

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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 Price, George R., House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 3000 Forest Drive not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Columbia vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state South Carolina code SC county Richland code 079 zip code 29204

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide x locally.  
(\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 3/26/98  
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.  
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 commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): \_\_\_\_\_  
Edson H. Beall 4.30.98  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action



**Criteria Considerations**

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

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1939  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Period of Significance**

1939

**Architect/Builder**

George R. Price

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American 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

Name of repository: John M. Sherrer, III

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>17</u>	<u>500160</u>	<u>3763620</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title John M. Sherrer, III  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 22 April 1997  
street & number 1017 Laurens St., Apt. 1 telephone (803) 254-5934  
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29201

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

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

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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### Property Owner

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

name Elaine Gillespie  
street & number 3000 Forest Drive telephone (803) 787-8562  
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29204

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George R. Price House  
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Description

Summary:

The George R. Price House, built in 1939, is Columbia, South Carolina's only Streamline Moderne style residence. As an expression of the Modernistic movement, the structure is one of a handful of the city's buildings constructed in a style that was common in American commercial architecture during the late 1920s and 1930s. Located at the corner of Forest Drive and Glenwood Road, the house rests on less than one acre of land within the Forest Hills neighborhood, a residential community developed in the 1940s. The home is a two-story, steel-framed, masonry building with an L-shaped floor plan, flat roof, multiple porches, and a three-car garage. With the exception of minor brick ornamentation around its frieze and numerous glass block windows, the house lacks ornamentation and contrasts sharply with its neighboring houses. The home has, over the years, experienced only minor exterior alterations such as the modification of its rear sun deck in the 1960s into a screen porch and the conversion of two doorways into glass block windows by the current owner.

Exterior:

The George R. Price House is an L-shaped, two-story structure with a flat roof and an asymmetrical facade. Its masonry walls laid in a stretcher bond pattern cover a structural steel skeleton. Concrete composes the building's foundation, while the building's flat roof is made of tar and gravel. Substantial portions of the masonry walls are interrupted by sections of glass block windows. Horizontal concrete banding, thin metal balustrades similar to those found on ships, and large glass block windows create a sense of speed and machine-like efficiency<sup>2</sup> within the structure, themes central to Streamline Moderne architecture.

Northern Elevation

The structure's asymmetrical facade faces north on Forest Drive and consists of three bays. The east bay contains a long horizontal glass block window on its first story. This bay's second story contains two smaller horizontal glass block windows and a porch covered with an aluminum shed roof supported by thin metal posts. The facade's middle bay features a recessed porch with a central doorway flanked by two four-paned casement windows. Above the doorway is a twelve-paned transom. On the middle bay's

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<sup>1</sup>Raymond Price, telephone interview by author, 15 February 1997; David Gebhard, The National Trust Guide to Art Deco in America (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 1; Elaine Gillespie, interview by author, 18 January 1997. According to Raymond Price, the house bordering the George R. Price House on the east, though somewhat similar in design, was built in the 1950s by George Raymond Price as a graduation present to his son. All other Streamline Moderne structures in Columbia are commercial properties.

<sup>2</sup>Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 465; Gebhard, Art Deco in America, 9-10.

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second story the central doorway is repeated; however, its two flanking wagon spoke windows overlook an open deck featuring decorative concrete banding and thin metal balustrade. A large, vertical glass block window dominates both of the west bay's stories. Along the frieze of the northern elevation runs a band of bricks laid in a dog-tooth bond, which adds some minor decoration to the facade's otherwise smooth masonry finish.

Western Elevation

The building's western elevation facing Glenwood Road contains four bays. Within the elevation's two north bays there are three four-paned casement windows and a doorway with a twelve-paned transom. Above the doorway rests a small canopy whose horizontal concrete banding mimics that found on the northern facade's porch. A three-car garage dominates the remainder of the western elevation's first story, while jalousie windows and the west wall of the building's screen porch make up its second story.

Southern Elevation

Three bays comprise the southern elevation. Across the first story of both the elevation's west and central bays run large glass block windows. A curved glass block window extends away from the main body of the house in the middle bay's first story. This extension creates a second story deck, accessed by a metal ladder permanently attached to the bay's curved wall. The middle bays' second story contains three four-paned casement windows. The east bay has a central glass block window in its first story, while the building's screen porch rear wall constitutes its second story. Dog-toothed bond frieze work extends across only the west and central bays of the southern elevation.

Eastern Elevation

While the first story of the southernmost bays features a solitary glass block window, the second story of both bays mirrors its western elevation's counterpart. Various sized, four-paned casement windows are evenly distributed throughout both stories of the eastern elevation's two northernmost bays. Dog-tooth bond decoration runs along the frieze of the northernmost half of the facade as well.

Interior:

The George R. Price House contains several notable interior features. The most striking aspect of the spacious home's interior is a circular

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<sup>3</sup>A typical exterior treatment on Streamline Moderne style structures involved the use of stucco to create smooth, unadorned wall surfaces. Though the George R. Price House seemingly breaks with the common practice here, the building's stretcher bond brick work and white paint job create, from a distance, virtually the same effect as that achieved by other Streamline Moderne structures covered with the more common stucco finish.

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staircase highlighted by the two-story glass block window located on the building's facade. Also noteworthy are the house's bathrooms which include original decorative tile featuring wave patterns and a sail boat motif. The structure also possesses two unique structural features. The first involves a network of pipes which transfer standing water on the house's flat roof to the city's sewer system. Unfortunately, this internal drainage system has occasionally failed to work as planned, thus resulting in some interior water damage. The second unique structural characteristic consists of a series of external vents and internal ducts which provide air circulation between the first and second stories. Evidence of this system can be found in two metal grates located on the east elevation beneath the floor of the north elevation's porch.<sup>4</sup>

Conclusion:

The George R. Price House is a strong example of the Streamline Moderne expression of the Modernistic movement, an architectural style which did not experience as much widespread popularity in Columbia as it did in other parts of the nation during the late 1920s and 1930s. With its architectural integrity intact, the building is the city's only Streamline Modern style residence, and thus provides an interesting comparison to the old Greyhound Bus Station, a commercial property crafted in the same style.

Furthermore, the George R. Price House serves as a bridge between a local Modernistic predecessor and successor - the Art Deco style Kress Store and the International style Wallace-McGee House.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Gillespie interview. According to the current owner, the internal drainage system is prone to clogging from debris that collects on the structure's flat roof. The system's failure to work according to design resulted in water damage to the home's interior plaster treatment which was repaired during restoration.

<sup>5</sup>Most of the other Columbia Modernistic structures are commercial buildings crafted in the Art Deco style. Though the largest concentration of these structures is found on Main Street, one or two commercial buildings located in the Congaree Vista and on Harden Street in Five Points do feature some very minor Art Deco characteristics such as decorative pilasters. Both the Wallace-McGee House and former Greyhound Station are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places for their contributions to Columbia's architectural heritage.

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Statement of Significance

The George R. Price House, located at 3000 Forest Drive in Columbia, South Carolina, is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its local architectural significance. Built in 1939, the house is a strong example of the Streamline Moderne style, an expression of the Modernistic architectural philosophy developed in Europe and later introduced into the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. Designed and constructed by George R. Price, a Columbia building contractor, the Price - Gillespie House constitutes a significant local landmark in the state's capital city and is illustrative of a larger international architectural movement.

Modernism began in Europe as a philosophical reaction to the social chaos created by the First World War, and Modernistic architecture evolved in Europe between World Wars I and II as a reaction to traditional building theory and expression. Brought to the United States in the early 1920s, Modernistic architecture extolled the virtues of simplicity and functionalism, while casting off the restrictions of conventional construction methods, building materials, and traditional decoration. This avant-garde movement represented the first significant shift from the revivalist architecture of the period houses and Beaux-Arts structures common to early twentieth-century America. Materials such as structural steel, reinforced concrete, terra cotta, polychromy, and sheet glass gave architects more freedom to design innovative structures better suited to the requirements of their inhabitants, structures which emphasized the future rather than imitating the past. Though present throughout much of the United States, most examples of Modernistic architecture commonly concentrated in California, Florida, the Midwest, and the Northeast. They appeared with much less frequency in the southern states, including South Carolina.

The Streamline Moderne style of the Price - Gillespie House is a derivative of the earlier Art Deco style. The term Art Deco, coined after the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes held in Paris in 1925, came to describe a movement which influenced not just architecture, but also art, sculpture, and jewelry. Typically, Art Deco buildings incorporated, through a variety of previously unused building materials, stuccoed smooth wall surfaces, zigzag designs, stylized decorative motifs, and facades with vertical emphases such as towers and projections. Many times, their exterior treatments and internal decor and ornamentation shared common themes and elements. Most Art Deco architecture in the United States involved commercial structures, such as the Kress dime store erected in 1934 on Columbia's Main Street; few residential examples are extant. However, by the mid-1930s, the trend towards greater simplicity in

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<sup>6</sup>McAlester, Field Guide, 463; John C. Poppliers, S. Allen Chambers, Jr., and Nancy B. Schwartz, What Style is it? A Guide to American Architecture (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1983), 88-89.



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design strengthened, Art Deco's popularity began to wane, and structures took on more streamlined appearances.

Streamline Moderne buildings, while retaining the smooth exterior walls of the Art Deco style, featured asymmetrical facades, flattened roofs with modest decorative ledges, and an emphasis on horizontal lines, balustrades, and grooves. Other distinctive characteristics included round windows, sections of glass block windows and walls, rounded corners, and rolled metal banding. Through Streamline Moderne architecture, designers attempted to symbolize the twentieth century's technological hallmarks of speed, efficiency, and machinery. Despite its masonry finish, in lieu of a more typical smooth stuccoed exterior, the George R. Price House incorporated the basic tenets of Streamline Moderne architecture, from its flat roof to its glass block and round windows.

The George R. Price House has often been misidentified as an International style dwelling. This may be due in part to the year of its construction and to the fact that some of its architectural features bear some resemblance to that later style. The International style, the zenith of Modernistic theory, took the renunciation of ornamentation and nonessential design to an extreme. Building on the foundation of the Streamline Moderne school of design, the International style, popularized in the late 1930s, offered virtually no decoration whatsoever. Beauty, felt its designers, equated to simplicity. Windows often were metal casement or glass block in nature. Roofs, while still flat, featured no decorative ledges. Structural steel skeletons allowed International style architects to emphasize volume rather than mass in their buildings. Non-load-bearing walls could be constructed very thinly using such materials as plywood, glass block, and sheet glass. Often, cantilevered designs allowed portions of the building to hang, seemingly unsupported. By rendering absent all non-functional ornamentation and detail, designers sought to create a "machine for living," constructed from standardized materials and tailored to meet the owner's specific needs.

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<sup>7</sup>Pamela Dwight, ed., Landmark Yellow Pages: Where to Find All the Names, Addresses, Facts, and Figures You Need (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1993), 9.

<sup>8</sup>Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, American Architecture, Volume 2: 1860-1976 (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995), 331; James Ford, Classic Modern Homes of the 1930s: 64 Designs by Neutra, Gropius, Breuer, Stone, and Others (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1989), 11; McAlester, Field Guide, 465-466.

<sup>9</sup>Poppeliers, What Style is it?, 88-89; McAlester, Field Guide, 10; Ford, Classic Modern Homes, 11.

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By the time construction began on the George R. Price House in 1939, many American buildings exhibited International style characteristics. According to Laverne Price, the brother of architect-builder George R. Price, the inspiration to build the Price - Gillespie House in the Streamline Modern style may have come from magazine articles featuring Modernistic buildings. Price's interest in Modernistic design may have also stemmed from his business experiences as a Columbia contractor and builder. The contractor's trade would have granted first-hand experience in working with new prefabricated and mass-produced building materials, while introducing him to the new construction concepts of the era. Regardless, Price, known for his collaboration with architect James B. Urquhart in the construction of schools and churches in the Columbia area, ultimately designed his home in a slightly earlier Modernistic interpretation. It is unknown whether his lack of formal architectural training or a personal preference prompted the building contractor to deviate slightly from the Streamline Moderne style by adding International style features like metal casement windows to his home. Nevertheless, the George R. Price House significance lies not only in its builder's vocation, but also in its local architectural distinction and rarity.

