



United States Department of the Interior

HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The Director of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

Chris Therral Delaporte

is pleased to inform you that the historic property listed on the enclosed sheet has been nominated by the State Historic Preservation Officer responsible for your State's implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, P.L. 89-665 (80 Stat. 915), as amended. It has accordingly been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. A leaflet explaining the National Register is enclosed for your information and convenience.

Enclosures

DEMOLISHED

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW JERSEY

Date Entered JUL 25 1978

Name

Location

Seamen's Mission

Hoboken
Hudson County

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

ACQUISITION

REMARKS

REMARKS

REMARKS

REMARKS

REMARKS

REMARKS

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REMARKS

Also Notified

Honorable Clifford P. Case
Honorable Harrison A. Williams, Jr.
Honorable Joseph A. LeFante

COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Seamen's Mission

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

60-64 Hudson Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hoboken

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

CODE

34

COUNTY

Hudson

CODE

017

3 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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Society for the Care of German Seamen in the Port of New York

STREET & NUMBER

312 West 22nd Street

CITY, TOWN

New York City

VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hall of Records, Hudson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

583 Newark Street

CITY, TOWN

Jersey City

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory (1480.38)

DATE

1978

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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1 NAME

HISTORIC

Seamen's Mission

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

60-64 Hudson Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hoboken

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

New Jersey

VICINITY OF

CODE

34

COUNTY

Hudson

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

XX PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

X PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

X YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

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FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES

1907, 1917, 1942

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For seventy years the Hoboken Seamen's Mission has served as a home and refuge for German sailors.¹ The Mission was an outgrowth of a large vigorous German community which peopled Hoboken from the latter part of the nineteenth century until after the First World War. During this same time Hoboken was an active seaport which served North German Lloyd and the Hamburg American Lines. The Mission reflected the desires of the German population to help their countrymen, especially those who brought a touch of the old country with them on every crossing.

The Mission was operated under the auspices of The Society for the Care of German Seaman in the Port of New York - a Lutheran affiliated group - from 1907 until 1974. On February 7, 1974, the Society consolidated with the Lutheran Emigrants House Association on New York and the Association for the Relief of Indigent Germans.²

The Mission was originally funded by contributions from "German residents of New York and Hoboken, by forty churches in New York state and by various clubs and German organizations."³ Over the years contributions continued to be received from a wide spectrum of people which ranged from royalty and bankers to bakers and auto makers.⁴

The pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Hoboken was Reverend Alexander Richter during the early part of the century. It was he who founded the Mission in 1907. The following year another Lutheran pastor, Reverend W. Thun, was sent from Germany to take over the Mission. Reverend Thun was also the founder of the Philadelphia Seamen's Mission at a later date.

After one year under Rverend Thun's direction, Pastor Herman Brueckner, another German emigre, took over the Mission.⁵ He remained in that position for forty-six years. In addition to the Hoboken assignment he was responsible for the establishment of the Brooklyn branch Prospect Park Young Men's Christian Association

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE # 2

SIGNIFICANCE

at 9th Street in Brooklyn, New York. This he did in an attempt to reach still more German seamen as they entered the New York/New Jersey Port at the Brooklyn piers.⁶ Brueckner also served as pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Hoboken during the same period 1908 to 1954. Brueckner died in 1957.

The newly-ordained Reverend Herbert Patzelt from Germany became the Mission director in 1955.⁷ The Mission was still exclusively serving German seamen. Today Reverend Heinrich P. Suhr acts as president.

During both the First and Second World Wars events at the Mission were a bit more dramatic than the romantic arrival and departure of ships. The Mission building was raided many times and in several instances arrests were made by Federal agents. In 1917 over two hundred Germans were taken into custody in a single raid.⁸ In 1942 the raids were conducted in an attempt to search out "undesireable aliens" and Nazi spies who were suspected of using the Mission as a site for bund organization or short wave radio transmissions. Many seamen were arrested during this time and deported from the country.⁹

The activities which surrounded the Mission building were but microcosmic events indicative of what was happening on a larger scale in Hoboken and the United States. In a society that changed the name of sauerkraut to "liberty cabbage" and frankfurter to "hot dog," anything German was suspect. The hysteria of war was experienced first hand in Hoboken. Even the pastor of the Mission was arrested in the raids,¹⁰ however, no evidence was ever unearthed which indicated direct involvement of the Mission ownership in clandestine operations.

Besides the anti-espionage role played by the Federal agents, the United States Government was a frequent owner of the building. During World War I American soldiers were housed in the Mission. These soldiers were charged with the task of guarding the Hoboken waterfront and piers, an important

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE #3

SIGNIFICANCE

function in as much as Hoboken served as the major port of embarkation and reentry during the entire conflict.¹¹ After the war, the Mission reverted to its original use of providing shelter for German seamen.

