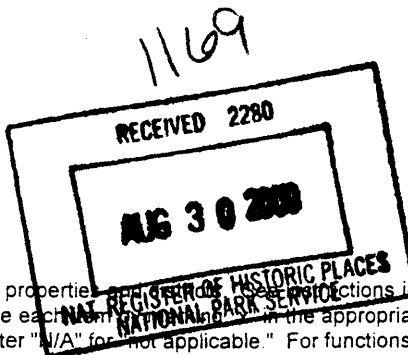


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



RECEIVED

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OHP

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item 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, 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 Club Casa Del Mar

other names/site number Del Mar Club, Synanon Foundation, Pritikin Longevity Center, Hotel Casa Del Mar

2. Location

street & number 1910 Ocean Avenue (n/a) not for publication

city or town Santa Monica (n/a) vicinity

state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90401

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 CAR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Samuel Abeyta 8/3/00
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

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 commenting or other official 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): _____

[Signature] _____
Signature of the Keeper
Edson F. Ball 9-29-00
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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/clubhouse
DOMESTIC/hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:
Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
roof CERAMIC TILE
walls BRICK, CONCRETE
other CONCRETE METAL/tin, METAL/iron

Narrative Description

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

Please see continuation sheets.

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 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
 Entertainment/Recreation
 Architecture

Period of Significance

1926 to 1941

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Plummer, Charles F., architect & engineer
 Reynolds, Dell S., consulting engineer
 Arthur Bard and Company, contractor
 Barker Brothers, interiors and furnishings

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CAR 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 1	3 6 2 3 8 0	3 7 6 3 6 6 5
	Zone	Easting	Northing

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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 Christy Johnson McAvoy, Principal

organization Historic Resources Group date January 7, 1999

street & number 1728 Whitley Avenue telephone (323) 469-2349

city or town Hollywood state California zip code 90028-4809

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 The Edward Thomas Companies - Tim DuBois, President

street & number 9301 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 515 telephone (310) 859-9366

city or town Beverly Hills state CA zip code 90210

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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Club Casa del Mar
Los Angeles, California

Section 7: Description

Summary

Club Casa Del Mar, located at 1910 Ocean Avenue in Santa Monica, California is one of the last surviving examples of beach club architecture in the city from the 1920s. Designed by architect Charles F. Plummer, the building maintains a horizontal orientation and formal, symmetrical composition consistent with the conventions of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. The primary facade on Ocean Avenue, facing east, and the beachside facade, facing west, are both symmetrical. From the exterior the building appears five to six stories high on various facades due to the grade of the property. The base is clad in cast stone and has mezzanines inserted within portions of the first two floors, which have banks of tall windows overlooking the beach and coastline. The top three stories are clad in brick and have smaller, rectangular windows (those on the top floor have arched headers). A penthouse, rectangular in plan and parallel to the primary facade, is located atop the east side of the building. The beach facing side of the building has a patio terrace on the fourth floor within the U-shaped plan of the upper stories and a projecting pavilion at the beach level. The building's historic name is Club Casa del Mar, and it is herein referred to as "Casa del Mar."

Alterations and Rehabilitations

Originally constructed as a private beach club, the Casa Del Mar building has had several occupants since the Second World War, including a U.S. Army Redistribution Center, the Synanon Foundation, the Pritikin Longevity Center, and most recently the Hotel Casa Del Mar. These owners altered some exterior elements and much of the building's interior to accommodate a succession of uses. The building's exterior, however, retains much of its integrity. A substantial renovation of the building occurred at the end of the Second World War, including extensive masonry repointing and window repairs. Further alterations were made between 1949 and the mid 1980s.

A rehabilitation completed in September 1999 substantially restored all missing original exterior elements, including wood windows, cast stone cladding on the west elevation, sheet metal "rafter tails" under the eaves, and a large penthouse structure above the roof line. Multiple coats of paint were also removed to uncover original cast stone surfaces. Some cast stone pieces which were badly deteriorated due to salt air corrosion or reinforcing were replaced in kind. A raised pool deck was added atop the fourth floor exterior patio terrace on the building's west elevation in a reversible manner during this rehabilitation.

Extant original decorative interior features, including a plaster and wrought iron organ grill soffit and open stairwells with wood railings, were retained and repaired. The historic double-loaded U-shaped corridor patterns on the upper guest-room floors were also preserved in the rehabilitation. Many original features on the building's lower levels, such as the indoor plunge, gymnasium, and locker rooms, were significantly affected by previous alterations and had been subdivided into offices, meeting rooms, and an exercise room. The 1999 rehabilitation reopened some of these spaces to create a ballroom in the gymnasium space at the beach-level loggia and re-subdivided the remaining space into hotel support and guest rooms. On the building's main level, previously added partitions and suspended acoustical tile ceilings were removed to restore higher ceiling heights and a larger, more open space similar to the interior's original condition, establishing a circulation and visual connection to the beach.

The current owners performed the rehabilitation using the architect's original 1926 construction drawings for the building. Aside from previous interior alterations noted above, the building retains historic integrity as the last historic beach club building on the Santa Monica coast. Historically, it stood with the adjacent Breakers Beach and Edgewater

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Club Casa del Mar
Los Angeles, California

Clubs (both demolished) dominating the coastal view south of the Santa Monica Pier and was a common subject of many photographs and postcards.

The Club Casa Del Mar building occupies half a city block between Ocean Avenue and Appian Way on the beach south of the Santa Monica Pier. It is five stories high with a symmetrical U-shaped plan. The end of the building's U-shaped plan faces west, opening on to the beach, while the main entrance is located on the east facade. The central space created by the "U" is occupied by a two-story, five-sided pavilion projecting from the face of the west elevation. The building is covered by a hipped roof fit with terra-cotta mission-barrel roof tiles, while the pavilion has a flat roof that doubles as a patio terrace. The tile roofing on the west-facing roof shed was at one time replaced with composition roofing, and was again restored with terra cotta roof tiles in the late 1990s.

A large rectangular penthouse topped Casa Del Mar's existing roof until it was damaged by fire and removed in 1948. The structure had a stucco finish and featured a hipped roof fit with terra-cotta mission barrel roof tiles. Seven regularly-spaced, arched openings with decorative wood shutters punctuated the structure's east and west elevations. Two flat-roofed dormers overlooking the building's east elevation replaced the penthouse after its removal. The penthouse was reconstructed according to original plans in the most recent rehabilitation.

Structure

Two different structural systems are contained in Casa Del Mar's construction. The foundation and structural components on the building's first, second, and third levels consist of reinforced concrete, steel, and concrete-encased steel column framing. Three wythes (seventeen inches) of unreinforced brick, clad on the exterior with either cast stone panels or brick veneer, infill this framing. The structural component of the building's upper levels consists of unreinforced brick masonry bearing walls with some steel framing elements and wood-framed interior partitions, floors, and roof supports. Brick veneer with cast-stone panel trim clads the exterior walls of these levels. The building's foundation and entire structural system received partial seismic strengthening in the early 1990s and a complete structural rehabilitation in 1998-1999. This work included the concealed bolting of floor and roof-framing elements to the exterior unreinforced masonry walls, or "Phase I" seismic strengthening, prior to the Northridge earthquake in 1994, and afterwards the addition of shotcrete-formed shear resisting elements in the building's three upper floors.

Exterior

The Casa Del Mar property slopes downward from the building's southeast corner. The building's first story, or ground floor, consequently sits partially below street grade, causing the main entrance to access the second floor. The first story is faced in cast stone on all elevations. The second story, or main floor, is topped by a band course of cast stone embellished with a series of alternating roundels. The roundels on the outer sections of the east and west facades contain sculpted masculine profiles. Red brick veneer a stretcher bond pattern is the primary exterior cladding material on the third, fourth, and fifth stories, and partially on the second story. The building's corners feature non-alternating quoins of cast stone. Its upper story is topped with a decorative frieze of cast stone just below the projecting eaves. Painted, galvanized sheet metal brackets originally adorned the existing cornice, but had been removed and replaced with a painted plywood soffit. Missing original metal brackets were replicated and replaced with the existing brackets in 1999.

The east (front) facade is divided vertically by two cast stone pilasters into three sections. The middle section is five bays wide with a centered entrance. The main entrance is recessed and consists of a large, decorative cast stone

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Club Casa del Mar
Los Angeles, California

archway. Within the archway are two sets of nonhistoric, nine-light, metal frame double doors beneath a large decorative multi-light window. A non-historic metal marquee projects between the doors and the window above. Installed during the late 1990s rehabilitation, all of these elements within the archway are compatible with the building's original features. They replaced earlier alterations, including two sets of single-light, metal entrance doors, a vertically-glazed, aluminum-framed, four-light window, and a fixed-frame fabric "box" awning.

A cast stone arch surrounds the main entrance, flanked on each side of the upper portion by large decorative cast stone colonettes and finials. A cast stone frieze caps the top of the arch and contains the name "CLUB CASA DEL MAR" in raised Gothic style letters flanked by sculpted dragons. Shields encircled with festoons decorate the face of the arch just below the frieze to each side. Two original flag pole brackets remain extant above the arch and just below the third-story windows. Four rectangular wood casement windows with wood frames and cast stone surrounds also flank the main entrance, two on each side. Original decorative iron grills cover the windows, and smaller non-historic fixed, tripartite, wood-sash windows with original wood frames rest above and below each opening. These windows replaced non-historic aluminum sash sliding windows.

The middle section's top three stories feature a regular pattern of fenestration and ornamentation. A decorative shield centers the frieze in this section, and all the windows are paired in a 2-2-3-2-2 pattern across the section on each floor. The windows on the third and fourth story consist of four-over-four, double-hung, wood sash windows, while the fifth story windows are arched, four-over-four, double-hung wood sash windows, a few separated by engaged columns. All of the existing windows are replications of the original windows, and replaced non-historic, two-light sliding aluminum windows. The replications have original wood frames, lintels of soldier-course brick, and cut brick sills.

