

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Reynolds Building

Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, FY2141, Listed 8/19/2014
Nomination by Jen Hembree
Photographs by Jen Hembree, November 2013 and March 2014



Overall view



Rear view

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Reynolds Building

Other names/site number: R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company Office Building

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 51 E. Fourth Street

City or town: Winston-Salem State: NC County: Forsyth

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national X statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

| | |
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| <p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p> | <p>_____ Date</p> |
|--|-------------------------------|

| | |
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| <p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> | |
| <p>_____ Signature of commenting official: Title :</p> | <p>_____ Date State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p> |

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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

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(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Skyscraper

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE

Granite

Walls: Limestone

Roof: CONCRETE

Other: Limestone

Lead

Marble

Nickel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Please see attached Continuation Sheet.

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Narrative Description

Please see attached Continuation Sheet.

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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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1929-1964

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Shreve and Lamb Architects

James Baird Company, New York City

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Please see attached Continuation Sheet.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Please see attached Continuation Sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Please see attached Continuation Sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register**see below
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

The Reynolds Building is a contributing building in the Downtown Winston-Salem Historic District which was formally determined eligible due to owner objection April 27, 1990.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): FY2141

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property .55 of an acre

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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 568570 | Northing: 3995160 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Reynolds Building is located in Lot 150A of Block 6084, Forsyth County, North Carolina, PIN 6835-27-5196.00. The building extends to the parcel line along the lot's northern boundary.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

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Lot 150A of Block 6084, Forsyth County, North Carolina encompasses the current legally recorded bounds of the Reynolds Building and is the property historically associated with the resource during the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jennifer F. Hembree
organization: MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC
street & number: 1400 16th St., NW, Suite 420
city or town: Washington state: D.C. zip code: 20036
e-mail jhembree@mac-ha.com
telephone: (202) 483-2020 xt. 7011
date: 03/31/2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Reynolds Building

City or Vicinity: Winston-Salem

Reynolds Building

Name of Property

Forsyth County, NC

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County: Forsyth

State: North Carolina

Photographer: CBRE, and Jennifer F. Hembree

Date Photographed: 11/2013 (noted in list) and 03/2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1. Exterior, west façade and south elevation, looking north (11/13)
2. Exterior, north elevation, looking southeast (11/13)
3. Exterior, east elevation, looking west (11/13)
4. Exterior, south elevation, looking northwest
5. Exterior, lower stories of west façade, looking southeast
6. Exterior, north elevation within the U-shaped courtyard from the tenth floor roof, looking southwest
7. Exterior, close up of upper stories of south elevation, looking north
8. Exterior, entrance on south elevation, Fourth Street, looking north (11/13)
9. Exterior, main entrance, close-up of transom crown and tracery above, looking east (11/13)
10. Interior, elevator lobby from octagonal hall, looking west
11. Interior, stairs east of octagonal hall, looking east (11/13)
12. Interior, octagonal hall stone detail, looking south
13. Interior, lobby lounge, north of the elevator lobby, looking northeast
14. Interior, elevator lobby, thirteenth floor, looking northeast
15. Interior, nineteenth floor, conference room, looking southwest (11/13)
16. Interior, nineteenth floor, board room, looking northwest (11/13)
17. Interior, first floor, east side office space, looking east

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Summary

The Reynolds Building is an Art Deco-style ziggurat and limestone veneered twenty-two-story skyscraper. It rises 315 feet tall, with a sixty-five-foot flag pole on top and is situated at the northeast corner of North Main and Fourth Streets in downtown Winston-Salem. The building's current street address is 51 East Fourth Street where the south elevation entrance is located. Historically, the building address was 401 North Main Street, with the main entrance on Main Street. Fronting North Main Street, its design consists of an eight-by-eight bay ziggurat tower situated squarely on the North Main and Fourth Streets corner that rises straight up sixteen stories, with visible setbacks at the seventeenth, nineteenth and twenty-first levels. The remainder of the building forms the base, which extends both north and east to form the U-shaped footprint or plan from the second to ninth floor levels, with the arms extending north. The building is approximately 120 feet wide on the Main Street side and 120 feet wide on the Church Street side. It has a depth of approximately 200 feet on the Fourth Street side, spanning the width of the block between Main and Church streets, and totals an area of 313, 995 square feet. Below ground, a basement, a sub-basement mezzanine, and a partially excavated sub-basement are featured, although the basement is raised along the east elevation and the eastern portion of the south elevation due to the site's gently sloping grade. The building's twenty-two storied structural frame is of structural steel, fire protected with clay tile on columns and concrete on beams and girders, supported by a foundation of reinforced concrete and a spread footing design. Floor and roof slabs are poured in place reinforced concrete construction. Exterior materials featured include buff-colored Indiana limestone veneer, with brick and structural clay tile backup; lead-coated copper spandrels under windows; and Benedict metal, which is specifically, nickel silver, an alloy composed of copper, tin, lead, zinc and nickel, for metalwork at entrance doors and along street level windows. The main entrance features "a two-story portal with ornamented metal work of delicate tracery."¹

Designed by the world-famous, New York architectural firm of Shreve and Lamb (later Shreve, Lamb and Harmon) in 1928 to 1929, the Reynolds Building's height --the tallest in North Carolina-- and more importantly, its "exotically modern Art Deco style" made it a Winston-Salem landmark upon completion.² As described by architectural historian, Catherine W. Bishir in her comprehensive treatise, *North Carolina Architecture*:

The vividly vertical design lifts the eye from street to sky in soaring strips to the narrow observation tower. Art Deco ornament of carved stone and Benedict metalwork accents the setbacks and enriches the lobby story. A tobacco-leaf theme, executed in copper and bronze hues, frames the deep-set street entrances and makes the elevator lobby into a gleaming treasury. As the building neared completion in 1929, [Reynolds] company pride swelled when their architectural firm gained international fame as designers of the Empire State Building (1929-31), the symbol of the age.³

The Reynolds Building in fact received the 'Building of the Year Award' by the National Association of

¹ "R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's Building, Winston-Salem, N.C." *Architecture and Building* Vol. 61:7, July (1929): 201.

² Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 481; and "R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's Building, Winston-Salem, N.C." *Architecture and Building* Vol. 61:7, July (1929): 201.

³ Bishir, 481 quoting Nannie M. Tilley, *The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 329.

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Architects for the year 1929.⁴

Narrative Description

The Reynolds Building stands at the northeast corner of North Main and East Fourth Streets in downtown Winston-Salem, in a rectangular lot that spans eastward approximately one-hundred-twenty feet to North Church Street. Constructed on the site of Winston-Salem's original city hall and city market (the site was sold by the city to R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in 1927), the lot slopes gently down from south to north, as well as gently down from west to east. The Reynolds Building fronts Main Street to the west – the primary elevation, and Fourth Street to the south – the secondary elevation. Tertiary elevations include the east, along Church Street, and the north, which is virtually inaccessible due to adjacent construction. The Reynolds Building runs twelve bays along Main Street, twenty-one bays along Fourth Street and thirteen bays along Church Street. The north or courtyard side, also twenty-one bays in width, features the arms of the U-shaped second to ninth floors at six bays and seven bays wide, east arm and west arm, respectively. The Reynolds Building extends out to the parcel line along the north, abutting the adjacent property.

The Reynolds Building's design consists of an eight-by-eight bay ziggurat tower situated squarely at the southwest corner that rises to twenty-two stories from a nine-story base. Thus, the detailed exterior description below distinguishes the tower from the base.

The Tower

The limestone veneered building's first eight bays north and eight bays east from the southwest corner of the lot rise from its flush and muted gray granite foundations the full twenty-two stories thus comprising the building's eight-bay squared tower. Serving as the focal point, the main entry is a two-story recessed portal with ornamental Benedict nickel of delicate tracery centered at the foot of the tower on the Main Street side. The portal is flanked by two, double-bay, tripartite show windows; two, single bay show windows with solid glazing demarcate the tower's ends.

Nickel silver revolving doors provide entry into the building. These are flanked by single doors and a tripartite transom above, delineated by solid metal bands. Each transom light is delineated further into either three or six thin rectangular lights. Above the transom extends an elongated crown of intricate Benedict nickel of repeating geometric flowering tobacco plants inset within a recessed tripartite frame of alternating floral and linear banding. Sitting proudly at the base of this ornamentation is an organically-inspired stylized tobacco plant in low relief. Above the entry, but beneath the third floor window openings, a metal inscription in a stylized font reads, "R J Reynolds [first line] Tobacco Company [second line]." Historic glass and metal lamp fixtures flank the portal. The rectangular show windows feature granite sills and marble lintels. The pale pink lintels are capped by a thin crown of ornamental metal work, stepped at the center of the opening. All windows above the ground level are 1980s rectangular three-over-three metal windows. Stone spandrels delineate the second floor window openings from the third floor. The openings at the third story are defined below their sills by repeating short-in-stature flowering plants in a low stone relief. The building's tower is further accentuated above the main entrance. The six center window bays of the tower are delineated from the third through fifth

⁴ Jerome Beatty, *Our 100th Anniversary, 1875-1975*. (n.p.: R.J. Reynolds Industries, Inc., 1975), 13. [place missing] See also, "The Reynolds Building: 40 Years Young," *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, 18 April 1969. The National Association of Architects is known today as the American Institute of Architects.

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floor levels by ribbed stone pilasters that culminate in embellished and tall, flowering tobacco plants. The fourth floor window openings of this accentuated area are capped by floral stone spandrels and have lead-coated copper spandrels featuring a zigzag and diamond motif below them. The lead and copper spandrel panels continue to demarcate the floor levels beneath window bays from the sixth through sixteenth floor, but have are fluted. The sixteenth floor windows are capped by stone spandrels in a repeating geometric low relief. This ornamentation thus demarcates the tower's first setback at the seventeenth floor. This setback remains eight bays wide, although end bays are slightly recessed. Floor levels between the seventeenth and eighteenth floors are again demarcated by metal spandrel panels beneath window openings. The nineteenth floor openings are capped by fluted stone spandrels. These extend some eight feet in height, bringing attention to the tower's second setback at the nineteenth floor level. This setback is centered and reduced to a width of six window bays. The window bays of this setback --the nineteenth through twenty-first floors-- are capped by spandrel glass, rather than metal or stone spandrel panels, thus creating the visual effect of a continuous three-story high vertical window. These windows are in most cases fixed, alternating between three-over-three or two-over-two square lights. The twenty-first floor provides the tower's third setback. Its parapet is stepped, with pilasters culminating in heavy square caps at both ends as well as every two bays. Situated between these heavy pilasters, the three groupings of two window bays delineated by a run of limestone veneer are capped by stone lintels featuring a simple geometric swirl relief that extends almost ten feet in height, thus announcing the final setback. The twenty-second floor or tank room is reduced in width to four window bays, although only the two center bays feature window glazing. The fixed windows' glazing extends eighteen feet in height, with eight rows of paired square lights. The two vertical window bays are flanked by fluted stone spandrels. Above each window opening is ten-foot stone geometric stone relief reminiscent of a rectangular skyscraper emerging from above clouds. The ziggurat hence extends upward to provide for a sixty-five foot metal flagpole.

The remaining three sides of the eight-bay by eight-bay tower are the same in materials and design, with variations typically only at the lower three floor levels. The south elevation of the tower for instance, features three show windows along its base that are flanked today by single windows in the each of the tower's end bays.

The Base

The building's nine-story base extends from the tower an additional four bays north along Main Street; double-wide show room windows are featured in these bays, one of which has a recessed entrance with paired egress doors. Along Fourth Street, the base extends an additional thirteen bays east from the tower. A secondary ornamented entrance is located in the first bay adjacent to the tower and is thus, almost centered in the elevation. This entrance is now the building's address. The secondary nature of the entry is evident however due to it being a single door recessed within an opening. The opening is framed in fluted nickel silver and features a marble lintel matching those of the show windows; a metal inscription in stylized font is featured on the marble, reading "R J Reynolds Tobacco Company." Adjacent and east of the recessed opening is a double-wide show window. The remaining nine window bays along the base at the street level are the three-over three metal windows also installed at upper floors.

The Church Street elevation is thirteen bays wide and is the service side of the building. Due to the grade, this side meets the street at basement level, as evident by the building's granite base which

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extends up to the window sills. A truck entrance and recessed loading dock is situated at the north end. Two non-descript pedestrian egress doors are also provided. Remaining window openings at street level here feature the three-over-three metal windows also installed at upper floors.

The north elevation of the building's base is the courtyard elevation. Its western portion or arm is eight bays wide. The first bay from the west is recessed four bays from third through ninth floors. The eastern arm is seven bays wide. The center portion is six bays wide and recessed four bays at the west and six bays at the east. A tertiary elevation, the north is virtually inaccessible due to adjacent construction. The Reynolds Building is separated from the adjacent property by a fire-door in the center of the north wall at the mezzanine (first floor) level, which effectively serves as a firewall between the two properties. A small portion of the northwest corner of the Reynolds Building is accessible from the street. This portion has three street-level show windows and a continuous ornamental stone relief panel above them. This panel is in contrast to the metal and marble lintels above the show windows at the west and south elevations. With the exception of the setback bay, the remainder of the visible lower portion of the western arm through its fourth floor is a blank concrete wall, evidencing an adjacent building (now gone) at the time of original construction. The adjacent property that is setback from Main Street obstructs views of the eastern arm and center portion of the courtyard elevation to its third floor, but no window openings exist at these lower levels with the exception of the show windows previously described. Windows of the third through ninth floors of the courtyard elevation are the same as those installed elsewhere.

Exterior ornamentation of the base is minimized. The limestone veneer is continued on the base, with the exception that face brick is utilized on the piers delineating the window bays at the courtyard elevations. Fluted lead and copper spandrel panels are located below windows at the fourth floor and above and demarcate floor levels of the base. The spandrels below third floor window openings are of stone; third floor openings of the Main, Fourth and Church streets elevations of the base are defined below their sills by repeating short-in-stature flowering plants in a low stone relief, a design detail continued from the tower. The ninth floor of the base is capped by a stepped parapet that features a subtle low-relief repeating geometric stone motif culminating in draping leaves above the windows.

Exterior Alterations

The existing windows, of which there are approximately one thousand, are modern aluminum replacements installed in 1988 at basement and mezzanine (first floor) levels, and in 1997 to 1999 at all remaining floors, replicating the originals in design. The show windows along Main Street were restored in 1981 and 1982 using like materials, including nickel silver for exterior trim and marble panels for the lintels, duplicating the original detailing. Several show windows that once featured door openings have also been altered to windows. These changes however were done sympathetically; the openings have received a granite base like the existing. This early 1980s work also included restoration of the main entry's revolving door. It was disassembled, rebuilt, and reinstalled for continued use. Other alterations are limited to replacement of egress doors and the loading door with new doors. Additionally, the western arm of the base's north side received three show windows and a stone relief panel above, reflective of, but differentiated from the historic, likely due to the reveal of this face after removal of the earlier adjacent building. Lastly, the building's historic exterior limestone has been cleaned and mortar joints repointed in 1950, 1960 and most recently in 1997 to 1999.

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Interior Plan, Finishes and Alterations

The interior of the Reynolds Building was designed to not only house R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company offices, but also income-producing shops in the first story and basement level, a public arcade at the first floor mezzanine, as well as rental office space on various upper floors, which tended to be leased by lawyers, railroad, insurance companies and others with direct links to the tobacco business.⁵ A Reynolds employee cafeteria was featured on the tenth floor. This floor was renovated in 1978 to provide additional executive offices. Executive offices including the Board Room were located on the top floors, e.g. the seventeenth through nineteenth floors, with other upper floors remodeled and subsumed for use by executives in later years, such as the fourteenth level in 1986 and 1987. The twentieth floor is the fan room floor, the twenty-first level houses the elevator machine room and the twenty-second level is the tank room.

