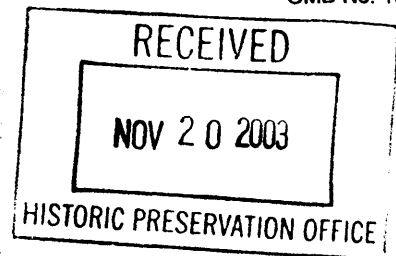


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

2/09/2004



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of The Wildwoods MPS)

other name/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & town 911 Surf Avenue  not for publication

city or town City of North Wildwood  vicinity

state New Jersey code NJ county Cape May code 009 zip code 08260

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Marc A. Matsil* Date 1/16/04  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Marc A. Matsil, Assistant Commissioner Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

3/25/2004

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Motels of The Wildwoods MPS

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Hotel

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COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant

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DOMESTIC/Hotel

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

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---

foundation CONCRETE

walls CONCRETE BLOCK, STUCCO

---

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD FRAME/STUCCO PORTE COCHERE

**Narrative Description**  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT \_\_\_\_\_

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1962 to the mid-1970s \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1962 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of The Wildwoods MPS)  
Name of Property

North Wildwood, Cape May County, New Jersey  
City, County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.2296 acres

#### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 51177155 431461752  
Zone Easting Northing

2 1 111111 111111  
Zone Easting Northing

3 1 111111 111111  
Zone Easting Northing

4 1 111111 111111  
Zone Easting Northing

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

Property Tax No. Block 304, Lots 25, 26, 27, 29, and 29

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy Zerbe, Stephanie Hoagland, Catherine Bull, Michael Hirsch

organization ARCH<sup>2</sup>, Inc. date August, 2003

street & number 16 Wernik Place telephone 732-906-8203

city or town Metuchen state NJ zip code 08840-2422

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

##### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs:** Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

#### Property Owner

name/title Albert L. & Elizabeth A. Crossen

street & number 31 Virginia Trail telephone 609-522-2822

city or town Medford state NJ zip code 08055

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape  
May County, New Jersey

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## Chateau Bleu Motel

### Narrative Description

The Chateau Bleu is a flat-roofed, two-story L-shaped motel with five bays in the north wing and eight bays in the east wing (Photograph #1). The motel is located at the northeast corner of Surf and East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues on a lot that occupies approximately one-half of the property between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues. A paved concrete parking area surrounds the southern and western sides of the motel, and a heart-shaped pool occupies the central space created by the “L” of the motel’s footprint (Photograph #2).

The north wing consists of four bays of individual guest rooms and the northernmost bay with a porte cochere below an unpunctuated façade (Photograph #3). This façade is part of a solid block utilized for a second floor suite which is entered from the western end of the balcony via an original door with jalousie window (Photograph #4). The north façade of this block projects to the end of the balcony; the west façade consists of a concave curve which echoes the curve of the circular driveway below (Photograph #5). Both the north and west facades of this block contain the name of the motel in blue interior-lit letters. The artistic font for the motel is representative of the 1960s, and displayed in both upper and lower case letters with “ChatEau” over the “BlEu” below.

The porte cochere consists of a small circular driveway, partially covered by the block above and by a curved concrete canopy. The canopy creates the impression of concrete construction, but is actually a wood frame structure with applied stucco. The block is supported by wishbone shaped columns which were originally metal painted blue, but are covered with stucco and vented. The canopy is supported by two angular pylons. These tapered pylons are irregular in height, with the western one ending at the roofline and the eastern one projecting above the roofline. The driveway, which leads to the motel office, is lined with ashlar planters.

The east wing consists of eight bays, two of which are at the juncture of the two wings and are therefore not seen from the front of the motel. The first floor of the east wing consists of seven bays of guest rooms and the southernmost bay with an open carport. The second floor of the east wing consists of eight bays of guest rooms.

Although this motel appears to be constructed of reinforced concrete, the motel has an ashlar concrete block foundation and a frame built of concrete block and wood covered in a cement-based stucco. The south façade of the north wing is clad in buff-colored Roman bricks, and the office is clad in blue synthetic siding. The balcony is continuous inside

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape  
May County, New Jersey

Section number 7 Page 2

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the "L" of the motel and around the south wall of the east wing. The railings are constructed of horizontal and vertical bars, which create a pattern of smaller squares and rectangles (Photograph #6). There are no visible means of support for either the balcony or the roofline, both of which cantilever up on their undersides (Photograph #6). The undersides of both the balcony and roofline have decorative wood grids which alternate with four spot lights at every other unit.

