

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

_____
Name of Property
_____
County and State
_____
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100002220

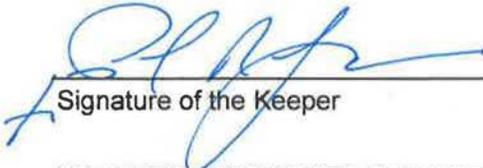
Date Listed: 3/15/2018

Property Name: First National Bank and Trust Company Building

County: Oklahoma

State: OK

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This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

3/15/2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Previous Documentation on File:**

The Part 1 Tax Certification approval #34226 should be marked under Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) instead of Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.

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The OKLAHOMA SHPO was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

SG-10-2220

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: First National Bank and Trust Company Building

Other names/site number: First National Center

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 120 N. Robinson Ave. & 111 North Broadway Ave.

City or town: Oklahoma City State: Oklahoma County: Oklahoma

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national X statewide \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

 Signature of certifying official/Title:	 Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**

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**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government**

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

  
Signature of the Keeper

3/15/2010  
Date of Action

**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

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Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce: Financial

Commerce: Business

Commerce: Professional

Commerce: Specialty Store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce: Business

Commerce: Professional

Commerce: Specialty Store

Commerce: Restaurant

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Vacant/Not in Use

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement: Art Deco

Modern Movement: International

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone, Aluminum, Granite, Glass

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is a complex of three interconnected elements in downtown Oklahoma City consisting of the main Art Deco-style 33-story tower, with a 14-story original rear section, and two Postwar International Style 14-story additions attached to its rear. Although no longer the city's tallest, the 33-story Art Deco building is notable for its signature tapered beacon atop a stepped-back tower. Its exterior gray limestone walls and opulent silver-toned aluminum ornamentation provide a striking contrast to the gold and pink hues of the grand banking hall on the building's second floor. This complex building is located in Oklahoma City's downtown financial district among other buildings dating to the oil-boom of the 1920s and 1930s, reflective glass buildings of the 1980s and the state's tallest modern building, Devon Tower, completed in 2012. The First National Bank and Trust Company Building retains a high degree of historic and architectural integrity both on the exterior and interior.

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### Narrative Description

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building stands at the southeast corner of North Robinson Avenue and Park Avenue in the financial district at the heart of downtown Oklahoma City. The building has evolved through time from its initial construction in 1931 in the Art Deco style designed by Weary and Alford from Chicago Illinois to include a 14-story International Style building designed by Sorey Hill Sorey in 1957 and the 1972 building designed by Hudgins Thompson and Ball (HTB) and Howard Samis and Porch of Oklahoma City. The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is near other notable downtown buildings including the Skirvin Hotel (NRIS #79003020), the Colcord Building (NRIS #76001571), the Chase Bank

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Building (formerly Fidelity Bank Building, c. 1972), the Medical Arts Building (NRIS #16000849) McGee Tower (1970-72), and Leadership Square (1983).

### **1931 First National Bank**

The original portion of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building is a 33-story skyscraper. The exterior walls of the first floor on the Robinson Avenue and Park Avenue elevations (west and north elevations, respectively) are sheathed with polished black granite. The remainder of the facades are clad with gray Indiana limestone. The first thirteen floors of the building were constructed in a “U” shape with the bottom facing Robinson Avenue, the north section facing Park Avenue and the south section facing the alley. The rear elevation is clad in brick. The entire building is constructed of reinforced concrete and structural steel.

The tower, which represents floors 14 through 33, extends upward with setbacks on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> floors. The 32<sup>nd</sup> floor has a ribbon of fixed windows on the south, west, and north elevations, and on portions of the east elevation. The windows are not original and likely infilled a terrace previously at this level. These windows provide a panoramic view of the city. The windows on the 33<sup>rd</sup> floor pierce the hipped aluminum-ribbed roof and are flush with it. The roof is capped by a tapered, octagonal aluminum beacon with a long lightning rod. The beacon and setbacks are illuminated at night, giving the building a striking presence.

The first floor along Robinson and Park Avenue has large storefronts with recessed center doors, display windows, and glass transoms with raised aluminum trim above the three center units. At the corner of Park and Robinson, an aluminum-framed four-sided clock projects above the 1st floor. At the center of the Robinson facade is the building’s main entrance, which is surrounded by an elaborate cast aluminum frame extending up to embrace the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor windows. Birds, swirling foliage, animals, and human figures are among the decorative motifs of the main entrance. These same natural elements are a common theme found throughout the building’s exterior aluminum trim. A recessed portico is centered in the decorative aluminum frame, and uses aluminum framework to form a four-pointed star on the ceiling with opaque glass and translucent panels to infill the star pattern. An aluminum grille covering the transoms above the two revolving doors and center swinging door is inscribed with “First National Building”. The entrance is flanked by large octagonal lanterns which are suspended between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. Two elaborate aluminum flag pole holders are above the 4th floor on either end of Robinson façade. The building’s south facade faces a narrow alley, and the ground floor is clad in brick with a limestone wainscoting, while the remainder of the elevation is clad with limestone.

On the Robinson, Park, and alley facades, casement windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors are connected by elaborate aluminum spandrels between the floor levels. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor windows are capped with ornate, lintel-like aluminum trim. The 4<sup>th</sup> floor has aluminum-framed casement windows along with the remainder of the tower. However, the tower windows have aluminum-framed hung windows which are connected between floors with olive green spandrels. Below each 5<sup>th</sup> floor window is a medallion-like aluminum ornament. The 14-story north and south wings wrap around the rear elevation of the tower section. The wings form an exterior light well

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around the banking hall and its massive skylight, which was later covered over. The windows are evenly spaced on this elevation.

Exterior changes to the original building include the covering of the original flat banking hall skylight with a composition membrane, and the enclosure of the 31<sup>st</sup> floor originally-exterior setbacks with awning-like roofs and ribbon windows.

### *Interior*

A lobby off of the Robinson Avenue entrance provides access to stairs and escalators that lead to the second floor banking hall. Two flanking elevator banks of four elevators each provide access to the upper floors. Escalators were not included in the original building design; however, during renovations to the building in the 1950s the original grand staircase was replaced and retrofitted with two escalators, one on each side. Upon entering the ground floor lobby, one can go right to the elevators that serve the 1<sup>st</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> floors and one of the commercial spaces. Access to the escalators that serve the 1980s glass skybridge addition is also in this area. To the left of the ground floor lobby are elevators that serve the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> floors and access to another commercial space.

The stainless steel elevator doors are etched with intricate floral designs. The ceiling treatments in the elevator lobbies consist of plastered cornices adorned with yellow flowers and brown cattails. The ceilings are plastered “and decorated in metallic effect in dull green gold and silver.”<sup>1</sup> Round aluminum and glass light fixtures hang from the elevator lobby ceilings (photo 0033). Other decorative elements near the front entrance include a floral-inspired drinking fountain and directory boards and mail boxes with a “heavy, modeled aluminum ‘half-polished’ finish”<sup>2</sup> reminiscent of the exterior applications. On the south side of the grand staircase is a hall that leads to a shopping arcade. On the north side of the staircase is a short hall that leads to the stairs to the basement where the vaults and safety deposit boxes are located. Public access to the stairs are blocked by an ornate iron gate.<sup>3</sup> Walls in the entrance and elevator lobbies are clad in warm-toned marble, and the floors are a combination of cream, gray, and black travertine.

Upon ascending the staircase or escalators to the second floor, the eye is drawn to the most prominent space in the entire building - the banking hall. It is so impressive that the architects called it “the Great Banking Room.”<sup>4</sup> Its Italian Renaissance motif juxtaposes the building’s more modern exterior. However, details such as the tiered, geometric pendant light fixtures with frosted glass connect it back to the Art Deco exterior. The hall is 120 feet long, 91 feet wide, and two stories in height (41 feet high at the center). Italian travertine stone in three colors is laid in a geometrical design on the floor.

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<sup>1</sup> See D. A. Shaw, “No Slavish Imitation, Nothing other than it Declares Itself to be . . . Metal: First National Building, Oklahoma City,” *Metalcraft* 8 (February 1932): 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Jo Nelson, “Temple of Deco Awaits Fate: First Interstate Considering Move From City Landmark,” *Daily Oklahoman*, July 1, 1990.

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The banking hall is organized around a colonnade of 16 massive fluted marble columns with Corinthian capitals; seven on north and south sides and two across the east end. A large barrel-vaulted skylight dominates the ceiling, centered above the colonnade. As originally designed and constructed, natural light filtered through the exterior light well to the skylight which illuminated the banking hall. It is believed that the original glass in the skylight was removed in the late 1950s and replaced with translucent glass that was lit overhead. At some point, the skylight was covered with a gravel roof, which remains there today.<sup>5</sup>

The remainder of the banking hall's ceiling consists of geometrical-shaped paneling painted in oil on plaster. Human and floral figures and geometric elements adorn the ceiling panels. A technique called "Stippling" or "Rag Rolling" was used to hand-brush a glaze all over the surface. Recent restoration reports indicate that the structure of the plaster is in relatively good condition and should be easy to patch where damaged. The overall aesthetic of the banking hall was meant to be of quality, grandeur, and permanence. This was achieved through the consistent use of hand-brushed glazes, waxed and buffed Kasota Stone columns, and ornate metal work with a deliberate patina.

The Art Deco suspended light fixtures are comprised of aluminum and frosted glass. The light fixtures' intricate aluminum patterns ties into the exterior ornamentation with swirling foliage, swans, eagles, and nude figures.

The open area in the center of the hall is reduced to 67 feet wide and 83 feet long by bank teller counters which frame the north, east, and south walls. Original bronze and glass privacy screens are still intact on the teller stalls. Clerical and general office spaces were concealed behind the walls of the banking hall. These spaces are accessed behind the teller areas through a marble-framed opening infilled with decorative metal scroll-work, lead glass windows, and an elaborately adorned door frame. Natural elements such as foliage, peacocks, and a pair of eagles are found in these panels. Balconettes with lead glass are located behind and above the teller areas. These balconettes are accessed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor that served as lookout stations for security personnel as banking transactions proceeded below. Elaborate bronze grilles span across the fronts of the balconettes, and large reproductions of ancient coins are on either side of each balconette.<sup>6</sup>

The same richly-veined rose-tinted marble used for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> floor elevator lobbies is continued into the banking hall and mezzanine. This marble is used for the hall's wainscoting, pilasters, teller counters, and the lower portions of the columns. The upper portions of the columns are fluted, clad in a warm-toned Kasota stone, and are capped with extravagant Corinthian capitals.<sup>7</sup> The original finish was waxed onto the Kasota stone, which typically gives a warm luster and antiquing to the stone. These columns support the raised portion of the ceiling

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<sup>5</sup> Meacham, "First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma."

<sup>6</sup> First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City. *Fifty Years Forward: The First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City*. Oklahoma City: First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City, 1939.

<sup>7</sup> Meacham, "First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma."

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where the skylight is located. Above the wainscoting on the walls is sandstone cut in ashlar form. Lining the top of the walls and pilasters is a cornice with human, animal, and plant forms.

Four large oil paint on canvas murals by Chicago artist Edgar Spier Cameron depicting events associated with the development of Oklahoma are prominently displayed on the west and east walls banking hall. Of the murals on the west wall, one depicts the lowering of the French flag in New Orleans in 1804 as a part of the transfer of the Louisiana Territory to the United States; the other, titled "Sunset Trail," represents the displacement of Native Americans as a result of the expanding frontier. The two murals on the east wall portray scenes associated with the Land Run of 1889. The murals are framed with wood painted to look like stone with decorative motifs encompassing the perimeters. The oil paint was sealed with wax to give it a gentle glow and aged look, which is a common French technique. Recent restoration reports indicate that the murals can be successfully cleaned and restored with minimal invasion.

Two original octagonal marble benches served dual functions as not only a resting spot, but also as part of the building's ventilation system, as evidenced by decorative vents in the bases of the benches.<sup>8</sup> Two marble pedestal drinking fountains are located on either side of the grand staircase and escalators.

A portion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor overlooks Robinson Avenue to the west and the banking hall to the east (photo 0039). Decorative iron railings, rose-tinted marble walls, and geometric travertine floor tiles are all continued from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors to this area. The elevator doors are covered with intricately engraved stainless steel panels. The plastered ceiling of the elevator lobby is stenciled with muted tones and features a geometric border with a floral inlay, similar to the ground floor elevator lobbies. The multi-colored travertine patterned floor continues into the space. Decorative iron grilles, fluted pilasters, and an ornately painted geometric ceiling are also familiar features that are carried into this space.

Located on the north side of the staircase are marble stairs which lead to the basement. The stairs are flanked with wrought iron gates at the top and bottom. The lower gates that lead into the vault are topped with silhouettes of squirrels, which symbolize savings and thrift. The bank vaults and safety deposit boxes are located in the basement. A large rectangular vault door serves as the entryway for the safe deposit lobby. The walls of this lobby are sand-blasted fumed oak. On one wall is a drinking fountain shaped like a floral basket and an original clock is on another wall. The ceiling is painted with patterns reminiscent of the ceiling in the banking hall. Wood-paneled privacy booths that were available to customers to examine the contents of their boxes are still intact. The vaults are located in an enclosed structure that measures 50 feet by 67 feet. The massive, round Diebold vault doors are impressive and were state-of-the-art in terms of security when the building was constructed. Polished steel covers the vault walls, and the ceiling is covered with blue enameled steel panels framed by steel planks. Each vault contains its own ventilation system.

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<sup>8</sup> Shaw, "No Slavish Imitation . . .," 71.

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The circulation pattern of the third through thirteenth floors is dictated by the U-shaped configuration. A double-loaded central corridor runs the length of each leg of the floor plate, with office space accessed on each side. The tower for floors fourteen and above has a similar floor configuration but with much shorter “legs.” The typical condition of corridors consists of seven-foot high marble wainscoting and marble tiles on the floors. Original doors were typically wood paneled with frosted glass, and some are still in place. Some of the doors have vertical mail slots near the door knobs. The ceilings typically have acoustical tile which were added during renovations and with the construction of the mechanical system. Elevator doors are painted a light yellow with black and yellow vertical lines at the center of each door. Mail chutes are found near the elevators on each floor. Above the fourteenth floor, the restrooms are located at the half-floor level in the stairwells. A barbershop on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor is a unique space that has been relatively well preserved.

### **1957 Building**

An addition was constructed at the east end of the 1931 building in 1956-57. The site had been occupied by First National’s first motor bank which opened in November 1948 and was demolished for the construction of this addition. The addition’s main façade faces Park Avenue and is 14 stories high. With the exception of the retail stores on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, it was built as an office tower with floors two through four devoted to use by the bank. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor included a direct connection to the banking hall of the First National Bank building. The 1957 design reflects the popularity of the Miesian grid design during the mid-twentieth century, and is a stark contrast to the Art Deco style of the 1931 building. The building reads as a separate structure from the 1931 building.<sup>9</sup>

Like its neighbor to the west, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor is clad in polished black granite. Large storefront windows with aluminum frames are on either side of the centered entrance which is located in a recessed portico. The doors are glass with aluminum frames. Protecting the portico’s opening is a flat canopy. The front edge of the canopy is shaped like a flattened “V”. Yellow trim covers the edges of the canopy. Above the first floor is a glass curtain wall that is divided horizontally and vertically by aluminum mullions. Colored spandrel panels serve as dividers between each floor. Below the 2<sup>nd</sup> story windows are yellow spandrels, and between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor are two rows of blue spandrels. Above the third floor windows is another row of blue spandrels, and above them is a row of precast concrete ribbed spandrels. Precast concrete panels are used as dividers between the remaining floors. Beginning at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, the window openings are smaller than those on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. They are filled with two small operable panes of glass at the bottom topped by a larger single pane.

