

1259

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 PLAZA BUILDING

other names/site number CENTER BUILDING

2. Location

street & number Plaza #2 not for publication

city or town Patterson vicinity

state California code CA county Stanislaus code 099 zip code 95363

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.)

Stefano D. Infescco DSIR 11/21/03
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
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:

- 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): _____

Elson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

1.6.04

Center Building
Name of Property

Stanislaus County, California
County and State

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	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: business

Government: post office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Culture: recreation & museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Mission Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof asphalt

other wood

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.)

Property is:

- 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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1910

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Benton, Arthur B.

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:

Patterson Township Historical Society

Center Building
Name of Property

Stanislaus County, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1/4 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	0	6	6	5	4	6	0	4	1	4	8	6	2	0
Zone	Easting						Northing							

3

Zone	Easting						Northing							

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 Robert C. Kimball / Museum Curator

organization Patterson Township Historical Society date August 20, 2003

street & number P.O. Box 15 telephone (209) 892-8664

city or town Patterson state CA zip code 95363

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 City of Patterson

street & number 33 South Del Puerto telephone (209) 892-2041

city or town Patterson state CA zip code 95363

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.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Patterson Center Building
Stanislaus Co., CA

Description

The Center Building in Patterson is indeed that. Built on a circular piece of property, it is in the center of a city planned by Thomas W. Patterson to resemble Washington, D.C. Construction began in 1909 and was completed in October, 1910. A concrete foundation supports the wood frame structure. Stucco over sheeting comprises the exterior walls and the flat roof is covered with rolled tar paper material. The middle section of the 1824 square foot building is rectangular. Small wings at the north and south ends enhance the Mission Revival style. Porches protect the two entries. A roofed porch with stucco rails and pillars covers the east double doors. The single-doored west porch is covered by a wooden trellis and has wood rails on three sides. For many years a climbing yellow rose bush over the trellis offered protection from sun and rain. The bush had to be removed when a handicapped ramp was installed in 1974. Straight wood frames surround all the double-hung windows. Glass panes are in the top half of each door. Small arched windows top the door and windows of the west porch and the doors on the east porch. Directly north of the west porch is a lift-up wooden door leading to the 292 square foot basement. This area contains heating and cooling units installed in 1978, a storage vault and other storage space.

Interior walls are of lath and plaster construction with a smooth painted surface. The original tongue and groove pine wood floor has been carpeted except for the room used to display kitchen equipment from the 1910 period. This floor has been redone with a thin wood overlay. There are three rooms on the east side of the building. The large central room is flanked by two smaller rooms. The west side holds the above mentioned kitchen, two closets, a half-bath which was modernized in 1999 and the main greeting room. A large brick fireplace, with its back to the half-bath, faces into this room. A display area extends to the south from the main area and a narrow hall leads into the former small office now used for museum storage. Six interior doors allow visitors to walk through the rooms without back-tracking.

No additions have been made to the Center Building aside from the handicapped ramp.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

Statement of Significance

The Patterson Center Building is architecturally significant as the work of master architect Arthur B. Benton of Southern California. He came to the developing town in October 1909 at the request of the town founder Thomas W. Patterson. Benton contracted with the Patterson Ranch Company to design the first three buildings here. His plans for the Center Building and the Del Puerto Hotel (ruined by fire in 1996 and demolished in 1998) were for Mission Revival construction. The Mercantile Building (still standing) is a two-story brick building. Benton chose a coterie of local architects to oversee construction of these buildings before returning south. The Center Building was completed in 1910. It is the oldest building in Patterson and the city continues to revolve around it.

Historical Background and Significance - Architecture

The California Mission Revival architectural style had its inception during the late 1860's and 1870's. Newcomers from the East became aware of the abandoned and deteriorating missions. They found each mission was different in design with some few things in common. Usually built around a quadrangle, the sun-dried adobe brick walls had to be four to five feet thick to support tile roofs. Overhanging eaves protected the adobe, covered with lime stucco, from melting in the winter rains. Roofed corridors with exterior arches were used on the quadrangle walls to protect walkers from sun and wet weather. The Spanish padres coming into Alta California were accustomed to the needs of Mediterranean climates and built accordingly. Mission Revival architects recognized and appreciated this factor. Although having to build with concrete or stucco rather than adobe, the revivalists adopted some basic mission elements to create the style. These included arches, gables, quarterfoils, open or enclosed porches and tile roofs.

