

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Coral Court Motel

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 7755 Watson Road n/a  not for publication

city, town Marlborough n/a  vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Louis code 189 zip code 63119

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>26</u>	<u>4</u> buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u> objects
<u>28</u>	<u>6</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Claire F. Blackwell  
Signature of certifying official Claire F. Blackwell  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

5 March 1989  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

Moderne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Ceramic tile

roof Asphalt

other Glass

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Coral Court Motel occupies a tract of 8.5 acres at 7755 Watson Road (formerly U.S. 66) in the Village of Marlborough. It is a complex of thirty buildings, most of which are one story high with flat roofs and clad in yellow and brown glazed tile streamlined in the modernistic style of the '30s called Art Deco or Moderne. Many of the windows are made of glass block, including the cylindrical center window of the office, which dominates the street front of the complex. Most of the buildings house two or four bedroom-bathroom units, each with its own built-in garage. Three structures to the rear have hipped roofs accommodating second-floor units. Two noncontributing frame houses and a frame storage building are located in inconspicuous positions off to one side of the complex. To the rear of the site is located a pool complex (pool and small pool house) which also does not appear to be original to the motel complex. Buildings in the complex are set back at least fifty feet from the road and more than two-hundred feet from the residential neighborhood behind, and the grounds are meticulously landscaped with lawns, shrubs, and towering oaks contemporary with the buildings. Along the road, the grounds are set off by chains supported by squared fieldstone piers, which are also contemporary with the buildings; both the landscaping and fence contribute to the historic character of the complex. A large non-contributing, due to its age, aluminum and neon pylon-type sign stands between the office and the fence. The Coral Court is virtually unchanged from its original condition, and its very high level of maintenance makes it a showplace of roadside architecture.

The basic unit of the Coral Court is the two-unit building. In these small structures, the two units are separated by a pair of garages, each with its own remote-control door. The pedestrian doors are set into a curving wall, and each room has a second curving wall of glass brick that supplements the more conventional three-part louvered windows.

The syncopated rhythm created by the repetition of these unequal curves is given further complexity by the irregular placement of the two-room units on the site, as well as by slight variations in the unit plans and the patterns of the glass brick. Some patterns step down to the left, some to the right; others narrow at the top like mosaic Christmas trees. Additional glass bricks are used for small windows over the garage doors and, in some of the units, as a frieze in the striped band below the parapet.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 7 Page 1

---

The ceramic tiles are really hollow blocks, 3 3/4 inches thick. They were supplied by Architex Ceramics, Inc., of Brazil, Indiana. The tiles are veneered over standard concrete block, making the wall a foot thick. Two shapes of tiles are used, a conventional horizontal shape for the flat surfaces and a more vertical one for the curved. Shaped tiles are used for the window sills and surrounds and for the roof parapets.

The office building, located at the front of the complex, has seven bays overlooking the highway. The center three break forward with curving corners, and the center bay itself is a projecting semicylinder of glass block with a tile parapet a foot or two higher than the rest of the building. At the east end of the building, the basement level is exposed between two stone retaining walls and accommodates a two-car garage.

The center three bays of the entrance side of the building break forward under a metal canopy. These corners are also rounded and have glass block windows. At the west side of this block is a large chimney, and a second, smaller chimney rises from the east side. The street front of this building has been slightly modified by the insertion of air-conditioning units in the wall.

Three larger buildings with hipped roofs and large frame dormers stand at the northwest end of the complex. The front elevations of these buildings are simpler versions of the earlier buildings, with central garage doors and corner windows. Above the garage doors and in the corresponding position to the rear are wide shed-roofed frame dormers. On the side elevations, similarly detailed dormers extend to the edge of the roof, giving them a height sufficient to accommodate two doors as well as two windows. The doors are reached by metal staircases; those on the east building and at the west end of the west building are freestanding, but between the west and center buildings the staircases are joined into one elaborate composition.

At the southwest corner of the property are three smaller tile buildings with low hipped roofs. One is a single motel unit. A second building has three front bays and one side bay, while the third building has two front bays and two side ones, with a chimney rising from the north wall; both of these are service buildings. All these buildings have darker buff surrounds around doors and windows and brown stripes forming a frieze just below the overhanging roofline.

