

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 12 1979

DATE ENTERED

MAY 24 1979

**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

Joseph Fischer House

AND/OR COMMON

Fischer-Hanlon House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

135 G Street

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Benicia

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4

— VICINITY OF

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Solano

CODE

095

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

—DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

—STRUCTURE

—SITE

—OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

—PRIVATE

—BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

—IN PROCESS

—BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

—OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

—YES: UNRESTRICTED

—NO

PRESENT USE

—AGRICULTURE

—COMMERCIAL

—EDUCATIONAL

—ENTERTAINMENT

—GOVERNMENT

—INDUSTRIAL

—MILITARY

—MUSEUM

PARK

—PRIVATE RESIDENCE

—RELIGIOUS

—SCIENTIFIC

—TRANSPORTATION

—OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

California Department of Parks and Recreation

STREET & NUMBER

1416 9th Street

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

— VICINITY OF

STATE

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

California Department of Parks and Recreation

STREET & NUMBER

1416 9th Street

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Building Survey

DATE

1970 (March 25)

—FEDERAL STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

California Department of Parks and Recreation, 1416-9th Street

CITY, TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>1858</u>

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Fischer-Hanlon House, a rectangular, two story structure built in the early 1850's, was said to have originally been a hotel named the Eulahlia. In its early days the building, measuring fifty-one feet east to west by twenty-nine feet, was barn-like, with a two story open veranda on one side.

The original foundation material, which was redwood sills, has been replaced by concrete. The heavy timber frame with mortise and tenon joints, reflects an eighteenth century method of building in America which lost favor with the advent of the balloon frame technique in the 1830's and 1840's. The interior walls of this early Gold Rush period building were of painted muslin.

The building, which was said to have been damaged by fire, was moved to its present site by Joseph Fischer, who purchased the property in July, 1858. Fischer restored the structure and converted it into a residence. Since that time, the house has undergone a gradual remodeling; several additions have been built onto the rear or north wall at the west end of the building.

The exterior is covered by five and one-half inch clapboard siding; vertical end boards strengthen the corners. The medium pitch gable roof is wood shingle, as it was originally; two brick chimneys rise from the peak. Evenly distributed, two sash, double hung windows, with shaped lintels and plain trim, pierce the front facade. Each one is enframed by wooden shutters. The windows on the east and west sides are of the same type. Straight stairs lead to the first floor entrance which is well above ground level and off center. The original door has been removed. A one story porch, enclosed with lattice work, covers the entrance. Squared posts support the second story balcony above.

Originally, the first floor of the home was divided by a large hall with a parlor on one side and a dining room and bedroom on the other. The second floor contained three bedrooms. Interior walls were covered with redwood boards of random lengths and widths and interior room partitions were made of plaster. There are two fireplaces in the house.

Eventually, the two story veranda at the rear of the building was enclosed and additional rooms were built on. The house grew to contain a total of fourteen rooms, including a kitchen, nursery, pantry and creamery.

In 1901 the bathrooms were put in and in 1902 electricity was installed. Other major remodeling projects were carried out in the 1930's by the three grand-daughters of Joseph Fischer, who inherited the home. They had the home re-wallpapered and they had hardwood floors put down.

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Currently, the Fischer-Hanlon Home, which has remained in one family for three generations, is being restored by the State Parks and Recreation Department. Thus far, it has been re-roofed, new concrete foundations have been laid, and the house has been made earthquake proof. Future plans include the installation of a new heating system, safe wiring, and a wood-burning stove. The home will be painted in its original colors and the interior will be papered with documented wallpaper of the 1880-1900 period. Based on architectural/historical studies, which sampled the original historic fabric under more recent wallpaper layers, it appears that the Joseph Fischer House in Benicia Capitol SHP preserves almost all of the material original to its construction. This material is presently covered by more recently applied material, but will be available for viewing in specific areas through viewing windows. Since the more recent (since late 1850's) materials have been merely applied over the first historic fabric, the latter can be safely estimated at 90% of the current amount of material forming the building.

