

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 14 1985

date entered MAR 14 1985

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

1. Name

historic The Electric Building

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 619 S. Fourth Avenue na not for publication

city, town Louisville na vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Martin Cohn c/o Tiff's Records

street & number 615 S. Fourth Street

city, town Louisville na vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County

street & number 517 W. Jefferson Street

city, town Louisville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input 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 <u>na</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Electric Building is located in the central business district adjacent to the Wright and Taylor Building (National Register, 1984), Lowes United Artist Theatre (National Register, 1978) and the Theatre Building (National Register, 1982). The southern end of the 600 block of Fourth Avenue is being developed as Theatre Square, which involves the total renovation of the Brown Hotel (National Register, 1978) and considerable new construction.

The Electric Building is a three-story brick structure with three facade bays. The first floor currently provides commercial space for two businesses. The storefronts are not original. The first floor was originally designed as a single commercial space. Early photographs show what appears to be large display windows flanking a central recessed entry. A large multi-paned transom light extends the full width of the first floor. The entire first floor also appears to be slightly recessed with a cast iron frieze of geometric design and end cast iron brackets between first and second floors. (See Figure 1, historic photograph)

The upper two floors are nearly identical. Again the actual window surface is recessed slightly behind a cast iron frieze and cast-iron paired columns which flank the windows. Sullivanesque motifs are found in the iron tracery in the frieze, one foliate and the other geometric. The windows are comprised of a single, central large pane with multi-paned transom lights and sidelights. The sidelights on the second floor have been altered by the installation of jalousie windows. The wide overhanging cornice contains four pairs of large, stylized brackets. (Photos 2 & 3)

Within the recessed areas surrounding each window grouping and along the spandels and cornice are electrical sockets spaced approximately one foot apart, apparently used by the first owner/occupant, the Kentucky Electric Company, to advertise its services.

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 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 1912 Builder/Architect UNKNOWN

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Electric Building is one of Louisville's finest examples of the Chicago School. Although modest in scale, the building displays the simplicity and restrained ornamentality of the style masterfully executed. Few buildings in Louisville boast the Chicago School style, and none create the sense of freedom from the masonry wall as well as the Electric Building.

Built in 1912 for the Kentucky Electric Company, the Electric Building was lighted nightly. Electrical sockets are still evident in the recessed areas surrounding the windows and lining the cornice. The Kentucky Electric Company, however, was short lived. Only a year later, in 1913, Rhodes Burford, a furniture store, occupied the building. Subsequent occupants included the Soldiers Club, Hubbuch Brothers and Wellendorf Carpets, and Kunz's Restaurant.

The first floor of the building now houses two commercial concerns and the upper floors are used for storage. The materials used to alter the first floor appear to have been applied over existing materials. Hopefully the original transom and spandrel decor is intact.

The Electric Building is one of only several buildings in the 600 block which remain from the early twentieth century when this block was known as Theatre Row, where five grand movie houses supplied the community with the height of entertainment. The state-of-the-art design of the Electric Building and its glittering lights certainly complimented the atmosphere of the 600 block.

The architect of the Electric Building is unknown, but may have been Mason Maury or Clarke and Loomis. Both firms were competent in the Chicago School of architecture. The screen-like attitude displayed by the frieze work and paired columns are accentuated by the multi-paned transoms and sidelights around the larger single-pane windows. This treatment softens and adds depth to the fenestration. The use of cast iron allows for the delicate, airy treatment of the entire facade, particularly the spandrels.

The Electric Building is a locally significant element of the architectural history of the community. It is one of few remaining Chicago School designs in Louisville, and one of the most masterfully executed.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Carons Annual Directories of the City of Louisville

Deed Books. Jefferson County Courthouse.

University of Louisville Photographic Archives, Caufield and Shook and Royal Collections.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .21 acre

Quadrangle name Louisville West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	6	0	8	7	2	0	4	2	3	3	8	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

City of Louisville Block 13K Lot 131.

