

ABSTRACT

(R. Andrews 9-76)

Professional Arts Building 1936-1937 (Front)

1-3 South Potomac Street at Public Square c. 1920 (Back)

Hagerstown

Washington County

Historically and architecturally significant, the Professional Arts Building is a massive office building which consists of two structures. The main and most prominent is the six stories high Art Deco influenced brick structure erected in 1936-1937 and fronting on South Potomac Street and Public Square. The second structure is a circa 1920 brick warehouse, five stories high, which stands to the west or back of the main building and was adapted for use as offices when the main building was erected.

Both sections of the building were erected for Domenico Ramacciotti (1871-1950), an Italian immigrant who had a wholesale produce business in Hagerstown. Ramacciotti purchased the property in 1905. In August 1936 he was issued a building permit by the City for construction of the front section. The estimated cost of construction is given in the permit records as \$65,000.

The front section of the building was designed by Amos J. Klinkhart (18 - 1954), a Hagerstown architect. A native of Canajoharie, New York, Klinkhart was a graduate of Cornell Universtiry. He opened an office in Hagerstown in 1907 and was one of the architects of the Hagerstown City Hall (1939-1940).

The back section of the building is believed to have been designed by an architect whose office was located in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, a small town to the northeast of Hagerstown. The building records pertaining to this section are not known to exist.

Architecturally, the Professional Arts Building is significant both for its stylistic features and construction methods, particularly in relationship to its prominent location on Public Square. The decorative detailing of the exposed elevations of the main section are Art Deco in influence. The prismatic, geometric lines characteristic of the Art Deco style are evident primarily in the decorative panels above and below the windows, the arrangement of the window columns versus the solid piers, and the ziggurat decorations terminating the piers.

In Hagerstown, the best examples of the style are the Professional Arts Building and the Post Office Building at 44-62 West Franklin Street.

The Professional Arts Building is constructed of masonry walls with steel joists. When completed in 1937, the structure was one of only two twentieth century buildings standing on Public Square. Most of the buildings encircling the Square were, and still are, mid to late nineteenth century brick structures crowned with curvilinear bracketed cornices. The use of metal in these nineteenth century buildings appears to be limited to decorative detailing.

EXISTING SITE  
SURVEY INVENTORY

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM  
for the  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

<b>1. NAME</b>					
COMMON: Professional Arts Building					
AND/OR HISTORIC: Ramacciotti Professional Arts Building					
<b>2. LOCATION</b>					
STREET AND NUMBER: 1-3 South Potomac Street at Public Square					
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown					
STATE Maryland			COUNTY: Washington		
<b>3. CLASSIFICATION</b>					
<b>CATEGORY</b> (Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<b>OWNERSHIP</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		<b>STATUS</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<b>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</b> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	Offices	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious			
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific			
<b>4. OWNER OF PROPERTY</b>					
OWNER'S NAME: Ramacciotti Estate (For Sale)					
STREET AND NUMBER: Professional Arts Building, 1 South Potomac Street					
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown			STATE: Maryland	21740	
<b>5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>					
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Washington County Courthouse					
STREET AND NUMBER: 95 West Washington Street					
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown			STATE: Maryland		
<b>Title Reference of Current Deed (Book &amp; Pg. #):</b> 110-11					
<b>6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS</b>					
TITLE OF SURVEY:					
DATE OF SURVEY: <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local					
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:					
STREET AND NUMBER:					
CITY OR TOWN:			STATE:		

**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Professional Arts Building is located at 1-3 South Potomac Street in Hagerstown, Washington County, and stands on the west side of the street in the southwest corner of Public Square.

The building actually consists of two structures: a 1936-1937 Art Deco influenced masonry and steel structure which fronts on South Potomac Street and a circa 1920 masonry warehouse which was adapted for use as offices when the front portion was erected. When erected, this back section was hidden by the buildings on Public Square, but now is clearly visible from the street because the others have since been demolished.

The Art Deco influenced building fronts on South Potomac Street and Public Square, is six stories high, and abuts the neighboring structure to the south. It is constructed of tan brick and steel joists with cement decorative detailing, a crenelated roof line along the two exposed elevations and large stone display windows on the ground floor. The elevator shaft extends above the roof line at the west end of the building where the circa 1920 structure abuts.

