

Listed  
12/21/89

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 Koen, Henry R. Forest Service Building

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 605 West Main Street

not for publication N/A

city, town Russelville

vicinity N/A

state Arkansas

code AR

county Pope

code 115

zip code 72801

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<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 N/A

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 of certifying official  
General Services Administration

Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Catharine A. Buford  
Signature of commenting or other official  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

8-16-89  
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)

Government/Government Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government/Government Office

**Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Other:

Rustic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Sandstone

Wood

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Henry R. Koen Forest Service Office Building is a two-story structure, constructed of native stone and wood, and designed in an irregular, T-shaped plan with a single story ell projecting from the eastern elevation. It is designed in the rustic style common to public works construction projects of the Depression era.

Elaboration

The Henry R. Koen Forest Service Office Building in Russellville, Arkansas is constructed of beige native sandstone and dark stained wood (using the balloon frame method of construction) and is two stories in height with a full basement (6,574 sq. ft.). The two-story section of the building is covered by a hipped, black asphalt shingle roof and features an irregular, T-shaped plan with a single story, gable roof 'L'-shaped component terminating the eastern elevation. The entire second story of the hipped roof section overhangs the first story, the cornice of which is ornamented with decorative wood brackets. A single red brick chimney rises from the eastern hip of the main section, displays pattern brick detailing and corbelling, and is protected by a metal chimney cap. The windows throughout are wood sash, painted white.

The front or northern elevation is divided into a single bay, single-story eastern section, the central two-story, five bay section, and a projecting two-story, two bay section which terminates the western end of the elevation. The eastern, single-story section is fenestrated by a single segmented arch opening filled with a group of three eight-over-twelve wood sash windows. The central section is fenestrated with five evenly-spaced eight-over-eight sash windows on the second floor and four pair of grouped eight-over-twelve sash windows placed symmetrically around the central entrance on the first floor. The projecting section to the west is relieved only by two evenly-spaced eight-over-eight sash windows on the second floor and a single rectangular opening filled with four grouped eight-over-twelve sash windows in the first story below. The entrance is of the pair door and transom type, and is constructed of wood. A later grey poured concrete handicapped-access porch and metal rail--placed in the center but with the ramp extending to the west--finishes the elevation.

The western elevation is six bays in length, with six eight-over-twelve sash window evenly-spaced across the first floor and five eight-over-eight sash windows on the second floor spaced around a fire stair door which occupies the third bay from the south. The eastern elevation features a projecting, single-story gable to the north and a side-gable wall to the south. The gable is relieved only by a single arched opening filled with four grouped eight-over-

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twelve sash windows. The side-gable wall is fenestrated with two evenly-spaced eight-over-twelve sash windows.

The southern elevation is composed of the projecting, two bay western end of the two-story section, a seven bay central section and the projecting gable end of the single story 'L' section. The projecting western portion of the main building is virtually a mirror image of the opposite elevation, with its two eight-over-eight sash windows on the second floor and single rectangular opening below filled with four grouped eight-over-twelve sash windows. The central section is fenestrated on the second floor with six eight-over-eight sash windows spaced evenly around a central eight-over-eight-over-eight triple-hung sash window. On the first floor, six eight-over-twelve sash windows are spaced evenly around a central entrance and Classical Revival bracketed wood porch. The eastern gable end is fenestrated by a single square-headed opening on the first story which is filled with three grouped eight-over-twelve sash windows. A rectangular opening for a louvered metal vent is placed directly above in the gable peak. A single eight-over-twelve sash window in the side of the eastern projecting gable completes the elevation.

The interior features a cross-shaped hallway plan on the first floor of the central section, providing access to all seven offices and two restrooms throughout the rambling plan (a total of 6,679 sq. ft.). A stairway leads to the second floor which contains eight offices and two restrooms (a total of 4,884 sq. ft.). The interior is simple, with the only detail of note being the gracefully detailed molding framing the doors and windows.

The only alteration of note is the replacement of the original front (north) porch with the concrete handicapped-access ramp in 1979.

Also included are such original designed landscape features as concrete walks and driveways, and the flagpole and its foundation.

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Summary

The Henry R. Koen Forest Service Office Building is significant at a statewide level by virtue of its associations with the Civilian Conservation Corps, which oversaw and executed its construction, and as an outstanding urban adaptation of the rustic or 'indigenous' style typically reserved for more rural sites. As such it is eligible under Criteria A and C.

