

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____ 1 _____

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100002699

Date Listed: 07/23/2018

Property Name: Shannon's Funeral Home

County: Tarrant

State: TX

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation



Signature of the Keeper

7/23/2018

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Bibliographic References:

The box for Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) should be checked (Tax Project #36974. Part 1 approved--9/21/17.)

The TEXAS SHPO was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

56 2699

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Shannon's Funeral Home
Other name/site number: Meissner-Brown Funeral Home
Name of related multiple property listing: n/a

2. Location

Street & number: 2717 Avenue B
City or town: Fort Worth State: Texas County: Tarrant
Not for publication: n/a Vicinity: n/a

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 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 levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 6/1/18
Signature of certifying official / Title
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register
 other, explain: _____

[Signature] Date of Action 7/23/2018
Signature of the Keeper

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

<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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Funerary: mortuary

Current Functions: Vacant/Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Mission / Spanish Colonial Revival

Principal Exterior Materials: Stucco; Other: clay tile

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-9)

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: n/a

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period of Significance: 1937

Significant Dates: 1937

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): n/a

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): n/a

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-14)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-15 through 9-16)

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 (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): n/a

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property: Less than one acre

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (use decimal degree format)

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

1. Latitude: 32.734506° N Longitude: -97.286258° W

Verbal Boundary Description: Lots 7-9, Block 2, Boaz & Dillow Addition to Fort Worth, TX.

Boundary Justification: This is the property historically associated with the nominated resource, excluding the parking lot north of the alley (Lots 4-6).

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Susan Allen Kline, Consultant for Dale Sellers, Phoenix I Restoration & Construction, Ltd.

Organization:

Street & number: 2421 Shirley Avenue

City or Town: Fort Worth

State: Texas

Zip Code: 76104

Email: sskline@sbcglobal.net

Telephone: 817-921-0127

Date: February 13, 2018

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Map-17 through Map-22)

Additional items (see continuation sheets Figure-23 through Figure-27)

Photographs (see continuation sheet Photo-28 through Photo-34)

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photographs

Name of Property: Shannon's Funeral Home
City or Vicinity: Fort Worth
County, State: Tarrant County, Texas
Photographer: Susan Allen Kline
Date Photographed: February 5, 2018

Photo 1

View: Northwest at front (south) and east elevations

Photo 2

View: Northwest at front (south) elevation

Photo 3

View: Northeast at front (south) elevation

Photo 4

View: North at west entrance, front (south) elevation

Photo 5

View: West at east elevation

Photo 6

View: Southwest at east and rear (north) elevations

Photo 7

View: Southwest at tower detail (east and north sides of tower)

Photo 8

View: South at rear (north) elevation

Photo 9

View: South at west elevation

Photo 10

View: Southwest in chapel

Photo 11

View: North showing details of ceiling trusses in chapel

Photo 12

View: Southeast in Room 3 (west wing)

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.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Narrative Description

The 1937 Shannon's Funeral Home located at 2717 Avenue B in Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, is an asymmetrical one-story, stucco and clay tile building constructed in the Mission Revival style with Spanish Eclectic influences. It is sited at the northwest corner of Avenue B and Nashville Avenue in the Polytechnic area of the city's east side. The building's notable features include its gabled red clay tile roof over the chapel wing, large round window below the gable's peak on the front and rear elevations, arched doorways, multiple-light arched and rectangular steel casement windows, and a 35-foot domed tower at the southeast corner of the chapel wing. Its exterior has been restored to its historic appearance and the interior has been sensitively rehabilitated for potential use as a church, event space, or other commercial use. The building retains a high degree of integrity.

The former Shannon's Funeral Home in Fort Worth, Texas is an asymmetrical one-story, rectangular shaped building that is approximately 96 feet wide and 60 feet deep. The building is divided into two sections; the east section has a gabled roof and the west section has a flat roof. The gable roof covers the chapel and the flat roof covers what was the mortuary and business side of the building. The building's exterior is constructed of hollow clay tile sheathed with a white stucco finish. Distinctive features include a red clay tiled-roof, metal balustrades, cast stone ornament, a domed tower at the southeast corner, a large round window on the chapel's south and north elevations, buttresses around the chapel, arched windows and doors, and a terrace fronting the west entrance on the south elevation. All but two of the original steel multiple-light casement windows remain. Small vents are evenly spaced above grade on all elevations. These provide ventilation to the building's pier and beam foundation. The current owner acquired the building in 2015. Since then, it has been sensitively rehabilitated with the assistance of state and federal historic tax credits. The building and its setting are described in greater detail below.

Setting:

The former Shannon's Funeral Home sits on a trapezoidal-shaped parcel that is bordered on the south by Avenue B, diagonally on the east by Nashville Avenue, an alley on the north, and a one-story house on the west. The surrounding neighborhood is a mixture of residential, institutional, and commercial buildings. Between East Vickery Avenue (two blocks to the north) and East Rosedale Street (four blocks to the south) the east side of Nashville Avenue is dominated by the campus of William James Middle School, a three-story Collegiate Gothic Revival style building constructed in the 1920s with later additions. Opposite the school is a recently constructed police substation. Smaller commercial buildings and parking areas line the rest of the street. Between Nashville Avenue and Conner Avenue to the west, the neighborhood is mostly residential dating from the late 1910s to the 1930s (Maps 4 and 6). Nearby is the large campus of Polytechnic Senior High School (1930s, with later additions). Immediately west of the campus is the nearly 100-acre Sycamore Park.

The property's Deed History Card from the late 1930s and a Sanborn Map from 1951 (Map 6) indicate that previously there was a large brick garage on the north end of the property bordering the alley. It is no longer extant. The 1951 Sanborn Map also indicates that there was a small appendage at the rear of the chapel although it does not appear on the Deed History Card and was not present when the current owner acquired the property. A non-historic flat-roofed addition of wood and asbestos shingles was possibly added in the 1970s. It may have connected the building with the garage. According to aerial photographs, the garage had been demolished by 2001.¹ There was a small non-historic shed-roofed outbuilding north of the building near the west property line when the current owner acquired the property. The shed and the rear addition have since been removed. The area behind the building has been paved with concrete for parking (Photo 8) as have lots on the north side of the alley. The latter parking area is not included in this nomination.

¹ Aerial photograph encompassing 2717 Avenue B, Fort Worth, TX, 2001, available from Historic Aerials at <https://www.historicaerials.com> (accessed July 25, 2017).

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Front (South) Elevation: The asymmetrical front elevation faces south toward Avenue B. It is approximately 96 feet in length and is divided into two distinct zones. The east zone consists of the gable-roofed chapel and domed tower, inspired by Mission bell towers, (Photos 1 & 2) and the flat-roofed west zone originally contained the mortuary and business areas of the funeral home (Photos 3 & 4). When the current owner acquired the building in 2015, the gable roof of the chapel had tan-colored composition shingles. Historic images indicate that the roof was originally covered with clay tile (Figures 3 & 4). The composition shingles have been replaced with red clay tile that matches the historic coping on the west wing. The stucco on the exterior has been repaired as part of the building's recent rehabilitation.

Chapel wing: There are four buttresses on the south elevation; two at the base of the tower and two near the west end of the chapel. A 35-foot tall tower is at the chapel's southeast corner. The square tower is surmounted by a dome. At the base of the tower is an arched entrance. At some point, the door opening had been changed from its original arched form to a rectangular shape. The arch has been replicated and paired rounded-arched wood-framed doors with glass panels have been installed. Above the entrance are five vertically aligned decorative red clay tile circles (perhaps to simulate vents, Photo 2). The dome sits on a large cube with tall arched openings on all four sides. Metal balustrades front the arches (Photo 7). The interior of the tower has a beadboard ceiling. The tower's ceiling and dome are painted turquoise. Historic images indicate there used to be a small cupola/finial on top of the dome. It had been removed by 2013 but likely much earlier (Figure 4 & 9).

To the left (west) of the tower is a large round window opening on the gable end of the wall. The window is divided into quadrants by wood muntins. By 2015, the window was in extremely poor condition. It has been replaced by a window with wood muntins that replicate the design and profile of the original. Beneath this window are three narrow steel-framed multiple-light fixed windows. Between the western two buttresses is a rectangular window opening filled with paired steel-framed multiple-light casement windows. New glass has been installed in these windows.

West wing: As mentioned, the western portion of the building has a flat roof (Photos 1-3). Red clay tile is used as coping around the parapet. This section is divided into two zones. The right (east) section contains an arched entrance at its center. The entrance is surrounded by cast stone ornament. The original door was missing and the arched opening had been infilled with a rectangular opening. The arch has been reopened and paired doors similar to the ones at the base of the tower have been installed. Flanking the entrance are three multiple-light steel casement windows with new glass. Above each set of windows is a rounded cast stone medallion with an urn motif (Photo 4). The center of the west section of this wing contains a blind arch infilled with polychrome bluish-green and brown Batchelder ceramic tiles. In the center of the arch is a ceramic cherub's head on a background of smaller polychrome brown ceramic tiles (Photo 3). This feature brings to mind a spout for a fountain although there is no indication it was ever used as such. Above the blind arch (and below the parapet) are seven arched niches that are infilled with a latticed-patterned cast stone grill. The lattices are painted red similar to the color of the clay tile roof and the backgrounds are painted turquoise (Photo 3).

In front of the west entrance and its flanking windows is a terrace paved with red brick. It is approached on the south by three stairs. Flanking the stairs and at the terrace's corners are stuccoed piers. Between the piers are metal balustrades. These were the existing balustrades when the building was acquired in 2015 (Photo 4).

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

East Elevation: The east elevation faces Nashville Avenue. The tower is on the left (south) end of the building (Photo 5). At its base is a single multiple-light fixed window. Above it are the vertically aligned red clay tile circles like those on the south elevation. The arched opening near the top of the tower has a balustrade fronting it like those on the south elevation. Also on this elevation are buttresses like those on the front elevation. Abutting the north end of the tower is a small, projecting gabled-roofed vestibule (Photo 5). In 2015, the roof was covered with composition shingles but is now covered with a red standing seam metal roof. The east elevation of the vestibule has a rounded arched opening that provides access to the east entrance to the building. Prior to the building's acquisition in 2015, the north and south rounded arched windows north of this vestibule had been infilled with concrete block but the original paired multiple-light steel casement windows were retained behind the infill. The concrete block was removed and the original windows revealed. After 1951, the two center rounded arched window openings were removed and a hipped roof vestibule was added at this location (Figure 9). As part of the rehabilitation of the building, this vestibule was removed and the window openings restored. Multiple-light steel-framed windows with the same profile as the original were installed (Photo 6). The original windows on this elevation have new glass.

North (Rear) Elevation: This elevation is divided into two sections like the front elevation; the gabled section is on the east (left) end of the building and the flat roofed section is on the west (right) end. The gabled section has a large round window opening on the gable end. It was boarded over when the building was acquired in 2015. A new round window replicating the features of the original south window has been installed. At the ground level below this window is an entrance with paired flush steel doors. Each side of the entrance is flanked by a rectangular opening filled with multiple-light steel-framed windows. This wing also has buttresses. The west section of this elevation features two above-grade entrances with flush steel doors. Between the entrances are three rectangular window openings filled with paired multiple-light steel-framed casement windows. A metal canopy extended from the right entrance to a shed-roofed outbuilding. A post-1970 addition with carport obscured much of the original elevation. As mentioned previously, the addition and carport have been removed as well as the canopy and outbuilding (Maps 3 & 7 and Photos 6 & 8). New glass was installed in the windows.

West Elevation: The west elevation sits close to the west property line and the adjacent house (Photo 9). It has only two window openings. Both are steel multiple-light fixed windows located near the north end. The north window has frosted wire glass.

Interior: The interior retains its basic configuration. Because the building had experienced movement causing cracks in the walls, prior owners had installed wood paneling to hide the cracks and the arched opening on the west side of the chapel had been squared off. Dropped ceilings had been installed in much of the west wing. Subsequent water infiltration caused extensive damage to walls, floors, and ceilings. There was also substantial fire damage in different areas as well as mold. The wood paneling has been removed and walls re-plastered or rebuilt with dry wall as needed. The arch on the west side of the chapel was revealed. There were wood floors in the chapel and west wing except for a concrete floor in the northwest corner of the building. The latter area had been used as part of the mortuary function of the building. A portion of this area was converted to a unisex ADA-compliant bathroom and the floor was covered with ceramic tile. Two additional restrooms have ceramic tile floors. Red clay tile floors has been installed in the halls and a rear room that was modified for use as a kitchen. Two small offices have carpeted floors (see Figure 1 for floor plan).

