

DATA SHEET

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Wisconsin
COUNTY:	Waukesha
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAR 27 1975

1. NAME

COMMON: Old Waukesha County Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 101 West Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Waukesha CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Ninth

STATE: Wisconsin 53186 CODE: 55 COUNTY: Waukesha CODE: 133

3. CLASSIFICATION

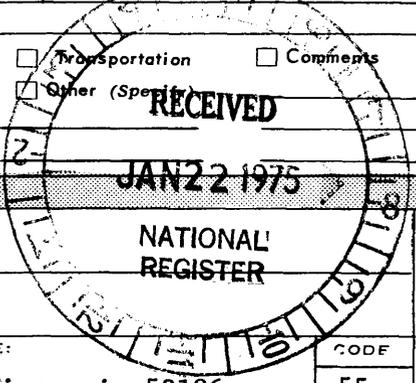
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: County of Waukesha

STREET AND NUMBER: 515 West Moreland Boulevard

CITY OR TOWN: Waukesha STATE: Wisconsin 53186 CODE: 55



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Waukesha County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER: 515 West Moreland Boulevard

CITY OR TOWN: Waukesha STATE: Wisconsin 53186 CODE: 55

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Buildings and Sites

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: State Historical Society of Wisconsin

STREET AND NUMBER: 816 State Street

CITY OR TOWN: Madison STATE: Wisconsin 53706 CODE: 55

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

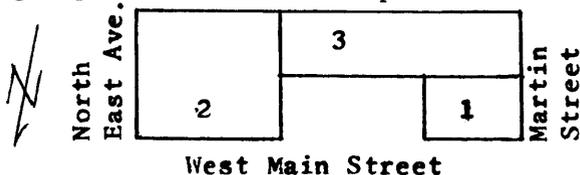
STATE: Wisconsin
COUNTY: Waukesha
ENTRY NUMBER: MAR 27 1975
DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former Waukesha County Courthouse occupies the south side of West Main Street from North East Avenue to Martin Street in downtown Waukesha. The building comprises three distinct sections, differing in style and construction dates, but all having walls of cream-colored, rock-faced local limestone and all essentially three stories in height. As seen from the north, the building's plan takes this shape:



The oldest section (1), the west wing, is dated 1885 and served originally as the county jail. It is a simple, attractive, rectangular building, with rectangular window openings and steeply pitched hipped and gabled roofs. The interior has been remodelled (it was converted from jail to offices during the late 1930's), but the exterior remains much as it was 90 years ago. At present this wing is unoccupied and is in need of repair inside and out.

The east wing (2) was the courthouse proper and was erected in 1893-94 in accordance with plans furnished by Milwaukee architects Charles H. Rau and Robert G. Kirsch. An imposing Richardsonian Romanesque edifice, the building is rectangular, with round-arched and rectangular openings, hipped roof, round towers at the corners of the facade (north elevation), and a lofty, two-stage tower centered above the north entrance. The building continued in use as the county courthouse until completion of the present courthouse on West Moreland Boulevard in 1959. Over the years the exterior has undergone only minor alterations. Interiors on all floors have been altered to accommodate changing occupancies, but on the second and third stories one finds substantial portions of the original woodwork. The first floor now houses exhibit areas and offices of the Waukesha County Historical Museum. On the second story are offices of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and U.S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, while additional SEWRPC offices occupy the third floor. Solidly constructed and well maintained, the east wing survives in very good condition.

Connecting the two 19th century buildings, the south wing (3) was erected in 1938-39 to house various county offices, the municipal court, and a new jail. Today, this wing contains offices and research facilities of the Waukesha County Historical Museum, together with SEWRPC offices and the headquarters of the Soil Conservation Service.

On the northeast corner of the property, directly in front of the east wing, is all that remains of a large turtle effigy mound which once measured almost 290 feet in length. A county historical society marker describes the original mound and first courthouse (1849).

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

*Ed
W. Smith*

5. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1885; 1893-94; 1938-39**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Location, size, and function, as well as the striking appearance of the section built in 1893-94, have made the former Waukesha County Courthouse the principal landmark of downtown Waukesha. A handsome country cousin of H.H. Richardson's renowned Allegheny County Courthouse, the east wing is Waukesha County's foremost example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style. And though less impressive, the west wing, erected in 1885, is also of interest architecturally, for its simple, straightforward design.

As indicated, the present occupants are various federal, regional, and local governmental agencies and institutions, including the Waukesha County Historical Museum. Among the museum's holdings, the doll collection and the research collection are said to be particularly noteworthy.

The building stands on a site once occupied largely by a huge turtle effigy, the work of aboriginals of Wisconsin's Effigy Mound Culture. Unfortunately, excavation for the first Waukesha County Courthouse, dedicated in 1849 and demolished in the 1890's, destroyed most of the mound, but a recognizable portion remains. Both the mound and the original courthouse are cited in the text of a county historical society marker near the northeast corner of the property. A sketch of the turtle effigy appears in Plate XIX of Lapham's Antiquities of Wisconsin, and Charles F. Brown states in The Wisconsin Archeologist that "This turtle effigy had the distinction of being the first effigy mound to be described from Wisconsin, Dr. Lapham having printed a description of it in the Milwaukee Advertiser, in 1836." The remnant seen today is apparently a proximal portion of the tail, if one may judge accurately from Lapham's original sketch.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brown, Charles E. "Waukesha County; Southern Townships," Wisconsin Archeologist (n.s.), 2(2):74 (1923)
 Brown, Elizabeth Gaspar, "Two Courthouses on Main Street, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, 1846-1959," 15 American Journal of Legal History, 1971, 3-37.
 Lapham, I.A., The Antiquities of Wisconsin, Wash., D.C. (1855), Plate XIX.
 Loerke, Jean Penn, Early Waukesha, Waukesha, 1973, 5.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

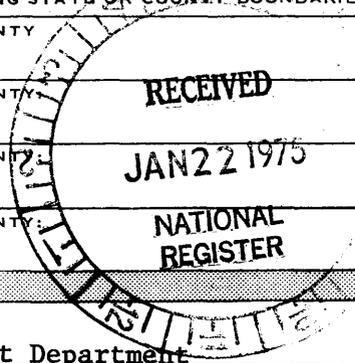
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

U.T.M. Zone 16
 400,000 E.
 4,762,710 N.

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.5

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS
 OK
 CD
 ATM

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mary Ellen Young, Associate Professor, Art Department

ORGANIZATION: University of Wisconsin Center-Waukesha County DATE: 1 January 1975

STREET AND NUMBER:
1500 University Drive

CITY OR TOWN: Waukesha STATE: Wisconsin 53186 CODE: 55

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name James Morton Smith
 James Morton Smith
 Title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin
 Date Jan. 15, 1975

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Albert W. Winters
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 3/27/75

ATTEST:
W. J. Smith
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 3-26-75

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Wisconsin	
COUNTY Waukesha	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 688 2 7	DATE 1975

(Number all entries)

OLD WAUKESHA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

11. Donald N. Anderson, Asst. Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

January 7, 1975

816 State Street

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

Code: 55