Where the ground drops at the north edge of the property are three freestanding frame buildings and a small frame addition to one of the tile structures. The smallest of these is a storage building of square plan with a pyramidal roof. The larger ones, with hipped roofs, are residences. The largest one has its

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 7 Page 2

---

main floor at the upper level and a partly exposed basement against which is a hipped roof supported by corner posts. These two buildings do not contribute to the overall character of the Coral Court Motel, but because of their secluded positions they have little impact on the overall appearance of the complex.

The pool complex to the rear of the property also appears to be a later addition. The pool house is constructed of vertical corrugated metal in pink and pale yellow, with a corrugated metal roof. The pool itself is set on a grassy plateau above the level of the nearby drive and thus the pool complex makes little visual impact on the motel, except for a chain link fence surrounding the pool and pool house.

The landscaping of the complex contributes to the significance of the district and is a major component in the motel's historic appeal. Lawns surround the complex on all sides and the landscaping is unimpaired because the garages connected with each unit directly remove cars from sight. The narrow strips immediately in front of the units are graveled and accented with low Japanese yews. Along the highway a row of pfitzers mark low pylons of squared rock-faced limestone capped by ashlar squares. Heavy chains hang between the pylons, creating a fence, which is original to the complex. At the two main entries taller pylons support pylon-shaped deco-style lights. The entire complex is sheltered by a canopy of pin oaks that have been pruned over the years to enhance their height.

The main sign is a tall pylon with flag-like banners of ascending size cantilevered from it. The lowest banner is a marquee-like billboard, backlighted and with movable letters. The narrow middle banner says "Moderate Rates," while the pink or coral-colored, neon-lighted top banner says "Coral Court Motel." The main pier of the sign is fluted aluminum. The similarity of this sign to the Holiday Inn "Great Sign," which was designed in 1951 by Eddie Bluestein, suggests that this sign too dates from the early 1950's.<sup>1</sup>

The owners of the Coral Court Motel have, over the years, adhered to the highest standard of maintenance. Even the asphalt driveways, resealed annually, have an exceptionally clean black appearance.<sup>2</sup> On a clear summer day not a leaf is out of place in its extensive plantings. The green of the lawns, the yellow and brown of the tiles, and the blue of the sky combine to lift the spirits of any lover of America's commercial archaeology.

<sup>1</sup> Chip Lord, Automerica (New York: Dutton, 1976), p. 68; Phil Patton, Open Road (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> There is some indication that the paved aprons in front of the garages and the sidewalks between some of the buildings were once tinted green, but they are currently coated in black like the drives.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Commerce

Period of Significance

1941  
1941

Significant Dates

1941

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Adolph Struebig

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Coral Court Motel, located at 7755 Watson Road in the Village of Marlborough, Missouri, is slightly less than fifty years old, having been built in 1941. It is widely recognized, however, as a property of exceptional significance, both as an outstanding example of Art Deco or Streamline Moderne architecture and as perhaps the premier surviving example in the country of a motor court from the middle period of motel development. It is associated with the growth of commerce oriented to automobile travel, which enjoyed a period of brief prosperity before World War II. The architecture of the Coral Court embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Streamline Moderne, one of the sub-categories of the modernistic styles that appeared in the 1920s and became popular in the 1930s. As such, the Coral Court Motel is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, with its period of significance relegated to 1941, its date of construction and the final year of the pre-war, auto-related economic boom. In 1987, the Coral Court Motel was threatened with demolition, and the massive protest that resulted indicated how highly regarded it has become:

"If I were to write the Mobil Guide today, Coral Court would get five stars. It is one of the most significant pieces of roadside architecture in the country." - Carolyn Toft, director of the Landmarks Association of St. Louis

"Outstanding for its architectural integrity." - Claire Blackwell, director of the Missouri Historic Preservation Program.

"It will be a terrible loss. It's in a class by itself." - Osmond Overby, professor emeritus of history at the University of Missouri at Columbia.<sup>1</sup>

"The Coral Courts has a very interesting art deco architectural style and is a mythical part of St. Louis lore." - Lea Von Kaenel, interior designer.<sup>2</sup>

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 1

## ARCHITECTURE

The Coral Court Motel is an example of the modernistic, as opposed to international modern, styles that were popularized at the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris in 1925. In 1969, Marcus Whiffen wrote of modernistic buildings, "Today they are not so much disliked as simply disregarded. Tomorrow they will doubtless be found to have period charm."<sup>3</sup>