The chapel is the most significant space in the building. It is accessed through the tower's south entrance, the east entrance facing Nashville Avenue, through the double doors on the north elevation, or from inside the west wing. It has an open volume. Wood trusses beneath the gabled roof are exposed and have metal gussets and joist brackets giving them a rustic quality (Photos 10 & 11). The configuration of the members resembles a King Post truss. Exposed wood beams are on the ceiling between the trusses. The beams and trusses are stained and varnished. Centered on the south wall beneath the round window is a stage. It is set within a rounded arched proscenium (Photo 10). New ceiling fans with lights are

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

suspended from the ceiling. LED lights discretely installed on the top side of the lower truss beams are programmed to change colors but are separately operated from the chapel's other lights.

Alterations: As described, the building was altered over the decades. Until the current owner acquired it in 2015, it had been vacant for several years and suffered from deferred maintenance and vandalism. Its recent rehabilitation resulted in the removal of non-original additions on the east and north elevations, the installation of missing windows on the east side, and new round windows in the chapel wing that replicated the original. Original windows received new glass. The arched entrances on the north elevation were rebuilt. Red clay tiles were installed on the chapel's roof and the exterior's stucco repaired. These and other repairs returned the exterior to its historic appearance. A missing feature is a cornerstone that was laid in May 1937. Its original location is unknown and it is not known when it was removed. Another missing feature is the small cupola/finial on top of the tower's dome. Recent interior work included the removal of non-original wood paneling and dropped ceilings, re-plastering of walls in the chapel, opening the arch between the chapel and west wing, and refinishing wood floors. New spaces were created in the west wing to accommodate modern restrooms and kitchen space. Modern but compatible light fixtures have been installed throughout the building.

As a result of its recent rehabilitation, the former Shannon's Funeral Home retains a high degree of integrity, including the aspects of setting, location, and feeling. Nashville Avenue to the east is still an important north/south corridor in east Fort Worth but is lined with fewer residences than it was when the funeral home was constructed. The 2700 block of Avenue B retains its residential feel. The building also retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The exterior retains its distinctive character-defining features such as stuccoed walls, a domed tower, steel multiple-light windows (although the glass has been mostly replaced), arched entrances, and blind arch with ceramic tile inlay. Red clay tile once again covers the chapel's roof. On the interior, workmanship is evident in the chapel's rustic wood ceiling beams and trusses. The building no longer functions as a funeral home and thus lacks integrity of association.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Shannon's Funeral Home is an excellent example of the Mission Revival style with Spanish Eclectic influences in Fort Worth, Texas. In particular, the one-story clay tile and stucco building's domed tower makes it unique among extant buildings constructed in this style in the city. Built on the edge of a residential neighborhood in east Fort Worth, it also has significance as a building type. It is believed to be the earliest extant funeral home building constructed for that sole purpose located outside the city's downtown core. The building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C for Architecture. The period of significance is 1937, the year of construction.

Early Mortuaries in Fort Worth

In the latter part of the 19th century and prior to the establishment of "funeral homes" and the creation of the profession of "funeral director," many funerals were under the purview of the livery stable operator (transportation of the body and carriages for loved ones), a carpenter (maker of caskets), or furniture dealer (many of whom carried caskets). Fort Worth's first trained undertaker, George L. Gause, got his start in the funeral business via the livery stable scenario. He came to Fort Worth in 1870 where he studied law under his father, Col. William R. Gause. In 1876, three years after Fort Worth was incorporated and the same year the Texas & Pacific Railway arrived in the city, he opened the Missouri Wagon Yard at Rusk (now Commerce) and 3rd streets. Renting carriages for funerals became a big part of his business leading him to venture "East" to study embalming. After returning to the city, he opened "an undertaking parlor" with Frank Flenner in 1879. This was the same year that the City Cemetery and the Colored Cemetery were established northwest of the central business district. In 1887, Gause and John Wilkes built the Palace Livery Stable at 310 W. Weatherford Street, a few blocks west of the Tarrant County Courthouse. In conjunction with the livery operations, the business also carried "a full line of undertakers' goods in addition to conducting funerals." This building is no longer extant.²

Moving from the livery stable, early mortuary companies in Fort Worth were typically found in commercial buildings in downtown Fort Worth. These were generally leased spaces that were often shared with other tenants. However, in 1915, the Fort Worth Undertaking Company constructed a two-story (with basement) brick building downtown at Lamar and Texas streets for its use (since demolished). The first floor contained a chapel that could be converted to three smaller chapels. Also on that floor were an office, a women's restroom, embalming rooms, and rooms for displaying caskets and associated merchandise. The upper floor contained living quarters for the manager and other rooms for the use of guests.³

Beginning in the early 1920s, mortuary services in a "funeral home" began to be adopted by the city's undertakers who purchased large houses outside of the downtown district and established their businesses there. Two were established on Pennsylvania Avenue in what had been the Quality Hill neighborhood. The previously mentioned George L. Gause and his partner and son-in-law, John Morton Ware, purchased the Neil P. Anderson House at 1251 Pennsylvania Avenue and began operating out of it in 1923. The company remained at this location until it was destroyed by fire in 1979. In 1929, the former James H. Moore home at 1326 Pennsylvania Avenue became home to the Robertson-Muellar-Harper Funeral Home and remained there until 1955 when it moved to a building on 8th Avenue it had constructed specifically as its new place of business. The old residence now houses the Junior Woman's Club of Fort Worth.⁴

² "Black Hearses Carried the Dead 50 Years Ago," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 30, 1949, from the vertical file "Funeral Homes," 614.64, Fort Worth Library, Genealogy and Local History Department, Fort Worth, Texas.

³ "Undertakers New Plant to Cost \$20,000," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 13, 1915.

⁴ Brenda McClurkin and Historic Fort Worth, Inc., *Fort Worth's Quality Hill* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), pp. 88 and 100.