Arthur Burnett Benton was born in Peoria, Illinois in 1858. He graduated from high school in 1877 and moved to Kansas in 1879 where he farmed. During this time he took courses in design and construction and also studied English literature. In 1887 Benton moved to Topeka to attend the School of Art and Design. He worked for the Atcheson, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad as a draftsman in the architectural department at this time. A position in the chief engineer's office of the Union Pacific took him to Omaha in 1889. Benton, with his wife and daughter, moved to California in 1891. They settled in Los Angeles. He worked as a draftsman for Sidney Haas before joining William Aiken's firm where he became a junior partner. By 1896 Benton was working on his own.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 3

The Mission Revival period had progressed through its beginnings by the time Benton arrived here. He became attracted by the missions and spent hours visiting and sketching those in the Los Angeles area. His concern over the condition of the structures led him to join friends Charles F. Lummis, noted journalist and historian, and architect Sumner P. Hunt in the 1894 founding of the California Landmarks Club. This was one of the first preservation groups to appear on the national scene and its members were dedicated to restoration of the missions. Benton and Hunt were the club architects and were active in the planning for stabilization and rebuilding.

Although deeply involved in the Mission Revival style, Benton's other designs included numerous churches, hotels, private homes and public buildings. His association with Frank Miller of Riverside and acceptance of a commission to design additions to the Glenwood Inn (now Mission Inn) in 1902 kept Benton busy off and on for over 20 years. The Mission Inn is a National Landmark. Most of Benton's work that has not been demolished can be found in Southern California but there are still buildings designed by him in various parts of the state.

Patterson is fortunate to have two of them. The original Mercantile Building, now owned by Century 21, is a two-story brick building with the lower floor always used for commercial purposes and the upper floor for offices. It is not a Mission Revival structure but the office windows are arched. The Center Building, referred to as the Plaza Building until the early 1970's, is Mission Revival. Benton did an excellent job with the rather small allotted space. The mission roof line catches the eye immediately. Arched windows and open verandah porch at the west entry plus the arched entry and door under the enclosed porch at the east side welcome visitors.

Bibliography:

California

Many Ideas
d, 1926

California

the title

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page

Patterson Center Building
Stanislaus Co., CA

The Center Building is significant for its position as the hub of Patterson. The contribution of those who worked in the building added to the growth of both the city and surrounding farm lands. Needs have changed over the past ninety-four years but the building continues to serve the community by housing the Patterson Township Historical Society Museum and the local Chamber of Commerce which occupies a small portion of the west greeting room.

Located in West Stanislaus County, this city's history traces back to the arrival in California of John Duncan Patterson of Westfield, New York in 1860. Although settling in Alameda County, he continued searching for more suitable acreage for his band of prize-winning Merino sheep. Patterson liked what he found here and purchased the Rancho Del Puerto Land Grant with its 13,340 acres in 1866. He also bought over 5,000 acres west of the grant line before returning to New York in 1868. The California property was then supervised by a nephew, William Wallace Patterson. John D. Patterson died in 1902 and his estate was left to thirteen heirs, mainly nieces and nephews, as he had no children. Executors were W.W. Patterson and Thomas W. Patterson, a prominent businessman and banker of Fresno, also a nephew and heir. T.W. Patterson's idea of irrigated farms with a town to support them was not acceptable to most of the heirs. Only John D. Patterson of a Canadian branch of the family was interested in the plans. Shares held by eleven of the heirs were bought out. In 1908 Thomas and John formed the Patterson Ranch Company to carry out the project.

