

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0685194

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 26 1978

DATE ENTERED

JAN 19 1979

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Evergreen Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

500 Main Street

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Vancouver

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4 - Mike McCormack

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

CODE

53

COUNTY

Clark

CODE

011

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_\_ DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

\_\_\_ STRUCTURE

\_\_\_ SITE

\_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_\_ PUBLIC

PRIVATE

\_\_\_ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_\_ IN PROCESS

\_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED

\_\_\_ UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_\_ YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_ AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL

\_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_\_ GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_ MILITARY

\_\_\_ MUSEUM

\_\_\_ PARK

\_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_ RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_ OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Paul A. Hart and Paul Clark

STREET & NUMBER

500 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Vancouver

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clark County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

12th and Franklin

CITY, TOWN

Vancouver

STATE

Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Clark County Cultural Resource Inventory

DATE

In process

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE  COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Regional Planning Council of Clark County

CITY, TOWN

Vancouver

STATE

Washington

# 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

## Site Description

At the time of its construction in 1928, the Evergreen Hotel in Vancouver, Washington was carefully sited at the center of the city. The local newspaper, The Columbian, reported: *The new Evergreen Hotel is located on what is almost without question the most strategic piece of ground that could have been chosen for its purpose. Squarely upon the junction of the main arteries of the Pacific and Evergreen Highway it sits.*

Diagonally across the street were the stage waiting rooms where hundreds of persons paused on their way to Portland, Camas, Kelso, and all other points east, north and south. Two blocks down the street was the interurban car station, where still other Portland passengers arrived and departed daily. The light-colored concrete building, rising high above the older neighboring buildings, could be seen for a considerable distance in every direction. It was situated within easy reach of every part of the town; for it was placed in the very heart of the business district.

Today the hotel stands near the foot of Main Street. South of it the city's original street grid has been radically altered with riverfront industry and highway construction associated with Interstate 5 and the bridge to Portland. The Evergreen serves as a prominent visual placeholder in this most vulnerable section of Vancouver's commercial district.

## Building Exterior

The Evergreen Hotel is a five-story, concrete structure. There are two primary entrances. The Main Street entrance faces the east, viewing Mt. Hood, and the Fifth Street entrance faces the Columbia River and, beyond that, the City of Portland to the south. The Main Street facade consists of six broad bays, three flanking each side of the main entrance. The base of the building was finished in a sandstone effect and the remainder of the structure was painted. The entire building was finished in a cream color complemented by the red Spanish tile roof.

At the second and fifth floor levels are marble balconies and ornamental marble window surrounds. The white marble balconies with their casement windows and sculptured railings add a look of classic elegance to the structure. These window and balcony units are topped with round arch motifs at the fifth story and individual projecting roof forms clad with Spanish tile. On the Main Street elevation is a decorative parapet with a series of corbelled arches along the roofline. Above the formal entrance below are two flagpoles, one for the United States flag, the other for the flag of the State of Washington. On either side of the main entry doors are brass plaques bearing an Evergreen Tree motif.

In the recent restoration of the exterior of the Evergreen Hotel, much consideration was given the original appearance of the building. The structure was painted in the original cream color, the marble balconies restored and cleaned, and the red roof tiles repaired. The front door handles, push plates and kick plates were re-plated with brass finish. The flag poles were resurrected, once again carrying the flags of our country and state.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Building Interior

Inside the Main Street entrance is a highly buffed red tile corridor, 50 ft. by 12 ft. in dimension. This spacious hallway includes such features as the main staircase with its broad stairs winding up to the mezzanine, an intricate grill pattern on the elevator doors, and two old-fashioned phone booths.

Beyond this corridor to the right is a lounge area. Its high small-paned windows are partly concealed behind rich burgundy velvet drapes and stand some fifteen feet above the floor. On the opposite side of the room is a balcony which provides an overall view of the lounge. The balcony is in three sections, each delicately railed. Massive open beams cross the lofty ceiling, and an immense chandelier crafted in dark metal with five gold lamps is suspended from the center of the room, 23 feet in height. The walls themselves are like those of the corridors, finished in California stucco. On the west side of this grand lounge room are three recessed gold arches, rising 20 ft. high. In the center gold arch is a 12 ft. by 7 ft. bevel-edged Roman arched mirror resting atop a massive 7 ft. fireplace. Rich burgundy and gold medallion-patterned carpet adorns the lounge floor.

