

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED 413

MAR 28 1995

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 the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, check the "not applicable" box. 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 Douglass Township Community Building

other names/site number 015-1390-0001

2. Location

street & number 206 S. Forest not for publication

city or town Douglass vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Butler code 08 zip code 67039

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.)

Ramon Powers SHPO, February 22, 1995
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kansas State Historical Society
 State of Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: limestone

walls Stone: limestone

roof Wood

other

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.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
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.
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:

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Social History

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

c. 1936

Significant Dates

c. 1936

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

J. Hamilton

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:

Kansas State Historical Society

Douglass Township Community Building
Name of Property

Butler County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 4	6 7 5 3 8 0	4 1 5 4 0 0 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 Michele M. Risdal; National Register Special Projects Assistant

organization Kansas State Historical Society date February 22, 1995

street & number 120 West 10th Street telephone (913) 296-3251

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66612-1291

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 Douglass Township

street & number Route 1, Box 263 telephone _____

city or town Douglass state KS zip code 67039

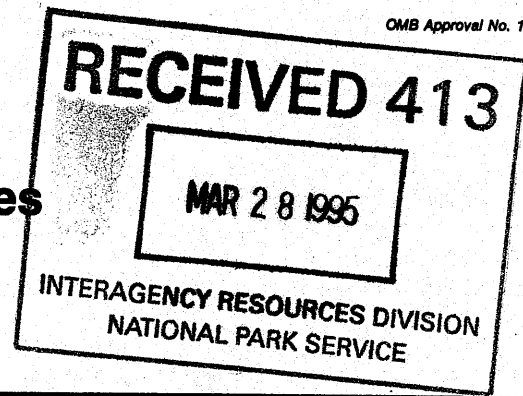
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1



The Douglass Township Community Building (c. 1936) is located at 206 S. Forest, Douglass, Butler County, Kansas (pop. 1,800). The one story, native stone building sits on a limestone block foundation and is surmounted by a flat roof. The stone walls are composed of roughly coursed, limestone blocks that were quarried at Aaron Hawks quarry, four miles west and three and a half miles north of Douglass. The building has a western facade orientation with overall measurements of approximately one hundred and two feet east to west and sixty-two feet north to south.

A stepped gable vestibule projects from the center of the building's facade. Two doors surmounted by semi-circular transoms and flanked by long rectangular windows pierce the building's projecting facade. The two metal doors are replacements. A finished limestone arch with an enlarged keystone surrounds each door and limestone thresholds underscore each door. A finished limestone stringcourse running at the level of the door lintel surrounds the building. Two light fixtures flank both sides of each door. A large wooden sash window divided into 16 lights is placed in the gable. A finished limestone arch with an enlarged keystone surmounts the window. The arch carries down to the foundation creating a recessed area below the window. A name plate of Silverdale limestone is placed in this recessed area below the finished limestone band. It reads "DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY BUILDING 1936 WORKS IN PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION." On the north and south side of the projected vestibule is a large sixteen light sash window surmounted by a semi-circular transom. A finished stone arch with enlarged keystone surrounds each window. A finished limestone band defines the foundation level.

Two large, twenty-five light, metal sash windows pierce the facade on either side of the vestibule projection. The windows are replacements. On the north corner of the west facade is the corner stone laid by James H. Wendorff, Grand Master Mason of Kansas Masons. This stone is differentiated from the others because it is a perfectly square finished limestone in contrast to the other rusticated blocks. The stone reads "J.H. WENDORFF M.W.G.M. AF & AM A.L. 5936." A finished limestone cap row encircles the top of the building.

The building's north and south elevations are identical and made of medium sized rectangular limestone blocks. Four large, twenty-five light, metal sash windows pierce the walls at equal distance. Five pilasters rise from the foundation and terminate under the entablature row of finished limestone blocks. One pilaster defines each corner while the other three are spaced equal distance between them.