Streets for the town were laid out with eight of them radiating into the circular street around the hub. This was west of the Southern Pacific Railroad track. Roads for the farms were graded to the east of the railroad. Building began in 1909. T.W. Patterson sought out Arthur B. Benton, well-known Mission Revival architect of Southern California, to design the town's first three buildings. Benton arrived here in October, 1909 and drew up the plans for the Center Building, the Del Puerto Hotel (ruined by fire in 1996 and demolished in 1998) and the Mercantile Building. He chose a coterie of local architects to oversee construction before returning to the south. Contractor F.W. Maurice completed the construction of the Center Building October 14, 1910.

Water was a prime necessity for the 5, 10 and 20 acre farms envisioned by T.W. Patterson. When it did not appear feasible to extend the Miller & Lux canal north

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 **Page** .

Patterson Center Building
Stanislaus Co., CA

Statement of Significance (continued)

of Crows Landing, Patterson eyed the San Joaquin River as a possible source. He thought some kind of lift system would work and hired Arthur L. Adams of Berkeley to engineer the project. The outcome came to be recognized as the first successful lift irrigation system in the world. Seven pumping stations lifted the river water 120 feet to a series of reservoirs. Canals were dug using Fresno scrapers pulled by mules. Water flowed through these canals by September, 1910. Although modernized, the lift system is still in use here.

By 1910 advertisements appeared in Midwest newspapers for Patterson Irrigated Farms. Agents from the Payne Investment Co. of Nebraska were in Patterson to take care of sales, They had offices in the Center Building. Prospective buyers arrived by train from several Midwest and Upper Midwest states. The visitors were accommodated in the Del Puerto Hotel. They were chauffeured by a team of drivers to see the lands available.

Besides the Ranch Company office and the Irrigated Farms office, the Center Building's main east room served as the Post Office from 1910-1931, The Bank of Patterson was also in that room until its building was completed in 1912.

When T.W. Patterson died suddenly in 1914, his minor son, John D. "Jack" Patterson inherited the Ranch Company. His Canadian cousin, John D. Patterson, came down to oversee the business until the early 1920's. "Jack" bought out the Canadian's interest in the company in 1923 and continued to manage the company until its dissolution in 1948. He retained ownership of the Patterson Water Company that serviced the city, but moved his office out of the Center Building in the 1960's. Due to the depression and the financial situation at that time, the Center Building came under the ownership of the City of Patterson in the early 1940's. The city has seen to the maintenance and upkeep since then.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page

Patterson Center Building,
Stanislaus Co., CA

Bibliography

- Azevedo, John, former Museum Curator, reminiscences.
Brown, John & James Boyd, *History of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties*, Madison, Wisconsin, Western Historical Association, 1922.
Patterson City Council *Minutes*, 1943-1948.
Patterson Irrigator, Jubilee Edition, 1984.
Patterson Ranch Company, Ledger #1.
Patterson Township Historical Society, *The Gateway*, 1978.
Sunset Books, *The California Missions, A Pictorial History*, Menlo Park, California, Lane Book Co., 1964.
Weitze, Karen, *California's Mission Revival*, Los Angeles, Hennessey & Ingalls, 1984.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page

Patterson Center Building
Stanislaus Co., CA

Verbal Boundry Description

The Center Building footprints on a circular piece of property 120 feet in diameter (approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ acre). This is bounded by a street named Plaza which serves as a hub for 8 radiating streets. APN: 131-08-48

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated building is surrounded by a lawn with landscaping that includes trees, bushes and some flowers. It is bounded by a circular street as laid out in 1909 by Thomas W. Patterson.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Page

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Name of property - Center Building
2. County & State - Stanislaus County, California
3. Name of photographer - Ben Swift
4. Date of photograph - February 18, 2003
5. Location of original negatives - Ben Swift's possession
Patterson, California

6. 2 sets of black & white photographs, 8" X 10", numbered 1 - 4
Description of view indicating direction of camera:
#1 - Front (entrance) of building - camera pointed east.
#2 - North side of building - camera pointed south.
#3 - Rear of building - camera pointed west.
#4 - South side of building - camera pointed north.

7. Photograph number - number appears on the front of each photograph in the lower right corner on the border.

Name of photographer, location of negatives, date of photographs applies to all photographs.