

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1057

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Carrington House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Lewis Walk (at eastern terminus of Ocean Walk) [] not for publication

city or town Fire Island Pines, Hamlet of Cherry Grove []
vicinity

state New York code NY county Suffolk code 103 zip code 11782

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 as 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 [] nationally [] statewide locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Signature of certifying official/Title November 12, 2013 Date

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the 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] Signature of the Keeper 11/8/14 date of action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Ruth A. Peeples DBHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/3/13
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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[] see continuation sheet
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- other (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

date of action

Carrington House

Name of Property

Suffolk County, New York

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

3

Noncontributing

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social/civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Piers

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Carrington House

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Suffolk County, New York

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property 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 that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/ Recreation

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1912 - 1969

Significant Dates:

1912, 1927, 1969

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 Building 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 repository: _____

Carrington House
Name of Property

Suffolk County, New York
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 6.75 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 662484 4503075
Zone Easting Northing

3 18
Zone Easting Northing

2 18

4 18

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Molly R. McDonald

organization _____ date 10/26/2012

street & number 15 Northstar Drive telephone 917.566.0525

city or town Troy state NY zip code 12180

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name Fire Island National Seashore – National Park Service (contact: Chris Soller, Superintendent)

street & number 120 Laurel Street telephone 631.687.4752

city or town Patchogue state NY zip code 11772

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20503

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Carrington House
Name of Property
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

LANDSCAPE AND LAYOUT

The Carrington property is located on the south shore of Fire Island in an undeveloped area within the Fire Island National Seashore between the communities of Cherry Grove and the Pines. Three buildings are located on the Carrington property: the Carrington House (the "Main House"), the Guest House, and a small utility shed. All of the buildings are clustered in the southeast portion of the property, on low sandy ground just behind the row of dunes along the oceanfront beach. The utility shed is located roughly 10 feet west of the Main House. The Guest House is located roughly 60 feet west of the Main House.

The buildings are immediately surrounded by a forest that consists of small pine trees, bayberry bushes, and other low shrubs. South of the woodland are dunes, beach, and the Atlantic Ocean. North of the woodland is a marsh. The Carrington House is accessed from the north and east by meandering sandy pathways. There are no paved roads in Cherry Grove or the Pines, nor are there any in the vicinity of the Carrington property. A wood plank boardwalk runs east-west along the north side of the house, providing a raised walkway between the Main House, utility shed, and Guest House. A second boardwalk, oriented north-south, is located a short distance west of the Main House, affording access between the beach and the east-west pathway leading towards Cherry Grove. The Carrington House faces south towards the ocean, and is entered from the north. The Guest House is entered from the west.

THE CARRINGTON HOUSE

Exterior

The Carrington House is a modified beach bungalow; an early 20th century wood shingle-clad vacation cottage with additions made over time, principally dating to the second quarter of the 20th century. The cottage exhibits elements of the Craftsman (or Arts & Crafts) style. It is a one and one half-story wood-frame building with a gable roof, covered in asphalt shingles. Two brick chimneys rise from the structure. Many of windows are currently sealed with plywood (some from the interior; some from the exterior); in almost all cases, the window sash remain in place. The house is raised above the ground surface on wood piles. The area beneath the house is sealed from the exterior by vertical board sheathing.

The core (original portion) of the structure faces south, towards the ocean, and consists of a simple three-bay side-gable Beach Bungalow with a peaked roof and a front (south) shed-roofed porch (now enclosed). On the north and south facades, the rafter ends overhang. On each of the side (east and west) elevations, three windows are located at irregular intervals along the ground-story level. They include a paired window containing six-over-six-light double-hung sash and single windows containing eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash and eight-light awning sash. A small rectangular window containing eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash is located in the gable field just below the roof apex. A small brick chimney rises from the roof ridge.

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A large gable dormer with overhanging eaves is located on the south roof slope. A paired window on the face of the dormer contains six-over-six-light double-hung sash and a window with six-over-six-light double-hung sash is located on each side facade of the dormer.

On the rear (north) elevation of the original house there is a gable-roofed rectangular-plan addition which was likely added in the 1930s or 1940s. The eastern end of the addition extends beyond the original house. The north elevation of the addition features a four-light awning-sash window in the gable field. The first story contains a large paired window. A tall narrow brick chimney with simple corbelling rises from the west roof slope of the north addition.

Another ca. 1940 addition is appended on the east elevation of the rear addition. Its roof ridge is aligned perpendicular to that of the north addition. Its shallowly pitched gable roof has overhanging exposed rafter tails. A paired window is located centrally on the east gable; each aperture contains six-light awning sash. A wood window ledge projects from the wall immediately beneath the window. The side (north and south) elevations of the east addition contain windows of various sizes with a variety of sash types ranging from six-over-six-light double-hung sash to four-light awning sash.

A single-story rectangular-plan garage parged with cement is built onto the northwest corner of the Carrington House. A wide doorway containing swinging double doors is located off-center on the west elevation of the garage. Two small windows sealed with vertical-board shutters are located on the north elevation. Portions of a low, clapboard-clad parapet remain atop the flat roof of the garage.

Interior

The ground story of the Carrington House contains a living room, an enclosed porch, a kitchen, an entry room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and multiple closets. The upper story contains an open landing area, two bedrooms, and additional closets. Most of the rooms have vertical board finishes, possibly a mid-20th century addition, while others have plaster or fiberboard walls. Wood floorboards are the typical floor treatment, while tile and linoleum are found in the kitchen and bathrooms.

The enclosed front porch is a long narrow room with a wall of contiguous six-over-six-light double-hung-sash windows and wood paneled wall surfaces. What appears to have been the main living and/or dining room adjoins the porch to the north, forming the southern core of the original portion of the house. This room has plaster walls and wood floors. Eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash windows are located on the east and west walls. The room is dominated by a large, battered brick chimneybreast featuring a brick mantelpiece, fireplace, and hearth, centered on the north wall of the room. Doorways, containing four-panel wood doors, flank the fireplace; the eastern doorway leads to the kitchen and the western to a bedroom.

The relatively narrow kitchen, which adjoins the living room to the northeast, appears to have been refurbished during the third quarter of the 20th century. It has a linoleum-covered floor and wood drawers and cupboards, as well as a refrigerator and other appliances. On the north wall of the kitchen (likely the original north wall of the house), a doorway and a six-light

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fixed-sash window with simple wood frames adjoin a wood-paneled room, located within the rear addition to the house. This room now contains the primary entry to the Carrington House on its east wall. Six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows occupy its north wall. An additional exterior doorway is located within a small alcove on the west side of the room. Flanking the alcove are a bathroom (on the north) and a small closet (on the south). A relatively small room, probably used as a bedroom, adjoins the entry room to the southeast. The walls of the bedroom are clad with vertical board paneling and have simple wood wainscoting and paired wood windows with six-over-six-light double-hung-sash. A closet occupies the southwest corner of the room. Another apparent bedroom is found on the west side of the kitchen. This room also features vertical board paneling, simple wainscoting, and wood floorboards; it contains a bed, bureau, and other furniture.

A stairway leading to the upper story is located along the east side of the kitchen, arranged in a single north-south-oriented flight. The closed-stringer stair features turned spindles and newel posts at upper and lower levels composed of a single base with reels and an engaged half-round newel cap and turned spindles. A stairway to the basement (not accessed) is located beneath the stairway described above.

The stairway leads to a relatively spacious open landing on the upper story of the Carrington House. Here, the wedge-shaped spaces beneath the eaves of the main roof are used as closets, screened with vertical beaded-board doors and sheathing. Bedrooms adjoin the landing to the south and west, respectively. Both have wood floors, particleboard partition walls, and eight-over-eight-light double-hung-sash windows with simple wood frames. Both have small closets and still contain beds and other furniture.

