

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1244

NOV 21 2008

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 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 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 Barbour, Robert Bruce, House

other names/site number Casa Feliz FMSF# OR234

2. Location

street & number 656 Park Avenue North N/A  not for publication

city or town Winter Park N/A  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Orange code 095 zip code 32790

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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Bambert E. Mattick / DSHPO 11/20/2008  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of 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.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
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  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action  
12-31-08

**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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**  
(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**

0

**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)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Spanish Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
walls BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof TERRA COTTA  
other CAST STONE  
LEADED GLASS

**Narrative Description**

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

**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.

**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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**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 36) 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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1932-1933

**Significant Dates**

1933

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Rogers, James Gamble, II

H.C. Cone, Constactor

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_



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**SUMMARY**

The Robert Bruce Barbour House is located at 656 North Park Avenue, Winter Park, Orange County, Florida. It was built in 1933 for Robert Bruce Barbour (1863-1950) and designed by architect James Gamble Rogers II (1901-1990), in the Spanish Revival Style. Since the 1960s it has been commonly known as Casa Feliz (Spanish for "Happy House"). It was originally sited on the east side of North Interlachen Avenue on the shore of Lake Osceola, approximately 900 feet to the east of its present location [Photo #1].

The two-story, brick dwelling was designed in a style that combines elements of Mediterranean-area architecture with the more vernacular, farmhouse architecture of the Andalusian region of Spain. Rogers referred to it as a Spanish Eclectic design. The façade (west elevation) consists of a central, four-bay-wide, rectangular block that is covered by a side-facing gable roof of barrel-shaped, terra cotta tiles and fronted by a full-width, cantilevered wooden balcony. A rounded turret form, located at the northwest corner of the central block, houses a curving staircase. The two-bay-wide, shed-roofed servants' wing and a pointed-arch, drive-through bay that connects the house to the former garage wing are located on the north end of the house. The one-story bell tower, located south of the central block, is located at the gable end of a one-story, front-facing gable-roofed wing that projects to the west.

The selection of materials for the house, many of which were reused materials, adds to its highly textural appearance. These materials include terra cotta for the roofing tiles, hewn and turned wooden members for the balcony, and rough brick and extruded mortar joints for the exterior walls. Deeply recessed door and window openings, as well as the deeply shaded balcony and the physical relationship of building masses and forms, provide a play of light and shadow on the façade.

In 2000, demolition on the house was begun by its then-owner, but through local preservation efforts, the house was saved and moved from to a city-owned lot 900 feet to the west, adjoining the National Register listed Winter Park Country Club and Golf Course (NR 1999) on the north. Despite the move from its original site, the Barbour House retains its original orientation with its west elevation as the façade. In fact, the move of the house from its original site allowed preservationists to re-create some of the original elements

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that had been modified by subsequent owners. Among these restored elements are the re-opened rear loggia at the southeast corner of the house and the re-creation of the series of broken arches that terminates the south end of the loggia.

**LANDSCAPE AND SETTING**

**Original Setting and Landscape**

The Barbour House originally was located on the western shore of Lake Osceola and faced west towards North Interlachen Avenue. The house was set away from the road with a sweeping west yard planted with clusters of palm trees and low shrubberies. A driveway wound along the north side of the house and ended at the arched opening and garage [Photo #2]. Newspaper accounts of the time observed that the wide expanse of open front lawn “gives the house a breadth of perspective unusual even in Florida” and provided an unencumbered view of the house from the street.<sup>1</sup> In the late-twentieth century, owners installed an earthen berm with heavy landscaping along the west front in order to obtain some privacy on that side of the house. The architect expressed his disappointment in this change, since the house was designed to be seen from the street.

The original lot of Barbour House was transformed into an open and scenic setting by Orlando-based landscaper Martin J. Daetwyler, whom Rogers had worked with on several of his projects in Fern Park.<sup>2</sup> The lot had earlier been occupied by a large, Victorian frame dwelling known locally as the Ergood House. The house was removed and the site was cleared of about 200 trees. These trees were replaced with tall palms, palmettos, bamboo, and sub-tropical foliage plants. There were also a lily pond and a large pool that flowed over into several stepped goldfish basins and eventually into the lake.

**Current Setting and Landscape**

In 2001, Barbour House, having been threatened with demolition that in fact had already begun, was moved about 900 feet to the west to a city-owned lot adjacent to the Winter Park Country Club’s Golf Course [Map 1]. The house’s orientation was retained and the building was placed on the new site facing west towards North Park Avenue, just as it had faced onto North Interlachen Avenue [see Photos 1 & 2].

The landscaping of the original site was designed to complement the aged appearance of the house and to provide a rustic, loose planting design with a wide variety of mostly

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tropical plantings. Landscaping at the new site was designed by Stephen and Kristin Pategas, ACLA, owners of the Winter Park landscape firm Hortus Oasis. The Pategas developed a plant palette for the new site by reviewing historical photographs of the house taken soon after it was completed for the Barbours. Period plant catalogues and visits to other 1930s house sites in the area provided additional information on the types of plants available to landscapers during that time. The resulting plant palette provided plants comparable to those seen in historic photographs and common to the 1930s time period, while also making environmentally conscious decisions concerning freezable plants and plants now considered invasive (e.g., Brazilian pepper). The new design did not seek to replicate the original landscape, but to reuse elements that worked well in the climate and setting.<sup>3</sup> The over 50 varieties of plants found at the original site and included at the new site include yucca, century plant, podocarpus, bamboo, Ti plant, bougainvillea, sabal palms, snake plant, and aloes (see enclosed plant list).<sup>4</sup> In keeping with the aged appearance desired by the architect, antique agricultural and utilitarian garden elements such as four-foot diameter Turkish amphoras darkened by a patina of blackened olive oil residue and then whitewashed are tipped on their sides as though abandoned within the planting beds. Large succulents spill out of them. A carved stone grinding wheel lies embedded in a bed of groundcover and square carved stone planters with succulents soften the interior courtyard. At the original site, three sabal palms were planted within the interior courtyard with their heads floating above the rooflines [Photo #3]. Due to safety concerns, a decision was made not to reinstall palms in the small courtyard. However, in an effort to recreate the visual effect of the overhanging trees, two trios of palms were installed on both sides of the house at the new site and as the palms age and their heads rise above the rooflines, the historic look will be recreated. The current palm clusters were also placed to encompass the front and rear walkways to create the feeling of a gateway for visitors. Some of the palms were selected with curved trunks to create a feeling of age and imperfection.

One of the advantages of moving Barbour House to the new site was that the house was once again visible from the street, albeit now from North Park Avenue. While the original lot was larger than the lot on which the house is now located, the present site is adjacent to the municipal golf course, a National Register-listed property, which provides a green space that visually extends the lawn to the north. The use of giant timber bamboo (60-foot-tall) on the south side of the lot helps to shield the dwelling from the adjacent buildings.<sup>5</sup> Similar bamboo on that side of the house is visible in the historic photographs. The

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landscaping along the walkway that leads from North Park Avenue to the front door creates a residential scale as visitors approach from that vantage. A bench along the walkway, a pre-existing element at the site, offers a place to rest in the shade and provides a wide view of the front of the house to the east and the golf course to the north.

Because the house is now a civic space that is used for meetings and special events, parking has been provided on the rear (east) side of the house. The parking, however, is located some distance from the house and below the grade of the house site in order to keep the view of the east elevation unencumbered. A decorative fountain, simulating the effect of the former lily pond, is located on the east side of the house within a circular drive.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

**Exterior**

The Barbour House is composed of a central, two-story, four-bay-wide, rectangular block that is covered by a side-facing gable roof. This central block is flanked on the south by a one-story, front-facing gable-roofed wing with bell tower and on the north by a rounded turret form, a servants' wing, and an open pointed-arch bay that connects to the garage wing. The façade (west elevation) of the central wing holds four bays, although the main façade focuses on the northernmost three bays [Photo #4]. The fourth bay (southernmost) is visible only at the second-floor level. The three northern bays feature a centrally located, round-arch entry that is flanked by two, deeply recessed window openings. The opening to the north is covered by a concrete grille with 12 openings that is placed flush with the wall plane [Photo #5], while the opening to the south holds a pair of four-pane, wooden casement windows (with horizontal mutins only). Wooden shutters with Z-shaped supporting bars and iron shutter dogs flank the casement windows. Another detail on both the west and east elevations is a two-row, corbelled cornice that features a row of slightly projecting bricks with a row of alternating projecting and flush bricks beneath it.

Rogers designed a highly decorative cast stone arched front door surround that was poured on site and that is detailed with cast stone pilaster caps, a keystone, vines in bas relief, and lions' head sculptures cast especially for the house [Photos #6 & #7]. The 15-panel entrance door with carved quatrefoils and turned iron hardware is also arched at the top to fit the opening.



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Dominating the central block of the façade is the three-bay, shed-roofed heavy timber balcony that is centered over the front entrance to the house. The balcony is characterized by hand-hewn pine timbers (beams, columns, and rafters) and is cantilevered from the upper level of the masonry wall with exposed hewn joists. The balusters of the balcony railing, which are turned and painted alternating colors, and the carved block column capitals were the only timber elements to receive any type of decorative finish treatment. The post-and-beam supports exhibit only the hewing marks of the carpenter's adze. A set of wooden French doors, located in the center bay of the second-floor level, opens onto the balcony from the upstairs hallway. The doors are flanked to the north by a pair of wooden casement windows and to the south by a small, one-over-one, wood-sash window.

The bell tower wing, located south of the central block, is covered by a front-facing gable roof with an arched tower at its peak that holds a cast-iron bell [Photo# 8]. A pair of wooden casement windows is located in the south bay of the west elevation of the wing (the only opening on that elevation). This section of the house, which originally held a flower room, also projects to the east and connects to the broken arches of the rear loggia.

The rounded turret, incorporated into the central block of the house at the northwest corner, is covered by a conical roof of terra cotta tiles and holds a round-arch window opening on the first-floor level that is filled with bottle-end glass panes set in leaded frames [Photo #9]. A similar, smaller window is located near the cornice line of the turret. The two windows were manufactured by Frank Armstrong of Casselberry.<sup>6</sup> The windows provide filtered light within the circular staircase.

The one-and-a-half-story, shed-roofed servants' wing holds three, three-coursed corbelled arched bays on the west side [see Photo 1]. The two end bays (north and south) hold paired wooden casement windows while the center bay is blind. The openings are further detailed with cast stone sills. The window opening on the north side of the wing holds a pair of casements with a cast stone lintel and sill, while the window opening on the south side is covered by a cast stone grille [see Photos 4 & 9].

The pointed-arch opening north of the servants' wing is continuous through the width of the building and was constructed from cast segments of concrete [Photo #10]. The

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archway exhibits chips along the edges—a condition deliberately created by the architect in an effort to simulate a historical age to the house. The arch connects to the garage wing, which is covered by a shed roof with the down slope oriented towards the north. French door openings were located on the north end of the garage and a single window, located on the west side, was covered by a wooden grille of turned spindles, a common Spanish type of window covering.

The east elevation (rear) of the house presents several forms and interesting elements including a loggia with arched openings [Photos 11 & 12]. The loggia, which originally overlooked a formal flower garden and the lake beyond, is accessed by French doors from the entrance hall, living room, and library spaces [Photo #13]. The walkway is paved with bricks set in a herringbone pattern, and at the southern end, broken brick arches terminate the loggia.

The one-story living room wing, which connects to the dining room wing on the north, holds a pair of French doors within a projecting three-sided bay on the east end [see Photo 11]. Doors on the south side of the wing open onto the recreated formal garden terrace, which is also adjacent to the loggia on the west [Photo #14].

**Interior**

The plan of the house was dictated by both the desires of the client and the way in which the house was intended to be used, as well as by the architectural style of the house and its intended appearance as a farmhouse that had grown over the years. The long entrance hall is entered through the round-arch, centrally located doorway and paneled door on the west side of the house [Photo #15]. The stairs, located to the northwest, are enclosed within the turret and are set outside of the rectangular space of the entrance hall. Three arched openings are located on the east side wall: the two northernmost bays lead into the living room to the northeast, while the southernmost opening holds French doors that access the loggia. An arched opening on the south wall of the entrance hall leads into the library. These three spaces, the entry hall, living room, and library, made up the public domain of the house, along with the exterior spaces of the loggia and formal garden. The spaces are unified by materials of textured plaster walls, random width oak plank flooring, six-inch-high wooden baseboards, and in the living room and dining room, the use of exposed hewn rafters in the ceiling. These elements are original to the house. The contrast of dark wood against light plaster extends the play of light and shadow from the exterior into the interior.

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The library also served as Barbour's office, with a dressing room and private bath located to the southwest [Photo #16]. The east wall holds three sets of arched French doors that

lead onto the loggia with two recessed arched wall niches between them [Photo #17]. The west wall holds a pair of wooden casement windows and the door to the dressing room; the north wall holds the arched opening from the entrance hall [Photo #18]. The south wall of the library has a fireplace with a brick hearth flush to the floor that is flanked on the east by a pair of wooden casement windows and on the west by built-in bookcases [see Photo 16]. The majority of the plaster, oak flooring, and woodwork in the room are original.

The living room, the dominant public space in the house, is oriented east-to-west and extends the view beyond the room by the inclusion of French doors and sidelights on the eastern end that are located on axis with the two arched openings from the entrance hall [Photo #19]. Leaded glass panels with circle designs are in the transoms above the openings. Originally, these openings would have allowed a view of the lawn and Lake Osceola beyond. Leaded-glass French doors on the south wall of the living room open to the formal garden and the brick arched loggia. The living room's north wall features a door opening onto the interior courtyard, a fireplace flanked by a small wall niche, and an arched opening into the dining room [Photo #20]. The fireplace features a curved, wooden shelf mantle with a multi-stepped molding and brackets and a brick hearth that is flush with the floor. Pegged hand-hewn heart pine rafters and collar beams were left exposed in the ceiling and the tails of the rafters are set into "pockets" along the top of the wall. In the living room, all oak flooring, wood members, the wooden mantle, and most of the plaster work are original.

The dining room, accessed through an arched opening in the south wall and oriented north-to-south, features a similar exposed rafter ceiling as the living room [Photo #21]. Metal tie-rods span the width of the room. The west wall holds French doors that open into the interior courtyard; the doors are on axis with the courtyard fountain, as well as the doors beyond that enter into the service hallway. A doorway leading into the pantry is also located on the west wall. The east wall holds three sets of wooden casement windows and the north wall holds a casement window of leaded diamond panes, which is a replica of the original.

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A passage leading directly north from the entrance hall connects to the servants' wing, which formerly contained the maids' rooms (two bedrooms and a shared bath), the kitchen, and the pantry. The space now holds restrooms and offices on the west side and a small galley kitchen and pantry on the east. The kitchen features a new heart pine floor, plaster walls with no baseboard, and a cased opening to the pantry. Wooden casement windows are located on the north wall.

The interior courtyard is another of the signature spaces of Barbour House [Photo #22]. The combination interior-exterior space is created by the surrounding living spaces of the house: the living room on the south, the dining room on the east, the kitchen on the north, and the passage wall on the west. Newspaper descriptions of the newly completed house cited the interior courtyard as "one of the pleasing features of the house" with a private stairway leading from the patio to the owner's suite of rooms on the second floor.<sup>7</sup> The courtyard is detailed with hand-painted Majolica tile wainscoting with the exposed brick wall of the house above, and is paved with bricks set in a herringbone pattern. At the center is an octagonal-shaped fountain also featuring Majolica tiles. A set of concrete steps with a solid concrete side wall is located in the northeastern corner of the patio, leading to the second floor balcony. The space gives a feeling of secrecy and privacy, but also serves the practical purpose of providing an exterior space that is shielded from the sun. The feeling of coolness is enhanced by the sound of the running water in the fountain. The second floor is accessed from the entrance hall. The wooden spiral staircase, housed within the turret form, leads from the entrance hall to the second floor [Photo #23]. The staircase features a turned iron railing and the previously mentioned leaded roundel windows, which are curved to fit the radius of the turret. Arched, double-leaf paneled doors are located at the small landing at the top of the stair and can be closed to provide additional privacy for the second floor spaces [Photo #24].

The second, more private floor of the house is composed of four bedrooms arranged around the large central hallway, which also holds doors opening onto the front balcony [see Photos 24 & 25]. The bedroom located immediately east of the stairs and the bedroom located to the north over the former servants' wing, access via French doors the internal L-shaped balcony, which overlooks and is accessible to the interior courtyard below. The bedrooms are similar in materials and finishes to the rooms on the first floor and are modest in size and detail [Photos #26 & #27]. Each bedroom has a private bath.

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At present, two of the rooms are used as changing rooms for weddings, one room is an office, and the fourth room is planned as a James Gamble Rogers II studio museum.

**Construction Materials and Finishes**

Rogers' desire to give Barbour House an aged appearance dictated the materials selected in construction. The house is constructed of solid 12-inch-thick masonry load bearing walls clad with second-hand, whitewashed brick obtained from the old Orlando Armory, which was built in 1886 and was razed about 1930. Although most Spanish houses employ stucco over masonry, Barbour insisted that the brick be left exposed. Originally, the brick was covered with a whitewash finish, which was mixed to a formula devised by Rogers that would naturally flake off over the years to expose the color of the underlying brick. The brick walls are laid in a seven-course, American-bond pattern.

The interior finishes are similar throughout the house and include plaster walls, random width oak flooring, and six-inch wooden baseboards. Ceilings are either plaster or plaster with exposed hewn beams (as in the living room and dining room) that are set within pockets along the top of the wall edge. A variety of windows are used in the house including wooden casement windows, round-top windows, and sash windows that hold a variety of pane configurations. In many cases, the deeply recessed window openings are covered on the exterior by a grille or *rejas* of wood or concrete. Paneled doors, hand-painted tiles, and iron lighting fixtures and hardware complete the interior details. Construction drawings show that Rogers added custom-designed electrical fixtures, including metal lanterns and sconces. The sconces and light pendants in the house today are not the originals, which were removed by previous owners. Care has been taken, however, to use appropriate lighting fixtures and antique fixtures where possible. The fixture in the entrance hall will be replaced with a wrought-iron Spanish-style fixture to be designed by architect John Hopewell "Jack" Rogers, son of James Gamble Rogers II.

**Interior Furnishings**

Interior furnishings for the original house were selected with great care in order to complement the design of the house. The Barbours secured the skills of Mabel Noyes, who was hired as "consulting decorator" to travel to Spain in order to retrieve furnishings for the house. Noyes, whose shop "Aux Tours D'Argent" (French for "in the towers of silver") was located on East Park Avenue, stated that "from the moment that Mr. and Mrs. Barbour asked me to help them select the furnishings for their lovely house I tried never to

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lose sight of the fact that it was to be the home of twentieth-century Americans, not seventeenth-century Spaniards. With this idea in mind we worked for an atmosphere of comfort, color, harmony, and a certain air of subtle distinction which is so well achieved by the judicious use of a few fine examples of antique art.”<sup>8</sup> Such antiques may have included chairs, tables, tapestries, benches, and cabinets as seen in period photographs of the interior taken by New York-based photographer Harold Costain.

