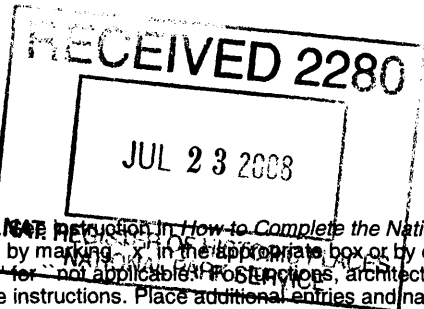


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



8019

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. **NOTE: Instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A).** Complete each item by marking in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Tulsa Monument Company

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1735 East 11th Street South [N/A] not for publication

city or town Tulsa [N/A] vicinity

state Oklahoma code OK county Tulsa code 143 zip code 74104

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Rob Barber
Signature of certifying official/Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

July 21, 2008
Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- other, explain
 See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

9.4.08

Tulsa Monument Company
Name of Property

Tulsa County, Oklahoma
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

foundation	CONCRETE
walls	STUCCO
roof	ASPHALT
other	

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Tulsa Monument Company
Name of Property

Tulsa County, Oklahoma
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance
1937

Significant Dates

Significant Person(s)
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mahler, Harry Hamilton, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Oklahoma Historical Society

Tulsa Monument Company
Name of Property

Tulsa County, Oklahoma
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than One Acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- | | | | | |
|----|------|---------|----------|------------------------------|
| 1. | 15 | 233180 | 4004220 | (NAD27) |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 2. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 3. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 4. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | [N/A] See continuation sheet |

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia Savage, Architectural Historian, for the City of Tulsa
organization Architectural Resources & Community Heritage Consulting date September 2007
street & number 346 County Road 1230 telephone 405-459-6200
city or town Pocasset state OK zip code 73079

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name D.M., O.L. & L.M. Rives; c/o D.M. Rives
street & number P.O. Box 1089 telephone _____
city or town Skiatook state OK zip code 74070

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY:

The Tulsa Monument Company is a one-story Streamline Moderne style building clad with a smooth white plaster concrete. Constructed in 1937, the building was designed by local Tulsa architect Harry H. Mahler for the Tulsa Monument Company. Despite changes in ownership, the Tulsa Monument Company remained at the building until 2006. Now under the name of Benchmark Monument Company, the building still functions in its original capacity as a showroom and manufacturing site for headstones and other related granite products.

The rectangular building has a flat roof and a concrete foundation. The main central entry has double, glazed slab doors, ornamentally topped by a flat ledge, characteristic of the Streamline Moderne style. The secondary entrances on the front elevation have single metal slab doors. Both of the secondary front entries are painted gray and topped by double stacked metal transoms. On the west side, there is a narrow, double wood paneled glazed door historically used as a loading bay. The unusual tall windows are twelve-pane metal with a hopper window in the bottom center and an awning window two panes above. The other panes are fixed and the panes on the sides are decoratively narrow. The windows have projected, concrete sills and the window header is formed by the double-banded stringcourse. The stringcourse also separates the upper section of the wall into a long, smooth, white, flush, rectangular expanse. On both sides within these areas, there are long rectangular tables that are slightly projected and historically contained metal signage. The west sign, reading "MONUMENT," remains but the east sign, which historically read "MAUSOLEUMS" is gone, as is the metal signage above the entryway which read "TULSA/MONUMENT/COMPANY." The center of the building is stepped-back through the strategic placement of two sets of different height columns and highlighted by a clock tower. There are large, square black-faced clocks on each elevation except for the back. Other decorative details include three-bar horizontal banding on the top of the columns and two-bar banding on the wall coping, triple openings and a vertical line of glass blocks. The horizontal banding, flat ledge, windowsills and frames, secondary doors and foundation are all painted a contrasting gray.

The building is located on a large corner lot that slopes downward towards the west. Off the west corner of the lot, the grade drops significantly, placing the Tulsa Monument Company on notably higher ground than its surroundings. To the front of the lot, there is a concrete plaster-clad retaining wall with a metal railing adjacent to the concrete sidewalk. Aligned to the building's center entry, there are concrete steps cut into the retaining wall. Just above the stairs, there are two metal lights that provide light for both the stairs and the concrete walk that extends north towards the building. The remaining area behind the retaining wall is grass-covered with various monument samples scattered about.

