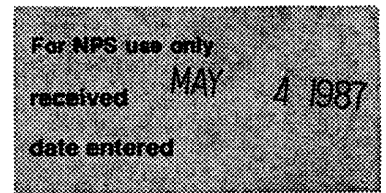
New Mexico State Archives, Santa Fe. WPA File #191. J. Vernon Smithson, "A History of Curry County, New Mexico". No date.

New Mexico State Archives, Santa Fe. WPA File #191. Mrs. Belle Kilgore, "County Seat War Of Curry County," May 3, 1937.

Whiffen, Marcus and Carla Breeze. Pueblo Deco, The Art Deco Architecture

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of the Southwest. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

10. Geographical Data: The nominated property consists of all of Block 43, Liebelt Addition to the City of Clovis.

Quadrangle Name: Clovis
Quadrangle Scale: 7.5 minute

UTM References:
Zone 13 Easting 664960 Northing 3808345

Acreage:
Approximately 2.5 acres.