

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory **DRAFT**

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 535 Green Street

City or town: San Francisco State: CA County: San Francisco

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide **X** local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

**X** A \_\_\_ B **X** C \_\_\_ D

<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>
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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
-

Name of Property  
Structure

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Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE / INDUSTRY

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT / NOT IN USE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN  
INTERNATIONAL / MODERN

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: REINFORCED CONCRETE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory occupies a central location in the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco, a neighborhood of mixed of residential and commercial structures the majority of which date to the period of post-1906 reconstruction. The building is located mid-block on the south side of Green Street between Grant and Columbus Avenues. It sits on the western portion a rectangular parcel. The east side of the building abuts an asphalt-paved, surface parking lot, part of the same parcel. A purpose-built, industrial structure, it operated as a meat production facility from 1948 until 1978 and remains an intact, representative example of International/Modern architecture applied to a utilitarian building type. At the principal, street-facing elevation, the building reads as two stories with a single-story rear extension that reaches the far property line. The principal elevation is deftly composed around the central, monumental window wall with fine details throughout which express Modern architectural ideals. The subtlety of the design is seen in the use of simple reveals and recesses, ribbed tiles and textured glazed panels, repetition of rectangular proportions, and other customized architectural embellishments accented with red, green and white striping, known as “il tricolore,” the national colors of Italy. Original signage spells out “BUON GUSTO” in bold, red, sans serif, capital letters across the top of the façade. An analog clock on the east side of the façade encircled by a black base and neon script spells

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out “BUON GUSTO SAUSAGE.” The principal building material is reinforced concrete, applied at the façade as a smooth finish, in contrast to the rough-finished work at secondary elevations. The building retains its original appearance, architectural expression and character defining features. Though overall maintenance is lacking, the exterior retains a high level of integrity. Together with its clean lines, International/Modern vocabulary and details tailored to the original use and ownership, the factory remains distinctive visual landmark.

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## Narrative Description

Dating to 1948, the building historically known as the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory was constructed as a utilitarian industrial, commercial building. Rectangular in plan, the building is one and two stories over a full-length basement. It is topped by a flat roof and retains its original flagpole centered over the main elevation.<sup>1</sup>

### Exterior: North Elevation

At the principal, Green Street-facing elevation, the building reads as two stories. Its overall dual massing is comprised of a two-story cubic volume at the front property line that transitions to a low-slung, single-story rear extension that reaches the far property line. Extending the full length of the parcel, the building abuts property lines on the north (front), south (rear), and west sides of the parcel. The east side of the building adjoins an asphalt-paved, surface parking lot, part of the same parcel. The east side of the building is highly visible from the right-of-way.

The principal elevation is organized around a recessed, monumental window wall that nearly fills the center of the façade with a grid of rectangular, wood-framed panes; the grid is nine window frames in width by seven frames in height. The individual façade windows are fixed, except at the second row from the top and the second row from the bottom, which are operable. Each glazed panel, 26 inches in height by 20 inches in width, is ribbed and opaque, except at the upper level where the glazed panes are clear and transparent.

Bold, red, sans serif, capital letters, consistent with the International/Modern idiom, spell out “BUON GUSTO” and span the top of the façade above the width of the window wall. A pair of single-leaf, glazed entry doors flank the central window; each entry door is accessed via a single, short concrete step topped with a textured steel plate. Each door retains original door handle hardware, a steel kickplate, and has an open-patterned metal grate affixed over the glass panel.

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<sup>1</sup> The Buon Gusto Building at 535 Green Street is located within the boundaries of the Upper Grant Avenue District, a locally designated historic district, and is a contributing resource within the district. In 1982 it was formally evaluated for inclusion in the National Register as part of the Upper Grant Street Historic District. The building was assigned California Historical Resource Status Code “3D,” indicating that the building “appears eligible for NR as a contributor to a NR eligible district through survey evaluation.” The Buon Gusto Building is not a designated City of San Francisco Landmark.

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Other features and decorative elements of the façade include: a smooth, concrete finish, scored to imitate blocks (in contrast to the side (east) elevation which is rough-finished concrete); slightly projecting, concrete lintels over each door; a three-foot base below the central window clad in maroon-red, glazed terra cotta tile; a pair of narrow metal pipes that support the soffit above the window; a narrow, concrete lintel over the central window adorned with diagonal red, green and white striping, known as “il tricolore,” the national colors of Italy; and, an analog clock on the east side of the façade encircled by a black base and neon script spelling out “BUON GUSTO SAUSAGE.”

### **Exterior: East Elevation**

The long, single-story, east-facing elevation is punctuated by nine regularly spaced openings, each infilled with paired, six-lite, steel-framed, awning-type fenestration. At the ground plane, another series of regularly spaced windows, steel hopper-type, afford natural light to the basement level. One of the lower level windows has been altered to accommodate a flue pipe for venting and bulky ventilation equipment.

Toward the rear, metal steps lead to a landing topped with a steel plate, measuring four by nine feet; the landing is set below a pair of double metal doors. This area appears to have served as a loading dock. The doors are topped by a canted metal sheet used as a canopy.

Neither the rear nor western walls are visible; both abut adjoining structures. The building’s interior has not been surveyed as access is not possible. Originally, the building was comprised of a ground-floor retail space with an office above. The single-story, rear extension was for meat production and operations. Windows along both sides allowed natural light and ventilation.

### **Style**

Though the overall character of the building is utilitarian and stripped down, its street-facing principal elevation, as described above, is a distinctive and exuberant composition with fine details, texture and subtlety which express Modern architectural ideals. The building’s style falls within the Modern architectural idiom and has been variously described as late Art Moderne<sup>2</sup> and International style.<sup>3</sup>

Characteristic features of the International/Modern style that are found at the Buon Gusto building are: flat roof; clean lines and right angles; the absence of a cornice; rectangular footprint; symmetrical arrangement; simplified ornament; blocky massing; grid-like or ribbon type window arrangements; a light-colored palette; projecting canopies or lintels; modern industrial materials; and, sans serif lettering/signage.

<sup>2</sup> Bloomfield, Anne. *Upper Grant Avenue District* for the North Beach Historical Project, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> LSA Associates. *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p.1.

