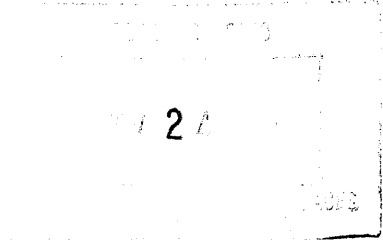


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1576



1. Name of Property

historic name William Alfred Mensch Building

other names/site number Stroud Convention Center

2. Location

street & number 218 W. Main Street not for publication N/A
city or town Stroud vicinity _____
state Oklahoma code OK county Lincoln code 081
zip code 74079

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> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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: SOCIAL Sub: meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Commercial style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof _____
walls STONE--sandstone
other GLASS--display and clerestory windows

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 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)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance _____

8. Statement of Significance (Continued)

Significant Dates 1922
1924

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

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

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) N/A
 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 1 (one) acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	711980	3958410	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 Dianna Everett, Public Historian

organization _____ date 15 June 2000

street & number 2510 Countrywood Lane telephone 405/348-4272

city or town Edmond state OK zip code 73003

Property Owner

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

name Arthur H. Thompson

street & number 218 W. Main Street telephone 918-958-2545

city or town Stroud state OK zip code 74079-0450

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

SUMMARY:

The William Alfred Mensch Building, located at 218 W. Main Street, in Stroud, Oklahoma is an attached, one-story, north-facing masonry building measuring approximately 25 feet east-west and 140 feet north-south. The building is sited in the center of downtown Stroud, a commercial district. The building faces north, with the short axis paralleling Main Street (formerly Third Street), which is also U.S. Route 66. The original section, dated to 1922, and designed in Commercial Style typical of storefronts of the post-World War I era, features a sparsely decorated, symmetrical limestone main elevation with wide display windows and central entryway. The other walls are constructed of rough sandstone blocks. A 1924 addition is also of sandstone construction. The interior was altered several times historically. A 1997-98 rehabilitation of exterior and interior resulted in a new interior arrangement consisting of meeting rooms, a lobby, a kitchen, and restrooms. Alterations include the addition of a wood awning over the main entrance (which may have been an historic feature), infilling of one east-side window at an unknown date and infilling of one double door in the rear elevation (on the alley) in 1997-98 (to accommodate handicap access). New signage was added to the north and south elevations at this time. Exterior rehabilitation has restored or refreshed much of the building's historic fabric, returning it to a fair approximation of its original appearance. The William Alfred Mensch Building, in downtown Stroud, Oklahoma, retains adequate integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, feeling, and association to be listed on the National Register under Criterion C, for its architectural significance in the town of Stroud.

DESCRIPTION:

The William Alfred Mensch Building, located at 218 W. Main Street, in Stroud, Oklahoma is an attached, one-story, masonry building measuring approximately 25 feet east-west and 140 feet north-south. The building is sited in the center of downtown Stroud, a commercial district. The building faces north, with the short axis paralleling Main Street (formerly Third Street), which is also U.S. Route 66.

The original 1922 building measures 25 feet by 102 feet; a 1924 addition to the south side measures 25 by 38 feet. Both sections have flat roofs, slightly pitched toward the south/rear. The roof of the rear section is approximately two feet lower than that of the original section.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 10

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

Designed in a modest Commercial Style, the north/main elevation is horizontally massed and generally symmetrical. As a specialty store, the storefront was designed with large display windows to admit light and to showcase goods and with a large clerestory strip placed higher in the elevation (particularly important, as the building faces north). The builder used materials that indicate the familiarity with twentieth-century trends such as steel-framed, awning-opening windows in the center of the clerestory strip. Otherwise, the building is exclusive of decoration except for shallow stonework projections on the main elevation. The design is typical of a small "Main Street" commercial building of the era.

