

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

FEB 3 7 1991

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**historic name **Edmond Armory**other names/site number **Edmond Historic Community Center****2. Location**

street & number	431 South Boulevard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not for publication			
city, town	Edmond	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vicinity			
state	Oklahoma	code	109	zip code	73034
county	Oklahoma				

**3. Classification**

## Ownership of Property

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

## Category of Property

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

## Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	0 buildings
0	0 sites
0	0 structures
0	0 objects
1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **0****4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. N/A See continuation sheet.

Jan. 29, 1991

Signature of certifying official

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this 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.

Entered in the  
National Register

3/14/91

- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## **6. Function or Use**

### **Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)**

DEFENSE/arms storage

### **Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)**

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

## **7. Description**

### **Architectural Classification**

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Works Progress Administration

### **Materials (enter categories from instructions)**

foundation CONCRETE

walls STONE/sandstone

roof ASPHALT

other

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

### **SUMMARY:**

The Edmond Armory is a single-story, rectangular shaped building (140' x 125') built of native sandstone between 1935 and 1937 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The armory is located on the southeast edge of Edmond, Oklahoma's central business district at the northwest corner of East Fifth Street and South Boulevard. It is situated in Stephenson Park, a well-maintained and landscaped public park. The building has two distinct sections, a flat-roofed east section and a barrel-roofed west section. Both sections of the roof are covered with rolled asphalt. The twelve inch thick, roughly squared, regular coursed sandstone masonry is an excellent example of WPA work. The use of recessed panels above the east elevation windows and projecting corner pilasters gives the building a vertical emphasis and suggests an Art Deco influence.

### **EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:**

The public entrance to the building is on the east elevation. This elevation features the central entrance flanked by a series of narrow, fixed windows. The entrance area is highlighted with a projecting, pediment-shaped portal. Wide sandstone piers approximately eight feet high flank either side of the recessed entrance, composed of a flush glass door with full length sidelights (not original). A decorative element of each pier is a row of vertically aligned circular sandstone medallions. Spanning above and between the piers is a wooden sign bearing the inscription "Edmond Historic Community Center." This sign was added c. 1987. Wide pediment-shaped pilasters above the piers feature vertical rusticated lines lending a fluted appearance. There are eleven window openings on this elevation. Two of these, one on either side of the entrance, were originally one-over-four, narrow fixed windows with steel muntins. They are now each filled with a single tinted glass pane. The other nine narrow windows on this elevation were originally steel-framed multiple-light units, the lower portion of which were hopper windows. These were replaced with fixed, tinted glass windows after the National Guard vacated the building. These nine windows have rough cut stone sills. Above the windows are recessed, plastered panels rising up to the roofline. The panels are painted white, which helps give the building a vertical emphasis. At the north end of this elevation is a cornerstone with the inscription: "State Armory/Built By Works Progress Administration, 1936/W. S. Key/State Administrator."

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****Section number** 7 **Page** 1

The north and south elevations reveal the two-part nature of the building. The east half of the building has a flat roof. The west half has a barrel roof with a semicircular shaped parapet. On the north elevation, projecting pediment-shaped castellations flank the parapet and on the south elevation, the parapet is flanked by projecting pediment-shaped pilasters. The east half of the north elevation features a wide, projecting pilaster on the far east end. To the right of the pilaster are two, full length, fixed tinted glass windows. These were probably originally entrances. Around the second window is a wood privacy fence that hides a central air conditioning unit. Above both of these windows are plastered panels similar to those on the front elevation. Also on this half of the building are three other window openings with rough-cut sandstone sills. The left opening is filled with an aluminum-framed casement window. The other two have fixed, tinted glass windows. All of these were probably originally multiple-light hopper windows. Besides the shaped parapet, the west half of the north elevation features one narrow, fixed window similar to those on the east half. It also was a multiple-light hopper window. In the center of this half of the building is a basement window well.

