Wyoming National Holds Grand Opening

'Modern' Sums Up the Design Of New Bank

The imposing beauty of Casper's new Wyoming National Bank Building is just one of the noteworthy aspects of this outstanding modern concept in bank buildings. The concrete, granite and glass house many new designs and construction features.

The casting of the 17 leaves of the rotunda on the site and placing them in position was a departure from accepted builders' practices. A form was created out of wood and dirt dug from the lower level. Each leaf blade is 44-feet high and weights approximately 21 tons. The blades become a part of the wall as well as supporting columns, making possible a circular room 86-feet in diameter clearspan (free of interior supporting columns).

As a matter of design, the second floor around the rotunda is treated as a large square block cut away to make room for the rotunda. The outside walls on the north and west sides are actually bowed outwards in a gentle curve to soften the squarishness of the mass.

Windows Unique

The windows of the building also are unique creations with the second floor windows appearing to have been cut into the wall with a rounded chisel. That portion of the 104 precast concrete panels which frame the second-floor windows, fit together at the bottom and the glass slid into a groove from the top of the panels and sealed with a waterproof caulking material.

The main floor windows between the leaves require special drapery treatment because of the curvature from top to bottom. A gray, heat-absorbing glass is used.

The actual dome of the rotunda is 60-feet in diameter and is connected with the remainder of the building with translucent plastic panels which let daylight in overhead.

Form Sculptured

The shell-like structures of the drive-in teller units were also modeled as pieces of sculpture and relate to the blades of the rotunda. A general outline was created in steel reinforcing rod and steel mesh. Then both sides were plastered with cement plaster until sufficient thickness was built up for the shells to be self-supporting.

Though the bank occupies a corner lot, the usual corner entrance was omitted. One entrance is located near the parking lot and the other planned to be near the downtown shopping district.

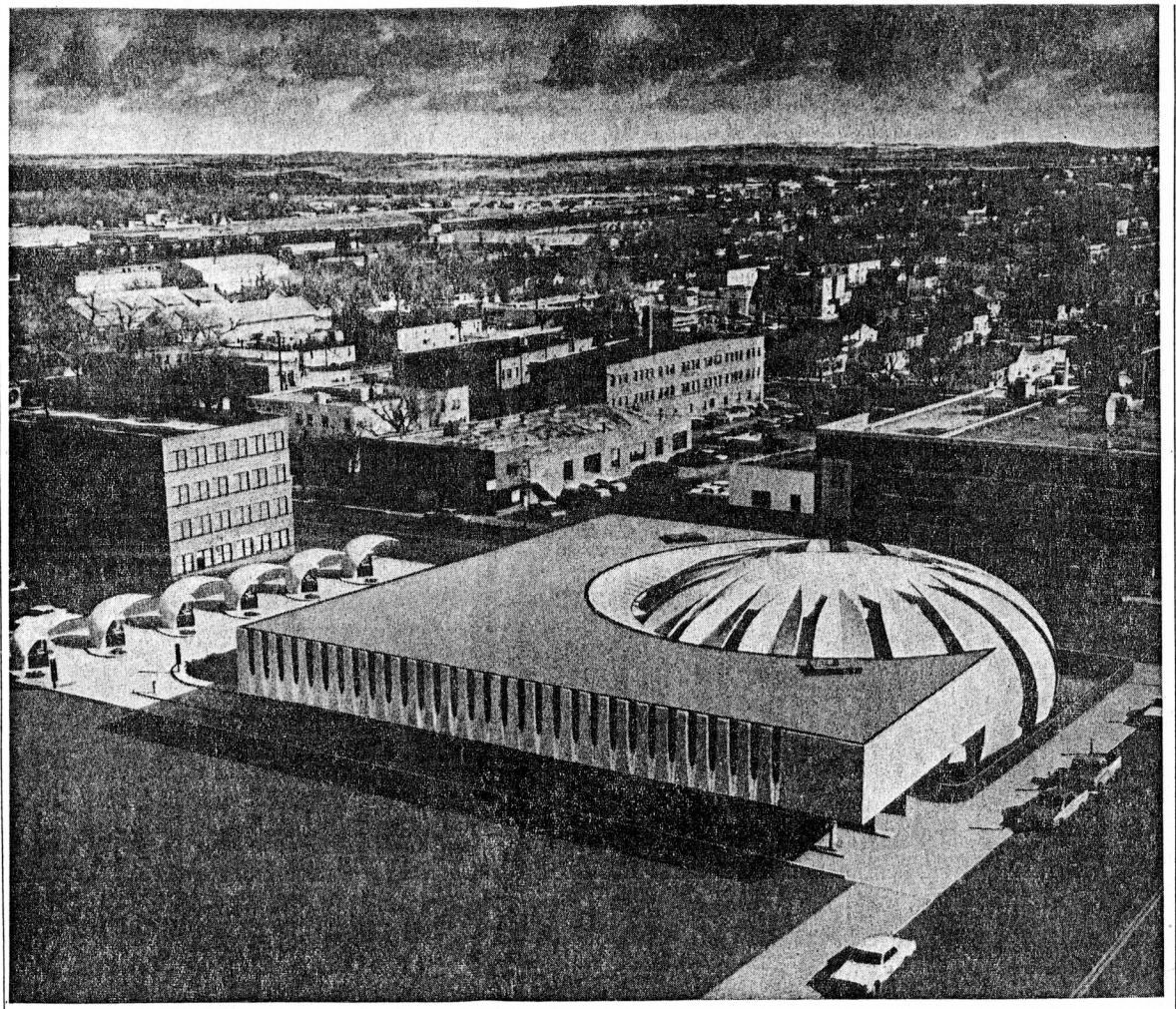
A sunken garden opens between the sidewalk and the rotunda at the corner allowing daylight to enter the lower level.

