

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

..... Name of Property
..... County and State
..... Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____ 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100002108


Date Listed: 2/23/2018

Property Name: Marconi--RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

County: Marin

State: CA

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



Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Location:

The Street Address location is revised to read: *Mesa Road; Point Reyes National Seashore.*

Historic Function:

Add: *Domestic/ Institutional housing*

The CALIFORNIA SHPO and NPS FPO were notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

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

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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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

Other names/site number: Station KPH

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Mesa Road

City or town: Bolinas State: CA County: Marin

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

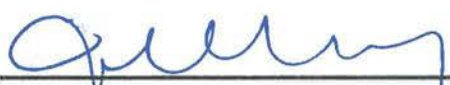
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

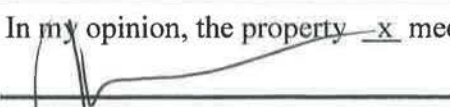
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

	12/19/2017
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>NPS EPO</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
	16 August 2017
Signature of commenting official:	Date
State Historic Preservation Officer	California Office of Historic Preservation
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

2/23/2010
Date of Action

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>13</u>	<u>5</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY/Communications Facility

DOMESTIC/Institutional Housing

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT/National Park Service facility

AGRICULTURE/Agricultural field

HEALTH CARE/Health research facility

7. Description

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Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th/20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Mission Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation concrete; Walls concrete and stucco; Roof tile and asphalt, Detailing brick

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station is located about one mile northwest of Bolinas, California, on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The terrain is vegetated with low growing pasture grasses, except around the areas adjacent to the station buildings, where Monterey cypress, Monterey pine, and eucalyptus windbreaks shield the buildings from the prevailing winds that sweep across the headlands from the ocean. The four Mission Revival buildings erected by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company between 1913 and 1914—a transmitter building, a hotel, and two cottages—occupy an area near the edge of the cliff, above the ocean. All four buildings are made of cast-in-place reinforced concrete, and share the architectural detailing such as red tile roofing and arched entries with decorative brackets. The ruins of a cooling tower are just south of the transmitting station. A paved access road runs southwest for one-half mile from Mesa Road and provides access to the site.

In addition, the site contains four buildings and two structures built by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) between 1929 and 1931; these include a transmitter building, a garage, a power switching building, an antenna tuning building, and two cooling tower foundations. They are located slightly east of the Marconi buildings, clustered within a roughly two-acre area south of the main access road, within a dense stand of trees. Access to the buildings is provided by a one-lane road that extends south from the main access road to the front of the RCA transmitter building, the principal building in the cluster. Monterey Pine trees line the main access road and obscure the buildings in the complex from view from the main road. Like the Marconi-era buildings, the RCA buildings are also constructed of reinforced cast-in-place concrete, but in the Art Deco style. An antenna field occupies an extensive area around the building clusters that comprise the development. The remains of antennas—the concrete bases and poles—surround the site in the fields to the north, south and east. The historic district contains 422 acres.

The transmitting station retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The buildings and structures remain in their original locations, and the setting, in an open landscape above the Pacific Ocean in Point Reyes National Seashore, remains the same. Historic design, materials and workmanship are intact. The buildings and structures continue to be largely unaltered, and the spacial arrangements of the resources reflect the historic pattern. The historic road alignment is intact

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and provides access to the buildings. The antenna fields, with working antennas, still surround the buildings, and cattle still graze these fields, though some coastal scrub species have colonized the fields. Concrete antenna bases and guy wires convey the historic antenna arrays. The buildings, structures and antenna fields convey the historic character of the transmitting station. 60 acres of the site, including the buildings, is leased by the nonprofit Commonweal Retreat Center, but this use does not detract from the historic character of the transmitting station.

Narrative Description

See continuation sheet

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Narrative Description

The Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station is located on headlands north of Bolinas Point, on the Pacific Ocean, about 160 feet above sea level. The closest town is Bolinas, California, which lies about one mile southeast of the facility. The terrain is vegetated with low growing pasture grasses. Exceptions include areas adjacent to the station buildings, where Monterey cypress, Monterey pine, and eucalyptus windbreaks shield the buildings from the prevailing winds that sweep across the headlands from the ocean.

The four buildings erected by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company between 1913 and 1914—a transmitter building, a hotel, and two cottages—occupy an area near the edge of the cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The buildings were constructed in the Mission Revival style. All four buildings are made of cast-in-place reinforced concrete, and share the architectural detailing such as red tile roofing and arched entries with decorative brackets. The ruins of a cooling structure from this era are located just south of the transmitting station, and a tennis court is set at the southeast corner of the hotel. An antenna field occupies an extensive area around the building clusters that comprise the development. The antenna field contains the concrete piers that anchored the antennas erected by the Marconi Company. These occur in three roughly linear clusters between the transmitter building and Mesa Road.

