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NPS Form 10-900
OMB No. 1024-0018

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

RECEIVED 2280
AUG - 1 2014
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Melrose Building
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 1121 Walker
City or town: Houston State: Texas County: Harris
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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 ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
☐ national ☐ statewide ☑ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☑ C ☐ D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 7/25/14
Signature of certifying official / Title **Date**

Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting or other official **Date**

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

X 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 9/17/2014 **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

x	Private
	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

Category of Property

x	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: COMMERCE/TRADE/business/office building

Current Functions: VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification: MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK/CONCRETE/METAL

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7 to 9)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

	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.
X	**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: NA

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance: 1952

Significant Dates: 1952

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Lloyd & Morgan

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 10 to 18)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 19)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
- **x** State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*, Austin)
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- **x** University (*Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University,* Houston*)*
- _ Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

Lat: 29.756971° Lon: -95.362687°

Verbal Boundary Description: Tracts 1, 2, 3A & 16, Block 94, South Side Buffalo Bayou (SSBB). See map on Page 21.

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes all legal parcels historically associated with the property

11. Form Prepared By

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Date: 2 April 2014

Additional Documentation

M**aps** (see continuation sheets 20 and 21)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 22 to 44)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 5 to 6 and 45 to 61)

Photographs

Melrose Building
1121 Walker
Houston, Harris County, Texas
Photographed by Anna Mod, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 10245 West Little York, suite 600, Houston, Texas 77040

Photo #1 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0001)
South façade (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing west.

Photo #2 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0002)
West elevation (left) and south façade (right), camera facing east; view east down Walker Street.

Photo #3 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0003)
North elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing southeast.

Photo #4 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0004)
Interior, typical floor on south elevation, replacement windows, view south.

Photo #5 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0005)
Ground floor elevator lobby, camera facing north

Photo #6 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0006)
Ground floor elevator lobby, AIA award 1950-51 in ground floor lobby, camera facing east

Photo #7 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0007)
Ground floor elevator lobby, East wall; building directory and aluminum framed doors to lease space, camera facing east

Photo #8 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0008)
Ground floor elevator lobby, Detail of N wall; mail box and door to staircase, camera facing north

Photo #9 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0009)
Ground floor elevator lobby; view towards street; E wall on left, camera facing south

Photo #10 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0010)
Ground floor elevator lobby; Detail elevators, camera facing west

Photo #11 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0011)
Typical upper floor elevator lobby, camera facing north

Photo #12 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0012)
Typical upper floor “intact” elevator lobby; detail of mail shoot and door to staircase, camera facing north

Photo #13 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0013)
Typical upper floor long corridor from elevator lobby to rear fire stair, camera facing east

Photo #14 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0014)
Typical upper floor “blown out” elevator lobby, camera facing southeast

Photo #15 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0015) , Typical upper floor tenant space

Photo #16 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0016)
Typical upper floor tenant space

Photo #17 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0017)
Exterior; W and S elevation; view E down Walker Street from intersection with Fannin, camera facing east

Description

The Melrose Building is a twenty-one story office tower located at 1121 Walker Street in downtown Houston. The building's primary façade faces south onto Walker and its eastern elevation faces east onto San Jacinto. The Designed by Lloyd & Morgan in 1952, the Melrose Building is Houston's first International Style skyscraper and the first to incorporate cast concrete cantilevered sunshades shielding rows of grouped windows. The asymmetrical concrete reinforced steel frame building is clad with buff colored brick, and a projecting concrete enframed window wall. The ground floor storefront retains its original aluminum framed, single light entry doors and storefront punctuated with marble clad, unadorned square columns.

Site

The property includes only the office tower located on the southeastern corner of Block 94; the Block is bounded by Walker to the south, San Jacinto to the east, Rusk to the north and Fannin to the west. The surrounding area is an urban commercial neighborhood with surface parking lots, skyscrapers, and multi-story parking garages typical of the neighborhood. The Melrose building is three blocks southeast of the southern boundary of the Main Street/Market Square Historic District (NR, 19847), Houston's late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial historic district that includes Allen's Landing, the place of the city's founding. Individually listed National Register of Historic Places properties in the neighborhood include the 1949 City National Bank Building (NR, 2000) and the 1921, 1936 Humble Oil Building (NR, 1999) located one and three blocks to the south respectively. Two blocks north are the Kress Building (NR, 2002), the 1929 Texas State Hotel (NR, 2008), the 1915, 1936, 1959 Texas Company Building (NR, 2003) and the 1911 United States Custom House (NR, 1974).

The building has a U-shaped plan with only small inset airspace on the north elevation where the fire escape staircase is located. Due to its corner location, the twenty-one-story building with basement has two dominant elevations: the primary facade faces south onto Walker and includes the main entrance; the second elevation faces east onto San Jacinto. The building measures roughly 131' x 76' with the longer span facing south onto Walker. The rhythmic bay composition of the building is 5 x 3 bays following the structural system. The entire building is clad with buff colored brick with the west and south elevations solid end walls excepting the inset airspace on the north elevation for the fire escape. The south and east elevations have an asymmetrically placed enframed window wall composed of a cast concrete cantilevered "eyebrow" that projects from the building plane and completely surrounds the regularly grouped, aluminum framed ribbon windows. The windows are grouped in sixes and separated by a dominant vertical mullion, an expression of the structural column beneath; there are five groups of six windows on the south elevation and two groups on the east. Within the enframed window wall, there are additional cantilevered "eyebrows" that run continuously above the windows providing sun protection. The current fixed anodized aluminum windows were installed in the early 1970s when the building underwent a well-publicized renovation (Figures 28abc); the current windows follow the rhythm and proportions of the originals (the original windows alternated between aluminum fixed and casement type with a small upper and lower transom). One significant change made in the renovation is the exterior turquoise tile spandrel panels were covered with an anodized aluminum panel; these tiles are extant below the current spandrels. There is an elevator penthouse, clad is the buff brick, on the western side of the parapetted flat roof.

Despite the International Style of the building, its composition exhibits the last vestiges of the classical, three part composition of base, shaft, and cornice, executed in new modernist vocabulary. The base along Walker Street includes floor-to-ceiling aluminum framed storefront windows (now boarded), entry doors covered by a continuous aluminum clad cantilevered canopy that wraps the corner and continues halfway along the San Jacinto elevation. The ground floor of the east (San Jacinto) elevation has an unadorned brick wall with paired egress doors on the northern-most bay. Above the ground floor, the shaft or central building section is an asymmetrical composition of

continuous bands of aluminum-framed windows with cast concrete sunshades enframed by a projecting concrete band; the bands of windows compose the majority of the south façade leaving only a small vertical strip of the buff colored brick in the far western bay. This vertical counters the running horizontal emphasis of the window wall and continues above the projecting concrete band to simply express the cornice or terminus of the building. On the east elevation the enframed window wall is only two bays wide leaving a full bay for the vertical buff brick of the building plane.

Floor Plan

The building's basement is utilitarian and designed for the mechanical systems and back of house maintenance offices and storage. There are no public spaces in the basement; the floor is concrete and the walls painted plaster or gypsum board. The ground floor public spaces include the elevator lobby, richly ornamented with green marble with heavy white veining. The upper 20 floors have mostly intact elevator lobbies with plaster walls, the glass mail chute, the fire hose boxes and brushed aluminum molding surrounding the elevator cabs.

Interior

There is a small rectangular inset along Walker Street that highlights the building's primary entrance spanning approximately 22 feet: a central paired single light aluminum framed doors flanked by two single doors. The lobby is currently carpeted and has a drop ceiling; both of these elements were later alterations. The five elevator cabs are places against the western solid end wall and are surrounded with green marble with white veining. The elevators cabs have brushed aluminum surrounds. Other original elements in the lobby include a mail box with glass mail chute from the upper floors; fire hose cabinets and an aluminum framed office directory. The 1962 AIA award still hangs in the lobby. The original concrete dog leg staircase with simple metal pipe railing is in the northwest corner of the building just north of the elevator lobby.

There is a tenant space in the eastern two bays of the building. The tenant space has a concrete floor and drop ceiling; there are not remaining character defining features. There is a paired aluminum door with access to the main lobby on the west elevation as well as access to Walker, also via aluminum framed single light doors.

Upper floors

The upper floors were designed to offer maximum flexibility for tenant build out. All floors retain some semblance of the elevator lobby and access to the rear fire escape. Alterations are visible on most floors: Twelve or 60% of the upper floors have had modifications to the corridors and/or elevator lobbies; the remaining eight floors have the majority of their corridors and elevator lobbies intact. The corridors were designed according to building codes at the time and ran in a L-shape from the southern end of the elevator lobby and turned in an easterly direction with a final turn northward to access the fire escape staircase. Electrical panels ran in a continuous vertical chase along the southern wall. Tenants altered the office plans and many of the corridors over time and electrical panels and fire boxes were relocated. The extant corridors have a thin layer of plaster over a metal stud wall and a rubber baseboard. The drop ceilings are now acoustical tile and are placed approximately three and one half feet below the original floor-to-ceiling height. The corridors have been altered and are not considered character defining features of the building. The elevator lobbies, largely intact on each floor, also have a plaster finish although most have been encapsulated with wallpaper, paint or wooden paneling. The elevator lobbies are the only character defining features remaining on the upper floors.

Summary

The Melrose Building retains a high degree of integrity on the exterior, ground floor lobby and upper floor elevator lobbies. The exterior has underground minimal changes and the window replacement completed in 1971 replicated the rhythm and spacing of the original fenestration. The turquoise tiles are extant beneath an aluminum spandrel panel. The building is recognizable as Houston's first International Style skyscraper with its buff brick building plane with projecting concrete enframed window wall. The interior tenant floors have been altered albeit following the space planning ideas of the day that tenant spaces were designed to be as flexible as possible. The Melrose Building is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, Architecture, as an excellent example of the work of Lloyd & Morgan and the city's first International Style skyscraper.

