

1162

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form

Hotel Charlotte

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1. NAME of PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Hotel Charlotte

OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Hotel Charlotte & Cafe, Hotel Charlotte & Restaurant

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 18736 Main Street (State Highway 120)

CITY/TOWN: Groveland

STATE: California COUNTY: Tuolumne CODE: 109

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER

VICINITY: N/A

ZIP CODE: 95321

AUG 22 1994

3. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP of PROPERTY: Private

CATEGORY of PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER of RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:

	CONTRIBUTING:	NONCONTRIBUTING:
BUILDINGS:	2	
SITES:		
STRUCTURES:		
OBJECTS:		
TOTAL:	2	0

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 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature]
SIGNATURE of CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

8/15/94

DATE

California Office of Historic Preservation
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

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5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

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):

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Edson H. Beall

9/26/94

Entered in the National Register

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

6. FUNCTION or USE HISTORIC FUNCTIONS (CATEGORY/subcategory)

DOMESTIC/hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

CURRENT FUNCTIONS (CATEGORY/subcategory)

DOMESTIC/hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

Hotel and Cafe:

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS.

OTHER DESCRIPTION:

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Concrete Cafe: Concrete
Walls: stucco/metal Cafe: Stucco/metal
Roof: Asphalt Cafe: Metal
Other: Wooden balcony (Hotel only)

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. STATEMENT of SIGNIFICANCE

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

NATIONALLY STATEWIDE X LOCALLY

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA: A

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS (exceptions):

AREAS of SIGNIFICANCE: Commerce

PERIOD(S) of SIGNIFICANCE: 1921 to 1944

SIGNIFICANT DATES:

SIGNIFICANT PERSON(S):

CULTURAL AFFILIATION:

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Ferretti, Frank

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # _____
- recorded in Big Oak Flat - Groveland Historic Sites Survey, 1988.

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Southern Tuolumne County Historical Society, Big Oak Flat, CA. 95305

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE of PROPERTY: .25

UTM REFERENCES: Zone		Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	10	743820	4191390	B		
C				D		

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:

X See continuation sheet.

All of Tuolumne County Tax Assessor's Parcel Number: 7-032-04.

Boundary Justification:

See continuation sheet.

This includes all property historically associated with the subject buildings.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Mark V. Thornton, Groveland Historian

ORGANIZATION: Mark V. Thornton, Historian-Consultant

STREET & NUMBER: P.O. Box 192

CITY or TOWN: Groveland STATE: California ZIP: 95321

TELEPHONE: (209) 962-7395

DATE: 1-17-1994

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form**Continuation Sheet: Section Number 7****Hotel Charlotte**

The Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant are located on the north side of State Highway 120 (Main Street) near the center of Groveland's business district. The highway is a slightly widened and paved version of the original Big Oak Flat to Yosemite wagon road. The Charlotte Hotel, a large wood frame building, was constructed in 1921. A small, single story restaurant building, erected circa 1928, is attached to the west side of the hotel. The common walls between have been opened, making the two buildings integral to each other. A narrow space along the west side of the restaurant addition separates it from a neighboring building complex that belongs to the Cassaretto family. That complex consists of a one and half story adobe and wood frame building erected circa 1850, on the east side of which (next to the restaurant) is a single story wood frame structure built circa 1900. The east side of the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant building complex is bounded by a narrow, paved alley. A single story wood frame building with basement stands to the east of this small alleyway. That structure was erected in 1936 and features stucco walls and corrugated metal roofing.

A concrete walk extends from the alley across the front of the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant running on past the Cassaretto buildings. A grate covered drain on the north edge of Main Street allows storm water to flow beneath this side walk and through a stone and mortar canal which lies beneath the restaurant. North of the restaurant, the conduit changes first to an all concrete canal and then to simply a grass covered, earthen ditch on its route to join Garrote Creek. The creek meets this ditch at a right angle and forms the north boundary of the subject property. Gravel parking areas extend around the back side of the hotel and restaurant with several shade trees, some shrubbery and native grasses bordering this area.