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### Method of Construction

Measuring 5,055 sq. ft., the factory building is constructed of board-formed, reinforced concrete.<sup>4</sup> The exterior (east) side wall exhibits the wood grain of the form work used in construction and have a rough finish; the concrete finish at the main façade is smoother and scored into rectangular blocks. As a manufacturing building, industrial materials were used throughout: concrete; steel plates; metal piping used decoratively and at handrails; textured glass; and, ribbed tiles. Windows are steel-framed on the east side and (atypically) wood-framed on the façade.

### Location and Setting

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory is located in the North Beach neighborhood of San Francisco. With regard to its immediate setting, the building is located mid-block on the south side of Green Street between Grant and Columbus Avenues. The factory sits on the western portion a rectangular parcel that measures 10,950 sq. ft. (0.251 acre). It is flanked by a surface parking lot to the east (part of the same parcel); on the west, the building abuts a three-story residential building at 545 Green Street dating to 1908. The site's topography slopes slightly toward the south (rear) of the parcel as well as toward to west, as Green Street descends Telegraph Hill to Columbus Avenue.

With regard to the broader setting, the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory is located in the business core of North Beach, a neighborhood mixed of residential and commercial structures. (See Section 8 Significance for further detail on the North Beach neighborhood context.)

Overall, the buildings on the 500 block of Green Street between Grant and Columbus Avenues convey their original appearances and retain a high level of integrity. An analysis of their construction dates reflects how little the neighborhood's building stock has changed since being almost fully rebuilt in the post-1906 reconstruction.<sup>5</sup>

509-513 Green (built 1906)

510-512 Green (built 1910)

517-523 Green (built 1907)

518-522 Green (built 1907)

526-530 Green (built 1906)

532-536 Green (built 1907)

535 Green (built 1948)

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<sup>4</sup> Square footage calculation is according to the City of San Francisco Property Information Map (PIM).

<sup>5</sup> The majority of buildings on this block of Green Street, including the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory, fall within the boundary of the Upper Grant Avenue District. As noted by historian Anne Bloomfield, writing for The North Beach Historical Project in 1982, the area is significant because of "its historical land use pattern recreated after the 1906 fire and essentially unchanged today (1982) from the earliest development...." The survey referred to, *North Beach San Francisco: An Architectural, Historical, Cultural Survey*, is on file with the Northwest Information Center, NWIC# S-35504.

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538-542 Green (built 1913)  
545-555 Green (built 1907)  
544-548 Green (built 1906)  
550-556 Green (built 1906)  
558-562 Green (built 1907)  
570-576 Green (built 1925)  
580 Green (built 1962)

With the exception of the Buon Gusto factory at 535 Green Street (1948) and the bank at 580 Green Street (1962), which is a bold example of Modern Neo-Formalism, the vast majority of buildings on the block were constructed by 1910 and exhibit architectural consistency in the form of three-story, vernacular, Classically ornamented buildings, with two residential upper stories over ground floor commercial spaces. Though visually distinct from the surrounding buildings, and one of just a few neighborhood resources in the Modern style, the Buon Gusto building's scale and expression make it compatible within the overall neighborhood setting. In fact, the building's ornament, which salutes the Italian legacy of the original owners, the Casissa family, and its purpose-built use, make it a sympathetic contributor to the North Beach scene.

### **Integrity Evaluation**

Integrity is a key component of the overall building evaluation. Integrity is the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity, evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance. An analysis of integrity involves seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building retains a high degree of integrity in all seven aspects.

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building operated as a meat production facility from 1948, its date of construction, until 1978. After operating as a meat factory, the building was used for various purposes. According to the City of San Francisco's permit records, subsequent uses included a café (1970-79), offices, warehouse, and wholesale/retail (1980-92). The building has not been in commercial use since 1992.<sup>6</sup>

### **Location**

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory remains in its original footprint on Green Street in San Francisco and retains integrity of location.

### **Design**

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. Buon Gusto is an intact, representative example of International/Modern architecture applied to a utilitarian building type.

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<sup>6</sup> LSA Associates. *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p. 12.

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The principal elevation is deftly composed around the central, monumental window wall with fine details throughout the façade which express Modern architectural ideals. The subtlety of design details is seen in the use of simple reveals and recesses, ribbed tiles and textured glazed panels, repetition of rectangular proportions, and small details such as the canted top of the tiled base.

Original signage that spells out “BUON GUSTO” in bold, red, sans serif, capital letters contributes to the overall design expression and remains intact. Accent colors in red, green and white and other customized architectural embellishments express the Italian background of the original owners and the original use.

As noted above, the Buon Gusto building epitomizes the International/Modern style by exhibiting the following characteristics of the style: flat roof; clean lines and right angles; the absence of a cornice; rectangular footprint; symmetrical arrangement; simplified ornament; blocky massing; grid-like or ribbon type window arrangements; a light-colored palette; projecting canopies or lintels; modern industrial materials; and, sans serif lettering/signage.

With regard to existing conditions, overall maintenance appears to be lacking. Several steel windows along the east wall are damaged and in need of repair. However, no major changes or alterations to the form of the building have occurred since it was constructed. All original exterior features are intact; it retains a high level of integrity on the exterior.

Together with its clean lines, International/Modern vocabulary and details tailored to the original use and ownership, these design considerations combine to make this a distinctive visual landmark. In terms of exterior volume, massing, and original design intent, the building is intact, and it retains integrity of design.

### **Setting**

Setting is the physical environment of an historic property, constituting topographic features, vegetation, manmade features, and relationships between buildings or open space. The setting remains urban in character and the physical characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood remain largely unchanged since 1948, the date of construction of the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory. Integrity with regard to setting remains high.

### **Materials**

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form an historic property. At the time of construction, industrial materials appropriate for a manufacturing building were selected. These are: board-formed, reinforced concrete; steel-framed and wood-framed windows; metal piping; and, textured glass. Original exterior building materials exhibit some damage and weathering. Despite dilapidation, original materials and finishes remain extant and integrity of the exterior materials is high.

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### **Workmanship**

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture, people, or artisan during any given period in history or pre-history. The original construction is typical of industrial building techniques at mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The building retains integrity of workmanship.

### **Feeling**

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historical sense of a particular period of time. Due to high design quality, International/Modern detailing, and an intact setting, the property retains its original feeling, which contributes to its overall integrity.

### **Association**

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and an historic property. As a facility to produce Italian specialty foods in North Beach, its association recalls the area's historical past. It was the only purpose-built meat factory in North Beach and remains as a direct visual link to the Italian heritage of the North Beach community during the 20th century. Consequently, its association contributes to the building's overall integrity.

In summary, the building retains its original appearance and architectural expression. Since the building was completed in 1948, few exterior modifications and repairs have been carried out. In terms of original design intent, volume, massing, materials, the building is intact. Although the building is vacant, its original use is apparent, therefore, it retains integrity of feeling and association. Weighing all factors, the Buon Gusto building retains integrity in all seven aspects.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE / INDUSTRY

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1948-1978

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Rist, Martin J.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance in the area of Commerce and Industry. As a facility that produced Italian specialty foods in San Francisco's North Beach neighborhood, the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory is directly associated with the commercial development of the area, as well as the history of its Italian community during the early-to-mid 20th century. As a facility to produce Italian specialty foods, Buon Gusto was important in maintaining an Italian culinary presence in the neighborhood during a period of significant demographic change after World War II. As the last vestige of the area's sausage-making trade, the building remains a tangible link to the community's Italian heritage during the 20th century.

The building is also eligible under Criterion C at the local level of significance in the area of Architecture, as the work of master architect Martin J. Rist, who designed many notable buildings during a 50-year career. Buon Gusto is an intact representative example of International/Modern architecture applied to a utilitarian building type. The building's principal façade embodies distinctive characteristics of the International style. Under Criterion A, the building's period of significance begins in 1948 with the date of construction and ends in 1978 when operations as a meat production facility ceased. Under Criterion C, the period of significance is 1948.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory**

Located at 535 Green Street in San Francisco's North Beach neighborhood, the building historically known as the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory was constructed as a purpose-built, industrial, commercial facility for the manufacturing of specialty Italian meats. Designed by architect Martin J. Rist for owner Federico (Fred) Casissa, the building was completed in 1948 at a total construction cost of \$150,000.<sup>7</sup> The general contractor was H.E. Rahlmann with engineer Ira S. Kessey.<sup>8</sup>

In a newspaper notice, Casissa announced that the Buon Gusto Sausage factory at 535 Green Street would begin production on September 7, 1948. The new facility would expand his workforce to 40 employees capable of processing "25,000 pounds a week of Italian style salami and sausage [salcicce]."<sup>9</sup> Casissa planned to be the largest producer of Italian specialty meat in the West and intended to market his products nationwide.<sup>10</sup>

Casissa's plans for large-scale meat production and coast-to-coast sales were not a matter of boasting or hyperbole. Prior to World War II, North Beach sausage and salami producers could be characterized as small operations where meats were often made and cured in the rear of, or at the basement level of, Italian grocery stores that occupied retail storefronts throughout the neighborhood. Inspections were carried out by the City of San Francisco or the State's Department of Food and Agriculture Inspection Services Division. After World War II, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety Inspection Service also inspected facilities; only those with USDA approval were allowed to be exported over state lines.<sup>11</sup>

Of all the San Francisco purveyors, only Buon Gusto Sausage Co., and another long-established maker, Cariani Sausage Co., opted for federal USDA inspection. In this way, they were able to sell their products across state lines, while all other local producers were limited to the California market.<sup>12</sup>

With an expansion plan that was somewhat counter to that of competing Italian meat businesses, which were moving out of the area in the post-WWII era, Casissa established his purpose-built factory in 1948 in the heart of North Beach with ambitious expanded production capability.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Sausage Factory," September 2, 1948, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Construction date and contractor and engineer information confirmed by historian Gary Goss.

<sup>9</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Sausage Factory," September 2, 1948, p. 27.

<sup>10</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Sausage Factory," September 2, 1948, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup> Personal interviews with Phil Gatto and Rosemary Mucklow, June, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Personal interview with Rosemary Mucklow, July 3, 2020. Confirmed in conversation with Phil Gatto.

<sup>13</sup> In an article titled, "S.F.'s Art of Sausage-Making Lives On," that appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1976, the journalist referred to the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory as the building as Casissa's "great salami factory as a cement cathedral" to the sausage-making art.

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Over the course of 30 years, three generations of the Casissa family manufactured specialty meats in the factory at 535 Green Street following traditional “old country” ingredients and techniques learned in Italy. After decades in the business, Casissa was asked by a journalist about the recipe:

“Simple, what tastes good to me,” ... [the sausage] gets processed by six sets of hands, including those of Fred and his son, John Casissa. But it is a handmade process in the grand manner with great German stainless-steel gadgets at every step of the way.<sup>14</sup>

In some ways Casissa’s Buon Gusto Sausage operations and the factory building itself were an anomaly. After World War II, most of the specialty meat manufacturers that started in North Beach were modernizing and seeking to relocate to areas outside the city or on the outskirts specifically zoned for industry.

When the sausage-salami exodus from North Beach occurred, after World War II, one major salami factory chose to stand its ground, and still does – Buon Gusto, at 535 Green Street, behind the market with the same name... In 1948, 28 years after he brought his ancestral Genovese feel for salami to North Beach, Fred Casissa – who is now a sunny 78 – built his great salami factory as a cement cathedral to the transplanted art form. The factory is designed with the economy and logical inevitability of a mighty gastrointestinal system. Within it, 75,000 pounds of meat per month are transformed into 50,000 pounds of gaudily wrapped salamis and dispatched to brighten the lives of customers from Samoa to the Mississippi basin.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, a 1921 zoning law (further explained below) specifically sought to discourage industrial operations like Casissa’s in central North Beach. Yet, the sausage factory was constructed 17 years after the zoning law came into effect prohibiting such activities.

In 1961, the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory hit a bureaucratic snag. Though the factory had been successfully operating at the site for 13 years, a permit for alterations was not approved by the City of San Francisco due to the fact that the site was not zoned for industrial uses. However, multiple other sources, including city directory information, indicate that specialty meat manufacturing continued on site apace for another 17 years.<sup>16</sup>

Buon Gusto produced salami and salicce at the 535 Green Street location until 1978, “the last North Beach sausage company.”<sup>17</sup> Afterwards, the building was used for various purposes. According to the City of San Francisco’s permit records, subsequent uses included a café (1970-79), offices, warehouse, and wholesale/retail (1980-92). The building has not been in commercial

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<sup>14</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. “S.F.’s Art of Sausage-Making Lives On.” December 1, 1975 p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. “S.F.’s Art of Sausage-Making Lives On.” December 1, 1975 p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> In a letter dated April 6, 1961, City Zoning Administrator Clyde O. Fisher, Jr. stated that the permit would be delayed due to “an existing but illegal sausage factory on the site” as cited in LSA Associates, *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. “Sampling Italian Restaurants.” October 11, 1979, p. 27.

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use since 1992.<sup>18</sup> The Casissa family owned the property from the 1940s until 1999 when it was sold to the Edmund and Shirley Lee Chow Family Trust.<sup>19</sup> The parking lot on the eastern side of the parcel remains operational.

### **Federico Casissa**

Federico “Fred” Casissa was born January 2, 1895, in the northwestern Italian community of Lavagna, in the province of Liguria. Casissa immigrated to the United States in 1920.<sup>20</sup>

In San Francisco, he arrived as “a penniless immigrant” wanting to open a grocery store to sell Italian products to North Beach’s Italian community.<sup>21</sup> One of his earliest jobs was working in the Old Victorian Sausage Co. on Davis Street in the 1920s.<sup>22</sup> In 1926, he started the Buon Gusto Delicatessen at 458 Columbus Avenue and used the rear of the retail storefront space to make sausage.<sup>23</sup> Similar to other small operations at the time, Casissa’s sausage production was limited due to space. Decades later, Casissa explained that this 1926 venture, the Buon Gusto Delicatessen, was financed by A.P. Giannini, founder of the Bank of America, stating:

“I needed money and went to A.P. Giannini for a loan. I had nothing to offer as collateral. Giannini looked at me, thought a while, and then told the clerk to give me \$3,000 to start my business,” the Buon Gusto Delicatessen.<sup>24</sup>

Casissa’s next enterprise started in 1936 when he opened and operated, but did not own, the Buon Gusto Market at 470-490 Columbus, more capacious and modern and just a few buildings away from the delicatessen.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Casissa used space at the rear of the market for sausage production, an undertaking that would become a separate business, the Buon Gusto Sausage Company.<sup>26</sup> When the new factory opened at 535 Green Street a decade later, his business took

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<sup>18</sup> LSA Associates. *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> LSA Associates. *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. “Obituary of Fred Casissa,” March 3, 1983, p. B9.

<sup>21</sup> LSA Associates. *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, March 2019, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. “Obituary of Fred Casissa,” March 3, 1983, p. B9.

<sup>23</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. “Obituary of Fred Casissa,” March 3, 1983, p. B9.

<sup>24</sup> This quote was cited in LSA Associates, *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, p. 21; the quote was reported in an untitled article in the *San Francisco Progress*, March, 1976.

<sup>25</sup> Located half a block west of the sausage factory building, the Buon Gusto Market was also designed by architect Martin J. Rist. Dating to 1936, it is an imposing and elegant, two-story, reinforced concrete building designed with high design values, a stellar example of the Streamline Moderne style. Designed to accommodate a ground-floor market (a space now occupied by a bank) and a full complement of second story offices, it displays the fundamental characteristics of the Streamline style: horizontal orientation, a prominent rounded corner, steel, ribbon windows that continuously span the west and north elevations, a monumental porthole window set in a deeply recessed entry arch, a flat roof, and grooved streamline moldings. The building has been previously surveyed to determine historic status; in 2007 it was assigned a CHRS code of “3S” meaning it “appears eligible for the NR as an individual property through survey evaluation.”

<sup>26</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. “Obituary of Fred Casissa,” March 3, 1983, p. B9.

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off. Eventually, his son John ran the business and sales extended to 38 states.<sup>27</sup> Casissa took great pride in his life's work, his business, his product:

"It is my life," says Fred, who proudly sees each shipment off in the parking lot – a lot enriched not only by Fred's wafting spices, but also by the sweet aromas from Malvina's bakery next door and the Danilo Bakery and the fortune cookie factory across the street, and the vapors of espresso from the Caffe Sport, gin from Gino & Carlo's, hair tonic from Antonio's barbershop, and ravioli sauce from the numerous ristoranti. Fred, inhaling, looks half his age. "I eat salami every day," he explains.<sup>28</sup>

Casissa married Dorothy Perazzo and had two sons, Fred Jr. and John Fred. By 1930, the Casissa family lived at 3235 Divisadero Street in the Marina District. Fred Casissa died on February 24, 1983. His son, John Fred Casissa, acquired ownership of the property a year later.<sup>29</sup>

According to Casissa's obituary, he was at one time president of the North Beach Boosters Club and was known as "a legend among San Francisco sausage and salami makers."<sup>30</sup> As was observed in a 1941 article, Casissa was active in all aspects of North Beach's Italian community.

And here's a large bow to an exceptionally nice guy in North Beach... Fred Casissa, founder of the famed Buon Gusto Market... Freddie came to this country from Chiaveri [near Genoa] and he has been in the center of North Beach business and civic life ever since.<sup>31</sup>

Casissa is representative of the many Italian-born immigrants who contributed to the commercial development of North Beach and the establishment of the Italian community in San Francisco during the early-to-mid 20th century.

### **Italians in North Beach<sup>32</sup>**

The two sections that follow contain excerpts from architectural historian Michael Corbett's excellent *North Beach Historical Context Statement* dated 2017.

North Beach is generally defined as the area between Telegraph Hill on the east and Russian Hill to the west. The neighborhood is bounded by Francisco Street on the north and Broadway to the south. Its principal spine is the commercial thoroughfare Columbus Avenue. It is generally agreed that it has "long been considered a distinctive place among other distinctive neighborhoods."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Obituary of Fred Casissa," March 3, 1983, p. B9.

<sup>28</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "S.F.'s Art of Sausage-Making Lives On." December 1, 1975 p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Details summarized from LSA Associates, *Historic Resource Evaluation for 535 Green Street*, March 2019, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Obituary of Fred Casissa," March 3, 1983, p. B9.

<sup>31</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "In the Districts." October 26, 1941 p. 8.

<sup>32</sup> This nomination benefits from the research and contributions of architectural historian Michael Corbett; the following section is based on excerpts from his *North Beach Historical Context Statement*, 2017, prepared for the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy.

<sup>33</sup> Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement* p. 51.

