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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Bristow Tower
Other Names/Site Number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

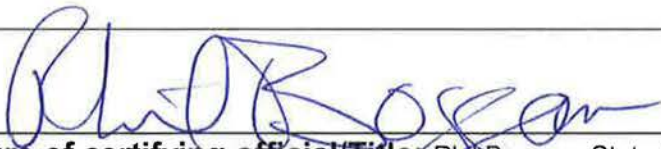
Street & Number: 4537 Magnolia St
City or town: New Orleans State: LA County: Orleans
Not for Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets, 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.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national state local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D



12-7-15

Signature of certifying official/Title: Phil Boggan, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register *on 1-26-2014 Due to weather-related Gov't closure*
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other, explain _____

[Handwritten Signature] _____ *1-27-2014*
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Vacant/Not in Use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): Modern Movement:
International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Stucco, Brick

roof:

other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Bristow Tower is a free-standing, ten story, International Style apartment building designed by Mathes, Bergman and Associates, a local firm. Construction began in 1963, and the building was dedicated on March 6, 1964. The structure is a reinforced concrete frame with a veneer mainly of flat white stucco panels. Brick shafts on the side elevations serve to accentuate and set off the whiteness of the building. Architecturally, the design is exemplary of the classic International Style as it emerged in Europe in the 1920s and 30s. Though vacant for many years and significantly deteriorated on the interior, the building has been little altered since its construction.

Bristow Tower is located on the campus of Ochsner Baptist Hospital, historically known as Southern Baptist Hospital. The campus occupies a city block in an early twentieth century neighborhood of Uptown New Orleans. The gleaming white apartment tower is located at the corner of Magnolia and Cadiz streets, which increases its visual profile. Immediately adjacent is a white spiral parking ramp for a campus garage built a year earlier. Two non-historic additions can be found at the front right corner and at the rear of the building. There is also a utilities corridor that is not functionally related to the Bristow Tower, but that is attached to the building.

Narrative Description

Floorplan Overview:

Because the interior arrangement of the building is clearly articulated on the exterior (“form follows function”), it is being described at the beginning.

The Bristow Tower housed apartments for interns and graduate physicians fulfilling their professional residency requirement at the hospital. Larger apartment units provided for physicians with families. The first story included an entrance lobby with elevator access, a mechanical equipment room and a large space for a day nursery. The apartments are located on floors two through ten. (See attached upper story plan.)

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On each of the upper stories the twin elevators open to a small central lobby, which gives access to a transverse corridor running from side to side of the building, bisecting it. These corridors give entry to individual apartments. The apartment units themselves are disposed as follows. On each floor, in the front half of the building, forward of the transverse corridor, are two, two-bedroom apartments, set symmetrically on either side of the central elevator core and elevator lobby. In the rear half, behind the corridor, is a pair of small studio apartments set together in the center of the building. On either side is a one bedroom unit. This symmetrical arrangement provides for six apartments on each floor, with a total of 54 units in the entire building. At each side of the building, the transverse corridor terminates with a fire door giving access to an exterior egress stair.

Architectural Overview:

The Bristow Tower embodies a profound lack of ornamentation so basic to the European Modernist ethos. It also features a very pronounced rectilinear articulation. Importantly, Bristow makes extensive use of white neutral smooth stucco surfaces to define and envelop space. This is seen in: 1) the low front walls that take the place of apartment balcony balustrades; 2) the similar low walls that take the place of balustrades at the many landings in the egress stairs; 3) the white wall strips that surmount the range of windows and sliding doors in each apartment's front wall; 4) the flat vertical thrusting shaft that defines the central elevator core and elevator lobbies; and 5) similar walls that mark, define and set off the side egress stairs. Taken together, these produce a collective effect that profoundly dominates the building's exterior.

The balconies are of particular interest. Along their bottoms, each features a series of weep holes (short pipes) whose purpose is to drain rain water from the balcony floor. This somewhat unusual feature emphasizes the extent to which the designers were striving for the white wall effect so typical of the International Style. An ordinary pierced metal balcony balustrade would have disposed of rain water easily, without the need for the special provision of weep holes. The weep holes also mark a slight recess in each balcony wall's front plane, enough to cast a good shadow and add to the building's geometrical complexity and interest. As an additional refinement, the balcony front walls and the egress stair front walls are recessed slightly from the side wall members with which they would, in a typical structure, connect. This is a feat of engineering made possible by the use of reinforced concrete. It also adds geometrical complexity and visual interest.

As a counterpoint to the white neutral surfaces, the side elevation walls of the main block are sheathed in variegated brick, with an overall reddish orange appearance. These walls are virtually devoid of openings, thus creating a simple, strong stark vertical element, well in line with Modernist conceptions of geometrical design. Another counterpoint, albeit less emphatic, is the first story base with its panels of textured white aggregate stone.

The design also features International Style signature ribbon windows or the effect thereof. The former is seen in the windows that surmount the high walls of the day nursery on the first story. The latter is achieved via the balcony walls covering most of what is almost continuous glass at each apartment's front wall. This produces a very strong ribbon window effect on each story when seen from the ground. This striking visual effect could not have been unintentional.

The International Style flat roof is also much in evidence. The building's roof itself is flat. In addition, the outward protruding balcony on each of the upper stories produces a flat roof effect for the story below. And because the balcony walls protrude forward of the first story's footprint, they appear to hover over the building's base in a manner much in line with European Modernism.

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A particularly compelling Modernist characteristic is the way the exterior design conveys a strong expression of the building's interior function and spatial organization. This can be seen in examining the individual elevations, as follows.

Main (Front) Elevation:

A central, continuous, upward-thrusting, broad white shaft, conveying vertical circulation, anchors the main elevation. Running from the second to the tenth stories, it also protrudes below the second story floor and above the tenth story roof, thus enhancing its vertical presence. This shaft marks the location of the elevator runs and the accompanying elevator lobbies on each of the upper floors. It is surmounted by a rooftop penthouse that houses the elevator mechanical equipment. Flanking the vertical shaft are pronounced horizontal apartment balconies and windows. Each apartment's individual presence is clearly conveyed. Moreover, the apartments on this elevation are all two bedroom units, per above. So there is only one apartment unit on each side of the vertical shaft. Thus the side-ward extension of apartment balcony and window is shown as a single unit without interruption. The side-ward terminus of the apartment building mass is clearly stated via the vertical brick side elevation walls, previously noted. Beyond this the side egress exterior staircases are clearly read, even to the casual observer. Their verticality is marked and emphasized by the above noted side expanses of white stucco walls, or vertical shafts, that terminate the building mass.

Rear Elevation:

The rear is very much an articulated elevation with architectural importance of its own. Only apartments occupy this elevation; so the horizontal elements (balcony walls and windows) are dominant. Here the side-ward extension of apartment balcony and window is interrupted. Two fairly narrow vertical white shafts separate the pair of smaller studio apartments, in the center, from the larger one bedroom units on either side. The two studio apartments are separated by clearly discernable fin-like walls. The terminating brick side walls and side egress stairs also read strongly from this elevation.

Side Elevations:

The identical side elevations contrast the sheer brick side walls with the outward-jutting white shafts marking the egress stairs. The brick walls run from the second to the tenth stories, resting upon the first story concrete columnar base. But the stair shafts ascend all the way from the ground to above the tenth story, thus producing a vertical contrast that conveys the idea of vertical circulation. Also the stairs, and their accompanying white shafts, are set closer to the front elevation than the rear. These are the building's only asymmetrical features. This, too, adds both complexity and interest.

Miscellaneous Exterior:

The stair wells feature deteriorated steel stair handrails and original light fixtures of brushed aluminum and tubular milk glass.

Interior Detailing:

The elevator lobbies are sparingly detailed with modest, brushed aluminum cove moldings flanking the elevator doors. Each door also has a brushed aluminum lintel top. The apartment units feature modest rooms with eight foot ceilings. Each includes a galley-type kitchen, a single small dormitory-style bathroom and minimal closet space. The units are provided with generous balconies which form a major feature of the front and rear elevations. They also feature generous systems of windows and sliding glass doors, to access the

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balconies, so much so, that the exterior wall of each apartment is almost continuous glass (at least when viewed from the interior).

The interior finishes and details are uniformly plain, with white plaster walls and textured dry-wall ceilings, flat unadorned natural finish wood doors (with plain surrounds), and brushed aluminum detailing on the windows and sliding glass doors. Floors are linoleum tile.

