



Name of Property: Central Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers/
Dayton Veterans Administration Home

City, State: Dayton, Ohio

Period of Significance: 1917-1959

NHL Criteria: 1, Exception 5

NPS Theme: II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
2. Reform Movements
III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design
IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
2. Government Institutions

Previous Recognition: 2004 National Register of Historic Places
2008 Historic American Buildings Survey, OH-2364

National Historic Context: *National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Theme Study*

NHL Significance:

- The Central Branch, NHDVS/Dayton VAH represents an evolution and shift in Federal care for veterans starting in World War I (1917), the end of an era in veterans care under the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS) model, and the consolidation of veteran’s benefits and the establishment of the Veterans Administration (VA) in 1930. Central Branch was the administrative center for the NHDVS from 1916 until 1930, and served as the Central Depot for the entire system.
- Following World War I and II as public sentiment swelled in response to returning soldiers in need of treatment and therapy, the Federal government pushed for the modernization of health care for veterans across the nation. The Central Branch NHDVS/Dayton VAH reflects the constant need to update and modernize health care for veterans. The Central Branch, NHDVS/Dayton VAH represents the transitional period from the latter years of the NHDVS into a more modern era of care with the creation of the Veterans Administration in 1930, and into the 1950s when the

Dayton campus underwent an extensive building program to modernize medical, surgical, and domiciliary care for a new wave of veterans.

Integrity:

- The district retains its historic east-west alignment, and although an imposing Patient Tower and associated facilities were built on the west side of the campus in the late 1980s and 1990s, the historic core still retains its historic layout and feel. The new construction on the west side of the district is outside the historic core and is not included within the proposed NHL boundary.
- Some newer facilities have been built throughout the historic core of the district but they do not detract from the overall integrity of the site.
- The framework of the landscape remains, including: the majority of the road system, the two remaining lakes and adjacent grotto springs and arch, the relationship of private living spaces for Home/VA professional staff; the core placement of domiciliaries toward the center of the property, and the relationship of medical facilities removed from these living spaces.

Owner of Property: Veterans Administration

Acreage of Property: 266 acres

Origins of Nomination: Via an interagency agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs Federal Preservation Office (VA FPO), and through a Cooperative Agreement with the National Council on Public History, the NPS contracted for a context study to assess significance and develop NHL nominations on several NHDVS-era facilities. Although the study did not recommend Dayton as one of the four NHDVS-era homes for consideration as NHLs, the draft NHL nomination was revised by the MWRO to reflect a different theme encompassing a transitional period in the institution's development.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Recognition of the Central Branch NHDVS/Dayton VAH as a nationally significant resource will help Americans to better understand the commitment of the Federal government to its military veterans.
- Designation as a National Historic Landmark will assist and encourage the Veterans Administration in providing long-term stewardship of the district.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (comments received as of 12/05/11):

William D. Montague, Acting Medical Center Director, Department of Veterans Affairs,
Dayton, Ohio (owner)

The Honorable Michael R. Turner, U.S. Congressman, 3rd District, Ohio

Walter Herbert Rice, President, The American Veterans Heritage Center, Dayton, Ohio

Franco Ruffini, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Ohio



Michael Gessel, Dayton Development Coalition, Vice President, Federal Government Programs,
Dayton, Ohio

Anthony J. Perfilio, Chair, National Aviation Heritage Alliance, Dayton, Ohio

The Honorable Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator, Ohio

The Honorable Robert Portman, U.S. Senator, Ohio

Landmarks Committee Comments:

Landmarks Committee Recommendation: Designation. Dr. Stevens moved, Dr. Murtagh seconded; unanimous approval.

Advisory Board Recommendation: