

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 94001497

Date Listed: 12/29/94


Rosenburg's Department Store
Property Name

Sonoma
County

CA
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

12/29/94
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

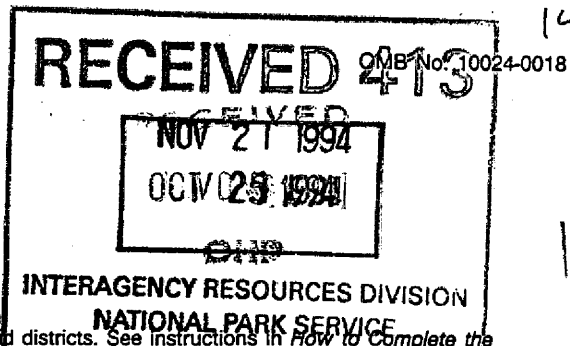
Location:

The "Not for Publication" and "Vicinity" blocks were inadvertently checked off on the original nomination form. The locational information need not be restricted in any way.

This information was confirmed with Cynthia Howse of the CA SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



1497

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rosenberg's Department Store
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 700 Fourth Street not for publication
city or town Santa Rosa vicinity
state California code CA county Sonoma code 097 zip code 95404

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
[Signature] 11/17/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
California Office of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 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 the Keeper Date of Action
[Signature] 12/29/94

Rosenberg's Department Store
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A (not visible)
walls Stucco
Glass
roof Asphalt
other Ceramic Tile
Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1937

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hertzka & Knowles

(Hertzka, Wayne S.)

(Knowles, William Howard)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository:

Sonoma County Room in Sonoma County
Library

Rosenberg's Department Store
Name of Property

Sonoma County, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	1	0
---	---	---

5	2	5	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	5	4	6	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

3

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Bloomfield
organization Anne Bloomfield Architectural History date 4 October 1994
street & number 2229 Webster Street telephone 415-922-1063
city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94115

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

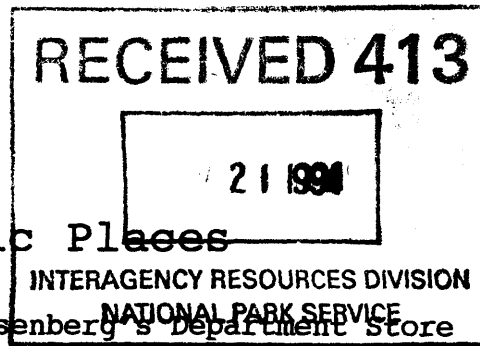
name Sonoma Commercial Investors, L.P.II, a California Limited Partnership
street & number 2740 Pierce Street telephone 415-474-3882
city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94123

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet



Section Number 7 Page 1

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

7. DESCRIPTION;

At the southeast corner of Fourth and D Streets in Downtown Santa Rosa, the Rosenberg Department Store property consists of a zero-setback, two-section, 1937 commercial building and a parking lot.¹ The corner section, a 140 x 120-foot rectangle, has two stories and mezzanine, with a grand center marquee/sign tower and considerable Moderne detailing; originally this section housed the department store itself. The other section of the building, a 126 x 108-foot rectangle on Fourth Street west of the corner section, has one story of the same 22-foot height as the first story and mezzanine of the corner section; it carries echoes of the same Moderne detailing but was always of simpler design; originally it was leased to other businesses, but its use was annexed to the department store in 1964, when it was considerably remodeled and also enlarged to the rear. Both sections are a flat-roofed steel frame structure, with stucco-clad, monolithically cast reinforced concrete walls, and wraparound plate glass display windows on the two street elevations. On the two-story section's street elevations, Moderne detailing includes a curved corner, a mezzanine-level Streamline string course or speed lines punctuated with recessed glass block clerestory windows, and tall second-story windows with keystones elongated to the parapet top. The center of the Fourth Street (north) facade is an entry pavilion consisting of marquee, two-story window of fluted glass blocks, pilasters rising above the parapet, and above them a blade sign with a rear blade tower 50 feet above the roof. The interior is almost entirely clear space on all floors in both parts. Three rows of columns (five, counting those near exterior walls) march east to west, displaying the same capitals in both sections of the building. An open mezzanine extends 32 feet from the south wall of the two-story section; its steel and birch railings evoke shipping imagery. Although there were serious alterations in 1964, many of them were reversed in the 1994 rehabilitation, which included reconstruction of some original features and the creation of some new, sympathetic features. The building possesses integrity of location, most design, setting, most materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