The Charlotte Hotel is a two story building measuring 30 feet wide by 93 feet deep. The hotel has a combination concrete wall (for the east and west elevations) and concrete pier and wood posts foundation. East, north and west elevations are covered in "v" groove siding. A brick patterned metal veneer overlays the south 66 feet of the east wall. The south (front) elevation features stucco cladding believed to date from the late 1930s. The hotel's simple gable roof is bounded on the south elevation by a false front. A louvered attic vent is centered on the false front, below which extends a full width covered balcony. Four square posts with decorative brackets support the hip roof over the balcony. The solid rail around the balcony is composed of vertical tongue and groove boards. Tongue and groove boards are also used for the balcony flooring. The balcony door is centered between sealed windows (casements intact, glazing replaced by wood panels). On the ground level the balcony posts have been encased (or truncated) with beveled, concrete posts. These concrete posts were added in the late 1930s or early '40s. The ground floor entry door, which is recessed into the south wall, is centered between two (1/1) double hung windows of original vintage. Single hung, aluminum frame (1/1) windows are featured on the east, north and west elevations of the hotel building. The window frames have been painted to match the wood casements. Composition shingles overlay most of the east half of the corrugated metal roof. A small, open eave overhangs the west gable side with no eave overhang along the east side (excepting on part of the rear addition).

The Charlotte Hotel was originally 30 feet by 66 feet plus a projecting "L" shaped rear porch. In the mid-1970s the rear porch was enlarged and enclosed, thus extending the building another 16.5 feet to the north. The western 17 feet of this addition was extended another 12 feet northward, thereby retaining the "L" shape pattern of the north facade. The Charlotte Hotel land parcel slopes downward towards Garrote Creek (from south to north). The first floor of the south end of the hotel is at ground level while the north end is about ten feet above ground level. The area below the rear (north) end of the hotel was enclosed and partitioned into several rooms, including a laundry room, at the time the north elevation was enlarged (in the '70s). These basement rooms have concrete slab floors and "v" groove siding. An external wood stairway leads up to a landing on the north (top) end of the "L" shaped additions. From this landing a short stairway and board walk wraps around the northeast corner of the "L" extending southerly to a first floor, rear entry. Another stairway ascends from the landing, wrapping around the northwest corner of the building to terminate at a second floor entry on the west wall of the rear addition. It was also during the 1970s that the original double hung windows were replaced with the existing single hung windows and the balcony windows modified.

The Charlotte Hotel Restaurant is a single story wood frame building measuring some 20 feet wide by 41.5 feet deep. The restaurant has a combination concrete wall (for the east and west elevations) and concrete pier and wood posts foundation. The building's board and plank cladding has been overlaid with corrugated metal. The gable roof is covered with composition shingles and features a gable dormer on the west side. A stepped false front is on the south gable end. A large, wood shingle covered awning extends across the front of the building. The awning has been enclosed with tongue and groove boarding on the ceiling and at each end. The awning does not appear to date from original construction. (Inasmuch as this

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form**Continuation Sheet: Section Number 7****Hotel Charlotte**

feature tends to detract from the charm of the hotel building, the present owners are considering removing the awning and remodeling the front of the restaurant so as to accentuate the adjoining hotel's appearance.)

Two large (1/1) double huge windows on the front wall of the restaurant are bounded on the east by a (1 pane/3 panel) entry door. The south (front) elevation has been covered with stucco. The north 16 feet of this building has been remodeled on several different occasions. Presently the north (rear) elevation features "v" groove siding. A rear porch extends across the back of the building. As with the associated hotel, the land slopes downhill to the north. Consequently, a two story addition, measuring 15 feet by 8.5 feet has been attached to the north side of the rear porch. This addition is off-set to the west and the west end of the porch has been enclosed, creating a continuous wall from restaurant to rear addition. A 13 foot by 8.5 foot walk-in ice box (self contained refrigeration unit) sits upon a concrete slab north of the rear addition and has been covered by a two story wood frame structure.

The restaurant building is generally believed to have been erected in 1927 or 1928. The concrete front walk and the stone lined canal under the restaurant were probably installed at the time of the restaurant's construction. Stucco on the front walls of both the hotel and restaurant could date from 1927-28 but more likely date from 1936. This belief is based on the fact that the builder of the hotel and restaurant buildings, Frank Ferretti, constructed the neighboring wood frame and stucco wall building (located on the east side of the alleyway) in 1936. It seems logical to assume that Charlotte De Ferrari retained Ferretti to remodel her property while he was constructing his own building next door. The hotel's concrete balcony posts probably also date from 1936.

Wood shingles originally covered the roofs of the hotel and restaurant buildings. When the numerous Hetch Hetchy project buildings were demolished in the late 1920s and early 1930s scrap corrugated metal became a readily available building material. Much of Groveland's existing corrugated roofs date from this period. The material was also commonly used for wall cladding. Consequently, the corrugated metal featured on the hotel and restaurant buildings probably dates from the 1930s. The restaurant building replaced a single story wood frame building which was originally used as a saloon. The presence of brick patterned metal sheeting between the walls of the hotel and restaurant indicates that the hotel building's west wall was left exposed for a period of time between the demolition of the saloon building and the erection of the present restaurant. Apparently the metal veneer on this wall, as well as that found on the hotel's east wall, dates from this era (1927-28). A photograph of the hotel taken in 1922 shows the "v" groove siding on the east elevation without the metal veneer covering.

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form**Continuation Sheet: Section Number 8****Hotel Charlotte****Applicable Significance Criteria**

The Charlotte Hotel derives significance under Criteria A, representing the only hostelry business to have been established in Groveland during the Hetch Hetchy era that survives to the present day. The business has played a nearly continuous role as a prominent hotel in Groveland since 1921. During the Hetch Hetchy days the facility also served as a boarding house for a few of the water system project laborers. The adjoining restaurant has been a favorite place to seek repast since circa 1928. After the departure of the Hetch Hetchy construction crews, the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant was one of the few businesses to remain in operation. Throughout the 1930s and '40s the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant became the most prominent hostelry in Groveland. Although both the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant buildings have been remodeled on several occasions these structures still contribute a sense of time and place, reflecting both Groveland's bustling Hetch Hetchy construction days and the town's more quiescent tourism days of the 1930s and '40s. Since the mid-1940s the front facades of both buildings have not been significantly altered. Groveland's central core permeates with the ambiance, character, and perhaps romance of a small, western frontier town. The town's linear street-scape is handsomely accentuated by the presence of several frame buildings with false fronts which date from the early part of this century. The subject property makes a fitting centerpiece for this historic built environment.

The Charlotte Hotel and the neighboring Groveland Hotel Annex are the largest wood frame structures in Groveland to have survived from the Hetch Hetchy era. The Charlotte Hotel displays a more conservative stylistic finish than the Groveland Hotel Annex reflecting its first owner's more humble means. In addition to the Charlotte Hotel and the Groveland Hotel Annex, only a couple of small NeoClassical commercial buildings have survived from the Hetch Hetchy days. Three other hotels, four large Hetch Hetchy project buildings, as well as a number of smaller commercial structures and dwelling houses which were erected in Groveland during the Hetch Hetchy era are now gone. Groveland does contain about a dozen NeoClassical homes constructed between 1895 and 1930.

Although Criteria B does not apply to The Charlotte Hotel's nomination, a few words about its namesake are in order. Miss Charlotte De Ferrari was one of Groveland's more successful independent businesswomen. She owned and operated the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant continuously from 1921 until 1948. She was a single woman who immigrated from Italy in her late teens. She started her business career with a restaurant located in one of her Uncle's buildings, situated across the street from the subject property. From there she moved to managing the Groveland Hotel's cafe. In 1921 she opened her own hotel and by 1928 her restaurant business was secure within its present location. Her success was measured by the number of patrons that made Charlotte's a required stop on their return trips to Yosemite. She counted among her customers people from as near as neighboring towns and counties to as far away as distant European countries. Even today an occasional hotel guest from Charlotte's era will return for one last visit. They enjoy reflecting upon the quiet, homey atmosphere that Charlotte gave the place, a familial ambiance the current owners pridefully maintain. Her two buildings provide a vivid and poignant reminder of Charlotte's lifelong career here.

