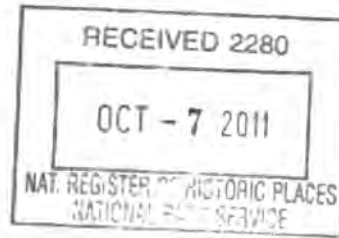


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



816

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Isaacson, Philip M. and Deborah N., House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 2 Benson Street N/A not for publication
city or town Lewiston, Maine N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Androscoggin code 001 zip code 04240

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 local

[Signature] 9/29/11
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
SHPO
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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:)

[Signature] 11-18-11
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

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
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT / International Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

METAL / Steel

walls: WOOD / Weatherboard

GLASS

roof: ASPHALT

other: STONE

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Philip M. and Deborah N. Isaacson House is a compact, International Style house located on a narrow, urban residential lot in Lewiston, Androscoggin County, Maine. Designed for the Isaacson's by Ferdinand Frederick Bruck in 1960 it is a one-story wood framed house, with a flat roof and full basement. The footprint of the square house measures forty feet to a side and it is sandwiched between private exterior courtyards, each measuring twenty by forty feet, attached to the front and rear of the building. Both courtyards are enclosed with nine feet tall privacy walls. As the site slopes gently towards the street, the entire structure is elevated on a 4 ½ feet high terrace that surrounds the front and sides of the building. The exterior of the one-story house is characterized by bays of floor to ceiling glass facing the courtyards, and vertical redwood siding on the side walls. The plan of the interior is based on a three-by-three division of the square, resulting in nine spaces of roughly the same dimensions. At the center of the plan the living room, which has no outside walls, is lit by skylights in the flat roof. This property retains a remarkable degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, design, setting, location, association and feeling, largely due to the careful stewardship of the Isaacson family.

Narrative Description

Benson Street in Lewiston, Androscoggin County Maine, is a short, residential street lined with modest, residences constructed primarily in the first half of the 20th century. The street runs northeast to southwest and links Mountain Avenue to the southwest and Ware Street to the northeast. This neighborhood is situated between Bates College to the southeast, the mixed commercial residential Main Street corridor to the north and the Main Street –Frye Street Historic District and Mt. David to the southwest. Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Four-Square style houses are generally set back between fifteen and thirty feet from the road. The street is lined with mature deciduous trees and fragmented sidewalks separate the front lawns from the paved roads. The Isaacson House is located at the southwest end of Benson Street, on the northwest side of the road. As with all the other properties on this side of the road the lot measures 130 in depth. The southern half of the lot is fifty-five feet wide, while the rear half is fifty feet wide. (To simplify description, throughout the remainder of the document the property will be described as if the house faces true south towards Benson Street.)

In contrast to the rest of the neighborhood, the front edge of the house is located roughly fifty-five feet back from the edge of the pavement. The first forty-five feet of the yard contains a level lawn, bisected by a flagstone walkway, and a gravel parking pad at the southwestern-most corner. A large, leaning, maple tree located between the walkway and pad is enveloped by a low wooden retaining wall that also functions as a planter. At the north end of the front yard the walkway leads to an open stringer staircase of five wide planks. The stairs grant access to an approximately ten foot wide terrace that stretches across the entire front of the structure. Lengthy, unpainted timbers form the front retaining wall of the terrace. Low, manicured hedges flank the stairs and additional square, wooden planting boxes front the terrace face and are dedicated to ferns, hosta, juniper and low perennials. A long, narrow planter is set into the top of the terrace on either side of the stairs and contain perennial heathers. The remainder of the terrace is paved with square flagstone. In front of the east end of the terrace is an ornamental Japanese red maple.

The exterior of the front and rear elevations of the house is protected by a nine-foot high privacy wall surrounding the end courtyards. The wall is mounted on steel columns, which attach to concrete footers under a layer of pea gravel. The southern, or front, privacy wall consists of five irregular bays. The first and fifth bay contain, full height, narrow panels of frosted glass set in minimal, white painted wooden frames. The second and fourth bays consist of 3" wide redwood siding, laid vertically and painted the color of wet sand. The center bay contains the entry portal (no door), which is painted white and topped with a simple, horizontal white panel. The privacy wall wraps around the east and west sides of the courtyard, broken where it meets the house by a section filled with vertically oriented, fixed louvers that allow light and breeze into the courtyard. The rear, or northern, privacy fence is similar, but lacks the center portal, and as such exhibits only three bays. On the east side of the rear privacy wall a chartreuse, solid body wooden door is situated next to the louvered section.

