

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____
HRI # _____
Trinomial _____
CHR Status Code: _____

Other Listings _____
Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

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Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) 2031 BUSH ST

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: Not for Publication Unrestricted

*a. County: San Francisco

*b. USGS Quad: San Francisco North, Californi Date: 1995

c. Address: 2031 BUSH ST City: San Francisco ZIP 94115

d. UTM Zone: Easting: Northing:

e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number 0676 027

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

2031 Bush Street is located on a roughly 58' x 137.5' L-shaped lot on the south side of Bush Street between Buchanan and Webster streets. Built in 1924, 2031 Bush Street is a 3-story, wood frame educational building designed in the Mediterranean Revival style. The irregular-plan building, clad in smooth stucco, is capped by a flat roof. The foundation is not visible. Two sets of tile-clad quarter-turn stairs on either side of the primary facade lead from the sidewalk to a terrace in front of the main entrance that is surrounded by a balustrade. A gateway clad in smooth stucco and capped by a clay tile pent roof is located at the northeastern corner of the building and attached to the stairs by a low wall. The gateway provides access to a service entry at the east side of the building. Due to the slope of the lot, the building is four stories high at the rear and a playground area is located at the rear of the lot.

The building features one entrance on the first story. The main entry is located at the center of the primary façade and features partially glazed, paneled, wood, double doors with a glazed, multi-lite, segmental arch transom. (continued)

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP15. Educational Building

*P4. Resources Present: Building Structure Object Site District Element of District Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Description of Photo:

View of the primary and east facades, looking southwest.
11/7/2007

*P6. Date Constructed/Age:

Historic Prehistoric Both

1924 SF Assessor's Office

*P7. Owner and Address
GOLDEN GATE INSTITUTE
2031 BUSH ST

SAN FRANCISCO CA 94115

*P8. Recorded By:

Page & Turnbull, Inc., DL
724 Pine Street
San Francisco, CA 94108

*P9. Date Recorded: 11/7/2007

*P10. Survey Type:

Reconnaissance - Level 1

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "None")

Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan

*Attachments: NONE Location Map Sketch Map Continuation Sheet Building, Structure, and Object Record

Archaeological Record District Record Linear Feature Record Milling Station Record Rock Art Record

Artifact Record Photograph Record Other (list):

*Recorded By: Page & Turnbull, Inc., DL

*Date Recorded: November 2007 Continuation Update

*P3a: Description (continued):

The slightly recessed entry has a paneled surround. The segmental arch opening is trimmed with glazed ceramic tile and surmounted by a metal balcony that serves a set of French doors on the second story. These partially glazed, paneled wood French doors are surrounded by sidelights and transoms. Windows on the first story are found in multi-part wood assemblies consisting of six-lite, double casement sashes, flanked by three-lite fixed sashes, and surmounted by fixed transom sashes. Windows on the second story originally had this configuration too, but have been altered. They now consists of two-lite, fixed, aluminum sashes flanked by aluminum casement sashes, and surmounted by fixed, wood transom sashes. The facade terminates in a parapet with clay tile coping. A vent pipe chimney protrudes from the roof.

A sign on the gateway leading into the service entry on the east side of the building reads "Nihon Machi Little Friends." The east service entry is located below grade and accessed by concrete stairs and a ramp from the sidewalk. A pop-out is located toward the rear of the building and encloses the south end of the service entry area. A set of wood panel double doors and a single door provide access into the building at the ground story level. The east façade and north façade of the pop-out feature nine-over-nine, and six-over-six, double-hung, wood sashes, as well as nine-lite, fixed, wood sashes. The east façade and the pop-out terminate in a parapet with clay tile coping.

The building appears to be in good condition.



Detail of main entrance.
Source: Page and Turnbull

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*NRHP Status Code 3S

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*Resource Name or # (assigned by recorder) 2031 Bush Street

_____ B1. Historic name: Kinmon Gakuen / Golden Gate Institute
 _____ B2. Common name: Kinmon Gakuen, Nihonmachi Little Friends
 _____ B3. Original Use: School
 _____ B4. Present use: School
 _____ *B5. Architectural Style: Mediterranean Revival

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
 1924-1926: Constructed. 1940: Construct moving picture booth for school auditorium. 1977: Install toilet, kitchen, and office. 1981: Erect non-bearing partition over existing low partition, install one door. 1987: Install aluminum windows in existing frames. 1990: Two aluminum windows installed in class room. 1992: Remove tile from stairway and landing. 1997: Repair deck and stairway, replace tiles, repair water damage.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features: Playground at rear.

