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These Walls

Colcord Building

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OKLAHOMA CITY – Charles Colcord first became a part of Oklahoma history when he came for land during the Oklahoma Land Run of 1889.

On April 22, 1889, Colcord laid claim to Lot Number 1, Block Number 1, in what became Oklahoma City.

In 1910, a building bearing his name was built at 15 N. Robinson Ave., the city's first skyscraper. At 13 stories, the building would be dwarfed by other towers in downtown Oklahoma City over the next decades.

The building was made of steel-reinforced concrete and was built to last. Colcord placed an emphasis on making the building as strong and secure as possible after seeing the devastation in San Francisco after a major earthquake there in 1906. Plans to eventually build a matching west wing to the hotel never came to fruition.

William A. Wells was the architect for the building and also designed the molds for decorative terra cotta seen on the first, second and 12th floors.

Black and white marble was added to the walls and columns in the lobby as well as nickel-plated elevator doors and a bronze letter box.

The Colcord functioned as an office building for many years, and was spared destruction during efforts by Urban Renewal that razed many of the city's landmark buildings to make way for new development.

In 1976 the Colcord was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 2006 a renovation began at the Colcord to turn it into Oklahoma City's first boutique hotel.

Tulsa developer Paul Coury, who also renovated and opened the 55-room Ambassador Hotel in Tulsa, led the project.

Work began on the project by Beck Design and the Manhattan Construction Co. for a nearly \$10.6 million renovation.

Coury oversaw every aspect of the hotel's design down to the bed throws and couch cushions in guest rooms. Furniture in the rooms was also designed specifically for the hotel and features splashes of red throughout the rooms.

Efforts were also made to keep as much of the original interior in the lobby intact as possible. Coury's efforts restored and revitalized the marble and lighting in the lobby with modern touches that blended seamlessly with the original décor.

For a true boutique hotel, Coury said it must have its own gourmet restaurant.

Oklahoma City restaurateurs Michel and Alain Buthion, owners of La Baguette Bistro, began work on the ground-level, 4,000-square-foot Soleil restaurant. The restaurant sits on the southeast corner of the building looking out toward Robinson and Sheridan avenues. The brothers also opened the XO Lounge in the basement of the hotel.

The hotel opened in late 2006 and features 108 guest rooms including a large suite known as the "Rock Star Suite."



The Colcord Hotel, formerly the Colcord Building, in Oklahoma City

PHOTO BY TED STREULI