

NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Crawford Hill Mansion
other names/site number: Capitol Hill Town Club
5DV.713

2. Location

street & number: 969 Sherman St. (150 East 10th Ave. (NA) not for publication
city, town: Denver (NA) vicinity
state: Colorado code: CO county: Denver code: 031 zip code: 80203

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
(X) private	(X) building(s)	_____	_____
() public-local	() district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
() public-State	() site	_____	_____ sites
() public-Federal	() structure	_____	<u>2</u> structures
	() object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this (x) 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 (x) meets () does not meet the National Register criteria.
() See continuation sheet.

Barbara Sudler 8-3-90
Signature of certifying official Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

- 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:) _____

Alma Byers 9/13/90

for _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

Commerce/Trade: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

FRENCH RENAISSANCE

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

foundations Brick

walls Brick

Stone

roof Asphalt

other Wood and Metal trim

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Crawford Hill residence is a 17,000 square foot, three-story, French Renaissance style home constructed in 1906. It is an exterior masonry bearing wall structure with steel and timber framing inside. The house is characterized by its classically symmetrical proportions, mansard roof, classical wood columns with Corinthian capitals, brick and stone arched windows, rounded dormers and prominent metal cornice and balustrade.

The Crawford Hill house is located at the intersection of 10th and Sherman Streets in Denver, Colorado. The neighborhood is a mixture of single and multiple family dwellings and commercial buildings. It is also a mixture of social stature and wealth. Brick apartment buildings lie to the north, south, and east of the house; a strip commercial building lies to the west. The residential "feel" of the neighborhood remains very strong even though what were once single family homes have been converted to multi-family or office functions. The integrity of the Crawford Hill site is maintained by the scale and age of many of the surrounding buildings and by the fact that the almost one acre site is intact, and with the exception of a small pool house and pool, the Crawford Hill house remains the only building located on the property. Many of the original landscape features remain on the site giving this mansion the room around it to maintain its proper scale and grandeur. The scale of the house and many of its decorative elements make the house very prominent. Its classical box shape and classical frieze and ornamentation make a statement of power and wealth, as intended by the Hills. Picture framing alluding to openings which do not exist, balance the classical facade and indicate that the interior layout has less adherence to the classical proportions of the exterior.

(X) See continuation sheet

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Crawford Hill House

The site features an original brick and stone site wall with an ornate iron fence on it. The site features an original brick and stone site wall with an ornate iron fence on it. The site wall also incorporates quoined brick pilasters with original iron lights mounted on top of them. The landscape features many varieties and sizes of trees, many of them original. In 1953 a swimming pool (non-contribution) and CMU (concrete block) pool equipment house (non-contributing) were erected in the south garden.

There are three porches on the house, each with a different appearance and use. The north entry porch with a classical pediment and frieze gave the sense of order to an arriving visitor. The east porch with Tuscan columns and Corinthian capitals, two stories high, is strategically located on Sherman Street in direct line with the State Capitol. The south porch, which was open and informal in nature was used to entertain in the vast south gardens. There are two types of columns used on the exterior of the building. The round Tuscan columns previously mentioned and the use of quoined brick and stone pilasters on the north, east, and south facades. There are various types of windows used on the house. Windows at the base and second floor tend to be arched brick and stone with wood windows. The third level windows also introduce a round casement window in a rounded dormer. The typical windows are three over two double-hung sash, and the doors are multiple sash "French lite" glass with sidelights. Many windows feature decorative iron grilles. The windows opening into the main stair well feature leaded glass panels. The exterior also features elaborate painted gabled and rounded dormers and metal cornice and balustrade. Five brick chimneys with elaborate carved stone detailing punctuate the design. A "Palm Room" with extensive windows and skylights was added to the southern side of the building in 1909 and is detailed to match the rest of the house. This addition is historic and, therefore, does not affect the integrity of the building. On the southwest corner of the building a CMU (concrete block) kitchen addition with a flat roof was added in 1956. Also on the south facade a glass porch enclosure added in 1956 has been partially removed to expose the original porch, with the remaining piece being converted into a sun room/greenhouse. A non-original fire escape is also present on the south facade exiting from the third level, across the "Palm Room" roof and down the west side of the building. Its date is unknown.