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE

Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE

County and State

The interiors of the courtyard walls are painted white. The front courtyard terrace is paved with square slate flagstones, into which is set two contrasting, rectangular islands. The eastern island is formed of square stone pavers upon which a low, polished stone bowl has been carefully placed. The western island is filled with bark mulch and hosts an ornamental copper leaf flowering crab tree with a crown that crests well above the privacy wall. Very low growing hedges (boxwood?) set in front of the windows of the house complete the vegetation in the front courtyard. The rear courtyard contains similar hedges, a mature maple tree in the northwest corner, and an apple tree espaliered against the eastern side of the privacy wall. Here the courtyard features well worn cobblestone paving.

The front wall of the house is divided into three bays. The outer bays measure approximately twelve feet wide and each contain seven, narrow, full height, glass windows, set deeply into the wall and separated by thick muntins. On each side the fifth window bay contains a muted chartreuse (originally vermilion) wooden panel, which acts as a vent and provides the only intentional color against the white of the courtyard walls. Between the outer bays is a tri-partite bay measuring sixteen feet in width. At the center is a wide, white, wooden exterior door ornamented with horizontal wooden louvers. A glass transom window hovers above the door, and a pair of wide plate-glass windows, set in deep wooden frames, flank the door to either side. This pattern is essentially repeated on the north wall of the house, except that the center bay is fitted with a wider, sliding glass door and the side plate glass windows are correspondingly narrower. The side elevations, east and west, each contain a single exterior door, a pair of narrow plate glass windows, and vertical redwood siding. The flat roof is now covered with asphalt, but the original covering was five layers of tar and gravel. Three raised skylights are located on the roof above light wells, two of which are adjacent to the chimney stack. The two-flue stack is executed in brick, but due to its low height it is barely visible from the exterior of the house.

On the interior two parallel partition walls, each running north to south and corresponding to the bay divisions seen on the exterior, dictate the three primary spatial divisions within the house. The eastern division contains square bedrooms in the northeast and southeast corners. In the bedrooms custom built shelving units and/or bookshelves are positioned against the partition walls. The bedrooms are linked by a narrow corridor (the only true hallway in the house), off of which opens an interior bathroom and a staircase to the basement. (Built-in closets in each bedroom also back up onto the bathroom and hall). The western division contains a slightly larger master bedroom in the southwest corner and a kitchen with breakfast nook in the northwest corner. Between these two rooms is another, smaller bathroom, and a large walk-in closet, both accessed from the master bedroom. In the middle of the house, between the partition walls is the dining room in the north, the living room in the middle and a narrow foyer adjacent to the front door in the south. In this central aisle the divisions between the functional spaces are not created by partition walls, but by well placed features. An approximately eight feet wide, free-standing, custom made, wooden closet is positioned opposite the front door and 'creates' the north wall of the foyer. On the backside the unit features deep rows of bookshelves and a display shelf. At the opposite end of the living room an equally wide brick fireplace, painted white, separates the living room from the dining room. A pair of light wells are placed in the ceiling to either side of the rectilinear chimney stack to allow additional light into the otherwise window-less, but not dark, living room.

There are only three doors in the north-south partition walls (one leads from the foyer to the southwest bedroom, the other two are opposite of the chimney stack and light wells and lead into the kitchen and the eastern hallway) which thus allows a considerable amount of interior wall space in the living room, foyer and dining room. The only trim elements are found at the doors. Each of the doors opposite the chimney stack are set in a narrow frame of quarter sawn oak and topped with flat oak panel – the contrast with the white walls is striking. The same wood is used to trim the free-standing closet, the built-in closets and the kitchen cupboards, and is echoed in the wall-mounted dining room credenza, the dining room table, and the chairs and side tables in the living room. Throughout the house the rich oak floors visually ground the structure.

Phoebe Mason Bruck, the wife of the architect, and a salesperson at Design Research in Cambridge, worked on the interior design of the structure. A mock-up of the house, annotated with rug choices, furniture notes, chair orders and fabrics hangs on the kitchen wall. With very few exceptions all the furniture in the house is original, and includes pieces designed or produced by Marcel Breuer, Herman Miller, Alvar Aalto and Mies van der Rohe. The kitchen retains its original cupboards, wall mounted oven and counter top range, as well as original lighting fixtures.

