

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Corby-Forsee Building

AND/OR COMMON

Corby Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

5th & Felix

CITY, TOWN

St. Joseph

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#6 - Hon. Thomas Coleman

STATE

Missouri

CODE

29

COUNTY

Buchanan

CODE

021

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDEN☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

The Corby Estate

STREET & NUMBER

Corby Building

CITY, TOWN

St. Joseph

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 64501

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registrar of Deeds - Buchanan County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

5th & Jules

CITY, TOWN

St. Joseph

STATE

Missouri 64501

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1. Historical Preservation Inventory St. Joseph, Missouri

DATE

July, 1972

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☒ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Department of Zoning and Planning

CITY, TOWN

St. Joseph

STATE

Missouri 64501

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1979 state
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City Missouri 65102

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

3. Rutt, Chris, (ed.). History of Buchanan County and the City of St. Joseph, Missouri. Chicago: Biographical Publishing Co., 1904.
4. Portrait and Biographical Record of Buchanan and Clinton Counties, Missouri. Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1893.

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. Thomas W. Carneal
Northwest Missouri State University
305 Colden Hall 816/582-7141
Maryville Missouri 64468

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Corby-Forsee Building is located in the business district of downtown St. Joseph, Missouri. As originally constructed, the building rose twelve stories, but a one story addition was built at its apex in 1927 to house the trade halls of the St. Joseph Grain Exchange. The Corby-Forsee Building measures 80' along the north and south and 114'6" along the east and west and is constructed of reinforced concrete faced with yellow brick and grey-buff terra cotta detailing at the first, second, eleventh and twelfth floor levels. Below, the terra cotta facing along only the Fifth Street and Felix Street facades echoes a modest version of Beaux Arts detailing with exaggerated floral and faunal rinceaux, anthemion antefixes, egg and dart moldings and a frieze of oval escutcheons in a sea of acanthus tendrils, birds and floral imagery (see photos #4,5 and 6). This decor reaches a crescendo at the main entrance in the west end of the north facade. Here, massive modillions of Michaelangelesque design support a lintel which acts as a base for a large glazed tympanum. The plain flat archivolts of this feature are embellished by the addition of plain and enriched water leaf moldings and are topped by an enlarged anthemion supported by flanking volutes.

Above this zone of decoration rise eleven stories, articulated by plain yellow brick piers and spandrels broken only by a terra cotta string course above the third floor. Just below the eleventh floor, terra cotta decoration begins again with a zone of plain panels and bosses. Acanthus encrusted terra cotta verticals rise to a second decorative zone where laurel wreaths surrounding large escutcheons are featured. Above, floreate verticals rise to cornice level. Here, the arcuated theme of the design recalls that of the main entrance and, like it, features elaborate moldings and oversized modillions which support a heavy denticulated cornice.

The addition of 1927 which sits above the cornice measures 30' along the north and south and 45' along the east and west. It is of a contrasting plain utilitarian style of construction which is vaguely Renaissance in inspiration. Notable features include its broad ornamental iron cornice featuring acanthus and anthemion motives and its corner pavilions on the north side.

Inside the building, just beyond the Italian marble foyer, the barrel vaulted marble faced lobby is located with polished brass elevators in its south wall; embellished with the coats of arms of the Corby family. Their molded paneled and voluted surrounds are flanked by broad marble pilasters capped with highly embellished floor indicators. Above, the barrel vaulted ceiling, which is painted gold, features extensive coffering and bronze chandeliers. To the east and west the lobby walls are pierced by doorways enclosed beneath Michealangelesque segmentally pedimented surrounds.

The remainder of the interior features 200 rental offices, each with its own lavatory. The corridors carry white tile floors, white Italian marble wainscoting and oak millwork.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1910
: 1927 - addition

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Selden-Breck, Eames-Young
Addition by Eckel and Aldrich

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Corby-Forsee Building, the first multistory office building in St. Joseph, is significant due to its imposing architectural character which dominates the downtown (see photo #1). In addition, because the history of this building is intimately linked with the stories of the Corby and the Forsee families, two of St. Joseph's most prominent, its significance is further enhanced.

John Corby, a former Mayor of St. Joseph (1856), was born in Limerick, Ireland in 1808. He came to America with his family in 1820 and a few years later he began a career in railroad contracting. In 1843 his job led him to St. Joseph where he became a banker and merchant of note. Corby was instrumental in the establishment of the Hannibal - St. Joseph Railroad in the 1850's, and he served as its director and as the vice president of the Roseport and Maryville Railroad Company during the same period. Later in his career he served as president of the St. Joseph - Denver City Railroad Company and of the St. Joseph - Topeka Railroad Company. In addition to his business success, John Corby was known for his philanthropies. He has been especially noted for his charity work and financial assistance to the Seminary of the Sacred Heart, St. Joseph Hospital and St. Joseph Cathedral. Corby died in 1870 (Rutt, pp. 467-468; Portrait and Biographical Record, pp. 238-239; Hardman, p. 400).

