

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: Nystrom Elementary School/ The Maritime Building

Other names/site number: School Building United States Maritime Commission (U.S.M.C.)
Housing Project Kaiser Company Inc.

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: 230 Harbour Way South

City or town: Richmond State: CA County: Contra Costa

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD/redwood siding

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

See continuation sheets.

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets.

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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.)

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1943-1945

Significant Dates

Construction Date: 1943

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Will G. Corlett and Arthur W. Anderson Architects & Engineers

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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.)

See continuation sheets.

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

See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

See continuation sheets.

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: Richmond Museum of History and Richmond Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.717

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)

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 10

Easting: 556397

Northing: 4198000

Reference Map

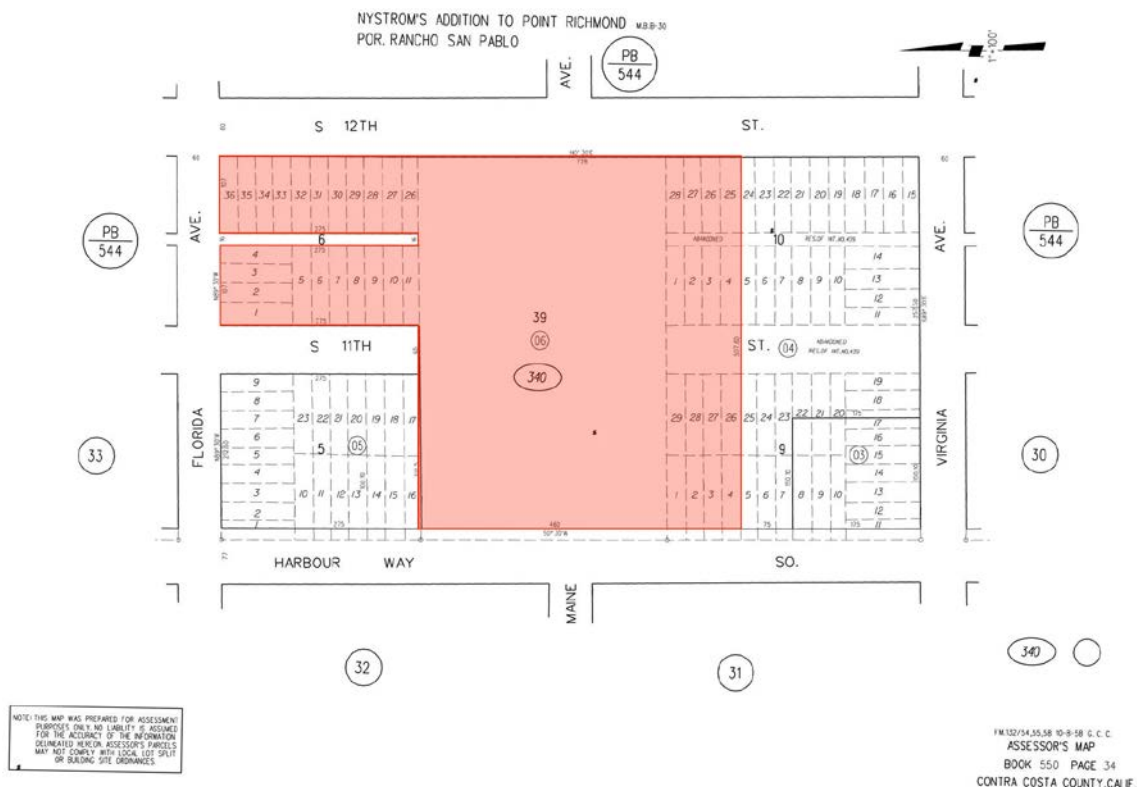


Figure 1: Contra Costa County Assessor's Map. The nominated property's parcel is defined by the shading.

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

See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kimberly Butt, AIA, MS
organization: Interactive Resources, Inc.
street & number: 117 Park Place
city or town: Richmond state: CA zip code: 94801
e-mail kim.butt@intres.com
telephone: (510) 236-7435
date: November 2016

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.)

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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.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Nystrom Elementary School
City or Vicinity: Richmond
County: Contra Costa State: California
Photographer: Kimberly Butt and Andrew Butt

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0001

Date Photographed: November 14, 2016

Description: Contextual and oblique view of the south and west façades from the intersection of Harbour Way and Virginia Avenue facing northwest.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0002

Date Photographed: November 14, 2016

Description: Contextual and oblique view of the north and west façades from the intersection of Harbour Way and Florida Avenue facing southeast. Note the Maritime Child Development Center in the foreground.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0003

Date Photographed: November 14, 2016

Description: Contextual and distant view of the north and east façades from the intersection of Florida Avenue and South 11th Street at the Maritime Child Development Center facing southwest.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0004

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Oblique view of the west façade from across Harbour Way facing southeast.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0005

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Oblique view of the west façade from the south end of the property facing northeast.

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CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0006

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Detail view of the west façade main entry facing east.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0007

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Oblique view of the south façade and a partial view of the east façade from the just in front of the Multi-Purpose Building facing northwest.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0008

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: View of the eastern end of the north façade and northern section of the east façade from the northeast corner of the play yard facing southwest.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0009

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: View of the eastern end of the north façade and the adjacent multi-purpose building from the northern end of the Nystrom Elementary School roof facing southeast.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0010

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: View of the northern section of the east façade from the southern end of the Nystrom Elementary School roof facing northwest. Note the Maritime Child Development Center in the background.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0011

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: View of the western end of the north façade from the northwest corner of the play yard facing southeast.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0012

Date Photographed: September 10, 2015

Description: Detail view of the ornamental medallions on the west façade during the rehabilitation.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0013

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Detail view of the former secondary entry and balcony on the west façade facing east.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0014

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Interior view of the ground floor lobby facing south.

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CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0015

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Interior view of the second floor corridor facing north.

CA_Contra Costa County_Nystrom Elementary School_0016

Date Photographed: September 14, 2016

Description: Interior view of a typical classroom on the second floor.

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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Section 7: Description

Summary Paragraph

The Nystrom Elementary School campus occupies an almost flat site in central Richmond, California, a city located on the east side of the San Francisco Bay in western Contra Costa County. The subject classroom building is located at the end of Main Avenue, facing Harbour Way, a busy thoroughfare connecting Interstate 580 to downtown Richmond. Located within an urban setting, the surrounding area primarily consists of single-family residential buildings with a mix of small scale commercial structures. The campus is part of a larger L-shaped superblock that covers approximately eight city blocks and includes other schools and city-owned recreational fields. To the north is the Maritime Child Development Center, a structure of the same era, style and construction methods. The Richmond shoreline and the former site of the Kaiser Shipyards are less than a mile south of Nystrom School.

The two-story, L-shaped building covers a footprint of approximately 25,000 square-feet and features a low-slope roof and a wood-frame structure clad in redwood shiplap siding. The building is Modern in style with a strong expression of horizontality and minimal ornamentation. The original fenestration pattern and configuration, exterior redwood siding and trim, decorative wood medallions, interior flooring at the second floor and selected interior wood trim remain intact. Overall, the building maintains sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance.

Narrative Description

Site

Nystrom Elementary School is located within a neighborhood historically known as Nystrom's Addition, as it had been the ranch land of John R. Nystrom prior to being subdivided. Development of the surrounding neighborhood began in the early 1900s, with the construction of single-family homes on individual small lots. Following the onset of World War II, the neighborhood was built-out with single-family homes, apartment buildings, temporary defense worker housing, and numerous facilities in support of the shipyard workers such as schools, a hospital and a fire station. Much of the neighborhood's wartime fabric remains today.

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Overall

The Nystrom School two-story, wood-frame classroom building is L-shaped in plan and features a low-slope built-up roof with a mineral cap sheet behind a parapet, strong horizontality and simple decorative details. The two rectilinear wings are connected by a recessed two-story entry segment. The building is clad in the original horizontal redwood siding laid out in a pattern creating horizontal banding across the façades (see Figure 3). The exterior is painted in the building's original color scheme of a light cream body with tan trim, doors and windows. A paint analysis was conducted during the renovation in order to determine the original colors.¹ The façades express the interior plan and layout, with large banks of windows grouped together at most of the classrooms.

The building's ornamentation is simple and integral in nature, including elements such as siding orientation and profile, wood medallions, balconies and trellises. The original fenestration type consisted of wood windows three-to-five sashes high with the majority of the sashes being awning and only selected sashes being fixed. After several decades, most of the original windows were replaced with aluminum units. The non-compatible aluminum units have since been replaced with new aluminum units matching the original sash pattern and color. The few remaining wood windows have been rehabilitated and reinstalled.

Exterior

West, Front Façade

The west, front façade consists of the long side wall of the building's north wing, the connecting entry segment and the end wall of the south wing. Additionally, rectilinear bays with low-slope roofs and deep overhangs extend out at the north and south ends of the façade. The side wall of the northern bay is punctuated by two vertically aligned three-lite windows, while the southern bay maintains a solid redwood clad surface.

The north wing, west façade is dominated by classroom windows. Profiled wood trim forms a large rectangle across the wall, grouping four banks of vertically-aligned windows which are separated by sections of wood siding. Three vertical wall segments, with an alternate siding profile from the rest of the building, divide the stacked window banks. Each bank contains a group of five aluminum window units, three sashes high at both the first and second story. The wall surface between the first and second story windows is articulated with vertical wood siding

¹ Paint analysis documentation is on file at Interactive Resources, Inc.

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divided into a tripartite scheme by two decorative elements each featuring three vertically aligned wood medallions set within a wood trim frame. The medallions are a stylistic extrapolation of a ship's prow.

North of the classroom window grouping, a narrow, vertical recession cuts through the façade. At the first floor of the alcove, concrete steps lead up to a pair of inoperable three-lite wood doors topped by a solid transom with decorative wood trim. At the second floor, a balcony clad in vertical wood siding and an aluminum trellis extends out from the façade, and a pair of three-lite windows punctuates the wall within the alcove. North of the alcove, a pair of three-lite windows penetrates the wall at the first floor. South of the alcove, two vertically aligned three-lite windows pierce the wall at the first and second floors. Finally, south of the classroom window grouping, one four-lite aluminum window penetrates the façade at the second story, completing the north wing.

The building's main entrance is located within the recessed two-story segment that connects the two wings and is slightly lower in height. A concrete stair and ramp set around two brick planters lead to the entry doors. The entrance consists of two pairs of two-lite double doors set within a glazed aluminum storefront across the width of the wall. Wood columns and a pergola extend out from the storefront entrance. Above the entrance, the horizontal wood clad wall is punctuated by a band of seven aluminum windows, three sashes high stretching between the two classroom wings.

The south wing, west façade features a centered, protruding rectilinear bay capped by a low-slope roof with a deep overhang. Bands of five aluminum windows, three sashes high, span the width of the bay and the window units are separated vertically by wood fins and horizontally by vertical wood siding. Two groupings of three, small square vertically-aligned wood windows punctuate the façade on each side of the bay.

North Façade

The north, side façade includes the north wing, end wall, the south wing, side wall and the north façade of the connector addition. Identical to the south wing, west-facing end wall, a rectilinear bay extends out from the center of the north wing, north facade. The bay features a low-slope roof with a deep overhang and a band of five windows three sashes high at both the first and second stories separated by vertical wood fins. Vertical wood siding clads the wall between the bands of windows at each floor. Flanking the bay, three small, square wood windows are grouped vertically at both floors.

