Form No. 10-300 REV. (9/77)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

NAME				
HISTORIC				
Skirvin Hotel				
AND/OR COMMON				
Skirvin Plaza H	lote1			
LOCATION				
STREET & NUMBER				
1 Park Ave <del>gue</del>			NOT FOR PUBLICATION	
CITY, TOWN			CONGRESSIONAL DISTRI	СТ
Oklahoma City		VICINITY OF	5	
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE 109
Oklahoma	4(	<u> </u>	Oklahoma	109
CLASSIFICATION	N			
CATEGORY OWN	ERSHIP	STATUS	PRESE	INTUSE
DISTRICTPUBLIC	:		AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
BUILDING(S) XPRIVAT	E	UNOCCUPIED	X_COMMERCIAL	PARK
STRUCTUREBOTH			EDUCATIONAL	PRIVATE RESIDE
SITE PUBL	LIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
OBJECTIN PROC	CESS	-YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
BEING (	CONSIDERED	_XYES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL	TRANSPORTATIO
				OTHER:
OWNER OF PROP	PERTY	NO	MILITARY	UINEN:
NAME BMA Properties, STREET & NUMBER BMA Tower, One	Inc. (Contact	_NO : Lloyd Coker, Pr rk, at 31st and SV	resident) V Trafficway	
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## 7' DESCRIPTION

	CONDITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK OF	NE
XEXCELLENT GOOD FAIR	DETERIORATED RUINS UNEXPOSED	UNALTERED <del>X_</del> ALTERED	X_ORIGINAL SI MOVED	ite date <u>1910–1</u> 1

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally built in two sections of 10 stories each, the Skirvin Hotel later was expanded in several additions to those identical sections of 14 stories each. Columns with ionic capitals extended onto the sidewalk on Broadway and Park Avenue (west and south) sides. The Broadway columns were removed in a major \$8 million renovation in 1973-74. There were six columns on the west side and four on the south facade, each with an entry canopy. Main entrance later was moved to the south side as a concession to the automobile. Park Avenue was being less heavily traveled. Canopies had a balustrade on top, with urns atop each post. Main body of the hotel is brown brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern. First two stories are marble at the base up to about five feet, with limestone facades reaching to the thrid floor leve.

From the third level up, the entire structure is brown brick. At the 10th level, there is a belt bourse of limestone. Eleventh and 12th floors are brick with limestone pilasters in Corinthian style, which occur between windows and at corners. At the corners, this executes a double pilaster effect. Above the pilasters is an elaborate cornice and the cornice is surmounted by another limestone balustrade. The 14th floor has a penthouse and a roof garden. Top floors have a slight set back with stone parapets. Decorations include flame and torch and limestone plaques with a circular design going around south, west, north and east sides. Each of the three towers is separated by a rounded bay running the full heighth of the building. These contain rooms and suites and were put there to give all rooms an outside window. The bays are set back, to give exterior views to inside rooms of the various towers.

The coffee shop added in a 1929 remodeling and extension took almost half the first floor, extending east from the main lobby. It was decorated with black Belgian marble. An elaborate feature of the 1929 expansion was the roof garden, which covers the west wing. It was finished without columns to allow unobstructed views. The roof is supported by steel trusses. Ceilings of the roof garden and some ballrooms are domed.

Exterior alterations in the 1973-74 renovation were limited to construction of a new drive-in entrance on the north side, removal of the sidewalk pilasters on the Broadway (west) side and renewal of the canopy over the Park Avenue entrance, where pillars were left. Awnings were added over lower level windows, and solar bronze glass replaced some original glass on lower levels.

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# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW						
PREHISTOHIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION			
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE			
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE			
1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN			
1700-1799	ART		MUSIC	THEATER			
1800-1899	X_COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION			
<u>x</u> _1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY INVENTION	X_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)			
	·• · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·						
SPECIFIC DAT	ES	BUILDER/ARCH					

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Skirvin was built in 1910-11 by William Balser Skirvin, who had made a fortune in oil exploration in Texas and Oklahoma. At the time of its construction, it was the most expensive building in Oklahoma City, costing \$1.8 million. Instantly proclaimed an Oklahoma show place, it was caught up in the opulent era spawned by the state's infant oil industry and its new status of statehood. It quickly became headquarters of such famed oil giants as Robert Galbreath, William Skelly and Walter Ramsey. The Skirving children lived there with their parents, including eldest daughter, Pearl, who gave her first party in the hotel. She later became Perle Skirvin Mesta, legendary hostess of Washington, D. C. through the administrations of five presidents. (She was minister to Luxenbourg from 1949-1954, by appointment of President Harry Truman.)