The four buildings and two structures built by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) between 1929 and 1931 include a transmitter building, a garage, a power switching building, an antenna tuning building, and two cooling tower foundations. They are located slightly east of the Marconi buildings, clustered within a roughly two-acre area south of the main access road, within a dense stand of trees. Access to the buildings is provided by a one-lane road that extends south from the main access road to the front of the RCA transmitter building, the principal building in the cluster. A series of concrete walkways lead from building to building, and between buildings and roads. Monterey Pine trees line the main access road and obscure the buildings in the complex from view from the main road. Like the Marconi-era buildings, the RCA buildings are also constructed of reinforced cast-in-place concrete. However, rather than continuing the Mission Revival architectural style, RCA chose the newly popular Art Deco style, with its emphasis on strong vertical lines and geometric forms in detailing. The remains of antennas—the concrete bases and poles—surround the site in the fields to the north, south and east. Sixty acres of the site, including the buildings, is leased by the Commonweal Retreat Center.

Contributing Resources

Marconi Transmitter Building (Building 1)

The Marconi Transmitter Building, completed in 1914, is located near the edge of the cliff overlooking the ocean. The two-story building is made of cast-in-place reinforced concrete. It measures roughly 85 feet by 100 feet. It is divided into two volumes, resulting in a split-level roof, with the southern, higher volume rising above the lower northern section. Each roof level has a long hipped-roof clearstory covered with red tile, with windows that open for ventilation. On the east and west sides of the building, decorative concrete parapets with Mission Revival-style detailing rise above the top of the walls. Large window openings with concrete sills are located in all walls of the building. Each opening originally contained forty fixed lights in wooden sashes. A strip of ground between the west side of the building and the cliff has been planted with cypress and pine, forming a windbreak that partially shields the buildings from the prevailing winds.

Currently, the building exhibits some deterioration in its historic fabric, such as spalling concrete (especially around the door and window openings), and broken windows. In recent years, four loading dock openings on the north side of the building have been filled in with cinderblocks, and most of the door and window openings on

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both floors have been boarded shut with plywood. The building still contains some non-functioning transmitting equipment, and it is used as storage by the Commonweal Retreat Center. Although the condition of the building is only fair, with the exception of the filled-in entries, it possesses sufficient integrity to the historic period, and is counted as a contributing building.

Cooling Structure Ruin

Slightly southwest of the Marconi Transmitter Building lie the ruins of a cooling structure associated with that building. The structure was completed in 1914. The cooling station cooled and recycled water used to lower the temperature of the transmitters in the transmitter building. The concrete base for the tower is extant. The base is counted as a contributing structure.

Cottage No. 1

Cottage No. 1, completed in 1914, is located about 200 feet north of the transmitter building and across a gully. It is accessed from a spur road that extends southwest from the main paved access road. The cottage is a one-story, rectangular building with a hip roof. The exterior walls are concrete with a smooth stucco finish, and the roof is covered with red tile. The top of a red brick chimney, with a metal spark arrester, extends above the roofline at the rear of the building. Throughout, window openings with concrete sills (which occur singly and in pairs) contain one-over-one-light windows with wooden sashes.

The front of the cottage faces west toward the ocean. It has a recessed, open porch that extends the length of the building. Square concrete columns support the roof, and divide the sides of the porch into two bays and the front into five bays. Low, concrete walls span the bays between the columns, the exception being the northernmost bay on the front of the building that accommodates the entrance to the porch. Each wall segment between the columns contains three recessed panels, with a wide panel in the center flanked on either side by a narrow panel. On the rear of the building, a recessed entrance is offset left (south) of center. Concrete steps, flanked on either side by a low concrete wall, lead to the arched opening. Stairs to the basement are located to the right of the rear porch. The only alterations are the addition of some modern replacement doors. The building lies within a grove of pine and cypress, and there are foundation plantings surrounding the base of the building. This building possesses integrity to the historic period, and is counted as a contributing building.

Marconi Hotel

The Marconi Hotel is located roughly 500 feet north of Cottage No. 1, in a discrete area with Cottage No. 2. It is accessed from the north end of the road that leads to Cottage No. 1. The Marconi Company built the hotel between 1913 and 1914 to house technicians and visitors to the station. The two-story hotel has an ell-shaped plan created by a gable roof wing that extends from the rear of the main hip-roof volume. Like the cottage described above, the hotel has a full-length open porch on the front (south) wall, with five bays defined by broad concrete columns. The center bay contains the opening for the porch. A wooden lattice has been attached to the wall above this opening, to support climbing vines that are part of the foundation plantings. The arched openings between the columns and the low porch wall exhibit the same architectural details as the cottage, including the brackets at the corners and panels in the porch walls. Five evenly spaced window openings, each with a one-over-one-light aluminum sash, are located in the second story above the porch. The sides and rear walls also contain single window openings, symmetrically placed along the first and second stories. On the east side a chimney extends the full two stories and projects above the roof; the entrance to the basement is located adjacent to the chimney. Another entrance is located on the rear (north) wall of the wing, centered within the wall and accessed by concrete steps with a low concrete wall on each side.

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A gravel road surrounds the building. Foundation plantings are located between the road and the building, especially adjacent to the front entrance, where a rock-lined planting bed separates the road from the front wall of the building. The concrete pad of an associated tennis court lies under forest duff adjacent to the southeast corner of the hotel, within a grove of trees, though further excavations are needed to assess the pad's condition. Two deteriorating concrete net posts remain as markers of the court's location.

Recent modifications to the hotel include the installation of aluminum sashes in the original window openings (to replace wood sashes), the construction of a fire escape on the west side of the building, and the addition of a shed-roof dormer in the east side of the roof of the rear wing. Despite these modifications, the architectural design of the building has not been substantially altered, and it possesses sufficient integrity to be counted as a contributing building.

Cottage No. 2

Cottage No. 2 lies east of the hotel, across the access road between the two buildings. This building is identical to Cottage No. 1, except that its original wood window sashes have been replaced with aluminum sashes. The front of the building is oriented south, opening onto a gravel access drive that extends around the building from the main road. Foundation plantings are found on the front and sides of this cottage, and a climbing vine grows over the front porch. This cottage retains integrity to the historic period is counted as a contributing building.

Pedestrian Bridge

A concrete pedestrian bridge spans the gully separating Cottage No. 1 from the Marconi Transmitter Building. The bridge is 54" wide and 11' long, and is approximately 35" thick. The date of construction is unknown, but its exposed twisted square-section reinforcing bars are typical of the historic period, as is the deterioration of the same iron reinforcing bars on the bottom, due to rusting and expansion of the metal. Despite the corrosion, the bridge is still sound and in fair condition. The galvanized railing supports bolted to the top of the bridge along with the wooden railings are replacements. The pedestrian bridge is a contributing structure.

RCA Transmitter Building (Building 2)

The RCA Transmitter Building is the largest of that company's additions to the site. It was built in 1929. It is two stories tall, rectangular (95' by 60'), with a concrete parapet rising above the flat roof. The front (east) wall exhibits classic symmetrical Art Deco styling. Four fluted pilasters, rising from concrete bases to the top of the parapet, divide the façade into three bays, a central entry bay on the ground floor with a window bay on either side. Glazed bricks are arranged in a diamond pattern top each pilaster at the level of the parapet. "RCA COMMUNICATIONS INC" is spelled out in one-foot-tall metal letters, across the parapet between the pilasters.

The slightly recessed entrance is accessed via concrete stairs. Fluted concrete pilasters that extend the height of the ground floor flank either side of the central entry. The entrance contains a wooden door with one large light, surrounded by side lights and a transom. Lantern-style light fixtures are affixed to the wall outside the entry pilasters. The window openings on the ground floor contain two, two-over-two-light single hung sashes, with a two-light fixed sash on top. Second story window openings are larger, extending from floor to ceiling, and contain four, two-over-two-light single-hung wood sashes, divided by a central fixed sash. The north and south sides of the original volume exhibit the same symmetrical styling as the front, with four window bays defined by the full-height concrete pilasters. In recent years, a wood fire escape, a handicap access ramp, and a deck on the building's south side have been added.

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A circular drive, defined by raised concrete curbing, lies in front of the building. Curbing also extends along the north side of the building to the vicinity of a garage. The circular planting area in front of the transmitter building and narrow strips of land on its north and south sides are planted in grass. A concrete bench, 6' long, 2' wide, and 2' high, is located at the southeast end of the drive. It is set on a concrete pad with a short concrete walkway leading up to it from the drive. The building has a short walkway or landing in front of the primary entrance (northeast façade) of the building. It is approximately 8' wide and constructed of concrete to match the steps leading up to the front door. This original portion of the building is utilized by the Commonweal Retreat Center for administration and programs.

An addition, built in 1959, covers the entire length of the rear wall. Made of concrete blocks, it nearly doubled the size of the original building. The addition is also two stories high, like the original building, with symmetrical fenestration on the sides. The rear of the building contains a central loading dock. This addition houses the transmission equipment, which is maintained and operated by the Maritime Radio Historical Society. Despite the addition, the building possesses sufficient integrity to the historic period, and is counted as a contributing building.

Garage

The garage, constructed in 1929, is located behind (west of) the RCA transmitter building. It is a one-story, rectangular building, and measures 28' by 52'. Like the transmitter building, the distinctive architectural features of the garage include its full-height pilasters that extend from the base of the building to the roof parapet and that divide the exterior wall surface into bays. Although the pilasters are not fluted, glazed bricks applied in a diamond pattern are affixed to the top of the pilaster, at the level of the parapet.

The garage faces south onto a utility road that runs between it and the operations building. From west to east, the front of the building originally had five garage bays, each enclosed with a large diagonal board-and-batten door; an office bay; and a pull-through fueling bay at the east end of the building. The east wall of the office bay contains a pedestrian entrance in the south half and a six-light fixed wood sash window in the north half of the wall. The pull-through fueling bay, open on the north, east and west sides, is adjacent to the east wall of the office. The two garage bays west of the office have been combined into one large space, by removing the interior wall and the south side pilaster/pier, and installing a steel I-beam across the enlarged opening to support the structural load. On the rear (north) wall, six, six-light fixed windows are evenly spaced across the wall, and correspond to the six interior spaces. It originally had a flat timber roof with a concrete parapet, but the roof has collapsed, leaving the interior open to the weather. For this reason, the building is unused. Although this building is in poor condition, it retains sufficient integrity to be counted as a contributing building.

