

General Printing Office Warehouse

Original Name: GPO Warehouse

Address: 732 North Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20002

Architect(s): Victor Darwin Abel

Year of Construction: 1938 Addition

Current Status: Federal Government Offices

Original Use: Printing Offices

Materials: Brick, limestone, granite, sandstone, steel, aluminum, glass

The first building in the Government Printing Office complex was completed at the turn of the last century. The part that is of most interest to Decophiles is the 1938 addition by Victor Darwin Abel of Philadelphia (not to be confused with prolific Washington, DC architect Joseph Abel, who was a close contemporary). It is located just to the north of the original building and fronts on North Capitol Street. The façade uses a red brick, not too dissimilar to the original building. It takes additional cues from its earlier neighbor to the south: there is a nod to traditional rustication in the first- and second-floor brick work with recessed bands, the general fenestration pattern of punched windows, the vertical groupings of windows in the middle floors joined by metal spandrel panels and the attic story read of the façade's top floor. All of these elements echo the traditional character of the original building, but do it in a decidedly modern fashion. This notion is prevalent in many Art Deco era buildings: they are Deco-ized versions of other styles. Other interesting features include the stylized bas relief eagles carved in a red sandstone that flank the building's sign over the center entrance. The brass entrance doors are held by a bold projecting granite frame and accenting by particularly elegant wall sconce light fixtures, also adorned with eagles. The red brick is furthermore complemented with a sandstone foundation, window surrounds and bandings.



Static (Fixed) Google Map:



Dynamic (Searchable and Expandable) Google Map:

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