Charlotte De Ferrari's success also symbolizes the important role that women have historically played in southern Tuolumne County. It is appropriate to mention a few of these women, most of whom worked with their husbands in building up businesses in this area. In the 1800s, Margaret Priest was widely known for her inn keeping and tavern. Priest Station was located near the top of a winding highway grade that bears her name today. After the turn of the century women like Mrs. Raggio, Mrs. Jordan, Mrs. Schroeder and Mrs. Hall distinguished themselves in operating various enterprises that catered to both the traveling public and resident populace. Mrs. Lena Ferretti has been identified as one of southern Tuolumne County's more successful cattle ranch operators. After San Francisco's construction facilities were closed in Groveland, and the laborers, supervisors and doctor relocated to the west, it was former Hetch Hetchy Hospital nurse "Dorothy" Glen Conwell who practically became Groveland's only "doctor" for the next two decades. When Grovelanders formed a community services district in 1953, Lena Cassaretto and Mary Laveroni helped oversee the operations of this small local government for the next quarter of a century. Even today a majority of the commercial establishments in Groveland are owned and/or managed by women.

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form**Continuation Sheet: Section Number 8****Hotel Charlotte****Brief Contextual Background**

In 1848 Benjamin Wood led the first known group of gold seekers into what is now Tuolumne County. One of the members of the "Wood's Party" was an American by the name of James D. Savage. Savage was widowed in 1846 as the result of the rigors of an overland journey from the East. Shortly after his arrival to California, Savage began marrying into various Indian tribes. His "wives" afforded him favorable position with tribal leaders. In the Spring of 1849 Savage, his wives, and several other Americans left Woods Creek and ventured into the rugged mountains southeast of the Tuolumne River. About 2,000 feet higher in elevation than the river, Savage's party discovered placers along a small stream flowing through a broad, flat valley. A second encampment was soon established in a smaller valley some three miles to the east. Collectively, the mining camps were known as "Savage's Diggings." Although Savage was known for his ability to negotiate peaceful relations with local Indian tribes, his own small band of Indians apparently proved too much a cause for tension with the incoming tide of miners. As a result, Savage left the area. By the Spring of 1850 the western camp had become commonly known as "Big Oak Flat," in tribute to a particularly large specimen that stood near the west end of town. Meanwhile, many Mexicans had taken up prospecting in and around Savage's eastern camp. The cause for renaming this camp is unclear but a Mexican may have killed a fellow countryman, possibly in an attempt to steal gold or a horse (or both). The felon was quickly apprehended, tried, convicted and, as tradition has it, hung on an old oak tree in camp. The camp became known as "Garrote." Members of a smaller camp located at San Ignacio Flat, some three miles to the east, attended the proceedings and, thus, the two camps became known as "First Garrote" (or simply, "Garrote") and "Second Garrote." They were also called "Garrote No. 1" and "Garrote No. 2."

Tuolumne County was created in 1850, the same year California achieved statehood. By 1852 post offices had been established in Big Oak Flat and First Garrote. A thriving population of several hundred to a few thousand miners and other residents led to the erection of numerous buildings of wood, stone, and adobe construction. Big Oak Flat incorporated as a city in 1860 but a devastating fire in 1863 laid waste most of the town. With the Gold Rush era of prosperity already waning, Big Oak Flat disincorporated in 1864. Most of the buildings lost in the fire were never rebuilt. First Garrote was spared the ravaging effects of fire, so common to other mining camps. Consequently, even though the town was smaller than Big Oak Flat, more of its Gold Rush era buildings have survived to the present day. In 1875 a more staid populace, desirous of portraying a hospital image to the traveling public, succeeded in having First Garrote renamed Groveland.

In addition to the Gold Rush, Big Oak Flat and Groveland experienced two other periods of significant economic growth. First was the hard rock mining boom, from about 1895 to World War 1, during which time several stamp mills and numerous other buildings were erected to accommodate the thriving business of mining. On the heels of this period came the Hetch Hetchy era (1914 to 1929), a reference to the construction days of the Hetch Hetchy Water and Power System, a project undertaken by the City and County of San Francisco. The U.S. Congress approved the damming of Hetch Hetchy Valley (located within Yosemite National Park) in 1913. Because of its strategic location, San Francisco chose Groveland as its "Mountain Division Headquarters." A railroad was built to transport the materials, equipment and laborers to damsite, and to the work camps along the aqueduct system. The line started at a point on the Sierra Railroad in western Tuolumne County and extended twenty-seven miles eastward to Groveland. Damsite was another forty-one miles east of town. Groveland became the site for the railroad shops and warehouse. This immense new labor force elicited a need for renovation and new construction. Today, many of Groveland's buildings date from this era. Between these historic economic booms, Groveland was a typical, quiet mountain town which catered to the needs of the surrounding ranches and provided accommodations for Yosemite Park bound travelers. Groveland began to experience a fourth period of pronounced economic growth in the late 1960s, said growth continuing down to the present time. Despite development pressures, much of the business district still carries the ambiance of an early twentieth century, western mountain town with the subject property serving as a significant contributor to that historic built environment.

Historical Background of Subject Property

The Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant stand upon a portion of Lot 2 of Block 7 as per the Official Townsite Map of Groveland, 1877. The first structure to be located upon this land was the Washington Hotel. J. L. Cogswell and Otis Perrin started this business circa 1854. Elizabeth Boutillier bought the hotel in 1866. She married Benjamin Savory in the early 1870s and the business was renamed the "Savory Hotel." Ben hailed from Groveland, Massachusetts and he is credited with instigating the renaming of "First Garrote" to "Groveland." Thomas R. Reid acquired the Savory Hotel in 1882 and in 1886-87 he had the facility dismantled.

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Continuation Sheet: Section Number 8

Hotel Charlotte

He sold his land to the Meyers in 1887.

The Meyers quickly sold a portion of the western end of Lot 2 (30 feet wide by 120 feet deep) to Louis Cassaretto. Cassaretto's tax assessments increased significantly from \$250 to \$1,500 between 1900 to 1901. This reflected the construction of several new buildings, including two single story wood frame buildings side by side upon the west end of Lot 2. In erecting his new buildings, Cassaretto's eastern structure trespassed onto the Meyers' remaining portion of Lot 2 by five feet. A deeded boundary adjustment took care of this problem in 1903. This eastern building was rented by the proprietors of the Gem Saloon. In 1905 Cassaretto died and his estate was settled in 1907. Cassaretto's son, Fred, bought the Gem Saloon business in 1909. The enterprise is believed to have stayed in operation until prohibition. During the 1920s, the Gem Saloon building was occupied by the "Groveland Cash Store." Charlotte De Ferrari bought the Gem Saloon lot from the Cassaretto family in 1925. Soon thereafter she would erect a new restaurant building.

The Meyers sold the remaining portion of Lot 2 to Timothy Carlon in 1915. Carlon sold the western portion (30 feet by 120 feet) to Harilaos Colivas and Gerasimos Vrionis in 1916. They sold this parcel to Clyde Smith in 1917. The deed transaction described the parcel as immediately on the east side of the Gem Saloon building. Smith sold his vacant lot to Charlotte De Ferrari in 1921. Upon this site Charlotte De Ferrari had Frank Ferretti, a respected local carpenter, build her hotel. The southeast corner of the hotel is said to be upon or next to the site of Groveland's (Garrote's) hanging tree (removed in the 1800s). It was also in 1921 that Charlotte acquired a portion of Lot 2 of Groveland's Common Lands. The 30 foot by 161 foot parcel had belonged to the Cassaretto family, with Louis being the first one to gain title to it. The parcel, which runs along the south side of Garrote Creek, ensured that Charlotte would have vehicular access from a nearby county road to the back of her hotel.