EXTERIOR, TWO-STORY SECTION

The walls of the building are monolithically cast reinforced concrete, smoothly finished with cement stucco. The casting includes

¹ Much of the material of this Form is indebted to the draft for it researched and prepared by Paula Cook Eckman.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 7 Page 2

at mezzanine level a string course of eight speed lines, projecting "keystones" that rise from second-story windows to the top of the parapet, and vertical creases at the curved northwest corner and at building seams such as the southwest and northeast corners. There is no cornice.

The two street elevations are similar except for the entry pavilion in the center of the two-story section's north (Fourth Street) side. The facade composition is seven bays on the west (D Street) side, and four bays on each side of the entry pavilion on Fourth Street. Each bay is defined by a second-story window of 12-pane steel sash fixed on the side panels and awning in the center panel. This window has a plain recessed panel below the sill and a "keystone" elongated from lintel to parapet top. The windows take up much less than half the wall surface. At mezzanine level each bay has a tripartite clerestory window of glass blocks recessed into the string course.

The entry pavilion begins at its base with a deeply projecting half-hexagonal canopy that is flat, stuccoed, and painted with a horizontal band that dips in the center. Above it rise a pair of pilasters that project shallowly, have rounded corners, carry the string course as their bases, and extend about ten feet above the parapet. Their capitals are a pair of deeply recessed speed lines and a round-cornered top. Between the pilasters and from canopy to above the second-story windows a glass block window functions like the rose window of a medieval cathedral. Only this window is rectangular, and its surface undulates with its glass blocks alternating among flat, convex, and concave, each form aligned vertically. Above this window there begins a blade sign, most of which backs onto the roof rather than projecting over the canopy. With a curved north edge, it rises about ten feet above the pilaster capitals, or 20 feet above the roof. Its capital is three shallow groves, horizontal, topped by a recessed panel about four feet high in which are inserted sheet metal letters spelling the name of the store and originally lit with neon. At the back of this blade sign a translucent glass tower/blade sign rises some 50 feet above the roof. It was originally lit from within by green neon.

Storefronts wrap around the entire street elevations. Their stem walls, covered with tan tile occasionally fluted, are about one foot high. The six-foot plate glass display windows dominate. Current sash is black anodized aluminum. Above the windows is a short, horizontally grooved metal strip painted to match the walls, and above that are fixed awnings of a fairly shallow pitch (the

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 7 Page 3

original awnings were retractable). The two street entries retain their original cone-shaped recess plan. The one on D Street retains a Moderne-patterned, colored terrazzo flooring. The entry doors, patterned after the original plans, have transoms and sidelights.

The mid-block (south and east) elevations are simpler. For the two-story section of the building only the second story of the east elevation is exterior. It matches the second story of the west elevation on D Street. The south elevation, on the parking lot side, has at its western end two second-story windows like those on the other elevations. The center is blank wall with a painted sign. Five much smaller windows light its eastern portion. The mezzanine also has small windows, and a short carry-over of the string course. The ground floor has a delivery bay but is otherwise blank.

EXTERIOR, ONE-STORY SECTION

The one-story section on the east was constructed as part of the original building. It is described in the original plans and the original contract and bond. It was designed simpler than the two-story section in order to distinguish the tenant spaces here from the owners' own business, Rosenberg's Department Store, in the two-story section.

