

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 23 1976
DATE ENTERED MAR 8 1977

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower Block
AND/OR COMMON
Building #1, National Naval Medical Center

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
8901 Wisconsin Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Bethesda
STATE
Maryland
VICINITY OF
Eighth
COUNTY
Montgomery
CODE
24
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Eighth
STATE
D.C.
CODE
031

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Department of the Navy, Bureau of Medicine & Surgery
STREET & NUMBER
23rd and E Streets, N.W.
CITY, TOWN
Washington
VICINITY OF
STATE
D.C.

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Montgomery County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
Washington and Jefferson Streets
CITY, TOWN
Rockville
STATE
Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
None
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN
STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

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"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The National Naval Medical Center was constructed in 1939-42 on a 264.7 acre site on Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, Maryland, directly opposite that of the new National Institute of Health. The original building which is unaltered today, consists of a 20 story central tower rising above a series of interconnecting three and four story pavilions. It may be roughly divided into the central tower block, or the tower with its two "L" shaped wings oriented toward the Wisconsin Avenue entrance on the west, and the rear pavilions to the east. The modernistic building is neo-classical in feeling, its composition characterized by a strictly formal bilateral frontality. The central tower block is sited on a bluff overlooking Wisconsin Avenue and its architectural presence is directed toward this important approach to the nation's capital. The sweeping greensward of a 9 hole golf course together with a mature foundation planting of yew, maple, oak and sycamore enhances the monumentality of the building. The low lying interconnecting pavilions at the rear of the tower block are inconspicuously sited, screened from view by the landscaping, thus reducing the apparent mass of the hospital complex and emphasizing the soaring verticality, the sculptural qualities of the tower itself.

The main block of the building consists of the tower with its flanking "L" shaped pavilions to the north and to the south as well as a central connector to the east which leads to the minor pavilions at the rear of the complex. Construction is of reinforced concrete and structural steel frame clad in precast exposed aggregate concrete panels. The latter are faced with a combination of translucent and opaque quartz mixed with quartz sand and white portland cement. The fenestration of both tower and pavilions is stacked. Bronze sash alternate with serpentine spandrels to form dark verticals which contrast with the brilliant concrete panels creating the major decorative effect of the facades. The pavilions, by this device, become a neo-classical colonnade which acts as a base for the tower. The development of detail, proportions and rhythm here is sensitive and restrained, subordinated to the volumetric concerns of the composition.

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1939-42

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frederic W. Southworth, Navy
Dept. Paul P. Cret, consult.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Maryland was built during the early years of World War II to house the U.S. Navy's principal center for the practice and dissemination of medicine related to the needs of the naval service. The importance which the government attached to this center for education and research in naval medicine is reflected in the evolution of the complex's design which proceeded from rough plan and elevation sketches by Franklin D. Roosevelt on White House stationary to an in-house Bureau of Yards and Docks design effort executed under the close supervision of the noted private consulting architect, Paul Philippe Cret. The twenty story tower block with its two "L" shaped wings enveloping a lawn that slopes down toward Wisconsin Avenue on the east constitutes a landmark of the Bethesda area in the physical sense of the word.

The construction of the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda was the culmination of over a century in the development of medical facilities to serve American naval personnel. Although the Surgeon General of the Navy had advocated the establishment of a school for naval medical officers as early as 1809 it was not until 1878 that a course of instruction at the Brooklyn Naval Hospital was inaugurated after a study was made of medical education practices in Europe. The school thus established found a more permanent home in 1902 at the Old Naval Observatory, 23rd and E Streets, N.W. in Washington, and was augmented by a hospital in 1906. By the mid thirties the growing complex of medical functions at the Observatory site included a dental school, a medical technology school, and the library of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. Renamed the Naval Medical Center, this complex of functions had outgrown its facilities at 23rd and E Sts. When the Congress acted in 1937 to fund the construction of a new Naval Medical Center, the Observatory site was abandoned due to National Capital Park and Planning Commission opposition to the negative impact of a large building on the setting of the nearby Lincoln Memorial. Instead, President Roosevelt selected the new site for the center in rural Bethesda.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records of the Naval Shore Establishment, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Archives, Port Hueneme, California
 Building the Navy's Bases in World War II: History of the Bureau of Yards & Docks and the Civil Engineer Corps 1940-1946 Vol. 1. Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947
 "Naval Medical Center" Architectural Concrete. Vol. 9, No. 2

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	31,8	61,0	4,3	1,8	8,3,0	B				
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING					
C							D				
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Building #1 is the tower, the two "L" shaped wings to the north and south, and the eastern connector which attaches it to the rear pavilions (not themselves part of Building #1).