The interior of the 1957 addition retains the shopping arcade and concourse on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The Park Avenue entrance consists of a long hall flanked by commercial and retail spaces with floor-to-ceiling glass walls. This hall continues south towards an alley and adjacent parking structure not associated with the First National Center. It intersects with another hall that extends from Robinson to Broadway Avenues that is also lined with floor-to-ceiling glass walls. At the

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<sup>9</sup> Meacham, “First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.”

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northwest corner of the intersection of the two halls is the escalator that provided access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor banking hall. At the southwest corner of the intersection are three elevators. All of the tenant spaces, including the 1<sup>st</sup> floor retail spaces and the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> floor bank spaces, have been renovated or gutted over the years, and there is no remaining historic fabric.

### **1972 Building**

In 1969, The First National Bank and Trust Company announced plans for a 400,000 square foot expansion that would wrap around the Medical Arts Building (NRIS #16000849) at the southwest corner of Broadway and Park Avenues. The expansion consisted of two facades – one facing Park Avenue that would abut the 1957 addition, and the other facing Broadway Avenue. The new structure would take over sites occupied by the bank's Auto Hotel on Park Avenue, an alley running north-south, and a hotel and restaurant located on Broadway Ave. There was much contention over the expansion as another bank also had plans for the property and opposed First National's claim to the alley as it was in the city's jurisdiction. Ultimately, First National prevailed and secured the approval for the expansion.<sup>10</sup> Unlike the previous addition, the 1972 buildings were not associated with the bank, but instead would provide general office and retail space. Except for the arcade and concourse on the ground floor, there are very few interior connections to the 1957 building.

#### *Park Avenue Façade*

The façade of this addition matches the style and materials of the 1957 building, in order to avoid mixing styles and creating confusing facades.<sup>11</sup> One notable difference is that the upper story window openings do not have the divided pattern as those on the 1957 addition. It has a recessed entrance at the east end of the façade. The rear of the building is sheathed with tan brick and the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> stories extend over the alley to connect with the adjacent parking structure not associated with the First National Center. These connections have been closed and abandoned over time.

#### *Broadway Avenue Façade*

The 14-story addition fronting Broadway Avenue reads as a separate building although it is structurally connected to the 1972 Park Avenue addition. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the façade features six rectangular white marble columns which frame a shallow portico that protects the main entrance. The entrance features a revolving door and an aluminum and glass door. The exterior wall at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor consists of narrow full-height windows with smoked glass separated by white marble pilasters, mimicking the spacing of the façade columns. A curtain wall with smoked glass covers the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> floors. Divisions between the windows give the building a vertical emphasis. White marble cladding wraps around the south elevation for a few feet. The rest of this elevation is constructed of tan brick and features numerous small aluminum framed windows on the upper floors. The northern edge of the facade appears to abut the adjacent building but is actually separated from it by a false wall fronting the street. The north elevation is also sheathed with tan

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<sup>10</sup> "First National Center Collection," *Retro Metro OKC*, [www.retrometrookc.org/first-national-center-collection](http://www.retrometrookc.org/first-national-center-collection), accessed on March 9, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Meacham, "First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma."

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brick and has numerous windows on the upper stories. Portions of the south side of the building extend over an adjacent alley.

The 1972 addition has a bank of elevators on the south side of the arcade's hallway. The elevator lobby walls are clad with marble. The east bank of elevators is no longer operable. The Broadway Avenue addition has an escalator on the south side of the hallway that accesses the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The upper stories have a more open floor plan than 1931 and 1957 portions of the building, reflecting changes in commercial and work space design as they have been renovated numerous times by tenants in the years since initial construction. The floor plates of the 1972 addition align with the floor plates of the 1957 addition, however there are no direct connections between these two additions above the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. There is little to no original fabric remaining inside the 1972 addition. It is evident that the spaces have been renovated over the years by multiple tenants.

### **Alterations**

Overall, the building retains its integrity. A lack of maintenance in the recent years has resulted in issues such as peeling paint on areas of the decorative ceilings of the basement, the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor banking room, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor mezzanine. The most noticeable alteration occurred in 1982 when a skybridge was attached to the southwest corner of the building at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The skybridge spans across North Robinson Avenue and connects to the former Perrine and One Galleria buildings on the west side of the street. An elevator and a pair of escalators in the southwest corner were added to access the skybridge. As previously stated, the original grand staircase leading to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor banking hall was also modified and retrofit with a pair of flanking escalators. A bullpen-like low-height marble-clad enclosure was added in the center of the bank lobby. It is thought this change was made in the 1960s, when the bank invested heavily in branch banking throughout the metro area and no longer needed so massive a central bank space. Another alteration was the installation of fixed windows on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Some upper floors were altered with the removal of original materials and reconfiguration of corridors and rooms. Because the general public did not typically visit these spaces, and with the retention of historic fabric elsewhere in the building, these alterations have little impact on its historical integrity. The shopping arcade of the 1957 wing retains its form but its facing materials have been altered.

The 1931 First National Bank and Trust Company Building retains a high degree of integrity, both on the interior and exterior. The superb quality of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, and feeling all work together to establish a distinguished presence in Oklahoma City. Although it no longer houses a bank and is no longer occupied, it retains its integrity of association by its continued commercial use. The exterior of the building retains many original character-defining features such as intricate aluminum ornamentation, aluminum windows, granite, and limestone. The interior retains original decorative details, finishes, and fixtures not only in the prominent banking hall, but also throughout the building.

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## 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
Commerce  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1930-1957  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1930-1931  
1956-1957  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Weary & Alford, architect (1931 building)  
Manhattan Construction Co., builder (1931 building and 1957 addition)  
Sorey Hill and Sorey, architect (1957 addition)  
Hudgins, Thompson, Ball, Inc. and Howard Samis Porch, architects, (1972 addition)  
Harmon Construction Company (1972 addition)

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building in Oklahoma City is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance for its historic and architectural significance. It is significant under Criterion A in the field of Commerce because First National Bank and Trust was Oklahoma's largest bank for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The building is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an outstanding example of an Art Deco style high-rise commercial building. The building was designed by Weary and Alford from Chicago and constructed from 1930-1931. The Art Deco style is exemplified by a vertical emphasis. The intricate aluminum decorative elements on the building's interior and exterior are the only examples in Oklahoma City of Art Deco design from this era. The Great Banking Hall is a combination of the Classical Revival with Art Deco. The 1957 addition reflects the popular modern International Style, with its clean lines, orderly grid, and use of glass and metal. The period of significance of the building is from 1930 to 1957. The 1957 wing is significant under Criterion C as an early example in downtown Oklahoma City of an International Style Postwar office building.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

First National Bank and Trust had humble beginnings. Before the Unassigned Lands were opened, Oklahoma Station was a small settlement consisting of a depot, section house, post office, a government building, a railway agent's house, and a boarding house. With the opening of the territory to non-Native settlement on April 22, 1889, Oklahoma Station was flooded with people desiring the opportunities associated with the new city in the previously unavailable territory. New businesses opened to serve the budding town. Among the opportunists were Thomas M. Richardson and his son, T. M. Jr, who took the first available train from Purcell, Indian Territory, to Oklahoma Station, and started the Oklahoma Bank in a tent near Main and Broadway. After some time, the bank moved into a small building at Main and Broadway. This location would be established as Oklahoma City's financial district.<sup>12</sup>

The bank changed names multiple times in its early years. First, it changed names to First National Bank of Oklahoma City in 1890 after receiving its initial charter. In 1891, it moved to a three-story building at same corner of Main and Broadway later known as the Huckins Estate. In 1897, the bank merged with State National Bank after surviving the financial crisis of 1893. The newly formed bank was known as the State National Bank until 1919. Hugh M. Johnson later bought the interests of the bank and merged it with his bank, the State Exchange Bank, and then changed the name of the bank to the First National Bank. It later moved to a brick building where it occupied the main floor and other organizations shared the remainder of the building. This building was replaced by the Hales Building, an early skyscraper. The bank stayed at this

<sup>12</sup> Lynee Pierson Doti, "Banking Industry," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/B/BA011.html>, accessed October 3, 2014. Published by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

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location until it merged with the American National Bank in 1927. Hugh Johnson's brother, Frank P. Johnson, was the president of American National Bank at the time of the merger. First National moved its assets to American National Bank's building at 138-40 West Main Street. In early 1930, the American-First National Bank merged with the Security National Bank, and adopted the new name "First National Bank and Trust Company."<sup>13</sup>

Oklahoma City had more than doubled its 1920 population to 185,839 when First National Bank and Trust Company was created. During the 1920s, the city had experienced a dramatic metamorphosis with the rise of the automobile and the beginnings of suburban development along with its growth as an agricultural and industrial center. In 1927, downtown was forever changed with the construction that ushered in new buildings such as the Tradesmen's National Bank, the Cotton Exchange, the Perrine Building, and the Braniff Building. Tapping of the Oklahoma City Field in late 1928 allowed more construction to commence. The city issued more than \$24,000,000 in building permits in 1929, more than \$20,020,000 in 1930, and \$15,000,000 in 1931. Buildings under construction in late 1930-early 1931 included the 33-story Ramsey Building (\$3,000,000), the 26-story Oklahoma-Biltmore Hotel (\$4,000,000), the 10-story YWCA (\$700,000), and the 26-story Skirvin Hotel Tower (\$2,500,000).<sup>14</sup> Toward the end of 1930, the city's office vacancy rate of 5.05 percent was significantly lower than the national average of 8.3 percent. Sixty percent of the Ramsey Building had been preleased before it was completed.<sup>15</sup> The country was entering the Great Depression, but it did not immediately affect the construction and development of Oklahoma City or the surrounding areas.

## Construction

The First National Bank and Trust Company had paid \$1,050,000 for a site at the southeast corner of First and Robinson as reported by an article from the April 20, 1930, issue of the *Daily Oklahoman*. The article stated that the tallest building in Oklahoma (30 to 36 stories) would be constructed on the site. The property was located at the current day location – at the corner of Robinson Avenue and First Street (later renamed Park Avenue). It described a ten to 13 story tower rising from the first twenty stories which would occupy the entire lot. A rendering from the article depicted a rectangular base from which a gothic-inspired vertical tower rose. The upper stories stepped back as the tower ascended, and a penthouse was capped with a thin spire.<sup>16</sup> It was anticipated that the First National Bank would occupy the first four floors, leaving approximately 470,000 square feet available for other tenants.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, April 20, 1930; Doti, "Banking Industry;" First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City, *Fifty Years Forward: The First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City*, (Oklahoma City: First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City, 1939), 57 and "Frank Pearson Johnson, 1872-1935," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 17 (Number 4, December 1939): 458.

<sup>14</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, January 4, 1930.

<sup>15</sup> Linda D Wilson, "Oklahoma City," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/O/OK025.html>, accessed April 7, 2014. Published by the Oklahoma Historical Society; Bob Blackburn, Arn Henderson, and Melvena Thurman, *The Physical Legacy: Buildings of Oklahoma County 1889 to 1931*, (Oklahoma City: Southwestern Heritage Press for the Oklahoma County Historical Society, 1980), 46; *Daily Oklahoman*, October 10, 1930.

<sup>16</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, April 20, 1930.

<sup>17</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, October 19, 1930.

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By the end of 1930, the bank's name had been changed to the First National Building Corporation after a temporary holding company took title to the property. The bank's funds were not used for any of the building's construction and the bank would be a tenant. Officers of the company were prominent figures in the city's financial community. Other shareholders were to be given the option of subscribing to stock.<sup>18</sup> Bank officials wanted a building that would "give an 'impression which conveys the power and protection of this largest bank in the . . . oil fields.'"<sup>19</sup> The Chicago architecture firm of Weary and Alford, which was known for its works in banking buildings, was given the task of designing the massive project.

The construction contract was awarded to Manhattan Construction Company along with F. H. Beaumont supervising the majority of the construction.<sup>20</sup> Existing buildings on the site were demolished in August 1930. Concrete caissons were driven into bedrock fifty feet below the sidewalk. Excitement for the building was growing as a rendering of the second floor "Great Banking Room" was published in the *Daily Oklahoman* the same month that site work began. It depicted a grand hall with a colonnade supporting a large illuminated glass skylight. That same month, the *Oklahoma City Times* published a sketch of the revised exterior of the building showing that the upper story setbacks were to start higher than originally planned. A beacon on top of the building would add the equivalent of an additional seven stories, making the structure the tallest and largest in Oklahoma. The bank's president Frank Johnson requested construction of a revolving aviation beacon that could be visible for fifty miles. Johnson instructed the Chamber of Commerce's aviation committee to obtain specifications from the U.S. Department of Commerce for the erection of this beacon. By May 1931, steelworkers were placing the highest steel girders at the peak of the building. For a time, a flag pole on the neighboring Ramsey Building, also under construction, made it the highest man-made point in the state. The addition of the First National Bank Building's beacon quickly surpassed the Ramsey Building's claim.<sup>21</sup> The beacon was of special interest during the building's construction. At 2.5 million candlepower, the revolving orb was first illuminated on September 6, 1931. Radio station KFJF broadcasted the event and told listeners who lived within 100 miles of Oklahoma City to step outside to see the light. The upper stories of the building were also illuminated, making the building a favorite subject of photographers. The building's image was incorporated into the bank's logo and was frequently used in the bank's advertisements months before it was completed.<sup>22</sup>

The finest materials had gone into the construction of the building. Indiana limestone was used for the exterior with the exception of the black granite that was used at the base of the building

<sup>18</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, April 20, 1930 and December 17, 1930.

<sup>19</sup> Meacham, "First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma."

<sup>20</sup> Meacham, "First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma."

<sup>21</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, August 8, 1930 and August 18, 1930; *Oklahoma Banker*, August 1930, p. 16; *Oklahoma City Times*, August 4, 1930; *Daily Oklahoman*, November 29, 1930, May 14, 1931. There was a heated competition between the builders of the Ramsey Building and the First National Bank and Trust Company Building as to who would finish their building first. The Ramsey Building was completed in nine months, one month ahead of the First National Bank building. For an account of the competition, see Bill Moore, "Race to the Top: The Great Skyscraper Race of 1931," *Oklahoma Gazette* 19 (November 6, 1997): 17-20.

<sup>22</sup> Moore, "Race to the Top: The Great Skyscraper Race of 1931," 19; *Oklahoma City Times*, October 30, 1931.

