

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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
Plaza Court
AND/OR COMMON
Plaza Court

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
1100 Classen Drive
CITY, TOWN
Oklahoma City
STATE
Oklahoma

VICINITY OF
CODE
40

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
No. 5
COUNTY
Oklahoma
CODE
109

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
John P. Caporal
STREET & NUMBER
1100 Classen Drive
CITY, TOWN
Oklahoma City
STATE
Oklahoma 73103

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Office of the County Clerk
STREET & NUMBER
Oklahoma County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN
Oklahoma City
STATE
Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey
DATE
1979
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Oklahoma Historical Society
CITY, TOWN
Oklahoma City
STATE
Oklahoma

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Plaza Court was constructed in 1926-1927 at a cost of \$150,000. Architect was Hawk & Parr, one of the City's best firms. It was designed to make the best possible use of a wedge-shaped site formed by Classen Drive as it slices WNW from the intersection of 10th Street and Walker (cf. map).

Basically, the Court was (and remains) a two-story brick building with basement, facing SSW, with a triangular projection at the back. The Court fronts on Classen - behind its paralleling off-street parking area - runs some 300 feet ESE to to WNW. The ends are 60 feet deep, but with the projection to the NE it is some 160 feet deep as its mid-point. This central section features a mezzanine designed especially for the Crescent Market (cf. No. 8), its first tenant. (The projecting "bulge" at the back also accommodated food lockers and other storage needs of the market.) A ramped parking facility now completely fills in this back-side area bounded by Walker and 11th Street, the 50-year-old building's only significant alteration.

Plaza Court was a first class structure - attractive to the eye and, even more importantly - substantially built. Constructed of reinforced concrete, it was fireproof and so well designed from an engineering standpoint that addition of the ramped three-level parking facility demanded few structural changes. Cars are now parked on the roof of the original building. The decking was covered for protection, but the building itself did not need strengthening.

Aside from this completely new northeast elevation, profiles of the south, west and southwest elevations, though showing obvious modernizations, do not appear to be significantly (or irrevocably) changed. The original clay tiles on the roof have now been painted gold. The flame-top finials and roof peaks of round knobs are believed to be original, although they are also coated now with gold paint. Entrys on the southwest retain curved canopies and the decorative, classical motif constructed into the masonry walls above the arched roof. The urn, in bas relief, has also been painted gold!

The ground floor masonry walls are of brick. Otherwise the walls have been covered with stucco or metal. Much of the ground floor brick has been removed - except where needed for columns and supports - to provide maximum glass area. Limestone sills and window lintels are now covered. And where clerestories once abounded above the canopies to provide interior lighting to shops and stores, there is now a

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super-abundance of boxes to house heating and cooling equipment. Needless to say, these too are painted gold. Despite these additions and adaptations, however, a vague Mediterranean feel still persists. The modernizations seem to be more obvious than substantive.

Inside, the second floor has been changed hardly at all. The one new interior feature is a long first-floor hallway to better serve Plaza Court tenants. Most of the building's 50,000 feet of floor space has been carpeted. A disco has been added in the basement.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1927 to present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT hawk & Parr

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Plaza Court, when opened for business in 1927, was the first shopping center (other than downtown) in Oklahoma City and one of the first anywhere. Its development was a far-sighted response to changing urban conditions, in Oklahoma City and elsewhere, as the family automobile began to lessen the dependence of shoppers on the streetcar. Plaza Court was largely the idea of John Thomas, owner of a quality market and grocery located directly across the street from the downtown streetcar terminal. The new location selected was about a mile from downtown on the edge of what was then the city's finest residential section and adjacent to several almost-as-fine areas then being developed. It was served by several streets that were and still are major traffic arteries.

If the move from downtown and relocation near affluent homeowners were decisions carefully arrive at, so were those determining the design of the new shopping center ... and its name. Spanish architectural features, popular in the 1920s from California through South Texas to Florida, were then beginning to penetrate Oklahoma, both in quality residences and commercial buildings, particularly "movie places." The wedge-shaped building was thus given tiles and other minor motifs. As for "plaza" Spanish for market place - it suggested the shopping center concept. As did "court," for dependence on autos rather than streetcars was creating the need for parking space. And convenient off-street parking, fronting Plaza Court, was one of its most progressive features. Soon shaded by elm trees, it contributed significantly to the success of the shopping center concept.

The soundness of the shopping center concept is underscored by the number of major Oklahoma City businesses that moved to the Plaza Court building or actually had their beginning in it. John Thomas' Crescent Market was perhaps the city's finest in the 1920s, both downtown and at Plaza Court. Today, relocated another five miles to the northwest, again to the convenient edge of one of the city's best residential areas, it continues to hold that position. Joining the market at plaza Court was the city's pioneering Radio Station WKY, one of the first commercial stations

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Plaza Court

west of the Mississippi. The old Veazey drug chain opened one of its first stores in the new building's southeast corner. (The space is still occupied by a drug store.) The florist who moved into Plaza Court in 1927 remained there for about 40 years. A furrier was another longtime tenant. And deserving footnote status: Dr. John A. Roddy, who maintained his medical office in Plaza Court for several years; he is believed to have been the first doctor in Oklahoma to administer insulin to a diabetic patient.

Significant, too, it would seem, is that both its design and its construction (cf. No. 7) allowed Plaza Court to adjust to changing conditions with a minimum of effort and expense. After World War II and into the 1950s, as Oklahoma City's growth continued, businesses moved farther north and Plaza Court began to slump. Parking became a problem. This was finally solved, at least in part, by utilizing roof-top space, made possible by the extremely sturdy original construction. Today the surrounding area is being up-graded significantly and Plaza Court, under new ownership and having undergone a major interior facelifting, seems once again to be prospering.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Parr, William G., An Interview with Pendleton Woods, October 1978. Parr is the son of Josephus Overton Parr, of the Hawk & Parr architectural firm that designed Plaza Court. Miscellaneous newspaper stories.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Oklahoma City

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 minute

UTM REFERENCES

A 114 634175 39271026

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1-3, Block 10, Classen Marquette Addition, Oklahoma City plat

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City

DATE

December 1979

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



Plaza Court



