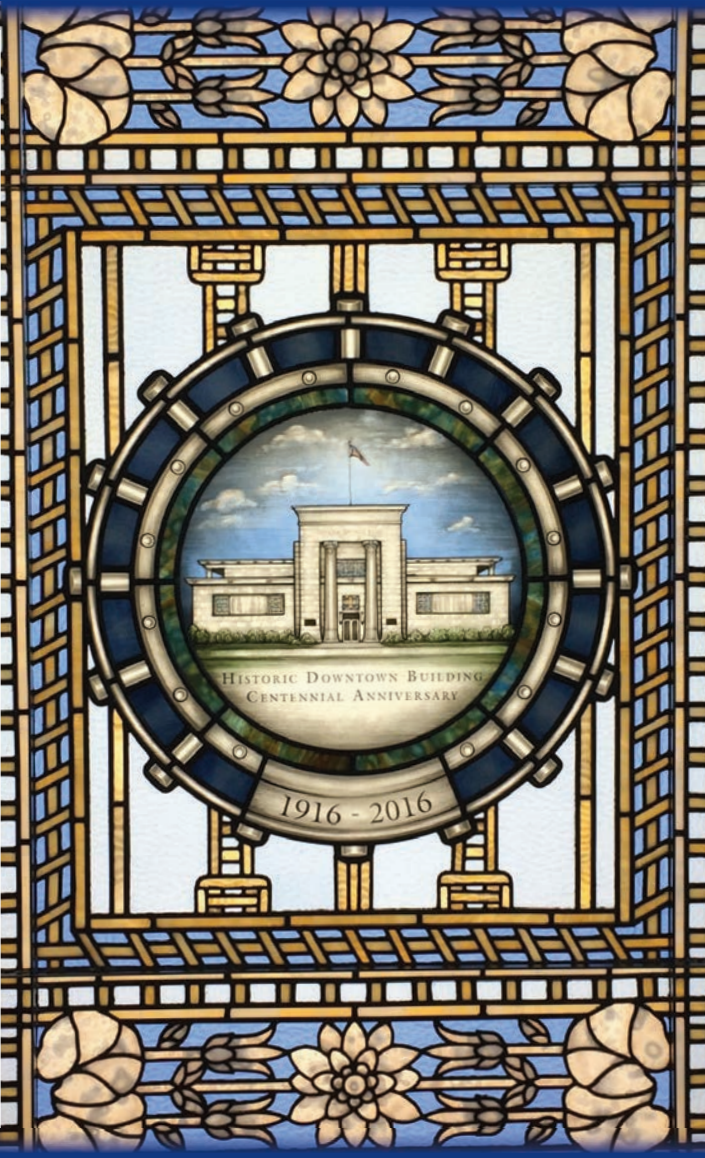
Tour Booklet



Explore our treasured heritage.

WNB Financial
More than a bank



Welcome

Thank you for touring the Downtown office of WNB Financial.

You will find many interesting artistic and architectural features on the tour. We hope you enjoy your visit!



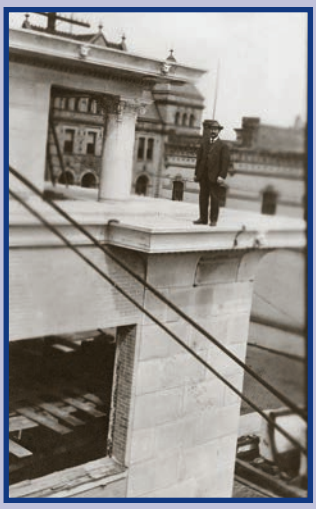
The completed building in 1916.

A Brief History of the Bank

The bank was formed as the Winona Savings Bank and began business in July 1874.

WNB Financial's Downtown building was erected in 1916, originally housing both the Winona Savings Bank and the newly formed Winona National Bank. Engraved on the front of this building is "Winona Savings Bank" as the merger with Winona National Bank had not occurred when it was built.

Over the years, WNB Financial has had prominent presidents, including William Mitchell for whom William Mitchell Law School in St. Paul is named, and William Windom, a former United States Treasury Secretary.





Building construction.

The Building

The building was designed by prominent architect George Maher of Chicago who also designed the Watkins building in Winona. Maher was a contemporary of legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The bank building is in Egyptian Revival style, but it has clear Prairie School influences.

Monolithic Columns

The building's face has a formidable look highlighted by the two grand columns. The front design is meant to show strength and stability, two important banking concepts.

Column features:

- Height: 37 feet
- Diameter: 4 feet, 8 ½ inches
- Weight: 32 tons
- Each column is a single granite piece.
- Each pillar rests on a 5-ton granite base.
- The granite was quarried in North Carolina and polished in Vermont.
- At the time the columns were erected in 1916, they were among the largest gray granite columns in the United States.

The original planning for the building included columns made of the much less expensive Bedford stone. Architect George Maher convinced bank president E.L. King that the columns and bases should be granite instead. The granite cost nearly two-and-a-half times as much as the Bedford stone, but Maher focused on the long-term value of granite. In a 1913 letter to E.L. King, Maher assured King that, "no bank that might be erected at Winona in the future could be erected of a better material than granite."





Details from the columns outside of the building.

The granite columns have stood the test of time and continue to impress visitors and life-long residents alike. The columns, however, are not merely large pieces of polished granite. At each column's top is detailed artwork that might not be noticed by the casual observer. Maher designed the column artwork that celebrates the building's grand structure while blending cohesively with the architecture of the building. Note that the lion motif is evident at the very top of each column.

Buried Treasure

A secret lies beneath the South column. On October 15, 1915, the bank's owners placed a copper box (a time capsule) in the ground that would soon be occupied by the South column. Among the items in the box were family photos, newspapers, bank plans, and various other items from the time period. Because the column would have to be removed to reach the time capsule, there are no current plans to recover the box.

The Vault

The original souvenir booklet crafted in 1916 referred to the vault as "the mammoth steel vault." It was built by the Diebold Safe and Lock Company of Canton, Ohio, which has long been considered the leader in vault equipment.



The mammoth steel vault.

In the grand design of the bank, the vault serves as an imposing, impregnable structure – a place where your money and valuables are safe.

Maher took great care to distinguish this building as safe and secure, something critical to the bank's success, especially in the early part of the century. In 1916, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) did not exist. Banks had to demonstrate strength and stability because the financial panic and four-year economic depression that had begun in 1893 were still frightening memories for many citizens.

A hidden architectural treasure is located above the steel vault. The owners apparently thought that the vault area was a bit austere, so one month before the grand opening in 1916, they engaged Tiffany Studios of New York to add a decorative touch that blended harmoniously with the building's other architectural and artistic features.

On the ceiling above the vault, a decorative cove (also called a frieze) outlines the ceiling. This cove was designed by Tiffany Studios, and it matches the general theme of the stained glass windows (also designed by Tiffany Studios). The intricate detail is remarkable – especially when one considers that to design, mold, and paint the entire cove cost only an additional $275.



The frieze from above the vault.

Marble

Marble gives the interior an elegant appearance while enhancing the image of a safe, solid institution. Maher designed every shape and size of the marble.



Green marble planters.

Green Marble

The exquisite emerald green marble radiates color and fascinating patterns. Marble dealers refer to this popular marble as Tinos Green marble because it was quarried from the Isle of Tinos, a Greek island in the Mediterranean Sea. The tiny island of Tinos is home to several Greek mythology figures, including Aeolus and Poseidon. Tinos Green marble appears prominently in many famous buildings, including the Carnegie Museum of Art.

White Marble

The white marble is called English Vein Italian white marble and was imported from the Carrara District of Italy.



Green marble ventilation grid.





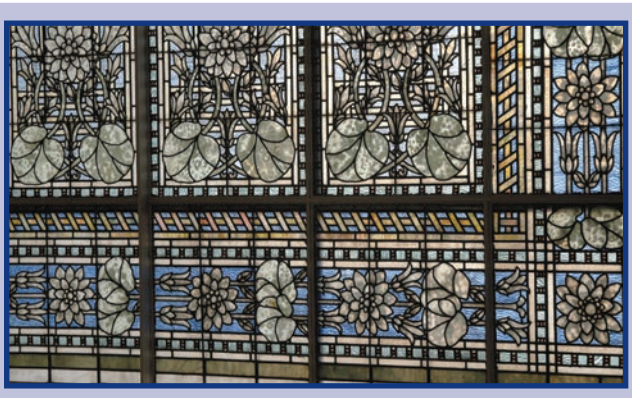
Details of white marble molding and steps.

Unlike the Tinos Green marble, the Italian white marble is uniformly smooth and strong. The floral bowls and the staircases are made of the white marble. Note the intricate detail of the marble work above the building's front door.

Each groove and curve were painstakingly detailed in the blueprints by Maher. Also note the Prairie School-inspired banding pattern on the center lobby's white marble.

Stained Glass Windows

The famous Tiffany Studios of New York created all of the building's stained glass windows from architect George Maher's sketches. The art glass was so dazzling that the local newspaper considered its installation newsworthy.



Original Tiffany stained glass.

Smaller stained glass windows are located at the North and South sides of the lobby. According to the newspaper article, the smaller stained glass windows each took a Tiffany artist 24 working days to complete.

The most impressive art glass window in the building is the huge, colorful window placed over the entrance on the West side of the building. A lotus pattern is apparent in the large art glass window, and Maher's Prairie School influences are also evident. During bright, sunny days, the window shines brilliantly and is a focal point of color and beauty.

Skylights

Maher designed the building to be illuminated by direct light fixtures as well as the indirect light of many skylights.

A large skylight is in the center of the lobby, and other skylights are located in the marble staircases and the third floor meeting rooms. The skylights share the same simple yet elegant design motif, characteristic of the Prairie School architectural movement.

Light Fixtures

The third floor light fixtures show an art deco influence. Remarkably, most of the original fixtures are still in place today after more than 90 years of continuous use.



Skylights and light fixtures in a third floor meeting room.



Staircase details.

Staircases

The white marble's strength and uniformity make it an excellent choice for the two stairwells that lead from the first to third floor. The stairwells are designed to provide an elegant passageway to the third floor's artistic splendor. Top-grade mahogany railings wrap around the staircases.

Metal Works

The main floor has several examples of Prairie School-inspired ventilation grids. Iron window gates help complete the building's formidable front entry. All metal works were designed by George Maher.

Ceiling Cove

The vault cove may have been inspired by the decorative cove on the center ceiling of the building. The ceiling cove has a unique pattern that incorporates the lion motif and lotus pattern.



Decorative staircase metal work.

Tiffany Studios created the center ceiling cove from George Maher sketches. The Prairie design style appears in the ceilings of the upper level meeting rooms. The stepped design echoes the patterns in the furniture that was custom built for those rooms.





Decorative cove (above) and Prairie style molding.

Furniture

The chairs and tables both reflect Prairie School influences. These original furniture pieces were carefully restored in 1991 during the building's last major renovation.

Thank You!

We hope you enjoyed your tour of WNB Financial's Downtown building. If you would like to arrange a group tour, please call at least one day in advance (507-454-8800 or 1-800-546-4392 if calling from outside the Winona area). WNB Financial gratefully acknowledges the Winona County Historical Society for the use of its resources in the publication of this book.



Prairie School-inspired furniture.

WNB FINANCIAL
MORE THAN A BANK

Historic Downtown Office Tour

204 Main Street

General Information: 507-454-8800

Toll Free: 1-800-546-4392

WNBFinancial.com

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