While most of the original Barbour furnishings were scattered after the Barbour family sold the house in 1951, the library contains the only piece of furniture that is original to the house. This is a seventeenth-century hall bench that was returned to Barbour House by Rollins College in honor of Polly and Thaddeus Seymour [see Photo 16].<sup>9</sup> Just as historic photographs aided in the development of the landscape on the exterior of the house, photographs also aided in acquiring suitable furnishings for the interior [Photo #28]. Bookcases, chairs, tables, lamps, and sideboards have been selected for their antique character (many dating from the eighteenth century and originating in Europe), the appropriateness of the materials and details, and the similarity to pieces originally gracing the interiors.

**ALTERATIONS**

The move of the house in 2001 resulted in some alterations to the house, including the reconstruction of some original details that had been modified over the years by subsequent owners.

Interior elements that have been altered include the north side of the dining room that was destroyed during the 2000 demolition, but it has been reconstructed with materials that match the original [Photo #29]. A fireplace and chimney added by subsequent owners were removed and the damaged north wall and window opening were reconstructed to match the original design. Also due to destruction by demolition, a small area of the ceiling on the north end of the dining room and a small portion of the wooden wall cap had to be reconstructed; otherwise, the woodwork in the room is original.

The elements of the south wall of the library were reconstructed after the house was moved. A door opening had been inserted into the wall, but the original design of a fireplace centered between a window opening and a built-in bookcase has been restored.

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The window is new and the beam that serves as the window sill and extends to form the fireplace mantel is a hand-hewn replacement.

The interior courtyard exhibits all original elements except the brick paving, which has been replicated with brick laid in a herringbone pattern. The Majolica tiles that form the wainscot in the courtyard were inspiration for the tile cladding used in the hallway and baths of the former servants' wing. These tiles were donated by Archie Vandermast of The Tile Market in Orlando during the 2001 renovation.<sup>10</sup>

The Majolica tiles were also used in the garage wing, now referred to as the "Garden Room," which has been reconstructed since it was one of the first elements destroyed during the 2000 demolition [Photo #30]. The reconstructed garage, however, follows the designs of the original blueprints for the house and, thus, retains the form and detail of the original wing.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the brick used in the reconstruction was salvaged from the original brick foundation wall. While the original garage had a concrete floor, the present floor covering is a rustic Italian tile. The space is used for small meetings and receptions.

The broken arches of the rear loggia were restored after the house was moved to its current location. The loggia had been enclosed and the broken arches had been removed by a previous owner [Photos #31 & #32]. With this recreation, the house recovered its original exterior appearance.

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**SUMMARY**

The Barbour House, built in 1933 for Robert Bruce Barbour and designed by architect James Gamble Rogers II, is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for local significance as an outstanding example of Spanish Revival Style architecture and as the preeminent residential design executed by Rogers.

James Gamble Rogers II's opened a branch of his father's architectural firm in Winter Park in 1928, and in 1935 he established his own firm, which continues to operate in Winter Park today as Rogers, Lovelock & Fritz, Inc. Completion of the dwelling for Robert Bruce Barbour established Rogers as Winter Park's most accomplished architect. Although completed early in his architectural career, the house is viewed as Rogers' most significant work both for its architectural excellence and for the influence it exerted—and still exerts—on the quality of residential design within the community.

The Barbour House is eligible under Criterion Consideration B, which govern properties that have been removed from their original locations. In 2000, Barbour House was threatened when demolition was begun on the house. Local preservationists rallied public support and the building was moved to its current location 900 feet west of its original site. The Barbour House qualifies for listing under the Criterion Consideration since the property is significant primarily for its architectural value and it is the surviving residential property most importantly associated with the career of James Gamble Rogers II. Despite its move from its original lakefront site, the house retains its physical integrity and compatible setting characteristics that make it eligible for listing in the National Register. The access to a view of the lake does not appear to have been a defining feature of the house. The property retains a high level of architectural integrity with regard to design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association sufficient to convey its historical appearance.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

**Winter Park in the Early Twentieth Century**

Winter Park's modern history can be traced to Loring Chase, a real estate developer from Chicago, who suffered from bronchitis and came to Florida on the advice of his doctor. In 1881, Chase visited a friend in Orlando who drove his guest around the nearby chain of lakes Virginia, Osceola, and Maitland. Sensing that the area had development potential, Chase and his partner, Oliver E. Chapman, purchased 600 acres and platted a town.<sup>12</sup>

With the enthusiastic boosterism of Chase and Chapman, Winter Park became a favored destination of Northerners, aided by the service of Henry Plant's South Florida Railroad. The small, sand-streeted, seasonally occupied community evolved into a bustling wintertime resort for wealthy Northerners. New hotels were



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constructed along the banks of the chain of lakes and seasonal homes were built. The town received another boost in 1884 when it was selected over five other Central Florida communities as the site for a new college supported by the Congregational Church. The school--Rollins College--was incorporated in 1885. The area also became noted for its citrus production, and groves were planted within the town.

The decade between 1910 and 1920 was a period of growth and development in Winter Park as the local economy flourished. Improvements along the major streets in the town included cement sidewalks, electrical streetlights, and brick pavers. An elementary school was built in 1914 and, due to the beneficence of Charles H. Morse, the new president of the Winter Park Company, Central Park, the municipal golf course, the public library, and the Woman's Club were established. In 1920, the year-round population had risen to 1,079 residents.<sup>13</sup>

Much of town outside of the commercial areas remained a scattering of residences surrounded by orange groves. By 1912, however, many of the large estates were subdivided for residential development, with much of the first wave of development naturally occurring along the lake shores. Many of the residences, commercial buildings, and public buildings of this period reflected nationally popular architectural styles such as the Colonial Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman (bungalow) styles. By the mid-1920s, Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival Style residences and public buildings began to appear in Winter Park. The style--seen as "native" to California, the Southwest, and Florida--was usually expressed in stucco-clad examples with shallow-pitched roofs covered with barrel-shaped tiles and was often accentuated with projecting towers. Rollins College also chose the Spanish Colonial Style for its late-1920s residence halls, as well as for the National Register-listed Knowles Chapel that was designed by Ralph Adams Cram in 1932. While Rollins College continued to expand during the Great Depression, residential development in Winter Park continued at a slower rate than during the early 1920s. By the time James Gamble Rogers II moved his father's architectural firm to Winter Park in 1934, Chase and Chapman's vision for the town was several decades old.

**Robert Bruce Barbour and His House Design**

Robert Bruce Barbour, a native of Lansing, Michigan, came to Winter Park, Florida, in 1915 from Chelmsford, Massachusetts, where he was a manufacturer of chemical dyes. Barbour, a graduate of Michigan State University, was proprietor of the Eclipse Chemical Manufacturing Company, which made indelible inks and aniline dyes. For the first eight years of his residence in Winter Park, Barbour lived at New England and Chase Avenues.<sup>14</sup> The Barbours joined a large group of wealthy Northerners who began arriving in Florida during the first few decades of the twentieth century.

During this period of the Great Depression, only a few citizens could afford such a luxury as a new house, some of which in Winter Park were only seasonally occupied. Barbour approached Rogers to design his new home in

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1932. The undertaking of the project during the depth of the Great Depression did not quell Barbour's interest. He felt that the conditions actually favored him and that he would be able to get better prices on labor and materials because of it.<sup>15</sup> In fact, due to the economic hardship of the time and the eagerness of the city to stimulate business, Barbour was granted a three year respite from ad valorem taxes if he started construction right away. Total construction cost for the 15-room, 5,400-square foot house was \$25,000.

The elite circle of friends building homes in Winter Park and Orlando spread the word about the young architect Rogers and his talent. The Shippens, for whom Rogers completed a Spanish influenced residence in 1931, were friends of the Barbours and encouraged their efforts to engage the architect. The Barbours contracted with the Noyeses, an artistic couple residing in Winter Park, to help decorate their Rogers-designed Andalusian Style home with authentic Spanish furnishings and, in the course, inspired the Noyeses to commission a residence from Rogers.

From its completion in 1933, the Barbour house played a significant role in the architectural and cultural contexts of Winter Park. Barbour and his wife, Antoinette (Nettie) were greatly involved in the city's social life and often graciously volunteered their home to clubs and organizations for meetings and social gatherings. The Barbours were members of the First Presbyterian Church of Orlando, the University Club, and the Chamber of Commerce of Winter Park. They had three daughters, all of whom attended Rollins College. Their daughter Vivian was married at Barbour House in 1933. Among the various activities hosted at the house and its grounds were Garden Club tours, Symphony Orchestra concerts, and Florida Poetry Society meetings. In 1938, the house was the site of the Spanish Institute of Florida (*Instituto de las Espannas*) annual fiesta honoring Cervantes. The two-day celebration featured an "Andalusian evening" (*Noche Andaluza*) with music furnished by the Spanish Symphonette and the Spanish Serenaders.<sup>16</sup> The event must have been successful, since the institute held its annual meeting at the house the following year, as well. In the 1960s, owners would name the estate "Casa Feliz," [Spanish for "Happy House"] the name by which the house is locally known. The house continued to be the site of cultural and social events under subsequent owners.<sup>17</sup>

The fame of the house, however, was not limited to Winter Park. Beginning in the late 1920s, New York-based photographer Harold Haliday Costain made three or four trips a year to Florida on assignment for several national magazines, many of which specialized in architecture. Costain had spent some time as a still photographer for a movie company, but once the movie industry moved west to Hollywood, Costain stayed in the East.<sup>18</sup> Costain photographed some of the houses Rogers designed in Ormond Beach and in Fern Park. When the photographer saw the Barbour house as he drove through the streets of Winter Park, he said that he threw on the brakes and hurried back to look at the house and to photograph it. Costain captured the exotic architecture, its landscape, and antique-filled interiors in his evocative black-and-white prints. Exhibiting these prints in New York galleries brought Rogers and the Barbours' house recognition from afar. According to Rogers, the Nobel Prize-winning author Sinclair Lewis had seen the Barbour House in an exhibit in New York

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and when he visited Rollins College in the late 1930s he was eager to see the house. The Barbours held a dinner at the house in Lewis' honor.<sup>19</sup>

### **ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

The Barbour House is an excellent example of what the architect termed an eclectic Spanish Style residential architecture as executed in Central Florida during the 1920s and 1930s. During this "boom" time, many wealthy Northerners were coming into the state and bringing with them the romanticized visions of historic Spanish architecture—little of which actually survived. Instead, what emerged was a type of "historicizing eclecticism" that combined elements of Venetian, Spanish, Latin American, and other traditions of architecture. Addison Mizner of Palm Beach nearly single-handedly revised the image of the City of Palm Beach from a Colonial Revival Style town into a Mediterranean-style resort through his designs for residences, commercial buildings, club houses, and hotels.<sup>20</sup> Other architects working in St. Augustine (e.g., Carerre and Hastings) and Miami (e.g., Joseph Urban and Marion Sims Wyeth) also created architectural confections that combined Mediterranean, Moorish, and Renaissance elements to the mix.

The Barbour House embodies the distinctive characteristics of Spanish architecture, which in this instance combines traditional Spanish and Mediterranean elements with the overall plan and appearance of an Andalusian farmhouse or *cortijo*. Materials such as the masonry structure (brick), the terra cotta barrel-shaped roofing tiles, the wooden shutters, the wooden and cast stone grilles, and the leaded glass and wooden casement windows are typical of the Spanish Style houses that gained popularity during the trend of architectural revival-style design of the 1920s and 1930s. Elements such as the cantilevered front balcony; the deeply recessed window and door openings; the interior courtyard; the arched loggia; the long, low profile of the house; and the interplay of building masses and forms are also hallmarks of the Spanish Style house.

In traditional Spanish houses, balconies were most often provided over a patio or courtyard and served as an open-air corridor. A gallery, similar to a balcony but usually supported by a solid wall or piers, was a common element used on the façade of houses, especially in Catalonia, and presented an additional variation of "shade-producing inventions."<sup>21</sup> Beginning with St. Augustine houses in the seventeenth century, North American versions of Spanish house designs adapted the use of the front balcony to provide an additional space that was open to the outdoors, but shaded from the intense sun.

### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

#### **James Gamble Rogers II**

The Barbour House is significant as the preeminent example of local architect James Gamble Rogers II's

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residential design work. James Gamble Rogers II came from a family of architects. His father, John Arthur Rogers (1870-1934) and his uncle, James Gamble Rogers I (1867-1947) were both successful architects in Chicago, New York, and Florida. According to an interview Rogers gave with the Morse Foundation, even his grandfather, Joseph Martin Rogers (1839-1924), had dabbled in architecture after he retired from his work as an attorney and passed the Illinois State Examination (i.e., architectural certification) at the age of 60.<sup>22</sup> The Rogers family originated in Winnetka, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, but Joseph Rogers retired to Seabreeze, Florida. Both his uncle's and his father's classical training influenced James Gamble Rogers II's architectural career.

Rogers' uncle, James Gamble Rogers I, attended Yale University and continued his architectural studies at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, from which he graduated in 1898. Throughout his early career and training, Rogers worked with some of the most notable Chicago architectural firms of the time including the office of Major William LeBaron Jenney and the office of Daniel H. Burnham and John Wellborn Root. In 1892, Rogers and his younger brother John Arthur, who was studying architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, opened their own firm. The younger Rogers maintained the office while his brother attended school in Paris. Upon the older brother's return, the office work revolved around residential designs, which were executed in numerous styles, including Tudor Revival, Arts and Crafts, and even more modern adaptations exhibited by the Chicago School. The firm thrived, and in 1905, the older Rogers decided to move to New York City. John Arthur became principal of his own firm "Rogers and Phillips," but continued to work on some of his brother's projects.

In 1913, Rogers' father, John Arthur, suffered a serious heart attack and physicians gave the 43-year-old only six months to live. They suggested that if he were to move to a warmer climate he might increase his lifespan by a couple of years. Heeding their advice, Rogers and his wife moved to Seabreeze, Florida, where his father Joseph, had retired years earlier. Their three children, including Gamble, stayed with their Grandmother Baird back in Winnetka. For the next year or so, John Arthur spent his winters in Florida, where he had started an architectural practice in Daytona Beach. He returned north in the summers, where the family had a second home in Long Lake, Illinois. In 1915, the entire John Arthur Rogers family moved to Florida.

At the time, Daytona Beach was a growing tourist destination with active boosters that promoted it as "the most beautiful beach in the world." Drawn by state boosters, increased accessibility, and the lure of the healthful tonic of the climate, more year-round citizens settled in the area during the 1910s and 1920s. Increased construction of schools, churches, clubs, and other organizations resulted. The majority of Rogers' projects were residential designs (estimated at nearly 100) for some of Daytona's prominent citizens, but he also produced civic designs such as the Peninsula Club and a clubhouse for the Daytona Golf and Country Club, which was Daytona's first country club, as well as commercial projects, including the Osceola-Gramatan Inn, a hotel formerly located on South Ridgewood Avenue.<sup>23</sup> John Arthur Rogers' move to Florida had added 20

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years to his life. He died at his home in 1934.

James Gamble Rogers II, son of Elizabeth Baird and John Arthur Rogers, was born on January 24, 1901, in Chicago and lived with his family in the northern suburb of Winnetka until his family moved to Daytona Beach, Florida. There, having completed his first two years of high school at New Trier High School in Kenilworth, Illinois, Gamble enrolled as a junior in Daytona Beach High School where he participated in a number of extracurricular and social activities. Throughout high school he displayed an array of artistic talents, including producing a fanciful design for a New York-to-London bridge. Gamble's drafting plans, however, were put on hold immediately following his graduation. Having contacted Dartmouth College concerning admission, the college informed Gamble that they did not have room for him in their upcoming class and that it would be two or three years before they could admit him. Gamble took a position at Daytona's Merchants Bank and in 1922, he entered Dartmouth, attending on a swimming scholarship. Academically, Gamble took the largest number of his semester hours in Spanish language, history, and mathematics. He earned his best grades in English and Spanish language classes.

Gamble's athletic and educational ambitions, however, came to a halt during his third (junior) year at Dartmouth. In 1924, he withdrew from college after his father suffered another serious heart attack. Returning to Daytona, the younger Rogers assumed a place in his father's architectural firm where for the next 10 years he gained professional experience and took on responsibilities for architectural projects. Initially, Gamble used his artistic talent in the office and served as a draftsman. His knowledge of construction then led him into the role of a structural designer and construction supervisor. He also continued his formal education through the American Correspondence School (of Chicago) by studying courses in mechanical engineering and architecture.

After several years of observation and practical application, Gamble became the office's building designer. It was during these 10 years in his father's office that Gamble developed his ability to manage people and projects, to solve problems creatively, and to produce architectural designs that satisfied his clients' needs, budgets, and desire for social status. With no formal architectural degree, Rogers relied on the licensed architects in his father's office to review and to correct his drawings. His father signed much of his early work, and associate architects, such as David B. Hyer or George Camp Keiser in Winter Park, often signed other drawings.

In 1928, Gamble opened a branch of his father's office in the developing community of Winter Park, located approximately an hour inland from the east coast of Florida and just outside of the City of Orlando. Gamble said he liked the people in Winter Park, many of whom had Chicago ties, and that he thought of it as "an awfully nice place to live." He had first visited Winter Park back in 1917, when an uncle, his mother's brother whose fiancée's family wintered in Florida, was married in the All Saints Episcopal Church there.<sup>24</sup>

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Through a creative business deal, Gamble secured a building lot on Winter Park's Woo Island, also known as Bear Island and now known as the Isle of Sicily, located on Lake Maitland. By January 1, 1930, Rogers had designed and built "Four Winds," a romantic cottage in the French Provincial Style, for his wife Evelyn and himself. The completion of this house drew much admiration locally and was published in seven national architectural magazines.<sup>25</sup> Gamble successfully passed the Florida exam in 1935 and received license #124 from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Later, he also was registered in Illinois, New York, and Georgia.

After his father's death, Gamble moved the Rogers' architectural firm from Daytona Beach to Winter Park. He mulled over moving back to Chicago, but decided that the Florida climate suited him best. While he continued to produce designs for clients on the east coast, it appears that Gamble was drawn to the intellectual, cultural, and social life that was thriving in Winter Park. At first, Gamble allied himself with local architect David B. Hyer, whose office Gamble had actively managed since June 1934. In November 1935, Hyer moved to Charleston, South Carolina, and closed his Winter Park office. That year Gamble opened his own firm and remained active in the firm until his death in 1991. Rogers was posthumously named a Fellow in the American Institute of Architects for the quality of his work throughout his prolific career, as well as for his civic and professional endeavors and service.<sup>26</sup> Rogers' firm continues operations today as Rogers, Lovelock, & Fritz, Inc.

**Rogers, the Barbour House, and his Eclectic Spanish Revival Style**

In 1932, after seeing Rogers' own French Provincial Style residence on the Isle of Sicily, Robert Bruce Barbour commissioned the architect to design a Spanish farmhouse for him on Lake Osceola. As Rogers relayed the story of the commission: "Mr Barbour came to my house on the island and asked, 'Who is your architect?' I told him and he said, 'Well, I want you to design me a house. I don't want anything like this at all. I want a Spanish farmhouse. You go ahead and design it any way you want. I'll limit you to cost and number of rooms, but I'll not interfere with you at all while you are designing the house. You do it any way you want and if I don't like it, I'll sell it.' It was an architect's dream come true."<sup>27</sup>

The plans for the Barbour house were drawn in 1932 at John A. Rogers' branch office in Winter Park. In February 1933, a ground breaking ceremony was held at which one hundred friends and neighbors gathered on the Barbours' lot, including Rogers, who displayed a clay model of the proposed building.<sup>28</sup> Upon its completion, the house was declared a showplace and one of the outstanding homes of Winter Park. The firms engaged in the construction and material supplies for the residence included: H.C. Cone, a general contractor with whom Rogers preferred to work; Thomas Lumber Co. of Winter Park; Falkner Roofing Co.; Winter Park Electric Co.; Morgan Brothers, plumbing; Mrs. George Noyes, furnishings; and Alvin A. Marriott, master painter and decorator.<sup>29</sup>

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Stylistically, Rogers was inclined towards the historical styles of Europe, as adapted to the American lifestyle and Florida climate. For him, Florida was a perfect match to the warm and sunny climate of the Mediterranean, and his work reflects many of the quintessential elements of the Spanish house as described by Rexford Newcomb in his 1927 book *The Spanish House for America: Its Design, Furnishing, and Garden*. As previously mentioned, other Florida cities, including Palm Beach and Miami, were revising their images with Spanish-influenced buildings that combined elements from various Mediterranean countries.

James Gamble Rogers II was also a contributor to this collection of eclectic designs. Proficient in many styles, Rogers is best known for his Spanish Eclectic examples, most of which were executed in Winter Park. Through observation and self-teaching, Rogers was primarily concerned with “exactness” in detailing regardless of the architectural style of a design. While “exactness” and “eclecticism” seem at odds with one another, the two tend to complement each other through attention to detail and the correct combination of forms, materials, and scale. Rogers also used these elements strategically in an effort to minimize the glaring sun and intense heat of Florida days and provided ways that shade and natural breezes could be utilized to cool interiors in the days prior to central air-conditioning.

While Rogers insisted that the house designed for the Barbours was a replica of an Andalusian *cortijo* or Spanish farmhouse, the architectural style of the house is best described as Spanish Eclectic, since it incorporates both authentic Spanish details as well as elements inspired by other Mediterranean traditions.<sup>30</sup> In its plan, the house does indeed resemble a *cortijo*, which historically was a evolutionary house type to which incremental spaces were added as more space was necessitated by an expanding family. The two-story central block of the house represents what might have been the “original” farmhouse with one- and two-story wing additions to the sides and rear. This characteristic is enhanced at Barbour House through the rich variety and combination of forms used in the building mass: the central rectangular block, the projecting gable-roofed bell tower; the servants’ wing, the garage wing, and the rear gable-roofed ell. The 125-foot length of the house is emphasized by the use of a series of low-pitched gable roofs that are oriented north to south.

The plan also reflects Rogers’ use of the formal entrance hall, which was seen often in Mizner’s Palm Beach mansions. Rogers used this element in only a few of his larger residential designs (e.g., 1939 house for Mrs. Caroline Griggs Plant, Palmer Avenue, Winter Park). Given that the Barbour house was intended for social and cultural events, an entry space was needed that would accommodate many people.

Barbour House exhibits many of the hallmarks of the Spanish Revival Style, including the cantilevered front balcony and the interior courtyard. Rogers used the balcony at the Barbour House both as a shade invention over the front door and as an element of visual relief from the broad wall expanse of the brick façade. This area also heightens the celebration of the entrance by providing a variety of colors and textures at the main doorway.

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To further celebrate the entrance, the architect wanted to incorporate carved or cast figures into the doorway scheme, but none of the examples he found locally satisfied him. Rogers finally contacted George Etienne Ganiere, a Rollins College professor of plastic arts (1929-1935). While on a trip to Rome, Ganiere had made a plaster cast, or “squeeze,” of a lion’s head sculpture at the Vatican. Rogers commissioned Ganiere to produce two concrete casts of the squeeze and placed these at either side of the front entry of the Barbour house.<sup>31</sup> The lions’ heads “stand guard” just below the pilaster caps [see Photos 6 & 7].

The interior courtyard is another typical stylistic element in the design of the house that illustrates the use of light and shade and open and enclosed spaces. The organization of the house is a series of rectangular spaces centered around an interior courtyard (or patio), which closely follows the archetypal precedent. The open court, surrounded on all four sides by interior living spaces, is a common element to residential designs throughout the Mediterranean. In *The Spanish House for America*, Newcomb expressed the physical and spiritual centrality of the courtyard to the Spanish house design: “one desiring to build a Spanish house should understand at the outset, for a ‘Spanish’ house without its patio is no longer a Spanish house.”<sup>32</sup> Newcomb contrasted the interior courtyard scheme of the Spanish house, wherein a “shaded retreat deep within the house, yet open to the air and light” was provided, to the residential planning of northern European countries in which a dooryard or garden stood between the house and the street. At Barbour House, Rogers, who held a copy of Newcomb’s book in his library, combined the two planning modes by using the authentic planning device of an interior courtyard enclosed on all sides by the house, but also provided an extensive lawn between the house and the street.

Both the balcony and the interior courtyard at Barbour House are examples of what Newcomb referred to as “shade producing inventions” and are typical examples of these stylistic elements. Other such elements used at Barbour House include the deeply recessed window openings fronted by a wooden or concrete grille, in which the space between the grille and the window becomes a cool, shaded area through which breezes may pass. Here we see an example of Rogers’ use of typical stylistic elements in a way that responds to the challenges presented by a hot and sunny climate.

The rounded turret form is an element that Rogers used many times in other residential designs such as the Spanish Revival houses for Eugene R. Shippen (1931), George L. Noyes (1934), and George C. Holt (1937). He also used the turret in non-Spanish designs such as his own home, Four Winds, on the Isle of Sicily, which was designed in a French Provincial Style. In most of these examples, the turret was used as a stair tower, as it is in the Barbour house. The turret also visually connects the main block of the house with the low-pitched roof of the servants’ wing on the north. The turret form in combination with the more rectangular forms of the building adds to the picturesque quality of the design and again provides some visual relief from the broad facade.



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The Barbour house was situated on its original site in order to maximize the interest of the view both from and of the house, which is comparable to Newcomb's description of the Spanish tendency to utilize "enticing vistas to lend beauty to the house and make life therein more interesting."<sup>33</sup> Rogers' placement of windows, balconies, doors, and loggias were calculated to provide pleasing views from the interior of the house out to gardens, and to other portions of the house. Interior arrangements also were used to provide views from one space into another such as corridors, stair halls, interior balconies, and interior courtyards. Such vistas within the Barbour House include the view from the south end of the living room westward through the arched openings to the spiral staircase beyond (which is framed within one of the arched openings); the view from the entrance hall through the French doors to the loggia and formal garden beyond; and the view from the upper interior balcony down into the interior courtyard and its Majolica tiled fountain.

Materials were also an important part of Barbour House's style and image. In several instances, the architect selected used construction materials (both a stylistic decision, as well as a financial one) found in various locations. The use of barrel, or half-rounded, tiles on the gable roofs of the house added to the textural quality of the exterior. Rogers procured the clay tiles for the Barbour house from Penney Farms near Jacksonville. The tiles were intended for use at James C. Penney's "Penney Farms," which was to be a community of cottage apartments for retired religious, social, and educational administrators and workers in Clay County near Green Cove Springs. By 1930, though, Penney had been caught in the bust that followed Florida's boom and the project stopped. According to a description written by Rogers, the handmade tiles had been purchased from a roof salesman who had toured Cuba in the early 1920s trading tin for tiles. The salesman was told that the tiles had originally come to Cuba from Barcelona, where the peasants, whose fingerprints are still distinguishable on the tiles, formed them over their thighs, giving the tiles just the right taper.<sup>34</sup> Rogers also reused bricks from the demolished Orlando Armory, which had been built in 1886. For detailing in the interior courtyard, Rogers used hand-painted Majolica tiles found locally in stockpiles of Spanish tiles.<sup>35</sup> The tiles were used in the courtyard wainscoting, as well as on the foundation.

In addition to utilizing design elements, forms, and materials typical to the Spanish Style of architecture, Rogers also added romantic touches to the structure and the design of the house to produce an aged appearance, as though the house had existed for many years. At the Barbour House, these elements include an intentional six-inch sag in the main roofline, as though the roof trusses had bowed over the years; the construction of broken arches at the end of the rear loggia, which implied that part of the loggia had fallen into ruin; and the intentional chipping of the cast stone surround of the pointed arched opening, replicating damage that might have occurred as rustic carts and carriages passed through the arch.

The completion of the Barbour residence helped to solidify James Gamble Rogers II's position as one of the elite architects in Central Florida. Rogers later received commissions to complete work at Rollins Collage (where he maintained the Spanish Colonial Style architecture of the campus in his 1984 design for Olin Library)

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and the Florida Supreme Court Building in Tallahassee (which was a classically inspired design). Barbour House, however, became a benchmark of residential design within the City of Winter Park and influenced numerous other designers of residential, as well as commercial buildings in the area. Although Barbour House was a design completed early in Rogers' long and prolific career, it is nonetheless his preeminent residential design. It is also the most important residential design executed in Winter Park during the depth of the Great Depression. Special clients and special circumstances contributed to the completion of this architectural work. Because of its unique character and social importance, the citizens of Winter Park rallied in 2001 to ensure that the building remained a part of their community.

Rogers worked in all parts of Florida, but his projects were not confined to the state; in fact, the architect designed buildings in New York, North Carolina, Illinois, Wisconsin, and on the West Coast. Rogers viewed each of his buildings as a part of the larger community, and thus, part of a larger architectural and urban context. This awareness contributed to Rogers' desire to provide his client with a pleasing product, but also one that would contribute in general to the character of the community in which it was built. The fact that Rogers' buildings are some of the most admired and prized in the community are an indication that the architect was successful in fulfilling this ambition. In addition, Rogers was viewed as an image maker for the town as he completed residential, commercial, religious, and institutional designs throughout the area adding important elements to the urban fabric of Winter Park.

Rogers possessed the technical and artistic talent needed to become one of Florida's most respected architects. He had a proclivity towards fine artistic expression as evidenced by his many detail drawings for construction documents, but he also possessed a refined sense of proportion, space, and human scale. Rogers' attention to detailing, the allusion to historical precedent, and the overall sense of spatial organization in his plans show a familiarity with the very principles being taught at the *École des Beaux Arts* during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He also tackled such practical concerns for Florida residents as termite control, proper ventilation, and humidity control. The picturesque variety of building forms and materials, and the transition between interior and exterior spaces are hallmarks of Rogers' work and are presented with perfection in his design for Barbour House. For this reason, the house has come to symbolize the epitome of James Gamble Rogers II's career, although he would continue to practice architecture for more than 60 years.

### **OWNERSHIP HISTORY**

When Robert Bruce Barbour purchased his North Interlachen Avenue property in 1926, a house already existed on the site. The late-nineteenth-century home of John R. Ergood was a three-story, frame dwelling with a dome-topped tower constructed in the 1880s. In 1888, Ergood sold the property to John and Cerissa Roe of Buffalo, New York, who presumably were seasonal residents. At that time, the property, located on one of the originally platted streets in Winter Park, consisted of Lots 493, 494, and part of lots 495 and 496 as depicted on

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the 1914 Chase and Chapman plat for the Town of Winter Park. In 1892 when the Roes sold the property to Charles Tousey of New York City, they referred to house as “Bellewood.”<sup>36</sup>

Tousey added to the property in 1906 by purchasing Lot 10 of Block 1 from Charles H. Morse, of Cook County, Illinois, who was also a seasonal Winter Park resident. The deed further noted that the property was part of the large estate left by Francis B. Knowles. In 1920, Tousey’s heirs sold the property to Roy Symes, who sold the property five years later to Stewart A. Stevens on which the Ergood house was located.<sup>37</sup>

Between 1926 and 1928, Robert Bruce Barbour and his wife Antoinette Olin Barbour purchased several parcels to compose their three-acre house lot on Lake Osceola. This included a parcel from W.R. O’Neal acting as executor to Evaline Smith’s estate. The Barbours also acquired property from Stewart Stevens.<sup>38</sup>

The property remained in the Barbour family until 1951. Robert Barbour died in 1950 and his wife Antoinette moved out to live with one of their daughters. In 1951, Antoinette, who died in 1955, and the Barbour children conveyed the property to Will David McCreery and Elizabeth J. McCreery for \$100,000.<sup>39</sup>

When Elizabeth J. McCreery died June 26, 1968, her children sold the property to Thomas C. and Ann B. Dickinson. The Dickinsons are believed to have coined the name “Casa Feliz” (Happy House)—a name by which the house is known locally. Thomas C. Dickinson obtained full ownership of the property in 1980 and then sold the property to Roger and Juliette Holler. The Hollers retained ownership for 20 years before selling the property to Wayne and Judy Heller. The house was obtained by the City of Winter Park from the Hellers in 2000.<sup>40</sup>

**HOUSE MOVE AND RESTORATION**

In 2000, the new owners of Barbour House submitted a demolition application to the City of Winter Park. As reported in subsequent newspaper articles, the owners felt that the house did not suit their needs and that they desired to build a larger and more modern dwelling on the site.<sup>41</sup> On Tuesday, September 12, 2000, demolition of house commenced destroying the garage, part of the kitchen and dining room wing, and the front corner of the house, including the interior-end chimney. At that time, the City Commissioners unanimously agreed to rescind temporarily the demolition permit.<sup>42</sup> Within days, local preservationists had rallied to raise funds to preserve the house. Through a series of public hearings and careful negotiations, a plan was crafted to move the house from its original site to a nearby city-owned lot. As part of the agreement, no tax dollars were to be spent on the move, renovation, operation, or maintenance of the house. To that end, the Friends of Casa Feliz, a non-profit organization, was formed and private donations were raised to finance the move and renovation of the house. Many in-kind services, including architectural, engineering, interior design, landscape and contracting services and materials, were donated. By June 28, 2001, the Friends had exceeded their goal of \$500,000 for

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the initial move and renovation of the house. Beginning in late August and concluding on September 8, 2001, the house—estimated to weigh over 750 tons—was moved by World Moving and Restoration using 20 pneumatically leveled dollies with eight tires each and a 50-ton winch mounted on the bed of a World War II work truck powered by a 1200-horsepower, diesel engine and anchored by a front-end-loader with its blade buried in the ground.<sup>43</sup> An elaborate pulley system moved the house about 75 feet per hour on a path that previously had been made level.

Painstaking research, renovation, and rebuilding ensued. Over 16,000 bricks were cleaned by hand by mason Jim Doane; landscape architects Stephen and Kristin Pategas of Hortus Oasis researched and planted appropriate landscaping and hardscaping materials; interior designers studied historic photographs for hints at period furnishings while Friends Board members scoured auction catalogues and antique stores for suitable pieces. Replacements for wooden members damaged or removed from the house were hand hewn by woodworker Mark Webb. Fundraising continued throughout the restoration, resulting in over one million dollars in private donations.

In the fall of 2001, the City of Winter Park was awarded a \$251,200 Special Category Grant from the Historic Preservation Advisory Council of the Florida Division of Historical Resources for its planned renovation work at Barbour House (the project was ranked number one out of 94 submissions). The money was earmarked for repairing damage incurred during demolition and for the construction of public restrooms at the house.

On March 5, 2005, the newly restored Barbour House held its public grand opening. Over 2,500 people gathered to view the house that many had admired only from a distance. The house is now open as a meeting and special events space and also houses the offices of the Friends of Casa Feliz and the Winter Park Historical Association. While the building and land are owned and administered by the City of Winter Park, the Friends, who hold a 99-year lease from the City, are responsible for day-to-day activities in the house, including special events bookings. In 2006, the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation awarded an Outstanding Organizational Achievement Award to the Friends of Casa Feliz for the preservation and restoration of the house.

A tangential result of the threatened demolition of Barbour House was the approval by the City Commission of a local historic preservation ordinance. Previous attempts to pass such a measure had not received sufficient support among commissioners. Since the adoption of the ordinance, 60 individual buildings and sites, including Barbour House, and one historic district have been listed as local landmarks.

The outpouring of support for saving Barbour House points clearly to the fact that James Gamble Rogers II's impact on the community went beyond the buildings he designed. Because of their contextual nature, the buildings became part of the larger community, rather than serving as individual, detached objects within the landscape. The result was that people recognized the intangible value that these buildings gave to the built

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environment, that being one of scale, one of style, and one of grace. As Rollins College President Emeritus Thaddeus Seymour stated in a letter, "Casa Feliz is one of the treasures of our community, and its preservation is an eloquent statement of our community's values and priorities....Casa Feliz is not only an outstanding example of architectural design, but it stands today as a tangible example and reminder that citizens can make a difference and that historic buildings can and should be preserved."<sup>44</sup>

**ENDNOTES**

(Section 7)

1. "The Barbour House," *Winter Park Topics*, February 15, 1936.
2. *Winter Park Herald*, February 9, 1933.
3. Stephen G. and Kristin G. Pategas, "The Search for an Historic Landscape," *Friends of Casa Feliz* Newsletter, Fall/Winter 2005; Pategas and Pategas, "Casa Feliz Landscape Design Process," unpublished manuscript, January 2005.
4. Pategas and Pategas, "Casa Feliz Landscape Design Process."
5. Ibid.
6. State of Florida Division of Historical Resources, Florida Master Site File "Barbour House," [1978], 1.
7. "The Barbour House," *Winter Park Topics*, February 15, 1936.
8. Ibid.
9. Peggy Rogers, "Period Furnishings Complement Casa's Rich History," *Friends of Casa Feliz* Newsletter, Spring/Summer 2006:3.
10. Frank Roark, "This Old House," *Friends of Casa Feliz* Newsletter, Spring/Summer 2006.
11. John Hopewell Rogers, son of James Gamble Rogers II, interview with Debra A. McClane, November 1, 2007, at Casa Feliz, Winter Park.

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12. National Bank of Commerce, *Millennium Memories* ([Winter Park]: National Bank of Commerce, 1999), 3-4; Mark Derr, *Some Kind of Paradise: A Chronicle of Man and the Land in Florida* (New York: William Morrow, 1989), 81.
13. "Winter Park Architectural Survey" (Winter Park: City of Winter Park, 2001), 20.
14. "Mr. Barbour Dies in Winter Park," *Orlando Morning Sentinel*, April 12, 1950.
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16. "Spanish Evening at Barbour Residence," *Winter Park Topics*, April 9, 1938, 1; "Spanish Fiesta in Cervantes (sic) Honor," *Winter Park Topics*, April 15, 1939.
17. *Winter Park Topics*, January 15, 1954, 11. Caption beneath photograph of house: "The Interlachen Avenue residence of Mr. and Mrs. W.D. McCreery, formerly the Barbour Estate, where the March of Dimes benefit Tea will be held on Wednesday, January 27."
18. *60 Years of Architecture by James Gamble Rogers II*, Exhibit Pamphlet Commemorating the Opening of the Olin

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- Library, Rollins College, Cornell Fine Arts Center, Winter Park, Florida, 3.
19. Keith McKean, Interview with James Gamble Rogers II, October 27, 1981. Transcript, Winter Park Public Library, Winter Park, 10-11.
  20. See discussion of Mizner's eclectic style in Donald W. Curl, *Mizner's Florida: American Resort Architecture* (New York: Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1984), 130-132.
  21. Rexford Newcomb, *The Spanish House for America: Its Design, Furnishing, and Garden* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1927), 79.
  22. McKean, 1.
  23. Pleasant Daniel Gold, *History of Volusia County, Florida* (DeLand, FL: E.O. Painter Printing Company, 1927), 277.
  24. McKean, 4.
  25. Rogers, "Barbour House."
  26. John Hopewell Rogers [sponsor], "Nomination application for James Gamble Rogers II as Fellow in the American Institute of Architects," 1990.
  27. Rogers, "Barbour House."
  28. *Winter Park Herald*, February 9, 1933.
  29. "The Barbour House," *Winter Park Topics*, February 15, 1936.
  30. Rogers, "Barbour House,"
  31. Ibid.
  32. Newcomb, 25.
  33. Newcomb, 30.
  34. Rogers, "Barbour House."
  35. State of Florida Division of Historical Resources, Florida Master Site File "Barbour House," [1978], 2.
  36. Orange County Deed Book 81, page 177 (1892). Plat Book A, page 72.
  37. Orange County Deed Book 125, page 52 (1906; Orange County Deed Book, 205, page 580 (1920). Plat Book E, page 38.
  38. Orange County Deed Book 314, page 141 (1926); Orange County Deed Book 359, page 80 (1928).
  39. Orange County Deed Book 876, page 688 (1951).
  40. Orange County Order Book 1778, page 948 (1968); Orange County Order Book 3130, page 1062 (1980); Orange County Order Book 3130, page 1063(1980); Orange County Order Book 6066, page 4218 (2000).
  41. Sandra Mathers, "Winter Park Stops Wrecking Ball at Casa Feliz," September 13, 2000, A1-A7.
  42. Ibid.
  43. "Historic Casa Feliz Home Museum," pamphlet distributed by *Friends of Casa Feliz*, n.d.
  44. Thaddeus Seymour, Letter to Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, Inc., February 7, 2006.

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Debra A. McClane photographs taken November 2007  
and  
Historical photographs by Harold Haliday Costain, ca. 1933 (as noted).  
Courtesy of Rogers, Lovelock, & Fritz, Inc.  
All photos filed with Friends of Casa Feliz.

**PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST**

1. Robert Bruce Barbour House, 656 North Park Avenue, Winter Park
2. Orange County, Florida
3. Debra A. McClane
4. November 2007
5. Filed with Friends of Casa Feliz, Winter Park, Florida
6. West, façade elevation, looking east
7. Photo #1 of 32
  
3. Costain photo
4. 1933
5. Friends of Casa Feliz
6. West elevation at original site, looking east
7. Photo #2 of 32
  
3. Costain photo
6. West elevation, looking northeast
7. Photo #3 of 32
  
6. Central block of west elevation with balcony, looking east
7. Photo #4 of 32
  
6. Detail of concrete grille on western façade, looking northeast
7. Photo #5 of 32
  
6. Detail photo of doorway, looking east
7. Photo #6 of 32

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6. Detail of lion's head sculpture at main doorway, looking east
7. Photo #7 of 32
  
6. Western extension with bell tower, looking east
7. Photo #8 of 32
  
6. Turret and servants' wing, looking northeast
7. Photo #9 of 32
  
6. Pointed archway, looking east
7. Photo #10 of 32
  
6. East elevation, looking west
7. Photo #11 of 32
  
6. Detail of loggia, looking west
7. Photo #12 of 32
  
6. View through loggia, doors at left to library and entrance hall, and door at center to living room, looking north
7. Photo #13 of 32
  
6. Living room wing, looking north
7. Photo #14 of 32
  
6. Entrance hall, looking southwest
7. Photo #15 of 32
  
6. Library, looking south
7. Photo #16 of 32
  
6. Library with doors to loggia and wall niches, looking east
7. Photo #17 of 32

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6. Library with arched doorway to entrance hall, looking northwest
7. Photo #18 of 32
  
6. Living room with French doors with leaded glass transoms, looking east
7. Photo #19 of 32
  
6. Living room with doors to interior courtyard at left, fireplace at center, and arched opening to dining room at right, looking northeast
7. Photo #20 of 32
  
6. Dining room, looking north
7. Photo #21 of 32
  
6. Interior courtyard with Majolica tiles on the walls and fountain, and the balcony above, looking northwest
7. Photo #22 of 32
  
6. Curving staircase with leaded glass window, looking west
7. Photo #23 of 32
  
6. Second floor hallway with doors to right onto balcony, looking south
7. Photo #24 of 32
  
6. Second floor hallway with doors to curved staircase and door to a bedroom, looking north
7. Photo #25 of 32
  
6. Second floor bedroom called "Groom's Room," looking east
7. Photo #26 of 32
  
6. Second floor bedroom, "Bride's Room," with doors onto balcony above interior courtyard, looking southeast
7. Photo #27 of 32

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- 3. Costain photo
- 6. Entrance hall, looking
- 7. Photo #28 of 32
  
- 6. Northeast corner and dining room wing, looking southwest
- 7. Photo #29 of 32
  
- 6. Pointed arch and reconstructed garage, looking northwest
- 7. Photo #30 of 32
  
- 3. Costain photo
- 6. Broken arches, looking southwest
- 7. Photo #31 of 32
  
- 6. Current view of broken arches, looking southwest
- 7. Photo #32 of 32

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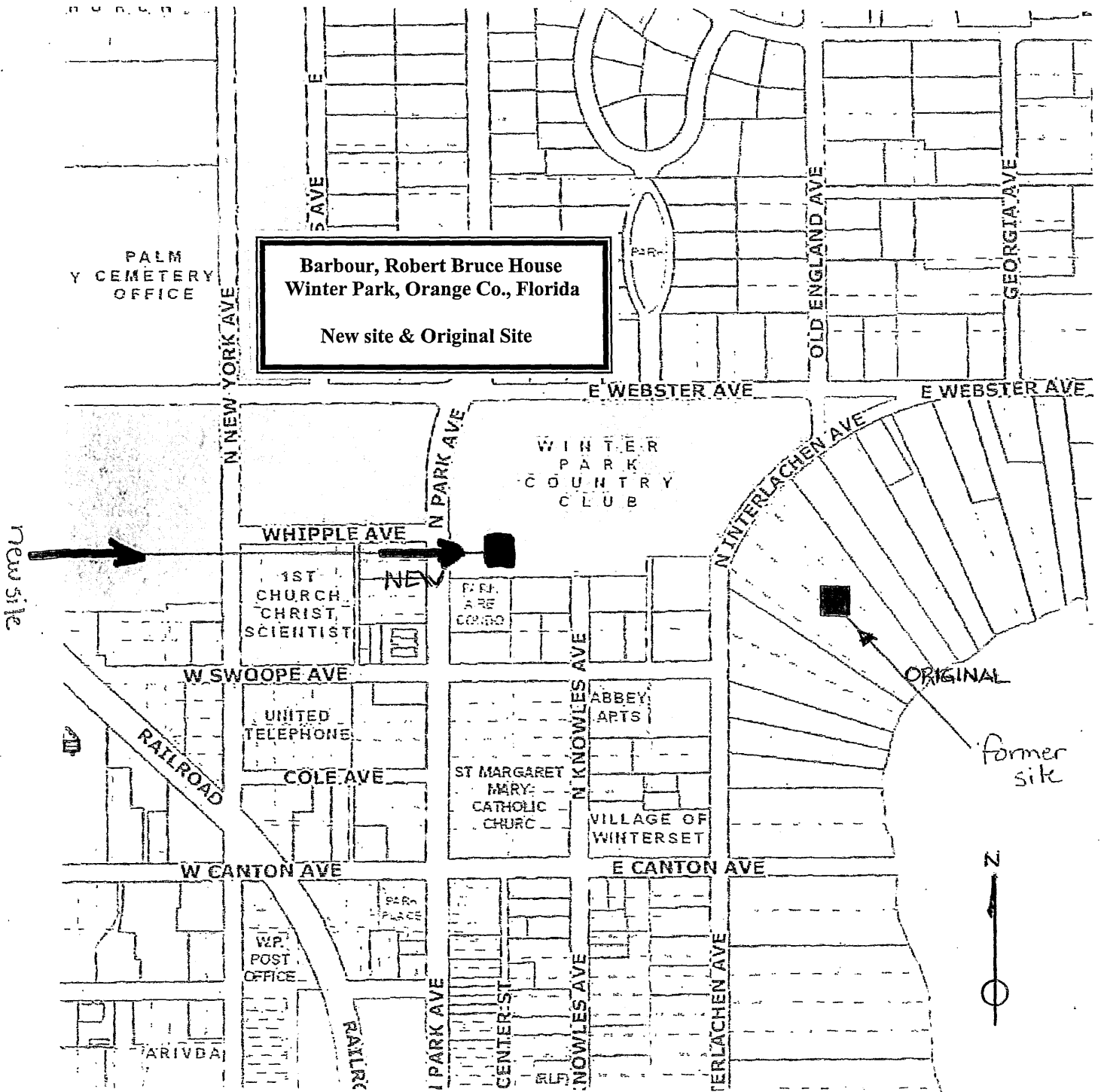
**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The National Register boundary for the Robert Bruce Barbour House property is a portion of a larger parcel City of Winter Park Golf Course 44/102 Tract 5, parcel ID# 06-22-30-1342-00-050, (Plat Book 44, Page 105), and is owned by the City of Winter Park. The portion is located near the southwest corner of the parcel.