THE GUEST HOUSE

Exterior

The Guest House on the Carrington Estate is composed of two buildings that were moved to the site ca. 1942 and joined together. They originally functioned as a wagon house/stable and an oil house associated with the Lone Hill Lifesaving Station that formerly occupied the neighboring property. Both are rectangular in plan and are aligned with their roof ridges oriented north-south. The smaller and shorter building, the former oil house, is joined to the southwestern portion of the taller building, the former wagon house. Both are single-story structures clad in wood shingles; their roofs are covered in asphalt shingles (earlier wood shingles were replaced with asphalt shingles in a 2011-2012 rehabilitation). The structures are supported on piles. The former wagon house has a relatively steeply pitched gable roof with a slight overhang and a simple molding along the eaves. The former oil house has a more shallowly pitched gable roof; the south (gable end) elevation of this structure has a raking cornice. Beneath the cornice there are two symmetrically placed windows, each of which appear to contain two-over-two-light double-hung sash.

On the east elevation of the former wagon house is a large window containing eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash (sealed from the exterior with plywood). A large paired window is centrally placed near the apex of the north (gable end) elevation of the former wagon house. Each aperture of the window contains six-over-six-light double-hung sash. Another

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window, containing eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash is located off-center beneath it. The primary entry to the Guest House is located on the west elevation of the former wagon house.¹ The entry is accessed from the boardwalk that runs along the north side of the Guest House via a short flight of simple wood stairs and a landing. A brick external chimney, reportedly added in the early 1970s, was located on the east elevation of the former wagon house until it was removed in a 2011-2012 rehabilitation.

A single-story single-bay flat-roofed addition is located in the southeastern portion of the Guest House (against the east elevation of the former oil house and the south elevation of the former wagon house).

Interior

The interior was accessed prior to a 2011-2012 rehabilitation. The interior of the Carrington Guest House is accessed from a doorway on the west elevation of the building via a wood stair and landing. The first story of the house contains four rooms: a living room, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a bedroom. In general, the rooms have plaster walls and ceilings, wood floors, and wood windows containing eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash. The living room, the largest room in the building, has exposed sawn-plank joists and simple wood crown moldings and wainscoting. A brick fireplace with corbelled brick mantel and brick hearth, believed to have been added in the 1970s, is located on the east wall of the room. A closet with a six-panel wood door is located in the northeast corner of the room, beneath a stairway leading to the upper story of the building. The stairway features turned wood newel posts and balusters. The bathroom, located south of the living room in the eastern portion of the building, contains a shower and sink and a six-over-one-light window. The small bedroom located southwest of the bathroom contains two six-over-six-light windows. The upper story (of the former wagon house portion of the Guest House) contains only one finished room, presumably a bedroom. A portion of the roof framing of the Guest House is visible from the landing. Sawn plank rafters are nailed to a plank ridge beam, secured with plank collar beams. Relatively large sheathing boards are fixed to the rafters.

In general, the interior appears to retain the layout that it likely had in the 1940s when Carrington had the two former Lifesaving Station structures relocated to his property and joined. A number of architectural features also remain, including the stairway and windows.

As part of the 2011-2012 rehabilitation, the brick fire mantle (believed to post-date the period of significance) was removed. No interior features believed to date to the period of significance were reportedly removed (Chris Olijnyk, pers. comm.).

UTILITY SHED

A small single-cell utility shed is located immediately east of the Carrington House, along the boardwalk north of the house. It is constructed of concrete blocks and the gable field is clad in wood shingles. The overhanging eaves reveal exposed

¹ At the time of the author's visit, this entry was sealed from the exterior with plywood.

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rafter tails. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles. A central entryway containing a wood door is located on the west elevation of the shed. A slightly shorter and smaller wood-frame addition sided with vertical boards is appended on the east elevation. This addition also has a gable roof with exposed rafter tails and a double-door on the south façade. The utility shed does not contain windows.

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Carrington House
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Statement of Significance:

The Carrington House is significant under criterion A at the local level in the area of Recreation as one of the earliest extant residential properties in the resort communities of Cherry Grove and the Pines and among the earliest known vacation homes on Fire Island, a 32-mile-long barrier island known primarily as a summer resort. Built ca. 1912 as a summer home by Frederick Marquet, the cottage is associated with the earliest wave of development of Fire Island as a popular recreational destination. The cottage is also significant under criterion C in the area of Architecture as a distinctive, intact example of a typical early twentieth-century beach bungalow, characterized by a single-story side-gable form, front porch, and wood shingle cladding. The property is also locally significant under criterion A in the area of Social History, as an important link to the development of Fire Island (particularly the Fire Island Pines and Cherry Grove) as a community friendly to both gay culture and the arts because of its association with Frank Carrington, a prominent theater director and patron of the arts with a large circle of acquaintances whom he introduced to Fire Island. Carrington acquired the property in 1927 and in the 1930s or 1940s was responsible for enlarging the main house with two wood-frame additions that closely matched the original design. In 1947 he purchased two outbuildings from the abandoned Lone Hill Lifesaving Station and combined and reconfigured them as a guesthouse. In 1950, he also constructed a garage, said to be the only one constructed historically in Cherry Grove or the Pines since cars have never been in general use in this part of Fire Island. In addition to Carrington, the property has been linked to several other prominent artists who rented the property from Carrington, including Truman Capote, who wrote his famous novella *Breakfast at Tiffany's* there. The period of significance for the property has been identified as beginning in 1912, the presumed construction date of the house, and ending in 1969, the date that Carrington officially deeded the house to the National Park Service.

Fire Island: Pre-1912

Fire Island is an approximately 32-mile-long barrier island that runs along the southern edge of Long Island, separated from it by the Great South Bay. The Atlantic Ocean borders its southern shore (Dickerson 1975). In 1685 members of the Secatogue band of Lenape Indians deeded Fire Island and the adjacent south shore of Long Island to Brookhaven Town. The following year, Governor Thomas Dongan issued a land patent to William Nicoll for the area that now composes East Islip and Fire Island. A major storm washed over the area in 1690, breaking the barrier island into five distinct parts. It is said that a surveyor for Governor Dongan labeled the group "Five Islands" and that the current name Fire Island is a corruption of the former (Greeley-Polhemus Group, Inc. [GPG] 1998: 42).

Colonel William Tangier Smith of England, who had served as lieutenant governor of Tangier, arrived in the area and began to acquire large tracts of land in Brookhaven. In 1693, Governor Fletcher granted Smith a patent for an area that encompassed much of the Town of Brookhaven, including the entirety of Fire Island. Known as St. George's Manor, this was one of the twenty-three manorial grants distributed by the governor (Koppelman and Forman 2008). Upon his death,

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William Tangier Smith bequeathed all of Fire Island east of the Fire Island Inlet to his sons Major William and Charles Jaffree, and the land long remained in Smith family hands (GPG 1998: 45).

The first person of European descent to take up permanent residence on Fire Island is said to have been a pirate and scavenger named Jeremiah Smith, who built a house (no longer extant) near present day Cherry Grove in the 1790s. Shipwrecks were common on Fire Island. In 1805, the American Humane Society began to erect small shelters along the beach for stranded seamen. The first lighthouse was built on Fire Island in 1824, at Fire Island Inlet; it was replaced in 1859 with the current 165-foot high structure. In 1872, the United States Life Saving Service was founded. Larger lifesaving stations, watchtowers, and associated structures were built on Fire Island at this time, including one at Lone Hill (the future location of the Carrington property, between Cherry Grove and the Pines). After World War I, the Lifesaving Service was dissolved and replaced by the United States Coast Guard. During Prohibition, the Coast Guard was heavily involved in "rum running." After World War II, however, many small Coast Guard stations, like the one at Lone Hill, were abandoned.²

Fire Island was established as a summer resort location when the Long Island Railroad extended its service to Patchogue in 1869. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, several ferries had been established connecting Fire Island with mainland Long Island. Nineteenth-century Fire Island resorts included the Surf Hotel opposite Babylon, Long Island, which gained national fame when the State of New York attempted to seize it as a place to land immigrant ships suspected of harboring cholera during the epidemic of the early 1890s. Water Island, opposite Patchogue, was also the site of an early resort community, featuring two hotels between the 1890s and the 1930s (Dickerson 1975). Point O' Woods is arguably the oldest community of summer residences on Fire Island, with its first heyday in the 1890s. Saltaire was developed as a family community beginning in the 1910s.