On the main elevation, the load-bearing masonry wall is constructed of limestone ashlar blocks, regularly coursed. On south, west, and east, the building's load-bearing masonry walls are constructed of reddish-brown, rough-cut, randomly shaped and irregularly coursed sandstone blocks set with wide mortar joints. This material and method resembles that of many other of Stroud's Main Street buildings of the period and may indicate that the sandstone for all of these buildings was locally quarried.

The significant architectural features of the main or north elevation are its fenestration and materials. These are large display windows and walls made of smooth-faced, cut limestone blocks. At the east and west extremities area narrow, shallow limestone pilasters project forward and lead the eye up to the parapet. In this elevation a slightly off-centered, wood-framed, single-light door, topped by a four-light transom, is flanked by large, horizontal display windows. These also have wood frames. Each display window has two vertical lights divided by a wood mullion. Below the windows is a wood sill, and below this the wall appears to be concrete. The openings span nearly the entire width of the elevation. Above the openings an imposing stone lintel also spans the width, visually joining the vertical limestone projections. Above the lintel, steel-framed clerestory windows, with opaque glass, span the width of the facade. These are divided into four sections, each divided further into equal lights. The two center sections contain three horizontal rows of five lights. The flanking sections have eighteen lights each, set in three horizontal rows of six lights. The two center sections have awning-type openings in the center. Above this clerestory row is a heavy concrete band that spans the facade. Placed on this band is a metal sign that identifies the building as "STROUD CONFERENCE CENTER". Above this is limestone masonry, divided into three sections by two evenly spaced, shallow vertical projections.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 11

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====
Centered is a block of stone carved with the date "1922". A concrete cap finishes the wall, which projects slightly above the roof, as a low parapet. The openings are shaded by a new wooden awning, suspended from steel eyehooks and secured with steel bolts that were present historically (see below, Alterations). On the west side of the elevation, to the west of the window, is a bronze plaque bearing the wording "WILLIAM ALFRED MENSCH\BUILDING\HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE\NATIONAL REGISTER\OF HISTORIC PLACES\BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR\1922."

The south, west, and east walls of the 1922 building are load-bearing, reddish-brown sandstone. The original south wall was the same, according to a 1996 architectural study.(1) The east and west walls of the 1922 section are partially covered by the walls of adjoining buildings and, above the roofline of those buildings, are stuccoed and painted white. Otherwise, these walls expose the sandstone construction. An opening in the original south wall held a metal-clad, wood double-door.(2) This opening became an interior opening by the 1924 addition, but the door remained until 1997-98, when it was reduced to a single-width passageway between the two sections. The roof of the 1922 section contains a centrally placed, eight-light, 2x4-pattern, metal-framed skylight.

The 1924 addition is also constructed of load-bearing, reddish-brown sandstone masonry. The west wall has been stuccoed, but on the south and east walls the original construction material remains fully visible. In the south wall, an opening for an overhead door once provided vehicle access.(3) In 1996, after the overhead door blew out in a storm, this opening was partially infilled with concrete blocks and now has a new, steel single door. A concrete ramp with steel-pipe handrail provides handicap access to this doorway. A concrete parking space is placed between the handicap ramp and the alley. The wall is painted grey, and a small metal sign identifies the building as "Stroud Conference Center." A new lighting fixture hangs on the wall near the sign. On the east side of the addition there is a window opening under a heavy concrete lintel. When created in 1924 it was square, but at an unknown date two feet of the width, on the south side, was infilled with sandstone blocks identical to those of the wall. The existing window is now a 3x3 pattern, fixed unit. At the southeast and southwest corners of the addition, new steel gutters and downspouts drain the roof. Air conditioner condenser units are visible on the roof of the addition. The concrete foundation is visible on all four elevations. A skylight in the roof of the 1924 addition, near the junction of the two sections, had been roofed over at an unknown date and is still covered on exterior and interior.(4)

