

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number Various

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Oklahoma Natural Gas Company Building.

Location: 624 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Block 163, Lot 4.

Owner of Property: Oklahoma Natural Gas Company, 624 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, OK.

Description:

The Oklahoma Natural Gas Company Building was completed in 1928. The architect was Arthur M. Atkinson, A.I.A., and the designer was Frank V. Kershner, A.I.A. It is 47' 6" x 140', built of reinforced concrete fire-proof construction enclosed with buff tapestry brick and trimmed with Indiana limestone and vitreous tile. The height of its ten stories is enhanced by the piers which rise unbroken to the top of the building. The windows are inset between the piers and spandrels that are covered with decorative tile whose motifs are the stepped-in chevron and geometrical shapes typical of Art Deco design.

The interior of the building, whose "L" shaped lobby is open to the public, features rosy marble wall facings. Its marble tile floors have a border of diamond and arrow shapes in black terrazzo outlined in brass and set apart from the marble tiles by bonds of black tile. The baseboards, approximately two feet high, are also of black vitreous tile.

Octagonal pillars rise to the ceiling of the two story first floor, they are faced with marble to a height of approximately five feet. Where the marble ends there is a trim of black tile pieces set in marble. The plaster columns above the marble as well as on the marble are fluted. The marble fluting ends in an arrow design at top and bottom.

The bronze elevator doors have stepped-back mirrors. The cornice over the elevator doors is of carved marble in a ziggurat shape and decorated with stylized flowers.

The ceiling features seven painted stars in stepped-in patterns. The bronze and glass chandeliers are centered in these stars.

Both entrances to the building feature metal canopies of geometrical designs.

Significance:

This was the second Zig-Zag Art Deco building erected in Tulsa. (The first is no longer standing) and both its architect, Arthur M. Atkinson, and designer, Frank V. Kirshner, continued to work in this style for several years and were important influences in its development.

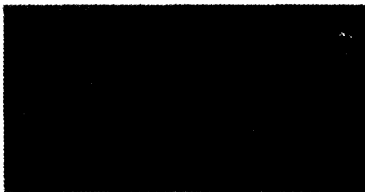
The richness of materials and designs in the interior of this building are a significant feature of the Zig-Zag Art Deco style and contrast with the austerity of the later Streamline and P.W.A. periods of Art Deco.

Oklahoma Natural Gas Company is a business based on one of Oklahoma great energy resources, and these resources were the reason for Tulsa's boom times in the 1920's. The company was formed on October 9, 1906 and on December 28, 1907 the first gas began to flow from a transmission line in the oil fields to Oklahoma City. By early 1916 ONG had increased its capitalization to \$10,000,000 and was serving 29 additional towns and cities. In the early 1920's Tulsa's growth was moving with an amazing momentum and ONG began to attract out of state business interests. White, Weld, and Company, a New York investment banking firm bought ONG in 1926 and moved the home office to Tulsa from Oklahoma City. Phillips Petroleum Company acquired control of the company through various stock purchases. Two months after gaining control the executive

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committee authorized construction of a general headquarters building to house the company. The building which cost \$600,000 had just been started when Phillips decided to dispose of its ONG holdings. On October 15, 1927 the company came under the control of G.L. Ohstrom and Company, utility financiers. Ohstrom immediately launched a major acquisition program to increase the size of the company. When the stock market crashed in 1929 it initiated a period of turmoil for ONG, however, by 1934 the company was again stable and had avoided the bankruptcy fate of thousands of utility companies. The company has contributed to Tulsa's growth as well as benefited from it, because the low rates it made to quantity consumers attracted many industries to Tulsa.

Acreage: Approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle Name: Tulsa, Oklahoma

Verbal Boundary Description: Block 163, Lot 4.

UTM: 15 ~~231170~~ 4004540 - corrected. see 7/25/84 USGS map