

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received NOV 7 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Hotel San Carlos, San Carlos Hotel ✓

and/or common Hotel San Carlos

2. Location

street & number 202 North Central Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Phoenix N/A vicinity of

state Arizona code 04 county Maricopa code 013

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

4. Owner of Property

name Phoenix II - Limited Partnership; Dwain Kantor, General Partner

street & number 202 North Central Avenue

city, town Phoenix N/A vicinity of state Arizona

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Maricopa County Recorder's Office

street & number 111 South Third Avenue

city, town Phoenix state Arizona

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Phoenix Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office/City of Phoenix Planning Dept.

city, town Phoenix state Arizona

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

SUMMARY

The Hotel San Carlos, built in 1928, is a Renaissance Revival style building located in the center of the downtown Phoenix central business district. The seven story hotel is constructed of reinforced concrete which is scored on the main elevations to create the appearance of masonry construction. The building is stylistically highlighted with Neo Classic ornamentation at the entries and bas-relief terra cotta panels with floral motifs. Storefronts on the main elevations remain intact with slight modification in 1955. The original windows were replaced in 1950 with large fixed sash, single-pane windows. Due, however, to the retention of the building's primarily stylistic details, this window alteration has minimal impact on the building's architectural characteristics and overall integrity. The hotel has been in continuous use since its 1928 opening and is a major architectural and historic resource of downtown Phoenix.

DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The hotel is located in the approximate center of the downtown Phoenix area on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Monroe Street. It is entered from Central Avenue on the east and Monroe Street on the south through two recessed entries located slightly off center on the primary facades. The entrances are highlighted by vertically-ribbed, glazed, ceramic tiles which follow the curved corner of the recessed opening. (Portions of the entry level were remodeled in 1955; the ceramic detail may date from this time.) Segmental arches appear over each entry. The second story window serves as a visual keystone.

The first story was slightly modified in 1955, but the original design of the storefronts is intact. Each storefront features a recessed central entry flanked by multi-paned display windows. These windows are topped by fixed glass transoms which are presently obscured by later sheathing. Originally, the storefronts were topped by a fully articulated Classical cornice which complemented the building's Neo Classical embellishment. A projecting metal canopy installed in 1955 concealed the cornice, however it remains intact. (The canopy is to be removed by a proposed facade restoration.)

On the upper stories, the main entry bays on both elevations are further highlighted by Renaissance-derived, Classical embellishment. The second and third story windows in the entry bays are flanked by pilasters with fluted capitals which support an entablature over the third story window. Above the fourth story windows of the entry bay are projecting balconies supported on heavy console brackets.

Other ornamentation of the primary elevations consists of terra cotta panels with bas-relief floral patterns located below the second story windows. These windows are topped by projecting lintels and have molded surrounds. Pilasters divide the upper facade into three asymmetric bays, rising to the elaborate seventh story.

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The rectangular windows are symmetrically placed on both facades with the remainder of the surfaces being plainly detailed in smooth-textured concrete. The original sash windows were removed during the 1980 renovation and replaced with fixed-sash, single-pane windows. This modification, while unfortunate, does not result in a major impact to the overall integrity of the hotel.

Two vertical rectangular terra cotta inset panels located between each window are found on the 7th floor. They are based with a continuous projecting cornice moulding. Above the terra cotta insets occur bold, heavy-bracketed, crowning cornice elements underlined with dentils repeating at approximately 6" on center and surrounding smaller inset panels of textured concrete in relief. Above the 7th floor is a penthouse which is original construction. However, it is not reflected in the original construction documents and was apparently accomplished by field order.

In 1955 the building underwent remodeling. A swimming pool was added on the existing 3rd floor sun deck, and the original canopy was replaced by the existing metal one. Additionally, the building was repainted.

Interior

The building retains much of its original fabric and elements despite minor remodeling in 1955. The lobby contains the original registration desk, paneling, and recessed ceiling coffers. A more recent renovation took place in 1980 during which time lofty ceilings and intricate plaster mouldings were uncovered and restored. In this restoration the elegant "Grand Salon" with crystal chandeliers, sconces, and mirrors were returned, as was the original Palm Room's ornateness. One of the two original attendant-operated elevator cars still functions on its original manual controllers. Both cars are faced with original copper-clad doors.