The interior of the William Alfred Mensch Building gave evidence that it has

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 12

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

been changed many times to accommodate various owners and uses.(5) The floor is concrete; the roof structure was originally of wood joists. The 1922 building has a fifteen-foot-high ceiling and originally featured a loft that extended from the south wall 70 feet to the north, across the entire 23-foot width. The deck or floor of the loft was wood, with wood joists supported by metal pipes. At the northeast corner was a wood stair. Architects indicate that the loft appeared to have been part of the original building. Some interior partitioning may have been present in the original.(6) The entire ceiling is of pressed tin. The 1924 addition, which was originally lower in ceiling height, also had a wood-joist roof-support structure but had an exposed rafter system and no ceiling. (See below, Alterations.) The floor of the addition is also concrete. A window overlooking the alley from the loft was added later, at an unknown date(7); this opening was covered during rehabilitation in 1997-98.

ALTERATIONS:

The exterior of the William Alfred Mensch Building is in good condition and maintains a high degree of integrity. Few alterations occurred to the exterior of the building. The original limestone is intact on the main elevation, and the east and south elevations have slight alterations to door or window openings. The building was allowed to deteriorate for many years before a rehabilitation effort was initiated in 1997. Immediately prior to the beginning rehabilitation, on September 23, 1996, a windstorm damaged the building, causing the roof to collapse; the south-side overhead door blew out, as well as one of the front display windows.(8) Material was salvaged and the rehabilitation proceeded. The historic fabric has been restored to a fair approximation to the original appearance.

The 1997-98 rehabilitation performed the following measures: On the main (north) elevation, limestone blocks were cleaned of paint and the joints hand-raked. The mortar was replaced with mortar of matching strength, color, texture. A new wooden sign was added where an original sign had been. Stone was cleaned and restored to original appearance. The door and frame were rebuilt to match the historic wood-and-glass unit. The display window frames were similarly rebuilt, wood sills were added, and new glass was installed. Door frame detail was altered to swing the door outward, to be up to code. The door and window frames were painted. Opaque clerestory window glass was removed, seals and caulking were added as required, frames were painted, original glass reinstalled, and two missing lights replaced to match the originals. A new wooden awning was constructed of a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 13

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

wooden framework of two-by-six wood joists, roofed with plywood and roll roofing; on the underside, between the joists, is beadboard. By means of turnbuckles, the awning hangs from hooks that appear to be historic and attached at bolt holes that also appear to be historic. Although there is no other evidence of an awning having been attached to the building historically, Sanborn maps of the era show that many of the north-facing buildings along Main Street featured an awning, as did the building that previously occupied 218 West Main Street. The roof area was replaced over the addition with steel joists and deck. Roofing was repaired and re-roofed with roofing membrane. As the roof is not visible from the exterior, and because the roofing has been changed a number of times over the past seventy-five years, roof and roof structure are not judged to be historically significant features. A new steel frame and steel door were installed in the infilled masonry opening on the south side. The east-side window was replaced with a new fixed metal-frame window with obscure glass. The glazing pattern matches the original. The skylight was cleaned and sealed; one cracked glass panel was replaced.

The interior has been altered a number of times by the addition and removal of partition walls. The 1997-98 rehabilitation removed existing partitions and the loft, which had been demolished by the 1996 storm. The 1922 original decorative tin ceiling, however, was saved and restored and is now placed throughout the 1922 section. Damaged panels were repaired and some were replaced with panels salvaged from covered areas (HVAC and electrical closets). The ceiling was cleaned with mild detergent and touch-up paint was applied. The original ceiling remains exposed. The loft and supports were removed, and new partitions were added. These do not touch the historic ceiling, except where post-type supports were required. In the 1922 section are four functional areas. An enclosed entryway, with an interior single-light, wood-framed door, is placed slightly off-center in the north wall, between a waiting area and an office. Adjacent and south of these areas, a wide lobby gives access to the large main meeting room and to a narrow corridor placed on the west wall along the length of the building. The main meeting room, which measures 17 by 42 feet, is connected to a storage room, which has the original skylight. Along the east side of the storage room are three small rooms for electrical and mechanical systems. The storage room links the main meeting room to a smaller meeting room that is in the south end of the original 1922 section. Both meeting rooms have doorways that connect to the corridor. The opening between the 1922 and 1924 sections has been preserved, but without a door. The corridor continues through this opening and exits at the rear, at the location of the original 1924 exit. The 1924 section has a kitchen/janitorial area separated by a short hallway from new restrooms. This section of the building has

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 14

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

a new, metal drop ceiling. Throughout the building, old fluorescent lighting fixtures were removed and new hanging fixtures and wall washers, in a style compatible with the building's age, were installed. All doors and woodwork are new throughout.

