

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Phillips 66 Station #473

other names/site number _____

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2. Location

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street & number <u>2224 East Admiral Boulevard</u>	not for publication <u>N/A</u>
city or town <u>Tulsa</u>	vicinity <u>N/A</u>
state <u>Oklahoma</u> code <u>OK</u> county <u>Tulsa</u>	code <u>143</u> zip code <u>74110</u>

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 ___ nationally ___ statewide locally. (N/A See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bob Barlow 10-25-09
Signature of certifying official Date

Oklahoma Historical Society, SHPO
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

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register Edson A. Beall 12/6/04
___ 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): _____

[Signature] _____
Signature of Keeper of Action Date

=====
5. Classification
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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> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </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/TRADE Sub: specialty store

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub: _____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof asphalt shingle

walls brick

other _____

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

=====
8. Statement of Significance
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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 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 (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)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance 1929--1954

=====
8. Statement of Significance (Continued)
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Significant Dates 1929
1941

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Phillips Petroleum Company

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(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: _____

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property less than one acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	233775E	4005507N	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

N/A 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 Michael Cassity, Ph.D.

organization Michael Cassity Historical Research and Photography date March 10, 2004

street & number 304 W. Albuquerque telephone 918 451-8378

city or town Broken Arrow state OK zip code 74011

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Additional Documentation
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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 James R. and Ramona Edwards

street & number 15516 E. 79th Street North telephone 918 437-1700

city or town Owasso state OK zip code 74055

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Description

Located a block west of Whittier Square in Tulsa, on Admiral Boulevard, Phillips 66 Station #473 was one of the early businesses in the first suburban commercial development in Tulsa. Built in the prototypical Phillips 66 cottage style so as to blend into residential areas, the station at first consisted of a simple tiny cottage with chimney in the front. As with many of these stations when they prospered and their business grew, this station also expanded, building on to the west elevation in 1941 with a garage and service bay that was linked to the original structure with an enclosed work/store space. Constructed of red brick, the original building, like other Phillips 66 stations, was painted a dark green; the paint has been largely removed, although patches and flecks of the green are still evident on this station more than on most Phillips cottage stations that still exist. The building expansion conforms to the original design and materials used so that the building retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, appearance, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The building consists of three distinct parts: (1) the original building on the east, which smoothly connects to (2) the middle section that encloses the work space between the original building and (3) the garage / service bay on the west. Those three parts are under a steeply-pitched gable roof on an east-west axis with a subordinate gable over the entrance in the north elevation and an intersecting gable roof over the garage at the west end of the building. The roof retains, in places, some of the original orange and blue shingles characteristic of the Phillips 66 service stations. Rain gutters and drain spouts under the eaves are original with the ornamental box designs evident in early photographs.

The original building, on the east end of the present structure, set the design for which later additions to the building conformed and is a square with the main entrance and chimney on the north elevation, facing Admiral. With steeply pitched roofs, a pronounced gable rises above the door, and the chimney, which projects forward from the main elevation, tapers as it rises above the eaves. The roundel (bordered with header bricks) that once carried the Phillips 66 medallion, has been capped with a metal cover but remains distinct and intact. The doorway is gently arched with a row of soldier bricks. The doorway and chimney are flanked by large multi-light steel casement windows over brick sills. Soldier bricks form lintels and also form a belt course around the bottom of the wall above the curb in the original building and continued in the additions to the west, thereby providing an important element of continuity.

The east elevation includes a matching multi-light casement window near the front of the building and a smaller casement that opens into the restroom at the rear (south) portion of the elevation. Centered in the gable above the windows is another roundel, this one empty and revealing the wiring for the electrical illumination of the Phillips 66 logo.

Adjacent to the original building on the west, with a seam in the north elevation that is barely noticeable because of the consistent brickwork and original gutter spout, the middle section consists of two sets of metal windows, the casement on the west being original and matching those in the original building section. The larger set, on the east, however, has been replaced with modern fixed light units; although the appearance of the current windows does not conform to the original design, the dimensions of the window itself have not been altered from their original configuration, as the surrounding brickwork indicates.

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The third section on the north elevation is the garage, or service bay, which projects forward slightly under a gable. Characteristic of other Phillips 66 additions, the garage is at a slightly larger scale than the original building so as to accommodate the vehicular repairs necessary inside, although the ridge of the roofline rises only slightly above the original ridge. The brickwork matches that in the rest of the station and includes the soldier lintel above the vehicle door. The door itself, which rises in panels, is original and opaque security glass has been installed in the topmost pair of panels. Remnants of paint patches in the gable indicate the presence of earlier signage, indicating a previous occupant of the building, though only the word SHOP is readable.

The west elevation is a uniform brick wall with a large window opening centered to allow light into the work area of the garage. The window, with the same soldier lintel and header bond sill, is now boarded. The belt course of soldier bricks at the bottom of the elevation continues around the building.

The south elevation is as complex as the north, and again the building is divided into three distinct components. The west-most section is the garage, or service area, that projects to the south, and which is connected to the original station on the east with an enclosed workspace. The south elevation of the service bay includes the one significant alteration to the building, although the impact should not be overstated. In recent years a vehicle inside the service bay lurched forward and through the south wall of the garage causing substantial damage to the building. In the repair work, the proprietor replaced the damaged portion of the wall with a rising door to minimize future such accidents. The rising door is modern and metal and thus not a contributing part, but the location at the rear of the building prevents it from detracting from the historic appearance of the structure. An unanticipated discovery in the repair of the building came from an examination of the bricks that were removed. *Tulsa World* Newspapers dating from 1941 had been used, and were preserved, in the mortar and brick so that the date of construction of this section could be confirmed.

The section of the building east of the service garage on the south elevation is a continuous brick wall without fenestration until reaching the original building—again, a smooth, virtually seamless continuum. In the original building a single rear entrance door with a wooden screen door is on the west and a similar door that opens to the restroom is on the east extreme. Roughly centered between the two doors is a six-light opaque security window that opens into the service station office area.

The original station included pump islands both north and west of the cottage building; those on the west were removed to accommodate the expansion of the building and those on the north have been removed in modern times after the building no longer served as a gasoline station. The concrete apron in front of the building extends to the street and a grassy lawn to the east of the station is separated from the building by a concrete walk that goes around to the back of the station to the restroom entrance. Appropriately, the grass lawn continues around the station on its rear, again providing the visual association with domestic houses and yards.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

The Phillips 66 Service Station #473 at Gillette and Admiral Boulevard in Tulsa is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its association with fundamental patterns of commercial development in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This service station was constructed by the Phillips Petroleum Company in 1929 and served the Whittier Square neighborhood, the first suburban center associated with Tulsa, for three decades. It is thus significant under Criterion C in the area of significance, Commerce. It is also significant under Criterion C in the area of significance Architecture because it represents a distinct type and period of construction.

Historical Significance of the Phillips 66 Station #473

The Phillips 66 Service Station #473 is significant under Criterion A because its construction and growth over the period from 1929 to 1954 reflected and contributed to the fundamental patterns of commerce in the Whittier Square neighborhood of Tulsa. The suburbs, of course, were impossible without efficient urban transportation, and the ascendance of the automobile in the 1920s underlay the development of this part of Tulsa. As an important contributing element to this business center, and its automobile nexus with the rest of Tulsa, the Phillips 66 Station #473 drew upon traffic from U.S. Route 66 as it looped its way through the neighborhood in a significant diversion from the shortest path in the early years of that highway, as it reflected the rise of chain merchandising systems in the 1920s and 1930s, and as it in particular signified the new-found role of place-product-packaging in automobile-related commerce. Moreover, its subsequent growth showed the ability of automobile-related businesses to sometimes withstand the circumstances of economic depression that severely affected other parts of the economy, and during World War II, the ability of this station to survive by making a critical adjustment in management system further reflects the currents of commerce reshaping the face of urban America.