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The interior features 23 rooms and 9 fireplaces and retains much of its original integrity even though it has undergone alterations for use as a social club (Capitol Hill Town Club) from the 1940s through 1990 and is currently being restored and remodelled for use as law offices. This is an investment tax credit project and the Secretary of the Interiors Standards and Guidelines for Historic Preservation are being followed. The front entry vestibule features ornate iron entry doors into an enclosed porch which has ornate carved benches on either side and a wood lamp, said to be from Thomas Jefferson's house, hangs in the center. From the vestibule one passes through a set of large, divided double mirrored French doors into the entry hall. The entry hall features a black and white terrazzo floor and ornate plaster cornice molding. An elevator in the southwest corner was added at a later date. From out of this central organizing room the house unfolds; individual divided double mirrored glass doors lead to the drawing room on the east and the dining room on the south. A three-panel wood door to the west leads to the "back of the house" service areas. An elaborate grand stair, also on the west, leads to the second level. This curved stair features maple treads and a painted wood balustrade with a wood cap, detailed to look like stone. At the intermediate landing, towards the entry there is a curved orchestra balcony. Windows in the walls of the stair, two exterior and two interior, feature leaded glass panels. The drawing room, running the entire 72' length of the east facade features original maple floors, ornate plaster cornice molding, and ornate wood pilasters, door and base trim. Hanging in the room are two original leaded glass chandeliers and a large mirror with a foliage pattern carved wood frame. This room opens to the exterior on the east or into another room through double mirrored French doors to the north, "Palm Room" to the south, and dining room and entry hall to the west. This room also features one of the many stone trimmed fireplaces throughout the house. The dining room, now being used as a library, features elaborate plaster cornice work. Most of the rest of the original detailing of this room, including fireplace trim, was removed in the 1950's to accommodate the Town Club. The Palm Room addition of 1909 on the southern side of the building features an ornate wood coffered ceilings with four glass paneled skylights.

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It also features double-hung sash windows with a fixed arched sash window at the top. Walls which were reported to be white marble when the addition was made are in fact imperial plaster with scored joint lines. The east side of the ground floor which was originally the kitchen and service areas have been remodelled and the original configuration is uncertain. However much of the original base and door trim and the doors themselves remain, along with the original service stairs to the basement, second and third levels.

The second level which originally was the bedroom level remains largely intact. The hallway at the top of the stair features ornate coffered plaster ceilings. The large master bedroom to the southeast features intricate plaster cornice work and fireplace. The original maple floor with cherry herringbone border is also in place. Original door and base trim remains and is quite ornate. The bedroom on the northeast corner of the house has been altered and any original ceiling cornice has been removed. The original walls, doors, base and miscellaneous trim remains. The two sitting rooms on the south side of the house feature ornate fireplaces and wood trim and doors. The bedroom on the southeast corner of the house also features an ornate fireplace and, like the rest, has the original metal gas fireplace logs. The bedroom to the southeast was one of the servants bedrooms and has limited trim and detail which appear to be original. The two bathrooms at this level feature the original pedestal sinks and some of the original tile is on the walls and floors.

The third floor, the servants quarters, accessed by the original service stair with wood balustrade, features plaster walls with no ceiling molding. The level of wood detail at the running trim and doors is much less than the rest of the house and appears original. The introduction of operable glass transom panels occurs at the level above five of the doors. At this level there is also a pyramidal glass skylight over the hallway and a glass paneled floor directly under the skylight which allows natural light down to the second level at the head of the main stair. This level features a total of eight rooms and a connecting hallway. The corner rooms all have round windows and the southeast room has an exterior exit to an open porch.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: () nationally () statewide (X) locally

Applicable National Register Criteria (X) A () B (X) C () D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) () A () B () C () D () E () F () G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Social History

Period of Significance

1906

1906 - 1940

Significant Dates

1906

1906

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Boal, Theodore Davis

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Crawford Hill House meets Criterion A for its role in the social history of Denver from 1906 to 1944. It also meets Criterion C for its Architectural Significance as an excellent example of late 19th and 20th Century French Renaissance Revival and as a representation of the opulence of Denver's mining magnates. The period of significance has been arbitrarily ended in 1940, due to the 50 year criterion. Eventually the property's significance to Denver's social history should extend to 1944, the year Mrs. Crawford Hill, then a widow, moved out of the mansion and into a room at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver.

Criterion A

The Crawford Hill House is significant to the social history of Denver as home to one of Denver's most conspicuous socialite families and as its "social capitol."

The son of Nathaniel Peter Hill, founder of Colorado's smelting industry, member of the Territorial Congress and U.S. Senator from 1879 to 1885, Crawford Hill came to Colorado Territory in 1867 and attended grammar school in the mining town of Black Hawk. He prepared for college in the English and Classical School, Providence Rhode island, and graduated from Brown University in 1885. He then returned to Denver where he became a partner in his father's extensive business interests. He took over management of the Denver Republican, which at the time was one of the most influential newspapers of the West. His other business

(X) See continuation sheet

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interests included: Denargo Land Co., Hill Land and Investment, Boston and Colorado Smelting Co., Inland Oil and Refining Co., and the Thomas Dolly Vardin Mining Company. He also served at one time or another as Director of the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the First National Bank of Denver. As a civic leader he was Director of the Denver Museum of Natural History. He received the rank of Colonel for his work as head of the Colorado Military Staff, under Governors John L. Routt and Albert W. McIntire. Crawford Hill was a life-long Republican and served as the alternate delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1900, as well as Chairman of the state delegation to the Convention in 1908.