The Electric Building occupies the entire lot.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. A. Allgeier, Director of Research

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission date 12-84

street & number 727 W Main Street telephone (502) 587-3501

city or town Louisville state Kentucky

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 David L. Morgan

title State Historic Preservation Officer date February 5, 1985

For NPS use only

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

Entered in 750
National Register

date 3-14-85

for Alvora Byers
Keeper of the National Register

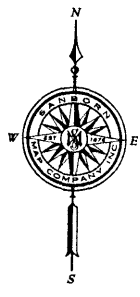
Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

T

E7

W. CHESTNUT

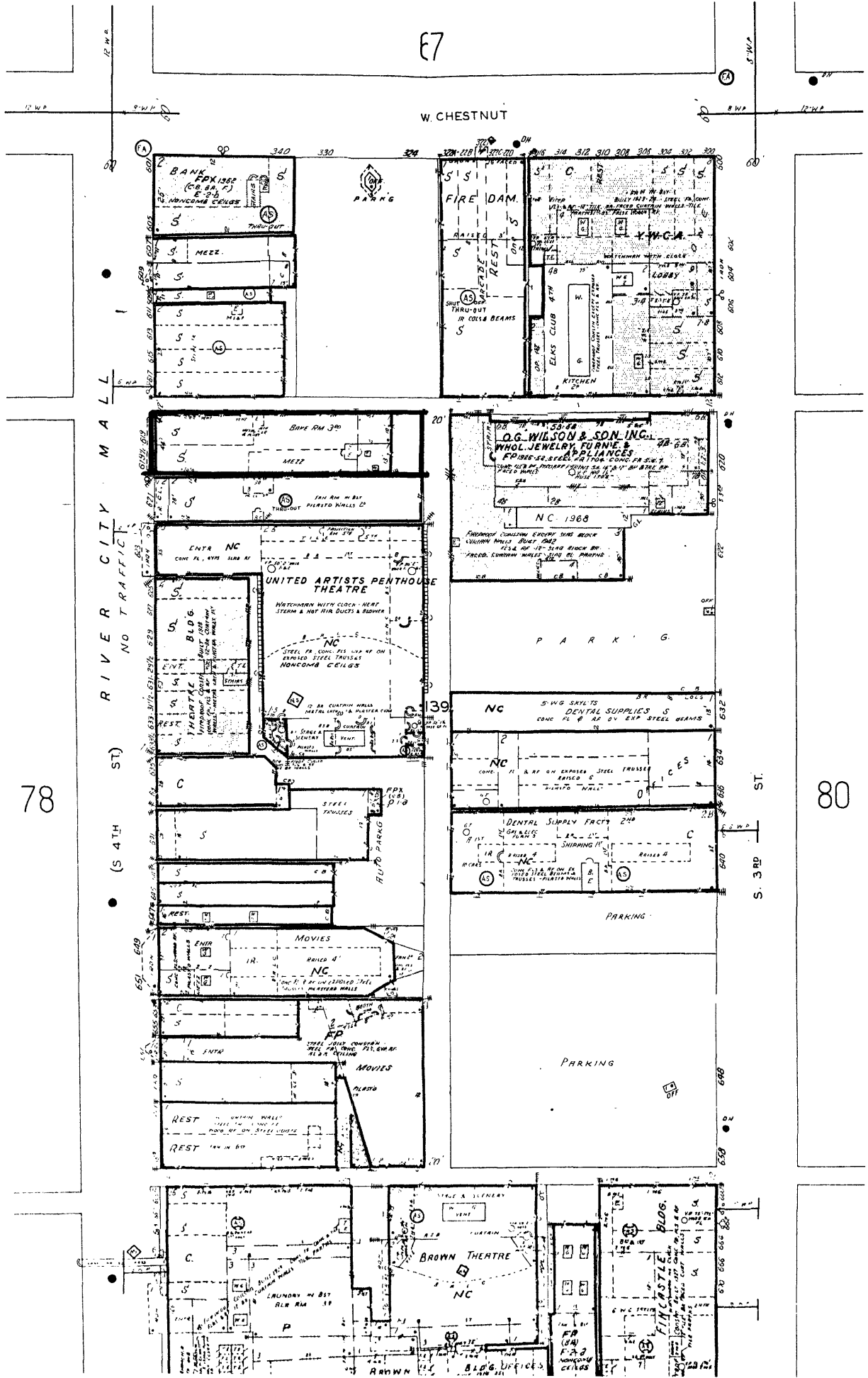


RIVER CITY MALL
NO TRAFFIC
(S 4TH ST)

78

80

S. 3RD ST.



Electric Building
619 Fourth Avenue
Louisville, Jefferson Co., Kentucky
Sanborn Map
Sanborn Map Co.
Pelham, NY