Historical Background

The community known variously as Tallasi, then Tulsey, then Tulsa in the nineteenth century, when this area formed part of the Muscogee, or Creek, Nation in Indian Territory, emerged as a ranching town by the end of the century and remained so even as late as Oklahoma statehood in 1907. By that point, however, the winds of change were dramatically reshaping the area physically, socially, and economically, and Tulsa started to take on the appearance of an oil town. Several oil discoveries in the surrounding area launched Tulsa on a distinct course of development, beginning with the Red Fork gusher in 1901, a cross the Arkansas River from Tulsa. This was followed by discoveries near Cleveland in 1904, and especially by the discovery of the Glenn Pool, south of Tulsa, which, according to historian Carl Coke Rister, "capped all early-day Oklahoma fields."¹ In 1906—just before statehood—this huge field set off a frenzy of exploration and moved Oklahoma to a position where it produced over half of the region's oil; the Glenn Pool itself did not yield a single dry hole in its primary producing area in the first two years of production. Locally that activity contributed to a surge in population, and Tulsa grew from 7,298 citizens in 1907 to 18,182 in 1910. More than size,

¹ Carl Coke Rister, *Oil! Titan of the Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949) 89.

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though, this growth reflected a different kind of economy coming to dominance, activity symbolized by the arrival of the *Oil Investors' Journal*, from Beaumont, Texas, in 1908. This was at first a branch office of the trade journal that reported activity in the nation's oil fields, but by 1910 the journal's main office had moved to Tulsa and changed its name to the *Oil and Gas Journal*.² In 1912 the giant Cushing oil field west of Tulsa went into production. Oilmen flocked to the area, bringing with them companies that were already established in Pennsylvania and also creating new companies. And the suppliers, the pipelines, and producers came in droves, and refineries began to crop up in West Tulsa and at Sand Springs, both across the Arkansas River from Tulsa. The population soared again. By 1920 Tulsa had 72,075 people—an increase of nearly three hundred percent in the decade. In that year the city telephone book listed 431 oil and gas companies, a number, as historian Danney Goble points out, that was three times the number of grocers and twice the combined sum of doctors and lawyers in the city. And that did not count the oil refineries, the petroleum distribution companies, or gasoline companies.³ And the growth continued. In 1920 the giant Osage field emerged; while much of the oil from the Burbank field went to Ponca City, as Angie Debo explains, "Tulsa was the oil capital, and the management and wealth of the industry still centered there."⁴ By 1930 the population doubled yet again, reaching a level of 141,258—the second largest city in Oklahoma. Again Professor Goble cogently summarizes what had happened in those years:

By 1927, Tulsa provided the headquarters for fifteen hundred oil-related companies, and the city was at once the nerve center, the heart, and the guts of the mid-continent fields, which produced two-thirds of the nation's oil. Its refineries furnished more gasoline than any other city in America. Its pipelines ran to each coast. Its producers were directly responsible for 90 percent of the crude oil flowing from Oklahoma fields, which, in turn, accounted for a third of all the oil originating in the United States.⁵

Tulsa was, in the 1920s, without exaggeration the Oil Capital of the World and one indication of that status was the establishment of the headquarters of oil and oil-related businesses. There was another development, however, that contributed to the change of this area from residential to business. In 1926 Second Street was designated part of U.S. Route 66 and very quickly an expanding stream of interstate traffic between Chicago and Santa Monica and points between began to surge along Tulsa's Second Street, and a different kind of business emerged to serve these travelers. While the Philtower and the Philcade towered over the downtown with their many levels of offices, on the street the businesses that catered to the traveling public built smaller operations to provide essential services. Thus gasoline stations and diners and tourist camps took their places in the shadows of the skyscrapers.

² Angie Debo, *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943), 97.

³ Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City* (Tulsa: Council Oak Books, 1997), 108.

⁴ Debo, *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*, 102.

⁵ Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 95-96.

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At the same time, the city's boundaries began to expand dramatically. The neighborhood that became known as Whittier Square represented the expansion of Tulsa to the east. With the Arkansas River blocking growth to the west, and with the other side of the river dominated by vast oil refineries, the growing population of Tulsa had to move other directions and the eastward thrust quickly became evident. As early as 1916 Whittier School opened and a post office also emerged. But the neighborhood really lacked a business district, and a combination of streetcars and jitneys—automobiles that carried paying passengers—provided the main transportation to the central Tulsa business district.⁶ This growth, on the eastern edge of Tulsa, represented the emergence of a suburban impulse in Tulsa, the same impulse that in other metropolitan centers in the 1920s would stimulate the rise of separate towns encircling urban areas. During that decade, of course, the expansion of the automobile in numbers and in importance both reflected and contributed to such suburban expansion, in the words of urban historian Howard Chudacoff, by making "outer areas more accessible."⁷