Statement of Significance

The 1952 Melrose Building at 1121 Walker Street in Houston, Harris County, Texas, was the first International Style skyscraper in the city. Built nearly six decades after the construction of the Houston's first skyscraper, the Melrose ushered in an era of sleek modernist design on the growing city's skyline. In line with national trends, Houston's earliest skyscrapers referenced traditional styles through Neoclassical or Gothic ornamentation and form, and after World War I, Houston architects began to design skyscrapers with relatively limited ornamentation inspired by the movements later described as the Art Deco or Art Moderne styles. Following World War II, however, the International Style became a predominant style for skyscrapers in the U.S., and while several such buildings were proposed for Houston developers, the 1952 Melrose Building was the first to be completed. Serving as an office building, the Melrose Building was well-received both locally and nationally. The building is nominated for listing in the National Register under Criterion C at the local level of significance as the city's first International Style skyscraper and for its association with Houston architects Lloyd and Morgan.

Houston's Pre-Modern Skyscrapers

Although there is no single, accepted definition of the term 'skyscraper,' the type can generally be described as a building of exceptional height with a steel-frame structure.[1] Tall building in Houston began in the last decade of the nineteenth century with the construction of the 1894-1895 Binz Building (demolished 1950-1951) at the intersection of Main Street and Texas Avenue (See Figure 1).[2] Not technically a skyscraper due to its interior cast iron and steel frame with load-bearing brick walls, the six-story building marked the city's first attempts to build upward. The architect, Olle J. Lohren, ornamented the building with Italian Renaissance styled elements. The first completely steel-framed skyscraper in Houston was the eight-story First National Bank Building (Sanguinet & Staats, 1903-1905).[3] As with the Binz Building, the architects utilized traditional Renaissance Revival ornamentation and organized the building into three parts, a base, a shaft, and a cornice (See Figure 2).

Between 1908 and 1913, the City of Houston saw a boom in skyscraper construction with buildings ranging from seven to 17 stories in height.[4] These new buildings followed the same composition and ornamentation established by the Binz Building and First National Bank Buildings; traditional revival styles, such as the Renaissance or Gothic Revival styles, were used to ornament the exteriors. The skyscrapers were either 'U' or L-shaped in plan to bring natural light and ventilation to the center of the building. Additionally, the buildings were flat-sided, rising directly from the sidewalk in the tripartite, base, shaft, and cornice formation. Only those elevations that faced streets were ornamented while the secondary or tertiary elevations were left undecorated.[5] These new skyscrapers did vary from the earlier office use examples in their use and included hotels, apartments, retail space, and hospitals. The Rice Hotel (Mauran, Russell & Crowell, 1913) and an apartment building, the Beaconsfield (A. C. Pigg, 1911), exemplify Houston skyscrapers built at this time (see Figures 3 and 4).

During the early years of Houston skyscrapers, most developers hired architects from out-of-town for both high-rise and low-level construction. Sanguinet & Staats of Fort Worth, Texas and Mauran, Russell & Garden of St. Louis, Missouri were the most prolific. D. H. Burnham & Co. of Chicago (1909, Scanlan Building, 405 Main Street), Jarvis Hunt of Chicago (1911, Southern Pacific Building/ Bayou Lofts, 915 Franklin Avenue), and Warren & Wetmore of New York (1915, Texas Company Building, 720 San Jacinto Street) each designed a tall building in

[1] Ching, *A Visual Dictionary of Architecture*, 22.
[2] Fox, "Scraping the Sky," 193.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Fox, "Scraping the Sky," 197.

Houston as well (See Figures 5-7).[6] Sanguinet & Staats' C. F. Carter Building (1919) was the tallest building in Texas for a few months after its construction and the tallest building in Houston until 1926 (See Figures 8-9).[7]

From 1913-1917 tall building in Houston slowed as World War I (WWI) began and construction stopped altogether from 1917-1918 after the United States (U.S.) joined the war.[8] When it began again in the early 1920s, Houston joined the rest of the U.S. and the world in the effort to identify a modern style to accompany the many advancements of the twentieth century.

Modernism and the International Style

The Modern Movement arose during the 1920s in response to the numerous advancements in technology and extensive growth of cities following the industrialization of Western Society. It spans the arts, literature, religion, politics, the organization of society, and architecture. As a philosophy, its followers attempted to depart from traditional practices of the past and form new methods based upon the technological advancements of the present. Architectural historians have avoided defining Modernism because of the breadth of materials and characteristics found in the buildings of this time period.[9] As architects abandoned traditional building precedents, a number of new architectural styles, schools, and theories of design were formed; all of which fall under the larger classification of Modernism.

The Modern Movement can be divided into two waves corresponding to the development of architectural modernism. The first wave occurred after WWI from the 1920s to the 1940s. Following the horrors of WWI, architects sought to utilize modern architecture as a means to improve quality of life through buildings and spaces.[10] In the U.S. the predominant styles of this first wave include Art Deco, Streamlined Moderne, and Stripped Classical.[11] All of these show an attempt to distance new architecture from past styles by minimalizing ornament to various degrees. The second wave of modernism occurred after World War II and extended into the 1970s , after which historical references and ornament begin to reappear in architecture.[12] This wave was dominated by the International Style.[13] Phillip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock are credited with giving this style its name in the title of their book, *The International Style* that served as the catalog for an exhibit of modern architecture in 1932 at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City.[14] This style follows three general tenets, the first is the expression of volume rather than mass, the second is the emphasis of balance over symmetry, and the third is the expulsion of all ornament.

International Style Skyscrapers in the U.S.

Although there were early examples of International Style skyscrapers in the U.S. before WWII, such as the 1932 Philadelphia Saving Fund Society (PSFS) Building, now the Loews Philadelphia Hotel (NRHP & NHL, 1976), by William Lescaze and George Howe, the International Style was not widely adopted for use on skyscrapers until after WWII.[15] New York City was the first city to experience a major skyscraper building boom following WWII and as a result was the location of the first iconic International Style skyscraper office buildings. The 1952 Lever

[6] Fox, "Scraping the Sky," 197.; Fox, *AIA Houston*, 64, 73, and 81.
[7] "SANGUINET AND STAATS."; Fox, "Scraping the Sky," 196.
[8] Fox, "Scraping the Sky," 197.
[9] Robinson and Foell, *GSA Buildings*, 12.
[10] Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, 2.
[11] Robinson and Foell, *GSA Buildings*, 12.
[12] Robinson and Foell, *GSA Buildings*, 12-13.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Prudon, Preservation of Modern Architecture, 4.

House (NRHP, 1983) was designed by Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill (SOM) and consists of one horizontal rectangular block on pilotis with a second, tall, vertical, rectangular block asymmetrically placed on top of the first horizontal rectangle (see Figure 10). Both blocks have steel structural frames and all-glass curtain walls covering all four sides in a distinctive green color. The 1952 United Nations (U.N.) Secretariat Building was designed by Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier as part of the U.N. complex and houses all administrative offices and offices of the delegates (see Figure 11). Unlike the Lever House, the UN Secretariat Building is placed in a larger, landscaped park setting. It is also built with a steel frame; however glass curtain walls only cover the two larger sides of the rectangular form, the two smaller sides cap these translucent walls with windowless slabs of stone veneers. Both these buildings were considered international successes and both participated in discussions concerning International Style design issues for office buildings.[16]

Part of the goal of the International Style was to create spaces that were both economically and functionally efficient. Architects sought to use this style as a tool to create healthier living and working environments that were affordable to everyone.[17] Discussion of how best to achieve this goal for an office environment centered around several issues.[18]

- Windows:
    - Should they be as large as possible as with the UN Secretariat Building and the Lever House or should they be made smaller because air-conditioning and high-level artificial light had reduced their functionality?
    - Do tenants like bigger areas of glass or does the glare disrupt their work?
    - Are floor-to-ceiling windows worth the extra construction cost if tenants will pull Venetian blinds halfway down anyway?
- Volume:
    - Do air-conditioning and high-level lighting change the economy of office space construction? Deeper office space, away from windows used to be cheaper for tenants but with air-conditioning and new lighting, deep space costs almost as much as space near a window. Should developers be building deeper offices as in the past or is it more profitable to build thinner buildings, like the Lever House, to maximize window space?
- Curtain Wall:
    - How far can architects depart from the masonry walls of the past used to represent structure?
- Exterior Design:
    - Should there be an exterior pattern in the curtain wall? If so, should it be vertical, horizontal, or another pattern?
- Design Integration:
    - Should the engineering features of new office design be expressed on the exterior?
- Ground Floor:
    - Is there still sufficient demand for retail space that it remains profitable to build retail space on the ground floor of office buildings?

Common among these issues was the concern for maximizing the profitability of the building through the concern for tenants' individual needs. A major part of the effort to offer tenants maximum control of their space was the development of the loft style office that could be built out to meet individual client's specifications. If a particular tenant needed an open floor-plan then the space could be left open but if they preferred individual offices or a

[16] Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, 5.
[17] Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*, 4.
[18] "New Thinking on Office Buildings," 107.

combination of the two, the space could be divided up.[19] The debate over how best to answer these concerns while providing the most profitable rental space played out in office skyscrapers across the country following the inspiration of the Lever House and the UN Secretariat Building.

Modern and International Style Skyscrapers in Houston

Houston participated in both waves of Modernism and produced Art Deco, Streamlined Moderne, and eventually International Style skyscrapers. The first large local building to attempt to break with traditional, architectural ornamentation was the 1929 Gulf Building (NRHP, 1983) developed by Jesse Jones and designed by Alfred C. Finn (see Figure 12).[20] Built in the Art Deco style, the building retains the traditional tripartite arrangement of base, shaft, and cornice but has very little ornament. Here, the Neo-Classical features seen on earlier skyscrapers have been streamlined into linear suggestions of the earlier detailed ornamentation.

Skyscraper construction in Houston slowed during the Great Depression of the early 1930s but resumed by 1939 with the construction of Houston City Hall (NRHP, 1990) by Joseph Finger (see Figure 13).[21] Ornamentation on this building is even more restrained and streamlined than the Gulf Building. Cornices are marked by simple banding or recessing the roofline back from the elevation. Simple, bas-relief friezes provide the most intricate decoration and sit atop each window column and over the main entrance. The building does retain the three fold formation; however, the base is articulated with two smaller towers placed in front of and on either side of the taller, central shaft with minimal cornice above.

The 1940 St. Joseph's Infirmary Maternity and Children's Building was designed by I.E. Loveless and shows the continued streamlining of ornament typical of Art Moderne (see Figure 14). This building is one of the last Houston Art Moderne skyscrapers to be built during the first wave of Modernism. It retains the three part formation and exemplifies the streamlined ornament of the new style with its horizontal banding and vertical emphasis on the central tower.[22]

The First City National Bank Building of 1949 was the first building to be built following WWII. Although the first wave of Modernism ended before the war, the design of this building clearly shows lingering popularity. An additional reason for the retro Art Deco/Art Moderne appearance of this building is it was designed before the war, shelved, and then erected quickly once the war was over. Its ornamentation is more restrained than its pre-war predecessors and it clearly illustrates the turning point from the more streamlined, cut-back ornament of the first Modernist wave in Houston to the full expulsion of ornament in the second wave.[23] Almost all exterior ornament has been removed and only minimal marking on the spandrel panels and at the cornice provides any decoration. The tripartite formation is still discernible but has lost much of the emphasis seen in earlier buildings like City Hall and the Gulf Building.

Houston's attempts at International Style skyscrapers pre-dating the Melrose Building show architects attempting to implement elements of this style but not fully breaking with the earlier Modernist styles. The results of these attempts cannot be called International Style but are not Art Deco or Art Moderne. The 1951 original Methodist Hospital designed by Watkin, Nunn, McGinty & Phenix does implement cantilevered, eyebrows seen in fully International Style buildings and these do give the building a horizontal emphasis (see Figure 15). The windows are still separated on the façade as if they were punched into the heavy brick exterior walls, making the building seem

[19] "New Thinking on Office Buildings," 107.
[20] Mod, *Building Modern Houston*, 10.
[21] Mod, *Building Modern Houston*, 14.
[22] Mod, *Building Modern Houston*, 20.
[23] Ibid.

solid and heavy as opposed to the suggestion of weightlessness sought in the International Style with curtain walls. The original Methodist Hospital also retains a discernible base, shaft, and cornice division despite the lack of applied ornament. The 1952 Prudential Building (demolished 2011), designed by Kenneth Franzheim, excludes all but the most minimal ornament and departs from the tripartite form (see Figure 16). The building retains the stocky weight and vertical emphasis of earlier Modern styles due to the individual windows punched into the exterior limestone walls arranged in perpendicular masses of differing heights.

Houston architects did succeed in implementing the International Style in low-rise buildings prior to the Melrose Building. In the 1938 Houston Fire Alarm Building, MacKie & Kamrath successfully used ribbon windows to create a sense of volume rather than weight and to place an emphasis on the horizontal in keeping with the International Style (see Figure 17). Battelstein's, the 1950 specialty store by Finger & Rustay, also achieves full expression of the International Style using ribbon windows centered on a brick façade (see Figure 18).

Despite these successes with smaller building types, no skyscrapers achieved fully articulated International Style until the Melrose Building in 1952. Unlike with the original Methodist Hospital and the Prudential Building, Lloyd & Morgan use large ribbon windows with cantilevered concrete eyebrows above to create a horizontal emphasis while achieving a sense of weightlessness. The large expanses of windows with the shiny, blue ceramic spandrel panels beneath remove all sense of weight seen in earlier buildings with brick or masonry separating each window unit. The eyebrow sunshades also make it seem as if each floor is lightly stacked one-upon-the other. Although two of the walls are windowless and clad in brick, these are done in such a way as to emphasize the weightlessness of the building.

Following the Melrose Building, architects continued to utilize the International Style on smaller, low-rise buildings like the 1955 East End YMCA (now the Cossaboom YMCA; see Figure 19). Milton McGinty's design of a horizontal building with ribbon windows and raised on piers successfully implements the International Style. Kenneth Franzheim fails to fully implement the International Style with his 1955 Texas National Bank Building (see Figure 20). He does achieve some horizontal emphasis with his small rows of ribbon windows but the overall emphasis is vertical with the divided spandrel panels. The building also retains a feeling of weight due to the large expanses of masonry cladding. Despite having the first aluminum curtain wall in Houston, the 1956 Bank of the Southwest Building also fails to generate a sense of weightless volume with horizontal emphasis (see Figure 21) yet it does successfully demonstrate that architects of this era were sensitive to site; the Bank of the Southwest is the same composition – central tower with flanking wings – as City Hall (Figure 13), only executed in a modern vocabulary. The first purely abstract skyscraper in Houston was the 1960 First City National Bank Building by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) with Wilson, Morris, Crain & Anderson with its floor-to-ceiling windows recessed into the structural frame to create a protective exoskeleton (Figure 22).[24] The second building was Cameron Fairchild's Houston First Savings and Loan Building built in 1962 (see Figure 23). Here Fairchild referenced the Lever House with his steel and glass tower set back on a rectangular base.[25]

The Melrose Building

Houston developer Melvin A. Silverman and his partner Bennett Rose hired noted Houston architects Hermon Lloyd and W.B. Morgan to design the 21-story office building at the intersection of Walker and San Jacinto Streets. The two developers named the building the Melrose Building from the combination of both of their names. Silverman and Rose gave the architects an unusual amount of freedom for the design of the proposed skyscraper.[26] Their only request was that, before beginning the design of the building, Lloyd and Morgan thoroughly research all

[24] Mod, *Building Modern Houston*, 93.
[25] Mod, *Building Modern Houston*, 94.
[26] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.

the most modern materials, techniques, and equipment available so that the new building would be "completely serviceable and yet of a type to command the immediate attention of the public."[27] Silverman's vision was of a new, modern office building that would be a departure from Houston's earlier skyscrapers.

Lloyd and Morgan used their design for the Melrose Building to engage in the national discussions concerning the modern, postwar office building. The final design served, in their view, as a summation of their beliefs on the essentials of good skyscraper design.[28] Many of Lloyd and Morgan's design choices that make the Melrose Building unique arise from the architects' answers to the questions concerning new office design listed above.[29] Concerning the treatment of windows, Lloyd and Morgan departed from the large window model. Whereas the Lever House and the UN Secretariat Building (see Figures 10 and 11) had all-glass curtain walls with large windows creating a dramatic transparency, Lloyd and Morgan used blue, glazed ceramic tile spandrel panels to create a sense of opacity while obtaining some of the exterior sheen experienced with the floor-to-ceiling windows of the New York buildings.[30] Likewise, when considering the effect of air-conditioning on window size and cost, the architects utilized cantilevered, projecting eyebrows on each floor to act as sunshades to lower the cost of air-conditioning by blocking the sun's rays. These concrete eyebrows also serve to illustrate Lloyd and Morgan's view concerning the proper exterior design of skyscrapers. In an interview, they described their theory that tall, multi-story buildings like skyscrapers, are just a series of levels or planes. This idea, combined with Lloyd and Morgan's belief that exterior design should reflect the interior structure of the building resulted in the logical conclusion that the exterior design of the Melrose Building should stress the horizontal lines created by the loft-style building.[31] In addition to their practical role, the projecting eyebrows serve to articulate the horizontal focus and rhythm of the building.

Although they never identify specific buildings or architects, Lloyd and Morgan acknowledged gaining inspiration for their design from buildings in Brazil, Sweden, and Mexico City.[32] Two potential sources for this inspiration can be found in the work of Oscar Niemeyer of Brazil and the Dutch architect, Willem Marinus Dudok. The Gustavo Campanema Palace (1939-1941 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), designed by Niemeyer in conjunction of Lucio Costa and Affonso Eduardo Reidy, employs a grid of protruding sunshades as well as smaller, adjustable levered sunshades within each opening (see Figure 24). Lloyd and Morgan could easily have looked to this building as a precedent for a method of protecting their building from the solar heat gain particularly potent in the climates of Texas and Brazil. The work of Dudok may have inspired the Houston architects' choice of ceramic, blue-glazed tile for the Melrose Building's spandrel panels. His 1928-1931 Hilversum Town Hall in Hilversum, Netherlands, while Cubist in style, utilizes similar glazed, blue tiles to accentuate piers and other architectural details (see Figure 25).

In addition to Lloyd and Morgan, the project team for the Melrose Building included Walter P. Moore as the structural engineer, Hermonn Blum as the mechanical engineer, and the Tellepsen Construction Company as the contractor.[33] Construction began in 1951 and the 220,687 square foot building was completed in 1952 at a cost of $3,160,000. The Melrose Building received both local and national recognition. In 1952, Lloyd and Morgan received the Medal of Honor for Architectural Merit from the Houston Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for the Melrose Building (see Figures 26 and 27). In 1955, the firm was also awarded the Honor

[27] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.
[28] Ibid.
[29] "New Thinking on Office Building," 107.
[30] Koush, "The Modern Mr. Jones," 32.
[31] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.
[32] Ibid.
[33] "New Thinking on Office Building," 113.

