

**KENOSHA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
HISTORICAL ARTIFACT DETERMINATION**

ARTIFACT NAME/DESCRIPTION	<i>Kenosha County Courthouse Murals</i>
ADDRESS	<i>912 56th Street</i>
CONSTRUCTION DATE	<i>Installed in 1925</i>
ARCHITECT/SCULPTOR/BUILDER	<i>Charles Holloway, A.E. Foringer, William Peaco and William De Leftwich-Dodge</i>

STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATION - MUST CHOOSE 1 OR MORE

X	1	Item is a local historical artifact that is at least 50 years old.
X	2	Item is associated with a property that meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATION - MUST CHOOSE 1 OR MORE

	3	Item exemplifies or reflects the cultural, archaeological, political, economic, social, or religious history.
	4	Item is identified with personages, events, or periods of history which personages, events, or periods are significant to the community.
X	5	Item embodies distinguishing characteristics of architecture, an architect, architectural materials, craftsmanship, or works of nature.
X	6	Item is in its inherent historical nature provides the citizenry with educational or aesthetic enrichment.
X	7	Check here if the historical artifact is located in a designated local, State, or National Register property or district.

<i>Level of Action</i>	<i>For Listing</i>	<i>No Listing</i>	<i>Removal from Listing</i>
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & INSPECTIONS	X		
<i>PUBLIC HEARING DATE: 10/31/2013</i>	<i>RECOMMENDATION DATE: 11/14/2013</i>		
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION		X	
COMMON COUNCIL			
DATE OF COUNCIL ACTION:			

DESCRIPTION

The Kenosha County Courthouse, completed in 1925, once featured eight murals completed by four artists. Today, five are still displayed in public areas of the building, as well as inside one of the court rooms. The original murals were painted by four artists; four murals by Charles Holloway, two by A.E. Foringer, one by William Peaco, and one by William De Leftwich-Dodge.

Court Room Murals - There were originally four murals that were executed by Mr. Charles Holloway. Two are still located within the Courthouse.

In Circuit Court Room 205, formerly the Municipal Court, the mural over the doorway depicted the "*Spirit of Mercy*", who shows pity and compassion as the guardians of the natural law demand the penalty of the offenders. Today, it is not known if this mural still exists; a drop ceiling was installed just above the doorway.

Mr. Holloway also executed the "*Spirit of the Law*", a mural which once was located over the judge's bench in the former Municipal Court. The mural features a figure at the left which is the mother appealing to the law for protection, while the one at the right is the man guilty of the wrong. This mural is now located within the Kenosha County Board Chambers inside of the Kenosha County Administration Building.



In Circuit Court Room 209 and above the judge's bench is shown the "*Spirit of Justice.*" The figures on each side are those who have been tested and who have failed to balance the Scale of Justice. Over the main doorway is "*Truth.*" in whose mirror is reflected all that was, is, and will be.





Entrance To Court Rooms – Both of the murals outside Circuit Court Rooms 205 and 209 are by Mr. A.E. Foringer.

The mural over the entrance to Circuit Court Room 208 symbolizes Civil Law introduced by two winged figures flanking a tablet with the inscription “*Uphold the Right.*” The one figure, bearing a torch, typifies “*Knowledge.*” The other, bearing the fasces, “*Power.*” Below and on both sides of the doorway are two Roman braziers suggesting the Roman origin of much of our jurisprudence.



The mural over the entrance to Circuit Court Room 205, formerly the Municipal Court, is in a general way similar as to composition. In this panel, the figures represent “Mercy” and “Force” respectively, with the quotation “*Prevent the Wrong*” on the tablet. The colors used on the mural are blues, gold and white, which harmonize with the Botticino marble that is extensively used in the surrounding architecture of the Court House.



Memorial Hall - This mural was executed by Mr. William Peaco and portrayed the early days of Southport, as Kenosha was then known. This location and existence of this mural is unknown.

Grand Staircase – The mural titled “*In Memoriam*”, completed by Mr. William De Leftwich-Dodge, is located on the landing between the second and third floors of the grand staircase. The composition consists of a dominating central winged figure representing the State in mourning for her dead in World War I; a wounded soldier at the left side, the hand of the central figure is on a young orphan boy. The figure at the extreme left represents an American soldier placing a wreath on a soldier's grave while holding an American flag to denote that the soldier died for his Country. The figure on the extreme right represents the Red Cross, mourning for the dead child in her lap. Gold palms on a blue-gray background signify that the palms were won for valor. The entire composition is one great dramatic power and is executed in the rugged style for which the artist is noted.



SIGNIFICANCE:

The Kenosha County Courthouse, a contributing building to the Civic Center Historic District, is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of the Neoclassical style adapted to public buildings. The Kenosha County Courthouse building was completed in 1925, a time when murals were regarded as an essential element of most public architecture.

The mural paintings were furnished by The William G. Andrews' Decorative Company, Chicago, and overseen by W.G. Andrews, who personally designed the ornament and color schemes throughout the Court House. All of the murals were completed by noted artists.

A.E. Foringer designed panels in the Supreme Court, Utah State Capitol; noted panels in large churches throughout the United States; and decorative designs for governments of France, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Russia.

Artist *William De Leftwich-Dodge*, one of the most prominent muralists of his time, designed murals in the dome of the Administration Building for the World's Fair in Chicago, as well as decorations for the Library of Congress, and the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. Mr. De Leftwich-Dodge received many medals including: New York-Gold Medal Prize Fund, American Artist, 1889-Paris-Third-Class Medal, Exposition 1889, and the Chicago-World's Fair Medal, 1893. He provided decorations for theaters, banks, hotels, and educational buildings in several cities.

Artist *Charles Holloway* executed cartoons and sketches for the Paris Exposition, which were then bought by the French government. At the St. Louis Exposition, he won first prize for his subject on the Louisiana Purchase. He also designed the "*I Will*" figure for Chicago, and murals and panels for court houses, theaters, and churches in several states.

Artist *William Peaco* designed panels in court houses for Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Ohio. He was also designed twenty-four historical panels for the South Dakota Capitol.