Power Switching Building

The power switching building, built in 1929, is located north of the transmitter building. Historically, the building housed the central switch that channeled electrical feeds from a substation on Mesa Road to the transmitters. Built in the same style as the other RCA buildings, it has a flat roof and smooth pilasters with brick detailing. It measures 14' by 26', and has a door in the center of the south wall; there are no windows in the building. A short 3' wide walkway leads from the road northwest of the RCA Transmitter Building to the center of the switching building. The building is currently utilized as a recreation room by the retreat center. The power switching building retains integrity to the historic period and is counted as a contributing building.

Antenna Tuning Building

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The RCA antenna tuning building, built in 1929-1930, is set southwest of the transmitter building on the south side of RCA/Marconi Road. The building (also known as building 42) was used to house devices to "tune" the transmission antennas to specific frequencies. The simple wood-frame building with a shallow gable-roof is approximately 12' x 15', and 13' high at the ridge. There is a door on the north side and vents immediately under the roof peak at the front and rear of the building. The roof is covered with asphalt composition shingles. The tuning building is immediately adjacent to a wood antenna pole. A 4' wide walkway leads due south from the RCA/Marconi Road to the RCA Tuning Building. During the historic period there were several antenna tuning buildings located in the antenna field. The building is leased to the Commonwealth Retreat Center. This is the only one left in its original location and configuration, and it is a contributing building.

Cooling Tower Foundations

The remains of two cooling structures are located across a driveway on the south side of the RCA transmitter building. Water, used to cool the equipment in the transmitter building, was transported to the two structures, where it was allowed to cool before being recycled back to the transmitter building. Each structure consisted of a 17' by 17' concrete pool topped by a metal tower, about 15 feet high. The frame of one tower and the concrete substructures of both remain. These cooling structures were an integral part of the historic-era operations at the site. Although they lack some aspects of historical integrity, sufficient material and design integrity remains to indicate their functions in terms of station operations. For this reason, the remains of the two structures are counted as one contributing site.

Road System

The station's vehicular road system was built between 1913 and 1928. The road network consists of the entrance road, utility area roads, residential area roads, the antenna field road, and a road along the bluff. It has changed little over time. The entrance road is a paved, 15-foot wide one-lane road that extends about a quarter mile southwest from county-maintained Mesa Road, through open pasture towards the Marconi buildings. Utility area roads include two paved driveways that lead southeast from the entrance road to the RCA Transmitter Building. The first, northeast driveway terminates at the oval loop drive in front of the RCA Transmitter Building and the second, southwest driveway terminates at the back of the building.

Branching southwest off the western end of the parking area behind the RCA Transmitter Building is the RCA/Marconi Road, leading toward the Marconi Transmitter Building on the bluff. The straight, mostly gravel road has weathered and missing patches of asphalt in numerous places, indicating it was paved at one time, and vegetation growing in patches in the middle of the roadbed. It is 8' wide with no curbing. The road cuts through the antenna field, flanked by poles and antenna foundations on both sides. Several paved and gravel roads branch from the paved access road, and lead to specific buildings as well as the outlying areas that once contained the antennas. The residential roads provide access to the cluster of Marconi-era residential buildings. The gravel residential road extends one-tenth of a mile and terminates at the driveways for the Marconi Hotel and Cottage No. 2. Just after the turn from the Entrance Road, is a Y-intersection for a road that leads southwest 400', providing access to Cottage No. 1.

Branching off the entrance road, just 100' southwest of Mesa Road, is a dirt two-track road providing access to the antenna field. The road extends one mile southwest, terminating at the bluff where a concentration of concrete counterweights have been dumped. In addition, a narrow dirt road branches off the RCA/Marconi Road at the Marconi Transmitter Building, heading southeast along the bluff for one-half mile.

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Some roads are now primarily used for foot rather than auto traffic, but their alignment has not been altered. The station's road system has changed little since 1928, and is counted as a single contributing structure.

Antenna Field

The antenna field was constructed in 1914, when the Marconi station opened. The antenna field occupies an extensive area around the three building clusters that comprise the Marconi and RCA development. The Marconi Company constructed nine 300-foot towers at the site to support its antennas. In the 1930s, the original antennas were removed, but the nine foundations remain. Each consists of the tower base and four guy wire foundations. The bases are substantial features: solid concrete blocks measuring 8' by 8' feet and about 8' deep, with a 30" metal ring (the base of the tower) imbedded in the surface. The guy wire anchors are 10' cubes, sunk into the ground with about two feet exposed above the surface, with diagonal faces for the four metal guy attachments.