A shed projection lies off the east elevation. A partial basement exists under the stage and six basement windows line the east elevation. Rising from the center of the shed roof is a chimney. Both north and south elevations of the projection are pierced by a nine light, metal sash window. An original wooden door flanked by two windows pierces the east elevation. The south window on the east elevation has been boarded up.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

The interior of the building retains its original floorplan and detailing, reflecting its use as a community building. Entry occurs on the west wall of the vestibule. The concrete floor is painted. The windows reflect their exterior figuration. The surrounds have no decoration. A projection ticket booth flanked by two multi-pane doors compose the east wall. Above the vestibule is a projection room used for showing moving pictures.

The two doors lead into a gym. Three original rows of wooden bleachers line the north and south elevations. The sixty-eight feet by forty-seven feet gym floor is concrete. A 1967 photograph indicates that the floor was originally hardwood. A stage approximately four and a half feet above the gym floor pierces the east wall. On each end of the stage are stairs leading down to a foyer. This foyer has concrete stairs leading to the basement. In the partial basement under the stage is a kitchen and two bathrooms. All fixtures in the kitchen and bathrooms have been replaced.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1

The Douglass Township Community Building (c. 1936) is being nominated to the National Register under criterion A for its association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the growth and development of Douglass, Kansas and under criterion C for its architectural significance as a rustic style, limestone community building.

The Works Progress Administration was established in 1935 by Roosevelt to respond to the mass unemployment of the 1930s. The WPA work relief programs organized light public works projects for the able-bodied, unemployed men who were on the public relief rolls. The WPA never employed more than 3.2 million people in any month and its average monthly earnings were far below prevailing or social security wages. The WPA "efforts resulted in the development of thousands of miles of roads and the construction of over a hundred thousand public buildings including schools, libraries and courthouses as well as recreational buildings." (Missouri Preservation News, Summer 1986) The WPA provided work for over 5 million Americans between July 1935 and December 1938, after which date the agency was reorganized and renamed the Works Projects Administration. The WPA constructed twelve buildings in Butler County. Buildings ranged from a stadium to flood control pump houses, Douglass was the only town that got a community building.

In June 1935, the city of Douglass tentatively planned to "erect a building about 60 x 90, of stone, with floor for a basketball court, stage, dressing rooms, showers and kitchen." (Douglass Tribune June 28, 1935) Government assistance through the Works Projects Administration was needed to help pay for this community building which would "fill a long felt need in Douglass and the community." (Douglass Tribune June 28, 1935) A petition on September 13, 1935 signed by over 225 people was given to the township board asking for a bond election on October 17, 1935 to raise the \$7,500 not covered if the WPA approved to fund the community building. The plans drawn up by architect R. J. Hamilton had already been approved by the zone WPA office in Wichita on September 12 and were sent on to Topeka. If the plans were approved and the bond issue passed a \$25,000 community building would be built with only a cost of \$7,500 to the community. The October 25, 1935 Douglass Tribune stated "Douglass township folks voted on Thursday last, about 7 to 1 for a township building."

There was opposition to the project and "two men opposed to the bonds called on the WPA office in Wichita, in an endeavor to stop the project, informing the officials that there was widespread opposition to the building here." (Douglass Tribune October 25, 1935) Mr. Fornelli of the Wichita WPA checked up on the matter interviewing businessmen and farmers. To offset the protest a petition showing support signed by all city officials and local businessmen was sent to the WPA.

On October 24, 1935 a telegram from Representative John Houston informed Forrest Bush that "received advice from Washington that Douglass Community Building, total cost \$ 24,977,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Federal funds, \$17,825, approved by Washington WPA, October 24, and submitted to President."
(Douglass Tribune November 1, 1935)

The building was now funded but the township still had not decided on a location. On November 16, 1935, Douglass Township purchased lots 8, 9 and 10 in Block 9 from E.C. and Ona Varner and on December 14, 1935 purchased lots 4 and 5 in Block 9 from Cornelia House. (Deed Book #169, Butler County Courthouse)

In December of 1935 the township officials and WPA decided to start the building after March 1, 1936 when the weather would be milder. On March 27, 1936, Postmaster Harry B Clay received a letter from Representative John Houston.

