

YMCA Building
116 5th Street South
Designated October 1991, HPC #90-03



Built in 1927 for \$550,000 the YMCA building is significant for its association with the YMCA a worldwide organization first emerging in England in the 1840s as well as for distinction as one of the largest community funded projects in the City of St. Petersburg. It's construction was made possible through the generous donations of individuals and businesses throughout the Tampa Bay area. In addition, the YMCA is an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture which retains significant interior features (the tile pool, the cypress beams and the tiled lobby) which contribute to its significance.

The YMCA building is significant for its distinction as one of the largest community funded projects in the City of St. Petersburg. It's construction was made possible through the generous donations of individuals and businesses throughout the Tampa Bay area. The building retains its architectural integrity as an excellent example of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture and also retains significant interior features (the tile pool, the cypress beams and the tiled lobby) which contribute to it's significance. The YMCA building was designed and built by the team of University of Minnesota Professor Clarence Brown, (Woolvert & Brown), local architect Archie G. Parish, and local contractors Edward S. Moore and Sons.

The Mediterranean Revival building is four stories with a basement and a fifth-story tower, the style is expressed with arched windows and doorways, wreathed columns, balconettes trimmed with ornamental iron railings, and varied roof lines with barrel tile. The Fifth Street facade is divided into three unequal bays, each containing a series of arched casement windows or arched open hallways and rectangular casement style windows. There are three entrances into the building; two on the Fifth Street side and one on the Second Avenue South side. All of the entrances are arched doorways with quoined door surrounds that have the YMCA initials carved into the stone.

Much of the building's detailing, such as the ornate iron lanterns and corner entry sign, the exterior tile work, and the boxed wooden window grille reinforces the Mediterranean Revival style. Under each gymnasium window on the second level, facing Second Avenue South there is a rich panel of decorative Spanish tile from Seville, Spain. Pecky cypress wood beams and tile were used throughout the interior of the building, especially in the entrance lobby, and much of this decoration still remains. The decorative tile swimming pool runs parallel with 2nd Avenue to the south of the building and it is 74 by 37 feet. To the east wall of the pool is a fountain memorializing the donor of this pool, David S. Welch, who gave the YMCA \$20,000 to building the facility.