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The north façade of the south wing, similar to the front façade, features a grouping of classroom windows framed together by wood trim. Three banks of banded windows at the first and second stories, each containing five units of three vertically aligned sashes, punctuate the façade and present vertical wood siding on the wall sections between the upper and lower floor window bands, while patterned horizontal wood siding clads the wall between the vertical groupings. A new, single story cement plaster-clad, low slope-roofed addition covers the western-most window bank at the first floor. The addition features two, two-lite aluminum windows and two, single-lite doors. At the east end of the south wing a four sash high window unit pierces the wall at the second story. West of the connector, two vertically-aligned three-lite windows punctuate the side wall of the bay extending from the south wing, completing the façade.

East Façade

The east façade faces the play yard and includes the south wing, east facing end wall and side wall of the bay extending to the south; the north wing, rear facing wall and side wall of the bay extending to the north; and the connecting segment and rear addition. The simple south wing east façade is punctuated by four doors at the ground floor: one pair of three-lite wood doors with single-lite transoms above, and two new flush doors north of the side entrance. At the second floor, a pair of three-lite windows punctuates the center of the wall. Also, a rectangular bay extends out south from the south wing and features a side façade with a three-lite window at the second floor above a pair of flush doors at the ground floor.

Similar to the front, west façade, four banks of classroom windows are visually grouped by wood trim framing the entire configuration. Each bank of windows includes two vertically aligned bands of five, three-lite windows separated horizontally by vertical wood siding. To the north, the bay side wall is punctuated by a vertically aligned three-lite window over a similar four-lite window. Between the bay and the classroom window grouping, the east façade features a pair of three-lite wood doors with single-lite transoms above and flanked by two three-lite aluminum windows at the ground floor. At the second floor, a pair of three-lite windows pierces the wall directly above the doors and is also flanked by two three-lite windows. South of the classroom windows a single three-lite window at the second floor punctuates the wall over a pair of single-lite doors covered by an awning.

At the connecting segment, a new single-story addition clad in cement plaster extends slightly in front of the north wing, east façade. The addition façade is punctuated by one single-lite door protected by an awning with three two-lite aluminum windows to the north and one two-lite

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aluminum window to the south. The connecting segment second story facade is recessed from the north wing, clad in cement plaster and features three pairs of three-lite aluminum windows.

South Façade

The south, side façade includes the south façade of the south classroom wing, the side wall of the narrow bay extending from the west façade and the face of the wide stairwell bay extending from the south façade at the western end. Two vertically aligned three-lite windows accent the narrow side wall of the western bay. Two identical three-lite windows also pierce the western end of the south classroom wing wall directly west of the stairwell bay. A large, three-lite-over-five-lite window penetrates the center of the stairwell bay south façade. Two three-lite aluminum windows over a single two-lite aluminum window are located on the façade between the stairwell bay and the classroom window grouping, which contains three banks of windows articulated similar to the other facades. Completing the façade are two three-lite vertically aligned aluminum windows at the east end.

Interior

The American school building in the early twentieth century up to the postwar period typically consisted of a multi-story box, with small self-contained classrooms, a few specialized spaces such as libraries, offices and cafeterias and occasionally cavernous gymnasiums or auditoriums. No matter what architectural style was applied, the plan was essentially the same.² Nystrom School incorporated many of the typical American school building design approaches with its double-loaded corridors, stacked floors, and self-contained classroom; however the expanses of windows and exterior Modern stylistic expression reveal an important transition between the prewar and postwar approach to elementary schools in California.

Similar to the exterior, wood was the primary building material originally used throughout the school building's interior. Original wood floors exist today at the second floor corridors and classrooms, and much of the original wood trim remains at the windows and in the classrooms. New surface finishes include linoleum and ceramic tile floors, painted gypsum board walls and ceilings, ceramic tile walls, plastic laminate wainscot at the corridors and stair wells, and suspended acoustical ceiling in the classrooms.

² Ben E. Graves, *School Ways: The Planning and Design of America's Schools* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 14-15.

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First Floor

L-shaped in plan the school building contains two double-loaded classroom wings connected by the centrally located main entrance and lobby. Directly east of the entry lobby, toward the play yard, is the new administrative addition featuring offices, restrooms, a small conference room and a courtyard. The north wing includes an enclosed stair hall adjacent to the lobby, two kindergarten classrooms on each side of the corridor, custodial rooms, a staff toilet room, an open stair hall, and a preschool room at the north end. Interior fixed windows above the wainscot in the north wing corridor provide visual access to the kindergarten classroom. The south wing encompasses an elevator, staff workroom, conference room, data room and records room at the west end; an open stair hall at the southwest corner; offices, toilet rooms, three classrooms on either side of the corridor and an enclosed stair hall at the east end.

Second Floor

At the second floor three offices open off of the east side of the connector corridor. The north wing includes a stair hall at the east side on both the north and south ends, toilet rooms, four classrooms on either side of the corridor, a storage room, and two classrooms at the north end. The south wing features an elevator, teacher's lounge and stair hall at the west end, four classrooms on either side of the corridor, several storage rooms, toilet rooms, and a stair hall at the northeast corner.

Historic Appearance

A rehabilitation of the Nystrom classroom building was completed in 2016. The building's exterior is now remarkably similar to its original appearance with the removal of the asbestos siding, the restoration of the original redwood siding painted in the historic colors, and the replacement of non-compatible aluminum windows with new aluminum windows matching the original configurations. Several remaining wood windows were also restored as part of the work. The primary differences at the exterior between the building's historic and current appearance include: a change in window material from wood to aluminum; the enclosure of the open ground floor loggia at the connecting segment; the combination one-and-two-story addition at the connecting segment; and a new exit in the north wing, north façade.

