

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 18 1984

date entered

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

1. Name

historic The Balboa Pavilion

and/or common The Balboa Pavilion

2. Location

street & number 400 Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Balboa N/A vicinity of 40th

state California code 06 county Orange code 059

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" 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"/> <u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Balboa Pavilion, A California Corporation

street & number 400 Main Street

city, town Balboa N/A vicinity of state California 92661

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Clerks Office

street & number 700 Civic Center Drive West

city, town Santa Ana state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State of California - Point of Historical Interest has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 7, 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Office of Historic Preservation

city, town P.O. Box 2390, Sacramento state California 95811

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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

The Balboa Pavilion was built in 1905 by the Newport Bay Investment Company at a cost of \$15,000.00. Measuring 80' x 120' and rectangular in shape, the two-story wood-frame structure is "Waterfront Victorian" in style with some eclectic influences.

The first floor was supported by 26 wood pillars and served as a bath house and boathouse with a small bay pier. The second floor of the Pavilion was surrounded by a covered balcony with Victorian railing and central stair linking it to Main Street to the south. The gabled break-pitch roof with intersecting transverse gables was terminated with an onion dome cupola and "widows walk" located at the midpoint of the asymmetrical roofline. Built on an out-cropping of a sand jetty, later to become Balboa Peninsula, the structure was (and still is) highly visible from Corona Del Mar and the sea. E. J. Louis, one of the original developers, named its location "Balboa Beach" and painted this designation on the bay side of the Pavilion's main roof in large letters.

Although the Pavilion has sustained several alterations through time, the basic character of the original building and its recreation marine visitor-service uses remain intact. In 1923, J. P. Greeley converted the second floor Pavilion into a dance floor. Later in 1947, the 26 deteriorated wood piers were replaced by eight concrete caissons. Several lower wood walls were rebuilt in addition to other structural improvements. Some Victorian ornamentation was removed or simplified to give the structure a cleaner, more modern look of the 40s.

A major rehabilitation commenced in 1962 by the Ducommun Company at a cost of nearly \$1,000,000.00. These improvements included the enclosure of the second floor balcony with new glass, retaining the openings defined by the earlier 45-degree wood braces at the upper corners and openings, removal of the Victorian railing and replacement with a grey wood wainscoting, removal of the half-circle windows at the intersecting transverse gable roofs and replacement with wood louvers, and replacement of the old roofing with blue asphalt tile. Concrete docks were added at the bayside and the old bathhouse became a new restaurant. An unobtrusive flat roof kitchen and service additions were built at the southeast and southwest corners to accommodate the new restaurant and banquet room above. The central stair was relocated to the west side of Main Street for access to the second floor. In 1963, 2,500 roof lights were added at the ridges and hips, amplifying the Pavilion's carnival atmosphere.

Six years later, Davey's Locker, Inc., now the Balboa Pavilion Company, purchased the building and completed the authentic interior rehabilitation with turn-of-the-century light fixtures, saloon, furnishings, and entertainment. Recently a clarion was added at the cupola, chiming the time and appropriate holiday tunes.

Today, the Pavilion houses a restaurant, saloon, banquet room, marine general store, boat rental, and Harbor Santa Catalina Cruise/fishing excursion operation. This proud Victorian remains a highly visible and well-preserved relic from the early days of Newport Beach.

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 type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Recreation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1905

Builder/Contractor: Chris McNeil/George Preble

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Balboa Pavilion is significant because of its unique architectural character and for the role it played in the development of Newport Beach. It is by far the most famous historical landmark in the Newport Beach area, and one of the most noted historical sites on the South Coast. Along with Hotel Del Coronado's boathouse in Coronado, the Pavilion is one of the very few remaining examples of "Waterfront Victorian" architecture—a rarity in Southern California. Although altered through time, this local historic landmark clearly retains its distinctive architectural style. Its graceful lines and unique setting make it one of the most readily identifiable structures in Orange County. Pictures of the Pavilion frequently occur on magazine covers and in advertisements in the Newport area.

In addition to its architectural value, the Pavilion played a major role in the birth and development of Southern Orange County, Newport Beach, and the Balboa Pavilion Peninsula. The original permit was approved by Robert Shaw Oliver, acting Secretary of War, on September 20, 1905, for the construction of a boathouse/bath house along 210' of bay frontage. Completed in 1905, the Pavilion was the southern terminus of the famous "Red Car Line" (rapid transit) which was completed a year later, coinciding with the City of Newport Beach's incorporation. The original developers hoped that the Pavilion would spur land sales. On July 4, 1906, the first Red Car rolled into Balboa, linking it to Los Angeles and Pasadena via a one-hour rail ride. Once in Balboa, beach goers would change from their traveling finery into their bathing suits at the Pavilion. It also served as the landing point for the ferry from Corona Del Mar.

