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JUN 13 1997

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

AHPP

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1. Name of Property

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Historic Name: Kress Building

Other Name/Site Number: MS 0034

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2. Location

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Street & Number: 210 W. Main Street

Not for Publication: N/A

City/Town: Blytheville Vicinity: N/A

State: AR County: Mississippi Code: AR 093 Zip Code: 72315

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A.

Kress Building
Name of Property

Mississippi Co., Arkansas
County and State

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. _____ See continuation sheet

Cathryn A. Slatu
Signature of certifying official

5-2-97
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. _____ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ____ entered in the National Register _____
 ____ See continuation sheet.
- ____ determined eligible for the _____
 National Register _____
- ____ See continuation sheet.
- ____ determined not eligible for the _____
 National Register _____
- ____ removed from the National Register _____
- ____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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6. Function or Use

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Historic: Commerce Sub: Department Store

Current : Social Sub: Civic
Culture Museum
Work in Progress

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Art Deco

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Asphalt
walls Brick other _____
Terra Cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary

Located at 210 West Main Street in Blytheville, the Kress Building is a two-and-a-half-story, Art Deco-style, brick commercial building constructed in 1938. The steel I-beam reinforced structure rests upon a continuous concrete foundation with a partial basement and is covered by a flat roof behind a parapet. Virtually unaltered since construction, the Kress Building is in good condition.

Elaboration

Located at 210 West Main Street in Blytheville, the Kress Building is an Art Deco-style, brick commercial building constructed in 1938 at an estimated cost of \$100,000. The 70' X 140' building is a full two stories in height, with an additional partial third story housing the original heating and air conditioning systems and the mechanical system for the still-functioning elevator. The heat and air systems in this building were the most modern available at the time of construction. A partial basement housing boilers and an access to the elevator shaft covers approximately ten percent of the total area of the first floor.

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The building is constructed of steel I-beams with a cast-concrete foundation. The front, or southern, facade is faced with cream-colored brick above glazed terra cotta. The terra cotta is green at bulkhead level; however, on the sides and above the windows (including the area encompassing the S.H. Kress & Co. sign), the terra cotta is peach colored. Window trim is bronze. Four plate-glass windows measure 114" X 130". There are also four curved-glass windows, two at each entrance.

Glazed terra cotta was used extensively from the bulkhead level upward to the level of the ceiling of the first floor. Above the terra cotta on the second level, the facade is cream-colored brick. Six two-over-two double-hung windows at the second-story level are surrounded by decorative ivory terra cotta which features a fluted pattern at the sides and a stylized shell form at the top of each window unit. The parapet at the top of the commercial facade is also of ivory terra cotta and consists of simple vertical geometric bands. A larger area projects up in the center of the parapet and features raised letters with the name "Kress" in gold.

An operable awning has not been used in recent years. A photograph taken in 1968 or 1969 shows the awning extended. The mechanical portion of the awning appears to be intact, but the canvas is virtually nonexistent. Two wooden strips have been attached to the peach terra cotta, above and below the Kress sign. These were probably installed in 1985 to accommodate a sign for Dollar General Store, which occupied the building in the late 1980's.

The side elevations consist of party walls that are shared with adjacent one-story buildings; however, some of the common red brick wall is visible on the second story.

The building appears to have undergone little or no alteration from its original form. A photograph taken in 1938 and a copy of a photograph of the original architect's drawing (from a 1938 newspaper) show the building to be virtually unchanged over the past fifty-eight years.

Occupying the east twenty feet of Lot Nine and all of Lot Ten in Block 4 of the Blythe Addition to the City of Blytheville, the Kress Building was recently donated to Main Street Blytheville by Kendall Berry, a local businessman. The building will become the home of the Blytheville Heritage Museum as well as the Main Street Blytheville Office.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1938

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: W. F. Holmes/Kress Architectural Dept.
E. V. Bird Construction Co.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Summary

The Kress Building is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C with local significance as an outstanding example of an Art Deco-style commercial building and the best example of its subtype in Blytheville.

Historical Background

The Kress chain of dime stores arrived in Blytheville in 1923. In 1936 the company purchased two buildings on Main Street and had them razed as both were in disrepair. These properties were sold to the Kress Company by trustees for the Glenn Estate and by J. T. Alford. Demolition of these buildings began on February 8, 1938. Joe P. Randolph of the Bird Construction Company was in charge of the demolition, while W. F. Holmes represented the Kress Architectural Department. One of the demolished

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buildings, the 1902 Blytheville Hotel, was purchased for \$20,000. The bricks from this structure were given to the City of Blytheville for use in street repair. The other demolished building, which housed the OK Barber Shop, was built in 1911. It was on the site of these two buildings that the current Kress Building was erected.

On January 26, 1938, E. V. Bird Construction Company of Fayetteville, Arkansas, was awarded the contract to erect a building to house the new Kress store. With an estimated construction cost of \$100,000.00, the building was an ambitious project during the Depression. When construction began on the Kress Building in February, 1938, it was one of the few buildings in Blytheville's downtown area in which steel I-beams were used in masonry construction. Opening of the new Kress Five and Dime was a much-anticipated event in the community as the new store was the first completely air conditioned retail store in Blytheville. The original air conditioning equipment is still in place in the "penthouse" structure on the roof of the building.

Architectural Significance

Situated in the center of downtown Blytheville, the Kress Building provides an aesthetic anchor for the surrounding historic commercial district. Complementing the nearby Art Moderne-style Greyhound Bus Station (NR 08/17/87), the Kress Building offers its own interpretation of the Art Deco style as applied to commercial buildings and is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion C with local significance as the best example of this subtype in Blytheville.

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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Abbott, Jonathan and Thompson, Marcy. *Reverend H. T. Blythe and the Downtown He Founded*. Blytheville, Arkansas: Quality Printing, 1991.

Courier News. Blytheville, Arkansas. January 26, 1938, February 9, 1938.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

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Primary Location of Additional Data:

- X State historic preservation office
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- X Other -- Specify Repository: Main Street Blytheville

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>16</u>	<u>238920</u>	<u>3979620</u>	B	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Verbal Boundary Description:

East twenty feet of Lot 9 and all of Lot 10 in Block 4 of the Blythe Addition
to the City of Blytheville

Boundary Justification:

This boundary includes the historic Kress Building and all of the property
historically associated with this resource.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Stefanie Washburn, Program Manager, Main Street Blytheville
Edited by AHPP staff

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: April 16, 1997

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201