I shall interrupt this chronology of the property's history to take a look at Charlotte's life. Luigi De Ferrari, a native of Italy, came to California during the Gold Rush. After several years of successful mining, De Ferrari returned to his motherland. In 1882 he was blessed with the arrival of his daughter, Charlotte. Shortly after this, Luigi returned to California. In 1886 he was killed in a tragic mining accident near Harden Flat (Tuolumne County). Charlotte came to America in 1900 or 1901, settling in the Groveland area. In 1916, Giacomo De Ferrari, Charlotte's uncle, had a small wood frame building erected along the east side of his saloon. It is here that Charlotte opened her first restaurant. In 1918 the *Tuolumne Prospector* (a Groveland Newspaper of that day) reported that "Miss Charlotte De Ferrari, who has conducted the Hetch Hetchy Restaurant for the past year, closed up that business Wednesday and has taken over the dining room and lunch counter of Hotel Groveland." The paper reported in a subsequent issue that "Miss Charlotte De Ferrari announces that she will be glad to serve at Hotel Groveland former patrons of the Hetch Hetchy Restaurant. First class meals will be served at all times. On Sundays, chicken and ravioli dinners will be the rule. Dinner parties of local people are especially invited." Her Sunday menu remained a tradition until her retirement in 1948. It's unknown how long Charlotte operated the dining room at the Groveland Hotel. A photograph from the early 1920s depicting Giacomo De Ferrari's buildings shows "The New Hetch Hetchy Restaurant" operating within a newly constructed building on the west side of De Ferrari's saloon. It is possible that Charlotte had relocated back to her uncle's facilities by this time.

After July 1, 1919, saloons were outlawed in the United States by a wartime act of Congress. The 18th Amendment (Prohibition) became effective on January 16, 1920 (Prohibition ended with the passage of the 21st Amendment on December 5, 1933). Charlotte De Ferrari was arraigned for violating prohibition near the end of 1921. She eventually pleaded guilty and paid a \$400 fine. She reportedly went awry of the law on at least two more occasions. Carlo De Ferrari, Tuolumne County's Historian, reports that "one of the arrests was made upon 'planted' evidence according to those involved." Charlotte was by no means the only tavern keeper occasionally caught serving illegal libations. In fact, it appears that during the 1920s "any eating establishment that didn't have liquor available soon went bankrupt." Carlo added, "It was almost a matter of survival." Furthermore, liquor was never far removed from the construction sites and railroad camps of the Hetch Hetchy project. Even officials and visiting dignitaries, up to inspect the progress of the mammoth water project, generally expected liquor to be served with their meals.

Charlotte's hotel and restaurant catered to residents, laborers, and travelers alike in the 1920s. Despite the departure of the Hetch Hetchy construction crews, and the advent of the Great Depression, Charlotte continued successful operation of the hotel and restaurant throughout the 1930s and '40s. It was during this time that Charlotte cemented her reputation as a fine cook. Groveland had a long tradition of hosting Saturday night dances. For many years a hall building located just down the street from the Charlotte Hotel (opposite

National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form**Continuation Sheet: Section Number 8****Hotel Charlotte**

the Groveland Hotel) had been the site for these weekly events. Sometime during the late '30s or early '40s Charlotte began providing food here. The dances, which were open to all ages, culminated at midnight when Charlotte served her specialty: ravioli dinner. Even after all these years, there are still people to be found that can readily recall just how good those meals were. It was during the 1930s and '40s that the Charlotte Hotel and restaurant eclipsed the reputation of the Groveland Hotel, becoming Groveland's most prominent hostelry. Charlotte De Ferrari, who never married, finally sold her business and property in 1948, retiring to Sonora. Until her death in 1970, Charlotte occasionally returned to Groveland to see how her old business was doing.