Exterior rehabilitation has restored or refreshed much of the building's historic fabric, returning it to a fair approximation of its original appearance. The William Alfred Mensch Building, in downtown Stroud, Oklahoma, retains adequate integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, feeling, and association to be listed on the National Register under Criterion C, Architecture.

ENDNOTES

1. Glover-Smith-Bode, Architects, William Alfred Mensch Building, Historic Preservation Certification Application, 6 December 1996 (File, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 16

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

SUMMARY:

The William Alfred Mensch Building, built in 1922, with a 1924 addition, represents a relatively rare use of building material in the downtown commercial district of Stroud, Oklahoma. The development of Stroud's downtown began in 1897 when the town was placed at its present site. Economic activities over the next three decades resulted in several building booms that created the basic core of downtown buildings in a six-block area facing Main (Third) Street from 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue. Within this area, several dozen all-brick, stone-with-brick-front, and stone-with-stone-front buildings were erected. The bulk of building activity came in the 1920s following an oil boom in the surrounding region. While most of the 50 remaining buildings identified with this era are stone-with-brick-front, approximately two of the 50 are stone-with-stone-front. These two are the only remaining of seven of their kind originally built. Of the two, one has been heavily altered on the main elevation, with much of the original material replaced or concealed by metal panelling. Only the 1922 William Alfred Mensch Building remains to illustrate a variation from the standard brick buildings that once graced downtown Stroud. Completed in 1922, the William Alfred Mensch Building is architecturally significant as the only surviving, unaltered example of an early twentieth-century stone commercial building in Stroud, Oklahoma.

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

The town of Stroud, Oklahoma, grew out of a commercial effort by one John W. Stroud, who constructed a general store on his Lincoln County homestead in 1891, the year that Lincoln County was created. Stroud did a small business for about a year and then improved his business position by garnering a post office designation in September 1892. Around the store/post office Stroud built modest business buildings and recruited people to occupy them. Then in 1897 a series of events began that caused a major change in Stroud, Oklahoma.(1)

In that year the St. Louis and San Francisco surveyed a rail route through Lincoln County. Several local entrepreneurs got together and decided to promote their town to the railroad, but the railroad promoters had other ideas concerning the building of a new community. In the ensuing dispute, John Stroud bought a farm closer to the proposed rail route and one mile east of his own place. He and the local promoters platted a town there and sold lots at auction in Oklahoma City. Original Stroud became "Old Stroud," and "new" Stroud, the present town, grew when

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 17

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

the businessmen of the old town moved their buildings to the new site. They set up on 2nd, 3rd (now Main) and 4th Streets, near the railroad depot. All of this had been accomplished by June 1898; the first train arrived soon after, on August 14.(2) In the next few years the promoters sold residential lots at \$25 each and business lots at \$350 each. Streets were numbered, with north-south arteries as "Avenues" and east-west avenues as "Streets." The intersections of 3rd Street with 3rd, 4th, and 5th Avenues comprised the core of the commercial district.(3)

Commercial activities in Stroud's early years developed in an ordinary fashion for a town of this size. Banks were quickly established, building substantial buildings on main corners at the center of town. The Stroud National Bank, chartered in 1898, built its building at the corner of 3rd Street and 4th Avenue in 1902 and occupied the premises until 1977. Stroud State bank, also begun in 1898, built at the same corner. It occupied these premises until 1974. Other businesses of the day included drug stores, grocery stores, a hardware store, a hotel, an opera house, and so forth.(4)

