

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

DATA SHEET
FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 5 1976
DATE ENTERED OCT 8 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Oklahoma State Capitol
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

22nd Street and Lincoln Boulevard

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 5

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Oklahoma

40

Oklahoma

100

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

COMMERCIAL

PARK

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The State of Oklahoma

STREET & NUMBER

State Capitol

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

Oklahoma County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

STATE

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Special State Capitol Survey

DATE

1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma Historical Society

STATE

CITY, TOWN

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT

☐ GOOD

☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED

☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED

DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oklahoma's domeless Capitol was started in 1914. Its cornerstone, of Tishomingo granite, was laid, fittingly enough, on Statehood Day - Nov. 16, 1915. It was completed in 1917. The massive structure is six stories high, with its full basement. However, it has only five "working" floors, as the legislative chambers and the unfinished dome are two stories high.

The Capitol is in the form of a cross with projecting central pedimented pavilions at the front and rear. A low central tower, over the crossing, is the base of the dome that was included in the original design, but never built for reasons of economy. The east-west section is 434 feet in length, 136 feet in width. The north-south section is 304 feet long, 88 feet wide. At the time it was built it was said to be the largest reinforced concrete building in the world.

Exterior of the building is of Georgia granite to the second-floor level; the superstructure is of Indiana limestone. Entrances were originally provided on all four sides of the building, with the main entrance on the south (and a grand staircase extending to the fourth floor). The west entrance, however, has long since been closed to permit use of the west corridor for offices and to provide access to the basement for service vehicles. The north and south facades have Corinthian porticoes; the east and west have Corinthian pilasters.

The Capitol's interior is decorated with classic features in harmony with the exterior. Lobby floors, stairs, and balustrades are of light-colored marble. Columns, pilasters, painted beams, lunettes, and Italian elliptical vaulted ceilings adorn the various offices. The second and fourth floors are the most elaborate in the building.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☒ ECONOMICS (oil!)	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☒ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1914 to present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT S. A. Layton

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Most state Capitols boast an impressive dome atop a determinedly classic superstructure. Oklahoma's Capitol is different. It is traditionally classic in design. But its dome is underground ... and filled with oil. The appeal, if not visual, is at least fiscal.

The long, oil-bearing Nemaha Ridge - of which the Capitol "dome" or reservoir is a part - stretches from southeastern Nebraska across Kansas into Oklahoma. The southern end of this vast oil trap lies about 6,500 feet below the Capitol itself. The dome was first tapped Dec. 4, 1928, when the ITIO Oklahoma City No. 1 blew in some six miles to the south. Drilling spread steadily north and westward toward Oklahoma City until by 1930 the forest of derricks had reached the city limits. By 1936 oil wells had crept west to within blocks of the downtown business district, north to the Capitol grounds. And when the Oklahoma City council finally refused to enlarge the drilling zone still farther so as to include the state-owned land around the Capitol, Governor E. W. Marland, himself a successful oilman, went into action. He put the area under martial law and issued drilling permits in defiance of the city government. Twenty-four wells went down immediately, some within a few yards of the Capitol and of the governor's mansion. Many of these are still producing. And few pictures of Oklahoma are more familiar, particularly to envious out-of-staters, than that of its domeless Capitol, one or more oil wells in the foreground busily pumping black oil into state coffers.

The Francis No. 1 is Oklahoma's "glamour" well. Painted white, blue, and gold, it stands north of the Capitol, across 23rd Street. It was completed in September 1936 and has produced more than 1,300,000 barrels of oil. In the Capitol rotunda is a display containing a model of the Capitol Site No. 1. The actual well is situated on the south plaza, near the Capitol's main entrance, and draws oil from a level 6,618 feet directly beneath the building. Demonstrating this "whipstock" or directional drilling technique, the 1,200-pound model is a popular feature of guided tours of the Capitol.

* * *

Oklahoma City was caught by surprise with the sudden removal of the state capital from Guthrie in 1910. (The city won the referendum authorizing the removal, but the move of the government itself had not been expected until 1913.) Final selection of a site had to be made first. This was resolved when two city leaders - William Fremont Harn and John James Culbertson - each gave adjacent 40-acre sites on the city's northeast side. And, when each understandably pushed for actual location of the

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

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Oklahoma State Capitol

Capitol on his donated parcel, Judge Edgar S. Vaught is said to have fathered the Solomonic decision to center the Capitol-to-be on Lincoln Boulevard, the half-mile line of Section 27, thereby sharing the honor!

Work on the Capitol began in 1914. The cornerstone was laid Nov. 16, 1915. The building was officially completed on June 30, 1917. For nearly 60 years it has watched over virtually every phase of the growth and development of the state - the passage of its laws, the administration of its justice, the inauguration of its governors (and impeachment of two of them), the burial (or at least lying-in-state) of its famous sons (like Wiley Post) ... all the routine comings-and-goings of state government. The governor's office and reception room are on the second floor, as are courtrooms and offices. On the top floor are the two chambers of the state legislature. Features of the rotunda include heroic portraits of four of the state's best known men: Sequoyah, Will Rogers, Jim Thorpe, and Robert S. Kerr, all by Oklahoma artist Charles Banks Wilson. Currently being readied for placement by the same artist are four giant murals portraying the history and development of the state.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hurst, Irvin, "It Happened Like This," The Sunday Oklahoman, June 9, 1957
Montgomery, Ed, "Moods of Our Capitol," Oklahoma's Orbit, Nov. 16, 1969
Ruth, Kent, et al., Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State, University of
Oklahoma Press, 1957, pp. 179-193

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10 acres approximately 5 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 035779 3928460
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

36 - per. nite
from Kent RRL
11/76

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

February 1976

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ☒

STATE ☐

LOCAL ☐

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

SHPO

DATE APR 2 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Attn:

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/8/96

DATE

9/29/76



Oklahoma State Capitol

NE/4 OKLAHOMA CITY 15' QUADRANGLE

(SPENCER)
655 III SW