Much of this early commercial growth came along East Admiral Boulevard near Lewis. The Tulsa Preservation Commission has identified the three initial buildings in the "original shopping center in Whittier Square" as the Eby Brothers Building (1927), the Rowlinson Building (1929), and the Cobb Building (1929)—all three located in the 2300 block of East Admiral.⁸ Indeed, while those substantial buildings signaled the growth underway, a host of smaller businesses alongside them were also cropping up. A close examination of the property listings in the city directory for East Admiral in the years following 1927 reveals the steady displacement of residences by businesses, especially in the two blocks (2200 and 2300) between Zunis and Lewis, and, appropriately enough for a development dependent upon transportation, a growing number of these were automobile related. A Marland Oil Company gas station appears to have been one of the first automobile related businesses in this district (around 1927) but it was followed by a few other tire repair and auto-repair businesses. By 1928 this two-block section could support five restaurants and bakers, three dry goods stores, and a variety of small shops including a taxidermist, a barber, a grocery, a hardware store, a drug store, and a radio sales store. The following year, the Phillips Petroleum Company built one of its distinctive stations in the center of this two block span—on the east end of the 2200 block at the intersection of East Admiral Boulevard with Gillette.

The Phillips 66 Station #473, 1929-1954

In the spring of 1929, a man named O. K. Wing purchased the lot at the southwest corner of Gillette and Admiral Boulevard from Ernest and Lora Ashby. The Ashby family had owned the property since the beginning of the decade and they operated a carpet repair business on the next lot west at 2220 East Admiral. The specifications were received on March 13, the site survey made the next day, and Wing inked the purchase on March 15, 1929; probably

⁶ Judy Randle, "Whittier Square . . . A Third Generation Later," *Tulsa World*,

⁷ Howard P. Chudacoff, *The Evolution of American Urban Society* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), 181.

⁸ Tulsa Preservation Commission and the City of Tulsa's Urban Development Department, *A Neighborhood History of Historic Kendall-Whittier* (Tulsa: Urban Development Department, Planning & Economic Development Division, 1999), 5.

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Wing was in charge of the specifications, the site survey, and the purchase. Exactly who O.K. Wing was, and who he represented, may not have been immediately clear to the Ashbys, and he is identified on the deed simply as O.K. Wing, Trustee.⁹ If there were any question as to the plan for the property, however, it was quickly removed because the construction contract was let on April 24, and on June 20, Phillips Station #473 opened for business.¹⁰ The practice of purchasing the site for a station through a separate, third party, presumably to secure an advantageous purchase price, was a common practice for the Phillips Petroleum Company. The company used the same method, for example, in its purchase of the property for the company's station at Sixth and Elgin in Tulsa, that time acquiring the property from the Independent Oil and Gas Company, owned by Frank Phillips' brother Waite Phillips.¹¹ As to the identity of Wing, his name does not appear on any of the standard indexes, but a close reading of the official history of the Phillips Petroleum Company shows in an obscure mention that "two company executives, O.K. Wing and J.S. Dewar," persuaded Frank Phillips to support the Phillips Petroleum Company's employee basketball team.¹² One of Mr. Wing's duties with Phillips Petroleum clearly was to acquire property for gas stations. The company spent just over seven thousand dollars on the construction of the station on Admiral and grossed fourteen thousand dollars in its first year—a very successful investment.¹³ Two years later the property was officially transferred from Trustee Wing to the Phillips Petroleum Company.¹⁴

In an era of small, independently owned, gas stations, the Phillips station was not the average, and indeed represented new directions in commerce. This was, in the first place a unit of a large chain of gas stations, a relatively new phenomenon in American business, and one that met with a mixed reception where it was introduced—hence another reason for the property acquisition through a blind purchase. The plethora of small, mom-and-pop businesses that characterized the business community of the nascent Whittier Square commercial district was already starting to change. Prior to 1929, the only indication of chain store retailing in this section was the Marland Oil station a block away; the Marland Oil Company, based in Ponca City, was an Oklahoma company and the chain of stations was growing, but still limited in its territory. The 1930 city directory lists, in addition to the Phillips station, the arrival of Piggly Wiggly and Safeway groceries and the conversion of the Marland Oil Company station to Continental Oil (after the J. P. Morgan company acquired Marland, merged it with Continental, and sought to stamp

⁹ General Warranty Deed, Ernest Ashby and Lora Ashby to O. K. Wing, Trustee, March 15, 1929, Book 826, page 339, Tulsa County Clerk Office files.