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1960

Significant Dates

1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Bruck, F. Frederick (1921-1997), architect

Laliberte Bros, Inc, Lewiston, Me, contractors

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- 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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance reflects the year this resource was designed and constructed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

According to the owner, travelers on Benson Street in Lewiston, Maine often mistake the Philip M. and Deborah N. Isaacson House for a private tennis court or swimming pool. The structure, elevated on a level terrace, presents to the street a wall of vertical redwood siding, broken only at the corners by elongated frosted-glass panels and in the middle by an open portal with a white wooden frame. This structure, one of two high walls surrounding front and rear courtyards, is both an integral part of the house and a method of providing privacy for the occupants of the glass-walled International Style House at the core. Designed in 1960 by the Cambridge-based architect F. Frederick Bruck, and lived in continually by the original owners, the Isaacson House is essentially unchanged since its completion, and retains an extraordinary integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, association, setting and feeling, as well as original, period furnishings. Within Maine, this is one of a very few International-style houses designed for year-round residency and possibly the only example located in an urban residential neighborhood. In addition at this time is it the only known International Style courtyard house in the state. The Isaacson House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level for its architectural significance under Criterion C, as a building that possesses the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.

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

Criterion C: Architecture

In a recent on-line edition of *Yankee Magazine*, the Maine art critic Edgar Allen Beem described the Isaacson House as an "exquisite little modernist box in which every surface, line, and appointment is thoughtful and intentional." Reminiscent in its simplicity of the early work of Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, the Isaacson House embodies the distinctive characteristics of the International Style. The form is radically simple: a forty feet square core to which is affixed a pair of twenty by forty feet enclosed courtyards. Within the house is a grid reminiscent of a tic-tac-toe board producing nine enclosures of more or less equal size. On the north and south exterior walls this grid is expressed through three glass-and-wood, foundation-to-cornice modular window units. Executed in wood, or glass, verticals contrast with horizontals from the base of the terrace to the cornice of the house, but otherwise the structural ornament is minimal and results from the materials and the repetitions of shapes. The use of color is subdued and punctuated. The façade of the privacy fence is painted a wet sand color to soften the structure (a flat expanse of white wood would have dominated the house and landscape to distraction), and in each of the four, corner, rooms is a single, muted chartreuse panel. A similar panel is used once, on the east side of the rear courtyard, as a side door. Additional ornamentation, on the exterior is not structural, instead it is provided by the play of shadows through wooden grills and ornamental trees, the cobblestone terrace and espaliered trees against the fence. The exterior materials are redwood siding over a wooden, not steel, frame, but nonetheless the construction can be seen as an honest expression of the structural form. There is little left to chance in this gem of a modernist box, except for the play of light and shadows against the glass and wood palette. On the interior, the finishes are honest in their expression: wood is celebrated as wood; leather as leather, stainless steel shines, light from the skylights highlight a line or corner. Texture is provided by books on the shelf, the Braille-like painted brick chimney stack, fabric floor to ceiling curtains, and contemporary art and artifacts on the walls.

Architect Bruce Norelius's column *Modernism in Maine* in the "AIA Maine News," provides an overview of the house's demeanor.

The house itself is a perfect 40 foot square box with a flat roof. The plan is rigorous and extremely economical, providing a feeling of spaciousness in the living core through parallel circulation and furniture floating away from the walls.

The most remarkable characteristic of the house's *partire* in its inward focus, and that introspection clearly references the urban site response of Sert's house that intrigued Isaacson initially. Here, the 40 foot square of the house is bracketed front and back with the enclosed 20 by 40 courtyards, creating a 40 by 80 footprint on the site. The courtyard walls match the height of the house's wall, and – while bigger than any space on the interior – still retain the proportions of rooms. Though unprecedented in Lewiston or any other city in Maine, where densities rarely have the urban feel of Boston or Cambridge, the house achieves respectful contextualism in the neighborhood through its modesty. Isaacson succinctly describes the house's placement on the lot as "restless." Placed on a short plinth which extends toward the street but is behind the setback line grounding the front façade of neighboring houses, the courtyard

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

walls sit back still further. As crisp and staid as the façade appears, its retreat back on the lot substantially reduces its presence on the street...