Award for Architectural Design and Achievement from the Texas Society of Architects for their work on the building.[34]

In 1953, the Melrose Building was published in the national architecture journal, *Architectural Forum*, as an example of new thinking on sunshading and floor planning.[35] The article cites three devices employed by Lloyd and Morgan to create a "dramatic appearance and pleasant workspace." The first of these concerns the juxtaposition of the two windowless walls with the large, ribbon windows of the other two sides. The architects used these two walls both to cut air-conditioning requirements by preventing solar heat gain and to increase rentable floor area and allow for more flexibility to meet tenants' individual needs. By placing the elevators and service areas along one windowless wall, Lloyd and Morgan were able to create a bulk, loft interior space with only five columns interrupting the floor area. Each floor was left like this so that tenants could build out the space to their individual needs. The floor could be left open to allow for an open-office plan or could be partitioned into large or small offices. The versatility provided by the large available spaces on each floor provided a new level of service the building management could provide and thus made rental space in the Melrose Building even more marketable.[36] The other two devices noted by the article included the concrete eyebrow sunshades and the blue, tile spandrel panels. The brise soleil worked to cut air-conditioning requirements from 800 to 667 tons and the blue tiles served not only to create a sense of opacity but also to add color to the building's exterior.[37]

By 1953, various tenants occupied the majority of the Melrose Building. The Melrose Florist occupied the kiosk in the lobby while the upper floors were either rented by single entities or divided into smaller office spaces and occupied by multiple tenants. Floors, two through seven and 14-16 help multiple companies and tenants while the remaining floors were leased by single groups. Smaller tenants included everything from insurance companies, dental supply companies, industrial-related companies, to language schools; however, the largest tenants were all oil-related. The Texas Pipe Line Company leased the eighth through tenth floors. The Texas Company rented the 11th through 13th floors for its South Texas Division and Shell Oil leased part of the 16th and the entire 17th floor. The 18th through 21st floors remained vacant.[38] In 1954, the Melrose Building was almost completely leased. The Home American Finance Company leased the ground floor, retail space and Bill Roberts & Associates occupied the penthouse. The oil-related tenants of the year before remained the largest building occupants.[39] By 1959, the Melrose Building had lost two of the earlier major tenants and only Shell Oil remained. The florist kiosk in the lobby had been converted to a cigar stand and the majority of the floors had been divided for multiple tenants. Next to Shell, the other largest occupant of the building was the Jefferson Chemical Company located on the 20th and 21st floors.[40] By the end of the 1960s, the Melrose Building had lost all major tenants and much of the rentable space remained vacant.[41]

In 1971, Lloyd, Morgan & Jones (Lloyd & Morgan prior to 1961) completed a building renovation. [42] The windows were replaced with single-pane, Solarbronze plate glass and the blue-tile spandrel panels were covered with bronze plate. The architects also participated in a major effort was made to re-partition each floor according to new tenants' needs. Smaller offices were offered for immediate occupancy while larger offices or unique floor-plans could be built to the client's specifications.[43] For a time, this renovation proved successful in attracting new tenants.

[34] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.
[35] "New Thinking on Office Building," 113.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] *1953 Houston City Directory*, 1661.
[39] *1954 Houston City Directory*, 386.
[40] *1959 Houston City Directory*, 589.
[41] *1968 Houston City Directory*, 523.
[42] "The New Melrose Building," 2.
[43] Ibid.

By the end of the 1970s, the majority of the Melrose Building was occupied; however, there were no major, stand-out tenants as in earlier years.[44] This trend continued through the 1980s until occupancy began to decline again.[45] As of April 2014, the Melrose Building stands vacant and awaits rehabilitation.

Lloyd & Morgan

Although the firm underwent numerous name changes, Lloyd & Morgan (as it was known from 1941-1961) was one of the most prolific Houston architectural firms from the 1930s to 1990. Their oeuvre includes corporate headquarters and office buildings, retail facilities, banks, recreational facilities, high-rise residential buildings, educational and institutional buildings, and sports facilities. Some of their most notable work includes: nine buildings at Greenway Plaza begun in 1968, master planning for the 40-acre downtown Houston development the Allen Center, numerous buildings at Rice University, and the Astrodome (1965) in association with Wilson, Morris, Crain and Anderson.[46]

Hermon F. Lloyd founded the firm in 1932 upon his graduation from the Rice Institute (now Rice University). Lloyd partnered with Harvin C. Moore from 1932 to the outbreak of WWII. In 1941, William B. Morgan, also a graduate of the Rice Institute, joined the firm and the name was changed to Lloyd & Morgan. In 1947, upon his graduation from the Rice Institute, Arthur Jones joined the 12-person firm and eventually became a named partner in 1961 when the name was changed to Lloyd, Morgan & Jones.[47]

Melvin Silverman and Bennett Rose awarded the firm its first two major projects. The first, The Town & Country Apartments (demolished 1949) was a 488-unit project before which, Lloyd & Morgan had not designed anything above three floors.[48] Following the success of the housing project, Silverman and Rose hired Lloyd & Morgan to design the Melrose Building in 1950.

The firm's name changed an additional four times after the firm's name changed to Lloyd, Morgan & Jones in 1961. In 1974, it became Lloyd / Jones and Associates, then Lloyd Jones Brewer in 1976, Lloyd Jones Fillpot in 1984, and Jones & Fillpot in 1990. Throughout its existence, the firm built or contributed to some major Houston landmarks as well as smaller projects. They master-planned and designed buildings for several large, Houston mixed-use developments including Greenway Plaza, the Allen Center, the American General Center, and Regency Square. In addition, they built a number of individual buildings including the Astrodome, Foley's Distribution Center, Cashco Tower, and the CitiCorp Building. The firm also designed buildings for Rice University, the University of Houston, and Houston Baptist University. Throughout its existence the firm received numerous awards from the Houston Chapter of the AIA, the Texas Society of Architects, the National Society of Professional Engineers, and the National Glass Association.[49] Although the Melrose Building was neither the largest commission nor the most recognized, it helped the firm establish its reputation in Houston as modern architects and allowed them to enter the national discourse surrounding modern skyscraper design.

Summary

The 1952 Melrose Building designed by architects Hermon Lloyd and William B. Morgan was the first Houston skyscraper in the International Style. While there were earlier attempts at implementing this style into the

[44] *1978 Houston City Directory*, 1095.
[45] *1980 Houston City Directory*, 1113; *1982 Houston City Directory*, 1128; *1984 Houston City Directory*, 1063.
[46] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Koush, "The Modern Mr. Jones," 32.
[49] Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records.

skyscraper form such as the original Methodist Hospital and the Prudential Building, these buildings only utilized individual elements of the style mixed with earlier architectural forms. The Melrose Building uses large ribbon windows, cantilevered, concrete eyebrows, and glazed ceramic spandrel panels to create the horizontal emphasis and focus on weightless volume necessary to the International Style. The building was praised locally by the Houston Chapter of the AIA and the Texas Society of Architects and recognized nationally in the journal *Architectural Forum* as an example of innovative office design.[50] The practical as well as aesthetic use of the concrete eyebrows as sunshades and the customizable, open, loft style office space illustrate the focus on the individual needs of the tenant as well as the economic efficiency of office buildings arising in the nation at this time. Lloyd & Morgan were prolific Houston architects responsible for both large scale and smaller projects including the Astrodome and the Allen Center development. The Melrose Building was an earlier project of the firm's and demonstrated their capability with both Modernism and the International Style.

The Melrose Building retains its integrity of location, setting, and feeling. Although it underwent a renovation in 1971 during which the blue-tile spandrel panels were covered with bronze plates and the windows replaced, the building's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship has only been slightly compromised as the window openings remain the same as the originals and the spandrel panels remain in the same size and relationship to the windows. The Melrose Building has no known association with significant historic persons or events. The period of significance for the Melrose Building is 1952 to 1964 and the building retains a high level of integrity corresponding to this time period. The Melrose Building is nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level of significance as the first International Style skyscraper in Houston, Texas.

[50] "New Thinking on Office Buildings," 113.

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Willard B. Robinson, "ARCHITECTURE," *Handbook of Texas Online* (http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/cmask), accessed March 26, 2014. Uploaded on June 9, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

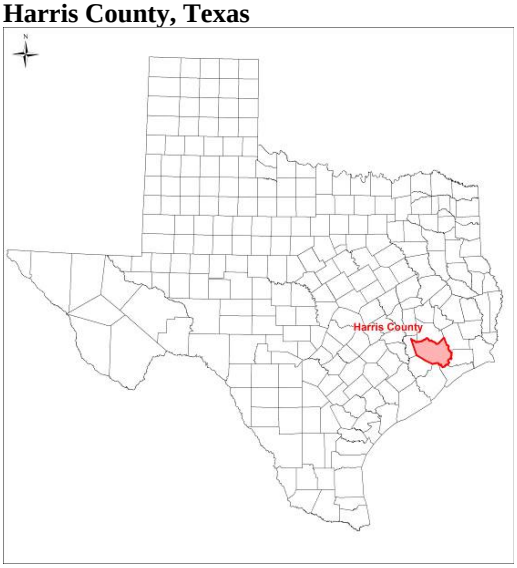
Archival Collections

Arthur E. Jones Architectural Records, MS 535, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

