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There have been many alterations and additions to the buildings, beginning, we believe, in 1881. The clubrooms on the second floor of the main building--with their admirable trim and fireplaces--have not been used as such since World War II. There were rooms for reading, dining, cards, billiards etc.; and the original architectural design/is largely intact. The north wing of the main building was seriously (See Continuation Speek) 07er 22 Jua RECEIVED

Form 10-300a (Dec. 1968)	UNIT
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#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

## INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)-1

STATE	
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COUNTY	
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7. Description.

damaged by fire about 1918, and the second story and porches of this wing were not rebuilt. When the clock tower was recently reshingled, the decorative rows of variously shaped shingles were not replaced; but plain shingles were used, as previously, on the part of the rear wall which had been burned. There has also been a recent brick and shingle addition at the rear of this section--one story high--in designing which the architect tried to conform to the original wall plan insofar as possible. In 1963 the entire Bellevue Avenue façade was repaired and restored, but some items of the restoration plan had to be omitted because of lack of funds.

The present tennis locker and lounge rooms are located within the walls of the original "court tennis" court, which was so badly damaged by fire in 1945 that it was not rebuilt as such.

The "Casino Theatre,"\* beautifully designed by Stanford White, was built as a ballroom, but included a stage. Numerous dances and entertainments for the summer colony took place there during the early years. Since then it has been enlarged and altered, but its interior architectural design has been preserved in its unique beauty. That building has recently been renovated.

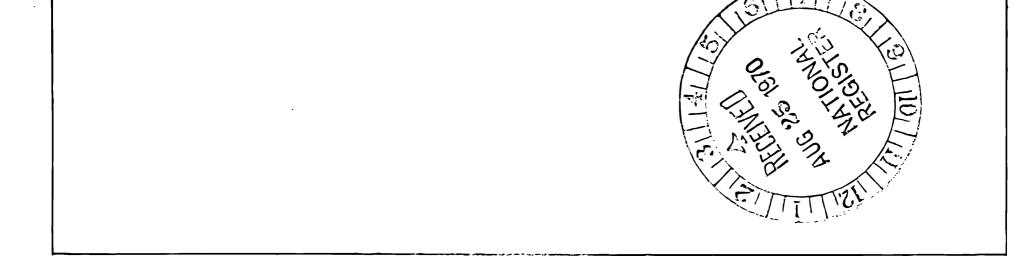
The "Horseshoe Piazza" and "upper court" were designed as a social gathering-place. There is now a carpet-type tennis court in this area, but otherwise it is close to its original design, although there have been recognizable alterations.

The grass tennis courts to the rear of the property have been in continuous operation since 1880.

The south wing of the main building, which was an open porch in 1880, has been over the years transformed into a two-story structure containing four large rooms now used as the museum of the National Lawn Tennis Hall of Fame.

\* The theatre is now, itself, a separate nomination to the National Register.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

This property is significant both architecturally and as a landmark in the history of sports in the United States.

It is an oustanding example of the "shingle" style of architecture as employed by the great firm of McKim, Mead & White and is so described by such prominent critics as Edward Durrell Stone, Aline Saarinen, Vincent Scully and Antoinette Downing.

As a sports center, it is unique in being the site of the first official United States Lawn Tennis Championships in 1881, which were continued here annually through 1914. An important grass-court tennis tournament for men has been held here each year since then, and it is safe to say that every prominent United States male tennis player has competed on the Newport Casino courts, as have also a majority of the international men players.

Richmond Barrett, in his book <u>Good Old Summer Days</u>, says: "The Casino courts were the finest in the United States, and the Casino itself was first and foremost a tennis club." He devotes an entire chapter in this book to the National Championships held here 1881-1914.

Maud Howe Elliott, in her <u>This Was My Newport</u>, says: "Looking back at the many champions whose skill I have watched at the Casino with breathless enjoyment, I see Larned, Clothier, the fiery McLoughlin, Kumagae the Japanese, Cochet the Frenchman, and towering above all others the long, lean figure of Big Bill Tilden, the greatest of tennis players." Since her book was written, in the 1930's, the Newport Casino Cup has been won by Budge, Talbert, Mulloy, Schroeder, Richard-

NATIONAL REGISTER

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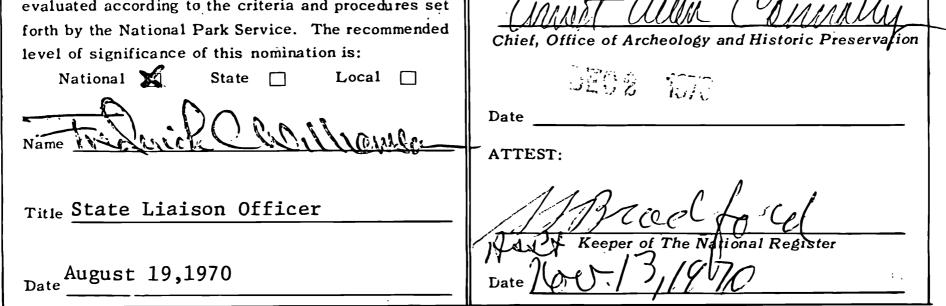
son, Rosewall, Anderson, Laver, Mark, McKinley, Emerson, Ralston, Bowrey and others.