Cherry Grove, opposite Sayville, Long Island, is generally considered Fire Island's oldest settlement (Weinstein 2007:5; Newton 1993: 15; Dickerson 1975). In 1869, Archer Perkinson of Patchogue bought a mile of the Fire Island from the Smith estate of St. George's Manor. He is said to have taken over the house of the pirate, Jeremiah Smith, built a dock and a small farm, and advertised dinners for excursionists. Perkinson is credited with naming the community after the wild cherry trees that grew abundantly there. About 1880, Perkinson built a two-story hotel to replace the earlier cottage (Dickerson 1975). Well before Cherry Grove had been established as a gay community, Oscar Wilde stayed there in 1882 and noted that Cherry Grove was one of the most beautiful resorts he had visited (Newton 1993:15). The first boardwalks were laid out in the community in 1900 (Johnson 1983). In contrast to Cherry Grove, the Fire Island Pines community was established quite late: little or no development appears to have occurred there prior to the 20th century, with the exception of the Lifesaving Station noted above.

² The Lifesaving Station at Lone Hill stood until the early 2000s, when it was demolished and replaced by the current Pines community house.

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No documentation has been found suggesting that the current location of the Carrington property was developed prior to 1900. A map of Fire Island drawn by Jonathan Sammis, surveyor, dated 1878 and entitled "Map of Partition of the Great South Beach in the Towns of Brookhaven and Islip, L.I.," illustrates the entirety of the island partitioned into various large numbered lots. The map identifies the owners of these lots and illustrates building locations. The map indicates that the area now comprising subject property would have been part of "Lot 26," which was then owned by Rosella Rogers, Emeline Avery, and Sarah Stillman. One structure is depicted in the approximate center of the lot (west of the present location of the Carrington House), labeled with the name I. Bedell. Property records on file at the Suffolk County Clerk's Office show that "Sarah Stillman and Emeline Avery (as special guardian of infant Emma Rogers)," conveyed the property now known as the Carrington Tract to George R. Brush of Sayville in 1887 for \$1,232.40, which the deed refers to as "being the easterly portion of Lot #26 on the Jonathan Sammis map." George Brush was a physician who had served in the Navy during the Civil War. Brush lived with his wife Margaret Ann (Maggie) and his mother- and father-in-law, Jacob and Elizabeth Smith. Capt. Jacob Smith (b. 1811), a retired sea captain who kept a shop in Sayville, was a prominent local businessman. George Brush died "in the service" prior to 1896 (*Portrait and Biographical Record of Suffolk County 1896*: 163).

1912 to the 1960s

Cherry Grove and the Pines

As described above, the earliest cottages built on Fire Island were the small vacation homes of both local baymen and middle-class families from Long Island or New Jersey. It was not until the 1920s that New York City sophisticates, (sometimes locally referred to at that time as "the theater people"), many of whom were gay, were recognized as a distinct and growing group of Fire Island vacationers. The sparsely populated barrier island furnished a relatively private retreat from the both the crowds of the city and the strictures of mainstream society. For a period, the "family people" and the "theater people" in Cherry Grove were aware of themselves as two separate groups that generally coexisted harmoniously. Most of the gay vacationers during this early period rented houses for the summer from the "family people," rather than purchasing land (Newton 1993: 19). While gay renters received a certain amount of hostility from some Fire Island landowners and residents of Sayville, the community was able to gain a foothold; in part due to a number of open-minded Cherry Grove landowners, and in part because the tourism represented an economic boon. As Esther Newton, author of the seminal history of Cherry Grove observes, "No matter what [the locals] thought of the city people, city money was a godsend during the Depression" (Newton 1993: 32).

The notorious hurricane of 1938 did a great deal of damage to Cherry Grove, wrecking all but a few homes. Ironically, however, the hurricane has been cited as a force that bolstered the gay community's stake in Cherry Grove. The property damage suffered by local "family people" that owned land on Fire Island induced many of them to sell. Vacationers who were part of a bohemian, artistic, and to a large extent gay community, increasingly filled their place as landowners (Newton 1993: 27).

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In 1939, Edward Duffy bought the old Perkinson establishment and converted it into Duffy's Hotel, one of Fire Island's most popular venues, and one which galvanized Cherry Grove's status as a place where gay and lesbian people could socialize publicly with relatively little fear of persecution (Newton 1993:70). "News of Cherry Grove spread by word of mouth in gay bars or private parties in New York" (Rupp 1999: 146-7). Most of the gay and lesbian vacationers in Cherry Grove in these early years were white, middle- or upper middle class intellectuals and artists. Among them were many noted writers, actors, and artists. "English poet W.H. Auden and his companion Chester Kallman spent time in Cherry Grove, as did other literary celebrities such as Carson McCullers, Tennessee Williams, and Truman Capote" (Ibid). According to one history of the gay movement, "Gay theatre people had first discovered Cherry Grove in the 1930s, and in the postwar years, the small isolated summer community became 'like a very private gay country club'" (Rupp 1999: 146). Police raids occurred periodically during the 1950s, as Sayville sheriffs made sporadic arrests for "indecent acts" or nude sunbathing. This sort of police activity was by no means unique to Fire Island during the conservative climate of the 1950s; "crackdowns" on a gay communities that were just beginning to organize and identify themselves were being felt in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and elsewhere (Garnets and Kimmel 1993). In general, however, Fire Island residents viewed "the sporadic hostile police presence as a fact of life about which they could do little" (Newton 1993: 95). In 1956, Duffy's Hotel burned along with multiple adjoining cottages. However, a larger Duffy's was built in its place the following year. By 1960, Cherry Grove was well known as "the summer capital of the gay world." (Dickerson 1975).

Theater played an important role in Cherry Grove from an early date. The Arts Project of Cherry Grove was founded in 1948 by Frank Carrington, Hallye Cannon, Cheryl Crawford, and others. Gay and straight men and women, some of whom were well-known actors, participated in the local productions. According to Cherry Grove historian Esther Newton, the project "manifested the longing for expression of increasingly assertive and self-conscious gay people who were utterly stifled in legitimate theater and in society" (Newton 1993: 48). Newton further argues, "The work of the gay Grove was nothing less than to create the world's first theater for a gay audience" (Newton 1993: 85). Various aspects of this complex and multi-faceted genre were expressed over the course of the early years of the Arts Project. In general, performances were dominated by light-hearted parody, frequently in the form of a musical revue. More serious social statements were typically expressed subtly within a humorous satire. Several of the early productions overtly parodied the gay and non-gay communities on Fire Island and many featured musical numbers performed in drag (Newton 1993).

The Fire Island Pines was settled significantly later than Cherry Grove. The Lone Hill Lifesaving Station and the Carrington (then Marquet) house were among the only buildings in the Pines through the 1920s (these are both on the western fringe of the present Fire Island Pines community). The Home Guardian Company purchased much of the very sparsely settled Pines from Antoinette Sammis in 1925. However, it was not until 1947 that the Home Guardian company subdivided lots in the area and "started development with modest homes around the Lone Hill Coast Guard Station." The boardwalks in the community were laid out in the early 1950s by the company, which also dredged a harbor and built a large boat basin (Johnson 1983). Ferry service to the Pines was established in 1954, and a small community, including several restaurants,

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a grocery store, and a hardware store were established around the boat basin (Weinstein 2007: 12). Both Cherry Grove and the Pines "had the unique position of being gay 'safe spaces' since the fifties, for the Pines, and even further back... for the Grove" (Weinstein 2007: xv). In the latter half of the 20th century, residential development in the Pines more typically consisted of larger homes on larger plots of land than in Cherry Grove. While both communities were predominantly gay, the Pines had a reputation as a quiet, opulent, and sophisticated community, in contrast to the more diverse and theatrical Cherry Grove (Johnson 1983).