Alterations:

Within the past 20 or 30 years, a portion of the lower egress stair (front elevation - right hand side) has been enclosed in brickwork matching the side walls and a one story flat-roofed gym was added at the inside rear corner. Finally, there has been significant water penetration, and significant deterioration and mold, in the upper four stories. The foregoing have had minimal visual impact given the scope of this 10 story building's noteworthy International Style design.

Note: There is a narrow one story utilities corridor extending from the rear of Bristow Tower. The connector is not included in the nominated acreage, for it is not functionally related to Bristow Tower, nor does it relate to Bristow Tower's architectural significance. There is also a one story c. 1985 gym added to the rear (see Photos 20-25) that is also non-historic. It is included with the acreage as it is physically attached, has internal access and circulation with the tower, and has continuity of design with matching brick, but like the utilities corridor, is not functionally related to the Bristow Tower nor does it relate to the architectural significance of the building. (Negotiations are presently underway for a private developer to secure a long-term lease on Bristow Tower from Ochsner Hospitals to develop it as a hotel. No other buildings on the hospital campus are included in this submission.)

Note regarding photos: Limited photos are provided for the tenth floor because it was deemed possibly unsafe to enter apartments due to roof deterioration. In any event, floors 2 through 10 are identical.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
x	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Criteria Considerations:

	A	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
	B	Removed from its original location
	C	A birthplace or grave

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D	A cemetery
E	A reconstructed building, object, or structure
F	A commemorative property
G	Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): Architecture

Period of Significance: 1963-64

Significant Dates: 1963-64

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder (last name, first name): Mathes, Bergman, and Associates

Period of Significance (justification): The period of significance is the year of the building's construction, 1963-64.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Bristow Tower is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C (architecture) at the local level of significance. It is a particularly accomplished example of the International Style within the City of New Orleans, embodying the classic trademarks of what was considered a revolutionary aesthetic. Like other International Style influenced buildings in New Orleans, Bristow Tower illustrates that post-war modernism was far from monolithic. Some of the styles from before World War II (such as the International Style and Art Moderne) continued to be built in the post-war years. The period of significance is 1963-64, the years of its construction and completion.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The International Style:

“Between the two wars the world was given a new architecture,” observed Frederick Gutheim in his 1960 book on Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. The International Style, as it came to be known, grew out of art, architectural and handicraft reform efforts in Europe in the years after World War I. These came together in the Bauhaus school of design in Weimar, Germany, which sought to teach all artists, artisans and architects to work together, in common service, towards “the building of the future.”

Originally founded in 1906 by the Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar as a school for the arts and crafts, the Bauhaus emerged in the 1920s as the focus of a radical new approach to industrial design and architecture. Inherent in the Bauhaus was a commitment to marshalling the greater art world in the service of humanity. And there were strong associations with political reform, socialism, and a mandate for art to respond to the machine

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age. Two Americans, Philip Johnson and Henry Russell Hitchcock, of New York's Museum of Modern Art, coined the term International Style for their groundbreaking exhibition on the new architecture held at that institution in February 1932. The exhibit went on a national tour, and an accompanying book was produced. This "seminal event," writes Carter Wiseman, "served as an introduction to European Modernism for most Americans concerned with the subject."

The new architecture the Bauhaus school epitomized, the International Style, had a "stark cubic simplicity" (Nikolas Pevsner) – minimalist machined art completely and profoundly devoid of ornament. The complete absence of ornamentation was a particularly important litmus test. Lewis Mumford, in a piece in the *New Yorker*, praised an early Shreveport, Louisiana International Style building (the Municipal Incinerator, 1935) for its "excellent design, with no vulgar attempts at prettifying a form that needs no additions." The same stark design was used for all types of buildings – from incinerators, to factories, to homes.

In addition to the absence of ornament, classic International Style buildings are characterized by: 1) a machined metal and glass framework, with smooth neutral (generally white) stuccoed surfaces pierced by thin bands of windows (ribbon windows) sometimes turning the corner; 2) an overall horizontal feel; 3) functional and decidedly flat roofs; 4) frequent use of the cantilever principal for balconies and upper stories; and 5) the use of "pilotis"—or slender poles – to raise the building mass, making it appear to float above the landscape. Importantly, modern buildings were supposed to take their cue from their practical function -- the oft-repeated maxim of the day being "form follows function."

The International Style's following in the United States (a fairly small one) was among clients of advanced taste, typically in major cities. The first International Style building in America, the Lovell "Health" House in Los Angeles (1928), was designed by a European émigré, Richard Neutra, from Vienna. A notable early example on the East Coast is the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building (1931-32, Howe and Lescaze). Howe was a Philadelphian; Lescaze was born and trained in Switzerland. The PSFS Building was the first time the principles of the International Style were applied to a skyscraper.

Surprisingly, given the state's general conservatism, Louisiana was in the forefront of the International Style in America. Pioneering works in the new style were in Shreveport, the state's second largest city, due to two architect brothers, Samuel and William Wiener. The style was so novel and examples so limited in the United States that Samuel Wiener and fellow Shreveport architect Theodore Flaxman traveled to Europe in 1931 specifically to see the new architecture and meet its creators. They visited numerous buildings, attended the 1931 Building Exposition in Berlin, and met various architects, including Gropius, Eric Mendelsohn, and Alvar Aalto. In the next few years the Wiener brothers produced a number of major works in the International Style (institutional, commercial and residential) for Shreveport clients, beginning as early as 1931. Various national and international publications featured their designs.

While the heyday of the International Style was the 1920s and '30s, seldom do styles end abruptly. Research by the author for historic context essays on Louisiana Architecture, 1945-1965 revealed that in Louisiana, classic International Style buildings continued to be built in the post-WWII years alongside steel and glass, modular grid skyscrapers. One suspects the state is not alone in this regard.

A few of the post-war examples (such as the Bristow Tower) are classic International Style – i.e., buildings that just as easily could have been constructed in the late 1920s and the 1930s. In a few cases, the post-war buildings remained true to the signature white (or almost white) smooth stucco look of European Modernism. More commonly, blond or light colored bricks were substituted for the neutral white stucco or plaster enveloping walls, occasionally with contrasting brick accents. But there were others, less pure, that still reaffirmed the basic abstract International Style geometry.

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Elements that carried forward into mid-century from the International Style of the 1920s and '30s include:

- an essentially horizontal feel (even in taller buildings)
- bands of windows, sometimes emphasized with a modest ledge (and sometimes the window sequence is punctuated with periodic blank, neutral or opaque panels);
- flat roofs, sometimes emphasized with a ledge;
- strongly rectilinear compositions;
- substantive exterior walls (as opposed to curtain walls);
- absence of ornament.

“Form Follows Function” Architectural Background:

The major thrust of the Renaissance in Europe was to bring back the civilization, art and architecture of ancient Rome. But it also had the effect of raising architects from the status of master artisans to that of philosophers. This ushered in a new phenomenon -- design by philosophy or ideology. One did not build just to please the eye. In order to be worthy, or to appropriately possess beauty, a building must be designed to reflect some abstract principal or philosophical idea of merit. An early instance of this was what is now termed “anthropomorphic” architecture. Renaissance man reasoned that buildings should be designed to follow the proportions of the human body. Because man was made in God’s image, buildings designed to reflect his proportions would be inherently, and eternally, perfect. Design by abstract principal could often spark debate. For instance, in the 18th century French Academy, there were two groups: the ancients, who believed the Romans had devised the most perfect architectural forms which, thus, could not be improved upon, and the moderns, who believed that, at least to some extent, innovation was possible. A primary design principle of the Modernist Movement has been simply stated, “Form follows function.” Frank Lloyd Wright had a variation, “form and function are one.”

Of course, ultimately every building is constructed to serve some purpose. But in this case the functionality of a building is overtly espoused as the key to architectural worthiness and to high aesthetic qualities, even beauty. This conception first appears in early 19th century French Classicism. It was much a part of Victorian England’s aesthetic moralizing, most notably John Ruskin’s *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. Here the notion of truth to functionality took the stage alongside: 1) truth to construction materials, 2) fine and earnest craftsmanship (work being good for the soul), and 3) the nobility of this or that architectural style (Ruskin recommended Venetian Gothic). But it is, arguably, in the Modernist Movement where functionality (constructing a building to portray its vital internal functions – “form follows function”) reached its zenith as a central doctrine of design. Indeed, in mid- century modernism, it rose to the standing of something like a moral ideal.