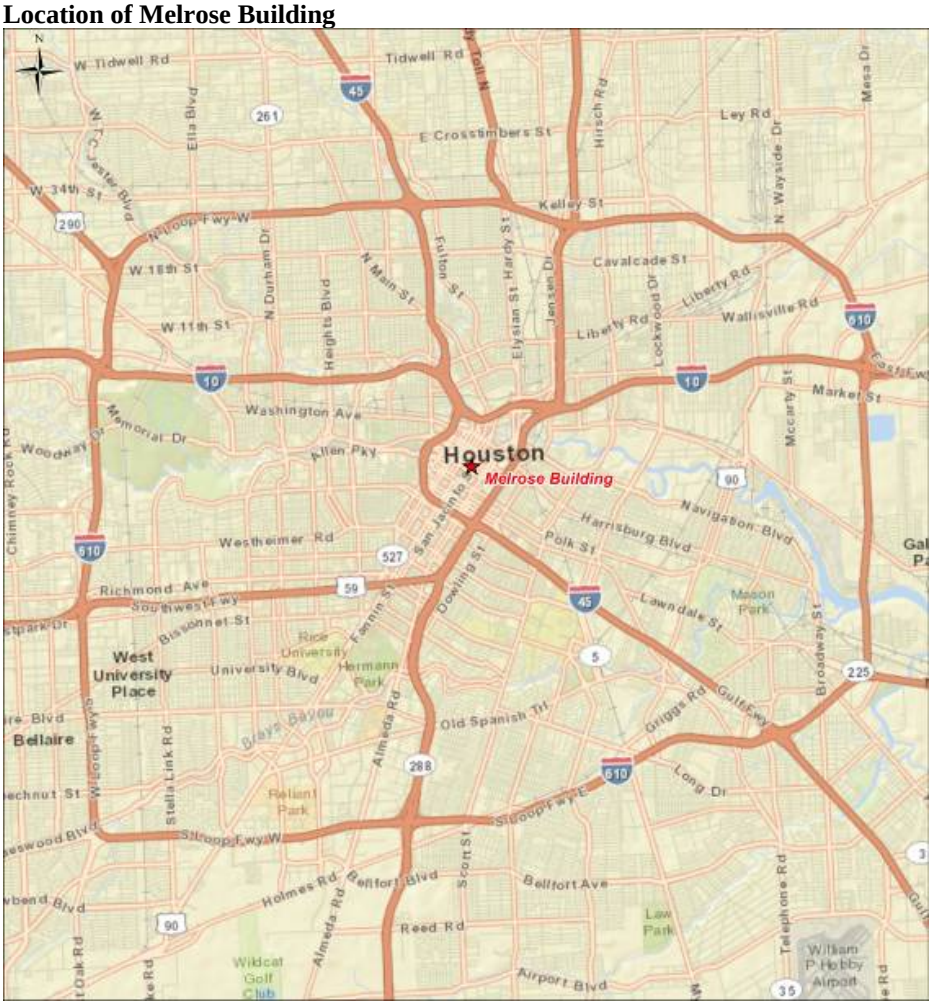
Houston City Directories, Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas.

Melrose Building Architectural Drawings, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas.

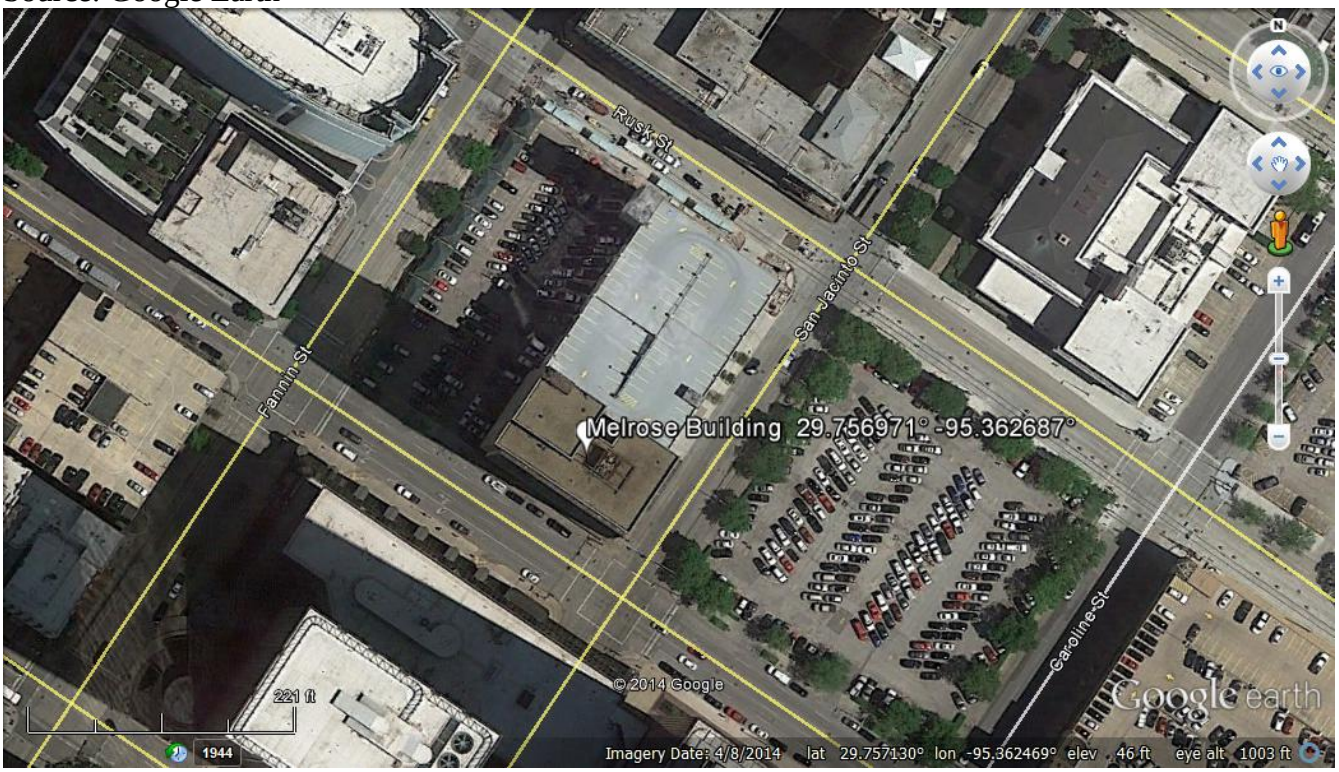
Harris County, Texas



Location of Melrose Building



Source: Google Earth



Coordinates

Lat: 29.756971

Lon: -95.362687°

Verbal Boundary Description

Tracts 1, 2, 3A & 16, Block 94, South Side Buffalo Bayou (SSBB)

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all legal parcels historically associated with the property

Figures

Figure 1. The Binz Building, 1905, Houston, Texas. The Binz building was located at the northeast corner of Main and Texas streets (513-519 Main Street) in Houston, Texas. The six story building with a basement was constructed in 1895 and demolished in 1950.
Courtesy: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

Figure 2. First National Bank Building, 1907, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: George Fuermann Texas and Houston Collection, University of Houston Libraries.

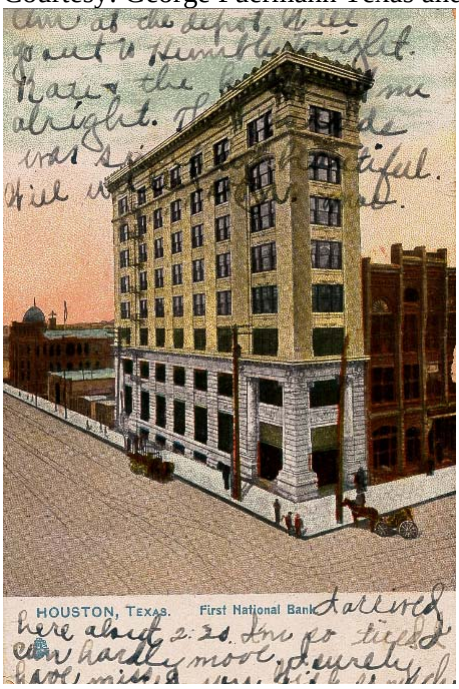


Figure 3. The Rice Hotel, 1920, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library

Figure 4. The Beaconsfield, 1910, 1700 Main, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: www.houstonarchitecture.com

Figure 5. Scanlan Building, 1920, 405 Fannin, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library

Figure 6. Southern Pacific Building (now Bayou Lofts), Houston, Texas
Courtesy www.waymaking.com

Figure 7. Texas Company Building, 1915, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

Figure 8. Carter building 1920 – no addition

Figure 9. Carter building 1925 with addition
Courtesy postcard collection Randy Pace, Houston, Texas

Figure 10. Lever House, New York, New York
Source: www.ou.edu

Figure 11. United Nations Building, New York, New York
Source: http://ny.curbed.com/tags/united-nations

Figure 12. Gulf Building, (1929), Houston, Texas
Source: www.waymaking.com

Figure 13. City Hall (1939), Houston, Texas
Courtesy Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

Figure 14. St. Joseph's Infirmary Maternity and Children's Building, 1940, Houston, Texas

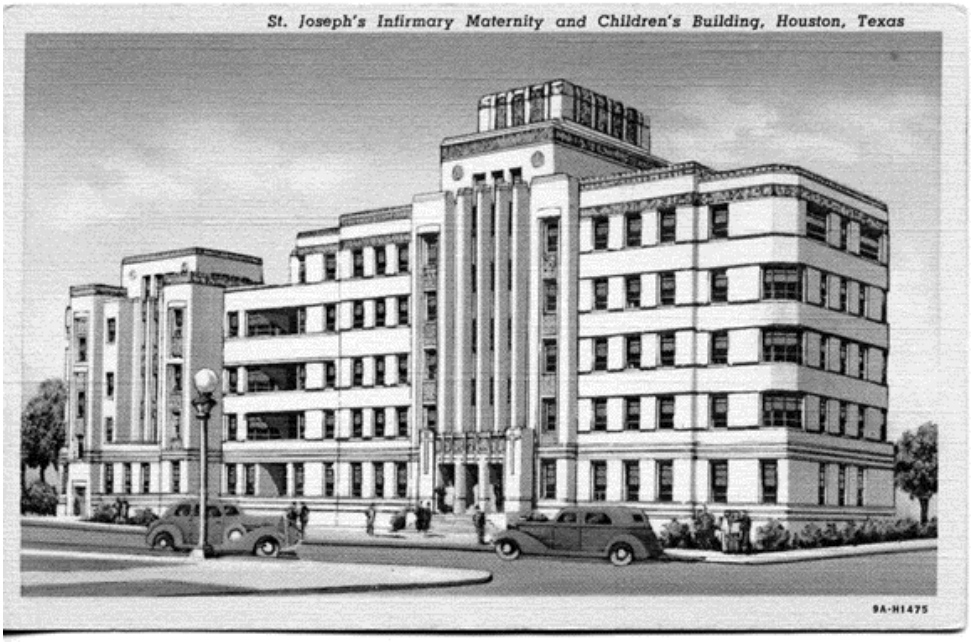


Figure 15. Original Methodist Hospital (1951), Houston, Texas
Courtesy: post card collection Randy Pace, Houston, Texas

