

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 Casa Blanca  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 103 West Boyd  not for publication  
city, town Norman  vicinity  
state Oklahoma code OK county Cleveland code 027 zip code 73069

### 3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing: NA  
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.

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_ Date 1-12-90  
Signature of certifying official

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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/education-related housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STUCCO

roof TERRA COTTA

other WOOD

CERAMIC TILE

### Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Casa Blanca is a two story Mission Revival building located directly across from the University of Oklahoma campus. It occupies the northwest corner of the intersection of Boyd Street and Jenkins Avenue near the School of Engineering, the University's new Energy Center, and a commercial shopping strip. The building anchors one end of the Campus Corner commercial district, which is predominantly Mission Revival. This is a neighborhood commercial district which separates the University of Oklahoma main campus and a residential neighborhood to the north.

The building site is 140 feet by 100 feet. From the intersection, the site extends to an alley on the west, and a service drive to the north provides access to the rear of the building.

The main entrance faces the intersection of Jenkins and Boyd to the southeast. The wing of the building which runs east and west is set back twelve feet from Jenkins Avenue. The other wing of the building, which runs north and south, is set back from Boyd street thirty-two feet. Concrete walks along either wing intersect at a curvilinear concrete porch which provides access to the main entrance. The concrete porch has a brick edging. A raised bed bordered by a brick retaining wall fills in the corner of the site from the concrete porch to the sidewalks along Jenkins Avenue and Boyd Street. In the past, this area was augmented by a planting of shrubs and a stand of mature trees along the Boyd Street exposure which deteriorated during years of neglect. The rehabilitation included replanting this area with trees, shrubs and perennials. (Photos #1 and #2)

The building has a hipped terra cotta tile roof which intersects behind a curvilinear parapet to define the entry. The exterior walls are stucco. Windows and doors on major elevations are arched and windows are in groups of two and three. Materials and workmanship are of high quality and typical of Mission Revival buildings. A certified rehabilitation has recently been completed on Casa Blanca. The building retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

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EXTERIOR

Casa Blanca is designed predominantly in the Mission Revival style, however, it has decorative details such as the exterior wood trim at the fenestration which is more indicative of the Spanish Colonial Revival. The building is composed of two equal perpendicular wings connected by a central front and rear entry and circulation area turned at a 45 degree angle relative to the two wings. (Photo #1)

The exterior bearing walls are hollow terra cotta tile masonry with a smooth stucco finish. The two wings have low pitched hipped terra cotta Spanish tile roofs which intersect behind the parapet above the main entry. The exterior stucco is painted a buff color. The spiral and fluted wood trim between the window panels and the window trim are painted blue. Square tiles turned at a forty-five degree angle which punctuate the springpoints in the arch pattern of the windows are terra cotta.

The southeast elevation is balanced and symmetrical. It features a prominent curvilinear parapet, reminiscent of a mission bell tower, pierced by an arched cutout centered above the main entry, an arched front doorway flanked by arched casement windows and sheltered by a second floor balcony, and double and triple arched casement windows shallowly recessed into the walls and symmetrically placed on either side of the main entry. The original iron light fixtures flank the main entry.

The south elevation features three triple arched casement windows on the lower level and three double arched casement windows on the upper level. Each grouping is placed within a shallow arched recess. The upper windows are carefully placed in relation to the lower windows; rather than centering one bay above another, the two upper bays on either end are lined up over the inner edges of the two lower bays on either end. This serves to triangulate the overall elevation pattern which anchors the building and enhances the sense of perspective from the street. (Photo #2)

The east elevation exhibits a more random pattern indicative of the interior functions. Arched single casement windows demarcate the ascension of an interior stair. Arched double casement windows are located upstairs in corner rooms and an arched door leads to the kitchen. (Photo #1)

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The north and west elevations are similar. Both are punctuated with tile capped exterior chimneys. Both also feature double casement windows on the upper level arranged above single casement windows on the lower level. A simplified curvilinear parapet has been added to the north elevation to house an elevator added in 1988.

The northwest elevation focuses on the back entry porch and the sleeping porch above. The entry porch has flattened elliptical arches on three sides. A contemporary railing of a compatible design and a ramp for handicapped access were installed in 1988. The sleeping porch above has square window openings which were filled in with square multilight windows at the same time. (Photo #3)

## INTERIOR

The first floor is composed of a main central entry with two perpendicular wings. It features an original decorative fireplace, a massive oak arched doorway and arched oak casement windows. (Photo #4)

The original decorative brick and tile fireplace is located in a large room on the west side of the building. The brickwork is executed in a geometric, southwestern motif and the flue is delineated by corbeled brickwork above the mantle. The fireplace is painted.

Major interior openings are arched. A sitting room to the right as you enter the building is framed by a massive flattened oak arch filled in by paired doors with twelve lights which are flanked by fixed panels with nineteen lights. The arched opening to the left of the entry has the same profile but is executed in plaster. Arched oak doors and sidelights of a contemporary design were added to this opening in 1988. (Photo #5)

The oak casement windows throughout the building were refinished or replicated in 1988. Natural finishes were preserved and painted finishes were applied over previously painted surfaces.