Upstairs, corridors, suites, and even toilet rooms contain the original layout and electrical and plumbing fixtures (including ice water spigots), as well as decorative panel doors and moulding. Most of the original woodwork and trim is intact.

The basement level (98'x138') utilizes reinforced concrete load-bearing exterior walls and interior reinforced concrete columns with no particular grid spacing to be identified. An interesting detail exists in that consideration was given to the automobile by rounding those columns located in an area designated as "Garage". This lower level is also vented through the use of louver vents up the inside face of the perimeter walls and to the outside at the 2nd floor. The basement also houses a well, dug in 1874, which today provides water to the cooling tower on the roof. The 1st floor level (98'x138') carries the same structural spacing irregularities, including the rounded interior columns found in the garage.

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 checked="" 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 1928 **Builder/Architect** George Whitecross Ritchie - Architect
Kinnie and Westerhouse - General Contractors

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The social and historical significance of the Hotel San Carlos lies in several areas. It was built out of the growing need for tourist hotels in Phoenix in the 1920's. The building itself was a state-of-the-art facility, the first hotel in Phoenix with steam heat, elevators, ice water taps, and air cooling. The hotel was financed by the Dwight B. Heard Investment Company, with Mr. Dwight Heard an early prominent name in the development of Phoenix. The hotel also played a major social role as a gathering place for the city's elite in the late 1920's through the 1940's.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/SIGNIFICANCE

In its day the San Carlos was a state-of-the-art facility. It was the first hotel in Phoenix to offer air cooling, and the hotel charged extra because of this (one dollar more than the other three hotels in the area). Additionally, it had steam heat in all the rooms (still working), circulating ice water taps in every room, and hand-operated elevators.

That a hotel such as the San Carlos was built is testimony to the rise of Phoenix as a tourist center. Phoenix's early economic strength came from its agricultural output following the construction of Roosevelt Dam (NHL) in 1911. Cotton, lettuce, citrus, and other produce were the major contributors to the economy, turning the desert into a profitable place. By 1920 Phoenix was a bustling center of agricultural trade and commerce. Once the automobile was introduced, growth occurred rapidly, and with this growth other supportive industries were needed to sustain the population.

Dwight Heard and Charles Harris saw this need in terms of the hospitality industry and felt, obviously, that a hotel could serve their growing city well. The Dwight B. Heard Company financed the project and assumed 50% equity. Charles Harris owned the other half. Mr. Harris and his family, wife Elsie and sons Leo and Fair, managed the San Carlos and lived in the penthouse built above the seventh floor. It is not known whether Mr. Harris bought Mr. Heard's portion of the hotel, but it is safe to assume that he did as newspaper articles make reference to the fact that when Charles Harris died in 1946, the hotel went into his family trust, The Harris Trust Company. The role of Dwight B. Heard in the San Carlos enhances the significance of the hotel. Dwight Heard was a prominent Phoenix resident responsible for the development of acres and acres of land for commercial and residential development. He and his wife, Marie Bartlett Heard, came to Phoenix before the turn of the century due to Mr. Heard's health problems. They were big promoters of Phoenix, encouraging their friends back in Chicago to visit Phoenix and also to invest in the area. Dwight Heard saw the potential of the giant valley and assumed an active role in bringing about growth to the area. He and his wife owned 160 acres of land, now located in the central corridor of Phoenix, and he

(See Continuation Sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Phoenix

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 1 12 4 0 10 2 16 10 3 17 0 11 5 15 18
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

City of Phoenix - Block 92, Parcel 112-21-070.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert A. Craig, Historical Architect/Phyllis M. Cochran, Historical Researcher

Edited by SHPO staff

organization Craig Associates, Architects, P.C.

date March 1983

street & number 3810 North Miller Road

telephone (602) 941-2323

city or town Scottsdale

state Arizona

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

Samra J. Schuber

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 31, 1983

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

Justine Lorest Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 12/8/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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set about developing this land while his wife assumed an active cultural and civic role. A project such as the San Carlos interested him for the reason that a first class hotel would give stature to Phoenix, bring in more people, and be able to offer them good accommodations and fine food while increasing revenue, some of it his. The Dwight B. Heard Investment Company was but one arm of Mr. Heard's numerous financial enterprises, and he was one of Phoenix' earliest pacesetters. His involvement with the San Carlos speaks highly of the project and is also proof that Phoenix was indeed growing at a fast enough rate to warrant the building of a downtown hotel facility.

