

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 8 1981
DATE ENTERED JUL 22 1981

**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 BEACH CHALET

RECEIVED

AND/OR COMMON same

FEB 17 1981

OHP

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1000 Great Highway (Golden Gate Park)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

VICINITY OF

5th

STATE

California

CODE
06

COUNTY

San Francisco

CODE

075

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Recreation and Park Department, City and County of San Francisco

STREET & NUMBER

McLaren Lodge, Fell and Stanyan Streets, Golden Gate Park

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

VICINITY OF

California

STATE

94117

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Real Estate Department, City and County of San Francisco

STREET & NUMBER

450 McAllister Street

CITY, TOWN

San Francisco

California

STATE

94102

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

UNKNOWN

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Beach Chalet stands at 1000 Great Highway, at the western extreme of Golden Gate Park, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It was built in 1925 as a modified Spanish-Moorish style pavilion to house a municipal restaurant, replacing another "Chalet" restaurant that had seriously deteriorated. Its predecessor was a wooden Victorian style building, often referred to as the "Swiss Chalet", constructed by architect W.Q Banks in 1900. That original lunch room and restaurant was located just across the highway, which was then a wide dirt track.

The existing structure, measuring 58' x 104', was commissioned by the Recreation and Park Department of San Francisco as a replacement pavilion, for \$60,000. Designed by Willis Polk, the attractive Beach Chalet is a low, horizontal unit without architectural pretension. A white stucco building roofed with handwrought, terra cotta barrel tiles, its simple style is well suited to the site. Almost devoid of external ornament, there is little for the elements to corrode, and the stucco, wood sash, and glass exterior materials have withstood major weathering effects for over fifty years. Surrounded on three sides by aging cypress trees, the structure was designed as a two-story platform. The straightforward modular pattern has a ground floor arcade with eight pairs of doric columns, defining seven interior bays. The glass and wood frame facade overlooks a spectacular view of the ocean, and the Ocean Beach area north to the Cliff House.

The interior of the building is decorated with extensive artwork. On the ground floor, 1,500 square feet of walls, ceiling and stairwell were decorated with frescos in 1936 by Lucien Labaudt. The murals are framed with mosaic work, designed by Labaudt and executed by Primo Caredio. Several support columns and the stair railings were embellished with Michael von Meyer's sculpture. The exterior front porch is decorated with a 6' diameter mosaic of the Seal of the Park Commission, which was incorporated into Polk's original design.

The Beach Chalet remains intact, but has been poorly maintained. Although the foundation has deteriorated the superstructure is reasonably sound, except the roof, which is in very poor condition. Minor interior alterations have been made to both floors, but they are of no great consequence. The murals are dirty and damaged, virtually unlit and partly concealed by the existing back bar. However, they are structurally sound, and deserve cleaning, repair and restoration to their original condition.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES Built, 1925

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Willis Polk

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Beach Chalet is a unique San Francisco structure, known for the role it has played as a local institution, for its distinctive architecture that celebrates California's rich cultural heritage, and for the colorful, descriptive frescos that decorate the interior of the structure.

The Chalet has had a checkered career since its opening in June 1925. Originally, the ground floor served as a "commodious rest room" for bathers from the beach. A large room scattered with wicker furniture, it was constructed with arched Moorish-style windows and doorway, and a beamed ceiling of hewn timber. Upstairs was a restaurant, seating 200 diners. One local newspaper described the chalet restaurant as "an ideal spot for a pleasant meal and a view of the ocean."

The popular local eatery was taken over in 1930 by two sisters, Hattie and Minnie Mooser, and run as a tearoom. During World War II, the Army converted the Beach Chalet into coastal defense headquarters. After the war, it was boarded up for several years.

In 1947, under the instigation of William McCarthy, a World War II veteran and former commander of the Joseph P. McQuaide Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the chalet was reopened. Rented by the V. F. W. for a nominal monthly fee, they ran a bar on the first floor and used the upstairs rooms for meetings, parties, and occasional weddings. Now an informal local gathering place for athletes, joggers and others who use the Ocean Beach area, the bar has seen some turbulent times, frequented by beach gangs during the 1950's and once raided by police for showing pornographic films at a private party.

The Beach Chalet was the last design of noted San Francisco architect Willis Polk, who died in 1924, before the completion of the structure. Simple and streamlined in appearance, the building reflects a casual sophistication achieved by Polk after 35 years of design. This building also reflects Polk's interest in historical stylistic features, which he often incorporated into his work. The Chalet is constructed in the Spanish Colonial style that became popular in a revival movement beginning around 1890 throughout California and the Southwest. Polk was especially fond of working in stucco and wood, blending the elegant detailing of Spanish Baroque architecture with the simplified provincial forms of the Spanish Missions and Haciendas

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Delehanty, Randolph. "Report: Beach Chalet," for the San Francisco Heritage Foundation. June 1977. 4 pages.
- Jewett, Masha Zakheim. "The Beach Chalet: Scenes from Another Time." San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle, California Living Magazine. September 12, 1979, p. 26.
- Sward, Susan. "Veterans' Nostalgia at the Beach Chalet." San Francisco Chronicle. November 15, 1979, p. 6.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .8767 acres.

UTM REFERENCES

A 10 543220 4180150
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located at 1000 Great Highway, the property line is directly adjacent to the highway on the western boundary, extending back 144 feet into the dunes, and situated approximately 575 feet south of Kennedy Drive in Golden Gate Park and extending directly south 276 feet.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
NA			

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Molly Blauvelt, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Seth Curlin Associates, Architects/Planners

DATE

July 21, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

544 Pacific Avenue

TELEPHONE

415-398-7654

CITY OR TOWN

San Francisco

STATE

CA 94133

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. M. Ellison

TITLE

SHP O

DATE

5/20/81

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Beth Grosvenor
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/20/81

ATTEST: *Patrick Andrews*
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7/21/81

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 8 1981

DATE ENTERED JUL 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

found throughout the area. His Beach Chalet, a modest adaptation of these direct cultural influences, fits naturally into its stark, sandy site. The low hipped roof and thick white stucco are balanced by the arched entrances, the open air arcade with a row of supporting columns and a second story facade of glass windows that contrast the sense of solidarity while remaining cool and open to the marine view.

The simplified style of the architecture is given colorful definition and character by the work of several San Francisco artists, including fashion designer and muralist Lucien Labaudt. Funding for the chalet's art work was provided by the Federal Art Project division of the Works Progress Administration, established by Franklin Roosevelt in 1935. This unique sponsorship program was created in response to the desires of socialist-oriented artists' organizations and the practical necessities of setting up an effective art-relief program. A new artistic era was developing, which produced an expansion of the role of art as a means of social communication and change. Reviving an ancient Mexican artistic tradition, and responding to the influential work of artist Diego Rivera, muralists began to produce numerous public frescos, in an attempt to reach a "people's audience". According to his W.P.A. biography, Labaudt explained that the Beach Chalet murals "are to be specifically painted so that people without an understanding of art may recognize and enjoy the subject whether or not they are moved by considerations of design."

As in his earlier mural work, Labaudt employed the fresco technique, an ancient art form using earth pigment colors that are brushed directly onto a wet plaster surface. It is painstaking work because the artist must complete the section prepared before the plaster dries, or chip out dried blank spaces and hardened mistakes the next day. Working in sections of approximately two square feet per day, Labaudt spent over two years (1936 and 1937) creating his frescos.

Labaudt's Beach Chalet murals were conceived, in the social realist style, as a living record of San Francisco during the 1930's. The walls are filled with silent, colorful ghosts of the past who grace the familiar city-scapes with their many moods - playful, restive and contemplative. Labaudt's "San Francisco Scenes" serve as a random sampling of life at that time, filled with everyday working people, elbow to elbow with figures from the artistic and power establishments.

The murals are complemented by Primo Caredio's often whimsical mosaics, including an Indian shooting an arrow in the direction of the men's room, and Michael von Meyer's wood sculpture. A row of four free-standing, square-shaped support posts run longitudinally through the room. The posts were intricately carved by von Meyer, with an algae-like pattern of shallow incised designs. Von Meyer also carved the magnolia wood balustrade for the stairway. Elaborately designed, the newell-post is an octopus

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 8 1981

DATE ENTERED JUL 22 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

whose long tenacles twist the length of the staircase, entwining various merpeople and tiny divers.

It is fortunate that the building and these irreplaceable artworks have survived the relentless elements at the beach, and the constant stream of bar and entertainment patrons in the last thirty years. The City of San Francisco has recently entered into a thirty-year lease with Restoration Associates, an innovative San Francisco development firm, to completely rehabilitate and restore the Beach Chalet to as-new condition, and operate it as a first class restaurant and place of entertainment. This arrangement, initiated and supervised by the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission, should again give the people of the Bay Area a truly fine dining experience in Golden Gate Park, and hopefully spur a new renaissance of the long neglected Ocean Beach area of San Francisco.

