

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED MAY 31 1978
DATE ENTERED NOV 14 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
SCHOENSTEIN & CO. PIPE ORGAN FACTORY

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 3101 20th Street

CITY, TOWN San Francisco VICINITY OF Sixth
STATE California CODE 06 COUNTY San Francisco CODE 075 ✓

CLASSIFICATION

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

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. Jack M. Bethards

STREET & NUMBER 3101 20th Street

CITY, TOWN San Francisco VICINITY OF STATE California 94110

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER City Hall -- Civic Center

CITY, TOWN San Francisco California 94102 STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE NONE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

EXTERIOR

The Schoenstein & Co. plant is a three story building of wood frame construction with a stucco finish on the two sides of the building with street exposure and sheathed with corrugated metal on the other sides. The stucco walls are painted tan with green trim. The firm's former name: FELIX SHOENSTEIN & SONS PIPE ORGANS, ESTABLISHED 1877" is painted over the 20th Street doors and the legend PIPE ORGANS appears on the Alabama Street side. The overall appearance has a California-Spanish cast.

The interior of the building which is divided into public (front) and plant (rear) areas is clearly articulated on the exterior through different treatments of the roof and windows. Of the eight bays of windows the rearmost six define the plant. These are steel "factory" type windows, made as large as the frame of the structure permits. The bays are separated vertically by pilasters with tile capitals. The roof over this area is flat.

The factory type windows are also used for the garage (first story) and the offices (second story) but are given emphasis by moldings over the openings. Much smaller windows, set off by moldings on Alabama Street and by a series of arches on 20th Street, identify the third story studio area. The roof over the studio is pitched, with the slope running north and south.

The ground story of the 20th Street facade is composed of two broad arches enclosing the garage doors and the main entrance. Large loading doors appear in place of windows on the first and second stories of the rearmost bay on Alabama Street.

INTERIOR

The public portions of the interior consist of offices (second story) the studio (third story), vestibules, and stairways. The walls throughout and the ceilings, in all but the studio are heavily textured plaster, painted tan with a mottled shellac finish. The studio ceiling is the reflection of the roof, with all beams exposed. All the redwood woodwork has a deep natural stain. Much of the hardware is custom-made wrought iron. The interior areas amplifies the Spanish tone of the exterior.

The plant areas consist of two heavy fabrication shops on the ground floor, a shop for the lighter work on the second floor and an erecting room. The erecting room begins on the second floor and extends to the roof with a gallery that is accessible from the third floor. These areas are partially finished with tongue and groove and partially unfinished. A work room behind the studio is rented by an independent operation, a German music society.

In practice, the organ components are built in various shops then moved to the erecting room for assembly and testing. Very large double doors connect shops on the same level, and a portion of the erecting

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room floor may be removed to allow movement of bulky parts
between floors.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Industrial
				Archeology

SPECIFIC DATES	Construction completed 1928	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Contractors: Mager Brothers Architect: Unknown
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Schoenstein & Co. Pipe Organ Factory is derived from the combination of several different factors. Foremost, it is the place of business for a unique, industrial enterprise which is the third oldest organ building firm in the United States and one of San Francisco's initial industrial concerns. The structure itself is remarkable in that it is one of the few American factories which was designed and built for the sole purpose of pipe organ construction. Additionally, the Schoenstein & Co. Pipe Organ Factory is attractive, well constructed, and excellently preserved. In this respect it is important that it be preserved as it represents a type of industrial structure, the small, efficient, single purpose factory, which has almost ceased to exist in our country. Its high quality construction and attractive design embodies the spirit found at the height of the American Industrial Revolution where the appearance of industrial buildings were given the same attention and consideration that residential and other buildings received in their planning and construction.

For five generations the Schoenstein family has been engaged in the construction and maintenance of pipe organs. Leo Schoenstein began the practice in Germany before 1850. He was joined by his sons who started the production of orchestrions, a mechanically played organ, in 1864. Two of Leo's sons travelled to the United States in 1868 to install an organ in a San Francisco beer garden. Felix F. Schoenstein remained in San Francisco and shortly afterward began working with an early California organ builder, Joseph Mayer. After eight years as a foreman with the Mayer enterprise, he left to establish his own business. On August 4, 1877 he commenced operations. In 1881 a complete pipe organ was built in Felix F. Schoenstein's shop for a church in Stockton, California. Since that time the firm has built 80 new organs and carried out major restoration work on 160 organs. This work has been done for churches of all denominations, universities, and many types of musical institutions throughout California, Oregon, Washington and Utah. The influence of Felix Schoenstein & Sons on the development of the pipe organ industry has been particularly important in Northern California. Most of the historic pipe organs in the city of San Francisco are under the firm's care including those in the Trinity Episcopal Church, Philadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church, Holy Cross Church, Congregations Sherith Israel and Emanu-El as well as those in two municipal buildings -- The California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the Exposition (Civic) Auditorium. In addition the early service record books show calls that were made to private residences, notably those in the Nob Hill area. Furthermore, the firm did a great deal to shape the pipe organ picture in this area through its representation of leading eastern organ builders, most particularly Hooks & Hastings in the early days and Austin in later years.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Levins, Steve. Case Report on Schoenstein & Co. Building, March 23, 1977.
 (Prepared for and available from the Landmarks Board, San Francisco Planning Commission, 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, California.)
- Schoenstein, Louis. The Memoirs of a San Francisco Organ Builder.
 (Manuscript to be published in 1978, available at Schoenstein & Co., 3101 20th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre (25' by 104' lot)

UTM REFERENCES

10 900

A	11	551920	4179060	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is on a rectangular lot, 25' by 104', Lot #101 on Block #4048 with frontage on 20th Street to the north and Alabama Street to the east. The south boundary fronts a lot with private residence and it is bounded to the west by a lot with a commercial structure which houses an artist colony.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Deborah Edge Abele for the Schoenstein & Company

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

3101 20th Street

TELEPHONE

(415) 647-5132

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco, California 94110

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

K. May Miller

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/22/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles Adams

DATE

11.14.78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Marcella Sheffer

DATE

11-8-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Three of Felix's ten children, Louis, Erwin and Otto, joined the firm and in 1909 the business was reorganized as Felix F. Schoenstein and Sons. Under Louis Schoenstein's supervision the present day factory was planned and constructed. Special care has been taken to maintain the structure as it was originally built in 1928. In January of 1977, Mr. Jack Bethards assumed ownership of the firm with the son, Lawrence, and grandson, Terrance, of Louis Schoenstein associated in technical and advisory capacities. The new management intends to continue to maintain the building in its present unaltered form as even today it stands as a model for the pipe organ industry as an efficient factory.

The Schoenstein & Co. Pipe Organ Factory includes offices, manufacturing and erecting areas, and an organ studio. The building remains today in an extraordinary state of preservation. There have been no alterations since its 1928 construction except for one interior room. While the factory certainly is significant as a representative of the California-Spanish style of architecture, it is even more important as an evocation of the 1920's. This faithful preservation of an earlier era of America's history is, perhaps, best illustrated in the factory's organ studio. The organ studio is complete today with fixtures and furnishings that were installed when the firm first occupied the building. Included in the studio are such things as a small pipe organ which was actually used for early radio broadcasts by several of the original San Francisco stations. Also, most of the offices presently used by the Schoenstein & Co. personnel still contain most of the original furniture and appurtenances. Many of these accessories represent relics of a form of industrial organization and activity which have since disappeared. The company archives which date from 1877 further contribute to make the firm and the building an important source of information on our historical, industrial foundations. The City of San Francisco has recognized this importance by designating the pipe organ factory as a "San Francisco Historic Monument #99."

In summary, it is not one single aspect of the Schoenstein & Co. Pipe Organ Factory that makes it noteworthy. Rather it is the combination of its representation of an American industrial concern with over one hundred years of continual operation, its embodiment of an industrial architectural style and form of organization which no longer exists and its attractive and well preserved appearance which serve to make it a cultural form worthy of recognition and preservation.