

# Historic Hotel on National Register

The Hotel Metropole, today's Plaza Books and Paper Vision, is now included on the National Register of Historic Places.

Located at 1111 Pacific Avenue, the historic structure was built in 1908 by contractor Charles Kaye for Duncan McPherson, editor and publisher of The Santa Cruz Sentinel and one of the leading developers of downtown Santa Cruz.

The Metropole property was the site of architect John Morrow's home prior to its purchase by McPherson from Henry Rhein who also owned the Virginia House Hotel next door.

The Metropole, once one of the town's leading rooming houses, is owned by Hal and Barbara Morris.

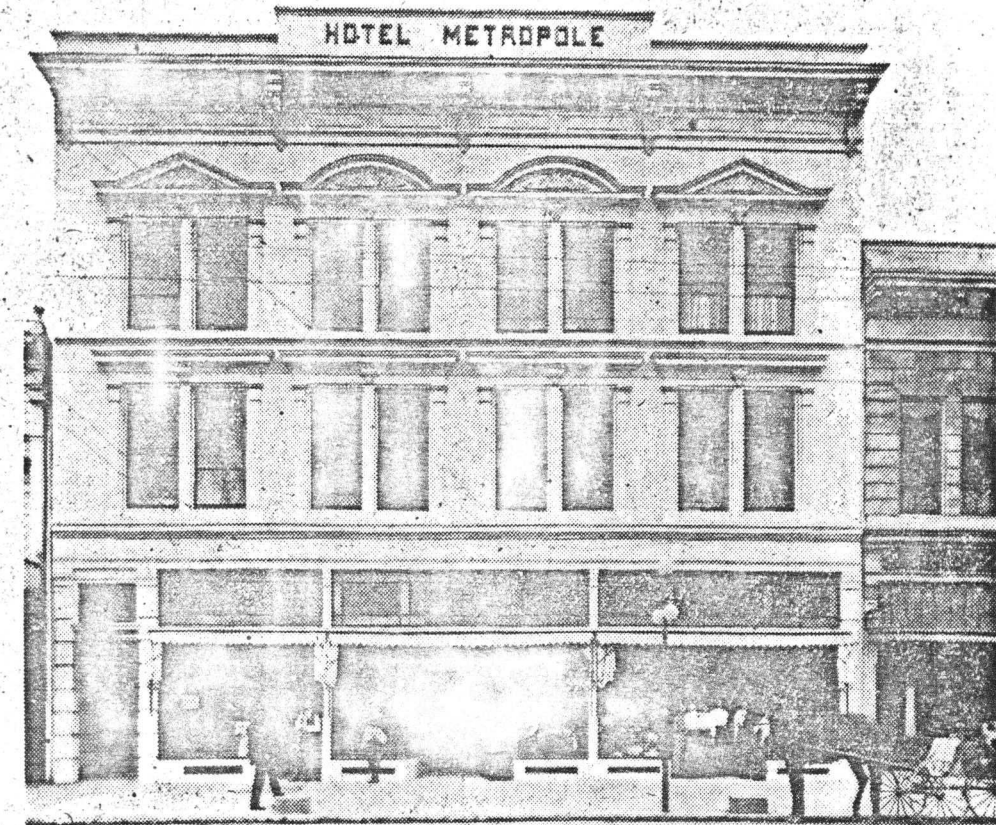
Buildings included on the National Register are selected for both their historical and architectural value and the selection process is a rigorous one, according to Morris.

The National Register is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.

In the late 1920s the three-story Metropole was sold by McPherson heirs to the Favourman family who in turn sold it to Aaron Cohen. Cohen's widow, Lena Cohen, kept the property until it was sold to Thea Roberts, and the Morriszes purchased it in 1976 when they moved Plaza Books and Paper Vision into the ground floor.

The hotel, which offered 48 furnished rooms at 50 cents a day to transient and permanent guests, also housed on the ground floor a millinery shop, the C.O.D. Grocery and the office of C.W. Waldron who was a partner of Duncan McPherson.

In 1935 the hotel became the Hotel Al Rose, named for the proprietor, and 11 years later



*Bustles, high-button shoes and horse-drawn buggies were the vogue when this photo was taken of Hotel Metropole. Today the hotel is Plaza Books and Paper Vision and is recognized historically.*

the name was again changed to Hotel Drake. The rooms were occupied by guests until 1961. They are currently empty.

The commercial space on the ground floor was consolidated in the 1930s for the National Dollar Store which operated there until 1976.

The Metropole is a unique Santa Cruz example of turn-of-the-century commercial architecture of the Italianate style. Pressed metal ornamentation was used to simulate the more costly and fancy Victorian plaster work of earlier buildings, according to author-

ities.

At the top of the building the original Hotel Metropole sign, which is some 25-feet wide, still can be seen mounted atop the cornice. The cornice runs the width of the building and is supported by brackets featuring the acanthus design which is repeated in window pediments and the corbels beneath them.

"With the exception of weathering, the second and third story facade is unchanged from its original appearance," notes owner Hal Morris.

On the ground floor the en-

trance facade is about 60 feet wide and 15 feet high and retains its corner columns. Since being combined into one large commercial area, entry is through central recessed glass doors. Above store windows are three square panels of amethyst-hued leaded glass, surrounded by rectangular panes.

Of wood frame construction with a plaster finish on the Pacific Avenue Mall, the building has brick walls at the rear and south side. The rear of the building was modified with a 1940 addition.