The Tulsa Monument Company retains a notable degree of integrity. The only changes to the front of the building consist of the removal of two metal signs and the painting of the lights in the door on the west side. The backside has undergone additional modification, including the placement of decorative, wrought iron bars on the back windows and one flat-roofed, concrete block addition. A metal, Quonset-style outbuilding has also been added off the north side of the concrete block addition. Judging from the available Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, both the addition and outbuilding were added after 1952. Although a new metal gable roof has been put on the low addition, it is still not as tall as

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the original building. None of these changes impact the ability of the building to convey its significance. The major change, the addition to the backside, is not readily visible from the primary elevations.

Situated on East Eleventh Street, the building is on the famed federal Route 66 that traversed Oklahoma from Miami to Erick. As such, the Tulsa Monument Company was on a major commercial thoroughfare from the beginning. Thus, the even limited landscaping to the front of the building is unique along a long stretch of asphalt and concrete. While several historic buildings remain on East Eleventh Street, many have been modified and other lots have been redeveloped with modern commercial buildings, such as the one immediately west of the Tulsa Monument Company. Additionally, to the rear of the Tulsa Monument Company, several multi-story office buildings have been erected, replacing the predominantly one-story housing that originally characterized the area. However, because the building retains its original limited landscaping amid the historic and current pressure of a major commercial thoroughfare, the Tulsa Monument Company retains its integrity of setting, as well as the characteristics of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION:

The Tulsa Monument Company building has a flat roof and a concrete foundation. In keeping with the Streamline Moderne style, the walls are clad with smooth white plaster concrete. Emphasizing the horizontal, another Streamline Moderne feature, the foundation of the building is painted a contrasting gray to echo the same-colored, horizontal lines of the windowsills and metal banding. The one-story building is a long, narrow rectangle, reminiscent of a headstone. The corners of the building, as well as of the center clock tower, are accented by large square columns capped with metal banding painted gray. The horizontal banding is another characteristic of the Streamline Moderne style. The banding on the columns is visually three bars. The dropped main wall has a matching metal coping but the banding is just two bars. Below this, but above the windows, there is a matching, double-barred, metal stringcourse that wraps around both sides but not the rear. The stringcourse is interrupted by the columns on each corner and does not cross the center clock tower.

The south elevation is divided into three sections (see photograph 1). The middle section is a tall, narrow bay that contains a clock tower, as well as the main entry. This center section is flanked by identical long bays. The highlight of the elevation, as well as the overall building, is the central clock tower. The square clock tower includes a black-faced clock on each side but the rear. The coping of the clock tower is ornamented with a distinctive wedge pattern that is not found anywhere else on the building. This coping wraps around all four sides of the clock tower, one of the few elements to continue on the backside of the building. Above each of the three clocks is a metal light that illuminates the clocks at night. The black frame of the clocks is outlined by a gray frame that matches the other accents on the building. Only on the south wall does the gray frame extend downward in a short straight line before splitting to the sides to create an ornamental cap for the perpendicular stretch of glass blocks that extends down to the flat ledge above the entry.

The clock tower is stepped back and up, a popular treatment for skyscrapers in the late 1920s and 1930s (see photograph 1 and 5). To create the setback, the clock tower is flanked by two sets of different height square columns. The columns adjacent to the clock tower are even in height with the

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top of the vertical band of glass blocks that decorate the front of the clock tower. The second set of columns match the height of the square columns on the outside corners of the building. Centrally located at the clock tower's ground level is the recessed, double, glazed, slab, main entry. Directly above the entry and extending slightly onto the adjacent columns is a triple bar, flat, metal ledge. Echoing the overall design of the building, there is a decorative, vertical, projection in the center of the ledge. Historically, there was metal signage above the vertical projection that read "TULSA/MONUMENT/ COMPANY." This signage has been removed, likely within the last year or so when the name of the business changed for the first time in nearly seventy years. As mentioned above, directly above the vertical projection is a narrow, perpendicular stripe of glass blocks that extends to a height equal to the tall, inside columns of the clock tower. The small square blocks are laid four to a row with about thirty-two total rows.

The south elevation's flanking bays are nearly identical (see photograph 1 and 6). Both have square columns marking the outside and inside corners. Between the columns, the wall is slightly recessed. Each bay has a matching fenestration pattern of single openings flanking a triple opening. The single openings consist of an oversize, twelve-pane, metal window with a projected, concrete sill. The unusual windows have four, narrow, fixed panes on each side of four larger panes. Within the four center panes, two are fixed and two are operable. The bottom center pane is a hopper window. The pane above this is fixed with the pane above that being an awning window. The uppermost pane is also fixed. The center opening on each side bay consists of two windows identical to the single openings. The windows flank a central entry. The secondary doors are plain, metal, slab but painted gray to match the other detail on the building. Above each door is a stacked, double, metal transom. Above the openings is a continuous metal stringcourse. The stringcourse, like the metal coping above, is similar to the metal capping on the corner columns. The stringcourse and wall coping, however, are only two bars. Between the stringcourse and coping is a long, rectangular area. Centrally located on this area are two slightly projected tables. Mounted on the west table is metal signage that reads "MONUMENT." The signage on the east side, which originally read "MAUSOLEUMS," has been removed.

The east and west elevations are very narrow but match the design of the front side bays (see photographs 2 and 3). This includes the corner columns appropriately capped and a recessed main wall ornamented with the double-banded coping and stringcourse. The east elevation has no openings. In the center of the west elevation, there is a double, wood, glazed, paneled door. The lights of the door have been painted. Extending off the top center of the entryway is a long, metal bar. As originally designed, this was to be a loading dock for the building with an adjacent driveway. The adjacent property owner, however, has obliterated the driveway with the construction of an addition to their modern building. As such, the door is no longer operational. To the north of the door, in the northwest corner column, is a single, narrow, rectangular window with a narrow, projected, concrete sill. The window has been boarded.

The rear of the building is relatively plain and is not divided into sections (see photograph 4). The triple-bar banding on the columns and the clock tower were carried around on the backside of the building. Additionally, the dropped main wall has a narrow, metal coping that is also painted gray. There are four windows that remain visible on the north elevation. The other openings have been covered by the rear addition. Three of the windows are identical to the front windows. The two

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windows towards the east side are aligned with the triple window on the front, east bay. The center door, however, was not duplicated. To the west of these two windows on the north elevation is a shorter, rectangular, six-pane, metal window. The fourth window is located west of this, just off of the one-story addition. For security reasons, decorative wrought irons have been placed on the three large windows.

After 1952, a back addition was added to the building and a metal outbuilding was added to the north of this (see photograph 4). The rear addition has concrete block walls and, originally, a flat roof. The roof now has a metal, side-gabled covering, probably due to drainage issues. Additionally, there is a short, metal awning over the front of the building that is likely the same vintage as the built-up roof. The symmetrical façade of the addition has a central, aluminum, glazed, slab door flanked by rectangular, metal windows. The door and both windows have been secured with decorative wrought iron bars, matching those on the back windows of the main building. Above the door is a long, flat, metal, entry porch roof. Like the front of the building, the grassy area on the south side is filled with various sample monuments. Directly to the north of the addition is a small area that has been blocked by gray fencing. To the north of the fence, is the noncontributing, metal, Quonset-style building. The building has large, metal, swinging doors on the east side and four metal windows on the north side. On the 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, there is a separate Monument Works building behind the main building. There is also a rear addition on the building; however, it is less than half the length of the existing addition. Thus, the existing addition and outbuilding were apparently added after 1952. Significantly, neither has an impact on the integrity of the property as both are confined to the rear and do not interfere with the building's architectural statement.