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along Robinson Avenue and First Street. Tan brick lined the light well. The decorative aluminum, bronze, and iron was supplied by C. W. Olson Manufacturing Company of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The aluminum panels over the building entrances were modern depictions of classical ornamentation featuring lavish foliage swirls, nude figures, peacocks, and other animals.<sup>23</sup> The marble was provided by Taylor Marble and Tile Company of Oklahoma City and was estimated to cost \$135,000. The stone came from Italy, Missouri, and Tennessee in golden brown, pink, and rose hues.<sup>24</sup> Denman Floors Company, Oklahoma City, supplied 13,500 feet of Goodyear rubber floor tiles.<sup>25</sup>

Bank employees moved into their new quarters on Saturday, December 12, 1931. Armored vehicles with 32 armed guards transferred \$45,000,000 in cash and securities from the old bank to the new. Police officers stopped traffic during the critical move. Small safes were moved to the new building the next day, and bank staff toured the different areas of the building and performed a trial run of regular operations.<sup>26</sup>

Although the construction and preparations for its opening received considerable coverage in the *Daily Oklahoman*, the bank's leadership wanted to quietly open its banking. Despite their efforts, a full-page advertisement showcasing the bank's amenities was published in local newspapers on opening day. The ad included a rendering of the Great Banking Room and ten smaller sketches featuring various areas of the bank, a women's lounge on the west end of the second floor, the safe deposit vault with conference room and individual privacy booths, and the safe deposit vault.<sup>27</sup> So much excitement had built up about the bank's opening "that great crowds filled the banking rooms and corridors throughout the day viewing the magnificent structure."<sup>28</sup>

The bank was also state-of-the-art in terms of mechanization and technology. Pneumatic tubes carried messages to all parts of the bank. Telegrams were also sent and received by pneumatic tubes that were directly connected to the nation's two primary telegraph companies. The bank had its own post office that prepared and sorted mail and operated its own cancellation machine under special permit. All areas of the bank were air conditioned although much of the building was not.<sup>29</sup> Elevators and various stairs provided access to the safe deposit boxes and vaults which were located in the basement. Bank robberies were a common occurrence, so state-of-the-art equipment and features were provided for security and customer convenience. The fireproof and drill-proof walls, floors, and ceilings were reinforced with steel plates and were wired to detect any attempts to penetrate them with a drill. Guarding the entrance to the safe deposit vault was a 28-ton Diebold door made of manganese, copper, and steel with a sophisticated time locking device. A system of gears and counterweights enabled bank staff to lower a section of the floor in front of the vault door, allowing it to open. Once fully open, the floor rose to its

<sup>23</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 14, 1931.

<sup>24</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, May 10, 1931 and December 14, 1931.

<sup>25</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 14, 1931.

<sup>26</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 12, 1931 and December 14, 1931.

<sup>27</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 14, 1931.

<sup>28</sup> "First National of Oklahoma City in New Quarters," *The Oklahoma Banker* 23 (Number 5, December 1931): 11.

<sup>29</sup> "First National of Oklahoma City in New Quarters," *The Oklahoma Banker* 23 (Number 5, December 1931): 12.

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original position. At the time of the bank's opening, it had 6,000 safe deposit boxes with a capacity of 22,500 boxes. Safe deposit boxes could be rented for as little as five dollars a year.<sup>30</sup>

Upon its completion, the building held several distinctions. It was said to be the fourth largest structure west of the Mississippi River, contained more aluminum than any building in the world, and that its beacon had been spotted by pilots more than one hundred miles away. At 440 feet high, it was Oklahoma's tallest building and also its largest. The *Oklahoma Banker* declared that the construction of the building was a testament to Oklahoma City's stability, pointing to the fact that it was fifty-five per cent occupied when it opened, unlike other recently constructed office buildings in eastern and northern cities which had difficulty finding tenants.<sup>31</sup> Among the first tenants was the architecture firm Sorey Hill and Sorey which designed layouts for other spaces in the building instead of paying rent.<sup>32</sup> Other early tenants included stockbrokers, dentists, physicians, insurance companies, oil and gas companies, and a geologist.<sup>33</sup>

### **Post-war Changes to the First National Bank and Trust Company Building**

In the post-World War II years, the banking industry experienced a transformation in philosophy. In part, the changes resulted in an attempt to gain back the public's trust following the bank failures of the 1930s as well as changes in consumer practices and suburban growth. Bankers were encouraged to present a less "stuffy" atmosphere and to make banking a convenient, efficient, and pleasant experience. One way to accomplish this was through the construction of new banking facilities that incorporated new technologies and modern architecture.<sup>34</sup>

The First National Bank and Trust Company brought convenience to its customers with the opening of a motor bank in late 1948 located directly behind the building. It was not a drive-through bank but one where customers could park in the adjoining parking lot and conduct their business in the small building at one of the three teller windows. Bank officials opted for this arrangement rather than a drive-in service as it was believed several customers could be handled at the same time. The building had a direct connection to the original building for the patrons' convenience.<sup>35</sup>

The First National Bank and Trust Company was among several banks that undertook construction projects in downtown Oklahoma City in the 1950s.<sup>36</sup> In November 1954, the bank

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<sup>30</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 12, 1931; "First National of Oklahoma City in New Quarters," 13.

<sup>31</sup> "First National of Oklahoma City in New Quarters," 11.

<sup>32</sup> Lee Sorey, Jr., "Sorey Hill and Sorey: Architects with a Civic Conscience," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 71 (Number 4, Winter, 1993-94): 358.

<sup>33</sup> Polk's Oklahoma City Directory, 1932, pp. 749-50. Sorey Hill and Sorey's office was in 1326.

<sup>34</sup> For a brief examination of the convergence of post-war banking practices and Modern architecture, see Carol J. Dyson and Anthony Rubano "Banking on the Future: Modernism and the Local Bank," in *Preserving the Recent Past 2*, edited by Deborah Slaton and William G. Foulks, (Washington, D.C.: Association for Preservation Technology International, 2000), 2-43 to 2-56.

<sup>35</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, November 18, 1948.

<sup>36</sup> Constructed at the same time as the First National addition was the sixteen-story Petroleum Club Building that was to house the Liberty National Bank. Fidelity National Bank was to become the primary tenant of a building being constructed at Park and Harvey that became known as the Fidelity National Building. It was also designed by

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announced tentative plans for the construction of a multi-story office building and a parking garage on land it had been acquiring on West Main, just southeast from the present bank. More details about the project, the largest to be undertaken in downtown in years, were released in April 1955. The project was expected to cost more than \$3,000,000 and would include an enclosed 12-story parking garage on Main Street and a 4-to-12-story office building facing Park Avenue (formerly First Street). The plans called for the basement of the parking garage to have drive-in banking facilities with an entrance and exit provided on the Park Avenue side. It was expected that four stories of the building would be used by the bank. The office building would include retail tenants on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor in an “arcade” type of arrangement. Alterations to the original bank building would be made to connect it with the arcade. Escalators would be installed on the east and west sides of the original banking room to provide convenient access. The *Oklahoma City Times* and the *Oklahoma Banker* published sketches of the proposed addition and parking garage designed by Sorey Hill and Sorey. They were a radical departure from Weary and Alford’s design for the 1931 building as the facades of both the bank addition and the parking garage reflected current trends in designs that rejected historical references. Also included was a schematic drawing that showed how the additions would relate to the original building. The bank hoped to get started on the parking facility so that it could be completed before it would be necessary to demolish the existing motor bank facility to make way for the office tower.<sup>37</sup>

Manhattan Construction Company, the same firm that constructed the 1931 building, was awarded the contract for the new project. Work began on the parking garage in May 1955 but plans for it were changed in October when the bank acquired an additional 25 feet fronting Main Street. The revised plans had the automobile entrance and exit to the underground banking facilities from Main Street only, thereby eliminating the entrance and exit planned for the Park Avenue structure. This gave the office building an additional 2,000 square feet for commercial use that was originally planned for automobile access through the building to the parking garage. The planned retail “arcade” in the office tower would meet customers’ needs of having banking facilities and shopping in one location.<sup>38</sup>

In November 1955, it was announced that the Park Avenue office building would be 14 stories. It was to connect with the parking garage underground and overhead with an extension over the alley. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor would have an arcade as previously planned. The 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> floors would be used by the bank with the intention that the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor banking hall from the 1931 building would connect to the new building. The 5<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> floors would be available for other tenants.<sup>39</sup> Bank officials had gotten caught up in the recently launched “600,000 in 60” campaign

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Sorey Hill and Sorey and was listed on the National Register in 2008. City National Bank renovated two existing buildings for the location of drive-in teller facilities and a parking garage. This work was also designed by Sorey Hill and Sorey and completed in 1957.

<sup>37</sup> *Oklahoma City Times*, November 21, 1954 and April 15, 1955; “First National Begins Oklahoma City’s Largest Downtown Construction Project in Years,” *The Oklahoma Banker* 13 (Number 5 May 1955): 22.

<sup>38</sup> “First National Begins Oklahoma City’s Largest Downtown Construction Project in Years,” 22.

<sup>39</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, November 15, 1955 and April 22, 1956.

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(an effort to increase the city's population to 600,000 by 1960) and the expanded building program was an outgrowth of this enthusiasm.<sup>40</sup>

Work began on the Park Avenue addition in October 1956 after the parking garage was completed.<sup>41</sup> As mentioned previously, the construction program included alterations to the 1931 building. The shopping arcade was extended into the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the original building where it connected with the vestibule at the Robinson Avenue entrance, and escalators were installed at the main stairs located at the west end of the banking hall.

The building was completed in late 1957. Access to the new shops could be gained directly from Park Avenue, the bank's parking garage, or the original building. The shops featured floor-to-ceiling display windows on the Park Avenue side and glass walls on the interior that allowed for maximum exposure of the merchandise and services within. Referred to as the "First National Arcade of Fine Shops," early tenants included House of Hollywood, Kathryn's Flowers, Mary Ball Candies, Random Gift House, Joe Wythe Company, Lillian Foster, Rainbow Travel Services, and Zula's Hat Shop. An advertisement for the arcade described it as a "pleasant, bright atmosphere." With the "unique décor" of the shops, the ad boasted that "the First National Arcade will soon be the talk of the town among Oklahoma City's most discriminating shoppers."<sup>42</sup> The retail arcade, while still in operation, is not retained in its original configuration.

In March 1967, First National Bank announced that it would build two 14-story office buildings.<sup>43</sup> One of the buildings would face Park Avenue and abut the 1957 addition, and the other would face Broadway. Both buildings would wrap around the 12-story Medical Arts Building at the southwest corner of Broadway and Park avenues. The plan called for the closing of a north-south alley that ran midway through the block out to Park Avenue. A competing bank also announced that it had plans build an 8-to-12-story building on part of the property which First National claimed.<sup>44</sup> The controversy delayed the construction of the project until First National secured title to all of the property. The additions were designed by the Oklahoma City architecture firms Hudgins Thompson Ball and Howard Samis Porch. The Park Avenue façade merely replicated the 1957 building and was not indicative of the era it was built. The Broadway Avenue addition, designed with white marble columns on the first floor and a smoked glass curtain wall above it, was not a distinctive architectural style of the era in which it was built. Construction began in 1971. The 1957 shopping arcade was evidently altered to create a connection to the 1972 shopping arcade.

### **The Decline of the First National Bank and Trust Company**

Upon completion, the building had a higher than average occupancy rate. However, the Great Depression was finally reaching Oklahoma City and it took its toll on the bank and the ability to

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<sup>40</sup> "First National Bank Expands Oklahoma City Building Program," *The Oklahoma Banker* 13 (Number 12 December 1955): 31.

<sup>41</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, September 23, 1956.

<sup>42</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 9, 1957 and December 8, 1957.

<sup>43</sup> Newspaper articles referred to the two additions as "buildings."

<sup>44</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, May 21, 1969.

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attract and retain tenants. In 1934, the First National Building Corporation had a 41.4% vacancy rate and gross revenue of approximately \$395,000. This was a large decline from three years earlier when downtown's vacancy rate was 5.05%. Although the building had been designed and planned for at a more favorable time, the economic downturn rendered it "a most hazardous undertaking from a business standpoint." Since the building was constructed when air conditioning was in its infancy, estimates to install air conditioning ranged from \$500,000 to \$600,000. The center of the business district had also moved a few blocks to the northwest, hindering the building's previously considered ideal location. In addition, downtown saw fewer pedestrians as the automobile influenced the trend of establishing businesses closer to the residential neighborhoods.<sup>45</sup>

During the 1970s, the Vietnam War had just ended and the United States economy was hurting. The apparent boom of the "Golden Age" from the late 1940s to the early 1970s was over and the nation was entering a recession. The major problems were the energy shortage, high inflation, and high unemployment. The energy shortage occurred because of a worldwide oil shortage. The Arab states, who had an abundance of oil, placed an oil embargo on the U.S. because of the support we provided to their enemy, Israel, during the Yom Kippur War. This embargo caused gas prices to rise so drastically that it devastated the American economy. The oil embargo ended in 1974, but the effects would remain until the end of the century.

The 1970s experienced high inflation, high unemployment, and low economic growth which would lead the U.S. into a recession. The inflation was caused by multiple factors including high demand and low supply of things such as houses, jobs, cars, etc. Another leading cause of inflation during this time was that investors and creditors had no confidence in the banking system. This lack of credibility and commitment caused inflation to rise. The U.S. economy during the 1970s was a difficult time for everyone, and it only worsened into the 1980s.<sup>46</sup>

The First National Bank and Trust Company was not excluded from the economic difficulties of the 1980s. Between 1982 and 1987, 47 Oklahoma banks failed. During the oil and gas bust of the 1980s, the bank suffered losses amounting to \$66.6 million. The bank was declared bankrupt and closed on July 14, 1986. The sale to First Interstate Bank of Los Angeles introduced interstate banking in Oklahoma. In fact, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) paid First Interstate \$72 million "to close the deal." As historian Michael J. Hightower noted in 2014, the only reminder of the once great First National Bank and Trust Company, "the financial Gibraltar of the Southwest," was the great banking hall.<sup>47</sup>

First Oklahoma Corporation was a conglomerate of creditors who took possession of the building following First National Bank's failure. As a new occupant, Interstate Bank demanded that the corporation renovate the building. Estimates for the needed repairs and upgrades were as high as \$20 million. It was said that issues with the company's numerous creditors and mortgage holders made it difficult to come up with a renovation plan. Attempts to sell the building for \$20

<sup>45</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, February 4, 1941.

<sup>46</sup> "U.S. History 1950-1975", <http://elcoushistory.tripod.com/economics1970.html>, accessed on June 29, 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Michael J. Hightower, *Banking in Oklahoma 1907-2000* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), 283-85, 287.

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million dollars in the late 1980s failed. In 1991, First Interstate was purchased by Boatmen's National Bank of St. Louis. In May 1992, Boatmen's announced that it would vacate the building and move into the glass towers of Leadership Square across the street. With no anchor tenant, the future of the building was unknown, which was a deciding factor for the building's oldest tenant, the law firm of Rainey Rice Ross and Binns, to leave the building. The firm had been there since 1931, which was even before the First National Bank and Trust Company moved in.<sup>48</sup>

In 1993, various attempts were made for the sale and revitalization of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building. The historic structure was listed on the first "Endangered Properties" list issued by Preservation Oklahoma, a non-profit statewide historic preservation organization. That same year, the Oklahoma State Insurance Fund considered purchasing the building for approximately \$5 million and investing another \$14 million into its rehabilitation. This idea was ultimately abandoned. In 1994, a limited liability corporation purchased the building for \$827,000, and a plan was soon proposed to move the Oklahoma City Art Museum to the second and third floors in recognition of the "Great Banking Room's" status as a work of art. The plan did not come to fruition.<sup>49</sup> After rehabilitation plans failed, the partnership gave the building to the nonprofit Feed the Children in 1998. The nonprofit sold the building for \$5 million in 1999, and the building sold again in 2006 to Los Angeles-based Milbank Real Estate for \$21 million. Under the ownership of Milbank, utilities were cut off due to unpaid bills. The building was foreclosed on in 2010 but was settled in 2012 which released Milbank from the mortgage. A U.S. District judge ordered the building into receivership, and a locally-based development team purchased the property for \$23 million in 2016. In an attempt to stop the previous cycle of neglect and failed restoration plans, several groups were vetted by the court to determine if they were even capable of closing a deal before a winning offer was chosen.<sup>50</sup>

### **Weary and Alford, Architects**

William Hedley Alford and Edwin Delos Weary led the Chicago architecture firm Weary and Alford which specialized in bank building design. The firm had commissions across the country and an office in Los Angeles in the early 1910s.<sup>51</sup> Chicago biographical dictionaries from the early 1900s identified William Hedley Alford as a manufacturer, not an architect. Alford was born in Brighton, Sussex, England, on April 8, 1860, where he studied architecture and came to the United States in 1884. His early business career started in the West Indies in the sugar industry. He later was employed by I. Hodson in Council Bluffs, Iowa. By 1887, he was engaged in the manufacture and distribution of bank furniture and fittings.<sup>52</sup> Edwin Delos Weary was also identified as a manufacturer in early 1900s Chicago biographical dictionaries. He was born

<sup>48</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, May 29, 1992 and *Sunday Oklahoman*, May 31, 1992.