The Pines, though within easy walking distance of Cherry Grove, maintained a different character in the early days. In the biography of Joan McCracken, who bought her nearby lot in 1954, the Pines was described a kind of "frontier," in which the few houses that were standing had no electricity and relied on kerosene lamps for light and gasoline-generated pumps for water. Nevertheless, the Pines was rapidly becoming the vacation home of many famous actors and distinguished people, many of whom were gay, but not always openly so. "The convenience to the Grove became an important factor in the settlement of the Pines, as its population grew to include wealthier, more circumspect gays who sought the privacy of the nearby exclusive community" (Sagolla 2003: 245).

The 1950s and 60s are often seen as a period during which the culture of both Cherry Grove and the Pines shifted somewhat. While both remained vibrant, largely gay communities, there was a change from a culture of relatively conservative, elite, intellectuals and artists enjoying quiet secluded vacationing, to a culture emphasizing greater diversity, commercialism, and large-scale social events. According to Esther Newton, during the first half of the 20th century, the culture was "artistic" (associated particularly but not exclusively with arts involving theater, design, and literature), "class-based," a "country club," atmosphere, and the archetypical Grover of the first half of the 20th century considered Fire Island "a rustic escape from homophobic America." While politically liberal and accepting of straight residents and lesbians, the typical Grover espoused a certain "elite" traditional taste. A long-time Fire Island resident explained, "They were artists, they were writers, and they were here for the quietude, so they could work—a place that offered that kind of refreshment of the human spirit..." (Newton 1993:136). By the 1960s, Newton argues, the local culture increasingly emphasized "gay male sexuality," and major social events such as the "tea dance" and the "Miss Fire Island contest," largely sponsored by a handful of local hotels, took ever greater precedence. With this new era, Cherry Grove's residents and visitors reflected a more diverse range of socio-economic classes and ethnic backgrounds. And yet, despite the lack of paved roads, the communities served less and less as quiet secluded retreats for artists. A resident reflected, "The noise at night was unbelievable... in the sixties and seventies, from the Monster [a bar], from the Ice Palace [a hotel], from the seaplanes" (Newton 1993: 137).

The Carrington House during the Marquet Years, 1912-1927

Margaret Brush inherited the Fire Island property from her husband and, in September 1912, sold the parcel to Frederick E. Marquet of 15 Frankfort Street, Orange, New Jersey. Marquet was born in Orange in 1886, the only son of Eugene J. and Susan Marquet. Frederick's mother was born in France; his father was a second-generation American whose parents

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came from France. Eugene Marquet is listed on the 1900 census as being a box manufacturer by trade, while the 13-year-old Frederick was at school. By 1910, Frederick was married and lived on Frankfort Street with his widowed mother; his profession is listed as "box manufacturer," as his father's had been. Marquet was just 26 years old when he purchased the Fire Island property.

The Carrington House was most likely built by Frederick Marquet in 1912, shortly after he purchased the property from Margaret Brush. Some have assigned the house a slightly earlier construction date. For example, the Fire Island National Seashore "Historical Resources Inventory" form for the Carrington Tract (1979) identifies the house's initial construction date as 1909 and notes that "the structure was built by a friend of Frank Carrington's father" (FINS 1979: 401). A letter from Frank Carrington to his friend Dorothy Cambern (1975) is cited as the source for this information. The reference to a "friend of Carrington's father" may refer to Frederick Marquet or his father, who lived near the Carringtons' primary home in New Jersey. However, property records indicate that Marquet did not purchase the property until 1912, and no other information has been found suggesting that the house's construction might have pre-dated his ownership. A later Classified Structure Field Inventory Report (1984) completed by Steven Kesselman of the Fire Island National Seashore also identifies the house's construction date as ca. 1909. It contends, "The Carrington Main House was built ca. 1909 by Mr. and Mrs. Fred E. Marquet of Short Hills, New Jersey, as a summer house, when the area was called Lone Hill." A 1982 *Newsday* article notes, "The main house has stood in its hollow between the primary and secondary dunes since 1910, when it was built as a honeymoon cottage by the family of a Coast Guard commander" (Durkin 1982). (No connection between the Marquets or the Brushes with the Coast Guard has been found).

Frederick E. Marquet and his wife, Mary, sold the western half of the property back to Margaret Brush in 1915 (Brush was then living with a boarder in Sayville). A 1915-17 Hyde map of Fire Island shows Frederick Marquet's property as a narrow strip of land running from the ocean to the bay immediately west of the Lone Hill Lifesaving Station property. The Marquet property and the Brush property are separated on the map by the land of B. Hamilton. By 1920, Marquet and his wife had moved out of his mother's house on Frankfort Street to Millburn, New Jersey (the village where Frank Carrington and his family also lived). It is likely that the Marquets used the house on Fire Island as a summer vacation bungalow; however, little is known about the frequency of their visits or their place within the community. The following portrait of the area is painted in the biography/autobiography of the actress and writer Joan McCracken, who built a home in the Pines in the 1950s: "Though the first bona fide house in the Pines was built back in 1912 by Fred and Molly Marquet, the area, then known as Lone Hill, had for the first half of the twentieth century, been the province of squatters who pitched tents along the beach or dwelled in crudely constructed tar paper shacks alongside the dunes" (Sagolla 2003: 245). Several local histories refer to a reported nudist colony near Lone Hill between Cherry Grove and the Pines in the early 20th century (for example Johnson 1983: 140); however, this has not been substantiated. It is possible, however, that reports of such a colony may be tied to the Marquets. Esther Newton remarks (without citing her source) that "[Frank] Carrington had

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acquired the white house just west of the Pines that belonged to a French theatrical family who practiced 'nude bathing'..." (Newton 1993: 313).

Frank Carrington: His Life and Career

Frank Carrington was born on September 13, 1894 on an army base on Angel Island, California. This birth date was drawn from federal census records (the social security death index differs slightly, listing Carrington's birth date as 1893).

However, Carrington was generally evasive about his age and frequently exaggerated his youth. His World War II draft registration card lists his birth date as September 13, 1896, a Freemason's member guide lists his birth date as 1901, and his obituary does not assign a date to his birth.

Frank's father, Major Frank de L. Carrington (1855-1940), was an army commander. Born in Georgia, Major Carrington served during the "Sioux Uprisings" in the West, was an instructor with the California National Guard, and led a regiment in the Philippine Islands (Anon 1940: 27). Carrington's mother, Nina, was born in Pennsylvania in 1863. Frank had two elder sisters, Leighla (b. 1887) and Gene (b. 1893). In 1900, census records show that the family resided in the Vancouver Barracks in the State of Washington with Nina's mother, Carolina Adimson, and a servant.

Frank Carrington was said to have been interested in theater from his earliest childhood, writing plays by the age of six and working at the Pasadena Playhouse by twelve. Carrington's father retired in 1910, and the family moved to Short Hills in Millburn Township, New Jersey. From the family home on Park Road, Carrington later claimed he could hear the steam whistle of Millburn's Diamond Paper Mill, which he would eventually convert into a theater (Goldsmith 1945: X1).

Carrington worked in a law office during the day and studied theater at night; despite being discouraged by his father, he doggedly pursued a career in the arts (Reynolds 1999: 11). Carrington was a member of the Freemasons, and a member guide states that he was "with the US Navy in World War I" (Denslow 1957: 184). The 1930 federal census indicates that he and his sister Gene were both living with their parents on Park Road. In that year, Carrington's profession is listed as theater director. Carrington was involved in establishing the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York and worked in several other theaters in New York City and Newark (Reynolds 1999: 11).

