United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form  
See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

**1. Name**

- historic: Mendenhall's Bath House
- and/or common: Keller's Bath House

**2. Location**

- street & number: 601 East 7th Street  
  (not for publication)
- city, town: Claremore
- state: Oklahoma

**3. Classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Present Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>both</td>
<td>work in progress</td>
<td>educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>site</td>
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<tr>
<td>object</td>
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<td>government</td>
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</table>

- Accessible: yes: restricted
- Accessible: yes: unrestricted
- Accessible: no

**4. Owner of Property**

- name: Keller Bathhouse Inc.
- street & number: 312 S. Muskogee
- city, town: Claremore
- state: Oklahoma

**5. Location of Legal Description**

- courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Office of the County Clerk
- street & number: Rogers County Courthouse 219 South Missouri
- city, town: Claremore
- state: Oklahoma

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

- title: Northeastern Oklahoma Counties Survey
- has this property been determined eligible? yes  
  no
- date: 1981
- depository for survey records: Oklahoma Historical Society - State Historic Preservation Office
- city, town: Oklahoma City
- state: Oklahoma
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Mendenhall Bathhouse nomination is composed of two buildings and two structures: the bathhouse, the well house, and two storage tanks. The bathhouse consists of bathing facilities and guest rooms, the well house contains the artesian well used to pump mineral water for the bathhouse, and the two storage tanks were used to store the mineral water from the artesian well. The bathhouse and the storage tanks are located on the same piece of property, at 601 East 7th, and the well house is located two blocks north, at 9th and Lavira.

Mendenhall Bathhouse, built in 1903, is a two-story 56' by 40' rectangular structure constructed of red brick laid in a running bond course. It has a flat roof with a 3' parapet on three sides.

On the first floor of the front of the structure there are four tall 2/2 double hung sash windows and three 2/2 double hung sash windows. Above each of the windows there is a plain wooden lintel. Each window has a pair of two panel shutters.

On the second floor of the front of the structure there are six tall 2/2 double hung windows.

The first floor of the southwest side of the structure has five 2/2 double hung sash windows. On the second floor of the same side there are three tall 2/2 double hung sash windows and one 2/2 double hung sash window.

There are two entrances to the structure. One is located on the first floor of the front of the structure and the other is on the second floor of the southwest side.

The door in the front is a wooden panel door with lights in the upper half. Above the door there is a transom window. In addition to the wooden door, there is a metal and screen outer door.

The door on the southwest side is also a wooden panel door with lights in the upper half. A wooden staircase with a second story landing leads from the ground to the door.

A two-tiered porch with a slanting roof extends across the entire front of the structure. It has decorative, wrought iron porch posts on both the first and second tiers. The porch posts on the first floor are set on concrete pedestals and have triangle-shaped wrought iron brackets. On the second tier there is a wrought iron railing with elaborate wrought iron panels.

At the rear of the structure there are two 20' circular redwood holding tanks for the mineral water. Both were built ca. 1907. They are approximately 8' off the ground and are supported by a one-half story building constructed of red brick laid in a running bond course. Brick walls extend from each corner of the structure to better support the holding tanks.

The well house, built in 1903, is a 6' by 6' square structure with a shed roof made of tar paper. Sandstone laid in a random rubble course is the construction material.
In the center of the rear of the structure there is a window which has been boarded over. On the west side there is a solid wooden door which provides the only access to the structure.

Alterations to the structures have been minimal. In the mid-1920's the well house was painted white and in the late 1910's a one-story, 8' by 8' brick structure was added to the east corner of the rear of the bath house. Neither alteration significantly affects the architectural or historical integrity of the structure.
8. Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
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**Specific dates** 1903-1980 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Mendenhall's Bath House, constructed in 1903, is significant for several reasons: (1) it was the first mineral water facility of its kind built in Oklahoma, occurring three years before statehood when its location in Claremore was still a community in Indian Territory (2) it was operational from 1904 to 1980, a period of over 75 years, which outlasted all other mineral water bath houses in the state as a functional operation (3) during the peak period of mineral water usage for medicinal and curative purposes from ca. 1910 to 1940, it became well-known throughout the Midwest as one of the best facilities of its kind and attracted thousands of visitors annually which played a vital role in the regional economy of northeastern Oklahoma (4) although other facilities of this type are still standing in northeastern Oklahoma, it is the best remaining example of this unique recreational, medicinal, and commercial facility because the historic integrity of the entire complex (bath house, well house, and two mineral water storage tanks) has been retained.

While drilling for oil near Claremore, Oklahoma in 1903, George Eaton inadvertently discovered an unusual water with a strange stench. It was soon revealed that Eaton had struck a vein of mineral water, or "radium water" as it was referred to locally. Mineral water was believed to have curative powers for those who swam or bathed in it.

The Mendenhall Family of Claremore, Oklahoma was the first in northeastern Oklahoma to capitalize on the use of mineral water for curative purposes. One year after the discovery by Eaton, the Mendenhalls constructed a bath house, lodging facilities, and storage tanks; and began to advertise in newspapers throughout the Midwest. By 1906 three more mineral wells had been drilled in the Claremore area and several more bath houses were under construction. None of these, however, retain the historic integrity as does the Mendenhall complex, or were operational as long.

Mineral water played a vital role in the economy of northeastern Oklahoma during the peak period of its usage from ca. 1910-1940. Long after most of the bath houses and lodges, which featured mineral water facilities, were closed, the Mendenhall Bath House attracted visitors and clients. It closed in 1980 after 75 years of service to the people of the region.
9. Major Bibliographical References
Interview with Bob Keller, current owner, July 1981.

10. Geographical Data

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<thead>
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<td>Quadrangle scale</td>
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UMT References

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<tr>
<td>G</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Verbal boundary description and justification
Bath House & Storage Tanks - Lot 1, Block 156, Original Townsite of Claremore, Oklahoma.
Well House - Lot 3, Block 160, Original Townsite of Claremore, Oklahoma.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>code</th>
<th>county</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Claudia A. Craig Supervised by Dr. George O. Carney
organization Northeastern Oklahoma Counties Survey date February, 1982
street & number Oklahoma State University telephone 405/624-6250
city or town Stillwater state Oklahoma

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89–665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 2-2-83

For use only by state:
I hereby certify this form to be correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

chief of registration

Attest: Patrick Andrews 3/33/83