The north and east elevations are arranged in strong vertical lines with brick piers alternating with columns of windows. The piers are terminated at the top with large stepped, rectangular or ziggurat decorations forming the crenelated roof line. The east side has six columns of windows and the north wall has seven columns of windows plus a row of blanks. These planes of verticality sit on a vertical base formed by the large display windows.

The upper story windows are of the metal casement type and have prismatic and geometric decorative panels above and below. The display windows on the first floor are surrounded by panels of small, glazed tiles in dark colors with varying textures.

Entrance to the upper levels is through a Greek Revival influenced doorway on the north side along Public Square. The doorway has flat pilaster and entablature which is tied into the cornice above the shop windows.

The back section of the building is also constructed of a light color brick but is only five stories high. It displays no signs of aesthetic strivings and was, as stated above, originally hidden by the neighboring buildings.

The Professional Arts Building appears to be structurally sound and, for the most part, is in fairly original condition on the exterior although in need of some repair.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1936-1937 (Front); c. 1920 (Back)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Historically and architecturally significant, the Professional Arts Building is a massive office building which consists of two structures. The main and most prominent is the six stories high Art Deco influenced brick structure erected in 1936-1937 and fronting on South Potomac Street and Public Square. The second structure is a circa 1920 brick warehouse, five stories high, which stands to the west or back of the main building and was adapted for use as offices when the main building was erected.

Both sections of the building were erected for Domenico Ramacciotti (1871-1950), an Italian immigrant who had a wholesale produce business in Hagerstown. Ramacciotti purchased the property in 1905 (Deed Book 121, p. 542). In August 1936 he was issued a building permit by the City for construction of the front section (Building Permit No. 789). The estimated cost of construction is given in the permit records as \$65,000.

The front section of the building was designed by Amos J. Klinkhart (18 - 1954) a Hagerstown architect (Building Permit Records). A native of Canajoharie, New York, Klinkhart was a graduate of Cornell University. He opened an office in Hagerstown in 1907 and was one of the architects of the Hagerstown City Hall (1939-1940).

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(See Continuation Sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

## CONTINUATION SHEET

(R. L. Andrews, September 14, 1976)

Professional Arts Building  
1-3 South Potomac Street at Public Square  
Hagerstown  
Washington County, Maryland

## #8. SIGNIFICANCE

The Art Deco style is one of several eclectic styles which influenced American architecture and decorative arts in the 1920s and 1930s. The style seems to have had its greatest impact in the large metropolitan areas. In the smaller, urban areas of western Maryland and throughout Pennsylvania, the impact of the Art Deco period was limited primarily to commercial buildings such as movie theaters and office structures.

In Hagerstown, the best examples of the style are the Professional Arts Building and the Post Office Building at 44-62 West Franklin Street.

The Professional Arts Building is constructed of masonry walls with steel joists. When completed in 1937, the structure was one of only two twentieth century buildings standing on Public Square. Most of the buildings encircling the Square were, and still are, mid to late nineteenth century brick structures crowned with curvilinear bracketed cornices. The use of metal in these nineteenth century buildings appears to be limited to decorative detailing.

The Professional Arts Building occupies a prominent site on Public Square and is visually an important part of the streetscape of downtown Hagerstown. Stylistically, it offers a strong but compatible contrast with the primarily classical influenced neighboring buildings. Because the principal facades show few signs of alteration, the building retains a unity of the whole structure and is an artifact of Hagerstown's cultural history.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Building Permit Records (Permit No. 789), Office of the Building Inspector, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Interview (telephone) with Mr. Leonard Ramacciotti, 19 September 1975.

Menten, Theodore. The Art Deco Style in Household Objects, Architecture Sculpture, Graphics, Jewelry. New York: Dover Publications, 1972.

Washington County Land Records, Courthouse, Hagerstown, Maryland

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

**Acreage Justification:**

The property measures approximately 36' x 146.6'.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

