

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name La Belle Tour
other names/site number Hollywood Tower

2. Location

street & number 6200 Franklin Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Hollywood N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90028

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | <u> </u> | <u> </u> sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <u> </u> | <u> </u> structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | <u>1</u> | <u>0</u> objects |
| | | | <u>0</u> Total |

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Richard J. ... State Historic Preservation Officer 11/30/87
Signature of certifying official Date
Office of Historic Preservation, California
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. Patrick W. Andrus 1/22/88
 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic--multiple dwelling
Domestic--hotel

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic--multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals
other: Chateaesque

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Concrete

roof Asphalt
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located on the southwest corner of Franklin and Vista del Mar Avenues in Hollywood, the Hollywood Tower is an eight-story French Renaissance/Chateaesque apartment building of reinforced concrete construction. Built in 1929, the L-shaped building with its dramatic central tower rising above the intersecting wings, is a prominent visual landmark in the Hollywood skyline. Carefully crafted and recently rehabilitated, the building serves as an example of the sophisticated urban accomodations available for luminaries in the film industry during its "Golden Age."

The primary facades of the building face north and east, with the rear of the structure adjacent on the south to the Hollywood Freeway. The main entrance is reached via a circular drive. The entrance, with its wood and glass double doors, is the apex of the two wings, one sited north-south, the other east-west. The focal point of the ground floor, the entrance is covered by a half-moon shaped metal and canvas awning which extends to the drive. On either side of the doors are double sets of 2x4 casement windows recessed in shadow-box wood frames. A simple decorative frieze with a central shield further highlights the entry, and is supported by unadorned piers.

Massing of the building is symmetrical, and consists of two wings, each with a decorated end bay, a slightly recessed central block, joining in a central tower, slightly set back from the wings. Fenestration is regular, and windows on the primary facades are small-paned 2x4 metal sliding windows over 1x2 fixed-pane windows, while the south and west elevations have two-light sliding windows over the fixed portion. The main body of the building rises four floors with the tower rising another four floors.

Topped by steeply pitched hipped roofs decorated with cresting and pierced with round-headed dormers, the end bays carry most of the decoration found on the structure, while the central remainder of the structure relies on the form lines left in the concrete during construction to give the exterior walls texture and some detailing around upper floor windows and below the parapet. The classically designed cornice and decorated parapet are supported by a row of fanciful decorated corbels. The design of the parapet is continued in the balustrades for the landings of the firescapes centered in the ends of each wing.
(see continuation sheet)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1

The roof of the central block of each wing is flat, and has been turned into a roof garden, edged with a plain parapet and small cornice. The center of the east-west wing is marked with a flattened pediment rising above the parapet, supported by simple piers which extend below the parapet to surround a pair of casements. The central tower, which serves as the focal point for the primary facades, rises to a decorated fifth floor before stepping back in two increments to intersecting, steeply pitched hipped roofs. This fifth floor, made up of three bays separated by pilasters rising above the parapet, is capped by an unadorned frieze band topped by an ornate, Gothic-inspired parapet of circles and small horseshoe arches. The parapet guards a small, private roof garden, reached from the sixth floor which steps back from the parapet and is separated from the seventh floor by a strongly defined stringcourse. This floor, which supports the ornate roof with its chimney and turret, is capped by a simple cornice and punctuated with another heavily decorated pediment on the north facade, echoing the Gothic styling of the sixth floor parapet. The tower is topped by intersecting, steeply pitched hipped roofs, decorated with cresting. The east-west roof terminates on the east in a small, polygonal turret attached to the north side of a tall, broad chimney. This turret, decorated with a single, screened, round-headed window and a series of blind arches, provides access to another firescape landing, enclosed with another decorative balustrade. The south facade of the eighth floor carries the neon sign of the building, visible from many points in Los Angeles.

The public spaces of the interior of the building reveal the same restrained, yet elegant design of the exterior of the structure, with a spacious lobby encompassing the ground floor of the tower. Roughly rectangular in shape and punctuated with massive square columns decorated with gilded acanthus-leaf columns, it is entered from the street on the west, and has small landings in the northwest and southeast corners providing access to the apartments. A small elevator is tucked under into the southwest corner. Recently restored by A.T. Heinsbergen Co., the original decorating firm, the lobby features a dramatic stenciled, coffered ceiling done in an abstract, geometric design.

The upper floors contain their original configuration, with eleven apartments on each of the first four floors, five apartments on the fifth floor, and each of the top three floors containing a penthouse. The floor plan features an amply proportioned central hallway in each wing, with entrance to the apartments off this main corridor. Alterations to the structure include replacement of the original apartment doors, originally done in the 1960s, to conform to fire code requirements and again as part of a recent rehabilitation in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's standards, and certified by the National Park Service in 1986. Changes included replacement of deteriorated casement and double-hung windows with a multipaned metal sliding window approved by the State Office of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service, restoration of the public spaces to their original appearance including the recreation of the original stencilled ceiling in the lobby and refurbishment of the original elevator, and changes in the interior configuration of apartments, (including the removal of some interior partitions), renovation of original baths, restoration of landscaping, roof gardens, and original neon signage.