ALTERATIONS:

The Tulsa Monument Company retains a high degree of integrity. The only change to the front of the building is the removal of two of the three metal signs. On the west elevation, the loading bay door no longer functions and the door lights have been painted over but the door remains in place. On the backside of the building, the windows have been secured with decorative wrought iron bars and a post-1952 concrete block addition was constructed. Significantly, the addition is not visible from the main elevations. Even with the addition of a metal, side-gabled roof, the addition is not as tall as the original building. Matching the length of the addition, there is a metal Quonset-style building to the north of the addition. The outbuilding was also added after 1952. As with the addition, the metal outbuilding is not readily visible and, therefore, it does not impair the building's ability to convey its architectural significance. Overall, the Tulsa Monument Company building maintains all of the seven characteristics of integrity, including location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association.

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SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY:

The Tulsa Monument Company is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an excellent, unusual example of the Streamline Moderne style as applied to a small commercial building. The building was designed by Harry H. Mahler for the Tulsa Monument Company. Mahler, an engineer and architect, opened his architectural practice in Tulsa in about 1918. Previous to this, Mahler worked in Chicago, Illinois, reportedly for twenty years for the nationally esteemed firm of Holabird & Roche. In a solo practice for most of his twenty-plus years in Tulsa, Mahler designed a variety of buildings, including commercial, religious and residential. In about 1939, Mahler left Tulsa for Texas, joining the firm of Wyatt C. Hedrick, the successor to the noted firm of Sanguinet and Staats and, at one time, the third-largest architectural firm in the United States.

The Tulsa Monument Company building was constructed in 1937, during the height of the Streamline Moderne style's popularity. This American style of architecture was particularly appropriate for the Tulsa Monument Company as it was easily adapted to architecturally express the function of the building. The long, narrow shape, as well as the light-colored, smooth wall surface, were evocative of the headstones that composed the occupant's main business. Characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style found on the Tulsa Monument Company building include a flat roof; light-colored, smooth wall material; a flat ledge above the main entry; and, minimal decorative detail in the form of multiple sets of horizontal banding, distinctive metal signage, triple openings and a vertical strip of glass blocks. All of these stylistic elements remain on the building, except for two of the three metal signs. The Tulsa Monument Company building has long been recognized within Tulsa for its architectural significance as an unusual example of the Streamline Moderne architecture designed by Harry H. Mahler.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND:

The town of Tulsa existed as early 1879 when a post office was established on the Perryman Ranch in the Creek Nation. The town, first called "Tulsey Town," grew slowly. During the early 1880s, the town was a haven for gamblers and "bad men" due to its isolation. At the time of the first government townsite survey in Indian Territory in 1900, Tulsa's population stood at merely 1,390.¹

Shortly after this survey, a momentous event occurred near Tulsa, Indian Territory. This event not only had a major impact on Tulsa but the entire future state of Oklahoma. In 1901, the state's first important commercial oil well "blew in." Located in Red Fork, this landmark well was across the Arkansas River from Tulsa. Two years later, the Secretary of the Interior allowed the leasing of restricted Indian Territory lands under Department of the Interior supervision. The oil rush was on as oil men from Pennsylvania and other states flocked to Indian Territory. In 1904, three men built a toll bridge over the Arkansas River connecting Red Fork and Tulsa. In addition to allowing Tulsa to benefit from the Red Fork strike, the toll bridge also enabled the town to profit from the fabulous Glenn Pool strike which "blew in" in 1905. Within months of the discovery, the Glenn Pool field was "famous

1 The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma (Lawrence, Kansas: The University Press of Kansas, 1986), 206-208.

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throughout the industry as the richest small field in the world.”²

At the time of Oklahoma’s statehood in 1907, Tulsa’s population had jumped to 7,298, an increase of nearly six thousand in just seven years. In just three years, Tulsa’s population more than doubled to reach 18,182 in 1910. As to be expected, a major commercial and residential building boom accompanied this tremendous population boom with brick plants working at capacity. Hotels, office buildings and fine residences were under construction as the streets were paved. By late August 1910, construction activity underway in Tulsa was valued at over one million dollars. Pipelines to the Gulf of Mexico opened as oil prices climbed. In 1912, a third major oil pool, the Cushing field, “blew in.” Although the incredible production from the Cushing field temporarily resulted in a drop in crude oil price by 1916, the United States’ entrance into World War I rallied the market. Additionally, it was during this time that the first oil refining plant opened in Tulsa. By 1920, Tulsa’s population had grown to 72,075, a tremendous increase of almost fifty-four thousand persons in merely ten years. Nearly doubling in the ensuing decade, Tulsa’s population by 1930 was 141,258 and the city was the second largest in the state. Although oil drilling activity occurred all over eastern Oklahoma, the oil companies’ headquarters were generally located at Tulsa and that is where the oil men in charge made their homes. As such, Tulsa became known as the “Oil Capital of the World.”³

