

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Crosby Building
 Other names/site number: Bing Crosby Enterprises
 Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



2. Location

Street & number: 9028 W. Sunset Boulevard
 City or town: West Hollywood State: California County: Los Angeles
 Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**
 Applicable National Register Criteria:
 ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D**

_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:	_____ Date
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
_____ Title :	
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/business

COMMERCE/professional

INDUSTRY/manufacturing/research facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/business

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Moderne

Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

foundation: Concrete

walls: Stucco

roof: Asphalt shingles

other: Glass steel or wood framed. (windows)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Crosby Building is a 3-story, 3-bay commercial building with basement in the Moderne style with Colonial Revival influences. Construction started on 15 October 1936, and it was occupied in 1937. It is located at the west end of the Sunset Strip at 9028 Sunset Boulevard with front facing north. Exterior walls are original stucco. Each floor steps back from the floor below. Dentil stringcourses run between first, second, and third floors. The third floor features quoins along its outer edges. The building has a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles with four arched roof dormers and a front-facing gable dormer. Windows are original steel, multi-light casements. At street level along the primary elevation are three storefronts with windows that are fixed, aluminum or wood frame. Outermost storefronts have decorative wood surrounds with ornamental pediments. The building has parking behind it with the entrance on the east side of the building. The Crosby Building was constructed to serve as the office of Bing Crosby and his staff and support elements. There also were some commercial tenants. About 1946 Bing Crosby reorganized his support business that was known as Bing Crosby Enterprises (BCE). It took over

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all of the top two floors of the building. The two commercial tenants on the ground floor and basement remained; however, by 1949 the Electronic Division of BCE had taken the right side space and basement. In 1952 it also took space on the right side of the second floor. In April 1969 the building was sold to other interests that converted it into a mixed-use commercial building. Only minor changes have been made to it since it was built, and it provides historical continuity to the architecture of the Sunset Strip.

Narrative Description

Crosby Building Exterior

The Crosby Building located at 9028 W. Sunset Boulevard faces north on the south side of the street. It is a three story structure with basement in a Streamline Moderne - Classical styling. The footprint of the building has not changed since it was constructed, and its exterior features are original. The particular interpretation of the Streamline Moderne in the Crosby Building with original exterior stucco walls is contained in the careful proportions of the receding levels, curved window bays, recessed bands of windows, swept bays, curved recesses and horizontal banding at corners. The Classical interpretation is seen in the dentillated cornice line on the second floor, Swan's neck pediments, bold, fluted pilasters, hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles and two segmental arched roof dormers on each side and a front-facing gable dormer in the center. The building successfully uses tradition in a modern format. [2, 3]

At street level along the primary elevation are two storefronts and the building central main entrance with windows that are fixed, aluminum or wood frame. The two storefronts and the main entrance have central, fully glazed doors that are flanked by fixed, fully glazed windows and fronts with shallow stucco bulkheads. Outermost storefronts have decorative wood surrounds with ornamental pediments. Only the right store front has been changed with the center door moved to the right side. The main central entrance is flanked by curved display windows. [1, 2, 4]

The second floor is stepped back slightly and has a dentillated cornice that wraps around to the adjacent sides. Centered above each main bay of the first floor are gently sweeping bays flanking a central, recessed bay. The third floor is setback still further with banded molding marking the corners. It is punctuated by a center triangle and flanking segmental arched dormers that break the cornice line and contain multi-pane windows. The windows are original steel, multi-light casements. [3]

The east and west sides of the building have stucco walls that extend from the basement level to the third floor roof. These side walls are broken at the front by an extension of the basement, first and second floors. The third floor setback is maintained and the molding from the building front is carried back on these extensions. The side windows also are the original steel, multi-light casements. The rear of the building also uses the stucco wall from the basement to the third floor roof. It is broken only by a bay window on the second floor east and a wraparound open balcony above it on the third floor. The windows are also the original steel, multi-light casements. [4]

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The parking lot behind the building is accessed by doors on the east and west side of the rear wall at basement level. It originally had about sixteen covered spaces and about twelve open spaces. The access driveway is on the east side of the building. [4]

Crosby Building Interior

The ground floor is divided into three spaces, east to west along Sunset Boulevard. The two end spaces were for commercial use and included the basement level and restrooms. These spaces appear to have been built for their original tenants. The east side space tenant was Sam's Finlandia Baths that included most of the basement where the baths were located. There was access to the parking lot from the basement, and it also connected to the elevator. The west side space consisted of a two level main floor with a balcony in the rear over the small basement that also had access to the parking lot. It appeared to have been designed for a tailor, Stanley, Davis & Puraro. The center space of the building was the main entrance and consisted of a stairway that went from the basement to the third floor. In the back was an elevator that also served the same levels. [4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9]

The second and third floors were divided by the central hall with stairway and elevator access. The three front sections of the second floor contained offices each with their own large windows. Prior to 1945 the east portion of the second floor was used by Bing Crosby's agent. After 1945 Larry Crosby had the front office on the east side and the large work room behind it with the bay window at the rear. The work area was used to process the fan mail of Bing Crosby. The center and west sides of the front had offices. The one on the west side beginning in 1951 was the executive office for the Electronic Division. It had a conference room behind it and restrooms in the rear. The third floor was all offices on each side of the central hall. The office on the east side in the rear with the wraparound open balcony was for Bing Crosby. [4]

By 1949 the Electronic Division of BCE had taken the west side and basement where the tailor had been. In 1951 this space became a technology development area for the video tape recorder under Francis Healy who later moved to the second floor front west side office. The first floor of this area was multi-level with the center being the lowest. The display area by the front door had Ampex recorders on display. From there were three steps down to the large center area where the video tape recorder was staged and electronic work benches were located. In the rear there were several steps up to the third level (balcony) over the basement area. The balcony level was used as a design area and had a restroom. The basement was reached by steps from the middle section. It served as a machine shop and had its own access to the parking lot in the rear. [4]

Alterations

Since the 1980's only minor alternations have been done to the building. The interior spaces have been modified to meet the commercial requirements. The right side entrance was moved for the tenant there. The only other changes that have been made were for code requirements such as the outside stairs and additional fire exits. Several windows were blocked for the stairs and the first floor tenant. The building looks very much as it did in 1936 except for the signage. [2, 4]

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

INVENTION

INDUSTRY

ENGINEERING

COMMERCE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

PERFORMING ARTS

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1936 - 1965

Significant Dates

1936 - 1946 (Bing Crosby Office)

1946 - 1965 (Bing Crosby Enterprises Offices)

1951 - 1956 (Development of video tape recorder)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Crosby, Bing

Mullin, John T

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Webb, Ronald J. (Architect)