In 1908, the famous "Christmas Tournament of Lights" was started at the Pavilion by Venetian, John Scarpa. The 20s brought larger crowds, jazz, gambling, and dancing to the Pavilion. Bands like the Trojan Trotters and later Phil Harris, Jimmy Grier, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Stan Kenton performed for up to 500 people in the Pavilion ballroom. The "Balboa Hop" or "Shuffle" originated here and became a famous big band dance step in the 30s and 40s.

Other unique events which occurred at the Pavilion included the notorious Madame La Rue's Bathing Beauty Contests in the early 20s, featuring local beauties clad in bathing suits. In 1932, the Pavilion hosted the first U.S. National Surfing Championship. Flagpole sitting, dance marathons, and legal casino gambling all occurred here. The building had also served as Balboa's first Post Office, a bingo parlour, bowling alley, arcade, and shell museum. After World War II, sportfishing became a popular activity in Newport Beach. In addition to fishing excursions, the Pavilion currently offers harbor cruises, whale watching tours, and boat transit to Catalina. Today, the Balboa Pavilion is the focal point of Newport Harbor, the largest pleasure craft harbor on the West Coast.

In June of 1968, the Pavilion became Newport's first local historical landmark. As part of the City's 75th Anniversary celebration, the Pavilion was designated a "Point of Historical Interest" in 1981 by the State of California Resources Agency. Today, the famous Balboa Pavilion remains the hub of Newport Harbor and an elegant link to its past.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Fifty Golden Years, 1957 by Samuel A. Meyer
Newporter News, June 13, 1968 and July 20, 1978
Newport Beach Heritage & Horizons, 1976 pub. for City's 70th birthday
Daily Pilot, March 2, 1980
Orange County Illustrated, March 1974 and August 1975

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .25

Quadrangle name Newport Beach, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	1	4	1	6	7	1	0	3	7	1	8	2	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundaries encompass the historic resource on its original site. Beginning at the intersection of the north boundary of Bay Avenue at the centerline of Main Street, proceed 25' west along the north boundary of Bay Avenue; then proceed 120' west along the north property line of 301 Main Street and 706 Bay Avenue; then proceed 34' north along the east property line of 705 Washington Avenue; then proceed 275' east along the U.S. Government Bulkhead line; then proceed 25' south along the west property line of 808 Bay Avenue; then proceed 115' west along the north boundary of Bay Avenue to the point of origin.

code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John C. Loomis, Secretary and Chief Financial Officer

organization Thirtieth Street Architects, Inc.

date May 1983

street & number 2821 Newport Boulevard

telephone (714) 673-2643

city or town Newport Beach

state California 92663

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

Marion Mitchell Wilson

title

Deputy SHPO

date

3/23/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

5-17-84

for *Shelvia Byer*
Keeper of the National Register

Chief of Registration

date

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED.