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At the interior the building maintains much of its original layout with double-loaded corridors flanked by classrooms at each wing and on each level. The primary changes to the interior include: the new administrative rooms within the connecting segment addition; the installation of an elevator; the combining of some classrooms to make larger classrooms with their own toilet rooms at the first floor in the north wing; the insertion of interior windows at the first floor in the north wing; new material finishes; and the insertion of toilet rooms and storage areas in place of two classrooms at the second floor in the south wing.

Site and Building Chronology

- 1881* John Nystrom purchased a 70-acre plot of land and established a family farmstead.
- The Nystrom family home was set among an orchard and located just east of the current Nystrom Elementary location.
- 1908* The first Nystrom School was constructed on the east side of South 13th Street between Virginia Avenue and Maine Avenue
- 1916-1922* Between 1916 and 1922, the 1908 school building was relocated to the site of the Nystrom family home.
- 1922* A classroom wing and detached auditorium building were added onto the 1908 school.
- 1942-43* U.S. Maritime Commission builds a new two-story school (the subject building) at the Nystrom site.
- 1948-49* A Kindergarten and Child Care Annex built at the north end of the property. Two additional classroom buildings and a bus garage were also constructed at the east side of the property.
- 1953* Original school and 1922 addition were demolished. A new Multi-use building was constructed east of the subject building.
- 1954* Cement asbestos siding was installed over the original cement asbestos siding.

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- 1970 Minor interior renovations to some of the rooms of the subject building. Plans show change in finishes and the removal of some cabinetry.
- 1991 The Nystrom Campus Modernization project included plans for accessibility, mechanical, electrical and finish upgrades to the two-story classroom building.
- 2008 Richmond College Preparatory and Leadership Public School Temporary Campus were both located on the Nystrom campus. Both schools consist only of multiple modular units and no permanent buildings were constructed.
- 2010 The 1953 multipurpose building demolished and a new multi-use building constructed east of the classroom building at the south end of campus.
- 2013 The kindergarten building was demolished.
- 2016 Complete rehabilitation of the two-story classroom building completed to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

Integrity

Overall, the two-story classroom building at Nystrom Elementary maintains sufficient historic integrity to convey its historical significance. The property remains at its original site and retains the integrity of location. With the recent rehabilitation, the property retains its integrity of design. Alterations are discussed above under Historic Appearance.

While much of the campus itself has been altered, including the demolition and construction of several buildings and temporary classroom units, the school retains its integrity of setting relative to the surrounding neighbor, which includes numerous other significant sites from World War II. Nearby buildings that are currently identified in the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park include: the Maritime Child Development Center, Fire Station 67A and the Kaiser Field Hospital. The classroom building also retains its integrity of materials. The building maintains its original redwood siding painted in historic colors. Much of the original wood trim and decorative elements remain at both the interior and exterior, and the original wood floors at the second floor have been refinished as part of the recent work. Additionally, the building retains the general integrity of workmanship, because the craftsmanship of the original

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construction is still evident within the building's character defining features such as the exterior decorative medallions and siding patterns. The property maintains its integrity of feeling, as it clearly illustrates its aesthetic and historic nature as a World War II-era elementary school through its Modern design, location and sustained use as an elementary school. Nystrom Elementary School is one structure within a significant grouping of buildings constructed during World War II that not only share a common history, but also share a Modern design aesthetic expressed through characteristics ranging from the overall form and planning to details such as fenestration patterns and maritime-themed features (see Figures 4-7). Finally, the property maintains its integrity of association to the World War II home front effort; specifically as a built example of an effect of the massive influx of people on Richmond and its infrastructure and the subsequent development that resulted in response to the home front industries. The City of Richmond maintains such clear and strong associations with America's World War II history, that it was selected over all other cities in the country to be the site of the nation's only National Historical Park addressing the home front efforts. Nystrom Elementary contributes to and is part of the national home front story that is being preserved and interpreted by the National Park Service in Richmond, California.

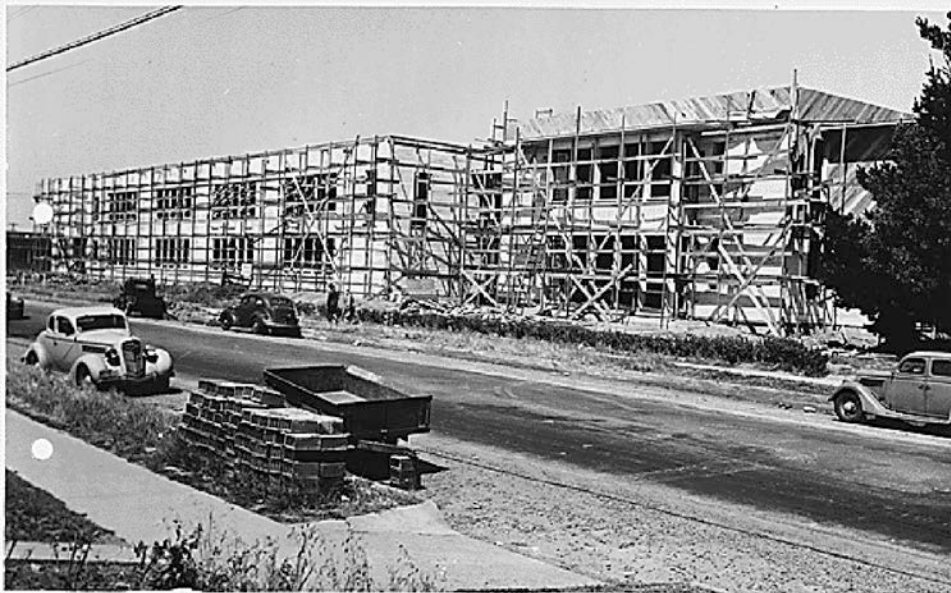


Figure 1: Nystrom Elementary under construction 1943. The view is of the front, Harbour Way facade looking northeast. Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.