The overall design intent of the upper general office floors consisted of large open office spaces extending from the perimeter or outer wall into corridors built around the elevators, stairs, toilets and other utilities. This intent was employed in both the tower and the base. To accommodate such in the base, architect, R. H. Shreve stated in his 1930 *Architectural Record* article,

“Two of the three facades...have been set back from the street line to secure better light and air conditions, and a large court has been placed on the inner property line. Utility units are in the darker inner corners of the plan...” He clarified this further, “...the twenty-eight-foot deep office is the basic unit, with the utilities occupying the ‘blind space.’ The set-backs are on the street and because of the climate there is a wider court than is usual among more northerly cities.”⁶

The interior of the Reynolds Building’s lowest levels features a partial sub-basement, with an area that has been excavated and utilized today for storage and HVAC, as well as a sub-basement mezzanine in its east side that houses custodial offices and toilets, for example. The basement level above, which spans the full width and depth of the building, features additional mechanical and storage rooms, truck loading facilities, and some office space. The basement was renovated between 1977 and 1982. Originally, a distinct medical office was situated in the southeast corner with access and egress to Church Street; this southeastern corner has been reconfigured into a larger office and a new egress corridor between the northern-most Church Street entry and base’s stair and freight elevator core. The finishes are modern. This corridor connects to the basement’s main east-west corridor, which has a lowered ceiling, but has retained terrazzo flooring. Toilets, storage rooms, as well as stairs down to the historic barber shop on the building’s south side are located off of the main east-west corridor. The corridor ultimately leads to the tower’s elevator bank, which features historic terrazzo flooring, as well as buff colored Hauteville marble wainscoting and Belgian black marble base and elevator surrounds. Its ceiling is stepped, but has been updated, accommodating sprinklers and recessed lighting. West of the elevator bank and along the basement’s west wall is an early 1980s hallway which provides access to the basement’s northwest corner office area. Originally, the entire northwest corner comprised the building’s famed restaurant, the Caravan Room, and its support spaces. The Caravan Room had originally been named the Reynolds Grill and Cafeteria, later the Cavalier Grill. No historic fabric of the restaurant remains as the newly partitioned spaces have received modern ceiling, wall and floor finishes.

⁵ Nannie M. Tilley, *The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 593 per telephone conversation with James A. Gray, Sept. 20, 1988.

⁶ R. H. Shreve, “The Economic Design of Office Buildings,” *Architectural Record* 67 (Apr. 1930): 358 and 357.

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The barber shop, however, does retain white and gray marble wainscoting and Belgian black marble base on its north, east and a portion of its west walls. Ceiling, floor and other wall finishes are non-historic. The north-central and northeast corner of the basement is service, mechanical and utility space. A wide corridor extends from the north side of the freight elevator to the northeast corner's truck entrance and loading dock, for example and has common brick walls, a concrete floor and a dropped ceiling.

The first floor, referred to as the 'mezzanine' in existing plans, is at street level and is accessible from both the main entrance and the Fourth Street entry. From the Main Street revolving doors, one enters the main lobby. The main lobby today features open spaces to the south – the exhibition hall, as well as to the north – the main hall or lounge. Both were created during the 1981 to 1982 renovation, replacing multiple smaller commercial spaces. These enlarged spaces received new finishes -- flooring of terrazzo and Casino Rose Italian marble chips and bands of brass laid out in a repeating geometric pattern, Casino Rose Italian marble walls with nickel silver trim, and new plaster, zigzag coffered ceilings. The exhibition hall, the smaller of the two spaces, has carved glass panels and a mural commissioned for the renovation that depicts the history of tobacco, done in the style of Works Progress Administration artwork. Several glass exhibition cases are also installed in the exhibition hall. The main hall or lounge is more formal, with three rows of evenly-spaced and thick brass-banded columns that flare upward and outward in a tobacco plant motif; glass cases are located in its north wall at the east. The 1980s reception desk is located towards the main hall's center south side. An interior accessible ramp also slopes down and northward from and along the west exterior wall and hence eastward into a partitioned short service corridor to the first floor's central hallway that delineates the western portion of the first floor from the eastern portion. A perimeter overlook in the main hall adheres to the path of the accessible ramp and is delineated by a brass railing.

The remainder of the western portion of the first floor features the main entry foyer and the elaborately ornamented elevator bank, both of which are immediately east of the main entry. The elevator bank consists of six elevators; the three southern elevators provide access through floor ten only. An enclosed stairwell is located at the east end of the south side elevators. At the east end of the elevator lobby are five steps down to the building's octagonal hall; from here, one can turn south and exit to Fourth Street. Heading north from the octagonal hall leads to the building's far north wall. Along this portion of the central hallway, steps up to the renovated main hall are available, as is access to the short service corridor and accessible ramp previously described.

As part of the 1980s renovation, new flooring was installed in the main entry foyer, the elevator bank, octagonal hall and its associated central hallway. The replacement flooring and base however replicates the original in both material (terrazzo and marble) and design. The design of the entry foyer floor features a large pink terrazzo circle delineated by two thick green-colored terrazzo lines and four smaller pink circles, also each delineated by two thick green terrazzo lines. Nickel silver demarcates the pattern, distinguishing it further as a stylized tobacco flower. The octagonal hall floor features a sunburst pattern immediately beneath the rotunda, a purplish hued terrazzo sun, encircled first by a band of buff-colored terrazzo, followed by an outer band of green-terrazzo with pink terrazzo diamonds and a third band of buff-colored terrazzo. Thirty-two rays emanate from the sun, alternating in thin buff-colored terrazzo and thicker multi-colored terrazzo. Nickel silver delineates the various terrazzo bands and also demarcates the terrazzo sun, further distinguishing it in fact as a stylized tobacco flower akin to that of the main entry foyer's floor. The elevator bank flooring and the remainder of the central hallway have a

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repeating pattern of evenly-spaced pink-hued terrazzo squares, delineated by thick buff-colored terrazzo lines. The elevator bank has an additional line of alternating pink- and green-terrazzo running along its north and south walls. The steps to the elevator bank from the octagonal hall are of Belgian black marble; Belgian black marble flooring also lines both edges of these described spaces and serves as a baseboard along their walls.

The walls of the octagonal hall, central hallway and elevator bank are the historic marble and were cleaned in the 1980s. Marble relief panels are featured on three of the octagonal hall's upper walls; these reliefs continue a tobacco theme, featuring either stylized potted tobacco flowers or wild tobacco flowers. Similar floral marble reliefs are also located on the square arched opening to the stairs at the east side of the octagonal hall. Replica light fixtures were installed as part of the renovation and the Art Deco chandelier hanging in the octagonal hall was reconstructed at that same time. The letter box for United States mail on the elevator banks' north wall appears to be the original and features some nickel silver detailing. Additionally, the historic ornamented metal elevator doors are retained; they are contoured and feature metal transoms above with an emblematic motif reminiscent of the banded elevator bank ceiling.