Just a year previously, Bevis Hillier had coined the term "Art Deco" to describe these buildings,<sup>4</sup> and in the two decades since then the style has experienced a major revival, both in terms of the identification and appreciation of resources from the 1920's and 1930's and of the creation of new designs in the style. While the exact nomenclature for this period is by no means settled, many scholars now limit use of the term "Art Deco" to the more rectilinear examples of modernistic design, decorated with zigzags, chevrons, and stylized plant and animal motifs.<sup>5</sup> "Moderne" or "Streamline Moderne," by contrast, is less ornamental. Its rounded and sweeping lines were originally intended to cut down wind resistance on trains and ships, but they were applied as well to a wide variety of stationary objects.<sup>6</sup>

Streamlining had a logical symbolism in buildings serving transportation-related functions, such as the bus terminals designed by W. S. Arrasmith for Greyhound, and by extension for other buildings serving travelers.<sup>7</sup> Miami Beach's Art Deco District contains many examples of streamlining applied to hotels, and the Coral Court Motel is probably the best surviving example of a streamlined motor court. Chester H. Liebs has described the massive indoctrination campaign on behalf of Moderne imagery that was conducted in the 1930's in all aspects of design.<sup>8</sup> Streamlining telegraphed this message, which was: "I am modern, the latest scientifically designed object -- buy me." Motor courts, one of the few growth industries of the 1930's, naturally wanted to take advantage of this selling technique, and they were encouraged by architectural publications and trade journals, with articles such as "The Motor Court Moderne."

The Coral Court Motel is outstanding in part because of its remarkable state of preservation, but it was also exceptionally well designed by the standards of its day. Adolph L. Struebig, the architect who designed Coral Court, recalled that John Carr, the motel's owner, wanted something outstanding and was willing to pay for it. In an interview with E.F. Porter, Jr., Struebig said, "Money was no object. Johnnie was willing to go the limit. I used to take my sketch board and we'd sit across from the site on Highway 66, and I'd show him what I proposed to do. We had an open field to work with. I'd show where the trees would go and how the shadows would fall. I'd sit for hours with that man."

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 2

I just tried to please him and go all-out because I knew he wanted something unique."<sup>9</sup>

Among the notable features of the design are the concrete block construction and the glazed ceramic blocks that cover it. The ceramic blocks incorporate the brown stripes that contribute to the court's Moderne styling, and they have an ever-clean surface. As Struebig said, "All you have to do is put a hose on it." Streamlining is evident in the curving corners. The glass blocks used in the corner windows and as accents are also characteristic of the style. The grouping of the buildings heightens the streamline effect through the repetition of the curved elements. The units have built-in garages, a feature not unusual at the time, but these have direct access to the bedrooms, which gives the Coral Court unusual privacy.

Adolph L. Struebig came out of the large and prosperous German population of south St. Louis. He worked as an architect for Nolte and Nauman from 1926 to 1936, a period in which the firm was active in residential and commercial work. In 1927, they designed the Lambskin Masonic Temple, one of the earliest Art Deco-inspired buildings in St. Louis, now listed on the National Register. After Fred Nauman's departure, Struebig was briefly in partnership with Edward F. Nolte but then went out on his own. In later years, he served as staff architect for the State of Illinois, retiring to Satellite Beach, Florida.<sup>10</sup>

**COMMERCE**

According to the Society for Commercial Archaeology, which is a national organization dedicated to the documentation, interpretation and preservation of appropriate American automobile roadside structures and landscapes, the Coral Court Motel is unique in the country as a high-style example of the motor court type of roadside lodging. Even when it was first built, the Coral Court was distinguished by the fine quality of its design and materials, and the passage of time and sweeping changes in the motel industry have left it standing virtually alone.

The motor court as an institution was an intermediate phase in the development of hosteleries catering to motorists. There were few roadside facilities before 1920. However, the advent of the automobile as low cost transportation generated new travel which, in turn, increased the demand for low cost accommodation. Often private homes offered rooms to these "tourists" or "transients," but many of the earliest motorists stayed in campgrounds. These sites could be upgraded by simple frame cabins, little more than shelters for camping equipment.<sup>11</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 3

As competition increased, however, cabins began to be improved. Indoor plumbing, heaters, inner-spring mattresses, and more substantial construction appeared. The informal cluster of cabins became the cabin court, also called the cottage court, the tourist court, or the motor court. Courtors, as the people who owned and managed these facilities were called, sought to attract passing motorists with architectural themes, mimicking Spanish missions, adobe pueblos, Indian tepees, Dutch mills, and medieval villages. By the late 1930s, the Tourist Court Journal was urging its readers to abandon the older visual metaphors in favor of clean-lined and efficient modern design. At the same time the internal amenities of the courts reached urban standards. As one salesman was quoted, "The motor court of today has everything a good hotel has, with free garage, no tipping -- also more privacy."<sup>12</sup>

