

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 5 1980  
DATE ENTERED AUG 11 1980

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC War Memorial Natatorium

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Kalakaua Avenue

CITY, TOWN Honolulu VICINITY OF First

STATE Hawaii CODE 15 COUNTY Honolulu CODE 03

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME State of Hawaii

STREET & NUMBER 1151 Punchbowl Street

CITY, TOWN Honolulu VICINITY OF Hawaii

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Bureau of Conveyances

STREET & NUMBER 1151 Punchbowl Street

CITY, TOWN Honolulu STATE Hawaii

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Hawaii Register of Historic Places 80-14-9701

DATE 1973  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Department of Land and Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN Honolulu STATE Hawaii

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The War Memorial Natatorium is a reinforced concrete structure which contains an open air 100 meter by 50 foot swimming pool which is fed by ocean water through a series of coffered locks.

The pool is surrounded on four sides by a twenty-foot wide deck which is enclosed on the three ocean sides by a three-foot high wall. On the fourth, mauka (mountain) side, concrete bleachers rise thirteen levels in height and provide seating for approximately 2,500 people. The bleachers are divided into two parts, each with four sections, with a central entry space separating the two parts.

The Beaux-Arts inspired main entry, with its triumphal arch flanked by two lesser round arches, is the major architectural feature of the Natatorium. A pair of Ionic pilasters support the triumphal arch's entablature which has the words, "The War Memorial" inscribed in its frieze. An elaborate sculpture rises from the entablature. It consists of a garlanded base with an American eagle perched at each corner and the Hawaiian motto and seal in the center. The triumphal arch itself, has a paneled ceiling decorated with hexagonal floral designs. Flanking the triumphal arch, and above the two lower arches, is a medallion with floral patterns and a woman's face in the center in relief. The ocean and mountain sides of the entry are similar.

To either side of the main entrance, the bleacher's rear walls extend approximately 100 feet. Locker rooms are below the bleachers and inset behind centered round arched arcades of seven bays each. Round arched windows, which correspond to the arcade openings, provide the locker rooms with ventilation and illumination. A pair of simple pilasters flank the arcade and support large concrete urns, which project above the bleacher walls and demarcate the end sections of each bleacher. A flagpole with a ball finial is located above the second and sixth openings of each arcade. The bays on either side of the arcade contain office and restroom spaces and are distinguished by rectangular windows with grills.

A ramp leads to the main entry; to either side of this ramp are a volleyball and basketball court. A concrete wall with an incised diamond pattern, encloses these courts. The end walls are stepped, and two bays long at the main entry end and three bays long at the other end. The front walls are five bays long and a tapered concrete column, which originally supported a light globe, is at each pier. At the corners of the entry ramp, these columns are fluted metal and support spotlights which illuminated the triumphal arch entry. A hau arbor, supported by pipes, is adjacent to the front walls.

The War Memorial is situated on the ocean in Kapiolani Park and is surrounded by expansive lawns with a large number of tall coconut trees, a few banyans and other varieties of vegetation.

The basic structure is in poor condition and presently is officially closed, although people still use the facility. There have been no additions, and the only alterations have been the removal of a free-standing clock and diving platform from the deck area, and the removal of several light fixtures.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES 1927

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Lewis P. Hobart

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The War Memorial Natatorium is significant as a major landmark along the Kapiolani Park stretch of Kalakaua Avenue. Rendered in a Beaux-Arts style, which is typical of its period, it presents a striking image of monumentality within its setting of open lawn, beach and ocean.

In 1921, the Territorial Legislature authorized the issuance of bonds to produce \$250,000 for the construction, on the former Irwin property, of a memorial dedicated to the men and women of Hawaii who served in World War I. The legislature further provided for the appointment of a Territorial War Memorial Commission to decide upon the form the memorial was to take. The legislature stipulated that a swimming pool of at least 100 meter length be included and a competition be held to determine the most appropriate design. The competition was held under the general rules of the American Institute of Architects. Three architects, Bernard Maybeck of San Francisco, Ellis F. Lawrence of Portland, and W.R.B. Willcox of Seattle, were selected to judge the competition, and Louis P. Hobart of San Francisco won the first prize. Hobart's plans, however, had to be twice modified before they could be implemented in accordance with the budgetary parameters. Thus it was not until 1927 that Mr. T.L. Cliff started construction.

