

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 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 Ada Public Library
other names/site number Ada Arts and Heritage Center

2. Location

street & number 400 S. Rennie N/A not for publication
city, town Ada N/A vicinity
state Oklahoma code OK county Pontotoc code 123 zip code 74820

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> 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. See continuation sheet.

Paul Galay Signature of certifying official October 2, 1989 Date

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 _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Almond Byrum Signature of the Keeper 11/13/89 Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education-library

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture-museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls brick

roof ceramic tileother metal-tower roofstone-entry porch

Describe present and historic physical appearance.Summary

The Ada Public Library (now known as the Ada Arts and Heritage Center) is a two-story, red brick building located at 400 S. Rennie. The setting is both commercial and residential, as it was in 1938-1939 when the building was constructed. The building's plan is that of a box with projecting wings, or Y-shape; the structure is self-contained and horizontal in volume. The facade is symmetrical. In appearance and feeling, both interior and exterior, it reflects Colonial Revival (from both Georgian and Adam models) style reminiscent of the style found in Colonial Williamsburg. Colonial Revival elements include side-gabled roof(s), paired exterior gable-wall chimneys, portico and roof balustrades, elliptical fanlight over entry, and multiple-light, double-hung windows. Elements of Adam-style ornamentation include Palladian windows, flat keystone lintels, and imposing entrance portico. The building's most prominent features are the entrance portico and imposing tower with cupola. This close copy of Georgian/Adam also features a ceramic flat-tile roof and copper-clad tower and cupola roofs. The building exhibits fine workmanship and careful attention to stylistic detail by architect Albert S. Ross. The only alterations made to the original were accomplished in 1982, when badly deteriorated wooden window frames and sashes were replaced with aluminum; the new windows are close approximations of the originals. The building maintains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and feeling.

Description

Located in downtown Ada, Oklahoma, the Ada Public Library building is a Y-shaped, red brick structure of Colonial Revival design. Its overall dimensions are 74 feet (east to west) and 108 feet (north to south). Designed to utilize a corner lot, the symmetrical building is enhanced by an inviting entrance which faces northwest. The rounded portico has two Corinthian columns on either side and is covered by canopy, balustrade, and tower. The entrance consists in two single-transom doors. Above the balustrade is a double-hung window, and above that, a round window. On top of the tower is a mansard copper roof and an octagonal louvred cupola with domical roof. Behind the tower is a balustrade, which outlines a flat roof. Each wing is covered

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1

by a gabled roof and contains Palladian windows and an exterior end-wall chimney. The exterior walls of this Williamsburg-style building are 12-inch brickwork with cut stone trim. Six brick quoins at each corner of the building are two feet wide and project one-half inch.

The building's interior also retains its integrity of design and materials. Inside, there is a small diagonally-shaped vestibule with marble wainscoting, leading into a rotunda. There, the floors and ceiling are reinforced concrete construction, and there are eight interior loadbearing piers. Surrounded by four delicate Corinthian columns and high, graceful arches, this portion of the building features a terrazo floor which contains a star-shaped design. The arches are decorated with keystones and dentils. Over the foyer there is a metal lathe and plaster suspended ceiling. Behind the foyer is the stacks room, a rectangular area with flat ceiling. To the left and right of the foyer are the north and south wings, which originally served as the Children's and Adults' Reading Rooms, respectively. Each of these rooms contains its original marble and brick wood-burning fireplace, and on either side of each wing are Palladian windows, framed by wide oak trim. To the right of the stacks room is a door leading into an office, behind which is a workroom, now used as a kitchen. To the left of the stacks room is a glassed-in area used originally as the reference room. The building also contains a second story, which consists in one large lecture room and a half-bath. A basement consists in three storage rooms, a boiler room, and a half-bath.

In 1980 the library books were removed, and in 1982 restoration began on the old building. The workroom at the back southeast corner of the building was converted into a kitchen, and the booklift, condemned as a fire hazard, was removed. The windows had deteriorated, and because it proved impossible to restore them, the original wooden frames and sashes were replaced with aluminum members of the same design. Some of the original glass panes from the old windows were placed into the new ones. This alteration does not compromise the building's integrity.

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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1938-1939

Significant Dates

April 24, 1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ross, Albert S. - architect

Chapman Construction Co. - builder

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

Summary

The Ada Public Library building (now known as the Ada Arts and Heritage Center) is architecturally significant because its Y-shaped plan is unique in Oklahoma and because its designer, Albert S. Ross, is one of Oklahoma's foremost architects. Constructed in 1938-1939, the Ada building is generally considered to be Ross's finest achievement. The building is virtually pristine, retaining almost one hundred percent of its original materials and also retaining its integrity of workmanship, design, feeling, and association.

Historic Context

In the late 1930s several Ada women borrowed books from various townspeople and opened a children's library on the second floor of City Hall. After taking turns keeping the library open for a year, they persuaded the City Council to call a bond issue election to build a new building. A library board was appointed; these people worked during 1936 and 1937 with Albert Ross, a local architect, on a design that would sell itself to the public. After deciding on a plan and securing a federal PWA grant for \$29,250, the City Council held a bond issue for \$35,750. Construction began in the autumn of 1938.

On April 24, 1939, the Ada Public Library was opened. The local newspaper had carried articles about the building daily for the previous week, and Ada citizens had become enamored with the structure. Over 1,500 people attended the dedication ceremony at the First Presbyterian Church nearby and then walked over to tour the building for the first time.

Architectural Significance

This building is the only one of its kind in Oklahoma. Its unique Y-shaped plan was functional for two reasons: it afforded an unusual architectural treatment for a corner lot, and it enabled one person, the librarian, to stand at the circulation desk in

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Ada Evening News, 20 July 1938, 17 August 1938, 7 October 1938.
Ada Evening News, 16 April - 24 April 1939, 17 May 1959, 12 March 1978.
"An Unusual Architectural Treatment For a Corner Lot." The Pioneer 9
(November-December 1945): 2.
Ross, Albert, Interview by Linda Stephenson, 27 March 1986. Notes in
possession of interviewer.

N/A 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one (1) acre

UTM References

A 14 7112640 3849920
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The North 100 feet of Lots 7 & 8, Block 21, Ada Original Townsite, Ada, Pontotoc, Oklahoma

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Legally recorded boundary lines, County Clerk's office, Pontotoc County Court House, Ada, Oklahoma, 74820

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynda Stephenson, Assistant Professor
 organization East Central University date May 5, 1989
 street & number _____ telephone (405) 332-8000
 city or town Ada state OK zip code 74820

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the rotunda and remain in control of every section of the building, including the open second story.

Albert Ross, the architect, was clearly one of the most important and influential architects in southeastern Oklahoma. During his career he designed ninety-two (92) public, commercial, education, and private buildings in Ada. This includes eighteen (18) buildings on the campus of East Central University. In all, Mr. Ross has designed a total of 532 buildings in southeastern Oklahoma, including twelve (12) on the Southeastern University campus in Durant, Oklahoma. In 1957, Mr. Ross was the third person in Oklahoma to become a Fellow of the American Institute of Architecture.

The old Ada Public Library building is said to be Ross's finest achievement. Beautifully balanced in its setting, the building's exterior expresses charm and graciousness, while the wings extending to the sides of the lot give the impression of "open arms extended to welcome visitors" and to drawn them into the classical symmetry of the entrance [The Pioneer 9 (November-December 1945): 2].