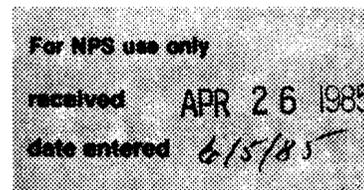


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Historic Resources of

Continuation sheet **Downtown South Bend** Item number Page **14**

I & M Building
220 W. Colfax
141-56042-598
d. 1929

Owner: C. Allen Wickizer
Administrative Assistant
I & M Electric Company
220 W. Colfax Avenue
South Bend, Indiana 46601

Description:

Photo #8, 9; Building #4

The Indiana and Michigan Electric Company offices are located mid-block on Colfax Avenue between Main and Lafayette Streets. A parking lot is to the east and a small commercial structure (Building #6) is directly west.

The seven-story Art Deco structure has an irregular floor plan and is faced with brick, cut stone, and marble. The front facade follows the Chicago School form of base, shaft, and capital. The first floor, or "base," is visually heavier than the rest of the building because its marble facing and bronze window and door surrounds are much darker than the dressed limestone of the second to sixth floors, which form the "shaft." Spandrels at the end bays of the second to fifth floors are trimmed with metal octagonal medallions depicting ships and birds in flight, while embossed, metal spandrels with Art Deco motifs separate the center bays. Cut stone panels separate the fifth and sixth floor windows. The "capital," or seventh, floor is set off visually by a string course and vertically cut stone.

Significance:

The I & M Building is architecturally significant as one of the few Art Deco structures in South Bend and the only "pure" example in the central business district. Built in 1929, it was designed by the firm of Austin and Shambleau, one of South Bend's most prominent architectural firms. They were responsible for many office buildings, schools, and residences in South Bend during the early 20th century (including Building #'s 5, 26 and 38).

The general contractors of the I & M Building were H. G. Christman & Son, one of South Bend's largest contractors responsible for the construction of many prominent local buildings (including Building #'s 3, 14, 19, 23 and 38). In business since 1834, the firm still exists as H. G. Christman Contractors & Company.

The structure was built at a cost of \$250,000 for I & M on a site occupied by them since 1904. Grand opening ceremonies were held on April 13, 1930.

The only change to the first floor lobby of glazed brick, marble and bronze is a lowered ceiling which merely covers the original. The sixth floor houses an auditorium, the seventh floor a display area originally used for kitchen demonstrations, while the other floors contain offices.

The majority of the interior is still intact. I & M has photographs that document the removal of the John C. Knoblock house that served as I & M offices from 1904 and the construction of the present office building in 1929.

UTM Reference: 16/562190/4614040

Acreeage: Less than one acre

Legal: West 32' of east 92' lot 245, and west 42' of east 102' lot 246, and lot 7 Knoblocks sub of lots 245 and 246 Original Plat of South Bend.
Parcel #18-1012-0471