The Coral Court Motel was a perfect incarnation of these ideals, with its substantial construction, high style, and built-in garages. Privacy was no doubt an important consideration for the builder, John Carr. "Johnnie Carr was a very high-class guy," recalled a friend of 45 years, "very impressive-looking, very charitable...not a con man but a nice guy, a gentleman. Women were naturally attracted to him, which is probably why he was in the business he was in."<sup>13</sup> The privacy assured by the garages and by the management of the motel has contributed to the Coral Court's local reputation, which seems to induce whispered asides and loud laughter.

Constructed in 1941, the Coral Court Motel also benefited from the economic boom which began in 1940. With the upsurge in war-related production, prosperity came to the industry of motor camp and court as well as to most of the American economy. According to James Belasco, the expansion "put more Americans than ever on the road, both for business and for pleasure, and with more to spend."<sup>14</sup> Much of the success of the Coral Court was also due to its location on Route 66, the fabled highway to the southwest. After crossing the Mississippi River, Route 66 followed Chippewa Avenue and Watson Road to the western edge of St. Louis -- about three hundred miles or one day's travel from Chicago. Iver Peterson, who retraced the route in 1984, wrote "This is where you started looking for your first night's sleep on the road."<sup>15</sup> Located in Marlborough, on the western edge of St. Louis, Coral Court must have seemed a logical choice for many travelers. In 1942, travel again declined with the imposition of gasoline rationing. However, for the well-located court or camp, such as Coral Court, price controls and 100 percent occupancy guaranteed prosperity.

Route 66 was designated in 1926, a year after the first U.S. highways were numbered.<sup>16</sup> It extended from Chicago to Santa Monica, through the heart of America's southwest. In the 1930's, it became the path of migration from the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 4

Dust Bowl to the fields of southern California, a phenomenon raised to epic proportions in the writings of John Steinbeck and the photographs of Dorothea Lange.<sup>17</sup> More pertinent to the Coral Court, Route 66 also became "an asphalt monument to the American entrepreneurial spirit." In the 1940's, it carried more out-of-state traffic than any other highway in Missouri. Lined with independently owned and operated businesses catering to the needs of these travelers, it was assiduously promoted by the Highway 66 Association, so that by the time Bobby Troup's song "Route 66" was recorded in 1946, the name had already become a household word. The television series which ran from 1960 through 1964 consolidated that reputation.<sup>18</sup>

The construction of the interstate highway system marked the end of Route 66. The new limited access roads (Interstates 55, 44, and 40) were built directly on top of the old right-of-way to a greater extent than was true of most other U.S. highways. Where business and population centers proved obstacles, they were bypassed. By December, 1972, Chippewa Avenue, Watson Road, and the Coral Court Motel had been bypassed by a newly completed section of Interstate 44. By 1981, only two segments along the original 2200 mile route retained their original designation and, in 1984, the last section in Williams, Arizona, was also bypassed.<sup>19</sup>

During this same period, the motor court gave way to homogenized franchised motel chains, with bedrooms arranged all in a row under one roof instead of in separate buildings. Moderne gave way to International Modern, and even the term "motor court" gave way to "motel." The passing of Route 66, then, symbolized the end of a whole era in the evolving culture of the road. Organizations such as the Society for Commercial Archaeology began to study roadside America as they would an ancient civilization.<sup>20</sup> The survival of the Coral Court in the midst of all these changes is nearly miraculous. It was noted in 1984 by Iver Peterson in the nostalgic trip he took down the surviving, renumbered sections of Route 66 for Rolling Stone. Talking about the attractions of the merging motor court to the early motorist, he wrote, "The best of them, the Coral Court Motel, is still there, all glazed tile, glass brick, and serpentine walls, nestled discreetly among the oak and walnut trees."<sup>21</sup>

In recent years, the survival of the Coral Court has been threatened. John Carr died in 1984 at the age of 83, leaving his interest in the motel corporation in equal parts to his widow Jessie and the housekeeper Martha Shutt. The property is currently owned by Mrs. Carr, who is now the wife of Robert G. Williams. While maintaining the motel to its usual high standards, they have twice in recent years optioned it to shopping center developers. The long-term preservation of the motel may depend on incentives afforded by listing on the National Register.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 5