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Shannon's Funeral Home

Among Fort Worth's early undertakers was S. D. (Samuel David) Shannon. His introduction to the business began with a job in the livery stable run by George L. Gause and John Wilkes where he started out rubbing down the horses. After taking other jobs, Shannon partnered with Mr. Gause and the pair formed the North Fort Worth Undertaking Company in 1906 when North Fort Worth was a separate city. In addition to its mortuary services, the company's carriages were frequently used for weddings and other social functions. As the firm became successful, it moved from the Rosen Inn on North Main Street to the Triangle Building at Ellis and North Main and then to a building at North Main and 20th Street. S. D. Shannon was joined in the business by his sons S. D. Shannon, Jr. and J. O. Shannon. In 1922, the company occupied the first two floors of the newly constructed 3-story Masonic Building at 12th and North Main (since demolished).⁵

Between 1920 and 1925, Fort Worth's population grew dramatically from approximately 106,500 to an estimated 154,847 residents. Accordingly, the Shannon family expanded its facilities to meet the demands of the growing city. On May 10, 1927, the North Fort Worth Undertaking Company formally opened a new funeral home at 2717 Avenue B in the Polytechnic area, originally an Eastside suburb that was annexed into Fort Worth in 1922. Likely to avoid confusion with the Northside location, this funeral home was operated under the name Shannon's Funeral Home with J. O. Shannon as manager. The new business was located in an existing house, a one-story brick Bungalow/Craftsman-style dwelling (Figure 2). The company did not own the property but executed a ten-year lease with its owner, Wood W. Graham. The \$15,000 lease included the house, grounds, and garage but excluded a store building on the north side of the property. Shannon's also operated an ambulance service from the building using vehicles built in Fort Worth.⁶

In 1931, Shannon's acquired the previously mentioned Fort Worth Undertaking Company located at Texas and Lamar streets in downtown. This gave Shannon's three locations. The location at 1301 N. Main was referred to as Shannon's Funeral Chapel or Shannon's North Side Funeral Chapel. It served the areas north of the Trinity River. The Avenue B location was known as Shannon's (or sometimes written as Shannon) Funeral Home or Shannon's Polytechnic Funeral Home. As the latter name suggests, it served the east side of the city, including Polytechnic and the district along the interurban line that connected Fort Worth and Dallas. The downtown location, later referred to as Shannon's Mortuary, served the whole city. In addition to funeral services, the Shannons also operated ambulance services from the Northside and Eastside locations. However, records indicate that the downtown location did not stay in operation for long. In 1937, the Shannons made extensive interior and exterior modifications to the building on North Main Street.⁷

In late January 1937, Wood W. Graham, the owner of the Avenue B property, took out a building permit for the construction of a \$15,000 funeral home on that site. A local newspaper noted that the building was to be leased and occupied by Shannon's Funeral Home.⁸ The new building was respectful of the surrounding residential neighborhood in massing and scale. However, the Mission Revival style and the form of the building more closely resembled a church

⁵ J'Nell Pate, *North of the River: A Brief History of North Fort Worth* (Fort Worth, Texas: Texas Christian University Press, 1994), pp. 82-83; "The Shannon Story: The History of a Family and the Organization That Bears Its Name," brochure, c. 1957, from the vertical file "Funeral Homes."

⁶ "Announcing the Formal Opening Shannon's New Funeral Home," advertisement appearing in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1927. The lease was executed on March 28, 1927 and was not filed with the County Clerk's Office until September 1929. See Tarrant County Clerk's Office, Deed Record, Volume 1105, Pages 233-234, September 23, 1929 (recorded September 25, 1929); "Safe Ambulance, Designed, Built in This City, Proves Popular Over U.S.," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 8, 1927.

⁷ "Supreme Service," advertisement in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 13, 1931; "Convention Success is Praised by Shannon," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 25, 1931; See Fort Worth, Texas, City Directory, 1932 and 1936. Obituaries in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* in 1937 used the names Shannon's North Side Chapel (for example see obituary for Mrs. Mattie Newbolt, November 11, 1937) and Shannon's Polytechnic Funeral Home (see obituary for Mrs. Annie Miller, November 10, 1937); *North Fort Worth News*, March 26, 1937.

⁸ "Building for Week \$79,625," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 31, 1937.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

instead of a home. Indeed, the new building featured a large chapel on its east end. The chapel wing had a large front gable with a round window on the south and north elevations. Arched window and door openings provided visual interest. Rising from the southeast corner of the building was a 35-foot tower that extended above the peak of the building's roof. The tower was capped with a dome. Although the building was modestly detailed, the tower contributed to its picturesque qualities. The west portion of the building had a flat roof and featured another entrance and decorative details such as medallions with an urn motif, a blind arch infilled with ceramic tile and a small cherub's head, and arched niches below the parapet that were filled with latticed cast stone grills.

Before the funeral home was completed, its cornerstone was dedicated on May 15, 1937 at a ceremony under the direction of the East Fort Worth Lions Club. Placed within the cornerstone were "newspapers, pictures, and other artifacts." The building was dedicated to the memory of the late Don Shannon, son of founder, S. D. Shannon. The dedicatory address was delivered by Rev. E. A. Hunter, pastor of Polytechnic Methodist Church and a member of the Lions Club.⁹ At least one church leased space in the building during Shannon's tenure. The Polytechnic Christian Church held services there in the late 1930s.¹⁰

Later Uses of the Building

Shannon's occupation of the building was short-lived. War-time shortages may have made it difficult for the company to operate from more than one location. On January 1, 1944, Shannon's executed a four-year sub-lease of the funeral home and grounds with Raymond Meissner, a former Shannon's employee, under the same terms and conditions the company had with the property owner, Wood W. Graham. However, in June 1947 Shannon's assigned its rights to the property to Mr. Meissner but retained a lien against him.¹¹ That same month, Wood W. and Lula Graham sold him the lots on which the building sat for \$20,000.¹²

Meissner operated the Meissner Funeral Home at 2717 Avenue B for thirty years. On the company's third anniversary, it ran an advertisement in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* in which it expressed its appreciation to its patrons and noted that the war-time shortages of equipment, especially hearses, ambulances, and funeral cars were becoming a thing of the past. The company pledged to offer superior services that included "The Most Modern and Complete Funeral Home in the City," a chapel with a seating capacity of 300 and a pipe organ, "Lady Attendants" and "Restorative Art Specialist," and ambulance service and first aid (see Figure 5).¹³

In 1974, Meissner Funeral Home was acquired by Joe R. Brown and the name was changed to Meissner-Brown Funeral Home. Brown, who served as the new firm's president, had previously worked at other funeral homes in Fort Worth. Meissner-Brown also provided non-emergency ambulance service.