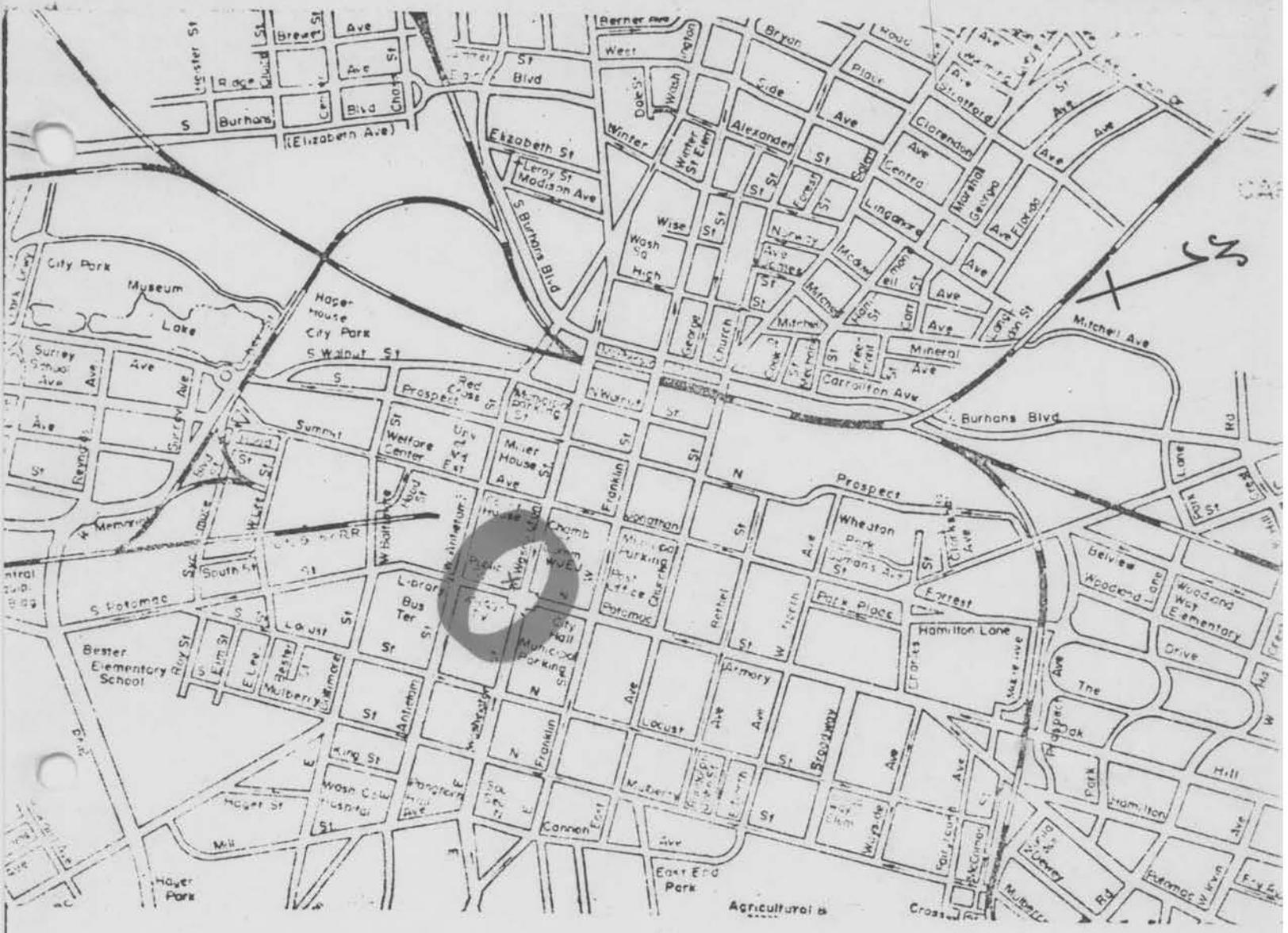
NAME AND TITLE: Ronald L. Andrews, Historic Preservation Consultant (bg)	
ORGANIZATION City of Hagerstown	DATE Sept. 15, 1976
STREET AND NUMBER: City Hall	
CITY OR TOWN: Hagerstown	STATE Maryland

**12 State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)**

Significance of this property is:

National  State  Local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature



**SITE:** Professional Arts Building  
 1-3 South Potomac Street at Public Square  
 Hagerstown  
 Washington County, Maryland

**map:** City of Hagerstown,  
Washington County, Md.  
 City Engineering Dept.  
 July, 1970  
 scale 1"=1200'



WA-HAG-57

Professional Arts Building  
1-3 South Potomac Street  
Hagerstown  
Washington Co., Md.

NE view

July, 1975

RONALD L. ANDREWS



WA-HAG-57

Professional Arts Building  
1-3 South Potomac Street  
Hagerstown  
Washington Co., Md.

detail, NE corner

July, 1975

RONALD L. ANDREWS