Sentney, C.R. (Builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Crosby Building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B and C at the local level of significance. Its eligibility for Criterion A is due to two major areas: Entertainment and Performing Arts. The use of the building to support contributions it made to entertainment and the performing arts as the central office for the support of Bing Crosby. The second area was its use in developing instrumentation and video tape recorders. The first quality television tape recorder was demonstrated there in 1952 followed by the first quality color television recorder in 1955. Its eligibility for Criterion B is due to its association with two internationally recognized individuals. The first is Bing Crosby who built and used the building as his headquarters for his work in radio, television, recording and motion pictures. The second is John T. (Jack) Mullin who is recognized for his work in audio and videotape recording. The Crosby Building is the single surviving property most closely associated with the careers of both these men. Its eligibility for Criterion C is due to its being one of few remaining buildings on the Sunset Strip of the Moderne and Colonial Revival architecture style. Its history parallels that of the Strip and growth with the entertainment industry. The period of significance for the Crosby Building begins in 1936, the year of its construction as the headquarters for Bing Crosby and ends in 1965 when Bing Crosby had begun to reduce his appearances and the need for a central office declined. This period also covers the period of the development of the video (television) tape recorder (1951 - 1956).

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A

The Crosby Building construction was started on 15 October 1936 by Bing Crosby just after he began his ten year association with NBC and the Kraft Music Hall. It was to be the headquarters for his many projects that started with his singing and radio career. Its eligibility for Criterion A at the local level is based on its use as the management office that supported Bing Crosby's ENTERTAINMENT and PERFORMING ARTS career that reached national and international significance. It also is eligible for Criterion A based on its involvement in the development of technologies to support Bing Crosby and the recording industry. The most notable development was the video (television) tape recorder that was demonstrated in the building in 1952 that proved for the first time that it was possible to record video on tape. This work not only affected the local level, but its reach was international as well. [1, 2]

From 1937 until 1946 the building functioned as Bing Crosby's management office that included his brother Everett Crosby (his manager) and a talent agency, the General Amusement Corp., to handle support functions such as fan mail. Bing Crosby was the first of the entertainers to incorporate to keep the rights to his performances. By 1945 Bing Crosby had established many separate corporations from acting to the Crosby Research Foundation and needed to consolidate

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his businesses. He was not only involved in movies and recordings, but had to do a weekly nationwide live radio program. At the end of 1945 he hired Basil Grillo to reorganize his businesses, and the Crosby Building became the major financial and business center staffed by people who worked directly for Bing Crosby Enterprises (BCE). It was the center for his radio, movie and recording projects, and other efforts such as oil wells, Minute Maid Orange Juice, horse racing, and the annual pro-am golf tournament at Pebble Beach. [2, 3, 4]

His older brother, Larry Crosby, was in charge of the operation that also included responding to Bing's fan mail that amounted to over 10,000 letters per month. Mail sacks came from all parts of the world and were processed on the large second floor east room. He also was charged with helping new inventors and actors. He had a list of people provided by Bing that included Louis Armstrong, Judy Garland, Rosemary Clooney, Les Paul and others that Bing wanted to help. In 1940, twenty-two year old Cindy Walker, songwriter and singer, walked into the Crosby Building hoping to meet Bing. Instead she meet his brother Larry who after hearing her song, "Lone Star Trail," arranged for her to meet Bing the next day on a movie set. She sang her song to Bing, and he had a hit with it the next year. [2, 3, 4, 16]

Bing Crosby also took control of his radio program in 1946 and made it the first prerecorded (transcribed) show. It was broadcast on 16 October 1946 using transcription discs. This change meant that he had to become involved in the technology (ENGINEERING) of broadcasting. The Electronic Division headed by Francis (Frank) Healy was established in 1946 and located in the Crosby Building to manage this function. By 1947 they needed a better recording process for the radio show and discovered John T. (Jack) Mullin who had built a high quality audio tape recorder based on German technology. He was employed by the Electronic Division, and Bing Crosby's radio show became the first to be aired from tape. This show was broadcast on 1 October 1947. While the actual recording was done at the radio studios, the operation was managed from the Crosby building where Frank Healy and Jack Mullin had their offices. Jack Mullin worked from the Electronic Division in the Crosby Building to help Ampex build improved recorders for the radio show and with Minnesota Mining (3M) in developing (INVENTION and ENGINEERING) better recording tape. These advances also were then employed by other radio networks and recording studios. [2, 4, 5]

In 1951 Bing Crosby was faced with the prospect of doing live television shows since there was no tape recorder for television. He established a laboratory in the Crosby Building to develop (INVENTION) a video recorder for him, and he also asked Ampex to build one. The work in the Crosby laboratory developed a video tape recorder that could reproduce a television picture of reasonable quality by early 1952. A demonstration of this recorder in the fall of 1952 proved for the first time that it was possible to record and play back video of reasonable quality. General David Sarnoff of RCA heard of it, and with his board of directors visited the laboratory for a demonstration. He unsuccessfully tried to buy the rights to it. [2, 5]

Over the next three years other demonstrations were given, each with increased quality. The last demonstration in 1955 was of a high quality color video recorder, and CBS ordered several of them. These were the first video recorders ever sold (INDUSTRY). Ampex, encouraged and

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supported by the Crosby research, subsequently demonstrated the first commercial recorder in 1956 that became the industry standard. [2, 5]

In 1952 the Electronic Division of BCE also addressed the recording problems faced by the military instrumentation recorders that they helped Ampex develop and sell (COMMERCE). It developed a noise compensator and a new tape transport that eliminated the noise problems in the recordings. In 1953 it produced the first magnetic head to record over a megahertz that made quality video recording possible for both BCE and Ampex. By 1956, it built the first airborne 12 channel megahertz instrumentation recorder. From 1949 to 1955, it also provided service for most of the military and commercial Ampex recorders in the western United States. [2, 5]

In 1957 the Electronics Division was sold to 3M, and the Crosby Building returned to the basic support of Bing Crosby into the early-1960's. In 1962 Bing sold his movie unit, Bing Crosby Productions, at Paramount Pictures and began to cut back on his activities due to health reasons. The building was sold in April 1969. It now has become a mixed-use commercial building. [2, 5]

Criterion B

The Crosby Building is eligible for Criterion B at the national level due to at least two people who were associated with it. They are Bing Crosby and John T. (Jack) Mullin. Of the two, Bing Crosby is the most universally known.