¹⁰ "Record of Service Station Construction," Phillips Petroleum Company, file in Oklahoma SHPO.

¹¹ See National Register nomination for Vickery Phillips 66. Warranty Deed, Independent Oil and Gas Co. to Phillips Petroleum Company, September 30, 1930, Land Records, Tulsa County Clerk Office. Independent Oil and Gas had bought the property a month earlier from an individual owner.

¹² *Phillips: The First 66 Years* (Phillips Petroleum Company, 1983), 70.

¹³ "Record of Service Station Construction," Phillips Petroleum Company, file in Oklahoma SHPO.

¹⁴ Warranty Deed, O. K. Wing, Trustee, to Phillips Petroleum Company, February 12, 1931, Book 965, page 361, Tulsa County Clerk Office files.

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out the Marland personal identity) in the next block. Chain stores were not only rising in the nation, but in Whittier Square.

The second element of significance was the particular design of the station, or, more pointedly, the design to which this station conformed.

Aside from its distinctive architectural qualities, this station represented the emergence not just of a chain of businesses, but of a chain that used a common physical identity to attract customers and develop a loyal following that could be counted on for repeat business. In a market that appealed by definition to a mobile trade, people in their automobiles who would not be likely to limit their business to a single neighborhood station, it



Tulsa Phillips 66 Station #473 shortly after 1929 opening. Photo from Susan Everly-Douze, *Tulsa Times: A Pictorial History: The Boom Years: Photographs from the Beryl D. Ford Collection* (Tulsa: Western Printing Company, Inc., 1987), 47.

was important to provide them the assurance of consistent product and service at multiple and varied locations where they were not familiar with the businesses. Termed "place-product packaging" by scholars John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, this was an important development in the businesses that catered to roadside commerce:

Place-product-packaging evolved on the roadside first in the petroleum trade. At gasoline stations, logos, colors, building design, point-of-purchase signage, uniformed attendants and their activities, branded merchandise, and managerial system all served to communicate place meaning.¹⁵

While the cottage design of the station helped it integrate into the neighborhood, the consistent appearance and design of the station made the building itself an advertisement and sign of the presence of Phillips Petroleum products.

The third association of the station that reveals its importance is the proximity to Route 66—a natural and important relationship for a gas station. When U.S. Highway 66 was first designated in November 1926, the alignment of the

¹⁵ John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 46.

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road used existing thoroughfares instead of immediately constructing a new string of roadway across the nation from Chicago to Santa Monica. As the highway coursed its way across Oklahoma, entering the state from the east just below Baxter Springs, Kansas, toward its exit in the west at Texola on the edge of the Texas panhandle, it wound its way carefully through Tulsa. In Tulsa, as in other communities, the road did not necessarily follow the shortest, most direct course, but seems to have connected commercial districts, a service both to the travelers who needed replenishment in their journeys and to the businesses who sought their trade. Thus the first alignment of Route 66 in Tulsa, as it came from Catoosa to the northeast, was to 193rd south to Eleventh, west to Mingo Road, north to Admiral, then west again to Lewis, and south to Second, where it again turned west. By turning north, and making this loop through the Whittier Square neighborhood, the highway appears to have made a conscious diversion to serve that community's business district.¹⁶ Even though the Phillips 66 Station #473 was located a block away from Route 66, the proximity to the highway traffic doubtless figured into the calculations the Phillips company used in locating this station. Especially in urban areas, it was not uncommon for traffic to leave the main alignment to seek out necessary services that might be visible, and the place-product-packaging formula used by Phillips could easily entice travelers a block away, especially given the restaurants and other nearby auto services, like the tire repair shop across the street, on Admiral Boulevard. Although the years beginning in 1929 represented the devastating impact of the Great Depression, businesses along Route 66 often continued to grow and thrive, and businesses in Whittier Square likewise seemed to grow in the decade of the thirties, due perhaps in part to the stimulus of traffic on Route 66 through its district for seven years before the alignment was simplified in 1933 and followed Eleventh Street through Tulsa, avoiding the loop to the north through Whittier Square.