The height, structure, and wall finish of the one-story section match their equivalents of the other section. The only seam between sections is a matter of ornament alone, and not a consistent vertical line. The mezzanine string course carries over onto the one-story facade in the form of one-foot-wide vertical accents marking bays on the plain fascia/parapet. Each bay also has a ventilation grill molded in the concrete. The historic canvas awnings were replaced in 1964 with a fixed stucco canopy. The canopy has a pair of low barrel vaults to mark the off-center entry, and it is flat for the rest of the one-story elevation. The store window nearest to the two-story section was enclosed in 1964 and is now faced with smooth stucco. The other windows' storefront system and the entry doors are still the reduced-height aluminum ones of 1964. In the same year an asymmetrical T-plan addition, of matching height, was built onto the rear. The east and rear walls are plain and windowless. The roof has skylights, which have been covered.

INTERIOR

The interiors of both sections and of the second floor are open, but the floor level of the one-story section is about six inches

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 7 Page 4

above that of the two-story section. Boxed steel columns support the roof and the mezzanine, dividing the two-story interior into four bays north to south and seven bays east to west; the one-story interior has three bays aligned north to south with the bays in the other section, and six bays east to west. In the two-story section the column boxes are plaster, square with canted corners. Their capitals consist of a three-inch band of vertical fluting below a wide cavetto molding, perhaps a reference to Egyptian Revival. The second floor columns have only the band of fluting, no spreading cavetto, and no differentiated base. The one-story section has simple square column boxes. Historically the main floor columns were incorporated into retail casework and therefore had no bases of their own; in 1994 the plaster column boxes of the two-story section were continued down to the floor and were given new bases derived from a design in the original Hertzka & Knowles plans.

An open mezzanine covers the southernmost bay of the two-story section, accessed by an elevator and stairs at the rear. The northern edge of the mezzanine curves out and in symmetrically at the center bays. The delicate railing for stairs and mezzanine is composed of horizontal metal bars, metal tube balusters wide apart, and birch handrails; it evokes passenger liner imagery.

ALTERATIONS

In 1964 the one-story section of the building was incorporated into Rosenbergs' Department Store, and considerable alterations were made. The most serious retained to the present was the addition of a stuccoed canopy cantilevered all along the north elevation of the one-story section, flat but for a pair of shallow barrel arcs for the entry west of center. The display window bay nearest to the two-story section was enclosed to conceal the whole building's electrical service behind it, and this bay was faced with bronze ceramic tiles. A whole new aluminum storefront system, including doors, was installed, two feet lower than the original system, and the window tops were filled in. There were additions to the rear of the one-story section. In the interior, tenant partitions and about half the wall between the two building sections were removed. Part of the balcony was enclosed. There were miscellaneous repairs and changes, including the removal of most of the storefront stemwall tiles.

The store was closed in 1988 and remained vacant until 1994. Nearly complete as of this writing, the 1994 rehabilitation focuses on the ground and mezzanine floors of the two-story section. It is