Bing Crosby

To most Americans, Bing Crosby was the eternal crooner, a much celebrated and beloved performer of unparalleled popularity. Yet he was far more than that; he was an architect of 20th century entertainment, a force in the development of three industries that barely existed when he came into the world - recordings, motion pictures, and broadcasting. As the most successful recording artist of all time, an abiding star of movies, radio, and television, and a firm believer in the wonders of technology, he helped to transform and define the cultural life not only of the United States, but of the world. [4, 6]

When Harry Lillis Crosby was born, on 3 May 1903, to a working-class Catholic Irish-Anglo family with deep roots in the American Northwest, there was little reason to think he would amount to much. Though an obviously intelligent and conscientious student, his primary interests were sports (he won many swimming medals), school plays, and music. He played drums (not very well), sang, and whistled. At Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, he decided to study law because he could think of nothing better at the time and it pleased his parents. He left law school two months before graduating in 1934. [4, 6, 7]

Music lured him away. It had always been part of the Crosby household. His father, who played the mandolin, led the family in song and bought one of the first phonograph players in Spokane. Harry was the fourth of seven siblings. Nicknamed Bing for his love of a newspaper parody, "The Bingville Bugle," he listened to everything; he attended the vaudeville shows that came through town, regaling his friends afterward with detailed accountings of each act. He landed a

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backstage job when the legendary Al Jolson performed in Spokane, and studied his every gesture from the wings. [4, 6]

A younger boy named Al Rinker sealed Bing's fate, asking him to play drums in his five-piece dance band. When the other fellows in the group, the Musicaladers, heard Bing sing, they did not care how well he played the drums. Even at that age, Bing had a mellifluous, solid baritone with good range, a steady sense of timing, and a casual charm. With his uncanny memory, Bing could learn songs after hearing them once, though he never learned to read music. [4, 6]

After the band broke up, Bing worked locally with Rinker, who accompanied him on piano. In 1925, Al Rinker suggested that they pool their funds and drive a broken-down flivver to Los Angeles, where Al's sister (the not-yet-celebrated jazz singer Mildred Bailey) might get them a job. She got them an audition, which was all they needed. Bing and Al toured in one vaudeville show after another, up and down the West Coast, until a couple of musicians from Paul Whiteman's band chanced to hear them. Within a year after leaving Spokane, Crosby and Rinker were under contract to the most famous orchestra in the country. They were on their way to New York. [4, 6, 7]

Despite a few setbacks and a too-eager embrace of big city temptations, Bing refined his style. He was inspired by his idol and lifelong friend, Louis Armstrong. Whiteman teamed Bing and Al with a pianist and songwriter, Harry Barris, calling them the Rhythm Boys. They became the first successful jazz vocal group. Yet it was Crosby's way with a song that most impressed Whiteman's arrangers and musicians, who lobbied for more Bing solos. [4, 6]

The word was out: Bing brought something new to American song - rhythmic excitement, virile authority, emotional candor. The best jazz musicians of the day accepted him as one of their own. He recorded with Bix Beiderbecke and Duke Ellington. Soon, every major American songwriter, among them Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer, Jimmy Van Heusen, and Johnny Burke, were writing songs for him. [4, 6]

Within a few years, the Rhythm Boys left Whiteman; then Bing left the Rhythm Boys in 1930's. Working in nightclubs and headlining in theaters, Bing was the first vocalist to use the microphone as an instrument, enabling him to communicate subtle emotions and musical nuance. When he appeared at the Cocoanut Grove in Hollywood, the movie community flocked to hear him. Producer Mack Sennett hired him to make a series of comedy shorts. William Paley, of the fledgling CBS network, gave him a daily radio show starting in 1931. Paramount Pictures brought him to Hollywood to star in *The Big Broadcast* in 1932; the studio quickly signed him to a three-picture deal that grew into a 25-year association. [4, 6, 7]

Meanwhile, record executive Jack Kapp, using Bing's loyalty to him as a come-on, found backing to start in 1934 his own company, Decca, which saved the then moribund industry by lowering the price of records. Kapp convinced Bing that he was more than a jazz or ballad singer, encouraging him to sing every kind of song and positioning him as the voice of America - home grown, unaffected, unassuming, and irresistible. [4, 6, 7]

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Bing's popularity really took off a year later, when in 1935 NBC asked him to take over its faltering national network program, The Kraft Music Hall. Bing turned it into the archetypal broadcast variety show, a template still in use today. The public and critics loved him. At a time when radio was dominated by schooled, oratorical voices, Bing sounded like the guy next door and people trusted him. Instead of pandering to the presumed tastes of the masses, Bing combined pop, jazz, light opera, and classical music. He was as much admired for his unique brand of slang, offbeat sense of humor, and unruffled disposition as for his singing. In the dark days of the Depression, Bing was a beacon of optimism. [4, 6]

In 1936 when Bing became the host of the weekly NBC Kraft Music Hall, he needed a place where his many interests could be supported and managed. In October he started construction on his headquarters that was to serve him for most of his career. The Crosby Building was located on Sunset Boulevard at the west end of the Sunset Strip about halfway between his home and the radio, movie and recording studios in Hollywood. While most of the work of Bing Crosby was done outside of the Crosby Building, it is hard to separate him from it, since its configuration and subsequent changes to it were due to his career and interests. It was his support system that included negotiating his contracts, answering his fan mail, doing his bookkeeping and providing new technologies (ENTERTAINMENT and PERFORMING ARTS). [1, 2, 3, 7]

From the beginning the building was designed to meet his needs with a Swedish bath and space for his talent agency. There were other offices that appear to have been for his doctor and possibly his dentist. Bing had his office in the back of the third floor with a balcony looking south. The office in the front was identified as Everett N. Crosby LTD Management. Everett was Bing's older brother, manager, agent and key supporter. He was responsible for Bing's radio contracts with CBS and NBC and movie contracts with Paramount Pictures among others. [1, 2, 3, 7]

Bing Crosby during World War II, became involved in touring military installations at home and abroad, making a record number of V-Discs and personally answering thousands of letters from servicemen and their families. He raised an unequaled \$14,500,000 in war bonds. All of these functions were coordinated and supported from the Crosby Building. While the contracts, accounting and mail were handled in the building, many of the day-to-day functions were handled in satellite offices or non-Crosby spaces such as the radio and recording studios. However, the Crosby Building remained the focal point for Bing Crosby, since all of his appearances were scheduled in the building and all of his mail came through this building to the servicemen and fans. During World War II he sent letters to nearly every service person he met. There also were letters and telephone calls to their families. At the end of the war, an Army poll declared him the individual who had done the most to boost wartime morale. [6, 7, 8, 9]

The postwar years represented the peak of Bing's success. He was involved in radio, movies and recording and also raising a family. Decca Records stated in 1954 that "The voice of Bing Crosby has been heard by more people than the voice of any other human being who ever lived." [6, 7]