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural community development Area: Japantown, San Francisco, California
 Period of Significance 1924 - present Property Type Educational Applicable Criteria A/1, C/3
 (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

A Japanese educational system in San Francisco's Japantown was first realized when a number of local Japanese American associations came together to address a law passed by the San Francisco Board of Education in 1895 that excluded children of Japanese ethnicity from public schools. The first Japanese language school in California was Nippon Shogakko, which was established in 1902 and located at 1765 Sutter Street. In 1906, the Sano School at 1761-1765 Post Street was established as a boycott measure to the Board of Education's even more stringent segregation policies. Kinmon Gakuen soon followed, sponsored by the Japanese Association of America (Hoku Nichi Bei Kai), as well as by other Japanese language schools, many of which were also sponsored by local churches. The establishment of bilingual Japanese language schools reflected *Issei* (first-generation Japanese) parents' convictions that their *Nisei* (second-generation) children belong in both American society and in the Japanese American community – that they be able to function with other Americans in daily life while also retaining and valuing their Japanese heritage. (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP15. Educational building, HP36. Ethnic minority property (JA)

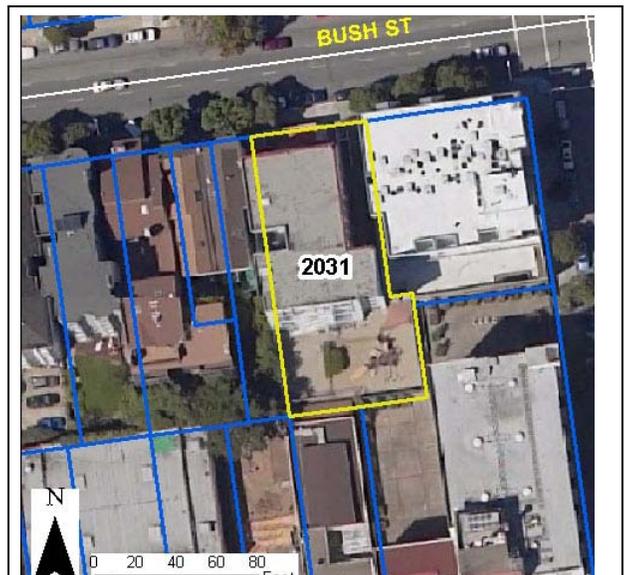
*B12. References:
 The Japanese American Directory, San Francisco: The Japanese American News, Inc., 1941.
 Japantown Task Force, *Images of America: San Francisco's Japantown*. San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.
 (continued)

B13. Remarks:

*B14. Evaluator: Caitlin Harvey, Page & Turnbull/
Matt Weintraub, SF Planning Department

*Date of Evaluation: May 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)



B10. Significance (continued)

Yet, in April 1912, accusations were made in American society that Japanese schools promoted "Emperor worship." In response, the Japanese Association of America stated that the policy of language schools was to develop permanent residents of the United States, to provide Japanese instruction combined with American education, to provide a moral education, and instill both Japanese character and American spirit.

Kinmon Gakuen (translated as Golden Gate School or Golden Gate Institute, as it is sometimes referred to) officially opened on January 18, 1911 and was initially located in a two-story 19th century house located on the same site as the present-day school building. The first year it was open, enrollment totaled 133 students in elementary, junior high school and high school-level classes. The school also played a prominent roll in the first statewide Japanese American educator's conference during its initial year. During its early development, Kinmon Gakuen weathered a number of challenges, including Alien Land Laws passed in 1913 and 1920, restrictions on language schools and their teachers in 1921, and, in 1923, near passage of a law to outlaw language schools altogether.

