

PH0685577

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 4 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1978

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Hotel Beach (Hotel Barnum)
AND/OR COMMON
Hotel Barnum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
140 Fairfield Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Bridgeport
STATE
Connecticut

VICINITY OF

CODE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fourth
COUNTY
Fairfield
CODE
001

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Irene Morganstern
STREET & NUMBER
69-33 110 Street
CITY, TOWN
Forest Hills
STATE
New York 11375

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Bridgeport Town Clerk
STREET & NUMBER
45 Lyon Terrace
CITY, TOWN
Bridgeport
STATE
Connecticut 06604

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources
DATE
March, 1978
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Connecticut Historical Commission
CITY, TOWN
59 South Prospect St., Hartford
STATE
Connecticut 06106

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Hotel Barnum is a thirteen-story steel skeleton building of reinforced concrete construction. It is located near the center of the Main Street business district in downtown Bridgeport, opposite the Baldwin Plaza Mall and new Fairfield County Courthouse, and is adjoined by various commercial buildings that front on Main and Elm Streets and Fairfield Avenue.

The structure is unique in Bridgeport with its terraced profile. Two ten-story pavilions protrude from the thirteen story central tower at either side, giving the building a U-shape. These pavilions in turn are flanked by subsidiary eight-story wings. The piano nobile of the second story ties the entire mass together with its arcaded row of tripartate windows flush with the street with balustraded balconies in the three recesses above.

The exterior is faced with skindle brick laid in broken Flemish bond, with diamond and herringbone designs worked in. It is trimmed at such points as window and doorway openings and balustrades with a pinkish color pre-cast artificial stone moulded into elaborate Art Deco designs. There are three ground-floor storefronts along the main Fairfield Avenue front. In addition, there are two marquees (modern replacements of the originals), one located over the main hotel entrance and the other over the doorway leading to the Barnum Arcade.

This arcade extends approximately 210 feet in a curve through to Elm Street. It contains twelve shops in addition to six others that face Elm Street. The shopfronts have transomed doorways and windows trimmed in dark stained wood; the walls in between are of mottled glazed tiles approximately 5 inches by 14 inches each. The floor is terrazzo and the ceiling is textured stucco. The half of the arcade nearest Elm Street is lit by three rectangular skylights that have brass enframements.

The main hotel portion of the building contains 188 rooms, with 21 rooms on each floor between the third and eleventh stories and 17 rooms each on the twelfth and thirteenth. The rooms are roughly similar in size and all contain a private lavatory, lavatory and shower, or lavatory and bath. All bathroom fixtures are original, as are the ceiling lights with etched glass globes in each room. Dark-stained wooded doors with louvred top panels lead to the corridors, some of which retain the original scallop pattern carpeting. The public space at the center of each floor is lit by a square Spanish-style wrought iron lantern suspended from the ceiling. The public space has entrances to the two elevators. On the eighth floor originally was an executive suite (since partitioned into standard size rooms) which had its own kitchen facilities and private roof garden shaded by a canvas awning.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1927-8

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Thomas, Martin & Kirkpatrick

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hotel Barnum is an outstanding Art Deco feature of the downtown Bridgeport skyline. An Italian palazzo front, English brickwork and Egyptian detailing complement the design. Built in a grand style during one of the city's most expansive periods, it remained one of the great hostelries of New England for many years after its construction. Today it serves primarily as a residential hotel and is still one of the city's most important architectural ornaments.

The Barnum was known as the Hotel Beach at the time of its opening. It was named for Francis E. Beach, prominent local merchant and owner of the land on which the building was erected. The name was changed within a year to Hotel Barnum after the more-famous showman who was a Bridgeport resident in the nineteenth century. The structure was owned by a group of local stockholders and leased to the American Hotels Corporation of New York. The timing of its opening (4 March 1929) so close to the beginning of the Great Depression crippled business at the onset, and by 1930 the hotel had been foreclosed by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Corporation, which continued to lease it to the American Hotels Corporation.