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 7-8 Page 5

expected that when tenants are secured for the second story and the one-story section, they will receive similarly careful rehabilitation, and possibly, removal of the stucco canopy. In 1994 the storefronts were entirely rebuilt, including stemwalls which had rotted out. New display windows match the size of the original ones; new doors replicate photos and drawings of the lost originals, with glass, wood frame, and brass push bars. New tiles for the stem wall were modeled after the fluted originals because not enough of the originals had survived. The bronzed tiles of the infilled display bay were replaced with stucco to match the walls. The main entry canopy was restored. The "ROSENBERG'S" letters from the blade sign were carefully removed and stored, to be replaced with similar lettering for the new tenant, Barnes & Noble. The 1964 balcony enclosure was removed. Also removed were the partitions enclosing the rear of the display windows so that now, perhaps for the first time, light will enter the retail space directly from the display windows. All the store casework (1964 work) was removed; the interior had suffered great damage from water, graffiti, homeless occupancy, and pigeons during the 1988-1993 years of vacancy. The interior columns had never had regular bases, as their lower four and one half feet had been incorporated into the store casework. In 1994 the columns' plaster shaft coverings were continued down to the floor and given new bases pursuant to the original Hertzka & Knowles plans. The wall was rebuilt between the building sections. New lighting fixtures were modeled on historic photographs. The building was given a seismic upgrade, of which the only visible sign is a single leg of a V-brace behind the eastern display window of the two-story section. Mechanical systems were also replaced. New accessible bathrooms were constructed, and a low new security partition at the D Street entrance.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rosenberg's Department Store appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance, under criterion C, architecture, in the context of commercial Moderne architecture in Santa Rosa, 1930-1941. It is the city's largest and best remaining example of the Streamline Moderne style. The period of significance and the significant date are both 1937, the year of construction. The building possesses integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association; the recent rehabilitation has restored the building's basic integrity of design (except where rehabilitation awaits the securing of tenants) and, where necessary, has provided substitute materials that closely match the lost originals.

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 8 Page 6

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

The ancestor of Rosenberg's Department Store was founded by Max Rosenberg (1863-1944) in 1896. Called the Red Front Store, it was a small clothing establishment. Burned out in the 1906 earthquake-fire, it reopened ten days later in a temporary shack with stock from salesmen's sample trunks. The store was soon rebuilt at Fourth and B Streets, and renamed Rosenberg's Department Store. Max's son Fred S. Rosenberg (1886-1965) joined the firm, and together father and son invested in real estate all over the county, especially in Santa Rosa. In 1921-1922 they constructed Santa Rosa's only prewar skyscraper, the Rosenberg Building at Fourth and Mendocino. Max retired in 1925 but remained active; Fred managed the business from then on. Rosenberg's had already become "the town's largest store, selling groceries, fresh vegetables, liquor, and drugs, along with clothing."²

In the mid-1930s planning began for a new and larger store, on gas station property the Rosenbergs owned at the southeast corner of Fourth and D Streets. Fred Rosenberg explained that, "The factor in favor of this location is the parking problem. We own property at the rear . . . which will provide a parking lot 140 feet square . . . This seems to be the coming thing in modern merchandising with the growth of the use of automobiles by shoppers." Preliminary planning was entrusted to local architect Charles "Cal" Caulkins. The project suddenly became urgent on Friday, 8 May 1936, when the 1907 Rosenberg Department Store burned to the ground.³

The design was turned over to the Hertzka & Knowles firm in San Francisco, with W. W. Breite as consulting engineer. Their plans include the one-story section of the building. The building contract with Moore & Roberts, dated 19 January 1937, called for construction of a "department store and store building," and a bond to guarantee payment to the workmen was filed to the amount of \$104,500. Rosenberg's Department Store opened for business in the new building on 27 October 1937. In the same year the one-story section of the

² "An Old Name in Santa Rosa," *Press Democrat*, 4 August 1964, 10/3. Gaye LeBaron et al., *Santa Rosa, A Twentieth Century Town*, Santa Rosa (Historia, Ltd.) 1993, 6, 122, 126-127. Sonoma County Recorder, *Index to Grantees*, 1930s, Rosenberg, and *Official Records*, passim. Paula Cook Eckman, "Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part 1: Rosenberg's Department Store," 1994, 6/4.

³ "Building Plan is Confirmed by Rosenberg," *Press Democrat*, 13 May 1936, 2/5. Le Baron, op. cit., 126-127.

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 8 Page 7

Purity had been located in a very small Fourth Street space next to the other Rosenberg Building. Purity's need for proto-supermarket space may have coincided with a management choice to take Rosenberg's Department Store out of the grocery business after the fire, but still to accommodate customers who were used to finding a market there,⁴

Rosenberg's Department Store and the Purity market operated side-by-side until 1956. In 1951 Fred Rosenberg retired from active management of the department store and sold that business to the McNeany family, which operated the store until it closed down in 1988. Fred Rosenberg continued to own the property until his death in 1965. In 1963 the McNeany's secured from him the additional lease of the one-story section of the building. They performed a major remodeling designed by J. Clarence Felciano. The new Rosenberg's Men's Store opened on 5 August 1964.⁵

In 1988 Rosenberg's Department Store closed down. The building stood vacant and deteriorating. In the early 1990s the owners went through all City processes and received a demolition permit. At the last moment the building was rescued by the present owner, who rehabilitated it, undoing most of the 1964 alterations. The new tenant on the ground and mezzanine floors of the two-story section is to be Barnes & Noble Booksellers. Tenants for the remainder of the building are as yet unknown. The building is returning to its original position as a focus for retail activity in Santa Rosa.

CONTEXT

The context of the commercial Moderne architecture in Santa Rosa, 1930-1941, is a small one, as few known buildings were ever built or remodeled in this style, and fewer still survive. As a very small city--the population reached 10,000 just before 1930--Santa Rosa generally ignored the 1920s Art Deco phase of Moderne, which was sparked by Saarinen's entry for the Chicago Tribune tower in 1922 and was boosted into high fashion by the Paris Exposition Internationale

⁴ Hertzka & Knowles, Plans for Rosenberg's Department Store, 1936-1937. Eckman, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Rosenberg's Department Store," draft, 6 August 1994, 7/11. Sonoma County Recorder, "Eugene M. Moore and James Robert to Fred S. and Max Rosenberg, Bond," *Official Records*, Book 436, 458. "Business Offices Reopened Here by Rosenberg's Firm," *Press Democrat*, 12 May 1936, 2/6.

⁵ Eckman, National Register draft, 7/11, 8/2. "Fred Rosenberg Dies . . .," *Press Democrat*, 26 February 1965, 1/6. "Rosenberg's Remodels, Expands Downtown Store," *Press Democrat*, 4 August 1964, 10. J. Clarence Felciano, A.I.A., Alterations and Additions, Rosenberg's Department Store, 1963.

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 8 Page 8

des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Moderne of 1925. In the 1930s Santa Rosa paid more attention to the two other phases: the WPA Moderne, usually government buildings in a synthesis of Moderne and an austere late type of Beaux-Arts Classicism; and Streamline Moderne inspired by machine age aerodynamic forms, and typically employing smooth surfaces (especially stucco), rounded corners, horizontal banding, new materials (glass block, steel, vitrelite), and other metaphors for speed and modernity.⁶

In Santa Rosa the earliest moves in the direction of any Moderne styling were remodelings of existing commercial buildings. Most of the city's historic commercial center has since been lost through freeway construction in 1949 and c. 1970, from a 1969 earthquake, a downtown shopping mall built opened in 1983, and general re-remodelings and demolitions. The best Moderne storefront known to survive besides the applicant is a brightly colored store stemwall in fluted, three-dimensional glossy tile at 512 Wilson Street.⁷

The earliest known new commercial building in a Moderne style is the Sonoma County Ice Cream Company building at 850 Fourth Street. A small, three-bay, one-story retail outlet-cum factory behind, this building has a stepped parapet and four base-less, capital-less pilasters that extend from the sidewalk to above the parapet and have a five-step profile molded in the concrete. It was constructed in 1936 and is slated for demolition.⁸

The next whole building is the Streamline Moderne Rosenberg's Department Store of 1937. After that, in 1939, the same owners constructed the magnificent moviehouse, the Tower Theatre, immediately west of the store building. Its Streamline Moderne facade was a concave semicircle with speed lines, illumination tower, and projecting marquee ablaze with neon. Fred Rosenberg donated it in 1964 as part of the present library's site, and it is gone.⁹

⁶ Society of Architectural Historians, "Glossary," in *Buildings of the United States* series, as in Pamela Scott and Antoinette J. Lee, *Buildings of the district of Columbia*, New York (Oxford University Press) 1993. David Gebhard et al., *Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California*, Salt Lake City (Peregrine Smith Books) 1985, 576-577.