The west elevation features nine window openings with rough-cut sandstone sills. The outer two are filled with aluminum air vents. The other seven are filled with three-over-six steel framed hopper windows. At the center of this elevation are two elevated entrances; each retains its original wood paneled door. Above each door is a three-over-four light transom. Below the doors is a stepped, concrete landing.

The five overhead garage doors on the south elevation give evidence to the building's former use as a drill hall and truck storage facility. The garage door on the western half of the building opens up to the former drill hall. This door is a corrugated-aluminum overhead door and is not original. To the left of this door are three window openings. The outer one is filled with aluminum vents. The others contain the original three-over-six steel-framed hopper windows. To the right of the garage door is a flush steel door (not original). Above it is a three-over-four light transom. Two window openings are to the right of this door. The first one contains the original three-over-six light hopper window. The second one is filled with aluminum vents. All of the window opening on this elevation have rough-cut sandstone sills. The four garage doors on the east half of this elevation are the original overhead, wood paneled doors. These opened to the former truck maintenance and storage area. Two regular-sized doors have been unobtrusively cut into the westernmost door. Green canvas awnings are above all of the door and window openings on this elevation.

**INTERIOR DESCRIPTION:**

The interior of the building is divided into two distinct areas. The eastern half originally contained the offices, a locker room, classrooms, ammunition vault, and the truck storage room. This portion of the building is divided

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 2

---

by a central east/west hall. The western half of the building contained the drill hall. On the north end of the hall is an elevated stage which has been enlarged since the National Guard vacated the building. Flanking the stage are wide sandstone pilasters with details similar to the pilasters at the front entrance. Underneath the stage is the basement. It contains a long narrow room that was used as a rifle range. The original maple flooring of the drill hall has been replaced with concrete. All of the interior load bearing walls are of uncoursed sandstone. Some of the original partition walls are of brick. After the Guard moved out, the city converted some of the larger rooms (such as the truck maintenance facility) into smaller rooms with the addition of sheetrock walls. The size of the drill hall has not been altered except for the addition of small mechanical closets at the east and west corners of the south wall. The ceilings have been dropped throughout the building with the use of acoustical tiles.

**ALTERATIONS**

As mentioned in the above text, the Edmond Armory has undergone some alterations. With the exception of the replacement of the drill hall floor, these alterations occurred after the Guard vacated the building. Exterior alterations include changing the east and north elevation windows from hopper to fixed windows, replacing one of the garage doors, and adding the sign over the front entrance. Interior alterations include enlarging the drill hall stage and adding mechanical closets in that room, breaking up some of the larger rooms into smaller rooms, and dropping the ceilings throughout the building. These alterations have not compromised the historic and architectural integrity of the building.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section number 7 Page 3**

---

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Immediately west of the armory's property line is a well encased in a flat-roofed structure constructed of yellow brick. This structure, which appears in photographs of the historic resource, lies outside the boundaries of the nominated resource and is not associated with the property.

## **8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

### **Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)**

ECONOMICS  
MILITARY  
ARCHITECTURE

---



---



---



---



---

### **Period of Significance**

1935-1940

### **Significant Dates**

1937

### **Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

### **Significant Person**

N/A

### **Architect/Builder**

Nolan, Bryan W., Supervising Architect

**State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.**

### **SUMMARY:**

The Edmond Armory is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Works Progress Administration of the 1930s. Under this federal program, local construction projects were devised as a way of creating jobs for unemployed laborers and stimulating the local economy with the infusion of payroll money and the purchase of local materials (when possible) to complete the project. The armory also was important as the home of the Oklahoma National Guard's Headquarters Company, 179th Infantry Unit of the 45th Infantry Division. The Edmond Armory also is significant as an excellent example of WPA architecture and is therefore eligible for the Register under Criterion C. The native sandstone and fine craftsmanship displayed in this building reflect the ideals of the WPA program.

### **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was created in May 1935 during the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was designed as a means to provide meaningful employment to those workers, mostly unskilled laborers, who were without jobs as a result of the economic depression of the 1930s. The program was discontinued in 1943 with the economic recovery associated with the United States' involvement in World War II. By June 1943, the federal government had allocated \$10.75 billion dollars to the program, and more than \$185 million of this total was expended in Oklahoma.

