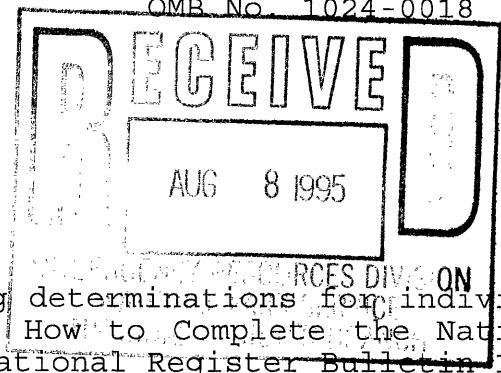


1007

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Tower Building

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1401 K Street, NW not for publication N/A
city or town Washington vicinity X
state District of Columbia code DC zip code 20006 county N/A code N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally X statewide locally.

(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Stampler Cross 8/8/95
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
(See continuation sheet).
- determined eligible for the
National Register
(See continuation sheet).
- determined not eligible for the
National Register
- removed from the National Register

- other (explain): _____

Elsam H Boall 9/7/25

Entered in the
National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====
5. Classification
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

=====

6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE Sub: Business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: WORK IN PROGRESS Sub: _____

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT:

Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

roof STONE: Slate

OTHER: Slag

walls STONE: Limestone

STONE: Granite

other METAL: Drawn Bronze

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

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1928-29

Significant Dates 1928-29

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder Robert F. Beresford

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>18</u>	<u>323750</u>	<u>4307600</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

_____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Eve Lydia Barsoum / Architectural Historian
organization D.C. Historic Preservation Division date August 7, 1995
street & number 614 H Street, NW, Room 305 telephone (202) 727-7360
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20001
=====

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Franklin Tower United Partnership c/o Carey Winston
street & number 1667 K Street, NW Suite 700 telephone _____
city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20006
=====

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====

The Tower Building is a 12 story, steel construction with limestone veener office building with an H-shape plan and set-backs which are terminated by stylized ornament and a slate, pyramidal roof. The L-shape lobby incorporates marble pilasters and bronze trim with Art Deco ornament. The building is located at the northwest corner of 14th and K Streets, NW. There is an alley along its north side and a building lot on the west side. The site is across from Franklin Square, it is from this vantage point that the mass of the building can best be appreciated. Although the property has received minor alterations, it is in good condition.

The base of the building fills its 125 foot (14th Street) by 96 foot (K Street) lot. Its base is one and one-half stories high, its bottom is faced with polished granite above which is buff-colored limestone. The corners of the base are solid with one small window in each face, between which are show windows and a centrally located entrance. The openings have bronze trim with a floral and geometric repetitive pattern. The top of the base is terminated by a simple limestone cornice.

The principal facades of the upper stories are faced with limestone and follow the H-shape plan (the alley elevation is faced with brick). The forecourt faces 14th Street. The wood one-over-one windows are grouped in pairs with plain spandrels; however, the spandrels above the ninth floor incorporate an embossed chevron pattern. Both the eleventh and twelfth stories incorporate a set-back, above which are a couple more set-backs from which rises the pyramidal slate roof crowned by copper cresting. The tops of the upper set backs feature large stylized flowers. The cross bar of the "H" incorporates the elevators and the tower encloses the mechanical equipment.

Despite the addition of air conditioner vents in many of the spandrels and in the cornice at the base of the building, the incompatible modern signage, and the painting of the bronze window frames at the base, the building maintains its original integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====
The Tower Building embodies the principles of Art Deco architecture and represents an uncommon example of a tall office building erected in the set-back form in Washington. The details also reflect Washington's propensity toward stripped Classicism. The Tower Building was designed by Robert F. Beresford who practiced architecture in Washington for fifty years.

TOWER BUILDING

Art Deco architecture appeared in America in the 1920s and 30s. Its aim was to be popular, entertaining, and urbane. The Art Deco skyscrapers in New York City popularized the style's chic image, however the style was used for a large variety of building types. Art Deco's popularity and proliferation corresponded with New York's building boom between 1925 and 1931. The massing of the tall buildings was predetermined by the 1916 zoning law which imposed ratios between building heights and street widths which resulted in the setback form. Washington enacted its own version of set-back zoning in 1927 which mandated setbacks above 110'. The Tower Building's apex stands at 177' which made it the tallest office building in the city when it was constructed in 1929. The fact that the plan and a perspective of the Tower Building were published in the November issue of *American Architect* is indicative of the building's importance.