"I am pleased to advise that I have received very good reports from both Mr. Griffith and Mr. Primm. The former was here last week and assured me that work will start as quickly as possible...I have a letter from Mr. Primm under date of March 20th, in which he assures me the project will be started on or about March 25th, and since that date is only two days distant, I hope the desired results will have been obtained prior to the receipt of this letter..." (Douglass Tribune March 27, 1936)

Quarrying of the limestone finally began April 2, 1936 at Aaron Hawks quarry, four miles west and three and a half miles north of Douglass and construction begun around April 8th or 9th. Glen Mulvane was the superintendent, Forrest Bush was the foreman, Joe Creed was the time keeper and Anthony Fornelli from WPA was the resident engineer. About fifty unskilled laborers were involved on the project.

By September 4, 1936 the Douglass Tribune reported that the "girders for the roof were placed on the walls early this week, and...walls are completed on both sides up to the cap rock and fire wall." The corner stone was laid with ceremony on September 28, 1936 at 3:30 p.m. by James H. Wendorff, Grand Master of Kansas Masons. (Douglass Tribune September 25, 1936) An interesting feature of the building is the limestone name plate and corner stone were quarried near Silverdale, Kansas, not at the Aaron Hawks quarry. Both were lettered by Gerald Snell. (Douglass Tribune May 25, 1936).

Workmen during the week of October 23, 1936 laid the last capping rocks on the front wall of the vestibule. By this time only some of the inside walls, the floor and roof needed to be completed. On December 11, 1936 the Douglass Tribune reported that the piping for gas and water was completed and the electric wiring was finished. The flooring, though, was delayed due to a delivery problem.

On Saturday January 2, 1937, the Douglass Township Community building was dedicated. The dedication was preformed by Reverend Percy Atkins, of the Christian Church at Winfield,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Kansas, to a crowd of 350 to 400 people. In his dedication Reverend Atkins remarked, "I wonder who can reason the contribution to be made to this community thru this building-as every community is measured by the use it makes of its spare time...In this building, which would do credit to a town many times the size of Douglass, you are casting bread upon the waters, and in some future day it shall return manifold blessing to the community." (Douglass Tribune January 8, 1937)

The Douglass Township Community Building derives its architectural significance as a rustic style building type that was constructed nationwide during the decade of the federal relief programs (1932-1942). "Depression Era structures built by relief workers reflected the principles of rustic architecture upheld by the National Park Service from its establishment in 1916 through the early 1940's." (Missouri Preservation News Summer 1986)

Rustic structures were designed to blend in with the environment and not intrude upon the environment. Colors such as warm browns were used to subordinate the structures to their settings as would horizontal lines and silhouettes. Building materials were to have the qualities of ruggedness, durability, practicality and nativeness in order to create the impression of the building as a natural outgrowth of the landscape. The Douglass Township Community Building is a successful example of rustic style architecture, integrating native stone construction with horizontal lines.

Only five months after its completion, the Douglass Township Community Building hosted two county wide music festivals, league basketball games, a President's Ball honoring FDR, high school plays, Civic club banquets, five county Grocer's meetings, and the high school baccalaureate and commencement.

The building almost sixty years later is still used by the community for its original purpose. Community dances, dance lessons, parties, family reunions, and voting still take place in the building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9,10 Page 1,1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Deed Book #169 p. 406-407. Butler County Courthouse, El Dorado, Kansas.

Douglass Tribune; 9 June 1935 through 14 May 1936.

Ray, Maraline J. "Douglass Township Community Building." National Register nomination draft, September 1993.

Stepenoff, Bonnie. "Pacesetting Recognition of State Park Architecture." Missouri Preservation News, p. 1 and 7.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is located on lots 5, 8, 9, and 10 in Block 9, Subdivision of Douglass - Original Town. The property is bounded to the west by Forest Street, to the east by an alley, and to the north and south by adjacent property lines.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the property that is historically associated with the community building.