



DRAFT LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Sailors' Union of the Pacific 450 Harrison Street

Landmark Designation Report
December 21, 2012

Landmark No. XXX

TABLE OF CONTENTS	page
OVERVIEW	3
BUILDING DESCRIPTION	3
BUILDING HISTORY	7
Early Maritime Labor Struggles	7
Expansion of the Sailors' Union	9
HARRY LUNDEBERG	9
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION	13
ARCHITECT: WILLIAM G. MERCHANT	17
ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION	18
Significance	18
Integrity	19
Boundary	19
Character-Defining Features	19
Property Information	19
END NOTES	19
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	20

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a seven-member body that makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the designation of landmark buildings and districts. The regulations governing landmarks and landmark districts are found in Article 10 of the Planning Code. The HPC is staffed by the San Francisco Planning Department.

This draft Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the initiation and designation process. Only language contained within the Article 10 designation ordinance, adopted by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, should be regarded as final.

Sailors' Union of the Pacific

450 Harrison Street

Built: 1950

Architect: William Gladstone Merchant

OVERVIEW

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific building at 450 Harrison Street derives its significance through its association with the maritime union that bears its name. The building has served as the headquarters for the Sailors' Union of the Pacific (SUP) since it was first constructed in 1950. The SUP is the oldest maritime union in the United States, having originated in San Francisco in 1885. SUP had a major impact on the shipping industry and helped to secure the rights of merchants and sailors all along the West Coast. The SUP building is also associated with a person significant to our past, Harry Lundeberg, the Secretary-Treasurer of SUP from 1935 to 1957.

450 Harrison Street also displays a high level of architectural expression. The building was designed by William Gladstone Merchant, a prolific master architect in the San Francisco Bay Area. Merchant worked alongside renowned architect Bernard Maybeck while he was still a student, helping to secure his reputation among the trade. 450 Harrison Street is designed a full expression of the Streamline Moderne style and displays notable similarity to the architect's design of "Pacific House," a theme building from the 1939-1940 Panama Pacific Exposition on Treasure Island. The building was designed with specific features to give it the appearance of a ship, such as the small, circular portholes punched into the ground floor.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific Building at 450 Harrison Street stands out for its large, monumental massing. The building is composed of a large, five-story central pavilion with two small three-story wings along each side. The central pavilion is essentially a granite box free of any exterior ornamentation save for the Streamline-Moderne window entrance which characterizes its primary façade. The smaller, rectangular three-story wings located at either side of the building are defined by the parallel horizontal window bands on each floor. The ground floor of the building's southwest façade feature round portholes, a nod to the maritime uses contained within. Two small statue busts of Harry Lundeberg and Andrew Furuseth (an early SUP leader) are located on either side of the building's entrance.

Primary Façade



Above: Primary Façade on Harrison Street. Source: Bing.com

The primary façade is characterized by its monumental central pavilion emphasized by an enframed window wall entrance portico. The vertical windows of the entrance portico are framed by a six concave piers, connected by wave panels and banded tubing. The walls surrounding the entrance have little ornamentation besides the pattern of the panel cladding and the words “Sailors’ Union of the Pacific” etched above the entrance.



Above: Detail of window wall entrance. Source: Thomas Hawk, Flickr.com

Secondary Façades

Southwest Façade



Above: Southwest façade on First Street. Source: Bing.com

The secondary, southwest façade fronting First Street is characterized by the rectangular wing protruding from the central pavilion. The façade of the wing is defined by its' fenestration pattern: three stories of horizontally oriented window bands. Small, circular window resembling port holes on a vessel are punched into the stone bulkhead located on the ground floor fronting the sidewalk.



Above: Northeast façade. Source: Bing.Com

The secondary, Northeastern façade is also characterized by a rectangular wing protruding from the central pavilion. The façade of this wing also features horizontally oriented window bands, although a sizeable portion is blank with no fenestration.



Above: Northwestern façade. View looking east from First Street towards Harrison Street. Source: Bing.com

The rear, Northwest façade is primarily a solid wall with little fenestration save for a small horizontal window band facing a parking lot. A loading dock is found at the first story.

