

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 10 1978
DATE ENTERED NOV 17 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC American National Bank Building (Old)

AND/OR COMMON
Florida National Bank Building 1944-64, Empire Building 1965-72, Seville Tower 1973-

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 226 South Palafox Street

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT one

CITY, TOWN
Pensacola

--- VICINITY OF

STATE 32501
Florida

CODE
12

COUNTY
Escambia

CODE
033 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Empire Building Ltd. ✓

STREET & NUMBER
226 South Palafox Street

CITY, TOWN
Pensacola

--- VICINITY OF

STATE
Florida 32501

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Escambia County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Pensacola

STATE
Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Seville Square Historic Building Survey

DATE 1970
--- FEDERAL --- STATE --- COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Historic Pensacola Preservation Board

CITY, TOWN
Pensacola

STATE
Florida

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old American National Bank building was designed by J.E.R. Carpenter in the commercial style popularized by the Chicago school. This style, used almost exclusively in high-rise construction at the turn of the century, had interior metal framing and exterior masonry piers. Decoration was usually limited to the base and cornice areas, with the long vertical columns of windows of the intermediate stories receiving uniform and subordinant ornament.

The building is located on the north corner of the intersection of Government and Palafox streets, with the southeast and southwest facades having street exposures. The northeast and northwest facades are not articulated.

The original base of the Old American National Bank building was two stories (however with the addition of a mezzanine level in 1973, the present fenestration has three levels), the recessed spandrel between the first and second story windows exhibiting a full entablature. The second story windows have segmental arched heads. Terra cotta is used as the decorative material with large rope beads defining panels applied to each pier. Window surrounds are channelled acanthus leaves. The vertical channels continue on the entire facade and provide a visual link to the cornice.

Horizontality is expressed by the belt above the second story windows which contain heavily ornamented panels with garlands and masks and by a secondary belt at the 10th floor level. This horizontal line of the shallow blind arcading also serves as the architrave of the entablature which rises through the tenth story proper (the frieze) and terminates in the larger corbelled blind arcade of the cornice.

Other decorative elements include the panels with cartouches in the tenth story window spandrels and the secondary window surrounds in the bays closest to the corners of the building. These surrounds have bas-relief scrolls. The remaining windows, separated by similar paneled bas-relief mullions, are paired.

Of the three original entrances, only the largest remains. This is located in the westernmost bay of the southwest facade. It has a flat roofed hood supported by consoles. The hood is trimmed with rosettes and the consoles are heavily decorated.

Newspaper accounts from the opening of the American National Bank describe the original interior as an imposing room decorated with marble, brass and mahogany.

The finished Grecian marble, the highly polished mahogany woodwork, the bronze and brass and glistening steel of the metal fixtures, the soft colors of the heavy antique lamps, and the white simplicity of the great Doric pillars were all given a heightened effect by the rich ferns and flowers with which the

(Continued)

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 checked="" 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 +1908 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Carpenter, J.E.R.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old American National Bank Building, designed by J.E.R. Carpenter in 1908 in the commercial style, is a product of a "boom" period in Pensacola's economy when local businessmen promoted the city as a potential import and export center. The City Hall (1907), the San Carlos Hotel (1910), the Citizen's and People's National Bank building (1908), and the Blount Building (1906), all built during this same period, reflected the growth of the economy and the community leaders' hopes for the city to become the "Gateway to the Panama Canal."¹

The American National Bank Building is believed to have been the tallest building in Florida when it opened in August, 1909. Newspaper reports refer to construction rivalry between Jacksonville and Pensacola, but no comments appear about which city had the tallest structure.² The American National Bank building was the tallest structure in Pensacola and retained that distinction until 1974 when the Charter National Bank building was completed.

The American National Bank opened in Pensacola in October, 1900, in the Opera House building at Government and Jefferson streets "with a capital stock of \$200,000."³ The Bank "pioneered the popular use of safe deposit boxes; initiated one of the earliest night depository services and was one of the earliest users of the Burroughs adding machine, then known as an 'arithometer'".⁴ By 1908, the bank had outgrown its original quarters and began construction of its ten-story building at the corner of Palafox and Government streets. This building, completed in August, 1909, housed the bank on the first two floors and a variety of other offices on the remaining floors, including real estate, insurance, legal, and export firms.⁵ At the time the building opened, the U.S. Weather Bureau and the first Pensacola-based wireless telephone station occupied offices on the tenth floor.⁶

In 1944, the DuPont estate purchased the American National Bank and changed its name to the Florida National Bank at Pensacola. The bank remained in this building until 1964, when it moved to a new office at Garden and Jefferson streets.⁷ Between 1964 and 1973, the building changed hands several times and stood vacant for a period until Empire Building, Ltd. acquired and renovated it in 1973. The building still stands as a local landmark and currently houses the Escambia County Tax Assessor's office on the first floor and other professional offices on the remaining floors.

(See footnotes on continuation sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Abstract for property, notes on file at the Historic Pensacola Preservation Board, Pensacola, Florida.

The Banker's Magazine, January, 1910.

(Continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	47,939,0	3,36,39,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All that part and parcel of land described as Block 16 Old City Plan and consisting of the south 99 feet of lot 285, all of lot 286 less the north 15 feet and the west 32 feet 6 inches of lot 287 less the north 15 feet thereof.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Elizabeth B. Monroe, Historic Sites Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management

DATE

3/17/78

STREET & NUMBER

Department of State, The Capitol

TELEPHONE

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida 32304

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

6/27/78

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11-17-30

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Jane H. Gilmore

11/16/78

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The American National Bank Building (Old)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

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banking room had been supplied. One of the most striking decorative features of the interior was a huge brass eagle which looked out over the banking room from above the entrance to the elevator lobby.¹

None of the original interior remains.

¹Pensacola Journal, August 31, 1909.

Item Number 8 continued

¹James R. McGovern, The Emergence of a City in the Modern South: Pensacola, 1900-1945 (Pensacola: James R. McGovern, 1976), pp. 13-32.

²Pensacola Journal, August, 1908 - August, 1909.

³Philip A. Pfeiffer, Pensacola's Currency Issuing Banks and Their Bank Notes, 1833-1935 (Pensacola: Pfeiffer Printing Co., 1975), p. 46.

⁴Pensacola News-Journal, May 3, 1964.

⁵Pensacola City Directories, 1911-1961.

⁶Pensacola Journal, March 17, 1909 and April 6, 1909.

⁷Pensacola News-Journal, May 3, 1964.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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McGovern, James R. The Emergence of a City in the Modern South: Pensacola, 1900-1945. Pensacola: James R. McGovern, 1976.

Miller's Pensacola City Directory, 1931. Asheville, North Carolina: The Miller Press, 1931.

Pensacola Journal, 1908-1909.

Pensacola News-Journal, 1963.

Pfeiffer, Philip A. Pensacola's Currency Issuing Banks and Their Bank Notes, 1833-1935. Pensacola: Pfeiffer Printing Co., 1975.

Polk's Pensacola City Directory, 1911-1942. Jacksonville, Florida and Richmond, Virginia: R.L. Polk Company.