

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

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

For HCRS use only

received MAY 23 1983

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Maccabees Building

and/or common Detroit Public School Center Building

2. Location

street & number 5057 Woodward Ave. N/A not for publication

city, town Detroit N/A vicinity of congressional district 13th

state Michigan code 026 county Wayne code 163

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Detroit - Board of Education

street & number 5057 Woodward Ave.

city, town Detroit N/A vicinity of state Michigan

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wayne County Records

street & number City-County Building, 2 Woodward Ave.

city, town Detroit state Michigan

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Detroit Urban Conservation Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Michigan Department of State

city, town Lansing state Michigan

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N. A.

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Maccabees Building, located approximately two miles north of Detroit's central business district, is an impressive fourteen-story office building designed by Albert Kahn and built in 1927. The building is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Woodward and Putnam Avenues in an area bounded by the Medical Center on the south, the Cultural Center on the north and east and Wayne State University on the west. The building is of steel frame construction with reinforced concrete floors, a Kahn trademark, and is sheathed with stone.

The building occupies a corner, rectangular site and thus has two major elevations. The fourteen-story, central tower is flanked by four, six-story wings providing an H-shaped plan. Characteristic of Kahn's work, the building has a vigorous vertical thrust which is created by the strong, continuous piers and grouped windows. The building is bound together at the street level by an arcaded band of polished grey-pink granite. The principal facade, located on Woodward Avenue, is dominated by a two-story, arched entranceway, similar to the one found on Kahn's earlier Detroit Free Press Building of 1922. The tall arched entrance further emphasizes the verticality of the central tower. The stone surround of the entranceway is highlighted by applied bronze letters which state the original name of the building. The archivolt molding is composed of a band of continuous stone carving which illustrates medieval knights. Within the recessed entranceway, Levant and Tennessee marble panels are located immediately above the bronze doorways. A large, glazed area, designed to allow natural light into the lobby area, fills the arch above these marble panels. Flanking the entranceway are Art Deco-style polished granite light standards and niches which contain marble statues of medieval knights. Above the arched entrance opening at the second floor level are eight round-arched windows. Round arches are repeated in the street level windows and the termination of the vertical fenestration. The Putnam Avenue facade contains the secondary entrance, and the street level is composed of large round-arched display windows alternating with flat-headed windows with a circular window above. The tower shaft above the ground floor is stone pier and spandrel composition with double-hung windows. Metal spandrels, located between the eighth and ninth floors and the thirteenth and fourteenth floors, have centered bas-relief animal heads and separate the round-arched upper level windows from the flat-headed windows below. The parapet wall contains a stone gargoyle above each window bay at the ninth-floor level and perforated stone panels at the top level.

The interior public spaces of the Maccabees Building are remarkably beautiful and intact. The floor of the public lobby utilizes a six-pointed star motif executed in two shades of marble. The walls are of polished travertine marble. The most spectacular element of the interior design, however, are the mosaics which cover the transverse barrel vaults. The iconography is derived from early Christian and Medieval sources and is executed in intense blues, greens and reds on a gold field. The central vault has an early Christian pattern which consists of squares inscribed in quatrefoils. Illustrated on the southern arch is a bee hive, often seen in Renaissance coats of arms, symbolizing industry and thrift; the northern arch uses symbols such as an anchor, scales, mercury wings, and caduceus; and on the western arch are birds and foliage. The Maccabees meeting room/auditorium on the first floor has been remodeled and modernized. The upper floors contain ordinary office space, much of which was lease space. The building now houses the Detroit Board of Education, but with few exceptions, remains unaltered in its original splendor.

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 checked="" 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 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 1927 **Builder/Architect** Albert Kahn, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Maccabees Building was built in 1926 as the world headquarters of the Order of the Maccabees, a fraternal beneficiary society first organized in 1878. The Maccabees became well known for their liberal beneficiary laws. The building is an important work of Albert Kahn, Detroit's foremost industrial architect. Kahn, a pioneer in the development of the use of reinforced concrete and the advancement of industrial design also produced fine commercial office buildings as evidenced in the Maccabees Building.

