

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received APR 26 1984  
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Medical Arts Building

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 603 Main Ave. N/A not for publication

city, town Knoxville N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Knox code 093

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Medical Arts Building Associates

street & number P.O. Box 2367

city, town Knoxville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37901

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Knox County Courthouse

street & number 400 Main Avenue

city, town Knoxville state Tennessee 37902

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Knox County Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37203

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee, the Medical Arts Building (1929-30) displays one of the most ornate terra cotta facades remaining in this city from this period. The ten-story Gothic style office building towers over the lower commercial and governmental buildings which surround it. Both on the interior and exterior, the Medical Arts Building retains its architectural integrity to a high degree.

The south and east elevations of the building are sheathed in Gothic style, off-white terra cotta with dark green spandrel panels between the upper eight stories. The roof line is crowned with an ornate, one-story cornice which is also sheathed in off-white terra cotta and is chamfered at the corners. The facade of the three-story parking garage is incorporated into the design of the building through use of an ornately detailed terra cotta belt course which forms the cornice of the smaller structure. This belt course separates the storefronts of the lower level from the fenestration of the upper-story office space. This fenestration is regular and symmetrical and the windows are of the aluminum sash, three-paned, jalousie type. The north and west elevations of the building and garage are more simply treated in blond brick with regular fenestration.

The Gothic motifs of the Medical Arts Building can be found in the greatest detail in the entries to the garage and office building. The garage entry is set in a broad, decorated Tudor arch with tracery and a panel which integrates the name of the garage into the design in a Celtic script. The two entries into the office building are similar to each other and are more ornate. Their design includes ornamental terra cotta buttresses and finials surrounding a pointed arch opening with a panel above which incorporates the name of the building in Celtic script. The floor of the alcove between the main doorway and the arch is tiled in a decorative pattern. The doorway is flanked by pilasters from which springs a concentric arched opening. Within the opening are the transom, whose muntins resemble Gothic tracery, and a brass double leaf door.

The main floor lobby of the Medical Arts Building continues the Gothic theme with its ornately plastered cove ceiling, marble floor and walls, and metal door surrounds. The door surrounds have quatrefoil panels integrated into the vertical Gothic motifs.

The hallways of the upper floors have vaulted ceilings and high marble wainscoting. The door surrounds are less elaborate. The tenth floor office space includes an arcaded hallway with tiled wainscoting and pointed doors and leaded glass windows.

The Medical Arts Building has survived as a fine unaltered office building from the 1929-1930 period whose Gothic detailing both inside and out reflects fine craftsmanship and retains its historical integrity.

## 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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** 1929-1930 **Builder/Architect** Manley and Young

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Medical Arts Building, located in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee, is being nominated under National Register criterion C for its architectural significance as one of the best examples of a terra cotta, Gothic style, high-rise office building in northeast Tennessee.

Five locally prominent physicians, including the president of the Knoxville Academy of Medicine, Dr. Parley Herbert Acuff, engaged the architectural firm of Manley and Young of Lexington, Kentucky and Knoxville to design the Medical Arts Building and matching garage in 1929. The structure was completed in 1930 at a cost of \$750,000 and was touted to be the most outstanding and completely equipped medical building in the South at that time. The five physicians subsequently went bankrupt and the structure was taken over by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Mr. A. F. Pilzer of Montgomery, Alabama purchased the building in the late 1930s. In 1977, the structure was sold to David Brown of the real estate firm of Brown, Brown and West for \$750,000. Kristopher Kendrick purchased the building in 1981 and sold it to the present owners in 1983 who plan to rehabilitate the structure for continuing use as office space.

The first floor commercial space of the building was occupied at various times by a bank, a restaurant, and a drug store. The principal tenants of the office space were doctors, dentists, and other medically related businesses.

The Medical Arts Building is one of the two remaining terra cotta facaded buildings of the late 1920s period remaining in Knoxville, and is the larger and more elaborate of the two. The other structure is the Kress Building on Gay Street. The superior craftsmanship is displayed -- the elaborate Gothic style terra cotta tracery in the entries, the cornice and belt course of both the main building and garage, and in the interior detailing including decorative vaulting, woodwork, elaborate plasterwork and elevator door treatments in the lobby.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Brewer, Carson and Alberta. Heart of the Valley. Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1975.  
 Herndon, Joseph. "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930." Thesis, Columbia University 1975.  
 Knoxville Journal. 9/16/34, 1031/81.  
 Knoxville News Sentinel and Journal, 6/22/77.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1.5 acres