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Figure 2: Photograph of Nystrom Elementary School soon after construction c. 1943. The view is of the front, Harbour Way façade looking southeast. Source: Richmond Museum of History.



Figure 3: Detail of the rehabilitated building showing the unique siding pattern. September 2016.

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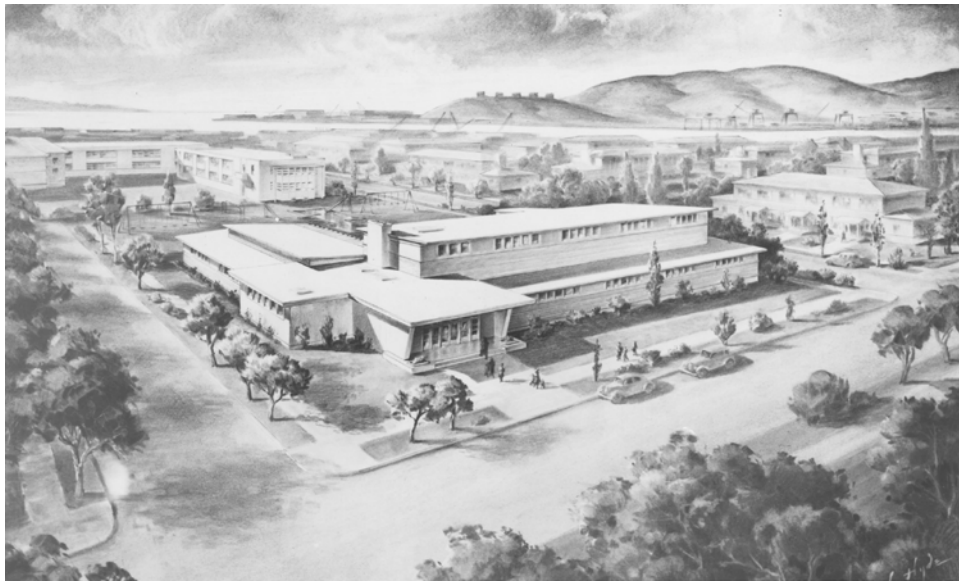


Figure 4: Architectural rendering of the Maritime Child Development Center c.1943 showing Nystrom Elementary School and wartime housing projects in the background. Source: Richmond Museum of History.



Figure 5: The Kaiser Permanente Field Hospital c. 1943. Source: Richmond Museum of History.

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Figure 6: Richmond Fire Station 67 c. 1943. Source: Richmond Museum of History.

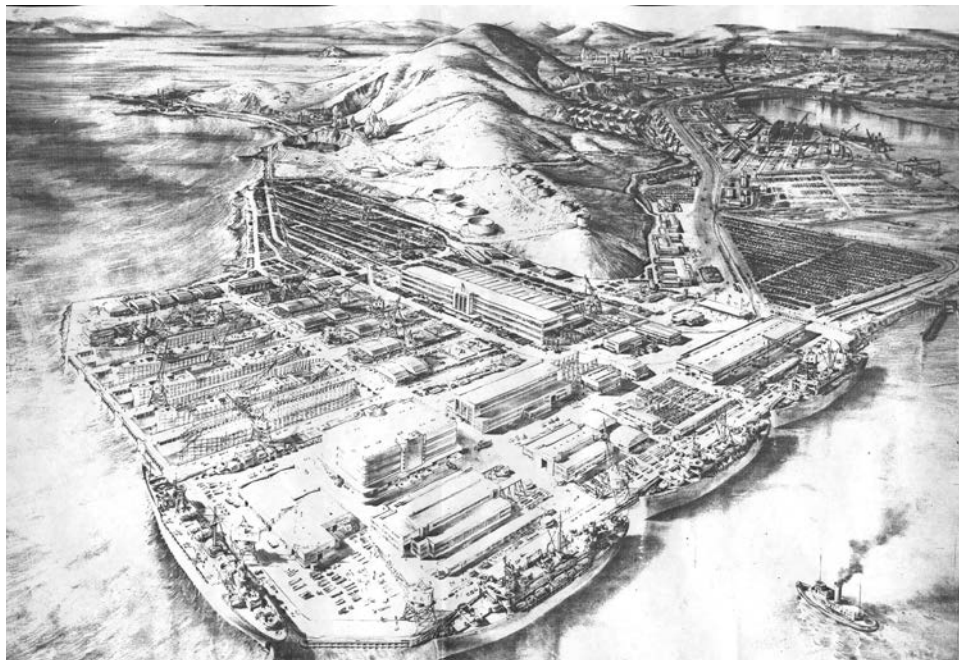


Figure 7: Architectural rendering of Kaiser Shipyard 3 c. 1942. Source: Richmond useum of History.

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Section 8: Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Nystrom Elementary School is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance under Criterion A for its association with providing educational services to the children of war industry workers in support of the World War II home front efforts in Richmond, California. It thereby exemplifies an effect of the massive influx of people on a small town and its infrastructure and the subsequent development that resulted. As the population rapidly increased with laborers filling positions in the fifty-six war-related industries located in Richmond, the enrollment of pupils in the schools also exploded. The local government bodies were overwhelmed by the growth, particularly in the areas of housing, schools, and urban infrastructure, and required federal assistance in developing sufficient public services. The two-story Nystrom Elementary classroom building, constructed in 1943, represents a significant example of the federal government, specifically through the U. S. Maritime Commission, providing financial assistance to support local public services during the war. The period of significance is from 1943-1945, the date of construction to the end of World War II.