<sup>49</sup> *Journal Record*, July 1, 1993 and October 27, 1993; *Daily Oklahoman*, July 13, 1994; *Journal Record*, September 16, 1994

<sup>50</sup> Steve Lackmeyer, "First National Center foreclosure advances," *News OK* (<http://newsok.com/steve-lackmeyer>) (<http://newsok.com/article/3470562>) Published June 23, 2010. Accessed March 11, 2015.

<sup>51</sup> See a reference to the Los Angeles office in the *Tile Layers' and Helpers' Journal*, 13 (No. 2, June 1913): 14-15.

<sup>52</sup> "Alford, William Hedley," in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago*, John W. Leonard, editor, (Chicago: A.N. Marquis & Company, 1905), 18, and "Alford, William Hedley," in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago*, Albert Nelson Marquis, editor, (Chicago: A.N. Marquis & Company, 1911), 10.

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on December 26, 1859, in Akron, Ohio, where he was educated in the public schools and then received “technical training” in Cleveland. He began working as an interior designer in the 1870s and then was manager for A. H. Andrews & Co. for ten years. In 1884, he established his own business as a furniture designer and contractor for fine interiors and bank furniture, among other things. While associated with the firm of Weary and Alford, Weary also had business interests in Weary and Beck, contractors for mosaics and tiles, and served as president of the Plastic Construction Company, Plastic Construction and Marble Company of the Pacific Coast, and Athey Sanitary Equipment Company.<sup>53</sup> Weary’s older brother, Frank Orlando Weary, was a prominent Akron-based architect who designed courthouses, jails, churches and school buildings, including several on the campus of Oberlin College with his partner George Washington Kramer.<sup>54</sup>

The firm Weary and Alford was created in 1902. The 1911 edition of the Chicago biographical dictionary listed Weary as president and Alford as secretary and vice president.<sup>55</sup> Other banks designed by the firm included Citizen’s National Bank, Sioux Falls, South Dakota (1917); the First National Bank of Los Angeles, the Dime Savings Bank (Oakland Holbrook Branch), Detroit, Michigan, c. 1918; First National Bank, Kalamazoo, Michigan (c. 1918), the Exchange National Bank, Tulsa, 1917 and c. 1922; National Bank of Commerce, San Antonio (c. 1918); City National Bank, Galveston, Texas (1919-20, NR 1984); Fletcher American National Bank, Indianapolis (1920); First National Bank & Trust, Lima, Ohio (1926, NR 1982); and American Commercial and Savings Bank, Davenport, Iowa (1927, NR 1983).<sup>56</sup> Mariner Tower, a 21-story building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1930), was constructed around the same time as Oklahoma City’s First National Bank. Although not as extravagant as the Oklahoma City bank, it also featured cast stone or stone, and metal Art Deco details around the entrance and windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> through 4th floors. Two smaller bank buildings that also display Art Deco influences are the First Central Bank, Madison, Wisconsin (1928) and the Second National Bank Building, Hamilton, Ohio (1931). The firm also designed banks for rural communities including one for

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<sup>53</sup> “Weary, Edwin Delos,” in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago*, (1905), 598-99, and “Weary, Edwin Delos,” in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago*, (1911), 704.

<sup>54</sup> Weary, Frank Orlando, *Smith-Weary Chronology* Nabu Press, 2011 (reproduction of 1923 original)

<sup>55</sup> “Alford, William Hedley” and “Weary, Edwin Delos” in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago* (1911), pages 10 and 704, respectively. Neither Alford or Weary were listed as registered architects in Illinois in a 1908 directory sponsored by the Chicago Architects’ Business Association, see Emery Stanford Hall, ed. *Handbook for Architects and Builders* (Chicago: Wm. Johnston Printing Co., 1908).

<sup>56</sup> “Citizen’s Bank/Behrens Building,” *Greetings from Sioux Falls Presents* (<http://www.greetingsfromsiouxfalls.com/Citizens/Citizens.html>) accessed January 21, 2015; *The Hereford Brand* (Hereford, Texas), January 24, 1918; *San Antonio Express*, March 16, 1919; “MS 218 (VAULT) Weary and Alford Company Architectural Drawing,” *Weber State University Library* (Ogden, Utah), (<http://library.weber.edu/asc/speccoll/registers/ms218.cfm>) accessed January 21, 2015; [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wells\\_Fargo\\_Building](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wells_Fargo_Building) . . .) accessed January 21, 2015. Drawings and/or photos of the Dime Savings Bank, Exchange National Bank, First National Bank in Kalamazoo, and the Boone County National Bank can be found in *Architecture: The Professional Architectural Monthly*, Volume 37 (No. 3 March 1918): 57, 61, and 78, and Plates XLIX and LIII.

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the Central National Bank of Ellsworth, Kansas, which was described as the “model country bank of the country.”<sup>57</sup>

### **Manhattan Construction Company, Builder**

Manhattan Construction Company originated in 1896 when Laurence H. Rooney of Muskogee, Indian Territory, traveled to New York City to obtain a corporate charter for his company. When asked what the name of the company was, Rooney replied “Manhattan” as that was his location at the signing of the charter. Although based in Muskogee, by 1960, the company had offices in Oklahoma City and Tulsa; Fort Smith, Arkansas; Houston, Texas; and, Mobile, Alabama. Manhattan Construction built fifteen county courthouses across Oklahoma spanning the years 1907 to 1955; school, university, and other public buildings; as well as many commercial and industrial buildings. The county courthouses were Bryan County, Durant (NRIS #84002974); Coal County, Coalgate (1909, demolished); Craig County, Vinita (NRIS #84002994, demolished); Creek County, Sapulpa (NRIS #85000679); Garvin County, Pauls Valley, (NRIS #85002758); Hughes County, Holdenville (1920, demolished); Lincoln County, Chandler (1907, destroyed by fire); Logan County, Guthrie (NRIS #84003141); McCurtain County, Idabel (1920, demolished); Muskogee County, Muskogee (NRIS #84003173); Noble County, Perry (NRIS #84003361); Oklahoma County, Oklahoma City (NRIS #92000126); Pawnee County, Pawnee (NRIS #84003406); Stephens County, Duncan (1921, demolished); and, Tulsa County, Tulsa (NRIS #11000641). Buildings constructed by the firm in Oklahoma City include the Oklahoma State Capitol (NRIS #76001572); the Perrine Building (directly west of the First National Bank, 1926); the First National Bank and its addition (1931 and 1956-57); the Hightower Building; St. Luke’s Methodist Church; Congregation Emanuel Synagogue; Temple B’Nai Israel; and, Penn Square Shopping Center (1960). Manhattan Construction continues to construct high-profile projects and retains offices in Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Dallas and Houston, Texas; Fort Myers, Naples, Springdale, and Tampa, Florida; and Washington, D.C.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> “901-909 University Ave,” Property Record, *Wisconsin Historical Society* (<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Property/HI109923>) accessed January 21, 2015; “Second National Bank Building, Hamilton, Ohio,” *Where the River Runs* (<http://wheretheriverruns.blogspot.com> . . .) accessed January 21, 2015; *The Hereford Brand* (Hereford, Texas), January 24, 1918; “Wisconsin Tower (Milwaukee, 1930),” *Structurae* (<http://structurae.net/structures/wisconsin-tower>), accessed October 10, 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Grady, *County Courthouses of Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1985), 16-17, 31, 39, 42, 43, 49, 56, 65, 66, 72,75, 76, 79, 83, 93, 96; 1989 Centennial Committee, Oklahoma Builders’ Chapter, AGC. *Oklahoma Built: The First 100 Years 1989*, ([Oklahoma City]: Oklahoma Builders’ Chapter, Associated General Contractors of America, Inc., and the Oklahoma Construction Advancement Foundation, 1989). 16 *Manhattan Construction* (<http://www.manhattanconstructiongroup.com/manhattan-construction/contact>), accessed December 11, 2014. Manhattan Construction Company is a branch of Manhattan Construction Group which also includes Manhattan Road & Bridge Company, Manhattan Pipeline, LLC, Spectrum Contracting, Inc., and Cantera Concrete Company.

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**Edgar Spier Cameron, Artist**

Edgar Spier Cameron (1862-1944), born on May 26, 1862, in Ottawa, Illinois,<sup>59</sup> grew up drawing cartoons and engraving them on wood. Summers were spent studying at the Chicago Academy of Design. As a student at the Art Students League in New York in 1882, he was admitted to a life drawing class and “was spared from the influences of tradition.”<sup>60</sup> He then went to Paris and studied at the Julian Academy for six months and was quickly admitted to the Ecoles des Beaux Arts. While in Paris, his teachers included Louis Boulanger, Jules-Joseph Lefebvre, Jean-Paul Laurens, and Benjamin Constant. He studied under Cabanel, described as “one of the most liberal of masters,” and modeled clay at the Ecoles des Arts Decoratifs in the evenings. Landscapes were the focus of study during Cameron’s summers spent in the country among older artists, mostly at Barbizon and Greza. Following two years at the Ecoles des Beaux Arts, he went to Venice, and was then admitted to the Paris Salon where he had his first public exhibition of one of his paintings in 1888. Cameron met his future wife, Marie Galon, in Paris who also became a well-known artist.<sup>61</sup>

Cameron was back in Chicago by 1890, and from 1891-1900, he supplemented his income working as an art critic for the *Chicago Tribune*. He was credited with introducing and publicizing new art work at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.<sup>62</sup> Since Cameron was a newcomer, he worked as an assistant under more established artists who had received commissions for murals for the 1893 exposition. He worked on the dome of the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building with Robert Reid and on large tympana for the same building with Walter McEwen. Cameron also completed two seven- by seventy-foot panels for the interior of the Transportation Building.<sup>63</sup> He continued his academic training in Paris after the World’s Fair. He also painted while traveling, including landscapes along the Seine and forest scenes in Fontainebleau. He considered his most important work, “The Youth of Christ,” a painting of a young Jesus standing beside a work bench in Joseph’s carpenter shop. A light falls upon Jesus’ face who is wearing a simple white tunic. This painting suggests that Cameron was contemplating his divine calling.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup> “Cameron, Edgar Spier,” in *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago*, (1905), 104.

<sup>60</sup> Charles M. Towne, “Edgar Cameron, Painter,” *Brush and Pencil* Vol. 8 No. 4 (July 1901): 187. Published by JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/25505655.pdf?acceptTC=true>), accessed January 7, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Towne, “Edgar Cameron, Painter,” p. 177; Mary Lackritz Gray, *A Guide to Chicago’s Murals* (Chicago: University of Chicago 2001), 421; Michele Mohr, “Art for history’s sake: The Illinois & Michigan Canal . . .,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 21, 1996 ([http://www.article.chicagotribune.com/1996-07-21/features/9607210380\\_1\\_art-institutesworks-chicago-historical-society](http://www.article.chicagotribune.com/1996-07-21/features/9607210380_1_art-institutesworks-chicago-historical-society)) accessed January 6, 2015; Mary Lackritz Gray, *A Guide to Chicago’s Murals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 421.

<sup>62</sup> Mohr, “Art for history’s sake: The Illinois & Michigan Canal . . .” Mohr states that Cameron was the *Chicago Tribune*’s art critic from 1890-1900. However, the 1905 and 1911 editions of *The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of the Leading Living Men of the City of Chicago* and Gray’s *A Guide to Chicago Murals* state that he was critic from 1891-1900.

<sup>63</sup> Leonard, “Cameron, Edgar Spier,” 104; Towne, “Edgar Cameron, Painter,” 180.

<sup>64</sup> Leonard, “Cameron, Edgar Spier,” 104; Towne, “Edgar Cameron, Painter,” 181-82, 183.

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Cameron painted his subjects in muted or bright colors, depending on the appropriateness. He worked with landscapes, figures, and classically-inspired or historic events. Some paintings were described as “[having] something of the quiet melancholy which is characteristic of the works of the Israels and some of the other modern Dutch painters.”<sup>65</sup> His work included private commissions, exhibitions, and commercial work. It was acquired for private collections or institutions such as the Chicago Historical Society, the Union League, and Woman’s Aid Club, Chicago, and he painted many murals in early Chicago movie theaters. Surviving murals in public buildings can be found in the main reading area of the Illinois Supreme Court Library, Springfield, Illinois (c. 1908), the Genesee County Courthouse, Flint, Michigan, (c. 1926), and the Riverside Public Library, Chicago (c. 1931). Other surviving murals in Chicago can be found in the grill room of the former Railway Exchange Building (now Santa Fe Center, c. 1904), the former Fort Dearborn Hotel (now Traders Building, 1913-14), and City Hall (1911) for which he created twelve murals portraying Chicago’s history. Seven of these murals still remain outside the Mayor’s Office. Cameron also completed a number of paintings for the Works Progress Administration that were placed in schools, a park, and an army post in Illinois. Perhaps it was his Chicago connections and fondness for painting historic events that led to his commission for the murals in the banking hall of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building.

Cameron’s work received numerous awards that included an honorable mention for the Yerkes Prize Competition in 1892, a silver medal at the Paris Exposition in 1900 and the Municipal Art League Prize in 1909, and the Butler Prize from the School of the Art Institute in 1913. He was also awarded Clyde Carr and Rosenwald prizes. In 1920, he received the *Palmes Academiques* from the French government for the work he completed during World War I in which he created pictorial publicity for French patriotic drives in 1917 and 1918.<sup>66</sup>

Cameron spent several months studying at the Oklahoma Historical Society to find inspiration for the First National Bank and Trust Company Building murals. He then returned to Chicago to complete the paintings in his studio.<sup>67</sup> The four large murals drew from events significant to the development of Oklahoma. The title of the mural in the southwest corner of the banking hall is “Louisiana Transfer: December 20, 1803.” It depicts the day that the U. S. flag was raised over New Orleans following the treaty of cession between the United States and France that was signed on April 30, 1803. The Louisiana Purchase included present-day Oklahoma. The mural in the northwest corner of the banking room is titled “Sunset Trail” and depicts a group of Native Americans on horseback and foot heading toward the sunset. According to Cameron’s notes, the painting was suggestive of the “general displacement of Indians toward [the] west” and the departure of the buffalo.<sup>68</sup> The east wall of the banking room has two murals titled “Land Run” with the date of April 22, 1889, below the title. The mural in the northeast corner depicts horse-drawn wagons and riders on horseback racing across the open prairie. The mural in the southeast

<sup>65</sup> Towne, “Edgar Cameron, Painter,” 183.

<sup>66</sup> Gray, *A Guide to Chicago Murals*; *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 1920 and *Washington Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), November 6, 1944, Edgar Spier Cameron Art & Artist Files, Smithsonian American Art Museum/National Portrait Gallery Library, Washington D.C., January 14, 2015 (date consulted).

<sup>67</sup> Meacham, “First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.”

<sup>68</sup> Notes on the murals for the First National Bank and Trust building, “Edgar Spier Cameron,” Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm roll 4291, p. 1177.

