INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

NAME
HISTORIC
AZTEC HOTEL
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
311 West Foothill Boulevard
CITY, TOWN
Monrovia
STATE
California

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT
OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH
PUBLIC ACQUISITION
STATUS
OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
ACCESSIBLE
IN PROCESS
IN PROCESS
PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
MILITARY
MUSEUM
PARK
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
RELIGIOUS
SCIENTIFIC
TRANSPORTATION
OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
Adelia & Harold Haney
STREET & NUMBER
311 West Foothill Blvd.
CITY, TOWN
Monrovia
STATE
California

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE
Los Angeles County Hall of Records
STREET & NUMBER
320 West Temple Street
CITY, TOWN
Los Angeles
STATE
California

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
California Historic Resources Inventory
DATE
February 1977
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Office of Historic Preservation
CITY, TOWN
Sacramento
STATE
California
**DESCRIPTION**

**CONDITION**
- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- RUINS
- ORIGINAL SITE
- ALTERED
- UNALTERED
- MOVED

**CHECK ONE**

**CHECK ONE**

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed of brick, hollow tile, and concrete, the Aztec Hotel is a two-story and basement hotel and shop structure with a salmon-colored sheathing of stucco. The floor plan is L-shaped which allows for a large outside courtyard in the northwest corner. The first floor is composed of six stores, the hotel lobby, kitchen, and dining room, and four apartments. The upper floor contains 36 hotel rooms and an additional four apartments.

The most striking feature of the hotel is the Mayan art and architectural theme which is carried out in the interior and exterior. The facade consists of a row of storefronts extending several feet forward from the face of the two-story structure. Along the roofline of both levels are stepped projections, square spires, and geometric designs reminiscent of Mayan pyramids and art in Mexico. Ornate detailing around the hotel entrance, between several of the storefronts, and on the building corners add to the overall effect. This architectural styling is also carried out in the interior with similarly carved panels, and a plethora of murals, mosaics, and reliefs of Mayan art.

Alterations to the hotel have been very minimal. On the facade, the numerous neon signs have changed to meet the needs of the current tenants. Some of the glass-paned display windows have been replaced and the original stucco foundation beneath these display windows has been replaced with brick laid in stretcher bond. Several minor changes have been made in the interior but have not substantially altered the original appearance.

The hotel is situated on the corner of a commercial street with a large residential section directly behind it.
When it opened on September 5, 1925, the Aztec Hotel was not only the most ornate hotel in the city of Monrovia, it was also the completion of the first architectural attempt to apply the principles of Mayan art and architecture to modern American buildings. The hotel was designed by Los Angeles architect Robert B. Stacy-Judd who attributed the inspiration for this design to John L. Stephens's *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas and Yucatan* (1841), a work which expounded on the importance of the Mayan contributions to architecture and included a number of engravings by Fredrick Catherwood. The misnomer "Aztec" was given to the structure by Stacy-Judd because he believed that the general public was better acquainted with that tribe than with the Mayan culture.

Because of the modest budget for construction of the hotel, Stacy-Judd had to discard balance and yet form a continuity of Mayan motifs. On the façade of the hotel he located most of the ornamentation along the rooflines, on the building corners, and around the entrance structure to the lobby. He included a mass of Mayan mosaics, murals, and reliefs in the interior to continue the theme carried out on the exterior. Stacy-Judd also made sure that the furniture which would complete the lobby and dining room had Aztec, Toltec, and Inca designs which were compatible with the rest of the interior. Even the electrical fixtures exhibited the Mayan motif.

The publicity associated with the completion of the hotel spurred an almost immediate response. Structures such as the Mayan Theater in Los Angeles, the Beach and Yacht Club in La Jolla, the Mayan Hotel in Kansas City, and a number of residences in Southern California, as well as across the nation, were highly influenced by the design of the Aztec Hotel. Many new companies sprouted up manufacturing furniture, tile, fixture, and other items of Mayan influence. However, the Mayan style proved to be a short-lived phenomena as it had effectively died out by the end of the 1920's.

Although its influence as an architectural prototype passed quickly, the Aztec Hotel remained as Monrovia's premier hostelry and an architectural curiosity in the area. It has never been significantly altered and is today the most highly visible landmark in the city and the first of a very few remaining Mayan-styled buildings in the United States.
**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:** less than one (27,632 sq.ft.)

**UTM REFERENCES**

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<th>A</th>
<th>110,713.60</th>
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<th>ZONE EASTING NORTTHING</th>
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<td>C</td>
<td>3,717.23</td>
<td>D</td>
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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

A lot commencing at the northwest corner of Foothill Blvd. and Magnolia Ave., extending 176' northward along Magnolia, then 157' westward, then 176' southward to Foothill Blvd, and then 157' along Foothill to the original point.

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**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**

**DATE**

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**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

**DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**EST:**

**KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

**DATE**
Southern California Business, Vol. 7, no. 3 (April, 1928), pp. 16-38, 45.


Southwest Builder & Contractor, June 27, 1924, p. 57; August 8, 1924, p. 53; August 15, 1924, p. 53.


The Aztec Hotel
Monrovia, Los Angeles County, California
UTM Reference:
11/407360/3779220