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Having recorded shows during WWII on transcription discs for the armed forces, he insisted in 1945 on prerecording his radio show instead of doing it live to give him more time for his family and many projects. NBC and Kraft resisted, and he left the show. The events that followed between 1946 and 1948 were to revolutionize the entertainment industry and brought about changes to the Crosby Building. By 1945 Bing's ventures had grown beyond the capability of the support that was provided by the organization that was established in his early years. At the end of 1945 Bing Crosby hired Basil Grillo to reorganize his businesses. By this time Everett Crosby was spending more time in New York and not as involved in the day-to-day business. Basil Grillo made Bing Crosby Enterprises into a self-sustaining organization that took care of all its functions in-house. The building had begun to change in the early 1940's with the departure of the doctor and dentist, but with the changes in 1946 by Basil Grillo the building took on the new look that represented the organization that was to support Bing well into the 1960's. These changes included Bing's brother Larry taking over the fan mail and finance functions and Basil Grillo, the contracts. They did not involve any structural changes, but the name changes on the front of the building tell the story. [1, 2, 6, 7]

When Bing left NBC in 1946 he went to ABC, which had separated from NBC and needed good talent. Bing began his first season with ABC using transcription discs, since it was the only recording media available with reasonable quality. After he produced the first prerecorded radio series, other entertainers quickly followed suit. Billboard called Bing's gamble the most important show business story since the invention of talking pictures. However, this move involved doing his own recording, and Bing then had to provide technical support for his shows. This function was done previously by NBC, and in its place Bing created the Electronic Division of BCE in the Crosby Building headed by Francis (Frank) Healey. It was charged with providing the technical support (ENGINEERING) to his radio shows and was located in the Crosby Building on the west side where the tailor had been. While the actual shows were recorded at the radio studios, the technical process was supervised from the Crosby Building. [1, 2, 6, 7]

In 1947 at the end of his first recorded radio series, Bing realized that the transcription disc quality was poor and they were losing listeners. During the summer of 1947, Frank Healey heard Jack Mullin demonstrate his high quality audio tape recorder based on the German Magnetophon. When Bing heard the recording and the editing it permitted, he had Jack Mullin tape record the first radio show of the 1947-1948 season. It was an instant success with Jack Mullin being hired to record the rest of the season. [1, 2, 6]

In 1948 Jack Mullin became Chief Engineer of the BCE Electronics Division with his office in the Crosby Building. Bing encouraged Mullin to work with Ampex to produce (INVENTION) a recorder for his 1948 radio season and provided Ampex with \$50,000 of financial help. Bing over the next ten years encouraged Mullin to undertake a number of tasks to improve tape recording to include building the first quality video tape recorder for Bing's television shows. Bing's interest in technology had once more changed the Crosby Building with a video tape recording development (INVENTION and ENGINEERING) laboratory located in old tailor space. [2, 5, 10]

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In the late 1950's the building began to change once more when Bing sold the Electronic Division to Minnesota Mining. His radio show was over and his television work was now in the hands of the networks. In 1962 Bing sold Bing Crosby Productions at Paramount Pictures and moved away from the production of movies. These divestures by the mid-1960's returned the Crosby Building to the basic functions that supported Bing. He was not in the best of health and had begun to limit his appearances, which did not require a large operation anymore. The Crosby Building was sold in late 1969, but space was leased in the building for a few years for Larry Crosby to continue support to Bing. [1, 2, 7]

While Bing did his recording and appearances elsewhere, the Crosby Building was clearly key to Bing and his many ventures. It was built to be his operation center and evolved over the years as his interests changed. The building could not have existed without Bing, and Bing needed its support to function. It was the "go to" place to interact with Bing. [2, 4]

John T. Mullin

Born in 1913 in San Francisco, California, John T. (Jack) Mullin graduated from Santa Clara University with a major in electrical engineering, a career choice that would propel him into the role of an important catalyst in the development of postwar entertainment technology. Stationed in England during World War II, Mullin worked on Allied radar and other electronics. In his lab at night, he sometimes listened to German radio, the only classical music on the air. The performances sounded live, with none of the telltale noise of the 16-inch transcription discs (331/3 and 78 rpm records) that were the norm in American broadcasting. Mullin reasoned the Germans had some kind of outstanding, new recording technology. [10]

In Paris, starting in the late summer of 1944, Mullin's mission was to examine captured German electronic equipment and report to the Signal Corps and to Allied intelligence. A year later, just after the war ended, Mullin visited a studio in Germany occupied by the Allies and was shown the source of those high-fidelity recorded nighttime broadcasts he had heard in England. It was the AEG Magnetophon K-4 studio tape machine with AC bias in the record circuit, the key to its great quality. Mullin obtained official permission to send home two of the German recorder transports, head assemblies, and 50 reels of I. G. Farben Type L blank tape for his own personal use. He later designed and built his own improved electronics for the recorders in his San Francisco home. [5, 10]

In May 1946 Jack Mullin demonstrated the modified Magnetophon recorder at an IRE (IEEE) show in San Francisco with the help of William Palmer. This demonstration caused a number of people to take notice of the quality that could be obtained from a magnetic tape recorder. There were other tape recorders at that time, but none of them had the outstanding quality of the rebuilt Magnetophon. During the following months William Palmer set up a number of demonstrations of the recorder for Jack Mullin to give to various movie, recording and broadcast people. The demonstrations showed that the recorder could reproduce sound as if it were live. Not only that, the magnetic tape could be edited by cutting it with a pair of scissors and splicing it with Scotch tape. [2, 5, 10]

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These demonstrations were more of a novelty to the industry than a major step forward. After all there were only two recorders and only 50 rolls of German tape that no longer was available. The movie companies had made other agreements for their sound tracks, and the recording companies were happy with their recording processes. During the demonstrations in the summer of 1947 Frank Healey, who was head of the Electronic Division of Bing Crosby Enterprises and responsible for the technical production of the Crosby show, heard a demonstration and encouraged Murdo McKenzie, the producer of the Bing Crosby show, to investigate the process for the show. McKenzie arranged for a demonstration in San Francisco where Jack Mullin and Bill Palmer had their business. This demonstration was after Bing's bad experience with the transcription disc recordings, and Crosby was faced with the prospect of finding a new way of recording his radio show or reverting to live broadcasts again. Murdo McKenzie was so impressed with the tape process that he arranged for Bing to hear the demonstration, which took place about the first of August 1947 in Los Angeles. When Bing heard the sound quality and saw the editing, Jack Mullin was asked to do a test recording of the first Bing Crosby show of the 1947 - 1948 radio season. It was only a week away, and the Crosby people expressed concerns that Mullin had only two recorders and a limited amount of tape. There needed to be way forward other than just the Magnetophon recorders. [2, 5, 10]