Carrington met Antoinette Quinby Scudder, with whom he would have a long and fruitful business partnership, in the 1920s, while starring in a play that she had written at a community theater on 5th Avenue and 12th Street in New York. Scudder, an aspiring painter, poet, and playwright, was born in 1886 to a prominent New Jersey family. She was the daughter of Wallace M. Scudder, founder of the *Newark Evening News*, and granddaughter of James M. Quinby, three-time mayor of Newark and a member of Congress. Antoinette Scudder studied at Columbia University, the Art Students League of New York, and the Cape Cod School of Art (Reynolds 1999: 10). Scudder and Carrington first teamed up in the late 1920s, founding a dramatic branch of the Newark Art Club and then establishing the Newark Art Theatre in the late 1920s (Anon 1958: 28). Also in the late 1920s, Carrington purchased his summer home in Fire Island from another Millburn resident, Frederick Marquet.

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In 1934, Carrington and Scudder responded to an advertisement for the sale of an abandoned 19th century paper mill in Millburn, New Jersey. The former Diamond Paper Mill was a brick building on a brook, within walking distance of the railroad and an easy commute to both Newark and New York. Antoinette Scudder purchased the mill and spent over a million dollars to transform it into a substantial well-planned theater, using the services of her architect cousin, Henry D. Scudder. Carrington and Scudder founded the Paper Mill Playhouse "to create a greater interest in art, music, drama, history, literature, education, and theatre" (Reynolds 1999: 7). The playhouse was decorated in a rustic Arts and Crafts style, referencing Colonial and Shaker design precedents, likely influenced by Carrington.

The Paper Mill Playhouse was conceived as a "civic drama center, modeled after European art centers." Typical of the playbill in its earliest days of operation were "straight plays," by Pearl Buck, Noel Coward, and George Bernard Shaw (Steinberg 1952: X3). However, from its inception, Carrington and Scudder were also conscious of the Paper Mill's place within the burgeoning rural theater movement, in which high-quality theater employing a combination of established actors and new talent presented itself in small town and rural settings and embraced a folksy collaborative atmosphere. Carrington emphasized: "I want to build a real community theatre where members do everything. Here's where people should learn to act, direct, work the lights, make wigs and shoes, and learn the business side too" (Ibid).

The playhouse presented a wide variety of arts, ranging from dramatic sketches, vaudeville, children's theater, ballet, classical music, art exhibits, and lectures. While Scudder's connections in society and the press helped to finance and advertise the theater, Carrington's connections in theater gained the support of many prominent actors. Early productions featured such talent as Uta Hagen, Jose Ferrer, and Eva La Gallienne. Carrington built a distinguished list of sponsors, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Tallulah Bankhead, George M. Cohan, and Clifton Webb, among others. In the early years, the team garnered tremendous success, with lines and crowds surrounding the box office before performances. Nevertheless, the playhouse retained a collaborative local atmosphere. In addition to co-owning the playhouse, Carrington directed and acted in many of the theatrical productions, and designed sets. Carrington's sister Gene ran an art gallery in the playhouse displaying the works of local artists (Klein 1983: NJ17).

In 1939, Carrington convinced several prominent actors to appear in Paper Mill productions at reduced salaries to benefit the British War Relief (Anon 1941: 28). In the same year, he established the New Jersey Theatre Festival. World War II almost shut down the rural theater movement, since gas and tire rationing prevented many theatergoers from making pilgrimages to country playhouses. The Paper Mill, however, saved by its easy train and bus accessibility, was one of the few that kept the flame of rural theater alive (Bamberger 1944, X1). The train schedules to and from New York were reportedly synchronized to the Paper Mill's performance times (Reynolds 1999: 23).

During the 1940s and 50s, the playhouse distinguished itself as a venue for operettas and musicals, responding to audience demand. In the post-war era, the rural theater movement had regained momentum, and the Paper Mill generally benefited from the boom (Anon 1946: 45). However, with the return of prosperity and the proliferation of cars, many would-be New York City and New Jersey theatergoers retreated to cottages in the summer. The Paper Mill took the cue and

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operated only in the fall, winter, and spring (Steinberg 1952: X3). This allowed Carrington to leave his primary residence, a converted barn on Brookside Drive near the playhouse (Freeman 1975: 26), and retreat to his own summer cottage on Fire Island. The *New York Times* reported that "Even Carrington's office [at the Paper Mill Playhouse] is festooned with his own seascapes of Fire Island, turned out at such times as he is not busy casting, directing...producing, and rewriting" (Goldsmith 1945: X1).

Although the Paper Mill Playhouse occupied the bulk of Carrington's professional time, his commitment to theater extended beyond Millburn. He directed and produced for the Theatre Guild, an important New York City theatrical society, and the Shubert Theatre in New York (Denslow 1957: 184) and he helped to found and run the Arts Project on Cherry Grove in Fire Island (Newton 1993: 52). Carrington had a talent for gaining the friendship, support, and enthusiasm of his associates, and despite his active involvement in a myriad of prominent projects, he tended to keep himself somewhat out of the spotlight. "Although described as a 'patrician' and called 'Mr. Carrington' by everyone connected to Paper Mill, he was always interested in and thoughtful of his staff and the performers who appeared there. In turn, he received devotion and complete loyalty from all of them" (Reynolds 1999: 11).

Carrington was able to hire many of the most popular stars of stage and screen, including Lillian Gish, Myrna Loy, and Shelley Winters, to perform in the productions of the 1950s and 60s. The *New York Times* called the playhouse "one of the foremost operetta theatres in the country" (Anon 1960: 17). Carrington directed the productions with his co-director Agnes Morgan, a writer and director with experience in many New York City and Philadelphia theaters. Productions attracted established stars, such as June Allyson, Joan Fontaine, George Hamilton, Vivian Blaine and others. They also introduced many younger artists to the stage; these included Carol Channing, Gene Wilder, Jane Fonda, Liza Minnelli, Bernadette Peters, and Sandy Duncan (Reynolds 1999: 23).

Antoinette Scudder died in 1958. After several attempts at finding a new partner for his work at the Paper Mill, Carrington finally settled on Angelo Del Rossi. Under the Del Rossi partnership, the Paper Mill Playhouse came full circle and began to focus more exclusively on plays rather than musicals. It exchanged productions with other regional theaters in New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts and retained its prominent place in the regional theater movement. In 1971, the governor of New Jersey proclaimed the Paper Mill Playhouse to be the State Theatre of New Jersey (Reynolds 1999: 10).

Carrington continued to work in partnership with Del Rossi, although his involvement became less active after the early 1970s, when his health became poor. When Carrington died of cancer in 1975, the playhouse was "the state's largest performing arts organization and one of the country's most widely attended institutions." While it retained the character of a regional theatre, it was internationally respected (Catinella 1981; NJ2).

Del Rossi became executive director of the Paper Mill Playhouse after Carrington's death in 1975. In 1980 a major fire severely damaged the playhouse building. However, with the support of prominent actors and politicians, it was rebuilt and

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quickly regained its stride. Since that time, the playhouse has continued to attract prominent performers and varied productions and is still widely recognized as an important and deeply rooted regional theater.

The Carrington House during the Carrington Years, 1927-1969

In 1927, Frank Carrington became the owner of the subject property (Durkin 1982). He had most likely known the Marquets from Millburn. When Carrington purchased the property, the Guest House was not yet extant and the Main House consisted only of the three-bay gable-roofed rectangular-plan building that now forms the core of the house. An early (undated, likely ca. 1930) photograph of the Main House suggests that it stands on its original location and retains its original brick center chimney. The front portion of the house, which is under a shallower roof pitch, is pictured in the historic photograph as an unenclosed porch supported by round posts, likely cedar trunks. The three windows along the main story and the single window beneath the apex on the gable end of the house all appear to contain six-light awning sash. The date (or dates) at which the two main wood-frame additions were made to the Carrington House is not certain. The architectural characteristics of the additions closely mirror those of the original house, suggesting a construction date in the 1930s or early 1940s.

