

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

JUN 21 1979
AUG 24 1979

DATE ENTERED

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Bank of Los Banos Building (see continuation sheet)

AND/OR COMMON

The Old Bank Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

#836, 840, 842 & 848 Sixth Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Los Banos

__ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

15

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Merced

CODE

047

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Thomas Edward Kaljian and Mary Grace Kaljian

STREET & NUMBER

1508 Seventh Street

CITY, TOWN

Los Banos

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

California 93635

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Merced County Court House - located in Book 2088, page 608

STREET & NUMBER

2222 M Street

CITY, TOWN

Merced

STATE

California 95340

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bank of Los Banos, located on the northeast corner of Sixth and I Streets, Los Banos, California, is a commercial structure which houses numerous local businesses. This substantial two-story structure occupies a large corner lot (approximately 100' x 100') in the main business core of Los Banos.

The overall plan of the building is basically a square; the front of the building measures 100 feet as does the I Street side, although the rear of the building has a 25' x 50' rectangular indentation on the northeast end.

The facade which runs along Sixth Street is composed of seven bays. Except for replacement of wood doors with glass and the removal of some decorative detailing, the exterior remains as constructed in 1924; it is reinforced concrete with a finish of grani-lithic stone. The style of the Bank of Los Banos Building is neo-classicism; wall surfaces rise to the architrave in a rough imitation of engaged piers. A plain frieze once decorated by cattlehead and garland swags was removed in the 1930's for safety reasons, but the scars of the bucrane remain. A dentiled cornice finishes the entablature with a recessed parapet topping the cornice; behind this is a flat roof. The facade is divided into seven bays with each bay containing either an entrance door, windows, or both. The original office functions can be distinguished by the treatment of door and window openings on the first elevation. The bank, which occupied the south end of the building, is distinguished from the northern portion of the facade by an end window flanked by a large double door with a console supported pediment with dentil course and leaf and tongue panel below. A fret band surrounds the door opening. Another large window with a wall vault serviced pedestrian banking functions. To the left of this vault is the second bank entrance with an overhead canopy decorated with a honeysuckle frieze (the material is probably cast iron). Other first floor offices which housed Miller and Lux enterprises were entered through two equally spaced doors located on the northern end of the facade; a large plate glass window separates these entrances. All of these openings are distinguished from the bank openings by a double panel of small paned overdoor windows.

Above the first floor elevations seven grani-lithic panels each containing a roundel divide first and second floor window panels. Architectural trim on the second floor windows is kept to a minimum with a simple Greek fret band above each of the seven windows.

The northerly side wall which butts up against another building is unarticulated. The southerly wall of the Bank of Los Banos Building is identical to the facade except for window and door treatments. All first story windows are patterned after the facade windows of the bank. A door is located in the sixth bay of the side wall and is a recent (1977) alteration to satisfy fire and safety code requirements. The rear of the building contains plain windows and door exits. The first floor contains five windows with steel window grills and the second story contains twenty windows without grills.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Commenced March 1923 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architect: H.H. Winner Company
Completed January 1925 Contractor: M.M. Finlayson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Bank of Los Banos is both historical and architectural. At the time of its construction in 1924, its size and neo-classical design were a testimonial to the substantial commercial empire built by its owners Henry Miller and Charles Lux. The neo-classical design popular in the U.S. between 1900-1920 marks a period when major institutional and public buildings were constructed in this style.

Henry Miller and Charles Lux, both immigrants from Germany, formed a partnership in 1858. The Miller-Lux empire grew to include cattle holdings, land holdings, and the San Joaquin and Kings River Canal and Irrigation Company. Miller and Lux were instrumental in obtaining the Southern Pacific Railroad line one block from the site of the Bank of Los Banos Building. The town's development, which blossomed with the coming of the railroad, centered around the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot. In 1923, Miller and Lux unveiled plans to build a new bank to house all major enterprises of the area after a 1919 fire destroyed the Los Banos business area which had developed around the railroad depot. The building was completed in 1925 with the first floor housing the Miller-Lux enterprises, while professional and business offices¹ were housed on the second floor.¹

The exterior effect of the Bank of Los Banos is both blocky and massive, an intentional choice for the building's function as a bank and one of the main commerce buildings. Architect H.H. Winner described the building as Italian and pre-Renaissance. The building is basically an example of neo-classicism, a style based primarily on Greek architectural motifs and popular in the U.S. between 1900-1920. This style received its main impetus from the Columbian Exposition, 1893, Chicago. Neo-classicism is distinguished by symmetrically arranged buildings finished with smooth stone or surface.