Like the rest of the nation, the oil business and Tulsa did not escape unscathed by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Further worsening the status of the oil industry in Oklahoma was the October 1930 discovery of oil in the East Texas field. Forty-five miles long and five to ten miles wide, the East Texas field quickly yielded a sufficient amount of oil by itself to satisfy national demand. The worsening economic conditions combined to such an extent that by 1933 the price of oil had reached bottom of the barrel prices and a good portion of Tulsa’s residents were jobless. Although oil prices stabilized between 1934 and 1940, the decade of the 1930s proved to be difficult for Tulsans, as all Americans. In 1941, the city’s population stood at only 142,157. This represented a growth of only 899 citizens since 1930.⁴

America’s involvement in World War II proved to be a major redeeming event for Tulsa, as well as the nation as a whole. Although Tulsa and Oklahoma did not benefit from the increased military spending of early 1940, it quickly became apparent Tulsa enjoyed certain important characteristics that made it ideal for subsequent military spending. These features included its central, secure location in the middle of the country; ready sources of cheap fuel; a good network of roads and highways; and, a large pool of trained and unemployed workers. According to one source, the only drawback Tulsa had was the lack of available workers housing for the thousands of laborers necessary to make Tulsa “...a center of war production.” Nonetheless, in early 1941, the War Department named Tulsa as a potential site for the new \$15 million Douglas Aircraft Company plant. On 2 May 1941, a ceremonial ground breaking heralded the start of construction on the mile long building which by the summer of 1942 occupied one-and-one-half square feet of floor space. By the fall of 1942, the Douglas plant was in need of expansion and the plant payroll included nearly fifteen thousand workers earning an average

2 Ibid., 208. See also Angie Debo, Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943), 86-88.

3 Ibid., 208-209. See also Debo, Tulsa, 88 and 97-99.

4 Danney Goble, Ph.D., Tulsa! Biography of the American City (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Council Oak Books, 1998), 139-140, 143, 151 and 181. See also WPA Guide, 205.

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of just over \$185 a month.⁵

The Douglas Aircraft plant was not the only wartime plant impacting Tulsa in the early 1940s. Although the aircraft industry expended more than twenty million dollars during the period to expand their facilities in Tulsa, other factories in Tulsa spent more than seven million dollars in expanding their industrial plants during the war. In 1939, Tulsa manufacturers employed eleven thousand Tulsans in primarily oil-related manufacturing jobs. By 1945 forty-two thousand residents worked in local manufacturing plants. The majority of these in non-oil related capacities. In 1945, the United States Department of Labor determined that Tulsa was among the top three cities impacted by the wartime industrial expansion. In terms of the number of residents, between 1940 and 1945, Tulsa's population expanded by nearly a third to reach 185,000.⁶

Following the end of World War II, Tulsa continued to enjoy prosperity unthought-of in the 1930s. Responding to consumer demands for goods of all types, Tulsa continued to expand its industrial base. Further boosting the city's economy was the continued spending by the Federal government on military-related industries during the Cold War of the late 1940s through the early 1990s. This remarkable varied industrial development spurred Tulsa's growth through the 1950s and 1960s. By the early 1970s, Tulsa led the state in manufacturing.⁷

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

In early 1937, with the Tulsa economy on an upswing from the dark depression days of the early 1930s, the Tulsa Monument Company announced its plan to erect a new "...factory home..." on the northwest corner of Eleventh Street and Victor Avenue. This was an auspicious move from near downtown Tulsa to the "suburbs," made even more favorable due to the proximity of a well-known federal highway, the famed Route 66. The owners of the Tulsa Monument Company, Edwin and Jessie Holmes, had purchased the oversize lot for the building nearly three years previous in January 1934. However, for unknown reasons, the Holmes' also sold the lot in January 1935, just days short of a year after they originally purchased it. At the end of 1935, the Holmes' again purchased lot 7 in the Farmer's Subdivision of Lot 16, Block 3, Clover Ridge Addition of Tulsa.⁸