Colonel Joseph A. Corby, nephew of John Corby, arrived in St. Joseph in 1867 from Ohio on a visit to his uncle. He stayed and eventually became involved in his uncle's interests. In addition, he was owner and publisher of the St. Joseph Daily Gazette (1873-1875) and he was a pioneer in the establishment of telephone service in the Midwest. In 1879 he built the Bell Telephone Exchange in St. Joseph. In 1881 he constructed a line linking that city with Atchison, Kansas, the first such line west of Buffalo, New York to connect two cities. In 1882 he assisted in the establishment of the Missouri-Kansas Telephone Company. Colonel Corby's other interests included transportation and utilities. In 1878 he built and operated the Frederick Avenue Street Railway. Later, in 1883, he brought the Pacific Mutual Telegraph lines into this city and he constructed and managed the first electric light plant in town (Rutt, p. 448).

John Corby, the eldest son of Joseph, was vice president of the Zeilda Forsee Investment Company, the corporation which constructed the Corby-Forsee Building (Combe Printing Company's Directory, p. 238).

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

1

Dr. Edgar B. Forsee came to St. Joseph with his family from Kentucky in 1856. He became known as an outstanding citizen, doctor and businessman. His wife, Zeilda, managed his large estate after her husband's death. The corporation formed by her constructed the Corby-Forsee Building (Rutt, pp. 263-264).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Combe Printing Company's 1909 Directory of St. Joseph, Missouri. St. Joseph: Combe Printing Co., 1909.
2. Hardman, Lon. The Daily News History of Buchanan County and St. Joseph, Missouri. St. Joseph: St. Joseph Publishing Co., 1898.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME "St. Joseph, North"

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 34 11 85 44 03 26 0

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A tract of land encompassing all of Lots seven (7), eight (8) and nine (9), in Block fifty-one (51) of original town of St. Joseph, Missouri.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. Noelle Soren, Architectural Historian

September 20, 1979

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Department of Natural Resources

314/751-4096

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 176

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Jefferson City

Missouri 65102

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL x

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

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources and
State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

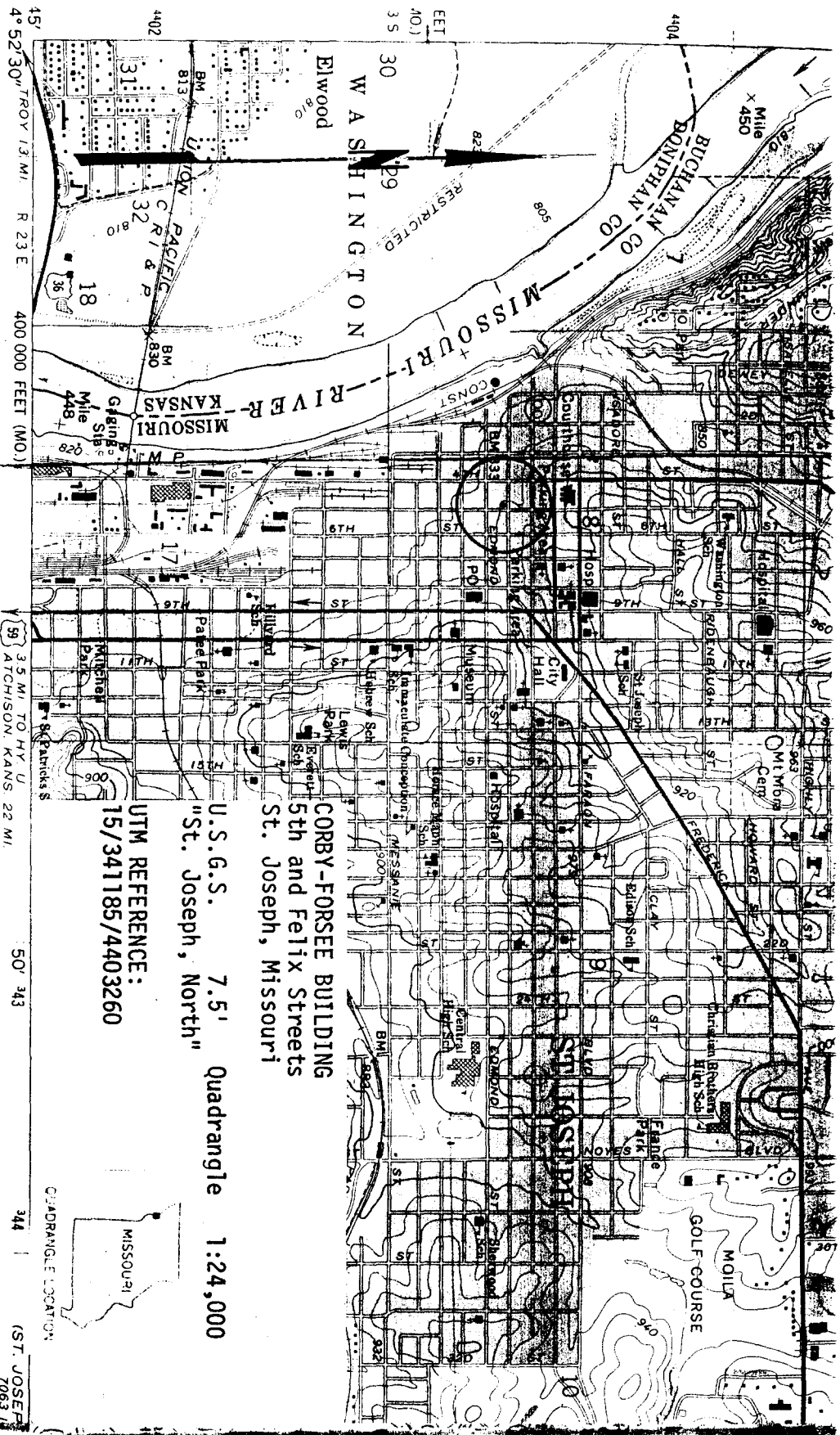
DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1971.

