

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



*Final*

MAY 10 1982

**1. Name**

historic St. Joseph's Hospital

and/or common St. Joseph's Hospital

**2. Location**

street & number 355 Buena Vista Avenue East n/a not for publication

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of congressional district Fifth

state California code 06 county San Francisco code 075

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name St. Joseph's Hospital Attn. J. J. Brandlin, President

street & number 10960 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 2220

city, town Los Angeles n/a vicinity of state California 90024

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office, City Hall

street & number Civic Center

city, town San Francisco state California

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title none has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<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 <u>n/a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

St. Joseph's Hospital consists of one major building (a 6-story-and-2-basement hospital) and two subordinate buildings (a one-story-and-basement chapel and a six-story-and-basement nurses' residence) all on a single site and all connected by corridors mostly underground. All are of "steel framed, reinforced concrete" construction (1) with light ochre stucco facades and red tile, hipped roofs. Style is Spanish Renaissance Revival monumental in size and restrained in ornament. The prominent site climbs from about 350 to 425 feet above sea level.

The 76-foot-high hospital building lies in an elongated rectangle about 50 x 360 feet, bent twice to complement the hillside site, the irregular lot shape and the contours of Buena Vista Park across the street. The rectangular shape gave a simple and practical floor plan to the 215-bed hospital: an eight-foot-wide double-loaded corridor, every patient room having an outside window. About 75 feet from its northerly end the rectangle bends about 30°, and it bends again at the same angle another 75 feet further along. This asymmetrical plan not only accommodates the lot contours, it disguises the rectangle's great length as one approaches from the logical access route (from north and downhill), and it creates on the second short section a limited entrance facade to be appropriately decorated. In the rear (downhill) a one-story diet kitchen extends 50 x 75 feet like the lower crossing of a capital F.

The hospital's ornamentation is appropriate to the size of the building both in proportions and in the relation between plain and ornamented spaces. A prominent string course between second and third floors runs the entire circuit of the building, as do simpler cornice moldings. Windows are recessed rectangles, double-hung. Entablatures top all first-floor windows on the Buena Vista facade, and a substantial balcony at the fifth floor relieves the rear facade. Quoins decorate all angles facing Buena Vista; an additional set partitions a part of the long section equal in length to one of the short sections, giving the illusion of a symmetrical, three-faced building with an afterthought of an extension to the south. The "extension" is one story shorter than the rest of the building but was constructed simultaneously. At the center of each of the two side facades a metal balcony rises from the string course and is supported on three stucco lion heads, similar to but different from the lion-head keystones one of St. Joseph's architects was to use on the Veterans Building and Opera House. All other ornamentation is on the entry facade. At the center of its five bays, a slightly extruding entry pavilion consists of a narrow, two-story-tall round arch flanked by a pair of engaged columns, all heavily rusticated stucco with matching voussoirs. The keystone is decorated with religious symbols. The

(1) Building Permit Application #15714, filed 20 Sept. 1926.

**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 St. Joseph's Hospital  
San Francisco, CA Item number 7 Page 1

entablature melts into the building-encircling string course, with pedestals and pineapple finials above the capitals. The third floor window above the entry has a garlanded pediment and spirals at the sides creating a continuity with the arch that adds a third story to the apparent height of the entry pavilion. The fourth floor central window is shoulder-architraved and flanked by a pair of cartouches. A sixth floor balcony rests on six scrolled brackets: two on either side of the central window and one at each balcony end between the next pair of windows. The visitor's perception of the obvious entrance to a reasonably scaled building is further enhanced by a symmetrically divided and gracefully curved stairway with openwork metal newels. A relatively shallow vestibule gives access to the main door, whose entablature is a little higher and more ornate than that of the first floor windows. The tympanum is decorated with relief sculptures of religious subject.

The subordinate chapel behind stands free of the hospital except for its entry corridor connecting its balcony to the hospital's main floor and the chapel's main floor to the hospital's basement. The exterior is a sculptural group of masses punctuated by gently sloping tile roofs, round-headed windows and a small square cupola for a bell. Inspiration could have come from some Italian or Byzantine church. Actually the sculptured quality expresses, with twelve-inch-thick walls, the interior shape of a square central space with shallow extensions in the four equal directions of a Greek cross, plus a half-round apse at the end opposite the entry. Of the square central mass only the corners show, as accents on the sides of a large octagonal lantern supporting a gently angled roof. The chapel contains the only significant interior. Its shallow central dome and much tighter apse-end half dome are lined with dreamy murals of Arts & Crafts or William Morris inspiration, flat figures in borders of intertwined vines and flowers with integrated Latin inscriptions. The dome features sky symbols and the apse sheep on a background of trompe l'oeil gold mirror mosaic, to match real mosaic in panels of the three white marble altars. On window reveals, assorted medallions, balcony walls and perhaps once on lower walls, murals contain muted vines and figures. The apse floor is white marble. At the rear six marbelized columns support the balcony and delineate a narthex. Each transept features a large Art Glass window in rich colors, with a single scene and Arts & Crafts borders; one shows the Flight into Egypt from the life of St. Joseph for whom the hospital was named.

The nurses' residence, or convent, lies downhill from the other two buildings, nearly parallel with the hospital's main wing. It is a simple rectangle in form, about 50 x 100 feet, six stories and basement, with only two string courses and a partial red tile roof for ornament. In the sub-basement the two original Heine Water-Tube Boilers of 1920 design still function on their original brick fireboxes and with reciprocating feed pumps for water and steam. Because of the hill and the mature trees the convent is invisible from Buena Vista Avenue and inconspicuous from Park Hill Avenue, but from a distance its bulk contributes to the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet    St. Joseph's Hospital    Item number    7    Page    2  
                                 San Francisco

camelion, castle-like form of St. Joseph's Hospital beneath the trees that crown Buena Vista Heights. (2)

Much of the remainder of the lot is landscaped, but one large portion, which is reached through an unadorned square hole punched through the north section basement, contains a jumble of derelict parking lots, remains of demolished and unimportant auxiliary buildings (e.g. laundry, dormitory, pipe shop), and two generators, one attached to the rear of the diet kitchen. While interiors, except the chapel, are much altered, the exteriors seems unchanged except for two harmonious stories added to the nurses' residence in 1941, minor rear sundeck changes and the generator. Southwest from the hospital extends a covered corridor leading to the 1945 College of Nursing building, which is on a separate city lot and not part of this nomination. The south portion and edges of the hospital lot are well landscaped with low flowers, appropriate bushes and a bit of lawn. Many mature pine, cypress and palm trees give the illusion that hill-cresting Buena Vista Park begins with this site and includes the buildings.

(2) The Nurse's Residence had three construction phases: first floor and basements of unknown date and architect; next three floors, 1926, no architect, builder Macdonald and Kahn; top two floors, 1941, architect John J. Foley. Source of this information is the two building permit applications for additions. Picture 6 shows 2 string course divisions.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) medicine

Specific dates 1926-1928

Builder/Architect Bakewell & Brown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Joseph's Hospital is a tastefully proportioned monumental Spanish Renaissance Revival complex, visually significant on the San Francisco cityscape from many different vantage points. The institution contributed significantly to the city's health care for 90 years. The building was one of the last major works by the important architectural firm of Bakewell & Brown.

The visual significance results from the site, color, shape, and design as described above. Not far from the geographical center of the city, Buena Vista Heights is crowned with Buena Vista Park, and St. Joseph's lies just below the park on the steep eastern slope. Its long, pale ochre-colored walls and red tile roofs seem to poke up through a double belt of trees, the last works of man visible before the crest. And it is visible from the central freeway, from Market Street near Fourteenth, from downtown highrises and from the northeastern slope of Twin Peaks. Public transportation passengers view it from the Market, Divisadero and Fillmore Street lines. The lower part of the site comes within the city's Special Sign District for scenic streets. (1) While St. Joseph's always presents a long ochre line among the dark green trees, its shape appears mysteriously to change, because from a distance the three buildings seem one, with constantly varying form depending on the angle from which it is viewed.

St. Joseph's Hospital existed in San Francisco only at the present site. It began late in 1889 as the result of a charitable donation to the Catholic Church; the present building opened in 1928, and closed in 1979 due to non-compliance with the state's stringent seismic requirements for hospitals and in response to federal-state-local cost-containment efforts to reduce the number of San Francisco's excess hospital beds. For the entire 90 years St. Joseph's accepted patients without regard to religion or nationality, the Franciscan Sisters always providing nursing and administration. For many years the hospital was also a home for the aged. Not only did the Sisters care for some patients on a charity basis, they kept general rates low by donating their nursing services, so that St. Joseph's was known as the working man's hospital. The Franciscan sisters also served San Francisco in extraordinary ways. During the Spanish-American War they nursed soldiers in the Presidio, for which the city granted the Order free public transit passes in perpetuity. For nearly a year after the 1906 earthquake and fire they fed several thousand homeless people without charge, costs partly born by the Red

(1) San Francisco Planning Code Section 608.6.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet, \_\_\_\_\_

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property about 2.8

Quadrangle name San Francisco North, Calif.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 10 549440 4179950  
Zone Easting Northing

B                    
Zone Easting Northing

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies city lots 1 and 1A of Assessor's Block 2607 and is shaped roughly like an arrowhead. Boundaries are shown on the attached site plan, and are drawn upon the lot lines which encompass the historic resource.

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

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code
state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Bloomfield

organization n/a date 6 May 1982

street & number 2229 Webster Street telephone (415) 922-1063

city or town San Francisco, state California 94115

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 1/17/83

For HCERS use only	<u>Determined Eligible</u>	<b>DOE/OWNER OBJECTION</b>
I hereby certify that this property is <del>included</del> in the National Register		
<u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of the National Register		date <u>8/22/83</u>
<u>[Signature]</u> Chief of Registration	<u>Entered in the National Register</u>	date <u>5-9-85</u>
	<u>at request of new owner + SHPO</u>	

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

St. Joseph's Hospital

Continuation sheet San Francisco, CA

Item number 8

Page 3

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Cross. Their School of Nursing, founded in 1921, graduated hundreds of nurses. They began using X-Ray equipment in 1902 and in 1947 opened the San Francisco Bay Area's first occupational therapy unit. The first St. Joseph's Hospital was a ten-room house set among ample gardens at the corner of Buena Vista and Park Hill Avenues, former residence of San Francisco merchant Maurice Ullmann since its construction about 1881, one of the earliest in the Park Hill Homestead Association Tract. In 1889 Miss Jennie O'Meara, member of a well-to-do Irish Catholic family, bought the property for \$30,000 and donated it in memory of her mother to Archbishop Patrick W. Riordan, "desiring that his Grace should establish a hospital from which no deserving applicant would be turned away." (2) Riordan arranged for the importation of nurses from the Joliet, Illinois, Motherhouse of the Franciscan Sisters. Five nuns arrived at the beginning of September and began to create a hospital for San Francisco. The first patients came before mid-October. On 31 October 1889 the city's Board of Supervisors voted permission "to maintain a hospital . . . intended for the reception of all parties, irrespective of nationality, and to be supplied with all the most improved sanitary equipment." (3) Charitable donations, including another \$3000 from Miss O'Meara, set up the infant institution and kept it alive; before the turn of the century income from patients had not once exceeded half of the hospital's revenue. The physical plant grew by addition 1893-1894. In 1902-1906 a new 200-bed frame hospital was built in what is now the adjacent parking lot. Sporting six turrets, this one was also long, narrow and a landscape feature. By 1920 the frame building was condemned, as hospitals have long been at the entering wedge of fire and earthquake safety requirements. Fund-raising for the replacement structure which we have today was led by Schlage Lock Company president Charles Kendrick, popular major in World War I, marriage-broker for the alliance between veterans groups, museum- and classical music-supporters that produced the city's War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building, and Trustee of the resulting Board. St. Joseph's fund-raising advanced enough by September 1926 for Building Permits to be secured for the present hospital building, and for the chapel in June 1927. (The nurses' residence seems to have been built 1920-1924 by Leo J. Devlin and enlarged in 1941 by John J. Foley.) The hospital was dedicated in May 1928. As early as the institution's fiftieth anniversary in 1939, St. Joseph's was hoping for a newer building, and California's increasingly stringent seismic safety standards for hospitals have made continued use of the 1928 structure highly unlikely. These standards and the late 1970's cost/planning pressures to reduce the number of San Francisco's excess hospital beds, prompted the St. Joseph's administration in July 1979 to lease the facility to Children's Hospital, phase out the 215 beds, and close after 90 years' service.