In 1895 Crawford Hill married Louise Bethel Sneed, a Memphis belle. As the daughter of an aristocratic southern family she knew all the arts, graces, and rules of high society. Determined to become Denver's social leader she ruled over Denver's social elite for more than 30 years. She was the leader of the "Sacred 36" a group of Denver persons eligible to the inner circles of New York and Newport Society. She personally signalled the beginning of Denver's social season each spring with the unveiling of her covered garden statue (no longer in place). She was known in her later years as the "Queen of Denver Society. She wrote Denver's first social register and was one of the very few western women ever to be presented to the St. James Court, where she was hailed as the beautiful lady of the West. In her home she entertained many distinguished guests, among them President William Howard Taft who stayed at the Sherman Street Mansion.

Mrs. Crawford Hill's reputation as the social leader of Denver was utilized in the musical "The Unsinkable Molly Brown." In the play, it is she who works to keep Mrs. Brown out of Denver's social circles.

Criterion C

The Crawford Hill Mansion has architectural significance as a good example of a style. Designed and built in 1906 by architect Terry Boal and decorated by Louise Hill, the house became a symbol of financial and social power in Colorado. Even though the front porch faces 10th Avenue, the house was given a Sherman Street address. Sherman Street, on direct axis to the State Capitol,

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gave more credence to the residence and its political and social stature. Here national and international celebrities were entertained. Presidents and princes were driven through the iron gates to the entrance which opened into a magnificent reception hall in which hangs a lamp which is said to have been from Thomas Jefferson's old home. Three years after its completion an addition was made to the south, specifically for house guest President William Howard Taft. The 23 room mansion with its manicured lawns and exotic landscaping made the residence the finest in Denver.

In the French Renaissance style the house is one of the best examples in Denver. Its classical proportions and detailing, though eclectic, are fully worked out on the exterior. In the French tradition it is highly influenced by the Italian Classical Style with its superimposed classical orders, pedimented roofs and dormers. The French influence is seen in the continuity and verticality of the facade, including the mansard roof and the verticality implied by the dormers and chimneys which project through the roof. It is also apparent in the extensive quoining of exterior pilasters and the eclectic use of the Tuscan column and base with a Corinthian capital. In order to achieve the Classical balance desired on the exterior, picture framing of openings which never existed appear on the exterior. This is the first clue that the interior is laid out, not in Classical formal style, but to suit the individual needs of the Hill family. The house also has extensive use of steel framing to support floors, allowing the interior rooms to be laid out without strict adherence to traditional load bearing wall structure. The informality of the interior layout was sought by Mrs. Hill to allow the house to function socially. Though not the first use of steel in Denver, the use does reflect on a state of society at the time. Steel was becoming affordable for use in housing and facilitated the desired "Classical eclecticism" on the exterior giving a sense of order, while allowing the "informal" interior, conforming to the rapidly changing and evolving Hill family and American lifestyle.

Today the Crawford Hill Mansion remains as one of the finest examples of Denver's turn-of-the-century architecture and most notably its extravagant past. A vast majority of mansions built in Denver were the homes of mining magnates who were moving back into Denver after they had attained great wealth. This house is the foremost example of the desires of the mining industry wealthy to express this wealth as strongly as possible. Located in the Capital Hill area, the mansion relates well to other nearby historical buildings and adds greatly to Denver's sense of time, place and historical development.

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Theodore Davis Boal, known as Terry Boal, was the architect for the Crawford Hill House and other important residences in Denver such as the Grant Humphreys Mansion (listed on the National Register). According to Denver: The City Beautiful, "the prominence of his (Boal's) parent's and wife's families allowed him to make the acquaintance of the wealthy as he traveled to secure commissions for grand residences. Like the Crawford Hills, Boal was a socialite who was raised in Newport, Rhode Island and who married a Spanish aristocrat, Mathilde Denis de La Garde. It is appropriate that this socialite architect designed Denver's "Social Capitol."

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"Lovely Statue..." Rocky Mountain News. 20 June 1935.
"Furnishings in the Grand Old Mansion..." Rocky Mountain News. 20 May 1947.
"Denver's Sunday Party Line," Rocky Mountain News. 10 August 1952.
"Mrs Crawford Hill,..." The Denver Post. 30 May 1955.