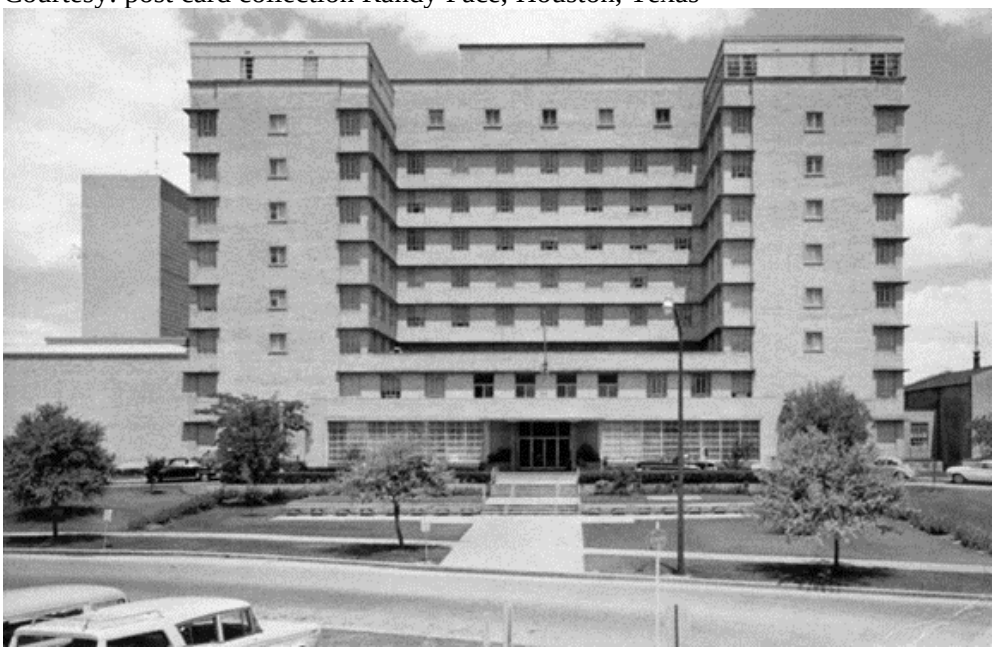


Figure 16. Prudential Building, Houston, Texas
Courtesy: Ben Hill Photography

Figure 17. Houston Fire Alarm Building (1938), Houston, Texas
Courtesy Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

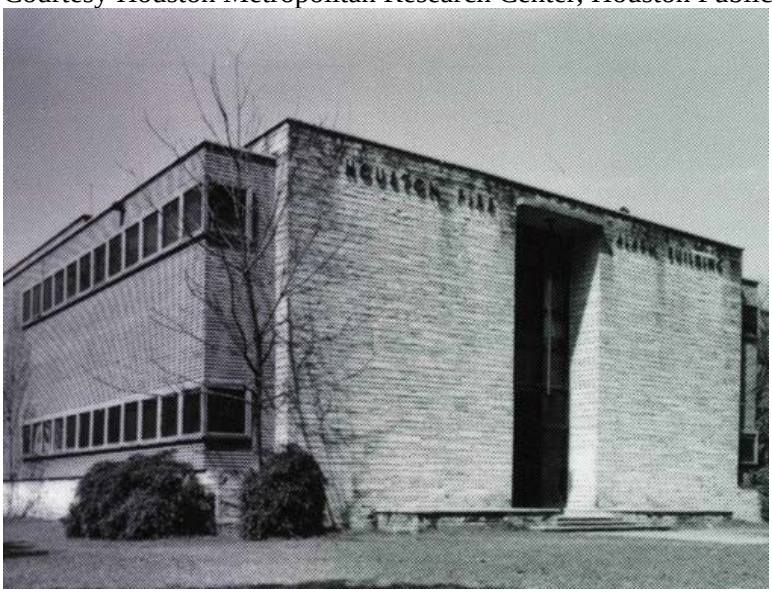


Figure 18. Battlestein's, Houston, Texas
Drawing by Kitty Landholt, courtesy www.HAIF.com

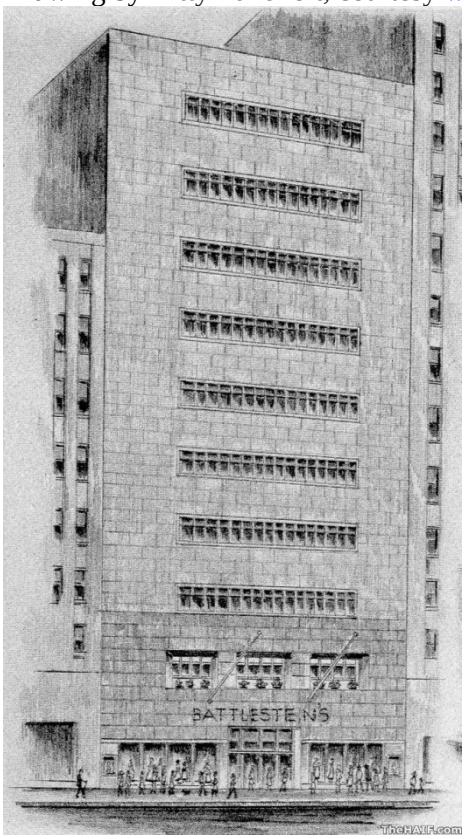


Figure 19. Cossaboom YMCA (1955), Houston, Texas
Courtesy Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

Figure 20. Texas National Bank Building (1955), Houston, Texas
Courtesy: Gerald Moorhead, Houston, Texas

Figure 21. Bank of the Southwest Building (1956), Houston, Texas
Courtesy Randy Pace postcard collection, Houston, Texas

Figure 22. First City National Bank Building (1960), Houston, Texas
Courtesy Randy Pace postcard collection, Houston, Texas

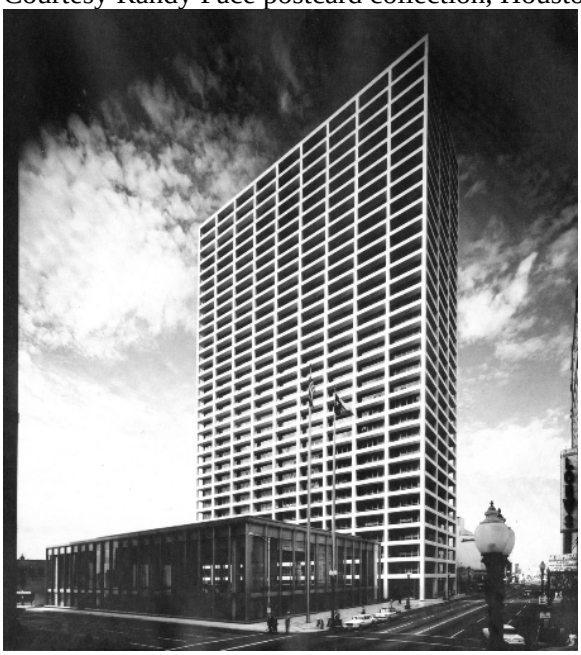
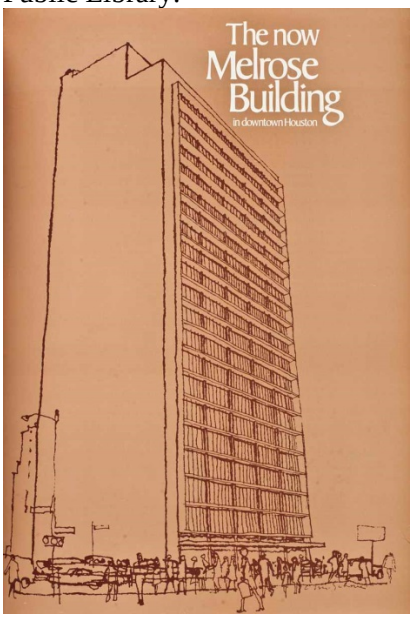


Figure 23. Houston First Savings and Loan Association Building, 1962, Houston, Texas
Courtesy Graham Luhn, Houston, Texas

Figure 24. Gustavo Capanema Palace, 1939-1943, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil
Courtesy of www.revistadehistoria.com.br

Figure 25. Hilversum Town Hall, 1928-1931, Willem Marinus Dudok, architect, Hilversum, Netherlands
Courtesy of www.greatbuildings.com

Figures 26a-c. Houston Magazine, 1969, Courtesy Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.



The Melrose Building has moved ahead with a tenant-oriented $500,000 modernization program, inside and out.

Familiar Melrose green has given way to a sculptured bronze exterior. Solarbronze plate glass to keep out glare. Bold bronze mullions to emphasize the verticals. The Astrodome architects, Lloyd, Morgan & Jones have transformed the Melrose Building into one of Houston's most exciting structures.

Inside, work is underway customizing each floor to the needs of individual tenants. Smartly-designed smaller offices (as small as 300 sq. ft.) are available for immediate occupancy. Larger offices, up to 25,500 sq. ft. on three adjoining floors, can be made available. Expansion room is guaranteed and lease terms are most attractive.

New blood. The Melrose Building has been under new management for over a year. We have received many compliments on what we have done so far. But the best is yet to come.

Basically, it's a matter of attitude—of tenant-mindedness. We *want* you to talk to our tenants; they constitute seventy of our best salesmen. Above all, talk to the Russells (Sam or Jake, 224-2764). We office here, too.

Unlike many buildings in Houston, the Melrose was designed to carry heavy floor loads as well as heavy heat loads. If you have data processing equipment, we welcome you.

Our design team stands ready, or you may elect to design your own facilities. Either way, you have the advantage of broad expanses of glare-free glass, high-intensity lighting, unobstructed floor plan, complete flexibility.

gh speed elevators, located at the west end the building, can open directly onto your spacious ception area, a refreshing change from the dim rridors of yesteryear. Another plus: we have found at a pretty girl can run an elevator as well as a ain one.

Figure 27.
Houston Magazine, 1971, Courtesy Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library

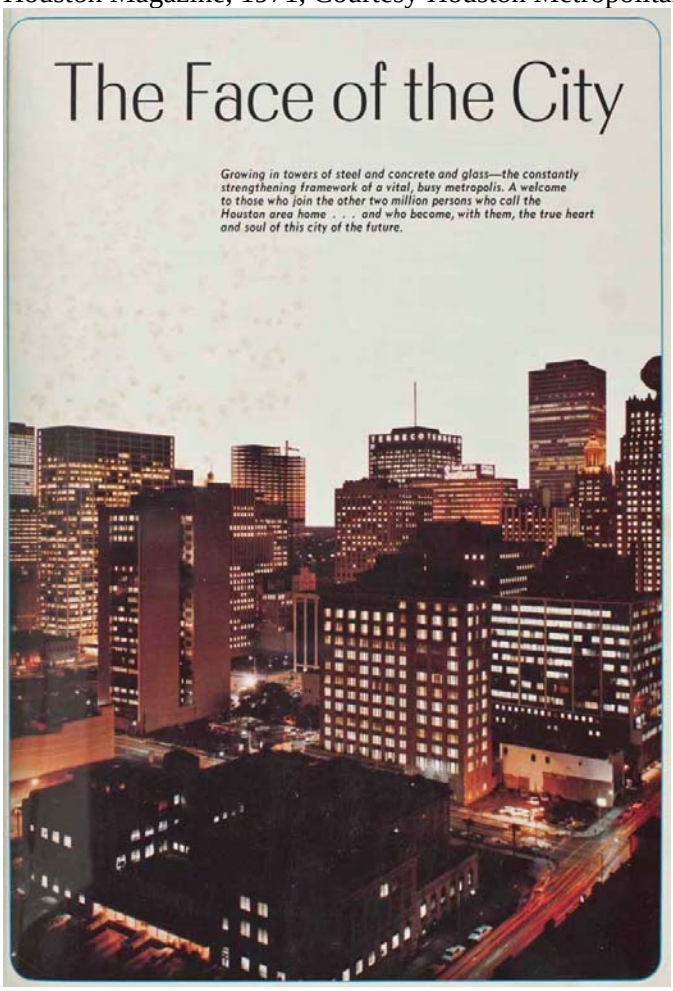


Figure 30. Melrose Building Exterior Elevations, 1950, Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

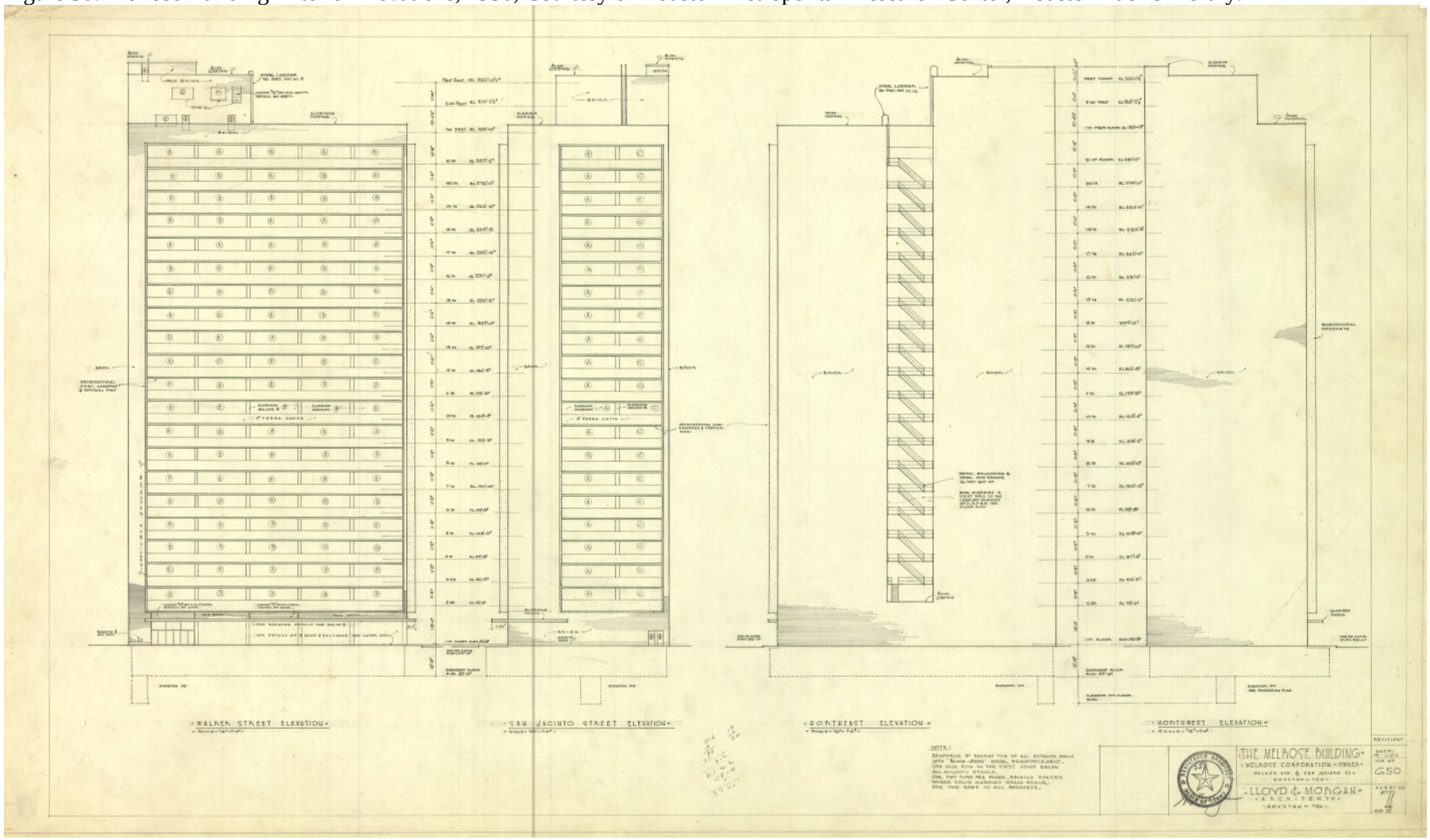
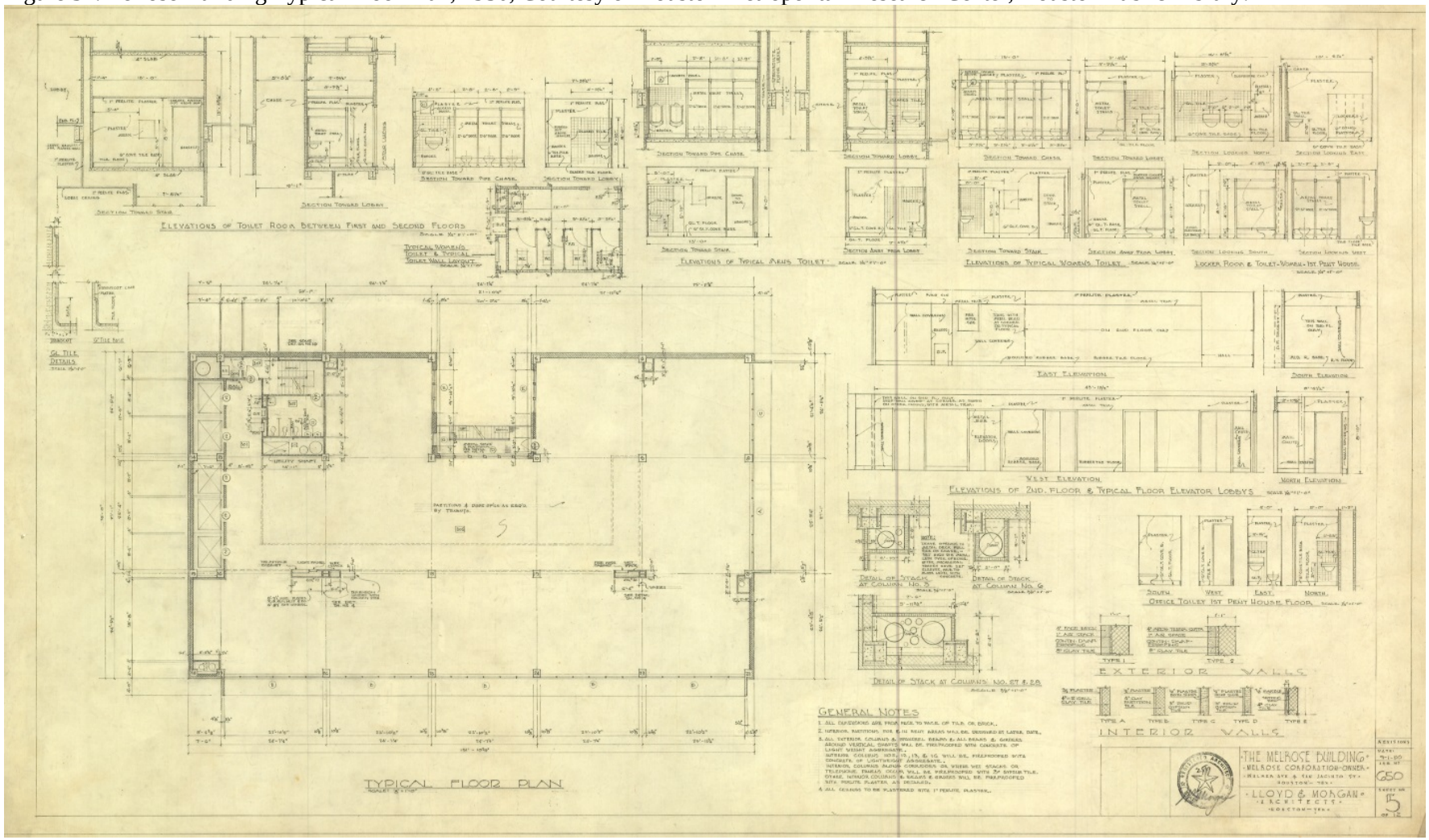


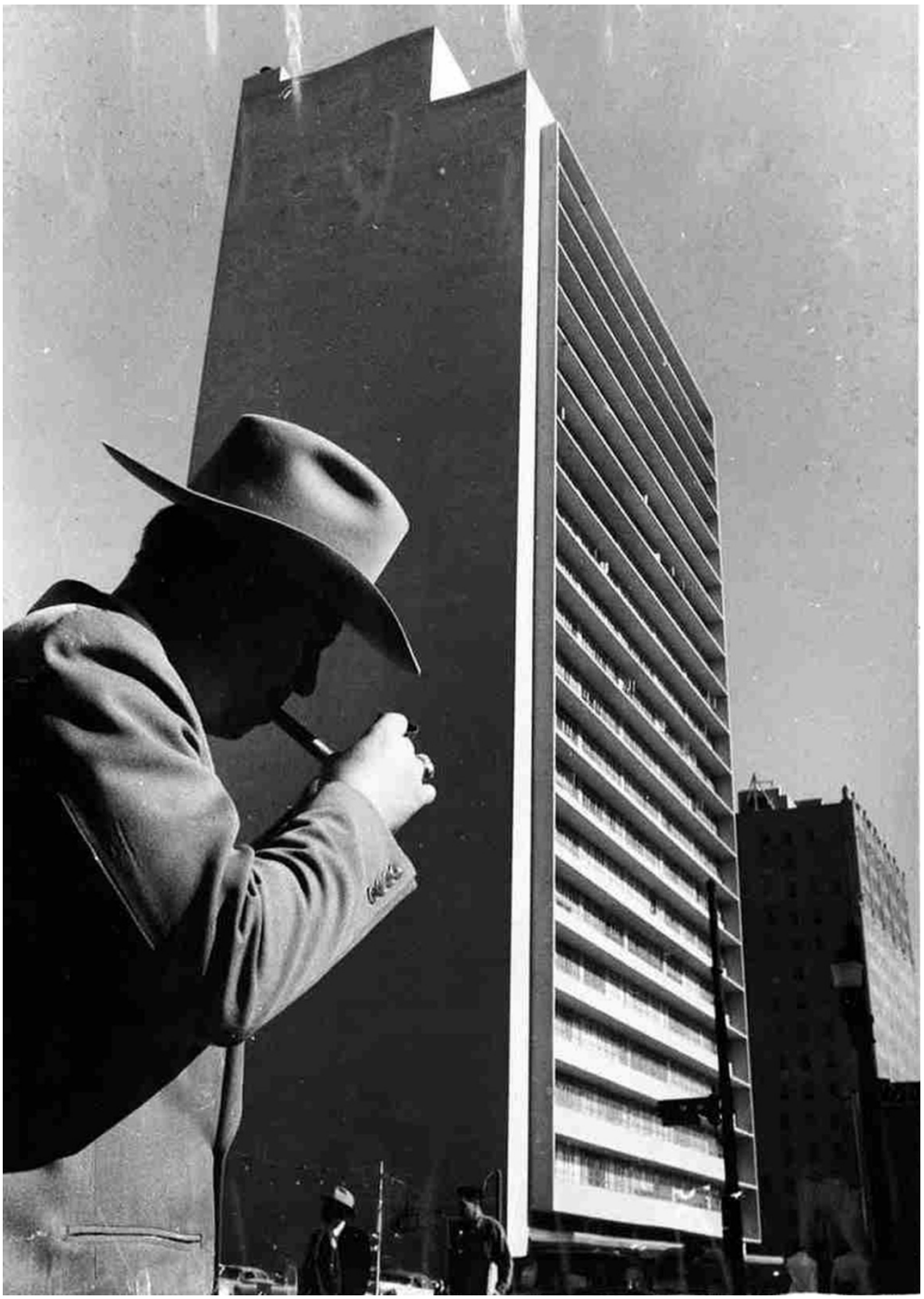
Figure 31.Melrose Building Typical Floor Plan, 1950, Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.



Historic Photographs

- Date of Photograph: 1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: postcard collection Randy Pace, Houston
- Photo #1 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0001)
- South façade (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing west.

- Date of Photograph: c1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: Houston Mod, Houston, Texas.
- Photo #2 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0002)
- West façade (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing east.



- Date of Photograph: 1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: C*ourtesy Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University*, Houston, Texas
- Photo #3 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0003)
- Interior ground floor elevator lobby, camera facing south towards Walker Street.

- Date of Photograph: 1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: C*ourtesy Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University*, Houston, Texas
- Photo #4 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0004)
- Interior ground floor elevator lobby, concession area to the south of elevator banks, camera facing west.

- Date of Photograph: 1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: C*ourtesy Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University*, Houston, Texas
- Photo #5 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0005)
- Interior, upper floor, open plan office.

- Date of Photograph: 1952
- Location of Original Digital Files: C*ourtesy Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University*, Houston, Texas
- Photo #6 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_historicphoto_0006)
- Interior, upper floor, typical office layout showing original fixed and casement windows.

Photographs

Melrose Building
1121 Walker
Houston, Harris County, Texas
Photographed by Anna Mod, 2014
Location of Original Digital Files: SWCA Environmental Consultants, 10245 West Little York, suite 600, Houston, Texas 77040

Photo #1 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0001)
South façade (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing west.

Photo #2 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0002)
West elevation (left) and south façade (right), camera facing east; view east down Walker Street.

Photo #3 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0003)
North elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing southeast.

Photo #4 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0004)
Interior, typical floor on south elevation, replacement windows, view south.

Photo #5 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0005)
Ground floor elevator lobby, camera facing north

Photo #6 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0006)
Ground floor elevator lobby, AIA award 1950-51 in ground floor lobby, camera facing east

Photo #7 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0007)
Ground floor elevator lobby, East wall; building directory and aluminum framed doors to lease space, camera facing east

Photo #8 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0008)
Ground floor elevator lobby, Detail of N wall; mail box and door to staircase, camera facing north

Photo #9 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0009)
Ground floor elevator lobby; view towards street; E wall on left, camera facing south

Photo #10 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0010)
Ground floor elevator lobby; Detail elevators, camera facing west

Photo #11 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0011)
Typical upper floor elevator lobby, camera facing north

Photo #12 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0012)
Typical upper floor “intact” elevator lobby; detail of mail shoot and door to staircase, camera facing north

Photo #13 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0013)
Typical upper floor long corridor from elevator lobby to rear fire stair, camera facing east

Photo #14 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0014)
Typical upper floor “blown out” elevator lobby, camera facing southeast

Photo #15 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0015) , Typical upper floor tenant space

Photo #16 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0016)
Typical upper floor tenant space

Photo #17 (TX_HarrisCounty_MelroseBuilding_photo_0017)
Exterior; W and S elevation; view E down Walker Street from intersection with Fannin, camera facing east


CENTER
CITY
SCHOOL BUS


Thank You
FOR
NOT SMOKING


MEDAL OF HONOR
FOR ARCHITECTURAL MERIT
AWARDED BY
THE HOUSTON CHAPTER
A·I·A
1951–52
THE MELROSE BUILDING
HERMON LLOYD & W. B. MORRIS, ARCHITECTS


1121 WILMER
PUSH


U.S. MAIL
LETTER BOX
LETTER MAIL
TIED IN
BUNDLES
U.S. MAIL
LETTER BOX


THIS CAR UP
THIS CAR UP


EMERGENCY EXITS
EXIT


EXIT


PULL DOWN
FOR
FIRE
ALARM


EXIT


EXIT
PULL DOWN
FOR
FIRE
ALARM


Fannin

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Melrose Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Harris

DATE RECEIVED: 8/01/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/22/14
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/08/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/17/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000627

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT _____DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Melrose Building is locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Houston's first fully realized International Style skyscraper, the award winning 1952 design by prolific local architects Lloyd and Morgan incorporated innovative open floor planning and sun-shading technologies to create a remarkably modern commercial building in the heart of postwar Houston.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criterion C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 9/17/14

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/(N)

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories

TO: Edson Beall
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington , DC 20005

FROM: Gregory Smith
National Register Coordinator
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Melrose Building, Houston, Harris County, Texas

DATE: July 25, 2014

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Melrose Building to the National Register of Historic Places.
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ file, and PDF
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

___ SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)

___ The enclosed owner objections (do__) (do not__) constitute a majority of property owners

___ Other: