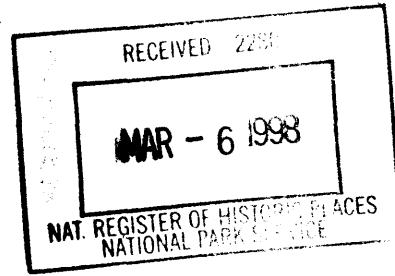


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



298

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 Dell Plain, Morse, House and Garden
other names/site number Woodmar 089-275-53046

2. Location

street & number 7109 Knickerbocker Pkwy. N/A not for publication
city or town Hammond N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Lake code 089 zip code 46323

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 36CFR 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.)
[Signature] 2/10/98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
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
 removed from the National Register
 other, (explain:)
[Signature] 4.1.96
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Name of Property

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, district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 2, 0

Name of related multiple property listing

(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

LANDSCAPE: Garden

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

LANDSCAPE: Garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

OTHER: Prairie School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof STONE: Slate

other

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE _____

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE _____

Period of Significance

1923-1926 _____

Significant Dates

1923 _____

1926 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Shaw, Howard VanDoren _____

Jensen, Jens _____

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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:

Univ. of Michigan, Morton Arboretum _____

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

Section 7-Description

The Morse Dell Plain House and Garden includes a large brick revival style home sited on a landscaped site. In 1926, owner Morse Dell Plain hired Jens Jensen to create the landscape; he had hired Howard Van Doren Shaw to design his house in 1923. The house is placed closer to the corner of 171st and Knickerbocker Parkway while the primary landscaped areas were behind (east) and beside (south) of the house. The immediate surroundings are residential suburban and the surrounding homes date from roughly the same time period. The house (contributing building) and landscape (contributing site, with elements as described below) are the only resources on the site.

House

The Morse Dell Plain House is an Elizabethan Revival style, two story brick structure located in the Hammond residential suburb of Woodmar. It is comprised of a main rectangular block with an attached service wing. The service wing sits perpendicular to the main block, and is a half-story smaller. The house has slate covered gable roofs and copper gutters. The brick walls are constructed in a modified English bond displaying two rows of stretchers between each single row of headers. Window openings have stone sills and are topped with a segmental arch. The main block has leaded casement windows that typically have five rows of three lights. The dormer's and service wing's windows have wood mutins and three rows of two lights.

The west, or main, facade fronts Knickerbocker Boulevard and displays architectural features characteristics of the Elizabethan Revival style. A recessed main entry is located in the center of the structure and is covered by a small flat roof supported by decorative brackets. The oak front door has three rows of five lights over two panels. A circular door-knocker is centered below the lights. The opening is surrounded by quoin-like stone tabs that project into the brickwork. The main facade is dominated by a massive chimney that spires over the roof. From the roof line down to the first-story it increases in width. It has a stone cap, a decorative stone band, and at the second story is embellished by four rows of slate shingles. Five windows are located on the front facade. On the first story a paired window is located right of the main entrance and a ribbon of three is located left. On the second story a ribbon of three windows with a flower box is centered over the main entrance, and between two paired windows. The roof has two shed dormers with paired six light windows. The service wing's west facade is set back from the main block. Its plain gabled west end shows two mid-story window openings that light interior stairwells to the basement and second story. A third window is located on the second story.

The north elevation shows the primary facade of the service wing, and the gable end of the main block. The service wing has a kitchen entry with a small flat roof, and a trellis on each side of the door. A ribbon of three windows allows light into the kitchen. On the roof, and centered over the window, is a shed dormer with paired windows. The east end of the service wing shows a profile of a hipped gable roof that overhangs the east facade's motor room entry. The north elevation of the main block has paired windows at the first

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

and second story, and a smaller six light window at the gables peak.

The east elevation shows the service block's motor room entrance and the rear of the main block. The single car garage entrance has a sixteen paneled overhead door with a hinged access door. Its hipped gable roof slopes down to create an overhang. The main block has a variety of window and door openings surrounding a midstory oriel. The oriel has diamond-shaped panes over a stucco paneled base. On the first-story, and right of the oriel, is a small kitchen window next to a larger three ribboned window that illuminates the breakfast nook. To the left of the oriel is a bay window and a hipped roof living porch that extends past the main block. The bay window has a slate roof, two front windows, single side windows, and a brick base. The porch has a sliding glass door entrance and a ribbon of windows that provide views to the yard. The second-story has two windows to the right of the oriel, and two to the left. An upstairs sleeping porch wraps around the second-story. It displays decorative half-timbering with a stucco inlay. The roof, like the main elevation, has two shed dormers.