The site possesses a number of other structures in addition to the main residence:

1. A one story, three room building with clapboard siding and an open veranda, which was used for the servants' quarters. It is situated behind the Fischer Home and was probably built in the 1850's or 1860's. The three rooms include a lamp cleaning room and a coal bin.
2. An old fashioned, three holer privy also stands in a good state of preservation.
3. The barn or carriage house was apparently built in the 1880's to replace an earlier barn. This one and one half story structure, with ten inch channel siding and a wood shingle roof, measures twenty-four by forty feet. The interior is divided into a main compartment for the storage of a carriage or buggy, a large area for stables, and a room for harnesses. Narrow stairs lead from the stall area to the loft. The interior is open timber finish with two by twelve inch floor joists.
4. A windmill, formerly used for pumping water for the garden or animals, has been dismantled and removed from the site. Its whereabouts are being sought.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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5. A cistern, located on the west side of the main residence, stores rainwater which is collected from the eaves of the house. The water was pumped into the pantry and used in the home.
6. A picket fence stands in front of the home and on the west side.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1850's (house)

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The architectural significance of the structure is principally in terms of its preserving a primitive form of construction for the California area. Specifically, this house preserves one of the few examples of heavy timber frame construction with mortise and tenon joints which was used mainly prior to the advent of balloon framing in California in the mid-19th century.

The Fischer-Hanlon Home, built in the 1850's was possibly once used as a hotel during the Gold Rush period. It was purchased by Joseph Fischer, a Benicia businessman who moved the building to its present site and converted it into a residence. Fischer had migrated from his native city of Zurich, Switzerland to New York in 1845. In 1849 he moved to California. A lucrative butcher business sponsored his remaining in Benicia, rather than attempting to mine.

At that time, and for twenty years thereafter, Benicia was a city to be reckoned with. In 1853-54, it was the capital of California--the State. House being located immediately adjacent to the Fischer property. Many noted people associated with California history were said to have been friends of the Fischers; among them were Mariano G. Vallejo, General Bennett Riley, and Thomas O. Larkin. Once known as the "Athens of the West", Benicia declined following removal of the capital to Sacramento and removal of the county seat to Fairfield.

One significant feature of the Fischer Home is the fact that three generations of the same family lived there and gradually developed and maintained it. Joseph Fischer and his wife left their home to their three children, Martha Fischer Quinn, Joseph Fischer and Elizabeth Fischer Hanlon. Martha and Joseph resided in the house until their death, whereupon Elizabeth Hanlon's three daughters inherited it.

The Fischer-Hanlon Home, with its outbuildings, and the remains of its well-cared for garden, is a good example of the nineteenth century way of life. Because of its historical significance and its many fine attributes, the State Parks and Recreation Department plans to make the Fischer-Hanlon Home "a house museum", with the family's beautiful collection of furniture, estimated in excess of \$50,000, on display. It will be restored to reflect the 1880-1900 period, the period during which family members were living in the home full time, and the period during which the condition and appearance

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historic Spots in California - Hoover and Rensch

Historical Benicia - Dykes

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .43 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Benicia

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES 870

A 10 573840 4211500

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Fischer-Hanlon House complex occurs on Lot 11 of Block 20, Book 1541, page 441, Benicia, California. The lot is 150' on the frontage and 125.15' deep.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Allen W. Welts, State Park Historian III

ORGANIZATION

Department of Parks and Recreation

DATE

10/28/74

STREET & NUMBER

1416 9th Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Sacramento

STATE

California

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Knorr Mellom

TITLE

DATE April 4, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

DATE 5-24-79

ATTEST:

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5-23-79

[Signature]
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

FHR-8-300A
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of the house is fairly well documented. Plans include architectural view areas: areas which will remain unrestored to expose the underlying structure, the method of construction, and the evaluation of the house. This museum will have two purposes: one, to show how a late nineteenth century family lived and adapted their house to meet family needs; and two, to show the evolution of late nineteenth century material culture and technology.