Proponents of the Art Deco style considered it to be modern as well as an international style due to its French, Viennese, and German decorative influences, and its adaptation of ideas from the Chicago School, the theater, and the movies. The ornamental patterns, stylized flowers and strident geometric designs combined with circular forms, which typify the style were indebted to the exhibits presented at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* held in Paris in 1925.

In general, Art Deco buildings include: ornament at the base and in the lobby to enhance the experience of the passerby; bold ornament near the top, and; an unusual crown for the building, such that it is clearly distinguishable in the skyline. As a whole, the grandeur of the building was designed to be accessible, pluralistic, and comprehensible by the general public. The Tower Building is representative of these qualities. Originally, the tower was illuminated at night.

However, in line with the conservative nature of Washington and with the city's predilection toward stripped Classicism, the Tower Building incorporated a minimal amount of ornament which derived from Art Deco and Classical sources. For example, the bronze window frames at the street level are comprised of narrow pilasters surrounded by frames with simplistic flowers linked by chevrons and S-curves and the frames are surmounted by a small pediment with acroteria-like forms at its ends.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====

ROBERT F. BERESFORD (1879-1966)

Born in Audenreid, Pennsylvania, Beresford attended Princeton University for two years (1898-1900) and traveled in Europe before moving to Washington. He worked for the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury and the Office of the Architect of the Capitol. In 1909, he joined the office of Washington's most prominent Beaux-Arts architect, Jules Henri de Sibour, where he worked until 1914. In 1919, he worked for another prominent local architect, Appleton P. Clarke. He opened his own office the following year.

During his private practice, Beresford received many commissions from Allen E. Walker, a prominent developer of the Brookland neighborhood in Northeast and several neighborhoods in Northwest, Washington and of Chevy Chase and Silver Spring, Maryland. In 1922, Beresford became the local architect responsible for overseeing the construction of the Mayflower Hotel (1127 Connecticut Avenue, NW) designed by the New York firm, Warren & Wetmore.¹ The Mayflower became the largest and most prestigious apartment-hotel in the city.

In 1923, Beresford gave a lecture on Colonial style houses at the Noyes Mansion in Silver Spring, inaugurating the development of the Woodside Park subdivision on the grounds of the former Noyes Estate. Beresford extolled the Colonial style for its unusual dignity, charm and simplicity; he praised it for reflecting "much variety and individuality without losing the unity of the whole."² In July 1926, the Washington *Evening Star* initiated a Model House with Horace W. Peaslee as organizer. Local architects were chosen to design a series of model houses, "not because they specialize in any particular type, but because of their wide and general experience." Robert Beresford was chosen to design the first of these projects, a stone Colonial house on 35th Street, NW, near Observatory Circle. His preference for Colonial Revival houses was shared by many of his peers in the profession, such as Arthur Heaton, Appleton Clarke, and Horace Peaslee.

While Beresford was a confirmed traditionalist with regard to residential architecture, he embraced the most up-to-date architectural style for the Tower Building. He devised the Art Deco design in 1928. Although Art Deco apartment buildings and small commercial buildings in Washington are fairly numerous, only a handful of Art Deco office buildings were built in the city which remained committed to the Beaux-Arts and NeoClassical traditions.

¹ Originally, the ten-story hotel was financed by Allen E. Walker and known as the Hotel Walker. In 1924, Walker lost financial control of the project, which opened as the Hotel Mayflower the following year.