The south elevation shows the rear of the service wing, and the gable end and living porch of the main block. The service wing's first story has a ribbon of three windows next to a single window. The second story has two paired windows. The main block's first story has a paired window and an attached living porch. The porch has a slate covered hipped roof and a ribbon of windows that wrap around all three of its extended sides. The second story has a paired window next to the upstairs sleeping porch, and a single window near the gable's peak. The sleeping porch has a ribbon of three windows over decorative half-timbering with stucco inlay.

The first floor's plan is a number of rooms centered around an entry hall and enclosed staircase. The foyer has a wood floor and plaster walls, and accesses a closet. The stairwell has an arched opening and a view that terminates on the oriel at the mid-floor landing. The stairs from the landing to the second story has an open string with plain square balusters. Three square posts, one on the landing and two on the second-story guardrail, are topped with a decorative finial. The treads are oak with rounded nosing, and the risers are plaster.

South of the foyer is a living room that is accessed through an arched opening (photo 9). It has wood floors and oak baseboards, and the ceiling has decorative exposed timber beams with chamfered corners. On the west wall is a fireplace with a stone hearth (photo 10). The fireplace surround is a horizontal oak top-plank set on quoin-like stone sides. The mantel is a simple shelf supported by three brackets. The wall opposite the fireplace has a bay window with views to the back yard. A small library alcove is located off the family room. Its opening has an oak frame with chambered edges and carved decorative details. The oak bookshelves are set on paneled bases. The family room French doors open to the living porch. The doors have six rows of three lights over a single panel. The porch has a random stone floor, a ribbon of windows, and doors to the yard.

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

The dining room (photo 11) located north of the foyer. It has wood floors with painted baseboards, chair-rail, and cornice. French doors open to an informal breakfast porch. Each door has fifteen panes over a decorative molding and a single panel, and side lights over a decorative molding and single panel. The breakfast porch has a slate floor, pine board walls with a molded chair-rail, and a window view to the yard (photo 12). A paneled door conceals a bathroom located beneath the stairs.

The kitchen (photo 13) which is located in the service wing, is connected to both the dining room and breakfast porch by a serving pantry. It accesses the second story and basement by two separate stairwells, and has a door to the motor room. A preparation area on the south wall has a vaulted ceiling, cabinets, and a large window. A servant's bell, which can be triggered from several areas within the house, registers the location where service is needed.

The main block's second story has a central hallway that accesses the owner's, west, and north chamber. Wood floors, painted baseboards and cornices, and three-paneled doors are typical throughout. Each end of the hallway has a vaulted ceiling (photo 14). The owner's chamber has a fireplace, and accesses a bathroom, dressing room, alcove, and sleeping porch. The fireplace has a cornice like mantel shelf over a plain frieze. A decorative molding frames the brick surround. The brick hearth has a herring bone pattern surrounded by a soldier row.

A walk-through linen closet connects the bathroom on the main block to the rear hall in the service block. The service block contains two maid's bedrooms, a bath, hallway, and stairs. The bedrooms contain storage cabinets, and as a result of the hipped roof, have sloped walls.

Landscape

The landscape consists of an overstory of mature White Oak, Scarlet Oak, and Sugar Maple trees, an understory of randomly planted yews, lilacs, viburnums and other shrub material, planting beds, turf, a council ring, and stone walks. Foundation plantings of small shrubs, perennials, and ivies line the house's walls. Volunteer species of Mulberry, Siberian Elm and White Ash are prevalent. The site is mostly flat except for a drop in elevation from the house to Knickerbocker Parkway.

The west, or front, yard has a circular concrete driveway (added later), and several planting beds with a variety of shrubs and flowers. A circular stone walk arcs from the house's main entrance to Knickerbocker Parkway. A large Scarlet Oak, the original site's only existing tree mentioned on the Jensen design, sits north of the circular drive. The north yard is dominated by a grove of Sugar Maples with no understory. A stone walk connects the kitchen entrance to 171st Avenue. The east, or back, yard has planting beds that frame a "long view" from the house across areas of open turf. Linear beds of trees and shrubs screen neighboring properties. Foundation plantings line the back walls of the house. An asphalt driveway, over the original concrete, is located east of the garage. A small council ring is located in the yard's center, and is made of horizontal pieces of stacked limestone. A small opening is on the south side, and a barbecue was a later

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

addition to its east side. The small south yard is dominated by a canopy of volunteer trees.

Originally, Jensen planned an extensive landscape extending to the south of the house, with a small oval pond roughly on axis due south of the house, screened from the street by flowering trees like crabapples, with an open turf area beside (south) of the pond. Roughly on axis, east of the open turf area, was a large circular working flower garden, with perennials and some annuals for cutting. This too was screened by flowering crabs, daisy and purple cornflower patches, and other trees such as dogwoods. A flag stone path led northeast then arced due north, connecting to the council ring. The pond and cutting garden were obliterated when this half of the yard was sold and a house was built on the resulting lot before WWII.

Overall, the landscape has suffered from lack of maintenance, volunteer tree encroachment, and removal of a major section of the design. However, it does still retain much of its original structure and organization, and a great deal of its feeling. The original vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, topography, and planting bed layout remain intact. The oak and maple canopy still provides a shaded and wooded setting. Jensen's signature stonework is evident in the council ring and walkways. Spatially, the long view from the rear of the house and the vista of the parkway from the front of the house remains. While major sections of the understory plantings are missing, the site still conveys the feeling of a native woodland setting that invites the residents of the house to explore and experience nature. Overall, the landscape has suffered from volunteer tree encroachment, and the removal of a major section of the design. The landscape, though altered, does still retain much of its original structure and organization, and a great deal of its feeling. It is an integral part of the nominated property.

Section 8-Statement of Significance

The Morse Dell Plain House is eligible for the National Register for its outstanding architecture and landscape architecture, and its association with noted architectural and landscape designers. The structure, designed by Chicago Architect Howard Van Doren Shaw, is significant as an excellent example of early Twentieth Century Elizabethan Revival. The Jens Jensen designed landscape is significant as an excellent example of the Prairie Style of landscape design. The house is also associated with a prominent Hammond citizen. The structure maintains its historical integrity evident in the slate roof, windows, exterior brickwork, unmodified plan, and interior architectural detailing. The landscape still displays the bed layout, council ring and a number of the plant species depicted on the original design. The landscape was notable enough to be mentioned in two books: Landscape Artist in America: The Life and Work of Jens Jensen, and Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens.

The house and landscape are significant in the context of early twentieth century (1923-1929) architecture, landscape architecture and community design in the City of Hammond. In the early 1900s, Indiana's Lake

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

Michigan shoreline generated huge industry, especially steel production and oil refining. The lake location offered port-of-entry to raw materials and distribution of finished products. The growing industries filled the surrounding communities with migrant and foreign workers resulting in a housing boom of working class neighborhoods. Some industries constructed and sold housing to their employees: Mark Manufacturing Company in East Chicago, U.S. Steel in Gary, Pullman-Standard in Hammond. Wealthy residents chose to separate themselves from the working class by constructing homes in developments exclusive of the "undesirable." These communities typically featured large lots and grand houses that displayed the wealth and status of the owner. Parkways and boulevards created naturalistic settings contrasting the compact environments of the working class. Glendale Park, Forest-Southview and Indi-Illi were all developments targeted for the wealthy migrating from Hammond's commercial and industrial center, but none compared to the scale and vision of the planned community of Woodmar.

In 1923, as a response to Lake County's growing industry and influx of blue-collar workers, developer Roscoe Woods and Frank Martin began construction and sale of lots for Woodmar Subdivision located south of Hammond on the undeveloped land adjacent to the Little Calumet River. A sales booklet described the proposed community as "a beautiful, roomy, orderly city restricted to exclude the undesirable features of the mushroom industrial cities which lie north." Planned in 1923 by Jacob L. Crane, the exclusive development offered grand boulevards, schools, a train station and a golf course. To maintain the residential character construction was controlled by zoning. The development sought to draw the wealthy residents of Chicago and Hammond's neighboring communities. Several grand houses depicting revival styles were constructed before the depression of the 1930's ended the venture.

Morse Dell Plain moved from Philadelphia to Hammond in 1918 as an employee of the United Gas Improvement Co., the parent company of the Northern Indiana Gas and Electric Co. that served the northwest region of Indiana at the time. Dell Plain had been involved with the electrical industry for several years. His first employment was as an operator with Central and South American Telegraph Company. Following classwork at Syracuse University he worked for Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Co. and Syracuse Lighting Co. In 1923, after Northern Indiana Gas and Electric changed ownership, Dell Plain was appointed Vice President. He was named President in 1929. Dell Plain was active in the national levels of the electrical and gas industries and participated in forming its policies. He took an active role in Hammond's community organizations as founder and President of the United Welfare Association and President of Hammond Chamber of Commerce. In 1934, after sixteen years in Hammond, he accepted the position of Vice President of the Welsbach Street Lighting Company of America and returned to Philadelphia.

In 1923, as one of the nine directors for the Woodmar community, Dell Plain developed a residence on the southeast corner lots of the intersection of Knickerbocker Parkway and 171st Street. He hired noted Chicago architect Howard Van Doren Shaw to design a Elizabethan Revival house, and Chicago landscape architect Jens Jensen to design the grounds.

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Howard Van Doren Shaw (1869-1926) was a Yale and MIT trained architect who, for a short time, worked in the office of William Le Baron Jenney. Although he designed several commercial buildings, including East Chicago's Marktown, Shaw's primary work was residential design. While the Prairie School was the major architectural movement in Chicago, Shaw was hired by wealthy clients to design grand houses in the more conservative English manor style. Shaw's houses were nostalgic brick structures with high-pitched roofs. Their facades, ignoring the horizontality of the Prairie School, displayed a random balance of windows, doors, flowerboxes, and chimneys. Shaw's interiors displayed open "modern" spaces decorated in arts-and-craft style finishes and furniture. Shaw was awarded the AIA Gold Medal in 1927.

Shaw's design characteristics are evident in the Morse Dell Plain House in the style, plan, and use of materials. The house was designed in the Elizabethan Revival style and features brick walls, a steep pitched roof, prominent chimney, half-timber detailing, and leaded windows. The plan shows a highly functional layout of living and service spaces. The interior has rustic wood and stone floors, and oak woodwork is featured in the entrance hall and living room. Besides the remodeling of wall finishes, the house has not been altered from the original design.

Jens Jensen (1860-1951) was a Danish immigrant whose demonstrated ability to master plants and design helped him progress through the West Chicago Park District to become general superintendent and chief landscape architect. Drawing on inspiration from the Midwest landscape, Jensen was the banner carrier for the Prairie Style of landscape design where regionalism was the driving force behind design aesthetics. His designs, characterized by recreations of Midwestern prairie and woodland plant communities, were embellished with features of water and stone. Native plants were grouped and massed in their ecological habitats that typically featured an overstory of trees and an understory of associated shrub and groundcover plantings. Plants controlled views and movement by creating mystery that enticed users to move through the space. The "long view" encouraged the viewing, from one end to the other, open linear spaces bordered by trees and shrubs. His landscapes displayed horizontal layers of stonework reminiscent of rock outcroppings, and large flat water features he termed "prairie rivers." His signature council rings were designed to encourage discussion and storytelling. Having grown extremely popular, he was commissioned to construct roadway, park, school, and estate projects throughout the Midwest. Jensen and his friends, the Prairie Club, took train rides to Indiana's dune landscape to study the many plant communities that converged on the Lake Michigan southern shoreline. The club's interest helped establish the Indiana Dunes State Park in 1926. Jensen eventually retired to The Clearing, his school in Door County, where he taught his design philosophies.

Jensen's design characteristics are evident in his plan for Morse Dell Plain in the plant selection, layout, water features, and stonework. Jensen preserved the site's existing native tree canopy and mass planted native species of small trees, shrubs, and ground covers. Annuals and perennial were planted around the house. Cockspur hawthorn, a favorite of Jensen's, was used in several locations. Jensen incorporated a variety of spaces into the design. The front of the house is framed by mass plantings of shrubs and small

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

trees. A "long view" extends east from the house and is framed by linear plantings of shrubs. A natural garden with a small pond was constructed south of the house. To the north of the natural garden was a formal circular cutting garden that featured native plants. Stone paths connected the house to the street, and the living porch to the natural garden. A small council ring was constructed east of the house.

The natural and cutting gardens were destroyed when the property was subdivided and a house built in their place. While the overstory and planting bed layout remains, the lack of landscape maintenance has resulted in the loss of most of the shrub, flower, and groundcover species. New landscape beds, exotic plants, and a front circular drive have been added to the property, but enough of Jensen's intentions remain to make the landscape significant.

Section 9-Bibliography

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Morse Dell Plain House and Garden, "Woodmar," Lake County, IN

Section 10-Geographical Data-Verbal Boundary Justification

Lots 15, 16, 17, 18 in Block 44 in Unit 13 of Woodmar Subdivision, Hammond, Indiana.

Boundary Justification

The existing property boundaries were chosen because they include both the house and the remaining designed landscape.

Photographs

Property was photographed by Christopher Baas. Negatives are located at the Dell Plain House. Exterior photos were taken in October of 1996 and January of 1997. Interiors were photographed in January of 1997.

1. View of west facade from Knickerbocker Parkway.
2. View of north facade looking southeast.
3. View of east facade looking northwest.
4. View of south facade looking northeast.
5. View of front door looking east.
6. View of kitchen door looking south.
7. View of oriel looking west.
8. View of stairs from entrance hall looking east.
9. View of living room, alcove, and fireplace looking southwest.
10. View of living room fireplace looking west.
11. View of French doors between dining room and breakfast porch looking east.
12. View of door in breakfast porch looking south.
13. View of kitchen's south wall.
14. View of upstairs hall looking north.
15. View of council ring looking southeast.
16. View of yard from southeast corner of house looking east.
17. View of front walk from Knickerbocker Parkway.