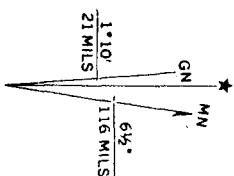
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Missouri coordinate system,
and Kansas coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken
1977. Map edited 1978. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

UTM GRID AND 1978 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

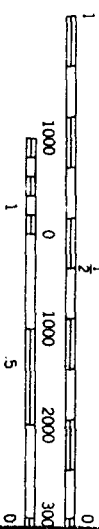


U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle 1:24,000
"St. Joseph, North"
UTM REFERENCE:
15/341185/4403260

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ST. JOSEPH
70637

SCALE 1



CONTOUR INTERVAL
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT
NATIONAL GEODETIC VER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER,
AND THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
AND STATE GEOLOGICAL SURV
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#420

COUNTY:

Buchanan

LOCATION:

5th & Felix

OWNER:

St. Joseph

ADDRESS:

The Corby Estate
Corby Building
St. Joseph 64501

DATE APPROVED BY A.C.:

November 9, 1979

DATE SENT TO D.C.:

January 8, 1980

DATE OF REC. IN D.C.:

DATE PLACED ON NATIONAL REGISTER:

March 27, 1980

DATE CERTIFICATE AWARDED
(AND PRESENTOR):

Given to Mary Boder: July 12, 1983
Presented:

DATE FILE REVIEWED:

Tax: MO-82-00188

MO-85-00212

The Corby-Forsee Building, the first multistory office building in St. Joseph, is significant due to its imposing architectural character which dominates the downtown. In addition, because the history of this building is intimately linked with the stories of the Corby and the Forsee families, two of St. Joseph's most prominent, its significance is further enhanced.

Colonel Joseph A. Corby
member of the Corby Family,
namesakes of the Corby-Forsee
Building at St. Joseph, MO.

CAPT. & AD
GEORGE L.R.

COLONEL
JOSEPH A. CORBY.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#1 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

View to north along 5th Street showing the
dominant position of the building.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#2 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Jill Watrous
May, 1979

305 Colden Hall, Northwest Missouri State
University, Maryville, Mo. 64468

View to southwest of upper portion of the
building showing terra cotta trim and the
addition of 1927.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#3 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Jill Watrous
May, 1979

305 Colden Hall, Northwest Missouri State
University, Maryville, Mo. 64468

Southeast corner, facing Felix Street, showing
the location of the terra cotta trim at first
and second floor levels.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