The pre-World War I years added to the town's prosperity as a regional service center for an agriculture-centered economy. The population grew from 1,200 in 1900-1910 to more than 1,800 by 1930. Serving the population were a number of retail businesses that erected permanent brick and stone buildings during the decade between the end of World War I and the onset of the Great Depression in 1929.(5) Among the area residents who opened business in Stroud was William Alfred Mensch. Mensch's parents, who homesteaded at the opening of the Sac and Fox lands in 1891, farmed near Stroud. Bill Mensch entered the plumbing and tinsmithing trade, and in 1915 he purchased Lot 16 of Block 30 of original Stroud.(6) In a white frame shop, construction date unknown, he carried on his trade until in 1921-22 he built a new, substantial, stone building on the same site.

While agriculture suffered a depression beginning in the mid-1920s, Lincoln County's economy was bolstered by the growth of the petroleum industry. Much speculation took place in Lincoln County in the 1921-22 period, and every day the local papers reported drilling activity in the vicinity. A modest discovery in 1923 in the Key West field, approximately four miles south of Stroud, made business boom, if only for a while.(7) Nonetheless, during the 1921-1923 years a "building boom" took place in both residential construction and commercial construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 18

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT:

In Stroud's first decade or so, 1900 to 1910, the commercial district grew up. By 1916 it occupied the four blocks along 3rd Street (present Main), with a few buildings also fronting on 4th Avenue and 3rd Avenue.(8) A 1908 photograph of "Stroud's Main Street" shows two blocks of buildings; most are of the one-story, wood-frame variety, but four appear to be two-story brick buildings.(9) As is true of most towns of this vintage, very few of the early buildings were of brick construction. This situation was about to change, however, and by 1930 the commercial district had achieved a complete new look.

In the year 1921 much commercial building took place. Early in that year new brick buildings were under construction and others of brick and stone were in planning stages. In March 1921 William Alfred Mensch, who was in the plumbing and tin-smithing business on Main Street, ordered the stone hauled in for his new building to be erected in the 200 block of 3rd Street (now Main Street).(10) Excavation began the last week of March for two stores, both planned to be fifty feet (front) by 100 feet deep; one of these was Mensch's, the other was being constructed by C. L. Wood. A crew began excavating at Mensch's site in late March and poured the concrete foundation the week of April 11.(11) During the second or third week of February, 1922, Mensch began the actual erection of the building, after a delay of several months past the foundation work.(12) The building's precise date of completion is unknown, but is most probably late 1922. Occupation took place at least by March 16, 1923, when an ad in the Stroud Messenger reported the relocation of Hugh McConnell Insurance, "MOVED . . . to the Mensch Building."(13) William A. Mensch installed his plumbing and tin shop in his new building and added a small line of furniture.(14) Apparently, he also leased space to McConnell. Business was good.

In 1923 the oil boom escalated around Stroud, and the town expanded rapidly in population and commerce, if only temporarily. As a result, there was a building boom on Third (Main) Street. In late 1923 or early 1924 William A. Mensch expanded his nearly new building, almost doubling its size. Other new one- and two-story brick buildings were quickly erected along Main, including three hardware, clothing, and variety stores, a new opera house, and a new hotel. The *Stroud Democrat* noted on January 2, 1925, that "the year 1924 was marked by much permanent improvement in the city. Lack of space prevents us from mentioning in detail all of these improvements; but we must mention the Smith-Moss building; the R. J. Miller and George Hughes block. Then the Lincoln Hotel erected by Moss &

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 19

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

Ingalls. Also the new postoffice building by Jont Smith and O. T. Hubbell. The new building erected by Mr. Foster. The buildings erected by Councilman J. S. Nicholson and Bill Mensch. The improvements by W. F. Wickham. The Globe Store building and hotel and Evans Brothers Dry Goods Store. . . . Another picture show was established by R. L. Barton."(15) During this time William A. Mensch added to his 1922 building, and in January 1924 he leased the expanded facility to the Kansas City Waffle House concern, of which the owner had moved from Tonkawa.(16) In March the *Stroud Messenger* reiterated the process of revitalizing downtown: "Prospects are getting brighter all the time . . . [Stroud] has nearly doubled in population since the first big well came in. . . . Our main street has taken on an entirely different look since the many new structures have been built and new fronts made on all the old buildings."(17) To complete the recasting of the center of town, the city added seven blocks of brick paving and a sewer system, funded by public improvement bonds.