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

Lawrence P. Earle, Urban Planner

September 1, 1975

ORGANIZATION

Chesapeake Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Building #57, Washington Navy Yard

TELEPHONE

202/433-3387

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *James D. Baker*

TITLE

Director, Real Property and Natural Resources

DATE Aug. 18, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF *Ken J. ...*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 3/8/77

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3/4/77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

MAR 8 1977

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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Cont'd)

The cornerstone for the Bethesda Naval Medical Center was laid on Armistice Day 1940 by President Roosevelt in the presence of various dignitaries. The President's interest in the facility was extensive, as his sketch had in fact superseded a design competition among the staff of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, the Navy branch charged with designing shore installations. The crude plan and elevation of the hospital complex which Roosevelt sketched was modeled on the 1924 State Capitol at Lincoln, Nebraska by Bertram Goodhue which had impressed him on a trip west. To develop this Presidentially mandated design concept of a fifteen story tower, flanked by low two story pavilions, BuDocks engaged the services of the internationally famous American architect, Paul P. Cret (1876-1945) to work with the Navy architectural staff under Frederic W. Southworth. Cret's design was larger in scale than Roosevelt's proposal but followed the general outlines of the President's sketch. The building's construction took two years and corresponded with the early period of United States involvement in World War II.

Significant research has taken place at the National Naval Medical Center since its completion in 1942. Research programs at the center produced and tested the acrylic eye, confirmed the value of bone and blood vessel grafting techniques, and developed the use of radioactive gallium for bone tumors. New surgical procedures, psychiatric techniques, and experiments on facsimile limbs were also developed at the center. In addition the National Naval Medical Center has trained thousands of hospitalmen, doctors, nurses, and technicians in special areas such as tropical medicine, radiation exposure treatment, or emergency care to the injured which are of critical or unique importance to the Navy. The Bethesda hospital has provided care to many Presidents of the United States and their families as well as Navy men and women. The addition of other specialized health science units in recent years such as the Naval Medical Data Service Center, the Armed Forces Radiobiology Unit, and the Naval School of Hospital Administration have added to the stature of the National Naval Medical Center.

TELEPHONE REPORT

DATE	2 Nov
TIME OF CALL	AM PM

1. CALL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TO: <input type="checkbox"/> FROM (Name)	2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)
Larry Earle	Navy

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

Asked for a justification for limiting the nomination to the tower and for photos of the rear wings and other buildings.

Navy does not want to jeopardize the construction of the Medical University of the Armed Forces on the south & east of the hospital. Larry will send.

IF they have to rewrite it will take a year to go thru Navy redtaps, especially so since Navy won't want to enlarge it.

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL	TITLE	OFFICE
Livingsood		

NR Data Sheet

DATE: /
Reviewer INITIALS: S
NR DOE MAR 8 1977

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower
OTHER NAMES: Building No. 1, National Naval Medical Center

LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER 8901 Wisconsin Ave.
CITY/TOWN Bethesda CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8th
STATE Maryland 24 VICINITY OF COUNTY code
Montgomery 031

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline) FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME): Navy
NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N.ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST
SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

FEATURES:

INTERIOR EXTERIOR ENVIRONS
- Substantially intact-1 Substantially intact-2 - Substantially intact-3
- unknown - 4 - unknown -5 - unknown -6
- not applicable - 7 - not applicable - 8 - Not applicable-9
- Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0
CONDITION - EXCELLENT - DETERIORATED - UNALTERED ORIGINAL SITE
 - GOOD - RUINS - ALTERED - MOVED
 - FAIR - UNEXPOSED - Reconstructed - Unknown
 - Unexcavated - Excavated
ACCESS - Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown
historic district? YES NO
WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:
WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)
then- HOSPITAL
now- same

SIGNIFICANCE:

- ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC
- ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC
- AGRICULTURE
- ARCHITECTURE
- ART
- COMMERCE
- COMMUNICATIONS
- CONSERVATION
- ECONOMICS
- EDUCATION
- ENGINEERING
- EXPLORATION
- INDUSTRY
- INVENTION
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
- LAW/Gov't/politics
- LITERATURE
- MILITARY
- MUSIC
- PHILOSOPHY
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- RELIGION
- SCIENCE
- SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER (SPECIFY)
- entertainment
- health
- recreation
- settlement
- socio/cultural
- urban & commun planning

Claims

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: stripped classicism

Frederick W. Southworth

architect/m.builder: Paul Philippe Cret

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

(label role & appropriate date)

personal

James Forrestal - jumped out window
F. D. Roosevelt - sketched building

events

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1939-42

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

Navy

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

1

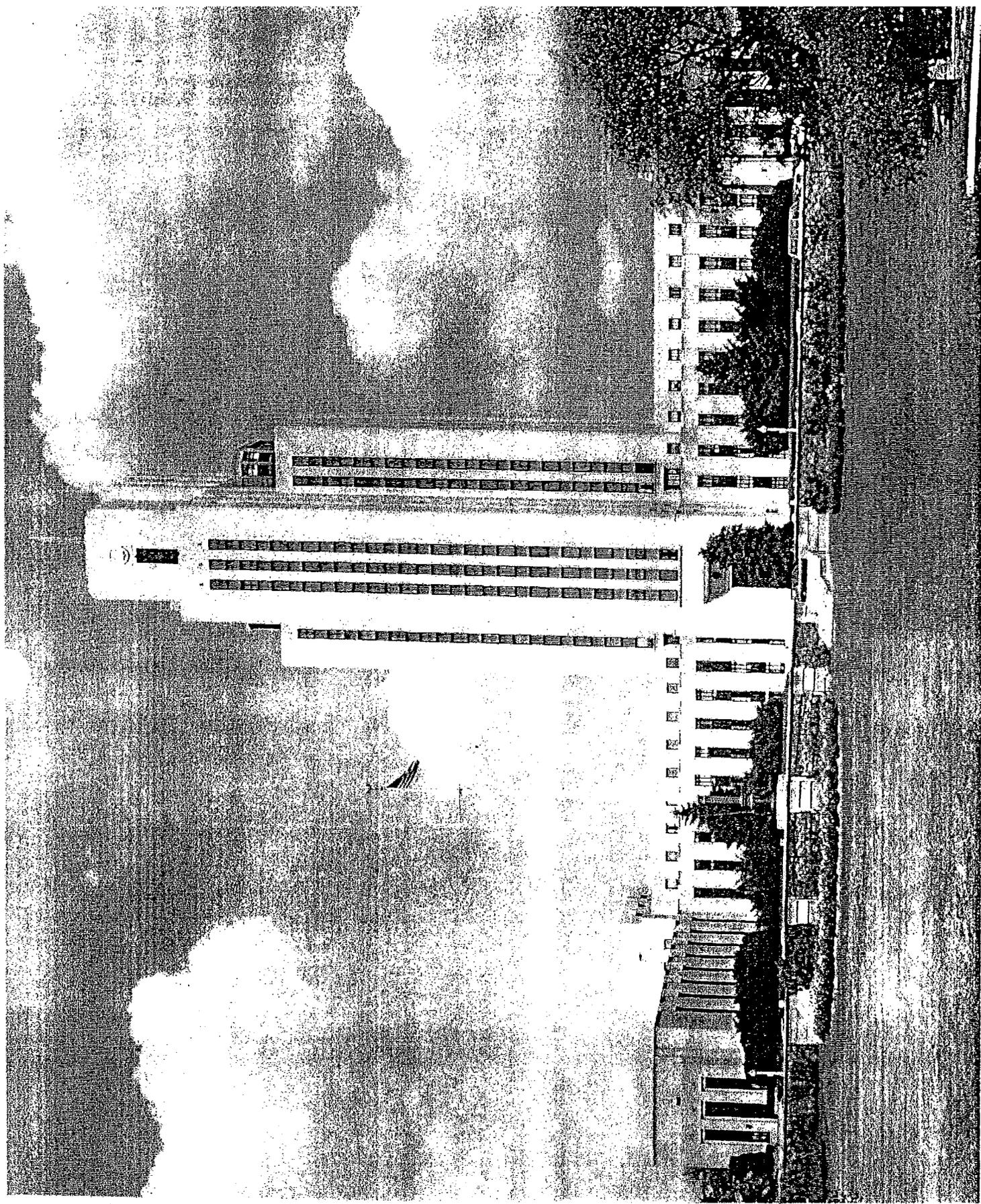
COMMENTS: (include architectural information here)

REINFORCED CONCRETE AND STEEL, ^{RECTANGULAR} CENTRAL TOWER (WITH SETBACK TO EACH SIDE)
FLANKED BY ELL SHAPED LOW WINGS. FLAT ROOFS, ONLY DECORATION IS
SEAL AT TOP OF TOWER AND AT WING ENTRANCES AND SLIGHT CAPS TO PLASTERS
ON WINGS. VERTICAL EMPHASIS CREATED BY GLASS AND BRONZE SPANDRELS AND
WINDOWS

ATTACHED PAVILIONS EAST OF THIS STRUCTURE

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

This nationally famous hospital is an architectural landmark
as well as a historically significant research center
designed by the nationally prominent architect, Paul P. Cret.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 23 1976

DATE ENTERED MAR 8 1977

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES. ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower Block

AND/OR COMMON

Building 740 National Naval Medical Center

2 LOCATION

CITY/TOWN
Bethesda

COUNTY

Montgomery

STATE

Maryland

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

CHINHO, Department of the Navy

NEGATIVE IDENT

Naval Photographic Center, Washington, D.C.

DATE OF PHOTO

June 1975

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION ETC. (IF DISCREET, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

View from Wisconsin Ave. of the West elevation
of the Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower Block

PHOTO NO.

1162949

Buildings
Bethesda
National Naval Medical Center
View from Wisconsin Ave. of West
View from Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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1 NAME

HISTORIC

Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower Block

AND/OR COMMON

Building #1, National Naval Medical Center

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Bethesda

—VICINITY OF

COUNTY
Montgomery

STATE

Maryland

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

CHENFO, Department of the Navy

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Naval Photographic Center, Washington, D. C.

DATE OF PHOTO

June 1975

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET.

Hand drawn sketch of view from Wisconsin Ave of the Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower Block, as drawn by F.D.R. (Franklin D. Roosevelt) Dec. 13, 1937, "New Naval Hosp. Center 15 stories Additions 2 stories." - on White House stationery

PHOTO NO.

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**THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON**