Eventually, the old Kinmon Gakuen building was outgrown and between 1924 and 1926, a new facility was constructed on the same site. Fundraising and donations within the Japantown community funded the construction of the Kinmon Gakuen building. It was one of four community facilities in Japantown (along with the Japanese Salvation Army, YWCA, and YMCA) to be financed in this way. Events like movie nights were used as fundraising opportunities. The first, held in November 1924, raised \$1,600 for the building campaign through the rental of seat cushions and the sale of refreshments during shows. Movie nights continued as a Japantown tradition through the 1960s, shown at either Kinmon Gakuen or the Sokoji Temple.

The first floor of the new building housed the all-day kindergarten program, while the upper stories contained class rooms that were shared by the higher grades. These older students attended mainstream schools, like the nearby Raphael Weill School, during the day for basic curriculum, then went to Kinmon Gakuen afterward for Japanese instruction. Primary school-level classes were held from 3:00 to 4:00 in the afternoons, and junior high school and high school-level classes were held from 4:00 to 6:00. Culturally oriented classes, such as Japanese language, ikebana, Japanese music, and etiquette were taught. The school was so culturally prominent within the Japanese and Japanese American community that it was visited by the Emperor of Japan in 1933 and 1935.

In 1941, the building at 2031 Bush Street housed the Golden Gate Institute, the Kinmon Kindergarten, and the Japanese Language School Association. A Kinmon Gakuen branch was also located at 945 Clay Street. Eight other Japanese language schools, housing various groups and grade-levels at locations throughout Japantown, were also known to have operated at that time. At the outset of World War II, the Kinmon Gakuen building served as a registration location for Japanese Americans being sent to the internment camps. Then, for the duration of the war, the school was closed. While Japanese Americans were interned, the building was used as the Booker T. Washington Community Center, serving the expanded African American population that moved into the Western Addition during the war. When Japanese Americans returned to Japantown after the war, the Booker T. Washington Center provided a men's hostel for those left homeless by internment. Due to discriminatory laws, Kinmon Gakuen was not able to open again until the fall of 1948. Its opening enrollment consisted of only 32 students, a fraction of what it had been before the war. However, in 1960, the school was again visited by the Japanese Emperor, indicating its continued and renewed cultural importance.

Today, Kinmon Gakuen operates a Japanese language education program held on weekends and the building also houses the Nihonmachi Little Friends bilingual daycare program. Numerous other community organizations also use the building for programs and activities. The building currently contains six classrooms, a social hall, a kitchen, library and auditorium.

The Kinmon Gakuen at 2031 Bush Street retains integrity of association, continuing to be used as an educational facility. The original occupant, Kinmon Gakuen Japanese language school, still operates in the building, as does the Nihonmachi Little Friends bilingual childcare program, which has strong ties to the Japanese American community. The building retains integrity of location and setting, having never been moved from the largely residential area in which it was constructed. The building possesses high integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Few alterations appear to have been made to the original building and it retains its original character and detailing.

The Kinmon Gakuen at 2031 Bush Street appears to be eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or for local listing. The building's associations with the Japanese American community began at its construction in 1924-26, though the specific association of Kinmon Gakuen school at the site predates the building and persists to the present day. The building represents the community-building efforts of Japanese Americans in San Francisco; the importance of education and cultural ties to the Japanese American community; and the struggles for civil rights and community recognition that the Japanese Americans have encountered. The Japanese American community still readily recognizes the property as a part of its cultural history and present-day community.

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*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) 2031 Bush Street

