

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED NOV 3 1980  
DATE ENTERED DEC 3 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

South Central Bell Company Office Building

AND/OR COMMON

South Central Bell Company Office Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

521 West Chestnut St.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

364

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

021

CODE

Jefferson

COUNTY

111

CODE

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

South Central Bell

STREET & NUMBER

521 West Chestnut Street

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

Kentucky 40202 STATE

VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

527 W. Jefferson

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

Kentucky

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Kentucky Survey of Historic Sites

DATE

1978

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

Kentucky

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
X __EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	XX __ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	XX __ALTERED	__MOVED    DATE _____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The South Central Bell Office Building is located in the southwest section of Louisville's central business district. The structure is close to the Brennan House ( National Register, August, 1975) and the Jefferson County Armory ( National Register, April, 1980).

The South Central Bell Company Office is a ten-story, buff-colored brick structure, with stone trim in the Art Deco style. The main structure has five bays. An addition, in the same material but of a more simple treatment was added to the west. Two smaller additions have been added to the rear, also in the same brick; none of these detract from the original building.

The ground floor is sheathed in smooth-coursed limestone. The central bay has three narrow windows which are deeply recessed. The top of the surrounds are marked by bas-relief horizontal bands. The lintel consists of a bas-relief band of stylized interconnecting circular forms. In the two flanking bays are doorways. Stone jambs with fluting surround a decorative bronze/brass grill. The original doors have been replaced. The door surround extends to the second floor and becomes part of the surround for paired windows. The surround has pilasters which vertically articulate the windows and various stylized floral bas-relief decorations. Handsome brass lights of the period hang from poles at each side of the entries. The end bays of the ground floor have a single window. The stone pattern forms a solid and defined corner treatment.

The upper section of the structure is typically marked by a great emphasis on verticality. The building is arranged in a series of set backs. Pilaster strips rise for seven floors on the end bays and articulate the two windows per floor. Beneath the windows is decorative brick work in chevron patterns. The bays, which contain the doorways, protrude and rise unadorned for seven stories, continuing the same fenestration as the second floor. The top floor has stone panels with foliate and geometric forms on the sides of the windows, capped by a band of chevron decoration. The central bay has three windows articulated by pilasters. Flanking these windows are larger pilasters pierced by small windows. Decorative bas-relief carvings adorn the top of the pilasters. Set back and rising behind this bay, is a two-story section which continues the fenestration of the first floor. This fenestration is adorned by vertical bands of raised brick, laid in an alternating pattern which is bold enough to be seen from the street level. The east face of the building repeats the main facade.

The main lobby and foyer are virtually unaltered Art Deco interiors. The walls are sheathed in a golden-beige marble with terrazo floors. The white plaster ceilings have rectangular raised panels of geometric decoration which serve as bases for large hanging brass light fixtures with opaque glass which are cylindrical in shape. Doors and elevator entries are decorated by fluted marble surrounds. Capping the surround is a bronze/brass panel with geometric decoration surmounted by a panel of black glass with gold etching in a lotus flower form.

# 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

1930

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Marye, Vinour, Marye & Armistead

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The South Cenral Bell Office Building is the finest and largest example of the Art Deco style in Louisville. It is the design of the Atlanta architectural firm of Marye, Vinour, Marye & Armistead.

The Louisville South Central Bell Office Building is related to a series of Art Deco structures constructed by A.T.&T. begining with the Barclay-Vesey Building by McKenzie, Vorhees & Gmelin in New York City, 1923-26. In 1930, 53 million dollars were spent by the phone company in construction. The Louisville office was part of this boom.

The South Central Bell Office Building is the largest and most complete program of Art Deco design and decoration in Louisville. The only other structures which are important works in the Art Deco style are the Clark Bridge pylons designed by Paul Cret and Brinton B. Davis' Fire Department Headquarters. A few small storefront facades with minimal Art Deco decoration are found in downtown Louisville.

The architectural firm of Marye, Vinour, Marye & Armistead was responsible for numerous office buildings for South Central Bell in cities in North and South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky. Their Louisville and Atlanta buildings were their largest and latest designs for the phone company. The firm was also responsible for the design of numerous public structures throughout the South.

The South Central Bell Office Building, as Louisville's finest Art Deco structure also recalls the economic situation of the city in the 1930's, hard-hit by the Depression with little building activity after three decades of prosperity. The South Central Bell Office Building also typifies the committment to good architecture by corporations which is often lacking in today's new construction.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Buie, Gordon, "Louisville 's South Central Bell Telephone Company Building and Art Deco", (typewritten), University of Louisville, Dept. of Fine Arts, 1976.

"Old Mansion of Early Louisville Makes Way for Modern Building," Louisville Courier-Journal. 2 February 1930.

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

approx. 1.1 acres

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE NAME Louisville West

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A | 16 | 6 0 8 | 5 2 0 | 4 2 3 4 | 0 0 0 |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

H | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

City of Louisville Block 13 E Lot 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE: Marty Poynter Hedgepeth Director of Research

ORGANIZATION: Landmarks Commission DATE: July 18, 1980

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: *Donna C. Hopkins*

TITLE: *Acting SHPO* DATE: *10-22-80*

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Lane* DATE: *12/3/80*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

64

S. 6TH ST

SOUTHERN BELL T. & T. CO. EXCHANGE

F.P. 1978 (CONC. C.B.R.R.)

84

PARK'G

FAN RIM BLDG

OFF'S

F.P. CONST'N BUILT 1958 OR CONC. FR. FLG & RF. 12" TILE BR. WALLS. TILE PARTING.