Beyond the lounge room is the hotel kitchen. The kitchen has another entrance leading from the dining room. One of the most outstanding features of the dining room is the handpainted ceiling, which was finished by sandblasting, blending shades of brown, tan and the more vivid colors used in other parts of the building's interior. The dining room is 41 ft. square, and lined with broad plate glass windows along Fifth Street. The four massive fir pillars are also sand etched and trimmed with contrasting red. All the wood in the room is local growth. Two richly detailed stained glass windows on either side of the dining room entry were installed in the recent renovation.

The second floor of the hotel consists in part of a ballroom with reception area, balcony, and kitchen service area complete with dumbwaiter. The beautiful hard maple floor, believed to have been the finest dance floor ever built in Vancouver, is laid in a geometric pattern. There are eight large windows. The mezzanine balcony of the main lobby serves as a lobby for the ballroom itself. Other auxiliary rooms are the women's lounge and a checkroom.

The 65 sleeping rooms of the Evergreen Hotel were as comfortable as any of their era. Each sleeping room was 10 ft. by 13 ft. except the corner rooms which measured 13 ft. by 13 ft. All of the rooms had lavatories, toilets and closet space. There were 24 tub baths and 19 showers distributed throughout the building. All the rooms were connected with a house central, an intercom house system and switchboard, centered in the office.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

In the recent restoration every effort was made to maintain the graciousness of the original hotel structure. Fortunately there had been few major changes in the hotel's construction over the past 50 years. Interior walls and ceilings were repainted with the original cream color. A carpet very similar to the original red and gold medallion pattern was laid throughout the main areas. Rich burgundy drapes were hung in the hotel lounge room, and gold velvet tie-backs were used in the dining room. The sandblasted ceiling in the dining room was preserved and restored, along with the sandblasted Evergreen Tree motifs on numerous doors throughout the main floor. Multi-colored floor tiles were restored to their original luster, and the grand 10 ft. chandelier in the lounge was retained. Two paintings donated to the hotel were restored and hung in prominent locations in the spacious halls.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD                                    |   | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW       |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC      | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input checked="" 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE    | <input 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION                     |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1928

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Tourt, Elliotte, and Hummel Architects

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Evergreen Hotel in Vancouver was a community project of great magnitude. Vancouver's citizens had long felt the need for a major hotel facility in which they could take pride, a place where they could graciously entertain. Until the construction of the Evergreen in 1928, no building met these needs. For many years the hotel functioned as the social and business hub of the city. Situated at the heart of the commercial district, it was in many respects a local landmark. Today the Evergreen is the oldest surviving hotel in the city. It serves as a visual and symbolic anchor in a particularly threatened, historic corner of downtown Vancouver.

## The Fund Drive

The funding for construction of the Evergreen was achieved through a broad-based, grass roots solicitation of investment funds throughout the community. The fund drive was the greatest event in the annals of Vancouver business. Its complex machinery carefully planned by experts in psychology and business, simply took the city by storm. There was an executive committee organized to function as a large, flexible unit in the project. There was a citizens' sales organization to comb the city, seeking potential investors in the Evergreen Hotel stock. There was a preliminary and secret sales campaign by the executive committee, followed by *the big drive*.

The Vancouver Community Hotel Company had incorporated by early 1927. Its officers were:

|                                     |   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| President                           | - | Dr. Charles B. Alexander                             |
| Vice president                      | - | Eugene J. Berry                                      |
| Secretary                           | - | Peter J. Flynn                                       |
| Treasurer                           | - | P. M. Elwell   |
| Chairman of the Executive Committee | - | Lewis Shattuck, President of the Chamber of Commerce |

All were deeply involved in community affairs and belonged to numerous civic organizations. An executive committee was formed, consisting of 39 men, headed by Lewis Shattuck. A citizens' sales committee composed of 150 businessmen and professional men organized under Eugene Berry. That sales force divided into four divisions, each with three teams.

