

VLR-1/17/84 NRHP-2/23/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceFor NPS use only  
received  
date entered**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic VIRGINIA BANK AND TRUST BUILDING (VHLC File #122-78)

and/or common Auslew Gallery Building (Preferred)

**2. Location**

street &amp; number 101 Granby Street N/A not for publication

city, town Norfolk N/A vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county (in city) code 710

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
district	public	X occupied	agriculture	museum
X building(s)	private	unoccupied	X commercial	park
structure	both	X work in progress	educational	private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	entertainment	religious
object	in process	yes: restricted	government	scientific
	being considered	X yes: unrestricted	industrial	transportation
	N/A	no	military	other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Donald S. Lewis

street &amp; number 101 Granby Street

city, town Norfolk N/A vicinity of state Virginia 23510

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Courthouse - City of Norfolk

street &amp; number 100 St. Paul Boulevard

city, town Norfolk state Virginia 23510

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
title (File #122-78)has this property been determined eligible? yes  no date 1979, 1982, 1983 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

## **7. Description**

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

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

#### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Auslew Gallery (formerly Virginia Bank and Trust) Building is located at the corner of Granby and Main streets. This was the commercial heart of Norfolk. The building was erected in 1908-1909 after plans drawn by the Baltimore firm of Wyatt and Notting, Architects, with the Norfolk firm of Taylor and Hepburn, Associate Architects. The four-story structure's architecture is derived from Greek and Roman elements featuring engaged Ionic columns and Doric pilasters on the Main (north) and Granby (east) street facades. The south wall was a party wall adjoining the Atlantic Hotel. The west wall faced an alley and was unadorned, consisting of stucco over brick. At the time of its erection the structure was hailed as "one of the finest bank buildings in the state."

#### ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The general design could be typified as an excellent example of Beaux-Arts neo-classicism; an eclectic mix of classical forms. The entry facade on Granby Street consists of a three-story engaged fluted Greek Ionic order of three-quarter columns distyle in antis, resting on a low plinth. The flanking pilasters are dark and enressaut. The central intercolumniation was widened to accommodate the main entry which is distinguished by highly carved antepagments supporting a triangular pediment surmounted by antefixes with anthemion moldings. A short, curved iron railing with an "S" curve motif (for Southern Bank of Norfolk) accents the two steps leading to the doors which are recessed bronze four-panel pocket doors with egg and dart molding.

At the level of the doorway cornice, the flanking stone walls are topped by coping stones that give way to a two-story glass facade linking the engaged columns. The metal frames of this glass area are highly decorated. The glass terminates at the architrave. The entire facade is surmounted by an Ionic entablature whose somewhat narrow frieze is decorated at the corners with rinceau moldings and whose center formerly contained the banks name. An Ionic horizontal cornice replete with dentil course completes the composition. A setback stone parapet crowns the entire building.

The south facade is five bays in width and is articulated in the same manner as the Granby Street facade with Doric pilasters enressaut and engaged Ionic quarter-columns flanking four engaged Ionic three-quarter columns in antis. The entire facade rests on a plinth that curves toward the facade in the intercolumniations. At the ground level the intercolumniations are spanned by stone walls pierced by windows that are articulated as aediculae and protected with decorative iron grilles. The pediments of the aediculae are supported by consoles. Above the stone walls rises a two-story glass facade whose metal frames are articulated as colonnettes and whose spandrels are decorated with Greek key moldings and fretwork. Two balconnets occur on the second and third levels. Their balustrades consist of metal work in a Greek key motif. As on the entry facade, the fenestration terminates at the level of the Ionic capitals and is topped by a continuation of the entablature from the entry facade. The frieze decoration is similar also for only the area above the pilasters is decorated with a rinceau motif. Above the horizontal cornice, a stone parapet terminates the composition.