In 1991, the property was designated a City of Fort Worth Historic and Cultural Landmark. Two years later, it was sold to Mt. Moriah Baptist Church. The building later went through a period of neglect, vandalism, and unpaid taxes, resulting in the boarding over of windows and doors. It was acquired by the City of Fort Worth in 2014 through a constable's sale. The building came close to being demolished. When Historic Fort Worth, a nonprofit preservation organization,

⁹ "Cornerstone Laid for Shannon Funeral Home," *North Fort Worth News*, May 21, 1937.

¹⁰ "Church to Decide on Building Site," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 12, 1939.

¹¹ Tarrant County Clerk's Office, Deed Record, Volume 1912, Pages 551-553, June 13, 1947 (recorded June 16, 1947).

¹² Tarrant County Clerk's Office, Deed Record, Volume 1912, Pages 549-551, June 7, 1947 (recorded June 16, 1947).

¹³ "Thank You, Friends!" (advertisement for Meissner Funeral Home), *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 15, 1947.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

publicized its plight, the current owner stepped forward and negotiated a sale with the City of Fort Worth in late 2015. Rehabilitation work began shortly after.¹⁴

Architectural Significance

As the Colonial Revival style was gaining popularity in the northeastern states in the late 1800s, architects in California were using the state's Hispanic heritage for design inspiration. These movements coincided with a backlash to the industrial revolution and its excesses as manifested in Victorian architecture. The spread of the Mission and Spanish Colonial Revival styles across the West was further facilitated when the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railway companies adopted the style for their depots and resort hotels. In Texas, the state's acquisition of the Alamo as a historic site in 1883 also generated an interest in its Spanish Colonial history.¹⁵

The Mission Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival (or Spanish Eclectic) styles encompass design elements that are derived from the vast expanse of Spanish architectural history. These can include Moorish, Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance, or Spanish Colonial from the American Southwest. The styles are most prevalent in the southwestern states and Florida—those states with a direct connection to Spanish Colonial history. Characteristics of the styles include low-pitched roofs covered with red clay tile, Mission-shaped parapets, arches around prominent windows and doors, multiple-light windows, embellished window and door surrounds, cast stone ornament, metal balustrades, grilles over windows, and round or square towers. Exterior walls are typically stuccoed although brick is a common substitute. Courtyards with fountains or pools are also common with the Spanish Eclectic style.¹⁶

The Mission Revival style commercial buildings in Fort Worth were limited. The most prominent example is the Livestock Exchange Building in the Fort Worth Stockyards Historic District on the city's north side. This large two-story building was constructed in 1902-03. The Mission Revival style is expressed through its stucco exterior, red clay tile roof, shaped parapets, and first floor arcade. The building does not have a tower but it does have three cupolas with octagonal domes (Figure 6). The adjacent Coliseum, constructed in 1907-08, also reflects the style through its stucco exterior, red clay tile roof, shaped parapet, and first floor arcade.

Numerous public schools were constructed in Fort Worth with Mission or Spanish Eclectic details. These included red clay tile roofs, arched window and door openings and decorative window and door surrounds. Several had faux towers with gabled or hipped roofs covered with red clay tile. Yellow or earth-toned brick was used for exterior walls in place of stucco.

The incorporation of domed towers in Fort Worth's Mission Revival buildings was uncommon. Two churches constructed in the early 20th century in the city's near Southside had this element. The First Congregational Church at 1001 Pennsylvania (1906) had a stucco exterior, shaped parapet, arched windows, and arcaded loggia. At its west end was a tower sharing similarities with the one on the Shannon's Funeral Home, including a small cupola/finial on the top of the dome (now missing on the Shannon's building, Figure 7). The other church with a domed tower was the Magnolia Avenue Christian Church, 950 Magnolia Avenue (1909, Figure 8). Its primary entrance was incorporated in the tower at the front of the building. Instead of stucco, the church had brick walls as well as a shaped parapet and arched windows

¹⁴ Sandra Baker, "Historic Fort Worth funeral home property saved from wrecking ball," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 14, 2015.

¹⁵ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), p. 410; Arrol Gellner, *Red Tile Style: America's Spanish Revival Architecture* (New York: Viking Studio/Penguin Group, 2002), p. 8.

¹⁶ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 416-421. For an excellent review of the style, see also Gellner, *Red Tile Style: America's Spanish Revival Architecture*.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

and entrances. Both churches have been demolished.¹⁷ The domes on these churches may have been inspired by such early Texas mission churches as the Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Mission, El Paso (1622-1668), Corpus Christi de la Ysleta del Sur, El Paso (1740-1744), and Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria y Guadalupe, San Antonio (1734-1749) although the latter's dome was not on a tower.¹⁸ Although the building was not a church, the unidentified designer of Shannon's Funeral Home may have been inspired by these examples, too.

The former Shannon's Funeral Home is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Constructed in 1937, it is an uncommon but modest local commercial example of the Mission Revival style with Spanish Eclectic influences. Characteristics of the Mission Revival style present in the building include its stucco exterior, red clay tile on a gable roof, rounded arched window and door openings, multi-light windows, and decorative door surround. Its distinctive tower invokes the bell towers of Mission-era churches in the Southwest. The style is also expressed in the interior through the rustic quality of the exposed beams and trusses in the chapel. Common details absent from the building are a shaped parapet and wide eave overhang. Spanish Eclectic influences that are incorporated in the design include slight eave overhang, decorative door surround, and metal balustrades. Although never a working fountain, the ceramic tile with cherub head inlaid in the blind arch on the façade may be a reference to water features that were sometimes included in buildings of this style.

Shannon's Funeral Home is also significant as a building type. Research suggests that it is Fort Worth's earliest extant funeral home designed specifically for that function without sharing space with other businesses. Located on the periphery of a residential neighborhood, its design emphasized the "home" aspect of a funeral home in addition to capitalizing on the popularity of Period Revival styles prior to World War II. Other extant stand-alone funeral homes were constructed after World War II. Examples constructed in the early postwar-era include Baker Funeral Home on West Rosedale Street, serving mostly an African American constituency (1947), Robertson-Muellar-Harper Funeral Home on 8th Avenue (1955), and the former Shannon Funeral Chapel on North Main Street (c. 1957). These buildings were not constructed in Period Revival styles.

