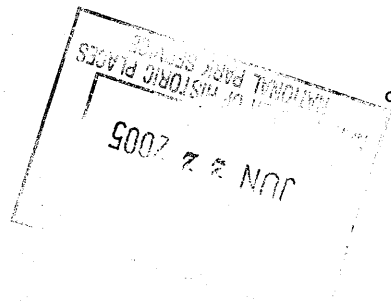


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 any 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 Masonic Temple

Other names/site number LC13:D08-020

2. Location

Street & number 1635 L Street Not for publication

City or town Lincoln Vicinity

State Nebraska Code NE County Lancaster Code 109 Zip code 68508

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Wendee Sommer
Signature of certifying official

6/20/05
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or 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 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.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Edson Beall

8/5/05

for
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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			Buildings
			Sites
			Structures
			Objects
1			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.)

OTHER/Fraternal Meeting House

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Fraternal Meeting House

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement: Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Stone: Granite

Walls Stone: Limestone

Roof Not Visible

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.)

- 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.
X 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 a 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture, Art

Period of Significance

1934-35

Significant Dates

1934-35

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Meginnis and Schaumberg (architects)

Olson Construction Company (contractor)

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 for additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
x Local Government
University
Other Lincoln/Lancaster County
Name of repository: Planning Department

Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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10. Geographical DataAcreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	694150	4519900	3.			
2.				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 Byname/title David A. Gaspers, Historic Preservation Intern; with E.F. Zimmer, Historic Preservation Plannerorganization Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department date April 28, 2005street & number 555 South 10th Street telephone (402) 441-7491city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508**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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title New Masonic Temple Associationstreet & number 1635 L Street telephone (402) 476-3453city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68508

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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Section 7 Page 1

The Masonic Temple in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska is a 3-story, Silverdale limestone meeting hall built in 1934-35 by the well-known Lincoln architectural firm of Meginnis and Schaumberg and contractor Charles Olson. The building is built for just under \$125,000 in a restrained version of the Art Deco style. Besides the installation of new windows, which have minimal impact on the overall appearance, the building has the same physical attributes today as when it was completed and retains especially significant interior features.

The Masonic Temple in Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska is a 3-story, Silverdale limestone meeting hall built in 1934-35 by the well-known Lincoln architectural firm of Meginnis and Schaumberg. The building is built in a restrained version of the Art Deco style. The Kansas limestone offers a pale peach-yellow tone to the 78 by 112 foot structure in contrast its lush, green front lawns. The building is situated behind two mature oak trees on the prominent southwest corner of 17th and L Streets. The temple has a granite water table as its base. The first exterior level of limestone facade is distinguished from the bare second with a banded rustication of the limestone and is punctured with a row of simple recessed windows. This style is similar to the most prominent art deco building in Lincoln, the Nebraska State Capital (NL), which was finished just 3 years before the Masonic Temple. This banded rustication with bare limestone above was replicated again by the architects in their 1936 remodel of the Little Building (LC13C9-048) at 11th and O Streets. The windows have been modified from the original windows of 1935, as the new windows are fully glazed single lites instead of the common divided lite glazing of the era. This modification has minimal impact on the overall appearance of the building because the windows are deeply recessed. Separating the first and second floors of the building is a decorative, carved stone band predominantly displaying the Masonic star in repetition around the three finished facades of the building. The North facing facade of the building is dominated by the front entrance, centered between the row of first floor recessed windows and crowned by a classical pediment that contains the radiating eye of the Masons. Three low steps rise from the sidewalk to three heavy wood doors, which are framed by a stone casing adorned by the Masonic star and a transom of etched glass panels. Above the entrance and just below the pediment is a carving from a sketch by artist Elizabeth Dolan. The carving is representative of the Masonic order's work, in three figures suggesting youth, manhood, and old age. At top of the facade, the Masonic compass is placed in repetition around the three finished facades of the building.

The main entrance accesses a small vestibule that leads to the main corridor. A mural, entitled "The High Hills and Low Vales" again by Elizabeth Dolan, depicts the early meeting places of the Masons. The floors are terrazzo and the walls are wainscoted with Montana produced travertine marble with textured plaster above. The appearance and condition of the hallway displays a high degree of integrity from when the Temple opened in 1935. The vaulted ceiling is marked with arches and capitals, completing an dignified passageway to the most important rooms in the Temple. The lounge which now acts as the library, is east of the central entrance and is decorated in English oak paneling. It is rich and dark toned as is most of the woodwork in the Temple.

On the south side of the main floor is the dining room, 80 feet by 47 feet, with a capacity of 400 people. The room has a colored ceiling of geometric reds and blues placed between broad cross beams in the Art Deco style. These stenciled geometric patterns have been used to decorate a ceiling that would otherwise be very bare and structural.