The Skirvin was just across the street from the Rock Island depot. Also, it was only a few blocks from the Santa Fe and Frisco train stations. Visitors to early-day Oklahoma City found it not only luxurious but conveniently located. Skirvin ran his hotel like a feudal baron. It had its own water well, electrical generation equipment, private gas pipeline, laundry and even disposed of its own garbage. Famous outlaw figures of the day, wealthy cattlemen, the Miller Brothers of the 101 Ranch, political figures of both parties and famous entertainers mingled in its well-appointed dining rooms and lobbies.

The 10-storied double wings were added to every few years. In a 1921 addition, a Venetian summer roof garden was opened and brought such entertainers as Ted Weems, Jimmie Joy, Jan Garbor, The Seven Aces. From the original 250 rooms, additions and expansions brought it to more than 450 rooms.

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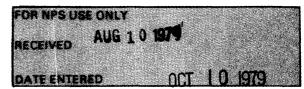
During and after World War II, it was used on occasion by Perle Mesta for parties honoring political figures or servicemen. As the era of opulence faded, the hostess continued as one of the city's leading hostelries. But after the founder's death in 1944, it was sold and gradually the hotel's glitter began to tarnish. By late 1970, it ran into severe financial difficulties and was placed

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Mesta, Perle, <u>Perle</u> Nelson, Mary Jo, "T <u>Prologue Series</u> ,	Oklahoma City <u>Times</u> , <u>My Story</u> , (1960). he Buildings of Solo (1978). ords, Oklahoma Count	mon Andrew Layton,"	
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10 GEOGRAPHICAL			
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPE	RIYC, <u>l acre</u>		
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GLILILL		н Ц	
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESC	RIPTION		
See Continuatio	on Sheet		ć
LIST ALL STATES AND	COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIE	S OVERLAPPING STATE OR	COUNTY BOUNDARIES
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>Oklahoma</u>		- Oklahoma	109
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
11 FORM PREPARED			
Mary Jo Nelson, S ORGANIZATION	pecial Writer		DATE
Daily Oklahoma and	d Oklahoma City Time:	March	<u>8-1979</u>
STREET & NUMBER			
500 North Broadway CITY OR TOWN Oklahoma City	<del>y</del>		/231-3213
<b>12 STATE HISTORIC</b>	PRESERVATION		
	UATED SIGNIFICANCE OF TH		
NATIONAL	STATE.		DCAL
As the designated State Historic I hereby nominate this property fo criteria and procedures set forth b	r inclusion in the National Reg by the National Park Service.		
STATE HISTORIOPRESERVATION O	FFICER SIGNATURE	<u></u>	
TITLE Arsup ch	Jourrel M.A.	`	DATE 7-13-79
FOR NPS USE ONLY	S REOPERTY IS INCLUDED IN		DATE /0-10-29
KEEPER OF THE NATIONA	L REGISTER	-	
ATTEST: Rul 6. A.M.			DATE mabo

### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET

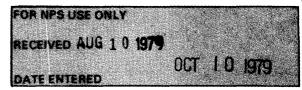
ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

in the hands of a receiver. New owners then restored the Skirvin's grandeur in a major renovation, giving it dowager status. The hotel has hosted scores of famous personalities from the arts, theater and motion pictures. Among U. S. Presidents it has sheltered are Harry Truman, Lyndon B. Johnson (before he was chief executive) and Gerald Ford. in October 1976. Skirvin added a second hotel across Broadway from the Skirvin in 1936, naming it the Skirvin Tower. Tunnels he built to link the two running across Broadway and north from the Tower became part of Metro Concourse when Oklahoma City built more than 1.7 miles of underground walkways and shops in 1974-75. Architect for the Skirvin and its later additions (until his death in 1943) was Solomon Andrew Layton, AIA, principal architect of prestatehood and early statehood Oklahoma City.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE

10. Verbal Boundary Description

The Skirvin Hotel is located on Lots 1 through 18 and the vacated alleys adjoining on the East and South; 39 feet of Lots 13 through 16 and the vacated alleys adjoining on the South; and Lots 29 through 32. All in Block 8 of the original Oklahoma City addition.