Dorothy Cambern, a Fire Island resident since 1927 and a friend of Carrington's, described him as "a very private person, who didn't drink, didn't smoke. He was nice to everyone, and very hospitable." According to Cambern, Carrington would hide in the dunes during the Prohibition years and watch rumrunners hiding contraband cargo in the sand. "Then the next day, they would come back and the stuff would be gone." According to those that knew him, Carrington was vigilant about protecting the dunes and the pine barrens and only cleared as much land as he needed (Durkin 1982: II/3).

In the 1940s, the former Lone Hill Lifesaving Station was abandoned by the Coast Guard (Dickerson 1975). In the same period, Frank Carrington is said to have purchased two outbuildings that were part of the Lifesaving Station and moved them to his property, where he joined them together to create the Guest House. According to a 1975 letter from Carrington to Dorothy Cambern, he purchased the structures in 1947 for \$325. The two-story section of the Guest House was a barn that "sheltered a pair of white horses and a wagon that moved supplies for the Lone Hill station, including coal from the dock to the station buildings" (FINS 1979: 406). The smaller section of the Guest House was originally an oil house for the Lifesaving Station: it held "drums of kerosene for lamps, machine oil and heavy crude oil that was sometimes spread on the road to the bay" (Ibid). The initial construction date of the Lifesaving Station buildings is not certain. They have been dated by the Fire Island National Seashore as ca. 1880 or "probably both late 19th century" (FINS 1979: 406; Kesselman 1984b: 2). A *Newsday* article about the property dates the former horse barn to 1864 and notes that during World War II it served as "a barracks for the men patrolling the house for saboteurs" (Durkin 1982: II/3). According to a 1996 *New York Times* article, the Guest House was assembled from the former Lifesaving Station buildings in 1947 by Carrington's son (Paquette 1996: 13LI.2). However, no record has been found indicating that Carrington had children or was ever married.

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Carrington had a small single-story garage added to the house in 1950 (Karen Freda, pers. comm.). It is said that this was the only garage ever built in either Cherry Grove or the Pines, and that Carrington kept his car, a Model A Ford, in it (Durkin 1982: II/3). In later years, he used the garage as a woodshed (Karen Freda, pers. comm.).

In 1948, Frank Carrington helped found the Arts Project of Cherry Grove. The first production, the "Cherry Grove Follies" of 1948, was feverishly written, produced, and presented in the ten days following the project's establishment by the Arts Project advisory board, which included Frank Carrington, Hallye Cannon of the Theatre Guild, and Cheryl Crawford, founder of the Group Theatre and the Actors Studio. The first production was a hit, featuring theatrical sketches interspersed with chorus lines and other musical numbers in a 1920s-style format. According to Esther Newton, Arts Project's earliest theatrical productions were relatively traditional and aimed to pass muster with several conservative donors and residents. However, within a year or two, productions increasingly dealt with gay themes or incorporated playful drag performances (Newton 1993: 53).

The geographical location of the Carrington property (in an isolated wooded area between Cherry Grove and the Pines) appears to have been reflective of Carrington's persona. The proximity of the property to Cherry Grove allowed Carrington to actively participate in the local theatre and the colorful liberal community of which it was a part. However, the private and rather traditional Carrington was also able to retain peace and anonymity in his isolated and rustic setting, serving as the archetype of the earliest cosmopolitan Fire Island resident. Carrington's residence in "Lone Hill" actually pre-dated the settlement of a Fire Island Pines village and, while his personal impact on the development of the two communities is difficult to quantify, through his extensive contacts in the world of theatre and the arts, Carrington was the initial connection linking many of the webs of acquaintanceship that drew people to visit and settle in the Fire Island Pines and Cherry Grove.

Carrington was also famous for renting his property to his friends and acquaintances in the artistic community. Among them, Truman Capote rented the property from Carrington for the summer of 1955. A friend of Capote's, Irving Drutman, recounted the following story (Gerald Clarke, pers. comm.):

In the spring of 1955, while *House of Flowers* was still playing, Truman made certain that he and Jack [Dunphy, his partner] would once again be able to spend their summer by the sea. Hearing about an isolated cottage on Fire Island, he telephoned the owner. 'How many of you would be staying there,' asked the man. 'There would be just the two of us,' said Truman. The owner was dubious. 'It's kind of lonely for two girls out there,' he volunteered, which caused a scream of displeasure on the other end of the line. 'This is Truman Capote!' A deal was soon struck... By July 6, when he reached Mr. Jack and the two dogs on Fire Island, Truman was rested and eager to begin writing once more. ... 'Now true to my word, I've settled down to work,' he wrote his old editor, 'and I hope that I will have something interesting to show you

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come September.' The something interesting was the novella that he had already titled *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Clarke 1988: 289).

In the late 1940s, Capote had met and become partners with Jack Dunphy, Joan McCracken's husband. McCracken and Dunphy eventually divorced; however, McCracken was accepting of Dunphy's homosexuality and remained close friends with both Dunphy and Capote. It is said that Capote modeled the character of Holly Golightly in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* in part on McCracken (Sagolla 2003:110-111). As stated above, McCracken purchased a lot in the Pines near the Carrington property shortly after Capote's stay on the island.

According to a 1982 *Newsday* article about the Carrington property, for which Capote was interviewed, "Capote, who now lives in Sagaponack, spent a summer here in 1987 [sic], working on 'Breakfast at Tiffany's.' The isolation was conducive to good writing, he said. 'It was just completely deserted,' he said. 'That summer was the one and only time I've ever been to Fire Island. It was a very different place in those days than I gather it is now. I rented the cute little house." The 'cute little house' that Capote stayed in was the guest house, which Carrington purchased in 1947 from the Coast Guard and moved to its present site" (Durkin 1982: II/3). A more recent *New York Times* article echoes the story that Capote wrote the novella "in bed" at the Carrington Guest House (Paquette 1996: 13.LI.2).

Not only Truman Capote, but many other well-known artists rented the property from Carrington. In some cases, these friends and acquaintances of Carrington's accompanied him, but apparently more often they rented the house in order to work and relax alone. Amongst Carrington's guests are said to have been Lincoln Kerstein (co-founder, with George Balanchine, of the New York City Ballet), designer Bill Blass, and actors Henry Fonda, Katherine Hepburn, and Gertrude Lawrence (ibid). Fashion photographer Francesco Scavullo rented the property. Eugene O'Neill is said to have written a play there; however, this account has not been substantiated (Kesselman 1984a; 1984b).

1969 to the Present

Cherry Grove and the Pines, 1969 to the Present

In the early 1960s, Robert Moses proposed to build a parkway along the length of Fire Island, but community organizations successfully protested. Most Fire Island communities have resisted infrastructure expansion and modernization since that time. Like Cherry Grove and the Pines, most settlements have no paved roads (relying instead on wood boardwalks and sandy paths), and vehicular access is extremely limited. In 1964, almost two-thirds of the island became part of the Fire Island National Seashore and was thereby protected from future development (Dickerson 1975).

The large two-story wood-frame Lone Hill Lifesaving Station was converted into the Fire Island Pines community center by the Fire Island Pines Property Owners Association. The building accommodated a medical facility, post office, auditorium,

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and library (Johnson 1983: 130). In the early 21st century, however, the building was demolished and replaced with a new structure serving the function of a community house.

To this day, both Cherry Grove and the Pines are famous as gay communities as well as cultural centers and scenic seaside towns. Of the roughly 18 communities on the long narrow barrier island that is Fire Island, "only two of them, Cherry Grove and Fire Island Pines, have made the words 'Fire Island' synonymous with 'gay' for gay men and lesbians around the world" (Weinstein 2007: xv).

