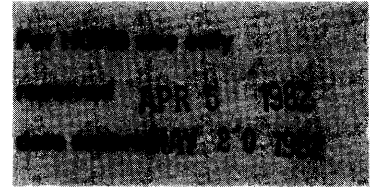


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Heidelberg Hotel
and/or common Capitol House

2. Location

street & number 201 Lafayette Street n/a not for publication
city, town Baton Rouge n/a vicinity of _____ congressional district 6th--Henson Moore
state LA code 22 county East Baton Rouge Parish code 033

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial (hotel) <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>n/a</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Apex Properties Mr. Joseph W. Ehrenreich, President
street & number 9100 Wilshire Blvd.
city, town Beverly Hills n/a vicinity of _____ state CA 90212

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. East Baton Rouge Parish Courthouse
street & number 222 St. Louis St. P. O. Box 1991
city, town Baton Rouge state LA 70821

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title La. Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1982 federal state county local
depository for survey records La. State Historic Preservation Office
city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Heidelberg Hotel (1927) is a ten-story, vaguely Romanesque skyscraper which at one time was the centerpiece of downtown Baton Rouge. Despite the many alterations the building has undergone, it still conveys its associations as well as a goodly portion of its architectural significance.

The steel frame building is sheathed in painted brick. When it was originally built, the ground story had a central lobby, several ancillary spaces, and a bar. Most of the upper floors had central corridors flanked by rooms with groups of rooms set at the ends in projecting pavilions. The top story contained a large ballroom space.

Like many eclectic skyscrapers of the 1920's, the ground story and the penthouse top story of the Heidelberg are richly ornamented, while the stories between feature course after course of unornamented windows. The ornamentation is mainly derived from the Romanesque style, although the round arches rest upon Persian columns. Overall, the building has a Mediterranean look. This is particularly true of the penthouse ballroom with its gable end pavilions, red tile roofs, heavy corbel table, and elaborate arcades. It is recessed slightly from the mass of the building, and gives the basic appearance of a rooftop Mediterranean villa. Most of the ornamentation is of terra cotta.

Since the Heidelberg was built, the following changes have been made:

1. The ground story has been completely remodeled for a restaurant. Only the bar area remains intact. This reworking included the replacement of the ground story front wall. (The side wall ornamentation remains intact.)
2. The construction of a massive modern addition on the north side.
3. The redecoration of most of the rooms, including the ballroom.

In spite of these changes, the building still conveys its historical associations. It still vividly presents the outward appearance of a 1920's eclectic skyscraper. The massive addition does not significantly impair this appearance because it reads as a separate building. The fact that the interiors have been remodeled should not be regarded as detrimental to the building's political associations. Most of these associations encompass the entire building as a whole, without specific reference to any particular interior space. For example, Huey Long kept a suite of rooms at the Heidelberg, but they were different rooms at different times. The only specific interior space in the hotel which is universally acknowledged as a political focal point in its own right is the bar, and this area remains intact.

Despite the architectural losses, the hotel retains much of its original articulation and ornamentation. It still warrants a secondary designation of local architectural significance as one of only two major examples in Baton Rouge of the work of the noted Louisiana architect, Edward F. Neild. It should also be noted in this regard that the other major example, the Old Courthouse, has also been modified, although to a lesser extent.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1927 **Builder/Architect** Architect: Edward F. Neild

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criteria A, B, & C

The Heidelberg Hotel is significant on the state level in the area of politics/government because of its close associations with Huey P. Long and Louisiana politics during his gubernatorial term (1928-32).* It is being nominated for significance at the state level because Governor Long during this period was a political figure of statewide prominence and political activity during his administration affected the entire state. In addition, the Heidelberg is significant to a lesser extent in the area of architecture at the local level. It is one of only two major examples in Baton Rouge of the work of the noted Louisiana architect, Edward F. Neild.

When Governor Long was in Baton Rouge (which was all of the time during a legislative session), he could be found either at the legislature or at the Heidelberg. As T. Harry Williams wrote in his Pulitzer Prize winning biography of Long: "He engaged a suite at the Heidelberg Hotel, the capital's largest, and another at the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans, and in these public houses he ate and slept and lived a public existence." As the unofficial Long headquarters, the Heidelberg quite naturally emerged as second only to the legislature as a focus for political activity during his administration.

A recent statement from Senator Russell Long so aptly capsulizes the Heidelberg's political significance that it deserves to be quoted at some length. Although he is evaluating the hotel's importance within a broader chronological framework, his comments are equally as true for the specific period under consideration (1928-32). The following is an excerpt:

The Capitol House, formerly known as the Heidelberg Hotel, has provided the setting for many of the momentous decisions affecting the future of the state of Louisiana. For many years, the "Hunt Room" (bar) served as a meeting place for Louisiana politicians including my Father, Huey P. Long, and my Uncle Earl Long during their tenures as Governor and U. S. Senator.

Prior to the days of legislative reform, committees held caucuses, political deals were finalized, and compromises on important pieces of legislation were hammered out in the privacy and comfort of the Heidelberg. Oftentimes, the vote on the floor of the Louisiana Senate and House merely confirmed a decision made earlier in an informal meeting in the "Hunt Room" (bar).

9. Major Bibliographical References

Williams, T. Harry. Huey Long. Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

Essay on the Heidelberg's history prepared by Ed Reed for the owner. Mr. Reed's sources included Long biographies, his autobiography, interviews, newspapers, etc. Copy located in Heidelberg National Register file, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 1.9 acres

Quadrangle name Baton Rouge West, La.

Quadrangle scale 1=24000

UMT References

A

1	5	6	7	3	8	3	0	3	3	6	9	7	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ed Reed (for the owner/applicant)

organization n/a

date February 1982

street & number c/o Capitol House
201 Lafayette

telephone 504-383-7721

city or town Baton Rouge

state LA 70821

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 29, 1982

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

Affect:

City:

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Heidelberg Hotel

Item number 8

Page 2

8. Statement of Significance (Continued)

Innumerable examples could be given to graphically illustrate the Heidelberg's political associations with Long and Louisiana politics from 1928 to 1932. For instance, the Heidelberg figured quite prominently in the 1929 attempt to impeach Long, an event which is considered to have had a considerable impact upon Long's attitude toward his conservative opposition and the development of his "fight fire with fire" policy towards them.

Long writes the following account of the trying and tumultuous days before the formal impeachment proceedings began:

Few callers knocked on my doors. At last I had the peace of quiet and solitude for which I had so often longed.

I barricaded myself in my rooms in the Heidelberg Hotel overlooking the Mississippi River. It looked as if another flood might come. Maybe--surely--I would hear from some of the mighty ones who remembered what I had done for them. I pondered, I wondered and reflected.

Long would not have to wonder and reflect much longer. The powerful Times-Picayune in New Orleans editorialized against him. A rally of his opponents mobilized 6,000 people. His opposition even invaded his "home away from home"--the Heidelberg. The impeachers reserved an entire floor of the hotel and operated from their "command post" there while the impeachee did the same on another floor.

The Heidelberg again made the headlines in January 1932 when it was the focal point of a "battle" for control between Governor Long and Paul Cyr, his lieutenant governor. Upon this occasion Long had to have Cyr evicted from the Heidelberg after Cyr had declared himself governor and had made the hotel the temporary state capitol.

Cyr was elected lieutenant governor with Long and had broken with him before either had served a year. When Huey campaigned and was elected to the U. S. Senate in 1930, he resisted taking the oath of office because he dreaded vacating the office and letting Cyr assume the governorship. Long's hand-picked successor, O. K. Allen, was elected to succeed Long in January, 1932, but he would not take office until May of that year.

However, Cyr impetuously declared that Long had vacated the office by his election to the Senate and announced that he would set up his "seat of government" in the Heidelberg, from which he would govern as the state's chief executive. Huey journeyed to Washington, D.C., took the oath of office as U. S. Senator, and immediately relayed the information to Baton Rouge, where the president pro tem of the Louisiana Senate,

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Heidelberg Hotel Item number 8 Page 3

8. Statement of Significance (Continued)

Alvin O. King, was waiting to take the oath of office as governor. King and Long maintained that Cyr, by taking the position he was governor of Louisiana, had vacated the office of lieutenant governor. King, next in line of succession, became governor of the state. Furthermore, Long telephoned the manager of the Heidelberg and suggested he evict Cyr from the establishment. The manager did so, depriving the hapless former lieutenant governor not only of his job, but also his seat of government.

These are but two of the better known political happenings at the Heidelberg. Countless other Long associations could be cited. For instance, most of the Kingfish's autobiography Everyman a King was written at his Heidelberg suite. Another example involves Long's well-known enthusiasm for LSU football. On one memorable occasion, he played banker from his suite at the Heidelberg, making loans to LSU students who could not afford the train fare to Nashville to see the Tigers play Vanderbilt.

Certainly the above discussion makes it abundantly clear that the history of the Heidelberg and the political history of the state from 1928 to 1932 are entwined. It should be noted in this regard that the Heidelberg was not associated with just any governor or just any period in Louisiana politics. Although Long is an extremely controversial figure with both admirers and detractors, surely no one can deny that the Long era was a watershed in Louisiana history. One could argue ad infinitum over whether Long's positive accomplishments outweigh his negative legacy, or vice versa. Do the ends justify the means? Did Long lose sight of his original purpose (i.e., helping the "people" of Louisiana) as he began to grasp power for power's sake? No matter what the answers to these questions may be, suffice it to say, concludes T. Harry Williams, that like other powerful men who have influenced the course of history, Huey P. Long certainly left a different world behind him.

As mentioned previously, the Heidelberg is being nominated for secondary significance at the local level in the area of architecture because it is one of two major examples in Baton Rouge of the work of the noted Louisiana architect, Edward F. Neild. Neild is remembered as a famous Shreveport architect, but his stature embraced the entire state and ultimately the nation.