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The first floor has a large central hall with an oak stairway which features massive turned newel posts and turned balusters. The stair has three turns accented by three double arched windows along the second set of risers. The windows are long and narrow with spiral wood trim which divides the two window panels from the top of the sill to the bottom of the springpoint of the arches. Each window is set into a shallowly recessed arched opening.

The organization of the second floor is similar to that of the first floor. Architectural features on the second floor include a flattened, painted wood arch with square paneled columns and pilasters on an elevated base which leads from the upstairs landing to a sitting room and a gray ceramic tile fireplace in the sitting room situated between arched paired doors which lead to the balcony above the main entry.

## ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

A certified rehabilitation was completed on Casa Blanca in 1988. Alterations to the building exterior were a simplified curvilinear parapet to house an elevator on the north elevation, the addition of a handicapped ramp and contemporary railing on the first floor of the northwest elevation, multilight window infill on the second floor porch of the northwest elevation, and a contemporary railing and enlarged stairway and porch on the east elevation. All of these alterations were required to bring the building into compliance with safety codes, with the exception of the window infill. The window infill was decided upon on the basis of interviews with women who lived in the building between 1925 and 1928. No photographs of that elevation could be found.

Alterations to the building interior include oak and glass doors and sidelights of a contemporary design as infill in an existing plaster arch to the left of the main lobby as you enter the building. Interior partitions were relocated, however, architecturally important spaces and spatial relationships were preserved as part of the rehabilitation.

**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

1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1925  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Casa Blanca is significant because it is the best extant example of the Mission Revival style in Norman, Oklahoma.

The community of Norman, the home of the University of Oklahoma, increased its population from five thousand people in 1918<sup>1</sup> to twelve thousand people in 1925.<sup>2</sup> This increase in population is reflected in the development of property along Boyd Street, the north boundary of the University of Oklahoma. In 1918, very little of the Boyd Street frontage was developed and approximately fifty percent of the property one block north of Boyd was occupied, predominantly by small two story residences and single story outbuildings.<sup>3</sup> By 1925, a dramatic change occurred. Property values nearly doubled between 1922 and 1925 and the same area shows a proliferation of buildings along Boyd Street and adjoining side streets directly north of the university. These include large commercial buildings, residences, a motion picture theatre, a masonic lodge, boarding houses and fraternities. Very few lots were vacant or underutilized.<sup>4</sup> One of the buildings constructed during this expansion was Casa Blanca, which started out as the Alpha Chi Omega sorority house. The finishing touches were put on the building during the last week of September, 1925.<sup>5</sup>

Casa Blanca's location anchors the east end of a neighborhood commercial district now known as "Campus Corner." Sparked by the Panama-California Exposition of 1915, in the mid-nineteen-twenties "a craze for Spanish architecture swept the country."<sup>6</sup> Campus Corner was part of this craze. The most distinctive and cohesive physical attribute of Campus Corner is the predominantly Mission Revival style of many of its commercial buildings. However, throughout the years, almost all of these Mission Revival buildings were subject to remodelings which have greatly altered their character, especially at the street level; or damage from neglect and fire.

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Casa Blanca is the best example of the Mission Revival of the remaining buildings representative of this style in Norman. Casa Blanca has more of the hallmarks of this style than any of the buildings comparable to it. These include a terra cotta tile roof; tile capped chimneys; a prominent curvilinear parapet reminiscent of a bell tower; arched, recessed windows; spiral wood window trim and ceramic tile accents; a stucco exterior; and massive interior wood detailing. Casa Blanca's architectural integrity suffered surprisingly little despite years of rough use and neglect. The very good overall condition of the building prior to its rehabilitation attests to the high quality of the design and workmanship that initially went into it, and the high quality of the rehabilitation will preserve the building and make it an important part of the community of Norman again. Thus, it is a valuable architectural resource that effectively links the community's past with its future.

Notes

- 1) Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Sanborn Map Company, Inc. (November, 1918).
- 2) Ibid. (October, 1925).
- 3) Ibid. (November, 1918).
- 4) Ibid. (October, 1925).
- 5) The Oklahoma Daily (Thursday, September 17, 1925), p. 3.
- 6) Sanford, Trent Elwood. The Architecture of the Southwest (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, New York, 1950). p. 274.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Dalgliesh, Elizabeth Rhodes. The History of Alpha Chi Omega, 1885-1948. Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company, 1949.

The Oklahoma Daily, 17 September 1925.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Norman, Oklahoma, 1918, 1925. Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman.

Sanford, Trent Elwood. The Architecture of the Southwest. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1950.

See continuation sheet

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested Approved 7/28/88
- 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**

Acres of property less than one acre

**UTM References**

A 

14	6	4	2	8	8	5
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1	2	3	0	4	0	5
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property's boundary includes the West 50 feet of Lots 39 through 42, Block 3, Larsh's University Addition, Norman, Cleveland County, Oklahoma and the East 90 feet of Lots 39 through 42, Block 3, Larsh's University Addition, Norman, Cleveland County, Oklahoma.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

These are the property's boundary lines as legally recorded in the County Clerk's office, Cleveland County Court House, Norman, Oklahoma.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jocelyn Lupkin/Researcher date 8/31/89

organization Robison Boeck Architects telephone (405) 524-4544

street & number 2927 The Paseo state Oklahoma zip code 73103

city or town Oklahoma City



Casa Blanca (Alpha Chi Omega Sorority House)