The Natatorium was completed in the summer of 1927, the first "living" war memorial in the United States. The opening ceremonies were held on August 24, and were the major social event of the year. The feelings of the populace were expressed in an editorial appearing in the Advertiser that day: "Tonight the Hawaii War Memorial Opens. It is highly appropriate that this Memorial to the heroes of the World War should be a public natatorium. America went to war to assure safety and independence and the privileges and rights of a free people to all her citizens, and a part of the birthright of a free people is sound health and the opportunity for wholesome recreation. The Natatorium epitomizes Hawaii's prominence in one of the world's great sports. Situated at Waikiki, it looks upon and is part of the ocean, whereof Hawaii is the "crossroad"... No such galaxy of swimming stars has ever been gathered together since the last Olympic Games. The opening of the natatorium will be signaled by the greatest competitive swimming ever seen anywhere in the Pacific, once more giving Hawaii a place of honor and distinction."

The actual ceremonies were colorful and dignified. "Duke" Kahanamoku--who traveled from Los Angeles to open the pool on his birthday--made the first swim, emerging at the end of the 100 meters to a thunderous ovation. It was an unforgettable moment--the man who symbolized the Hawaiian people to the rest of the world opening a memorial whose design captured so well the character of the Territory and its relationship to the sea.

An AAU National championship swimming meet, with swimmers from Japan and South America participating, capped the opening activities. Olympic champion, Johnny Weissmuller, was



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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

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in excellent form, managing to break the world's record for the 100-meter freestyle swim, and in the following three days of competition, set new world's records for the 440 and 880-meter freestyles, cutting more than ten seconds off the previous world marks for these events. Clarence "Buster" Crabbe, a local swimmer, who was later to replace Weissmuller in the famous "Tarzan" series, won the 1500-meter contest.

The natatorium became a social-recreational center for local people immediately, and many important international and national swimming meets were held there. It became a factor in moves toward a "Pan-Pacific" philosophy, at least in the area of athletics.

There were, however, problems. Maintenance gradually became less and less efficient. The job of superintendent of the natatorium was awarded by the Territorial government more on the basis of political loyalty than expertise. Gradually, deterioration set in.

After Pearl Harbor, the natatorium was taken over by the army until 1943, and used for training purposes. Its physical condition continued to deteriorate, and began to take on the proportions of a scandal. In 1949, the natatorium was rehabilitated by the Territorial government at a cost of \$82,000 and subsequently turned over to the City and County of Honolulu on July 1. The sporadic and inefficient maintenance of the memorial continued, however, and today, the natatorium is once again in need of extensive rehabilitation, if it is to continue to serve as a major social-recreational center. Although officially closed, the pool still attracts its share of visitors: local swimmers, people seeking to experience the ocean-park-beach scene from a unique space, and spectators who gather nightly to view a serene sunset.

# KAPIOLANI PARK

## KALAKAUA AVENUE

State of Hawaii  
(City & County of Honolulu)  
(Board of Public Parks & Recreation)

5.347 ACs.

NATATORIUM

FOR EXEC. ORD. 1998

State of Hawaii  
(Dept of Land & Natural Resources  
- Div of State Parks)  
Exec. Ord. No. 2469  
STATE PARK

Mohoney Foundation  
Estate Trust Co., Ltd.  
Shigeo Shigenaga & Mr.  
Akino-Jin, Inc.  
(Hotel Waiana, Inc.)  
-Sub-1c.

PLAT 32

43,007 sq ft or 0.987 ac.

28,506 sq ft  
FOR L.C. AN  
5031.1

TRIUMPHAL ARCH

BLEACHERS

BLEACHERS

Swimming Pool

Sea Wall

True North  
1" = 60'

# WAR MEMORIAL NATATORIUM

## WAIKIKI, HAWAII

1 756

Parcels Dropped: 2

FIRST DIVISION		
ZONE	SEC.	PLAT
3	1	31
CONTAINING		PARCELS
Scale: 1 in = 60 ft.		

AUG 11 1980

JUN 5 1980

Property

*War Memorial Natatorium*

80001283

State

*HI, Honolulu*

Working Number

*6.5, 80, 1463*

**TECHNICAL**

**CONTROL**

Photos

5

Maps

1, 1

**HISTORIAN**

*Significant in local recreational history & of distinctive Beachfront triumphal arch which is an important visual element of shoreline.*

*ACCEPT 8/4/80  
J. Towner*

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_

Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Entered AUG 11 1980

Federal Register Entry

2, 3, 81

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_



*Honolulu Co.*

War Memorial Natatorium

Waikiki, Hawaii

JUN 5 1980

Photographer: Unknown, 1979

Neg. in State Historic Preservation  
Office

Looking North

AUG 11 1980

Photo #1 *of 5*



*Honolulu Co.*

War Memorial Natatorium

Waikiki, Hawaii

Photographer: Nathan Napoka, 1980

Neg. in State Hist. Pres. Office

Looking North at South Wall

AUG 11 1980

JUN 5 1980

Photo #2 of 5



*Honolulu co.*

War Memorial Natatorium

Waikiki, Hawaii

JUN 5 1980

Photographer: Nathan Napoka, 1980

Neg. in State Hist. Pres. Office

Looking Southeast at Swimming Pool

AUG 1 1980

Photo #3 065



*Honolulu*  
*Co.*

War Memorial Natatorium

Waikiki, Hawaii

JUN 5 1980

Photographer: Nathan Napoka, 1980

Neg. in State Hist. Pres. Office

Looking South at Entry Elevation

AUG 11 1980

Photo #405



War Memorial Natatorium

*Honolulu CO 2*

Waikiki, Hawaii

JUN 5 1980

Photographer: Nathan Napoka, 1980

Neg. in State Hist. Pres. Office

Looking West at Triumphal Arch

AUG 11 1980

Photo #5 of 5



War Memorial Natatorium  
Z04 E 621885 N 2352250

VTM correction 4/18/08  
04/622197/2351272

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Hawaii State Survey  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods 1953  
and by plane-table surveys 1927-1928. Revised from aerial  
photographs taken 1959. Field check 1959  
Hydrography compiled from USC&GS charts 4109 (1960), 4131 (1958),  
and 4132 (1959)  
Polyconic projection. Old Hawaiian datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Hawaiian coordinate system, zone 3  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 4, shown in blue  
Blue indicates mean sea level. Only landmark buildings are shown

115°  
TRUE NORTH  
MAGNETIC NORTH  
APPROXIMATE MEAN  
DECLINATION, 1959

SCALE 1:24,000  
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET  
1 MILE  
KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET  
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 10-FOOT CONTOURS  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL  
DEPTH CURVES IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOWER LOW WATER  
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER  
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 1 FOOT

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER 25, COLORADO OR WASHINGTON 25, D.C.  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
○ State Route



Map of the Island of Oahu, scale 1:62,500, from an earlier survey is available

HONOLULU, HAWAII  
N2115—W15746.5/7.5

1959

AUG 11 1980

0-14

0-14

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      HAWAII

~~AUG 11 1980~~

Date Entered

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
War Memorial Natatorium	Honolulu Honolulu County
Waialua School	Haleiwa Honolulu County
McKinley High School	Honolulu Honolulu County

Also Notified

Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Honorable Spark M. Matsunago  
Honorable Cecil "Cec" Heftel

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Susumu Ono  
Chairman  
Department of Land and Natural  
Resources  
P.O. Box 621  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

NR

Byers/arb

8/22/80

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.