

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR - 7 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Soo Hotel (~~preferred~~)

and/or common Dakotan Hotel

2. Location

street & number 112-114 Fifth St. N. n.a. not for publication

city, town Bismarck vicinity of n.a.

state North Dakota code 38 county Burleigh code 015

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	<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	<input type="checkbox"/> 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
	n.a.	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Savran Family Trust

street & number 301 Cedar Ave.

city, town Minneapolis vicinity of n.a. state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Burleigh County Courthouse

street & number 514 Thayer Ave. E.

city, town Bismarck state North Dakota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title n.a. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date n.a. n.a. federal state county local

depository for survey records n.a.

city, town n.a. state n.a.

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 Soo Hotel, constructed during 1906, is a four-story building plus basement having a frontage of about 50 feet on Fifth Street North and a depth to the alley of 140 feet. It was built largely of fire-proof materials, a fact advertised widely by its owner and builder, Edward G. Patterson, and it made extensive use of poured reinforced concrete and cement blocks at a time when such materials were relatively new to the Bismarck area.

The entire basement as well as the first and second story secondary walls are of reinforced concrete, the upper walls being tied to concrete facing blocks. The third and fourth floor secondary walls are constructed entirely of six-inch cement blocks. These blocks were manufactured on the building site during the spring of 1906 using Peerless Block machines and sand and gravel found while excavating the basement. The facade is faced with glazed "iron-spot" brick (contemporary descriptions call it a premium facing brick) manufactured by the Hebron Brick Company of Hebron, North Dakota. Interior partitions are constructed of both concrete block and gypsum blocks. Floors on the first and second stories are of poured concrete while those on the third and fourth stories are of maple. This variance in materials on the upper floors may be partly explained by a decision to add a fourth story after construction was well advanced.

The facade has undergone several changes. As constructed, a flat-roofed open portico of concrete, supported by one-story wooden columns at the street curb line, extended across the entire street-level facade. This feature was damaged in some unknown manner during the fall of 1926 and replaced, the following spring, by a considerably smaller entry portico. An examination of available Sanborn Fire Insurance maps shows this second portico to have been removed entirely by the late 1930s. In addition the parapet wall was considerably shortened sometime after the late 1930s, eliminating the date and name blocks originally centered on the facade parapet. It should also be noted that although the first floor facade, built with two plate glass storefronts having recessed entryways, has been altered and remodeled several times over the years, one of the entryways in use today still retains that recessed character. At some unknown date, non-original doorways were constructed at the center and south end of the facade; the center doorway is presently obscured from view by vertical redwood paneling applied to the facade during a late 1970s remodeling.

Above the ground floor the facade is composed of four bays, each containing paired, double-hung wooden-framed windows on each story. The outermost bays are emphasized as slightly recessed panels as are the two center bays on the fourth floor level. Projecting limestone sill courses, corbelled string courses at window head and floor levels, a corbelled cornice and recessed paired rectangular panels beneath the third and fourth story windows provide horizontal counterpoints. Such detailing is characteristic of most work done by the architect, Milton Earl Beebe.

Sometime between 1912 and 1915 a four-story, 20' x 25' concrete addition, faced with stuccoed hollow tile, was constructed on the northwest (rear) corner of the building. The addition consisted primarily of a stairwell which allowed much easier movement between floors and may have been built to meet fire ordinances. At about this same time, presumably, the original north and west walls were also stuccoed, leaving only those visible portions of the south wall to show today the use of Peerless cement blocks in the construction of the original secondary walls.

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A three-story light shaft measuring about ten feet wide runs for a distance of about eighty-five feet through the center of the building to provide both fresh air and natural light to inner rooms and hallways. Although originally open to the elements, this light shaft is now covered at the roofline with translucent corrugated fiberglass to preclude moisture from gathering on its floor and leaking through to damage first floor ceilings.

Rooms and hallways are arranged around the light shaft with the layout varying somewhat from floor to floor. The original three-story building design provided for seventy-two guest rooms; the revised design which provided for the fourth story increased this to ninety-three. Each room was intended to have corner-mounted lavatories only; guests shared communal bathing-toilet facilities on each floor. Today second and third floor rooms along the south wall have private bathroom facilities as do the front corner rooms on the upper three floors but it is uncertain whether these features are original or were added at some later date. While the lobby was usually maintained on the ground floor, a second story parlor allowed guests to relax away from their rooms. This parlor was removed at some unknown date.

In keeping with its intended status as a "second-class" hotel, rooms throughout the upper stories are simple and utilitarian. Decorative plaster, woodwork and other architecturally distinguished features are notably lacking in both halls and rooms. Woodwork around windows and transomed doors constitutes the most decorative element within the building and that is almost totally lacking in distinction.

As completed in January, 1907 the ground floor interior contained commercial rental space along the north half with the hotel office, dining room and kitchen being placed in the south half. Following completion of the adjoining McKenzie Hotel (present day Patterson Hotel) in 1911 doorways were opened through the common wall giving patrons access to the McKenzie's dining facilities. The Soo Hotel kitchen and dining room were then closed and the space utilized for storage or added to the existing commercial space.

Over the years a variety of commercial establishments have occupied the ground floor. Grocery stores and meat markets appear to have been the occupants until well into the 1920s. For a time following the repeal of Prohibition in the 1930s it contained a tavern known as "The Ring," a reflection of Patterson's life-long interest in the prize-fighting game. Beginning about 1940 a clothing establishment, the People's Department Store, operated by the Savran family, made its appearance. Later, a series of bakeries utilized the space until well into the 1970s.

Patterson renamed the hotel the Princess in March, 1927. This supposedly was a slap at his arch-rival in the Bismarck business and political world, Edmond A. Hughes, who shortly before had been involved in renaming the Van Horn Hotel, two blocks west, the Prince Hotel. By the mid-1930s the place became known as the Patterson Annex at which time guests were required to register at the Patterson desk and, presumably, the original lobby was closed and devoted to another use. About 1949 the hotel came under new ownership and began operating as the Dakotan Hotel. A new lobby was then constructed (or the old resurrected) which was connected to the upper floors by an elevator installed in the east (front) end of the light shaft in 1954. Hotel operation ceased altogether in the late 1970s since which time the upper three floors have remained vacant. First floor space has continued to be used for commercial purposes, presently housing a gift shop and photographer's studio.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1906- **Builder/Architect** Milton Earl Beebe, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Soo Hotel is significant for its association with its builder and long-time owner, Edward G. Patterson (1866-1954), one of Bismarck's early businessmen and a political figure of some importance, and its architect, Milton Earl Beebe (1840-19??), one of the leading architects practicing in North Dakota around the turn of the century. Its construction methodology of poured reinforced concrete and cement blocks is also of some significance in that those building techniques were very new to Bismarck and central North Dakota in 1906.

Edward G. Patterson arrived in Bismarck in 1882 at the age of 16. He ventured into the hotel business in 1893 by leasing the three-story frame Sheridan House, the town's largest and most important hostelry. Owned by the Northern Pacific Railroad and then located adjacent to its tracks, the Sheridan served as the unofficial political headquarters in Bismarck after the capitol was moved here in 1883. In 1899-1900 it was moved a half-block east to make room for a new railroad depot and after remodeling and veneering with brick was reopened as the Northwest Hotel with Edward Patterson in charge.

Soon after 1900 Patterson began acquiring property across from the Northwest Hotel, on and adjacent to the northwest corner of Main and Fifth Streets. In 1905 he built the Patterson Block (listed on the National Register of Historic Places, October 22, 1982) facing onto Main Street and the following year erected the Soo Hotel around the corner on Fifth. During 1910-11 he built the seven-story McKenzie Hotel on the corner lots and in 1916 completed his holdings with a two-story addition connecting the McKenzie Hotel and Patterson Block. (The McKenzie became the Patterson Hotel in 1927 and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, December 8, 1976).

From the mid-1890s Patterson was a force to reckon with in local politics. Bismarck's old Fourth Ward (the southeast portion of town) was a district of working class people and small homes and as its Alderman Ed Patterson was their champion. His first wife, Agatha, was also well known for her philanthropies in the district and eventually was appointed Bismarck postmaster during the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations.

Patterson's political success brought him into close contact with Alexander McKenzie, known for years as the Political Boss of North Dakota, and he became known as one of McKenzie's most trusted lieutenants. The two also became close personal friends and McKenzie appears to have been a silent partner in many Patterson business enterprises, including the McKenzie Hotel. Over a period of more than a quarter century Patterson served in a variety of political positions, both elective and by appointment. He was Bismarck's mayor from 1896-1902, city councilman (1902-09) and city commissioner (1911-15); and Burleigh County Commissioner (1906-26), serving as chairman of the latter body much of the time. He was also a member of the State Penitentiary and State Pardons Boards, where he was a strong advocate of work-release programs and often provided jobs to former inmates. He was a staunch and lifelong member of the Republican Party.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bismarck Tribune, daily and weekly editions, various issues, 1893-1982

The Palladium (Bismarck), weekly editions, various issues, 1906-07. (This paper was owned by Edward G. Patterson)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre.

Quadrangle name Bismarck, N. Dak.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>1</u> <u>4</u>	<u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 5 and 6, Block 48, Original Townsite of Bismarck, North Dakota.

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank E. Vyzralek

organization n.a.

date February 24, 1983

street & number 702 Capitol Ave.

telephone (701) 223-1857

city or town Bismarck

state North Dakota

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 James E. Sherry

title State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota)

date 3/11/83

For NPS use only

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

John Melore Beyer
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

5/9/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Considering this background it is perhaps not surprising that Patterson would plan and build a large and modern "second-class" hotel in downtown Bismarck, one intended to attract a transient and working class clientele. The Soo Hotel took its name from the popular name of the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie Railway which had reached Bismarck in 1902 and had its depot two blocks to the east near the corner of Seventh Street and Broadway. (In 1961, following a merger, the company finally took "Soo Line" for its legal name).

Patterson's advertising made much of the Soo Hotel's concrete and cement block construction. It was touted as "the most nearly fire-proof hotel building in the state" ---words undoubtedly intended to evoke vivid memories of the August, 1898 fire which devastated much of Bismarck's central business district. And while the use of cement in building construction in central North Dakota was not new in 1906 it was a quite recent development. Bismarck's new Northern Pacific railroad depot, built during 1900-01, was the town's first structure to make extensive use of poured, reinforced concrete. Technological problems and doubts about public acceptance delayed the introduction of cement blocks but by 1904-05 they were in general use. The same newspapers that described the building of the Soo Hotel in 1906 mentioned at least two other active local block factories. While it is uncertain whether or not the Soo Hotel was the first commercial Bismarck building to utilize blocks it was certainly the first large local structure to incorporate cement blocks into its construction.

Patterson's choice of architect to design the Soo Hotel was Milton Earl Beebe of Fargo, who had done the Patterson Block for him the previous year. Beebe was a native of New York state and prior to moving to North Dakota in the late 1890s carried on an extremely successful architectural practice in Buffalo, New York, for about twenty-five years. Some of the commercial, residential, religious and governmental buildings he designed are still standing in the states of New York and Pennsylvania and the Canadian province of Ontario, and at least one, the Niagara County Courthouse at Lockport, New York, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Soon after his arrival in North Dakota Beebe's services were in great demand and he ranked with the Hancock Brothers of Fargo as one of the state's leading architects. Though no complete inventory of his work has been made his commercial work in Bismarck included the Eppinger Block (1898-99; destroyed by fire) and the City National Bank (1909), as well as his Patterson commissions. Most importantly, he was chosen in 1903 to design a new north wing for the state capitol building in Bismarck (later destroyed by fire).

Exactly why Beebe abandoned his family and a lucrative practice in Buffalo, New York, to set up shop on the Dakota prairies is something of a mystery. Equally mysterious was his departure, again for unknown reasons, in about 1912, when he again left behind what was to all outward appearances a successful business.