## NOTES

- 1 Quoted by E.F. Porter, Jr., "In A Class by Itself," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 4, 1987.
- 2 Quoted by Stephanie Grant Stanley, "Flights of fancy: Artists pay tribute to Coral Court Motel." Clayton Citizen Journal.
- 3 Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1969), p. 240.
- 4 Bevis Hillier, Art Deco (New York: Schocken, 1968).
- 5 Among authorities now making a distinction between Art Deco and Moderne are John J. G. Blumenson, Identifying American Architecture (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1977); David Gebhard and Robert Winter, A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, 1977); Fred Koeper, American Architecture Volume 2, 1860-1976 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1981); and Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Knopf, 1984).
- 6 Donald J. Bush, The Streamlined Decade (New York: George Braziller, 1975).
- 7 Richard Guy Wilson, Dianne H. Pilgrim, and Dickran Tashjian, The Machine Age in America 1918-1941 (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1986), pp. 174-179.
- 8 Chester H. Liebs, Main Street to Miracle Mile (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1985), pp. 55-58, 178-181.
- 9 Porter, op cit.
- 10 Esley Hamilton, "A Gem of the Road: Coral Court," SCA News Journal, Vol. 9, Nos. 1-3 (Fall 1987), pp. 1 & 3.
- 11 Warrens James Belasco, Americans on the Road (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1979); Liebs, op cit; and John B. Rae, The Road and the Car in American Life (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1971), pp. 103-104.
- 12 Quoted by Liebs, p. 181, from Hattie Plemons and Constance Plemons, "Why Many Downtown Hotel Guests Are Switching to Motor Courts," Hotel Management, Vol 55 (April 1949), p. 10.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 8 Page 6

---

- 13 Porter.
- 14 Belasco, pp. 169-170.
- 15 Iver Peterson, Rolling Stone, November 22, 1984, p. 48.
- 16 Albert C. Rose, Historic American Roads (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc. 1976), p. 98; Thomas W. Pew, Jr., "Route 66: Ghost Road of the Okies," American Heritage, Vol. 28, No. 5 (August 1977), p. 26.
- 17 Pew, pp. 26-32; Phil Patton, Open Road (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), pp. 226-245. Sylvia Jenkins Cook, From Tobacco Road to Route 66: The Southern Poor White in Fiction (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976) epitomizes this way of looking at Route 66.
- 18 Drew Greenland, "Route 66," Life, Vol. 6, No. 6 (June 1983), pp. 70-78, 80.
- 19 John M. Crewdson, "The Interstate's Shadow Is Overtaking Route 66," New York Times, July 7, 1981, p. A10; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "Route 66: A Bygone Era" (reprinted from the Kansas City Star), October 24, 1984, p. 2B.
- 20 It should be noted that none of these publications to date has identified any surviving motor courts comparable to Coral Court. The most relevant have been John Baeder, Gas, Food and Lodging (New York: Abbeville, 1982); John S. Margolies, The End of the Road (New York: Penguin, 1981). Most deal with other building types associated with the road: John Baeder, Diners (New York: Abrams, 1979); Jim Heimann and Kip Georges, California Crazy (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1980); Daniel Vieyra, Fill 'er Up (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1979); Jack Barth, et al., Roadside America (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986); J.J.C. Andrews, The Well-Built Elephant and Other Roadside Attractions (New York: Congdon & Weed, 1984); Philip Langdon, Orange Roofs, Golden Arches (New York: Knopf, 1986).
- 21 Peterson, pp. 42-44, 48; for a similar look at Route 66, see Jeff Smith, "Hot Rod's Route 66 Tour," Hot Rod, Vol. 40, No. 2 (December 1987), pp. 22-27. A full-length study along the same lines is soon to be published: Susan Kelly, Route 66 The Highway and Its People, photos by Quinta Scott (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press), 1988.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

1. Belasco, Warren James. Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1979.
2. Donaldson, Rob. "Coral Court Could fall to wrecking ball." South Side Journal, August 12, 1987.
3. \_\_\_\_\_. "Coral Court should not be demolished, historian tells board," South side Journal, September 18, 1987.
4. Friedman, Barbara. "Coral Court May Be Next Victim Along Famous 'Motel Alley'." Webster-Kirkwood Times, August 7-13, 1987.
5. Greenland, Drew. "Route 66," Life, Vol. 6, No. 6 (June 1983), pp. 70-83.