The Bristow Tower and the International Style in New Orleans:

The following analysis of International Style buildings in New Orleans and Bristow Tower’s place within this heritage is based upon: (1) field research conducted by the author in 2009 for historic context essays on Louisiana Architecture, 1945-65, prepared for the LA Trust for Historic Preservation with funding from the

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LA State Historic Preservation Office; (2) supplemental windshield surveys of high probability areas of New Orleans (the Central Business District and major commercial thoroughfares) conducted specifically for this nomination; (3) "New Orleans Regional Modernism," an electronic catalog prepared by the Tulane School of Architecture and DOCOMOMO US/Louisiana (Documentation and Conservation of the Modern Movement); (4) the many entries on the DOCOMOMO US/Louisiana website; and (5) the 1959 publication *Architecture of New Orleans, 1699-1959* by Samuel Wilson, the dean of historic preservation architects in the city. Wilson included 68 post-war commercial and institutional buildings in his inventory. Finally, the author's knowledge of historic buildings in New Orleans is augmented by National Register fieldwork in the city over a thirty-eight year career. Collectively, the foregoing has made possible an evaluation of the Bristow Tower within its local architectural context.

In analyzing the legacy of International Style buildings in New Orleans, an important principle must be acknowledged – the style was slow to come to the city, with almost all examples post-WWII. There are only two known instances of International Style influence in New Orleans prior to WWII, both houses. There are three known examples, also houses, in adjacent Metairie, a separate community. Modernism could be said to have arrived in New Orleans with the opening of Curtis and Davis in 1947, a firm specializing and excelling in contemporary architecture. Davis observed that when they opened, "there really were no modern buildings [in the city], not in the true sense."

The reasons for the style's late arrival in New Orleans are various. There was the general and pervasive architectural and cultural conservatism that still prevailed in the greater community through the 1930s and beyond. The practice of architecture was dominated by a limited group of prominent, well-connected locals who had been trained under the Beaux Arts system, and who excelled in the popular historic revival styles of the early 20th century. There was no ground-breaking practitioner of advanced taste and style, with access to clients and largesse, on the scene. National figures, the well noted pioneers of the Modernist Movement in America, did not practice in New Orleans in the 1920s and '30s. (Shreveport was even more conservative. But that city emerged as the epicenter of the International Style in Louisiana because of native architects Sam and William Wiener.)

It was in the post-war years that a number of International Style buildings were built in New Orleans, some closer to the ideal than others. Broadly speaking, these buildings can be broken down into two categories: (1) Major buildings that are fully and convincingly developed examples of the style. (2) Buildings that could be said to be influenced by the style, in widely varying degrees of adherence to the style's fundamentals.

The four most important buildings in the International Style (see below) are distinguished from the larger pool of International Style-influenced buildings because: 1) They are substantial in size and scale. 2) They adhere most closely to the tenets of International Style design, in contrast to big boxy buildings with an International Style-influenced feature or two, or buildings that feature elements not in accord with the style. 3) They are statements in which the component parts relate to each other in a cohesive and compelling whole. 4) They follow the doctrine that form follows function in a meaningful way. 5) They all embody the rejection of ornament so basic to the essence of the International Style.

They are:

- a. The Stephens Chevrolet Building (1949, Freret and Wolf, 826-828 Carondelet) is almost one fourth a city block in footprint. It features three expanses of neutral wall to define parking decks, the lowest of which includes an industrial style ribbon window concourse. And it is manifestly rectilinear with a stark geometric feel.

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- b. Sewell Car Dealership (701 Baronne, now Rouse's Supermarket, 1954) is a broad white painted brick, two-story auto dealership with a partial third story in the rear. Its large footprint occupies one fourth of a city block. The dominant second story appears to float over the wide showroom window of the first story. It culminates in a stark, sharply cut, almost continuous ribbon window that conveys internal administrative offices.
- c. The Shell Building (individually listed on the National Register, 1952, August Perez & Associates) is a fourteen story corner office building occupying a quarter of a city block. Its many layers of ribbon windows set forth the internal office spaces. One of its two elevations also includes a strongly worked and distinctive limestone grid of blade-like elements designed to provide shade and prevent heat gain. This element is crisp, sharply formed and highly rectilinear.
- d. The Bristow Tower. The many International Style features of the Bristow Tower are detailed in Part 7 – the crisp angular design with a profound lack of ornamentation; the white neutral smooth surface walls that define and envelop space; the flat roof; etc.

As a piece of architecture, Bristow Tower conveys a powerful and compelling abstract quality. Its stark, dominant neutral white surfaces that envelop, define and graphically delineate numerous individual spaces mark it as exemplary of the greater International Style. Regarding the doctrine of “form follows function,” Bristow is a *tour de force*. For it is one thing for a ribbon window to denote, in a general sense, a range of internal offices. At Bristow the numerous spaces and different circulation modes find clear and highly specific expression. The Modernist Movement saw itself as responding to the great age of the machine. Its well-known maxim that a house is “a machine for living in” (Corbusier) is telling. Bristow, with its cabinet-like enclosure and its numerous component parts, at least in a poetical sense, evokes the notion of a machine for housing people, in this case numerous people.

It is helpful to contrast the foregoing buildings with The Warwick (1315 Gravier St.), a 12 story apartment building from the early 1950s (architect unknown). Here a large blond brick building is fitted with suggestions of ribbon windows, achieved through the use of window units connected via contrasting brick bands. The contrasting brick bands are particularly prominent at the corners of the building, creating the illusion of an International Style trademark --windows that turn the corner. This design deviates in a fundamental way from the International Style by using contrasting brickwork in the manner of applied ornament, which would have been anathema to International Style theorists and architects.

There are two other large high-rise apartment buildings (now hotels) from the early 1950s, 2111 St. Charles Avenue and 2203 St. Charles, that partake of elements of the International Style. While important as rare examples of the International Style's influence in Louisiana, they do not adhere as closely to the tenets of the style as the four buildings detailed above. Both are big boxy buildings of brick (rather than the signature smooth white stucco) with the International Style influence resting primarily on ribbon and/or ribbon-like windows. They are also absent of ornament. 2203 St. Charles, built in 1951 as the Mayflower Apartments, has the signature ribbon windows at the corners, but the many façade windows (rectangular in shape) are ordered in bays. And the design is lacking the originality and crispness of the Bristow Tower. 2111 St. Charles, built in 1950 as the Wohl Apartments, features a façade with a plentitude of windows in varying shapes and sizes, all ordered in regular bays. Only those at the center are ribbon.

The Wohl and Mayflower apartment buildings are illustrative of a number of buildings in New Orleans from the 1950s and '60s that achieve a strong rectilinear feel, exhibit an absence of ornament, and graft some ribbon or ribbon window-like elements into the design. But the ribbon windows, or ribbon window-like

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elements, are organized on the façade using the time-honored device of regular modular bays. Almost all are multi-story, with the window sections aligning, one upon another, to form vertical elements. This denies the emphasis on horizontality so typical of the International Style. A further dilution of International Style tenets can be seen in a few buildings in the city where the International Style ribbon windows are set off in bays via vertical strips. And sometimes the ribbon window elements are set off with an enclosing masonry border – in effect, framed and limited in the classical sense. The latter is contrary to the International Style tenet that windows should have minimal or no surrounds – that they should be seen as a continuation of the wall surface rather than an interruption.

Mathes, Bergman and Associates:

The architectural firm of Mathes, Bergman and Associates was organized in 1958 (growing out of the earlier firm, Favrot, Reed, Mathes & Bergman, formerly Favrot and Reed). Earl L. Mathes was born in New Orleans in 1912, graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelors in Architecture in 1933, and joined the firm of Favrot and Reed in 1937. William E. Bergman, a native Texan, graduated from the University of Texas in 1936. Both men would have been in architecture school at a time when traditional architecture would have been the norm. It is known that the Tulane School of Architecture remained tradition-bound until the late-1940s, when it emerged as a major propagator of modern architecture within Louisiana. Most Americans were introduced to the new architecture with the 1932 International Style exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern Art. No doubt Mathes, Bergman and Associates designed in the modern idiom in the post-WWII years because it was indeed triumphant in American architecture. As Tulane School of Architecture graduate Saul Mintz noted, "It was all there was."

While there has not been a scholarly study of the firm's work, some comments can be made from post-war buildings known to have been designed by the firm (some highlighted on the successor firm's website, Mathes Brierre). Their 50 plus year old buildings ranged from classic International Style (the candidate), to International Style influenced, to modular grid Miesian (most by far in the last category). They were well connected enough in the early 1960s to be the joint architects of the New Formalist New Orleans Public Library, lead architects, Curtis and Davis, and the New Orleans Post Office and Federal Building (demolished), with Freret and Wolf, lead architects.

