

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service *VLR = 04/16/85 NRHP: 12/19/85*
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic ALLIED ARTS BUILDING (DHL FILE #118-110)
and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 725 Church Street N/A not for publication
city, town Lynchburg N/A vicinity of
state Virginia code 51 county (in city) code 680

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
	<u>N/A</u>	<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 Mr. B.C. Baldwin, Jr., Executor
street & number P.O. Box 958
city, town Lynchburg N/A vicinity of state Virginia 24505

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk's Office, Lynchburg City Courthouse
street & number 900 Court Street
city, town Lynchburg state Virginia 24505

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None to date has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date N/A N/A federal state county local
depository for survey records N/A
city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Allied Arts Building is a steel-framed structure, faced with yellow brick and greenstone, rising seventeen stories above a major street intersection in downtown Lynchburg. The main facade, only 40' wide, is on Church Street, while the side elevations extend back 132' into the steep hillside between Church and Court streets. A superb example of Art Deco design, it has been one of the city's major landmarks ever since it was completed in 1931, and stands today virtually unchanged.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

While the Allied Arts Building reads as a completely unified overall composition, subtle design features and the facing materials combine to create the familiar base, shaft, and capital so characteristic of the tall building ethic of the early 20th century. On the main facade on Church Street, the first three stories of the 40' frontage are faced entirely in greenstone, creating an effective visual base for the office floors above. The main entrance, centered in the facade, is two stories high, and contains double doors at the entrance level and a burnished metal grill above. Below the grill, which is decorated with stylized Art Deco motifs, is a greenstone sill with the words ALLIED ARTS BUILDING carved in it. On either side of the entrance portal is a small shop, with an entrance onto Church Street. At the second-floor level, on either side of the grill, are projecting oriel windows, lighting the offices within. The facing of these two first floors consists of large greenstone panels, highly polished, and laid in ashlar. The third floor of the facade is also faced in greenstone, but here more elaborate stonework is employed to terminate visually the base of the structure. At this level, three pairs of windows are separated from each other by greenstone panels embellished with incised, wavelike lines, while the windows are framed with projecting greenstone piers which continue to the base of the fourth-floor fenestration. Elaborately carved greenstone panels top each window and also continue to the base of the fourth-floor windows, where they are terminated with carved lions' heads.

The fenestration pattern established on the third floor -- three pairs of windows separated from the corners of the building and from each other by broad wall segments and each window within a pair separated by a narrower space -- continues through the fourth to the fifteenth floor. Here, in the office shaft, the facing is entirely of yellow brick, uninterrupted by any horizontal bands. This series of alternating broad and narrow piers creates the overriding sense of verticality so characteristic of the style. Windows are slightly recessed between the piers, and the space between the windows is faced with plain greenstone panels. Above the fifteenth floor, however, these greenstone panels are decorated, and serve to announce the termination of the major office shaft of the building.

The capital of the building -- the sixteenth and seventeenth floors -- is housed within a smaller, recessed area, with angled corner bays. Here the greenstone panels are also decorated, and the piers are treated as buttresses. Visually, these buttresses appear to support the attic, which is above the seventeenth floor, and is composed entirely of greenstone. This space, which houses the elevator and return air equipment,

(See Continuation Sheet # 1)

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 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 1929-31 **Builder/Architect** Stanhope S. Johnson & Addison Staples

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Allied Arts Building is one of Virginia's most impressive expressions of the Art Deco skyscraper style of the early 20th century. Designed by Lynchburg architects Stanhope S. Johnson and Addison Staples, it is a steel-frame structure clad in a combination of yellow brick and locally quarried greenstone. Effective combinations of these materials in varying proportions visually divide the building into three major components: base, office shaft, and capital; divisions characteristic of tall-building design of the period. Although the Allied Arts Building is no longer the city's tallest structure, as it was upon completion in 1931, it yet commands a dominant position on the downtown skyline of Lynchburg and remains a somewhat rare example for otherwise architecturally conservative Virginia of this forward-looking mode.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the 1920s, Lynchburg was experiencing a period marked by growth and expansion. Although visible evidence of this prosperous era is still evident in the numerous period-style houses and churches built in the outlying residential sections, perhaps the most impressive single local monument to the pre-depression 1920s is a downtown office building -- the Allied Arts Building. In both its scale and architectural character it remains a perfect expression of the spirit of the times in which it was designed and built. Begun at the very end of the decade, the building was completed as the full effects of the depression were being felt. Its proud, assertive lines and -- for Lynchburg -- its soaring height, gave confidence when it was most needed.

At the outset of the decade, office space in the downtown area was at a premium, and the newspapers of the times announced several plans to erect new buildings. As early as 1923, the Masons' Lodge had plans to erect a combination office building and lodge, which was to have risen some twenty stories. Nothing came of these or other proposals, however, and it was not until a group of business and community leaders formed the Allied Arts Corporation in 1928 that these several plans coalesced into a realizable effort. The corporation purchased a 40' x 132' lot at the western corner of Eighth and Church streets, a block and a half from the major downtown intersection at Ninth and Main streets, and a block away from the then tallest building in the city, the eleven-story People's National Bank Building, which had been completed in 1912 at the corner of Eighth and Main.