History

Early Maritime Labor Struggles and the Formation of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific

The Sailors' Union of the Pacific (SUP), the oldest maritime union in the U.S., had its origins in San Francisco in 1885. Prior to the streamlined containerization that moved the Bay Area's shipping docks across the Bay to Oakland, San Francisco was home to one of the most important ports on the West Coast. Although more vessels and seamen frequented the ports on the Atlantic coast than those on the Pacific, San Francisco was where the movement to unionize sailors successfully germinated. Certain factors coalesced to make this possible. The Pacific Coast ports' comparative isolation prior to the construction of the Panama Canal meant that men shipping from the West Coast came into more frequent contact with one another, creating a sense of community. Racial and ethnic homogeneity of the individuals, most of whom were of Norwegian heritage, involved in the shipping trades augmented this factor. Also, the coastwise trade, fuelled by the lumber industry, was by U.S. law, reserved for American shipping companies, further concentrating labor in the hands of individuals whose port of call was along the Pacific Coast. The volume of the lumber trade also meant that the Pacific Coast ports saw a lesser percentage of deep-water trade than the Atlantic ports. These factors provided favorable conditions for merchant seamen to organize successfully beginning with sailors aboard lumber schoonersⁱ.

Late Nineteenth Century shipping industry was brutal for sailors. Laws against desertion prevented seamen from striking while aboard ships or leaving their jobs because of unsatisfactory conditions at sea. Because of the unique factors involved in shipping, Congress declared that the 13th Amendment of 1865, which abolished slavery in the U.S., did not apply to seamen.ⁱⁱ This effectively created a situation in which seamen could be easily exploited. On both coasts, sailors worked within a system of legal servitude. On shore, sailors were easy prey to boardinghouse masters and shipping agents who took advantage of them. They would meet the men when they came ashore, putting them up in overpriced accommodations and getting them to accumulate huge tabs for food and drink at local taverns. When the sailors were unable to pay for their bills, these people would take their clothes, holding the garments until the debts were paid. Sometimes, the shipping masters, called "crimps," would "shanghai" seamen, drugging or beating them unconscious in order to place them on ships and receive a finder's fee.ⁱⁱⁱ

By the 1880's, workers along the West Coast began organizing to combat these conditions. Successful shipping relies on seamen completing trips, and desertion was illegal. An 1872 law declared desertion punishable by arrest and imprisonment, which effectively eliminated the use of the strike as a job action. Sailors' low status also made them easy targets for exploitation, and "crimps," middlemen acting as job agents for the shipping companies, took advantage of seamen through bribes, coercion, and abuse. Often, sailors could only obtain jobs through taverns or boarding houses, accruing perpetual debts that they could only repay through added trips to sea. The crimping system was also rife with violence. Crimps would often meet men once they got ashore and coerce them into staying at particular boarding houses or drinking at certain bars where the men would sometimes be beaten or drugged, waking up the next morning aboard a ship.

By 1885, wages for seamen decreased significantly. In March of that year, a group of socialists working under the International Workingmen's Association (IWA), began to discuss the possibility of a seamen's strike for higher wages. The main organizers were Ed Anderson and George Thompson of the IWA, seamen-journalist John Reade, and socialists Burnette Haskell, Rasmus Nielson, and P. Ross Martin. The group called a strike, and seamen walked out on March 4, 1885, a move which spurned the beginnings of a union for seafarers^{iv}.

One of the early leaders of the SUP was Andrew Furuseth, voted Secretary-Treasurer, the union's highest office, in 1887. These early years were difficult for the union, which struggled with insufficient funds to win wage scale demands from a

well-organized Waterfront Employers' Association^v. After a number of defeats on the local level, Furuseth decided to direct the union's focus on national legislation to shift the status of seafarers. In this capacity, Furuseth achieved a number of early successes. He successfully lobbied Congress to enact the La Follette Seamen's Act (1915) and the Jones Act (1920).^{vi} These laws did away with compulsory prison sentences for desertion, and allowed sailors to draw up to half of their wages at any port, both of which emancipated sailors from oppressive conditions that were akin to compulsory servitude. They also reduced working hours and set standards for health and safety aboard ships^{vii}.

By World War I, demand for a larger merchant marine to meet military needs, combined with Furuseth's efforts on behalf of seamen significantly increased wages and conditions aboard ships. Between 1914 and 1919, wages for able bodied seamen rose 180%.^{viii} However, a postwar decline in the shipping industry saw significant cuts in work standards and pay. In 1921, a strike and lockout over increased working hours and decreased pay virtually destroyed the union^{ix}. The organization remained at an ebb for over a decade, many of its gains pushed back. Seamen were forced to join unions, called "fink halls," which worked more to blacklist dissident sailors than it did to benefit them, in order to obtain any work aboard ships. Although some stayed within the Sailors' Union, many drifted from hiring hall to hiring hall, and the SUP saw a significant decline in union membership.^x

By 1933, the inaugural year of the National Industrial Recovery Act, wages for able bodied seamen fell to nearly 50% of 1914 rates. Despite being skilled laborers, having to go through a one year apprenticeship program to obtain certification for work, able bodied seamen received a similar pay rate to that of common laborers.^{xi} Adding to sailors' frustration, the U.S. government began granting mail contracts to shipping companies. Designed to stimulate the U.S. shipping industry, these contracts amounted to huge subsidies extended to shipping companies for inter-coastal mail transport. However, the financial benefits did not reach sailors working aboard the ships, causing anger, resentment, and renewed interest in strengthening the union.^{xii}

By May of 1934, the tensions finally burst. On May 15, sailors joined longshoremen—those who worked along the shore load and unloading ships—in a huge strike that spanned the entire Pacific Coast. The strike reinvigorated the union and also forced a change in their direction. Andrew Furuseth's lobbying attempts in Washington DC, at the time focused on restricting the use of foreign-born Asian crews on American ships, seemed increasingly conservative and out of touch with the current situation on the West Coast, leaving him open to criticism from the rank and file.^{xiii} Additionally, growing radicalism among the striking workers stimulated a renewed interest in syndicalism amongst members of the Sailors Union. Focal in the syndicalist ideology is an antipathy for politics and the state. Syndicalists envision a society based on loosely-coordinated, worker-controlled unions defined along industry lines. Working together, these unions can exercise their greatest weapon, the general strike, to reach trans-industrial goals.^{xiv} Unlike communism, which was also popular along the Pacific Coast Waterfront during the 1930's, syndicalism is not necessarily at odds with laissez-faire capitalism or American Patriotism. Thus, the syndicalist ideology appealed to the sailors, who saw themselves as a marginalized community, but who also took pride in their participation in World War I.

The strike held up shipping for months. Violent skirmishes between strikers and scabs broke out along the coast, with incidents in ports ranging from San Pedro to Seattle. In San Francisco, riots broke out along the waterfront, and on July 5th gunfire killed two strikers. The incident drew great public sympathy, leading to a general strike which virtually shut down the entire city for 4 days beginning July 16th.

The strike coalesced into Maritime Federation of the Pacific (MFP), which was an attempt by the various unions to work together to achieve mutually beneficial gains. The Sailors' Union was an active player in the Federation, publishing the *Voice of the Federation*, the official organ of the Federation, out of their union hall. The MFP organized another strike in 1937-8, to agitate for greater benefits to the maritime unions. Unlike the 1934 action, the 1937-8 strike was not marked by severe

violence. For the Sailors' Union, it succeeded in achieving the right to a union-controlled hiring hall.

However, the MFP was short-lived due to political differences between the sailors and longshoremen's unions. Their withdrawal from the MFP marked another turning point for the SUP. The union was now firmly established enough to feel confident not only in winning concessions from employers, but also in challenging certain political elements within the labor movement. The Sailors' Union became an organization known as much for its efforts against communism within organized labor as for its negotiations with shipping companies on behalf of seamen.

Expansion of the Sailors Union

The Sailors' Union did not reach their peak until World War II when the U.S. expanded its merchant marine fleet to meet wartime needs. The Bay Area was central to these efforts, with shipyards on both sides of the Bay. The union's membership spiked dramatically during this period, as increasing numbers of sailors were required to sail the Liberty Ships and later, the Victory Ships. With the wartime industrial and shipping boom, the number of shipboard employees in the U.S. spiked from a little over 8,000 in 1942 to around 45,000 in 1945.^{xv} Because the Sailors' Union maintained contractual agreements on U.S. flag ships, the increased numbers meant both physical and financial growth for the union.

With a dues surplus and an expanding membership that was rapidly outgrowing the offices at 59 Clay Street, the sailors' began to search for a more suitable space for their union operations. They established a building fund and a voluntary assessment to supplement the fund. Even though the union's membership numbers dropped after the war, they remained politically powerful and maintained a large presence, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Despite the postwar drop in membership, the union was in a much better position than it was after World War I. The legal gains since the union's inception, combined with the greater rights achieved in the 1930s and the increased status merchant marines gained during World War II put the sailors in the SUP in a position to rally for increased benefits. The move to relocate the SUP headquarters to 450 Harrison Street occurred alongside the union's last great fight: for pensions and family medical benefits. Both the opening of the Headquarters building in 1950 and the successful implementation of a pension program and comprehensive family medical insurance plan were indications that the union finally achieved its goals of bringing the status of sailors up to that of other workers.