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North Beach is widely associated with Italians, who have dominated the area for much of its history and who were primarily responsible for rebuilding the neighborhood after the earthquake and fire of 1906 — the neighborhood that is largely intact today. In this association, North Beach has been called Little Italy. However, North Beach has also been called the Latin Quarter for its mix of people speaking Romance languages — Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and numerous dialects. The changing mix of people that merited the term Latin Quarter ended more or less in the ten years after the earthquake and fire when the Italians overwhelmingly predominated.

San Francisco's Little Italy was one of the largest and most important populations of immigrant Italians in the United States during the principal period of Italian immigration from the 1860s to the 1920s. Most San Francisco immigrants came from provinces in Liguria and Tuscany in the north and Calabria and Sicily in the south. Most were farmers or fishermen at home and tried to find similar work in the U.S.

Immigration to San Francisco began before Italy was a nation, declared in 1861 and ratified in 1870, so that the first generations of arrivals did not consider themselves Italians, but natives of their regions, a situation reflected in many, but not all, entries in the U.S. census. Moreover, most did not speak or understand Italian, but only their regional dialect. Most of these immigrants lived in small enclaves of North Beach with others from their region who spoke their language. They tended to marry, work with, and socialize with others from their region. In fact, the predominantly male population of the first decades often returned to the home village for a wife. People from one region looked down on those from other regions. People from each region tended to work in specific industries and would only hire each other or hire others for inferior jobs. All of this was reinforced by a process of "chain migration" that brought streams of immigrants from specific villages and provinces to join their countrymen over a period of time.<sup>34</sup>

Many Italians arrived with nothing, not because they were poor, but because they intended to return home and had not sold their homes and farms in Italy. "At least until the early twentieth century, probably until the end of the First World War, most Italians considered their residence in the United States only temporary." Because of this, they referred to their San Francisco neighborhood as a "colonia" or colony, the Italian Colony — "a temporary settlement created by people who would return to the mother country."<sup>35</sup>

In both the United States and Italy, California was presented "as another Italy," having "similarities in climate and landscape," leading immigrants to expect to find the same work, mostly farming and fishing, as they had at home — but many had to adapt to new jobs. "In general, Italians in San Francisco lived near their work," with major sources of employment at the north end of North Beach at Fishermen's Wharf and various industrial establishments. The North Beach Cannery was the city's largest employer of Italians after the turn of the century.

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<sup>34</sup> Cinel. pp. 28, 119, as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 51.

<sup>35</sup> Cinel pp. 2, 112, 279, as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 51.

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Near the south end of North Beach, many worked in the produce market. “The goal of most Italians who finally settled in San Francisco was to establish a business of their own,” but most just got jobs — like in Italy “they worked for other people.”<sup>36</sup>

Regionalism among San Francisco’s Italians began to fade after the earthquake, perhaps partly because of the shared experience. While regionalism persisted, other factors worked against it. Exclusion from large areas of American society was a force for a united community. Columbus Day, established in 1869, grew in importance as a day for all Italians. Most important was the diminishing inclination to return to Italy and the acceptance of residence in the United States. Before the 1920s, large numbers did return to Italy, some more than once. One measure of the change was the increased immigration of women after World War I.<sup>37</sup>

With the continuing influx of large numbers of immigrants in the 1920s, North Beach was at its most Italian from the end of World War I to the end of World War II. Indeed, the population grew so that the Marina district, built in the 1920s on the site of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915, developed almost as an expansion of North Beach for wealthy Italians. San Francisco’s Italian population peaked in 1935<sup>38</sup> followed by new population movements. “People ordinarily moved from North Beach to the Mission district when they bought a house” — that is, when they could afford to leave a rented flat in North Beach. Also, children of immigrants “began leaving in large numbers in the mid 1930s.”<sup>39</sup>

The pivotal event in the acculturation of North Beach was World War II when Italy was a German ally against the United States: “the social transformation accelerated by the war, the defeat of fascism in Italy, the progressive departure from North Beach of the immigrants’ children, and the aging of the immigrants hastened the Americanization of the Italians and brought to a conclusion a century-long historical process.”<sup>40</sup> The war was a difficult time in North Beach where there was much support for the Italian leader, Mussolini, which led to the removal from the city of “leading Italians with strong ties to Fascism,” and the temporary prohibition of alien Italians from the waterfront — from Fishermen’s Wharf. Another consequence was that many aliens became citizens in 1943-1945 to show their loyalty to the United States.<sup>41</sup>

With the first movement of Italians out of North Beach in the late 1930s, the traditionally low-cost housing remained cheap; rents in 1940 were still “among the lowest in town.”<sup>42</sup>

While North Beach was long the undisputed center of Italian life and culture in San Francisco, there were many other neighborhoods in the city with concentrations of Italian people: the outer Mission, Potrero, Excelsior, Bernal Heights, West Portal, Hunter’s Point, and the Richmond

<sup>36</sup> Cinel pp. 15, 123, 134, 142 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 51.

<sup>37</sup> Dillon p. 3 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>38</sup> Dillon p. 171, as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> Cinel pp. 122, 125 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>40</sup> Cinel pp. 196-197 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>41</sup> Dillon pp. 172-173 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>42</sup> Cinel p. 12 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

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district.<sup>43</sup> Italians in these other areas were connected to North Beach as well through its churches, institutions, and celebrations such as Columbus Day and the Blessing of the Fleet for fishermen.

### **Commerce and Industry in North Beach<sup>44</sup>**

Development of North Beach in the era after the earthquake and fire of 1906 was predominantly residential in the form of houses, flats, hotels, and apartments. In addition, on the main streets of the neighborhood, Columbus, Broadway, Stockton, Green, and Grant, the ground floors of buildings were lined with businesses of all kinds. A wide range of businesses existed in the years prior to 1921 when the city's first zoning ordinance took full effect.<sup>45</sup>

Before 1921, there were many shops (or workshops) in North Beach where work was done onsite, such as tin shops, blacksmiths, laundries, plumbers, carpenters, upholsterers, paint dealers, bicycle repairing, machine shops, electrical supplies, feed mills, undertakers, a crematory, an accordion factory, ravioli factories, macaroni factories, a sausage factory, candy factories, and coal and wood dealers.<sup>46</sup>

The 1921 zoning law sought to exclude large industrial plants in the predominantly residential areas of North Beach, much like those operations located at the north end of the neighborhood: the Bauer-Schweitzer Malting Company (City of San Francisco Landmark No. 129) that occupied nearly a full city block and the Lewis Packing Company Vinegar and Pickle Works at the corner of Columbus and Chestnut (now demolished).<sup>47</sup>

The 1921 zoning law also sought to exclude other lighter types of manufacturing and commerce such as auto repair shops, machine shops, blacksmiths, coal yards, lumber yards, storage businesses, factories (candy, pasta, sausages, and cigars), crematories, contractor's plants and storage yards (carpenters, plumbers, electricians), feed mills, marble cutting, bakeries with over five employees, and others.

