

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Diamond Apartments

other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Location

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street & number: 321 Diamond Street

not for publication: NA

city/town: Redondo Beach

vicinity: \_

state: CA county: Los Angeles

code: 037

zip code: 90277

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_1_	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: \_0\_

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

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 of certifying official

Date February 13, 1992

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

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Entered in the National Register

entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.

Signature of Keeper Date 3/26/92

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 Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic Commerce/Trade

Sub: Multiple Dwelling Specialty Store

Current : Domestic Commerce/Trade Commerce/Trade

Sub: Multiple Dwelling Business Warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Classical Revival

Other Description:

Materials: foundation: concrete roof: asphalt
walls: brick other

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: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) :

Areas of Significance: Commerce

Period(s) of Significance: 1913

Significant Dates : 1913

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder: Pemberton, Lovell Bearse, architect
Meacham, Harry, builder

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

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X 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: .147 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	11	371610	3745540	B	_____	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Assessor's Parcel 7505-301-1, County of Los Angeles,

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 The boundaries are the historic lot lines.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Sandra Dyan

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: July 10, 1991

Street & Number: P.O. Box 823 Telephone: (213) 379-3087

City or Town: Redondo Beach State: CA ZIP: 90277

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Diamond Apartments

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The Diamond Apartments is a two-story Classical Revival building of modest scale. It combines storefronts on the first level and residential use on the second floor. The building sits on a bluff one block from the Pacific Ocean and is on the edge of the original downtown business district. Very few changes have been made to it and it has recently been rehabilitated in a tax certification project that will permit its use by low-income tenants.

This two-story, flat-roofed building is constructed of white faced brick that has been painted. The building, square in shape, was constructed in 1913. The flat roof is complemented by a brick frieze and dentilled cornice. Originally a two foot tall parapet graced the roof. After the 1933 Long Beach earthquake the parapet was stepped and lowered. The walls of the main facades (east and south) are integrated by continuous brick sills, belt courses and quoins. The second story windows on these facades are symmetrical, double-hung sash; two sets of small windows are flanked by larger windows. The first floor facade, east side, was changed in 1944. An apartment was put in on the first floor and six windows were added which matched the original in size and design. During the current rehabilitation it is being returned to its original appearance.

The south side facade has large storefront windows capped by transom lights. Originally there were five recessed doors -- one to the upstairs apartments and four store entry doors. Now there are four doors. One store entry door replaced two that were removed. This apparently happened in the 1920s and replacement doors matched the original doors.

Originally the first floor housed commercial space and a warehouse. The second floor has always consisted of ten single apartments that are currently being restored.

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Diamond Apartments

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While a modest building architecturally, the Diamond Apartments meet the requirements for National Register listing because it is a rare representative of the early commercial life of Redondo Beach. It has integrity and is one of only a handful of commercial buildings that still survive in the city. Virtually all of Redondo Beach's commercial downtown was razed during redevelopment in the 1960s. The Diamond Apartment building is the second oldest commercial building in town and the oldest such building that retains integrity. The building has been determined to be National Register eligible during the Tax Certification process.

This building was the first commercial building built in this area and effectively expanded downtown Redondo Beach. The city incorporated in 1892 and grew very slowly. In 1906 Henry Huntington bought the Redondo narrow gauge rail line. This purchase started a land rush and by 1907 buildings were springing up in Redondo Beach. Harry Meacham, the builder of the Diamond Apartments, and Lovell Pemberton, the architect, were early settlers in the community and designed and built many structures, residential and commercial. Lovell Pemberton was the architect of the Redondo Public Library, a National Register building four blocks from the Diamond Apartments. In 1913, when the Diamond Apartments were built, the local newspaper commented on "Mr. Meacham expanding the business district with his new building overlooking the Pacific Ocean and the Pacific Electric train going right in front of the building."

Redondo Beach as a tourist town and attraction brought many people here for the day, but many more stayed to provide services to the growing community. The Diamond Apartments provided housing for these early settlers and also housed a furniture store, paint store and laundry. One of the early residents was Mayor Louis Molnar who lived here in 1916-17. This building was unique, with apartments situated around an open patio on the second floor so every apartment had windows to the outside and fresh air and light were available to all tenants. The roof was flat and had a small deck that provided a panoramic view of the ocean and town.

This combination of ground floor commercial space and second story apartments became common in Redondo. However, with redevelopment in the 1960s, all but three downtown commercial buildings were razed. This building is the last of its type, age and integrity left in Redondo Beach.

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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DOCUMENTS:

- Redondo Beach Building Permits. City of Redondo Beach, 1913 through 1991.
- Redondo Beach City Directories. Redondo Beach Historical Museum. 1913 through 1925.
- Historic Resources Survey. City of Redondo Beach. July 1986.
- Los Angeles County Tax Records. City of Los Angeles, 1906 through 1925.
- Sanborn Map Slides. Redondo Beach Building Dept. 1895 through 1924.

BOOKS:

- Gebhard, David. A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California. Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977.
- Johnson, Ken. Fun, Frustration and Fullfillment. Redondo Beach, Ca.: published by the City of Redondo Beach, 1965.
- McAlester, Virginia & Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.
- Shanahan, Dennis. Old Redondo. Legends Press, Redondo Beach, Ca. 1982.

RESOURCE PERSONS:

- Mildred Meacham Downer, Daughter of Harry Meacham, Builder.
- Murial Sims, Owner of Diamond Apartments, 1940 through 1989.
- Gloria Snyder, Redondo Beach Historian.