Harry Lundeberg

The person of primary historical significance associated with the Sailors' Union Headquarters Building is Harry Lundeberg, Secretary-Treasurer of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific from 1935 to 1957. Lundeberg headed the union through the years of its greatest influence and highest membership numbers. He was a man of conviction, who neither compromised the needs of the members of his union, nor acquiesced to the prevailing political sentiments of some of the other major maritime unions. Lundeberg's leadership shaped the Sailors' Union as much as any other element in the union's history. He was a major force both in San Francisco and nationally.

Lundeberg was born Harald Olaf Lundeberg in Oslo, Norway in 1901 to Karl Lundeberg and Alette Koffeld Lundeberg.^{xvi} Both of his parents were labor supporters; his father was a trade union advocate and his mother a champion for the rights of women and labor. Three of Lundeberg's brothers were also seamen, two of whom died at sea.^{xvii}

At 14, Lundeberg left home to go to sea. Sailing around the world under 12 different flags, he experienced the harsh life of a seafaring man. He was familiar with the bad food, cramped sleeping quarters in the forecabin, and the extended voyages away from family and friends that made for long periods of loneliness¹. He related strongly to the culture of seafaring men,

and his love of the sea and of his fellow sailors spurred a passion within him to improve seamen's working conditions. He joined unions whenever possible, leaning towards those with syndicalist tendencies. During his tenure at sea, he was a member of the Norwegian and British maritime unions, a British syndicalist union, and a Spanish union with syndicalist leanings.^{xviii} In World War I, Lundeberg sailed on British ships, later joining the Australian Seamen's Union, a move that likely influenced his later union involvement.

Searching for work in 1923, Lundeberg landed in Seattle and established the city as his port of call. This was a period of decline in the U.S. maritime industry, and work was scarce. An unsuccessful strike in 1921, coupled with an increased labor supply and a reduction in the number of ships reduced job opportunities by 50%.^{xix} Lundeberg, however, decided to remain in Seattle, transferring his union membership from the Australian Seamen's Union to the Sailors' Union of the Pacific in 1926, and filing citizenship paperwork two years later. He became involved in the union, sailing out of that port until 1934, although many jobs were obtainable only by joining the "fink halls," employer-controlled unions.

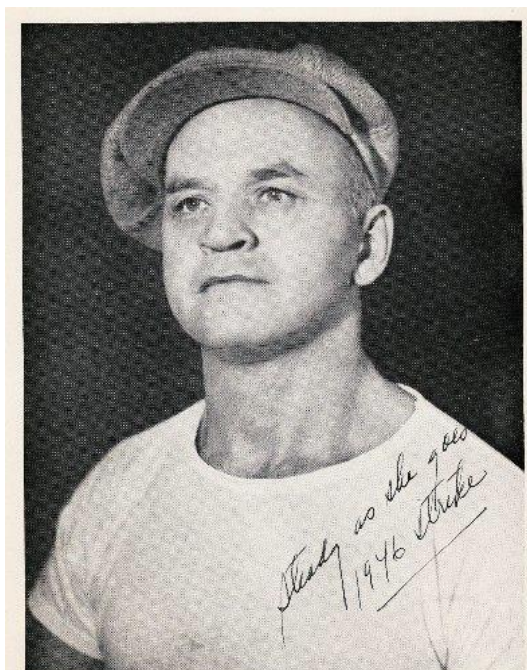
During the 1934 coastwise strike, when the Sailors' Union experienced a major rejuvenation, Lundeberg took a more active role in union affairs. He was elected Seattle Patrolman during the strike, a pivotal event in both Lundeberg's career and in the union's position. Along the coast, his reputation as a no-nonsense leader from the ranks reached San Francisco, where he drew the attention of the leadership in the International Longshoremen's Association.

Lundeberg's tenure in Seattle came to an end shortly after the 1934 coastwise strike when, with the backing of International Longshoremen's Association President, Harry Bridges, he moved to San Francisco to become President of the newly formed Maritime Federation of the Pacific.^{xx}

The MFP, an amalgamation of West coast maritime unions, emerged out of a need for the unions to band together to avoid jurisdictional disputes and form a united front to work on realizing their bargaining demands with ship owners. Initially, the MFP was a symbol of strength and determination amongst the West Coast maritime unions. However, by 1935, the organization began to deteriorate due to clashing political philosophies amongst the leadership, notably between Lundeberg and Harry Bridges. Initially, the division centered on the use of job actions to force employers to comply with arbitration agreements.^{xxi} However, the ideological differences transformed into a major rift in the organization followed by an adversarial relationship between Lundeberg and Bridges that lasted until Lundeberg's death two decades later.