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

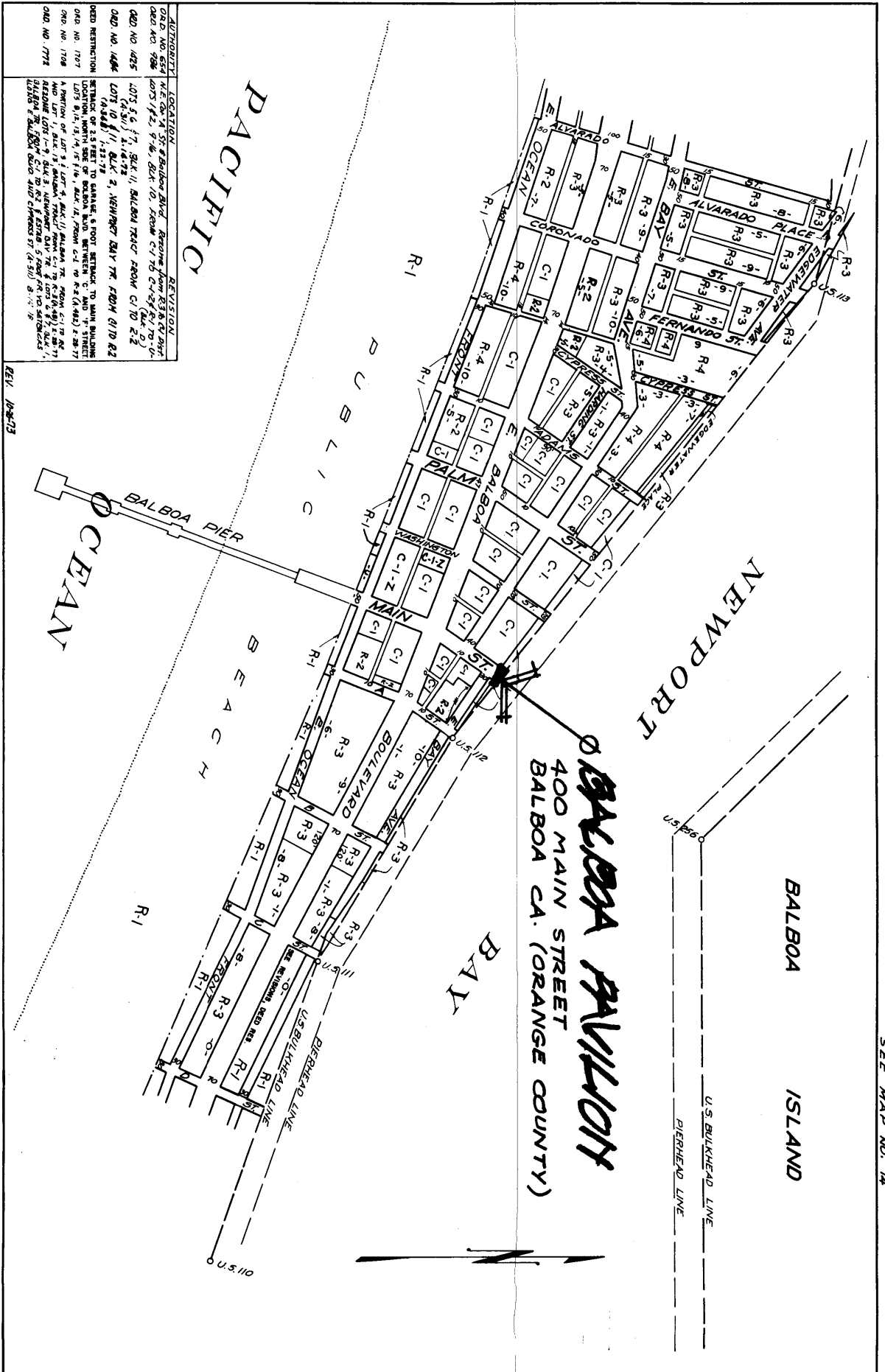
Representation in existing surveys:

Local Historical Landmark

X Local

June 1968

City of Newport Beach
City Hall, Newport Beach, CA



AUTHORITY	LOCATION	REVISION
ORD. NO. 654	N.E. COR. 1/4, ST. BALBOA BLVD. - Reszone from R-3 to R-1	
ORD. NO. 706	LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.	
ORD. NO. 14295	LOTS 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244	



Beginning of a Boom

The land boom that was Balboa began with the building of the Pavilion in 1904 by the Newport Bay Investment Company. Because of the difficulty of access to the sandy peninsula, the sale of lots in the Balboa Tract was not too prosperous at first. To reach Balboa one either had to come by boat from Newport Beach or fight the sandy road. However, arrangements were made with the Pacific Electric Railroad Company to extend their tracks from Huntington Beach to the end of the peninsula and on July 4, 1905, the first red cars rolled into Balboa, marking the beginning of the rapid development of Balboa Peninsula.

Some 80 passenger cars filled with people arrived for the opening celebration which included a mammoth barbecue held in the two-story, frame Balboa Hotel,

adjoining the Pavilion. Officially opened to coincide with the arrival of the first trolley, the Balboa Hotel, since gone, had been erected in 10 days to accommodate the more than 1,000 people who attended. Most of the people attending were from Pasadena which was then celebrating its annual Pasadena Day.

Photographed in 1906, the Pavilion also sported a short pleasure pier and boardwalks built for the earlier celebration. The popularity of the Pavilion, located at the foot of Main Street on the bay, continued to grow. In 1923, under the management of John P. Greeley, the first superintendent of Orange County Schools, the resort underwent remodeling to feature a fine dance floor in the big ballroom built over the bay and became a popular summer place for dancing as well as sunbathing.

Courtesy of

First American Title Insurance Company

HOME OFFICE: 421 NORTH MAIN STREET, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701 • (AREA 714) 547-6892