⁷ Anne Bloomfield, "North Railroad District," *Report, Cultural Heritage Survey of the City of Santa Rosa, California* (for Santa Rosa Department of Community Development), 1989.

⁸ Bloomfield, "Historic Resources Inventory Form, 850-852 Fourth Street," *Abbreviated Historic Structure Report, 850-852 and 858 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa*, 1991.

⁹ LeBaron, op. cit., 111, 270-271. "Fred Rosenberg Dies . . .," *Press Democrat*, 26 February 1965, 1/6.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 8 Page 9

Other examples of Moderne styling include six or seven diners in real or imitation streetcars. A curve-cornered Moderne Diamond Match Company salesroom was constructed on Sebastopol Road in 1946, but it has been heavily remodeled at least twice. Sonoma County's WPA and similar funds went into hiring the unemployed to improve infrastructure and parks, rather than into construction of buildings. However, in 1940 two stylish new fire stations opened in Santa Rosa: in the 400 block of A Street and on Benton Street. The A Street headquarters building was WPA Moderne, but it has been demolished.¹⁰

The last known privately owned Moderne commercial building to be constructed in Santa Rosa is the Thurlow Medical Building at 576 B Street, designed in 1940 by Charles "Cal" Caulkins, who had done preliminary designs for Rosenberg's Department Store. On a third of an acre at an acute-angled street corner, this small building is a parabola in plan with a broad and simple fascia band, four simple rectangular piers, and vertically ribbed spandrel panels. It is less remarkable than Rosenberg's Department Store, but like it is listed in David Gebhaard's *Guide*.¹¹

Of the few remaining survivors in Santa Rosa, Rosenberg's Department Store is by far the most effective carrier of Streamline Moderne styling. It is the largest retail building constructed in Santa Rosa during the historic period. It has the only Moderne tower left on the skyline. Its corniceless, smooth stucco walls and curved street corner are the stuff by which Moderne is identified. So are its glass block windows, speedline stringcourse, and exaggerated keystones. Its conspicuous location helps advertise the style for this community.

The young architects of Rosenberg's Department Store, Hertzka & Knowles (Wayne S. Hertzka and William Howard Knowles) would go on to design some of the most interesting examples of 1950s and 1960s Modernism in San Francisco's downtown. It is too early to assess their career, but the building in Santa Rosa was the first to achieve renown for this firm, which had started only in the inauspicious year of 1933. The building received the recognition of being displayed in model form at the Golden Gate International Exposition at Treasure Island in 1939. David Gebhard illustrated it in the "Photo History"

¹⁰ Le Baron, op. cit., 177-180, 220-221, 269. Bloomfield, "400 Dutton Avenue," *Historic Architectural Survey Report for the Sebastopol Road Improvement Project near Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California* (for Sonoma County Community Development Commission), 1994.

¹¹ Gebhard et al., op. cit., 380-381. Bloomfield, 576 B Street, "Thurlow Medical Building," *Santa Rosa Survey*, 1989.

Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 8-9 Page 10

section of his Guide, along with Oakland's Paramount Theatre and San Francisco's 450 Sutter Street building, as one of northern California's three best representatives of Moderne commercial buildings.¹²

, 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

"An Old Name in Santa Rosa," *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, 4 August 1964, 10/3.

Bloomfield, Anne. *Abbreviated Historic Structures Report, 850-852 and 858 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa* (for owner), 1991.

---. *Historic Architectural Survey Report for the Sebastopol Road Improvement Project near Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, California* (for Sonoma County Community Development Commission), 1994.

---. *Report, Cultural Heritage Survey of the City of Santa Rosa, California*, (for Santa Rosa Department of Community Development), 1989.

