

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 31 1978

DATE ENTERED DEC 22 1978

**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 Old Petaluma Opera House

AND/OR COMMON The Maclay Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
147 and 149 Kentucky Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN Petaluma VICINITY OF Petaluma 2nd

STATE California CODE 06 COUNTY Sonoma CODE 097

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. Mark Kimberly, Faye Bufacacchi, Malvina Cooper, and
Mr. Barnum Rawson Watkins

STREET & NUMBER
147 Kentucky Street

CITY, TOWN Petaluma VICINITY OF Petaluma STATE California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Sonoma County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER
2555 Mendocino Avenue

CITY, TOWN Santa Rosa STATE California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic Resources Inventory

DATE 1976
__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 2390

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Maclay Building¹ is a two story brick building with pressed sheet metal facade over wood frame front, showing the Eastlake Style and Beaux Arts influence. There are paired sheet metal columns framing rectangular windows across the second story facade of the building with egg and dart detailing on an ornate roof cornice. The corner pilasters are of cast iron on the ground floor. The building is a significant architectural and historical element of Kentucky Street; one of two main business streets that make-up downtown Petaluma. It is adjoined on either side by two one-story buildings that have retail stores at street level. In the rear of the building is a service alley that runs the length of the block.

The Maclay Building currently houses a furniture store on the street floor with offices and a hall above on the second story. This current building plan was first adopted in 1901, when the new owner, Adolph Bloom, engaged the local Petaluma architect, Brainerd Jones to remodel the Old Opera House into an office building. Bloom purchased the building for \$4,420. A local newspaper describes the progress of the remodeling.

The new building which A. Bloom is making out of the old theatre property is assuming proportions. The old front, which will be removed and a new one put on, is still in place, but the interior of the building will soon commence to look lifelike. The plan for the upper story has been decided upon. In the front will be six offices and in the back of the offices will be a big hall. There will be a kitchen and dining room to go with the hall. A local physician has already engaged one of the offices. The down ground floor will be made into one big store, 60' x 100'. In case it is so desired, the big store can be partitioned into two stores.

Petaluma Argus - May 20, 1901

The architect, Brainerd Jones, incorporated the use of five original skylights into the new scheme. The skylights were repositioned and new roof openings cut to accommodate their new location.

Although the detailing on the sheet metal facade reflects the Eastlake Style, most widely used in the 1890's in this area, evidence points to the fact that the front was first installed on the building at the time it was remodeled in 1901. The cast iron pilasters on the ground level were produced by the McCormick Foundry in San Francisco.

¹The building was originally built as an opera house in 1870 but was substantially changed in 1901 when owned by Adolph Bloom. In 1927, Thomas Maclay bought the building which today still bears his name. In the community, the building is referred to as both the Old Opera House and the Maclay Building. For clarity sake in this application, we refer to the building by its common name, the Maclay Building.

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The building was originally built as an Opera House in 1870 at a cost of \$25,000 by a group of investors incorporated as the Washington Hall Association. It was used as a theatre up until 1900. Although there were major interior alterations and facade changes made at the time of remodeling, the superstructure of the building, including roof trusses and upper ceiling joists, has remained intact. The building has continued unchanged since the 1901 remodeling initiated by Adolph Bloom and the sheet metal facade done at that time is the most elaborate in the area.

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The major significance in this building today is the elaborate facade which is constructed of sheet metal components. Earlier buildings of this character in Petaluma dating from 1870 - 1886 were constructed of cast iron. The Maclay Building is a significant representative of an era and an important example of a method of construction with the use of pressed sheet metal to create an intricate facade. This structure is the only building in Petaluma that has used sheet metal so extensively and still retained its architectural integrity.

The architectural use of sheet metal and cast iron was prevalent in the latter half of the 19th century on the west coast, especially in commercial buildings. Sheet metal construction represented the earliest attempt at prefabricated building design. In Architecture and Building Construction, published in 1897, it states that:

...store and office fronts are often covered with sheet metal, bent and formed into elaborate moldings, or pressed and stamped into ornamental details, which are grouped so as to form decorative features. Generally speaking, sheet metal coverings for buildings are imitations of brickwork or masonry and when properly arranged and attached to a good solid backing and carefully painted, they make for some time, successful deceptions.

