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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## FIRST NATIONAL BANK, New Roads, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

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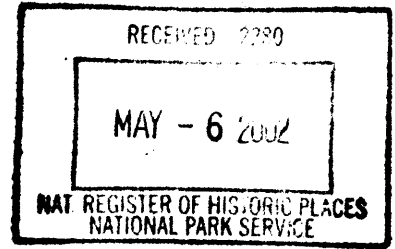
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

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### 1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: First National Bank

Other Name/Site Number: Hebert's Jewelry, Bank of New Roads



### 2. LOCATION

Street & Number 102 East Main Street

Not for publication: NA

City/Town New Roads

Vicinity: NA

State: Louisiana Code: LA County: Pointe Coupee

Code: 077 Zip Code: 70760

### 3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: \_\_\_ Statewide: \_\_\_ Locally: X

Jonathan Fricker  
 Signature of Certifying Official/Title Jonathan Fricker,  
 Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

May 6, 2002  
 Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this 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 of Keeper: Joe Edward H. Boall

Date of Action: 6/20/02

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property
Contributing
1
1

Non contributing
0 buildings
sites
structures
objects
0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: NA

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Commerce/Trade

Sub: Financial Institution

Current: Business

Sub: Office Building

**7. DESCRIPTION**

Architectural Classification: Classical Revival

Materials:

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Brick

Roof: Metal

Other: Stone

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### Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The former First National Bank of New Roads (1909) is a two-story brick building in the Classical Revival style. It stands at a busy intersection of Main Street within the central business district of the Pointe Coupee Parish seat of New Roads. The thoroughfare parallels False River, a large ox bow lake which was formerly a part of the Mississippi River. The bank stands on the lake-side of Main Street, with its rear elevation facing the water. Despite some alteration, the building easily retains its National Register eligibility.

The bank is a free-standing structure except on its rear elevation, where a small one-story historic-era addition (see below) shares a wall with a slightly taller structure never associated with the candidate. As a corner building, the bank was designed to be viewed at an angle, with the facade and one side elevation highly styled. The façade's Classical decorative elements, all made of stone, include a watertable, quoins, belt course, large keystones above most windows, pronounced lintels, and an elaborate door surround. The latter is composed of Tuscan columns and a heavily molded broken pediment. A vertical element composed of four pieces connects each column to the pediment. The parts include two molded square bases (the upper smaller than the lower), a large block containing triglyphs, and a wooden piece in a geometric shape. The pediment is surmounted by a decorative motif containing three parts. The lower two elements are stacked rectangles which serve as a base for the upper element, a semi-circular piece with an anthemion design. The entrance surround frames a glazed double door surmounted by a semi-circular transom. A brick band broken by a stone keystone outlines the transom's rounded portion. A raised brick plaque is found between the façade's two upper floor windows. Finally, a metal modillion cornice completes the façade's decoration. Most of the façade's decorative elements are repeated on the side elevation. In addition, this area is pierced by three large, slightly recessed arched windows (also a Classical motif) and a single door on the lower level and by five rectangular windows on the upper story.

The plan of the first floor (now altered -- see below) contained an office and lobby in the front portion, a vault and tellers' area in the middle of the building, a bathroom behind the vault, and a second office behind the tellers' space. At the rear, an enclosed staircase led to the second floor. Its plan (still intact) consists of a hallway from which offices open, a large janitor's closet and small bathroom opening off a short hall running perpendicular to the other, and a landing area where the staircase ended. Office doors consist of large glass panes above wooden panels. Interior doors between offices contain five horizontal wooden panels. All the second floor doors have transoms.

The building received some alterations during the many years it served as a jewelry store (1928 - 1998, see Historical Note) and is currently undergoing a renovation/restoration. Changes associated with each are listed below.