Returning to the property's history, Charlotte, as previously mentioned, had her hotel built in 1921 and she acquired the Gem Saloon lot in 1925. It's believed that Charlotte didn't relocate her restaurant business until after Giacomo's death in 1926. Photographs of the Gem Saloon building show a different structure than what is here today (the Charlotte Hotel restaurant building). It is generally accepted that Charlotte had the restaurant building built in 1927 or 1928. Although the tax rolls show a continuous improvement assessment for the Gem Saloon lot, the presence of brick patterned, metal sheeting on the hotel's west wall (now covered by the east wall of the restaurant) suggests that several weeks or even months lapsed between the demolition of the old saloon and the erection of the restaurant. The finely crafted, stone lined canal over the Gem Saloon lot (beneath the restaurant) lends weight to this impression. As with the hotel, Charlotte is believed to have hired Frank Ferretti to build the restaurant facility.

The biggest change to occur to the buildings during Charlotte's time presumably came around 1936 when stucco was added to the front of the restaurant and hotel. The age of this facelift is predicated on the assumption that a neighboring structure with the same type of exterior finish influenced this alteration. That building was erected in 1936. The replacement of the hotel's original wooden balcony posts with concrete posts took place in either the late 1930s or early '40s. According to Carlo De Ferrari, "Automobiles parking [in front of the hotel] were constantly either splintering [the] posts or knocking them out entirely... [Charlotte]... got tired of repainting or replacing them and put in the concrete ones so that anyone hitting or brushing up against them suffered considerable damage to their cars as well. Apparently the posts did much to make the parking drivers more careful."

It's not clear when the large awning on the restaurant was installed. It appears in photographs that date from the mid-1940s. Also showing in these pictures is a large metal sign with neon lighting hanging off the hotel balcony. The sign cantilevered over the street and faced oncoming traffic. It read "Hotel" in big letters on the first line, "Charlotte" on the second line, and in small letters "Coffee Shop" on the bottom line. In the early 1950s a large metal sign in the shape of a coffee pot was installed on the roof of the restaurant's awning. The word "Cafe" was prominently featured vertically on the neon outlined billboard. Both signs are gone today.

Since Charlotte's ownership, the property has passed through several hands, with subsequent owners removing a portion of the walls in common between the restaurant and hotel. The restaurant building appears to have undergone several alterations during this period. The hotel, on the other hand, has only been significantly renovated once. In 1975 and '76 the rear porch was reconstructed and enlarged, and the basement area enclosed and partitioned. At the same time most of the hotel's windows and electrical wiring were replaced, and a few other changes implemented. The restaurant's north elevation was also reconstructed, a rear addition installed, and the walk-in refrigeration unit (with two story wood shelter) erected. Inasmuch as most of these alterations have occurred to the back sides of both buildings, their overall historical character has not been significantly diminished. In fact, the front facades of both structures appear almost identical to the way they looked in the mid-1940s. The current owners, Ruth and Jim Kraenzel, bought the Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant in 1984. They have expended considerable effort toward refurbishing the interiors with period furnishings and decorations, even to the extend of locating items that actually were in the buildings during Charlotte's ownership. They are intent on preserving the Neoclassical lines of the Charlotte Hotel. They are also desirous of accentuating the hotel's connection with Groveland's prosperous Hetch Hetchy days and with reinforcing the property's historic association with Charlotte De Ferrari.

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Continuation Sheet: Section Number 9

Hotel Charlotte

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Selected maps from the *Plat Map Books* and *Records of Surveys*. Selected issues of *The Tuolumne Independent* (was a Sonora newspaper).

Tuolumne County Archives: Selected Tax Rolls 1852 to 1993.

The Union Democrat: Selected issues of *The Union Democrat* (Sonora newspaper).

Interviews: Bayard C. Beaudreau, Bruce Hill, Ruth and Jim Kraenzel, and Mary Laveroni. Additional assistance from Carlo M. De Ferrari, Tuolumne County Historian.

The following photographs are included in this report:

- 1: Charlotte Hotel, south (front) and east elevations.
- 2: Charlotte Hotel, east and north elevations.
- 3: Charlotte Hotel northwest corner of rear addition.
- 4: Charlotte Restaurant, north elevation.
- 5: Charlotte Hotel and Restaurant, south (front) elevations.

Photographs taken by Mark V. Thornton. Negatives on file with same, Groveland, California.