All indications are that this section of Whittier Square, at least, was able to prosper commercially during the Depression. This was often true of the automobile-related businesses where the impact of neighborhood and local economic downturns could be mitigated by the growing stream of traffic past its portals. It also seems to have been true in general of this neighborhood. By 1940 almost all of the remaining residences in the 2200 block had been replaced with businesses, including two grocers, a poultry business, two restaurants, and a used car dealer. The following year the Phillips station even expanded. This was an important reflection, first of all, of the success of the station, and secondly of the changing automobile service and gasoline station trade. The original station was a simple square cottage-type building, just large enough to contain the office / retail area and the restrooms. In 1941, that small building was expanded to include an even larger retail area and a single-bay service garage. This augmentation shows the significant transformation of the business from a simple filling station, with minimal additional service, to an actual service station where repairs and maintenance could be performed.

By the end of World War II this block had changed so that it became more populated by automobile-related businesses than previously. In 1946 there were at least two, and maybe three, car dealers across the street. But the signature change was with the station itself. Although the Phillips Petroleum Company still owned the building, the 1946 directory listed it as the B E Gladden Filling Station. Moreover, a branch station of Acme Cab was also located at this address. This development again reveals fundamental trends in commerce in the community and nation.

¹⁶ See the alignment of Route 66 in Kathy Anderson, Jim Ross, and Gary Ray Howell, Oklahoma Route 66 Association, *Oklahoma Route 66 Roadbed Documentation Project (1926-1970): A Survey of Roadbed and Integral Structures* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma SHPO, 2002), Map 17.

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World War II had been notoriously difficult for operators of gasoline stations because of the combination of a decline in traveling, especially for recreation but all other forms too, and the rationing of gasoline, oil, and tires further reduced the sales at the gas stations. The stations that were able to weather those challenges tended to be stations situated on main thoroughfares and stations that offered a variety of services to their customers. Although the Phillips 66 Station #473 had expanded its operation so that it could offer a full range of assistance in its service bay, the location was well removed from the main highways that promised more business. On the other hand, a great many stations closed their doors and ceased operation during the war; that the station was able to remain open at all could be counted a major victory. One of the ways that Phillips reduced its financial burden during the war at this station was to lease it to an independent operator. Throughout the 1930s Phillips appears to have operated the station with its own employees but at some point during World War II the company began leasing it. This was a common adjustment in the industry and one whereby the oil company retained its rights of ownership—including the requirement that the leased station sell only that company's products—but reduced its managerial and personnel overhead and risk. In the coming several years, the leaseholder changed several times; by 1950 it was known as Young's Service Station. In 1958, shortly after the end of the period of historic significance, the station was still operating (at that time as Charles Willige 66 Service), but in 1962 Phillips sold the station and, as was the custom, prohibited the new owner from using the property to sell or store automobile fuels and oils.¹⁷

Summary

During the period of historical significance (1929-1954) the Phillips 66 Station #473 in its initial appearance, in its continued operation, and in its evolution, both in the physical structure and in the shift from company-operated to lease-operated, reflected fundamental contours of local commerce, which was itself a microcosm of national trends as they were affected by the rise of suburbia, the impact of the Great Depression, the travail of war, and then the shifting sands of the post-war economic structure. For that reason, the station qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of significance Commerce.

Architectural Significance of the Phillips 66 Station #473

The Phillips 66 Station #473 is also significant under Criterion C because it represents a distinct type and period of construction.

At the time of its construction, Phillips Petroleum Company sought to generate service stations that would, by their very construction and design, convey an identity associated with the brand and thereby attract customers to its portals in the population centers of the Midwest. The cottage style that Phillips developed became immediately recognizable and historically distinct because of the attention to design, detail, and consistency in each unit. This station reflects these qualities.

¹⁷ Special Warranty Deed, Phillips Petroleum Company to Elliott and Regina Bernbaum, March 6, 1962, Book 3226, page 595, Tulsa County Clerk Office files.