Jewelry store era alterations include:

1. the loss of the first floor lobby's original tile floor, the painting-over of a Greek Key stencil design (visible in one or two places) which outlined the first floor outside walls at ceiling level, and the removal of some internal partitions to create a large sales room on that level.
2. the removal of the façade's original vertical first floor window, which was surmounted by a

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segmental arch. It was replaced by a large, horizontal plate glass show window. Brick infill can be seen above the current window where the façade had to be closed up when this work was done. Later, a large second floor rear window was lost when an opening was needed for an elevator (now removed).

3. the c. 1940 addition of a small one-story store room (mentioned above) to the rear of the building, the removal of the interior stairway leading from the building's side door to the second floor, and the removal of the wall which separated the interior staircase from the first floor rear room. Now the upper floor can only be reached via an exterior metal stair located on the other side of the building. The door accessing the stair landing was once a window.
4. the installation of steel I-beams (encased in wall board) at the first floor ceiling level during the 1940s to make the building more stable.

Restoration/rehabilitation-related alterations include:

1. the painting of all the building's stone decoration (done because the stone could not be adequately cleaned) and the placement of a sign announcing the building's present usage on the façade above the plate glass window.
2. the removal of some water-damaged plaster walls and all of the water-damaged ceilings on the second floor. A new slanted roof was installed to prevent further water damage to the building
3. the installation of partition walls in the large first floor space. This work created four offices and a small service hall. (Only the vault remains to symbolize the space's former use as a bank.) During the restoration process, a piece of the original baseboard was found; it has been replicated in parts of the first floor. However, the woodwork surrounding the doors is not original.
4. The replication of the damaged jewelry store show window. In addition, extensive work has been done on the bank's other windows to return them to their original appearance and condition. This work is ongoing, and a few openings are still covered while their sashes are being rehabilitated.

While the replacement of the original vertical segmental arch window with a plate glass show window is an obvious change, the overall impact is minimal when compared to the wealth of other strongly articulated features which survive. In short, the former bank's Classical Revival character is quite strong. As a rare architectural landmark within the New Roads Central Business District, the former First National Bank of New Roads is an outstanding candidate for National Register listing.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Applicable National Register Criteria:        A\_\_ B\_ C X D\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):        A\_\_ B\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_ E\_\_ F\_\_ G\_\_ NA

Areas of Significance:        Architecture

Period(s) of Significance:    1909

Significant Dates:        1909

Significant Person(s):       NA

Cultural Affiliation:        NA

Architect/Builder:        Emmett J. Hull, Jr., architect

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### State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The former First National Bank of New Roads is locally significant in the area of architecture because the building is a landmark within the central business district of the Pointe Coupee Parish seat.

Although Pointe Coupee is one of Louisiana's oldest parishes (organized in 1807), its current parish seat of New Roads was not established until much later. The community began as a tiny hamlet with a mission church (St. Mary's) located on False River, an oxbow lake created between 1713 and 1722 when the Mississippi River cut a new channel. The town takes its unusual name from this location. Documents from the 1820s refer to "*Chemin Neu*" (New Road) and to St. Mary's church being located at "the New Road on False River." In 1847, one year after a fire destroyed the original courthouse on the Mississippi, an act was passed authorizing the relocation of the parish seat. The upper floor of a residence in New Roads was offered as a temporary home, and later that year a permanent courthouse site was purchased. By 1856 the community apparently had six houses and two stores as well as the courthouse. Soon these establishments were joined by a coffee house, hotel, and sawmill. The first post office, known as "False River, Louisiana," opened in 1858 but closed in 1861. The small community grew in spurts after the Civil War. The first "boom" occurred in the 1880s as the result of the abandonment of the nearby town of Waterloo. New Roads' main thoroughfare, which paralleled False River, acquired a number of one-and two-story business and office buildings at this time. Although a few specialty businesses (including a drug store, hotel, blacksmith, jewelry store, Chinese laundry, saloons, and millinery shops) operated in town, the business district was apparently dominated by general mercantile stores carrying a variety of goods. The second growth spurt began with the arrival of the Texas and Pacific Railroad (1898-1899). Because the company laid its tracks some distance from the lake, the town grew to the north to meet them. The railroad made possible the introduction of large industries, including a brickyard, cotton gins, ice and light company, lumber company, cottonseed oil mill, and a bottling works. In addition to its role as the parish seat, New Roads today serves as the commercial center for a large agricultural parish. Because of its location on False River, it also ranks highly as a recreation area. Finally, the town is well known throughout South Louisiana for its annual family-oriented Mardi Gras celebration.

