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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 an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Palo Alto Dependency

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number LA Hwy 944 N/A not for publication

city or town Donaldsonville vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Ascension code 005 zip code 70346

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.)

Gerry Hobdy 4/14/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Gerry Hobdy, Date 4/14/92
LA SHPO, Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Entered On the
National Register

Date of Action

Melous Byers 6/4/92

Palo Alto Dependency
Name of Property

Ascension Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

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)

Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: French Creole

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof shakes

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Palo Alto Dependency (c. 1880) is a one-and-one-half story frame cottage in the French Creole style. In 1979, it was moved about one-fourth of a mile from its original location on Palo Alto Plantation to its present location on the same plantation. It is located well to the rear of the main house (N.R.) in a large fenced and landscaped yard. Although altered at the rear, the home's National Register eligibility remains intact.

The dependency's estimated date of construction is based upon the existence of two historic photographs showing the location upon which the structure originally stood. In an 1867 image, the building did not yet exist; but an 1890 picture clearly shows the house. Architectural evidence such as cut wire nails and circular sawn lumber also supports a post-war construction date. Interestingly, the architectural evidence also suggests that the dependency's builders used some materials salvaged from an older structure. For example, the home has twelve-over-twelve and twelve-over-eight windows on its side elevations. In addition, at least one of the home's two surviving simple but original mantel pieces appears to have been cut down, and the matching Greek Revival moldings on both mantels and the gallery's column capitals appear to date to the pre-war period.

The dependency's Creole features include:

- 1) the fact that the home stands raised five feet on brick piers,
- 2) a partially intact floorplan consisting of four rooms with front and rear galleries. The rarity of this room arrangement will be discussed in Part 8.
- 3) a Class III gabled roof, and
- 4) two sets of French doors, each leaf of which consists of eight lights above a set of double panels.

In addition to the salvaged windows and mantels mentioned above, other features of interest include:

- 1) four light transoms above the French doors,
- 2) heavy shutters with beveled battens,
- 3) original exterior siding (narrow flush boards on the gallery and clapboards on the other elevations),

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

- 4) original interior flooring, four panel single leaf doors, and baseboards and cornices in the cottage's two front rooms, and
- 5) an original annex which was constructed at the same time as the Creole cottage, standing directly behind it, and connected to the corners of the cottage's rear gallery by twin breezeways.

The Palo Alto Dependency remained largely unaltered until its move and renovation in 1979. It was moved 1/4 mile on the same plantation. At that time, the following changes were made:

- 1) Most of the home's plaster walls were removed and replaced by sheetrock.
- 2) A large living room was created at the rear of the cottage. This was accomplished by glazing the rear gallery, removing the wall between this gallery and the west rear room, removing the narrow staircase connecting the rear gallery to the attic, and installing a wider stair a few feet from the original location.
- 3) The eastern rear room was converted into a modern kitchen. Changes accompanying this alteration included the installation of a triple window on the outside wall and the removal of an original mantel, firebox, and chimney.
- 4) Two bedrooms and one bath were added to the attic story, and a mantel removed from one of the lower story's rear rooms was installed here.
- 5) The rear annex and its connecting elements were changed. These modifications included the move of the annex back from the cottage to create a small courtyard between the two, the conversion of the annex's original one room interior into two bedrooms and one bath, the enlargement and enclosure of the breezeways connecting the cottage to the annex, and the addition of a closet and bath to the side of the east breezeway.

None of these alterations seriously impacts the historic character or the National Register eligibility of the Palo Alto Dependency. Despite the alterations to the cottage's rear gallery and range of rooms, the changes do not deviate that much from the original floorplan, which is quite discernable. The rear gallery itself is glazed rather than enclosed by materials which would hinder the view. Furthermore, these rear alterations are not visible when

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Continuation Sheet**

Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 3

viewing the facade, which remains intact. In short, the Palo Alto Dependency is still very obviously a Creole house. In a parish whose Creole architecture has largely lost its historic character and integrity, the Palo Alto Dependency ranks as a strong candidate for National Register listing.

Non-Contributing Element

A modern one-story frame garage stands near one corner of the dependency's annex. This building is being counted as a non-contributing element for the purposes of this nomination.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1880

Significant Dates

c. 1880

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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): 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

Name of repository:

Palo Alto Dependency
Name of Property

Ascension Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 2.8 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5	6	8	9	6	2	0	3	3	3	0	3	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

2

Zone	Easting			Northing										

3

Zone	Easting			Northing										

4

Zone	Easting			Northing										

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff (based on draft nomination prepared by Dr. Jay Edwards, as referenced in bibliography)

organization Division of Historic Preservation date March 1992

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lemann

street & number P. O. Box 34278 telephone (504) 473-8625

city or town Donaldsonville state LA zip code 70346

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Palo Alto Dependency is locally significant in the area of architecture within Ascension Parish because it is one of only a handful of Creole houses which retain sufficient integrity. In addition, its floorplan is also unusual and rare for its rural location.

According to a review of the parish's Historic Structures Survey, Ascension has approximately 135 surviving houses which show some form of Creole influence. If this number seems rather high, it is because many of the houses stand within the Donaldsonville National Register Historic District. And, it must be noted that a significant number of these 135 structures exhibit only a basic Creole shape -- i.e., a pitched roof galleried cottage. Many do not even have French doors. In addition, most of the structures display serious integrity problems. Examples of these problems include replaced (and inappropriate) siding, the addition of Queen Anne bays and shingles or Eastlake details to facades, visible and inappropriate additions on porches and at the sides of structures, and the general state of deterioration found in the majority of the buildings. Against this background, the Palo Alto Dependency stands as a rare, relatively intact survivor.

In addition, the dependency's four room floorplan is worthy of note. This plan was fairly common in New Orleans but was seldom used in rural areas. Thus, the floorplan, still clearly visible after sympathetic alterations, is rare within the context of Ascension Parish.

Historical Note

According to the tradition of the Lemann family which owns the Palo Alto Plantation, the dependency was once used as an overseer's house, while its annex served as a dining facility for workers. The 1979 renovation was guided by architect A. Hays Town.

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Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

Section number 9 Page 1

Lemann, Arthur. Family records of the Lemann family of Palo Alto Plantation.
Copy in possession of Mr. Arthur Lemann.

Edwards, Jay D. A Survey of Louisiana French Vernacular Architecture, Volume II.
Baton Rouge: Museum of Geoscience, Louisiana State University. A
report to the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and the Louisiana
Division of the Arts, 2 vol., 1982.

Historic Structures Survey, Ascension Parish.

Edwards, Jay. Draft National Register Nomination, Department of Geography and
Anthropology, LSU, Baton Rouge.

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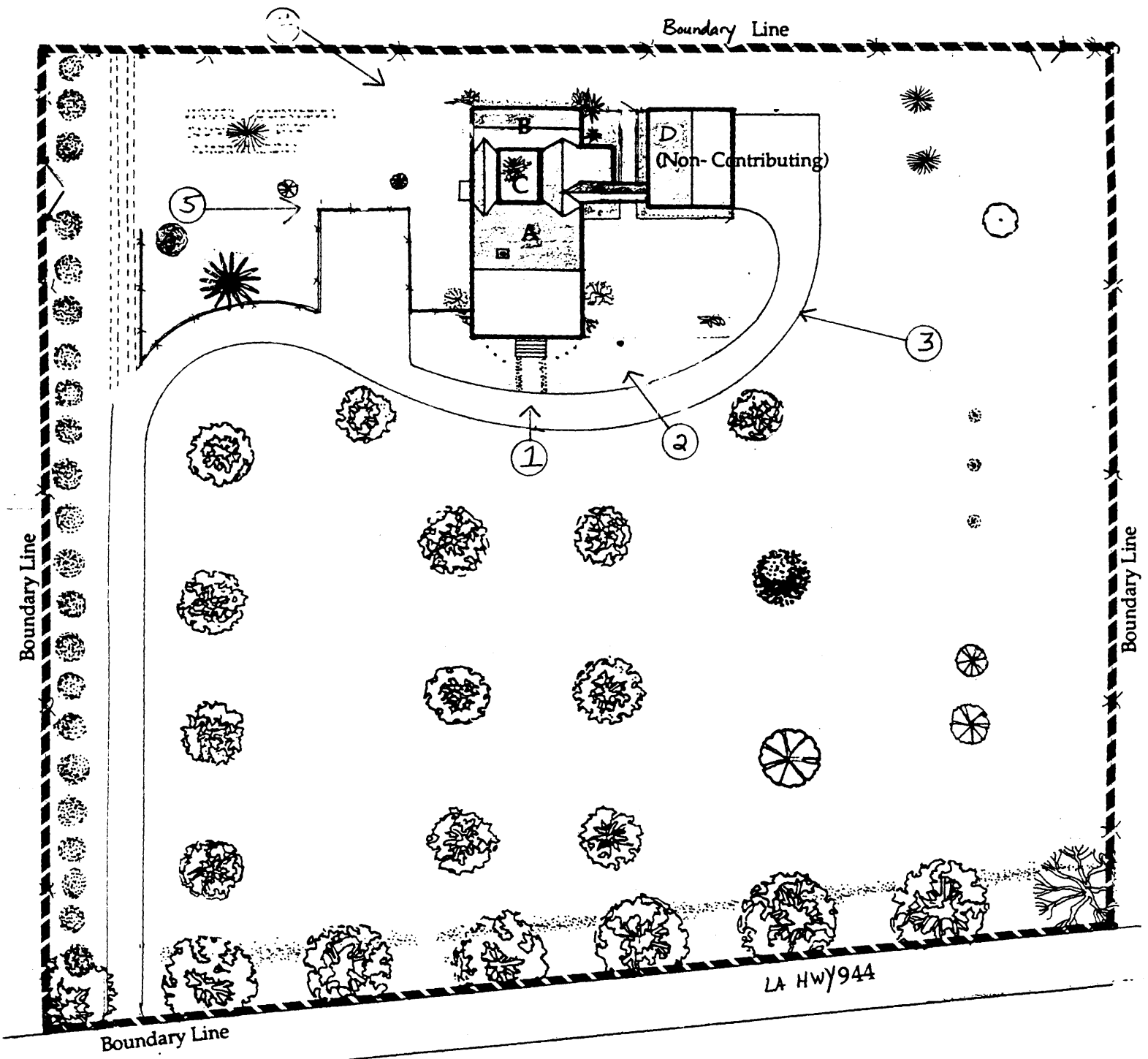
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Palo Alto Dependency, Ascension Parish, LA

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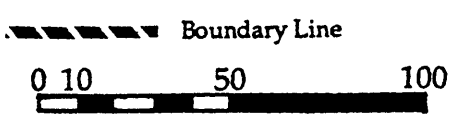
Boundary Justification

Boundary lines were chosen to discretely encompass this moved resource. They follow fence lines on three sides and LA Highway 944 on the fourth. Per instructions from Marilyn Harper, it is acceptable to nominate the Palo Alto Dependency individually (as opposed to an addendum to the main house Register listing).



Palo Alto
 Dependency
 Donaldsonville Vicinity,
 Ascension Parish, Louisiana

- A — Palo Alto Dependency
- B — Annex
- C — Courtyard
- D — Modern Garage (non-contributing)



SCALE 1" = 50'