See continuation sheet

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

St. Louis Department of Parks and Recreation

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property 8.75 acres

UTM References

A 

1	5
---	---

7	3	2	2	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	7	2	5	5	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

C 

1	5
---	---

7	3	2	4	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	7	2	4	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B 

1	5
---	---

7	3	2	1	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	7	2	3	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

D 

1	5
---	---

7	3	2	0	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	2	7	2	5	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

All of Lots 1 to 26 in Block 8, all of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4, part of Lots 5 to 12, and 22 to 25 and all of Lots 26 to 34 in Block 9, and all of Lots 18 to 22 and part of Lots 23 to 25 in Block 10 of MARLBOROUGH MANOR, and part of Croydon Drive, Radnor Drive and Sherbrooke Drive as shown on the plat of Marlborough Manor recorded in Plat Book 28, pages 44 and 45, of the St. Louis County Records, which streets were vacated by order of the County Court of St. Louis County.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all the ground that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Esley Hamilton/Administrative Assistant

organization St. Louis County Dept. of Parks & Recreation date April 4, 1988

street & number 41 S. Central Avenue telephone (314) 889-3357

city or town Clayton state MO zip code 63105

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 9 Page 1

---

- 6 Hamilton, Esley. "Coral Court, A Gem of the Road," SCA News Journal, Vol. 9, Nos. 1-3 (Fall 1987), pp. 1 & 3.
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_. "Historic Buildings Survey: Art Deco & The International Style in St. Louis and St. Louis County, Missouri." St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation, 1987.
- 8 Historic Buildings in St. Louis County. Clayton, Mo.: St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission, et al, 1983, 2nd edition 1985.
- 9 Liebs, Chester H. Main Street To Miracle Mile. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1985.
- 10 Lord, Chip. Automerica. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1976.
- 11 Patton, Phil. Open Road. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986.
- 12 Peters, Frank. "Roadside Buildings Mirroring America's Car-Borne History," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Jan. 12, 1986.
- 13 Peterson, Iver. "The End of the Road," Rolling Stone, Issue 435, Nov. 22, 1984, pp. 42-48 & 79.
- 14 Porter, E.F., Jr., "In A Class By Itself," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 4, 1987.
- 15 Rae, John B. The Road and the Car in American Life. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971.
- 16 Viets, Elaine. "A Dutiful Proposal to Save Coral Court," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 29, 1987.
- 17 \_\_\_\_\_. "Keeping Coral Court From Losing Its Shirt," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 21, 1988.
- 18 \_\_\_\_\_. "Hundreds Are Shirting The Issue." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, February 16, 1988.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 10 Page 1

---

The above are further described as: Beginning at the intersection of the north line of Watson Road (former U.S. Highway 66) and the north line of Sherbrooke Drive (vacated); thence westwardly along the north line of Sherbrooke Drive to the northwest corner of Lot 18 of Block 10 of Marlborough Manor; thence south along the west lines of Lots 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 of Block 10 245 feet to a point; thence southeastwardly along the northeast line of property conveyed to J. C. Realty Company by deed recorded in Book 4443, Page 323, a distance of 634.54 feet to a point in the northwest line of Watson Road (formerly U.S. Highway 66), said point being the intersection of the line dividing Lots 21 and 22 in Block 9; thence northeastwardly along the northwest line of Watson Road 794.82 feet to the point of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