According to the 1921 law, any of these already in operation could remain as long as they didn't expand. In theory, construction of the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory should not have been permitted; the historical record provides no clarification on why its construction was allowed in contravention of the 1921 zoning law.

Over time these manufacturing and light industrial businesses closed or moved away, and other types of establishments moved in; generally speaking, industries and workshops were replaced

<sup>43</sup> Dillon p. 53 as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 53.

<sup>44</sup> This nomination benefits from the research and contributions of architectural historian Michael Corbett; the following section is based on excerpts from his *North Beach Historical Context Statement*, 2017, prepared for the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy.

<sup>45</sup> Corbett, p. 63.

<sup>46</sup> Corbett, p. 64.

<sup>47</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "New Zoning Law Text and Maps Printed Today." September 20, 1921, p. 1, as cited in Corbett, *North Beach Historic Context Statement*, p. 67.

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by retail stores.<sup>48</sup> The departure of most of these businesses did not alter the building fabric or streetscapes.<sup>49</sup> However, the life of the district was altered by this change. Gradually, street traffic in the neighborhood became less rough and dangerous as there was less loading and hauling of heavy materials.<sup>50</sup>

### **Extant Industrial Buildings in North Beach**

Few historic, industrial buildings remain in North Beach. Those that are extant typically sit side by side among other building types, as is the case with the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building. Though often wider than adjacent residential buildings, they are still relatively small-scale affairs as compared to industrial structures in other parts of the city, South of Market or near the waterfront. Industrial buildings in North Beach tend to be one or two stories, sometimes with a basement and often of reinforced concrete, wood frame, or brick. The impression is one of horizontality. Cladding may be brick, stucco, tile, pressed metal, or wood. Examples of North Beach industrial buildings include the Delucchi Sheet Metal Works building at 1526 Powell Street (constructed in 1921) with its pressed metal facade, and the former pasta factory at 466-478 Green Street (originally the Italian-American Paste Company, which became the old Spaghetti Factory, City of San Francisco Landmark No. 127, constructed in 1912). Other examples include the building at 555 Francisco Street (constructed in 1928) and the adjacent building at 557 Francisco Street of reinforced concrete (constructed in 1930), both being the former home of the Friscia Seafoods fish processor/wholesaler.<sup>51</sup>

### **Specialty Meat Manufacturing in North Beach**

In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Italian specialty meats were manufactured by various businesses in North Beach, all established by immigrants from Italy. These included the Cariani Sausage Company, Gallo Salame, San Francisco Sausage Company (now Columbus Craft Meats), Molinari & Sons, the Old Victorian Sausage Company, California Meat Company, Swiss Italian, Buon Gusto Sausage Company, and others. The Italian-born founders of these businesses settled in San Francisco and brought with them a rich tradition of salame (or salumi) making and authentic recipes.<sup>52</sup> The cool climate of the Northern California region was ideal for curing meat. The individual stories of many of these sausage manufacturers follow a similar arc of humble beginnings and later success.

Molinari & Son's was founded by Pasquale Giuseppe (P.G.) Molinari. Molinari moved to San Francisco in 1885 from the Piedmonte region of Italy initially working at A. Chiesa, a small grocery in North Beach. In 1895, Molinari went into business for himself with a grocery and sausage business on Broadway; it was destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906. Then, with a collateral-free loan from A.P. Giannini, a family friend and financier who founded the Bank of

<sup>48</sup> Corbett, pp. 67-68.

<sup>49</sup> Corbett, p. 163.

<sup>50</sup> Corbett, p. 68.

<sup>51</sup> Corbett, p. 139.

<sup>52</sup> Salumi is the Italian term for cured meats, such as prosciutto and lardo, and some cooked meats, including mortadella. The word comes from "sale", Italian for salt.

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Italy (later the Bank of America), P.G. Molinari rebuilt his business at 373 Columbus Avenue, still a thriving delicatessen and grocery store. By 1962, the manufacturing side of the business moved from North Beach to an industrial plant in the city's Bayview district where it remains in operation.<sup>53</sup>

Gallo Salame was founded in North Beach neighborhood by Louis Gabiati in 1910. In 1967 the family-owned business relocated to 250 Brannan Street, to an existing neoclassically-designed three-story, 100,000 sq. ft. factory in the city's South of Market neighborhood. Gallo remains one of the leading producers of salame in the U.S.<sup>54</sup>

Columbus Salame was established in San Francisco by Italian-born founders Peter Domenici and Enrico Parducci, who settled in the city around 1906. In 1917, they started the San Francisco Sausage Company out of a two-room flat. In 1934, the company, later known as Columbus Salame, expanded to a new location adjacent to North Beach at 447 Broadway. In 1967, Columbus opened a new production facility in South of San Francisco and later moved to a plant in Hayward, California, where it conducts its operations and a nationwide distribution.<sup>55</sup>

Not only did these immigrant families start specialty meat companies, they fostered the city's reputation for salame manufacturing. The broader community established and maintained a renowned Italian culinary presence in the neighborhood and citywide as is evident in a journalistic observation from 1940:

San Francisco is virtually fed by its Italians. Their excellent restaurants and first-class markets dominate the whole city. Their sausage and pasta and other factories supply the restaurants... They are a financial and political force in city life. They manufacture a variety of products from accordions to salame.<sup>56</sup>

A glitch in the production of Italian specialty meats occurred in 1970 when the USDA sought to prevent San Francisco salami makers from labeling their product "Italian" salami, instead preferring "Italian Brand Dry Salami," a move the companies opposed.<sup>57</sup> Rosemary Mucklow,<sup>58</sup> then the director of the San Francisco - based North American National Meat Association, successfully argued that the salami makers were preserving traditions of their forefathers, including the natural air-drying techniques that the city's cool climate made possible.<sup>59</sup> The USDA retracted the suggestion.