Southern Baptist Hospital:

The Southern Baptist Hospital (SBH) of New Orleans opened its doors in 1926, with Dr. Louis J. Bristow as superintendent. Bristow was a leader in the development of hospitals by the Southern Baptist Convention and a member of the Southern Baptist Hospital Commission. He remained superintendent at SBH New Orleans until 1947. He died in the city November 15, 1957.

The construction of the apartment building named in Dr. Bristow's honor was part of an overall expansion program for the hospital campus. A master plan by architects Mathes, Bergman and Associates and consultants Ellerbe and Company is dated July 1, 1961. Preliminary sketches showing the proposed construction were issued early in the summer of 1962. In July 1962, a contract was let for the first phase of construction – a parking garage, laundry building and power plant. (The circular down ramp of the parking garage is located immediately adjacent to the Bristow Tower.) The contract was let for Bristow Tower on January 10, 1963, with the dedication of the building occurring on March 6, 1964.

At present (summer 2015) developers are in negotiation with Ochsner Baptist Hospital (the owner) to secure a long-term lease on Bristow Tower. The intent is to convert it into a hotel.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

Bristow Tower
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

See above.

9. Major Bibliographical Resources

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

AIA Historical Directory, 1962 (available online).

Davis, Arthur Q. *It Happened by Design: The Life and Work of Arthur Q. Davis*. The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, University of New Orleans and the University Press of Mississippi, 2007.

DOCOMOMO/NO/LA. "New Orleans Regional Modernism." Available on-line as an app.

Fricker, Jonathan. "Louisiana Architecture, 1945-65, Modernism Triumphant." Prepared as a historic context for the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation in 2012.

Greene, Glen Lee. *The History of Southern Baptist Hospital*. Southern Baptist Convention, 1969.

Gutheim, Frederick. *Alvar Aalto*. New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1960.

Kanh, Hasan-Uddin. *International Style: Modernist Architecture from 1925 to 1965*. Koln, Germany: Taschen, 1998.

Kingsley, Karen and Tulane School of Architecture. "Modernism in Louisiana: A Decade of Progress, 1930-1940." Tulane School of Architecture, 1984.

New Orleans *Times-Picayune*. "Bristow Tower Is Dedicated." March 7, 1964.

Wilson, Samuel, Jr. *A Guide to Architecture of New Orleans, 1699-1959*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1959.

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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University

Bristow Tower
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than 1 acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 29.937277 Longitude: -90.105291

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The southern boundary follows the curb line of Magnolia Street. The western boundary follows the curb line of Cadiz Street. The eastern boundary runs parallel to the eastern elevation of Bristow Tower at a distance of 2 feet. The northern boundary is the rear wall of the 1980s gym addition (see submitted boundary map).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Boundaries were chosen to encompass the Bristow Tower and the non-historic 1980s gym addition. (Per Part 7, the tower is part of a larger hospital complex.) The narrow one story utilities corridor was not included because it is not functionally related to Bristow Tower, nor does it relate to Bristow Tower's architectural significance (the latter the source of its National Register eligibility).

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jonathan and Donna Fricker
organization: Fricker Historic Preservation Services, LLC
street & number: 998 Stanford Ave, #203
city or town: Baton Rouge state: LA zip code: 70808
e-mail: jonathanfricker@gmail.com
telephone: 225-571-5794
date: July and October 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Bristow Tower

Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Bristow Tower

City or Vicinity: New Orleans

County: Orleans

State: LA

Name of Photographer: Donna Fricker

Date of Photographs: 5/20/2015

- 1 of 25: Camera facing north/northwest; Main façade
- 2 of 25: Camera facing north; Main façade
- 3 of 25: Camera facing north; Main façade balcony detail
- 4 of 25: Camera facing north/northeast; Main façade first floor
- 5 of 25: Camera facing north/northeast; Main façade
- 6 of 25: Camera facing east; Side elevation
- 7 of 25: Camera facing southeast; Rear elevation
- 8 of 25: Camera facing southeast; Rear elevation detail
- 9 of 25: First floor interior, main hallway.
- 10 of 25: First floor interior; southwest corner.
- 11 of 25: Third floor elevator lobby
- 12 of 25: Third floor sample apartment
- 13 of 25: Fourth floor sample apartment
- 14 of 25: Fourth floor sample kitchen
- 15 of 25: Fifth floor stair well light fixture
- 16 of 25: Stair well fifth floor – balcony wall

Bristow Tower

Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA

County and State

17 of 25: Fifth floor sample apartment

18 of 25: Staircase seventh floor

19 of 25: 7th floor elevator lobby

20 of 25: View of 1980s connector between the tower and the gym addition; camera facing west.

21 of 25: Another view of the connector between the tower and they gym addition; camera facing west.

22 of 25: View of the east wall of the gym addition; camera facing northwest.

23 of 25: View of the rear wall of the tower as viewed from behind the gym addition; camera facing south.

24 of 25: View of the rear wall of the gym addition and infilled pool area; camera facing south.

25 of 25: Closer view of the infilled pool, also added in the 1980s with the gym; camera facing south.

Bristow Tower
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

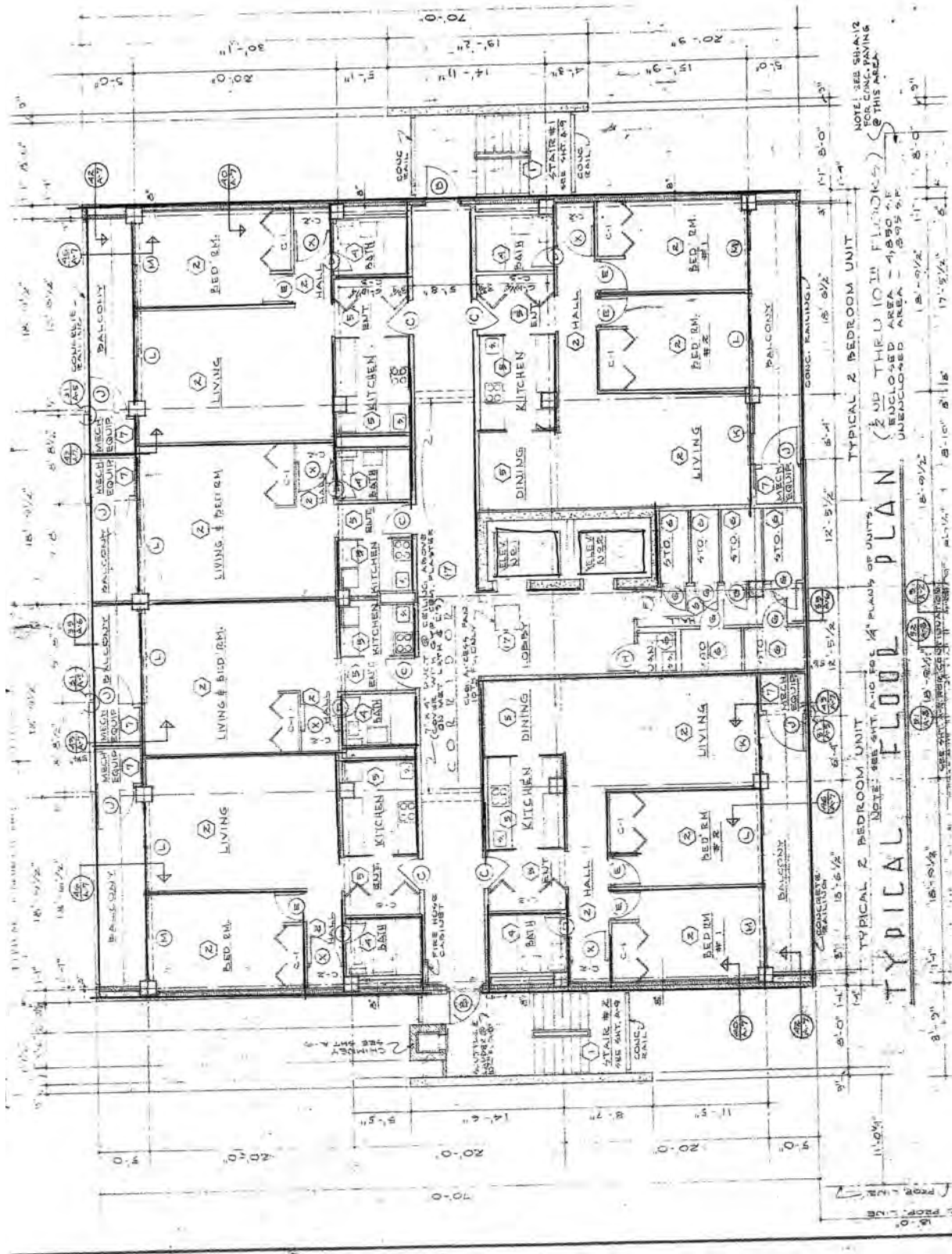


Figure 1. Original Floor Plan for Bristow Tower showing the layout of the residential floors. Image courtesy of Mathes, Bergman, and Associates.