In the not too distant future, the oil boom would fade, and prosperity would falter with the onset of the Great Depression. But the downtown commercial area of Stroud had been designed, and many of the buildings remained for decades. Gradually, however, neglect led to deterioration, which led to the demolition of some of the 1922, 1923, and 1924 buildings. Others were "remodeled" in the years after World War II. In 1949-50 a number of downtown buildings were given a "face lift" and "a new, modern front" during a civic improvement campaign.(18) This resulted in the covering over of brick facades with tile, wood and metal. Other changes were made in the ensuing three decades, resulting in a downtown that bears only slight similarity to its appearance at the onset of the Great Depression.

The Mensch Building, however, did not suffer "remodeling". It benefitted from general neglect, a situation that resulted in the retention of the historic materials on the exterior. William Mensch owned the building at 218 West Main Street until late 1938. Subsequent owners opened retail and financial businesses on the site. Today, the rehabilitated Mensch Building serves as a convention center that draws from Stroud, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Two assessments have been made of downtown Stroud's historic buildings. Glover-Smith-Bode, Architects, in 1996 studied the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 20

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

of Stroud from 1925 and 1931 for five blocks, excluding, apparently, the north-side (south-facing 200 block of West Main. The report stated that in the five-block area of downtown Stroud along Third (Main) Street), only six buildings were of stone. The architects concluded that in 1924, 37 percent of the lots contained brick or brick-facade buildings, 36 percent were wood-frame buildings, 7 percent had iron facades, and 5 percent were stone buildings. About 15 percent of the downtown lots were vacant. The architects estimated from the maps that by 1931, 44 percent of the lots contained brick or brick-facade buildings, 24 percent were wood-frame, 7 percent had iron facades, and 5 percent had stone facades; 20 percent of the lots were vacant. The architects reported that of the six stone-faced buildings existing in 1925-31, two had been demolished, two had been destroyed by fire and subsequently razed, one had been covered by a new facade, and the Mensch Building maintained its original integrity.⁽¹⁹⁾ The architects' conclusions, taken from the maps, generally conforms to the present reality of construction materials that is visible.

A June 2000 windshield survey of Stroud's existing six-block area along Main Street (three facing blocks), revealed that 50 buildings appear to remain from the 1900-1930 construction period. Examination of main facades and rear elevations revealed that construction materials used during the building period of 1900-1930 were uniformly of two types of materials, stone and brick. Of the 50 buildings (most of which are attached structures, except for the buildings located on corners), 33 have both brick rear (and side) walls and brick fronts. Another 15 have rough-cut, unevenly coursed, sandstone-block rear and side walls but have brick fronts. Two of the 50 have rough-cut, unevenly coursed, sandstone-block rear and side walls and stone fronts. These two are located at 218 W. Main (the 1922 Mensch Building, subject of this nomination), and a building at 309 W. Main (unknown construction date, but similar in appearance to the Mensch Building). The building at 309 W. Main has been altered by the addition of aluminum panels across the front, covering most of the upper portion of the elevation, including former clerestory windows, and the openings have new metal door and window frames. The other stone building, the Mensch Building, is virtually unaltered from its original appearance.