The trial recording with the Magnetophon on 10 August 1947 was a success, but there was no extra tape available or a source for new recorders. However, during this period Minnesota Mining (3M) was trying to develop a higher grade tape using a red oxide, and Ampex decided to build a broadcast quality tape recorder. They both needed the help of Jack Mullin. Bing decided to hire Jack Mullin to record the rest of his 1947 - 1948 radio season and asked him to consult with 3M and Ampex. At the end of the 1948 season in August Jack Mullin joined the Electronic Division as its Chief Engineer. With the encouragement of Bing Crosby, Mullin worked from the Electronic Division in the Crosby Building to help Ampex refine (ENGINEERING) the original Ampex 200 recorder. Bing earlier had sent a \$50,000 personal check to Ampex to aid the effort and get the first two machines for his 1948 - 1949 radio season. From 1948 to 1951, Mullin divided his time between the Crosby recording facilities at CBS and the Electronic Division in the Crosby Building on Sunset Boulevard working with Ampex on new recorders and 3M on improved recording tape. Soon other American manufacturers began building commercial audio tape machines for both professional and consumer use. Mullin's pioneering work became the basis for many domestic and international recording INDUSTRY standards, including the famous NAB equalization curve still in use for analog studio recording. [2, 5, 10]

In 1951, Bing Crosby asked Jack Mullin if television could be recorded on tape. Mullin replied that he thought it was possible, and Bing set up a laboratory in the Electronic Division at the Crosby Building to build a video recorder for him. He wanted it so he could record his first television show in 1953. Others had tried and failed, and Bing also asked Ampex to try. Ampex investigated the problem and gave up. Not to be defeated, Jack Mullin and his assistant Wayne Johnson gave a demonstration of a television picture from tape in November 1951 in the Crosby Building laboratory. It was very poor, but it galvanized everyone into action. Bing also encouraged Ampex to try again. Before the demonstration, Jack Mullin already had a better design (INVENTION and ENGINEERING) in mind. It was built quickly and used to demonstrate a reasonable quality television picture in mid-1952. It was the first video tape

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recorder to record and play back television, and it caused Ampex to investigate video recording again, which is what Bing wanted. In the beginning both groups shared information, but as time went by Ampex dropped its research again. [2, 5, 10]

By 1953 Jack Mullin and his engineers had developed (INVENTION) the first magnetic recording head that exceeded one megahertz. It was a major breakthrough that set the stage for the Crosby group to build a quality video recorder. In 1953 other Mullin inventions were made including the tight-loop-drive that greatly improved the tape transport. The recording head information was shared with Ampex, and in September 1954 Ampex restarted their small video recorder effort. By 1955, Mullin and his engineers had built and demonstrated the next phase in television recorders. It was the first high-quality color recorder ever built. CBS bought three of the Crosby recorders, but later traded them in for the Ampex recorder when it was subsequently introduced. By 1955 both groups were working independently except for Bing's overview. Ampex had produced a commercial video recorder that targeted the television broadcast market by the end of 1955. They demonstrated it in 1956 and won the approval of the broadcast industry. Both machines would not have been possible without the development efforts of Jack Mullin and his engineers in the Crosby building. Their goal was to build one for Bing, and Ampex's goal was to build one for the market. [2, 5, 10, 13]

Besides the video tape project Mullin pioneered the use of magnetic tape in data and instrumentation recording. His 1949 installation of a modified Ampex Model 300 audio recorder at the Point Mugu Naval Air Station and at Edwards Air Force Base, both in southern California, revolutionized data gathering for both military and civilian applications. Since then, aerospace and other industries, as well as the military, have depended heavily on tape to record instrumentation data for operations, research, and development. The work on the video recorder also led to the first multi-track megahertz recorder for instrumentation. The last task of the Crosby group was to build the first of these recorders for use in an airplane. [2, 5, 10]

Other projects included developing (INVENTION) a system to compensate for errors in telemetry data introduced by the tape recorder and the maintenance of many of the military and commercial recorders including Les Paul's famous record-over process. In 1952 Jack Mullin built a special set of electronics for an Ampex three channel recorder. It was used by Mullin and the BCE Electronic Division personnel to make stereophonic recordings that were edited in the Crosby Building into a major stereo demonstration that encouraged the recording industry to produce stereo records, which they did a year later (COMMERCE). [2, 5, 10]

Bing Crosby sold his electronics laboratory to 3M in 1956, which led to the creation of the 3M Mincom electronics division in Camarillo, California, a maker of military and civilian data recorders and later professional and consumer audio machines. Mullin was Mincom's chief engineer until his retirement in 1975. [2, 5]

Mullin was a long-time member of the Audio Engineering Society, which honored him with its Silver Medal in 1994, the Emile Berliner Award, and a citation in 1975. He was an elected member of the 3M Carlton Society. Peter Hammar, the Ampex Historian, said "He is justifiably

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honored as one of the greatest innovators in the history of the technology so important to broadcasting in the last half of the 20th Century - magnetic tape recording." [2, 10, 14]

Criterion C

The Crosby Building is eligible for Criterion C at the local level, since it is one of few remaining buildings on the Sunset Strip of the Moderne and Colonial Revival accentual style dating from the 1930's. However, two surveys done for the City of West Hollywood (December 1987 and August 2016) suggest that the building also is eligible at the state and national levels. [15, 17]

Construction started on the Crosby Building on 15 October 1936 just after Bing Crosby began his association with NBC and the Kraft Music Hall. It was designed to be the center for his many projects that included radio, movies and records and is located at 9028 W. Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood, California. It was about halfway between his home in Beverly Hills and the studios in the Hollywood to the east. The builder was C. R. Smith, and the architect was Ronald J. Webb. Together they built a number of buildings along the Sunset Strip in the 1930's. The Crosby Building was designed in the Moderne style with Colonial Revival influences, which is still preserved today without any significant changes. [1, 15, 17]

The December 1987 survey (ARCHITECTURE) made the following observation about the building: "The Crosby Building's location within the rare Streamline Moderne grouping of the western end of the Sunset Strip is one of central importance. It fills the gap in between the Paul Williams buildings which stand a block and a half away on either side. Stylistically related to the Colonially inspired Geffen and Sunset Plaza buildings on one hand and the Paul Williams buildings on the other, its position is focal in both the literal and metaphorical sense." The survey also stated: "The Crosby Building, designed by Ronald J. Webb, is a blending of the two trends with its own unique message - how important it was for the post depression nation's number one "crooner" to respect and acknowledge the traditions of the past while incorporating visions of the future." [17]