In his article, "Urban Development in Arizona", Professor Bradford Luckingham discusses how Phoenix grew and why. He claims that with the advent of the automobile and the arrival of a Southern Pacific main line in October of 1926, Phoenix was making it easier for people outside Arizona to get here and consequently utilize the area. By 1930, Phoenix could definitely be called a regional urban center, and the tourist industry was testimony to this growth. Built concurrently with the San Carlos were several other hotels. The Westward Ho, completed some eleven months after the San Carlos, was sited just up the street and was a major competitor. Equally as close were the Luhrs and the Adams, which were marketed to the destination traveler and were completed within a few years of the San Carlos. Beyond the downtown area, other hotels and resorts were built during the same time period. The Arizona Biltmore, Jokake Inn, and the Wigwam all were built on the premise that Arizona's climate would continue to bring in winter visitors.

The Chamber of Commerce spent money promoting Phoenix to the eastern cities, touting Phoenix as a "health mecca". The building of the San Carlos, seen in this perspective, was then a natural response to what was obviously a growing city, one which would need, if it did not already, tourist-oriented hotels. Along with the Adams, Luhrs, and Westward Ho, the San Carlos helped to fill this need. Today, as the Luhrs and the Adams have been torn down and the Westward Ho is in use as a residential center for senior citizens, the San Carlos Hotel is significant because it is the only historic hotel still operating in its original capacity.

Architect

George Whitecross Ritchie, architect for the San Carlos, was brought in from Los Angeles for the project. During the 20's and 30's there was only one major architectural firm in Phoenix, Leshner and Mahoney, and most of the major design contracts went to Los Angeles architects. The construction documents were signed August 10, 1927 by Mr. Ritchie and ground for the hotel was broken eight days later. Besides Mr. Ritchie, the General Contractors, Kinnie and Westerhouse, were also from Los Angeles.

Mr. Ritchie's architectural origins appear in Cleveland, Ohio. According to the city directory, he is listed as a draftsman in 1914 and an architect in 1916. Before he left Cleveland, he was the Assistant Architect, Board of Education, but no buildings identified as his are known at this time. From Cleveland he traveled

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to New Jersey where he held the post of Architect and Chief of Design for the state. In 1923 he was in Philadelphia. His 1925 address places him as a practicing architect in Hollywood. An article dated February 5, 1926 for the Architectural Record was written by Ritchie and discusses a type of commercial building plan, that of a "house court". From this we can certainly ascertain that Ritchie worked on such commercial designing as he describes. Included in the article are photographs of one such "house court" located in Los Angeles.

Due to the lack of a broad architectural base in Phoenix, Mr. Ritchie's commercial experience must have been seen as offering Phoenix a more sophisticated look in the downtown area. Another known building designed by Mr. Ritchie is the Pennsylvania Hotel in St. Petersburg, Florida, completed in 1926. It has a similarly designed storefront and also uses reinforced concrete scored in the same manner as the San Carlos.

Social Importance

From its beginning the San Carlos occupied a prominent place in the Phoenix social arena. There were not too many places that could be called fashionable, places where one could go to be seen and to see others. Before the construction of the San Carlos and the other three downtown hotels, residents had their choice of going to one of the local theaters such as The Studio or the Orpheum, of eating out in only a handful of restaurants, or staying home. With the bulding of the San Carlos, Phoenix now had a hotel complete with dancing and card rooms, a hotel which could be called "smart". The Palm Room, as it was named, sat off the lobby and served as the cocktail area. The French Cafe, restaurant for the San Carlos, soon became a noted eating spot. Literature for the hotel boasted that its french onion soup was the best in town, and fashionable Phoenicians were known, according to newspaper columns of the day, to enjoy that onion soup on Sunday afternoons.