In the case of the Maclay Building, the decorative use of sheet metal on the facade was extremely successful and durable.

Normally, sheet metal cornices were made at the factory according to drawings and specifications with brackets, modillions and dentils usually attached at the same time, then the parts were shipped to the buildings. The tinsmith was only required to assemble the various parts and attach them in place with proper supports, usually wood or iron. The Maclay Building was assembled in this manner using wood supports.

The history of the Maclay Building dates back to the 1870's when the Washington Hall Association was organized for the purpose of building a worthy opera house for the prosperous community of Petaluma. The company was incorporated February 22, 1870 and the architects, S. H. Williams & Son of San Francisco retained to prepare plans and specifications for the new theatre building on Kentucky Street. The original facade was stone in the Italianate Style containing arched windows and pedimented window hoods.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES The files of local historian, Ed. Manion - I Keller, Petaluma, Thompson, Thos. H. & Co., Historical Atlas Map of Sonoma County California, Oakland, Calif: Thos. H. Thompson & Co., 1877.
 Veronda, Burdell Charmaine, History of Sonoma County, Alley Bowen, 1879
 Sonoma County Recorder, Santa Rosa, Calif. Deeds for lot #323. Book 192 p4
 Official Souvenir Program, Petaluma Centennial, 1958, Article by Manion.
 Petaluma Argus, May-October 1870. - February - May 1901.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .14 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Petaluma QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	10	5311430	421311760	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A city lot measuring 60' x 100'; Assessor Parcel # 6363-14.

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
Dan Peterson, A.I.A. Architect/Connie Braito, Historian

ORGANIZATION
Dan Peterson, A.I.A. Architect

STREET & NUMBER
1049 Fourth Street

CITY OR TOWN
Santa Rosa

DATE
March 20, 1978

TELEPHONE
707-545-0895

STATE
California

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE
Ann M. Ellison

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE 5/22/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles A. ... DATE 12-22-78
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Margie ...* DATE 12-22-78
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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By the time the Opera House opened on September 26, 1870 with a Grand Promenade Concert and Ball, the fifty foot (50') high masonry building stood completed. The interior consisted of an auditorium, an elevated stage, front and side galleries, dressing rooms and a basement where refreshments were sometimes served. In 1871, the basement was used as a skating rink. The building was lit by 140 burners which according to the 1883 Sanborne Map of Petaluma were generated by a gasoline machine in the stable yard adjacent to the theatre.

The Petaluma Opera House was an imposing, well built edifice of which the town was very proud. The construction of the building was supervised by Captain W. Neill and W. J. Nap. In July, 1870, the Petaluma Argus notes that these men were "engaged for the last couple of days in hoisting the trusses to their place, which are to form the self-supporting roof. There are seven trusses, 58' long, weighing about 3800 each and were put in place by means of a large derrick." These trusses are still in place today.

The new Petaluma theatre was on the circuit for theatrical and concert groups as well as lecturers from San Francisco. An evening's entertainment often consisted of a sampling of romantic drama, musical burlesque and comedy pieces. Mark Twain is known to have addressed audiences at the hall on Kentucky Street. The theatre building provided a distinctive setting to many theatrical events, lectures, dances and parties up until the 1900's in Petaluma.

In January, 1900, the Washington Hall Association directors and owners of the Opera House decided to sell the property and allow the corporation to die a natural death. In 1901, Adolph Bloom outbid George McNear and became owner of the old theatre for a sum of \$4,420. Mr. Bloom initially thought he would be able to follow the wishes of the community and refurbish and reopen the old theatre at a cost of \$5,000 or \$6,000. The theatre idea was abandoned, however, and Mr. Bloom hired the local architect, Brainerd Jones to remodel the structure as an office building. The hall portion of the newly remodeled building served as a meeting place for community groups that has continued over the years with offices on the second story and a furniture store at ground level.