The building deserves recognition not only as an example of a fast-vanishing era of hospital construction, but also as one of the last major

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

St. Joseph's Hospital

Continuation sheet San Francisco, CA Item number 8 Page 4

For NPS use only

received

date entered

works by the very important architectural firm of Bakewell & Brown. In their 1905-1927 partnership the firm designed San Francisco's City Hall (1915), keystone of the Civic Center National Register Historic District, as well as City Halls in Berkeley (1908) and Pasadena (1928), several buildings on the Stanford University campus, the Santa Fe Station in San Diego (1915), and in San Francisco the Pacific Gas & Electric Company Building (1925), the rotunda of the late City of Paris Building (1908), Temple Emanu-El (with Schnaittacher, 1926), the San Francisco Art Institute (1926) and numerous private residences in San Francisco, Woodside, Pebble Beach and San Rafael. John Bakewell Jr. (1872-1963) was born in Kansas, grew up in Santa Barbara and graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1893. He then proceeded to the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and earned his diplome in 1901. Arthur Brown Jr. (1874-1957), Oakland-born son of the Central Pacific Railroad's chief civil engineer, graduated from Berkeley in civil engineering three years after his partner-to-be, and he also earned his diplome at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1901, under Laloup. Brown was the design partner, Bakewell the executive and supervising architect. Both later became Fellows of the American Institute of Architects. After their partnership dissolved in 1927, Brown had the more stellar career. He was appointed to the United States Treasury Department's Board of Architectural Consultants and helped design the world fairs of 1915 in San Francisco, 1933 in Chicago and 1939 in San Francisco. His solo credits include the Washington, D.C., Departments of Labor and Commerce, several university structures including Hoover Tower at Stanford and the Library Annex at Berkeley. In San Francisco he designed Coit Tower (1934) and three more in the Civic Center National Register Historic District: the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building (with Lansburgh, 1932) and the Federal Office Building (1936). Brown has been called "one of the finest of all American classical architects." (4) Best known as the producer of French Renaissance Revival buildings in the San Francisco Civic Center, Brown showed, in the Art Institute before St. Joseph's and Coit Tower after it, his ability to produce successful designs with a minimum of ornamentation. Like the contemporary Pasadena City Hall but leaner of ornament, St. Joseph's displays Bakewell & Brown's final design phase together of mixing classical planning with functional relationships and fine details in a beautifully integrated eclectic mix emphasizing the Spanish Renaissance Revival.

- 
- (2) The Monitor, San Francisco, 25 Sept. 1880: 5/3.  
 (3) Supervisors' Resolution #2432 (Third Series).  
 (4) Corbett, "San Francisco Civic Center," National Register of Historic Places Inventory--Nomination Form: continuation sheet 14.





LOTS	INTO LOT	67-1945
68	67	..
69	67	..
70	67	..
2 to 14	1	1930
81 to 98	1	1930
55	34	1947
40	39	1952
43	38	1950

2607

SHEET 1

PARK HILL HD. ASSN. BLK-A

REVISED '57  
REVISED '70

BUENA VISTA AVE. (E.)

PARK HILL AVE.