Although the Federation was short lived, it represented a new era of union strength, and Lundeberg's position in the Federation's principal office further increased his status along the waterfront. Lundeberg's prominent role inspired him to challenge Andrew Furuseth and the old guard Sailors' Union leadership, which had become increasingly out of touch with the sentiment among the rank and file membership. Representing a new direction for the union, Lundeberg took over as Secretary-Treasurer in 1935, resigning as President of the MFP^{xxii}. This was the beginning of a new era for the Sailors' Union in which the organization turned from its use of political lobbying to achieve demands in favor of direct negotiations with ship owners.

As head of the union, Lundeberg strove to improve the status of sailors, both economically and socially. A rank and file sailor at heart, Lundeberg believed strongly in syndicalism and the need for sailors to represent their own needs. He was wary of academics, politicians, and anyone who spoke for the cause of sailors to benefit their own agendas. However, he reserved his deepest disdain for the communists, who he felt had infiltrated the maritime unions to the detriment of all the workers involved.



Harry Lundeborg, ca 1950. Seafarers' International Union of North America, Proceedings, Eighth Annual Convention, 3/29/57, Labor Archives and Research Center

Lundeborg's leadership style was indicative of his syndicalist beliefs. Focal to this ideology is an antipathy for the state and political weapons and a vision of a society based on loosely-co-ordinated, worker-controlled productive organizations defined along industry lines^{xxiii}. Ever-wary of government intervention into the affairs of seamen, Lundeborg preferred to work on establishing contracts between the union and the shipping companies, rather than calling for government regulation or assistance. In later years, this philosophy manifested itself in unusual ways, and Lundeborg became one of the only U.S. union officials to outwardly support Republican candidates for political office.

Lundeborg's political philosophy permeated his dress and social mannerisms. Rather than donning a suit and tie, he preferred to wear the clothes of an average seaman: a hickory shirt and white cap. His style was so well-known, that the white caps which are part of the uniform for sailors and longshoremen are known as "Lundeborg Stetsons" in reference to him^{xxiv}. He was a tall, robust man, known for talking like a sailor and fighting like one. He reveled in the sailors' reputation for settling disputed with fists. In an interview for the Saturday Evening Post, he mentions fighting with alleged communist party crashers at the inaugural celebration for the Headquarters Building.^{xxv} Lundeborg was also wary of union leaders that fraternized with shipping company agents, or anyone with outside political motivations who tried to assist the sailors. The later was a primary reason Lundeborg became an outspoken opponent of communist influence on the union movement.

Although his anti-communist views caused much uproar amongst many unions, especially the more left-leaning maritime unions along the West Coast, Lundeborg was also able to use these as a bargaining chip in negotiations and political lobbying. In 1947, the year Congress voted on the Taft-Hartley bill, Lundeborg met with Senator Robert A. Taft, arguing that the closed shop movement would permit raiding by other maritime unions with more communist leanings. He argued that Taft should support the existence of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific hiring hall as a means to purge communists from the ranks of the maritime unions.

Lundeborg's union philosophy was unique, making it difficult to group him with other U.S. labor leaders. Although his Republican leanings seem conservative, his views on his union's power and on sailors' rights were in many ways far left.

The Sailors' Union constitution calls for monthly union meetings and a vote by the membership for most decisions. Monetary matters may not be discussed under special meetings, and any member, with the support of four of his fellow sailors in good standing, may call a meeting.^{xxvi} Very little decision-making authority is delegated to union officers, making the official process very democratic.

Compounding his leadership in the Sailors' Union, Lundeborg was a solid figure in the labor movement at a national level during the middle of the 20th century. In addition to his tenure with the SUP and his position on the Maritime Federation, he served as general counsel of the International Transport Workers' Federation beginning in 1946, and was elected President of the AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department in 1955. He also served as Vice President of the California Labor Federation from 1938 until his sudden death in 1957.^{xxvii}

His dedication to the sailors' also translated into Lundeborg's other work. Until his death in 1957, Lundeborg sat on the board of the San Francisco Maritime museum. He was seriously committed to the museum's growth, and his status as an influential figure was integral in helping the museum obtain and provide upkeep for the *Balclutha*, a large square rigged ship that had rounded Cape Horn, was important in the coastwise shipping trades, and had served as an Alaska Packers ship. Lundeborg also wrote Governor Knight, successfully launching campaigns for the museum to acquire the *C.A. Thayer* and the steam schooner *Wapama*.^{xxviii}

Lundeborg's move to construct the headquarters at Rincon Hill placed the sailors in a position where, physically, their organization could look down across the waterfront. The Headquarters location at 450 Harrison Street placed the union atop Rincon Hill. The position was in clear view of many of the busy piers. It was an ideal setting to highlight the union and Lundeborg's successes and role in the labor movement.



