

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 21 1979
DATE ENTERED DEC 6 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Sylvan Retreat

AND/OR COMMON

J. H. Pumphrey Home

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

610 North Third Street

-- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Gibsland

-- VICINITY OF

5th - Jerry Huckaby

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

022

COUNTY

Bienville

CODE

013

CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY** DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS** OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE** YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO**PRESENT USE** AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. F. Lestar Martin

STREET & NUMBER

1500 Fairview Street

CITY, TOWN

Monroe

-- VICINITY OF

STATE

Louisiana 71201

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clerk of Court Office, Bienville Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Arcadia

STATE

Louisiana 71001

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Louisiana Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1979

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historic Preservation Office

CITY, TOWN

Baton Rouge

STATE

Louisiana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 1884

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE



1848-1884

The house was initially built in 1848 as a five-bay, gallery-fronted, Greek Revival raised plantation house with a hip roof. The frame of the house was constructed of virgin cypress with all joints mortised and pinned with wooden pegs. Weatherboarding planks were nailed to the framework with hand-wrought iron nails. Brick kilns and saw pits were erected on the site, and all doors and window sash were cut and assembled with wooden pegs.

The plan comprised three bedrooms, a parlor, and a dining room, each 17 feet by 20 feet; a central hall, 12 feet by 35 feet, front and rear galleries, and a kitchen separated from the house. Each of the five major rooms had a fireplace at the perimeter of the house. Ceiling height was 15 feet. (See plan p. 3.)



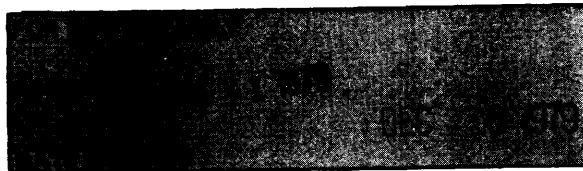
1884-1926

The first major changes in the structure were made in 1884 by Alonzo Walker, who moved the house to Gibsland. Architectural changes were as follows:

1. The four exterior bedroom-parlor fireplaces were combined.
2. The gallery, which extended across the front, was reduced to a portico with four columns.

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In about 1926 the house and property underwent further alterations. The changes reflected good taste and improved the circulation of air and general liveability of the house.

The following changes were made:

3. An interior bath with running hot and cold water was installed in a corner of the middle bedroom.
4. The detached kitchen was demolished and reconstructed adjacent to the dining room.
5. "Built-in" closets were constructed in each bedroom.
6. A chimney was removed from the dining room.
7. The double doors at the rear of the hall were relocated at the rear of the gallery which was walled in to create a back hall.
8. A rear screened gallery was added.
9. Four door openings were added or enlarged.
10. The front gallery floor was lowered 18 inches.
11. An oak strip floor was installed over the original heart pine floor.
12. Various landscape features, such as a garage and a greenhouse, were added.

However, the house retains all the original carved cypress mantels.