The construction of the new building in 1937 "...climax(ed) the many years of steady and consistent growth which the company has experienced in monument making." The company was also celebrating its fortieth year as a Tulsa business, selling "Memorials of Character and Individuality, Specializing in Mausoleums." In addition to the memorials, mausoleums and monuments, the company also sold building granite, as well as imported granite and marble. The previous home of the business for all of that time was 11 West Brady Street. Just over five months after announcing the start of work, the building was complete and the monument company moved in in mid-May 1937. In celebration of their new home, Holmes cancelled all debts for the purchase of monuments incurred prior to January 1,

5 Ibid., 170-180.

6 Ibid., 181.

7 Ibid., 242-245.

8 Grantor/Grantee Records, Lot 7, Farmer's Subdivision of Lot 16, Block 3, Clover Ridge Addition of Tulsa (Available Tulsa County Clerk's Office, Tulsa County Courthouse, Tulsa, Oklahoma), various dates

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1936. Amounting to some \$6,000, Holmes hoped the cancellation of the outstanding debt would "...contribute to the welfare of our friends and to this extent assist in the general business recovery of the community."⁹

To design their new building, the Holmes turned to a well-known Tulsa architect, Harry Hamilton (H.H.) Mahler. Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1876, Mahler attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Reportedly, Mahler worked from 1898 to 1918 for the nationally-recognized, Chicago architectural firm of Holabird and Roche. This firm, founded in 1883, employed "...as many as 40 draftsman" by the early 1890s. Less than twenty years later, the firm had nearly 100 draftsmen and was one of the largest architectural firms in the nation. During his years in Chicago, Mahler also apparently befriended Frank Lloyd Wright, who was also a neighbor. While his work in Chicago for Holabird and Roche remains unidentified, he did take out at least six building permits under his own name for buildings in Chicago during the period 1911-1912. Only two Mahler-Chicago properties, 3127-3145 W. Palmer Boulevard and 10736 South Longwood Drive, have been identified as still extant. The houses were documented as part of the historic resources survey done by the City of Chicago, Department of Planning and Development, Landmarks Division. Unfortunately, both properties were deemed to have lost their architectural integrity.¹⁰

Mahler moved to Tulsa in 1918 to work as an engineer for the Oklahoma Iron Works. Soon after arriving in Tulsa, he set up an architectural firm. The only known architectural partnership Mahler entered when living in Tulsa was with Marshall C. Cross in 1920. It was the firm of Mahler and Cross who designed the Oklahoma Iron Works Office Building and the Jarecki Manufacturing Company. Both buildings were designed in 1920. Apparently dissolving the firm within a year, Mahler then worked solo. In 1922, Mahler designed the Masonic Temple at the southwest corner of 7th and Boston. The Second Church of Christ Scientist was designed in 1929. Additionally, during the 1920s, Mahler served on Tulsa's planning commission, aiding in the rezoning of Eleventh Street from residential to commercial.¹¹

The only two identified buildings Mahler designed in the 1930s in Tulsa are the Tulsa Monument Company and the Security Federal Savings and Loan. The Security Federal Savings and Loan job was actually a remodel of an existing building. Interestingly, there is a strong similarity between the two projects. On the Security Federal Savings and Loan, Mahler chose to cover the façade with black

⁹ The Tulsa (Oklahoma) World, 3 January 1937 and 16 May 1937. See also Polk City Directory, Tulsa, Oklahoma, (Available Tulsa City-County Library, Tulsa, Oklahoma), 1937.