The outer two sections on the east facade are symmetrically divided with three bays each. Due to the property's sloping grade, the first floor of the northernmost section is exposed and punctuated by three replicated cast-concrete grilles covering non-historic wood windows that had replaced earlier non-historic grilles. Above these openings, the second story contains two banks of windows flanking a central fixed window, another pair of single-light wood windows, which replaced a cast-stone grille, and a ferrous-metal fire escape landing. The fire escape extends up the section's center with a landing on each level, and the central bay is topped with a decorative festoon draped over a central shield and carried on either side by winged cherubim in the frieze. The flanking windows consist of groups of three replicated, single-light, wood windows topped by tripartite wood transom windows. These openings originally contained glazing with two shades of leaded amber glass, later replaced by non-historic, single-light, sliding aluminum windows and then by the existing windows. The transom windows in the northern-most section only were replaced with louvered windows in 1949. Each group of windows is flanked by engaged half Corinthian columns, and a row of dentils is centered below the decorative grille in the second story.

Openings in the northern-most section's central bay are occupied by original pairs of eight-light wood french doors accessing each fire escape landing. Original small, double-hung, wood sash windows covered with replica decorative cast stone grilles flank these doors. The third, fourth, and fifth story windows otherwise possess the same fenestration and ornamentation as those found in the middle section, but distributed in a 2-1-1-1-2 pattern. Except for the exposed first floor and three original four-over-four, double-hung, wood sash windows on the fifth story, the facade's southern-most section has similar characteristics and configuration.

The south elevation of Casa Del Mar is five stories tall and sixteen bays wide with a cut-back, sloping grade running downward from east to west. Originally, the elevation's first story contained five sets of tripartite, vertical, single-light, wood casement windows and hinged transoms that became increasingly taller towards the west due to the pre-existing

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Club Casa del Mar
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grade. Two additional openings, a small opening with an iron grille and a vertical, two-light casement window, pierced the elevation to the east. The three easternmost tripartite windows were altered in the most recent rehabilitation, and the windows' sills were lowered to match the three existing western-most windows and accommodate the interior space adapted into guest rooms.

The south elevation's second story consists of five groups of five original, vertical, single-light, wood casement windows with wood frames and hinged transoms. These groups are divided by pilasters with Corinthian capitals and are set between the band courses wrapping the entire building. To the east, the second story is further punctuated by a non-historic, tripartite, vertical, wood casement window and another vertical two-light casement window. The tripartite window opens onto an original ferrous metal fire escape landing and was originally glazed with two shades of leaded amber glass. The fire escape extends up the building in the third window bay from the east with a fire escape landing on every level. Each opening in this bay features an original, eight-light wood door with hinged transoms on all except the fourth story.

The remaining area of the south elevation's third, fourth, and fifth stories is defined by series of replicated, four-over-four, double-hung, wood sash windows with original wood frames, lintels of soldier-coursed brick, and cut brick sills. These windows replaced non-historic two-light sliding aluminum sash. The westernmost and central window bays contain paired windows, while the remainder are single windows. The fifth story windows feature arched openings and some have engaged columns between the existing window pairs. The south elevation is further defined by a chimney in the southeast corner of the building's roof. The original stack, previously removed due to earthquake damage, was constructed of unreinforced brick with cast stone panel cladding and a terra-cotta tile covered cap. A shed and a metal chimney stack replaced the original feature until its reconstruction in the most recent rehabilitation. This reconstruction was based on historic drawings of the original chimney.

The west elevation of Casa Del Mar is organized into three sections formed by the outer wings of the U-shaped plan and the central pavilion. The first stories of the two outer sections are each defined by three large, arched, openings. All of the openings are original and significant. The glazing in those openings had been altered, was not original, not significant and not appropriate. The new frames and glazing do not replicate the missing original elements, but were designed to accommodate the adaptive reuse of those interior spaces, from beach club to hotel, and were found to be appropriate and compatible by OHP and NPS. These openings now contain non-historic, multi-pane, wood windows over a pair of non-historic, single-light, wood, french doors with wood-frame sidelights and transom windows. These elements replaced earlier non-historic aluminum windows and sliding doors. Their arched shape and surrounding cast stone are original. Cast stone grilles originally covered the lower halves of these openings, but were removed during the late 1940s.

The existing window openings in the second through fifth stories of the west faces of the north and south wings are similar to those on the south elevation with only a few differences. The west elevation's second story windows consist of three groups of three windows each, while three pairs of windows punctuate the third, fourth, and fifth stories. Other features include the decorative festoons in the frieze draped over a central shield and carried on each side by winged cherubim that top the central bay of each section, and the heavy cast stone sills resting below the center windows in the fifth story. Removed in 1949, two rows of dentils also existed below the sills of the outer sections' two center second-story windows.

The two-story, multi-faceted pavilion dominates the center of the building's west elevation. With five bays projecting from the building's face, the pavilion's entire facade is clad with cast stone panels and topped with a decorative cast

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stone balustrade. The existing exterior finish of the pavilion is a 1990s replication of its original appearance, as its cast stone finishes, opening configurations, and windows and doors had been lost in the mid 1980s. This restoration work also included reconstruction of the original balustrade and restoration of the pavilion's loggia and second story windows.

