

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Hotel Sterling

and/or common Sterling Hotel

2. Location

street & number 343-45 Hamilton Street

___ not for publication

city, town Allentown

___ vicinity of

state Pennsylvania

code 042

county Lehigh

code 077

3. Classification

Category

- ___ district
- building(s)
- ___ structure
- ___ site
- ___ object

Ownership

- ___ public
- private
- ___ both

Public Acquisition

- n/a in process
- n/a being considered

Status

- occupied
 - ___ unoccupied
 - ___ work in progress
- Accessible**
- ___ yes: restricted
 - yes: unrestricted
 - ___ no

Present Use

- ___ agriculture
- commercial
- ___ educational
- ___ entertainment
- ___ government
- ___ industrial
- ___ military

- ___ museum
- ___ park
- ___ private residence
- ___ religious
- ___ scientific
- ___ transportation
- ___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Charles Konya

street & number 343 Hamilton Street

city, town Allentown

___ vicinity of

state Pennsylvania 18100

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lehigh County Courthouse

street & number 5th & Hamilton Street

city, town Allentown

state PA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes ___ no

date 11/20/80 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg

state PA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated in the First Ward, Allentown's first industrial area, the Sterling Hotel is a three story rectangular brick building, constructed in the Victorian Romanesque style with Queen Anne and Eastlake influences. Although not terribly large (45.85' x 100') it projects a semblance of monumentality because of the fine proportioning and detail.

The first, second and third stories are vertically divided into three bays by four brick pilasters. Horizontally, the building has three divisions; the first floor storefront is separated from the remainder of the building by bracketed horizontal molding. A large, finely molded metal cornice crowns the structure. This cornice is Romanesque in flavor with a series of roundheaded arches running horizontally across the facade. The cornice is instrumental in giving the building a rich, monumental appearance. The fenestration progresses vertically in a symmetrical logical manner, which again, adds to the monumentality--the first floor windows are rectangular, the second floor windows are segmentally arched while the third story windows are fully arched.

The middle bay is dominant having one large window frame on each story culminating to a gabled parapet supported by consoles as a part of cornice. The Hotel name and date is also scripted in metal and appears above the third story window as a unique starburst pattern.

Brick arches frame all second and third story windows with stone Keystones on center. Molded brick is also used in the arched design. Stone bands run horizontally connecting the brick pilasters on the second and third stories. Queen Anne style stained glass and multi-paned windows are used on every story. Eastlake detail is noted by the incised arched window frames on the north and west elevations, and the turned and incised columns framing the storefront windows on the first floor.

The interior of the Hotel is also perfectly preserved with all the original details intact. The backbar is complete with stained and beveled glass cabinet doors above, and etched glass cabinet doors below a stained glass canopy in the center. A frosted beveled glass and wood partition separates the tap-room from the dining area. The dining area contains all the original bentwood chairs.

Original woodwork is displayed throughout the first floor--the bar, the backbar, the dining area partition, the massive Eastlake influenced balustrade winding up to the third floor, strong molding and paneling is also exhibited.

The molded plaster ceiling is still intact although in disrepair.

Upon entering the Hotel from the center door, one steps into an atrium with skylights above.

The hallway for the hotel rooms on the second and the third floor surround the atrium.

Addendum to #7 Description:

There are currently 33 sleeping rooms to receive permanent and transient guests.

The bar is 64' long and is built of oak and topped with mahogany. The bevelled leaded glass partition separating the dining room from the tap room was supplied by Neff, Chattoe and Company, an Allentown art glass manufacturer during the period.

Correction to #4:

Owner's Name - Charles and Helen Konya

Please Note: The Sterling Hotel is located within the First Ward Survey Area and a Federally funded code enforcement and rehabilitation area.

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"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1890

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Started in 1889 and completed in 1890 by Henry A. Trexler, the Sterling Hotel is the only High Victorian period hotel in Allentown functioning in its original use. Compared to other surviving buildings in Allentown which once served as hotels, the Sterling Hotel is architecturally important due to its eclectic design, elaborate detailing and high degree of integrity. Although the Sterling Hotel shares general features of scale material, and set back with other Allentown commercial buildings of its era, the building retains one of the few original commercial storefronts in the city which remains intact.

Although the building's architectural significance is its strongest quality it also has significance in the area of commerce as hotel and restaurant frequented by travelers and workers in local industries.

Located in proximity to Allentown's two railroad stations, the Lehigh Valley Railroad (now demolished) and the Central New Jersey Railroad, the Sterling Hotel displays an opulence in detail and architectural eclecticism sufficient to compete for the traveler's attention. The hotel served as a convenient city restaurant and hotel for railroad passengers. Also, being located on the commercial strip of the first ward, the Sterling served "the lunch crowd" from the industries in the area such as the Adelaide Silk Mill which was located directly behind it.

The exterior has been altered only slightly with two of the doors and the flatwall sign having been replaced. It is also architecturally significant because of its elegance and fine proportioning. Although the Sterling is not large it projects a sense of monumentality, which is certainly an asset to its function in that it attracts the attention and looks impressive. Detail work such as the Queen Anne stained glass windows and the elaborate metal cornice work also add to its appearance. The interior is not less worthy of merit. Exquisitely carved wood work constitutes much of the furnishings. Consequently, objects such as staircases, cabinets and counters are not merely utilitarian but rather become works of art giving the interior an air of elegance and refinement reflective of the period. Stained glass, mirrors, molded plaster and "the longest bar in the state" add to its richness of an era gone by.

While it is similar in scale, material and style to other Allentown commercial buildings from the period, the Sterling represents Allentown's only High Victorian period hotel which still functions in its original use. The Sterling's first floor storefront remains as one of the few completely intact original storefronts and the building's cornice is perhaps the most elaborate in the city. Likewise, the Sterling is the only nineteenth century hotel building in Allentown that retains its interior and exterior form. Further, none of the city's extant late nineteenth century hotel buildings display the Sterling's eclecticism and ornamentation. Thus, the Sterling is Allentown's best architectural example of a late Victorian hotel building and one of the city's best examples of a late nineteenth century commercial building.

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Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Beginning at a point on the north side of Hamilton where the property line of 343-345 Hamilton intersects with the curb line (said point is approximately 130 feet west of the intersection of North Race Street and Hamilton Street); then, north along the east property line to the intersection with Court Street; then, traveling west along Court approximately 46 feet to the west property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street; then, south along the west property line to the intersection with Hamilton, then, east along the Hamilton Street to the starting point.

9. Major Bibliographical References

History of Lehigh County, Vol. I, Roberts, Charles 1914

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .10

Quadrangle name Allentown East, PA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	8	4	6	0	9	2	0	4	4	9	4	8	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
PA			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debra Laubach/Mary Ann Riola

organization Bureau of Planning, City of Allentown

date 9/19/80

street & number Rm. 320, 435 Hamilton Street

telephone 215-437-7613

city or town Allentown

state Pennsylvania

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3/22/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Hotel Sterling

Item number 10

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10. Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point, said point being the intersection of the center line of Hamilton Street and the east boundary line of 343-345 Hamilton Street extended; then proceeding in a westerly direction along the center line of Hamilton Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the center line of Hamilton Street and the western property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street extended, the proceeding from said point along the western property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street in a northerly direction to a point said point being the intersection of the western property line and the rear property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street, then proceeding in a easterly direction along the rear property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street, to a point, said point being the intersection of rear property line and the eastern property line of 343-345 Hamilton Street; then proceeding in a southerly direction along the eastern property line to the point of beginning.

3865 11 NE
(CEMENTON)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
TOPOGRAPHIC AND ENGINEERING SURVEY

75° 30'
40° 37' 30"
4497000m N

458000m E

EASTON (U.S. 611) 16 MI.
FULLERTON 0.9 MI. 0.4 MI. TO INTERSTATE 78

461 27' 30" 1.5 MI. TO INTERSTATE 78 & U.S. 22

5965
(CATAS)

Sterling Hotel
Lehigh County Allentown East
Zone 18 Quad
E. 460 920 N 4494 830

