

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 27 1984
DATE ENTERED	JAN 11 1985

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

1 NAME

^{HISTORIC}
U.S. Post Office

AND/OR COMMON
San Pedro Main Post Office

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
839 S. Beacon Street

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
32

CITY, TOWN
San Pedro

NA VICINITY OF

STATE
California

CODE
06

COUNTY
Los Angeles

CODE
037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	NA IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
X Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U. S. Postal Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

850 Cherry Ave.

CITY, TOWN
San Bruno

NA VICINITY OF

STATE
CA 94099

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Los Angeles County Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

227 N. Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Los Angeles

STATE
CA 90017

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California
(by Gebhard and Winter, published by Peregrine Smith, Inc.)

DATE

1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Dr. David Gebhard
Dept. of Art History, University of California

CITY, TOWN

Santa Barbara

STATE
CA

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> _DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> _UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> _GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> _RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> _MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> _FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> _UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>NA</u>

4/27/84

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The San Pedro Post Office is a three-story reinforced concrete building, conforming to the Starved Classical style of the Supervising Architect's office in the 1930s. Ornament is restrained, and is limited to fluting cast into the concrete walls and piers of the front elevation.

A large mural occupies the west wall of the public lobby, and was painted in 1937 by Fletcher Martin. Polished brass is used throughout the lobby as a decorative door trim and in place of a crown molding. The lobby has a terrazzo floor and painted plaster walls.

LOCAL CONTEXT

San Pedro, located 25 miles south of downtown Los Angeles, was used as early as the 1850s as a port handling the products of the inland ranchos. The first harbor improvements were made in 1877, and dredging to make San Pedro a deepwater port began in 1892. The town was incorporated into the City of Los Angeles in 1909. San Pedro has an estimated 1982 population of 23,000.

No known archaeological or paleontological resources exist within or adjacent to the subject property. Subsurface investigation or additional research does not appear to be justified.

Information concerning use of the subject site prior to construction of the post office was not available.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The public lobby occupies the eastern portion of the first floor, and is lighted by large windows and fluorescent fixtures. A large mural by Fletcher Martin occupies the west wall of the lobby, directly above the service windows. Several of the polished brass and glass lobby desks are still in use, though the original service windows have been replaced by plastic-laminate topped service counters.

The building has three stories and a full basement. The structure is constructed of reinforced concrete, and is topped with a flat composition roof. Specific features of note include:

- Wrought iron grill work on first floor windows;
- Ornamental bronze on main entrance doors; and
- Bronze fixtures flanking ground floor entrances.

The building is designed in a subdued version of the Starved Classical. The simplified surfaces and restrained use of ornament is characteristic of buildings constructed in this period.

ALTERATIONS

The building appears to be in excellent structural condition and is well maintained. Only minor alterations are visible from the exterior; most interior and exterior fixtures and signage remain in place.

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 checked="" 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 **Begun October, 1935** BUILDER/ARCHITECT **OSA, Louis A. Simon**
completed September, 1936

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Though the San Pedro Main Post Office was not completed until 1936, and is not yet 50 years old, it possesses exceptional significance based on its relation and significance to the theme of this nomination, on its architectural merits, and through its inclusion of federally-commissioned murals, which form a significant and distinguishable entity.

ARCHITECTURE

The San Pedro Post Office is an excellent example of the large-scale combined post office and federal office building, constructed from the mid-1930s to the early 1940s. It is exceptionally well preserved, and retains complete architectural integrity, both in the front elevation and public lobby. The addition of a fire escape on the north elevation has had no significant impact on the style of the building. This is the purest example of the Starved Classical style included in this nomination. The public lobby is in excellent condition, and the original bronze fixtures, marble kickboards, and glass-topped lobby desks are an essay in mid-thirties federal design of interior public spaces.

ART

The mural that occupies the west wall of the lobby is a good example of the idealized and representational style employed in most Federal Art Project murals in the 1930s. Fletcher Martin was commissioned by the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts to execute the murals in 1937. Martin was well known during the 1930s as a painter and illustrator, and he received numerous commissions for federal projects. Among the work he completed for the Treasury Department was a fresco in the North Hollywood High School, and post office murals in La Mesa, Texas, and Kellogg, Idaho. He attained national recognition for his social-realist style, and his work is included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The lobby mural depicts an idealized version of the communities of Indians who originally occupied the San Pedro area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gebhard, David, Winter, Robert, " A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California". Peregrine Smith, Inc., Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, 1977.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .75

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	3 8 1	4 6 1 0	3 7 3 3	4 6 1 0	B					
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	
C						D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The site is located in Lots, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; Block 74, Peck's Subdivision of Block 74; City of San Pedro; Portion of Town of San Pedro Subdivison. The rectangular site has a 115' northern border on 8th Street and southern border on 9th Street and a 275' frontage on Beacon Street.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA	NA	NA	NA

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Doug Robertson, Planner

ORGANIZATION

Beland/Associates, Inc.