Elaboration

On March 4, 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt took the oath of office as president of the United States, having defeated Herbert Hoover in the election of the previous November; within a matter of days (March 9) the U.S. Congress was already considering the assortment of legislation which constituted Roosevelt's "New Deal." Among those bills was Roosevelt's answer to what was probably the most dramatic manifestation of the on-going Depression, the 25% national unemployment rate. A principal component of his proposed solution was the formation of what was at first called the Emergency Conservation Work (ESW) program; however, the media referred to it as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a name which the program officially adopted in 1937. In general, the CCC was a nationwide attempt to relieve the rampant unemployment through the organization of able-bodied men into work camps for the purpose of performing a variety of construction and infrastructure improvement projects which were in the public interest. However, the CCC program principally targeted the unemployed in America's large urban centers, where the congestion and standard of living was at its worst and most volatile.

Though President Roosevelt insisted that he would approve both all camp locations and work assignments, the initial organization of the CCC required a high level of interdepartmental coordination the likes of which had not been seen before. The Department of Labor initiated a nationwide recruiting program; the Army conditioned and transported the enrollees to the various camps; and the Park Service and the Forest Service operated the camps and supervised all work assignments. Furthermore, once the camps were designated the goals and objectives for the camps within each state were to be coordinated with state and local public agencies. For the purposes of effectively managing this ambitious program the nation was divided into regions or districts, with each district coming under the direction of a supervisor and staff specifically assigned thereto. The camps themselves were organized and administered based on military prototypes, but with principal emphasis placed on using military methods to organize work details of all sorts, including planning and construction, rather than on discipline or military preparedness. The 'recruits' would be brought from the larger cities into typically rural areas in which the national and regional leadership had

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determined a need for a public project of some kind.

The work and impact of the CCC spanned the entire nation and principally benefitted national and state parks and forests. However, virtually all projects were intended for and executed in rural locations for recreational use; hence it was unusual for the CCC to construct an office building in a relatively urban setting, even though it was to serve the Forest Service as a regional headquarters building. It was the efforts of Henry R. Koen, the Ozark National Forest supervisor between 1922 and 1939, which secured the success of this undertaking (the Ozark National Forest is in the northwest part of the state, just above the Arkansas River). Henry Koen, an Arkansas native, had worked for the Forest Service since 1913, when he was appointed a forest ranger in the Sylamore Ranger District in north central Arkansas. Later, during his tenure as forest supervisor he greatly expanded the administrative infrastructure of the forest: roads were constructed or improved, fire towers erected, and communications networks for better and more efficient management were installed. His recognition of the need for a centralized and coordinated system of forest management inspired his vision of a modern headquarters building.

Congressman D.D. Terry helped secure passage of the special Congressional act required to appropriate the monies required for the construction, and the relatively elaborate design (compared to the rough-hewn, unfinished aesthetic typical of most CCC construction) was provided by a Treasury Department architect. Congressman Terry was also present for the dedication ceremonies on May 2, 1939. Comments in the May issue of The Dixie Ranger, the regional Forest Service newsletter, reflected the feelings of pride in the completion of the headquarters building and the recognition of the debt owed to Henry Koen as the person most responsible for its existence:

"... one couldn't see the town for the people. The whole state of Arkansas rejoiced with Mr. Koen and considered the new building a symbol of the dedication of Mr. Koen's services to a program to rebuild and promote the ... resources of his native State."

The building housed both the administrative staff of the Ozark National Forest and the locally-assigned staff of the Civilian Conservation Corps. After the dissolution of the CCC the building continued to serve the Forest Service as well as an assortment of other government agencies. Though the building continues to serve as the headquarters for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest, its custody and maintenance have been the responsibility of the General Services Administration (formerly the Public Buildings Administration) since 1942.