Summary

Shannon's Funeral Home is an excellent local example of a modestly detailed yet picturesque interpretation of the Mission Revival style with Spanish Eclectic influences as applied to a commercial building in Fort Worth, Texas. Its Mission Revival characteristics include its stuccoed exterior, gable roof covered with red clay tile, multiple-light windows, arched doorways, and domed tower. Spanish Eclectic features include the slight eave overhang and details such as a decorative door surround, inlaid ceramic tile that bears resemblance to a fountain, and metal balustrades. It is also significant as an early example of a stand-alone funeral home in the city. As such, Shannon's Funeral Home is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The period of significance is 1937, the year it was constructed.

¹⁷ Willard B. Robinson, *Reflections of Faith: Houses of Worship in the Lone Star State* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1994), p. 149; *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Phase III Fort Worth's Southside* (Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, 1986), p. 145.

¹⁸ Robinson, *Reflections of Faith*, pp. 6 and 24.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

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Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey: Phase III Fort Worth's Southside. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, 1986.

"Thank You, Friends!" Advertisement for Meissner Funeral Home, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 15, 1947.

"Undertakers New Plant to Cost \$20,000." *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 13, 1915.

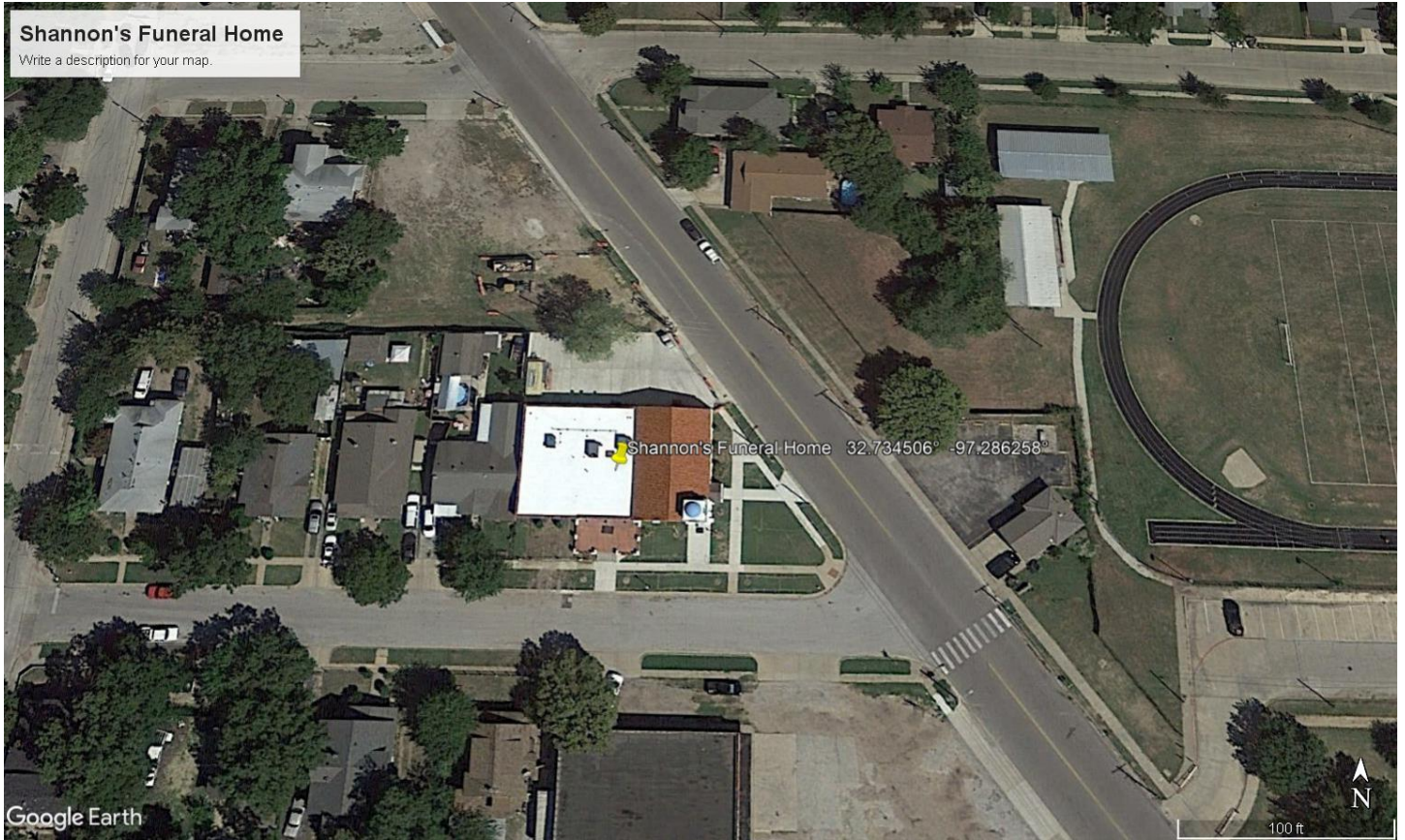
Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 3: Aerial photo, 2717 Avenue B, Fort Worth, Texas, retrieved from Google Earth, January 16, 2018.