Numerous buildings and sites in Richmond, California, related to the war effort have previously been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The resources include: two Child Development Centers (Ruth C. Powers and Maritime), Atchison Village Defense Worker Housing, the Kaiser Permanente Field Hospital, Richmond Fire Station 67, the Ford Assembly Building, Richmond Shipyard #3, and the vessel S.S. RED OAK VICTORY (see Figures X-XX). Because of the extensive amount of surviving sites and structures the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park (Park) was established in Richmond, California, in 2000. The National Park Service found Richmond to possess an outstanding collection of resources related to the war effort that would effectively support the interpretation of the nationally significant story of the mobilization for war and its sweeping social and economic changes.

Nystrom Elementary School represents a building type that is not yet recognized within the Park and one that expands the associations of the World War II mobilization effort to include the public schools and the numerous social issues related to educating the children of the home front workers. Due to its proximity to the shipyards and worker housing, Nystrom served the highest population of students within the Richmond School District during World War II. Even with the new building, the administration had to institute multiple sessions throughout the school day in order to accommodate the school's large enrollment. The Park's General Management Plan and

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the enabling legislation provide for the inclusion and identification of additional sites “that relate to the industrial, governmental, and citizen efforts during World War II that should be linked to and interpreted at the park.”³ Should Nystrom Elementary School be found eligible for the National Register, it is the intention of the National Park Service to add the school to the list of sites included in the Park.⁴

Narrative Statement of Significance

Criterion A

City of Richmond and the Richmond Unified School District

East of the San Francisco Bay, the City of Richmond was incorporated in 1905, following the development of the western terminus of the Santa Fe Railroad’s transcontinental line in 1899 and the establishment of the Standard Oil (originally the Pacific Oil Company) refinery in 1901. Initial civic, commercial and residential development was in an area known as Point Richmond; a hilly region located south of the refinery and physically isolated from the flatlands to the east by mud flats and sloughs. Early Richmond entrepreneur A. S. Macdonald, recognizing the geographical limitation of Point Richmond, shifted the development of Richmond to the east by subdividing 550 acres of former ranch land that stretched out to the eastern hills.⁵

The first schools in Richmond were established by the San Pablo School District and its three trustees: John R. Nystrom, Harry Ells and John Peres. In 1901, the trustees appointed Walter T. Helms to be supervisor of the District’s three schools. The San Pablo School District soon grew too large and was divided into three separate districts in 1903. Helms took on the role of superintendent of the Richmond School District in 1904, and would remain in the position until his retirement in 1949.⁶

³ H.R. 4063/Public Law 106-352 Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park Establishment Act of 2000 (Oct. 24, 2000; Stat. 1370).

⁴ Paul Scolari, Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources, Rosie the Riveter NHP, personal communication with the author, April 2016.

⁵ Joseph Whitnar, *A History of Richmond, California: The City That Grew from a Rancho* (Richmond: Chamber of Commerce, 1944).

⁶ Helen Pence, *Building Richmond’s Schools* (Richmond: Richmond Museum of History, 2010).

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The Establishment of Nystrom Elementary School

In 1901, the first school in Richmond opened its doors in Point Richmond; however, many new residents were also settling in the recently laid out eastern flatlands, requiring that facilities be established outside of Point Richmond as well.⁷ In 1902, a one room school opened on the corner of Ohio and Sixth Streets in the loft of a small barn. Wick's Barn, as it was known, proved an unsuitable facility, and the classroom was moved to the Fitzgerald store building on the corner of Maine and Haight (now Fifth) Streets. In 1908, the Richmond School Board constructed a four room, two-story building for the school children being taught in the Fitzgerald store. The new elementary school was located at Thirteenth Street on a parcel donated by John R. Nystrom. Subsequently, the school was named in honor of Nystrom, a pioneer of the City, former Richmond School District Board trustee and Richmond City Council member.⁸ Several years later, the Nystrom School building was relocated to a new site between Tenth and Twelfth Streets at Maine Street, which had been the original Nystrom ranch site.⁹

Nystrom School's enrollment and facilities grew gradually through the 1920s and 1930s. In 1922, a one-story classroom addition was constructed east of the two-story school house, and a few years later a free-standing auditorium building was constructed just to the north. The school served kindergarten through sixth grade, and by 1933, the enrollment was listed at 223 pupils.¹⁰

Wartime Changes

Until 1940, Standard Oil was the single largest employer in Richmond, which at the time cited a total population of only 23,000.¹¹ Standard Oil was soon to lose this distinction, when in January 1941, the federal government, in conjunction with Henry J. Kaiser, began development of the first shipyard in Richmond. The city was selected as an optimal shipyard site due to its deep-water ports and expanses of unoccupied land. At peak production, the Kaiser Company maintained an 880 acre complex in Richmond, which contained four shipyards and employed over 90,000 people. In total, 563 Liberty ships were built in Richmond, more than any other yard in the county.¹² Additionally, fifty-five other war-related industries were established in the city.

⁷ Whitnar.

⁸ "Know Your Local Schools: Nystrom School Named for Pioneer of City," *Richmond Independent*, October 25, 1945.

⁹ Sanborn Map Company, Richmond, CA (New York, 1916).

¹⁰ "Know Your Local Schools: Nystrom School Named for Pioneer of City."

¹¹ Lucretia Edwards, et al, Point Richmond Historical Association, "Point Richmond," Contra Costa County, California, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1979).