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Reportedly, Henry Koen also had a hand in the design of the headquarters building. Though the architect's conception of the building included the ductwork for an air conditioning system, Koen decided against the actual installation of the equipment due to his concern that the staff would become too comfortable in the office and would thus be reluctant to get out into the field. The overall aspect of the design recalls the rustic, rough-hewn, native stone and natural wood buildings constructed throughout the nation by the CCC during this period, and yet there are several clear differences. All of the stone has been cut and shaped for easier construction and a more finished appearance, a characteristic which is most atypical for CCC designs considering that random-coursed and irregularly-shaped natural stone was the norm. The stone also appears to have been selected for chromatic homogeneity, as it is all of a consistent light brown or beige hue, a relatively restrained palette compared to the rich red or polychromatic stone typical of other Arkansas CCC stone structures. Finally, the use of brick for the chimney and finished, dimensional lumber and decorative wood brackets on the second story of the main section, combined with the relatively shallow overhang below and shallow cornice above, render the design far more restrained and stylistically traditional than any other CCC design in Arkansas. Considered within this context its design is most unusual, and may in fact be construed as merely an extension of the same design ethic which informed the rural designs: a design which appears natural to its setting. Here the architect has adapted the use of native, indigenous materials to an urban site in which a more roughly-hewn and rustic aesthetic would have been inappropriate.

The headquarters became known as the Henry R. Koen Building in April, 1979, officially honoring the former forest supervisor. Koen family members and citizens of Russellville had petitioned the Forest Service to rededicate the building. Senator Dale Dumpers helped secure the legislation necessary to name a Government building in honor of an individual, and 40 years after construction, the crowd gathered once more to pay tribute to Henry R. Koen.

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### Verbal Boundary Description

to a perpendicular line formed by the intersection with the western side of South Fargo Avenue; proceed southerly along this side of South Fargo Avenue to a perpendicular line formed by the intersection with the northern side of West Second Street; thence proceed westerly along this side of West Second Street to a perpendicular line formed by the intersection with the eastern side of South Glenwood Avenue; thence proceed northerly along this side of South Glenwood Avenue to point of beginning, containing in all less than one acre.



**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)

Conservation  
Social History  
Architecture  
Science

Period of Significance

1939-1941

Significant Dates

1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Koen, Henry R.

Architect/Builder

Treasury Department/Civilian  
Conservation Corps

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

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bass, Sharon M.W., For the Trees, (U.S. Forest Service, 1981).

Burggraf, Frank and Karen Rollet, Marmade Elements in Natural Settings: The CCC in Arkansas. (1989).

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

City of Russellville

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one

**UTM References**

A 

1	5
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4	8	7	3	8	0
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3	9	0	3	7	6	0
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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**

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the eastern side of South Glenwood Avenue with the southern side of West Main Street, proceed easterly along West Main

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary contains all the property historically associated with this resource.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Howard Cappel, RHPO date \_\_\_\_\_  
 organization USA, 7PL telephone (817) 334-2531  
 street & number 819 Taylor Street city or town Fort Worth state TX zip code 76102

OLAF S. NELSON

GENERAL BUILDING CONTRACTOR  
Russellville, Arkansas

1910 - 1954

Some Russellville residences he built:

*C.D. March 26, 1916*  
*Call Dardanelle April 15, 1971*

<u>First Owner</u>	<u>Street Address</u>
John White	1509 West Main St. 1916
- W. H. White	1412 West Main St. c. 1912 - check nom
Dr. L. Gardner	1803 West Main St.
John Ganner	1415 West Main St. c. 1913
Oscar Wilson	312 South Denver
C. M. Richmond	412 South Denver
Olaf S. Nelson	1120 South Glenwood
Gus Swaim	103 South Houston
(moved - formerly at	corner of Houston & W. Main)
Floyd Henry	107 E. Sixth
(moved - formerly on	South Arkansas Ave.)
President's Home	Arkansas Tech University Campus
John A. Bayliss	1500 West Main

Some Russellville public buildings:

500 Building West Main Street  
(formerly Hotel Pearson)  
Original St. Mary's Hospital West Main Street  
(still exists as core of many additions)  
Caraway Hall Arkansas Tech University  
Williamson Hall Arkansas Tech University  
Russellville Country Club Highway 7 North  
(original building has an addition)

Some Dardanelle, Ark. residences:

Robert Cunningham	203 North Second
Jack Duff	415 North Front
Izzie Bondi	702 North Front
"Spanish House"	Cedar & North Front

Dardanelle, Ark. public building:

First Methodist Church

Some other Arkansas buildings:

Barton Coliseum (Supt. of construction)	Little Rock
Nyberg Sanatorium	Booneville
Several structures for Crossett Company	Crossett

Supplementary Biography:

Born April 2, 1886

Died September, 1954

Buried Oakland Cemetery  
Russellville, Ar

Charter Member  
Russellville Country Club  
Active in Elks Club

Sports enthusiast backing  
Tech Wonder Boys and  
Crimson Cyclones (High  
School)



OLAF S. NELSON



MARY LARCH NELSON

## OLAF S. NELSON

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Olaf S. Nelson, born in Skane Province of Sweden, came at the age of 14 with three older brothers to an uncle in Galesburg, Illinois. The Nelson family in Sweden had for a century been engaged in horse breeding when only the land "went bad," the family with nine children fell on hard times and these four young men decided to seek their fortunes in America. Olaf, served on the U.S. Army Mexican Border Patrol, then went into a horse-breeding enterprise near Roswell, New Mexico, with brother Otto, where he first heard of Russellville because they shipped horses to Henry Brothers Barn. He decided to

return to Galesburg, and go into the construction business, as he had served a carpenter's apprenticeship there. In 1912, he stopped at Russellville to visit friends, liked Arkansas, went into the building business, and married Mary Agnes Larch of Dardanelle in 1915. She was from a German family who had emigrated to Pittsburgh, Pa. from near Budapest in Austria-Hungary. When her father, on account of his health, had to give up glass-blowing as a trade, the family moved to a Yell County farm in 1900. Olaf's strong interest in horses is remembered by ribbons in the family's possession from Pope County Fairs where his horse received the First Premium in 1914. Meantime, Olaf (better know as "Oley") was building fine Russellville homes for John White, Bud White, John Ganner and Dr. L. Gardner, all on West Main Street, also public buildings such as St. Mary's Hospital, Russellville Country Club, Hotel Pearson (now the 500 Building). And at Tech, Caraway and Williamson Halls and the President's Home. Later, over the state, his work included Nyberg Sanatorium at Booneville and superintending construction of Barton Coliseum. During the years of recovery from the Great Depression, he trained as carpenters scores of unskilled, deprived Arkansas youths through the National Youth Administration of Roosevelt's New Deal. The family was active in Centra Presbyterian Church to which Olaf was originally attracted by the beloved Judge Bullock Men's Bible Class during Wiley Lin Hurie's pastorate. Olaf died in 1954, and Mary still lives at 903 West Main Street in the former home of an early Russellville merchant, J.H. Perry, whose home the Nelsons purchased in 1921 to be near West Ward School. The Nelson children are Ellen Lucile and O.W. ("Ozzie").

Ellen resides in Little Rock with husband Dr. Robert E. L. Bearden, Jr., retired Methodist Minister, who served Little Rock's First Methodist Church for 14 years. His father,

R.E.L., Sr., served Russellville First Methodist from 1934 to 1939. Ellen and Bob are both graduates of Duke University after Ellen attended Tech and Bob, Henderson. Ellen was on the Tech Board of Trustees for six years during J.W. Hull's presidency. Their daughter, an elementary teacher, is Linda Clare, who married Kirkland Dee Connally. They have a seven-year-old daughter, Kimberly Dee, and live in Dallas. The Bearden son is Robert Nelson, who was a National Merit Scholar, and lives in Little Rock.

"Ozzie," who attended Tech and is a graduate of the University of Arkansas, receiving both B.S. and M.S. degrees. He served with the U.S. Army in Africa, Sicily and Italy during W.W. II. He married Anna Bess Hurtt, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. S.R. Hurtt, who moved from Clarksville to Russellville in 1935. Their children are Nancy Ann and John William (Bill). Nancy, an elementary teacher, married Tom J. Pittman, Jr. of Hackett, Arkansas, now assistant manager of Everybody's Furniture Company, where "Ozzie" has been manager for twenty-five years. Prior to this "Ozzie" was a teacher and coach at Forrest E. Gardner Junior High School. Bill is with Pope County Ambulance Service, having completed his Emergency Technical Training in April, 1977.

by O.W. Nelson

Source of Biography:  
HISTORY OF POPE COUNTY  
Volume I, First Edition  
Page 356

Published by Pope County  
Historical Association  
1979