Horse Show which was an early September feature for many years.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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Form	10-300a
(Dec.	1968)

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

#### INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

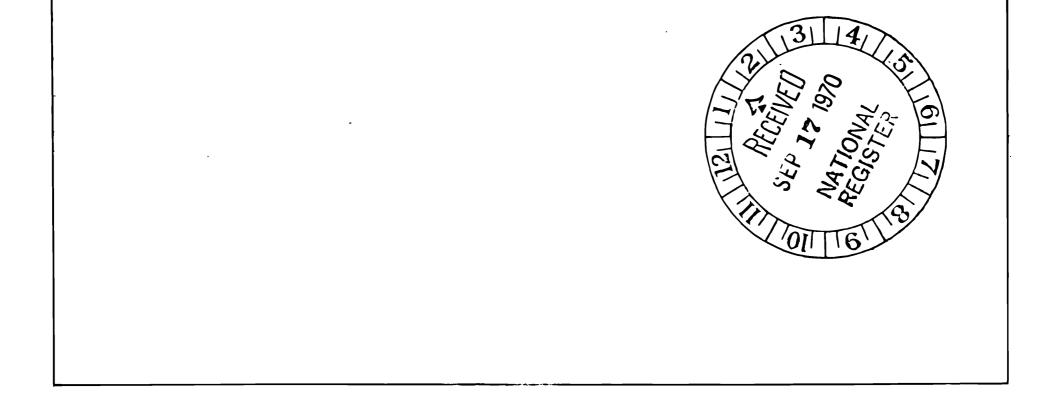
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(Number all entries)

8. Significance.

The National Lawn Tennis Hall of Fame and Tennis Museum, Inc., a non-profit corporation, now owns or controls about 80% of the capital stock of the Newport Casino. Its headquarters and museum were opened in 1955 and have continued here for fifteen years. The museum is open during the summer months (May through October) and has attracted thousands of visitors from all over the world. One of the foremost objectives of this organization is to preserve and maintain the entire Newport Casino property in its original uniqueness and beauty and to continue it as an active tennis center. The Tennis Hall of Fame also owns the so-called "Casino Theatre," which is an integral part of the Casino complex.



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7,	DESCRIPTION								
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Casino Theatre is a long building whose walls are covered by shingles and whose roof, of gable form, is sloped or hipped at the west end to adjust to the roof of a long porch there running across the building. The roof reaches low on the north side to cover a porch running along a good part of the building there. Both porches have first- and second-storey galleries which are railed and which at certain points carry decorative sawed and turned wooden lattice screens of Japanese derivation above the railings. The western porch forms a background for the lawn of the Newport Casino itself (a separate but allied building complex, and parent to the Theatre) and repeats some of the lattice forms of the verandahs behind the Casino.

There have been some exterior alterations or extensions, but these have generally been inconspicuous in either location or appearance: In 1930 a cinder-block extension of the backstage area was made at the east end; two small units for heating apparatus flanked this extension in 1967. In the 1930's a film-projection booth was built outside the western wall but is accommodated within the second-storey gallery of the porch there. In 1967 an enclosed hallway was also placed within this west gallery to shelter a stair to the theatre's interior audience balcony or loge. This hallway was carefully matched to the building's original exterior treatment and is hardly noticeable.

Within, the auditorium runs the length of the original building and includes a stage 25 feet square, equipped with overhead gridiron, fly gallery; modern lighting etc. The eastern cinder-block addition mentioned above provides space for scenery work and storage, plus eight dressing-The floor of the audience hall accommodates approximately 350 rooms. seats -- at one time movable to provide a ballroom floor, but now fixed. A shallow balcony at the rear (west) of the auditorium gives three row of seating. On the north and south sides of the auditorium, at balcony or second-storey level, are slightly protruding railed boxes under low arches, each box having room for about ten persons. Below the boxes the walls are solid and have behind them storage space at the south; a lobby, ticket-office, rest-rooms and stairs to the upper porch at the north. The scale is rather delicate, like that of White's library addition at the Watts Sherman house.

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Interior trim is all of wood and plaster, including a ceiling compartmented by decorated wooden members supposedly supported by wooden acanthus brackets; wall treatment is of trimmed matched boarding plied lattice and roundels above. The stage is of the usual shallow-arched proscenium type.

(See Continuatio

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

The Casino Theatre was designed by McKim, Mead & White as an adjunct to their Newport Casino on Bellevue Avenue (1879-1881) and was erected slightly later. This theatre, like the Casino complex to its west, exhibits outside and inside the talent and taste of this famous architectural partnership--in particular those of Stanford White, who was much concerned with matters of decorative detail and its placement. The hand of White is evident in the exterior trim (porches, their proportions, their uses as backgrounds, their delicate rails and lattices or screens) and in the interior trim of this building (applied wall and ceiling décor, box railings etc.).