While Ronald J. Webb does not appear to be a nationally known architect, he did a number of the buildings along Sunset Boulevard in the style of the Crosby building. It is one of a small number of commercial buildings remaining on Sunset Boulevard that were constructed during the late 1920's and the 1930's. Dubbed the Sunset Strip, this stretch of unincorporated county road was a hub for offices, shops, restaurants, and night clubs that became synonymous with Hollywood glamour. [15, 17]

By the early 1920's Sunset Boulevard was the main artery between the motion picture studios in Hollywood and the preferred residential area for film stars in Beverly Hills. While Santa Monica Boulevard was characterized by the electric streetcar, Sunset Boulevard was designed for the automobile. The earliest commercial development began in 1925 by Francis S. Montgomery in an area later known as the Sunset Plaza, a collection of upscale shops and offices with extensive parking located behind each building. By 1930, property owners were lobbying for zone changes and infrastructure improvements that would pave the way for commercial development. Businesses related to the entertainment industry including talent agencies, publicists, and managers began to open offices in small buildings lining the street. It was during

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this period that Art Deco, Streamline Moderne, and Period Revival styles became popular. [15, 17]

The Crosby Building is significant under Criterion C in that it represents this trend in its use and architecture. It has maintained all aspects of its integrity over the years. The Colonial Revival style features of the building include the symmetrical facade, central portion with smaller wings, hipped roof, boxed cornice, multi-paned windows, and the use of details such as applied fluted pilasters, broken pediments, and dentils. The Streamline Moderne style features include the horizontal orientation, smooth stucco cladding, unadorned wall surfaces with minimal ornamentation, curved surfaces, horizontal moldings, and "punched" windows. [15, 17]

The Crosby Building is significant as a West Hollywood Cultural Resource and in the history of architecture in West Hollywood. It also is significant for its history as a business and communication center from the late-1930's into the early-1960's that reflects the changes not only in Bing Crosby's career, but that of the entertainment industry. In addition, it represents the influence of technology Bing supported on the entertainment business and the recording industry. The building provides a detailed history not only of the entertainment business, but that of the Sunset Strip from its humble beginnings to its present day prominence. [15, 17]

Conclusion

The Crosby Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level based on the contributions made by Bing Crosby Enterprises to the entertainment community from the 1930's to 1967 and the country during World War II. It also is eligible based on the technical advances made in the building in tape recording (especially video recording) from 1951 to 1956.

It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B at the local level based on the contributions made by its two occupants, Bing Crosby (1936 - 1965) and Jack Mullin (1948 - 1956), to international entertainment and technology.

It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C at the local level based on its 1930's Moderne style with Colonial Revival architecture which has been preserved in an area of the Sunset Strip that has seen most of the early buildings torn down. It provides historical continuity to the Strip and a reminder of how it began as a support base for the entertainment community.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Section 7

Narrative Description

1. *BING, A Diary of a Lifetime*, compiled by Malcolm Macfarlane, an ICC Publication, 1997
2. Extracted from State of California - The Resources Agency, DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, PRIMARY RECORD for 9028 Sunset Blvd. (The Crosby Building), GPA Consulting, 617 S. Olive Street, Suite 910, Los Angeles, CA 90014, 08 Aug 2016
3. Extracted from State of California - The Resources Agency, DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY for 9028 Sunset Blvd. (The Crosby Building), David Amorena, City of West Hollywood, 8611 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069, December 1987
4. Personal observations and memories - 1951 - 1957 and 2014 - 2016. #
5. Photograph (Figure 2) of building front, 1937, Unknown
6. Photograph (Figure 6) of building front, 1938, Los Angeles Public Library
7. Photograph (Figure 7) of building front, early 1940's, Unknown
8. Photograph of building front, 1946, *Life Magazine*
9. *Life Magazine*, 24 April 1944, *Finlandia Baths*, Page 37

Section 8

Narrative Statement of Significance

1. *BING, A Diary of a Lifetime*, compiled by Malcolm Macfarlane, an ICC Publication, 1997
2. Personal observations and memories - 1951 - 1957 and 2014 - 2016. #
3. Photograph (Figure 6) of building front, 1938, Los Angeles Public Library
4. Gary Giddins, *Bing Crosby: A Pocketful of Dreams - The Early Years 1903 - 1940*, Little, Brown and Company, 2001
5. Billboard, 18 November 1972, *The Birth Of The Recording Industry* by John T. Mullin
6. Extracts from Gary Giddins notes on Bing Crosby.
7. Charles Thompson, *BING*, David McKay Company, Inc., 1976
8. Gary Giddins, *The Invention of Bing Crosby*
9. Wikipedia, *Bing Crosby on Armed Forces Radio in World War II*
10. Mix, 1 October 1999, *John T. Mullin: THE MAN WHO PUT BING CROSBY ON TAPE* by Peter Hammer
11. "United States Census, 1920," index and images, FamilySearch
12. Bing Crosby, Pete Martin, *Call Me Lucky: Bing Crosby's Own Story*, Da Capo Press, 29 November 2001
13. Billboard, 25 April 1953, SPOTLIGHT ON TOMORROW (Rainbow's Pot o' Gold) by Frank Healey, Executive Director, Electronics Division, Bing Crosby Enterprises, Inc

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14. J. Audio Eng. Soc., Vol. 42, No. 6, 1994 June, *In Memoriam (Jack Mullin)* by Peter Hammer
15. Extracted from State of California - The Resources Agency, DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, PRIMARY RECORD for 9028 Sunset Blvd. (The Crosby Building), GPA Consulting, 617 S. Olive Street, Suite 910, Los Angeles, CA 90014, 08 Aug 2016
16. Country Music Foundation, *The Encyclopedia of Country Music*, Oxford University, 16 Dec 2004
17. Extracted from State of California - The Resources Agency, DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY for 9028 Sunset Blvd. (The Crosby Building), David Amorena, City of West Hollywood, 8611 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069, December 1987

Robert Phillips worked for Bing Crosby Enterprises from 1951 to 1957. He was involved in the development of the video tape recorder at 9030 W. Sunset Blvd. and the Bing Crosby Radio show. He has visited the building in 2014 and 2016. For more details see:

http://ethw.org/First-Hand:Bing_Crosby_and_the_Recording_Revolution

http://ethw.org/First-Hand:The_Evolution_of_the_Bing_Crosby_Radio_Show

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 0069-58-10

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approx. 0.3 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- 1. Latitude: 34.090385 N Longitude: 118.388667 W Building Center
- 2. Latitude: Longitude:
- 3. Latitude: Longitude:
- 4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- 1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
- 4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The primary building occupies the northwest corner of the lot listed by the Los Angeles Assessor:

ID No.: 4340-026-022

Address: 9024 W. Sunset Blvd, West Hollywood, CA 90069 (The building address is 9028 W. Sunset Blvd.)