Neild was born in Shreveport in 1884. He rose to prominence in the 1920's, '30's, and '40's designing many of Shreveport's most important buildings. These include the nine-story Henry C. Beck Building, the Municipal Building, the Caddo Parish Courthouse, the massive exhibit center at the Shreveport fairgrounds, the Veterans Administration Hospital in Shreveport, and many of the Caddo Parish School buildings.

Neild's rise to national prominence began in 1928 when Judge Harry Truman visited Neild's recently completed Caddo Parish Courthouse. Truman was impressed and engaged Neild to design the Jackson County Courthouse in Missouri. This formed a lasting friendship between Truman and Neild which led to other commissions. When

CONTINUED

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Heidelberg Hotel

Item number 8

Page 4

8. Statement of Significance (Continued)

Truman was president Neild was the architect for the major structural renovations made to the White House after the famous "piano leg incident." Neild died in 1955 while working on the design for the Truman Memorial Library in Kansas City. He also designed courthouses in Phoenix, Arizona; Ruston, Louisiana; and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Stylistically Neild was an eclectic architect mainly rooted in the axial Beaux Arts tradition who gradually turned to modernism in the late-1920's. The Heidelberg represents Neild at the tail end of his enthusiasm for purely eclectic architecture. It is, therefore, of great interest in the scholarly study of his career.

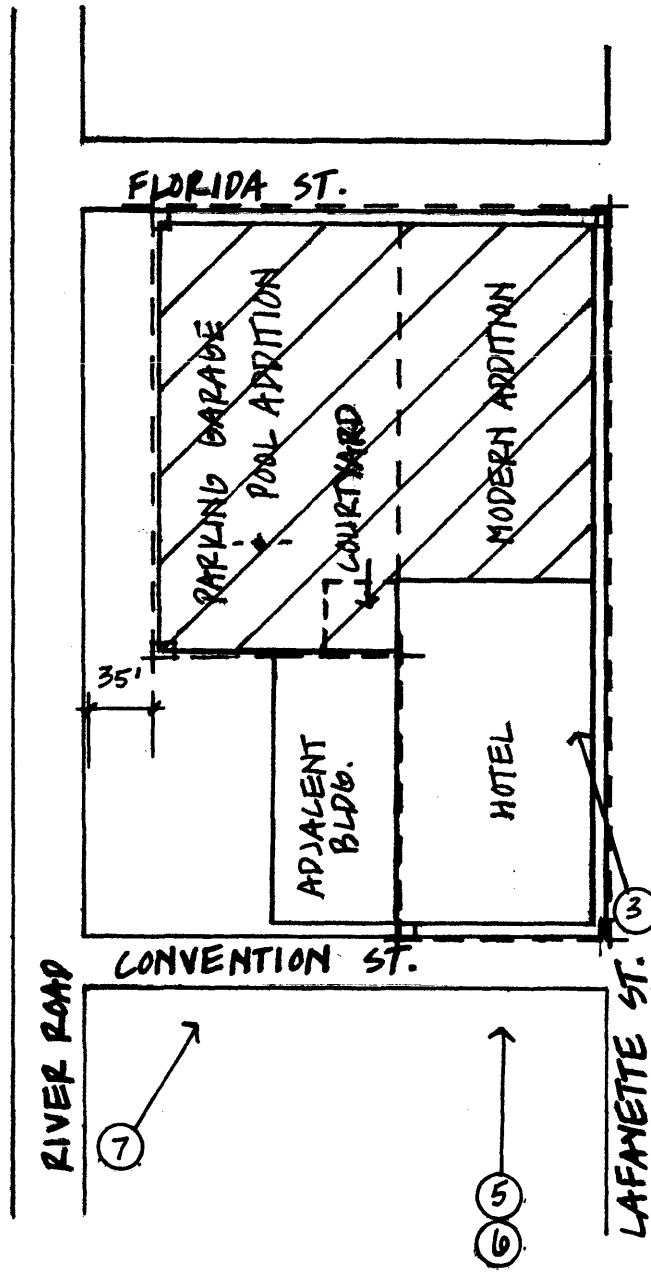
*The Heidelberg maintained its intimate association with Long until his death in 1935 and has been a focus for political activity from its construction on through the present. However, because of the federal regulation which makes it difficult to nominate properties which have achieved significance within the past fifty years, only the 1928-32 period can be taken into account in evaluating the Heidelberg's significance.

HEIDELBERG HOTEL BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

SCALE 1"=100' APPROX.

N



NOTE: SITE BOUNDARIES ENCOMPASS THE HOTEL & MODERN ADDITIONS, PARALLEL TO BLDG. FACADES. THE BOUNDARY FOLLOWS THE INSIDE CURB LINES OF THE STREETS, AND THE PARTY WALL OF THE ADJACENT BLDG, THEN FOLLOWING THE REMAINING FACADES OF THE HOTEL.