¹⁰ "Harry Hamilton Mahler (1876-1975), The Architects, Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, <http://www.tulsaarchitecture.com/Architects/mahler.shtml>, retrieved 5 October 2007. See also Carol Newton Gambino, et al., Tulsa Art Deco, First Revised Edition, (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, 2001), 149; "Holabird & Root," Encyclopedia of Chicago, Chicago Historical Society, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/2704.html>, retrieved 7 October 2007; "Index to the American Contractor's Chicago Building Permit Column, 1898-1912," American Contractor, Chicago Historical Society, http://www.chsmedia.org/househistory/1898-1912permits/architect_response.asp, retrieved 7 October 2007; and, "Historic Resources Survey," Chicago Landmarks, City of Chicago, <http://webapps.cityofchicago.org/landmarksearchWeb/pageflow/getResult.do;sessionId=HKsZh>, retrieved 8 October 2007.

¹¹ *Ibid.* See also Gambino, Tulsa Art Deco, 149 and The Tulsa (Oklahoma) Tribune, 2 October 1928.

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Vitrolite panels. While the opposite of the white concrete plaster of the Tulsa Monument Company, both color choices were striking in their simplicity. As with the Tulsa Monument Company, the corners of the bank building are marked with projected columns, also clad in black Vitrolite panels. The upper wall of the side bays sport black Vitrolite panels, alternately dull and polished to form a checkerboard design. Notably, the center bay is stepped back with a central clock on the tallest member, similar to the Tulsa Monument Company. Horizontal bands of aluminum mark the stepped roofline, with similar metal banding above the windows and entryway. Also over the double entry is a flat, projected, metal ledge. There are a few subtle differences between the two buildings, such as the etchings on the top of the foremost center piers, but clearly Mahler applied the same Streamline Moderne stylistic features to both buildings. Significantly, the Tulsa Monument Company is a better example of Mahler's work, being an original work, rather than just a remodel. Additionally, the Security Federal Savings and Loan was demolished in 1999.¹²

In about 1939, Mahler apparently moved to Fort Worth, Texas, to join the noted firm of Wyatt C. Hedrick. Also an engineer and architect, Hedrick opened his own architectural firm in 1925. The following year, Hedrick purchased the remaining interest of his previous partners, Sanguinet and Staats. From that time through the 1950s, Hedrick had "...an active nationwide practice, and at one time his was considered the third-largest architectural firm in the United States." Hedrick's firm is well known for their Moderne style buildings, particularly within Fort Worth and Houston, Texas.¹³

The Tulsa Monument Company is architecturally significant not only as an example of the work of Harry H. Mahler in Tulsa but also as a striking Streamline Moderne commercial building. As evidenced by Mahler's work on the Security Federal Savings and Loan and the variety of other identified Streamline Moderne style buildings such as the Mayo Motor Inn and City Veterinary Hospital, the Streamline Moderne style was widely accepted in Tulsa. The American style that is Streamline Moderne emerged in the early 1930s, related to but often directly in opposition to the flamboyant Art Deco style of the 1920s. The Streamline Moderne style used flat roofs, rounded corners, ribbon windows, smooth, light-colored wall materials, small ledges and horizontal ornamental banding to architecturally express the burgeoning fascination with the concept of the machine in motion. The relatively austere style of architecture was a fitting response to the trying economic times of the Great Depression when fortitude overtook exuberance as a critical character, and architectural, trait. Importantly, the Streamline Moderne style also came to symbolize industrial progress through its emphasis on aerodynamic principles. The style derived its visual vocabulary from the forms of cutting-edge, high-speed transportation, including automobiles, trains, airplanes and ocean liners. The curved walls, horizontal emphasis and ribbon windows of the Streamline Moderne style all added to the perception of high-speed, forward motion. Additionally, the Streamline Moderne style with its flat roofs, horizontal banding that wrapped around the building and smooth, clean wall surfaces embodied the concepts of mobility, efficiency, luxury and hygiene, all characteristics identified with the Modern age of the 1930s. Also adding to the style's popularity was its scientific, futuristic feel that echoed the utopian visions of popular designers, writers, illustrators and moviemakers of the period.¹⁴

¹² Ibid. See also Gambino, Tulsa Art Deco, 151-152.

¹³ Ibid. See also Christopher Long, "Wyatt Cephias Hedrick," The Handbook of Texas Online, <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/HH/fhe51.html>, retrieved 8 October 2007.