The grounds to the south of the structure were abbreviated by the coconstruction of the Hollywood Freeway in the 1950s.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1929 - 1937

1929

Social History

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cramer & Wise

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Constructed in 1929, at the height of Hollywood's influence on American society, La Belle Tour provided both a visual exclamation point in the Hollywood skyline and the type of sophisticated urban accommodations that were sought by the film industry's elite in the 1930s and 40s. Designed by the noted Los Angeles architectural firm of Cramer and Wise, La Belle Tour was one of the last of a group of hotel/apartment buildings constructed in sophisticated period revival styles along the Franklin corridor just north of Hollywood Boulevard, including the Villa Carlotta, the Chateau Elysee, the Castle Argyle, and the Montecito, which provided upscale accommodations to the mobile industry and the tourist. With its extravagant, French Renaissance/Chateausque architecture, and glittering clientele, La Belle Tour provided an example of the affluent lifestyle made famous in many of the Hollywood films of the "Golden Age."

Cramer and Wise were one of several noted firms working in Hollywood at the end of the 1920s. The firm specialized in "high-rise" apartment/hotels of five to ten stories, a building type very popular in the community during the period. Other examples of the firm's work dot the area among them the four-story Spanish Colonial Revival apartment at 5870 Franklin. Several apartment courts in the foothills were built by the firm as well. All of the above have been included in the Hollywood Historic Resources Survey. Their largest contribution to the area's built environment, both in terms of scale and craftsmanship, is the Tower. Cramer and Wise were commissioned by the real estate development firm of Henry Hersh and Associates; the investment in the building was reported to be almost \$500,000. La Belle Tour was first leased to the Stillwell Hotel Corporation, a company with a proven track record in the management of upscale establishments, and it was reported that Mrs. Stillwell herself selected the best furnishings from Barker Brothers, Los Angeles' premiere furniture mart. "Overlooking City, Mountains, and Sea," the facility advertized valet and alteration service, personal maid, cook, butler, and child care service, and laundry service, catering to those who "prefer good living to just a place of residence." There was a private subterranean garage in this "aristocrat among Hollywood apartment hotels."

(see continuation sheet)

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

City of Los Angeles Building Permit Files.

Hollywood Historic Resources Survey, 1978-1980; revised 1984.

Johnson, Christy A. and Leo G. Lucas. Architecture and Society in Hollywood: 1900-1930. California State University, Dominguez Hills, 1977 (Unpublished).

_____, "Structure Acquired by Hotel Firm." Los Angeles Times, December 15, 1929

_____, "French Architecture in New Apartments." Hollywood Daily Citizen, February 4, 1930.

Building Notice. Southwest Builder and Contractor. April 26, 1929, p. 63.

Completion Notice. Southwest Builder and Contractor. December 6, 1929, p. 69.

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Johnson Research Associates

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .4

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Grand View Boulevard Tract, lots 8, 9, and 10.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundaries based on legally recorded lot lines of property.

The north, east and west boundaries are the historic lot lines. The original south boundary was changed with the construction of the Hollywood Freeway in the 1950's.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christy Johnson McAvoy date April 15, 1987
organization Johnson Research Associates telephone (213) 851-8854
street & number 3103 Lindo St. city or town Los Angeles state California zip code 90068

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Then as now, the building boasted a spectacular view of Los Angeles, and yet was only a few short blocks from the film studios and fashionable shopping district of Hollywood Boulevard. Roof gardens provided lush areas for al fresco entertaining, while a more private sunbathing area was located off one of the three penthouses.

When management of the building was taken over by the Kinsey Corporation in the late 1930s, the name was changed to "The Hollywood Tower." The level of service begun by the Stillwells was continued. At that time, the building's distinctive neon roof sign, visible for miles, was added. The Hollywood Tower continued its tradition providing of fine living for film industry personnel, and many members of the film community, preferring the low-maintenance and short commute to the studios of the facility, chose to live there rather than in one of the mansions of Beverly Hills or Brentwood. One example was Virginia Mayo, a leading lady to comedians Bob Hope and Danny Kaye in Goldwyn Productions of the late 1930s and 40s.

Recently restored to its original elegant appearance as part of the tax certification program of the National Park Service, the Hollywood Tower again is home for many Hollywood professionals. Although no longer a hotel, it provides the chic, urban lifestyle that Hollywood was noted for in its "Golden Age."