The pavilion's first story features an open loggia with a pair of arched openings in each face of its facade. Single Doric order columns form the central pier of each pair of arches, and the openings reveal a non-historic glazed wall looking into an interior banquet space. Originally enclosed with glazing and doors in the late 1940s, the loggia received further change when the pavilion's entire facade was altered in the mid 1980s. New multi-light aluminum windows were also installed on both levels with non-historic, eight-light, fixed, aluminum-frame windows placed into modified openings on the pavilion's second story. The existing second-story windows, replicating the pavilion's original windows, are groups of four vertical, single-light, wood pivoting-casement windows with wood frames and hinged transoms. One group of windows exists in each bay, separated by Corinthian order pilasters.

A patio terrace between the north and south wings extends out over the roof of the pavilion. Referred to as the "Palm Patio," the terrace originally featured a concrete deck decorated with a central water fountain, palm trees in planters, and wicker furniture. An elevated deck has been installed over a portion of the existing concrete decking to accommodate a pool.

The patio terrace is accessible from the rooms on that level through doors on the building's north, south, and east terrace elevations (or those inner elevations of the building's U-shaped plan). All three elevations have similar features and are clad with red brick veneer in a stretcher bond pattern. The building's top three stories are revealed in this space. The fourth story is punctuated by a roughly alternating distribution of four-over-four, double-hung, wood sash windows, pairs of ten-light wood doors, and pairs of ten-light, wood frame french doors with four-light sidelights. The fourth and fifth stories contain regularly spaced four-over-four, double-hung wood sash windows with original lintels of soldier course brick and cut brick sills. The outer pairs of fifth-story windows in each elevation are divided by engaged cast stone columns.

The north and south terrace elevations have a nearly identical distribution of window openings on the third, fourth and fifth stories, while the west terrace elevation somewhat varies. The west terrace elevation was originally punctuated by a 2-1-2-1-2 distribution of openings on the fourth and fifth stories and 2-1-3-1-2 distribution on the third story. Four new window openings were cut into the brick walls in the recent rehabilitation, creating sets of paired windows all across the elevation. All existing windows and doors on the three elevations are replications and replaced earlier non-historic, two-light, aluminum sliding window sashes and single-light aluminum doors during the late 1990s rehabilitation. Original ferrous metal fire escapes located in the second bay from the west in the north and south terrace elevations were also removed at this time.

To the west of the pavilion, an garden extends the length of the building's west elevation between the building and the adjacent beachfront sidewalk. The pavilion itself divides the garden into two parts, both separated from the sidewalk by an original wall. The enclosure consists of original square concrete piers, once topped with decorative lamps, connected by pierced masonry screens on each side of the pavilion. Directly in front of the pavilion, and as an integral part of the loggia, a wrought iron enclosure secured the loggia from the beach. The original iron enclosure remains as a result of recent restoration efforts. The central wrought iron fencing, the existing lamps, and the transverse walls dividing the space into patios are 1990s additions.

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The north elevation of the building is similar to the south elevation in design and appearance, except on the first story. The north elevation's first story originally featured a series of tripartite windows declining in height from east to west due to the naturally sloping grade. The easternmost window opening contained a tripartite fixed wood window, and cast stone grilles originally covered the lower portion of all the windows. The existing window openings maintain their original spacing, but differ in height. The cast stone grilles were removed during the late 1940s renovation, and the three westernmost windows were removed and replaced with sets of smaller single-light, tripartite, wood casement windows, one above another, in the late 1990s. Some of the remaining openings were increased in size by lowering the sills and fitted with groups of three, vertical, single-light, wood casement windows with wood frames and hinged transoms. A pair of non-historic exterior egress doors and sidelight windows were also added at an existing non-historic opening at this time.

Interior

The interior of the Casa Del Mar has undergone many alterations through its history. The building originally contained six floors, in addition to a mezzanine and penthouse. The ground floor originally had a plunge, gymnasium, men's locker room, kitchen, and boiler room, and a loggia characterized the building's west elevation. The ceiling height of both the gymnasium and plunge spanned the two lowest levels. The former was modestly appointed with wood floors, plastered walls, and an exposed structure ceiling, while the latter featured a beamed ceiling supported by an arcade of concrete columns with cast stone or plaster capitals sculpted into mermaid-like figures. A laundry and the women's locker room occupied the remainder of the building's second floor.

Casa Del Mar's public and social activities primarily occurred on the building's main (or third) floor in elaborately decorated, large open spaces, including a dining room, lobby, and men's and women's lounges. This level was accessed from the street on the building's east elevation. The club's kitchen, restrooms, and other services were located in the eastern portion of the main floor. Above the main floor, a mezzanine housed the club's administrative offices and "Grille Room." The building's upper three floors originally contained guest rooms in a double-loaded corridor configuration, and each guest room had a separate bathroom. The fourth floor also featured specialty-use rooms, including card rooms, a billiard room, barber shop, hair dresser, Mah-Jong room, and a private dining room. Three handball courts were likewise contained in the penthouse.

When the Synanon Foundation, and later the Pritikin Longevity Center, occupied the building in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, many of the building's original interior partition walls were altered or replaced and most open spaces filled-in with offices, guest rooms, and other small rooms with a variety of functions. The interior was renovated to its current configuration during the building's rehabilitation. It now contains eight floors, including converted mezzanine and penthouse levels. Suites and guest rooms are found on all floors in a double-loaded corridor configuration. A banquet hall and conference rooms occupy the first and second floors, and the main floor again features a lobby, dining room, and kitchen.

Integrity

The integrity of the building is high on the exterior. The location of the building has not changed, and the setting, particularly on the important beachfront facade, remains similar to what was seen surrounding the building in the 1920s. A new hotel, small in scale and designed in the style of turn of the century resort, lies to the north, and the city-owned lot to the south, which was part of a park during the building's period of significance, remains landscaped and unbuilt upon. The building continues to overlook the beach and the Santa Monica Pier to the north. The materials of the exterior

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Club Casa del Mar
Los Angeles, California

are unchanged, with nonoriginal finishes removed, including removal of paint from originally unpainted surfaces and removal of aluminum frame fenestration from the building. The integrity of design is high, with restoration of the west pavilion and reconstruction of the penthouse, a major feature of the roofline which had been missing since the 1940s. No additions have been made to the building. The workmanship of the exterior remains intact as well, with the exception of that of the penthouse, which was missing, and pavilion, which had been heavily altered. The historic feeling and association are also intact, since the building has a compatible and highly similar use to that it originally had, and the building retains much of the feeling of a private beach club.

The interior retains the original configurations and spaces, though in the public spaces many features had been altered or removed as described above. The U-shaped corridor off of which the guest rooms are located is an original feature, as are the features and locations of the stairways throughout the guest room floors. The current interiors of the public spaces and the guest rooms, dating from the 1999 certified rehabilitation, are designed to be compatible with the existing elements and with the style and history of the building.

Conclusion

The Club Casa Del Mar building embodies an important part of the social history of Santa Monica and the Los Angeles area as one of the few remaining examples of the beach clubs that once dominated the Santa Monica coast. The exterior of the building is substantially intact, and it is one of the few prominent examples of the Renaissance Revival style in Santa Monica. While the building has sustained repeated alterations, many of its original features remain or have been replicated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Historic and contemporary photographs of the building taken from the ocean establish it as a familiar visual feature of the Santa Monica Coast. Historically, the building dominated the view of the coast south of Santa Monica Pier along with the adjacent Breakers Beach Club and Edgewater Club. Now that the other two clubs have been demolished, and due to contemporary restrictions on building heights in the area, Casa Del Mar has attained an even stronger visual prominence and historical importance.

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Club Casa del Mar
Los Angeles, California

Section 8: Statement of Significance

Summary

Casa Del Mar is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance. The building is significant under Criterion A in the contexts of social history and recreation, and under Criterion C in the context of architecture. As a prominent beach club, the building is associated with events that made important contributions to the social and recreational history of Santa Monica. It operated as a beach club for a significant period of time, from its construction in 1926 to 1941 and again from 1946 until the early 1960s, and is one of the last remaining buildings which was built and functioned as a major beach club in Santa Monica. The period of significance, 1926 to 1941, covers the period from the construction of the building and opening of the club until its use by the U. S. Navy just prior to the nation's involvement in the Second World War. When the club reopened, the era of the large beach clubs had essentially ended, so such a club was unable to regain its former social status, and various changes were made to the building. Casa del Mar has been recognized by the National Park Service as a Certified Historic Structure, and the 1999 rehabilitation was certified by the National Park Service. In addition, since it is designated as a City of Santa Monica Historic Landmark, the project was reviewed by the Santa Monica Landmarks Commission throughout the process.

The Construction of Club Casa del Mar

Los Angeles businessmen E. A. Harter and Tilford "T. D." Harter of the H and H Holding Company opened Club Casa Del Mar in 1926. They erected the structure at a cost of \$2,000,000 and hired the Los Angeles-based architect Charles F. Plummer to design the building as "the finest furnished and equipped of any beach club in America." (*Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, 4/21/26) Plummer, who was originally from Seattle, specialized in the design of stores and restaurants between 1913 and 1938. Working primarily in traditional styles, he was best known for his design of the Young's Market building on West Seventh Street in Los Angeles, to which the Club Casa Del Mar building is similar in scale and detail. Young's Market is listed in the National Register. The Los Angeles based Arthur Bard and Company served as the project's primary builders and contractors, while Barker Brothers, the area's most prestigious interiors retailer, provided the interiors and furnishings.

A three-day celebration commemorated the opening of Club Casa Del Mar in April 1926. The opening received a great deal of press coverage in Santa Monica and the greater Los Angeles area. Newspapers reported on the club's many features and praised the musical program performed by the club's orchestra, simultaneously broadcast over a Hollywood radio station, and the presentation of Dr. H. Clifford Loos, the club president, with keys to the facility. An invitation-only banquet and reception for club members was held the following evening.

The Club Casa Del Mar's facilities were extensive and paralleled those of the other clubs which have been demolished over the years. They included a private beach with locker rooms, cabanas and an outdoor cafe on the sand, an indoor saltwater swimming pool, several lounges and dining rooms, a ballroom, billiard room, card room, and one hundred-fifty guest suites. The extravagantly decorated new club was twice featured in *Architectural Digest*, showcasing these amenities, including a major feature with dozens of photographs published in 1926 shortly after its opening.