¹² *Western Shipbuilding in World War II: A Detailed Review of Wartime Activities of Leading Maritime and Navy Contractors*,

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The shipyards brought a massive influx of migrant workers to Richmond, many coming from southern and midwestern states. The Kaiser Company brought almost 38,000 laborers to the shipyards, while over 60,000 migrated on their own accord.¹³ By 1943, the city's population had increased to over 100,000 residents.¹⁴ Richmond was unprepared for the transformation from small community to burgeoning metropolis, and it lacked sufficient infrastructure such as housing, hospitals, schools, and general public services needed to support the immense population increase.

One of the city's largest demographics to change following the opening of the shipyards was of school-aged children who had arrived with their job-seeking parents. In particular, large increases were noted in the number of children in the early elementary grades. During the war year the general population of Richmond increased by a factor of four, while the early elementary school-aged population grew seven times over.¹⁵ Further, the three schools that were located near shipyard housing (Nystrom, Stege and Pullman) saw an increase in their student population by over fourteen times.¹⁶ In January 1940, Richmond had eleven elementary schools with a total enrollment of 2,883 pupils.¹⁷ Enrollment rapidly increased, and in April 1942, Walter T. Helms, the district superintendent, issued a report alerting the school board of the growing strain on all of the school facilities in which he noted that "15 to 20 new pupils are being enrolled every day."¹⁸ In his report, Helms specifically identified Nystrom as the school facing the biggest problem. In reference to Nystrom, the local newspaper stated that "the load is already unusually high and space is not available for many new pupils"¹⁹ Nystrom's proximity to the shipyards and the available housing, led to it becoming the most highly populated elementary school in the district, and by April 1942, the school had more than reached its capacity.²⁰ Still the enrollment continued to increase.

(Oakland: Shipbuilding Review Publishing Association, 1945): 55-56.

¹³ Richard Reinhart, "Richmond's Boom That Didn't Bust: Where Can Displaced Tenants Find Homes?" *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 21, 1953.

¹⁴ Roy M. Hamachi, "Postwar Housing in Richmond, California: A Case study of Local Housing Developments in the Postwar Period," (Master's thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1957), 73.

¹⁵ Hubert O. Brown, "The Impact of War Worker Migration on the Public School System of Richmond, California from 1940-1945," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1973), 2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 196.

¹⁷ "Richmond, City of Many Marvels," *P G and E Progress*, February, 1944 Vol. XXI No. 3, 2.

¹⁸ "School Board Hears Report on Lack of Room," *Richmond Independent*, April 7, 1942.

¹⁹ "School Enrollment Shows Another Gain," *Richmond Independent*, April 6, 1942.

²⁰ "School Board Hears Report on Lack of Room," *Richmond Independent*, April 7, 1942.

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Helms held a meeting with Dr. W. T. Peterson, senior officer of school facilities for the U.S. Department of Education to inform him of the district's critical conditions. Helms noted that in the last six months more than 2,000 new students had been enrolled and that "the situation [was] rapidly growing out of hand."²¹ Following the meeting, the district was awarded approval of federal funding in order to erect temporary classrooms at several elementary campuses.²² However, weeks later the funding was revoked, as the federal government halted all non-essential construction in order to conserve materials for the war industries. The Works Progress Administration supervisor advised that the Richmond District had not yet exhausted all measures such as "the double shift school system or the establishment of classes in lodge-rooms, churches, or other vacant buildings." Helms strongly disagreed with the supervisor's suggestion and continued to plea with the federal government for additional funding for the Richmond schools.²³

By September 1942, it was reported that school enrollment increased by 2,500 pupils over the summer and over 5,200 children were enrolled in the elementary schools alone. Several lower grade teachers had classes of sixty to sixty-five children, with one kindergarten having ninety-three students registered.²⁴ In the same month, the U. S. Maritime Commission awarded contracts for an additional 6,000 housing units to be constructed in the neighborhood surrounding Nystrom School. The units were to be constructed on "practically every open piece of property between Ohio street on the north, Cutting boulevard on the south, First street on the west and Twenty-third street on the east." In support of the growing number of working mothers, the project would also include the construction of a nursery school (the Maritime Child Development Center) just north of the Nystrom Elementary school yard. Upon learning the news that thousands of new residents would be living within the Nystrom neighborhood, Richmond school officials promptly held a conference in order to ascertain how much more room would be required at the school.²⁵

A meeting was held at the Kaiser shipyards with local school officials, U. S. Maritime Commission representatives and Kaiser Company executives. The school district had no more funds available to construct additional classrooms or buildings. Helms argued that in order to provide greater capacity at the school for the increasing population associated with the new U. S. Maritime Commission housing project, new construction was required and would have to be financed by the federal government or the Kaiser Company. Helms requested that twenty new classrooms be constructed at the Nystrom campus.²⁶

²¹ "Need for More Homes, Schools is Emphasized," *Richmond Independent*, April 8, 1942.

²² "Schools to get Federal Funds," *Richmond Independent*, May 5, 1942.

²³ "Richmond Plea for Federal School Fund Denied," *Richmond Independent*, May 29, 1942.

²⁴ "School Enrollment Here is Increased by 2,500 Pupils," *Richmond Independent*, September 15, 1942.

²⁵ "Three Builders Get Contracts for 6,000 Richmond War Apartments," *Richmond Independent*, September 25, 1942.

²⁶ "Local School to Add 20 Classrooms," *Richmond Independent*, September 29, 1942.