Phoenix was also a getaway spot for the Hollywood stars of the day, and, according to hotel records, Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, Spencer Tracy, and others were frequent visitors. Del Webb, the builder and developer, also stayed at the San Carlos. State legislators were known to have drinks in the Palm Room after a day at the capitol building some two miles away, and during World War II, servicemen from Luke Air Force Base were housed at the San Carlos on layovers.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Water System

The original water system for the hotel was a well that had been dug for an adobe schoolhouse that had formerly occupied the site and was connected to an underground source of water. This well supplied the hotel with all its water in the early days and today is used for the air conditioning system. The well can be found in the basement, capped and looking very modern. The San Carlos has grandfathered rights for the water, entitling them to usage without payment, a situation common for many buildings in the downtown Phoenix area.

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Chronology of Ownership

Historical aspects of ownership include the following:

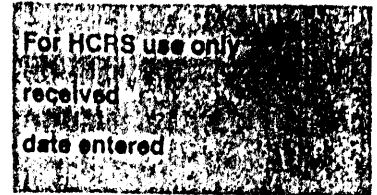
Charles Harris/Dwight B. Heard Investment Comapny 1928-1946
Harris Family Trust 1946-1964 - leased to James H. Alberts, independent
management company, from the mid-50's
until June 1, 1964

More recent ownership includes the following:

ADCR Corporation 1964-1973
Gregory Melikian 1973-1980
Bill Futerer 1980
Phoenix II/Dwain Kantor, General Partner, 1980-present

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Newspapers

Phoenix: A Pioneer in Air Conditioning. Phoenix Gazette,
Section 2, column 8. June 8, 1935.

Ground Broken For San Carlos. Phoenix Gazette, Front Page,
column 3. August 19, 1927.

Public Reception To Open New Hotel San Carlos Tonight.
The Arizona Republican, pages 8-9. March 20, 1928.

Journals

Luckingham, Bradford. Urban Development in Arizona: The
Rise of Phoenix. The Journal of Arizona History.
Summer 1981. pp.202,206,208,209,212,214.

Who's Who in Los Angeles. 1925-1926.

Ritchie, George Whitecross. Buildings of Moderate Cost/
Adaptable to the Smaller Communities. Architectural
Record. Feb.5, 1926. pp.245-49.

Library Collections

Life of Maie B. Heard. Notes from a speech by Eula Parker
Murphy, personal secretary. 4 pages. Original given
to Maie B. Heard School. Copy contained in Biographical
File on Maie B. Heard, Arizona Collections, Hayden
Library, Arizona State University. Tempe, Arizona.

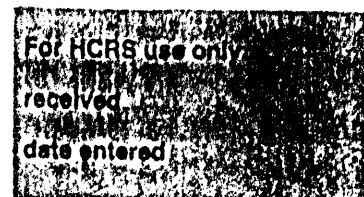
Oral Interviews

Emma Melikian, wife of former owner. January 21, 1983.
Conducted with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Gregory Melikian, former owner. January 26, 1983, with
Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

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Oral Interviews, Con't.

Roger Hathaway, member of Los Angeles consulting firm.
March 8, 1983 with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Dr. David Gebhard, professor at University of Southern
California, Santa Barbara. March 7 and March 14, 1983
with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Eric Johannesen, Chief, Western Reserve Historical
Society in Cleveland, Ohio. March 10, 1983 with
Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Ann Giblin, archivist, Cuyahoga County. Cleveland, Ohio.
March 9, 1983 with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Terry Karshner, historical architect, State of New
Jersey. March 9, 1983 with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Tom Cain, curator, Heard Museum. March 18, 1983 with Phyllis
Cochran, researcher.

Bill Bond, owner of Pennsylvania Hotel in St. Petersburg,
Florida. March 15, 1983 with Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Bill Closson, employee of Hotel San Carlos. various times
during months of January, February and March 1983 with
Phyllis Cochran, researcher.

Miscellaneous Documents

Well Schedule from U.S. Department of the Interior. 1957.

Original Letterhead, San Carlos Hotel.

Brochure, Luhrs Hotel. circa 1940.

Original construction drawings designed by George Whitecross
Ritchie, 1927. Remodeled by John Stephens and Associates,
1955.