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corner depicts two soldiers on horseback observing the great race. A photograph of this painting appeared in the *Chicago Evening Post* on March 15, 1932. A photograph of "Sunset Trail" appeared in the *Chicago Daily News* on April 9, 1932.<sup>69</sup> The four murals were painted with muted green, blue, and brown tones and framed with yellow and golds that complemented the ceiling stencils, marble, and bronze decoration in the banking hall. Cameron died on November 5, 1944.<sup>70</sup>

### **Sorey Hill and Sorey, Architects**

The origin of the architecture firm of Sorey Hill and Sorey dates back to the 1920s. The firm's senior partner, Tom Sorey, studied mechanical engineering at the University of Oklahoma (OU) in Norman. He suspended his studies to work as a testing engineer for the Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C., during World War I. Upon returning to OU to complete his studies, he was also employed as an assistant professor of mechanical and architectural drawing at the university. Sorey spent his summers taking courses at the Chicago Art Institute and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and working for an architectural firm in Chicago. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1920. Because of his training, Sorey created the first architectural courses at the university. He resigned in 1923 to go into private practice in Oklahoma City with MIT graduate Walter Vahlberg under the name Sorey and Vahlberg. Their first commission was the design of OU's Student Union Building which was followed by other commissions at the university. The firm also designed residences, including a few in Wichita Falls, Texas.<sup>71</sup>

In 1925, Sorey's 22-year-old brother-in-law, Alfred Hill, joined the firm. Hill had attended the architecture school at Oklahoma A & M College in Stillwater and had worked with an Oklahoma City architect. In 1931, Sorey and Hill, and Sorey's cousin, Lee Sorey, an architect trained at the University of Kansas, formed the firm of Sorey Hill and Sorey. Their first office was located in the newly completed First National Bank and Trust Company Building in downtown Oklahoma City where they designed quarters for other tenants of the building in lieu of paying rent. The Great Depression brought challenges to the firm. Both Tom Sorey and Lee Sorey found part-time work with the federal government but maintained their partnership with the firm. The partners had residential commissions in several Oklahoma City neighborhoods that were still benefiting from the city's oil boom from the previous decade. The firm also had commercial work that included an addition to the John A. Brown department store and interior work in the Huckins Hotel. Sorey Hill and Sorey benefited from projects partially funded by the Public Works

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<sup>69</sup> Scrapbook, "Edgar Spier Cameron," Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm roll 4292, pp. 603 and 825.

<sup>70</sup> See "Centennial Celebration of the Illinois Supreme Court Building, 1908-2008," *2008 Annual Report, Supreme Court of Illinois, Administrative Summary*; Gray, *A Guide to Chicago's Murals*, 421. ([http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/SupremeCourt/AnnualReport/2008/AdminSumm/2008\\_Centennial.pdf](http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/SupremeCourt/AnnualReport/2008/AdminSumm/2008_Centennial.pdf)), accessed January 6, 2015; Lauren Nowenstein, "Renovations Transform Historic Genesee Courthouse," *Michigan Bar Journal*, December 2003 (<http://www.michbar.org/journal/pdf/pfdarticle652.pdf>) accessed January 6, 2015; Mohr, "Art for history's sake: The Illinois & Michigan Canal. . ."; Gray, *A Guide to Chicago's Murals*, 16-17, 24-25, and 354-55; and S. M. Hansen, Works Progress Administration, Illinois, Federal Art Project, to Edgar Cameron, October 30, 1936, Edgar Spier Cameron," Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, microfilm roll 4291, p. 951.

<sup>71</sup> Tom Sorey, Jr., "Sorey Hill and Sorey: Architects with a Civic Conscience." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 71 (Number 4, Winter 1993-94): 357.

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Administration. These included a post office in Duncan as well as dormitories at Oklahoma A & M and Panhandle A & M College in Goodwell. Oklahoma A & M's Cordell Hall was designed by the firm and was reported to be the largest dormitory in the Southwest at the time of its construction. Between 1948 and 1962, the firm completed the Edmond Low Library and the Student Union and an addition for the Union at Oklahoma A & M. The two buildings were centerpieces for the college and followed the pseudo-Georgian Revival architecture favored by Henry G. Bennett, president of the college from 1928 to 1951.<sup>72</sup>

After World War II, the firm followed a modern, or contemporary, idiom for its work with notable exceptions such as their work at Oklahoma A & M. Previously, the firm had experimented with the Art Deco or "PWA Moderne" styles in works completed in the late 1930s as evidenced by its design for Stillwater's Municipal Building. In the post-war era, the firm designed some highly visible buildings that brought a modern tone to downtown Oklahoma City. These included the YMCA Building, an eight-story concrete structure built in 1948 that combined elements of the International Style and the Dutch De Stijl movement. It was a major departure from downtown's Period Revival and Art Deco buildings constructed before the war. This building was demolished in 2001 as a result of damage it sustained during the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in 1995. The firm's design for the 1955-57 14-story addition to the First National Bank and Trust Company, as well as the accompanying parking garage on Main Street, also was illustrative of the International style. During this same period, Sorey Hill and Sorey designed the Fidelity National Bank Building at Harvey and Park avenues (1956-57, NR 2008), said to be the best example of a stand-alone high-rise International style building in downtown Oklahoma City.<sup>73</sup> The firm also designed a ten-story office building for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company at North Robinson Avenue and Northwest Sixth Street (1958) that bears an International influence.

In 1958, younger members of the Sorey family became partners of the firm. In 1964, the firm's name was changed to Sorey Hill Binnicker following the addition of Ray Binnicker, an architecture graduate of the University of Kansas. The firm's 1957 parking garage it designed for First National Bank and its Local Federal Bank Building were demolished in later years for further additions. After 1973, members of the Sorey and Hill families were no longer associated with the firm.<sup>74</sup>

### **Hudgins, Thompson, Ball, Inc. (HTB), Architects**

The architecture firm of Hudgins, Thompson, Ball & Associates (HTB, Inc.) was formed in 1942 in Oklahoma City. Architects Ralph M. Ball and Ed Hudgins and Verlin G. Thompson, an engineer were the founding partners. Their first project was the design and construction of Altus Air Force Base in Altus, Oklahoma. The firm grew to become one of the largest architecture firms in Oklahoma City. In 1962, Ball's son, Rex, opened a branch of the firm in Tulsa. Projects designed by HTB included Central Fire Station, Oklahoma City (1948); Will Rogers Turnpike

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 357-65.

<sup>73</sup> Cathy Ambler, "Fidelity National Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma." National Register of Historic Places Nomination, #08000151.

<sup>74</sup> Sorey, "Sorey Hill and Sorey: Architects with a Civic Conscience," 367, 372, 373.

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Restaurant, Vinita, Oklahoma (1957); United Founders Life Tower, Oklahoma City (NRIS #13000076); Will Rogers World Airport, Oklahoma City (1965); Myriad Gardens, Oklahoma City (landscape design c. 1976-1988); Mid-Continent Building, Tulsa (addition 1981); Francis Tuttle Vocational-Technical Center, Oklahoma City (c. 1982); Robinson Renaissance Building/Perrine Building, Oklahoma City (renovation 1985); Charles Haskell Elementary School, Oklahoma City (c. 1985); Gallagher-Iba Arena, Stillwater (renovation 1987); University Center of Tulsa (1987); Eugene Field Elementary School, Oklahoma City (1987); and, Temple Funeral Home Chapel, Oklahoma City (1988). Several of HTB's projects were done during the early years of the historic preservation movement in Oklahoma. These included the renovation of Oklahoma City's Central High School to become One Bell Central (NRIS #76001570) and Tulsa's Philcade Building (NRIS #86002196). The firm also had projects across the country and in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. In 1996, HTB, Inc. was purchased by Dewberry & Davis of Arlington, Virginia.<sup>75</sup>

### **Howard Samis Porch, Architects**

Howard Samis Porch's origins date to 1958 when W. L. (Bill) Howard (1923-2012), James M. Samis and Frank Davies, Jr. (1927-2008) formed an architectural and engineering practice in Oklahoma City. Stanley E. Porch joined the firm in 1964. Howard, Davies, and Porch had all studied architecture at the University of Oklahoma under Bruce Goff, chair of the School of Architecture from 1947 to 1955, and a noted practitioner of organic architecture. The firm designed projects for a variety of clients. Documented examples of their work in Oklahoma City include Sunbeam Home and Family Consulting Services Building (1964), a post office in South Oklahoma City (1964-66), and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (1966). One of the works the firm is best known for is Quail Creek Country Club, constructed c. 1962 when the firm's name was Howard Samis Lyons. The Wrightian-inspired clubhouse, called "a graceful, native stone and glass masterpiece that is completely casual and vividly awe inspiring at the same time" was designed by Bill Howard.<sup>76</sup> Howard Samis Lyons had an office in the First National Bank Building around the time the bank was planning its last expansion program. The firm later practiced under the name Howard and Porch. Documented examples of their work in downtown Oklahoma City include the Sheridan-Walker Parking Facility (1983).

### **Harmon Construction Company**

Harmon Construction Company was formed in 1933 by D. Allan Harmon. The company had numerous high profile projects in Oklahoma City as well as projects throughout Oklahoma and in other states. Oklahoma City projects included Mummers Theater (NRIS #13000075, Official

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<sup>75</sup> Max Nichols, "City's Oldest Architectural Firms are also Largest: Benham Group, HTB Sport Largest Operations," *Journal Record*, March 3, 1988; *The Oklahoman*, December 1, 2010; 1989 Centennial Committee, Oklahoma Builders' Chapter, AGC, *Oklahoma Built: The First 100 Years*, 51, 55, 58, 76, 96, 98, 109, 112, 114; *Great Buildings Ahead: A Guided Tour of Central Oklahoma's Architectural Landmarks. For Walking and Motoring*, 7, 150, 152, 154; *Tulsa World*, November 22, 1996.

<sup>76</sup> Lynne Rostochi, "Emotion, Truth, Life, Spirit: Bill Howard and His Architecture," *OKC Mod* (<http://okcmod.com/?p=102>, posted September 9, 2012 (accessed March 12, 2015). James M. Samis was a mechanical engineer, not an architect as confirmed in the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City Directory, 1952.

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DOE, Demolished); the First National Bank and Trust Company's drive-in facility (1972); and, 50 Penn Place, designed by Sorey Hill and Binniker (1972-73). Projects elsewhere in the state included Eastern Oklahoma Tubercular Sanatorium, Talihina (NRIS #10001008); Stillwater Medical Center, Stillwater (1973); Owen Field, Norman (expansion, 1974); and, the University of Oklahoma Energy Center (first phase).<sup>77</sup>

### **Significance under Criterion A: Commerce**

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the state level of significance in the Area of Commerce for its association with a bank that had a profound influence on the development of the state. Bank officials touted the fact that the bank and the city of Oklahoma City could both claim that April 22, 1889, the day of the first land run into the Unassigned Lands, was their origination day. The bank evolved over time with the ups and downs of the boom and bust eras and throughout its numerous mergers. The First National Bank and Trust Company was Oklahoma's largest financial institution when work on the building began. It was one of the 100 largest banks in the country with resources of \$70 million.<sup>78</sup> The building became the physical manifestation of the bank's reputation as the "Gibraltar of the Southwest."<sup>79</sup> Following the Great Depression and World War II, the bank lost its position as the state's largest bank in terms of assets to the First National Bank of Tulsa. When First National Bank and Trust merged with Tradesmen's National Bank in 1949, it regained its status as the state's largest bank. The \$27 million transaction and the sale of the ten-story Tradesmen's National Bank Building was thought to be the city's largest financial transaction in twenty years.<sup>80</sup> The bank's ultimate failure in 1986 sent shock waves throughout the state's banking industry.<sup>81</sup>

According to the First National Bank officers, the health of the bank was tied to the health of the city. Frank Johnson, president of the bank from 1927 to 1935, held leadership positions in the Biltmore Hotel Company when the city "was struggling to maintain a metropolitan hotel," as well as in "the Oklahoma City Building and Loan Company, the Oklahoma Savings and Loan Association, the Oklahoma City Clearing House Association, the Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce, . . . the Elks Club, [and] the Oklahoma University Club." Roscoe Dunjee, editor of the *Black Dispatch*, the state's largest African American newspaper, noted that Johnson was a fair man who was generous with his advice and a friend to the city's black community.<sup>82</sup> C.A. Vose became bank president in 1945 and later chairman and chief executive officer until his resignation in 1985. Vose was significant in creating the Oklahoma Industries Authority and

<sup>77</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, April 18, 2002; *Daily Oklahoman*, October 18, 1970, June 11, 1972, and July 16, 1972; *Daily Oklahoman*, November 14, 1935; 1989 Centennial Committee, Oklahoma Builders' Chapter, AGC, *Oklahoma Built: The First 100 Years*, 93.

<sup>78</sup> "Oklahoma City's Skyscraper Now being Erected," *The Oklahoma Banker* 22 (Number 1, August 1930): 16.

<sup>79</sup> Michael J. Hightower, "Brother Banker: Frank P. and Hugh M. Johnson, Founders of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Oklahoma City," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 88 (Number 4, Winter 2010-11): 391.

<sup>80</sup> Unidentified newspaper article dated August 3, 1949 in "Oklahoma City Banks" vertical file, Metropolitan Library System, Downtown Library, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma [hereafter identified as MLS].

<sup>81</sup> Michael J. Hightower, *Banking in Oklahoma 1907-2000* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), 285-86.

<sup>82</sup> Hightower, *Banking in Oklahoma 1907-2000*, 144-46.

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was credited with bringing intense industrial growth to the area during the 1960s and early 1970s. He convinced giants such as Firestone, General Motors, and Western Electric to establish plants in central Oklahoma. Vose was founder of Urban Action Inc. of Oklahoma City, a leader in the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and State Fair of Oklahoma. He was founder of First Bancorporation, the state's first bank holding company and had controlling interest or owned other banks in Oklahoma City, as well as Ada, Anadarko, Ardmore, Ponca City, Shawnee, and Tulsa.<sup>83</sup>

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is also significant for its physical manifestation of changes in banking practice in Oklahoma and the nation in general. Banks were some of the first businesses created at the time the Oklahoma Territory was opened to non-Indian settlement in 1889. Like this institution, initially these banks were small private establishments, largely unregulated. The state had 883 banks by 1907, many of which were quite small. Up until the 1980s, branch banking was prohibited in Oklahoma, making the headquarters bank building the symbolic and only physical presence of each institution.<sup>84</sup> A farming depression beginning after World War I led to the foreclosure of half the farms in the state from 1926-1930. The state, which had established the first compulsory deposit insurance system in the nation shortly after statehood, had to abolish the debt-ridden system by 1923. The failure of so many financial institutions, the decline of farming as a major revenue producer for the banking industry, the rise of major oil producers in Oklahoma, all led to a consolidation in the state's banking industry. Bigger banks were needed to supply the needs of the oil boom and also to survive the effects of the agricultural depression that preceded the Great Depression.

The 1931 building was designed not only to meet the needs of the state's largest bank within the constraints imposed by prohibiting the establishment of branch banking, it also had symbolic importance, conveying the immensity and permanence of this bank in an age when deposit insurance was unavailable.

In the post-World War II era, rapid suburbanization combined with the increased use of the automobile and an emerging freeway system plus the constraints of single-site banking, spurred changes at this site. First, drive-up bank stations were established in 1948. These may well have been the first in the city, but were not successful, as they were replaced by a massive bank expansion in 1957 that in itself constituted one of the largest construction projects in downtown Oklahoma City since the Depression.

The 1957 building was somewhat paradoxical in that it completed the enclosure of the main banking hall at its north end, which must have been anticipated by the initial design, which left this elevation roughly finished in plain brick. But, it broke with the design tradition of the original building by boldly expressing curtain wall construction, including horizontal bands of windows plus the then-innovative use of pre-cast concrete spandrel panels. The 1957 building not only provided much-needed additional office space for the bank, it made it more convenient

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<sup>83</sup> *Daily Oklahoman*, December 11, 1986.

<sup>84</sup> Oklahoma Historical Society, [Banking Industry - Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture](#). Accessed online July 12, 2016.

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for customers to use the main banking hall by adding escalators up to this mezzanine level in front plus a second set of escalators and stairs that serviced this new wing and the adjacent parking garage. That garage also included drive-through teller windows. Further, this addition not only included a broad public corridor lined with retail stores, it also extended that new corridor through to the main entrance, physically linking the main building to its new wing and parking garage and encouraging the public to use the space as a convenient passage. This was the beginning of a system, that would soon be expanded to tie together many downtown buildings through overhead walkways and similar passages cut through existing buildings.

### **Significance under Criterion C: Architecture**

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the state level of significance as an outstanding example of an Art Deco skyscraper in Oklahoma. The Art Deco style takes its name from the Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes of 1925. The Exposition showcased contemporary and industrial arts from twenty-seven countries. The distinct decorative style reflected an impressive “mix of avant-garde art movements—Cubism, Fauvism, Expressionism, and Futurism—and countless popular-culture influences caused an immediate sensation.” Many of the motifs were inspired by recent archeological discoveries in Egypt, South America, and Mexico, as well as Native American culture, African art, the Bauhaus, jazz, and the Ballets Russes.<sup>85</sup>

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building’s stepped-back verticality and exterior adornment are characteristic of the style. The sheer extravagance of the ornamentation makes this building unique among other Art Déco examples. The interior also reflects the style through the geometrical tiered light fixtures, original drinking fountains, extensive use of ornate bronze grilles and railings, and other decorative details. Even though the marble fluted columns and pilasters of the great banking hall are classically designed, the Art Deco influence continues through decorative detailing.

The design of the First National Bank was completed only about six years after the first Art Deco skyscraper in North America came into existence, which was the Barclay-Vesey Building constructed in lower Manhattan in 1924. The building has been described as “an irregular, stepped structure, shorn of historical detailing, its ultimate form having been determined by zoning, economic, and functional imperatives.” Yet its designer, Ralph Walker, of the firm McKenzie, Voorhees, and Gmelin, wanted a more humanized building, as opposed to the stark architecture that was preferred by modernists. “Instead, Walker and his friends exulted in the poetry and glamour as well as the modernity of the twentieth century skyscraper and sought all manner of means to express it.”<sup>86</sup> A street level arcade and decorative detailing inspired by the designs of the Mayan culture achieved this effort for the Barclay-Vesey Building.

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<sup>85</sup> Judith Singer Coehen, *Cowtown Moderne: Art Deco Architecture of Fort Worth, Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1988), 8.

<sup>86</sup> Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and Parnassus Foundation. *Money Matters: A Critical Look at Bank Architecture*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990). 215; Norvel White and Elliot Willensky, *AIA Guide to New York City*, Fourth Edition (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000), 54

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As Frederick Koeper noted, Art Deco ornamentation worked well in interiors, but was often located too high on the exterior of skyscrapers where the intricate level of detail and materials were hard to see at street level (e.g., the Chrysler Building and Barclay-Vesey Building). Koeper continued, “yet Art Deco ornament satisfied a certain self-conscious urban taste for modernity.”<sup>87</sup> The First National Bank addressed this quandary when James Kane, designer of the lavish aluminum ornamentation, placed the most dramatic features above the ground floor main entrances and storefronts, giving passersby a visual treat.<sup>88</sup> It is the extensive aluminum decoration on the exterior that makes the building unique among its contemporaries. Practicality was also critical in the design and crafting of the metal to treat weather-related factors such as expansion.

Even with the classically-inspired design, the exterior ornamentation gives the building a modern feel. This was a departure from the stylized zig-zag often used in Art Deco buildings of the era. Kane’s designs consisted of birds, foliage, urns, and nudes in low relief. The “modern” feeling of the ornamentation used on the First National Bank and Trust Company Building was a direct result of the intricacies involved in molding aluminum, a subject D. A. Shaw explored in an article for the February 1932 issue of *Metalcraft*.

Although there is no feeling of traditional style in the architectural design of the building there is, however, a suggestion of it in the character of the ornamental motifs, more in the actual appearance of the design than in reality. This modern feeling is expressed in the selection of the forms and in the swing of the curves. It is as if the designer had not bothered himself so much with a search for new forms or for new motifs in decorative design, as in holding hard to the governing idea that they would be executed in metal. The departure from traditional appearance here becomes evident. Stone is one medium and metal another. The rounded sections and the undercut leaves in ornament carried out in stone is almost as equally applicable to marble, plaster, or wood. Ornament that is cast in metal must be drawn from the mold. It demands a different technique. Sections suitable for the flowing lines of ivy oak leaf, or acanthus executed in other than low relief are the despair of the molder. In the decorative design for the ornamental features of this building which have been executed in metal, the equipment and the practices of the foundry have been kept in mind.<sup>89</sup>

Although not clearly evident, experimentation resulted in the use of triangular sections in the casting of the aluminum. The triangular section made it easier to remove castings from the mold. According to Shaw, this method of fabrication was new and innovative.

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<sup>87</sup> Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture, Volume 2, 1860-1976* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1984 (paperback edition), 326.

<sup>88</sup> Meacham, “First National Bank Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.”

<sup>89</sup> D.A. Shaw, “No Slavish Imitation, Nothing other than it Declares Itself to be . . . Metal: First National Building, Oklahoma City,” 67-68.

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The selection of ornament that could be controlled in the molding sand, the use of triangular section, and the choice of forms that lend themselves to that particular type, together with an almost entire absence of moldings, have seemingly created a new type of ornament. A studied arrangement of incised and raised members, of dull and polished surfaces combine to accentuate the shadows and high-lights in materials used, material that in its final appearance betrays no slavish imitation of marble, stone, or of anything other than what it declares itself to be—METAL.<sup>90</sup>

Oklahoma City's Ramsey Building, which was constructed at the same time as the First National Bank Building, is a much more stripped version of Art Deco architecture. This building is also thirty-three stories tall and sits directly north. Designed, built, and financed by Starrett Brothers Corporation of New York, the same firm that constructed the Empire State Building, the Ramsey Building was called "a study in the best of the Art Deco era" in the AIA Guide to Central Oklahoma.<sup>91</sup> Vertical elements and stone and brick patterns typify the Art Deco design of the exterior. Other Art Deco skyscrapers were also constructed in Enid and Tulsa, Oklahoma, including the Broadway Tower (NRIS #85002789), the Oklahoma Natural Gas building (NRIS #84003458), and the Philcade Building (NRIS #86002196). These buildings are excellent examples in their own right, but their scale does not compare with the First National Bank Building and all employ other materials for decorative details such as terra cotta or stone, not aluminum.<sup>92</sup>

The architecture firm Weary and Alford specialized in designing bank buildings across the United States, but more information about the breadth of the firm's work is non-existent. A quick study of their work shows that the majority of their work was in the upper Midwest near their Chicago home office. The masterful implementation and abundance of Art Deco detail of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building is striking when you take their body of work as a whole. Although not a new feature in bank design, the grand banking room was new to Oklahoma bank architecture.<sup>93</sup>

The 1957 wing is locally significant under Criterion C as an example of Early Modern commercial architecture. The 1957 wing was the first sizable office building constructed in downtown Oklahoma City since the Depression. Its Park Avenue façade displays key elements of the International Style, including horizontal ribbon-like windows arranged in a Miesian grid design, tinted glass spandrel panels, the use of pre-formed colored concrete spandrel panels with exposed aggregate, a cantilevered canopy of simple geometric form, plus the innovative use of aluminum mullions in robust contemporary style. The use of horizontal or ribbon windows was pioneered by modernist German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and French architect LeCorbusier in the 1920s and 1930s. By the 1950s, this form was beginning to spread throughout the United States. There are other buildings in downtown Oklahoma City that used

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 68-69.

<sup>91</sup> *Great Buildings Ahead: A Guided Tour of Central Oklahoma's Architectural Landmarks. For Walking and Motoring*, 17.

<sup>92</sup> For an excellent guide to Tulsa's Art Deco architecture, see Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, *Tulsa Art Deco* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Tulsa Foundation for Architecture, 2001).

<sup>93</sup> "First National of Oklahoma City in New Quarters," 11.

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this form, most notably the Fidelity National Bank (NRIS #08000151). It was also designed by Sorey, Hill and Sorey and dates from the same timeframe.

The First National Bank and Trust Company Building is also an excellent local example of the International Style. While it is not a singular example of one style of building, the overall building reflects the architectural trends of banking at the time. Initially, the Art Deco style of the bank in the 1930s demonstrated austerity and opulence, the image bankers were projecting at the time. By the time of the 1957 addition, banking was trying to remain relevant in the downtown core, when retail was moving to the suburbs. The International Style visually maintained the downtown as a modern-day location for business. Sorey Hill Sorey demonstrated its knowledge and acceptance of a style that embraced the vision of a more modern world after World War II. As such, the building's architectural styles did not just represent the architectural trend of the time of their construction but also a banking industry that was constantly trying to reach out to and be relevant to its customers.

By contrast, the 1972 building had a more limited role. It replaced the 1957 parking garage and drive-up teller windows with a nearby off-site parking garage. Its design facing Park Avenue was extremely conservative for the time, repeating the rhythm, proportions and even the materials of the earlier wing in a subordinate manner. A Park Avenue and Broadway corner rectangular building of similar height deprives the 1972 building of a major elevation, which it wraps around in L-shaped fashion. Its secondary elevation, facing Broadway, is a conservative interpretation of the New Formalism style, with stone-clad column-like piers, a recessed arcade and narrow windows set between thin stone bands. It is separated from the corner building by a narrow space with a conventional buff brick exterior with individual window openings arranged symmetrically. The alley elevation on the east side is similarly detailed. Its architecture is expressed in a subdued subordinate and dis-unified way that diminishes its visual impact. The 1972 wing extended the public passage and added more retail but did not change in any significant way either the 1931-32 or 1957 buildings. Programmatically, it housed no major bank functions but instead was a multi-tenant office building with separate elevators and stairs.

The 1972 addition was not intended to be part of the bank, or used by the bank, but rather serve as office space to multiple tenants. The tenant spaces have been renovated and/or gutted so significantly that there is no remaining original material. Although connected to the 1957 and 1931 buildings via the ground floor arcade, the 1972 addition was constructed with a concrete structural system and separated from the 1957 addition by an expansion joint on every floor. Neither the Broadway Avenue nor the Park Avenue façade reflects a major architectural movement of the era in which each was built. The Park Avenue facade replicates the design of the adjacent 1957 addition, and the Broadway Avenue façade is not indicative of a distinct style of the time. The 1972 addition also changed how the bank originally functioned. Where customers were once serviced in the 1931 and 1957 buildings, they were now forced to park off site and no longer had drive-up teller windows. The addition was constructed during the economic crisis of the 1970s, which ultimately led to the decline of the First National Bank during the recession of the 1980s.

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Because of the marked difference in the 1972 building from the other major portions of this building in function, styling and connection to the original building and in response to the banking industry in general, it is a non-contributing element of the First National Bank and Trust Company Building.

### **Criterion Consideration G, properties less than fifty years old**

The 1972 wing is less than fifty years old and would have to meet Criteria Consideration G for status on the National Register of Historic Places. By virtue of its remote placement, dis-unified styling and mixed-use function, this wing does not possess sufficient significance to justify its categorization as a contributing element of the overall building.

Oklahoma City is fortunate to have several properties that have been listed on or nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria Consideration G. Citizens Bank Tower, (NRIS #09000978) is a distinctive 20-story hexagon-shaped tower that recalls Frank Lloyd Wright's Price Tower in Bartlesville and is also notable for its cantilevered post-tensioned concrete construction. United Founders Life Tower (NRIS #13000076) is remarkable for its circular form, folded plate thin-shell concrete roofs at its base and above its top floor and the use of distinctive balconies, plus the presence of a revolving platform space atop its cantilevered top floor. Lincoln Plaza Historic District (NRIS #16000086) includes a 12-story crescent-shaped New Formalism-style hotel notable for its unusual cusp shape and for its role as one of the region's premier hotels that was attached to a sizable convention center and office building that vied with downtown Oklahoma City in attracting business. By contrast, the 1972 wing of the First National Bank and Trust Co. Building does not have a distinctive form nor create a recognizable outline on the city's skyline because it is surrounded by similarly sized or taller buildings. It does not use unusual structural methods nor is it faced with notable features or cladding materials. It was not built to serve as an iconic symbol for a corporate headquarters or to attract business or promote development in an outlying area. It did not have a single namesake user but instead was a multi-tenant office building.

### **Period of Significance, 1930-1957**

This timeframe begins in 1930 with the start of construction on this site of the Weary and Alford-designed building. After the building opened, there was a period of inactivity at this site in terms of construction, although as early as 1948 the bank had acquired much of the land needed for the 1957 wing in anticipation of its construction. This also includes a period, as has been noted, when the bank slipped in rank to become the state's second largest bank, but it still remained the largest financial institution in the city. The 1957 wing was built, as outlined, to correct perceived deficiencies in the circulation and efficiency of the 1931 building and to connect it with needed additional bank space near the main banking hall plus create additional parking and drive up banking windows. This timeframe within the Period of Significance reflects the changing role of banking, before regulations on branches were relaxed and banks by necessity had to concentrate offices and public banking and still address the trend toward suburbanization and the dominant role of the automobile as opposed to public transportation. There is no exact event to mark the end of the Period of Significance, but, after

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1957, there is no further construction activity at this site until 1972, which does not meet the description for exceptional significance. Therefore, an end date of the Period of Significance can reasonably be made at 1957, when the wing was completed, began to be occupied, and built out by tenants.

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**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 (Part I, II #34226)
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 1 MOL

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.468447 | Longitude: -97.516377 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lots 21 through 36, in Block 22, Original Plat of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, OK, together with all appurtenances thereunto belonging, including the appurtenant 20' alleyway situated to the south thereof.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the property historically associated with the nominated property, including the original 1931 building and the 1957 addition and the 1972 addition.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Susan Kline consultant for Sandvick Architects; Steven McQuillin and Jennifer Picquet-Reyes/edited by Lynda Ozan

organization: OKSHPO

street & number: 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive

city or town: Oklahoma City state: OK zip code: 73105

e-mail: lozan@okhistory.org

telephone: (405)522-4484

date: August 2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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**Photo Log**

Name of Property: First National Bank and Trusts Company Building

City or Vicinity: Oklahoma City

County: Oklahoma

State: Oklahoma

Photographer: Jennifer Picquet-Reyes, Emma Grace Williams

Date Photographed: February 26, 2016, June 21, 2016, August 8, 2017 and August 10, 2017.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 0001: West (Robinson Avenue) elevation. Looking east.

Photo 0002: West tower elevation. Looking east.

Photo 0003: West entrance portico. Looking east.

Photo 0004: Aluminum ornamentation over the west entrance. Looking east.

Photo 0005: Typical black granite and storefront window on west elevation. Looking north/northeast.

Photo 0006: Clock at northwest corner of building. Looking southeast.

Photo 0007: North (Park Avenue) elevation. Looking south/southeast.

Photo 0008: Tower west elevation. Looking east/southeast.

Photo 0009: Building crown with pyramid roof, beacon, and alterations. Looking east.

Photo 0010: Close-up view of the beacon.

Photo 0011: South façade along the alley. Looking east.

Photo 0012: View of the alley from Broadway Avenue. Looking west.

Photo 0013: View of the light well. Looking west.

Photo 0014: View of the light well and covered skylight. Looking down/west.

Photo 0015: View of 1957 (foreground) and 1972 (middle-background) additions along Park Avenue. Looking south/southeast.

Photo 0016: View of 1957 façade. Looking south.