As an old community, New Roads must have had many historic commercial buildings at one time. However, the town's central business district, roughly defined as the blocks of Main Street between St. Mary's Catholic Church to the parish courthouse, has experienced a number of losses and alterations over the years. This situation is confirmed by the Division of Historic Preservation's Standing Structures Survey for Pointe Coupee Parish, which records less than ten buildings in the CBD which were 50 years or more in age when the survey was conducted in 1983. Because of the survey's age and staff knowledge of additional losses which have occurred, a walking survey of the area was conducted to update the data. This survey found that today (2002) downtown New Roads is very much a mixture of old and new. Half or more of the buildings in the CBD are of modern (less than fifty years old) construction, and probably half of the historic buildings which survive have been altered substantially. Virtually all those historic structures which retain their integrity are plain and vernacular in character. The streetscape is largely one-story in scale, with perhaps four or five two story structures breaking the pattern. Featuring strongly articulated classical stylistic elements (see Part 7), the former First National Bank of New Roads ranks as a major architectural landmark against this undistinguished background. With the exceptions of the previously mentioned courthouse and

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church, the bank is the only highly styled building in the area.

### Historical Note

The First National Bank of New Roads opened in 1905 in a previously existing building and constructed its new headquarters in 1909 at a cost of \$7,200. Unfortunately, the business failed in 1912 and a competitor, the Bank of New Roads, soon moved into the former FNB building. The Bank of New Roads moved out in 1928, selling the building to jeweler Oscar Hebert. Hebert's Jewery operated there for the next fifty years, closing in 1998. In 1934 Hebert allowed the rear first floor room to be used as a community library; the length of this usage is unclear. The upstairs offices were used by doctors, dentists, and lumber and cotton buyers. Current owner Brent Labatut is gradually restoring the building. The first floor is occupied by a branch of the Edward Jones Investments firm.



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### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Costello, Brian. *New Roads: A Community in Retrospect*. N.P., N.D.

Division of Historic Preservation, Historic Standing Structures Survey of Pointe Coupee Parish, 1983.

Drawing of "New Building, First National Bank, New Roads, Louisiana," published in the *Pointe Coupee Banner*, March 20, 1909; copy in National Register file.

Site visit by National Register staff.

Baton Rouge *Advocate*, July 24, 2000.

Walking survey of the New Roads Central Business District by National Register staff.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

Previously Listed in the National Register. (partially)

Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.

Designated a National Historic Landmark.

Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #

Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other (Specify Repository):

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### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreeage of Property: less than an acre

UTM References:     **Zone** **Easting** **Northing**  
                          15    649980   3396400

#### Verbal Boundary Description:

Legal Property Description: A certain lot or tract of land, with all the buildings and improvements thereon, situated in the City of New Roads, Parish of Pointe Coupee, State of Louisiana, having a front of Main Street of thirty-five (35) feet and extending back between parallel lines sixty-five (65) feet, more or less, bounded on one side (on the west) by New Roads Street, formerly known as Cemetery Street or New Roads Lane; and on the other (on the east) by property formerly of Mrs. Mary Langlois Major, et.al., now of Whitney LeJeune, or assigns; bounded in front or north by East Main Street of the City of New Roads; and in the rear or south by property of Whitney LeJeune, or assigns.

#### Boundary Justification:

Boundaries conform to those from the historic period to include the bank and the small one story addition made circa 1940 by Hebert's Jewelry.

### 11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: National Register staff

Address: Division of Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Telephone: (225) 342-8160

Date: April 2002

### PROPERTY OWNERS

Brent Labatut  
102 Park Avenue  
New Roads, Louisiana 70760  
(225) 638-6271