

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NOV 20 1989

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 First National Bank  
other names/site number Carolina First Bank

2. Location

street & number 102 South Main Street  not for publication  
city, town Greenville  vicinity  
state South Carolina code SC county Greenville code 045 zip code 29601

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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.

Mary W. Edmonds 11/8/89  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, SC Department of Archives & History, Columbia, SC  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Alan Byers 12/21/89  
 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: Financial Institution

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: Financial Institution

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Granite

walls Sandstone

roof Tar and Gravel

other Aluminum

Granite

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The First National Bank building is located at the corner of Main and McBee Streets. This Art Deco two-and-a-half-story structure sheathed in sandstone with a polished black granite door frame and base was designed by Atlanta architect S.L. Trowbridge in 1938.

The flat-roofed building has a geometric-patterned cornice and a frieze band. Stylized sunburst aluminum grill work covers the transom and sidelights of the main entrance and its flanking windows. Fluted aluminum pilasters topped with stylized aluminum eagles frame the main double doors leading into the bank. "First National Bank" is deeply carved across the central section of the upper facade, over a high-relief eagle with out-stretched wings set within a sandstone niche immediately above the stylized granite keystone.

The 1938 building was enlarged in 1952 by extending the sandstone and polished granite facade around the adjacent 1917 building. The sympathetic and careful extension used the same building materials as the earlier one, duplicating the cornice and friezes with a side door enframed by black granite. A palmetto tree and the date 1952 were carved in the sandstone above the side door's stylized black granite keystone.

The 1938 banking hall had an alternating black and white marble tile floor, a gilded and carved plaster ceiling, shellacked walnut wainscoting, and elaborately carved four-foot wide pilasters on either side of the banking hall. Typically Art Deco stylized stepped wooden keystones were set above windows and tellers' counters. The 1952 interior expansion and renovation included duplicating the keystone motifs, adding an Art Deco-reminiscent clock to the McBee Avenue entrance, and painting the ceiling white in both buildings. Aside from signage, no significant changes have been made in the building's exterior. The interior has been modified, but many significant interior features remain or have been restored.

**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)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1938  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1938  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Architect: Trowbridge, S.L.  
Builder: Morris & McKoy

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

The First National Bank building is architecturally significant because it is Greenville's only major Art Deco commercial structure. Constructed in 1938, it was designed by Atlanta architect Silas L. Trowbridge, and built by Morris & McKoy, contractors. It is also important for its association with the old National Bank of Greenville, chartered in 1872, and the first national bank chartered in South Carolina.

Additional Information

The National Bank of Greenville was chartered in March 1872, and was the city's only bank until 1887.<sup>1</sup> In 1917 Fountain Fox Beattie, grandson of founder Hamlin Beattie and president of the bank, commissioned Trowbridge to design a new bank building at the corner of Main and McBee Streets.<sup>2</sup> That building served the bank until 1938.

Although several Greenville banks closed or had to be reorganized during the depression,<sup>3</sup> the first National Bank maintained its place as Greenville's leading financial institution. In 1937-38, Beattie invested over \$100,000 for the construction of a new building, also designed by Trowbridge.<sup>4</sup> This new bank building utilized the existing foundation and walls of a nineteenth-century commercial building adjacent to the 1917 building. The earlier building was rented to a succession of tenants.<sup>5</sup> When the 1938 building was expanded in the 1950s to include the 1917 bank, the Art Deco design of the 1938 building was extended to cover the exterior of the earlier building.<sup>6</sup>

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Barnes, Frank. The Greenville Story, Greenville, S.C. 1956/  
Cleveland, T.C. Greenville, S.C. Interview, 12 January 1988.  
Dailey News. (Greenville, S.C.), 6 October, 1917.  
News (Greenville, S.C.), 5 January 1937; 22 June 1938; 12 July 1952/

See continuation sheet

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

- Primary location of additional data:**
- State historic preservation office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other

**Specify repository:**

SC Department of Archives and History  
Furman University, Greenville, SC

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one (1) acre.

**UTM References**

A 

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

The boundary for the First National Bank building is shown as the red line on the accompanying Greenville County tax map #59, which is drawn on a scale of one inch equals fifty feet.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes only the historic bank building, which equals in size the nominated acreage.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Dr. Judith T. Bainbridge  
organization Director of Educational Services date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number Furman University telephone (803) 294-2222  
city or town Greenville state South Carolina zip code 29613

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>J.S. Plowden, "Story of Greenville's Oldest Bank, The First National," Greenville News, June 1942. See also Greenville: A Civic and Commerical Journal, July 1924.

<sup>2</sup>Frank Barnes, The Greenville Story, 1954.

<sup>3</sup>News, (Greenville, S.C.), 22 June 1938.

<sup>4</sup>Daily News, (Greenville, S.C.), 6 October 1917.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with T.C. Cleveland, 12 January 1988.

<sup>6</sup>News, (Greenville, S.C.), 12 July 1952.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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All photographs:

First National Bank Building  
102 South Main Street  
Greenville, SC 29602  
Blake Praytor, photographer  
Praytor Studios

1. Main Street entry after renovation. Alterations from original are replacement of the name "Carolina First" over the door and the addition of two granite plaques on either side. 1988.
2. View of Main Street entry showing fenestration and cornice. Summer, 1988.
3. First National Bank, McBee Avenue entrance showing 1952 facade expansion. Summer, 1988.
4. View of First National Bank from Main Street (looking west) when occupied by Fidelity Federal, ca. 1963.
5. Renovated 1938 banking hall interior looking east toward Main Street entrance. Summer, 1988.
6. Detail of north wall of 1938 banking hall showing ornate pilaster and woodwork. Summer, 1988.
7. Detail of office door in 1952 expansion. Summer, 1988.
8. McBee Avenue entrance. Tile floor is new. Summer, 1988.