Bristow Tower
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State



Figure 2. Block of Flats, Berlin, 1929, Walter Gropius; Image courtesy of Walter Gropius' *The New Architecture and The Bauhaus*, (1925; MIT Press English Version 1965)

Bristow Tower
Name of Property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State



Figure 3. Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Paimio, Finland, 1929-33, Alvar Aalto; Image courtesy of Frederick Gutheim's *Alvar Aalto* (New York; George Braziller, Inc. 1960).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Bristow Tower, Orleans Parish, LA



Latitude: 29.937277 Longitude: -90.105291

Bristow Tower, Orleans Parish, LA



Latitude: 29.937277 Longitude: -90.105291

Bristow Tower, Orleans Parish, LA



Latitude: 29.937277 Longitude: -90.105291

**Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish, LA
Boundary Map**

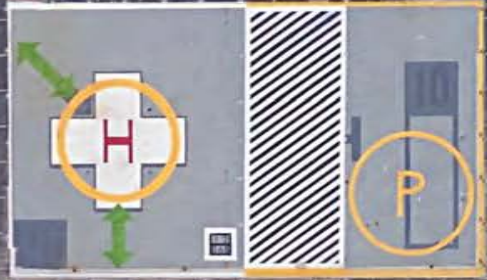
Boundary

Non-historic additions

Note: The utilities corridor
is not functionally related
to the Bristow Tower, but
does touch the building.

24
25
23

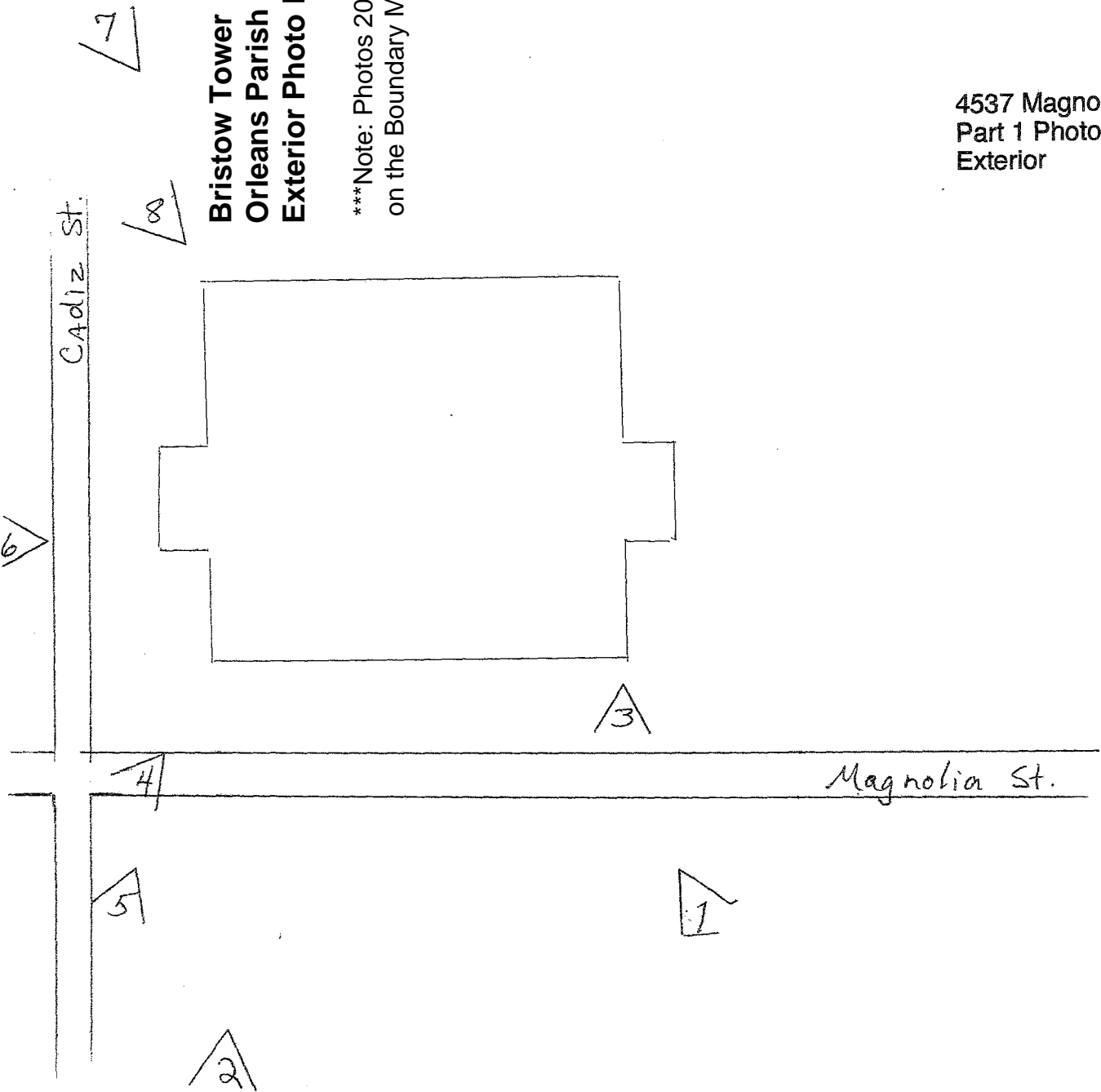
22
21
20



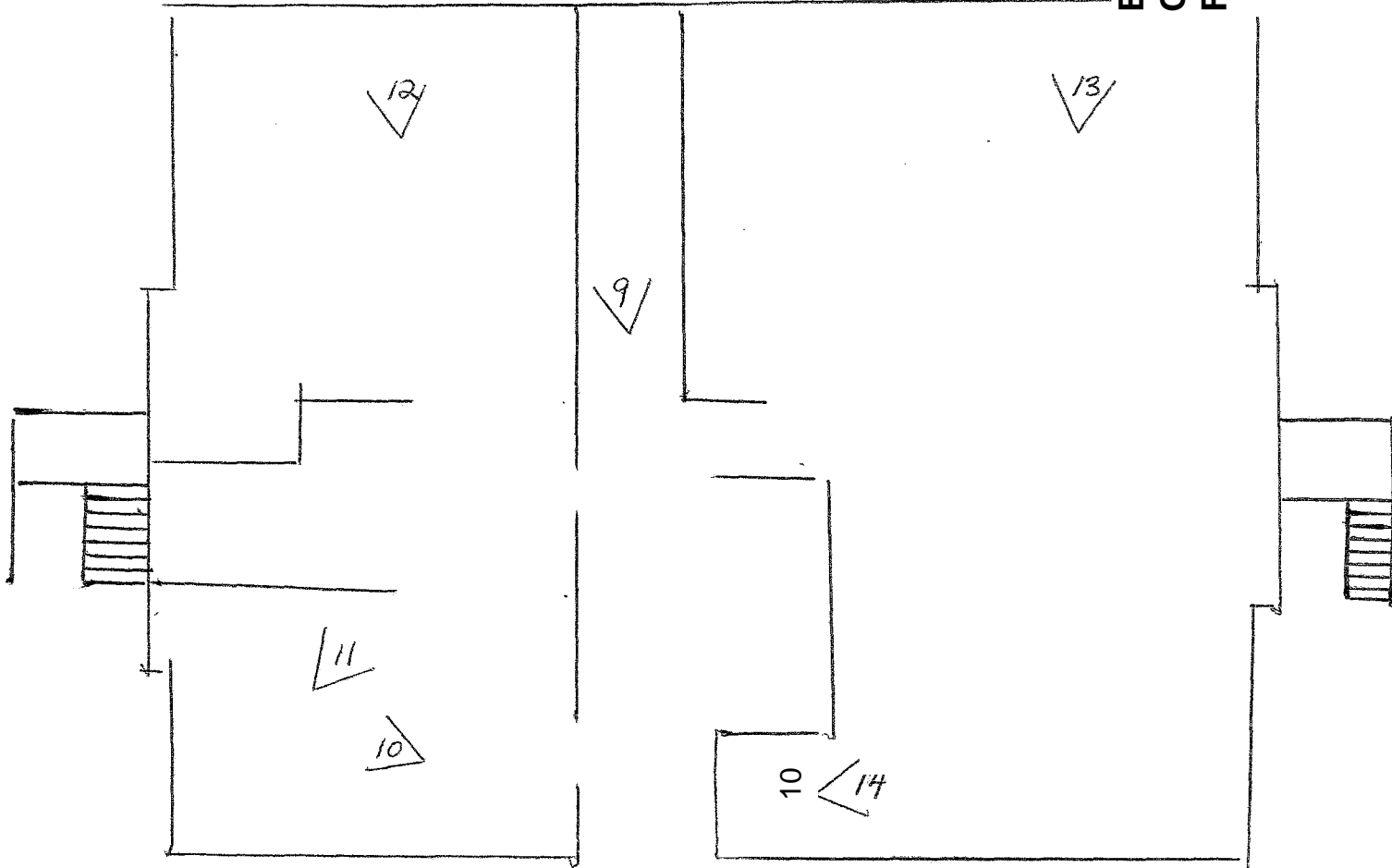
**Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Exterior Photo Key**

***Note: Photos 20-25 are
on the Boundary Map***

4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key
Exterior



Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
First Floor Photo

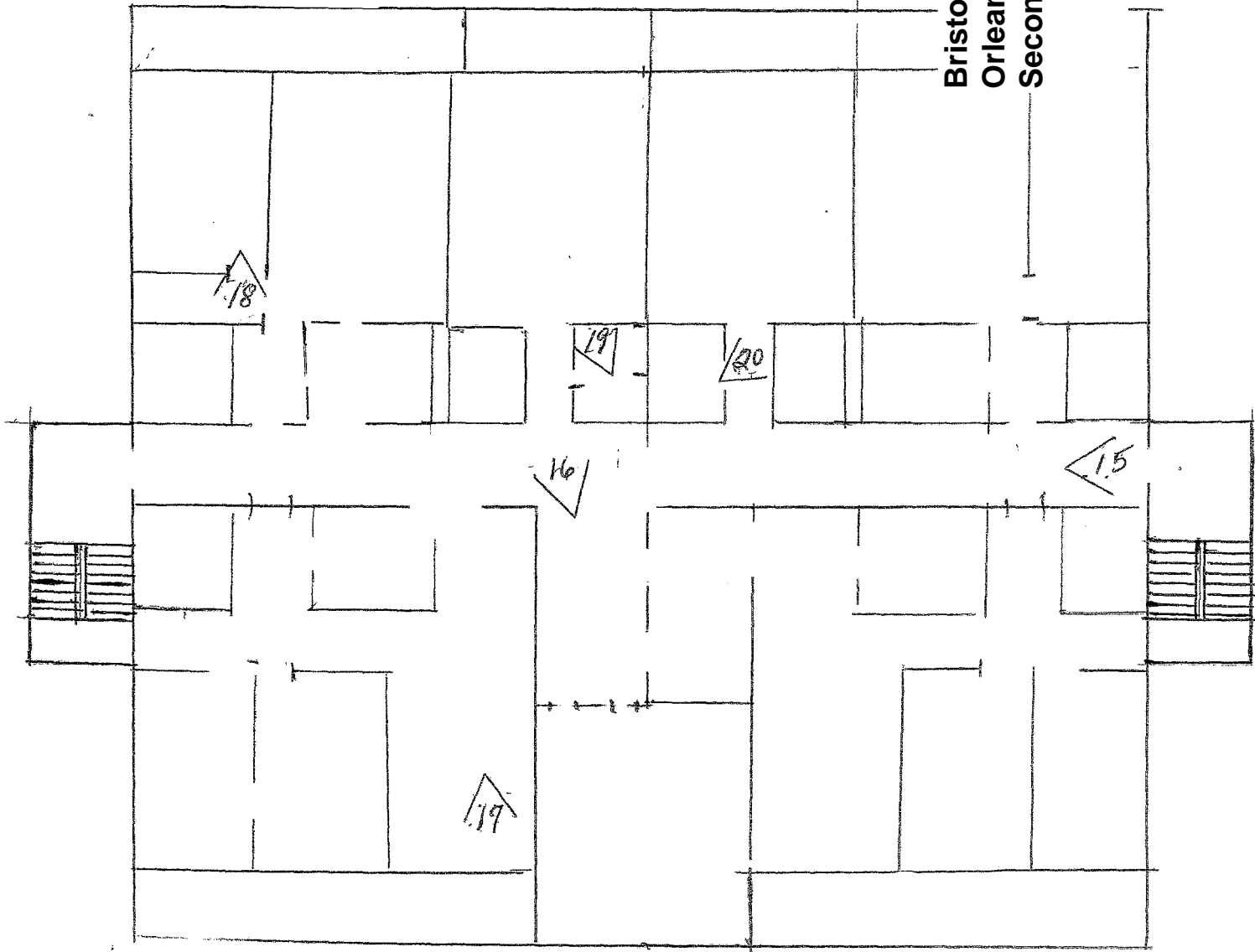


4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key

Magnolia St.

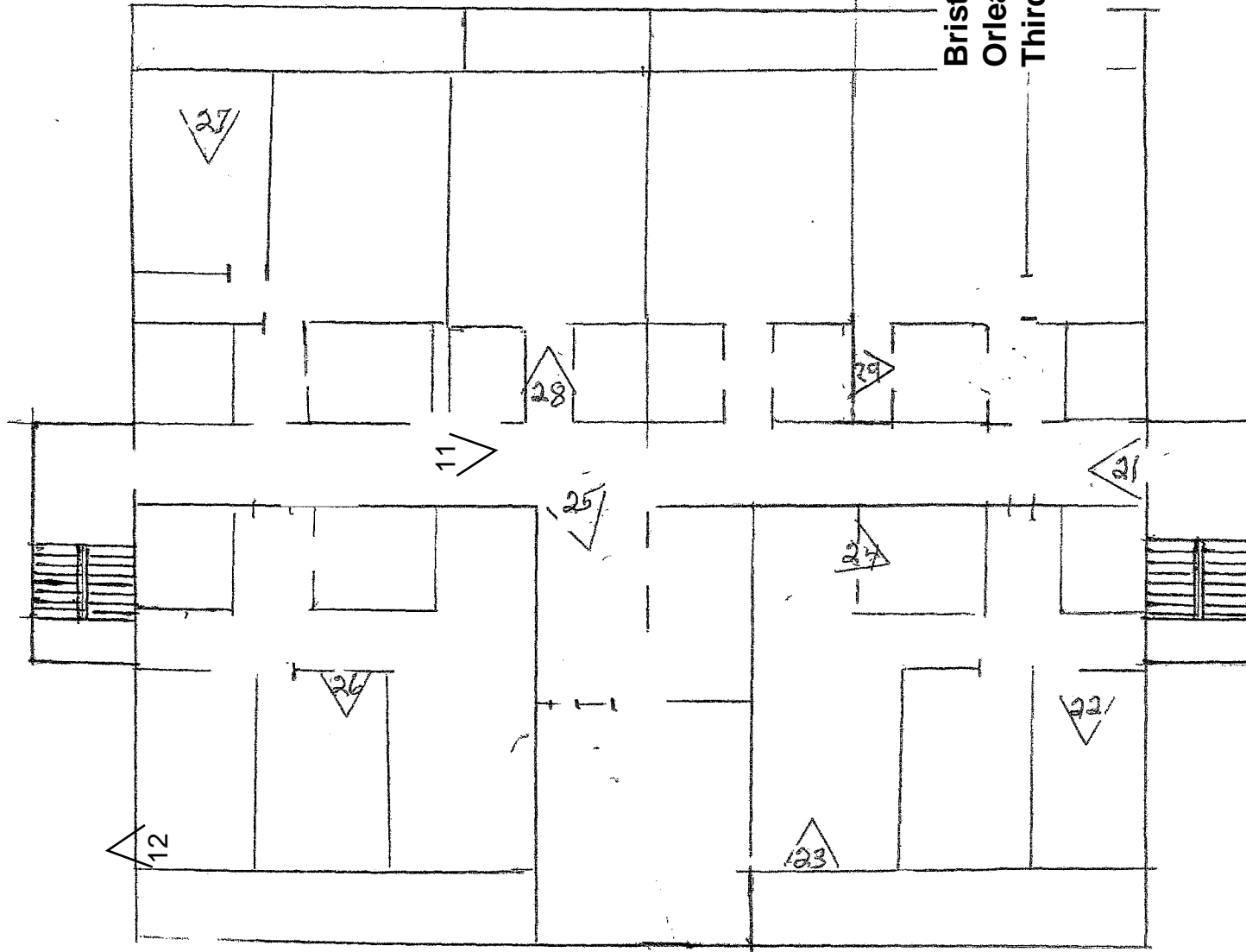
Floor 1

Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Second Floor Plan



4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key *Floor 2*

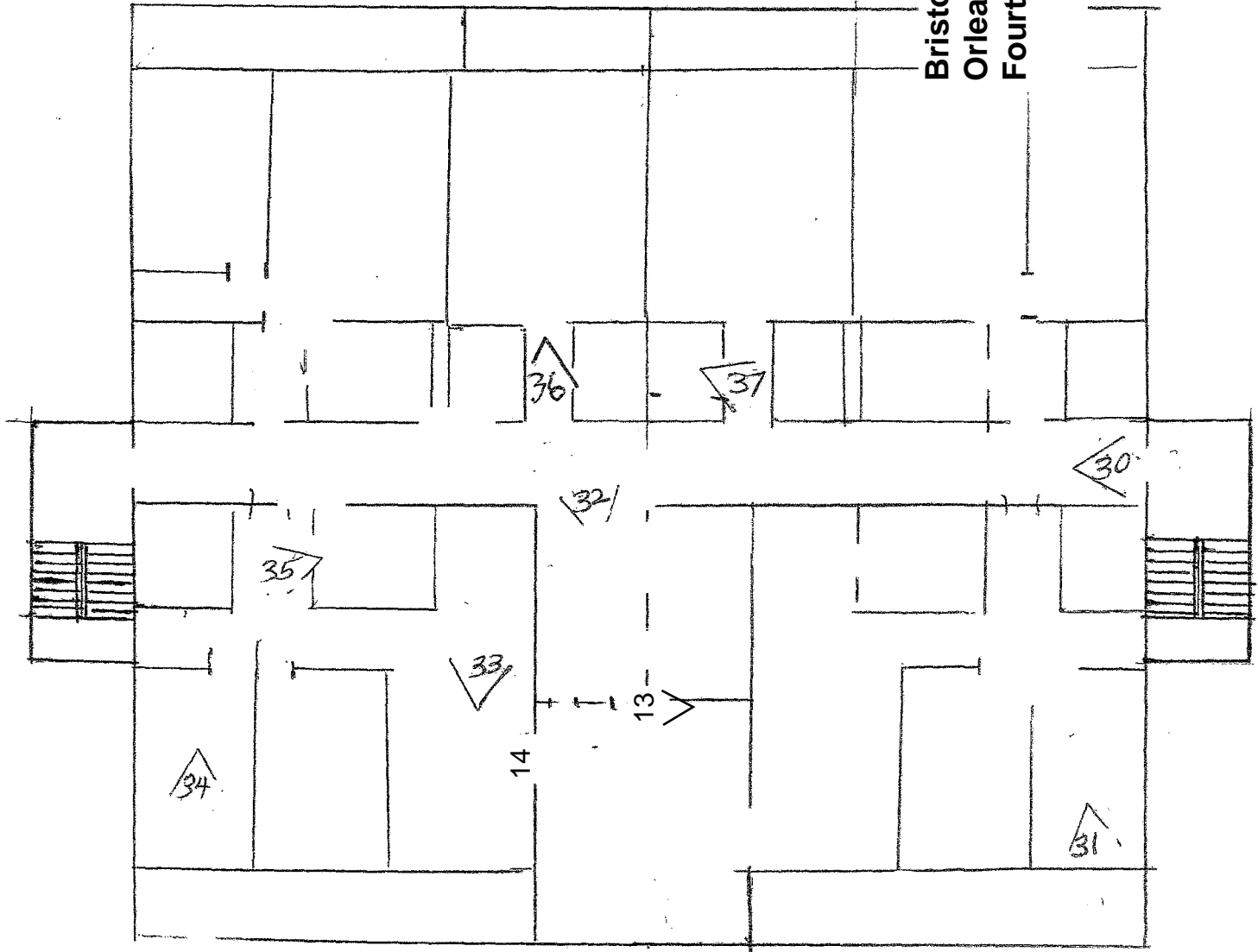
Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Third Floor Photo



4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key

Floor 3

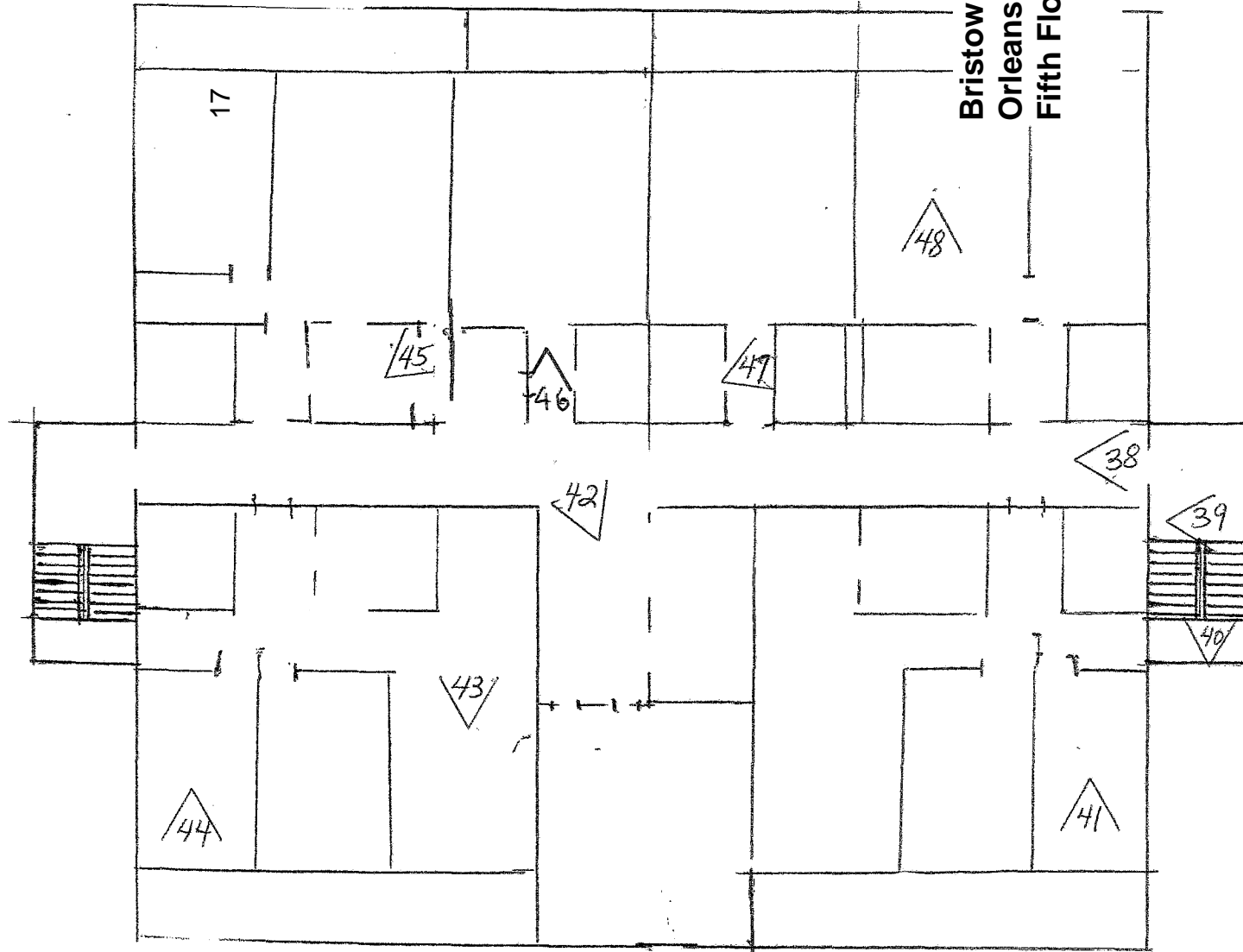
Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Fourth Floor Photo