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Just one week later, the Kaiser Company announced a plan to construct a new thirty-room school building at Nystrom that would be run by the school district. The land for the school would be leased by the Kaiser Company for one dollar per year.²⁷ Will G. Corlett and Arthur W. Anderson Architects and Engineers of Oakland were already under contract to design the 6,000 new units for the U. S. Maritime Commission, with Morris N. Wortman, chief architect for the Kaiser Company, serving as the project manager. The new school building at Nystrom was subsequently folded into the U. S. Maritime Commission housing project, and Will G. Corlett and Arthur Anderson were tasked with the design.²⁸

The population increases did not slow down, and in October 1942, the first class put on a double shift in Richmond was the second grade at Nystrom.²⁹ Nystrom's enrollment had more than doubled from the previous October from 210 to 438.³⁰ In addition to the new school building at Nystrom, the U. S. Maritime Commission also authorized the construction of a nursery school (the Maritime Child Development Center), an administration building, a 50-bed hospital addition to the Kaiser Field Hospital and a fire department building unit in order to support the 6,000 new units of housing under construction at the time.³¹ The entire neighborhood surrounding Nystrom was essentially built out to sustain the home front workers.

Architects

Will G. Corlett and Arthur W. Anderson ran an architecture and engineering firm together in Oakland at least through the 1940s and early 1950s. Corlett was the son of renowned Napa architect William H. Corlett. In 1910, he graduated from the architecture program at U. C. Berkeley and was a prolific contributor to the regional industry journal, *Architect and Engineer*. Corlett is most well-known for the Berkeley High School Community Theater, which he designed in conjunction with his longtime partner, Henry H. Gutterson, in 1938.³² Other notable buildings in which Corlett is listed as a contributing architect are Stern Hall and Cory Hall (designed with Arthur Anderson), both located on the U. C. Berkeley campus. Corlett served as a

²⁷ "Kaiser Will Build Thirty Room School," *Richmond Independent*, October 6, 1942.

²⁸ Lawrence E. Hunt, "Kaiser Enters a New Field: He Will Building School for Richmond," *Oakland Post Enquirer*, October 8, 1942.

²⁹ "Double Shift Set for Local 7 School," *Richmond Independent*, October 7, 1942.

³⁰ "Enrollment in Schools Here 3,000 Over Last Year," *Richmond Independent*, October 15, 1942.

³¹ "Addition to Field Hospital Also Authorized," *Richmond Independent*, November 2, 1942.

³² Susan Cerny, "Berkeley High School: Civic Center Historic District, Berkeley, CA," http://berkeleyheritage.com/berkeley_landmarks/berkeley_highschool.html, accessed February 2016.

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consulting architect and engineer to the Oakland Public Schools and was noted for his traditional school designs such as Oakland High School and McClymonds High School. Corlett's son, William Corlett also practiced architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area and was primarily recognized for his Modernist style.³³

Corlett died in 1954; however, Anderson continued to practice in Oakland until eventually moving his office to his home in Alamo. Anderson was the first graduate of the University of Washington School of Architecture in the mid-1910s. He was also a structural engineer, and in 1951, he served as president of the Structural Engineers Association of California. Anderson died in 1975.³⁴

Nystrom's New Classroom Building (The Maritime Building)

In early 1943, the architects completed the design drawings for the new two-story classroom building facing Tenth Street (now Harbour Way). The construction of the building ensued throughout the following spring. The classroom building was originally referred to as the Maritime Building, because the project was funded by the U. S. Maritime Commission, rather than the Richmond School District, and was part of the surrounding U. S. Maritime Commission housing development. The construction cost was listed at \$170,567.³⁵

The building maintained a traditional double-loaded plan and provided thirty new classrooms to the Nystrom site. Even with the new building, the enrollment still exceeded the elementary school's capacity. At its peak, Nystrom ran seventy-two classes on multiple sessions, more than any other school in the district, and in 1944, under the direction of Principal Harlan C. Still, a staff of sixty-four taught over 3,000 pupils.³⁶ By the end of the war, Nystrom had both the highest capacity of any elementary school in the district, as well as the highest enrollment.³⁷

³³ "Will G. Corlett, Noted Oakland Architect, Dies," *Oakland Tribune*, October 28, 1954.

³⁴ "Anderson, Arthur William Sr.," *Oakland Tribune*, March 14, 1975, 24EE.

³⁵ "A Survey of: School Facilities Evaluated for a Planned Community Re-development," (Richmond Elementary and Union High School Districts, 1955), Richmond Collection, Richmond Public Library.

³⁶ Woodington, Donald Devine 120; and "Know Your Local Schools: Nystrom School Named for Pioneer of City"

³⁷ Helms, PTA History, 4

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Postwar

Once the war ended, the population of Richmond did not drop overnight and the school district continued to struggle with high enrollments. In 1949, two single-story classroom buildings were constructed at the northern and western perimeters of the Nystrom campus, and in 1953 the original school building was demolished and a new detached multi-purpose building was built in its place, east of the Maritime building.³⁸ Eventually, enrollment declined to less than the capacity of the school and the remaining pre-war buildings were demolished.

The two-story Maritime building has continued to serve as the primary classroom building for Nystrom School since its construction. Changes have occurred to the site, primarily to the east with the demolition of the 1953 multi-purpose building; the construction of a new multi-purpose building; the addition of portable classroom buildings; and the demolition of the postwar classroom buildings.

Summary of Significance

In relation to the primary interpretive themes that are outlined in the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park General Management Plan, Nystrom School exemplifies the effects of the massive influx of people on a small town and its infrastructure and the subsequent development that resulted.³⁹ Due to its proximity to the shipyards and the U. S. Maritime Commission housing, Nystrom School endured one of the largest increases in enrollment of any school in the area. Even with the construction of the new classroom building, the school was forced to operate on quadruple shifts at times during war. The school building represents the significant role the federal government through the U. S. Maritime Commission played in developing Richmond's infrastructure to support the home front efforts during World War II.

³⁸ DSA File No. 6650, 6719, and 11170.

³⁹ National Park Service, Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park General Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, 2009.

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----- County and State
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Nystrom Elementary School

Name of Property

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Section 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the historic property encompasses the building footprint of Nystrom Elementary School.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was selected in order to include the building but exclude the surrounding landscaping and site.