The Maccabees were one of the first non-sectarian fraternal beneficiary societies to be organized after the Civil War. Organized in London, Ontario, Canada in 1878 under the leadership of W. D. McLaughlin, the order was based upon the history and traditions of the ancient Maccabees and their leader, Judas Maccabaeus. Maccabaeus held the Jewish nation together, preserved the Temple at Jerusalem and re-established and maintained the Judaic form of worship. Judas Maccabaeus demanded that his soldiers help provide for the "Widows, orphans, and disabled." It was this idea of promoting the general welfare of human society which gave impetus to the fraternal society.

The original plan required that each member contribute ten cents at the death of a fellow member, to be given to the widow of a deceased brother. Unfortunately, the order knew little of the principles of a sound insurance operation, resulting in mistakes which necessitated the complete reorganization of the society.

The reorganized Maccabees, headquartered in Port Huron, Michigan, became the Modern Maccabees in 1881, under the leadership of Major N. S. Boynton, who was called the "Father of the Maccabees." Growing very rapidly, it became the most popular fraternal society in Michigan. Because of a limitation in its charter, its operations were confined exclusively to the State of Michigan. To meet the growing demands throughout the country, the Supreme Tent of the Maccabees of the World was instituted in 1883 as a separate organization to operate in other states. While distinct organizations, the two used the same ritual and pass-word, and for many years maintained friendly social relations. It, too, grew rapidly, and the name Maccabee became known throughout the country.

In 1886, the men were joined by women who adopted the name of the Ladies of the Maccabees. This group, led by Mrs. Adelpia Grace Ward, was first organized in Muskegon, Michigan, and later headquartered in Port Huron, Michigan. In 1892 the Supreme Hive Ladies of the Maccabees of the World was organized. These were the first auxiliary beneficiary societies composed exclusively of women. The ladies aided the men in their social and community functions, but maintained the operation of their groups as separate entities.

In 1915, the amalgamation of the Modern Maccabees and the Supreme Tent became effective, and the name of the merged order was changed to the Maccabees. Eleven years later, in 1926, the Ladies of the Maccabees merged with the men under the name of the Maccabees. This union made it possible for the Maccabees to cover the entire field of family protection.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection, Burton Scrapbook, Buildings: Maccabees Ferry, Hawkins, W., The Buildings of Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1968.
The Gateway

"A Great Women's Organization," November, 1911, Vol. 15., p. 5-9.

(continued)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Detroit, MI - Ontario

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

17	32	9	9	00	46	9	1	34	5
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 The Stimson's Subdivision of Park Lot 55, 56, 57 and 58, Lots 114, 115 and north 39.09 of Lot 113. The boundaries include only the Maccabees Building.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brian Conway, Architectural Coordinator

organization Michigan History Division date 12/16/82

street & number 208 N. Capitol telephone 517/373-0510

city or town Lansing state Michigan

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Martha M. Bigelow*

title Director, Michigan History Division date April 27 '83

For HCRS use only

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

Beth Grosvenor

date 7/7/83

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**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet	Item number	Page
SIGNIFICANCE	8	2

The Modern Maccabees constructed and occupied its headquarters building in Port Huron, Michigan, in 1906 which replaced an earlier structure built in 1899. In 1908 the Supreme Tent of the Maccabees of the world moved its headquarters from Port Huron to Detroit, occupying what had been a palatial residence on the site where the present Maccabees Building stands. After the merger of the Modern Maccabees and the Supreme Tent in 1915, the Detroit office became the world headquarters for the Maccabees. Eleven years later the present fourteen-story building was constructed and dedicated as the international headquarters for the Maccabees.

The Maccabees became known for their liberal and beneficent laws. Not only did they provide for the widows and orphans of their members, but the Maccabees were the first order in the United States which provided for those members who might become disabled by reason of accident, sickness, or old age. Based upon sound rates, the Maccabees were able to provide these benefits to its members at a rate far less than was charged by the commercial insurance companies.

