

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

For HCRS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Pekin Federal Building

and/or common The Old Post Office

**2. Location**

street & number 334 Elizabeth Street (Elizabeth and South Capitol)  not for publication

city, town Pekin  vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 18

state Illinois code 012 county Tazewell code 179

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Storage

**4. Owner of Property**

name Rosalind Kay Antonini

street & number 712 S. 6th

city, town Pekin  vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Illinois

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tazewell County Courthouse, Recorder's Office

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

city, town Pekin state Illinois

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Inventory of Architecture Before  
title World War II - Tazewell County has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date October 1973  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Illinois Department of Conservation

city, town Springfield state Illinois

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pekin Post Office, originally called the Pekin Federal Building, is located on South Capitol and Elizabeth Streets in Pekin, Illinois. Four blocks from the Illinois River, the building is located across Elizabeth Street from the broad tree-shaded lawn of the Classically detailed Tazewell County Courthouse built in 1913. To the west across Capitol Street are the Chinese style Pekin "Dollarodeon" Theater and the Italianate style Arcade Building (both owned and being developed by a local realtor). (Photograph #18)

The original structure was built in 1905 at the cost of \$100,000 from designs prepared by the Supervising Architect's Office of the United States Treasury Department. Additions to first floor and basement were constructed in 1931 from plans prepared by the Acting Supervising Architect's Office of the Treasury Department. (Copies of these plans are available for both original and remodeled building.)

The original building contained two floors and full basement. Originally symmetrical in elevation, the first floor and basement areas were enlarged in the same style as the original. Dates of revisions on the original design drawings indicate these were used in planning the additions.

All first floor windows are double hung sash with semicircular fanlight above. The arches are highlighted by use of limestone (and terra cotta) details at spring points and at bold relief keystone. Second floor windows, centered over those on the first floor, are rectangular double hung with bold stone frame surrounding the opening. (Photograph #3)

The brick walls, of deep red brick with raked joints in English Cross Bond, are articulated by these window details and by the use of limestone (and terra cotta) in continuous base, quoins, and projecting cornice. The flat silhouette of the parapet wall atop the cornice is broken by an imposing limestone cartouche centered over the main entrance. The base projects out on each side of stone steps at both the side and main entrances. The main entrance was lighted by cast iron fixtures, since removed (Photograph #2) The side entrance's wall-mounted fixtures remain. (Photograph #1)

The first floor public lobby, while in bad repair, has the original heavy plaster egg and dart and ogee moldings and other major details intact. (Photographs #7 and #8) The floor finish in the lobby is terrazzo, light grey-green, and clouded white marble borders. The marble is extended in the wainscot in this public lobby.

The side entrance gives access to the stair to the second floor, marble detailing, with cast iron handrail with wood top-rail. (Photographs #10, #11, and #12) The original counterwork has been removed or damaged but the ornate stained and varnished wood and glass partitions to the mail order department and the upper interior window sash are intact. (Photograph #9) The lobby was enlarged in the 1930's; ornamental wrought iron screens are still in place in the upper portion of the extended lobby. Most of the bronze postal equipment, such as lobby rental boxes, have been removed as well as the revolving door. (The owner is investigating recovery of some pieces.)

The work areas on the first floor are distinguished by not only the extraordinary amount and form of fenestration, but by the use of a painted wood wainscot throughout and by a sizable chain operable skylight. (Photograph #17)

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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Not apparent to the observer is the security "system" of concealed ladders and "lookouts" into the work areas. Access to these are apparent only upon study of the plans.

The second floor served as offices for Federal agencies and departments. Detailing and layout are simply handled with one central corridor, continuous to the exterior walls. (Photograph #13) Offices were separated by either closets, small toilet, or vault. Damage due to leaks from the single slope roof and parapet has been extensive on the south, exposing the steel framework of the plaster ceiling.

Not readily apparent is the roof scuttle originally providing access to the flagpole mounted behind the cartouche. (Photograph #2) This pole has been removed with new free-standing pole at the northwest corner of the lot.

Present use of the building has been for warehousing by the previous owner. The new owner plans to develop rental space on all floors with themselves as tenant on the second floor.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention					

Original -- 1906  
**Specific dates** Addition - 1930 **Builder/Architect** see below \*

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

\* Original - James Knox Taylor  
 Supervising Architect  
 Treasury Department

V. Jobst & Sons (contractor)  
 Peoria

Addition - J. A. Wetmore  
 Acting Supervising Architect  
 Treasury Department

James McHugh Sons (contractor)

The Pekin Federal Building was opened in 1906 and was constructed on the site of the former Prettyman Homestead at the corner of South Capitol and Elizabeth Streets in Pekin, Illinois. Prior to this time, the Post Office had occupied many locations throughout Pekin since the free delivery system was installed in Pekin under Postmaster James Haines in 1866 with three carriers in the City.

When the Federal Building opened in 1906, there were five city carriers and one sub-carrier; three rural carriers and four clerks besides Postmaster C. A. Kuhl and his assistant, William Koch. In 1966 before the staff moved to the present facility, the staff had grown to a total of 72 persons.

The second floor of the building housed Pekin's Home Bureau, the Army Recruiting Office, and the offices of the Treasury Department including the Internal Revenue Department. The importance of these offices in the community was due to the nearby distilleries and the Federal taxes on alcohol. Many of the Federal agents responsible for the work of these local department offices advanced to more prominent positions in Washington, D. C.

The materials and Classical design are symbolic of the social values at the turn of the century and typical of buildings to serve Federal bureaucracy of this period. The style of the building follows that of Renaissance Revival, classically proportioned similar to the Athenaeum of Philadelphia with Italian mode influences seen in the bracketed cornice and style of window detailing, repeated circular arch over rectangular windows.

The building will soon regain its importance in the business life of Pekin's downtown area. As the photographs indicate, its location has prime visibility and the building helps to reinforce the character of the Courthouse Square and surrounding streetscape.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Pekin Centenary (1849-1949), Pekin Association of Commerce, Centenary Committee

Pekin "Sesquicentennial History (1824-1974)", Pekin Chamber of Commerce, 1974

Pekin Times, August 27, 1966

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .35 acres

Quadrangle name Pekin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 1, 2, 3, and 10 feet of Lot 4, Block 66, in the Original Town of Pekin.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name title Leslie H. Kenyon, Architect

organization Kenyon and Associates, Architects date March 26, 1980

street & number 735 N. Knoxville Avenue telephone (309) 674-7121

city or town Peoria state Illinois

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title	date
For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
	date
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered OCT 9 1986

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Haish Memorial Library	DeKalb DeKalb County
Pekin Federal Building	Pekin Tazewell County
Kirk, Col. Edward N., House	Sterling Whiteside County
Martin, Sarah, House	Monmouth Warren County

Also Notified

Honorable Charles H. Percy  
Honorable Adlai E. Stevenson  
Honorable Tom Corcoran  
Honorable Robert H. Michel  
Honorable Tom Railsback

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.