Quadrangle name Knoxville, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

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2	3	6	6	8	0
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3	9	8	3	3	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property consists of an L-shaped piece of land bounded on the east by Locust St., on the south by Main Ave., and on the remaining sides by adjoining property lines. This is the property historically associated with the Medical Arts Building.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Hollie Eckert, Research Assistant		
	Robin Krawitz, Architectural Historian		
organization	Office of Eugene Burr, Architect-Planner	date	November 10, 1983
	Tennessee Historical Commission		April 18, 1984
street & number	121 W. Jackson Ave.	telephone	(615) 525-7731
	701 Broadway		(615) 742-6722
city or town	Knoxville	state	Tennessee 37902
	Nashville		Tennessee 37203

## 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.

Deputy  
 State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Herbert E. Hoyer*

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 4/23/84

### For NPS use only

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

date 5/24/84

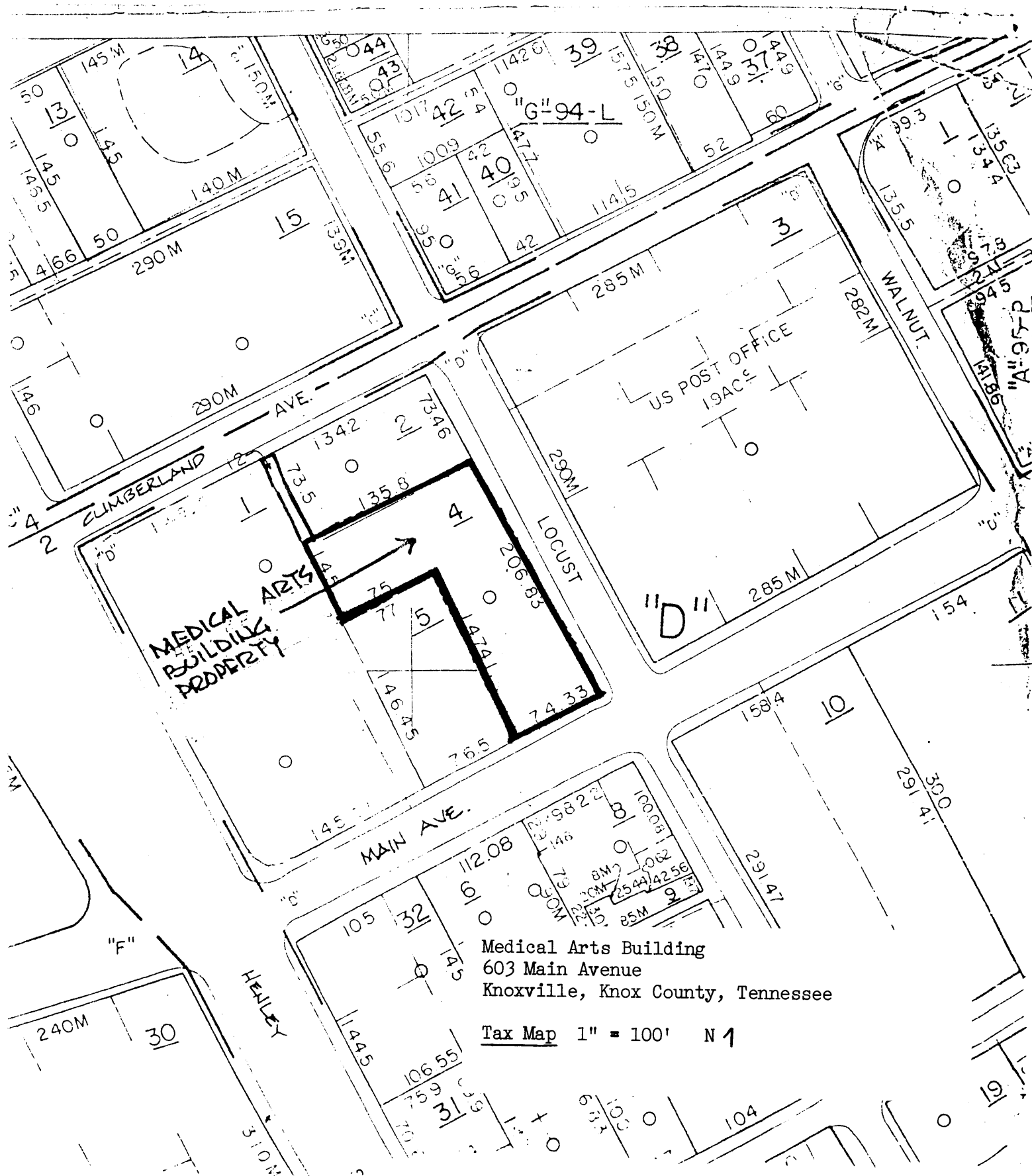
*Herbert E. Hoyer*  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING - KNOXVILLE, TN.



**MEDICAL ARTS  
BUILDING  
PROPERTY**

US POST OFFICE  
19AC5

Medical Arts Building  
603 Main Avenue  
Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 100' N 1