The architect of the hotel was the New York firm of Thomas, Martin & Kirkpartick, designers of other major hotels across the country. The local press at the time made note of the "cosmopolitan" styling first brought to Bridgeport with its construction. A 1928 article in Bridgeport Life stated that it, "resembles the new school of design that has made the New York skyline such a marvelously fairylike appearance." The Bridgeport Post of 12 May 1928 described the lobby as, "similar to the Hotel Commodore in New York City."

Today this Art Deco landmark, the second tallest component of the city's skyline, still serves as a major focal point of the downstore area. It has been adapted for reuse as a predominantly residential hotel, as there are few transient salesmen traveling by rail who call at local businesses and industries.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hotel Barnum newspaper clipping file, Historical Collections, Bridgeport Public Library.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .6371

QUADRANGLE NAME Bridgeport

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 minute

UTM REFERENCES
A 18 6511 780 4560 020
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet 2.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles W. Brilvitch

Historic Sites Researcher

ORGANIZATION

Bridgeport Architecture Conservancy

DATE

March, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

128 Walnut Street

TELEPHONE

(203) 336-5737

CITY OR TOWN

Bridgeport

STATE

Connecticut

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL x

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



TITLE

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

September 28, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

12-6-78

ATTEST:

Charles A. Adams
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/4/78

Anna Marie Boyd
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 4 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

The main floor of the hotel is on the second story. It contains a lobby, lounge, banquet room and dining room, along with kitchen facilities. The lobby is approximately 30 feet by 40 feet with a 14-foot ceiling height. It has a floor of Belgian black and yellow terrazzo and a wood-beamed coffered ceiling. It is approached by a 15-foot wide main staircase with wrought iron Spanish style central and side bannisters. All ceiling light fixtures are also of hammered wrought iron, some having gold leaf finish.

The registration desk is at the west side of the lobby. It is constructed of dark varnished oak with diamond shape recessed panels underneath. At the north end of it is a brass cashier's cage. The adjoining check room is entirely panelled to a height of seven feet. On the opposite side of a passway leading to the banquet hall is a telephone room, again panelled in oak. The only major change made in the lobby since the time of its construction has been the partitioning of a small area at the head of the main staircase for an office.

The lounge is a rectangular room at the front of the building, 19 feet by 45 feet, running parallel with Fairfield Avenue. Near each end are pairs of segmented octagonal columns with corresponding octagonal pilasters in the end walls. There are flat faced inverted wrought iron ceiling fixtures of Art Deco design.

The banquet hall at the west end of the building is approximately 30 feet by 80 feet. It has a beamed ceiling supported by marblized Corinthian pilasters with gilded capitals. A small private meeting room facing Fairfield Avenue is connected to it by sliding doors.

The former hotel dining room was converted to the "Winter Quarters" ballroom in the 1940's, and a small stage and bar have been added. Two of the three ground floor storefronts on Fairfield Avenue, including the hotel coffee shop, have been remodeled in the past decade and their original decor covered over or removed.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED OCT 4 1978

DATE ENTERED DEC 6 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

The Hotel Barnum includes all of that area in the City of Bridgeport bounded as follows: starting at a point of intersection with the north street line of Fairfield Avenue at the intersection of the easterly property line of land now or formerly of Hart Realty Co.; thence northerly for a distance of 147 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east and north property lines of land now or formerly of Hart Realty Co.; thence westerly 20.7 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north boundary line of land now or formerly of Hart Realty Co. and the east property line of land now or formerly of Yale University; thence running northerly 70 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the east property line of land now or formerly of Yale University and the south street line of Elm Street; thence easterly 107.74 feet, more or less, along the south street line of Elm Street to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of 1115 Main Street Company; thence southerly 110 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north property line of land now or formerly of 1105 Main Street Inc. and R. & P. Terry; thence westerly 15 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of 1105 Main Street Inc. and R. & P. Terry; thence southerly 23 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the south property line of land now or formerly of 1105 Main Street Inc. and R. & P. Terry; thence easterly 32 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the west property line of land now or formerly of Premium Realty Corp. and R.N.D. Realty Corp.; thence southerly 106.25 feet, more or less, to a point of intersection with the north street line of Fairfield Avenue; thence westerly 96.04 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 4 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