Although the entry foyer, elevator bank, and octagonal hall have received the modifications described, they continue to feature an historic hand-laid gold and silver leaf ornamented ceiling. This ceiling was reworked in 1949, during the period of significance, and was cleaned and polished in the 1980s renovation. The entry foyer's ceiling is rectangular in shape and defines the foyer bounds. It is stepped with three thin framing bands, followed by a thicker framing band of swirling curled leaves, stylized sunbursts and tobacco flowers, accented with flat leaves and undulating lines. The center portion of the ceiling is flat, but is outlined by raised undulating lines, also accented with flat-style leaves, small circles and larger semicircles. A light fixture (not historic) is located in the middle of the ceiling. The elongated rectangular ceiling of the elevator bank features six evenly-spaced bands that feature a centered, slightly raised and larger 'buckle.' The buckle is flanked by motifs seen in the entry foyer ceiling – curly leaves, stylized sunbursts and tobacco flowers. Contoured lines of gold bound the top and bottom of the bands and culminate in the buckle to help form a stepped diamond motif, in the center of which are multiple organic and curling tobacco plants. The ceiling of the octagonal hall is stepped, creating a rotunda. At four of the corners, inlay in the design of a four-stepped and centered ziggurat tobacco plant features flowing leaves that curl into sunbursts at each level. The reconstructed Art Deco chandelier hangs from the zenith of the ceiling. The ceiling of the remainder of the central hallway is stepped, but is not historic. At the north end of the central hallway, however, the original second floor beamed and coffered ceiling of lights (windows that are now painted over) is hidden above the current lowered ceiling; this ceiling is detailed as ceiling and vault lights on the as-built plans.

The east portion of the first floor is accessed from the octagonal hall. Continuing east from the rotunda space a stair leads up to the first floor's true mezzanine, which houses the service elevator, electrical closets and a stairwell; these are situated towards the center of the mezzanine and are surrounded by an open floor with a few offices partitioned in the south and southeast. Although generally an open floor plan today, this mezzanine was originally referred to as the public arcade because it was once partitioned into multiple retail and commercial spaces around the building perimeter that the public accessed from the octagonal hall and central hallway.

Comparison of the as-built drawings with the existing drawings indicate reconfigurations of the floors as company needs changed, or tenants changed. Although the second through fifth floor plans

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today no longer adhere to the twenty-eight-foot deep office that Shreve described, they do follow his push for air and natural light. Today, individual offices on these floors are still situated at the perimeter, albeit are generally much shorter in width, and rather than being delineated off an L-shaped or north-south double-loaded corridor as they were originally, they are located off of much wider raceway corridors, or in many instances, off of open plan areas. The sixth through ninth floors were designed as open plans, with the intention they would be partitioned as or if needed. Today, they are configured similar to the lower floors.

Over the years, the interior of the building has been renovated and updated to meet the technical and interior design standards of the time. In 1956 the building was outfitted with air conditioning. In 1961 the six passenger elevators were converted to automatic controls and in the late 1970s to early 1980s, a sprinkler system, voice communication through a vertical raceway and smoke detectors were installed on all floors, with the HVAC system upgraded again. As a result of these elevator and mechanical upgrades, some office space on the eleventh, twelfth, and fifteenth floors of the tower has been subsumed into shaft space or mechanical equipment rooms. At that time too, the long central hallways, which for example, typically formed an L-shaped corridor in the base were removed. The vault on the ninth floor, however, was retained.

Executive floors seventeen and eighteen were not delineated in as-built drawings and therefore, their original configuration remains unknown. However, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company records indicate that the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth floors were completely gutted in 1987, including elevator lobbies, with the exception of the nineteenth floor's current Board Room. This room is intact, featuring original wood paneling and fireplace, with a 1960s ceiling. The executive floors of ten, seventeen, eighteen and nineteen received new lobby wall and floor finishes of Italian Casino Rose and green marble in the 1987 renovation.

In addition to those of the executive floors, interior finishes of the upper general office floors have been updated in the Reynolds Building as needed and desired, inclusive of new ceiling tiles or grids, carpeting, and paint and lighting fixtures, for example, in office areas. Renovations and replacements of finishes occurred on the upper general office floors in 1977 to 1982, in 1990 to 1992 and again in 2000 to 2004. A portion of the first floor was also remodeled in the extensive 1981 to 1982 renovation previously described, accommodating the now existing accessible (interior) ramp, a reception and security desk, as well as a visitor's main hall or lounge area and Reynolds company exhibition space. This was accomplished by incorporating former first floor level commercial and retail space to create a large open plan in the western portion of the building.

As part of that renovation, however, the main entry foyer, elevator bank, octagon hall and central hallway were refurbished. Their historic Ste. Genevieve Golden Vein (Missouri) marble walls, as well as the gold and silver leaf ornamented ceiling which had been reworked in 1949, during the period of significance, were cleaned and polished. A new floor, utilizing Belgian Black marble for the octagonal hall's steps to the elevator bank, and a combination of marble and terrazzo for the remainder, replicated the original in design and materials.

Other historic interior finishes remain elsewhere in the building. Upper floor elevator lobbies typically retain their buff-colored Hauteville (France) marble wainscoting approximately four to six feet high with historic Belgian Black marble base and trim around the elevator openings.⁷ Additionally, on

⁷ "A Practical Monument to a Southern Industry." *Through the Ages: A Monthly Publication of the National Association of*

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select upper general office floors, some of the short halls that extend eastward from the tower's elevator lobby to the base retain the buff-colored wainscoting, continued from the elevator banks; the wainscoting is typically no longer present as one enters the base. Some service corridors in the tower, too, meaning the short north-south corridors off of elevator lobbies that provide access to toilets and janitor closets, retain their historic mail chutes. Although the existing wood paneling in the executive levels, such as seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth floors is, with the exception of that in the Board Room, replacement American Black Walnut paneling, R.J. Reynolds company records indicate that the new paneling replicates details of the 1929 paneling.

This description was based on visual inspection by the author and information provided by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and from the historic journal articles cited in Section 9. For additional insight into the original physical character of the building, photographs and select historic architectural plans are included with the nomination.

Integrity

The Reynolds Building has retained a good degree of historic integrity in terms of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Although adjacent one-, two-, three- and four story commercial buildings originally on the block or in the immediate vicinity have been replaced by taller structures, the building remains squarely within downtown Winston-Salem and still retains a place on the city's evolving skyline. Additionally, the historic R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company power plant and tobacco factory buildings that helped the building's namesake firm achieve stature in the 1920s remain near, beginning one block east. The building's ziggurat design, well-balanced masses and gauged setbacks are clearly evident. The façade materials consisting of limestone veneer, ornamental copper panels, stone pilasters and tobacco-leaf- and -flower-inspired stone spandrels; and the two-story main portal with nickel silver embellishment and similarly tobacco-inspired tracery continue to reflect the building's high degree of workmanship.

Inside, the building's first floor main entry foyer, elevator bank, octagonal hall and rotunda, and central hallway, layout is intact. Although their flooring has been replaced, these spaces have historic marble walls; additionally, the octagonal hall features marble relief panels and the ornamental metal elevator doors of the elevator bank retain their emblematic metal transoms. Most striking perhaps is the reworked gold and silver leaf ornamented ceiling of these spaces. Other significant historic interior features include the layout of the tower's elevator lobbies, specifically those of the upper general office floors which exhibit historic buff-colored marble wainscoting and black marble elevator surrounds. Stair-towers, one each in the tower and base remain, as do the stairs from the octagonal hall to the first floor's true mezzanine and the basement level's barber shop. In terms of executive space, the nineteenth floor's historic Board Room retains the original wood paneled walls and fireplace. Where historic finishes are intact, the thematic design motifs of stylized tobacco leaves, tobacco flowers and/or sunbursts are often featured and repeated, unifying the exterior with the interior. The twenty-two-story building continues to evoke the feeling and association of a significant 1920s Art Deco ziggurat skyscraper.

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Statement of Significance

Summary

The 1920s Reynolds Building in downtown Winston-Salem is significant at the statewide level and fulfills Criterion C as an icon of early twentieth century Art Deco architecture in North Carolina. Designed by renowned architects, Shreve and Lamb, the twenty-two-story building was erected between 1928 and 1929 and remains a prominent feature in the Winston-Salem skyline. It is an excellent example of the Art Deco-style ziggurat skyscraper and was from 1929 until 1966, the tallest building in the State. The architectural significance of the exterior lies in its well-balanced masses and gauged setbacks, as well as in its architectural detailing which consists of limestone veneer, ornamental copper panels, stone pilasters, tobacco-leaf- and -flower-inspired stone spandrels, and a two-story main portal with nickel silver embellishment and similarly tobacco-inspired tracery, together which provide it a good degree of integrity and distinguish it from other Art Deco contemporaries in the state.

