United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  

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 Blackstone Hotel  

and/or common same

2. Location  

street & number 601 Main Street  
city, town Fort Worth  
state Texas  

3. Classification  

Category  

district  
building(s)  
structure  
structure  
object  

Ownership  
public  
X private  
both  

Status  
occupied  
X unoccupied  
both  

Present Use  
museum  

Public Acquisition  
N/A in process  

Accessible  
X yes: restricted  
X yes: unrestricted  
no  

4. Owner of Property  

name Blackstone Hotel Partners, Ltd., Frank G. Baldwin & David J. Hurley, General Partners  

street & number 2601 Ocean Park Boulevard, Suite 100  
city, town Santa Monica  
state California  

5. Location of Legal Description  
courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Tarrant County Courthouse  
street & number 100 North Houston Street  
city, town Fort Worth  
state Texas  

6. Representation in Existing Surveys  

(1) Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey  
title (2) Historic Sites Inventory  
date (2) 1982  

has this property been determined eligible? yes X no  

(1) 1982  

(1) Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County  
depository for survey records (2) Texas Historical Commission  
city, town (2) Austin  
state Texas  

(1) Fort Worth  
state Texas
The Blackstone Hotel is a 22-story reinforced-concrete structure whose exterior is faced with tawny brick and ornamental terra-cotta work. The hotel features a setback upperlevel with terraces, which provides some outstanding views of the city. Slender brick piers, which divide the structure's facade into bays, are capped by ornate terra-cotta finials. While not strictly Art Moderne or Art Deco in its design, the Blackstone reflects the popularity of these styles in its massing and details.

Located at 601 Main Street in downtown Fort Worth, the Blackstone Hotel is a 22-story structure with a reinforced concrete frame clad in tawny brick with terra-cotta details. Sited on the corner of Main and East 5th, the hotel has two street elevations. The ground-level facades are faced with Minnesota granite punctuated by large shopfront windows and the two entrances for the hotel. The second-floor fronts feature large double-window bays which are enframed in ornamental terra-cotta work. The lower terra-cotta panels are meant to be read as a balustrade, although there is no balcony behind them. The vertical panels of the second floor are also highly detailed, with paired griffins and dolphins set within stylized foliage, the entire ensemble capped by an eagle with outstretched wings. The second floor is separated from the upper stories by a thin terra-cotta belt course.

At the third-floor level, and continuing up to the 15th floor on the East 5th elevation, and to the 20th floor on the Main Street elevation, the facade is divided by vertical brick piers. The Main Street front is divided into nine bays, while the East 5th Street facade is divided into seven bays, one of which contains three banks of windows. With the exception of a few openings, the windows of the hotel retain their original, double-hung, wooden sashes. Some of the windows of the uppermost floors have been replaced with metal sash, and approximately 25 percent of the windows on the structure's rear, or northeast, face have also been fitted with metal sash.

The setback massing of the hotel begins at the 14th floor with a setback on the rear of that floor on the east 5th elevation. The mass of the upper levels is again setback at the 15th, 18th, and 20th floors. Each of these symmetrically planned setbacks provides an open terrace whose balustrade is formed by a crest of ornamental terra-cotta highlighted by the massive finials capping the vertical piers of the lower stages. These finials are faced with stylized leafage that supports four rather abstract pineapples. A covered loggia at the Main Street front of the 20th floor is set beneath a large U-shaped terrace above. The small interior spaces contained within the last two stories of the building were clearly not intended as guest space, and serve merely as the crown of the structure.

In 1952-53, when the Blackstone was a part of the Hilton Hotel chain, several alterations and additions were made to the building. To the south of the original hotel, on Main Street, a five-story annex was constructed to provide large meeting rooms and a ballroom. The ground floor of this annex is not attached to the main building via hall ways. Rather, internal connections between the original hotel and the annex are located on the second, third, and fourth floors.
The exterior of the annex is essentially a blank wall with no openings above the ground floor. A swimming pool is located on the rooftop of the annex. The Hilton chain was also responsible for remodeling the hotel's interior. The original, double-height lobby was cut down by the addition of a mezzanine level, although the original plaster ceiling survives intact. On the upper portions of the tower, once-open loggias were filled in with windows. Located at the 15th and 18th stories, these former open spaces could be easily returned to their original character, as the window installation did not result in the loss of any original fabric.
8. Significance

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Specific dates 1929  
Builder/Architect Mauran, Russell, & Crowell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Located in the heart of the Fort Worth business district, the Blackstone Hotel is perhaps the tallest pre-World War II structure in the city, its verticality emphasized by the setback of its upper floors. Designed by the prominent St. Louis architectural firm of Mauran, Russell, & Crowell, the hotel has played host to all the presidents from Hoover to Nixon, as well as many notable figures from the world of entertainment. The Blackstone Hotel was constructed in 1929, at the end of one of the most prosperous decades in the history of Fort Worth. The hotel was built for the wealthy cattleman C.A. "Gus" O'Keefe, and was given the Blackstone name following O'Keefe's visit to the hotel of that name in Chicago. The structure contains over 300 rooms, including several special suites on the upper floors, some of which once featured private terraces overlooking the city. The setback massing of the hotel reflects the popularity of the Art Moderne and Art Deco styles, as well as the general use of setbacks on all high-rise buildings in New York City after 1923, when that city's zoning code required a reduction in the massing of tall buildings.