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL

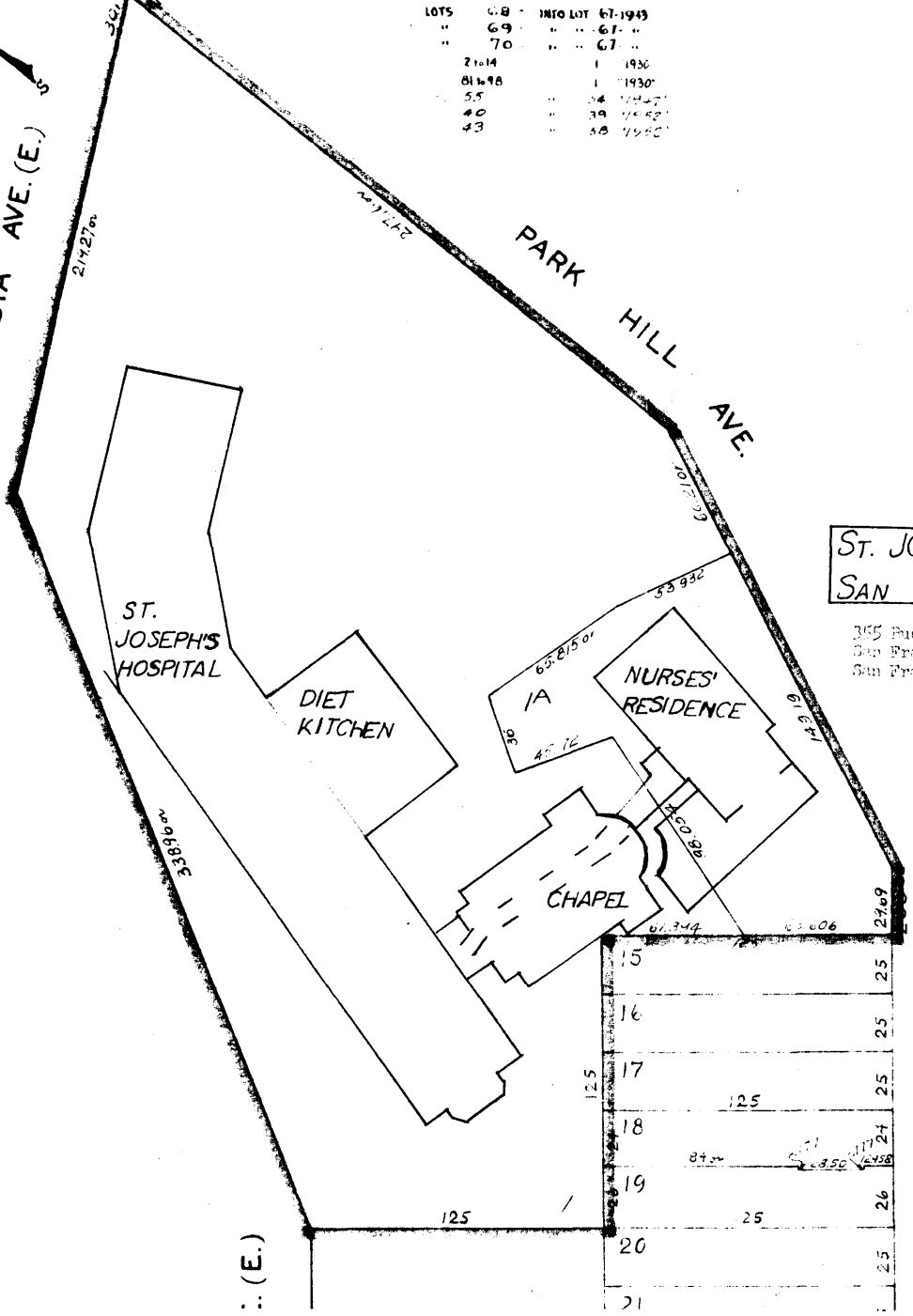
DIET KITCHEN

NURSES' RESIDENCE

CHAPEL

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL  
SAN FRANCISCO

305 Buena Vista Avenue East  
San Francisco County  
San Francisco, California



.. (E.)

AY

## DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

P.O. BOX 2390  
SACRAMENTO 95811

(916) 445-8006

APR 2 1985

Mr. Jerry Rogers  
Keeper of the National Register  
of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1100 L Street Northwest  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Rogers:

On August 22, 1983, St. Joseph's Hospital, located in San Francisco, California, was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This property was nominated by the California State Historic Preservation Officer, but notarized objection from the property owner precluded its actual listing in the Register.

We have been notified that the property has been sold and the new owner of record wishes to withdraw the objection to the National Register listing. We are enclosing a notarized letter from the new owner, Park Hill Joint Venture, stating that it is the sole owner of the property as of August 23, 1984. The new owner is formally withdrawing the objection and requesting that the property be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

We trust the enclosed letter will be sufficient to allow you to proceed with the listing of St. Joseph's Hospital in the National Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marion Mitchell-Wilson".

Ms. Marion Mitchell-Wilson  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Acting Chief, Office of Historic Preservation

Enclosure

B-2727H

*Recd 4/11/85*