The building takes its name from its original owner and primary tenant, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (RJRT). The building symbolizes the culmination of RJRT’s 1920s boom period and heralded the firm’s ensuing development into a modernized tobacco company. At the local level, the building thus fulfills Criterion A for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company’s influential role in the industrial history of Winston-Salem as the firm developed into a predominantly locally-based, yet nationally-known tobacco company. The period of significance extends from 1929, its year of construction until 1964, the fifty-year guideline for National Register eligibility which ensures enough time has passed to sufficiently evaluate the property in a historic context. During the years after this date, RJRT’s success continued, with the firm broadening its presence beyond the city, State and nation, and increasingly diversifying its products, but the period does not have the exceptional significance required to extend the date beyond 1964.

Historical Background and Industry and Architecture Contexts

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company

The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company was founded in 1875 by Richard Joshua Reynolds (1850-1918). As described by R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company historian Nannie Tilley, Reynolds was “a man of unusual size, great energy, an independent will... [and a] quick-thinking mind.”⁸ “Always aware of new trends in the tobacco world,” strategic and forward-thinking, Reynolds admitted to moving to Winston-Salem on account of the city’s new railroad facilities and the fact that it was in the center of the “Old Bright Belt” – the area where the new bright leaf tobacco -and preferred tobacco- was grown.⁹ His first factory expanded multiple times and in 1880 Reynolds installed a steam engine, thus allowing more production capacity, as well as operation through the winter months.¹⁰ By 1883, Reynolds was so distinguished among Winston’s tobacco manufacturers that the local newspaper, *Western Sentinel*,

⁸ Tilley, 24-5.

⁹ Ibid., 24.

¹⁰ The nature of factory operations during this time period was seasonal. Winston factories typically suspended operations during the winter months due to lack of light and heat. Reynolds was not the first, however, to utilize steam power in his tobacco factory. P.H. Hanes and Company had done so in 1878. (See Tilley, 34.)

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referred to him merely as “R. J. R.”¹¹ Reynolds’ first year of operation produced 150,000 pounds of chewing tobacco in a two-story structure covering less than the area of tennis court next to the tracks on Depot Street (now Patterson Avenue) in downtown Winston-Salem.¹² By 1886, the enterprising Reynolds produced eighty-six different brands of chewing tobacco. Reynolds quadrupled his output by 1897 and at that time was producing more than a fourth of the chewing tobacco in Winston-Salem.¹³ As such, RJRT was incorporated in North Carolina in 1890 with Reynolds as president and his brother William Neal as vice president.

In 1899, Reynolds conceded to becoming a subsidiary of the American Tobacco Company trust, essentially a tobacco monopoly and producer of cigarettes that typically forced competitors to sell.¹⁴ The sale of controlling interest in his firm to the trust, however, actually allowed Reynolds to acquire the other tobacco factories in Winston-Salem, including T. L. Vaughn and Company, B. F. Hanes & Company, P. H. Hanes & Company, Brown & Brothers, and Liipfert, Scales and Company, as well as others. Located within the vicinity of his original factory, the local firms that Reynolds acquired were incorporated into what had become the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company complex and Reynolds became the “plug [chewing] tobacco king.”¹⁵ In 1900, Reynolds was producing over 11,000,000 pounds of plug tobacco, far exceeding the production of the firms he purchased. The success of the Reynolds Company since 1880 had also led to construction of new factory buildings, including No. 256 in 1892 (no longer extant) and No. 8 in 1900 (no longer extant) within the firm’s downtown Winston-Salem factory district. Accounts of the time saluted these buildings, “as the largest plug factory in the State,” and as the “largest building thus far erected in our city [Winston-Salem],” respectively.¹⁶

In 1907 the company introduced ‘Prince Albert’ smoking tobacco, but it was the decision of 1913 that pushed the company into the national arena. Two years prior, the American Tobacco Company trust had been dissolved by United States Court order; the ‘Big Four’ successor tobacco companies resulting from the trust’s dissolution: American; Liggett and Myers; P. Lorillard and RJRT emerged with Reynolds continuing business “along the same as heretofore.”¹⁷ At the time and despite the popularity of Prince Albert, Reynolds, at the national level, ranked below the other manufacturers in sales; third in chewing tobacco; fourth in smoking tobacco; and with zero production of cigarettes.

With aggressive policies, RJRT however would soon lift itself up to a company of leadership.¹⁸ Reynolds introduced Camel cigarettes in 1913, along with four other brands. The first “truly American cigarette,” Camel offered originality – it was a blended cigarette – a blend of more than one type of tobacco, both domestic -burley and bright leaf- and Turkish tobacco.¹⁹ The blended taste became an

¹¹ Tilley, 34 quoting *Western Sentinel*, 28 June 1883.

¹² Beatty, 2.

¹³ Tilley, 64.

¹⁴ The American Tobacco Company was founded in Durham, N.C. by James B. Duke, 1856-1925, in 1890 through the consolidation of four major tobacco manufacturers.

¹⁵ Tilley, 2. It should be noted that Reynolds’ firm actually became a subsidiary of the Continental Tobacco Company, a holding company of American Tobacco Company, which served as an agency to carry out the policy of consolidating the manufacture of plug tobacco.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 69 quoting *Tobacco* 18 Mar. 1892, p. 5 (largest plug factory); and Tilley, 102 quoting Edward Rondthaler, *The Memorabilia of Fifty Years, 1877-1927* (Raleigh, 1928), p. 174 (largest building).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁹ Cigarettes were Turkish when first introduced to the United States.

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instant success; Camel production was 425 million cigarettes in the first year (1914); in 1915 production jumped five-fold to over two billion.²⁰ Already a success, Camel cigarette popularity increased again upon the country’s entry into World War I in 1917, with men in service using sixty- to seventy-percent more tobacco than they did in civilian life, and production subsequently doubling from the previous year to twelve billion.²¹

When Camel advertising resumed after the war ended, RJRT expended 6.4 million dollars, utilizing the now infamous phrase, *‘I’d walk a mile for a Camel.’*²² By 1925, over thirty-four billion Camel cigarettes were made, accounting for forty-three percent of all cigarettes sold in the United States; with the exception of only a few years between 1920 and 1930, Camel was the number one selling cigarette in the nation.²³

Despite the death of company founder, R. J. Reynolds in 1918 and continually building on the “fabulous success” of the company’s Camel cigarette, a new generation of Reynolds leaders in the late 1920s developed the firm into a modernized, international business and would continue to do so.²⁴ Reynolds was first succeeded by his brother, William, who as the newly-created position of chairman of the board subsequently recommended Bowman Gray Sr. as president of the company in 1924. Under this presidential leadership, along with James A. Gray, S. Clay Williams, Robert E. Lasater, James B. Dyer, James W. Glen, Carl W. Harris and Roy C. Haberkern, RJRT developed into a modern industry through physical expansion –both in manufacturing and administrative, as well as through modernization of production and practices.