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Significance under Criterion A

Santa Monica became one of Southern California's most prominent beach resorts during the late nineteenth century, attracting thousands of beach-goers from the Los Angeles area and the surrounding region. The beach attracted many people seeking refuge from the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Fresh air, sunlight, and ocean water were thought to offer health benefits. Street car lines carried people to the coast, and developers constructed bath houses, hotels, ballrooms, and amusement piers to cater to these growing numbers of tourists and health seekers.

During the early 1920s, the coastline north of the Santa Monica Pier was developed with large private beach residences for the growing wealthy class of the region, especially the Hollywood elite. Marion Davies, Jesse Lasky, Louis B. Mayer, and Bebe Daniels were just a few luminaries from the film industry who constructed large beach estates in the area, causing it to be referred to as the "Gold Coast." In the latter part of the decade, this development led to the construction of a series of exclusive beach clubs. These beach clubs catered to a growing number of upper and upper middle class residents in the Los Angeles area, particularly local businessmen and their families, providing some respite from the masses on the public beach. They emulated the opulence and grandeur of the coast's private residences, while making their facilities available to thousands of members with fairly reasonable annual fees.

Among the grandest of the beach clubs were the Jonathan Club (built in 1926 as the Sea Breeze Club), the Club Casa Del Mar (1926), the Edgewater Club (1926), the Deauville Club (1927), the Bel Air Club (1927), the Breakers (1927), and the Gables Club (1928). Three of these clubs, the Casa Del Mar, the Edgewater, and the Breakers, were prominently situated side-by-side just south of the Santa Monica Pier. Their presence in this location dominated the Santa Monica horizon for decades and was a popular subject for postcards and other photographs of the area. The other major beach clubs were located north of the Pier. All the clubs offered lifetime and yearly memberships with private beach privileges and use of their luxury facilities, including indoor and outdoor swimming pools, private suites, ballrooms, and gymnasiums.

The construction and opening of the beach clubs received extensive coverage in the Santa Monica and Los Angeles newspapers and were regularly reviewed by architecture and design magazines. Architects designed the clubs in a variety of architectural styles ranging from the outlandish to the sedate, and building costs generally exceeded one million dollars per facility. The Gables Club, for instance, planned but never built an enormous French chateau on the bluffs above its beach front site. Financial constraints restricted its construction to only a small portion of the original design. The Deauville Club constructed an immense Chateausque style structure, complete with a moat and several bridges. In contrast, the Jonathan Club occupied a building possessing a serene adaptation of the Mission Revival style. Some of Los Angeles' most distinguished architectural firms designed many of these grand structures, including the firm of Morgan, Walls and Clement, and the firm of Curlett and Beelman.

Smaller beach clubs, such as the Beach Club (1923) at 201 Palisades Beach Road (Pacific Coast Highway) and the Salt Air Club (1923) at 265 Palisades Beach Road, appeared along the coast during this same period. With smaller, more modest amenities and buildings, these clubs appear to have catered to a more middle-class clientele. The amusement piers, public bath houses, and public beaches were open to the middle and working classes, who flocked to the coast on weekends and holidays.

Santa Monica's grand beach clubs retained their large memberships through the 1930s, but most closed or were converted to military facilities during the Second World War. The beach club phenomenon never regained its popularity

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following the War, and Santa Monica's club buildings fell on hard times. The Bel Air Club, located on Pacific Coast Highway between Sunset Boulevard and Temescal Canyon, and the Jonathan Club, at 850 Palisades Beach Road, are the only two beach clubs that remain in operation. The Deauville, the Edgewater, and the Gables Clubs were demolished in previous decades, while the Breakers Beach Club (later the Sea Castle Apartments) was recently demolished due to earthquake and fire damage. The Club Casa Del Mar is consequently one of only a few beach club buildings still remaining.

The beach clubs, though they no longer remain, were clearly one of the most characteristic and important building types in the city of Santa Monica. Their characteristics included great size and cost, eclectic architecture by some of the most prominent architectural firms in the area (see above), luxurious features, private beach access, swimming pools, restaurants, ball rooms, sitting rooms and patios, game rooms, and hotel-type rooms or suites for members to stay for short periods of time.

At Casa del Mar, club dues (\$10 to \$20 a month during the 1920s and 1930s) provided members with full use of the club's facilities. Members were entertained with dinner-dances, big band concerts, operas, floor shows, and championship aquatic events. At its peak, the club had over 2,000 members, including several Hollywood celebrities; among them were legendary movie vamp Theda Bara and film composer Rudolph Frim. Throughout its history, Club Casa Del Mar figured prominently in the local imagination. The opening and subsequent activities at the club were the subject of many articles in local newspapers, illustrating its centrality to the social life of a particular class of residents of and regular visitors to Santa Monica.

The beach clubs named above, along with Club Casa del Mar, were the most prominent both physically along the shore and in terms of the prestige of membership. The clubs all shared these characteristics. Casa del Mar is now the only building on the beachfront in Santa Monica which embodies these characteristics and gives contemporary residents and visitors an idea of this important historic building type: a 1920s beach club, which was essentially a day-use resort for its members.

Significance under Criterion C

Club Casa del Mar is the best example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style in Santa Monica. In addition to its significance as a representation of the social and recreational history of Santa Monica under Criterion A, the building is also a significant example of this particular architectural style. Because of its formality, the style was not commonly used in the city, which was generally a recreational and resort destination as noted above. The quality of the design of Casa del Mar is comparable to other examples throughout the region. The symmetrical and formal design of the building, the refined but extensive use of cast stone, the brick cladding, and the sheet metal brackets in the eaves are some of the features which have caused it to be recognized as an important example of this style of design from the 1920s in Santa Monica.

The Italian Renaissance Revival style first gained popularity in the United States around 1890. In 1883, a large, imposing complex of stone town houses known as the Villard Houses was constructed in New York City by McKim, Mead, and White. With these landmark buildings, the style became associated with prestigious American domestic buildings. Such associations later made the style popular for apartment buildings, office buildings, and in this case, a private club. The Italian Renaissance Revival was one of many revival styles popularized in the early twentieth century by society's desire to create an established identity and past for the United States. In this instance, the style adorns a semi-public building, and is meant to showcase the resident social club's sense of refinement and culture.

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The Italian Renaissance Revival style is based on the massing, materials, and decoration of urban buildings in fifteen and sixteenth century Italian cities. Having started in Florence and spread throughout central Italy, the style was considered suitable for appropriation in the landscape and climate of California. As eclectic European revival styles gained popularity throughout the state in the 1920s, Italian Renaissance Revival style was widely used for clubs, office buildings, apartment buildings, and public buildings.

Like most Italian Renaissance Revival style buildings, Casa del Mar is designed using Beaux-Arts organizational principals. The main facades are divided into three zones: the base, the shaft, and the capitol, as a column is divided in Classical architecture. This device was based on Italian Renaissance examples, in particular the 14th through 16th century urban palaces of prominent families in Florence and Rome. The exterior of Casa del Mar is organized with a base of cast stone, upper floors clad in brick, and a cornice and penthouse capping the facade. The masculine heads seen in roundels in the frieze refer to the Renaissance, as do the swags and cherubim in the cast stone, as well as the very private and urban, almost defensive, treatment of the sidewalk-adjacent windows on the east side, which are set high on the facade with stone and metal grilles covering them.

The treatment of the two major facades of the building is the most important aspect of the design. The conventions of Italian Renaissance Revival design are used on both of these contrasting facades, and while the effect on each facade is very distinct, the design is still very well integrated. The conventions associated with an urban building which are used in this building are described in the preceding paragraph. In contrast to this closed facade, facing away from the city, the beach front facade is more informal with more fenestration and an open roof terrace at the fourth floor which cuts into the mass of the block. This treatment recalls the conventions of villa design developed in the fifteen century, where a single major element, usually a temple front combined with staircases or arcades, is centered on the front of the building and marks the entrance and provides for entry. The five-sided, projecting pavilion on the west side of the building does not appear to be based on any particular Renaissance precedent, but this idea does seem a likely source for its design. The importance of the view, the desire to have a visual presence on the beach, and the need for more fenestration and access to the beach were the design challenges of the building's beach frontage. Architect Charles Plummer resolved these needs by employing the pavilion on the west facade. The feature is consistent with the details of the other facades.

Later Uses of the Building

In 1941, when the United States was on the brink of war in the Pacific, the U. S. Navy took over the club building for use as a hotel and recreation center for enlisted men. After the war, the building continued to operate as a beach club under the name "Del Mar Club," but was unable to regain its prominence in Southern California's social life. Tilford Harter returned to manage the club in 1959, attempting to revive its membership and entertainment facilities. His revitalization attempt was not successful, however, and in just a few years, the club again closed its doors.

Charles E. Dederich, a former statistician and businessman, moved his Synanon Foundation to the club building in 1967, taking advantage of its many rooms and large public spaces. The foundation occupied the building for twenty years. The building's next owner was Nathan Pritikin, who purchased the property in the late 1970s to house the Pritikin Longevity Center, a nutrition and health-care facility. The current owner acquired the property in 1996. The building has been fully rehabilitated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and presently functions as a luxury resort hotel known as the Hotel Casa Del Mar.

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Conclusion

The building has been returned to its former role as a social center of Santa Monica, and its character-defining features continue to evoke the 1920s ambience which characterized the building in the period prior to the Second World War, during its heyday as a luxury beach club. Significantly, the building stands as the only historic beach club on the coastline of Santa Monica to illustrate that era. The Casa del Mar building represents the most important social centers and destinations of Santa Monica during its strongest years as a beachside resort city. In Santa Monica, 1920s beach clubs once proliferated along the coastline of Santa Monica but are now rare. In addition, the imposing building, one of the most distinct on the beachfront of Santa Monica, is an important example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style in Santa Monica. Therefore the building is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C.

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Section 9: Bibliography

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

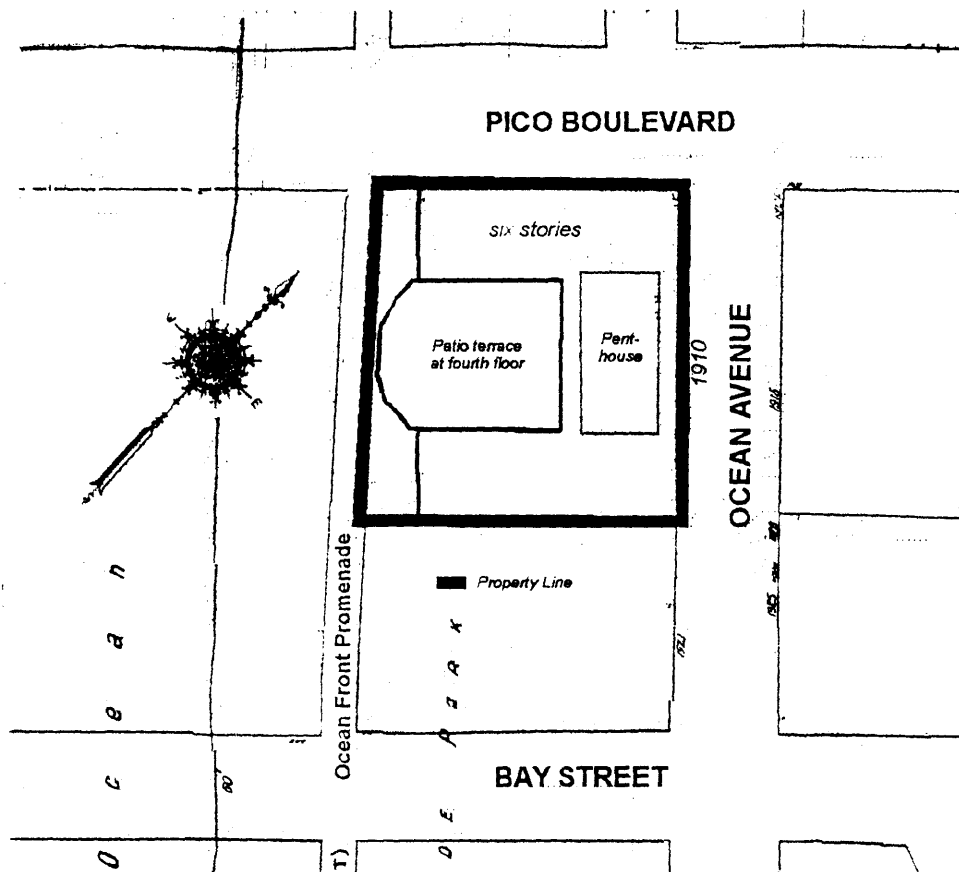
The property is bounded by Ocean Avenue on the east, Pico Boulevard on the north, and Ocean Front Promenade on the west. A lot owned by the City of Santa Monica, covered with landscaping, forms the south boundary.

The property is described as Lot 1 of Tract 8798 recorded in the City of Santa Monica, County of Los Angeles, in Book 114, Pages 22-23 of maps in the office of the recorder of said county.

Verbal Boundary Justification

These are the historic and current boundaries of the property.

Sketch Map



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Club Casa del Mar
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Additional Documentation: Photographs

Name: Club Casa del Mar

Location: 1910 Ocean Avenue
Santa Monica

Los Angeles County, California

Photographer: Christopher Hetzel, Historic Resources Group

Date of Photographs: November, 1999

Location of Negatives: Historic Resources Group
1728 Whitley Avenue
Los Angeles CA 90028

1. Primary (east) entrance facade, view northwest
2. South and east facades, view northwest
3. South facade, view north
4. North facade, view southwest
5. Beachside (west) facade, view north
6. Beachside (west) facade, view northeast from the beach
7. Face of north wing, beachside facade, view east
8. Pavilion in center of beachfront facade, detail of cast stone
9. East facade, detail of brick, fire escapes, cast stone frieze, windows, and window grilles
10. East facade, to north of the main entrance: windows with cast stone surrounds
11. North end of east facade, first story and mezzanine with cast stone base and grilles
12. South end of east facade, cast stone frieze and utility entrance, view west
13. Fourth floor patio terrace, view northeast
14. Fourth floor patio terrace, view north
15. Fourth floor patio terrace, view southeast, with steps up to raised pool deck seen at right
16. Raised pool deck on fourth floor patio terrace, view west
17. Main entrance, east facade
18. View from main lobby floor toward main entrance on mezzanine level, view northeast

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19. View from main lobby floor toward main entrance on mezzanine level, view east
20. Main lobby, view northwest
21. Main lobby, view northeast
22. View south towards restaurant dining room from main lobby
23. View from main lobby floor toward main entrance on mezzanine level, view east
24. View southeast of lounge from main lobby
25. Ground floor, anteroom to banquet room, view south
26. Ground floor, banquet room, view southwest
27. Ground floor, banquet room, view southeast
28. South corridor, view west, typical of corridors
29. Sixth floor stairway, view northeast
30. Fifth floor stairway, view northwest
31. Room 440, fourth floor, living room, view west
32. Room 619, sixth floor, view southwest
33. Room 309, third floor, view northeast
34. Room 301, third floor, view northeast