

2983

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only
received **NOV 21 1988**
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 Dade County Courthouse

and or common Dade County Courthouse

2. Location

street & number 73 W. Flagler Street

___ not for publication

city, town Miami

___ vicinity of

state Florida 33130 code FL

county

Dade

code FL 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
___ district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	___ military
			___ museum
			___ park
			___ private residence
			___ religious
			___ scientific
			___ transportation
			___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Metropolitan Dade County

street & number 111 N. W. 1st Street

city, town Miami

___ vicinity of

state Florida 33128

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dade County Courthouse

street & number 75 W. Flagler Street

city, town Miami

state Florida 33130

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title FMSF-Miami Multiple Resource
Historic Preservation Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes ___ no

date June, 1985

___ federal state ___ county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Historic Preservation

city, town Tallahassee

state Florida 32399-0250

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1938	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) community development

Specific dates 1925-1928 **Builder/Architect** A. Ten Eyck Brown; August Geiger

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see Bibliography for Cover Nomination

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Miami

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	8	0	6	9	0	2	8	5	0	7	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

Miami, All of Block 115-A, less the westerly 50 feet for street, and the area known as Avenue E lying east of Block 115_a, and Lots 8 and 0 of Block 115-N, of the plat of MIAMI NORTH (PB B-41) - follows historic and legal boundaries

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sarah Eaton / Vicki L. Welcher, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation

date October, 1988

street & number 500 South Bronough Street

telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee

state Florida 32399-0250

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

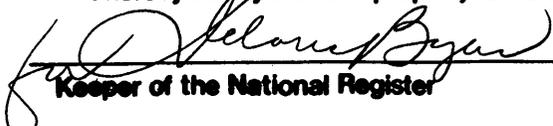
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 17, 1988

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register


Keeper of the National Register


Chief of Registration

11/4/89
date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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DESCRIPTION:

Condition: Good

The Dade County Courthouse building is a 28-story structure of steel frame construction executed in the Neo-Classical style of architecture. The building, which features a broad base and a central tower, was completed in 1928 following the designs of A. Ten Eyck Brown, architect, and August Geiger, associate architect.¹ The base of the building is faced with Stone Mountain granite while the other floors are sheathed in terra cotta, tinted to match the granite slabs.²

Surrounding the building at a height of five feet above the sidewalk level is a broad slate-paved terrace. The terrace and main floor, which is six feet above the terrace level, are reached by two flights of granite steps on the north and south sides. The raised level of the first floor provides space for a garage, a major consideration of the architect in undertaking the design of the building.³ The overall height of the structure is highlighted through a series of setbacks. The primary base rises three stories and encompasses 168 square feet in area. The primary base is surmounted by a secondary base, also rising three stories and encompassing an area of 138 square feet. From the seventh to the twentieth floors, the tower walls are set back from the base and form a square shaft. At the twentieth floor, the square shaft changes to an octagonal shape and further decreases in area at the twenty-fourth floor. A three-story pyramid caps the tower.⁴

Six colossal, fluted, Doric columns, flanked by two colossal pilasters, highlight the north and south elevations of the base. Similar colossal engaged columns mark the east and west elevations. Above the columns is a full entablature with triglyphs and metopes. Six engaged columns with Egyptian-styled capitals adorn the secondary base, which is surmounted by a classical balustrade. Decorative plaques with classical motifs embellish the ninth and nineteenth floors. The twenty-third floor is encircled by a classical entablature, with a pediment and tympanum at the twenty-fourth floor.

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A majority of the building's original steel casement windows remain, although windows on several floors have been replaced. The twelfth floor now contains bronze finished, aluminum fixed windows with bronze-colored glass. Aluminum awning windows on the fourteenth floor were recently replaced with new windows that closely replicate the originals in muntin configuration. Except for the alteration of some windows and doors, the exterior of the Dade County Courthouse remains virtually unaltered.

The main floor of the building was originally quite open and was equipped with folding metal grilles instead of the present-day security doors. The building was air conditioned in the 1940s, thereby necessitating the installation of revolving aluminum and glass doors.

The interior spaces originally provided full facilities for two government entities (city and county), including the necessary courtrooms, record storage, judicial chambers, libraries, and jails for both systems. Offices that had frequent dealings with the public were located on the first three floors, while other officials, courts, and jails were situated on the upper stories. The jails, with their administrative offices, occupied the floors from the fourteenth to twenty-fifth, inclusive, and were reached from the basement by two special elevators.⁵ A battery of eight high-speed elevators, some with specifically programmed access routes, originally served the needs of vertical circulation and privacy.

The lobby floor still retains the original marble floors, bronze sidelights, and mailbox. In some of the judicial chambers and offices, one can still see the original woodwork, with intricate carvings, still intact.

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Section number 8 Page 1 The Dade County Courthouse

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Specific Dates: 1925-1928

Architects: A. Ten Eyck Brown, Architect
August Geiger, Associate Architect

The Dade County Courthouse is significant in the history of government, community development, and architecture in Miami. Built between 1925 and 1928, the courthouse building has continuously served as Dade County's seat of government. The Courthouse was also designed to serve as the Miami City Hall, and facilities included the necessary courtrooms, record storage, judicial chambers, law library, administrative offices, and jails for both government entities. The Dade County Courthouse is also significant as an outstanding example of Neo-Classical style architecture.

When the county seat of Dade County was moved from Juno to Miami in 1899, judicial affairs were conducted from a wood frame building on the Miami River just east of the old Miami Avenue bridge. A new courthouse was built on the site of the present courthouse in 1904. That building was designed to meet the needs of Dade County for 50 years.

A new courthouse was planned in 1925 after the old one became inadequate. Several locations were considered, but the county later decided to utilize the site occupied by the old courthouse. The earlier building was to be torn down from within the rising steel structure of the newer edifice.

Shortly after its formal dedication on 6 September 1928, the Dade County Courthouse was featured in several national publications that showcased the latest developments in urban architecture and planning. The author of one article boasted that the courthouse was "the tallest structure south of Baltimore, and [was] believed to be the tallest municipal building in the United States."⁷ The tower rose to a height of 336 feet above the street.⁸ It was brilliantly lighted each night by electricity and visible for "100 miles by sea and 50 by land."⁹

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Construction of the building spanned the Boom and Bust years of 1925 to 1928. The completion of the building, at a cost of more than \$4,000,000, marked a milestone in the development of Dade County and reflected the faith and optimism of the community in its future.¹⁰

The Dade County Courthouse is also significant for its associations with the architectural development of South Florida. The building constitutes an outstanding example of the Neo-Classical style of architecture as applied to a high-rise building. The choice of the Neo-Classical style was in keeping with the contemporary ideas that the workings of the judicial systems of government were a solemn business to be housed in the dignified manner of the ancients.¹¹ The choice of a skyscraper met the desire for a modern building as well as the city and county's needs for expansion.

Designed by the prominent Atlanta architect, A. Ten Eyck Brown, who distinguished himself in the design of numerous courthouses throughout the South, the Dade County Courthouse featured many innovative solutions to meet the needs of local government. An underground garage, for instance, provided parking spaces at a time when parking was beginning to be recognized as a problem.

The building's history, size, classical decorative ornament, and distinctive ziggurat roofline have contributed to the local perception of the Dade County Courthouse as a major landmark.

The Courthouse was occupied by both Dade County and the City of Miami until 1954, when the city vacated its space. The jail, originally located on the upper tower floors, was closed in 1961. County offices have recently moved to the new County Administration Building, and the courthouse is now occupied exclusively by the judiciary for the first time in its history.

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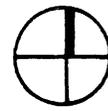
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NOTES

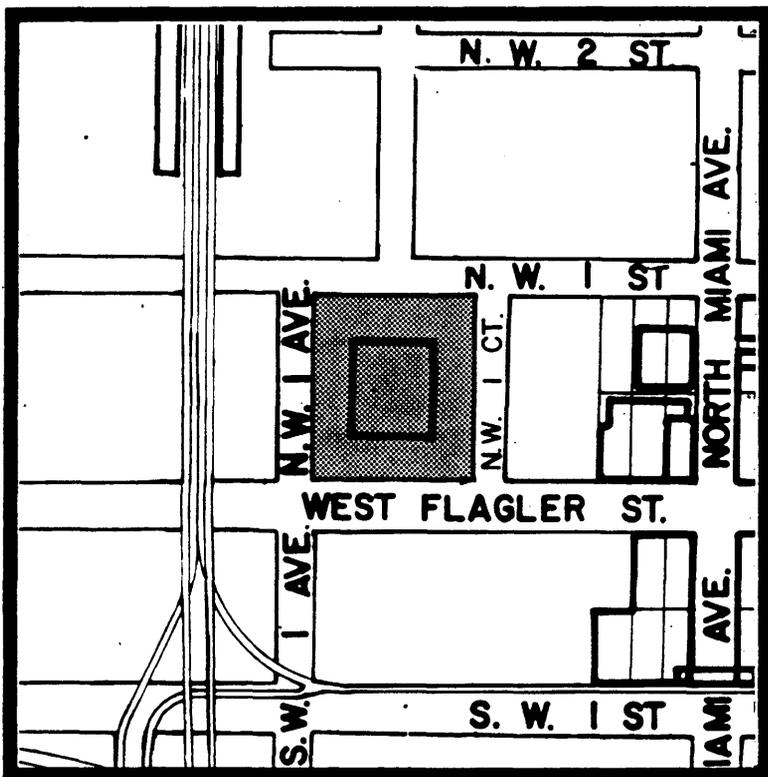
1. City of Miami, Building and Zoning Department, Building Plans on Microfilm, Roll 16, Plan M-34; and "Pass Courthouse Plans," Miami Herald, 5 April 1925.
2. W. L. Robinson, "A Four-Million Dollar 28-Story 'Tower of Justice,'" The American City, November 1928, p. 159.
3. See note 2 above.
4. A. Ten Eyck Brown, "Designing and Planning of Court Houses," Architectural Forum, June 1927, p. 520.
5. See note 2 above.
6. Sarah E. Eaton, "Dade County Courthouse Designation Report" (prepared for the City of Miami Heritage Conservation Board, 7 June 1985).
7. See note 2 above.
8. See note 6 above.
9. The Miamian, July 1927, p. 3.
10. See note 6 above.
11. See note 6 above.

DADE COUNTY COURTHOUSE and MIAMI CITY HALL

73 WEST FLAGLER STREET



location



site plan