

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUN 20 1985  
date entered JUL 18 1985

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

1. Name

historic The Montecito Apartments

RECEIVED

JAN 2 1985

and/or common The Montecito Apartments

OHP

2. Location

street & number 6650 Franklin Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Los Angeles N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Los Angeles code 037

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: <u>Vacant</u>

4. Owner of Property

name The Montecito Apartments, The General Partnership

street & number 9454 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite M-7

city, town Beverly Hills N/A vicinity of state CA 90212

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Los Angeles County Hall of Records

street & number 320 West Temple Street

city, town Los Angeles state CA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE (Tax Certification, Part 1, August 8, 1984)  
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The Montecito Apartments, 1861 Cherokee Avenue/ 6650 Franklin Avenue, is a ten story and two basement reinforced concrete structure. It is built in an essentially square building plan with two shallow light courts on the east and west facades, and is designed in a manner influenced by the Art Deco/ Zig Zag Moderne style with applied Deco and Mayan decorative detailing. It is built on a corner downslope lot from Franklin south along Cherokee. This lot provides a high degree of visibility for this virtually unaltered structure.

The main or entrance facade is located on Franklin Avenue. It has a double inset bronze doorway with a decorative cast iron, rusticated concrete and marble and black glass surround. A highly decorative cast iron canopy with lamps is located directly above the entrance and is anchored to the facade by bars with turnbuckles. The remainder of the Franklin street level frontage is relatively austere, consisting of rusticated concrete panels set between vertically incised piers and flat metal casement windows. Directly above the street level windows there are decorative cast Deco panels set as partial spandrels. Above these are heavy Mayan pendants cast in concrete and anchored to each pier at the second story level and extending to the third story level. The facade from the third story to the attic level is relatively unadorned with the exception of chevrons in the spandrel areas at each floor level. All windows are flat metal casements in each of the nine window bays which flank a centrally located inset fire stairwell. The attic area consists of cast decorative concrete utilizing a pattern similar to that of the first floor level.

The east elevation continues the decorative detailing of the north from the first story level to the attic area. The downslope lot exposes, however, the wall surface of the basement area which consists of rusticated cast concrete. This side has a centrally located shallow light well flanked by four window bays on each side. Again, the windows are of the flat metal casement type.

The south elevation carries the decorative Mayan detailing of the north and east only to the easternmost window bay. The window articulation and decorative detailing from the first story level to the attic area is, however, similar to that of the north elevation. The two basement levels are fully exposed on this facade and they consist of a flat wall surface articulated by irregularly placed window openings. A sloping driveway runs from Cherokee down to the lower basement level where a large garage doorway provides access to interior parking.

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The west elevation is similar in mass to the east elevation, but there are only three window bays located in the principal wall segments as opposed to the four in the eastern elevation. The wall surfaces are flat and are devoid of decorative detailing from the first floor to the attic area where cast decorative panels are utilized in a manner similar to each of the other three elevations. The basement wall surface is exposed and is rusticated only in the area directly below the northernmost wall segment.

The roof area consists of a centrally located machinery penthouse of concrete construction. It is rectangular in shape with four window openings on the east and west elevations and two window bays on the north and south. Elaborate cast Deco panels are carried above the window openings on all elevations and the penthouse is capped by a hipped copper and concrete roof. Large neon "Montecito" signs are located in the roof parapets on the east and south elevations. A similar sign is located on the machinery penthouse directly below the roofline on the northern elevation.

The interior of the structure is relatively unaltered. The principal areas of interest are the lobby, reception room and corridors. Access to the lobby is provided from the Franklin Avenue entrance. It consists of a relatively small area adorned by cast concrete moldings, Deco columns with both flat and fluted surfaces and marble baseboards. The reception room is located to the east of the lobby. It is rectangular in configuration with a splendid Deco fireplace set into the west wall. The windows have decorative surrounds consisting of fluted side moldings with scalloped incised molding above. The corridors are decorated by simple cast plaster moldings at the ceiling level. Numerous light fixtures are located throughout the building. The apartments are also relatively unaltered with the exception of minor modifications to the bathroom and kitchen areas.

The building grounds consist simply of a pool and parking area. The pool, a 1950's addition, is the only major alteration to the building complex. Located in the southwest corner of the lot it is presently unmaintained and is in poor condition.

In summary, the Montecito is an excellent example of the Deco style as utilized in apartment house design in Southern California. Furthermore, its unaltered condition and high visibility serve to make this building a landmark in the Hollywood area.

# 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 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 1930-1931 Builder/Architect Baruch/ Miller

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Montecito Apartments is one of the finest examples of Art Deco styling with Mayan detailing in the Hollywood area. It is significant for its architectural quality and integrity, and remains virtually unaltered. The structure is prominently situated on a hillside two blocks north of Hollywood Boulevard, and is highly visible from this well traveled thoroughfare. The Montecito Apartments has long served the Hollywood community as a visually pleasing local landmark, and is compatible in period, style and scale with nearby commercial structures on Hollywood Boulevard. The edifice, with its overscaled signage, is an integral component of the Hollywood skyline.

The Montecito Apartments is the finest extant work designed by the notable Los Angeles architect Marcus P. Miller. The structure was one of only a few apartment buildings in the Los Angeles area which reached the height limit imposed for earthquake safety. The Montecito Apartments has been regarded as one of Hollywood's finest apartment buildings since construction was completed in 1931. It was the illustrated subject of an article in the Arrowhead Magazine in June 1934 which stated that "Towering above the trees at the foothills the Montecito Apartments furnish an example of the fineness of Hollywood's living accommodations."<sup>1</sup> It served the motion picture industry during its peak production years by providing accommodations for the vast influx of workers and artists associated with film making.

The Montecito Apartments was built as a commercial venture by The Cherokee Properties, Ltd. The Los Angeles architect Marcus P. Miller was commissioned to design the structure. Architect Miller is best known for his design of the Darkroom Camera Shop storefront; the unique entrance area is constructed in the shape of a giant camera. The H.M. Baruch Corporation was contracted to erect the edifice at an estimated cost of \$275,000. This was a substantial sum for an apartment building in Los Angeles during this period. Herbert M. Baruch was one of Los Angeles' most prominent builders in the late 1920's and early 1930's. A high level of craftsmanship can be seen in his other works determined to be eligible to the National Register, including: the Garfield Building, the William Fox Building, and the Sun Realty Building.

<sup>1</sup> "Glamorous Hollywood" The Arrowhead Magazine, (June 1934), p. 25.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet, Item 9.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 0.77 acre

Quadrangle name Hollywood

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	3	7	6	9	5	0	3	7	7	4	4	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 11 and the north half of Lot 12, Block 2 of the Hollywood Ocean View Tract, City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles. Property is a 150' x 225' parcel at the southwest corner of Franklin and Cherokee Avenues. Boundaries are drawn to encompass the building and its historic lot.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger G. Hatheway and Richard Starzak

organization Roger G. Hatheway & Assoc. date December 7, 1984

street & number 25283 Cabot Road #218 telephone (714) 472-8648

city or town Laguna Hills state California 92653

# 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 Kathryn Gualtieri

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 24, 1985

For NPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
Entered in the National Register  
date 7-18-85  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

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Construction was begun on November 26, 1930 and was completed the following year.<sup>2</sup> Exterior and interior wall construction is reinforced concrete throughout. "Exterior ornament (is) cast integrally with the walls through the use of waste moulds."<sup>3</sup> Interior construction also incorporates tile partitions and plaster walls and ceilings. Cement flooring was incorporated throughout, and in addition, the bathroom floors were covered with decorative tile. Composition roofing was applied to the concrete roof, and the concrete penthouse roof was sheathed in copper. A semi-public swimming pool was constructed in 1956 to the southwest of the main structure. Construction of the pool cost \$3,900.

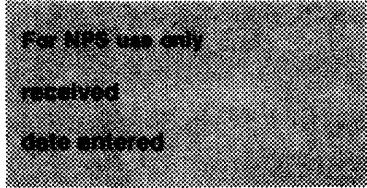
In summary, the Montecito Apartments is architecturally significant as one of the finest examples of the Deco style with Mayan influence detailing in the Hollywood area. Furthermore, it is significant for its architectural quality and integrity, as one of the finest extant works of the architect, Marcus P. Miller. The edifice of the Montecito is an integral component of the Hollywood skyline, and has long served the Hollywood community as a local landmark, contributing to the unique sense of time and place of the surrounding area.

<sup>2</sup> Los Angeles City Dept. of Building and Safety. Building permit #28346, issued November 26, 1930.

<sup>3</sup> "Portland Cement Association (advertisement)," The Architect and Engineer, Vol. CXIV No. 3 (September 1933).