DATE

April 27, 1984

STREET & NUMBER

16 S. Oakland Ave. #204

TELEPHONE

(818) 796-8093

CITY OR TOWN

Pasadena

STATE

CA 91101

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES ___ NO ___ NONE ___

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

1/11/85

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

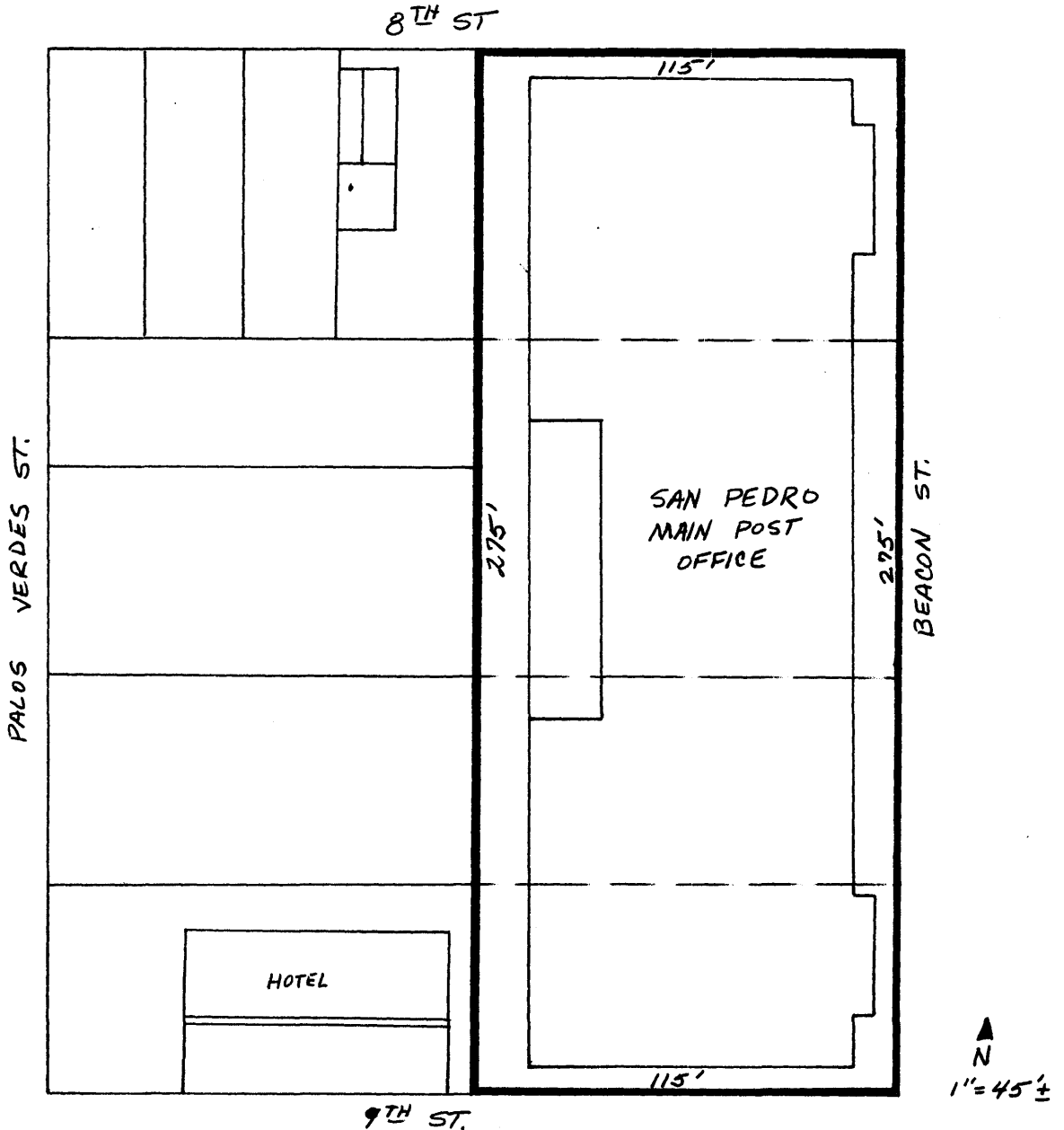
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET San Pedro MPO ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE one



Note: Post office site outlined in red.

Source: Sanborn Map, San Pedro Book, page 9, 1908-39; Geography Department, California State University, Northridge, Ca.