The Carrington Property, 1969 to the Present

Frank Carrington owned the property for almost fifty years. In May of 1968 he began discussions with the Fire Island National Seashore for the sale of the property. For several months, Carrington and his lawyer negotiated the price and terms of the contract. The preservation of the house was a sticking point for Carrington, who wanted this to be a term of the sale. In a memo dated January 13, 1969, a National Park Service official involved in the negotiations stated: "One thing that may be a factor is the landowner's desire to see his main house maintained as a museum. The house (circa 1910) he feels is an example of the type of living in the early days on Fire Island and as such should be retained" (Stewart 1969).

Later in 1969, Carrington deeded the property to the United States government for approximately \$300,000. The preservation of the house did not become a term of the sale; however, Carrington retained the right to inhabit the portion containing the house for the remainder of his life. He also retained "right of ingress and egress to and from the Great South Bay and the Atlantic Ocean only over existing foot paths and/or boardwalks, including right of use of the docking facilities and/or boat storage," as well as "an unimproved roadway which intersects Fire Island Boulevard at the northeast corner of Tract 2850 and terminates on the west line of Tract 2731 following a meandering course through the property..." (Deed on file with Suffolk County Clerk 1969: Liber 6650, p.72).

Frank Carrington died on July 3, 1975. A National Park Service Memorandum letter of July 25, 1975, from James W. Godbolt to Tom Coleman, superintendent of Fire Island National Seashore notes: "There are two residences on the property. One has been rented over many years to Mr. Thomas Bacon, 277 Park Avenue, New York, New York." Carrington's heirs were "two sisters, Mrs. Leighla Bates and Miss Gene Carrington. Mrs. Bates has been out to the beach house in the company of an estate lawyer. I understand disposition of the furnishings will take place soon" (Godbolt 1975).

The Carrington property has been part of the Fire Island National Seashore since 1969-1975. The property was inhabited from roughly 1976 through 1997 by a National Park Service Ranger, Bob Freda, and his family. The family lived in the Carrington Guest House from 1976 through 1980 and then moved to the main house, where they stayed from 1981 through 1997 (Karen Freda, pers. comm.). The Fredas made no substantial changes to the interior or exterior of the buildings or the landscape of the property. The current asphalt shingle roof cladding on the main house, installed as part of a 1982-3 rehabilitation effort, replaced an earlier asphalt roof cladding. Bob Freda's daughter, Karen, remembers that an

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Carrington House
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additional staircase on the rear of the house and an additional section of boardwalk that surrounded the house were removed by the National Park Service during the Freda's occupancy in an effort to conserve the dunes.

The Main House and the Guest House have been not been steadily inhabited or substantially repaired since the late 1990s. The structures are currently in need of repairs and have been stabilized and sealed in an attempt to prevent further deterioration. The historic integrity of both of the structures is relatively high, however. Few substantial changes have been made to the exteriors of the buildings since the mid-1940s and, therefore, they appear largely as they were during most of Carrington's ownership.

A modern guide to Fire Island notes, "Straddling the Pines and the Grove, the Carrington House is the oldest house in either community" (Weinstein 2007: 3). While other buildings were built prior to the Carrington House in Cherry Grove, these earlier buildings (including non-residential properties such as hotels and the Lone Hill Lifesaving Station) have not survived. The Carrington House is certainly among the earliest houses on Fire Island, and, most likely, it is the oldest surviving building in Cherry Grove or the Pines.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Carrington Main House is a vernacular variation of the Craftsman style beach bungalow. The bungalow is a residential building type characterized by its small scale, low massing, sweeping roofs with overhanging eaves, porches and emphasis on a simple, rustic aesthetic. The type was first popularized at the turn of the 20th century and was partially inspired by the Indian "banaglo," or Bengali style house, a small single-story building with verandahs. In North America, bungalows were originally an expression of the Craftsman style and sometimes embodied an eclecticism incorporating Japanese influences among others. The bungalow's plan was typically composed of a central room with smaller rooms radiating around it. In keeping with the Craftsman style, the bungalow often used natural or rustic building materials, such as wood shingles. During the first decades of the 20th century, bungalows proliferated in suburban developments and mail-order catalogs, greatly varying in size and sophistication. The beach bungalow variant in particular was typified by a simple, almost impermanent quality, and rustic features such as exposed rafters, simple wood wainscoting, and interior woodwork, as well as double-hung multi-light window sash (Foster 2004: 340; Walker 1981: 186).

With its small scale and low massing, the Carrington House is a relatively typical example of the bungalow building type. In contrast to the suburban embodiment of the bungalow, the Carrington House is a truly vernacular island manifestation, featuring irregular and likely salvaged elements. Its construction employs simple, rustic materials typical of the area, including wood-shingle cladding, brick chimneys, and multi-light wood windows. It features a front porch (originally open, now enclosed), exposed rafter ends, and simple wood exterior stairs and boardwalks. The house stands on wood pilings. The interior of the Carrington House also exhibits aspects emblematic of the Craftsman bungalow, including its floorplan, which features a larger central room with fireplace and several smaller rooms around it, including bedrooms and a kitchen. The large rustic brick mantel and chimneybreast are fine examples of the Craftsman style. The first-story rooms retain

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simple wood trim and wood floors. The stairway, likely original to the house, may have been salvaged from a slightly earlier structure. The upper story contains two bedrooms with minimal ornamentation and exposed rafters.

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Suffolk County, New York
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“Miss A. Q. Scudder of the Theatre Dies: Co-Founder of Paper Mill Playhouse Was Painter, Playwright, and Poet.” *New York Times*. January 28, 1958, 28.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary includes 6.49 acres located within the Fire Island National Seashore in the Town of Brookhaven, composed of four tracts, numbered 2731, 2850, 2851, and 2858. The property is bounded

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 3

Carrington House
Name of Property
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on the north by the Great South Bay and on the south by the high water mark of the Atlantic Ocean. It is bounded on the east by a path known as Sandy Walk and on the west by a point approximately 350 feet west of Sandy Walk.

Boundary Justification

The National Register boundary was drawn to include the entire 6.49-acre property that Frank Carrington transferred to the federal government in 1969, composed of four tracts, numbered 2731, 2850, 2851, and 2858 as described above. The Main House and Utility Shed are located on Tract 2731 and the Guest House is located on Tract 2850. An east-west-oriented footpath transects Tract 2851, providing access between the Guest House and Ocean Walk. Tract 2858 is undeveloped. Although Carrington is believed to have added Tracts 2850 and 2851 to his estate in the 1950s, all four tracts were part of Carrington's property prior to his transfer of the land to the federal government in 1969, the event that marks the end of the property's period of significance.

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Additional Information

Photos

1. Carrington House site looking northwest
2. Main House, southern and eastern elevation (Oceanfront)
3. Main House, northern elevation (Bayside)
4. Main House, western elevation
5. Main House, southeast elevation at el
6. Utility Shed
7. Guest House
8. Guest House, northwest elevation
9. Interior, Main House
10. Fireplace, Main House
11. Staircase, Main House
12. Bedroom, Main House

Great South Bay

Tract 2731
4.4 ac.

Tract
2858
0.352 ac.

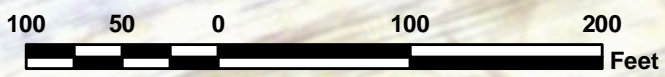
Tract
2850
1.1 ac.

p/o
Tract
2851
0.74 ac.

p/o
Tract
2851
0.21 ac.