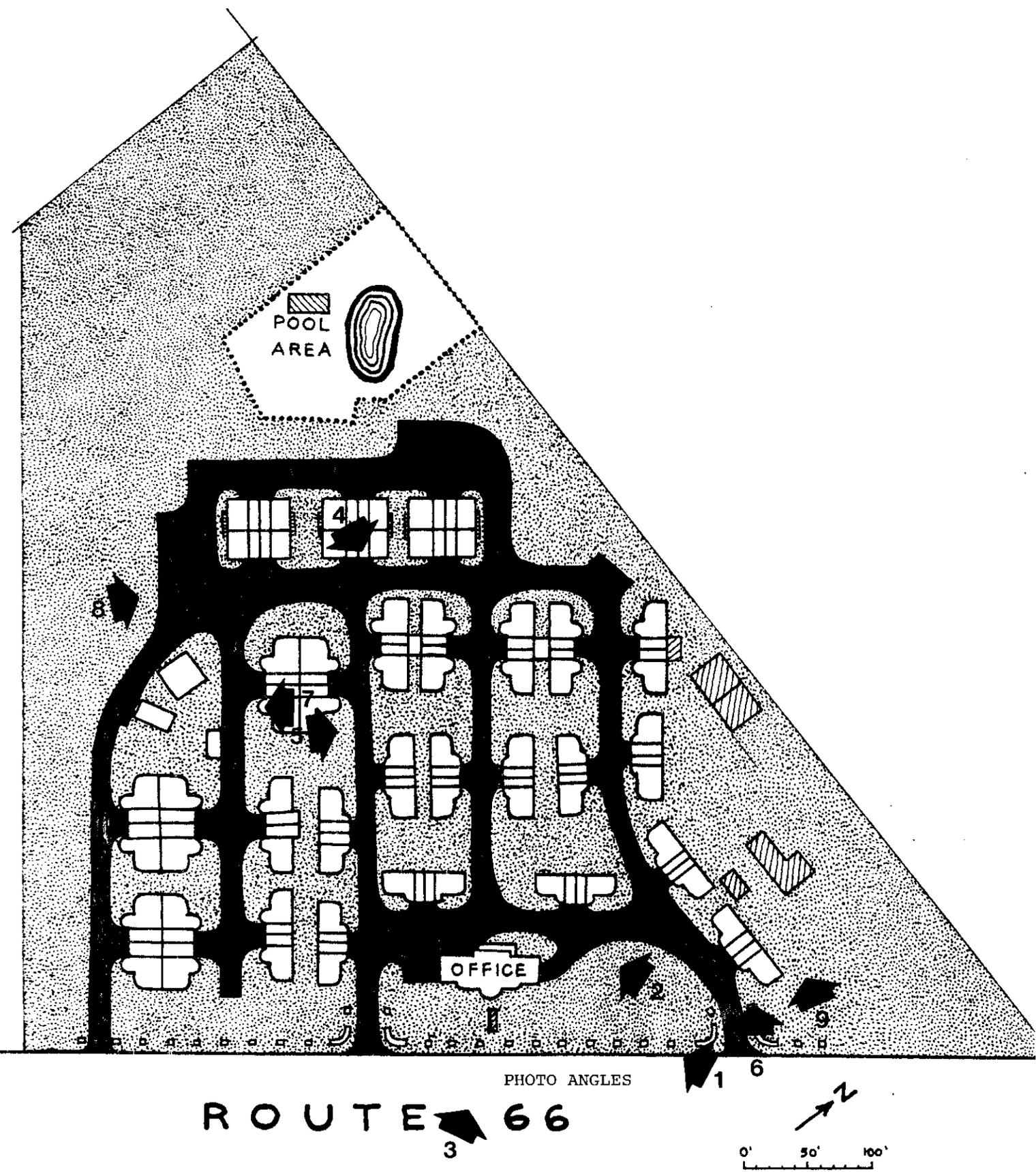
## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CORAL COURT MOTEL

Section number 11 Page 1

---

2. Steve Mitchell  
National Register Historian and  
State Contact Person  
Department of Natural Resources, DPRHP  
Historic Preservation Program  
P. O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102  
Date: March 13, 1989  
Telephone: 314/751-5376



JULY 1986 - PAT HAYS SAER

CORAL COURT MOTEL  
 7755 Watson Road  
 Marlborough, Missouri

 NONCONTRIBUTING

Coral Court Motel  
Marlborough, St. Louis County, MO

- A. 15/732230/4272550
- B. 15/732120/4272360
- C. 15/732470/4272470
- D. 15/732000/4272580



**Photo Log:**

Name of Property: **Coral Court Motel**

City or Vicinity: **Marlborough**

County: **St. Louis County** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Esley Hamilton**

Date

Photographed: **Feb. 1988**

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

- 1 of 9. Main sign and office from E.
- 2 of 9. Front drive from NE, office on left.
- 3 of 9. Office from S.
- 4 of 9. Row of motor court units from W.
- 5 of 9. Looking through center of site from SW.
- 6 of 9. NE building from SE.
- 7 of 9. Service buildings from NE.
- 8 of 9. W buildings from S.
- 9 of 9. N buildings from E.

# Coral Court MOTEL

MODERATE RATES

COLOR TV  
ROOM PHONE  
COMMERCIAL RATES

