A discrete elevator has been added to access the second floor meeting rooms. The staircase leads to the large, second floor lobby, which maintains the travertine marble and textured plaster of the first floor corridor. On opposite sides of this hallway lie the service and preparation rooms for lodge meetings. These include dressing rooms, a coat check room and telephone room.

To the east of the second floor lobby is the small lodge room. This 27 by 52 foot, Doric influenced room is dominated by the nine murals done by Elizabeth Dolan. Dolan's work can also be seen at Morrill Hall at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the library at the State Capitol and the Lincoln YWCA. Dolan's work is characterized by her almost sketch-like style of painting. The north wall has five murals, beginning in the west corner with Jacob's Dream, followed by St. John the Evangelist writing the Revelations, Moses and the Burning Bush, The Sepulcher, and St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness. The south wall continues with Sir Galahad searching for the Holy Grail, King Solomon with King Hiram of Tyre, Jeremiah the Prophet and the Wicked King Hezekiah and then

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Masonic Temple

Name of Property

Lancaster County, Nebraska

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Section 7 Page 2

returning to Sir Galahad when he finds the Holy Grail. Dolan brings her murals to life with subtle use of darker hues in contrast to soft yellow and peach tones. The murals work together to create the central theme. These nine paintings are well-crafted interpretations of the symbols of Masonry. The murals themselves are recessed into light beige masonry walls in between pilasters that lead to a sculptured wreath above. The wreath is detailed with Masonic symbolism including the bee hive, the hour glass, the star and other attributes. Indirect lighting floods the ceiling above from behind the wreath, giving the room a grand and luminous effect. The floor is covered with a plush green carpet, there is dark woodwork, and red leather benches surround the room's outer edges.

To the west of the lobby and preceding the entrance to the large lodge room is the upstairs lounge, measuring 24 feet by 26 feet. The lounge has high, white, beamed ceilings that add to the chocolate brown walls and narrow, square mahogany paneled wainscoting. The large lodge room occupies most of the south portion of the second floor. The entrance is framed by two ornate wood columns, capped with globes that represent the celestial and terrestrial spheres. The room, measuring an imposing 71 feet by 47 feet, is enclosed by soaring, elaborate Roman Ionic columns. The columns, colored in a light green hue, break up the stone textured exterior walls that lead to the high coffered ceiling of this grand room. The space created is filled with excellent mahogany woodwork, including the tables, benches and other furnishings brought from the previous Temple. Overall, the Masonic Temple retains a high degree of integrity of significant exterior and interior features.

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Masonic Temple

Name of Property

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Section 8 Page 1

The Masonic Temple is locally significant in the area of architecture as one of Lincoln's most complete Art Deco style buildings constructed by a local master builder. The Temple stands out in its restrained but total commitment to the style best illustrated by its cubic massing and geometric ornamentation. The decor of the Temple is also locally significant on the basis of the high artistic value of the murals by the local Nebraska artist Elizabeth Dolan.

An example of Art Deco in Lincoln

The Masonic Temple was built in 1934-35, for approximately \$125,000 as a modern, Art Deco style building to hold the meetings of the three local Lincoln lodges of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and the York Rite Masons. The architects of the Masonic Temple were Meginnis (Harry) and Schaumberg, (Edw. G) a prominent local firm, who also designed the Art Deco remodel of the Little Building (LC13-C9-048, NRHP 1988) in 1936, as well as the Federal Trust Building (LC13-C08-007, NRHP 2001-2) and the Y.W.C.A. (LC13-D08-018, NRHP 1984). Meginnis and Schaumberg worked in Lincoln as partners from 1926 to 1942.

Lincoln has a mere handful of Art Deco style buildings, which are generally of small scale and modest decoration. The two-story Union Bus Depot (300 S. 13th, ca. 1930, Davis and Wilson), with chevron decorated spandrels; and the one story Skelly Gas Station and Safeway Grocery Store (2600 and 2620 "O" Street, 1936 and 1937, Jesse B. Miller), with narrow, carved limestone friezes and decorated marquees, are characteristic of the scale and ornamentation found locally. The three-story Phi Delta Theta Fraternity House (1545 "R" Street, 1937, M.I. Aitken) was listed on the NRHP in 1986 for its local architectural significance. That limestone-clad building is most noteworthy for its cubic massing and curved, glass block corner. The two-story Christian Record Building (3705 S 48th St, F3-113, Felix A. Lorenz) was listed in 1986 primarily for social/humanitarian significance, although it also has local architectural significance as the Art Deco work of a builder/designer. The only other tall office building besides the before mentioned Little Building with Art Deco elements is the Stuart Building (NRHP 2003, 13th and "P", C9-3, 1927, Davis and Wilson), which combines stepped massing and fluted spandrels with considerable Gothic style trim.

The cubic massing and geometric decor of the exterior of the Temple is the best illustration of the of the building's Art Deco style architecture. The construction date of 1934-35 is significant as a midpoint of the style's popularity in Lincoln and a indicator of the architectural influence on the city by the recently completed State Capitol. The Temple stands at the southwest corner of 17th and L Streets as a perfect 78 foot by 112 foot rectangle block of Kansas limestone. Recessed windows puncture the banded rustication of limestone on the first floor as the second and third floors are presented as one large mass with geometric friezes on the top and bottom. The geometric friezes contain Masonic symbology, an unusual interpretation of a common Art Deco design feature. The frieze separating the first floor from the rest of the building is a simple banding predominantly displaying the Masonic star in repetition around the three finished facades of the building. At the crown of the flat roofed building is the Masonic compass, placed in repetition as a frieze around the three finished facades. Another illustration of the temple's Art Deco style is the front entrance of the building itself. Crowned by a classical Greek pediment that contains the radiating eye of the Masons, the entry is centered between the row of first floor recessed windows and dominates the north facade. Below the pediment is a bas relief representing the Masonic Order's work that is based on a sketch by Elizabeth Dolan. This geometric massing and decor is similar to the Nebraska State Capital, a Art Deco masterpiece by Bertram Goodhue, completed only three years before and just a few blocks to the south and west of the Temple.

A master muralist on display

Elizabeth Honor Dolan (1884?-1948) is best known for the background murals in Elephant Hall at the University of Nebraska's Morrill Hall. Primarily a commercial artist, Dolan also executed murals in Lincoln's Masonic Temple, State Capitol, Y.W.C.A. and Bennett Martin public library. Well trained in the academic tradition, Dolan was more successful receiving commissions as a decorative illustrator and muralist rather than a conventional artist.

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Masonic Temple

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Section 8 Page 2

A native of Fort Dodge, Iowa, Dolan moved as a child with her mother and sister to Tecumseh, Nebraska, and later to Lincoln. She attended the University of Nebraska in 1903-04, studying under Sarah Hayden. Dolan later attended the Chicago Art Institute, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and institutions in Italy. She lived in New York during the late 1910's and early '20s, and seems to have divided her time between New York and Nebraska throughout the 1930s. Later she returned to Lincoln, where she died in 1948.

Previous to her commission for the Temple, Miss Dolan completed a mural in the Law Library of the Nebraska State Capitol. Her collaboration with the Temple is a continuation of a marriage of her muralist artwork with the most popular style of monumental architecture of the era. Although not readily accessible to the public, Dolan's murals for the Masonic Temple combine individual paintings into a single coherent decorative scheme. The panels line the two long walls of the temple's small meeting room. Her paintings incorporate Biblical subjects with those drawn from the Knights of the Round Table. Each panel depicts several large figures set against a vague background, and include Solomon, John the Baptist and Sir Galahad. Another example of the Temple's Art Deco style is the bas relief sculpture based on a sketch of Miss Dolan's, which is above the main entrance of the Temple.

Unfortunately for the city of Lincoln, some of Dolan's murals have been lost or painted over. A 1930s work at the University Club on the top floor of the Stuart Building disappeared in a remodeling, and a mural done in 1930 at the Unitarian Church was lost when the church moved locations. Even one of her works at Elephant Hall was covered up, although not destroyed.

The Masonic Temple in Lincoln is a dignified example of the union of art and architecture, more dramatically displayed by the nearby State Capitol, with an exceptional degree of integrity.

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Continuation Sheet**

Masonic Temple

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property is legally described as Original Plat Block 94 Lots 1, 2 and 3, in Lincoln, Lancaster County, NE.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries include all the property historically associated with the Masonic Temple.

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Section Photos Page 1

The following information applies to all photographs:

Masonic Temple

Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska

All photos by E. Zimmer, March 2005

All negatives at Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department, Lincoln, Nebraska

Photo 1 of 12

View from the northeast of the Masonic Temple, showing the principal, north façade (right) and the east façade (left)

Photo 2 of 12

View from the northwest of the entrance on the principal (north) façade of the Masonic Temple

Photo 3 of 12

Interior view on the main floor of the Masonic Temple, looking south from the main corridor at the mural entitled "The High Hills and Low Vales"

Photo 4 of 12

Interior view into the library, looking northeast

Photo 5 of 12

Interior view into the main corridor from the library, looking southwest

Photo 6 of 12

Interior view into the dining room, looking northeast

Photo 7 of 12

Interior view on the second floor of the Masonic Temple, into the large lodge room, looking east

Photo 8 of 12

Interior view of the large lodge room, looking west

Photo 9 of 12

Interior view into the small lodge room, looking northeast

Photo 10 of 12

Interior view of the small lodge room, looking west

Photo 11 of 12

Interior detail of murals in the small lodge room, looking north

Photo 12 of 12

Interior detail of murals in the small lodge room, looking south