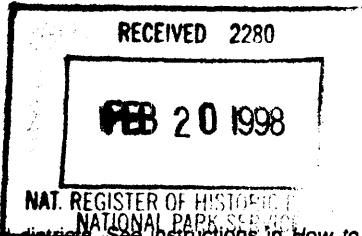


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" 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 Bank of Italy

other names/site number Old Bank of America

2. Location

street & number 1245 Park Street not for publication

city or town Paso Robles vicinity

state California code CA county San Luis Obispo code 079 zip code 93446

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.)

Harriet Abeyta, Deputy SHPO 2-5-98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State of 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 commenting 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.
- other, (explain) _____

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 3-19-98

The Bank of Italy

Name of Property

San Luis Obispo, CA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: financial institution

COMMERCE: business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: business

GOVERNMENT: government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Renaissance

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

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

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

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1921- 1948

Significant Dates

1921

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Nyberg, August

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:

El Paso de Robles Historical Society

The Bank of Italy
Name of Property

San Luis Obispo, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 0	7 09 2 80	3 94 49 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 Ali Salmanzadeh - Owner

organization N/A date June 16, 1997

street & number 1245 Park Street telephone (805)237-1000

city or town Paso Robles state CA zip code 93446

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 Ali and Julie Salmanzadeh

street & number 935 Inverness Drive telephone (805)237-9789

city or town Paso Robles state CA zip code 93446

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 average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

The Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA

DESCRIPTION

The Bank of Italy Building is a large three-story flat-roofed brick building, the tallest in Paso Robles. The building has a rectangular plan and stands on a corner lot of 40 feet by 140 feet. It is located at the northeast corner of 13th and Park Street on a commercial block in the heart of the downtown business district. Since its completed construction in 1921, the building has been the prime commercial location for prominent banks and businesses of the town. It is a well built and well designed building with a Renaissance Revival architectural style which provides a beautiful landmark for the city. The building is in excellent condition and with the exception of a few interior alterations, the building retains its original appearance and continues its historical associations as being one of the town's primary business locations.

Mr. August Nyberg, the owner, architect, and developer of the building, began construction in late 1920 and completed it in 1921. Originally there were two buildings attached by a common wall. The east half was 40 feet by 70 feet and the west half was also 40 feet by 70 feet. In 1947, the wall was removed to serve Bank of America's need for a larger facility.

The exterior of the building consists of high quality, tan colored, brick veneer; it has quoin-like brick corners and recessed transoms. The floor, walls, and roof of the building are reinforced. The south and west walls consist of 17 inch thick concrete with a nominal amount of steel reinforcement. North and east interior walls are standard red brick masonry with a plaster interior, totaling 18 inches in thickness (including the exterior brick). Steel columns in the first floor support steel beams in the second floor. The total square footage of the building is 16,800 divided up equally among the three floors including stairwells, bathrooms, and hallways. The ceiling heights of the first, second, and third floor are 13'-6", 9'-0", 12'-2" respectively.

On the street level there is an off-center double door facing Park Street which has a stepped stone pediment topped by a latticed transom. Three glass panels enhance the wooden door. Two other sets of wooden double doors are located on the north side facing 13th Street. Another wooden door on the west side opens to a small basement that was originally built to house the utility, heating, and cooling systems which are still in tact today. Later a steel door was added on the south side for a fire exit.

The second story is topped by a horizontal decorated stone band that encircles the east half of the building. The west half of the building does not have a stone band on the second story exterior. The front second story windows facing Park Street are latticed panes with semicircular openings of radiating brick. A plain brick band runs above the third story windows on the west half of the building. The third story windows are double hungs with square openings. Access to the third floor was by stairway or elevator from the northwest end of the building. The elevator was the only one in Paso Robles. However, in 1947, the original elevator was removed in order to install a large concrete vault approximately 30 feet by 13 feet by 18 feet high for the bank.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7,8 Page 2

**The Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA**

DESCRIPTION (continued)

In order to preserve the building for future generations and to continue its tradition for being a primary commercial location, some additions and restorations were made in 1993. Steel beams were added to the interior including eight iron window guards and two iron door guards for seismic reinforcement of the building. Fire sprinklers were installed and a new interior elevator was placed in the location where the original elevator had been removed. Also, restoration for the building included original poured window glass preservation, wooden window frame preservation, and plaster removal to expose original brick walls. The entire restoration was completed with minimum alterations to the original structure. The effect of the work helped to preserve the building's original beauty, but more importantly, it allowed the Bank of Italy Building to continue its historic involvement in the community as a home to local businesses today.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bank of Italy Building is historically significant for its architectural style and for being a building devoted to commerce. Since its completed construction in 1921, the three story building, located in the heart of the downtown business district, has been one of the city's most important commercial buildings. The building is an exceptional commercial example of the Renaissance Revival style of the early 20th Century. It is also a fine example of what a notable bank like the Bank of Italy (later becoming the Bank of America) can do for the growth and prosperity of a small town. The building housed many of the town's prominent businesses and several organizations held their lodge meetings on the third floor. Well-preserved and carefully maintained, the building continues to serve Paso Robles today as both a beautiful city landmark and a primary business location.

Located midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, Paso Robles was the perfect town for August Nyberg to invest his time and expertise to design and build this building for commerce use and investment purposes. The property began establishing its historic significance in the very beginning for the building's noted architectural features. Thoughtful consideration went into each detail of the Renaissance style including the high quality exterior brick used. The impressive three-story building is accented with quoin-like brick corners and recessed transoms. Another illustration of the quality features were the second story windows on the east half that are comprised of latticed panes with semicircular openings of radiating brick. Even the door was beautifully designed with a stepped stone pediment topped by a latticed transom. The architecture and structured design is truly a superior example of the Renaissance style of the early 20th Century.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

**The Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

In March of 1922, the Bank of Italy moved into the east half of the building and the Midland Light and Power moved into the west half (both on the first floor). August Nyberg sold his property to the Bank of Italy on January 23, 1923. On November 17, 1930 the Bank of America bought the Bank of Italy and thereafter the building was known as the Bank of America Building. In less than seven years, the Bank of America acquired every other bank in town and remained the only bank in Paso Robles for 21 years from 1937 to March, 1958. The Bank of America became the primary financial strength standing behind the community. The bank supported the many farmers and businesses and therefore played a significant role in fostering the town's development.

The building was the prime location for any successful business. Fifteen offices comprised the second floor which was occupied primarily by doctors, lawyers, and businesses which included: John Gallagher, Attorney; Dr. W.G. Gates and his son Dr. Russell Gates (both dentists); Giff Sobey, M.D.; David Kelder, M.D.; Loler Strahan, M.D.; Lawton Champion, Attorney; and a Credit Bureau Office run by Roland and Margaret Gates from 1945 to 1952. The third floor was comprised of a lodge room, a long hallway, five other rooms and a kitchen. An old "hand pump" in the kitchen made it possible to have city water. In April of 1922, lodge meetings for several organizations were held on the third floor including the Masonic Lodge, the Foresters and the IOOF.

To better serve the growing community and accommodate the bank's needs for a larger facility, the Bank of America remodeled in 1947 by turning the first floor of both the east and west buildings into one large room. This included the addition of a large vault. The Bank of America continued fostering the growth of the community on the first floor of the building until November 7, 1969 when they moved to a new location. After the Bank of America moved out, the building continued housing many successful businesses.

Even today, the building continues to gain future historic significance. In 1992, Ali Salmanzadeh became the new owner of the building. A Persian by birth, Ali is an internationally known businessman of established reputation for collecting fine art objects. He opened his business, Ali's Fine Art Galleries (established since 1972) on the first floor which was a prestigious addition to downtown Paso Robles. Due to new structural regulations for commercial buildings, the upper two floors were unable to be used until Mr. Salmanzadeh made plans to completely restore it. Therefore, a restoration of the building was started in 1993. Robert Alderman was the civil engineer for the project and well-known architect Hans Mumfer did the planning. In 1996, the business won the Main Street Business of the Year Award from the State of California (presented by Governor Pete Wilson), for Mr. Salmanzadeh's dedication and commitment for restoring the historical Bank of Italy Building which in turn improved the downtown business atmosphere. Due to his impressive efforts to preserve the building, on

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**Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA**

Section 8, Page 4

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

October 1, 1996 the city of Paso Robles passed Resolution No. 96-131 designating the Bank of Italy Building as a historic landmark.

Now the second and third floor are occupied by the State of California Department of Corrections Regional Accounting Central Coast Offices. The fifty new jobs created play a positive role in the overall health of the city's economy. Through the forward thinking of merchants and talented leaders, such as Ali Salmanzadeh, Paso Robles will continue to flourish and the Bank of Italy Building will continue to be a successful and pivotal commercial property reflecting the history of the town for years to come.

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**Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA**

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Ford, Harlow, "History of Banks of Paso Robles," Harlow, a former manager, worked at the Bank of America for 30 years. Harlow passed away at the age of 104 in 1997. His papers can be seen by calling Mrs. Dell Ford at (805) 238-3726.

Interviews with:

Dolly Barba Bader, age 87, lifelong resident of the area.

Ruby Maroney Duebler, age 96, arrived in Paso Robles in 1922.

Margaret Gates, age 87, lifelong resident of Paso Robles. Her husband worked for the Bank of America until 1947.

Virginia Peterson, age 85, arrived in Paso Robles in 1941. Her husband worked at the bank for 35 years.

Order of the Eastern Star, Bethlehem Chapter #95, Secretary Ledgers including minutes from 1922-1923.

San Luis Obispo County Historical Museum Records, including City Deed Books 91889-1960), local newspapers 1892-1980, photographic collection.

San Luis Obispo County, Records of the Clerk-Recorder.

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Bank of Italy Building
San Luis Obispo County, CA

Section 10 & Photos, Page 6

Verbal Boundary Description:

Block 25, Lot 18, City of Paso Robles, County of San Luis Obispo

Boundary Justification:

These are the boundaries associated with the property historically.

Photos:

Photos by James F. Danis, August 8, 1995. Location of negative: James F. Danis Photography, Paso Robles, California. Photo #1 – corner of Park and 13th Streets, looking at the northeast view. Photo #2 - corner of Park and 13th Street, looking at the east side view.