



# These Walls

## Stillwater National Bank – Tulsa

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TULSA – Originally resisted by surrounding residents, one of Tulsa's most successful infill projects will mark its 10th anniversary in January.

But its most beloved feature will not hit that milestone for another two years.

Although artist Kathy Barnard started on the 24 hand-etched panes in 1998, it wasn't until September 2000 that workers with American Metal and Glass Manufacturers of Tulsa started installing her elaborate glass depiction of a shady Oklahoma pond.

With each panel weighing in at 700 pounds, it took a month to complete the curved, 40-foot by 35-foot artwork. Drivers crossing 15th Street and Utica Avenue have marveled at it ever since.

Owner Stillwater National Bank and Trust commissioned the Kansas City, Mo., glass artist to provide the finishing touch to a dynamic, four-story Tulsa office design led by Mauro Dallabattista, then with Gary Sparks Architects Inc.

F. Ivan Griffith, a Crafton Tull Sparks senior architect who served as a project manager for the \$4.2 million effort (\$5.5 million in constant dollars), said Dallabattista worked closely with now-retired SNB Chairman Robert McCormick Jr. to create a building with no hard corners, one the lead architect described as a "fluid" and "floating" structure.

"Together they sculpted the building that stretched the boundaries of traditional construction," said Griffith, who considers the steel and brick structure challenging even by today's standards.

McCormick gave the Sparks interior designers great freedom to maintain that sculpted theme not just with the support beams, marble floors and maple-paneled halls, but its fixtures, furniture and artwork – most of which remains in use a decade later.

"We really appreciated having a client like Bob McCormick and his entire staff," said Crafton Tull Sparks Senior Interior Designer Jill Selman, who worked on the project.

"You don't have clients like that every



Stillwater National Bank in Tulsa is shown at the corner of 15th and Utica Avenue.

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The lobby of Stillwater National Bank in Tulsa.

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day."

McCormick kept the building infrastructure as modern as the building design,

said Griffith, installing 78 wells stretching 260 feet beneath the parking lot to provide the offices ground-source heating and cool-

ing.

In other areas the designers drew upon improvisation. For its rippled roof the Sparks staff chose fiberglass canopies originally designed for covered parking lots in Florida.

"They made a suitable crown for this building," said Griffith.

To get the decorative boulders in just the right position, he said landscape designer Joe Howell ended up driving a bulldozer down to the basement level – and burying it there.

The 1500 S. Utica project, completed by Tulsa contractor Flintco Inc. in January 1999, soon drew several honors, including national and state awards of excellence from the Associated Builders and Contractors.

"It's a jewel from the outside and a jewel from the inside," said Griffith.