Inside the house, the outer ring of rooms looks primarily into the courtyards. Placed on the east and west ends of the house, this placement of fenestration guarantees a play of light in these spaces that is achieved both through direct light at specific times of day, and through bounced light that plays on the white walls of the courtyard interiors. The Living Room, at the absolute center of the house, only has glimpses out to the courtyards around and past a fireplace mass and the floating cabinetry which defies (sic) the foyer. Enlivened by skylights at the edge of the space, this is a remarkable move – a Living Room without windows- and it resonates with a sense of quietude. Isaacson notes the modest scale of the rooms – based on a 12/16/12 foot grid – unintentionally references the proportions of traditional capes and other small colonial-era houses familiar in the state. (Norelius, p. 1, 3.)

While traditional dimensions may account for the building's accessibility, it's expression of International Style is overt, complete and well executed.

The architect for the Isaacson House was Ferdinand Frederick Bruck (better known as F. Frederick Bruck). Bruck was born in 1921 in Breslau, Germany. By 1936 he had relocated to York, England and the following year matriculated in Harvard College earning his B.A. in 1941. By 1951 he had obtained first his bachelors and then his masters of architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design, studying under the direction of Walter Gropius. During his studies he served as a draftsman in the firms of Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation followed by three years as designer and draftsman at Bogner & Richmond, Architects. After finishing his degree he worked for a year with Carl Koch & Associates, followed by a brief stay at Kilham, Hopkins, Greeley and Brodie, before joining Gropius's The Architects Collaborative in September of 1952.¹ Just over a year later he entered private practice. While at Harvard he was awarded the American Institute of Architects School Medal in 1949, and a traveling scholarship to California in 1949.

The vast majority of Bruck's commissions were done in Massachusetts (especially Cambridge and Boston), with at least one commission each in Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. In addition to the Isaacson House, Bruck was responsible for at least one other modernist style home in Maine. The 1964 Martin House, on a waterfront site in York Harbor, is an expansive, segmented building, with shed roofs, connecting covered walkways, curvilinear walls, recessed lanais and shingled walls. Although it still features expanses of glass and repetitive modules, they are used in lesser quantity and the expression of each module varies. In contrast to the Isaacson House, which is in the tradition of Gropius, Sert and Koch, the Martin house foreshadows the neo-shingle style that was to mature in Maine a decade later under the pen of Robert A. M. Sterns. At the same time, the Martin House had contemporaries with regard to a relaxation of the cubist glass-and stucco forms. As described by Lester Walker in American Shelter :

Second generation American International Style architects like Paul Rudolph and Eliot Noyes who studied with Gropius and Breuer at Harvard believed that climatic site differences were good reason to stress regional characteristics in building. By the early 1950s, these architects and others like them were designing houses using International Style rules, set down by their mentors twenty-five years earlier, but building with materials more indigenous to the site. The example shown below, [the Eliot Noyes House, New Canaan, Connecticut] no longer a white stucco box, incorporates native fieldstone for exterior walls with a cedar roof fascia board – natural materials influenced by the rugged character of the site. (Page 219.)

Bruck is probably best classed among the "others like them". Although the Isaacson House is formal with regard to its geometry and spatial patterning, this formalism is tempered through the use of vertical redwood siding, raw timber retaining walls, cobblestone and fieldstone pavers, and the plantings and trees integrated into the courtyard and terrace. Perhaps this meander from the more austere form was a result of a natural evolution of the style, but it is also possibly a response to the specific site. As opposed to dramatic open vistas, stark rugged landscapes or wave beaten headlands where a glass and stucco structure was the foil to the surroundings, in the traditional, middle class neighborhood of Lewiston the architecture needed to be toned down and integrated into the tree-lined, four-square local aesthetic. As such, the landscaping was designed to complement the residence. Square or rectilinear forms form the man-made elements

¹ Carl Koch, who also studied under Gropius at Harvard, is best known for his pre-fabricated, modernist residential building systems, called Techbull. He first debuted this system in 1953, the year after Bruck worked for him as a designer.

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE

Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE

County and State

(walkway, parking pad, planters, timbers and terrace) and contrast with the almost Bonsai form of the mature maple, the intense color of the Japanese Maple and the low, soft perennials in the planters – all tied together by the flat carpet of the well kept lawn.

The International Style, both in its academic and evolved Modernist expression, is not unknown in Maine, but it is rare, especially when compared with portions of southern New England between Boston and New York. Among the better known examples in the state are the 1936 George Howe designed "Fortune Rocks", the 1941 "Anchorage" (for Nelson A. Rockefeller), and 1947 "Sea Change" (NR: 08000991) all located in summer communities on Mount Desert Island. The latter two were designed by Walter K. Harrison. Outside of Portland is the Marcel Breuer designed Potter House, 1949-50, in a suburban development in Cape Elizabeth and the 1952 Payson House by Serge Chermayoff in Falmouth. Less well known are Bruck's 1964 Martin House in York Harbor; the 1948 Wilhelm Reich House in Rangeley (designed by James B. Bell); the 1972 Carter and Woodruff designed "Surf Point" in York, and the 1946 glass-walled vacation house designed by Hugh Stubbins, Jr. in Camden. The Portland Museum of Art by Henry Nichols Cobb of the I.M. Pei Firm and Edward Larrabee Barnes' Haystack Mountain School of Crafts top the list of publicly accessible buildings. Of these residential structures the three Mount Dessert Island properties, one York properties and the house in Camden are seasonal buildings. Neither of Harrison's homes are academic interpretations of the style; instead they are closely integrated into their naturalistic setting, as is the Martin House in York Harbor. Each of these significant commissions are important for their early introduction of modern style into a generally conservative state. Yet they differ from International Style residences in other states in their extensive use of local, natural materials (predominately stone), in a manner that has characterized homes on the Maine coast since the 1880s. Only the Potter House, the Payson House at Thornhurst the Isaacson House, and possibly Surf Point in York were designed as year round, family oriented, residential houses.

Like the Isaacson House, the National Register listed Payson House (NR: 05000057) is compact, modular and modest. This building, designed by Chermayoff, replaced a Victorian 'cottage' on the Falmouth shore, north of Portland. As such, the building was sited to take advantage of expansive views of foreground meadows backed by the rock-lined shore and ocean. The Potter House designed by Marcel Breuer, by contrast, is situated in a wooded suburban neighborhood of post World War II houses. As with the Payson House, the architect worked very closely with the Potter family to design a building that would fit within their budget and fulfill their functional needs. In the analysis of one critic, the Potter house represents a mature evolution of the International Style, in which the planer forms and the 'regular proportions, consistent simplicity and clear expression of function evolved away from industrial precedents to make a more domestic design that included, again, the conscious use of wood, stone and slate" (Isaacson, p. 250-1, 232). The same could be said of both the Payson House (minus the use of the natural materials) and the Isaacson House.

Courtyard Houses

Traditional courtyard houses, with a solid structure surrounding an open, interior courtyard, are rare in the northeast due to the difficulty in removing deep or heavy snow from the courtyard. More commonly this form is found in warmer regions, and often in dense urban settings where exterior spaces are at a premium. In the preface to The Courtyard House: From Cultural Reference to Universal Relevance, editor Nasser O. Rabbat explains the appeal of this building type:

Courtyard houses...are more common in the city, where zoning and land pressure require residents to delimit boundaries between their home, the street, and adjacent properties...In city dwellings, the courtyard may be a protected garden, an open reception space screened from view, a connector between rooms surrounding it, a service area where cooking and washing take place, or a combination of all these functions. But the most celebrated function of the courtyard is that it provides a window to the sky – a conduit for air and light in the midst of the crowded urban fabric – while ensuring visual and spatial privacy. For all of the above reasons, the courtyard house is one of the most successful and easily achievable architectural means to mediate between open and closed, inside and outside, social constraints and environmental requirements, or, more abstractly, between nature and culture. (Page xxii.)

The Isaacson house belongs to a class of structures that reverses the spatial relationships of the traditional courtyard house. The house core is located where the courtyard should be and the two courtyards linger in the footprint of where the house should be. The simple explanation is that the building's width was restricted by the narrow lot; any interior courtyard would have resulted in corridor shaped spaces and taxed the International Style axiom that form follows function. Secondly, with the courtyards attached to the edges of the core snow could more easily be removed. And the courtyard, with privacy fence, was necessary in order to allow the house the exterior walls of glass characteristic of the International Style. Indeed, it was after the publication of Jose Luis Sert's own house design in Cambridge in 1959 that the Isaacson's

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

decided to have a similar house designed for their Lewiston lot. The Sert House, which had a brick exterior facing the tree lined suburban street, contained both an inner courtyard and two exterior courtyards situated behind one-story high privacy walls. Sert was the Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and while he ultimately did not take on the commission, the courtyard concept continued to appeal to the Isaacsons and was then integrated into Bruck's design. None of the other International Style houses known in Maine exhibit the courtyard form; and it is unlikely that any could do so as effectively as this example.