<sup>53</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Profile: Frank Giorgi." July 27, 2012. Accessed June 12, 2020.

<sup>54</sup> Information summarized from <https://www.gallosalame.com> accessed June 12, 2020.

<sup>55</sup> Information summarized from <https://medium.com/columbus-craft-meats/our-history-6641d257cdd3> accessed June 12, 2020.

<sup>56</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "The World Lives in San Francisco." January 28, 1940 p. 9.

<sup>57</sup> Personal interview with Rosemary Mucklow, July 3, 2020.

<sup>58</sup> From 1961 until 2007, Mucklow headed up various entities: the Pacific Coast Meat Jobbers Association, later the Pacific Coast Meat Association; then she served as the executive director of the National Meat Association; she is currently director emeritus for the North American Meat Institute (NAMI).

<sup>59</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Profile: Frank Giorgi." July 27, 2012. Accessed June 12, 2020.

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The various individual businesses that produced Italian specialty meats in North Beach followed a general pattern of development over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. All were established by Italian immigrants who started small operations seeking to make sausage, salicce, salami, and associated products the time-honored way using authentic recipes and drying techniques that replicated Italian manufacturing processes. As operations, yields, and production prospered and facilities modernized, in parallel to industry standardization, and, as the next generations of family members entered the businesses, the industry evolved. Most businesses relocated away from North Beach and the city center to areas more amenable to industrial operations. Many businesses evolved into or were acquired by larger corporations. Some consolidated. All remain proud to continue the Italian traditions of the founders.

### **Conclusion**

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building operated as a meat production facility from 1948 until 1978. Its owner, Federico Casissa, is representative of the many Italian-born immigrants who contributed to the commercial development of North Beach and the establishment of the Italian community in San Francisco during the early-to-mid 20th century.

Buon Gusto is an intact representative example of International/Modern architecture applied to a utilitarian building type, a sausage making factory. The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building stands as a testament to the Italian community's sausage making trade in North Beach. It is the last remaining building designed as a meat production facility in the area during the 20th century.

### **Architect Martin J. Rist and the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory**

Martin J. Rist (1888-1956) was a prolific and important architect who, over the course of his successful 50-year career, was responsible for the design of buildings in a range of types: stately institutional and civic buildings, churches, hospitals, elementary and high schools, elegant estates and urban residences. Much of Rist's work can be seen in and around San Francisco, where he was based. Though he established his own practice, much of his work was completed in association with, or in partnership with, firms that were among San Francisco's most well-regarded and productive. Rist's work reflected the styles of the day; his work initially exhibited exuberant historicist and Period Revival styles, such as Spanish Colonial, Colonial, Mediterranean, and Tudor. Later, he also worked adeptly in the Streamline Moderne idiom and other Modern adaptations.

Martin Rist was born in Columbus, Ohio, on August 17, 1888, to parents George Rist and Fredrika Krauter, both natives of Germany.<sup>60</sup> In 1906, at age 18, he moved with his parents and large family of eight siblings to San Francisco.<sup>61</sup> Rist worked as a draftsman for architect William Curlett. In 1914, he worked as a designer in the office of Charles Gottschalk. Rist then opened his own practice, but later re-joined Gottschalk in partnership. Their office was located in the Phelan Building in San Francisco's Financial District.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Entry for Martin Rist at Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com> accessed May 11, 2020.

<sup>61</sup> Entry for Martin Rist at Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com> accessed May 11, 2020.

<sup>62</sup> *Landmark Designation Report, University Mound Old Ladies' Home*, p. 16.

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Their partnership flourished. Gottschalk and Rist were responsible for estates in Hillsborough and San Mateo, an apartment building on Filbert Street in San Francisco as well as many other buildings. It was noted that Gottschalk and Rist had “one of the busiest offices in San Francisco.”<sup>63</sup> Another project by Rist is the splendid Taraval Police Station (1924) at 2345 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue in San Francisco’s Parkside neighborhood.<sup>64</sup>

Rist designed many important residential buildings in San Francisco and on the Peninsula. Together with Willis Polk, Timothy Pflueger, Bernard Maybeck, and Julia Morgan, Rist was another prominent architect associated with residences in San Francisco’s early residential park, St. Francis Wood. In 1928, he designed his own home there, an exuberant Storybook style residence, located at 136 Yerba Buena Avenue.<sup>65</sup>

Rist’s custom-designed residences were extremely well designed, well built, and had high design values. When homes of his design later became available on the real estate market, advertisements included Rist’s name as a selling point: “For the very discriminating who insist on charm and view. Custom-built and planned by Architect Martin Rist at his best... sweeping Bay and Marin view” with “special features too many to list.”<sup>66</sup>

In the early 1930s, in association with architect Alfred I. Coffey,<sup>67</sup> Rist designed the McKinley School in Redwood City (1927), the Gault School in Santa Cruz (1931), and San Francisco’s University Mound Old Ladies’ Home (1931-32) at 350 University Street, a convalescent facility and nursing home that is now City of San Francisco Landmark No. 269.<sup>68</sup> Rist was profiled in the September 1932 volume of *The Architect & Engineer* in an in-depth article that included photos of many of these projects.

The best-known and most well-regarded work by Coffey and Rist remains the Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital (1932-1935). An excellent example of the Art Deco style, this project was designed in partnership shortly before Coffey’s death in November 1931.<sup>69</sup>

In the latter half of the 1930s, Rist was a partner in the firm Meyer, Peugh, Pflueger and Rist, Architects in San Francisco. Rist-designed projects from this period include the Coffin-Reddington Building at 301 Folsom Street (1936-1937), and Abraham Lincoln High School at 2162 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue (1938-40) in association with Timothy Pflueger, Frederick Meyer, and W. P. Peugh.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> “With the Architects,” *The Architect and Engineer*, 1928, p. 105.

<sup>64</sup> Public Art and Architecture website <https://www.artandarchitecture-sf.com> accessed May 18, 2020.

<sup>65</sup> Entry for Martin Rist at Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com> accessed May 11, 2020.

<sup>66</sup> *San Francisco Chronicle*. “On Belgrave, Clarendon Heights.” November 19, 1954, p. 34.

<sup>67</sup> The firm name was Coffey and Rist Architects.

