



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 any 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 Maylie's Restaurant
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1007-09 Poydras Street NA not for publication
city or town New Orleans NA vicinity
state Louisiana code LA county Orleans code 071 zip code 70012

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jonathan Fricker 4/14/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept. Of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

State or 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 this 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): _____

Maureen M. [Signature] Signature of Keeper Date of Action 6/3/98

Maylie's Restaurant

Name of property

Orleans Parish, LA

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 | — | buildings |
| — | — | sites |
| — | — | structures |
| — | — | objects |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Commerce/Trade

Sub. Restaurant

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Work in Progress

Sub. _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick, stucco

roof asbestos

other cast iron

Narrative Description

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

Maylie's Restaurant

Name of property

Orleans Parish, LA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" next to 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

NA

(Mark "X" next to all that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social history

Period of Significance

1894-1948

Significant Dates

1894

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- 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: _____

Maylie's Restaurant
Name of property

Orleans Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing

1 15 782380 3316720

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 National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1998

street & number P.O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name S & W New Orleans, LLC c/o New York Restaurant Group, Inc.

street & number 1114 First Avenue telephone (212) 838-2061

city or town New York state NY zip code 10021

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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The building which formerly housed Maylie's Restaurant is a two-and-one-half storey building of brick construction located at 1007-09 Poydras Street (at the corner of O'Keefe Avenue) in the New Orleans Central Business District. The 1894 building is a typical example of New Orleans' late Victorian architecture, exhibiting a cast-iron balcony at the second storey and Italianate brackets. Despite modifications and some deterioration, the building exhibits a fair degree of integrity.

The former restaurant is located in a portion of the CBD characterized primarily by modern skyscrapers and parking lots. Although the area has historically been a commercial one, the streetscape has changed significantly from that of the building's period of significance, when the surrounding buildings were of only a few stories and most larger commercial buildings were located several blocks away on the Canal Street corridor.

When the restaurant was originally opened in 1876, it was housed in a building located to the east of the candidate at the corner of Poydras Street and what was then Dryades Streets (see attached). This two-storey brick structure was demolished in 1959 in order to widen Dryades Street, the name of which was then changed to O'Keefe Avenue. The demolition of this adjacent structure explains the lack of continuity between the two principal elevations of the candidate.

The front façade of the building at the first storey features four bays of cast iron which are marked with an 1894 date. Three of the bays are in-filled with full-length wooden French doors with three lights each and matching sidelights with operative transoms above; the second bay from the left is filled with a modified entrance which was probably added following the 1959 demolition of the original building, as the entrance was formerly located in the original building. The second storey balcony of the front façade is supported by four cast iron columns featuring simplified Corinthian capitals.

The brick upper storey of the front façade features windows of 9/9 lights with cornice window heads; these windows were formerly shuttered. The capped asbestos roof is gabled at the front with an extending flared eave. The gable features a segmentally arched opening (formerly a window) and flanking quarter-round vents; two chimneys protrude from the roof. Although now sided with asbestos, small portions of the gable's historic textured shingling are visible. The eave is supported by decorative millwork brackets in the Italianate taste and provides a beaded-board ceiling at the second-storey gallery. The dormers protruding from the roof slope are modern additions. The sidewalk at the Poydras Street elevation features tilework reflecting the building's purpose in capital letters--"Maylie and Esparbe Table d'Hote."

The west elevation is not visible, as there is only a narrow alleyway separating this building from the adjacent one. However, interior examination reveals several window and door openings at this elevation.

The stuccoed lower storey of the east elevation features two door openings with French doors and transoms identical to those at the front façade, but without sidelights. The upper storey of this elevation features two door

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openings with treatments identical to the others and two window openings in a window-door-window-door pattern. All are shuttered. This gallery is supported by four simple wooden columns.

A patio located at this elevation features a low wall of corbeled brick topped by a cast iron railing which may be from the balcony of the original restaurant building (historic photographs are inconclusive).

The building has a service wing to the rear, the gallery of which has been enclosed and a dormer has been added. This rear elevation of the service wing also reveals four windows, two of which are associated with the enclosure of the service wing porch and are not original openings.

The interior features and arrangement are largely insignificant with the exception of a large oak bar, which at the time of the National Register evaluation was absent due to rehabilitative construction, as were most of the interior features. Recent photos reveal that the bar features decorative carved millwork and moldings. Also extant are cast-iron columns which act as structural supports at the first floor and interior molded door and window surrounds.

Current plans include the rehabilitation of this building and an adjacent one (through tax credits) for use as a restaurant by the New York restaurant Smith & Wollensky.

Assessment of Integrity: The building is currently undergoing a rehabilitation which will connect it to an adjacent early twentieth-century structure which formerly served as a furniture store. Over the course of the nearly 100-year history of the 1894 building's use as Maylie's Restaurant, various minor modifications were made to the interior to serve the building's function as a restaurant, such as the installation of cabinetry and other such furnishings. Exterior deterioration also caused the complete loss of both front and side gallery decking. Despite the exterior and interior modifications previously mentioned, this building exhibits a fair degree of integrity. It would, at any rate, be recognizable to an individual associated with its historic period. There is, however, an integrity issue related to the 1959 demolition of the adjacent (and formerly attached) original restaurant building. The remaining building, however, does display more visual interest than the earlier structure and this may somewhat mitigate the issue.

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The former home of Maylie's Restaurant is of local significance in the area of social history inasmuch as it represented one of the early and significant restaurants in the city of New Orleans. Described as a "good example of the combination of provinciality and sophistication" in the city, Maylie's Restaurant occupies an important place within the historical context of New Orleans' celebrated culinary history.

Bernard Maylié and Hypolite Esparbé, businessmen and friends, operated a coffee stall in the Poydras Market beginning in the mid-nineteenth century to cater to the market's many merchants. The Poydras Market, a part of the "public market" system which flourished in nineteenth-century New Orleans, was established in 1837 on the former Gravier Plantation which was subdivided as Faubourg Ste. Marie (now Faubourg St. Mary) in order to provide for the city's expansion. The market soon became a social and business center for its merchants--Native American herb sellers, Italian fruit vendors, and Irish and German green grocers. Located on the Poydras Street neutral ground (median) between Baronne and South Rampart Streets, the market operated until its demolition in 1932.

Due to an increasing number of customers, the two men expanded their business in 1876 to a building located at the corner of Poydras and Dryades Streets which had formerly been used as a saloon and billiard hall. They transformed the billiard room into a wine cellar and opened "La Maison Maylié et Esparbé." (At some point, the restaurant became known simply as "Maylie's" and the French *accent aigu* was either dropped or forgotten.) The men, married to French sisters whose father was an innkeeper and who therefore were familiar with cooking and business, expanded their coffee sales to include an 11 o'clock meal prepared by the women. Their *petit déjeuner*, which was actually a late breakfast for the butchers and merchants of the Poydras Market, consisted of stew, coffee, and wine. Although established as an informal market restaurant, Maylie's reputation of providing a delicious Creole meal intrigued further patrons. Mme Esparbé insisted on a "men-only" policy for the restaurant, which was becoming increasingly popular with the many men doing business in this commercial area of the city. It was not until after her death in 1923 that women were served in the restaurant.

In 1894, the men built the current building as a residence, but soon realized that the restaurant would again require expansion. The upper storey of the 1894 building continued to be used as a residence until the restaurant closed in 1986, but the first storey was occupied as part of the restaurant. At this time, the two buildings were connected, but a large wisteria vine which grew between the buildings was saved at the request of Mme Esparbé by connecting the buildings with only a glass enclosure as a roof. The wisteria vine, which covered the entirety of both buildings' balconies, became a Maylie's trademark and is described as having been the restaurant's only significant decor. Local lore suggested that those looking on the vine for the first time could have a wish granted. Current rehabilitation plans include the re-planting of a wisteria vine at the site.

Maylie's *table d'hôte* menu, which offered a selection of many different items and several courses at a fixed price, was one seen in formal cafés and in many early Creole restaurants. However, Maylie's continued to offer this style of menu long after most restaurants began to offer an *à la carte* alternative. This aspect of the restaurant also sets it apart as a Creole establishment which remained true to its history even in the face of modernity. As the *Times Picayune*

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observed in Mme Esparbé's 1923 obituary: "Times have moved too rapidly and the special type of dinner that has made the names of Mme Begue and Mme Esparbé famous has become more and more rare as diners have lost a certain grandeur of appetite ...".

Maylie's was known for its excellent bar and Creole dishes such as *daube glacé*, liquored cracklin' bread, hardshell crab stew, and *bouilli*. *Bouilli*, the house speciality, was a stewed soup meat prepared without spices so that patrons could prepare their own sauces from the many ingredients located at table. In true Creole fashion, wine was served with all meals, which were described as inexpensive, but generous and delicious. Maylie's itself was known as casual (men often removed their coats and ties while dining) and local, but stylish in its Creole traditions.

Louisiana, having been controlled at various times by the French, Spanish, and British, and as the New World home to many West Indian and West African slaves and later European immigrants, necessarily developed a unique cuisine. The term "Creole" refers to an individual of so-called "Old World parentage" who was born and raised in the tropical colonies; a blending of the many backgrounds may also be implied. Thus, Creole cooking is an amalgamation of varying backgrounds, cultures, and ingredients and can be said to be one of the first true American cuisines, having developed in the New World.

As early as 1744, the word "Creole" was used to describe the vegetables found in New Orleans markets. Although most of the cooking methods utilized were Old World, having been brought to the colonies by new settlers and their slaves, the products used were in many cases of the New World, owing to Louisiana's rich agriculture, aquaculture, and trade with France, Britain (through Mobile), Spain (through Florida), and Mexico, Cuba, and the West Indies. Thus, the old methods were influenced by previously unknown ingredients. Creole dishes emphasize a harmony between the ingredients, with no one element being more important than the other. Although some refinements and modifications have been made to various elements of Creole cooking, the fundamentals of the process and ingredients have remained largely unchanged, still emphasizing *l'art de bien manger* that the French so admired and encouraged. The importance of economy was also fundamental to Creole cuisine, as reflected by dishes such as *bouilli* which was also influenced by classic French pot cookery.

Although Maylie's changed managers several times in the early twentieth century, the restaurant remained in the Maylie family until it closed at the end of 1986. Maylie's was one of only two restaurants in New Orleans to remain under the continuous operation of one family from its establishment (the other is Antoine's, the city's oldest restaurant, opened in 1840).

Maylie's enjoyed comparable status to some of the city's finest restaurants despite its lack of formality. Most notable are its similarities to Tujague's Restaurant, which also began as a "market" restaurant (serving the French Market), and which continues in operation today.

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Maylie's Restaurant received wide acclaim as a real "New Orleans" restaurant which emphasized the city's Creole heritage through a relaxed atmosphere and simple but delicious meals. Although visited by celebrities, its primary clientele throughout its more than 100-year history was the local businessmen who worked in the Poydras Street area, the hub of the Central Business District.

A 1918 *Times-Picayune* news article provides a good idea of the place Maylie's occupied in New Orleans' restaurant history. The lengthy article, complete with photos, was on the occasion of Mme Esparbé's decision to close the restaurant temporarily, or perhaps permanently. The reporter bemoaned that "hundreds of New Orleans men and epicures all over the world will mourn the news when the tidings spread. Maylie's is closed." Fearing that the closure would be permanent (which it was not), the article noted that the passing of Maylie's "will bring a chorus of regret from New Orleans men whose weekly or nightly dinner about its friendly board has been an institution for years." The article cited not only the delicious meals which Maylie's offered, but also the "local color" which tourists had come to admire and seek (referring to the restaurant as "an institution that has helped to make New Orleans famous"). Equally, when the restaurant permanently closed in 1986, another *Times-Picayune* article revealed a sense of sadness and nostalgia felt by many of the restaurant's devoted clientele, reflecting its importance to the community at-large.

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Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration. *The WPA Guide to New Orleans: The Federal Writers' Project Guide to 1930s New Orleans*. New York: Pantheon, 1983 (1938).

Grady, Bill. "Gumbo All Gone at Maylie's." *Times-Picayune*. B:1-2. Dec. 31, 1986.

Guste, Roy F., Jr. *The Restaurants of New Orleans*. New York: Norton, 1982.

Kent, Doris. "Famous Kitchen Fire May Not Be Relighted." *Times-Picayune*. 1918.

Land, Mary. *New Orleans Cuisine*. Cranbury, N.J.: Barnes & Co., 1969.

Maylié, Anna May. *Maylié's Table d'Hôte Recipes: The History and Some Facts Concerning La Maison Maylié et Esparbé*. 1941.

Maylie's Restaurant

Name of property

Orleans Parish, LA

County and State

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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Legal Description:

Lot Nos. 7 and 8, Square 270, First District of the City of New Orleans.

Justification:

Boundary follows property lines.