See the attached assessor map for more details.

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It is about 0.3 acres and has a north facing property line or about 60 feet on Sunset Boulevard. The rectangular lot is about 185 feet deep oriented on a north-south axis. The rest of the lot is for parking.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Los Angeles Assessor boundary of the property is the original boundary of the original parcel currently occupied by the building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert R. Phillips
organization: _____
street & number: 3735 Morningside Dr
city or town: Fairfax state: VA zip code: 22031
e-mail: rrphillips@usa.net
telephone: (703) 280 4509
date: 8 January 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: The Crosby Building

City or Vicinity: West Hollywood

County: Los Angeles State: California

Photographer: Robert Phillips

Date Photographed: 2 June 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 4. Front of Crosby Building (north elevation), camera facing south
- 2 of 4. West side of Crosby Building, camera facing north
- 3 of 4. East side of Crosby Building, camera facing north
- 4 of 4. Rear of Crosby Building, camera facing north

See the Section AD Continuation Sheets for the Index of Figures and the related figures that include maps, satellite photographs, sketches and photographs.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Figure 2. A 1987 Los Angeles Assessor Map showing the location of Lot 23 on Sunset Boulevard.

Figure 3. A 1950 period Crosby Building lot layout showing photograph and figure locations.

Figure 4. Approximate floor plans for the Crosby Building in the 1950s.

Figure 5. A 1937 photograph from the Cafe La Maze of the Crosby Building front.

Figure 6. A 1938 photograph looking south of the Crosby Building front and west side.

Figure 7. An early-1940s photograph looking south of the Crosby Building front and east side.

Figure 8. A photographic likeness of the Crosby Building looking south in the early 1950s.

Figure 9. Some of the BCE Electronic Division staff in 1953 in front of the Crosby building.

Figure 10. Jack Mullin and an early version of the Crosby video recorder at 9030 W. Sunset Boulevard.

Figure 11. The first video recorder to produce a quality video picture in early 1952.

Figure 12. The view of the back part of the Crosby laboratory at 9030 W. Sunset Boulevard.

Figure 13. Bing Crosby examines his first quality video recorder in early 1952.

Figure 14. Bing Crosby and his video development staff in 1952

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Photograph from Google Earth (7 October 2007)
Building Center: 34.090385 N 118.388667 W

Property corners (from Google Earth):

NW 34.090488 N 118.388760 W	NE 34.090488 N 118.388575 W
SW 34.089996 N 118.388760 W	SE 34.089996 N 118.388575 W

Figure 1. A Google image of the property at 9028 W. Sunset Blvd. with boundaries in decimal degrees.

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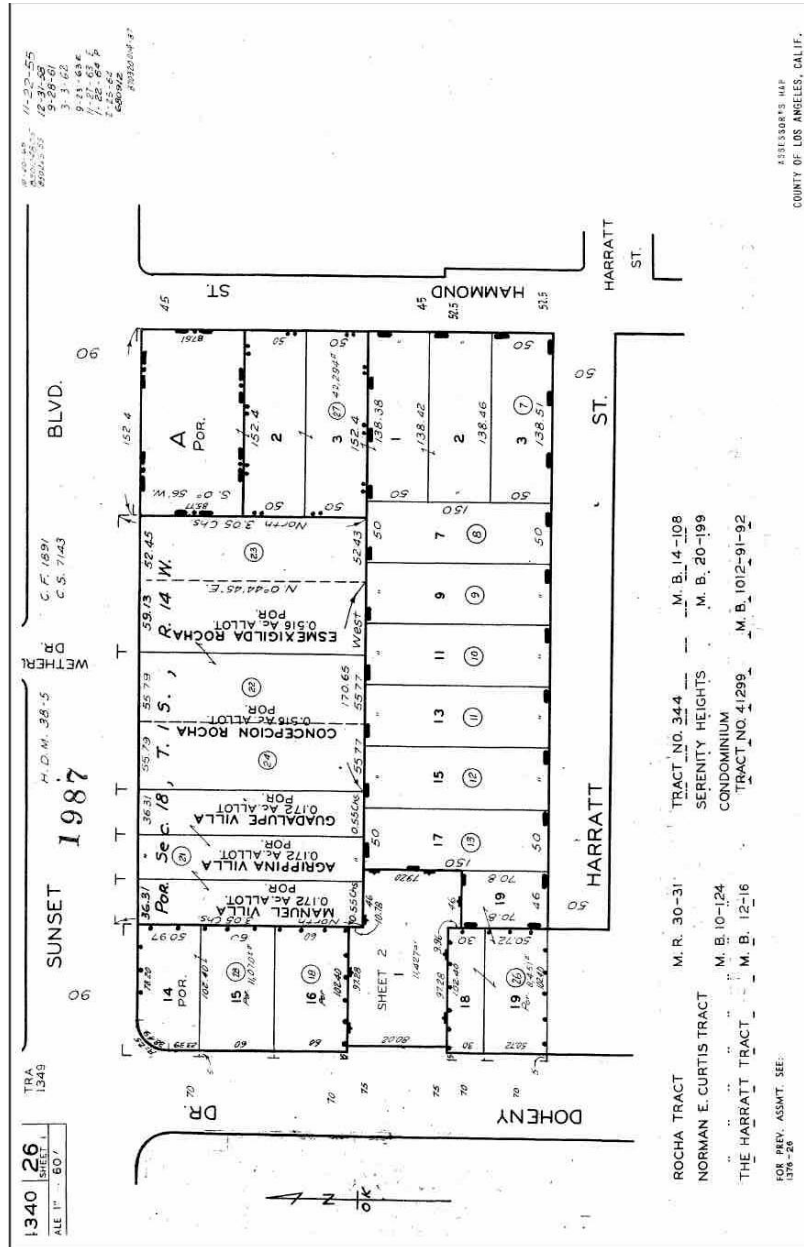


Figure 2 A 1987 Los Angeles Assessor Map showing the location of Lot 23 on Sunset Boulevard. (LA County Assessor Office)

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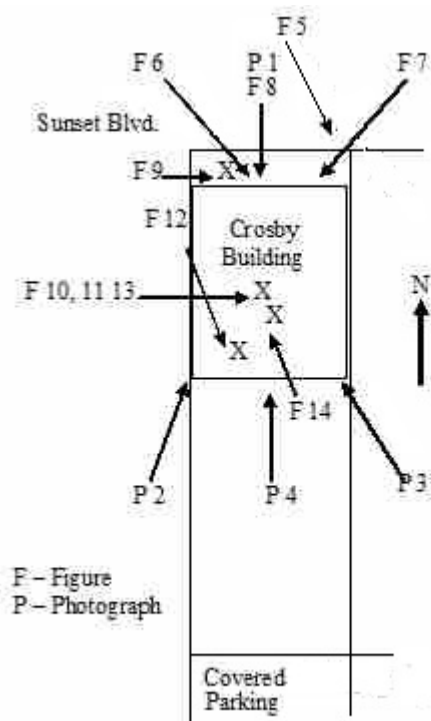


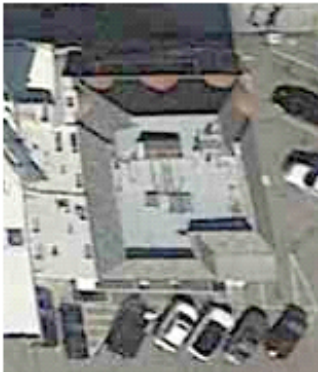
Figure 3. A 1950 period Crosby Building lot layout showing photograph and figure locations.(Robert Phillips)

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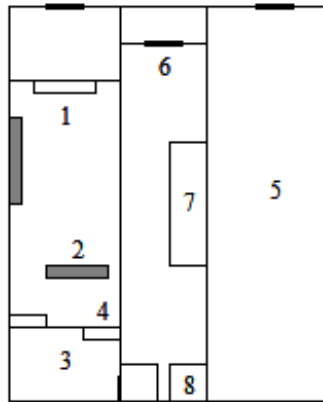
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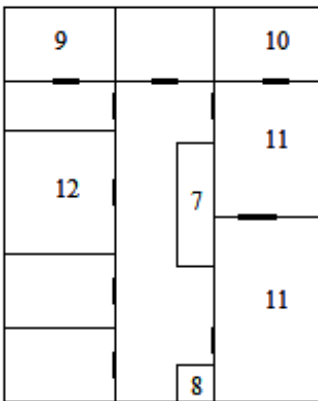


Top View
(Building is approx 46 x 60 feet.)

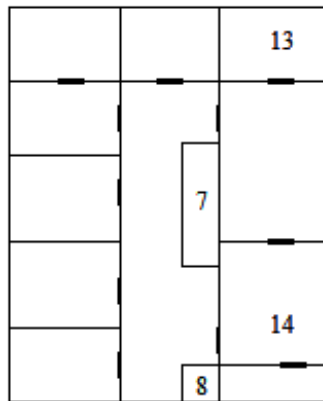


First Floor

1. Research Lab.
2. Video Tape Equip.
3. Balcony w/bathroom
4. Down to machine shop
5. Finlandia Baths
6. Main Entrance
7. Stairway
8. Elevator
9. Frank Healy's Office
10. Larry Crosby's Office
11. BCE work areas
12. Conference room
13. Everett Crosby's Office
14. Bing Crosby's Office w/balcony



Second Floor



Third Floor

Figure 4. Approximate floor plans for the Crosby Building in the 1950s. (Robert Phillips)

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A 1937 view of the Crosby Building front looking south from the Cafe La Maze. Shows the Sports Garden(?) on the first floor left, Everett Crosby on second floor left and the doctor and dentist on second floor right. The Rockwell-O'Keefe Agency is on the third floor.

Figure 5. A 1937 photograph from the Cafe La Maze of the Crosby Building front. (Unknown)

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A 1938 view of the Crosby Building front looking south that shows the Hollywood Sports Garden on the first floor left and the tailor on the first floor right. The clock over the main entrance has a Finlandia Baths sign. Everett Crosby is located on second floor left, and the doctor and dentist on second floor right. The Rockwell-O'Keefe Agency is on the third floor.

Figure 6. A 1938 photograph looking south of the Crosby Building front and west side. (Los Angeles Public Library)

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An early-1940s view of the Crosby Building front looking south that shows Sam's Finlandia Baths on the first floor left and the tailor on the first floor right. The clock over the main entrance has a Finlandia Baths sign. The General Amusement Corp. (formerly the Rockwell-O'Keefe Agency) is located on second floor left, and the doctor on second floor right. The Everett Crosb is on the third floor left next to Bing Crosby's office. The rear balcony is part of Bing Crosby's office.

Figure 7. An early-1940s photograph looking south of the Crosby Building front and east side. (Unknown)

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A photographic likeness of the Crosby Building front looking south shows Sam's Finlandia Baths on the first floor left and the Electronic Division (BCE) on the right.

Figure 8. A photographic likeness of the Crosby Building looking south in the early 1950s. (Robert Phillips)

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Most of the staff of the BCE Electronic Division in the Spring of 1953 (Sunset Boulevard looking east). (back l-r) Chester Shaw, Ed Corey, Mary Jane Snavley, U/I, Frank Healy and Wayne Johnson (front l-r) Frances Able, Gene Brown, Hoppie Healy, Bob Hopkin and Jack Mullin (Robert Phillips - missing)

Figure 9. Some of the BCE Electronic Division staff in 1953 in front of the Crosby building. (Robert Phillips)

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Jack Mullin and an early version of the Crosby video recorder that operated at 360 inches per second recording twelve tracks on a tape one inch wide.

Figure 10. Jack Mullin and an early version of the Crosby video recorder at 9030 W. Sunset Boulevard. (Jack Mullin)

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The second version of the Crosby video recorder in early 1952 before the new recording head was developed that permitted frequencies above one megahertz to be recorded. It was located in the center part of the laboratory of 9030 W. Sunset Boulevard. It was the first video recorder to produce a quality television picture and proved that video recording was possible.

Figure 11. The first video recorder to produce a quality video picture in early 1952. (Jack Mullin)

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The 1953 view of the back part of the Crosby laboratory at 9030 Sunset Boulevard showing the video recorder and the balcony in the rear. The basement stairs to the machine shop are to the left of the recorder racks.

Figure 12. The view of the back part of the Crosby laboratory at 9030 Sunset Boulevard. (Robert Phillips)

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Jack Mullin (l), Bing Crosby (c) and Wayne Johnson (r) looking at the first video recorder to produce a quality television picture in early 1952.

Figure 13. Bing Crosby examines his first quality video recorder in early 1952. (Bing Crosby Enterprises)

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The chairman of the board of Bing Crosby Enterprises (extreme right) is brought up to date on video tape recorder technical development by (left to right) John T. Mullin, chief engineer; Frank Healey, executive director, and Wayne R. Johnson, TV project engineer.

Figure 14. Bing Crosby and his video development staff in early 1952. (Jack Mullin)