Above: Harry Lundeborg at the Sailors Union of the Pacific headquarters on June 16, 1950. Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

Design/ Construction

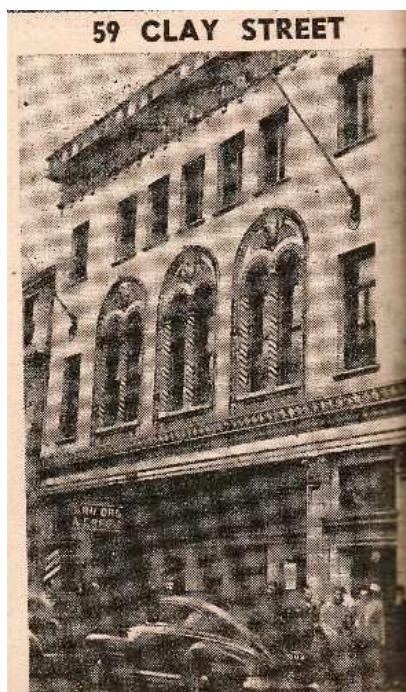
The Sailors' Union of the Pacific Headquarters building is a unique structure in San Francisco. It was designed as an office for the union, a center of community life, and a monument to deceased sailors. No other structure in San Francisco so effectively represents the status of seafaring and waterfront labor than the Headquarters Building. Its cement structure

evokes a feeling of solidity and the enduring impact of the seafaring trades on San Francisco culture.

When the Sailors' commissioned the building, they sought an appropriate symbol of their union. The *West Coast Sailors* documented every stage of construction. At the time of construction, the SUP was one of the most important unions in the country, an organization representing sailors on both coasts. In 1947, the union voted to establish a \$10 assessment for members in support of the building fund. The result was that every member felt a part of the building's successful design and construction.

The building is an appropriate monument to seamen. Its design is reminiscent of the ships on which the men were accustomed to spending months at a time earning their livelihood. The front portico resembles a ship's foredeck, and its columns bring to mind the sails of tall ships.^{xxix} The exterior walls are white, and they reflect in the black marble courtyard to the front, like a ship's bulky bow reflecting on calm water. Circular exterior windows resemble portholes, and the curved lines of the buildings' air conditioned interior mimic the feel of the inside of a ship. The building's design also helped foster the tight knit community elements that traditionally accompanied seamen. The design included not only union offices, and business-related facilities, but also had ample space for recreation.

The union commissioned the structure during a time of growth for the U.S. merchant marine. The successes in the 1930s were only the beginning of an era of maritime union prosperity and expansion, fuelled even further during the war. By the 1940s, the union was swiftly outgrowing its headquarters at 59 Clay Street and needed to seek another location for its operations. The membership voted to assess dues to start a building fund and established a committee to look for a suitable site. The committee hired William Merchant to design the building and purchased the lot at Harrison and First streets for the new headquarters.



The Old Headquarters at 59 Clay Street.
Source: *West Coast Sailors*, June 16, 1950.

The lot at 450 Harrison was an ideal spot for the union. Located close to the Transbay Terminal (built 1939), it was easily accessible to people commuting to San Francisco for work. Its position atop Rincon hill also gave views of the port so the men could watch the ships' movements. It was a quick walk to shipping terminals, making it easily accessible to men coming in or going to sea. On a symbolic level, the building is within sight of the "battle of Rincon Hill," an important event in the 1934 strike.



Source: *West Coast Sailors*, 16 June 1950

The building was a perfect symbol of the increased status the union achieved for seamen. The foyer included model ship exhibits. The Union hall was, and still is, located on the main floor, just beyond the main entrance to the building. The main floor also houses the local and national Union offices, as well as the offices of some of the affiliate Unions, including the Inland Boatmen's Union. A small library also resides on the floor.

On the mezzanine were sixteen outside, single, and connecting offices, some available for rental. Initially, the lower floor housed a restaurant and a separate bar, both open to union members and the general public. In the 1990s, the union leased the bar and restaurant facilities to a family-run music promotion company, which used the space to host live concerts and DJ nights.

The lower floor also housed a baggage room, locker room, shower room and a steam room. A gymnasium also occupied the floor. Its facilities included a range of equipment, plus a basketball court and a boxing ring, which was popular with the sailors as a spectator sport as well. From its beginning, the lower level was also home to the Andrew Furuseth School of Seamanship.

Two busts greet visitors at the building's entrance: Harry Lundeberg to the left and Andrew Furuseth to the right. The union installed both in the late 1950s, after the building was in use, relocating Furuseth's bust from its original location along the Embarcadero, and installing Lundeberg's bust on the anniversary of his death.

The membership elected Charles Brenner, Thomas Hookey, Harry Johnson, Harry Lundeberg, and Morris Weisberger as building trustees. These men oversaw the design and construction, although the majority influence came from Lundeberg.



Left: Bust of Harry Lundeborg at Headquarters Bldg. Entrance . Right: Bust of Andrew Furuseth
Photos by Robin Walker. :

Architect: William Merchant

Born in 1889, William Gladstone Merchant was an influential architect in the San Francisco Bay Area. He received his education at the Wilmerding School of Industrial Arts in San Francisco, CA, graduating in 1909. He augmented his education with private classes in engineering before obtaining his architectural license in 1918. Merchant worked briefly with John Galen Howard and also in the offices of Charles Wittlesay and William Woolet. In 1915, while still in school, Merchant worked with Bernard Maybeck on designs the Panama Pacific International Exposition, and was the designer in charge of exhibits at the Palace of Fine Arts.

From 1917 to 1928, Merchant took employment in the office of George W. Kelham. In 1930, Merchant opened his own firm in San Francisco, designing a number of commercial buildings. He also served as the consulting architect for the San Francisco Recreation Commission from 1932-1939.

In the late 1930s, Merchant was an integral member of the Architectural Commission for the Golden Gate International Exposition. He designed a number of buildings for the Exposition, including the "Temples of the East," which mixed Eastern and Western design components, the California Recreation Building, and in association with Bernard Maybeck, the Redwood Empire building, as well as a number of smaller buildings. Among the structures Merchant designed was the "Pacific House," which was the inspiration for the Sailors' Union of the Pacific Headquarters building.

By the 1940s, Merchant's reputation as an architect allowed him larger projects. Beginning in 1943, he served as the architect for the San Francisco World Trade Center. Insufficient funding forced the city to abandon the project, except for a portion incorporated into the north wing of the Ferry Building. He was able to expand his practice, and in 1946 transformed his firm into William G. Merchant & Associates. The firm completed the Pacific Gas and Electric Company Building and Annex and worked on projects for the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. In 1962, the City commissioned the firm to rehabilitate the Palace of Fine Arts complex, which had fallen into disarray since the 1915 Exposition, although Merchant died in 1962 before the project was completed.^{xxx}



Pacific House



Sailors' Union Headquarters Building at 450 Harrison Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION

This section of the report is an analysis and summary of the applicable criteria for designation, integrity, period of significance, significance statement, character-defining features, and additional Article 10 requirements.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

Criteria

Check all criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are documented in the report. The criteria checked are the basic justification for *why* the resource is important.

☒ Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☒ Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

☐ Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

Statement of Significance

Characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation:

Association with significant events

450 Harrison Street is closely associated with the history of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific. The building has served as the central union headquarters since its construction in 1950. It is also significant for Maritime Hall, a family-run music venue housed on the lower floor during the 1990s.

Association with significant person

450 Harrison Street is also closely associated with Harry Lundeberg, who served as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific from 1935 to 1957. Harry Lundeberg was an important figure in the early American labor movement, as his leadership came to shape the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, the oldest maritime union in the United States.

Significant architecture

450 Harrison Street displays a high level of artistic values through its architectural expression. Designed by master architect William Gladstone Merchant, the building is notably similar to his "Pacific House," the theme building of the 1939-1940 Panama Pacific Exposition on Treasure Island. The Sailors' Union of the Pacific headquarters exhibits characteristics of the Streamline Moderne style, with certain stylistic characteristics like portholes punched into the lower floors to give the building the appearance of a ship. There have been no major alterations to the building's exterior features since its construction in 1950. The Sailors Union of the Pacific Headquarters Building at 450 Harrison Street, with a virtually unchanged structure from its 1950 completion, exists today as an architectural masterpiece. Its structure is well-proportioned and contains interesting details. Taken as a whole, the building resembles a ship, with windows designed to look like port holes and offices surrounding the dispatch hall on the first floor.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the building at 450 Harrison Street, the Headquarters Building of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, is 1950-present.

Integrity

The building at 450 Harrison Street, the Headquarters Building of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific retains integrity of location, feeling, design, setting, materials, workmanship, association, and use. The building has changed very little since its construction.

ARTICLE 10 REQUIREMENTS SECTION 1004 (b)

Boundaries of the Landmark Site

The proposed landmark site includes the footprint of the building at 450 Harrison Street, and the Headquarters Building of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific characteristics.

Character-Defining Features

Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 Landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

The character-defining *exterior* features of the building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations and rooflines
- All architectural finishes and features of the exterior elevations
- Spatial configuration of building plan
- Flat roof form
- Rectangular granite panel cladding
- Black stone bulkhead
- Front entrance portico
 - Vertical window configuration
 - Six concave piers
 - Banded tubing, wave panels
- Horizontal window bands on secondary facades
- Porthole windows at bulkhead
- Statues along entranceway
- Etched "Sailors' Union of the Pacific" lettering above the entryway

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Historic Name: Sailors' Union of the Pacific Headquarters

Popular Name: Sailors' Union of the Pacific Headquarters

Address: 450 Harrison Street

Block and Lot: 3758 031

Owner: The Sailors' Union of the Pacific

Original Use: Union Hall

Current Use: Union Hall

Zoning: Rincon Hill Downtown Residential District

END NOTES

- ii Berwick, Arnold. *The Abraham Lincoln of the Sea*. Santa Cruz, CA: Odin Press, 1993. p. 52
- iii For more on crimps and the crimping system, read Green, Archie. _Harry Lundeberg's Stetson and Other Nautical Treasures. Crockett, CA: Carquinex Press, 2006 and Pickelhaupt, Bill. *Shanghaied in San Francisco*. San Francisco: Flyblister Press, 1996.
- iv Schwartz, Steven. *Brotherhood of the Sea*. San Francisco: The Sailors' Union of the Pacific, 1986. p. 7
- v West Coast Sailors Andrew Furuseth 150th Anniversary, p. 2, 12 March 2004.
- vi Saturday Evening Post, 180.
- vii Coast Seamen's Journal, "President Approves Seamen's' Bill" 10 March 1915.
- viii In the Matter of Arbitration Proceedings Between International Seamen's Union of America on behalf of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association, Marine Cooks and Stewards Association of the Pacific Coast, and Shipowners Association of the Pacific Coast. Proceedings, Jan. 17-Jan 28, 1935, Vol. 3, Union Documents, "Wage Rates, History of Wage Scales, Trend of Wages, Comparative Wages and Real Wages," p. 13
- ix *West Coast Sailors* 12 March 2004, p. 12.
- x Letter form Paul Scharrenberg to Victor Olander, November 17, 1930. Paul Scharrenberg Papers, Box 1, Bancroft Library.
- xi Hyman Weintraub, *Andrew Furuseth: Emancipator of Seamen*, Berkeley: UC Press, 1959. p. 115.
- xii "Ship Subsidies Attacked," *Seamen's Journal*, 1 January 1933, p. 8.
- xiii "Tributes to Furuseth," *Labor Clarion*, 30 March 1934, p. 7.
- xiv Cassels Record, Jane. *Ideologies and Trade Union Leadership: the Case of Harry Bridges and Harry Lundeberg*. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1954. p. 39-40
- xv Gorter , Wytze and George H. Hildebrand, *The Pacific Coast Maritime Shipping Industry, 1930-1948*. Berkeley: UC Press, 1954. p 251
- xvi Cherney, Robert.
- xvii Saturday Evening Post, 180
- xviii *Current Biography*, Nov., 1952 p.362^{xix}
- Current Biography*, Nov., 1952 p.362^{xx} *Current Biography*, Nov., 1952 p.363^{xxi} Cassels Record, 45
- xxii Cherney
- xxiii Cassels Record p. 39-40
- xxiv cite WCS article
- xxv Sat Eve Post citation
- xxvi Sailors Union of the Pacific Constitution, Article XXVII, section 1-7.
- xxvii This was taken from the obit in the Bancroft.
- xxviii Paine, Lincoln P. "Balclutha" in *Ships of the World* Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. p. 50^{xxix}
- Schwartz, p. 135^{xxx}
- From finding aid

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

San Francisco City and County

Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Jane Kim, District 2 Supervisor

Historic Preservation Commissioners

Charles Chase, President

Courtney Damkroger, Vice President

Karl Hasz

Alan Martinez

Diane Matsuda

Richard Johns

Andrew Wolfram

Planning Department

John Rahaim, Director

Tim Frye, Preservation Coordinator

Project Staff

Robin Walker, Pro-bono consultant, research and writing

Forrest Chamberlain, Department intern, compilation and writing

This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Department of the Interior.