

Manchester, East of Town Center: Post Office, Masonic Hall, Orange Hall, SNET building

The U. S. Post Office, built at the northeast corner of Main and East Center Streets in 1932, incorporates both Georgian and Colonial Revival influences in its design (479 Main Street). Its porticoed entrance, set on an angled façade which cuts across the corner, utilizes limestone columns with Ionic capitals. It is flanked by tall round-arched windows with keystones, features found on the secondary façades facing each street. A brick and limestone frieze forms a parapet for the hipped slate roof, which is surmounted by a cupola.

The immediate neighbor to the east is the 1926 Neo-Classical Masonic Temple, which has a recessed entrance in antis flanked by three-story columns (25 East Center Street).

in **antis**. [an-tis] adjective, **Architecture**. noting or pertaining to a classical temple in which the antae extend to form the sides of a recessed portico, which has a row of columns. noting or pertaining to the row of columns or the portico in such a building.



Across the street here are two additional major Colonial Revival buildings, Orange Hall (70-74 East Center Street) and the Southern New England Telephone Exchange (52 East Center Street). Built in 1902 as a meeting hall with commercial establishments at street level, Orange Hall has a façade elaborated by white-painted bricks around its central Palladian window and pilasters of alternating brick and limestone. The front gable is detailed with a modillioned cornice and cresting. Brick piers set off the original plate glass storefronts, and the central recessed round-arched, street-level entrance to the second floor has brick voussoirs [Webmaster's note: a wedge-shaped or tapered stone used to construct an arch] and repeats the keystone found above the façade windows.

The original portion of the Southern New England Telephone Exchange to the immediate west was built in 1929. Its stylized façade demonstrates the influence of Art Deco with concrete pilasters terminating in Greek fret capitals and the use of geometric patera [Webmaster's note: A bas-relief decorative oval ... Similar to a rosette which is not as shallow in depth as a patera] blocks at the corners of concrete window lintels. A large c.1950 brick rear addition is now connected to a new exchange building that extends almost to Main Street on the west.

(Information from <http://www.livingplaces.com>, which describes many of the country's historic districts in architectural detail. This flyer has been used for Manchester Historical Society walks around the Town Center.)