The period of significance extends into the 1940's, however, nothing occurred within the last 50 years to qualify as exceptional significance; therefore, the arbitrary date of 1937 is chosen as the terminating date of significance.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER Photos PAGE 1

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Main (north) facades; view southwest.
#1 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Central entrance with canopy; view southwest.
#2 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: East and south elevations; view northwest.
#3 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: L. Catlett
Date of Photograph: April, 1987
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: West elevation; view east.
#4 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Rehabilitated roof garden; view northeast.
#5 of 16

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER Photos **PAGE** 2

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Roof garden with pergola; view northwest.
#6 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby with stencilled ceiling; view southwest.
#7 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby; view north.
#8 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby and entry; view northeast.
#9 of 16

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER Photos PAGE 3

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby and stair; view southeast.
#10 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby elevator door; view south.
#11 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: B. Doggett
Date of Photograph: September, 1986
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, lobby elevator with original panelling; view southeast.
#12 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: L. Catlett
Date of Photograph: April, 1987
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, apartment living area, view southeast.
#13 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: L. Catlett
Date of Photograph: April, 1987
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, apartment living area, view northeast.
#14 of 16

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER Photos PAGE 4

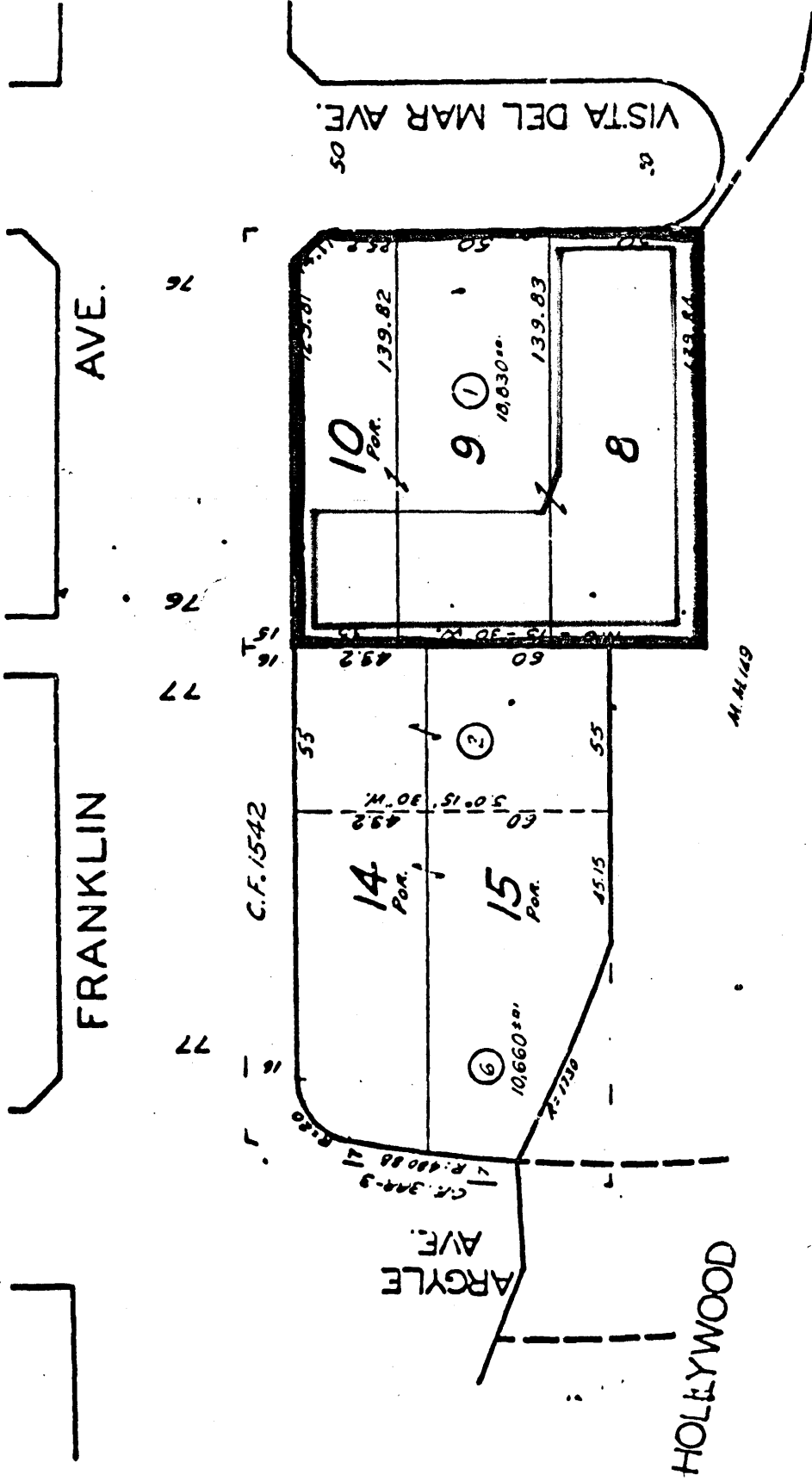
Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: L. Catlett
Date of Photograph: April, 1987
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, apartment living area.
#15 of 16

Name of Property: La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
Address: 6200 Franklin Ave.
Hollywood, CA
Name of Photographer: L. Catlett
Date of Photograph: April, 1987
Location of Negative: Johnson Research Associates
Description: Interior, bath.
#16 of 16

La Belle Tour/Hollywood Tower
6200 Franklin Avenue
Hollywood, CA 90028

5586 | 24

SCALE: 1" = 50'



FRWY.

GRAND VIEW BOULEVARD TRACT

M.B. 7-122

McGINNIS TRACT

M.B. 4-78