To receive federal funding, a project had to meet three criteria. First, it had to be useful; that is, it had to be a project that fulfilled a need within the community such as a new school, a water plant, or as in this case, an armory. Second, it had to be sponsored by a public body such as a city, a school district, or county. The sponsor had to contribute part of the total cost, usually between ten and twenty-five percent, which typically was done through the contribution of locally available materials. Third, ninety percent of the laborers had to come from employable persons who were on the relief rolls.

See continuation sheet

## **9. Major Bibliographical References**

Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935 to March 1, 1937. Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937.

Baird, W. David. "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)." Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University, 1987.

The Edmond (Oklahoma) Booster, May 1935 through May 1937.

The Edmond (Oklahoma) Enterprise, May 1935 through May 1937.

The Edmond (Oklahoma) Sun, May 1935 through May 1937.

Franks, Kenny A. Citizen Soldiers: Oklahoma's National Guard. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.

**See continuation sheet**

**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

**Specify repository:**  
Edmond Historic Community Center

## **10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

A 1 1 4 6 3 7 7 7 0 3 9 4 6 0 0 0  
Zone Easting Northing  
C                     

B                       
Zone Easting Northing  
D                     

N/A **See continuation sheet**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at the Southeast corner of Lot Twelve (12), Block Thirteen (13), E.B. Townsend's Addition to the City of Edmond, Oklahoma, thence in a Northerly direction to the Northeast corner of Lot Eight (8), Block Thirteen (13), thence in a Northwesterly direction along the North side of Lot Eight (8), Block Thirteen (13) extended, One Hundred Fifty (150) feet, thence in a Southerly direction parallel to the West  **See continuation sheet**

**Boundary Justification**

These are the property's boundary lines as legally recorded in the County Clerk's Office, Oklahoma County, Courthouse, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The boundaries described above have historically been associated with the property.

N/A **See continuation sheet**

## **11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Pam Terry Belote, edited by Susan L. Allen  
organization Central State University date October 1, 1990  
street & number P.O. Box 1807 telephone (405)-359-0204  
city or town Edmond state OK zip code 73083

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 1

One of the biggest and most visible WPA programs in Oklahoma was the armory building projects. By March 1937, one hundred and twenty-six armories had been built or were near completion throughout the United States. Fifty-one of these were in Oklahoma.<sup>1</sup> When the program ended in 1943, fifty-four armories had been constructed and fifty-three reconstructed or improved throughout the state.<sup>2</sup>

On June 20, 1935, The Edmond Sun announced that the city had been chosen as a possible location for one of these armories. According to the paper, the "new armories would serve as community centers, replace old and inadequate structures now being used in many places by the guard, create work for thousands of unemployed laborers, and serve as a permanent improvement for each city in which they are constructed."<sup>3</sup> By September 10, 1935, the city council had been notified that the city, acting as the sponsor, was assured of being awarded an armory. The council chose a site in the southeast corner of Stephenson Park for the armory's location. Construction on the building began in November 1935 and proceeded at a slow pace due to the nature of the stonework. Although the cornerstone was cast in 1936, the available evidence suggests that the building was completed in 1937.

As a WPA project, the construction of the armory provided a much needed influx of money into Edmond's economy. A contemporary newspaper account reported that in Edmond alone, the average monthly WPA payroll was \$3,500.<sup>4</sup> The armory project was not the only WPA project in Edmond but it was one of the largest. Reports of the cost of the building ranged from \$32,000 to \$40,000. Working off of an estimate of \$32,624, the Edmond Booster reported that approximately \$15,000 would be spent locally for materials and approximately \$11,500 for local labor. Less than \$6,000 would be spent outside for materials.<sup>5</sup> This expenditure of money would not only have helped individual families but would have been of benefit to local merchants and material suppliers.