The National Register boundary runs along the southern parcel boundary until it intersects with the western edge of North Knowles Avenue and the circular drive that extends northward. The western boundary parallels the western parcel boundary fifty feet from the western elevation of the house. The northern east/west boundary is 50 feet north of the Barbour House garage. See the boundary noted on the Site Map.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The Robert Bruce Barbour House was moved in 2001. The National Register boundary for the Robert Bruce Barbour House meets the criteria of a moved building site in that no existing historic resource has been negatively impacted by the new location. The orientation of the building is retained, and is 900 feet due west of its original location. The setting of the new location is appropriate and comparable to its historic site. The landscaping of the new site has been thoroughly researched and executed to provide a comparable setting.



**Barbour, Robert Bruce House**  
 Winter Park, Orange Co., Florida  
 New site & Original Site

New site

ORIGINAL  
 former site

Parcel ID:

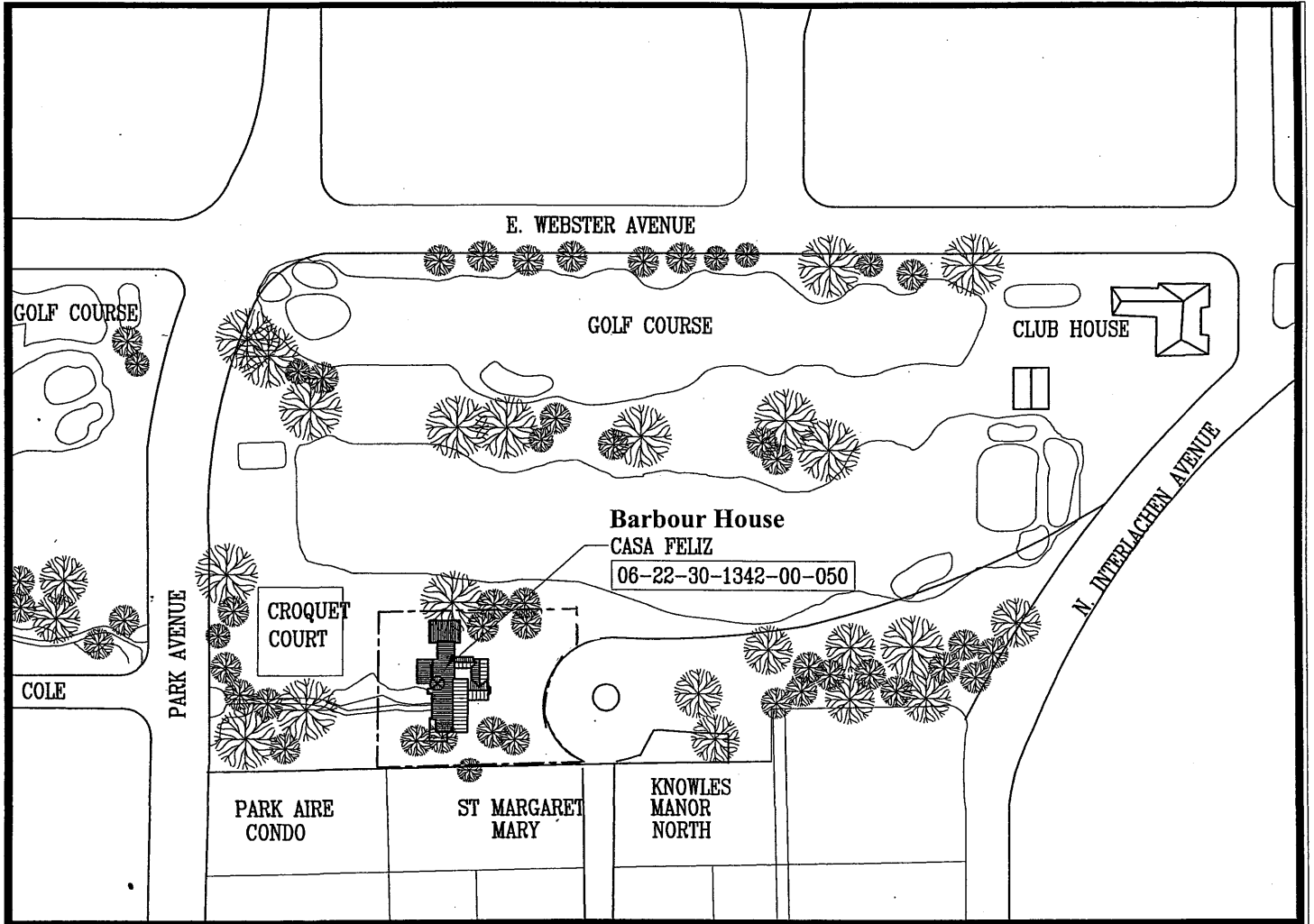
This map is for reference only and is not a survey.

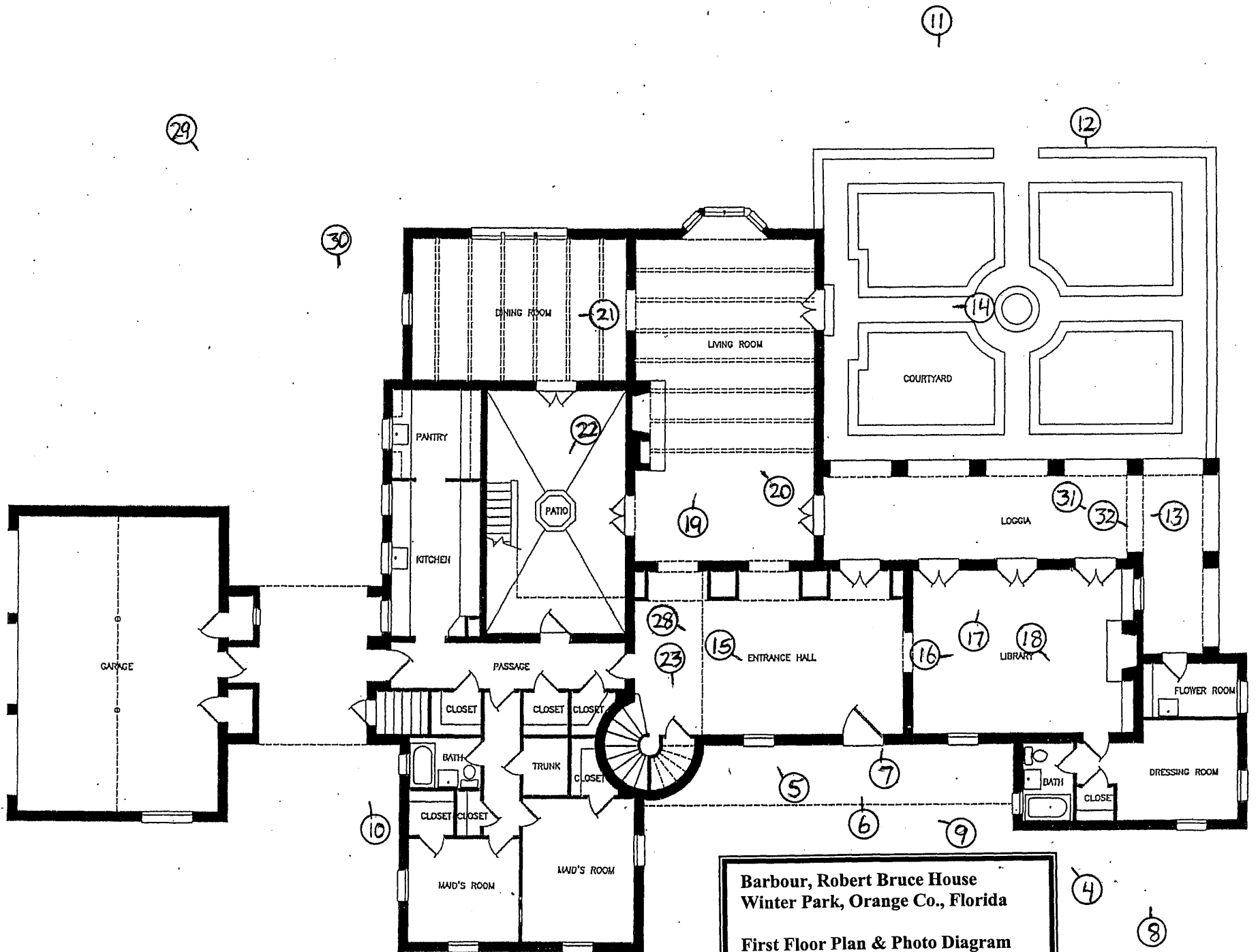
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**Barbour, Robert Bruce House  
Winter Park, Orange Co., Florida**

**Site Plan & National Register Boundary**





**Barbour, Robert Bruce House**  
**Winter Park, Orange Co., Florida**  
**First Floor Plan & Photo Diagram**