Walk-Ups Serve Business Area

With a location so convenient to the business district of Casper, The Wyoming National Bank planned walk-up teller windows at the entrances of the new bank building at First and Durbin. One is located to the left of the main entrance on First Street, on the south side of the bank building. Two tellers at this window handle deposits and withdrawals during the hours from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Monday through Thursday. The window is open on Fridays until 6 p.m.

Another walk-up teller window is located on the east side of The Wyoming National Bank next to the parking area on the north side of the building. This window will not be open during the grand opening celebration, but is being held in reserve for future needs.

Both walk-up teller windows are connected via a pneumatic tube with the bank's proofing room in order to expedite identification of checks and signatures.



DESIGNED FROM GROUND UP: In addition to being an interesting building to walk around, work inside and observe from street level, the Wyoming National Bank Building has been designed to be seen from the top, too. From a vantage point above two stories, one can see that the bank building's second floor is "cut out" to take the rotunda, the main banking room. The rotunda relates to the block of the second floor functionally and aesthetically.

New Bank Building Is Designed to Meet Needs of the Future

By ELEANOR R. FINN

The architect of the "new and different" building which will soon house the Wyoming National Bank in Casper says, "the structure is designed specifically to meet the bank's needs."

The building which will open to the public on May 3, is a two-storied structure made of reinforced white concrete. It illustrates a clear-cut departure from traditional bank architecture.

Charles Deaton, the Denver architect responsible for the bank's design, refers to the work as "a sculptural concept in architecture."

In association with architects Marvin Knedler and J. Robert Bence, Deaton brings to Casper a building which has created nationwide interest among architects and designers.

Deaton is pleased with the reception Wyoming residents are giving the new structure and amused by the "clever and highly original" titles they have been bestowing upon the building. (Frequent visitors to the site have grown to refer to the building's dome as "the leafy rotunda", "the peeled orange" and "the sunflower with its petals all closed up.")

The new bank is located at East First and North Durbin Streets, in the center of the downtown district.

Architects Interested In Bank

Several innovations at The Wyoming National Bank's new building have caught the attention of architects and construction experts throughout the country.

The "squarishness" of the second floor of the building was moderated by designing a slight curve or gentle bowing of the north and west walls. The average person looking at it might find it pleasing to see without recognizing that the reason the design is attractive relates to the slight bulge in these walls.

A special four foot wide granite slab normally functioning as part of the wall at the East First Street entrance can be swung out and locked into place on the sidewalk. The purpose of this free - swinging slab is to provide a shield for customers entering the bank from the prevailing, strong southwest winds.

First For U. S.

Three distinct designs in ceiling treatment to diffuse light have been used in the new building. The 60-foot diameter rotunda ceiling is formed by a specially designed plastic louver called a "squiggle" pattern. It is the first installation of its kind in the United States. Although it is made of several thousand pieces, it appears to be a continuous and unbroken pattern of curving lines. The Board of Directors' Room on the second floor has a light - diffusing system called "Leaf-Lite." It is made with hundreds of separate metal leaves suspended from a grid in a textured pattern. In the Safe Deposit Department on the Garden Level, a third light treatment is furnished using a textured luminous pattern.

Another outstanding innovation is a system for charging dust particles with an electric charge. This holds the dust in suspension throughout the building until the air is discharged from the building. It is called a Statronic Dirt and Dust Control System.