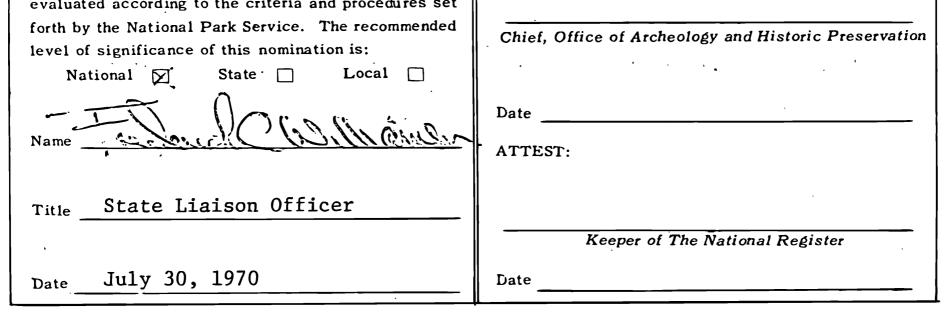
From its beginning this theatre has housed notable events, notable personalities and notable audiences. From Oscar Wilde on to the ballerina Danilova and Broadway's Tallulah Bankhead, there have been many on its stage. In addition to plays the house has accommodated lectures, concerts, ballet, opera etc.

The Theatre did run into difficulties when the Gilded Age ended and World War I took place: it was then closed. In 1927 it was reopened with a "Theatre Festival" under the highest social auspices, and for eight summers it again drew the most famous of American actors and actresses to its stage. The extended financial depression caused another closure, but the theatre was later opened again for touring summer companies and successfully managed in this way until 1959.

In 1969 the Theatre became the property of the National Lawn Tennis Hall of Fame and Tennis Museum and was used for concerts, recitals and Metropolitan Opera Company performances. In 1966 a lease was arranged with the Newport Players Guild, permitting this group to use the theatre for twenty years, from September to June, in return for raising \$ 50,000 to heat and insulate the building. The Players Guild has made it a centre for all the non-profit performing arts groups in the county, and it houses adult dramas, a children's play series, fine arts films, workshop groups and benefit productions.

(See Continuation Sheet)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES		
<ul> <li>Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Architectural Heritage of Newport (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), pp. 149-150, pl. 197- 199.</li> <li>Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Shingle Style (New Haven, Conn., and London, 1955), pp. 131 ff.</li> <li>Weinhardt, Carl J., Jr.: Newport Reserved, in Art in America, Vol. ?, No.?, pp. ? . June, 1965. (New York, 1965.)</li> <li>Kaull, James T.: What Now for Stanford White's Little Gem? in "The Rhode Islander" section of The Providence Sunday Journal, pp. ? . September 11, 1966. (Providence, R. I., 1966.)</li> </ul>		
Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Shingle Style (New Haven, Conn., and		
London, 1955), pp. 131 ff. Weinhardt, Carl J., Jr.: Newport Reserved, in Art in America, Vol.?,		
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NAME AND TITLE:		
Carol P. Dunton and Rita Hologitas, Application Committee	C	
Newport Players Guild June 23, 1970		
P. O. Box 111	0	
CITY OR TOWN: STATE CODE	Z	
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12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION		
As the designated State Liaison Officer for the Na- tional 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		



#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

## **INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

Rhode Island	
COUNTY	
Newport	
FOR NPS USE C	DNLY
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(Continuation Sheet)

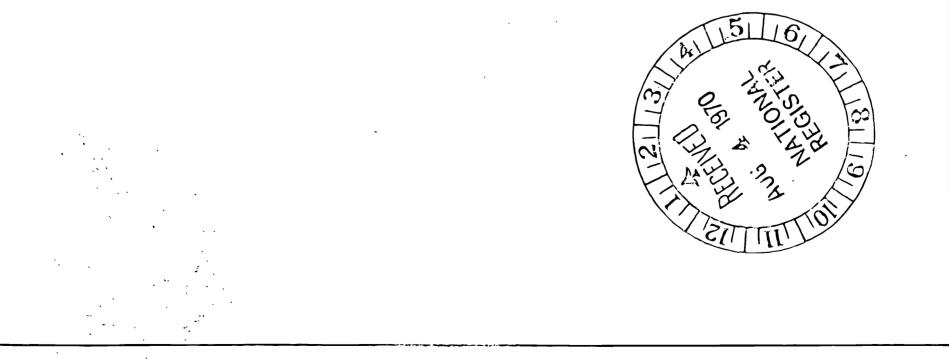
#### (Number all entries)

7. Description.

The building is now equipped with the up-to-date production or stage devices necessary to a (not large) theatre and with the heating, ventilating and safety devices now required in public buildings. These have been inconspicuously inserted and have aided in preventing deterioration of the fabric. However, the evidences of age and use are noticeable in the soiled, broken or stained condition of surface décor, the cracked or patched plaster; and the building, internally, needs cosmetic repairs.

## 8. Significance.

This building forms a part of Newport's architectural context and a lively part of the city's present-day life. It is also an important part of the entire Newport Casino lay-out and a valuable legacy from the firm of McKim, Mead & White. Still being used to great local benefit for its original purposes, the Casino Theatre is a very living thing, worthy of attention, care and preservation.



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