Cottage

Main House



Date of photo: November 4, 2012

Atlantic Ocean

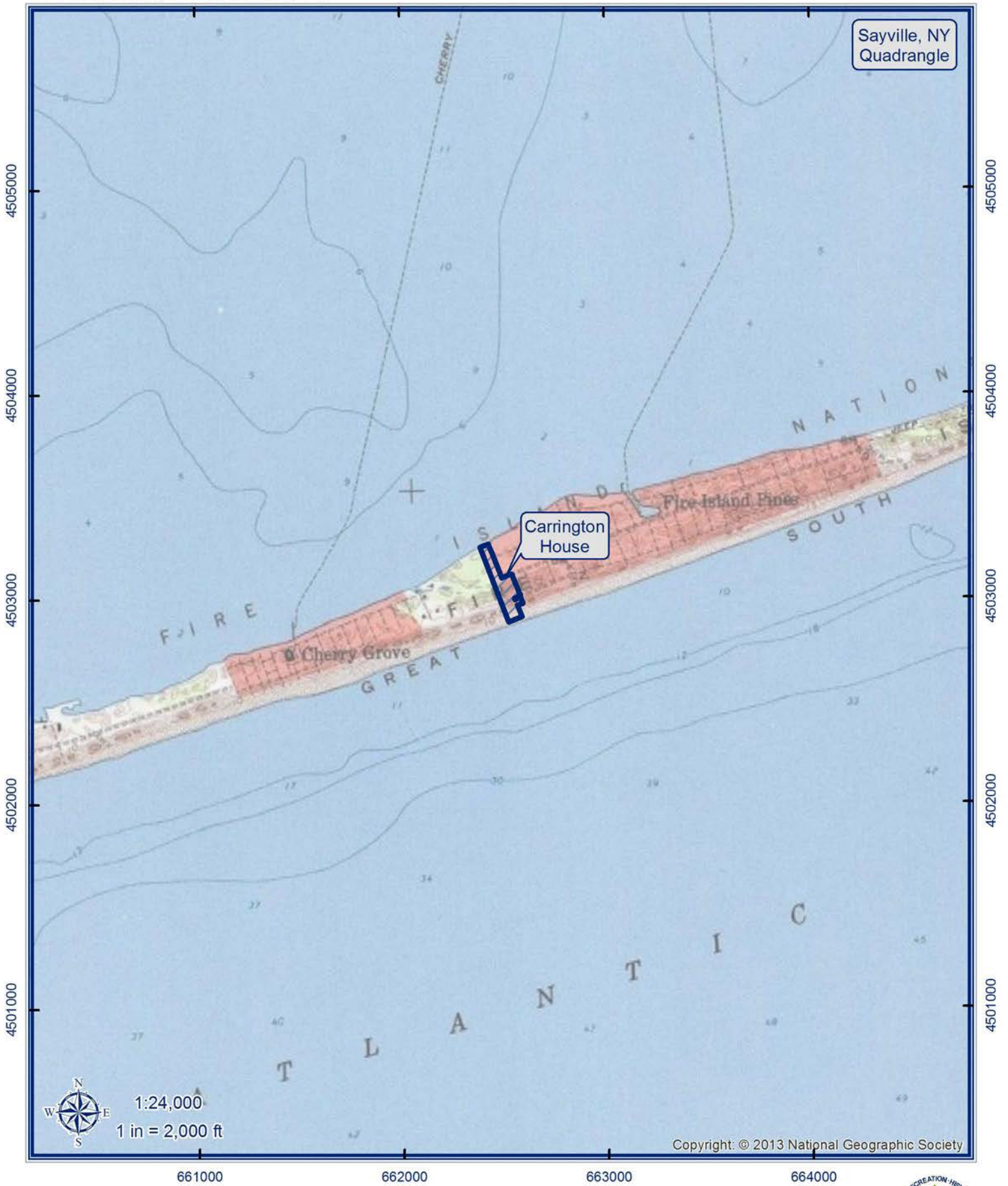
Carrington Tracts

Fire Island National Seashore

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Sayville, NY
Quadrangle



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 Carrington House

Tax Parcel Data:
Suffolk County RPS
<http://gis.co.suffolk.ny.us>





























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Carrington House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 11/22/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/24/13
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/08/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/08/14
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13001057

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1/8/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Significant for A+C. Important Revolution
& culture Frank Carrington was an important
figure in the Cherry Grove Community and its
theater. This is another important
LGBT site.*

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER A. Kennedy

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 1/8/14

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.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240



November 12, 2013

Memorandum

To: Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, National Park Service *Admiral [Signature]*

Subject: National Register nomination for Carrington House, Fire Island National Seashore, Suffolk County, New York

I am forwarding the National Register nomination for the Carrington House, located within the Fire Island National Seashore in Suffolk County, New York. The Park History Program has reviewed the nomination and found the property eligible at the local levels of significance under Criteria A and C, with areas of significance of Entertainment/Recreation, Social History, and Architecture. Please note that the NAD used for the UTM points was left off the form, but the authors have confirmed that the NAD used was 1983.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Northeast Region
United States Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

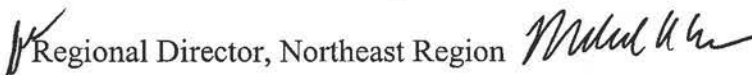
IN REPLY REFER TO:

1A2 (NER-RS)

SEP 18 2013

Memorandum

To: Federal Preservation Officer, WASO

From:  Regional Director, Northeast Region

Subject: National Register Documentation for Carrington House at Fire Island National Seashore

We are forwarding, for your approval, National Register documentation for the Carrington House at Fire Island National Seashore. The Carrington House is associated with the earliest wave of development of Fire Island as a popular recreational destination. The cottage is significant as a distinctive example of a typical early twentieth-century beach bungalow. It is also an important link to the development of Fire Island (particularly the Fire Island Pines and Cherry Grove) as a community friendly to both gay culture and the arts because of its association with Frank Carrington, a prominent theater director and patron of the arts with a large circle of acquaintances whom he introduced to Fire Island. In addition to Carrington, the property has been linked to several other prominent artists who rented the property from him, including Truman Capote, who wrote his famous novella *Breakfast at Tiffany's* there. The period of significance for the property has been identified as beginning in 1912, the presumed construction date of the house, and ending in 1969, at which time Carrington officially deeded the house to the National Park Service.

The New York State Historic Preservation Officer has reviewed the documentation and signed it on September 3, 2013.

If you have any questions please contact Elizabeth Igleheart, National Register Coordinator, Northeast Region, National Park Service, 15 State Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02109. Elizabeth_Igleheart@nps.gov, 617-223-5018.

Attachments



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Northeast Region
United States Custom House
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1A2 (NER-RS)

AUG 26 2013

Ruth Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner/Deputy SHPO
New York State Division for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Pebbles Island Resource Center
Delaware Avenue
Cohoes, New York 12047

Dear Ms. Pierpont:

The National Park Service, in accordance with 36 CFR 60.9 (c), is submitting new National Register documentation for the Carrington House at Fire Island National Seashore. The Carrington House is associated with the earliest wave of development of Fire Island as a popular recreational destination. The cottage is significant as a distinctive example of a typical early twentieth-century beach bungalow. It is also an important link to the development of Fire Island (particularly the Fire Island Pines and Cherry Grove) as a community friendly to both gay culture and the arts because of its association with Frank Carrington, a prominent theater director and patron of the arts with a large circle of acquaintances whom he introduced to Fire Island. In addition to Carrington, the property has been linked to several other prominent artists who rented the property from him, including Truman Capote, who wrote his famous novella *Breakfast at Tiffany's* there. The period of significance for the property has been identified as beginning in 1912, the presumed construction date of the house, and ending in 1969, at which time Carrington officially deeded the house to the National Park Service.

This documentation was prepared by Molly R. McDonald. It was reviewed by the region's National Register coordinator Elizabeth Igleheart and cultural resource staff.

We appreciate your review. Should you have any questions or concerns you may direct them to Elizabeth Igleheart at 617-223-5018. Otherwise we request that you sign block 3 of the nomination form and return the signature page and any comments to Elizabeth Igleheart, National Park Service, History Program, 15 State Street, Boston, MA 02109.

Thank you for your support of the National Park Service efforts to document its significant cultural resources at Fire Island National Seashore.

Sincerely,

for Michael A. Goldsmith

Dennis R. Reidenbach
Regional Director
Northeast Region

Enclosure

cc:
Superintendent, Fire Island National Seashore