During this time, the extant factory buildings within the nearby Winston-Salem Tobacco Historic District were constructed, including Factory 60 (1926; inventory resource number 33) and Factory 90 (1928; inventory resource number 34) and several of their large-scale additions including those named 60-2 and 90-2 in 1927 and 1928, respectively. A new power station was constructed (No. 64-3; inventory resource number 41) in 1922. Metal bridges above streets connected the expanded factory buildings together at various locations throughout the site, adding efficiency to the manufacturing process.²⁵

The period was also marked by new acquisitions. RJRT acquired the following Winston-Salem tobacco firms during this time, thereby consolidating and essentially controlling the city’s tobacco manufacturing industry: Ogburn, Hill & Company, the N. D. Sullivan Company, and Bailey Brothers. The firm of Bailey Brothers had been established in 1880; in 1924, despite an inventory of twenty brands of chewing tobacco, two brands of smoking tobacco and two brands of cigarettes on the market, the company was put on auction in a bankruptcy sale. Located amongst the Reynolds company downtown complex, RJRT purchased the firm, including all of its brands and property.²⁶ With acquisitions and production thus increasing, the modernization of cigarette production followed through installation of the Arenco packing machine and development of a foil-making plant (foil was used in the packaging of cigarettes). Moreover, RJRT had increased its average annual number of employees from

²⁰ Tilley, 219.

²¹ Tilley, 314

²² Ibid, Table 7-6.

²³ See Winston-Salem Tobacco Historic District National Register Nomination, Section 8, Page 4.

²⁴ Bishir, 478.

²⁵ Wyatt, “Downtown Winston-Salem Tobacco District Study List Application.”

²⁶ Tilley, 304-5.

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2,932 in 1905 to 11,436 in Winston-Salem in 1925, almost a quarter of the recorded 1920 city population.²⁷

The firm also focused on corporate aspects during this time. In 1922, the company finally succeeded in listing its stock in the New York Stock Exchange.²⁸ By 1925, the company's net earnings were \$25 million. By 1927, this would increase to \$29 million, even with advertising expenditures of over \$19 million.²⁹ By 1929 the company would establish a retirement plan for all employees and arrange for them to obtain, low-cost comprehensive insurance. The group insurance plan offered group life, total and permanent disability, and accident and health insurance through the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States; employees were eligible to participate after only six months' employment.³⁰ The retirement plan was said to be the 101st such plan in the United States, with the group insurance plans a first in the tobacco industry.³¹

The Reynolds Building

Clearly on the cutting edge of the tobacco industry, both in terms of manufacturing, and in terms of corporate practices, it is perhaps no surprise that RJRT also sought new modern offices during this time. RJRT employee numbers had increased, inclusive of an expanded Reynolds administrative force and as early as 1920 rumors indicated the firm intended to construct a new office at the corner of Main and Fourth Streets (at the time, the location of the city hall). The firm's then present office was situated at Main and Fifth Streets. A four-story, brick structure constructed in 1910 to 1911, it had the appearance of many of the company's nearby factory buildings. It was said that Reynolds had wanted the company buildings to look the same as possible.³²

Under the leadership of Bowman Gray Sr., a decision was finalized in 1927 however for something different, something bold --a twenty-two-story skyscraper. This height would surpass the existing tallest building in the South -- the Jefferson Standard Building (1923) in Greensboro. Yet in addition, the desired form would have "an effect of conservatism along with attractiveness, [avoiding] flashiness."³³ In general, it must be "well-constructed, economically planned, modern in equipment, well executed and distinctive in appearance."³⁴ In addition, a highly important consideration was the desired date of completion.³⁵ To accomplish this superior height and the design requirements, RJRT selected the New York firm of Shreve and Lamb as architects. Shreve and Lamb had experience in skyscraper design, as they worked principally on commercial office buildings in New York City,

²⁷ Ibid, 255, Table 8-8. See also: City of Winston-Salem. *City of Winston-Salem Government Meeting Notes-City of Winston-Salem: 1920-1929*. Web. Accessed March 31, 2014. The recorded population of Winston-Salem in 1920 was 48,395. It should be noted that RJRT did employ an out-of-state sales force; see Tilley, 563.

²⁸ Tilley, 201.

²⁹ Ibid., 332.

³⁰ Ibid., 358.

³¹ Ibid., 358 and 362.

³² "Old RJR Office to Vanish," *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, 6 September 1972.

³³ "The Reynolds Building: 40 Years Young," *Winston-Salem Sentinel*, 18 April 1969.

³⁴ Shreve and Lamb Architects. "Utilization of Working Schedules in Office Practice: A Method Employed in the Designing of an Office Building for the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company at Winston-Salem, N.C." *The American Architect* Vol. 133: 2544 (May 1928), 603.

³⁵ Ibid.

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although they also designed a number of estates and residences in the New York suburbs, and a few apartment houses in Manhattan.

Richmond Harold Shreve (1877-1946) was born in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. He studied architecture at Cornell University, graduated in 1902 and spent the next four years on the faculty of the College of Architecture there. While at Cornell, he supervised construction of Goldwin Smith Hall, designed by the prominent New York firm of Carrère and Hastings, and at the conclusion of the project, joined the firm.

William Frederick Lamb (1883-1952) was born in Brooklyn. After graduating from Williams College in 1904, he studied at Columbia University School of Architecture, as well as the Atelier in Paris. He received his degree from École des Beaux Arts in 1911, returned to New York and joined Carrère and Hastings.

In 1920, Shreve and Lamb became partners in the firm. Four years later, they broke away to form Shreve and Lamb. It was generally acknowledged that Lamb was the designer of the firm and Shreve the administrator. They not only had experience in exploring the trend of verticality, but also the changing nature of design, including new setback laws that some cities, in particular New York adopted during this time period in order to resolve conflicts over the height and bulk of buildings and the relationship to light, air and “open space in the sky” in commercial districts.³⁶ As a result, the firm was also well-versed in the complex engineering and financing that such skyscrapers required. The commercial work of Shreve and Lamb therefore tended to be spare and functional, reflecting little of the Beaux-Arts ornament seen in the designs of Carrère and Hastings. Their well-known buildings in New York, including the Lefcourt National Building (1928), 500 Fifth Avenue (1932), as well as the Chimes Building (1929) in Syracuse and of course, the Reynolds Building in Winston-Salem are thus similarly designed with unadorned limestone cladding, metal frame windows, simple set-back massing, with Art Deco (or Streamlined) ornamental motifs.³⁷

By December 10, 1927 plans for Shreve and Lamb’s ‘Office Building for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company,’ as it is referred to on the as-built drawings and subsequent journal articles written by the architects, received final approval and on March 1, 1928 the construction contract was awarded to the James Baird Construction Company of New York City on a bid of \$1.9 million. The final cost would be about \$2.4 million.³⁸ Local announcements of the forthcoming building described the “two-million-dollar” project of the “home office building of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company” to become “the most beautiful building in North Carolina, as well as the tallest,” providing “every modern convenience in like structures in the largest cities.”³⁹

“By today’s standards, what happened over the new few months might be seen as a miracle;” Roy Haberkern, a former RJRT director, recalled twenty-five years later, “Only seven months expired from the date the first steel was placed until the stonework was completed and the windows installed.”⁴⁰

³⁶ Mark A. Weiss, “Skyscraper Zoning: New York’s Pioneering Role.” *Journal of the American Planning Association* Vol. 58: 2 (Spring 1992), 201.

³⁷ Landmarks Preservation Commission, “Empire State Building Landmarks Designation Report,” 19 May 1981, pp. 9-10.

³⁸ Tilley, 329; and “Reynolds Building Vital Statistics,” p. 1.

³⁹ “A-Two-Million-Dollar Project,” in *Facts about Winston-Salem*, 1929 loose-leaf photocopy available in Winston-Salem Buildings and Architecture – Reynolds Building. Vertical File, Forsyth County Public Library-Central Library, Winston-Salem, N.C.

⁴⁰ “Looking Around Downtown-A Winston-Salem Landmark,” in *Downtown Winston-Salem*, October 1990, loose-leaf photocopy available in Winston-Salem Buildings and Architecture – Reynolds Building. Vertical File, Forsyth County Public

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The time-line was as follows:

- May 1, 1928 – the first structural steel was in place;
- June 27, 1928 – the first stone was set;
- December 3, 1928 – the structural work was finished;
- April 23, 1929 – the building was occupied.

