

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only  
received **JAN 24 1984**  
date entered

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Architects and Engineers Building

and/or common Security Life Insurance Company

## 2. Location

street & number 1200 Second Avenue <sup>S.</sup> ~~South~~ N/A not for publication

city, town Minneapolis N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota code 27 county Hennepin code 053

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Keenan and Clarey, Inc.

street & number 1218 Second Avenue South

city, town Minneapolis N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hennepin County Government Center

street & number Registrar of Titles - 300 South Sixth Street

city, town Minneapolis state Minnesota

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Preservation has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Designation Study - 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission

city, town Minneapolis state Minnesota

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Architects and Engineers Building is a four-story office block designed in the manner of an Italian Renaissance palazzo. It occupies a corner site at the intersection of 12th Street and 2nd Avenue in downtown Minneapolis, and measures 72'x110' overall. The principal facades (north and east) are organized vertically into four ranks of segmental, flat, and round arched windows, and are faced with light-colored Indiana Bedford limestone in a smooth-finished, random ashlar pattern. Horizontal organization of the windows varies by floor. Simple belt courses divide the facade above the second and fourth floor windows. The facade projects at the fourth floor, forming a broad corbel table into which an arcade of round arched windows is recessed. Voussoirs set flush with the wall surface form pointed, two-centered arches above the first, third, and fourth floor windows. The names of great architects, including Leonardo da Vinci, Filippo Brunelleschi, Sir Christopher Wren, and Henry Hobson Richardson, are painted in gold within the round arches of the paired third floor windows. Flat arched windows are arranged in pairs at the second floor level. First floor windows are grouped beneath large segmental arches. Wrought iron grilles decorate street-level basement windows, and an elaborate carved stone hood marks the main entrance. A one-story wing extending west along 12th Street has a separate entrance with an overhanging wrought iron lantern and two small windows with ogee-cut lintels. A six-story elevator and stair tower abuts the south facade, capped with round-arched corbels and a hipped roof. The tower, as well as the south and west facades, are faced with cream-colored sand-lime brick and occasional, randomly placed stone insets. The roofs of the main building and wing are flat. The hipped roof on the tower and "false" roof on the street side of the wing are tiled. An enclosed garden at the south side of the building is accessible from the entrance lobby, and from an arched loggia adjacent to the base of the tower.

Three interior areas retain significant original finishes and detail: the main lobby, and the main floor and basement of the one-story wing. The vaulted main lobby retains some original door frame and ceiling moldings (on the large central vaults and in the elevator alcove), multi-colored marble flooring, and a semi-circular frescoed mural above the main entrance. The main floor of the wing retains its original pegged wooden flooring, exposed-beam ceiling, and massive carved stone fireplace. The vaulted street entrance to the wing retains much original woodwork, including doors, windows, and a radiator enclosure, as well as its multi-colored marble flooring. The basement of the wing is virtually intact. The original woodwork includes a low, beamed ceiling; wainscoting and plate shelves; a built-in bench; and cabinets around the fireplace. The natural-finished woodwork has been decorated with the names of members of the Skylight Club, and the dates of their membership, painted in gold leaf. Cabinet doors above the fireplace are painted with scenes of revelry. The fireplace itself is an eclectic conglomeration of brick, stone, and ceramic tile. Two other original fireplaces survive in the basement and on the third floor. The remainder of the building's interior has been altered, superficially, to accommodate the changing needs of its tenants.

The building generally is in excellent condition, and is in no immediate danger of significant alteration or demolition. Work is currently underway to restore the enclosed garden and the main lobby.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1920 **Builder/Architect** Pike and Cook / Hewitt and Brown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Architects and Engineers Building is significant primarily for the high quality of its architecture and secondarily for its association with the leading practitioners of architecture, engineering, and interior design who were its designers, owners, and original occupants. Designed by prominent Minneapolis architects Hewitt and Brown, and constructed in 1920 by Pike and Cook, the building is a refined composition of Italian Renaissance design well suited to the varied window requirements of its complex interior program. "This adaptation of the Florentine of Tuscan type of design..." wrote Hewitt, "...was chosen because it permitted unusual spacing of the windows...and...the securing of maximum light in the drafting rooms where it was needed." Hewitt and Brown conceived the building as a home for a group of design professionals, and as a showpiece of their own work. In addition to private offices and common workspaces, the building originally housed several business and service organizations including the Skylight Club, the Post and Lintel Club, the Architects Small House Bureau of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The Architects and Engineers Building is in excellent condition, and has been designated for preservation by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.

During the 1910s and 1920s Edwin Hawley Hewitt and Edwin Hacker Brown were responsible for a number of prestigious building projects in Minneapolis, including St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the Gateway Park Pavillion (now demolished), and the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church. Their work reflected Hewitt's classical training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and furthered the development, locally, of the City Beautiful movement. On the outside, the Architects and Engineers Building was an example of this romantic classicism; on the inside, it was an innovative cooperative office building with shared facilities and work spaces for professionals working in the related fields of architecture, engineering, and interior design.

The concept for the building grew out of Hewitt and Brown's association with a group of prominent designers including architect William C. Whitney and the firm of landscape and interior designer John S. Bradstreet. They reasoned that the consolidation of their practices under one roof would save office expenses, and would provide "the special advantage of proximity and the facility for making the knowledge and experience of each available to the others."<sup>2</sup> To this end, the building was designed with private executive offices as well as common drafting and clerical rooms, libraries, and duplicating facilities. Meeting and dining rooms were also provided for the building's occupants, and for a variety of professional organizations and clubs. By night, the building was intended to serve as a studio where students of architecture could work under the supervision of practicing professionals.

As an exceptional example of the work of Hewitt and Brown in Minneapolis, and as a unique integration of the design professions of their day in a single cooperative venture, the Architects and Engineers Building is a significant monument in the architectural history of the city. The building is virtually intact despite superficial interior modifications, and retains its architectural and historical integrity.

1 & 2. Edwin H. Hewitt, "Cooperative Offices for Architects," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, IX (December 1921), pp.47 & 44.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Original drawings, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Hewitt, Edwin H. "Cooperative Office for Architects." Journal of the American Institute of Architects. IX (December 1921). 41-47.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 0.5

Quadrangle name Minneapolis South

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	5	4	7	8	4	2	0	4	9	7	9	5	3	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

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D 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 7 & 8, block 25, Snyder and Co.'s First Addition

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Fey, Research Associate; Stuart MacDonald, Partner

organization MacDonald and Mack Partnership

date 9/8/83

street & number 215 Grain Exchange Building

telephone (612) 341-4051

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Russell W. Fridley  
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

1/20/84

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

2/23/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration