

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Tower Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS. Pulaski

DATE RECEIVED: 04/22/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16<sup>th</sup> DAY: DATE OF 45<sup>th</sup> DAY:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000692

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	Y	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 6-8-2016 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Provides additional information on materials & manufacturer of external steel panels.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept AD.

REVIEWER Jerry Hubbs DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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County and State
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Additional research has revealed that the Tower Building’s exterior curtain wall, consisting of ribbon windows and porcelain-enamel panels, was manufactured by the Mesker Brothers Iron Company of St. Louis, Missouri, a firm famous for producing thousands of galvanized sheet-metal façades and related buildings components at the turn of the twentieth century. Rendering of the building was included in the company’s marketing materials during the 1960s (Figure 1). The metal curtain wall manufactured by Mesker Brothers was made possible by the Tower Building’s architects’ use of a composite steel frame, and is highly important to the building’s expression of the International Style.

The firm of Mesker & Brother<sup>1</sup> was started in 1879 in St. Louis, Missouri, by brothers Bernard (1851–1936) and Frank (1859–1952). In 1884, they began to manufacture complete sheet-metal storefront and façade assemblies, which included millwork, glass and everything else that was needed to erect an entire façade. The heyday of the company’s façade work spanned from the mid-1880s to the early 1910s, after which the firm began to concentrate on steel windows and related building elements. During the First World War, the company produced large quantities of ranges and bread ovens for the U.S. and Allied governments. After the war, it continued production of architectural elements such as steel windows, doors and stairs. World War II meant more government work and Mesker Brothers produced airplane landing mats, fragmentation bombs, ammunition lockers, and oil and water tanks for submarine chasers. After WWII, the company resumed its production of metal windows, and also began manufacturing aluminum and steel curtain walls. When Frank passed away in 1952, his sons Francis Augustus and John Bernard George continued to operate the business, while his grandsons David, Richard and Douglass entered the business in 1956. A few years later John bought out Francis and left the management of the company to his two sons. They held the company until 1966 when they sold most of its assets to Barry-Wehmiller Company of St. Louis, retaining only the real estate and the company name of Mesker Brothers Iron Co. Though it passed out of Mesker hands, the company continued to operate under the Mesker name in St. Louis until the 1980s when it moved to Huntsville, Alabama, where, as Mesker Door, Inc., it manufactures steel doors and frames.

It is unknown how many other Mesker curtain walls were manufactured or survive. The same Tower Building rendering was used in other marketing material, such as Sweet’s Architectural Catalog File from 1965, with no mentions of any other installations. At least one other was contracted in 1963 — the Donata Building in Arlington, Virginia — but it is unclear whether Mesker completed the work because of a legal dispute with the client.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The company is more commonly known as Mesker Brothers Iron Works. It was incorporated under the name “Mesker Brothers Iron Company” in 1912.

<sup>2</sup> Mesker Brothers Iron Company, Appellant, v. Donata Corporation, A & H Holding Corporation and A & H Plumbing Supply Corporation, Appellees. U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. 9 Sept. 1968. *Justia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 29 Jan. 2016.

United States Department of the Interior  
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TOWER BUILDING  
LITTLE ROCK ARKANSAS  
ARCH: HEROLD BERRY

# YESTERDAY AND TODAY

## FROM METAL FRONTS TO METAL CURTAIN WALLS

This catalog was printed in the early-nineteen hundred's and contained forty pages of the newest and most modern ideas in metal front construction.

We have exactly reproduced seven pages of that catalog in hopes that it may bring nostalgic memories to some, and a glance at the past for others.

Since the turn of the century architecture has changed, new materials have been discovered, new construction methods have been devised, esthetic values have changed, but the basic concepts of sturdy, fire resistant walls of metal are still built into every Mesker Curtain Wall Project of aluminum or steel.

For information on today's Curtain Walls, see Sweets' File Section 3 A/ME; or contact your local Mesker Representative or:

**MESKER BROTHERS**  
6002 N. Lindbergh Blvd.  
HAZELWOOD, MISSOURI

Phone: PErshing 1-1380



Figure 1. Page from a 1965 commemorative booklet produced by Mesker Brothers, featuring a rendering of the Tower Building.