

JUL 28 1989

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Huntington Beach Municipal Pier
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number The foot of Main Street at Ocean Avenue (State Hwy 1) N/A not for publication
city, town Huntington Beach N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Orange code 059 zip code 92648

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	structures
		objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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. See continuation sheet.

Kathryn Guattieri 7-20-89
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. 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:)

Helene Byers 8/24/89
Entered in the National Register

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

No style (Pier)

Art Deco (Buildings)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete

roof Wood - Shingle

other Concrete, Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Introduction

In 1901, the West Coast Land Company (Phillip Stanton, J. N. Anderson, and S. H. Finley) developed a West Coast resort, similar to Atlantic City, called "Pacific City". In 1903, a wooden pier was built to attract people from the inland communities to this resort. In 1904, H. E. Huntington, owner of the Pacific Electric Railway, bought stock in the company and extended a line from Long Beach to the resort which was renamed Huntington Beach in his honor (Higgins n.d.:1). The pier became a recreational attraction for travellers on the line. Damaged by storms in 1906 and 1910, a new pier was planned and built by 1914. In order to perpetuate Huntington Beach as the West Coast resort, the new pier was designed to be the longest, highest, and most artistically designed solid concrete municipal pier in the world (Huntington Beach News X(20):2 1914). Considered a wonder of architectural and engineering accomplishment at the time, the pier was expanded from 1,316 feet in length to 1,804 feet in 1930, and five (5) Art Deco style buildings were constructed on the tees (square lateral juts) which added to the aesthetic value of the pier and afforded areas for sale of recreational goods. For 74 years, millions of people have used this structure for recreational purposes. Despite three (3) major storms since its fabrication, 1,000-1,100 feet of the original pier length and concrete pilings remain (84% of the original). The original 1914 cornerstone and associated dedication block remain, and three (3) of the five (5) Art Deco buildings are intact and relatively unmodified.

The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier (1914)

When originally constructed, the pier was 1,316 feet in length, with an average width of 25 feet, and was supported by 208 concrete pilings (Huntington Beach News X(20):2 1914). An ornate concrete balustrade, about four feet high, defines the entrance to the pier and is decorated with recessed panels and topped with a plain lintel. One marker, cubic in form, is incorporated into the base of the balustrade and is inscribed "Municipal Pier 1914" on the two exposed sides of the stone. The other marker, a rectangular box-shaped monument, is inscribed "Huntington Beach Company". This inscription has been cut into a recessed panel on the long side of the stone which faces toward the street (Ocean Avenue). The top of this memorial is incised with an ornate diamond pattern. The deck of the pier, which is of poured concrete slab fabrication, has a guardrail

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Engineering
Architecture
Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1914-1939

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Designer - Rothenbert, Ernest
Builder - Mercereau Bridge Co.
Los Angeles, California

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

Introduction

The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier is significant under Criterion A because the 1914 concrete pier and its wooden predecessor were built to establish the City of Huntington Beach (formerly Pacific City) as a major West Coast resort community. The existence of the pier as a tourist attraction and recreational area drew people to Orange County and Huntington Beach, encouraged new businesses in the community (Huntington Beach News, April 26, 1912), and contributed to the growth and development of these areas (Higgins n.d.). As a major contributor to the founding of Huntington Beach, the pier has contributed to the broad patterns of history.

The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier is significant under Criterion C because it reflects a novel architectural and advanced engineering style for its period of construction (1914). When the pier opened, it was the longest, tallest solid concrete municipal pier in the world and was entirely different from any similar structure in existence (Huntington Beach News, June 12, 1914). Approximately 23 piers were in existence in Southern California in 1914, including 17 wooden piers, 2 metal piers, 1 rock breakwater pier, and 2 small concrete piers (Femling 1984). The early concrete piers in Hermosa and Santa Monica no longer exist; the Huntington Beach Pier is the last remaining recreational concrete pier from a period when this construction technique was experimental (Huntington Beach News, December 22, 1911; December 29, 1911; January 5, 1912; April 26, 1912).

Architecture

Architecturally, the Huntington Beach Pier is eligible for nomination under Criterion C because it possesses uniqueness in dimensions, aesthetics, and surviving numbers. The 1914 pier was designed to be the longest, highest, and most artistically solid concrete municipal pier in the world (Huntington Beach News X(20):2 1914). As such, its dimensions were unique.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Huntington Beach Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.1 acres

UTM References

A

1	1
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4	0	6	8	4	0
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3	7	2	3	9	8	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

1	1
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4	0	7	1	7	0
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3	7	2	4	3	5	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries consist of the pier structure and include the buildings built on the pier tees. The boundaries are shown on the attached scale map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the historic resource.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nancy A. Whitney-Desautels, Ph.D.
 organization Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc. date January 11, 1989
 street & number 5232 Bolsa Avenue, Suite 5 telephone (714) 898-7877
 city or town Huntington Beach state California zip code 92649

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consisting of a double course of horizontal pipes, interrupted at regular intervals by single vertical pipes. A series of ornamental concrete light standards were placed at regular intervals along the outside of the railing. The subfloor of the deck was constructed of wooden planking. A series of concrete steps abutted the south side of the pier at the sea cliff. A toilet facility was constructed under the east end of the pier, abutting the natural sea cliff.

The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier (1930)

In the late 1920's or early 1930's five Art Deco style buildings were constructed on the pier. Two were placed on the first tee, two on the third tee, and a larger "Sun Parlor" on the end tee. The pier was also lengthened at this time; 488'8" were added forming a new length of 1804 feet (Mayer 1975: 2). The buildings were fabricated of poured concrete all of similar design. The two buildings on the first tee are rectangular in plan view and symmetrical in overall design. Identical graduated stepped pilasters, topped with truncated stepped pyramid-form capitals, were placed at each corner. Identical pilasters divide the buildings into equal-sized vertical sunken panels in which paneled windows or doors are set. The roofs are plain in form, with parapet gables on either end. The building on the eastern arm has twelve pilasters; the building on the western arm has ten pilasters. The buildings on the third tee were similar in design to the buildings on the first tee and were most likely built at the same time. These two buildings may be described as box-like and symmetrical in form. The sides of the buildings are divided by a set of ten pilasters topped with truncated pyramid capitals. Panelled windows or doors are placed in the vertical sunken panels between the pilasters along the length of the buildings. The roof is plain hip in form; there are no end gables. The building on the end tee (the "Sun Parlor") was also a similar Art Deco structure.

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The Huntington Beach Municipal Pier (1988)

Through the years, storms have caused major damage to the pier, necessitating reconstruction; especially the western (ocean) end of the pier. The most recent major damage occurred in January 1988, when approximately 250 feet of the outer end of the pier, including the end tee, were swept into the ocean. This portion of the pier was not part of the original 1914 pier but was constructed in 1939. The original concrete decking was replaced in 1949-50. The two-tiered railing was changed in the 1970's and replaced by a taller four-tiered railing of similar cast iron pipe fabrication. The original light standards were also replaced in the 1970's by modern design galvanized steel fixtures. A life guard station was constructed on the eastern wing of the second tee probably in the late 1960's or early 1970's. Nothing has ever been built on the retreat (lateral triangular jut between the second and third tees) and it maintains its original 1914 appearance.

The two Art Deco structures on the first tee are largely unmodified from their original appearance, as is the building on the eastern wing of the third tee. Its companion on the western wing is totally remodeled and unrecognizable as an historic structure. The stairway leading down to the beach and once attached to the eastern side of the pier has been moved to the western side. This probably occurred when the plunge, now Maxwell's Restaurant, was constructed in the 1920's and 1930's.

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PHYSICAL APPEARANCE SUMMARY

<u>Key Elements</u>	<u>Key Dates</u>					
	<u>1914</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1939/ 1940</u>	<u>1960/ 1970's</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1988</u>
1. Pier Length						
Length	1316'					
Lost (Storms)			294'		482'	250'+
Added		488'	322'			
New Length		1804'	1832'		1350'	1000-1100'
2. Buildings						
1st Tee		Two				originals remain
2nd Tee				Life-guard station		
3rd Tee		3A&3B		3B modified		3A original remains
End Tee		Sun Parlor		destroyed		
3. Furniture/ Structure						
Lamp standards		replaced		replaced		
Iron pipe railings		sanded		replaced		
Wooden subflooring			replaced			
Concrete decking			replaced			
Concrete pilings			additions			originals remain
Concrete balustrade						portions remain
Cornerstone						remains
Dedication block						remains

Summary: 84% original length with original pilings remain (1914)
 1914 cornerstone and dedication stone remain
 60% 1930's length remains; 3 of 5 1930's structures remain

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Photo Log

For all photos, the following remains the same:

Huntington Beach Municipal Pier
Huntington Beach, Orange County, California
Photographer: W. Bonner
Date of photo: March 12, 1988
Location of negative: Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc.
5232 Bolsa Avenue, Suite 5
Huntington Beach, CA 92649

- Photo 1: General elevation, looking south
- Photo 2: Buildings on first tee, looking south
- Photo 3: Granite cornerstone, looking west
- Photo 4: Granite marker, looking west
- Photo 5: Decorative features on balustrade, looking east.

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The Huntington Beach Municipal pier has a high aesthetic value since its design was considered to be more aesthetically pleasing than the normal wooden pier which was more common in the early part of this century (Femling 1984). The Huntington Beach Pier is a unique survivor of early concrete pleasure piers in southern California and, therefore, qualifies in terms of rarity.

The Huntington Beach Pier was the most significant structure designed by Earnest Rothenberg of the Merceau Bridge Company of Los Angeles (Southwest Builder and Contractor: 1914). The architect utilized concrete to add decorative ornament to an otherwise plain pier. Ornamentation includes the recessed panels in the balustrade and the flared tops of the pilings beneath the understructure. No other piers constructed along the California coast possess such beauty of design. The construction of the art Deco buildings added to its aesthetic qualities. These buildings possess classic Art Deco symmetry and streamline design not found on any other pier buildings currently existing. The Huntington Beach pier has always been aesthetically pleasing, being termed the "Pride of the Pacific" when it was first constructed (Huntington Beach News X(20):2 1914). It maintains that aesthetic uniqueness in southern California today.

Engineering

As an engineering feat, the Huntington Beach Pier is eligible for nomination under Criterion C. At the time of its inception, the Huntington Beach Pier was considered a novel attempt in pier construction, causing months of debate in the Huntington Beach City Council and two formal polls of the voting electorate (Huntington Beach News Dec. 22, 1911; Dec. 29, 1911; Jan. 5, 1912; April 26, 1912). The standard building material of pier construction in 1914 and for many years was wood (Femling 1975: discussion of all piers in California). As documented, use of steel reinforced concrete pilings and substructure was experimental in 1914 since it had not been established whether this material would withhold the effects of sea water chemicals. The Huntington Beach Pier was the longest pier in the United States for many years. Its design was so novel that the builder, the Merceau Bridge Company of Los Angeles, determined not to design or construct any more piers (Southwest Builder and Contractor: 1914).

Historical Associations

The Huntington Beach Pier was initially conceived and its construction and progress supervised by members of the Huntington Beach Board of Trade, whose board of directors included J.C. Fountain, W.T. Newland and T.B. Talbert. These men were all early pioneers in the growth and development of the City of Huntington Beach and the County of Orange (Friis 1965).

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The pier has been the focal point of tourism to Huntington Beach since its opening in 1914 and continued to be a significant drawing attraction to the area before its closing this past summer. Approximately 25 years after its opening the local newspapers called the pier the "pride of local beach boosters and joy of visiting fish-folk" (Huntington Beach News Sept. 28, 1939). Its presence most likely attracted people to move to the area, thereby, significantly influencing the growth and development of the City of Huntington Beach.

The period of significance has been ended at 1939, fifty years ago, because exceptional significance is not apparent.

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REFERENCES

Unpublished Material

Anonymous. Various architectural blue line drawings of the Huntington Beach Municipal Pier, 1914-1967. Planning Department, City of Huntington Beach.

Interview with Les Evans, Planning Department, City of Huntington Beach, California.

Higgins, Delbert C. Huntington Beach Piers, n.d. Huntington Beach Library, Talbert Branch, Huntington Beach, California.

Koebig and Koebig, Inc. Structural Survey of the Huntington Beach Pier, 1967. Huntington Beach Public Library, Talbert Branch, Huntington Beach, California.

Mayer, Linda. A Historical and Geographical Survey of the Huntington Beach Municipal Pier and the Surrounding Beach, 1975. Huntington Beach Public Library, Talbert Branch, Huntington Beach, California.

Published Material

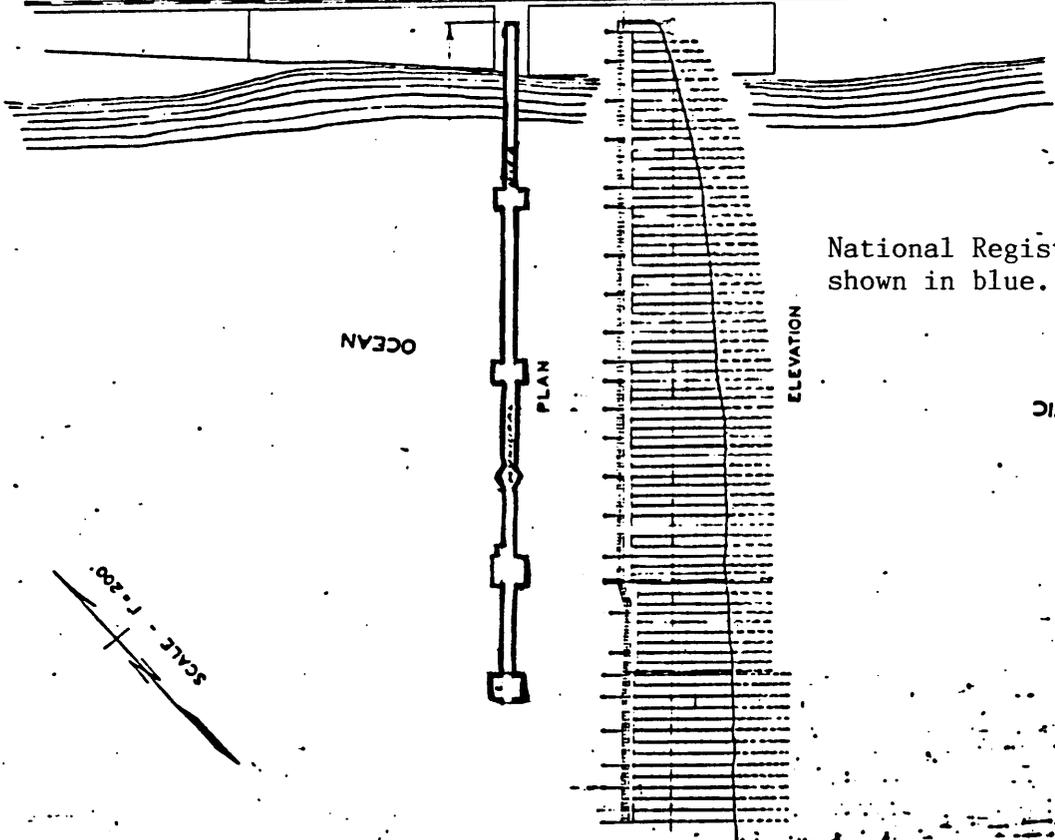
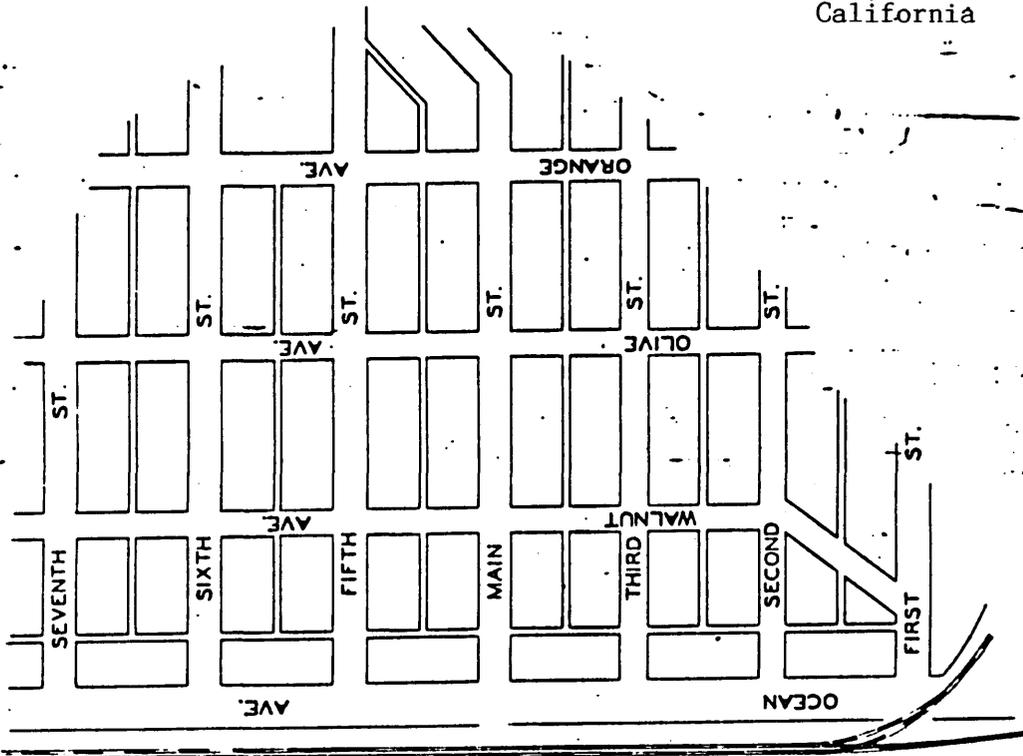
Anonymous. Various articles detailing the planning, construction, and other stories related to the history of the Huntington Beach Pier, 1911-1988. The Huntington Beach News.

Anonymous. Listing and description of builders and contractors by year of construction effort. Southwest Builder and Contractor: 1914.

Femling, Jean
1984 Great Piers of California. Santa Barbara, California: Capra Press.

Friss, Leo
1965 Orange County Through Four Centuries. Santa Ana, California: Pioneer Press.

Huntington Beach Municipal Pier
Huntington Beach, Orange Co.
California



National Register Boundary
shown in blue.

SCALE - 1" = 200'