

Statement of Significance

Villa Maris

2222 Bellevue Avenue

West Vancouver, BC

April 2008

Historic Place

The Villa Maris is a 12-storey, pink concrete apartment block, built in 1965 and located at 2222 Bellevue Avenue in West Vancouver.

Heritage Value

Villa Maris is valued as an early example of a high-rise apartment building in West Vancouver. The well-known landmark, nicknamed 'The Pink Palace' for its exterior colour, was once ridiculed, but is increasingly valued as a prominent feature of the West Vancouver waterfront.

The historic place is representative of tall waterfront apartment buildings of the time, which replaced single-family houses from an earlier era and evoked fanciful images of flamboyant seaside 'resort' lifestyle. Rezoning of parts of the Ambleside area and Vancouver's West End to allow high-rise apartments dramatically altered the skylines of these communities. The trend was evocative of the lifestyle changes of the 1960s, which included a rise in single-person households and childless couples, which supported new higher-density apartment-type housing.

The Villa Maris is representative as well of the tenure the time for residential suites, as it has always been a rental building and has been home to many different people over the years.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of the Villa Maris include:

- The parabolic arches, which act as a screen wall rather than carrying any structural weight, and which frame the outdoor walkways above the building entry
- The curved shape of the structure, which responds to an irregularly-shaped lot

- The orientation of the building's side wings to the water view and the southern exposure
- The pink colour
- The single-corridor plan, which provided every suite with a view of the water
- The surviving original windows and balcony railings