The Edmond Armory served as the home of a local unit of the Oklahoma National Guard--the Headquarters Company of the 179th Infantry Unit of the 45th Infantry Division. Oklahoma guard units had been a part of the 45th Division since 1923. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Guard was used extensively during civil disturbances, to aid in relief after natural disasters, and to carry out the orders of the state's governors. In 1935, Edmond's Headquarters Company consisted of sixty-three men and two officers.<sup>6</sup> As it previously had no permanent facility of its own, the new armory provided a valuable building to the Guard. The interior of the facility included a 75' x 100' drill hall, a firing range in the basement, and miscellaneous rooms including a store room, locker room, classroom, office, and truck storage space. The armory allowed the Headquarters Company of the 179th Infantry to achieve a greater level of military efficiency and preparedness as well as providing a secure place for the unit's property. This preparation would become of vital importance with the outbreak of World

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 2

War II as the Oklahoma National Guard was mobilized in September 1940 and later saw active duty in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Edmond Armory is an excellent example of WPA architecture in Oklahoma. Bryan W. Nolan, an architect and major in the Guard, was the supervising architect for the Oklahoma WPA armory building project. Construction began in late 1935 and was completed in 1937. The use of native sandstone exemplifies the WPA's goals of using local material when possible and keeping the design simple enough for unskilled workers. However, the Edmond Armory displays a certain level of competence with the skillful cutting and laying of the stone in such a manner as to highlight its natural qualities. This stone was quarried locally and brought to the building site in a rough state. There, it was dressed by the WPA laborers. The use of the native sandstone as well as the building's barrel roof with a one story, flat roofed extension to the east reflects the physical environment instead of an urban-rural dichotomy.<sup>7</sup>

Oklahoma's WPA armories were constructed to accommodate either one, two, or four units. This dictated the size and design of the building. The Edmond Armory is similar to other Oklahoma armories housing one unit. The standardization of designs accommodated the skill levels of a work force with little or no construction experience. Variations in construction did occur depending on the availability of local materials such as sandstone or brick. As in the case of the Edmond Armory, thirty-three of the armories constructed by mid-1937 were of locally available stone. The other eighteen were constructed of brick.<sup>8</sup>

The period of significance for the Edmond Armory is from 1935 to 1940, These years delineate the period from the beginning of the construction of the building to the year that the Oklahoma National Guard was mobilized for World War II.

The Edmond National Guard unit moved out of this armory in 1968 and into a new building. Since that time, the city of Edmond has used the facility for various purposes. It currently is used as the Edmond Historic Community Center and houses offices for the Edmond Historical Trust and the Edmond Historical Society. The listing of the Edmond Armory in the National Register of Historic Places would be a great boost to the preservation movement in Edmond.

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup>Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, July 1, 1935 - March 1, 1937, (Oklahoma City: Works Progress Administration, 1937), 38.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

---

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Work Projects Administration, Oklahoma: Final Report of Activities and Accomplishments. (Washington, D.C., 1943), 2.

<sup>3</sup>Edmond (Oklahoma) Sun, 20 June 1935.

<sup>4</sup>Edmond (Oklahoma) Booster, 27 February 1936.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 8 August 1935.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Accomplishments: Works Progress Administration for Oklahoma, 38.

<sup>8</sup>W. David Baird, "Final Report: WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)," (Stillwater, Oklahoma: Oklahoma State University, 1987), 13.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

---

Major Bibliographical References: (Continued)

Historical Annual: National Guard of the State of Oklahoma, 1938. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Army and Navy Publishing Company, 1938.

U.S. Work Projects Administration, Oklahoma: Final Report of Activities and Accomplishments. Washington, D.C., 1943. (Typewritten manuscript, Documents Section. Edmon Low Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section number** 10 **Page** 1

---

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** (continued)

side of said Block Thirteen (13) One Hundred Twenty Five (125) feet to a point on the South Line of Lot Twelve (12), Block Thirteen (13) extended west, thence in an Easterly direction along the said South Line of Lot Twelve (12) produced, to the point of beginning, as shown on the Recorded plat in Book One (1), Page Eighteen (18), of the Records of Oklahoma County, Oklahoma.