1926-1978

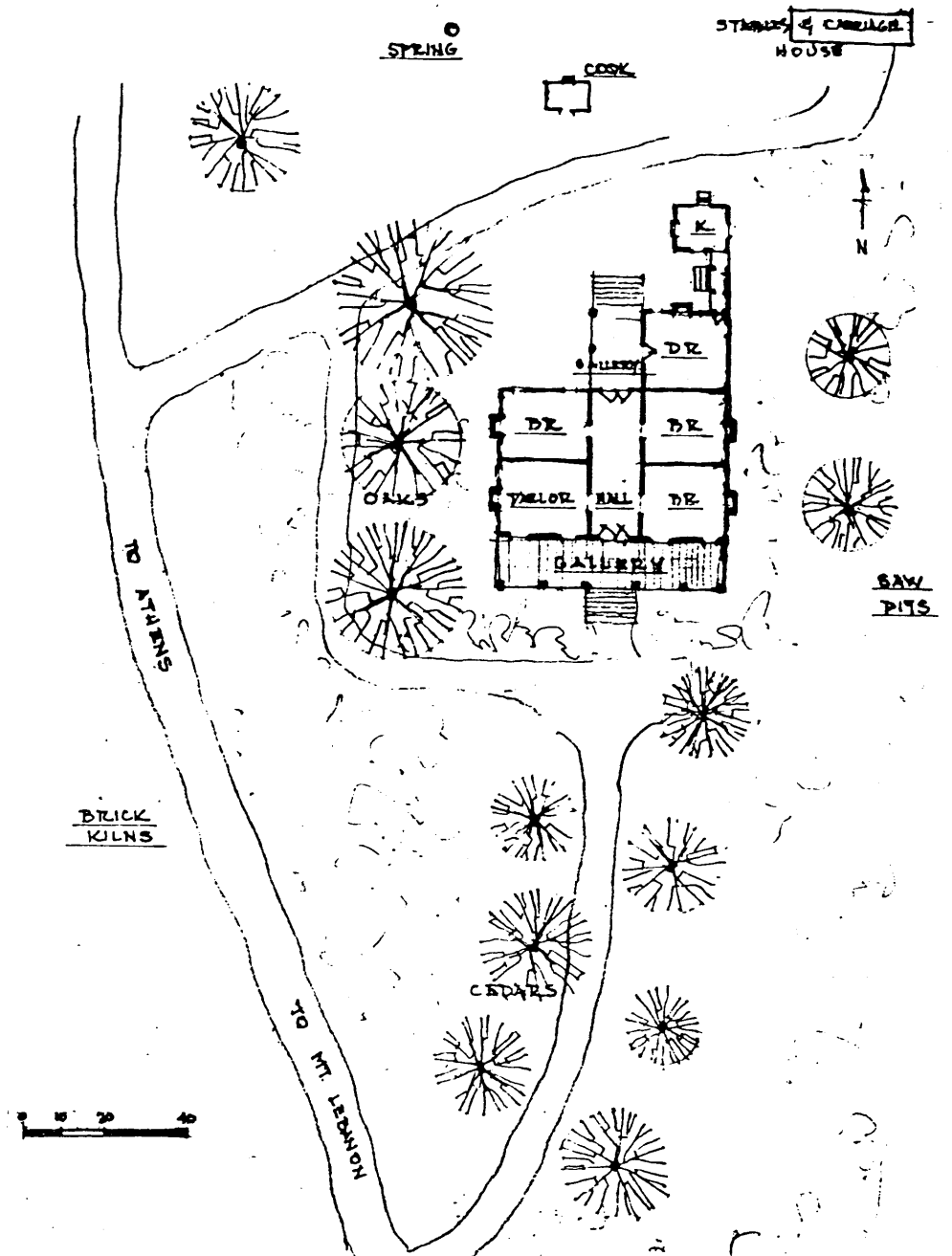
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SYLVAN RETREAT 1848-1884

Fig. 2

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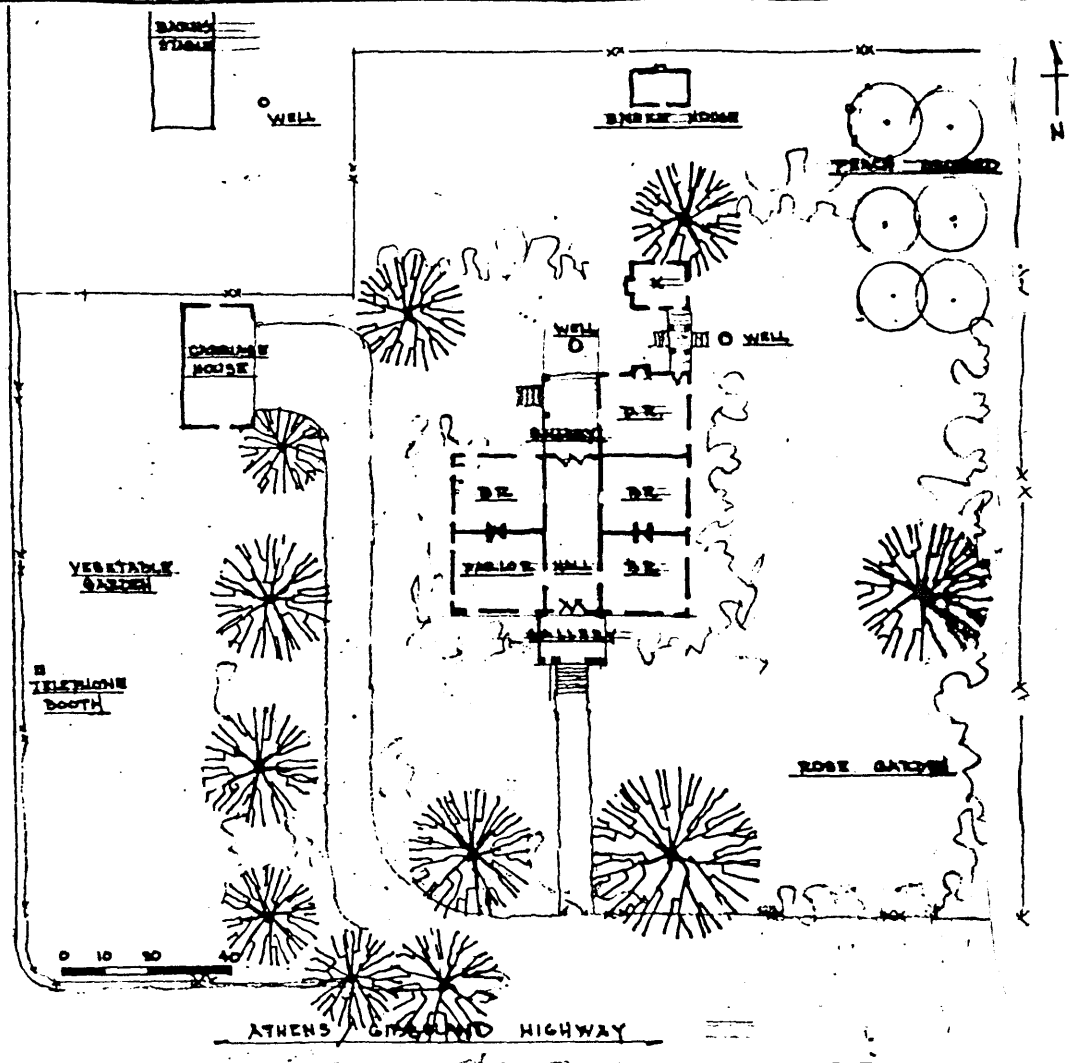
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1979

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SYLVAN RETREAT 1884-1926

Fig. 4

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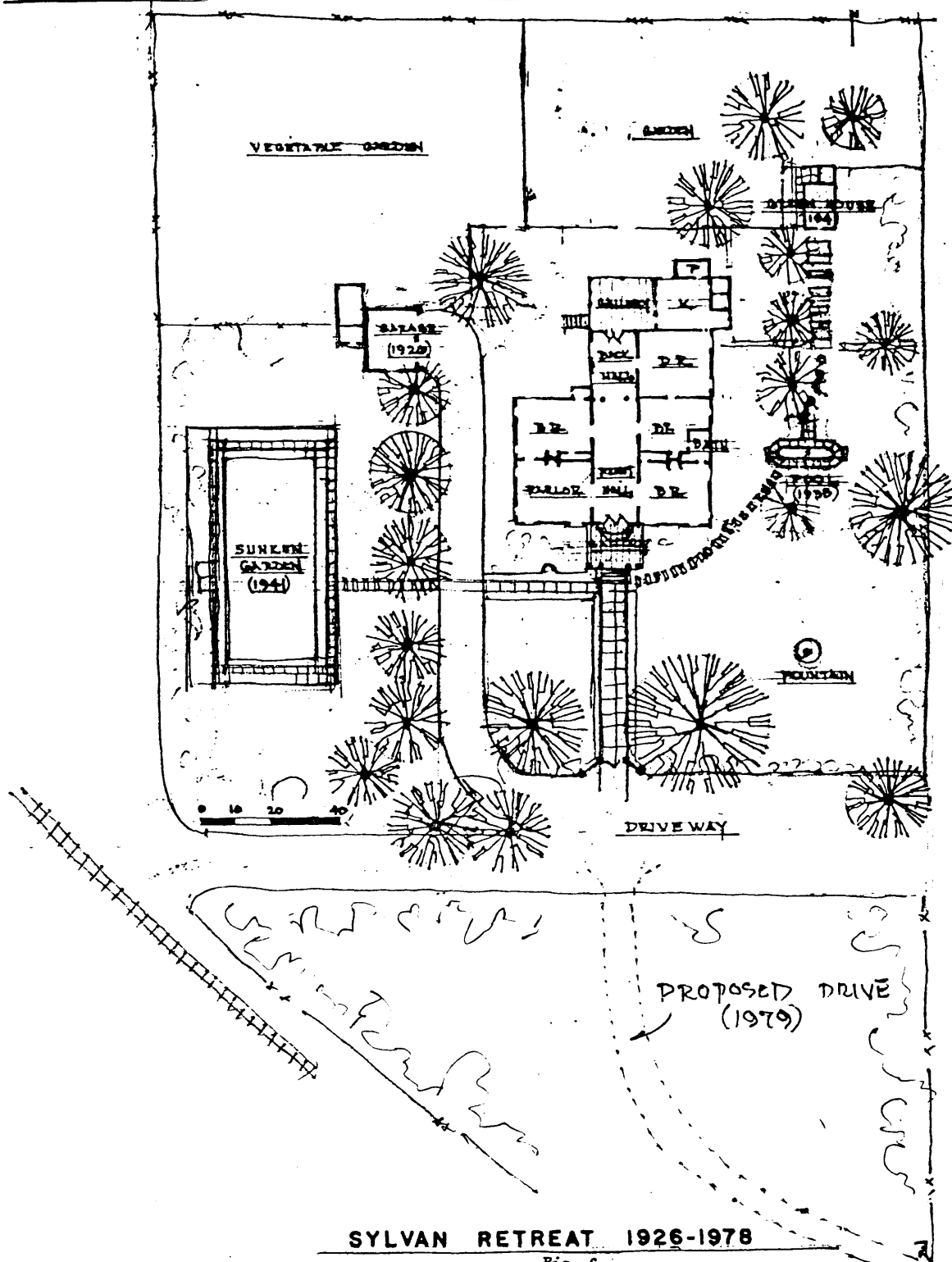
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DEC 6 1979