RCA constructed and installed new antennas after acquiring the site in 1920. A series of historic wood H-Frames stretch long distances from the RCA Transmitter Building and are connected to antennas located throughout the property. Historically, the antennas radiated from the building core and included various arrays of antenna poles that changed over time to accommodate new technologies. Today, these arrays are evident through the existing poles, remnant antenna foundation blocks, downed poles, wires, and other industrial artifacts throughout the fields.

The antenna field changed constantly throughout the historic period, with antennas continuously being relocated, removed, added or altered according to technological advances and desired signal locations around the world. These changes continued well after the period of significance, as made evident by the 1980s large metal aeronautical radio antenna tower that occupies the field northeast of the industrial building core that is still in use today. As radio technology evolved, antenna designs evolved also. Although none of the concurrent or subsequent antenna systems required such massive towers, dozens of other antenna structural remains can be found in the Bolinas antenna field – poles and wood frames, ground wires, concrete foundations, and antenna wires – and these remains also contribute to the integrity of the antenna field site. All of the standing antennas at the site date from the 1990s, which were the last years of commercial station operations. Changes since the end of the period of significance have not overshadowed the historic antenna formations that are still evident in the wood poles, support structures and antenna remnants. They help to convey the types of configurations that were historically used to receive wireless signals from specific locations around the Pacific Ocean. Therefore, the antenna field, with its antenna tower bases, wood H-frames, antenna poles, concrete foundations, downed poles, and guy wire anchors, is counted as a contributing site.

Non-Contributing Buildings and Structures

RCA Generator Building

The generator building was probably constructed around 1959, and is thus outside of the period of significance. The structure, built entirely of sheet metal with widely spaced corrugations, was assembled

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on a concrete foundation, and housed the emergency generation equipment to supply electricity to the station's transmitters. The building is rectangular, 27' x 45', with a shallow metal gable roof approx. 20' high, and is sited just northwest of Building 2. On the southeast side, facing Building 2a, there is a single nine-light metal window and the original intake vent for the generators. On the southwest side there are double doors and the exhaust louvers for the diesel generators. The northwest side has three sets of six-light metal windows placed high on the wall. The northeast side has a single entry door and a single nine-light metal window. There is a 6' x 15' concrete pad on the southeast side. The structure is used today as a workshop/utility building.

Meditation Hut

The Commonweal Retreat Center's meditation hut is a wood-framed structure sited near a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The building's origin and original location are unknown, but in both appearance and dimensions, approximately 12' x 11' x 13' tall, it suggests a former life as a tuning or rigging shed in the transmitting station antenna field. Wood shingles cover the roof and all walls; there is a single door and four small windows. Based on a small opening at the peak of the roof, Maritime Radio Historical Society members conjecture the hut may have originally been used as a rigger's shack for greasing cable. Historic photos show similar outbuildings, but this specific structure has not been identified in any of them, furthering the belief that this building was moved to its current location. Because it was likely moved and significantly modified for its current use, this structure no longer has integrity and does not contribute.

Pump House

The pump house is a contemporary wood-frame utility building is 9' x 12' and 10' tall at the roof ridge. It has plywood siding and asphalt composition 3-tab shingles on the roof. There is a single door on the front. The building is located in the island of vegetation between the Marconi Hotel and Cottage 2.

Sauna

A contemporary wood-frame sauna structure, also managed by Commonweal Retreat Center, is composed of a small plywood sauna building with vertical battens under a larger gable shingled roof sheltering a shaded shower on one side of the sauna, and partially sheltering a sitting area on the other. The sauna heater and stove pipe project from the rear of the sauna structure. The roof is missing several shingles. A contemporary wood footbridge, 4' x 9', spans a ditch located in the island of vegetation between the Marconi Hotel and Cottage 2. It is constructed of conventional dimensional lumber. These structures were built in the 1990s and do not contribute to the historic district.

Parking Areas

The Commonweal Retreat Center also built two minor contemporary additions to the RCA road system, but these do not affect the integrity of the historic road system. The center built a small parking area that is located near the northeast corner of the RCA Transmitter Building. It has a gravel and grass surface and is demarcated by large peeled logs, roughly twelve-to-eighteen inches in diameter. Along the Residential Road toward the hotel, Commonweal added a grass and gravel parking strip southeast of the junction that splits toward the hotel or Cottage 2. It is on the northeast side of the road and appears to have been added in the late-1990s or early 2000s, also to provide parking for Commonweal guests and visitors.