Corbett, Michael. *Splendid Survivors, San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*, San Francisco (California Living Books for the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage) 1979.

Eckman, Paula Cook. "Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part 1, Rosenberg's Department Store," 1994.

---. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Rosenberg's Department Store," draft, 6 August 1994.

Felciano, J. Clarence, A.I.A. *Plans for Alterations and Additions, Rosenberg's Department Store*, 1963.

"Fred Rosenberg Dies on His 79th Birthday," *Press Democrat*, 26 February 1965, 1/6.

¹² Michael Corbett, *Splendid Survivors, San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*, San Francisco (California Living Books for the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage) 1979, 72, 769, 162, 173, 211, 215, 227, 246. Waverly B. Lowell, *Architectural Records in the San Francisco Bay Area, A Guide to Research*, New York (Garland) 1988, 86. Gebhard et al., op. cit. 67/28, 68/31, 69/38, 80/35, 86/116, 380/2, 530-531.

National Park Service
Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number 10 Page 11

Gebhard, David, et al. *Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California*, Salt Lake City (Peregrine Smith Books) 1985.

Hertzka (Wayne S.) and Knowles (William Howard). Plans for Rosenberg's Department Store, 1936-1937.

LeBaron, Gaye, and Joann Mitchell. *Santa Rosa, A Twentieth Century Town*, Santa Rosa (Historia, Ltd.) 1993.

Lowell, Waverly B. *Architectural Records in the San Francisco Bay Area, A Guide to Research*, New York (Garland) 1988.

"Rosenberg's Remodels, Expands Downtown Store," *Press Democrat*, 4 August 1964, 10.

Sonoma County Recorder. "Moore and Roberts to Rosenberg," *Official Records*, Book 436, 458f.

---. *Index to Grantees, 1932-1946*.

---. *Official Records*.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is Sonoma County Assessor's Parcel No. 009-014-12, in Santa Rosa, California.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property is the single Assessor's parcel which contains the original two- and one-story building and the parking lot historically associated with it.

National Park Service
Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number P Page 12

PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

ROSENBERG'S DEPARTMENT STORE
Santa Rosa, Sonoma County, CA

All photos were taken by Anne Bloomfield on 30 September 1994.
The negatives are with the photographer.

Photo 1.
West and north elevations, looking southeast
(AB270/12)

Photo 2.
East and north elevations, looking southwest
(AB270/1)

Photo 3.
South elevation, looking north from Third Street across parking
lot (AB270/6)

Photo 4.
Rear addition, looking northwest
(AB270/3)

Photo 5.
Entry pavilion, looking south across Fourth Street
(AB270/36)

Photo 6.
Entry pavilion window, from interior, second floor
(AB270/26)

Photo 7.
Sign tower, looking northeast across roof
(AB270/30)

Photo 8.
Typical bay (south bay on west [D Street] elevation)
(AB270/9)

National Park Service
Department of the Interior

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rosenberg's Department Store
Santa Rosa
Sonoma County, CA

Section Number P Page 13

Photo 9.
String course detail, two south bays on west elevation
(AB270/8)

Photo 10.
"Seam" between sections of building, looking south across
Fourth Street (AB270/35)

Photo 11.
D Street entry, looking northeast
(AB270/10)

Photo 12.
Details and main Fourth Street entry, looking southeast
(AB270/33)

Photo 13.
Entry to one-story section, looking southeast
(AB270/34)

Photo 14.
Main interior space, looking southeast from northwest corner
(AB270/15)

Photo 15.
Balcony center, looking south from ground floor
(AB270/16)

Photo 16.
Balcony near center, looking northeast from balcony
(AB270/23)

Photo 17.
Second floor interior, looking northeast
(AB270/25)

Photo 18.
Portion of one-story section interior, looking west at row of
columns continuous through both sections
(AB270/20)

S K E T C H M A P

ROSENBERG'S DEPARTMENT STORE
SANTA ROSA, SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