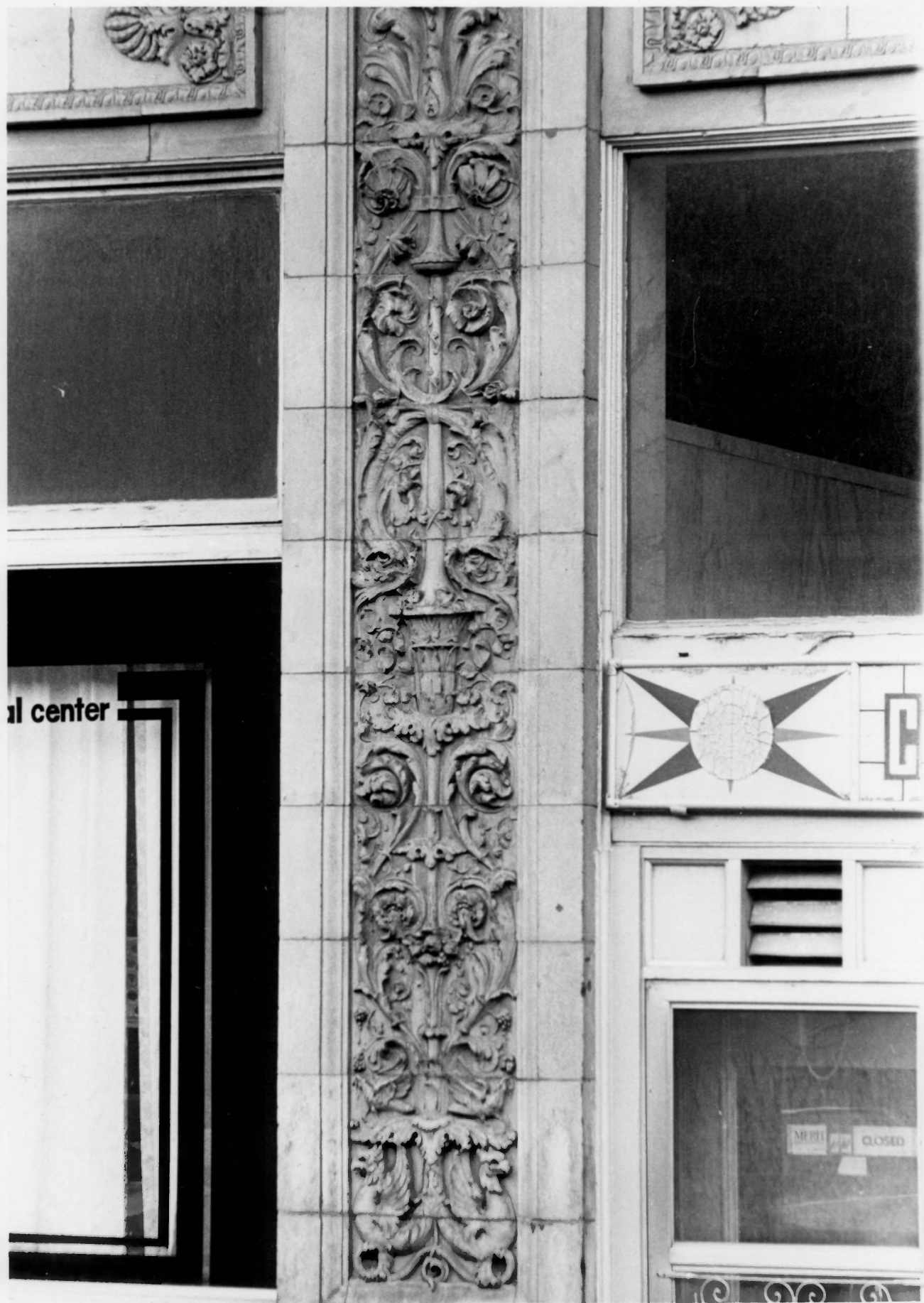
#4 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo.. 65102

Near northeast corner, detail of terra cotta
rinceaux at first floor level.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#5 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Main entrance on north side (Felix Street).



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#6 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Main entrance, detail showing embellished
archivolts, frieze and anthemion cap.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#7 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Carved marble embellishment separating the
small foyer from the lobby. This feature is
barely visible in photo #5.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING #8 of 10
5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Interior, lobby on north side, view to south-
east. Surfaces are faced with white marble
and the polished brass doors feature arms of
the Corby family.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING

#9 of 10

5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren

August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Interior, lobby, ceiling. The entablature and
ceiling are painted gold and the segmental
pediment features arms of the Corby family.



CORBY-FORSEE BUILDING #10 of 10
5th and Felix Streets, St. Joseph, Buchanan
County, Mo.

Photographer: Noelle Soren
August, 1979

Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176,
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102

Interior, lobby, east wall, a decorative
marble Michaelangelesque entryway.



EXTRA
PHOTOS



