4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key

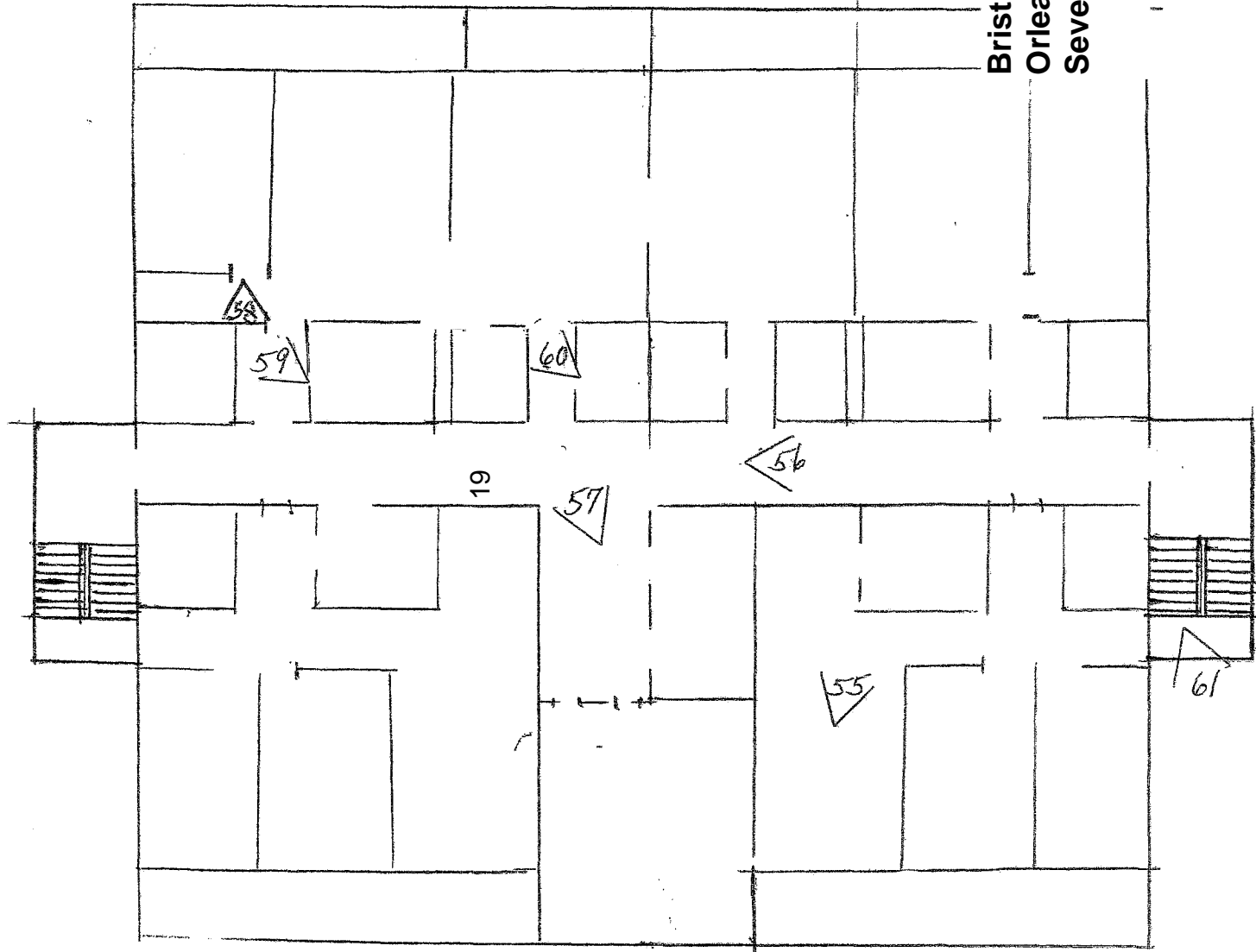
Floor 4

Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Fifth Floor Photo Key



4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key *Floor 5*

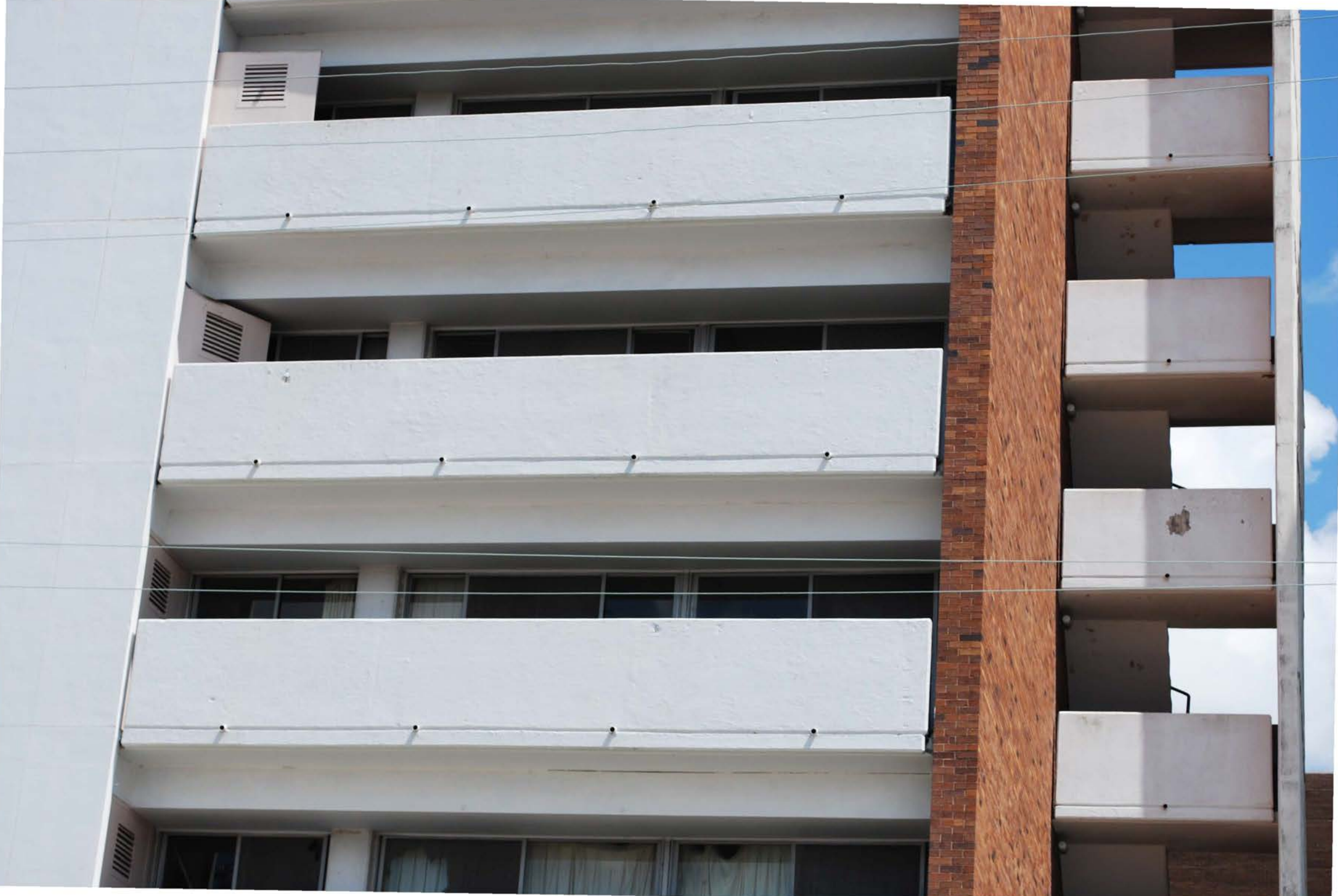
Bristow Tower
Orleans Parish
Seventh Floor P



4537 Magnolia St. (Bristow Tower)
Part 1 Photo Key Floor 7















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JANITOR

EXIT

EXIT

EXIT













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bristow Tower

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Orleans

DATE RECEIVED: 12/11/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/08/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/25/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/26/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15001001

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: Y PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1-27-2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Due to a weather-related govt closure, this property was automatically listed ~ 1-26-2016.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c

REVIEWER J. Gruber

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



RECEIVED 2280

DEC 11 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

JAY DARDENNE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

CHARLES R. DAVIS
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

December 10, 2015

TO: Mr. James Gabbert
National Park Service 2280, 8th Floor; National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street, NW; Washington, DC 20005

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: Bristow Tower, Orleans Parish, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Bristow Tower to the National Register of Historic Places. The second disk contains the photographs of the property in TIF format. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or jrichardson@crt.la.gov.

Thanks,

Jessica 

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- CD with electronic images (tif format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- Other:

Comments:

- _____ Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- _____ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67 (**Part 1 was denied**)
- _____ The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do _____ do not _____
- _____ constitute a majority of property owners.
- _____ Other: