

# HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

Ser. No. 0215-01  
HABS \_\_\_\_\_ HAER \_\_\_\_\_ NR 4 SHL \_\_\_\_\_ Loc \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM: A 11-371100-3792800 B \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_

## IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: None
2. Historic name: Bosworth; Hobart/William Powell Residence
3. Street or rural address: 809 North Hillcrest Drive  
City Beverly Hills Zip 90210 County Los Angeles
4. Parcel number: 4350-003-020
5. Present Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ownership is: Public \_\_\_\_\_ Private \_\_\_\_\_
6. Present Use: Residential Original use: Residential

## DESCRIPTION

- 7a. Architectural style: Hollywood Regency
- 7b. Briefly describe the present *physical description* of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

The present appearance of this two story home dates from 1934, when William Powell remodelled and enlarged Hobart Bosworth's 1926 Spanish home. Powell chose the fashionable Georgian Revival style. Stucco-sheathed and gable-roofed, the now two story residence featured a barrel-vaulted entry announced by Ionic columns and a shell pediment; flat-headed casement windows adorned with shutters; arched, sunburst pediments and broken pediments; round-headed windows spaced by pilasters; and delicate iron balconies. Parapets hide portions of the roof, from which arched dormers and lanterns emerge. The present condition of the house and its lavish grounds is unknown. A relatively recent photograph indicates that the house is relatively unaltered. The sizeable property is bordered by a wall, beyond which the bathhouse and theatre added by Powell to the estate can be seen.

Attach Photo(s) Here

Photograph not available.

8. Construction date: 1926/1934  
Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Factual X
9. Architect Bennet & Haskell/  
Dolena; James
10. Builder Dick; Alex Inc./  
Tifal; G.R. Co. Ltd.
11. Approx. property size (in feet)  
Frontage 318 Depth 500  
or approx. acreage \_\_\_\_\_
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)  
1986

13. Condition: Excellent \_\_\_\_\_ Good ☒ Fair \_\_\_\_\_ Deteriorated \_\_\_\_\_ No longer in existence \_\_\_\_\_
14. Alterations: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land \_\_\_\_\_ Scattered buildings \_\_\_\_\_ Densely built-up ☒  
Residential ☒ Industrial \_\_\_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Threats to site: None known ☒ Private development \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning \_\_\_\_\_ Vandalism \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Works project \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
17. Is the structure: On its original site? ☒ Moved? \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Related features: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SIGNIFICANCE

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)

Succeeding generations of movie industry stars had differing tastes as to the amenities which constituted a star's lifestyle. While the practice of buying and equipping these estates from each other was rather widespread, no estate underwent a more radical change than the property located at 809 North Hillcrest Drive. Originally built as a spacious Spanish hacienda for actor Hobart Bosworth and his wife in 1926 by the firm of Bennett and Haskell, the residence was radically transformed by William Powell and architect James Dolena in 1934 to the epitome of what has become known as the "Hollywood Regency" style. Powell began the project in March of 1934 with a \$36,000 remodel of the residence, proceeded to the chauffeur's quarters, a swimming pavilion, a "glass deck", elevator, etc. The remodel received extensive attention from the architectural press, with Architectural Digest devoting a full fifteen pages to both interior and exterior details. Its most prominent features included a long galleria, a mahogany panelled drawing room, and the master suite, which comprised most of the second floor. The grounds, designed by Benjamin Morton (see continuation sheet)

20. Main theme of the historic resource: (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)

Architecture ☒ Arts & Leisure \_\_\_\_\_  
Economic/Industrial \_\_\_\_\_ Exploration/Settlement \_\_\_\_\_  
Government \_\_\_\_\_ Military \_\_\_\_\_  
Religion \_\_\_\_\_ Social/Education \_\_\_\_\_

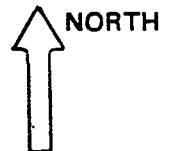
21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).

City of Beverly Hills building permits  
Architectural Digest, IX: 3  
Beverly Hills Citizen, 7-1-26  
California Arts & Architecture, March 1936

See continuation sheet.

22. Date form prepared November, 1986  
By (name) C. McAvoy & L. Heumann  
Organization City of Beverly Hills  
Address: 450 N. Crescent Dr.  
City Beverly Hills Zip 90210  
Phone: (213) 550-4881

Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):



See continuation sheet

CONTINUATION SHEET:

19. Significance:

Purdy, contained twin tennis courts with spectators galleries, a guest house, stables, a putting green, croquet court, and pool. The Bosworth/Powell residence remains a significant property in the compendium of Beverly Hills estates as one in which a subsequent remodel of an existing property assumed importance in its own right. Bosworth, an actor, director, screenwriter, and producer was among the first to create an estate on the well-known Sunset Boulevard. His early contributions to the film industry began in 1909 and continued until his death in 1943. William Powell was one of the most suave and sophisticated of Hollywood's leading men in the 1930s. Among his most famous roles are The Thin Man series with actress Myrna Loy, for which he was nominated for an Academy Award.

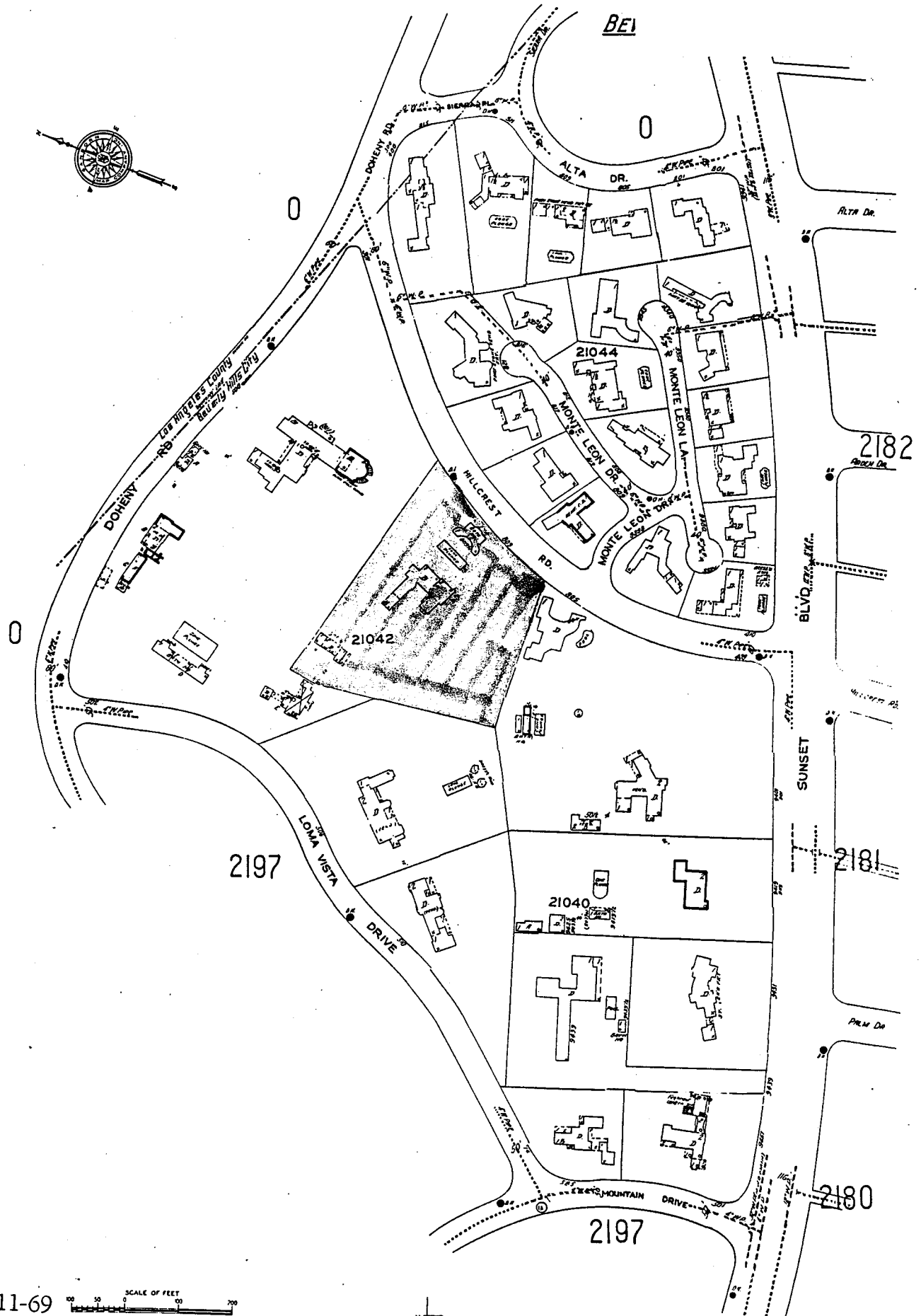
CONTINUATION SHEET: 809 North Hillcrest Drive

21. Sources:

Los Angeles Times, n.d.

Katz, Ephraim. The Film Encyclopedia. 1979

Regan, Michael. Stars, Moguls, Magnates--The Mansions of Beverly Hills. 1966



## CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #

HRI #

Trinomial

NRHP Status Code: 7R

Page 1 of 1 Resource Name or # 809 North Hillcrest Rd.

☐ Continuation ☒ Update

P2. Location: 809 North Hillcrest Rd.

**B10 Significance:**

*This property could not be properly re-evaluated because the building was not visible from the public right of way during the current survey process.*

**P5b Description/Date of Photo:**

No Photo Available

P8. Recorded by: Jan Ostashay, Peter Moruzzi, PCR Services, One Venture, Suite 150, Irvine, CA 92618

P9. Date Recorded: Tuesday, June 01, 2004