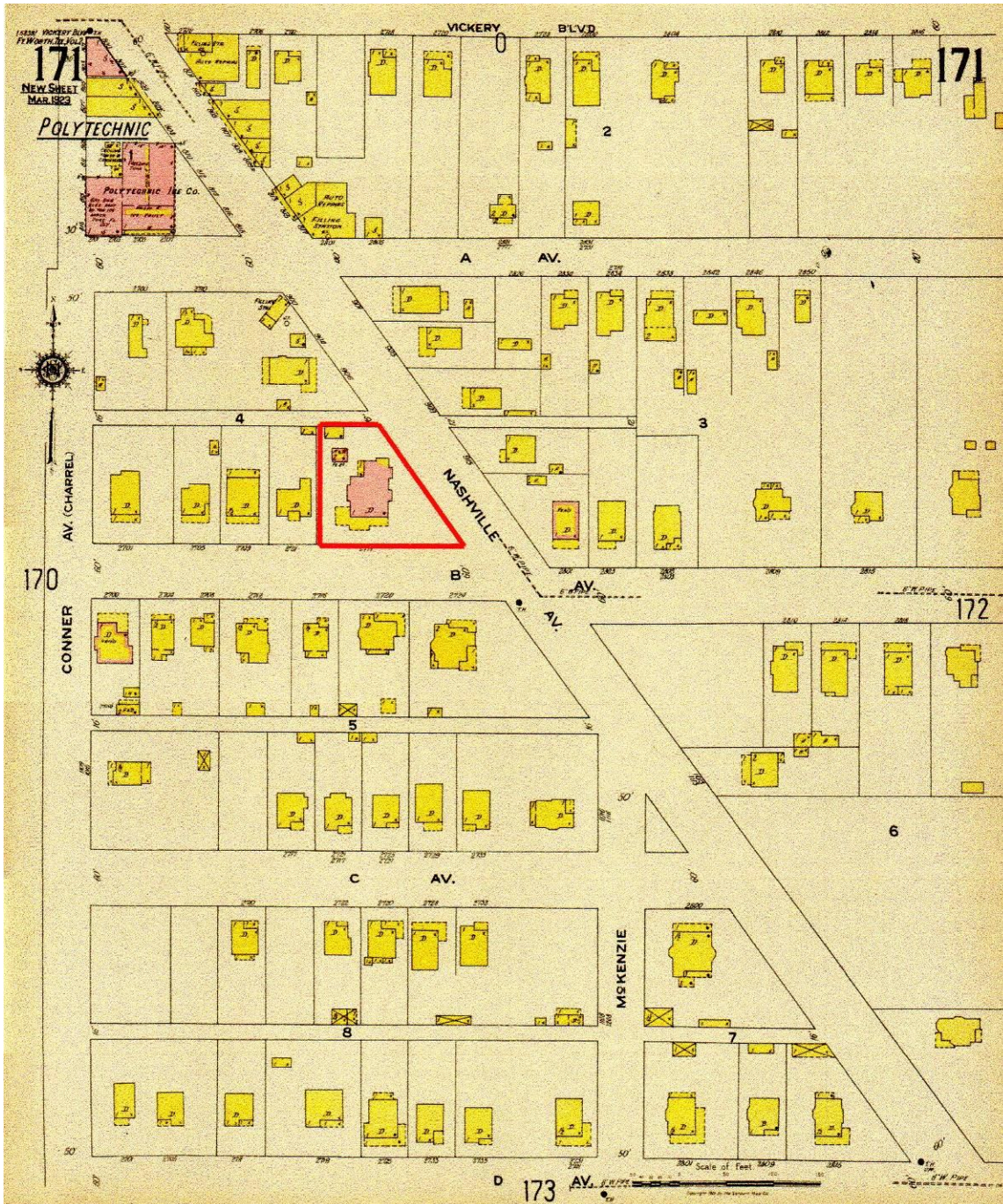
Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 4: Google Earth Map, 2717 Avenue B, Fort Worth, Texas. Retrieved February 20, 2018.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 5: 1923 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, 1923, Volume 2, Sheet 171, Fort Worth, TX before 2717 Avenue B became Shannon's Funeral Home.



Original located at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Map 6: 1951 Sanborn Map, Volume 4, Sheet 651, Fort Worth, TX showing location of Shannon's Funeral Home (occupied by Meissner Funeral Home at this time).



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 2: Original Shannon's Funeral Home at 2717 Avenue B. Advertisement appearing in the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1927.



Figure 3: Advertisement from *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 13, 1931 with images of Shannon's three locations.

Service Supreme

With the acquisition of the well appointed FORT WORTH UNDERTAKING COMPANY at Texas and Lantier Streets, Shannon's now are prepared to serve the people of Fort Worth, from the parent unit, SHANNON'S FUNERAL CHAPEL, Twelfth and North Main Streets; SHANNON'S FUNERAL HOME, Avenue B and Nashville, and THE FORT WORTH UNDERTAKING COMPANY, one of the pioneer and most respected mortuaries in the city. In this manner, we offer Fort Worth--

The Most Complete Mortuary and Ambulance Service



SHANNON'S FUNERAL CHAPEL
 North Main at Twelfth St.
 6-2191



SHANNON'S FUNERAL HOME
 Avenue B at Nashville St.
 4-2191



CLARENCE BABBIE
 Resident Chap. Shannon's Funeral
 Chapel. 6-2191



S. D. GRAY SHANNON, Pres.
 Office 3-426. Res. 6-1376



FORT WORTH UNDERTAKING COMPANY
 Texas at Lantier St.
 6-1191



J. OLIVER SHANNON, Gen. Mgr.
 Office 6-2191. Res. 6-2076



J. CONNER HILL
 Resident, Res. Shannon's Funeral
 Home. Tel. 6-2191

You can select your Shannon Funeral Chapel for its nearness to your home, to suit your convenience and comfort. Shannon's offers every service that lightens the sorrow of bereavement and which gives beauty and peace to a funeral service.

Our new central establishment makes it possible to give the same quick ambulance service to every part of the city that we have always been able to give the communities in which our chapels are located. Our drivers are careful and experienced and we are prompt and thorough on every call.



SAMUEL D. SLOAN
 Resident Chap. Fort Worth Undertaking
 Company. 5-1191

When to you, as to everyone, comes the tempest of loss and bereavement, let the sympathetic completeness of Shannon's Service give you that ease of mind and bring you a little nearer to the tranquility of the storm already past.

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 4: Rendering of 2717 Avenue B from 1945 Morrison and Fourmy *Fort Worth City Directory* the year after Shannon's ceased operating from this location.



Figure 5: Photo of 2717 Avenue B from advertisement in *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 15, 1947.

THANK YOU, FRIENDS!

MEISSNER FUNERAL HOME proudly announces its Third Anniversary of Funeral Service to the residents of Fort Worth and vicinity and welcomes this opportunity to convey appreciation to its host of friends for the opportunity to serve in times of bereavement. War time shortages of equipment, which gravely affected delivery of funeral coaches, ambulances and funeral cars are gradually disappearing. During our fourth and continuing years, we pledge ourselves to provide, as always in the past, a funeral service surpassed by none, complete in every detail and with our every thought and facility dedicated to the family entrusting their loved ones to our care.