This efficiency of construction became fodder for Shreve and Lamb in contemporary journal articles. In the May 1928 journal *American Architect*, the architects explained the necessity of cooperation of the architect, contractor, and owners in order to ensure a return on the capital invested on the construction of a building at the earliest possible time. The under-construction office building for RJRT was utilized as a prime example to be studied by readers. A progress schedule of the project provided shows that the general working drawings were initiated on November 15, 1927, with an estimated building completion date of April 15, 1928. This date was for intents and purposes, met.

From its beginning, the Reynolds Building was not only the corporate offices of RJRT, but also the premiere Winston-Salem office building for a variety of businesses, including insurance firms, brokerage firms, attorneys, architects, and developers, as well as rail lines. The public enjoyed access to the retail and commercial shops on the basement and first floor and its mezzanine (referred to at the time as the arcade), which included a barber shop and the eventual Caravan Room restaurant in the basement, as well as a Bobbitt's Pharmacy and an industrial bank, a telegraph office, a railway ticket office, and a haberdashery on the first floor and mezzanine, to name a few.⁴¹ When it opened, fifty-percent of the building was occupied by RJRT, with sixty-five-percent of the remaining available space already leased.

Upon RJRT's move from the old office to the new "magnificent building," the local newspaper extended "heartiest congratulations."⁴² "What this building means to the tobacco industry in general cannot be estimated in dollars and cents. It stands as a symbol of stability, an impressive monument indicative of the whole industry's progress. The continued expansion of the Reynolds Company's business is a matter of general knowledge," exclaimed a contemporary journal.⁴³ The local news editorial furthered, "The opening of its headquarters in the new building marks another epoch in the phenomenal progress of Winston-Salem's largest industry. It is also a sort of celebration of the record-breaking prosperity the company has enjoyed during the first quarter of 1929...But this building means a great deal more to Winston-Salem than merely a convenient plant where the highest efficiency may be obtained in the handling of the business of a great industrial enterprise...This building is a real triumph of modern architecture and as such is the pride of Winston-Salem and a distinct asset to North Carolina."

The Reynolds Building and Art Deco Architecture

In the early twentieth-century skyscrapers were "the new American building form" and "icons of prosperity, modernity, and progress."⁴⁴ As such, the laurels for the tallest building in North Carolina and, in particular, amongst competing Piedmont cities had been shifting back and forth between

Library-Central Library, Winston-Salem, N.C.

⁴¹See "Reynolds Tobacco Company Occupies New Skyscraper," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, 28 April 1929, and "A Winston-Salem Landmark," *Downtown Winston-Salem*, October 1990, 9.

⁴²"Congratulations," *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, 28 April 1929.

⁴³A Practical Monument to a Southern Industry." *Through the Ages: A Monthly Publication of the National Association of Marble Dealers*. Vol. 9: 3 (July 1931): 41.

⁴⁴Bishir, 476-7.

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Charlotte and Winston-Salem.⁴⁵ Charlotte's 1908 to 1909 and twelve-story Independence Building (formerly, the Realty Building, with two stories added in 1922; razed in 1981) by Frank Pierce Milburn was the first steel skyscraper in the state. Winston-Salem hence jumped into the 'race to the sky' with the subsequent 1911 construction of the seven-story Wachovia Bank Building, also by Milburn. After the city's O'Hanlon Building (by Northup and O'Brien) rose to eight stories in 1915, Wachovia added a competitive eighth story to its building in 1917. The Hotel Robert E. Lee (by William Lee Stoddart) was built to twelve stories in 1919 (since razed). These were surpassed by the eighteen-story (233 feet tall) Jefferson Standard Building in Greensboro in 1923. W. M. Nissen then began his office building of eighteen stories in Winston-Salem, and in 1926 it became the tallest building in North Carolina at 238 feet tall. The Reynolds Building however topped all in height, but more importantly, moved "beyond the established classical norm."⁴⁶

North Carolina's skyscrapers up to this time typically had blocky forms with decorative cornices at the roofline."⁴⁷ See for example, Charles C. Hartmann's Jefferson Standard Building, an eighteen-story, U-shaped building with a terra cotta and granite façade featuring extensive Beaux-Arts and Romanesque ornamentation such as clustered arches and engaged colonnettes. Milburn's eight-story Wachovia National Bank Building has a block form with symmetrical elevations that exhibit Renaissance Revival details, including limestone and terra cotta entablatures. Stoddart's Nissen Building is an eighteen-story U-shaped building, faced in limestone and brick with Neo-Classical exterior design motifs at upper floors including pilasters, chamfered corners and a modillioned cornice. All three buildings are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In contrast, the Reynolds Building presented a sleek and dramatic form then novel in the State and the nation. The first sixteen stories rise straight from the ground, above which six more stories step back in ziggurat form. The skyscraper format with setback upper stories to comply with zoning requirements for tall buildings in major cities also appeared in much smaller buildings, such as the Reynolds Building as a stylistic element. Described as combining "well-balanced masses that mount upward effortlessly to a graceful termination," the building achieves a "sprightly modernism," through its "accentuated verticality and well-gauged setbacks" -- in short, it is "modernistic."⁴⁸

As such, the Reynolds Building is a magnificent example of a sleek, ziggurat Art Deco skyscraper in North Carolina and stands out as the first in a review of the state's Art Deco architectural compendium. The Asheville City Hall (1926 to 1928, designed by Douglas D. Ellington), constructed slightly earlier than the Reynolds Building, for example, is a massive, eight-story, "fortress-like form" that appears to emerge "from a reversed quincunx ground plan through a series of three set-back levels to a stepped octagonal roof crowned by a heavy conical tower, "presenting equality in all facades."⁴⁹ In addition, the city hall is "a flamboyantly poly-chromed office building," with stylized Native American-

⁴⁵ Bishir, Catherine W. and Michael T. Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 217.

⁴⁶ Bishir, 478-9.

⁴⁷ Catherine A. Bishir. *North Carolina Architects & Builders: A Bibliographical Index -- Shreve and Lamb (1924-1970s)*. North Carolina State University, 2009. Web. Accessed December 27, 2014.

⁴⁸ "A Practical Monument to a Southern Industry." *Through the Ages: A Monthly Publication of the National Association of Marble Dealers*. Vol. 9: 3 (July 1931): 38; and "R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's Building, Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Architecture and Building*. (July 1929): 201.

⁴⁹ See *Asheville City Hall National Register Nomination, Section 7, 1976*.

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derived feather motifs using marble, brick and terra cotta.⁵⁰ The Hotel Kinston, built in 1927 to 1928 and designed by Herbert B. Hunter also differs from the Reynolds Building. An eleven-story building in Kinston and listed in the National Register, the hotel is primarily a plain red brick and cast-stone building, but exhibits distinctive Moorish stylistic details including a loggia-like entrance of ogee arches set on cast-stone columns, cast-stone panels with geometric design in turquoise and stucco at the top floors, and a steeply-pitched hipped roof, originally covered in Spanish tiles. In close proximity to the Reynolds Building on West Fourth Street, stands the six-story Art Deco-style Pepper Building which has received a determination of eligibility for listing due to owner objection in the National Register. It was completed in 1929 and designed by Northup and O’Brien. Unlike the Reynolds Building, however, the Pepper Building is a simple block form of brick featuring a variegated brown brick and sandstone veneer with cast stone Art Deco detailing on its street-facing elevations.⁵¹ Other National Register-listed Art Deco contemporaries of the Reynolds Buildings in North Carolina include low-rise commercial structures, such as Ellington’s 1929 S & W Cafeteria (later Dale’s Cafeteria) in Asheville, the 1929 F. W. Woolworth Building in Greensboro by architect, Charles C. Hartmann, and the four-story S. H. Kress and Company Building (1933, by architect Edward F. Sibbert) in Greensboro. Although Hartmann’s nine-story Atlantic Bank and Trust Company Building (1928 to 1929) in Burlington features Deco-inspired design motifs, it is a block form.