Photo 0017: Boomerang-shaped canopy at 1957 building entrance. Looking west.

Photo 0018: Connecting roofs of 1957 and 1972 additions. Looking west.

Photo 0019: Upper roof of 1972 addition. Looking west.

Photo 0020: View 1972 east facade along Broadway Avenue. Looking west.

Photo 0021: Main stair and escalators off ground floor lobby leading up to banking hall. Looking east.

Photo 0022: Ground floor elevator lobby and commercial space beyond. Looking north/northeast.

Photo 0023: Basement vault gate. Looking west.

Photo 0024: Basement vault door into safety deposit room. Looking west/northwest.

Photo 0025: Basement vault door. Looking south/southwest.

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- Photo 0026: Second floor banking hall. Looking east.
- Photo 0027: Teller stalls in banking hall. Looking east/northeast.
- Photo 0028: Third floor overlook into banking hall. Looking west.
- Photo 0029: Fourteenth floor barbershop. Looking south.
- Photo 0030: Typical corridor on upper floors. Looking south.
- Photo 0031: Typical restroom on upper floors. Looking west.
- Photo 0032: Framing inside pyramid roof. Looking south.
- Photo 0033: Typical ground floor tenant space. Looking west.
- Photo 0034: Typical basement parking area, 1957 and 1972 buildings. Looking west.
- Photo 0035: Typical basement interior area, 1957 and 1972 buildings. Looking west.
- Photo 0036: Ground floor escalators, 1957 building. Looking west.
- Photo 0037: Ground floor escalators and storefront, 1957 building. Looking west/northwest.
- Photo 0038: Ground floor retail concourse, 1957 and 1972 buildings. Looking east.
- Photo 0039: Typical tenant space on upper floors, 1957 building. Looking north.
- Photo 0040: Typical condition on upper floors, 1972 building. Looking east.

Historic Images

- Image 0001: Newspaper article announcing construction of building c.1930.
- Image 0002: Construction in progress c.1931.
- Image 0003: View of northwest corner.
- Image 0004: Building main entrance on west facade.
- Image 0005: Clock at northwest corner of building.
- Image 0006: View of great banking hall.
- Image 0007: Bank teller stalls in great banking hall.
- Image 0008: Basement vault door.
- Image 0009: Safety deposit box rooms in basement.
- Image 0010: Typical chandelier in great banking hall.
- Image 0011: View of 1957 addition c. 1957.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Historic Images Page 1

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Image 0001:

THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN

Published at the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, position, on Monday, April 30, 1930. BY THE CITY OF OKLAHOMA, MARCH 3, 1919.

ESTABLISHED 1907—Continued. EIGHTY-SIX PAGES—OKLAHOMA CITY, SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 1930. BY MAIL ASSOCIATED PRESS

First National Pays \$1,050,000 for Site
At First and Robinson for New 32-Story
Structure to Cost More Than \$3,000,000

Company's Forty-First Anniversary Will Be Celebrated on Date City Was Founded.

Announcement of the new building of the First National Bank and Trust Co. came on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the bank's establishment for this institution was founded on the same day as was Oklahoma City, April 22, 1900.

The first home of the bank which now will be located in Oklahoma's largest skyscraper, was a two-story brick and concrete.

A three-story structure stood east of the southeast corner of Main and Broadway, on the first "corner" block of the city. This one-story plan building housed the First National for about a year.

Over Four Buildings Since Then, Four Different Locations Have Been Known as "The First National."

In 1901 the bank moved into what now is known as the Hudson State building, a three-story brick and concrete structure, still standing on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway. This was a big step forward for the bank; but a number of other satisfactory features that were contained in the bank in Oklahoma Territory.

Next the corporation moved a block west. Here was a five-story structure with modern and complete equipment on the first floor. There was a bank teller's window which looked across the Old Palace and other half-day traveled across and later on.

After Stable Bank

At the bank near the former brick building where the bank once could own a new bank of bricks in brick with a reinforced concrete and steel frame with a window on each building and structure.

Just across the street from the City square, a four-story building occupied the lot for which the bank paid \$1,000,000.

Oklahoma City grew and the First National with it. In the three-story building was built across to Main and the old city square, Oklahoma, which now is known as the First National, and here the bank remained until April 22, 1930. On that date, following a consolidation with the American National bank, it moved across the street to the present location.

FLIERS PLAN AIR PROGRAM HERE SUNDAY

(Special to The Okla.)

With the new Central-Whitely flying field a scheduled event Saturday night, when planes were scheduled to fly over the city, which the first of the aviation season, who could not attend the dedication ceremony.

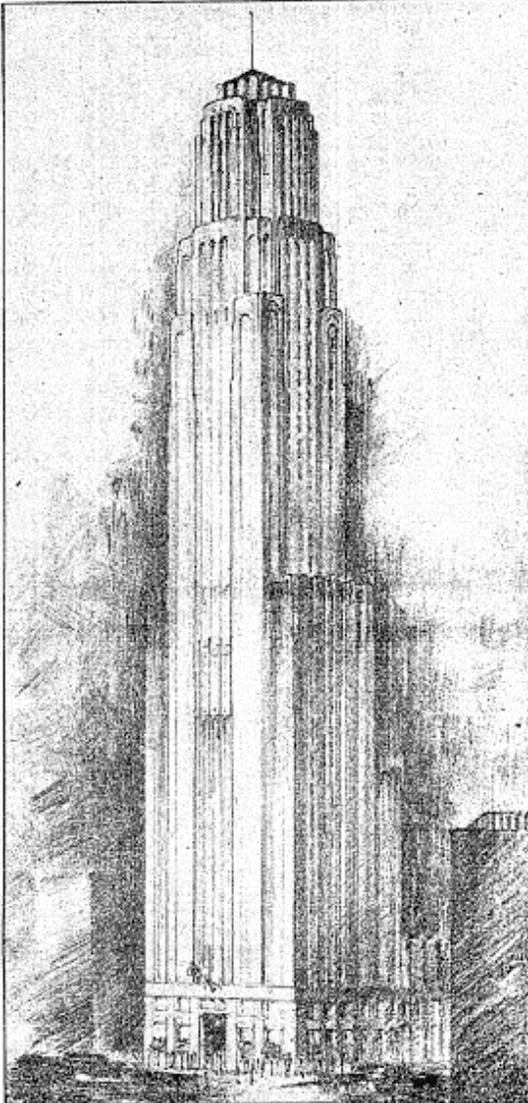
The occasion Sunday will be opened with a parade over the city at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, reports of the field office at 1 o'clock.

The first was followed by the Rev. Dr. Marvin, pastor of St. Paul's, the president of the aviation committee of the Chamber of Commerce, who addressed the crowd over the new post from a speaking airplane. Jim Moran, member of the house and E. M. Priddy, mayor, were principal speakers.

Included in the parade program will be a show which features the machine gun, by the students of the First National high school. The parade is a grand jump which was ended off Saturday because of high winds, will be re-arranged.

Lindbergh, Wife To Make Flight Today

OKLAHOMA, Calif., April 29.—(The Okla.)—Charles A. Lindbergh announced Saturday afternoon that he and Mrs. Lindbergh would leave tonight for St. Paul, Minn., to make a flight to Sweden.



Here is the architect's conception of how the new Oklahoma house of the First National Bank and Trust Co. First street and Robinson avenue, to be the state's tallest structure, will look when completed.

Work is Scheduled To Start on Oklahoma's Tallest Building In Midsummer.

Additional work on the First National Bank building in Oklahoma City is scheduled to start in mid-summer, according to the architect, who said that the work will be done by the First National Bank and Trust Co.

The 32-story structure will be the tallest building in Oklahoma City, and will be located on the southeast corner of First street and Robinson avenue.

The building will be a three-story structure, with a total area of 1,050,000 square feet. It will be built on a site which was purchased by the First National Bank and Trust Co. for \$1,050,000.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

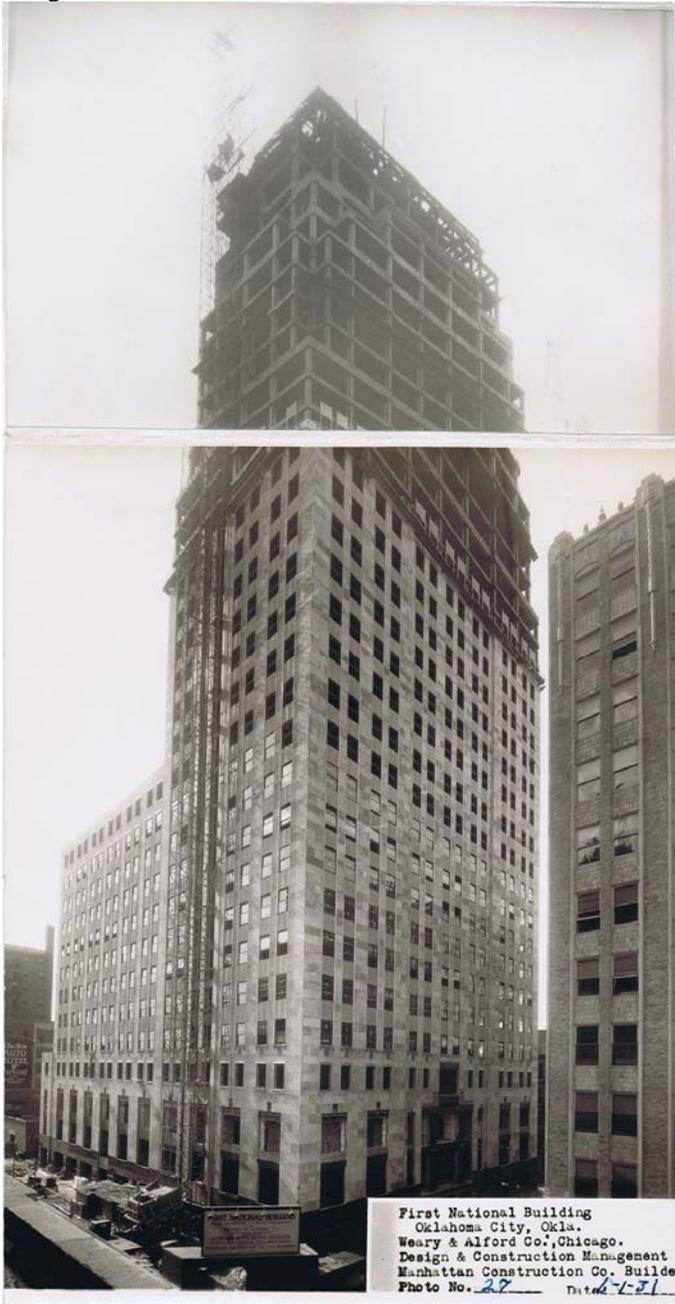
Section number Historic Images Page 2

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Image 0002:



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number Historic Images Page 3

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

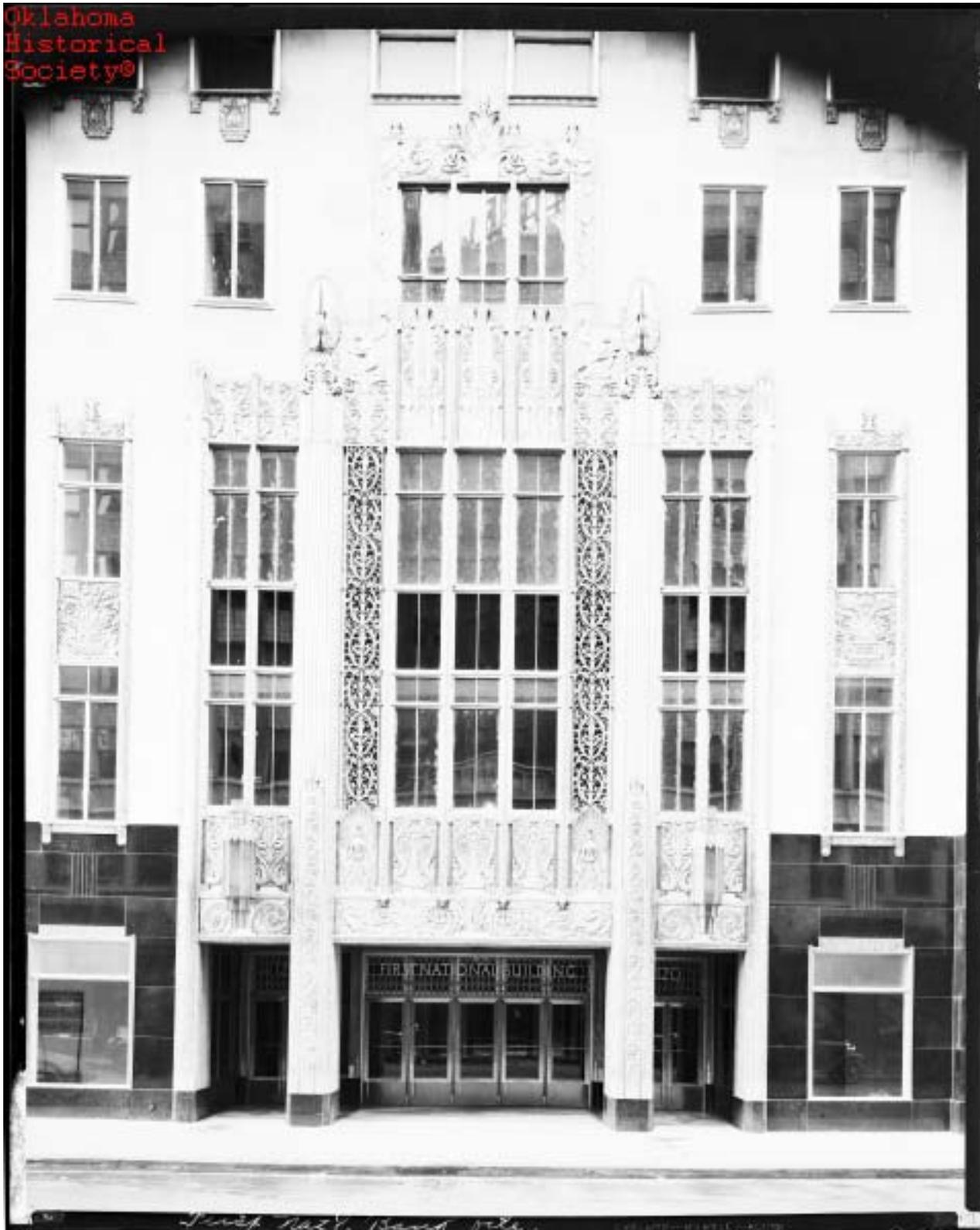
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 4



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 5



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 6



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 7



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 8



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company Building
Name of Property
Oklahoma, Oklahoma
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 9



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 10



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Historic Images Page 11



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma  
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 1

Map 1: Scaled Google Earth map shows property location within downtown Oklahoma City

Latitude: 35.468447 Longitude: -97.516377



Legend



First National Bank and  
Trust Co. Building

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

First National Bank and Trust Company  
Building

Name of Property  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 2

Map 2: Scaled Google Earth depicts the approximate boundary of the nominated property.