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The Phillips 66 Station #473 is a representative of the Phillips Type B Station, the Tudor cottage style widely viewed as the Phillips hallmark building and which the station used in its construction of stations from 1927 through about 1937 or 1938. Although Phillips was not the first oil company to use the cottage design for its stations, it was possibly the most pervasive in its application, and especially so in the region that included Oklahoma. The cottage appearance had as its origin the desire to help the commercial gasoline operation blend into, and be accepted by, residential neighborhoods. It looked like a small house, with grassy lawn and even flower gardens along the side. At the same time, however, that the station sought to convey an image of domestic tranquility, even romanticism, it also unmistakably communicated a corporate image with its consistency of design and colors. The cottage station quickly emerged as one of the distinct gas station designs in the early history of the automobile in the nation, and Phillips Petroleum proved to be a key agent in that development.¹⁸

Historians John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle have traced this development with a special focus on Pure Oil in other parts of the country, but the main contours of that use and the rise of the cottage station can be applied to Pure Oil's Midwest counterpart, Phillips 66. In fact, another student of the process, John Margolies, has explicitly argued that

Two major oil companies, Pure and Phillips, introduced quaint English country cottage-style stations in 1927. Pure Oil introduced its blue-and-white "rain spitter" (so nicknamed because of its steeply pitched blue tile roof) in Indianapolis, complete with window shutters, flower boxes, and a large bay window. The first Phillips cottage opened in Wichita, and by 1930 there were 6,750 of them in twelve states. The Phillips station had a central "chimney" (the Pure model had end chimneys), and each station was painted a distinctive dark green with orange and blue trim to make it stand out from the competition.¹⁹

As Margolies notes, the particulars of this design included the dark green color. That odd color was pushed within the Phillips operation by the first sales manager, Oscar Cordell. Cordell, according to the official history of Phillips, "wanted the company's new stations to have different colors than those common at the time. With the help of a paint company color expert, he decided on dark green with orange and blue accents."²⁰ Although Frank Phillips initially opposed the suggestion himself, Phillips then made an automobile trip from his Bartlesville home to Iowa; upon his return, he assented to Cordell's suggestion, saying that "I never paid any attention to gasoline station colors in my life. But on this motor trip I looked at every station. I saw they were all just alike. I think the colors you've chosen are the most attractive I've seen on anybody's stations and we'll keep 'em."²¹ The notion of place-product-packaging had been articulated from its very inception, as the design of the Phillips stations were conceived explicitly to identify the station with the brand of gasoline it marketed.

¹⁸ John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 167-180.

¹⁹ John Margolies, *Pump and Circumstance: Glory Days of the Gas Station* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 55.

²⁰ *Phillips: The First 66 Years* (Phillips Petroleum Company, 1983), 42.

²¹ *Phillips: The First 66 Years*, 42.

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In other respects too this station conforms to the historical architecture design in its adherence to the company formulation of what its buildings should look like: steeply pitched roofs, gable over the entrance, centrally located chimney with space for corporate logo, tall windows, flower boxes at the side, and blue and orange in its shingles. One of the particular distinguishing features of this building, in fact, is the continued evidence of the dark green paint in some places, both on bricks and mortar.

The Phillips 66 Station #473, because it represents a very distinct building form, indeed a building designed to be distinctive and readily identifiable for commercial purposes, is eligible under Criterion C in the area of significance Architecture.

Summary

In the period of historic significance, 1929-1954, the Phillips 66 Station #473 served as an institution and reflection of evolving patterns of commerce and as a symbol of architecture's integration into that pattern of commerce. While in its inception it carried the guidon of commercial and architectural change, the station and the neighborhood that it served, transformed during that quarter century and the original purpose and function, and even design, became historical artifacts reminiscent of an earlier time, a time in which chain stores were new features in the commercial landscape, and in which place-product-packaging beckoned to those unfamiliar with the neighborhood, and undermined the small, independent, locally-owned businesses with roots deep in the same community. The station is thereby eligible under both Criterion A in the area of significance Commerce and Criterion C in the area of significance Architecture.

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Verbal Boundary Description

This property includes Lot 1 of Block 21, Gillette-Hall Addition to the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the property historically associated with the Phillips 66 Station #473.