<sup>68</sup> *Landmark Designation Report, University Mound Old Ladies’ Home*, 2015.

<sup>69</sup> *Landmark Designation Report, University Mound Old Ladies’ Home*, 2015, p. 16.

<sup>70</sup> Poletti, p. 225.

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Abraham Lincoln High School, a project financed by the Public Works Administration, resulted in an accomplished design for an expansive and imposing three-story building in the International style. Another example of Rist's work in the Modern vein are three Streamline apartment buildings at 1963 - 1981 Clay Street (1938).

After World War II, Rist moved his offices from the downtown Phelan Building to San Francisco's west side where he maintained an office in the building of developer Henry Doelger at 320 Judah Street in the Sunset District. Rist resided on the city's west side, also the location of many large-scale projects that came later in his career: West Portal Lutheran Church (1947), Mercy High School (1951), and St. Cecilia Catholic Church (1954-1956). Mercy High School, on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue in San Francisco, is more Modernist in expression; it was completed for the Religious Sisters of Mercy at a cost of \$960,000.<sup>71</sup>

Also completed in 1951 was St. Catherine's of Siena Catholic Church, now considered a landmark in Burlingame where Rist was commissioned to design a Gothic Revival style church to complement a grouping of earlier parish buildings. Completed only three years after designing the International style Buon Gusto Sausage Factory, it reflects Rist's agility in designing projects of all scales, types and divergent styles.<sup>72</sup>

In North Beach, Rist designed two buildings in the course of a decade, a market and a sausage factory, for the same client. Though both are designed in Modern styles, they provide an interesting architectural contrast. In 1936, Rist designed the Buon Gusto Market located at 470 - 490 Columbus Avenue at the busy intersection of Green Street and Columbus Avenue. A two-story corner building, it is an exuberant expression the Streamline Moderne style with commercial space on the ground floor and offices above. It displays the fundamental characteristics of the Streamline style: horizontal orientation, a prominent rounded corner, steel, ribbon windows that continuously span the west and north elevations, a monumental porthole window set in a deeply recessed entry arch with grooved streamline moldings throughout.

Half a block east of the Buon Gusto Market, Rist was commissioned to design the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory a decade later. Here Rist employed a stripped-down version of the International style, entirely appropriate for a utilitarian industrial building. The subtle decorative treatment relied on red, green, and white accents, the national colors of Italy, appropriate for its location in the historic Italian-American epicenter of the city and as a nod to the Italian owners.

In his personal life, Rist married Alice Gowan. They had three children: Barbara, Martin Jr., and Theodore. The family resided in San Francisco's St. Francis Wood in the home Rist designed in 1928. Rist died on December 3, 1956, at Stanford Hospital. His funeral was held at St. Cecilia's Church, a building of his design. He is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in Oakland.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 184, No. 1., 1951.

<sup>72</sup> Carey & Co., *Inventory of Historic Resources for Downtown Burlingame*, 2008, p. 14.

<sup>73</sup> Personal information summarized from Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com> accessed May 11, 2020.

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Rist's death noticed states: In the last twenty years Mr. Rist worked with the Archdiocese of San Francisco designing many churches, schools, convents and rectories. The church at St. Cecelia's was his last major work.<sup>74</sup> A week after Rist's death, the columnist Herb Caen honored Rist:

Architect Martin Rist, a specialist in churches, had just begun work on the new St. Cecelia's in '55 when he was stricken with cancer and given six months to live. But when Monsgr. Harold Collins of the church advised him to quit the job, Rist merely smiled: "I'll not only finish the church, I'll fool those doctors by another six months."... St. Cecelia's was completed by June on Rist's schedule. And last Wednesday, also on his schedule, Martin Rist was buried from the last church he designed.<sup>75</sup>

Rist was an important architect, his contributions many. But the newspaperman Caen was inaccurate in describing him as a specialist in churches. As an architect, Rist successfully planned and built enduring projects of all types regardless of use, style or scale. Nor did he favor a particular style. Rather, his body of work is comprised of projects that span all historically derived and Modern styles and expresses the range of a skilled architect.

<sup>74</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Requiem Mass for Martin Rist." December 5, 1956, 2:4.

<sup>75</sup> *San Francisco Examiner*. "Herb Caen, Baghdad by the Bay." December 7, 1956, 2:1.

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### Newspaper Articles

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### Interviews

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### Online Resources

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

\_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

\_\_\_ previously listed in the National Register

\_\_\_ previously determined eligible by the National Register

\_\_\_ designated a National Historic Landmark

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Northwest Information Center

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** NWIC# S-35504

The Buon Gusto Sausage Factory falls within the boundary of the Upper Grant Avenue District, part of a larger survey titled, *North Beach San Francisco: An Architectural, Historical, Cultural Survey*, undertaken by the North Beach Historical Project in 1982. It is on file with the Northwest Information Center, NWIC# S-35504.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Parcel 0131/021 = 0.251 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.799430

Longitude: -122.408030

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone:

Easting:

Northing:

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is located in the City of San Francisco on Assessor's Parcel 0131, Lot 021. The subject building is located on the western side of the lot.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property boundary includes all of the footprint of the Buon Gusto Sausage Factory building constructed in 1948, as well as the paved surface parking lot to the east. Assessor's Parcel 0131, Lot 021 is comprised of the building and the parking lot in their entirety.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Katherine Petrin  
organization: Telegraph Hill Dwellers  
street & number: P.O. Box 330159  
city or town: San Francisco state: CA zip code: 94133  
e-mail petrin.katherine@gmail.com  
telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
date: July 7, 2020

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Buon Gusto Sausage Factory (535 Green Street)

City or Vicinity: San Francisco

County: San Francisco

State: California

Photographer: Shayne E. Watson

Date Photographed: May 15, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 9 Contextual view of subject property, camera looking southeast.
- 2 of 9 Contextual view of subject property, camera looking southwest.
- 3 of 9 Contextual view of subject property, camera looking southwest.
- 4 of 9 North elevation of building and parking lot to east, camera looking south.
- 5 of 9 North elevation, camera looking south.

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6 of 9 North elevation showing primary pedestrian entrances, camera looking south.

7 of 9 North elevation, signage and window detail, camera looking southwest.

8 of 9 East elevation, camera looking northwest.

9 of 9 East elevation, camera looking northwest.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.