Each day at noon, the entire sales force met for lunch and a conference. Each day the sales total mounted higher and higher. The going was harder than anyone had realized. Finally, the chairman of the drive made the dramatic announcement that \$143,800 of stock had been pledged, \$5,800 more than was needed. Vancouver was to have a new and grand hotel, to be designed by the Portland firm of Tourt, Elliotte, and Hummel.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Columbian "Evergreen Edition" March 15, 1928

Records of the Clark County Historical Society.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |             |               |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| A | 1,0  | 5,2,5,6,7,0 | 5,0,5,2,2,5,0 |
|   | ZONE | EASTING     | NORTHING      |
| C |      |             |               |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| D |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies Lots 7 and 8, Block 6, Plat of West Vancouver, Washington.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

Edited by: Florence K. Lentz, Hist. Pres. Sp. OA & HP Olympia, Wa. (206) 753-1707

NAME / TITLE

Gay Hart and John D. White

ORGANIZATION

Brookside Enterprises

STREET & NUMBER

518 Main Street

CITY OR TOWN

Vancouver

DATE

July, 1978

TELEPHONE

(206) 696-1338

STATE

Washington

# 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

*Jeanne M. White*

TITLE

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

September 18, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Charles E. Peterson*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

1-19-79

ATTEST:

*W. Ray Lane*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1-18-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

The Opening

On the day preceding the Grand Opening of the Evergreen Hotel, The Columbian, Vancouver's principal newspaper, published a special edition. It became the "Evergreen Edition" of The Columbian. The entire 12-page paper was dedicated to the hotel. Every possible aspect of news concerning the building, its funding and its opening was found in that issue. Forty-seven businesses welcomed the new hotel to their city in ads ranging from small to full double-page. The towns people were thrilled with the fruits of their labor. They had made the Evergreen Hotel a reality and felt a justifiable pride in their accomplishment.

March 17th, 1928 was opening night. Mayor John P. Kiggins proclaimed the evening of the opening to be a "public holiday" within the confines of the city. The entire city was invited to participate to make the event noteworthy in the history of Vancouver. *No single event in the history of Vancouver since the Armistice will have claimed wider attention,* predicted The Columbian. The opening had been carefully planned. One thousand invitations had been sent out to individuals far and wide, many of whom came from great distances. Two hundred and fifty covers had been laid in the banquet hall, as many as it could accommodate. The main floor coffee shop was to handle the overflow.

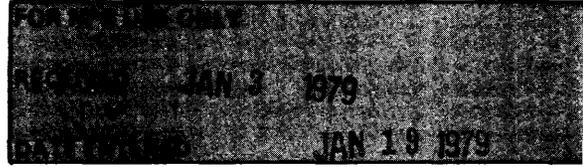
All day long the Evergreen Hotel doors were kept closed. That evening, as guests began to arrive, attendants in uniform ushered them in. Thousands of people lined the streets surrounding the hotel to view the highlight of the dedication, the historic "lights on" ceremony. Lights all along the street outside the hotel were extinguished just before 8:00 p.m., leaving the street a canyon of darkness. The police kept Main Street clear of traffic from Fifth to Seventh Streets to allow crowds to gather freely.

With every detail in order, the stage was set for what was declared to be the greatest feat of its kind ever attempted. At 4 a.m. (London time), Gov. Charles B. Sale, President of the historic Hudsons' Bay Company (Vancouver's founders and builders of Fort Vancouver), pressed a button in his office in London, England. It triggered an uninterrupted signal from London to Vancouver, Washington, the longest transcontinental cable ever connected. This signal lit up the new city lighting system surrounding the Evergreen Hotel. The signal symbolically linked the Old World with the New World and linked Vancouver's present with its historic past. Gov. Sale then spoke briefly over the cable with Mayor Kiggins and the hotel's vice president, Eugene J. Berry.

Following the grand opening of the Evergreen Hotel, many civic and social groups pledged their support to the hotel. Numerous meetings, banquets, dinners and dances were hosted there over the years. Strong ties developed between the people of Vancouver

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



**CONTINUATION SHEET**

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

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and the Evergreen Hotel, the project they had nurtured from the drawing board to reality. Vancouverites felt a great sense of pride and accomplishment in the Evergreen Hotel.

In the 1960's, however, the building and the neighborhood around it began to deteriorate. The Evergreen Hotel was condemned in May 1977 and stood empty and vandalized until private restoration began in November 1977. It is now, once again, an elegant old structure, reclaiming its status as a Vancouver landmark.

The Evergreen Hotel is significant to the City of Vancouver as an example of an ambitious and highly successful community-wide project of the 1920's. For several decades during the mid-20th Century the hotel was one of Vancouver's most prosperous commercial enterprises, and served as the social and business hub of the city. Today the Evergreen is Vancouver's oldest surviving hotel and it is an important visual placeholder in the rapidly-changing historic core of the community.