F.P. 1971 (C. B. B.R.F.)

PARK'G - C

NC. 1972 (C.B. B.R.F.)

SOUTHERN BELL TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH CO. INC.

FPX-1967 (C.B. B.R.F.)

A-1-B

F.P. CONST'N BUILT 1957 OR CONC. FR. FLG & RF. 12" TILE BR. WALLS. TILE PARTING.

OFF ANNEX

W. CHESTNUT

77

ARMORY PL.

66

S. 5TH ST

AUTO PARK'G

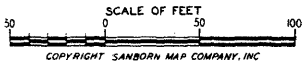
88

PARKING

PARKING

DRIV PARK'G

REST



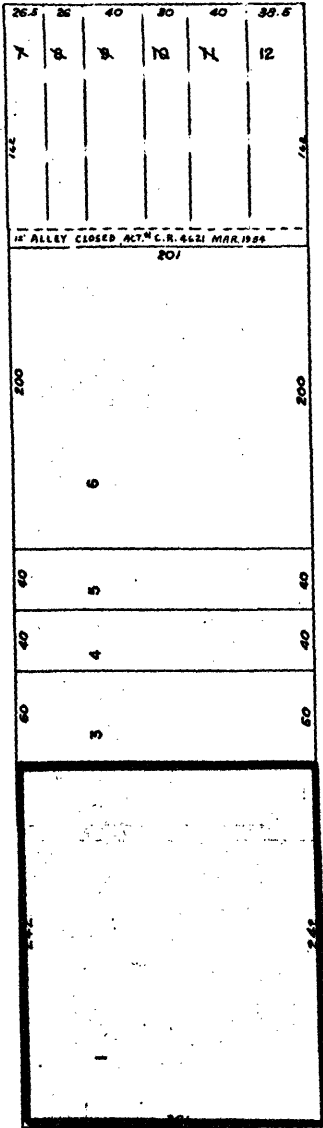
NOV 3 1980

DEC 3 1980

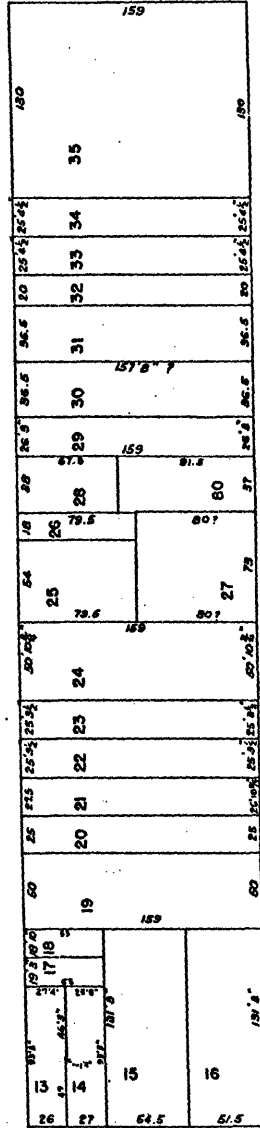
South Central Bell Office Bldg  
521 W. Chestnut  
Louisville, Jefferson, Ky.  
Map 2 Sanborn Real Estate  
Map

SCALE, 1" = 60'

6 TH ST. 60'

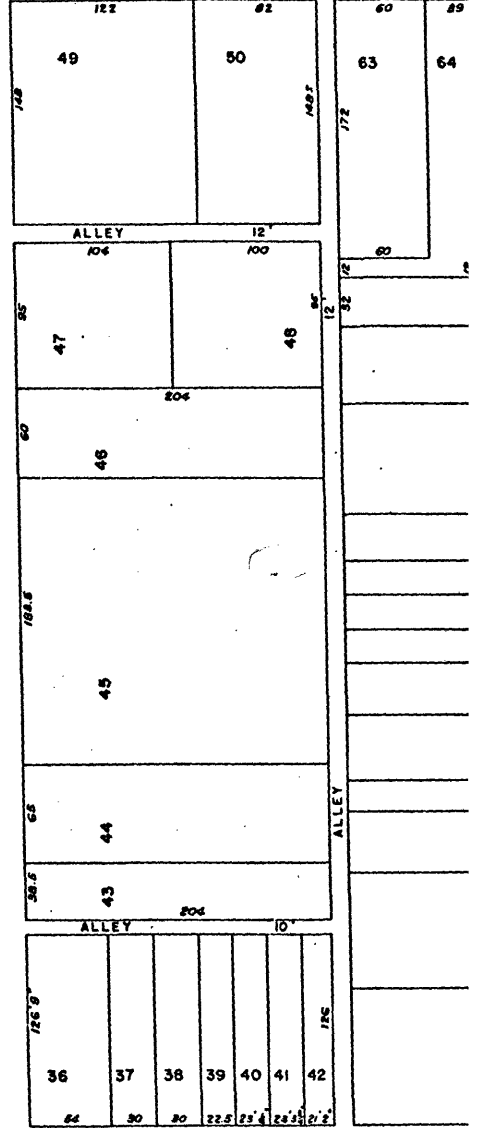


ARMORY PLACE 60'



WALNUT

5 TH ST. 60'



CHESTNUT

NOV 3 1980

DEC 3 1980

South Central Bell Office Building  
521 W. Chestnut  
Louisville, Jefferson, Ky.  
Real Estate Atlas of Jefferson County  
Vol.1, real Estate Directories, Inc.  
Miami, 1972

Map 3