

Historic McMill Building

1903

- Construction begins after Congress appropriates \$100,000
- Built in the Renaissance Revival style originating in Italy in the 14th century, a revival of classic Greek and Roman styles following the medieval period (replica of the Annapolis, MD federal building)
- Opens as the U.S. Post Office, Federal Court House, federal jail and marshal's quarters in October 1904
- At this time there were no other federal buildings in the U.S., in a city of Norfolk's size (5,000 at that time), that could compare with it



1930

- Addition built with matching construction on north side doubling the size to 20,000 sq. feet at a cost of \$145,000



1970

- Post Office moved and several federal agencies occupied until 1974—building was vacant for 2 years

1976

- Purchased by private developers, converted to office space
- Named the McMill Building, reflecting the date of its construction in Roman numerals, MCMIII



Original Features

- Marble and oak still enhance the entryway and open stairway that winds its way to the 3rd floor
- Stately 2nd floor courtroom, with its ceiling that reaches up through the 3rd floor, is wrapped in oak
- Decorative, 16-foot molded ceilings are still evident in areas of the building
- Wood doors with frosted glass windows, reminiscent of those from early-day school houses, still line the second and third floor hallways
- A conference table hides a hole in the floor where mail was dropped to the level below
- Attic reveals the evolution of construction from 1903 to 1931 (south half, with its wood beams and floor, like the hayloft in an old barn and north half built with steel and concrete)
- The original fire hoses hang in the hallways
- Several vaults are still used for client records
- Original construction included secret lookouts, where managers watched unsuspecting clerks to ensure honesty and the post office inspector walked in tunnels or "cat walks" built into the walls
- Over the entrance, "Old Abe," the eagle, still hovers, as he has since 1903

Today the McMill Building is one of four Norfolk entries in the **National Registry of Historical Places**