For the design of the new building, the corporation chose the Lynchburg firm of Johnson and Brannan, then the largest architectural firm in the city. Stanhope S. Johnson, the founding member, was a Lynchburg native who had been in practice since the turn of the century, and by the time of this commission, was involved in commissions not only in Virginia, but throughout the south. R.O. Brannan, who was with Johnson for only

9. Major Bibliographical References

Allied Arts Building - original plans, contracts, and specifications, in Lynchburg Architectural Archive, Jones Memorial Library, Lynchburg.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Architecture in Virginia. Richmond: 1966.
Staples, Addison. Interview, March 1975.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Lynchburg, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	6	6	4	2	3	0	4	1	4	2	2	7	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point on the W side of Church St. approx. 75' SSE of the intersection of Church St. with 8th St.; thence extending SSE on W side of Church St. for approx. 40'; thence approx. 132' WSW; thence approx. 40' NNW; thence approx. 132' ENE to point of origin. (See Continuation Sheet #2)

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title S. Allen Chambers, Jr.

organization N/A date 1981

street & number 1237 31st Street, NW telephone

city or town Washington state DC 20007

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

H. Bryan Mitchell, Director

title DIVISION OF HISTORIC LANDMARKS

date April 23, 1985

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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

ALLIED ARTS BUILDING, LYNCHBURG, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7, 8

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7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis

is recessed from the floor below and is encircled by a narrow exterior walkway. At the center of the attic facade is a carved greenstone eagle with wings outstretched. This seemingly superfluous bit of decoration is hardly noticeable from below.

The side elevations are similar to, but not identical with, the facade. Because of the slope of the lot, the greenstone base is only two stories tall at the rear. Above, on these longer sides, there are seven pairs of windows, rather than the three pairs noted on the facade. The rear portion of the building, containing two pairs of windows, extends only to the thirteenth floor.

The plan of the first floor is that of a broad center hall, or lobby, with doors opening into shops on either side. Behind the shop on the right are the elevators. Above, on the office floors, a similar arrangement exists, with offices on both sides and at each end of the central elevator corridor. The lobby on the ground floor is trimmed in greenstone, and the elevator doors are decorated with a fanciful Art Deco grill of burnished metal, in which architect Addison Staples stated that he had attempted to "show the whole of creation." At the base, stylized waves are interspersed with silhouettes of fish; in the center are cattails, and other foliage. Above are outlines of mountains, while at the top are geese flying in the familiar V formation. The floor of the lobby was also originally greenstone, but because of the uneven surface worn over the years, this has recently been carpeted. In addition, the original lighting of the lobby has recently been augmented with inappropriate brass chandeliers. Trim and ornamental detail of the office floors is minimal, and while some of the offices have been established with later trim, generally colonial in style, no major alterations to either the original decoration or plan have ever been made. Because of the excellence of its design and the quality of its construction, the Allied Arts Building stands today virtually as it did upon completion fifty years ago.

SAC

8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

several years, was primarily the office manager. Most of the local commissions which the firm obtained during the 1920s were entrusted to Addison Staples, a member of Johnson's staff, who had received his architectural training at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute of Technology. As Johnson planned to relocate his firm's office in the building, he took an active role in its planning, and it is to both Johnson and Staples that credit should go for the design. Most of Johnson's previous work on commercial and hotel structures in other cities had been very conservative in design, and Staples had heretofore proven himself as a master of Georgian and other period designs, but neither had attempted an essay in the then current Art Deco manner. Staples later freely confessed that he and Johnson drew much of their inspiration from photographs and drawings of large office buildings then appearing in the various journals to which they subscribed.

Construction contracts were awarded to the Lynchburg firm of C.W. Hancock and Sons, owned and operated by the Hancock family, who also owned a greenstone quarry in Lynchburg.

(See Continuation Sheet # 2)

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ALLIED ARTS BUILDING, LYNCHBURG, VA

Continuation sheet #2

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8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background

This unusual stone, obtained from a vein underlying a portion of the western suburbs of Lynchburg, had been used for local buildings as early as the 1870s, but primarily for decorative details. Never before had it been used in such profusion or had it been so highly polished as it would be in the Allied Arts Building. As the quarry has since been closed, the building remains the best example of the use of this unusual local material. Acting as an effective contrast to the greenstone facing is the use of yellow brick as a companion material.

Upon completion of the structure in 1931, the firm of Johnson and Brannan moved into the penthouse suite on the seventeenth floor. Soon after their move, the firm published a handsome booklet illustrating many of their commissions, ranging as far afield as the Carolinas, West Virginia, and Florida. The frontispiece was a color photograph of the Allied Arts Building, the only structure photographed in color, demonstrating the position of prominence the firm felt it deserved in the corpus of their practice.

In 1966, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts gave its seal of approval in showing the building as one of only two Lynchburg structures to be included in its major retrospective exhibition and accompanying catalog entitled Architecture in Virginia.