Again during World War II the United States Government played a part in the building's history. Once more there were raids and arrests.¹² In 1944 the United States Alien Property Custodian was placed in charge of the Mission and leased space to the U.S. Customs Department.¹³ One hundred and fifty Customs' inspectors and guards utilized the property as the Hoboken headquarters in the New York area. Following the departure of Customs in 1953, the Mission resumed its traditional operation under the auspices of the Society. The Mission has continuously offered shelter and housing to seamen since then. Its future, however, is threatened.

In 1976 the Society determined that the Mission could not cover expenses. The Society initiated proceedings to sell the building to Singer Brothers' Shop Rite, a supermarket. Shop Rite intends to raze the building in order to make way for an addition to its parking lot. In January 1977, when the negotiations to sell were started, fifty-four men lived in the Mission. After a series of eviction notices were served all but six departed. One of those who left died after thirteen days in a rented room.¹⁴ At this writing the six remaining men are still fighting for their home. The battle does not appear to have a successful conclusion. A demolition permit application has been filed with the city and the Society is still pursuing a final eviction notice. A property closing with Singer Brothers/Shop Rite will occur as soon as the building is vacated and secured.¹⁵ In a matter of days after eviction, demolition could be started.

The destruction of this building would be a critical event for Hoboken. The structure itself forms an integral part of the building mass around Hudson Place in the southern part of the city. The Mission stands two blocks west of the Eric Lackawanna Terminal which was designated a State and National Historic Site in 1973. The terminal and the entire

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE #4

SIGNIFICANCE

two block area of which the Mission is architecturally a part, is now the subject area for an Urban Development Action Grant application on the part of the city. The 1907 Terminal has already been awarded several million dollars in Public Works Act monies for restoration and reuse. More grants are being sought. The Hoboken Community Development Agency is currently working on a Southern Hoboken Historical District, which will include the Seamen's Mission. The entire area is to be rehabilitated.

At every point in United States history from 1907 to date, the Seamen's Mission building has reflected within its walls the helpfulness, the anxieties and the dreams of the German population of Hoboken. Hoboken has been, and probably always will be, a city of immigrants. The Mission captured and retains to this day, the German spirit which once dominated the Mile Square City of Hoboken.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Jersey Journal, Evening Edition, Friday, October 28, 1910. "A New Home for German Sailors."
2. Certificate of Consolidation, Hoboken Tax Assessor's Office.
3. Vierzehnter Jahresbericht des Vereins fur Seemannsmission im Hafen von New York, 1920. Fourteenth Annual Report. 11 pp.
4. Lutheran Seamen's Mission, Financial Report, 1973. pp 7-8.
5. Hudson Dispatch, November 13, 1937. "Sailors' Haven to Celebrate Thirtieth Birthday."
6. Herald Tribune, Sunday, June 27, 1954. "Dr. Brueckner Steps Down as Seamen's Pastor in Port."
7. Ibid.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE #5

SIGNIFICANCE

8. New York World-Telegram, Saturday, March 28, 1942.
"Two FBI Raids Net U-Boat Spies Here." p.1.
9. Ibid. Also The Daily News, Monday, May 19, 1941.
"Picked Up." Also New York Herald Tribune, March 28,
1942. "FBI Seizes 76 Aliens and Radio Sender." p.1.
10. The Jersey Journal, Saturday, April 7, 1917. "Arrest
German Pastor in Hoboken As Net is Spread for Enemies."
Also the Jersey Journal, Monday, April 9, 1917. "Six
Hudson Co. Germans in Uncle Sam's Net." p.1.
11. The Jersey Journal, Wednesday, July 1, 1953. "150
Customs Guards Bid Hoboken Adieu." p.2.
12. See footnote 8 above.
13. See footnote 11 above and Hoboken Tax Assessor's Office.
14. Conversation with Terri Ratti, caseworker, Hoboken
Senior Citizen Center.
15. The Dispatch, Wednesday, March 1, 1978. "Sailor Haven
at Sea." p. 16.

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

I, [Signature], National Historic Preservation Officer for the State of [State], hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places, and that it is a historic resource according to the criteria established by the National Park Service.

[Signature], Director of Environmental Protection, Department of Environmental Protection, State of [State], hereby certifies that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

I, [Signature], Director of the National Historic Preservation Office, hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Jersey Journal, Evening Edition. "A New Home for German Sailors." 10/28-1910.
Vierzehnter Jahresbericht des Vereins fur Seemannsmission in Hafen New York, 1920.
Fourteenth Annual Report.
Hudson Dispatch. "Sailors' Haven to Celebrate Thirteen Birthday" 11/13-1937.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/6th of an acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>18</u>	<u>5811830</u>	<u>4509670</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Terry Karschner, Historic Preservation Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Historic Preservation, Dept. Environmental Protection March 1978

STREET & NUMBER

109 West State Street

TELEPHONE

(609) 292-2023

CITY OR TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE XX

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.

Deputy

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Deputy Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE #2

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

New York World-Telegram. "Two FBI Raids Net U-Boat Spies
Here." 3-28-1942.

The Jersey Journal. "Arrest German Pastor in Hoboken" 4-7-1917.