While Columbia does have a few Modernistic buildings, the Price - Gillespie House, remains unique for it is the only home crafted in the Streamline Moderne style. Columbia's other significant Modernistic residence, the 1937 International style Wallace - McGee House, gained recognition on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. Both homes are anomalies in neighborhoods of otherwise traditional ranch and cottage style homes. Upon the George R. Price House's completion, however, it stood out not only for its distinctive appearance, which some citizens at the time felt was ugly, but also because of its location.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Danny C. Flanders, "International Flair," The State (Columbia, SC), 6 February 1994; Price interview; Phelps H. Bultman, telephone interview by author, 2 March 1997; Gillespie interview; John M. Bryan and Associates, "City-Wide Architectural Survey and Historic Preservation Plan: Columbia, South Carolina" (Columbia, SC: State Historic Preservation Office, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, and City of Columbia, 1993), 47-48.

<sup>11</sup>Rene Corley, interview by author, 12 February 1997; Price interview; Despite the structure's distinction among its contemporaries in the Columbia area, no mention of it was found in The State newspaper for the entire year of 1939, the year in which it was constructed. No record of the building is mentioned in The State's Sunday edition "Builder's Page" throughout the year 1940. Efforts to locate articles on the Price House in South Carolina Magazine for the early 1940s proved unfruitful was well.

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In 1937 George R. Price purchased slightly under an acre of land from Mattie B. Jennings on which he planned to build his home. At that time, little more than orchards and the Glenview Golf Course occupied the area that today is Forest Hills. In fact, the improved road leading out of the city ended in front of Price's plot of land. As the city of Columbia grew eastward in the 1940s and 1950s, more traditional style homes occupied adjoining properties, enhancing the Price - Gillespie House's distinction. In 1952, as a present to his son Raymond, Price designed and constructed another house loosely resembling a Streamline Moderne residence on an adjacent east side lot. Rather than detracting from the original structure, the second building actually accentuated Price's first effort. Over the years the Price - Gillespie's location on Forest Drive, a main thoroughfare in Columbia, rendered the home an easily recognizable landmark and a cornerstone to the Forest Hills neighborhood.

For the majority of its existence, the George R. Price House remained within the Price family, its ownership transferred from George R. Price upon his death to his wife Edyth, and later on to his grandchildren in 1985. During that time, the structure underwent little change except for the minor addition in the 1960s of a screened porch to its rear sun deck. Elaine Gillespie, the property's current owner, purchased the home in 1989 and has since meticulously restored the structure.

The George Price House represents an important architectural landmark for it possesses physical characteristics inherent to the Streamline Moderne school of design, a style uncommon to both the city of Columbia and the State of South Carolina. Enhancing its distinction among the city's residential properties is the fact that the home is the product of building contractor who did not benefit from formal architectural training. Despite his lack of official instruction in design, George R. Price successfully contributed to Columbia's architectural evolution. His effort, the Price - Gillespie House, represents locally an important chapter in the Modernistic movement of the earlier twentieth century. The Price - Gillespie House merits inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places for its representative role in a continuum of Modernistic structures such as the Art Deco style Kress dime store and the International style Wallace - McGee House previously recognized on the Register for their local contributions to nationally significant architectural trends.

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<sup>12</sup>Corley interview; Price interview.

<sup>13</sup>Deed Book 0929, page 451 and Deed Book 736, page 607, Register of Mesne Conveyance, Richland County Judicial Building, Columbia, SC; Price interview.

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**Bibliography**

Primary Sources

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Gillespie, Elaine. Interview by author. 18 January 1997.

Price, Raymond. Telephone interview by author. 15 February 1997.

Stockton, Robert P. "Carolina Landmark." The State, 15 July 1979, 8E.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is shown as the line marked as "George R. Price House" on the accompanying Richland County Tax Map #R13904-04-01.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

The boundary of the nominated property is restricted to the historic residence and the city lot on which it is located.

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: George R. Price House  
Location of Property: 3000 Forest Drive, Columbia, Richland County, S.C.

Name of Photographer: David Hunt  
Date of Photographs: July 1991  
Location of Original

Negatives: Elaine Gillespie, 3000 Forest Drive, Columbia, S.C. 29204

1. Facade
2. Left elevation
3. Right elevation
4. Entrance detail
5. Rear elevation
6. Facade detail
7. Wall detail
8. Sliding round window
9. Spiral staircase
10. Spiral staircase, alcoves, and windows
11. Curved wall in upstairs hall
12. Marble mantel
13. Upstairs bathroom
14. Upstairs bathroom floor detail
15. Bathroom