In 1961, the Maccabees changed from a fraternal exempt society to a mutual life insurance company. Although the Maccabees changed to a mutual life insurance company, it still maintained its fraternal activities as an added benefit for its certificate holders. A trust fund was established in 1961 to provide for this continuation of the fraternal society.

The prosperous Maccabees selected Detroit's foremost architect of the time, Albert Kahn, to design their headquarters. Albert Kahn was born in Rhaumen, Germany in 1869 and moved with his family to Detroit when he was eleven. He started his architectural career in the Detroit firm of John C. Scott and Company and entered the firm of Mason and Rice soon after. He left Mason and Rice in 1895 to form a partnership with George W. Nettleton and Alexander B. Trowbridge, fellow draftsmen from Mason and Rice's office. This partnership dissolved in 1897, leaving Kahn to continue the business alone. Working with his brother Julius' improved method of concrete reinforcement, Kahn made history in 1905 by designing the first reinforced concrete factory in Detroit, the tenth unit of the Packard Motor Company. By introducing concrete in factory design, Kahn had eliminated the deficiencies of mill construction. When the burgeoning automobile industry created an unprecedented demand for new factory buildings, manufacturers turned to Kahn for architectural assistance. Kahn's name became synonymous with the new industrial architecture, and his practice became national and later international in scope.

In addition to industrial work, Kahn did a considerable amount of residential and commercial work. He left his mark on the skyline of Detroit with fine commercial office buildings such as the Detroit Free Press Building (1923), the General Motors Building (1922), a National Historic Landmark; the Maccabees Building (1927); and the Fisher Building (1928), listed on the National Register. Kahn drew his inspiration for the Maccabees Building from Eliel Saarinen's Tribune Tower design entry of 1922, and the New York Telephone Building (1926) by Ralph Walker of McKenzie, Voorhees and Gmelin, which Kahn greatly admired. The similarities are evident in the handling of vertical bands of fenestration; the two-story, unified base; the tower-like central mass with subordinate masses flanking open courts; and the simple termination of the shaft. The Maccabees Building served as the departure point for Kahn's most outstanding office structure, the 1928 Fisher Building.

The Maccabees sold their building to the Detroit School Board in 1960 and moved to Southfield, Michigan. The building has been maintained by the Detroit School Board for their office use and has not been significantly altered.

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National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 2

The Gateway (continued)

"The Bee Family, The Story of a Great and Noble Fraternal Society," September, 1911,
p. 5-11.

The Maccabees Field Bulletin, May 31, 1926, June 7, 1926, July 12, 1926, and November
8, 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Substantive Review

Maccabees Building
Wayne County
MICHIGAN

MAY 23 1983

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-7-84
Date Due: 6/23/83 - 7/7/83
Action: ACCEPT 7/7/83
 RETURN _____
 REJECT _____

Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments: *The Maccabees Bldg. in Detroit Michigan is a 14 story office bldg. ~~It~~ erected in 1927, designed by ~~the~~ Albert Kahn as world head quarters for the Order of the Maccabees, a fraternal beneficiary society first organized in 1878. The bldg. is being nominated as significant ~~at~~ the State level in the areas of social/humanitarianism and architecture.*

Recom./Criteria Accept - CVA
Reviewer [Signature]
Discipline Architecture
Date 7/1/83

see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

- 1. Name
- 2. Location
- 3. Classification
- 4. Owner of Property
- 5. Location of Legal Description
- 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description
- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input 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
- summary paragraph
 - completeness
 - clarity
 - alterations/integrity

8. Significance

Period _____ Area of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____

Builder Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource (criterion A)
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

The nomination justifies the place and importance of the Maccabees within the State as ~~first~~ a benificent and charitable society. It also justifies significance ~~for~~ under architecture, as the Bldg is the work of Albert Kahn, one of Detroit's and the nation's foremost architects and "server as the point of departure for [his] most outstanding office structure, the 1928 Fisher Bldg."

→, but does not do a very good job of relating that significance to the period of significance to this building. Nevertheless, I think the inference is

9. Major Bibliographical References

strongly urged to carry it under A.
Grosvener 7/1/83

10. Geographical Data

Acresage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed Wynne Lee Jefferson Date 7/1/83 Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory
Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation
Advisory Board

Description of View: Camera facing south

Photographer number: 1 of 6

camera facing south 1 of 6

Maccabee Building
5057 Woodward Ave.
Detroit, Mi.

1438 - OA



Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory
Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation
Advisory Board

Description of View: Camera facing south

Photograph number: 2 of 6

Camera facing south 2 of 6

Maccabees Building, 5057 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Mi. (caption 1981)



OF DETROIT

GIFTS
TOBACCO - CIGARETTES - CIGARS

DETROIT TEACHERS
CREDIT UNION

PUBLIC
TELEPHONES

DETROIT TEACHERS
CONFERENCE CENTER

Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board

Description of View: North Corridor
Photograph number: 3 of 6

3066

MACCABEES BUILDING, NORTH CORRIDOR, DETROIT, MI TAKEN 7-1981 ROLL 1458-10



Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

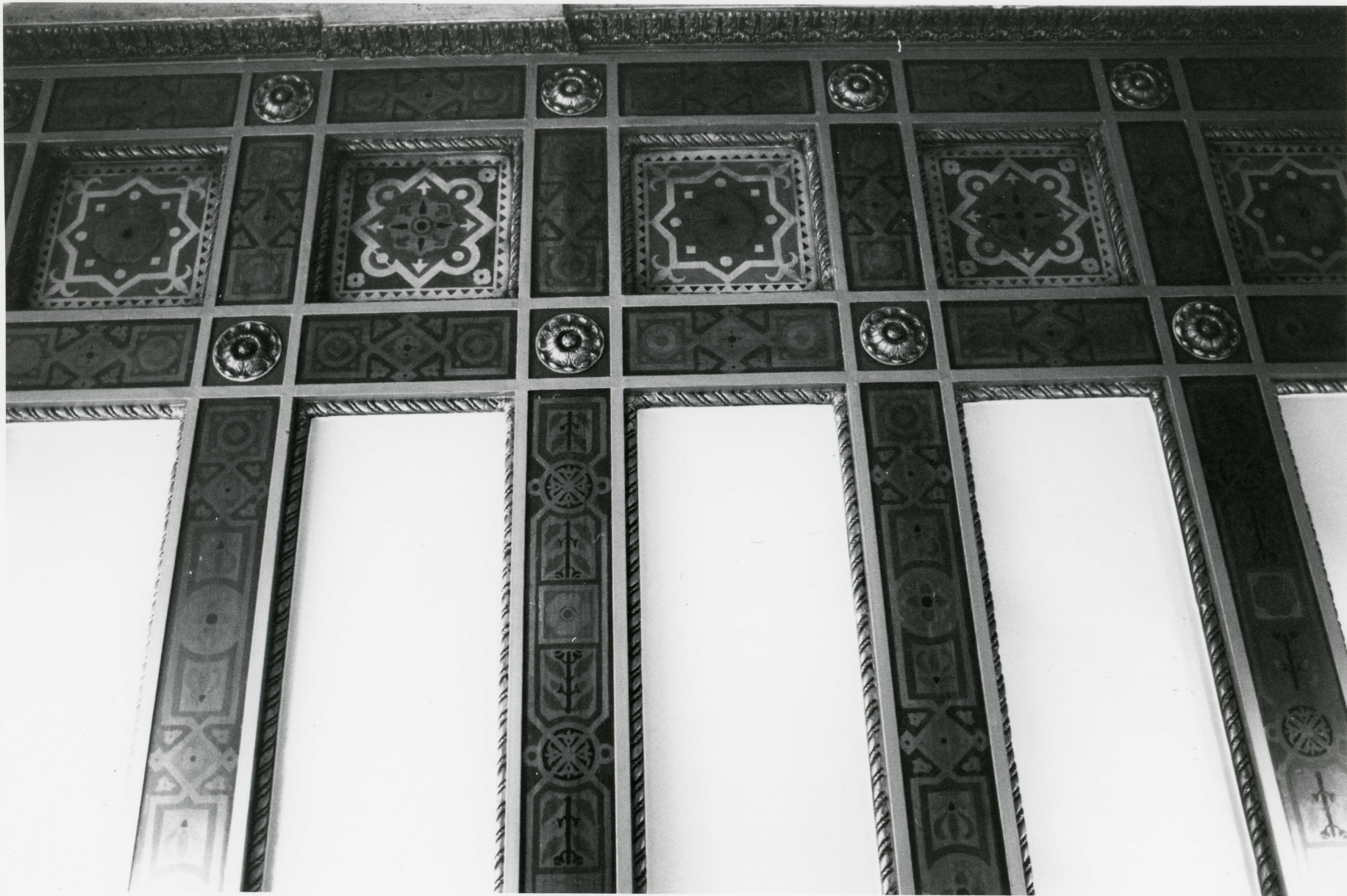
Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory
Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation
Advisory Board

Description of View: Main lobby, looking west
Photograph number: 4 of 6

4 of 6



Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory
Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation
Advisory Board

Description of View: Ceiling, north corridor

Photograph number: 5 of 6

5 of 6

MACCABEES BUILDING, CEILING, NORTH CORRIDOR, DETROIT, MI TAKEN 7-1981 ROLL 1450-11



Maccabees Building
5057 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan

Photographer: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board

Date of Photograph: July 1981

Location of Negative: Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board

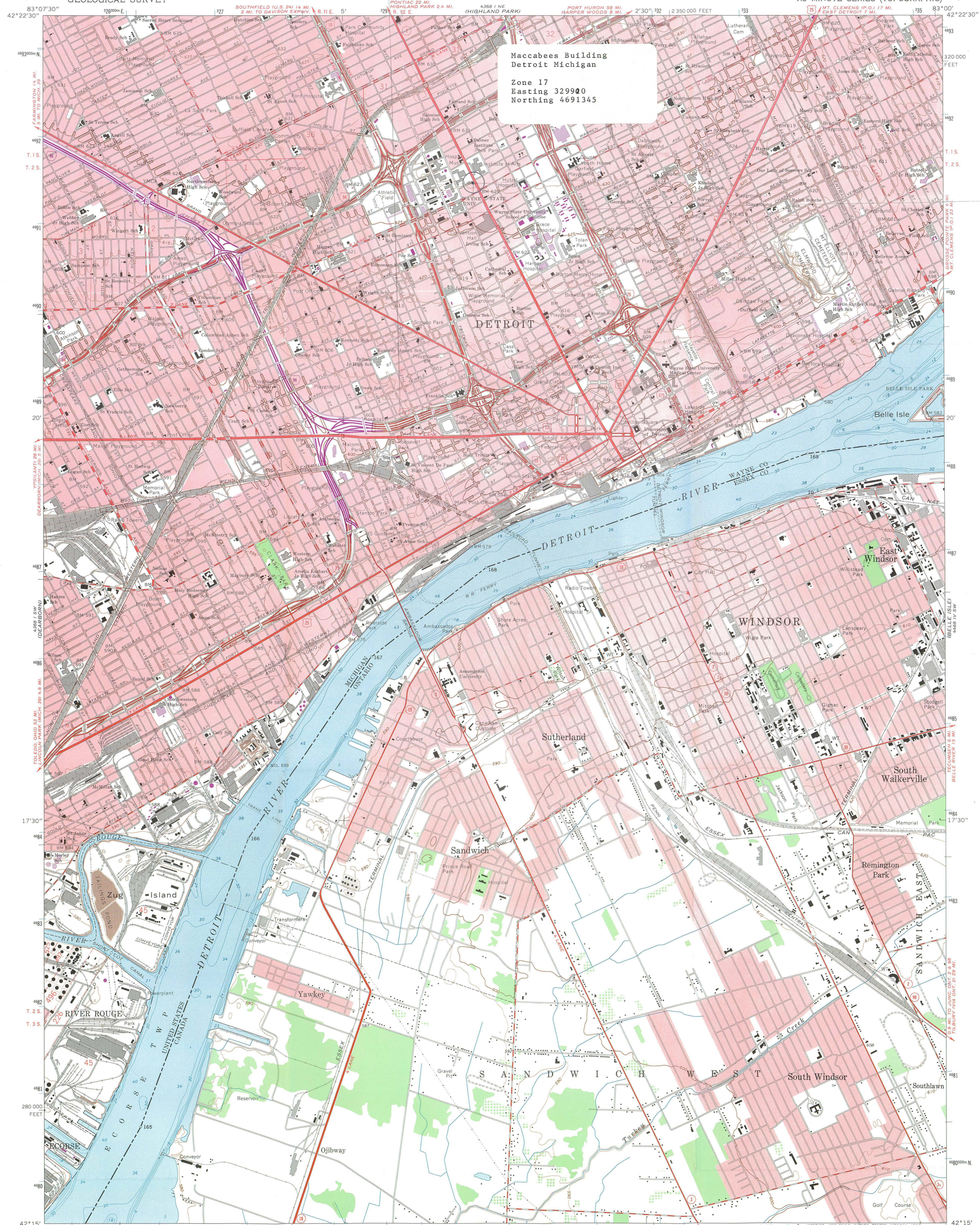
Description of View: Ceiling of main lobby

Photograph number: 6 of 6

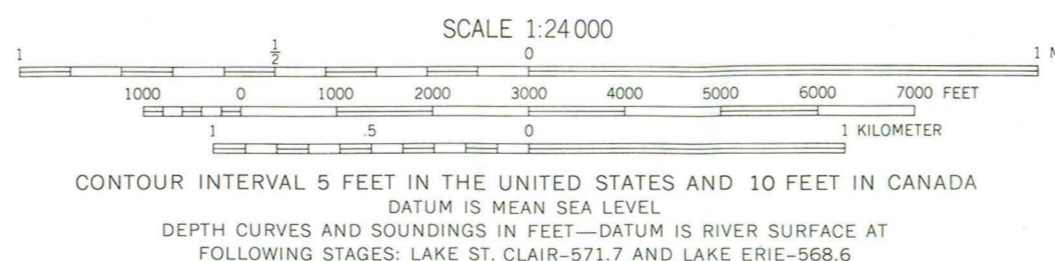
6066

MACCABEES BUILDING, CEILING OF ^{main} LOBBY, LOOKING NORTH, DETROIT, MI, BOLL 1450-17

TAKEN 7-1981



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with State of Michigan agencies
Control by USGS, USC&GS, U. S. Lake Survey, and City of Detroit
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planimetric surveys 1938. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966-67. Field checked 1968.
Canadian portion copied in part from Windsor quadrangle (1:25,000) 1960, Army Survey Establishment, R. C. E.
Selected hydrographic data compiled from U. S. Lake Survey Charts 41 and 412 (1966). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

○ Interstate Route □ U. S. Route ○ State Route

THE U. S. PORTION OF THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY THE U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked. Canadian portion not revised

DETROIT, MICH.—ONT.
N4215—W8300/7.5
1968
PHOTOREVISED 1973
AMS 4368 I SE—SERIES W862

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD H. AUSTIN

SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING

MICHIGAN 48918

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVISION

ADMINISTRATION, PUBLICATIONS
RESEARCH, AND HISTORIC SITES

208 N. Capitol Avenue
517-373-0510

STATE ARCHIVES

3405 N. Logan Street
517-373-0512

STATE MUSEUM

208 N. Capitol Avenue
517-373-0515

April 26, 1983

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Supervisory Historian
National Register of Historic Places Branch
Interagency Resource Management Division
National Park Service
440 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20243

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the Maccabees Building in Detroit, Michigan. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this property submitted to us during the commenting period are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Brian D. Conway, Architectural Coordinator (517/373-0510).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha M. Bigelow".

Martha M. Bigelow
Director, Michigan History Division
and
State Historic Preservation Officer

MMB/ROC/s1

enc.