- A Funeral Home Truly Striving for the Commendation of ALL!
- The Most Modern and Complete Funeral Home in the City
- Chapel Seating Comfortably Over 300 — Pipe Organ
- Lady Attendants — Restorative Art Specialist — Complete Staff Thoroughly Trained by Many Years' Experience
- Invalid Coaches — Emergency Ambulances — First Aid

We Welcome All to Investigate Now the Complete Services Available at Our Beautiful, Spacious Funeral Home. Absolutely No Hidden Costs . . .

MEISSNER FUNERAL HOME
J. RAYMOND MEISSNER, Owner
Nashville at Avenue B Phone DAY & NIGHT 5-2102

Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 6: Livestock Exchange Building, Fort Worth, 1903. It is an early example of the Mission Revival style on a non-residential building in the city. Photo source: Texas Historical Commission, [Livestock Exchange, (South façade)], photograph, date unknown [1970s?]; (texas history.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph665380/: accessed January 18, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas Historical Commission.



Figure 7: First Congregational Church, Fort Worth, Texas, 1906, destroyed by fire prior to 1952. Photo c. 1935. From Willard B. Robinson, *Reflections of Faith: Houses of Worship in the Lone Star State* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 1994), p. 149.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure 8: Magnolia Avenue Christian Church, 950 Magnolia Avenue (1909), demolished in the 1990s. Designed by M. L. Waller. Photo courtesy Sue McLean and the City of Fort Worth.



Figure 9: Photo of Shannon's Funeral Home building in 2013. Shows location of non-historic vestibule on the east elevation.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 1: View: Northwest at front (south) and east elevations.



Photo 2: View: Northwest at front (south) elevation.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 3: View: Northeast at front (south) elevation.



Photo 4: View: North at west entrance, front (south) elevation.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 5: View: West at east elevation.



Photo 6: View: Southwest at east and rear (north) elevations.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 7: View: Southwest at tower detail (east and north sides of tower).

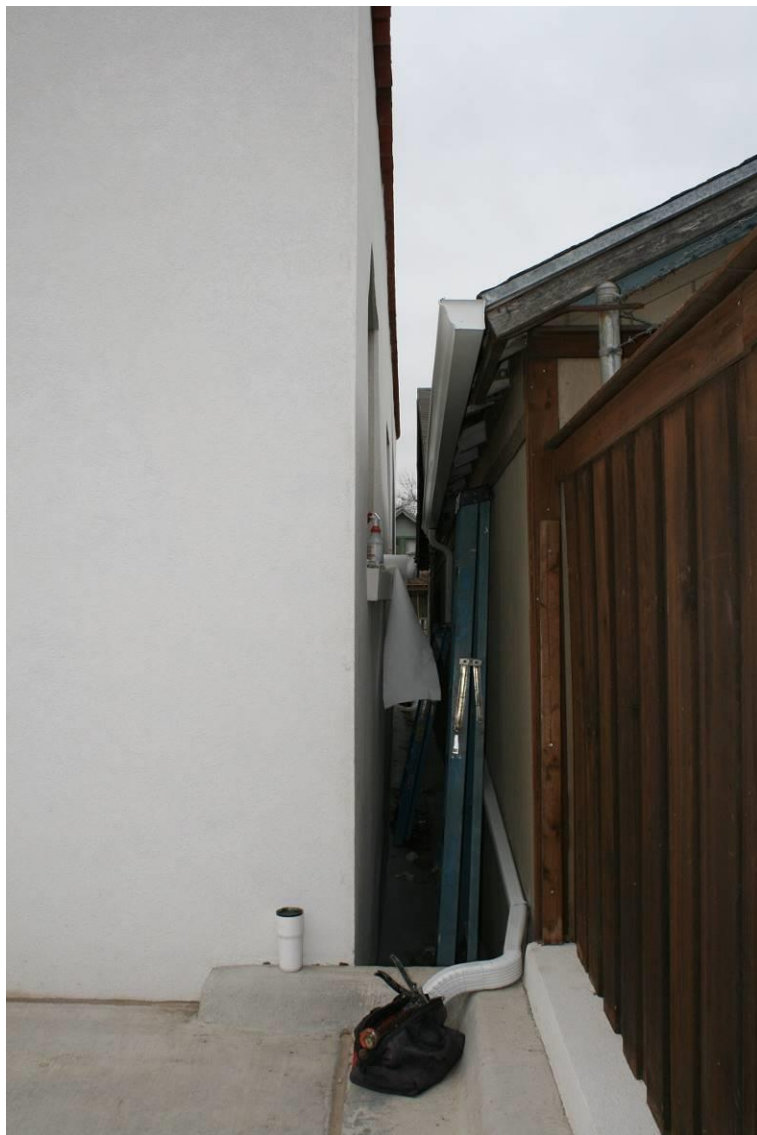


Photo 8: View: South at rear (north) elevation.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 9: View: South at west elevation.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 10: View: Southwest in chapel.



Photo 11: View: North showing details of ceiling trusses in chapel.



Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 12: View: Southeast in Room 3 (west wing).



























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Shannon's Funeral Home

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: TEXAS, Tarrant

Date Received:
6/8/2018

Date of Pending List:
7/9/2018

Date of 16th Day:
7/24/2018

Date of 45th Day:
7/23/2018

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100002699

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Appeal

PDIL

Text/Data Issue

SHPO Request

Landscape

Photo

Waiver

National

Map/Boundary

Resubmission

Mobile Resource

Period

Other

TCP

Less than 50 years

CLG

Accept

Return

Reject

7/23/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

The Shannon's Funeral Home is locally significant under National Register Criterion C (Architecture). Completed in 1937, the clay tile and stucco building is an excellent local example of Mission Revival-inspired design. The property represents an early, purpose-built, suburban funeral home structure designed to blend into the scale of the surrounding residential neighborhood, yet stand out as a distinctive commercial operation.

Recommendation/
Criteria Accept NR Criterion C.

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 07/23/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : Yes

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories



TO: Paul Lusignan
National Register of Historic Places
Mail Stop 7228
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

From: Mark Wolfe, SHPO
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

DATE: June 7, 2018

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Shannon's Funeral Home, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF
	Correspondence.

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
- The enclosed owner objections (do___) (do not___) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