Latitude: 35.468447 Longitude: -97.516377



Legend



First National Bank and  
Trust Co. Building



Approximate boundary  
of nominated property



Non-contributing  
1972 building







FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING

FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING  
120



Robinson

FIRST  
NATIONAL  
BUILDING

W175

**CATERING**  
HOME, OFFICE,  
MEETINGS,  
WEDDINGS AND  
FOR ALL OCCASIONS

JMB



FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING

FIRST NATIONAL BUILDING

HERMON ESTABLISHMENT

CAFE 7













No Pedestrian or  
Public Access  
**HAZARD AREA**  
CLOSED FOR CONSTRUCTION

RTD



15 FT 0"

NO PARKING  
IN THIS ZONE  
EXCEPT AS SHOWN  
ON THIS SIGN

















FIRST NATIONAL CENTER

BEUTINGSON  
FOR SENATE  
JAMES E. BEUTINGSON

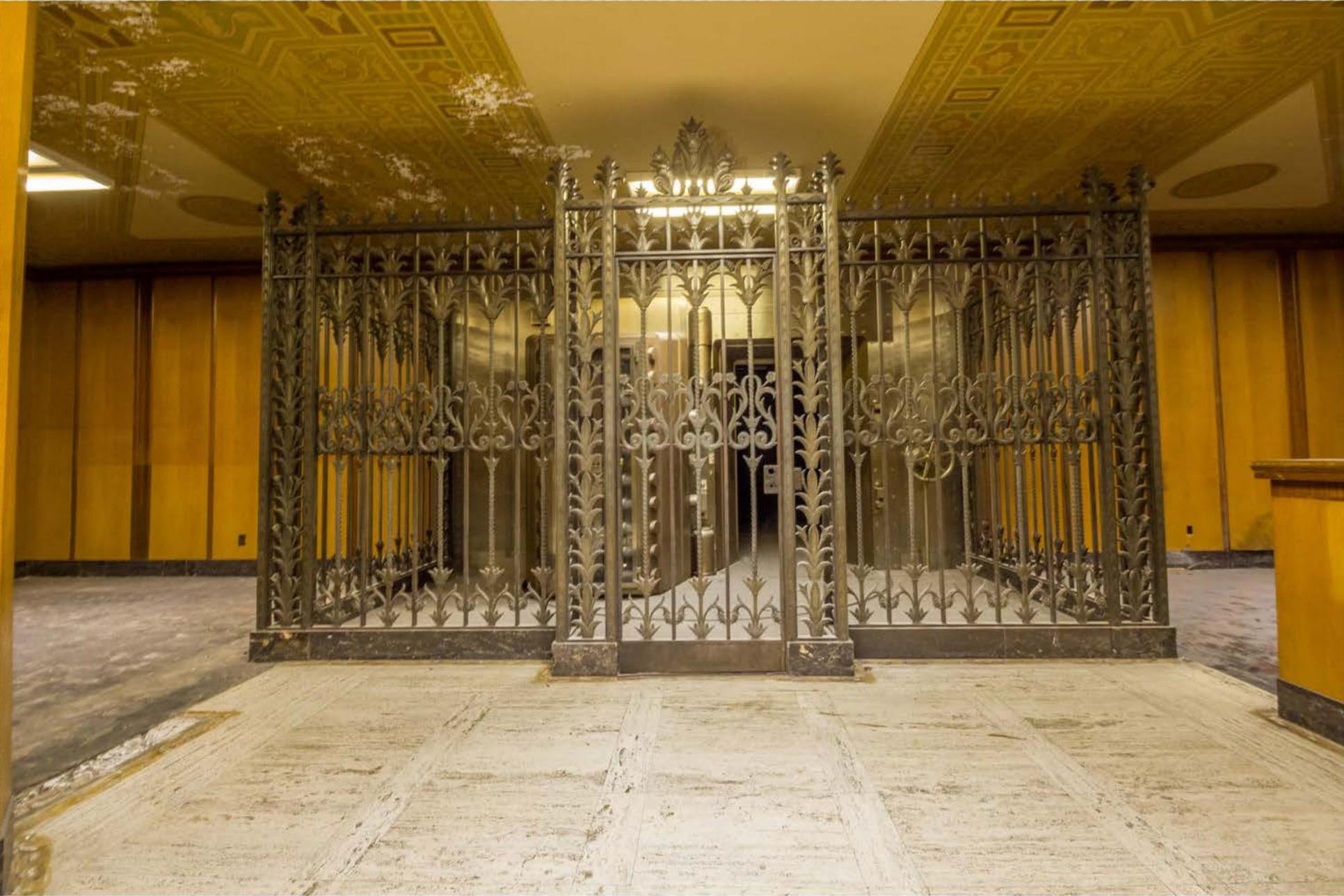
NO  
LEFT TURN  
ON RED

50  
24





ELEVATORS A  
14 TO 20



























EXIT







- ▶ VEHICLE TITLE REGISTRATION & TRANSFERS
- ▶ MOTORCYCLE TITLE REGISTRATION & TRANSFERS
- ▶ BOAT & TRAILER TITLE REGISTRATION & TRANSFERS
- ▶ LEASE FINANCING
- ▶ VEHICLE & BOAT REPOSSESSION TITLES
- ▶ DRIVER LICENSES & DRIVING RECORDS
- ▶ IDENTIFICATION CARDS
- ▶ IDENTIFICATION PHOTOS
- ▶ VEHICLE SERVICES
- ▶ TAX SERVICES
- ▶ COMMERCIAL TRUCKS
- ▶ VEHICLE REGISTRATION
- ▶ REFINANCED TITLES
- ▶ HUNTING & WILDLIFE TAGS
- ▶ TRAILER FINANCING

CONTACT  
232-8





## First National Pays \$1,050,000 for Site At First and Robinson for New 32-Story Structure to Cost More Than \$3,000,000

### Company's Forty-First Anniversary Will Be Celebrated on Date City Was Founded.

Announcement of the new building of the First National Bank and Trust Co. came on the eve of the forty-first anniversary of the bank's establishment, for this institution was founded on the same day as was Oklahoma City, April 22, 1890.

The first home of the bank, which was also its headquarters, was a two-story brick structure.

A three-story building which stood on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway was the first "modern" home of the bank. This one-story (the number building housed the First National for almost a year).

Used Four Builders

Since then, four different buildings have been known as "The First National."

In 1921 the bank moved into what now is known as the Herberle State building, a three-story office structure, still standing as the southeast corner of Main and Broadway.

This was a big step forward to the bank, but a second floor and balcony between that was contained the first in Oklahoma history.

Now the institution owned a brick wall. Now was a two-story structure which housed the bank and the bank's headquarters on the first floor. There was a brick wall which housed the bank, the Old Fellows and other half-day railroad workers had been there.

Many Stable Hands

At the bank was the Perrin heavy stable where the best stock could be had. There was a lot of stock in the stable, and the bank had a lot of stock in the stable.

Just across the street from the Perry stable, a two-story building occupied the lot for which the bank paid \$1,000,000.

### FLIERS PLAN AIR PROGRAM HERE SUNDAY

(Feature on Page 17)

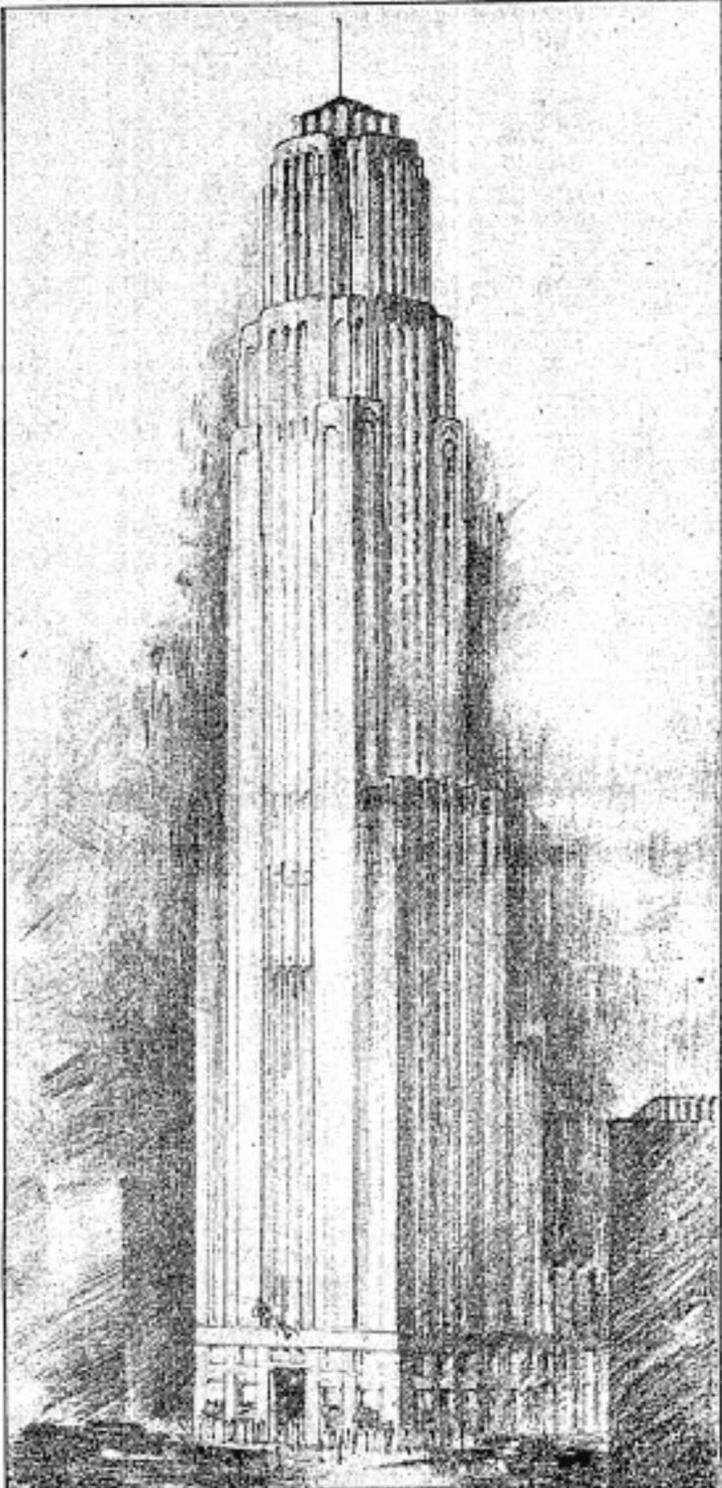
With the new Curtis-Wright type 1935 airplane, several other aircraft, and a full complement of their planes, the members of the Oklahoma City chapter of the National Aeronautic Association will hold an air show at the Oklahoma City airport.

The program for the day will include a parade over the city at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, a program of the Gold Star Club at 3 o'clock.

The first was followed by Miss Bernice Martin, daughter of H. G. Martin, president of the Oklahoma chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, who presented a check for \$1,000 to the Oklahoma chapter of the American Legion.

### Lindbergh, Wife To Make Flight Today

OKLAHOMA CITY, April 29.—The Col. Charles A. Lindbergh announced today that he and Mrs. Lindbergh would leave tonight for their flight to Europe.



Here is the architect's conception of how the new 32-story tower of the First National Bank and Trust Co. Just across and Robinson streets, to be the state's tallest structure, will look when completed.

### Work Is Scheduled To Start on Oklahoma's Tallest Building In Midsummer.

Additional Work on Page 17  
Plans for erection of the longest and tallest building in Oklahoma at the southeast corner of First street and Robinson avenue were announced Saturday by the First National Bank and Trust Co.

Twenty 32 stories above ground the building is estimated to cost more than \$3,000,000, although an estimate was made by bank officials. A deal for the site was closed Saturday with \$1,050,000 being paid for the property, including consideration of taxes for possession July 1.

Later Erection Included  
Property acquired for the four building fronts 140 feet on Robinson street and 200 feet on First street, according to a deal announced by Frank M. Johnson, chairman of the board of directors, and Frank P. Johnson, president.

Work will be started by July 1. Detailed plans are being prepared. The statement of the two officials was that the exact size of the structure had not been finally determined, although it was to be "more than 32 stories high (more than 30 stories in height, probably 22)."

Sketch of 32 Stories  
Architectural plans for the first 20 stories show the entire width of the lot, with a tower of 10 to 12 stories rising from it. The tower will be 100 feet square at the bottom, tapering to 50 feet at the top.

The Oklahoma Office Building Co., owned by stockholders of the bank, temporarily took title to the property in connection with the deal. It is not known if the bank will be interested in the building except as a tenant. The structure will be built by a separate corporation, strictly as an investment.

The site was acquired from the late Mrs. Perrin (and other other property owners after bank liquidation). Part of the land was obtained under a contract with the bank, but most of it was bought separately.

Organized Group  
Neither Frank nor Hugh Johnson would give an estimate on the cost of the building, declaring that the cost should be reserved until architects have completed the master plan. The bank will own the ground.

(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

### LAST MAN TO DEDICATE LONE TOAST TO PALS

(Feature on Page 17)

MITCHELL, S. D., April 29.—A letter of sympathy was forwarded to the family of the late Mr. Mitchell, a member of the Lone Star Club of Mitchell, S. D., who died Friday night. Mitchell was a member of the Lone Star Club of Mitchell, S. D., and was a member of the Lone Star Club of Mitchell, S. D.

In attending Mr. Mitchell's funeral, a man "went forward" in a woman's dress 40 years ago. Lacked 1939. "In

(Continued on Page 17, Col. 1)

### Moody Raps Work Of U. S. Oil Board

(Feature on Page 17)

PORT WORTH, Texas, April 29.—"The U. S. Oil Board is a waste of money," charged the Federal oil commissioner today, declaring that the board is a waste of money. The board is a waste of money, and the board is a waste of money.



First National Building  
Oklahoma City, Okla.  
Weary & Alford Co., Chicago.  
Design & Construction Management  
Manhattan Construction Co. Builder  
Photo No. 27 Date 6-1-31



*First  
National  
Building*







*The  
First National  
Lobby*





Oklahoma  
Historical  
Society©







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: First National Bank and Trust Company Building

Multiple Name:

State & County: OKLAHOMA, Oklahoma

Date Received: 1/29/2018      Date of Pending List: 2/26/2018      Date of 16th Day: 3/13/2018      Date of 45th Day: 3/15/2018      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100002220

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept       Return       Reject      3/15/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary: The First National Bank and Trust Company complex is significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce and Architecture, with a period of significance 1930-1957. The 1931, Weary and Alford designed Art Deco skyscraper is a prominent commercial landmark within downtown Oklahoma City. Dominating its corner location, the 33-story building is representative of the city's first bold skyscraper designs. The building is associated with an important banking institution that made dramatic contributions to state and local commercial and economic development during the first three quarters of the twentieth century. The 1957 addition to the Art Deco banking facility represents a contributing component of the historic building complex and is a fine local example of early International Style design in Oklahoma City. The 1956 to 1958 period represented a significant boom era in downtown construction with three prominent banks constructing new buildings or handsome additions in the Miesian/International Style. The historical and architectural contexts support the non-contributing status of the 1972 components of the First National building complex. The 1972 resource does not meet the exceptional significance threshold necessary to justify National Register eligibility.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C.

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan      Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229      Date: 3/15/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : **Yes**



# Oklahoma Historical Society

Founded May 27, 1893

## State Historic Preservation Office

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917  
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • [www.okhistory.org/shpo/](http://www.okhistory.org/shpo/)



January 26, 2018

J. Paul Loether  
Keeper and Chief National Register and  
National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are pleased to transmit five National Register of Historic Places nominations for Oklahoma properties. The nominations are for the following properties:

1210-1212-1214 North Hudson Historic District, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County  
Dunbar Elementary School, 1432 Northeast Seventh Street, Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma County  
First National Bank and Trust Company Building, 120 North Robinson Avenue,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County  
Enid High School Observatory, 611 West Wabash Avenue, Enid, Garfield County  
Okmulgee Country Club and Golf Course, 1400 South Mission Lane, Okmulgee,  
Okmulgee County

The member of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board), professionally qualified in the field of prehistoric archeology was absent from the public meeting at which each of these nominations was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. However, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of each nominated property was present and participated in the recommendation's formulation.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there any further questions regarding the nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lynda Ozan  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

Enclosures