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

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

Marin County, CA

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 8

Summary of Contributing Resources	
<i>Contributing Buildings</i>	
Marconi Transmitter building (Building 1)	
Cottage No. 1	
Cottage No. 2	
Marconi Hotel	
RCA Transmitter Building	
Garage	
Switching Building	
Antenna Tuning Building	
<i>Contributing Structures</i>	
Historic Road Network	
Marconi Cooling Structure Ruin	
Pedestrian Bridge	
<i>Contributing Sites</i>	
RCA Cooling Tower Foundations	
Antenna Field	
Summary of Non-contributing Resources	
<i>Non-contributing Buildings</i>	
Generator Building	
Commonweal Meditation Hut	
Commonweal Pump House	
Commonweal Sauna	
<i>Non-contributing Structures</i>	
Commonweal Parking Areas	
Total contributing Resources = 13	Total Noncontributing Resources = 5

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
Name of Property

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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Communications
Architecture

Period of Significance
1913-1945

Significant Dates
1913-1914, 1929-1930

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
J.G. White Engineering Company

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The district is eligible under Criterion A at the national level of significance for its role as the first station in the continental United States to transmit wireless messages between two points of land across the Pacific Ocean. Between 1913 and 1919, the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America developed a worldwide wireless communications network, and the Bolinas Transmitting Station was an integral part of that system. The technology, which used "long wave" radio to transmit Morse code messages that were then translated into telegrams, was groundbreaking. The facility enabled wireless communications between the United States, Hawaii, and Asia for the first time. The transmitting station, along with its sister station, the Marshall Receiving Station (which was listed on the National Register at the national level of significance in 1989), were the only stations on the West Coast of North America, and the first and only stations to relay wireless messages across the Pacific Ocean during the early era of wireless communications (before 1920).

The Bolinas Transmitting Station is also significant as one of only two known extant examples of a shortwave radio station from the early era of shortwave radio communications in the United States. In the 1920s, after the discovery that shortwave radio technology could more efficiently and economically power the transmission of wireless messages, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) converted the Bolinas Transmitting Station into a shortwave radio transmitting station. RCA sought to develop a worldwide wireless communications network with the new technology by utilizing the former Marconi stations as well as developing new sites. Shortwave wireless stations proliferated, since they could be built relatively inexpensively, and RCA and other companies built numerous transmitting and receiving stations along the United States coast. By mid-century, as satellite technology evolved and as the telephone became the standard method of overseas communications, the number of shortwave wireless stations declined. Almost none of them survive, and the Bolinas Transmitting Station remains as a rare example of a shortwave wireless station from the interwar period.

The district is significant under Criterion C at the local level of significance, since the buildings exhibit the distinct characteristics of Mission Revival and Art Deco architecture. The Mission Revival buildings are the only examples of the type in Point Reyes National Seashore. The Art Deco buildings, along with those built by RCA at the Point Reyes Receiving Station, are the only examples of this type within the seashore. Changes to the buildings, which included modifications to support technological advancements, took place mostly on the interior, and the buildings retain integrity to the historic period. The period of significance begins in 1913, when the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America began station construction, and ends in 1945, when the United States Army and Navy vacated the station at the end of World War II.

The Bolinas Transmitting Station represents one of only four extant Marconi wireless stations in the continental United States. The other three have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Chatham, Massachusetts wireless station, built in 1914 to communicate with stations in Europe, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the local, state and national level of significance in 1994. Little remains of the South Wellfleet Station, Marconi's first in the United States, due to seaside erosion. Only two tower bases and one building foundation remain. These ruins were listed on the National Register (the level of significance is not listed on the nomination) in 1975. The Marshall Receiving Station, the sister station of the Bolinas Transmitting Station that is the subject of this nomination, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance in

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

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1989. The site contains seven acres (of the original 1,125 acres), and retains four of the five original buildings. The site is now operated by California State Parks as a conference center, and numerous buildings and structures have been added to the site.

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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- Bray, John. *Innovation and the Communications Revolution: From the Victorian Pioneers to Broadband Internet*. London: Institution of Electrical Engineers, 2002.
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- Burns, Russell. *Communications: An International History of the Formative Years*. New York: Institute of Engineering and Technology, 2003.
- California Department of Parks and Recreation. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Station KPH-Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America, 1989.
- Coe, Lewis. *Wireless Radio: A Brief History*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 1996.
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- Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Marconi-RCA Wireless Receiving Station, Chatham, Massachusetts, 1994
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Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

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Short, K.R.M. "World War II Broadcasting in the Pacific" *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 3:1 (1983), 51-62..

Solymar, Laszlo. *Getting the Message: A History of Communications*. London: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Weightman, Gavin. *Senor Marconi's Magic Box: The Most Remarkable Invention of the Nineteenth Century and the Amateur Inventor that Sparked a Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 2003.

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Williams, Ralph. "Report from Radio Central," *Quarterly Bulletin of the Antique Wireless Association*, 20:1 (Spring 1992).

Wood, James. *The History of International Broadcasting, Volume I*. London: Peter Peregrinus, Inc, 1992.

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 # CA-311-A
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Point Reyes National Seashore

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 422 acres

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Zone: 10 | Easting: 523,580 | Northing: 4,196,549 |
| 2. Zone: 10 | Easting: 524,359 | Northing: 4,197,215 |
| 3. Zone: 10 | Easting: 524,364 | Northing: 4,196,967 |
| 4. Zone: 10 | Easting: 524,603 | Northing: 4,196,810 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the northwest corner of the property, the boundary extends east along the south edge of Mesa Road for approximately one mile at which point the boundary turns southwest in an almost straight line to the edge of the bluff above the Pacific Ocean; from this point the boundary line follows the edge of the bluff northwestward to the south edge of an unnamed coulee; from this point the boundary follows the south edge of the coulee northeast to its point of beginning.

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries for the transmitting station incorporate the area developed by the Marconi Company and by RCA. The boundaries include all extant buildings as well as the former antenna fields. The boundaries do not include all land owned by the Marconi Company and RCA. Both companies purchased land near Bolinas totaling about 1,049 acres, but the companies never developed the excess land; instead, they leased it to local ranchers for cattle grazing.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Christy Avery, Historian
organization: National Park Service
street & number: 909 1st Ave
city or town: Seattle state: WA zip code: 98104
e-mail: Christine_Avery@nps.gov
telephone: 206-220-4127
date: _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Marconi/ RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

City or Vicinity: Inverness

County: Marin

State: CA

Photographer: Debra Suarez

Date Photographed: May 26, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: (11 photos)

Photo # 1 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0001)

Entrance road to Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southwest.

Photo # 2 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0002)

Southeast façade (left) and northeast elevation (right) of Marconi Transmitter Building at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing northwest.

Photo # 3 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0003)

Northwest elevation (left) and southwest façade (right) of Marconi Cottage 1 at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southeast.

Photo # 4 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0004)

Southwest elevation (left) and southeast façade (right) of Marconi Cottage 2 at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing north.

Photo # 5 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0005)

Southeast façade (left) and northeast elevation (right) of Marconi Hotel at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing northwest.

Photo # 6 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0006)

Northeast façade (left) and northwest elevation (right) of RCA Transmitter Building at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southwest.

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

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Photo # 7 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0007)

Southeast façade (left) and northeast elevation (right) of RCA Garage at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing northwest.

Photo # 8 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0008)

Southeast façade (left) and northeast elevation (right) of RCA Switching Building at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing west.

Photo # 09 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0009)

RCA Cooling Tower Foundations at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southwest.

Photo # 10 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0010)

H-frames at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southeast.

Photo # 11 (CA_Marin County_Bolinas Transmitting Station_HD_0011)

Antenna Field from Entrance Road at Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station, camera facing southeast.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
Name of Property
Marin County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Marconi/RCA Transmitting Station and RCA Point Reyes Receiving Station Historic District
Point Reyes National Seashore
Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
Cultural Landscapes Inventory Site Plan - Boundary Map

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

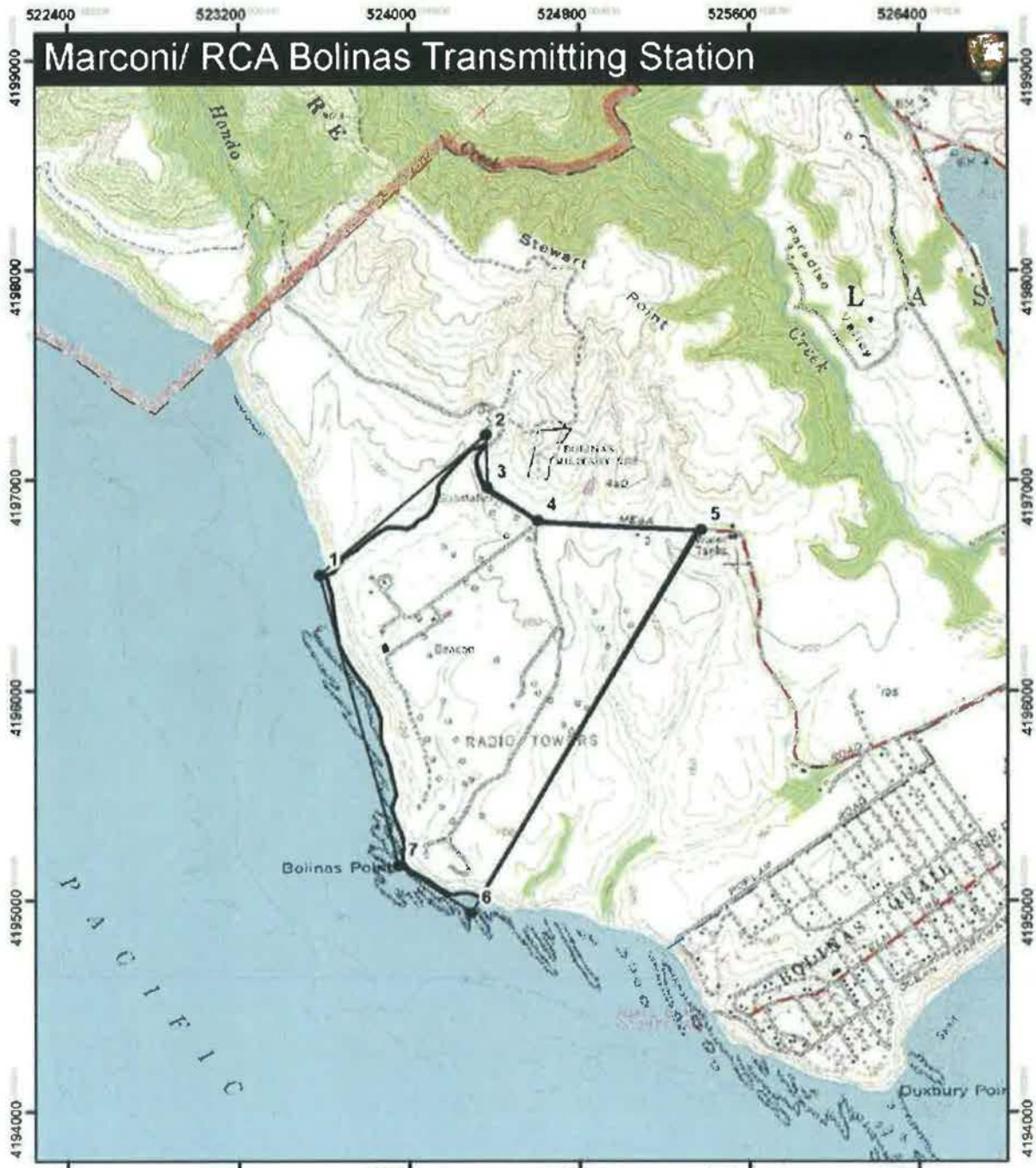


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
Name of Property
Marin County, CA
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 10 Page 2



	National Park Service Point Reyes National Seashore Marin County, CA		Legend ● UTM reference points □ UTM reference polygon □ Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station
	0 250 500 750 1,000 Meters		

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station



	<p>National Park Service Point Reyes National Seashore Marin County, CA</p>	<p>0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet</p>		Legend
				Contributing
				Non-Contributing

Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station Detailed Map



2014 Aerial Imagery

	<p>National Park Service Point Reyes National Seashore Marin County, CA</p> <p>0 120 240 360 480 Feet</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>Legend</p> <p> Contributing</p> <p> Non-Contributing</p>
--	---	----------	--



NO
PARKING
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POINT













RCA

COMMUNICATIONS

INC





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325i LS







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Marconi--RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station

Multiple Name:

State & County: CALIFORNIA, Marin

Date Received:
1/9/2018

Date of Pending List:
1/29/2018

Date of 16th Day:
2/13/2018

Date of 45th Day:
2/23/2018

Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100002108

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

Appeal

SHPO Request

Waiver

Resubmission

Other

PDIL

Landscape

National

Mobile Resource

TCP

CLG

Text/Data Issue

Photo

Map/Boundary

Period

Less than 50 years

Accept

Return

Reject

2/23/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

The Marconi--RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station is nationally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Communications and locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture. Between 1913 and 1919, the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America developed a worldwide wireless communications network, and the Bolinas Transmitting Station was an integral part of that system. This site was the first station in the continental United States to transmit wireless messages between two points of land across the Pacific Ocean. Significant later additions to the site reflected the important transition from long to short wave transmissions, which facilitated the more efficient and economic transmission of wireless messages worldwide. The Bolinas transmitting station remains as one of only four extant Marconi wireless stations in the continental United States, and is also a rare example of a shortwave wireless station from the interwar period. Architecturally, the buildings exhibit the distinct characteristics of Mission Revival and Art Deco architecture and represent the common design vocabulary of such installations.

Recommendation/
Criteria Accept National Register Criteria A and C

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 2/23/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : Yes




United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

DEC 19 2017

H32(2280)

Memorandum

To: Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places 

From: Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science,
NPS Federal Preservation Officer

Subject: National Register Nomination for Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting
Station, Point Reyes National Seashore, Marin County, CA

I am forwarding the National Register Nomination for the Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station in Point Reyes National Seashore. The Park History Program has reviewed the nomination and found it eligible at the national and local levels under Criteria A and C, with Areas of Significance of Communication and Architecture.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and chief local elected official(s) were sent the documentation, and within 45 days, the SHPO x supported supported with comments did not respond. Any comments received are included with the documentation.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Spradley-Kurowski at 202-354-2266 or kelly_spradley-kurowski@nps.gov.

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053
calshpo@parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



August 16, 2017

Ms. Joy Beasley
Federal Preservation Officer
Deputy Associate Director
Park Programs and National Heritage Areas
Washington Office
1201 Eye St., NW, Room 804
Washington DC 20005

RE: RCA Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station Nomination for the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) nomination for the Marconi/RCA Bolinas Transmitting Station. I concur that the district identified and evaluated in the nomination is eligible for listing in the National Register. The nomination clearly associates the property with the historic contexts of (Criterion A) Communications, for its national significance as the first radio station in the continental United States to transmit wireless messages between two points of land across the Pacific Ocean, and Architecture (Criterion C) for its locally significant examples of Art Deco and Spanish Colonial Revival architecture.

I have signed the application as commenting authority. If you have any questions, please contact William Burg of my staff at (916) 445-7004 or wburg@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julianne Polanco".

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer