

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received FEB 14 1985
date entered MAR 14 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic German Insurance Bank

and/or common United Way Building

2. Location

street & number 207 W. Market Street na not for publication

city, town Louisville na vicinity of congressional district

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> na in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> na being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Farm Credit Banks of Louisville c/o Bob Weis, Facilities Manager

street & number P. O. Box 23290

city, town Louisville na vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 517 W. Jefferson Street

city, town Louisville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>na</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The German Insurance Bank is located in the Central Business District of Louisville in the same city block as the Levy Brothers Building (National Register, 1978) and one block south of the 300 Block West Main Street Historic District (National Register, 1977).

The German Insurance Bank is a three story limestone structure which is rich in detail of the Second Empire, Romanesque and Classical styles. The building was originally built with one bay and a clock tower to the side. An additional bay was added in 1900 to the west side. This caused some alteration in the lower section of the clock tower but the bay itself matched the earlier bay. Some later alteration was made in the lower floor converting the two central windows into doorways and the two flanking doors into windows.

The first floor now consists of one window and door area per bay. Each bay has a central entryway set in rusticated stone arches. This was originally a window area. Each bay also includes a window area, which consists of a double mullied window with an arch window above it. The arch window consists of small panes with rosette inserts. This was originally a doorway and the window is set in the doorjamb. The double mullied window is separated by a fluted column. Below the window is an area of rusticated stone. These windows and stone are most likely the original central windows. The lower jamb around the windows protrudes from the facade and is in the form of a pilaster. The upper section of the jamb is flush with the facade and consists of twisted engaged columns in Romanesque style. The archway is highly embellished and has a keystone. The engaged columns support an architrave and pediment. The face of the pediment is carved in scrolls with a cartouche with the monogram GB.

The second floor consists of a pair of double mullied windows which are flanked by fluted pilasters and are recessed in each bay. A stone balustrade forms a balcony in front of the window. The bay is also flanked by Ionic pilasters. The bays are divided by a recessed stone panel. The windows have a plain stone entablature with rosettes above them. Each pilaster supports a section of entablature from which two arches spring. Three windows are contained in each arch on the third floor. The windows are divided by large brackets with acanthus leaves. Triangular areas of carvings fill out the area above the arch. Single pilasters flank the ends of the building on the third floor. A square panel with carvings of leaves and medallions divide the bay.

The clock tower is above this panel. The tower is square with a mansard roof. On each face of the roof is a clock. The roof is articulated by a cornice with brackets and dentils. The tower has one window encased in stone. The tower protrudes slightly from the plane of the facade and rests on two brackets. The brackets have a panel between them with the date 1887. Each bay of the building is capped by an extended cornice with a corbel table and end brackets. A band of carved leaves with small circular windows is below the cornice. (Photos 1-4)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1887; 1900; 1919; 1932 **Builder/Architect** Charles D. Meyer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The German Insurance Bank is one of Louisville's most grand architectural landmarks. The Eclectic design which Charles D. Meyer imposed on this structure compares favorably with many of Meyer's other local works, including the Hart Block. The plasticity of the ornamental work and preciseness of the styling are amount the best in Louisville.

The German Insurance Bank grew out of the German Insurance Company incorporated in 1854. This is the fourth structure which housed the bank renamed Liberty National Bank in 1918, until 1958. In 1961, Metro United Way purchased the building for use as headquarters. The building is currently used as offices for the Farm Credit Banks of Louisville.

The bank building grew architecturally as the bank business grew. Three major additions were made to the original structure. The first, in 1900, was a precise duplication of the original, so skillfully accomplished that the main facade appears to have been built from a singular design. It is clear that the architect had considerable respect for the original design. Charles D. Meyer himself may have been responsible for this addition.

The second addition occurred in 1919 with the construction of the north wing, which faces South Second Street. The design is symmetrical with classical elements. Although it is a well designed building in its own right, it does not serve to detract from the character of the main structure. It was in 1919 that the exquisite iron and wood canopy was added to the main entry on Market Street. The entry itself was also altered by pairing the doors in the central bays. The canopy was removed in recent years.

Finally, in 1932, the Art Deco annex designed by local architect and builder Walter C. Wagner, was constructed. This buff brick annex is one of the earliest examples of Art Deco influences in Louisville. Louisville unfortunately has little Art Deco architecture remaining. The bricks are laid at a diagonal which creates a lateral saw-tooth pattern. Both of these later two additions are now integral parts of the interior floor plans.

Charles D. Meyer, (1875-1905) architect of the 1887 core structure, was one of Louisville's finest architects. The German Bank Building and the Hart Block (National Register, 1974) are considered his most exuberant local works. Meyer's formal training was acquired from the Technical Institute in Germany, and worked in Louisville with his father, John Meyer, also an architect for many years.

The German Insurance Bank Building remains today as a local architectural gem. Eclectic in style, the plasticity and exuberance of the design are among Louisville's best. This building is also a chronicle of styles from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .35 acres

Quadrangle name New Albany, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

16	609050	4234650
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

City of Louisville Block 17 A, Lots 114, 115 and 142. The building occupies the entire area of the combined lots.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. A. Allgeier, Director of Research

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission

date 12/84

street & number 727 W. Main Street

telephone (502) 587-3501

city or town Louisville

state Kentucky

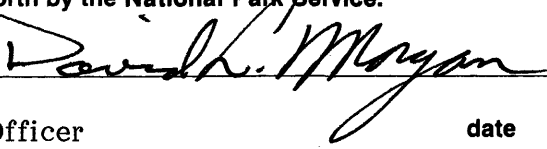
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

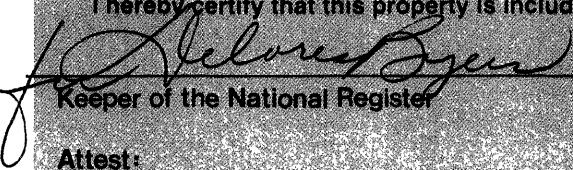


title State Historic Preservation Officer

date February 5, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register



Entered in the National Register

date 3-14-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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The German Insurance Bank /Louisville, Jefferson Co., Kentucky
Continuation sheet

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A buff brick addition was made to the Bank Building in 1932, designed by Walter C. Wagner. It is a two-story, modest Art Deco style structure which is located on the corner of South Second Street and Market Street. Five bays face Market and seven face South Second Street. Vertical emphasis is achieved by the brick patterns. The bricks were laid at a diagonal, creating lateral ridges in the facade. The corner bays on both facades are comprised of wide expanses of this treatment, from street level to above the second floor windows. This treatment is repeated between the windows. The first floor fenestration is also paired. Panels of recessed brick in a square pattern are located between floors, but the windows do not carry transom lights. The second floor windows are banded by a course of patterned brick work which emulates dentils. A wide parapet wall extends above this dentil course. (Photos 5 & 6)

Behind this buff brick addition is the north wing of the main building, constructed in 1919. It is a brick structure with stone facade, three bays in width. The central bay contains a double entry with sidelights and transom, and is sheltered by a metal-roofed hood. Large brackets support this hood. The fenestration consists of three window groupings. Tri-part windows on the first floor which flank the entrance, and second floor four-part windows with vertical muntins are within a single surround. The relieving arch above the second floor windows is capped by a keystone and stone surround with label stops. The central bay, second floor above the entrance is identical to the flanking bays. Large paired brackets support an extended cornice. A geometric balustrade extends across the facade. (Photos 6 & 7)

In 1919, an iron and wood canopy was also added to the Market Street facade. Decorative iron and wood with an eagle and globes embellished this canopy, which was recently removed.