In 1964 the American Institute of Architects (AIA) gave Bruck an *Award of Merit* in the Homes for Better Living Awards, (co-sponsored by the AIA and *House and Home* magazine) for the Isaacson house. Stating that it was "A consistent house, a real contribution" the jury was impressed by the clever use of the courtyards and privacy walls in the urban setting. This was not the first or the last of the accolades given to Bruck. In 1961 he received a design award at the Boston Arts Festival for the I.B. Cohen House in Cambridge, MA, (a three-story, modernist town house also located on a narrow, urban lot); in 1965 the Alan Steinert House, also in Cambridge, received the Award of Excellence for House Design, by the *Architectural Record* and was published in *House and Garden* the following year. In 1962 Bruck was one of the finalists in the Boston City Hall design competition, and while his design for the municipal building did not win, he later designed the First National Bank of Boston and the Bullfinch Office Building, both at Government Center in Boston. Bruck died in May 1997, leaving behind a body of work that spanned four decades, but which, to date, has not been fully cataloged or evaluated. Future research may find that the Isaacson House has added significance within the body of Bruck's overall oeuvre, but it would be premature to do so at this time.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The following history was written by Philip M. Isaacson, who, with his wife Deborah N. Isaacson, commissioned F. Frederick Bruck to design their home in Lewiston.

The design is a natural evolution from a number of contributing factors. The principal influence is the Harvard Graduate School of Design of the 1940's and 1950's and particularly during the years of Walter Gropius (1883 - 1969). Gropius, who had come to Harvard from his directorship of the Bauhaus in Weimar, brought with him the stringent prescriptions promulgated by early Modernism. They included linearity, translucency and order. These were reflected in the work of the School of Design graduates of the period, F. Frederick Bruck among them.

The design of the House embraced Gropius' principles with modifications showing the influence of José Sert (a successor to Gropius at Harvard) who, in turn, reflected certain attitudes of Le Corbusier.

The goal was to produce a pavilion-like structure embraced by courtyards adequate enough to permit the urban use of expanses of glass. With very rare exceptions, Modernist homes in Maine have been placed on rural sites as conscious expressions of sculpture. The Isaacson House, in its introspection, is thus unique.

The Isaacsons (Philip M. and his late wife Deborah N.) were self-instructed vis-à-vis Modernism. As there were no sympathetically schooled architects in Maine in the late 1950's, their education was incrementally acquired through reading, travel and occasional interviews with architects. Established urbane architects were not interested in designing a modest home in an old industrial city in far off Maine. There was little benefit to them in the commission as such and no apparent ancillary benefit in the form of broad publicity.

Bruck was a fortunate find. It came from the fact his wife, Phoebe Mason Bruck, was, while attending the Graduate School of Design herself, a salesperson at Design Research in Cambridge, a wonderland of design and a pioneer in the sale of Modernist furnishings. Its influence ultimately became nationwide. The Isaacsons met Ms. Bruck at Design Research and this led to her young husband. He understood the design attitudes of the Isaacsons (i.e., their "taste") and in developing each aspect of the design, gave them the sedate clarity they sought. His aesthetics have endowed the house with apparent timelessness, at least in Modernist terms. At the very least it is a quiet expression of refined Modernist attitudes as they were understood on the East Coast in the late 1950's.

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Baker, Chelsea Holden. "A Fine Vintage" in *Dwell*, Volume 10, Issue 10. October, 2010. Pages 82-90.

Beem, Edgar Allen. "Maine Modern 50 Years of Modern Architecture" in *YankeeMagazine.com*, 2011.
(<http://www.yankeemagazine.com/blogs/art/mainemodern> . Accessed February 16, 2011.

Bowker, R.R. American Architects Directory. (American Institute of Architects). First Edition, 1956, Second Edition, 1962, Third Edition 1970.

Clifford, Ann. Interview with F. Frederick Bruck. 23 May, 1995. Copy of notes on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

Hail, Christopher. Cambridge Buildings and Architects, Volume Four: Index of Names. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard/Radcliffe Online Historical Reference Shelf.) <http://hul.harvard.edu/huarc/refshelf/cba/> . Accessed May 18, 2011.

Isaacson, Philip. "The Development of Modern Styles of Architecture: Roughly from 1920 to the Present," in Maine Forms of American Architecture. Deborah Thompson, ed. (Camden, Maine: Downeast Magazine, 1976), pp 225-254.

Norelius, Bruce. "Modernism in Maine. Isaacson, Lewiston, Maine, 1960." in *AIA Maine News*, Volume 155. May 2009. (Scarborough, Maine). Pages 1, 3.