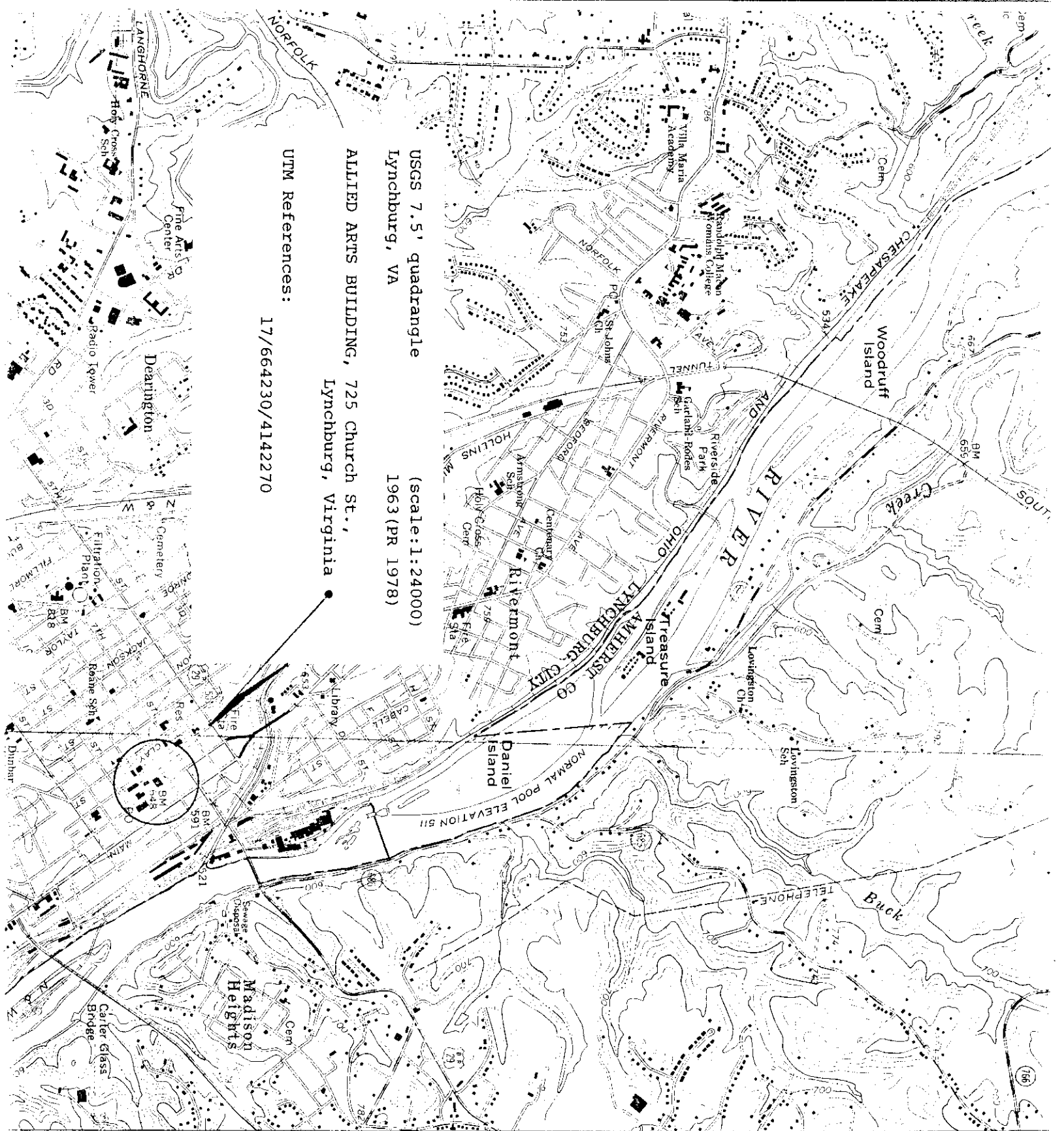
Today, the Allied Arts Building still serves well in its originally intended purpose as an office building. Occupancy has been at a consistently high level, and many of the city's leading doctors, lawyers, and business firms have their headquarters in the building. Johnson continued to occupy the penthouse until the 1970s, and another architectural firm now continues the original use of that space. After Johnson's death in 1975, his drawings were donated to the Jones Memorial Library in Lynchburg, where they form the nucleus of the Lynchburg Architectural Archive. Included within that collection is extensive documentation on the Allied Arts Building, consisting of preliminary sketches, specifications, working drawings, and correspondence.

Although the Allied Arts Building relinquished the title of the city's tallest structure to another office building in 1974, it continues as one of the most important elements in the downtown skyline, as an outstanding example of its style, and as a monument to the times in which it was built.

SAC

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Boundary Justification

Boundary Justification: The bounds have been drawn to include the building and the city lot on which it stands.



USGS 7.5' quadrangle
Lynchburg, VA

(scale: 1:24000)
1963 (PR 1978)

ALLIED ARTS BUILDING, 725 Church St.,
Lynchburg, Virginia

UTM References:
17/664230/4142270



(KELLY) 445
51581 NE

4142

25'

4144

4146