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Continuation sheet

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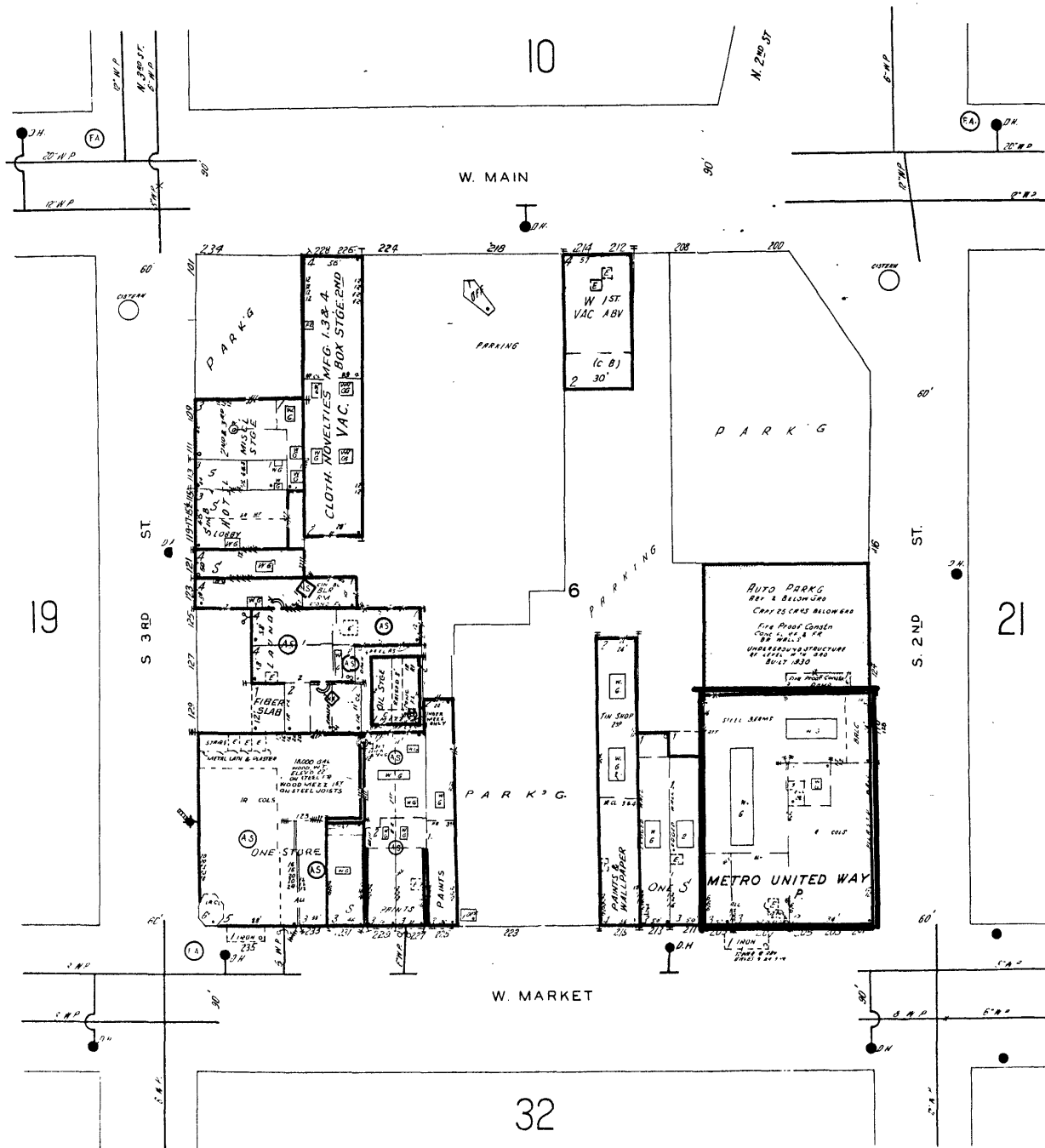
Illustrated Guide to Louisville and Kentucky, 1891.

Illustrated Industrial Souvenir of Louisville, 1902.

Louisville Free Public Library, Banks Clippings File.

Jefferson County (Ky) Deed Book 3697, p. 517 (1961); Book 3545, p. 247 (1958);
Book 1799, p.20 (1941); Book 529, p. 472 (1900); Book 212, p. 209 (1897).

Reibel, R. C. Louisville Panorama.Louisville: Liberty National Bank, 1954.



German Insurance Bank Building
207 W. Market St.
Louisville, Jefferson Co., Kentucky
Sanborn Map
Sanborn Map Co.
Pelham, NY