¹⁴ Richard Guy Wilson, et al. The Machine Age in America, 1918-1941, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc, 2001), 174. See

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The Tulsa Monument Company is a unique example of the Streamline Moderne style in Tulsa. Characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style present on the Tulsa Monument Company building include a dominate horizontal emphasis; light-colored, smooth wall surface; a flat roof; a tall, stepped back, center bay; the use of glass block and metal banding for ornamental detail; and, a flat ledge over the entryway. Also a defining influence was that the building was expressly built to house a monument company. The shape of the building is clearly evocative of the very product that was for sale. The Modernist concept of using the building itself as visual advertisement arose in the 1920s and remained popular through the 1930s. Similarly, the stepped center bay was in vogue nationwide with the "...mania for setback buildings (sweeping) the country in the late 1920s, and many cities, large and small, received small doses of "metropolitanism," as the style was sometimes called." Although more often applied to skyscrapers, the concept worked equally well on one-story buildings, such as the Tulsa Monument Company. Interestingly, the firm of Holabird and Root, Mahler's old Chicago firm, led the Midwest in application of the metropolitanism style.¹⁵

The Tulsa Monument Company has long been recognized within Tulsa as an outstanding example of the Streamline Moderne style. The building was included in Tulsa Art Deco. This book celebrating Tulsa's architectural bounty of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne style buildings was originally published in 1980. The book was republished in 2001 by the Tulsa Foundation for Architecture. Additionally, the Tulsa Monument Company is included on various lists of noteworthy Art Deco buildings in Tulsa, such as those posted to the internet by the Tulsa Historic Preservation Commission and the Tulsa Historical Society.¹⁶

Notably, the Tulsa Monument Company was, and is, not the only outstanding example of the Streamline Moderne style in Tulsa. However, it is a unique application of the style to a relatively small commercial building with the express purpose of selling grave markers. Of the total forty Streamline Moderne style buildings identified in Tulsa Art Deco, seventeen have been demolished, including Mahler's Security Federal Savings and Loan. Of the remaining twenty-three, fourteen were intended for commercial purposes, seven for residential use, one was a veterinary hospital and one was a school. The uses of the other thirteen commercial buildings were diverse, including several service stations, dry cleaners, entertainment buildings, a parking garage and office buildings. The Tulsa

also "The American Moderne: 1920-1940," Essay: The American Moderne:1920-1940, http://www.artsmiz.org/modernism/e_AM.html, retrieved 21 September 2007 and "The Streamline Style," <http://www.jahsonic.com/Streamline.html>, retrieved 21 September 2007.

¹⁵ Ibid., 161-166.

¹⁶ Gambino, Tulsa Art Deco, 150-152. See also websites for the Tulsa Preservation Commission, <http://www.tulsapreservationcommission.org> and the Tulsa Historical Society, <http://www.tulsaahistory.org>.

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Monument Company building clearly stands out, remaining a monument to the distinctive style as applied to a small commercial building.¹⁷

The integrity of several of the remaining Streamline Moderne buildings is also questionable. For example, the editors of Tulsa Art Deco note that the Big Ten Ballroom, constructed in 1950, has "...only a few original architectural details (that) are evident today." Similarly, the Midwest Tile and Marble building, constructed in 1945, had lost its historic integrity due to alterations in the early 1960s which included the enclosure of the building's original courtyard.

Overall, the Tulsa Monument Company is a distinctive, local example of the Streamline Moderne style. The building retains an excellent degree of historic integrity with only very minor change being made to the seventy-year-old building. Remarkably, the building continues to be used for the very purpose it was built, reflecting the success of the building design in advertising the goods for sale. The building is also an excellent example of Harry H. Mahler's design work in Tulsa.

¹⁷ Ibid., 186-187.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 7, less the South 4.5 feet for the street, and Lot 8 of the Farmer's Subdivision of Lot 16, Block 3, Clover Ridge Addition, Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include the property historically associated with the Tulsa Monument Company. While the original construction was confined to Lot 7, Lot 8 is included within the nomination boundaries as the rear addition to the building is located on Lot 8.

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Photographer: Cynthia Savage
Date of Photographs: 25 July 2007
Negatives: TIFF Files