² "Various Building Styles Explained." *Evening Star*, March 17, 1923, p. 12.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====
The Tower Building was Beresford's largest project, with a budget of \$1.2 million. It was commissioned by two local developers, Colonel William L. Browning and attorney Bates Warren. The Tower Building opened in late June 1929, four months before the stock market crashed and halted private office construction in the city for many years. Despite the economic conditions, the Tower Building seems to have been a financial success. According to *Boyd's City Directory*, there were 28 vacant offices in the building in 1930, and only 7 vacancies the following year. Bates Warren occupied the 11th floor for his own offices. However, in 1931-32, as the Depression went on, there were 20 vacant offices and 67 filled offices. The first floor, double height, commercial space at the corner of the building was designed for a bank, but was originally occupied by a Western Union office.³

The occupants represented a typical range of Washington tenants -- law firms, associations, real estate offices, and government agencies. The Department of Justice's Bureau of Prisons had offices on the second floor in the 1930s. In more recent years, all of the upper floors were occupied by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis. The Bureau moved out of the building in late 1993. Presently, the only occupant of the building is a McDonald's restaurant located at the ground floor corner of the building.

Well-regarded by his peers in the profession, Beresford served for twenty years as Secretary of the D.C. Board of Examiners and Registrars of Architects (1928-48). In 1927-28, he served as President of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Beresford was also active in the Washington Board of Trade, serving as chairman of its committee on Public and Private Buildings in the 1930s. He continued to maintain his architectural practice until 1961. Beresford died five years later.

³ The space has never been used for a bank.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====

American Architects Directory. New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1956, 1962, and 1970.

Boyd's Directory of the District of Columbia. Washington, D.C.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1900-present.

Brookland Survey, 1987. Database, D.C. Historic Preservation Office.

"Browning-Warren Bank and Office Building, Washington, D.C.; Robert F. Beresford, Architect." *American Architect*, November 5, 1928pp. 610-611 [Floorplan and perspective view of Tower Building.]

Bushong, William; Robinson, Judith Helm; and Mueller, Julie. *A Centennial History of the Washington Chapter, the American Institute of Architects 1887-1987*. Washington, D.C.: The Washington Architectural Foundation Press, 1987.

D.C. Permit to Build #9449 (1928). Building Permits of the District of Columbia, 1877-1949. Record Group 351, National Archives.

Don't Tear It Down, Downtown Survey, 1980. Vertical files, D.C. Preservation League.

Goode, James M. *Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988.

Goode, James M. *Capitol Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Building*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979.

Kaplan, Peter, "K St. Redevelopment Site Isn't Finding Any Takers." *Washington Business Journal*, August 5-11, 1994.

McDevitt, Cleland. *The Book of Washington*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Board of Trade, 1930.

Morris, Edwin Bates. *A History of the Washington - Metropolitan Chapter of the American Institute of Architects*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Chapter, American Institute of Architects, 1951.

"New Refinements Presented by Tower Building: Lofty K Street Structure Has Innovations in Many Features." *Washington Daily News*, June 29, 1929, p. 12.

"Praises Symbolism of Colonial Homes: Architect Beresford Tells Woodside Park Gathering It Typifies the South." *The Washington Post*, March 18, 1923, p. R3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====

Proctor, John Clagett, ed. *Washington Past and Present*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1930.

"R.F. Beresford, Was Architect for Notable Buildings." *The Evening Star*, Dec. 20, 1966.

Robinson, Cervin and Rosemarie Haag Bletter. *Skyscraper Style: Art Deco New York*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

"Setback Style Will Prevail for Higher Buildings Here; Zoning Commission's Ruling Blocks Move to Have Regulation Amended to Permit Unbroken Walls to 130 Feet." *The Evening Star*, August 4, 1928, p. 15.

"Various Building Styles Explained." *The Evening Star*, March 17, 1923, p. 12.

"Washington's First Pyramid Building." *Washington Times*, Nov. 4, 1928.

"Washington's Tallest Office Building Now Completed." *The Evening Star*, Aug. 3, 1929, p. 14.

Who's Who in the Nation's Capital, 1938-39. Washington, D.C.: Ransdell, Inc. 1938.

Wirz, Hans and Richard Striner. *Washington Deco: Art Deco in the Nation's Capital*. Washington, d.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Tower Building
Name of property
Washington, DC
County and State

=====
The Tower Building is located at the northwest corner of 14th and K Streets, N.W. on Lot 806 of Square 217 in Washington, D.C. The site has been historically associated with the Tower Building.