## **8. Significance**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b>							
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)				

**Specific dates** 1909

**Builder/Architect** Wyatt & Nolting, Baltimore, Architects  
Taylor & Hepburn, Norfolk, Associate

Architects

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Auslew Gallery Building lies in its architecture. It is an exceedingly well-preserved structure which reflects the aims and aspirations of the financial institutions at the turn of the century. It was a period when banks tried to cultivate an image of being "Temples of Finance" by using classical architectural motifs to make manifest their ever more important role in the economic development of the country as well as to reassure their clients as to their soundness and seriousness of purpose. The architectural motifs of Greece and Rome were felt to somehow provide an element of historic stability when applied to a 20th-century bank. The design of two well-known architectural firms, Wyatt and Nolting of Baltimore as prime architects, and Taylor and Hepburn of Norfolk as associate architects, fully reflects this preoccupation with classical design elements. The building, though no longer used as a bank, stands today, largely unaltered, as one of the best-preserved structures of its type and period and one of the very few structures representative of the work of what was then Norfolk's leading architectural firm. The building's close relationship to the Knickerbocker Trust and Safe Deposit Company in New York by McKim, Mead and White (1904) demonstrates the dissemination of a building type from New York prototype to a popular form through its interpretation by an architect of secondary importance. This type of form for a bank became very popular in many northern urban centers but extant examples are rather rare in the South.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The City of Norfolk, by 1900, had entered a period of great economic growth. To take advantage of this development new financial institutions arose including The Virginia Bank and Trust Company, Inc., which was founded in 1902 with a capital of \$100,000.00. By 1908 the bank's capital had grown to \$600,000.00, and it was ready to move from its quarters under the old YMCA Building on Main Street. The new location was to be on the corner of Main Street and Granby Street in what was the center of an emerging financial district. This was the area where Norfolk's most important banks were located including the Bank of Commerce, the Norfolk National Bank and the Marine Bank, as well as other institutions, such as the U.S. Customs House and the Cotton Exchange. The focal point was the seven-story Citizens Bank Building, the tallest building in Norfolk until 1904, when the Bank of Commerce announced that it would build a thirteen-story building in the area.

One of the key sites in the area was the corner of Main and Granby streets, which became available after a fire had destroyed part of the Atlantic Hotel in 1902. The Virginia Bank and Trust Company acquired the site measuring approxi-

## 9. Major Bibliographical References (See Continuation Sheet #2)

- Walker, Carroll & Faber, Linda G. Editors. Norfolk, A Pictorial History. Norfolk: The Donning Co., 1975.  
Wertenberger, Thomas J. & Schlegel, Marvin W. Editors. Norfolk, Historic Southern Port, (2nd Ed.) Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1962.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1/12 acre (4190 sq. ft.)

Quadrangle name Norfolk South, VA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>1 8</u>	<u>3 8 4 6 19</u>	<u>1 4 0 7 8 3 8 0</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
C			
E			
G			

B			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
D			
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is a rectangular lot

49.1' x 100' at the NW corner of W. Main St. and Granby St. fronting 100' on  
Main St. Norfolk Assessors Records: Plate 729.

(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 1) Frederick Herman, Architect &  
2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

organization 2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission date April 1983

street & number 1) 420 W. Bute Street telephone 1) (804) 625-6575  
2) 221 Governor Street 2) (804) 786-3144

city or town 1) Norfolk state 1) Virginia 23510  
2) Richmond 2) Virginia 23219

## 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, Executive Director  
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date January 17, 1984

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

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

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

AUSLEW GALLERY BUILDING, NORFOLK, VA

Continuation sheet #1

Item number 7,8

Page 1, 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

**7. DESCRIPTION -- Architectural Analysis**

The west wall, which faced a ten-foot alley, lacks any ornamentation with the exception of a brief return of the cornice. The wall finish is stucco over brick. There are several window openings without any decorative elements in which the original sash has been replaced.

The east wall was a former party wall and consists in part of rough and broken brickwork left when the adjacent building was demolished, and, the remaining part is stucco over brick. Recently window openings have been cut into this wall and modern metal windows installed.

On the interior, the banking lobby retains its coffered ceiling with egg and dart and labyrinth key cornices which follow the beam line and elements of the original Ionic pilasters. The vault wall with its three massive vault doors remains intact as does the board room above it with its Ionic pilaster and Greek key cornice facing the banking lobby.