*Recorded by: Page & Turnbull

*Date May 2009

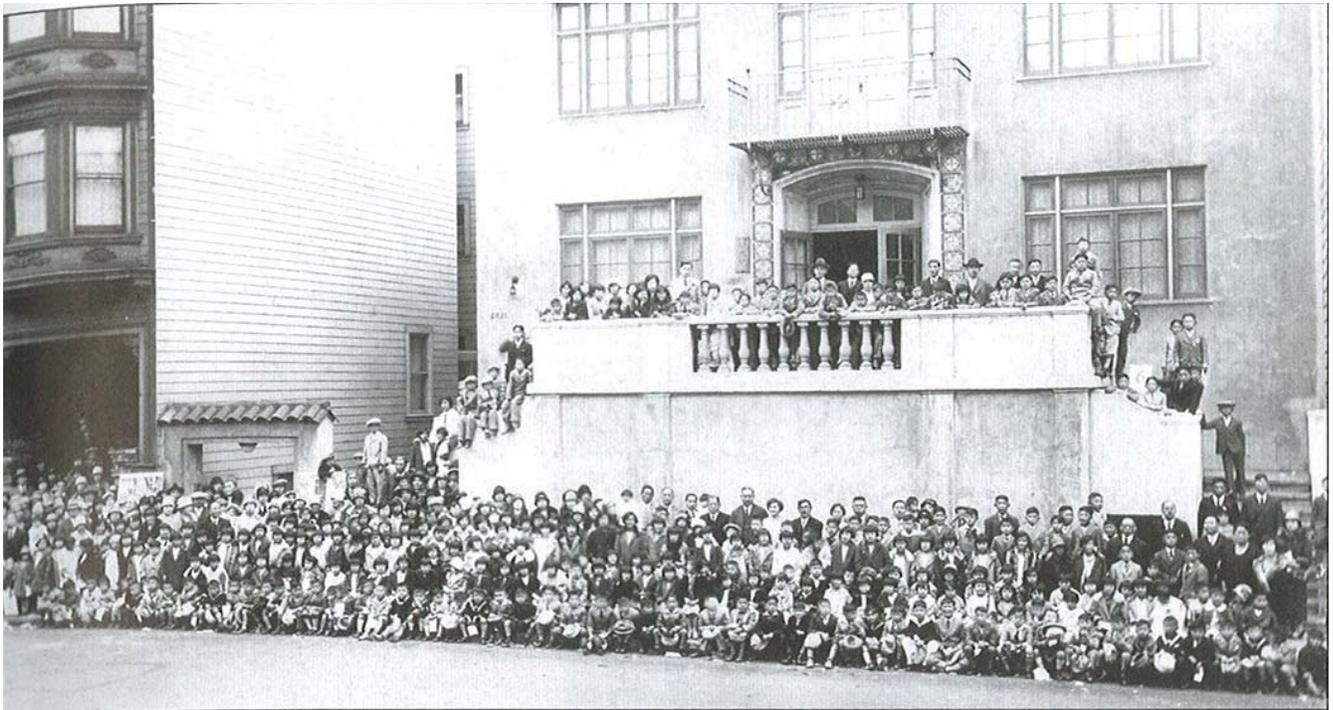
Continuation

Update

B10. Significance (continued)

Both the Kinmon Gakuen school and the Nihonmachi Little Friends program represent strong modern-day ties to the surrounding community. Along with other significant properties like the Japanese YMCA, Japanese YWCA, and Japanese Salvation Army, the building fits into the context of community organizations in Japantown that were established for the enrichment of the cultural community.

The status code of 3S assigned to this property means that it has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as an individual property through survey evaluation. It is therefore also eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and for local listing. This property was not assessed for its potential to yield information important in prehistory or history, per National Register Criterion D.



Kinmon Gakuen 17th anniversary celebration, 1925.
(Japantown Task Force, *Images of America: San Francisco's Japantown*.
San Francisco: Arcadia Publishing, 2005.)

B12. References (continued)

Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California, San Francisco Japantown History Walk: Kodomo No Tami Ni (interpretive sign), 2007.

Pease, Ben. San Francisco's Japantown and Western Addition maps; 1910, 1920s, 1940, 1948-49, 1956-59, 1972, 2004.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1893, 1899, 1913, 1950.

San Francisco Assessor's Office, sales ledgers.

San Francisco Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Historic Context Statement, 2009.

San Francisco Block Books: 1894, 1901, 1906, 1909.

San Francisco Chronicle, "Japanese Schools Here Cause Controversy," 7/26/1936, p. 6.

San Francisco City Directories.

San Francisco Department of Building Inspection, permit records and plans.

San Francisco Japantown Task Force, Data Sheet: Kinmon Gakuen Building – Japanese Language School, 7/2/04.

Yamato, Alex. California Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory forms: Golden Gate Institute (Kinmon Gakuen), 9/23/1979.