

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Oak Grove Plantation Dependencies

other names/site number Senrab

## 2. Location

street & number U. S. Hwy 61 N/A not for publication  
city, town St. Francisville X vicinity  
state Louisiana code LA county West Feliciana code 125 zip code 70775

## 3. Classification

## Ownership of Property

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

## Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

## Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
4	2 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
4	2 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register 0

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

January 9, 1992

Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, LA SHPO, Dept of Culture,  
Recreation and Tourism

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)Entered in the  
National Register

Selora Byers

2/13/92

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/secondary structures

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/secondary structures/single dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

other: French Creole

Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick; weatherboard

roof metal; wood shingles

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Oak Grove Plantation dependencies are located in the rolling, forested hills of West Feliciana Parish north of St. Francisville. The complex consists of two antebellum French Creole pigeonniers, an antebellum cistern house, a c.1900 carriage house, and two non-contributing elements. Despite deterioration and the adaptive reuse of one pigeonnier, the complex retains its National Register eligibility.

Oak Grove Plantation is believed to have been founded around 1831. The pigeonniers and cistern house date to this period. Although also historic, the carriage house is a later addition from the Victorian era. The dependencies are sited around the location of the main house, which was lost to fire in the 1930s (see sketch map attached). The pigeonniers are placed symmetrically within the front yard northeast and southeast, respectively, of the main house's location. The cistern and carriage house stand several yards beyond what would have been the northwest corner of the home. A description of the nominated structures follows.

### Pigeonniers (2)

Each of the two Oak Grove pigeonniers is octagonal in shape and ten feet in diameter. The northern pigeonnier is about thirty feet high, while the southern one is about twenty-five feet high. The lower story of each is constructed of brick, the upper floor of wood. Square nails can still be seen in the frame portions of the buildings. Simple but heavy Greek Revival cornices with drip moldings and Greek Revival pilasters with molded capitals decorate the upper portions of both structures. These molding profiles assist in dating the structures to the 1830s. Access to the pigeon roosts was provided by three rows of small holes within seven of each pigeonnier's eight exterior walls. These holes are now closed from behind. Each row of holes also has a surviving exterior ledge to assist the birds in lighting. A board and batten door pierces the eighth upper story wall of each pigeonnier. Each also has a single door within its lower brick story.

The northern pigeonnier on the property is quite deteriorated, with part of its roof and all of the floor separating the lower section from the upper pigeon roost having collapsed. The southern pigeonnier has been partially restored and converted into an insulated soundproof recording studio with central heating and air conditioning systems. The ductwork for these systems is attached to one

☒ See continuation sheet

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Oak Grove Dependencies, West Feliciana Parish, LA

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exterior wall. An exterior wooden staircase, itself replaced several times due to deterioration, replaces the original ladder which would have been used to reach the structure's upper floor. The shingle roof on this pigeonnier is also a replacement.

Cistern House

The frame cistern house is generally square in shape and has a hipped roof. Its Greek Revival cornice is similar in style, and thus in date, to the cornices found on the twin pigeonniers. In addition, the building is further decorated on three walls by a series of latticed screens with molded wooden panels below. The cistern itself survives intact inside the larger of the structure's two rooms. This eight foot deep and partially sunken feature is constructed of brick, with the part of the cistern standing above ground now covered by a thin layer of concrete installed to prevent the deterioration of the old brick. The floor and exterior foundation walls (also of brick) have been similarly covered. The building is somewhat deteriorated, its corrugated metal roof is a replacement, and gutters (now also deteriorated) have been installed at the eaves.

Carriage House

The carriage house is a simple rectangular board and batten structure with a steeply pitched roof. It has a dirt floor and its interior space is open above the beams which connect the side walls at ceiling level. There are no historic roofing materials beneath the current replacement corrugated metal roof. Each of the building's two swinging doors appears to have lost some material, as they do not meet in the center of the entrance opening. Carriage houses like this were constructed throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For this reason, we are assigning a date of c. 1900 to the structure.

Assessment of Integrity

Admittedly, the general deterioration of the buildings as described above, as well as the alterations made to the southern pigeonnier, are cause for some concern. However, the Oak Grove dependencies still easily convey their identity as plantation service buildings. It is the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office that nomination of the complex to the National Register is justified because of the extreme rarity of the resources being considered. This rarity will be explained in Part 8.

CONTINUED

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Continuation SheetOak Grove Plantation Dependencies, West Feliciana Parish, LA  
Section number 7 Page 2Non-Contributing Elements

For the record, a fifth historic outbuilding remains standing at Oak Grove. This two room brick structure served as the plantation's kitchen and laundry. (It is now used as a residence.) Its thick brick walls, double chimney, large fireplace openings, ceiling beams, and some of its original openings remain intact. However, the building has been encased within modern construction, which took place in the 1940s. Only a small part of one wall, one gable peak, and the chimney of the kitchen remain visible from the exterior. Thus, the dependency's National Register eligibility is seriously compromised, and it must be considered as a non-contributing element.

A modern shed/well house stands at the rear of the property. It is also being listed as a non-contributing element for the purposes of this nomination.

## Contributing Elements (4)

2 pigeonniers

carriage house

cistern house

## Non-Contributing Elements (2)

kitchen/laundry (loss of integrity)

modern shed/well house

Note: Although mentioned above and referenced on the attached map, the house site should not be regarded as a contributing or non-contributing element. Its location is being provided merely for informational purposes.

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
architecture

Period of Significance  
c.1831; c.1900

Significant Dates  
c.1831;c.1900

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Oak Grove Plantation dependencies are locally significant in the area of architecture within West Feliciana Parish because they are a rare grouping of once common building types. The Oak Grove pigeonniers are also significant at the state level as rare examples of a once prominent feature of the Creole building tradition.

West Feliciana Parish is known as a center of plantation culture. This is verified by the 1860 census, which identifies 63 large plantations (50 or more slaves) within the parish. It is certain that a number of smaller plantations also existed. Plantations were well known for the large complexes of support structures which were needed to meet the needs of agriculture, as well as the needs of life in rural surroundings. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that far more than 63 complexes of outbuildings must have once dotted the landscape. Today most of these have vanished. The West Feliciana Parish Historic Structures Survey documents 638 surviving buildings which are 50+ years of age or older. However, the majority of these are dwellings. Only eight complexes of dependencies, all with their integrity somewhat compromised, survive. Thus, it is the opinion of the Division of Historic Preservation staff that the rarity of the Oak Grove complex justifies its nomination to the National Register despite its current state of deterioration.

Oak Grove's two French Creole pigeonniers are also significant at the state level because they are rare examples of a once prominent Creole building form. Although the raised Creole plantation house is considered the apex of Louisiana's French building tradition, the pigeonnier also ranks as an extremely important building form. Frenchmen viewed the presence of monumental towers in the landscape as a sign of prosperity and prestige. Thus, Louisiana's plantations often had pigeon houses built in the form of one-and-one-half or two story towers with pigeon roosts in their upper levels. Hundreds of these structures must have once existed throughout south and central Louisiana, the areas of French

☒ See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Historic Structures Survey, West Feliciana Parish.

Site visit by National Register staff.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)  
has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings

Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State historic preservation office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property @ 8 acres

### UTM References

A 

1	5
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6	5	6	2	0	0
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3	4	1	6	8	4	0
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Zone Easting

Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting

Northing

D 

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☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Legal property description: A certain piece or parcel of land together with all buildings and improvements thereon, and all rights, ways, privileges, servitudes and advantages thereunto belonging, or in any wise appertaining, situated in Section 73, Township 2 South, Range 3 West, St. Helena Meridian, Greensburg Land District, West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, being designated Lot 2 of Senrab containing eight acres more or less, bounded on the north, west and south by lands of Marchive and on the east by Lot 1 of Senrab.

☐ See continuation sheet

### Boundary Justification

Boundary lines follow property lines of parcel of land upon which the complex is located.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation

date November 1991

street & number P. O. Box 44247

telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge

state LA zip code 70804

Owner: Mr. and Mrs. David Barnes

Senrab, P. O. Box 146

St. Francisville, LA 70775

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Oak Grove Plantation Dependencies, St. Francisville vicinity, West Feliciana Parish, LA

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settlement. However, only eighteen have survived. The set at Oak Grove is especially significant for two reasons. First, they are octagonal in shape, whereas most of the remaining pigeonniers are square. Second, they are the only pair to have survived on the east bank of the Mississippi River.

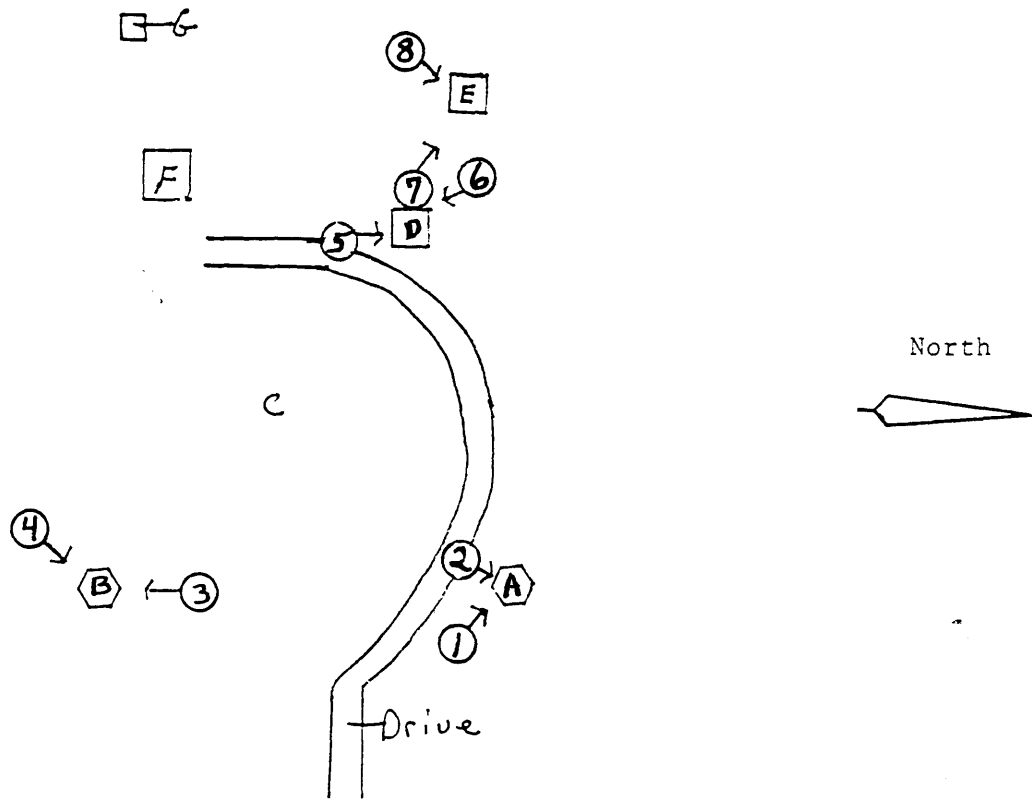
### Historical Note

The Oak Grove Plantation was started around 1831. It passed through several ownerships (and suffered the loss of its main house) before being purchased by the Barnes family in the early 1940s. It has now been in this family for three generations. As mentioned above, the old kitchen/laundry facility has been enlarged. Originally used as a summer home, it is now the year round residence of the David Barnes family.

OAK GROVE PLANTATION DEPENDENCIES

West Feliciana Parish, LA

SKETCH MAP: RELATIONSHIP OF BUILDINGS



A = North Pigeonnier

NOT TO SCALE

B = South Pigeonnier

C = Site of Main House

D = Cistern House

E = Carriage House

F = Expanded Kitchen/Laundry  
(Non-contributing)

G = Modern Shed/Well House  
(Non-contributing)