Four commercial properties in Stroud, Oklahoma, have previously been individually listed in the National Register. These are the Stroud Trading Company

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 21

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

Building, Main & 2nd Avenue, Criteria A,C; NR79001999), the Graham Hotel, Main and 2nd (Criterion A; NR79001998); the Hotel Lincoln, 323 Main (Criterion A; NR95000037), and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Building, 301 West 7th (Criterion A; NR86001093). The Stroud Trading Company building is sited across the street and one-half block east of the Mensch Building and is a brick building with brick front that is several years older than the Mensch Building. The Trading Company Building appears to be unaltered. Across the street in the same block, the Graham Hotel is a brick-and-brick-front building that is relatively unaltered but in deteriorated condition. The Hotel Lincoln is a two-story brick-and-brick-front building in good condition. The foregoing resources are within the central downtown six-block core that is used to define the architectural context for the Mensch Building. The Telephone Building is sited several blocks west of the defining core and was not used for comparison. The William Alfred Mensch Building has been recently rehabilitated utilizing the Investment Tax Credit available for certified historic buildings.

Completed in 1922, the William Alfred Mensch Building is architecturally significant as the only surviving, unaltered example of an early twentieth-century stone commercial building in Stroud, Oklahoma.

ENDNOTES

1. *Stroud: 100 Years, 1892-1992* (Rich Hill, Mo.: Bell Books, 1992), 2-3; "Brief History of Stroud," *Stroud Democrat*, 28 April 1949; *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 1 (N.p.: Lincoln County Historical Society, 1988), 228-29.
2. *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 1, 229-30,
3. "Brief History of Stroud," *Stroud Democrat*, 28 April 1949; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Stroud, Oklahoma (Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1916).
4. *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 1, 232 passim; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Stroud, Oklahoma, 1916; John W. Morris, "The Smaller Cities," in John W. Morris, ed., *Cities of Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1979), 10-14.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 22

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

Endnotes, continued

5. *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 1, 227; 230; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Stroud, Oklahoma, 1916, 1925.
6. *Stroud Messenger*, 17 September 1915; *Stroud: 100 Years*, 4; *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 2, 1052.
7. *Stroud: 100 Years*, 13; *Stroud Democrat*, passim, 1921, 1922.
8. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Stroud, Oklahoma, 1916.
9. *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 1, 227.
10. *Stroud Democrat*, 17 June 1921; *ibid.*, 4 March 1921.
11. *Stroud Messenger*, 1 April 1921; *Stroud Messenger*, 16 April 1921.
12. *Stroud Messenger*, 17 February 1922.
13. *Stroud Messenger*, 16 March 1923.
14. *Lincoln County, Oklahoma History*, Vol. 2, 1052.
15. *Stroud Democrat*, 2 January 1925.
16. *Stroud Messenger*, 18 January 1924; *ibid.*, 15 February 1924.
17. *Ibid.*, 21 March 1924.
18. *Stroud Democrat*, 3 November 1949; *ibid.*, 15 December 1949; *ibid.*, 6 April 1950.
19. Glover-Smith-Bode, Architects, William Alfred Mensch Building, Historic Preservation Certification Application, 6 December 1996 (File, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 23

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Glover-Smith-Bode, Architects. William Alfred Mensch Building. Historic Preservation Certification Application, December 6, 1996. File, State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.

Lincoln County, Oklahoma History. 2 vols. N. p.: Privately Printed for the Lincoln County Historical Society, 1988.

Morris, John W. "The Smaller Cities," in John W. Morris, ed., *Cities of Oklahoma*.
Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1979.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Stroud, Lincoln County, Oklahoma. 1916, 1925, 1931.
New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company.

Stroud: 100 Years, 1892-1992. Rich Hill, Mo.: Bell Books, 1992.

Stroud Democrat. 1920-1925, 1949-1950.

Stroud Messenger. 1920-1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 24

William Alfred Mensch Building
name of property
Lincoln, Oklahoma
county and State

=====

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundaries of the resource coincide with the boundaries of Lot 16, Block 30, Original Town of Stroud, Oklahoma.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

These are the legal boundaries of the property as recorded in Book 1281, page 464, Register of Deeds, County Clerk Office, Lincoln County, Oklahoma.