

## OKLAHOMA LANDMARKS INVENTORY NOMINATION

Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, Oklahoma State University, 502 Math-Science Bldg., Stillwater, OK 74078

SOURCE OF NOMINATION: Contract Survey

JIM THORPE STADIUM COMPLEX (Two structures)

LOCATION: Pottenger and Wallace Streets, Shawnee, Oklahoma 040, Pottawatomie County 125

CLASSIFICATION: structure and building; public; public acquisition--N/A; occupied; unrestricted; present use--educational

OWNER: Shawnee Board of Education, 306 N. Union, Shawnee, OK 74801

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Pottawatomie County Courthouse, Shawnee, OK 74801

DESCRIPTION: good condition; altered; original site

The Jim Thorpe Stadium Complex features two WPA-built structures: a football stadium and a clubhouse. The stadium itself is rectangular (258' x 74') and is constructed of steel reinforced concrete and brick. Rising 24 tiers on the field side, the exterior of the concrete superstructure is enclosed with brick, the beams themselves remaining visible. Entry into the stadium is achieved via an internal, central passageway. Access to the space beneath the stadium's seats is through garage doors and single entry doors. Window openings at the lower level have brick sills, while at the upper level they have brick sills and concrete lintels. All windows have been filled with wood inserts, but this alteration as well as the addition of a press box atop the stadium has not compromised the integrity of the building.

The clubhouse is located 12 feet north of the stadium. It is a single-story, essentially rectangular (78' x 61') structure constructed of untooled and uncoursed native sandstone. The roof is flat with parapets capped with pre-formed concrete blocks. Steel casement windows rest between sills and lintels of pre-formed concrete. Single door entries also have concrete lintels. Generally the structure is virtually vintage.

SIGNIFICANCE: 1936-39; builder/architect: unknown

The Jim Thorpe Stadium Complex is a magnificent example of WPA recreational architecture. The stadium is one of the largest constructed by the agency in Oklahoma, and the clubhouse is virtually one of a kind. The complex reflects the emphasis the WPA put on recreational facilities, not at all considering them frivolous despite the desperate economic conditions of the 1930s. Construction of the stadium and clubhouse provided a host of job opportunities for destitute workers and fostered a sense of community pride that is still seen in the winning athletic tradition of the Shawnee schools.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage: Approximately 6 acres

Quadrangle: Shawnee, Okla.  
1:24,000/7.5 min.

UTM: A-14-687690 3912680; B-14-687690 3912510; C-14 687640 3912600

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The east 416 feet of the SE 1/4, SW 1/4, NE 1/4 of Sec. 13, T 10 N, R 3 E

PICTURE REFERENCE: 64-a; 64-b; 64-c; 64-d