Parapets are common to the style while enriched moldings are rare except on the entablature. The restrained use of decorative moldings as well as the overall design, with large areas of smooth unornamented surface broken by recessions in the grani-lithic surface suggest a transitional design moving away from the more highly decorated classical style towards "modernism". No longer are the walls composed of the pilasters or columns typical of neo-classicism.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .02

QUADRANGLE NAME Los Banos, California

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 10 692460 4103610

B

C 691

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The southerly 100 feet of lots 17, 18, 19 & 20; proceeding northerly on the eastern line of lot 20 some 50 feet, then westerly 25 feet, then northerly

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Office of Historic Preservation
Staff revisions: Carol Branan

Mary Grace Kaljian - B.A. Credential (History) U.C. Berkeley - 1968

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1508 Seventh Street

(209) 826-3345 or 826-2797

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Los Banos

California 93635

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Kerry M. Ellery

TITLE

DATE

MAY 31 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Carol Shull
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

8-24-79

ATTEST:

DATE

8/24/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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CONTINUATION SHEET one ITEM NUMBER 1 PAGE 1

Site before present building was constructed. "New Opera House" (constructed 1903). The following institutions were located in this building:

- Post Office
- Bank of Los Banos
- Miller & Lux Butcher Shop
- Dr. W.J. Jamison, M.D. & Medical Library
- Dr. J.J. King, D.D.S.
- Theater - Town Hall

Present building - Bank of Los Banos (constructed March 12, 1923).

- Bank of Italy - April 13, 1926
- Bank of America - February 25, 1927
- The Old Bank Building 1965.

Offices located on the second floor were:

- Dr. Virgil Menefee, D.D.S.
- Mr. Moretti, M.D.
- Dr. Hillyer, M.D.
- Frank & Margaret Souza - Accountants
- Roy Lower - Attorney at Law
- Robert Falasco - Attorney at Law
- Office for the City of Los Banos
- Howard Stoddard - Engineering Firm
- Dr. Jadarola, M.D.
- Dr. C. Moretti, D.D.S.

Offices on lower level:

- San Joaquin & Kings River Canal & Irrigation Co.
- Miller and Lux Retail Store

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CONTINUATION SHEET two

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

The Bank of Los Banos has changed little in physical appearance during the past fifty-five years. The "cattleheads" grouped in pairs and separated by swags of garland which ran the length of the cornice were removed in the 1930's. A few changes were made by the second tenant, the Bank of Italy. These changes were relatively minor and included the replacement of wood doors with glass doors. Ground floor and second story offices are intact. The building's interior doors, windows, and stairwells are original as is the brass hardware on doors and banisters. Although the marble floor in the bank foyer is still intact, it has been covered with a carpet. Hardwood floors are also carpeted. The original coffered ceiling of the banking room has been covered and the ceiling height lowered.

While changes have occurred to the interior of the building, the exterior remains intact with only minor changes which have not damaged the integrity of design. The building retains its impressive corner lot in the business core of Los Banos and is a fine statement of the 1920's business world and architectural transition from period revivals to "modernism".

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CONTINUATION SHEET three

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

The Bank of Los Banos appears as a transitional building...no longer distinctly neo-classical but with only a hint of modernism. Impressive in both scale and style, the building was a statement of the commercial wealth of the Miller-Lux empire and operated as the major banking facility for the west side of Merced and Los Banos. In 1926, the building was sold to the Bank of Italy and was operated as a bank until 1965. With the construction of a new bank, the tenants moved out and the bank has stood vacant until recently. During its lifespan the building has changed little in physical appearance. Minor changes were made in the first floor exterior doors, but overall the site and building have retained their integrity.

Footnote:

1. Henry Miller amassed a fortune of over \$50,000,000 and acquired one million acres of land, Margorie Pierce, East of the Gabilans, p. 174.

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CONTINUATION SHEET four ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Outcalt, John, History of Merced County California with a Biographical Review of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present. Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1925.
2. Pierce, Marjorie, East of the Gabilans. The Ranches, the Towns, the People - Yesterday and Today. Fresno: Valley Publishers, 1977.
3. Treadwell, Edward F., The Cattle King. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1931.

Newspaper Articles

4. "Los Banos Bank Goes to New Location." Los Banos Enterprise, Saturday, July 17, 1920.
5. "Bank of Los Banos Building Most Modern Structure." Los Banos Enterprise, Saturday, July 17, 1920.
6. "Bank Vaults in Good Shape." Los Banos Enterprise, September 6, 1919.
7. "Bicentennial Edition." Los Banos Enterprise, July 3, 1976.
8. "Construction of Bank of Los Banos Building is Commenced Past Week; Means Expenditure of Approximately \$140,000." Los Banos Enterprise, March 10, 1923.
9. "Earthquake." Los Banos Enterprise, April 21, 1906.
10. "Fire Destroys 52 Business Houses. Five Hour Blaze Causes Loss Estimated Close to Million Dollar Mark." Los Banos Enterprise, August 30, 1919.
11. Golden Anniversary Section, Los Banos Enterprise, April 26, 1978.
12. Milliken, Ralph L., "The Smelly Tale of Why Los Banos Became Incorporated 70 Years Ago." Los Banos Enterprise, February 23, 1970.
13. "Miller and Lux Lands Being Sold." Los Banos Enterprise, Saturday, July 17, 1920.
14. "Remembering Dr. Jadarola," Los Banos Enterprise, September 13, 1978.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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CONTINUATION SHEET five

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 1

50 feet on the easterly lot line of lot 19, then westerly 75 feet to Sixth Street, then southerly 100 feet to northeast corner of Sixth and I Streets and point of beginning, as shown on the map entitled "Map of the Town of Los Banos", Block 64, filed October 29, 1892 in the office of the County Recorder of Merced County, in Volume 2 of Official Plats, page 21.

The 25' x 100' northern section of lot 20 is not included within the National Register proposed boundaries since it is used as a parking lot; the boundary has been drawn to include only the Bank of Los Banos Building.

JUN 21 1973
 JUN 21 1973
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TOWN OF LOS BANOS

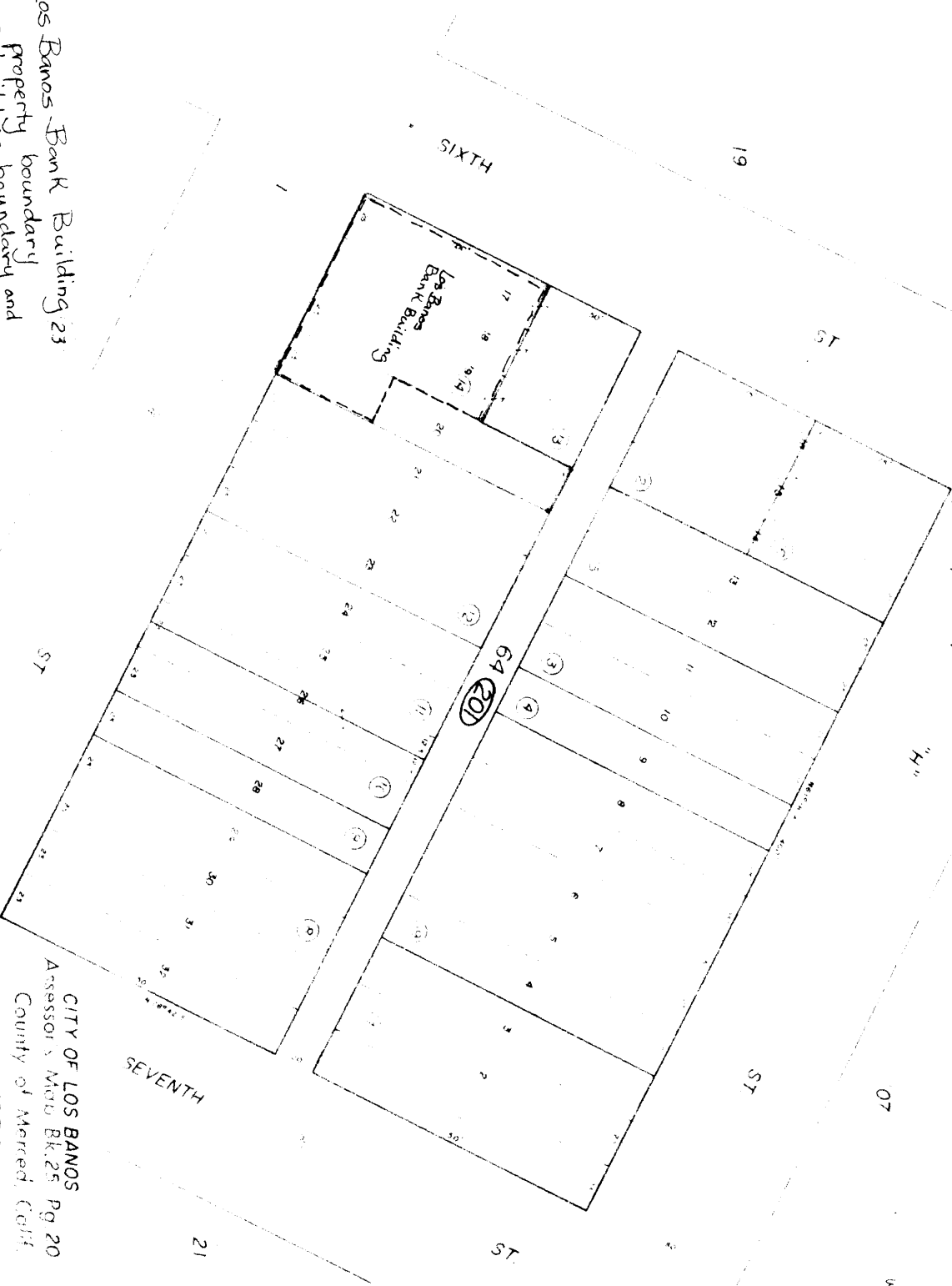
Tax Rate Area 4-01

25-2

FOR SECTIONS, RIDE, M.D.B. & M.

Los Banos Bank Building 23
 --- property boundary
 --- building boundary and
 National Register nomination
 boundary line

NOTE: Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Entries
 Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Entries



CITY OF LOS BANOS
 Assessor's Map Bk. 25 Pg. 20
 County of Merced, Calif.
 1954