The hotel was designed by the noted St. Louis architectural firm of Mauran, Russell, & Crowell. Before 1910 the company was known as Mauran and Russell, and was responsible for the design of the Rice Hotel in Houston, built 1910-1911, and the Galvez Hotel in Galveston, built in 1912-13. Both of these earlier hotels are listed on the National Register. Mauran, Russell, & Crowell were also responsible for the design of a number of significant structures in St. Louis, including the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company and the Laclede Gas Light Company Building. The fact that the senior partners of the firm, John Lawrence Mauran and Ernest John Russell, were both elected president of the American Institute of Architects, attests to their prominence in that profession.

The Blackstone was managed initially by Wallace N. Robinson Hotels Company, which at that time was also managing the St. Anthony in San Antonio. In 1946 the hotel was taken over by H. Fuller Stevens, of Dallas, and became part of the Hilton Hotel chain in 1952. Sold by Hilton Hotels in 1962, the building is presently vacant following a declaration of bankruptcy by the owners in 1982.

The hotel evidently was considered the finest in the city upon its completion, and it hosted every president from Herbert Hoover to Richard Nixon. The city's first radio station, WBAP, was established in the hotel and occupied the 21st floor in the mid-1930s. The Blackstone stands in the center of Fort Worth's rapidly growing downtown business district, though long since surpassed as the tallest building in the city.
## 9. Major Bibliographical References


Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 1928-1983.

Schilder, Eugene L. We Believe in Fort Worth Book: Where the West Begins. Fort Worth: Monitor, 1929.

## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of nominated property
- less than one acre

### Quadrangle name
- Haltom City, Texas

#### UTM References

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#### Quadrangle scale
- 1:24000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1-8, inclusive, block number 96. See also attached city map, Exhibit A.

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

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## 11. Form Prepared By

Roger L. Yandell, P.E., Carlton E. DeWolff, and Basil T. Elmer, Jr.

organization: Tri-Tech Design/Build Group

date: August, 1983

street & number: 2805 Fort Worth National Bank Building

telephone: (817) 335-3000

city or town: Fort Worth

state: Texas

76102

## 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:

[Signature]

date: 12/2/83

For NPS use only

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

[Signature]

date: 2/3/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: 

date: 

Chief of Registration
Blackstone Hotel  
Tarrant County  
TEXAS

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

Substantive Review:  
□ sample  
□ request  
□ appeal  
□ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:  
Once the tallest building in Ft. Worth, the Blackstone Hotel was considered the emblem of the city.  
It was the site of many presidential visits and featured a prominent art deco elements and imitations of New York.  
It is significant for its architectural and historical importance.

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

1. Name
2. Location
3. Classification
   Category  
   Ownership  
   Status  
   Present Use
   Public Acquisition  
   Accessible

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
   □ excellent  
   □ good  
   □ fair  
   □ deteriorated  
   □ unaltered  
   □ altered

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance
   □ summary paragraph  
   □ completeness  
   □ clarity  
   □ alterations/integrity  
   □ dates  
   □ boundary selection
8. Significance

Period: Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates: 1929
Builder/Architect: Mauren, Russell & Crowell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph):

More information would be helpful on the other Ft. Worth buildings produced by Mauren, Russell and Crowell. Are they stylistically similar, and what distinguished the Black & Fong Hotel from among them? Is the architectural set back and bulk enough unique to this hotel within Ft. Worth?

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property: __________
Quadrangle name: __________
UTM 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 Mary Lee Jefferson 222-345-9514

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ___________ Phone: ___________________________

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo: October 1929, photographer unknown, from archives of Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Main Street and 5th Street elevations, looking east.

Photo 1 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo: October 1929, photographer unknown, from archives of Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Fourteenth floor rooftop terrace.

Photo 2 of 10
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo: by W.D. Smith, Inc., 1938; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

Main Street and 5th Street elevations, looking north-northeast

Photo 3 of 10
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., 1951; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

View of hotel's south elevation and original two story adjoining building, looking north.

Photo 4 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., 1981; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

Aerial view of hotel, looking southwest.

Photo 5 of 10
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., August 1983; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

View of hotel from roof of Burk Burnett Building, looking east.

Photo 6 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., August 1983; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

Detail of Main and 5th elevations, from roof of Burk Burnett Building, looking east.

Photo 7 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., August 1983; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

View of ground-level facades, looking east.

Photo 8 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., August 1983; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

Terra-cotta detail, Main Street entrance, looking southeast.

Photo 9 of 10.
Blackstone Hotel
601 Main Street
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo by W.D. Smith, Inc., August 1983; neg. on file with same, 2900 Photo Ave., Fort Worth.

View of hotel from roof of Continental National Mini Bank Building, looking north.

Photo 10 of 10.