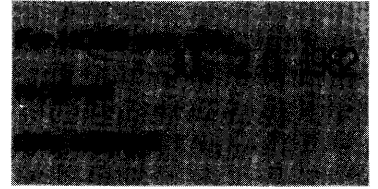


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic Pythagoras Lodge No. 41, Free and Accepted Masons

and/or common Pythagoras Masonic Temple/Decatur Masonic Temple

2. Location

street & number 136 E. Ponce de Leon Ave. N/A not for publication

city, town Decatur N/A vicinity of congressional district 4th

state Georgia code 013 county DeKalb code 089

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Fraternal

4. Owner of Property

name Pythagoras Lodge No. 41, Free and Accepted Masons

street & number c/o William K. Smith, Secretary 136 East Ponce de Leon Avenue

city, town Decatur N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30030

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number DeKalb County Courthouse

city, town Decatur state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Structures Field Survey:

title DeKalb County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pythagoras Lodge No. 41 is a three-story, Beaux Arts style brick building with a basement. It was built as a Masonic meeting hall with its first and second floors designed for commercial use. The third floor is used by the Masons and other groups for meetings. The building is prominently situated on a corner lot at a major intersection in downtown Decatur.

The exterior of the lodge consists of five horizontal divisions and three major vertical divisions. A two story porch of three bays with coupled columns flanked by end pavilions rests on a rusticated stone-faced podium. The continuous entablature supports the shallow hipped roof; classical details are used throughout. The south facade of the building (facing the old courthouse) is comprised of four major entities. The first entity is a stone-faced rusticated base of one story. A central entry with a swan's neck pediment with rusticated pilasters supports the Masonic emblem. The two storefront-windowed bays on either side of the entry have flat rusticated stone arches. The second entity is a central two-story recessed porch of three bays. The coupled columns and entablature have classical details and are among the commonest features of Beaux-Arts Classicism. The paired second-level windows are double-hung with brick, flat arch lintels. The third-level windows are covered by stone tracery screens. The third entity is the two end pavilions. Quoined stone pilasters support an entablature. The paired second-level windows are double hung and have brick flat arch lintels. The third-level windows have quoined stone pilasters supporting a stone pediment. A small stone porch supports an ornate wrought-iron rail. The fourth entity is a sloped clay-tiled roof near the street facades; it is flat everywhere else. The west facade consists of four entities. The rusticated stone base, roof, and end pavilions are the same as the south facade. There is no recessed porch on the second and third levels. Six double hung windows with brick flat arch lintels occupy this space.

The interior of the lodge is divided into three floors and a basement. The first floor originally was designed for commercial shops but has been converted for the most part into a bank that is entered from Ponce de Leon Avenue. The bank consists of modern offices, a vault, and a semi-circular tellers area. The south-east side of the first floor contains a modern c. 1950's staircase providing access to the second floor. The northwest corner of the first floor contains a barbershop and the hall and stairs leading to the second floor as well as the elevator shaft. There are no historic details remaining on the first floor interior other than part of the front entryway. There is a mezzanine above the rear of the bank area used for storage.

The lodge's second floor is accessed from the above mentioned stairways at the northwest and southeast corners and by the elevator. The second floor consists of offices opening onto the L-shaped central hall. The hall has a lineoleum floor and plaster walls. The doorways to these offices still retain their original woodwork, single transoms, and architrave mouldings. Several office interiors have been combined through the years to make larger space, but the hallway configuration

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National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 2

appears much the same. One office is the official office for the lodge. Next to it in the turn of the hall are large doors that lead into the grand staircase that leads to the lodge's meeting room on the third floor. The second floor does not entirely cover the same area as the first floor thus leaving some exposed roof on the east side of the second level.

The third floor is reached by either the grand staircase from the second floor or the elevator on the north side. The grand staircase has marble steps, a marble landing, and plaster walls. The third floor contains a dining room, kitchen, office, storage area, entry hall and the meeting hall. When entering the third floor by way of the grand staircase one enters a small hallway and then the entry hall. The entry hall has a large, two story barrel-vaulted ceiling with arches over windows and parallel arches on the interior walls, making a symmetrical room. French doors separate the entry hall from the small hallway and grand stairway.. The concentric arches rest over a panelled double door on the north end. The capitals used as the springing points of the several arches are designed with a trowel, the symbol of the Masons. The windows themselves are bare of any ornamentation and the plastered walls have no other ornamentation save the arches. One feature of the entry hall is the cornerstone of the earlier 1907 lodge building which sat on another corner in Decatur.

The entry hall leads into the large meeting hall of the lodge which has simple, bold classical detailing. A pair of thick Doric columns frame the raised speaker's podium at the east end of the room. The speaker's chair and two side chairs sit within a slightly recessed apse-like space with an arched enframingent. The keystone of the arch contains a carving. There is no painting or other decoration within this area. At the corners of the room and at various intervals around the wall are pilasters that appear to support the paired beamed plastered ceiling. The beams divide the ceiling into recessed areas each containing crown moulding. The west end of the room contains a balcony that is reached by stairs on either end leading to the meeting hall floor. The three doors leading into the meeting hall from the entry area (that is the area under the balcony) contain inset panels. The central door is flanked by two free standing Corinthian columns surmounted by world globes. Fretwork runs around the edge of the balcony. The meeting room has two tiers of seats on three sides and various Masonic and other emblems around the room and walls. Large chandeliers are found, one at each juncture of the cross beamed ceiling, decorated with lions' heads and fretwork.

The other rooms on the third floor are the small office, the large dining hall which has no window moulding, heavy classical crown mouldings and the elevator entrance, and the kitchen. A small staircase leads to a mezzanine above the kitchen that contains offices.

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The basement contains the original coal furnace made by Gurney Heater Manufacturing Company of Boston, Mass., as well as the present gas system. Most of the original steam heat radiators exist on the upper two floors.

The lodge sits on a corner of a city block, across from the original county courthouse and commercial establishments. It has no grounds, landscaping or out-buildings.

Major changes to the building since its 1925 dedication include the conversion of the first floor from small stores, several facing Ponce de Leon Avenue and three facing Clairmont Avenue, to the first floor bank, now occupied by the Bank of the South. The central front entrance staircase that originally led to the second floor was removed and the second floor landing covered over. A new stairway was added to the southeast corner as well as the elevator on the northside. Other changes include the expanding of offices on the second floor by combining one or more of the original offices while leaving the hall and doorways intact.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in August 1981 still represent the character and appearance of the property. No significant changes have been made since that date.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1924–1925 **Builder/Architect** William J. Sayward, Architect
 Arnold Construction Co. of Elberton, Georgia, contractors.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Pythagoras Lodge No. 41, built in 1925, is significant in architectural history as a building built to be a Masonic Lodge and commercial building and especially to symbolize the strength the Masonic organization had in the community, having been located on the square at different sites for many years. The use of the Beaux Arts styling as used during the early 20th Century for many similar community meeting-activity buildings such as libraries, city halls, and courthouses signified that this building would serve the community in a similar capacity. The architect was also a member of the lodge. The architectural significance of the lodge can be further elaborated upon by pointing out the significant architectural details found in the structure as well as the career of the architect, a brother in the lodge. The lodge is significant in social-humanitarian history because it was the meeting place of the Masons and other groups since its dedication in 1925. The goal of Free Masonry was to accept good men into its ranks and teach them to become better men. Through the years the lodge has included among its members many leaders of the city and county. These areas of significance support property eligibility under National Register criteria A and C.

Architectural Significance- The lodge is a fine example of a vernacularized Beaux-Arts style. Its style is manifest in the overall composition of the front facade which includes the raised podium that serves as the first floor, the paired columns and the central recessed porch of the second floor, and the pedimented windows with stone quoins. The use of a rusticated base and quoins tends to multiply re-entrant angles in an attempt to break the front facade into advancing and receding planes. The building sits directly to the north of the Old DeKalb County Courthouse (a National Register property) and is of a complimentary scale. As with other versions of localized high-style architecture, this building is a local landmark. The interior of the lodge rooms on the third floor are especially fine examples of architecture built for a specific use, in this case for lodge meetings. Symbols are used, such as trowels in the arch details of the entry hall, that relate directly to the Masonic movement. The simple Doric style of the meeting hall shows good workmanship for a functional gathering space.

The architect of the lodge was a lodge member, William J. Sayward (1875-1945), a Vermont native who moved to Atlanta in 1912 and practiced with William A. Edwards in the firm of Edwards and Sayward until Edwards death in 1939. Sayward later lived

(CONTINUED)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attached Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Northeast Atlanta, GA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>7</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>3</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is marked as Block 10 parcel 20 on the enclosed DeKalb County, Georgia Tax Map no. 15-246D. It is all that the owners own at this location and all that has ever been associated with this property.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code		county		code	
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state		code		county		code	
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

organization	<u>Historic Preservation Section</u>	date	<u>June 10, 1982</u>
	<u>Georgia Department of Natural Resources</u>		

street & number	<u>270 Washington St., S.W.</u>	telephone	<u>404 656-2840</u>
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city or town	<u>Atlanta</u>	state	<u>Georgia</u>
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12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature	<u>Elizabeth A. Lyon</u>
	Elizabeth A. Lyon

title	<u>State Historic Preservation Officer</u>	date	<u>7/14/82</u>
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For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Albena Byers</u>	Entered in the National Register
Keeper of the National Register	date <u>8/19/82</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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in Decatur. There are many fine examples of their work remaining showing the variety of their ability, including county courthouses in Georgia (Tift County 1912, Fannin County 1936) and South Carolina; college and university buildings, including Decatur's Columbia Theological Seminary, and Agnes Scott College's administration building and library (1929-36); local school buildings including Girl's Senior High School in Atlanta (1923), later called Roosevelt High School; and also in Decatur the City Hall and the Candler Hotel from the 1920's. Essentially the major historic buildings remaining in downtown Decatur, Georgia are the works of the firm of Edwards and Sayward save for the county courthouse. They also designed the Southeastern Fairgrounds (now Lakewood Fairgrounds) in Atlanta in 1915. Sayward served as president of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1917 and 1918 and served on a Georgia legislative committee to write proposals for the registration of architects in Georgia which went into effect in 1919. He was elected in 1923 to the board of the AIA in Washington, D.C. and in 1926 a fellow of the AIA.

Social/Humanitarian Significance- Since the 1734 beginning of Free Masonry in the United States, to the present, the Masons have been an integral part of many communities. The Decatur chapter of the Masons was granted 138 years ago on October 7, 1844. This predated both Atlanta and Fulton County. Since that time the Pythagoras Lodge has functioned without a break every month of the year, including those dismal days of the Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The earliest known home of the Decatur Masons was located on the north side of the courthouse. The Masons worked out of this location from 1844 to 1848. Their second home was also located by the courthouse, on West Court Square near the Reynolds Hotel. They stayed here from 1848 to 1900. Their next location was in a two story red brick building on the corner of South Court Square and McDonough Street. They stayed here from 1900 to 1907. Their fourth home was located directly across McDonough Street on the corner of South Court Square. They stayed here from 1907 to 1924 until they outgrew their building and decided to construct a new one.

Their present building, as all of their buildings have been, is located very near the courthouse. In 1924-25 the Masons constructed their present building on the same site as their first lodge, the northeast corner of North Court Square, on the corner of Clairmont Avenue and East Ponce de Leon Avenue. The cornerstone was laid May 10, 1924 and the building was dedicated as a Masonic Lodge on January 19th, 1925.

The Masons acquired possession of their present site for the sum of \$11,875.00. The lot fronts 95 feet on Ponce de Leon and 115 feet on Clairmont. Thus after 80 years the Lodge came back to its original 1844 location.

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The Decatur Lodge has had many prominent Atlanta families represented in its' ranks, including members of the Candler, Ansley, and Collier families.

The Decatur Masonic Lodge, along with all other lodges, represents many years of history, brotherhood, and community involvement.

In 1925 the Lodge building housed the Masons, several law firms, and a U.S. Post Office. Today it houses the Masons, several law firms, and the Bank of the South. Besides the owners of the lodge, the meeting rooms are used by several other fraternal organizations including the Knights Templars, Royal Arch Masons, Royal and Select Masters, Eastern Star, Amaranthe, Daughters of the Nile, Ladies of the Oriental Shrine, and the White Shrine of Jerusalem.

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Draft National Register nominations prepared by Judy Vines (1980) and Alvah Hardy (1981) for architecture class at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

1968-69 Historical Committee Report Pythagoras Lodge No. 41... (1969).

Freemasonry and its Progress in Atlanta and Fulton County, Georgia (Rev. Ed., 1925)
by T.C. McDonald.