The front façade of each room consists of a solid wood door, painted light blue, and three narrow, jalousie window panes separated by horizontal muttins (Photographs #6 and 7). The hopper of the window has been painted light blue. In the panel below the window is a through-the-wall air conditioner unit in an area that originally contained "cedar jalousies."

### Office

The motel office is located in the westernmost bay of the north wing. The entrance to the office is off of the driveway, with the entrance facing west. The interior of the office is one rectangular bay, with a sunken lounge area in the northern half. An original railing is located at the edge of the upper level and along the steps (Photograph #8). The east elevation of the lobby has an opening into the owners' quarters. The other three elevations have been altered with rustic paneling.

### Guest Rooms

The Chateau Bleu Motel contains nineteen guests (six on the first floor and thirteen on the second floor) as well as the owner's living quarters above the office. The typical guest room is one rectangular bay, notched by the closet and bathroom (Photographs #9 and 10). The closet has the original scallop and point moulding at the top of the opening (Photograph #11). Originally, there were sliding louver doors in front of the closet; the overhead tracks remain, but the doors have been removed.

All rooms contain two full-sized beds, original desks with chair, original lounge chairs with red or white vinyl cushions, and an original speaker in the ceiling for Hi-Fi music. Many of the rooms also contain original artwork. Rooms either contain a second bed in the area outside of the bathroom (Photograph #9) or a kitchenette (Photograph #11). All rooms have a single replacement window behind the kitchenette area (Photograph #11).

The ceramic tiled bathroom contains original porcelain fixtures (Photograph #12). The toilet, wall mounted sink, and square tub alternate in colors between yellow, green, and blue starting with the southernmost unit, and repeating in that order. Each bathroom has

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape  
May County, New Jersey

Section number 7 Page 3

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an original jalousie window, and some of the bathrooms have original vanity mirrors.

Although there have been some alterations to the motel's windows and doors, the Chateau Bleu remains essentially unaltered from its original construction. It retains its overall integrity of design, materials, location, and setting.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels  
of The Wildwoods MPS),  
Cape May County,  
New Jersey

Section number 8 Page 1

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### Statement of Significance

The Chateau Bleu Motel is significant under National Register Criterion A due to its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history. This postwar motel was constructed during an important period in the development of tourism in America. It is also eligible under Criterion C as a structure that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The Chateau Bleu contains many of the design features that are characteristic of resort motel construction as described in popular and trade publications of the period. In addition, the motel satisfies Criterion G by having achieved "significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance."

The Chateau Bleu is located in North Wildwood, which along with Wildwood and Wildwood Crest are known collectively as "The Wildwoods". The geographic location, on a barrier island off of the southern New Jersey Coast, and the natural character of The Wildwoods were crucial to their development as resorts in the twentieth century. In addition to the boardwalk amusements, The Wildwoods' unofficial motto - "World's Finest and Safest Bathing Beach"- emphasizes its broad sands as the area's primary attraction (Allaback, 115).

Constructed in 1962, the Chateau Bleu dates from the heyday of motel construction, a period bracketed nationally by the end of World War II and the advent of car culture, and the beginning of widespread protests of the Vietnam War and the crisis brought about by the Arab oil embargo in the mid-1970s. In The Wildwoods, the start of the motel boom was sparked by the opening of the Garden State Parkway in 1956, and was curtailed by the decline in popularity of boardwalk amusements, the publicizing of water pollution in the area, gas rationing, and the economic recession that began in the mid-1970s.

In the postwar period, motel buildings that were not part of national organizations or chains appealed to the growing middle class of automobile vacationers. Like many of the motels in The Wildwoods, the Chateau Bleu was built as a "Mom and Pop" motel to attract the large number of tourists that were being drawn to The Wildwoods after the opening of the Garden State Parkway. At the time of the motel's construction, the Chateau Bleu was situated just one block from the Atlantic Ocean, an ideal location for a resort motel. Today, through the accretion of sand along the beaches of The Wildwoods and the paving of John F. Kennedy Boulevard, the motel is now located two blocks from the ocean.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels  
of The Wildwoods MPS),  
Cape May County,  
New Jersey

Section number 8 Page 2

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The Chateau Bleu is an excellent example of the approximately 275 motels in The Wildwoods that employed distinctive architecture and signage to draw East Coast city dwellers to a resort that combined natural and man-made pleasures. The majority of these motels are low, horizontal modernistic buildings constructed of concrete block and pre-cast concrete planks supported by iron beams. Inspired by the motels and hotels of Miami Beach, the architects and builders in The Wildwoods worked to bring the high-style architecture of Florida down to an “everyman’s” level. These motels are vernacular buildings in that they take progressive designs and construct them using traditional materials.

The Chateau Bleu’s association with high-style modernist architecture comes from the features and materials used by its builder, largely for economic reasons: concrete block and pre-cast concrete planks for the walls and floors, mass-produced windows and doors, a flat roof, and minimal detailing. Vibrant paint colors for the doors and balcony trim, decorative iron railings, florid, multi-colored exterior lighting, and distinctive signage relieve the visual austerity of flat concrete or stucco walls.

The Chateau Bleu meets the criteria established to be included in the Motels of the Wildwoods Multiple Property Nomination. Constructed as a motel in 1962, the Chateau Bleu was built within the period of significance dating from the end of World War II to the mid-1970s. The Chateau Bleu utilizes concrete block construction with concrete plank flooring and balconies. The balcony, which has no visible means of support, is continuous inside the L-shaped footprint of the motel, and around the south wall of the east wing. The roof of the motel is flat with eaves that extend to the edge of the balcony below. The building has two carports, one at the west end of the north wing and one at the south end of the east wing. In addition, the motel has on-site parking along the perimeter of the heart-shaped swimming pool, which is located inside the “L” of the motel. Distinctive illuminated signs at the west and south façades of the north wing provide signage for the motel. The western facing sign consists of individual, interior-lit blue letters on the concave, curved wall above the carport. A second identical sign faces south, above the porte cochere.

The Chateau Bleu and the other postwar motels in The Wildwoods are especially important to the definition of community identity, and among motels on the statewide and national levels: “Wildwood Crest, NJ ...and the surrounding area provide a treasure trove of intact motels for the roadside scholar” (Hartmann, 25). The Wildwood motels virtually define the design idiom of the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, which has been designated “Populuxe” by historian Thomas Hine, who has singled out The Wildwoods

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels  
of The Wildwoods MPS),  
Cape May County,  
New Jersey

Section number 8 Page 3

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as one of two resorts, nationally, that preserve a “concentrations of Populuxe motels”  
(Hine, 157).

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape May  
County, New Jersey

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## Chateau Bleu Motel

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
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Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of The  
Wildwoods MPS), Cape May  
County, New Jersey

Section number 10 Page 1

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## Chateau Bleu Motel

### Verbal Boundary Description

The property being nominated is located at the northeast corner of Surf and East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues on Block 304, Lots 25 through 29. From the northeast corner of Surf Avenue and East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the northern boundary proceeds north along Surf Avenue for 110 feet until reaching the northern property line that separates lots 29 and 30 of Block 304. At this point, the boundary proceeds east along the property line for 100 feet. From this point, the boundary proceeds south for 110 feet until reaching East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, at which point, the boundary proceeds west for 100 feet until reaching the starting point.

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property was limited to the motel's current lot, Block 304, Lots 25 through 29, as designated on the official tax map of the City of North Wildwood.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of The Wildwoods  
MPS) Cape May County, New Jersey

Section number Photographs Page 1

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## Chateau Bleu Motel

For all photographs:

Property Name: Chateau Bleu Motel

Property Location: 911 Surf Avenue, Block 304, Lots 25 through 29  
City of North Wildwood, Cape May County, New Jersey

Photographer: Michael Hirsch

Date: August, 2003

Location of  
Negatives: ARCH<sup>2</sup>, Inc.  
16 Wernik Place  
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840-2422

Photograph No. 1 of 12:  
View looking northeast at the north and east wings.

Photograph No. 2 of 12:  
View looking west at the heart-shaped pool.

Photograph No. 3 of 12:  
View looking northeast at the porte cochere at the western end of the north wing.

Photograph No. 4 of 12:  
View looking northwest at the door with jalousie panes located at the entrance to the second floor suite at the western end of the north wing.

Photograph No. 5 of 12:  
View looking northeast at the curved façade at the western end of the north wing.

Photograph No. 6 of 12:  
View looking north at the balcony railing, pool, and north wing.



# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of The Wildwoods  
MPS) Cape May County, New Jersey

Section number Photographs Page 2

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Photograph No. 7 of 12:

View looking northeast at the second floor balcony of the east wing.

Photograph No. 8 of 12:

View looking northwest at the interior of the motel lobby.

Photograph No. 9 of 12:

View of the rear portion of a typical guest room.

Photograph No. 10 of 12:

View of the front portion of a typical guest room.

Photograph No. 11 of 12:

View of the rear portion of a typical guest room, showing kitchenette.

Photograph No. 12 of 12:

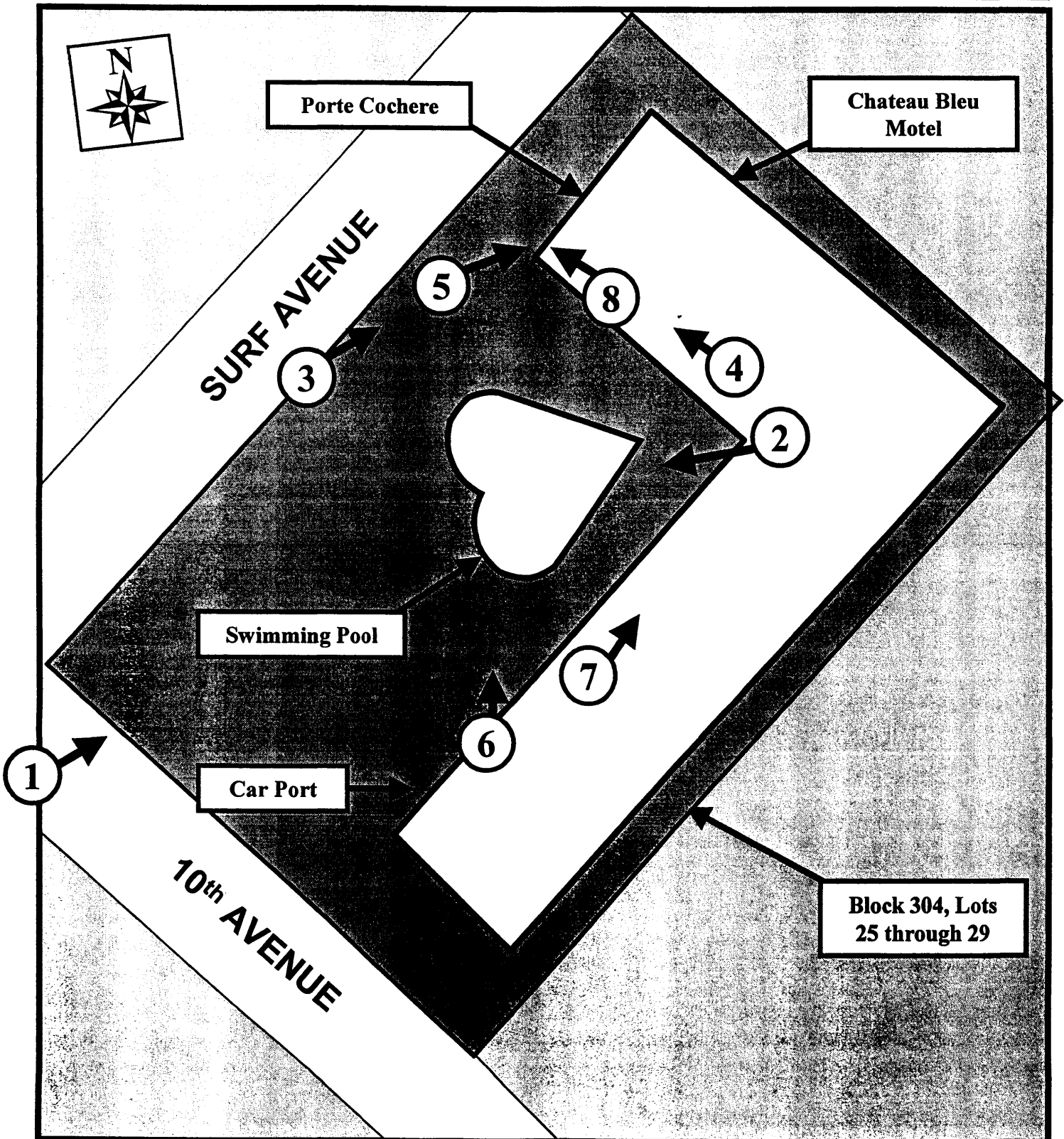
View of typical bathroom fixtures.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape  
May County, New Jersey

Section number      Photograph Key Page 1 of 1



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Chateau Bleu Motel (Motels of  
The Wildwoods MPS), Cape  
May County, New Jersey

Section number            Site Map            Page 1 of 1