The Reynolds Building is therefore unique amongst the late-1920s Art Deco buildings in North Carolina and moreover, influenced later Art Deco towers in the State. The Hill Building in Durham is one such illustration. It followed on the heels of the Reynolds Building and was constructed in 1935 to 1937. The seventeen-story limestone-faced building has a similar, but “more conservative stepped form” to the Reynolds Building and was in fact, designed by the successor firm of Shreve, Lamb and Harmon, with local architect, George Watts.⁵² Almost a decade later in 1942, another ziggurat Art Deco tower, the fifteen-story Durham Life Insurance Building in Raleigh, was constructed, resembling the Reynolds Building in stepped form and detailing. This skyscraper was designed by architects Northup and O’Brien.

Soon after completion, the Reynolds Building shared not only its ziggurat Art Deco form with the aforementioned buildings in Raleigh and Durham, but also shared both its form and its design team with the now infamous Empire State Building. Shreve and Lamb won the Empire State Building project in 1929, after which they added partner Arthur Loomis Harmon (1878-1958) to form Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon.⁵³ The completion of the Empire State Building in 1931 –the tallest building at 102 stories with spire in the world– gained the team international fame. To paraphrase the words of architectural historian, Catherine Bishir, with the Reynolds Building architects hence associated with the premier project of the era, local pride in the Reynolds Building mounted, and citizens boasted that the Winston-Salem skyscraper had been the model for the Empire State Building. The twenty-two-story Reynolds Building remained the tallest building in the state for thirty-eight years -- until the completion of its neighbor, the thirty-story Wachovia Building, in 1966, listed in the National Register in 2009.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ See *Asheville City Hall National Register Nomination, Section 8, 1976.*

⁵¹ Heather Fearnbach, *North Carolina Architects & Builders: A Bibliographical Index – Northup and O’Brien (1916-1953).* North Carolina State University, 2009. Web. Accessed December 27, 2014.

⁵² Bishir, *North Carolina Architects & Builders: A Bibliographical Index -- Shreve and Lamb (1924-1970s).*

⁵³ The successor firm of Shreve, Lamb and Harmon continued into the 1970s.

⁵⁴ Bishir, *North Carolina Architects & Builders: A Bibliographical Index -- Shreve and Lamb (1924-1970s).*

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RJRT Through 1964

The new style and stature of the Reynolds Building reflected RJRT's success not only as an individual tobacco firm, but also represented the benefit the firm provided to Winston-Salem. During the early twentieth-century and through the 1940s, RJRT not only expanded and innovated, but also became instrumental in the social and economic development of the city. In 1916, R. J. Reynolds himself led the drive to build homes that would rent at six percent on the investments, providing an alternative to slum landlord housing for his employees. Intended for African American employees, Wheeler Street, as the development was called, was the forerunner to the housing program Reynolds started for both white and black employees in what became known as the Reynoldstown neighborhood of Winston-Salem several years later. Reynoldstown started as a rent-to-own program, with all houses sold by 1942, primarily to African American employees.⁵⁵ In another act of benevolence during Reynolds' tenure, RJRT contributed \$10,000 to the local YWCA in 1917.⁵⁶ Successor president, W. N. Reynolds, left his 1,000-acre estate in 1951 to the public, known today as Tanglewood Park, Arboretum and Rose Garden. Later in 1953 the profits of RJRT helped to establish Wake Forest College (now Wake Forest University) in Winston-Salem.

Meanwhile, the firm continued to develop and modernize through the 1950s. For example, as a result of the labor turmoil of the 1940s, RJRT re-examined company policies. During the next decade, the firm expanded its personnel department and developed innovative personnel programs, such as the employee suggestion plan, implemented in 1953 that provided awards for successful suggestions; and pastoral counseling services, offered from 1949.⁵⁷ Innovations in products soon followed. In 1954, RJRT introduced Winston filter-tip cigarettes. In the first nine months, six-and-a-half billion were sold; with clever jingle advertising and a classically designed package, Winston was the top filter brand, with sales totaling thirty-one billion by 1956.⁵⁸ That same year, RJRT introduced the first filter-tipped menthol cigarette on the market – Salem.⁵⁹ Sales surpassed expectations, reaching four billion in the first 12 months, and soon dominated the menthol field.⁶⁰ With top selling brands in three categories – regular sized (Camel); filter tips (Winston); and menthols (Salem), RJRT was in dire need of expanding its manufacturing facilities. Evidence of this within the nearby Winston-Salem factory complex includes the expansion of Factory 90 (1926, inventory resource number 34), which received a north side extension in 1957 to 1958. Groundbreaking for the firm's fourteen-acre Whitaker Park Plant in the northwestern part of the city also occurred in 1958. Expanding facilities meant expansion of local personnel, too. For example, the company increased its engineering department from twenty-five individuals in 1930 to more than 270 in 1959.⁶¹ In 1953, a research department was established, employing 187 individuals by the early 1960s.⁶² RJRT employed 14,084 regular employees at year's end 1959.⁶³

⁵⁵ Langdon Opperman, National Register Nomination for Reynoldstown Historic District, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 2007, Section 8, pp. 78 and 52.

⁵⁶ Tilley, 525.

⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 468-474.

⁵⁸ Beatty, 21.

⁵⁹ Tilley, 502.

⁶⁰ Beatty, 21.

⁶¹ Tilley, 514 quoting *Management Bulletin*, 11, no. 47, 10 July 1959.

⁶² Ibid, 516, quoting Luther J. Upton Jr., interview with author. 11 Oct. 1960; leaflets on research department, 5 Sept. 1958,

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The close of 1950s would signify a shift for RJRT. From 1959 and forward, the firm would expand beyond being solely a tobacco firm with a substantial presence centered in Winston-Salem. The company had already begun seeking to establish tobacco-related facilities such as leaf storage and processing plants beyond city bounds. The Brook Cove Plant in Stokes County, North Carolina, for leaf processing and storage, as an example, was completed in 1959.⁶⁴ RJRT also expanded beyond State lines that same year; in 1957, the company directors approved the construction of a new stemming and re-drying plant in Lexington, Kentucky, which was completed in 1959. In 1960, the firm announced the formation of Reynolds-Neuerburg G.m.b.H., which by holding interest in the German firm of Haus Neuerberg K.G., had tobacco plants in several cities throughout West Germany.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, earlier in 1956 RJRT had amended its corporate charter to permit investment in non-tobacco enterprises. For its first non-tobacco acquisition, RJRT turned to an entirely new area – convenience and food beverages.⁶⁶ The acquisition of the Hawaiian Punch fruit drink in 1963 solidified RJRT’s diversification beyond tobacco and tobacco-related industries.

The Reynolds Building – Recent Times

During the remainder of the decade and through modern times, RJRT’s success has continued. The firm has repeatedly expanded its physical presence and facilities beyond Winston-Salem, the State and the nation, and has also continued to diversify products beyond tobacco and tobacco-related industries. Today, RJRT is the second largest tobacco company in the United States with approximately twenty-seven-percent of U.S. cigarette sales and is also an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Reynolds American Inc. (RAI). As such, the firm eventually took over all of the space in the Reynolds Building. The last outside tenant left the building in 1982. In 2008, however, RJRT and RAI decided to vacate the Reynolds Building, relocating all employees to larger offices. By 2010, the building was empty. The iconic ziggurat Art Deco skyscraper remains entirely vacant to this day and is currently on the market. Its future is uncertain, but with recognition of its historic architectural significance and its contribution to Winston-Salem’s early-to-mid-twentieth-century tobacco industry history, it is hoped it might continue to play an important role in the twenty-first-century growth and rebirth of the city’s downtown.

Sept. 1962.

⁶³ R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Annual Report 1959. (Winston-Salem, N.C.: The Company, January 30, 1960), 2.

⁶⁴ Tilley, 510.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 511.

⁶⁶Beatty,26.

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