Rabbat, Nasser O., editor. The Courtyard House: From Cultural Reference to Universal Relevance. (Cambridge, MA: Ashgate Publishers, in association with the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture), September 2010.

Sert, Jose Luis. Floor plans of the Jose Luis Sert House, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1857/57. Plans reproduced at <http://wikiarquitectura.com/es/images/a/ab/Escanear0001.jpg> , February 14, 2011.

Walker, Lester. American Shelter. (Woodstock, New York: Overlook Press), 1981, revised 1996.

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
 Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .16 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>19</u>	<u>403351</u>	<u>4884385</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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

The boundaries of the nominated property are depicted on the City of Lewiston tax map number 193, lot 154.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The above cited boundaries represent both the current and historical limits of the nominated property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christi A. Mitchell
 organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date 23 May 2011
 street & number 55 Capitol Street, SHS 65 telephone (207) 287-2132 x 2
 city or town Augusta state Maine zip code 04333-0065
 e-mail Christi.mitchell@maine.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

ISAACSON, PHILIP M. AND DEBORAH N., HOUSE
Name of Property

ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY, MAINE
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Isaacson, Philip M. and Deborah N., House
City or Vicinity: Lewiston
County: Androscoggin **State:** Maine
Photographer: Christi A. Mitchell
Date Photographed: 1 September 2009

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0001.TIF**
South elevation and front yard; facing northwest.
- 2 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0002.TIF**
Front steps, privacy screen and front door; facing north
- 3 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0003.TIF**
Front, or south, courtyard; facing northwest.
- 4 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0004.TIF**
Rear, or north, courtyard; facing southwest.
- 5 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0005.TIF**
Living room, separated from dining room by chimney stack; facing north.
- 6 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0006.TIF**
Dining room, with north courtyard in background; facing northwest.
- 7 of 7 **ME_ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY_ISAACSON HOUSE_0007.TIF**
Kitchen, with original cupboards and light fixture, facing northeast.

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 18 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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Isgacson, Philip M. and Deborah N., House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MAINE, Androscoggin

DATE RECEIVED: 10/07/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/28/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/14/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/22/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000816

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 11.18.11 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



ISAACSON HOUSE; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



ISAACSON HOUSE; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



ISAACSON HOUSE; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



ISAACSON HOUSE, ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



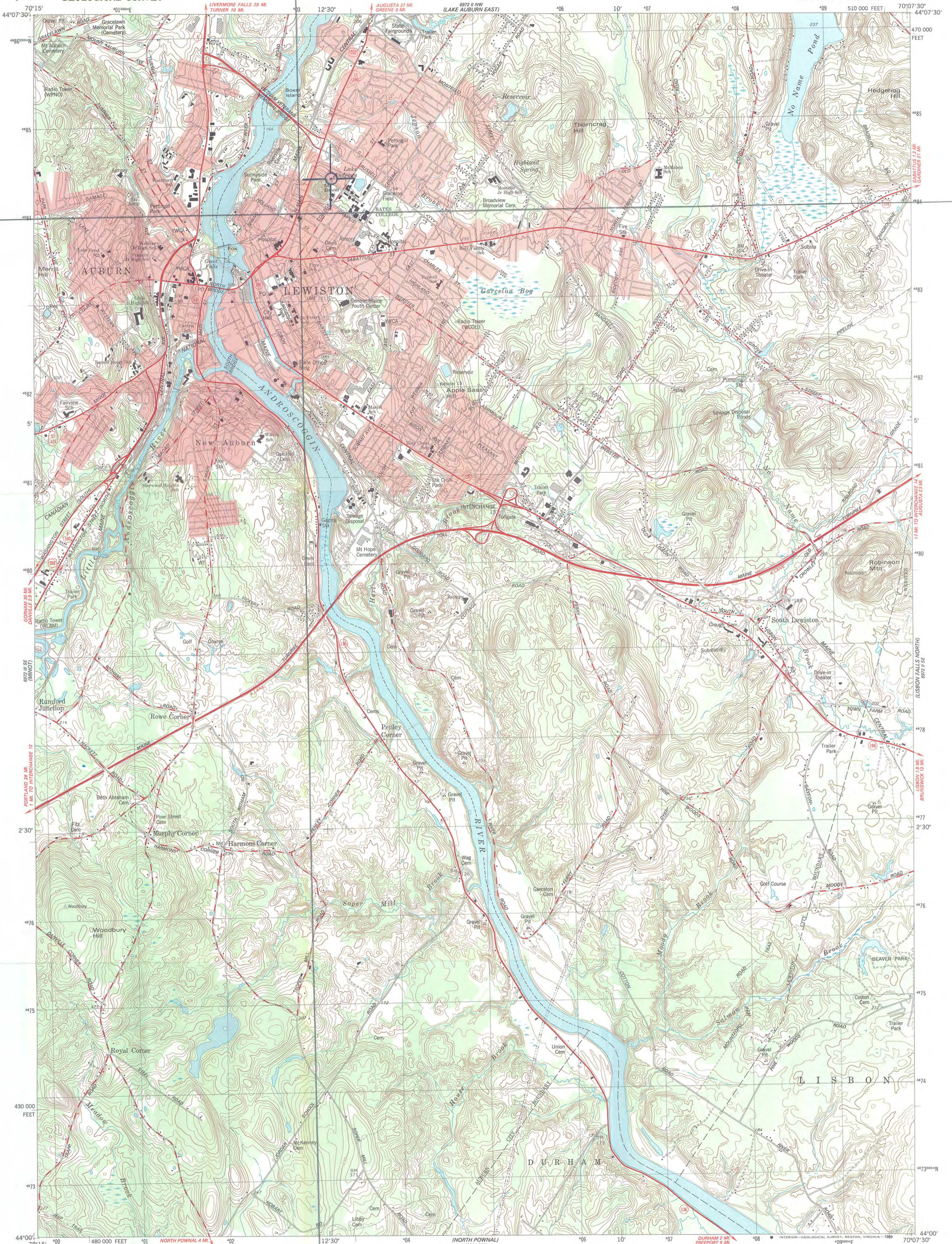
ISAACSON HOUSE ; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



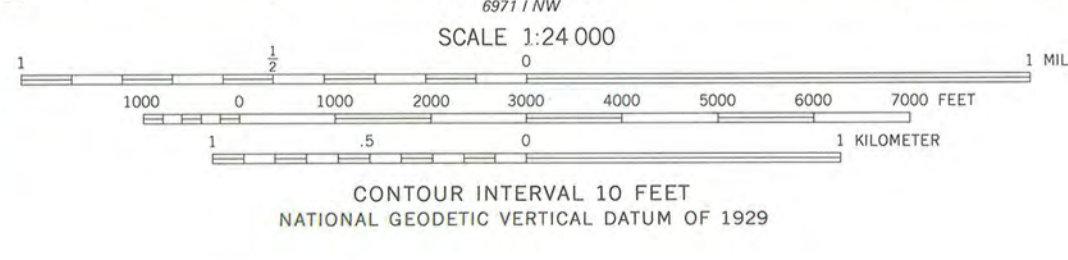
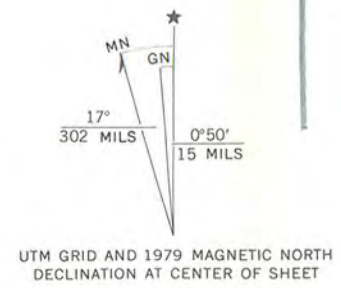
ISAACSON HOUSE; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME 60F7



ISAACSON HOUSE; ANDROSCOGGIN CO., ME



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Maine Geodetic Survey
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1973. Field checked 1975. Map edited 1979
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Maine coordinate
system, west zone (transverse Mercator)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 4 meters south and
42 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



LEWISTON, MAINE
SW/4 LEWISTON 15' QUADRANGLE
44070 A2-TF-024
1979
DMA 6972 II SW—SERIES V811



PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333



EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

29 September 2011

Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service 2280
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW,
Washington D.C. 20005

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find four (4) new National Register nominations for properties located in the State of Maine:

- Emery School, York County
- Isaacson House, Androscoggin County
- Seven Star Grange #73, Waldo County
- Troy Union Meeting House, Waldo County

The photographs for the Emery School were printed on an Epson Stylus Photo 1400 printer using Claria High Definition Ink, on Epson Premium Photo Paper Glossy. The photographs for the Isaacson House, the Troy Union Meeting house and the Seven Star Grange #73 were printed using Hewlett Packard Premium Plus Photo Paper and Vivera Inks on a Hewlett Packard Photosmart C7280 printer. These combinations of printer, ink, and paper were tested by Wilhelm Imaging Research and found to meet the archival standards of the National Register.

If you have any questions relating to these nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 787-2132 x 2.

Sincerely,

Christi A. Mitchell
Architectural Historian

Enc.