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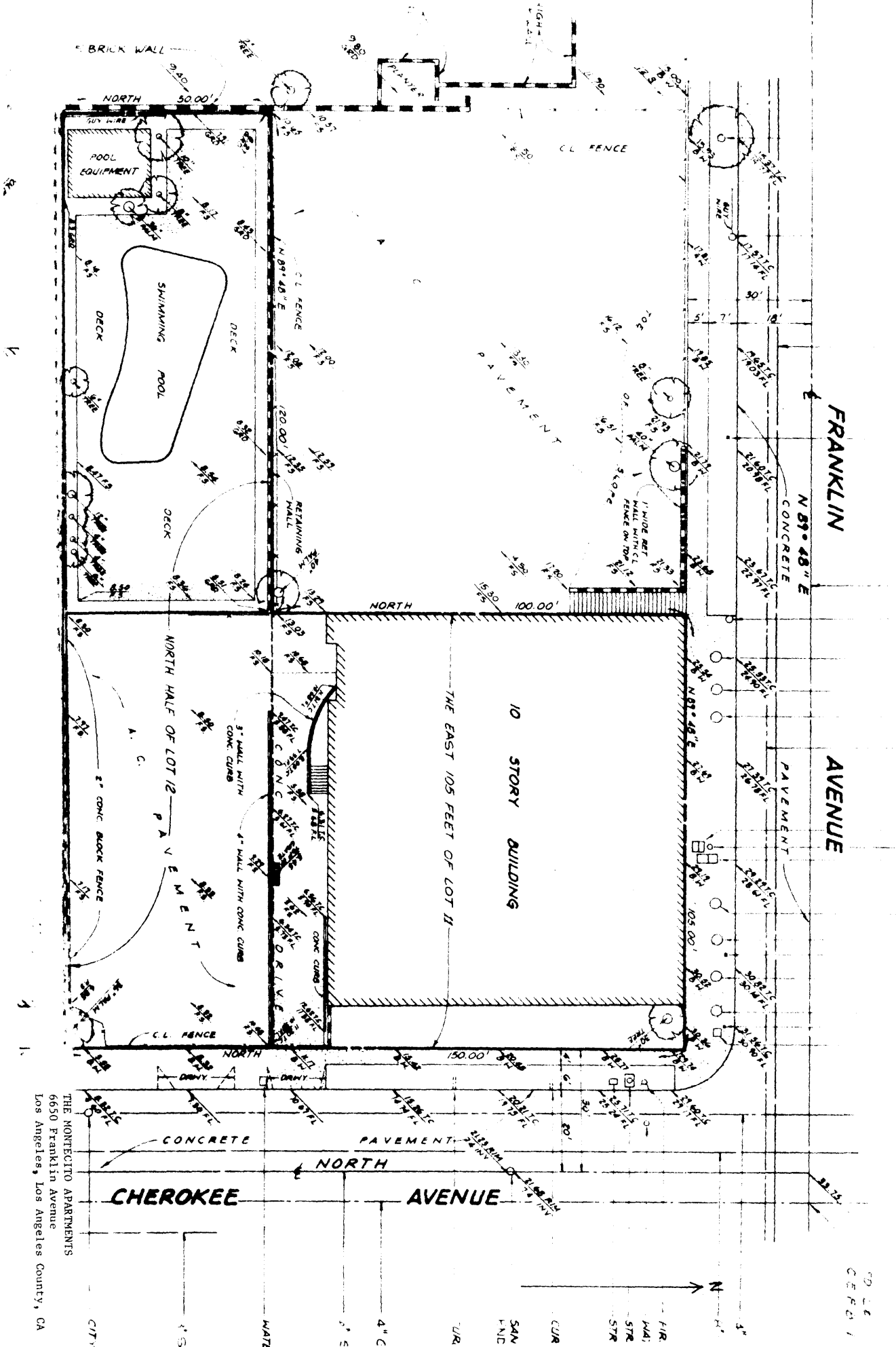
"Glamorous Hollywood" The Arrowhead Magazine, (June 1934), p. 25.

Los Angeles City Dept. of Building and Safety. Building permit  
#28346, issued November 26, 1930.

Los Angeles City Dept. of Building and Safety. Building permit  
#459 issued January 8, 1931.

Los Angeles City Dept. of Building and Safety. Building permit  
#42192 issued April 19, 1956.

"Portland Cement Association (advertisement)," The Architect and  
Engineer, Vol. CXIV No. 3 (September 1933).



THE NONSECTO APARTMENTS  
 6650 Franklin Avenue  
 Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA

SEP 11  
 C.E.F.D. I