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8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
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 1848 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Builder: William George Walker

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sylvan Retreat stands as a substantial five-bay plantation house with a pedimented portico. Taken within the context of north central Louisiana, it is a pretentious example of Classical Revival architecture. Although the portico was not created until the 1880's, it speaks of a strong continuing interest in Classical architecture, which persisted in rural Louisiana and even after the Civil War. Indeed, the fact that such a Classical feature was created so late is a statement of the architectural history of the region, i.e., the strength of the Classical tradition.

The house was built in 1848 by William George Walker, a planter from Columbus, Georgia. In that year he selected a site in the pine hills of Bienville Parish on which to construct his plantation home. Walker had an unfortunate life. He had left Georgia in 1843 and moved west, but on the journey a horse backed off a bridge and killed his wife. At some point he returned to Georgia and married Augusta Candler of Atlanta. Then in 1850, he moved with his wife and four children into the house. But he could not adjust to the climate and in the same year went to Mississippi to take mineral baths and died soon after.

The house was eventually purchased from his estate by his son Alonzo, who married Winnie Prothro of Mt. Lebanon. They moved into the house in 1876. Alonzo Walker made some major changes in the structure in 1884. (See "Description.") The railroad from Monroe to Shreveport had been completed and the town of Gibsland had been established two miles south of the home. Due to Mrs. Walker's loneliness and her fear of living in the country, he moved the house to Gibsland, dismantling the structure board by board. Each piece was lettered and numbered, hauled to the new site, and reassembled. Removal and rebuilding took a full year.

The Walkers reared five children in the house. The wife died in 1901, and after the husband's death in 1919, their daughter Pearl Pumphrey inherited the home. Mrs. Pumphrey adapted the house for convenient living in the early twentieth century. (See "Description".) She was an avid horticulturist, noted for her orchids and daylilies. The grounds, which were known as "Pumphrey Gardens," were at their greatest splendor in the 1940's and 1950's. Mrs. Pumphrey died in 1975 at the age of 97. The house remains in the hands of descendants of its builder.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bienville Parish Conveyance Records

Egan, Lavinia, "Memoirs of North Louisiana," unpublished, 1940's.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 495000 3601000

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

See attached architect's plan of the property. Boundaries were chosen to include the present extent of the property, which takes in the house and its graden setting.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

F. Lestar Martin, Owner

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1500 Fairview Street

TELEPHONE

318-322-8572

CITY OR TOWN

Monroe

STATE

Louisiana 71201

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

E. Bernard Carver

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5-14-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Sally Golden
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: *Carl Grosvenor*
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

12/6/79

DATE

10/25/79

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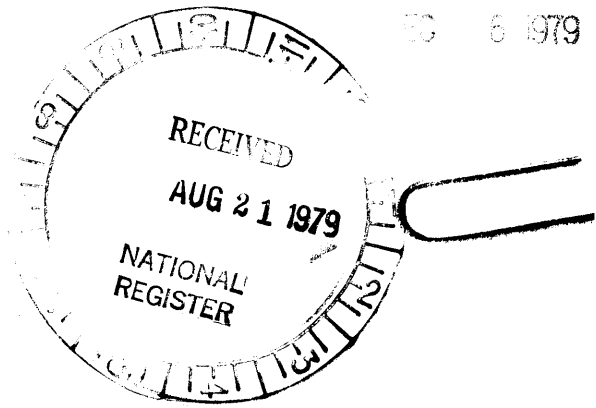
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Martin, F. Lestar, "Sylvan Retreat: A Restoration Project," North Louisiana Historical Association Journal 9 (Summer 1978): 135-142.

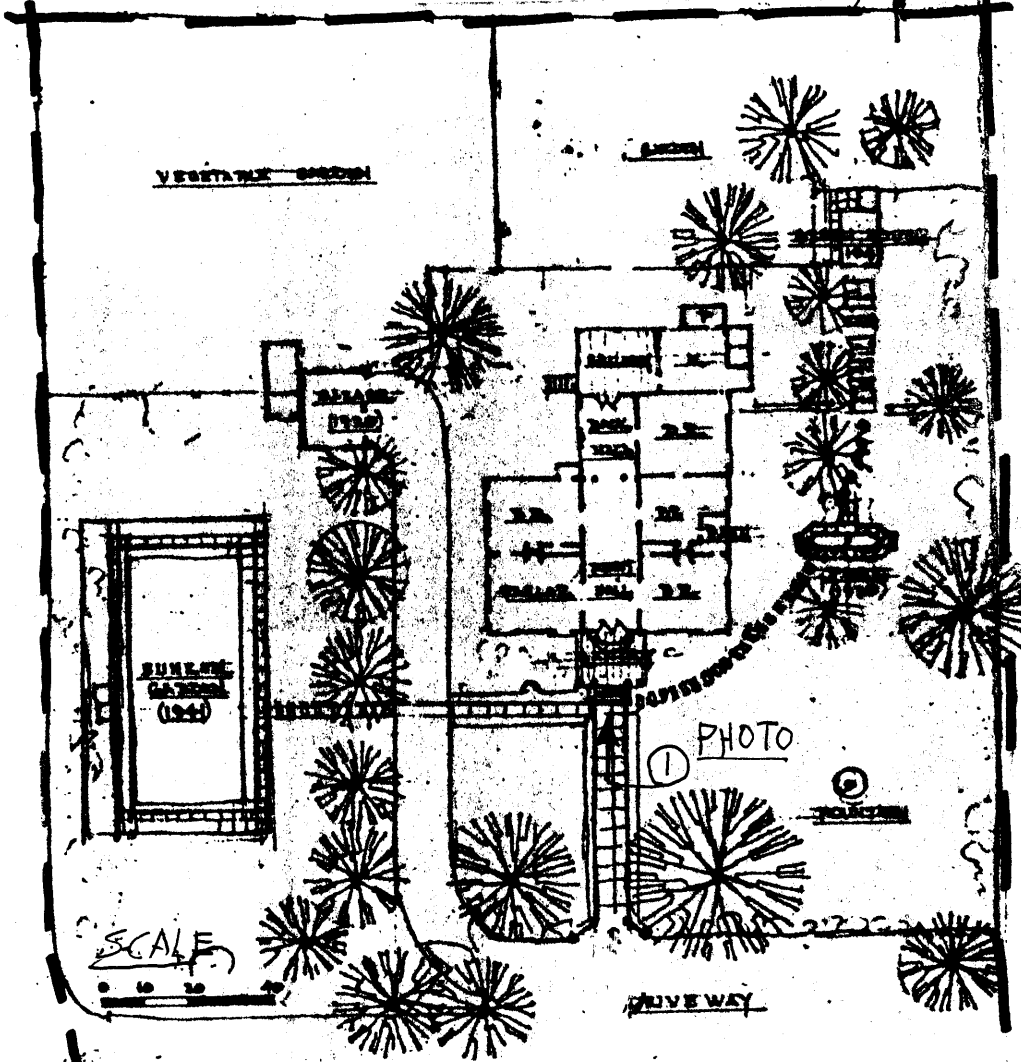
Mount Lebanon Masonic Lodge, Minutes, 1848-1898.

Pumphrey, Pearl W., "History of Sylvan Retreat," unpublished, 1950.

Walker, T. A., Deed of Sale for Gibbsland Homesite, 1884.



BOUNDARY 2



SCALE

DRIVEWAY

PHOTO 1

PROPOSED DRIVE (1979)

PHOTO 2

SYLVAN RETREAT 1926-1978

Fig. 6