The entrance lobby retains its original pink marble facing with a bronze egg and dart anthemion cornice. A handsome stair featuring a heavy cast-iron railing in a Greek motif featuring an elaborate labyrinth fret design with vertical uprights leads to the upper floors.

On the upper floors the office layout has been changed and new partitions have been installed without, however, affecting the exterior of the building. Other changes include new elevator doors and electrical fixtures as well as the installation of updated mechanical and electrical systems.

"Bank Opened Today In Its New Home," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA, July 19, 1909, p.14.

**8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background**

mately 42' x 100' in December of 1907, plans were prepared in 1908, and the bank formally opened its doors on Monday, July 19, 1909, an event hailed by the press who found:

The structure is one of the finest bank buildings in the State and compares favorably with any in the country. The exterior of the building is ornamental and a creditable addition to the business section of the city, giving an impression of strength, security and stability.<sup>1</sup>

The building was subsequently the home of various banks as changing economic times, the Depression, and the consolidation of financial institutions took their toll. In 1943, the building was acquired by the Southern Bank of Norfolk. This institution was to play a major role in the development of Virginia banking. In the 1950s it became the First Virginia Bank of Tidewater and subsequently it became a major component in one of Virginia's largest bank systems -- The First Virginia Bank Corporation. In the early 1970s, the Virginia Bank Corporation built a high-rise office building nearby and the old bank building was left vacant

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

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

AUSLEW GALLERY BUILDING, NORFOLK, VA

Continuation sheet #2

Item number 8, 9, 10

Page 2, 1, 1

For NPS use only

received

date entered

**8. SIGNIFICANCE -- Historical Background**

for several years. It was acquired by Donald S. Lewis in 1977 who established Tidewater's leading art gallery, Auslew Gallery, on the premises. This adaptive reuse of the building was achieved without in any way affecting the exterior of the building which stands today as an elegant reminder of Norfolk's past and as one of the very few classical design financial structures surviving in the area. It is one of the best-preserved structures of its type in the state -- fully the equal of the former First National Bank of Roanoke, another classical bank structure built at about the same time.

In exterior design, the bank bears a close resemblance to at least two banks that had recently been built in New York City: the Importers and Traders National Bank (1908) by Joseph Freedlander, and the Knickerbocker Trust and Safe Deposit Company Building (1904) by McKim, Mead and White. These two banks, with giant engaged orders or pilasters and vertical separation of banking departments served as prototypes for small bank design throughout the country. The Auslew Gallery is an excellent example of a secondary architect's interpretation of the New York paradigms for a small southern bank. This bank form proliferated throughout the northern urban centers, but relatively few seem to have been built in the South. This fact alone increases the Gallery's significance.

<sup>1</sup>"Bank Opened Today In Its New Home," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA. July 19, 1909, p. 14.

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

"To Invest Big Sum in Building," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA. May 30, 1908, pp. 1-12.

"Imposing Bank Building Now Nearing Completion," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA. May 17, 1909, p. 17.

"Virginia Bank and Trust Co. Moving Today," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA. July 17, 1909, p. 7.

"New Bank Opens Tomorrow For Inspection," Virginian Pilot, Norfolk, VA. July 18, 1909, p. 3.

"Bank Opened Today In Its New Home," Ledger-Dispatch, Norfolk, VA. July 19, 1909, p. 14.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA -- Boundary Justification**

Boundary Justification: The bounds have been drawn to coincide with the above described lot which is identical with the lot at the time the building was erected in 1908-1909 and does not include any additional area.

NORFOLK-SOUTH QUADRANGLE  
VIRGINIA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5757 1 NW  
(LITTLE CREEK)

USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)  
Norfolk South, VA 1965 (PR 1980)

(scale:1:24000)  
1965 (PR 1980)

AUSLEW GALLERY BUILDING  
101 Granby Street, Norfolk, VA

## UTM References:

18/384690/4078380