

OCT 16 2015

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

  x   New Submission                      \_\_\_\_\_ Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

The Architecture of A. Hays Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Overstreet and Town, 1926-1938

A. Hays Town Commercial Designs, 1939-1968

A. Hays Town Residential Designs and the "A. Hays Town Style," 1940-1991

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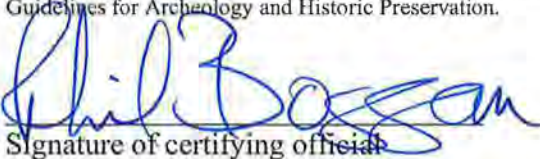
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**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.



SHPO  
Title

10/16/15  
Date

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.



11-23-2015  
Date of Action

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

The Architecture of A. Hays Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

Louisiana  
State

**Table of Contents for Written Narrative**

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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E. Statement of Historic Context

*Introduction*

Albert Hays Town was a renowned Louisiana architect whose career spanned eighty-five years. During this time, Town designed numerous buildings throughout Louisiana and Mississippi, with scattered buildings across the nation. Town's architectural career is representative of both the personal, cultural, and historical transformations during his lifetime.

A. Hays Town is a unique architect as his extensive career can be categorized as two careers. First, Town was a prominent Modernist architect for commercial and institutional buildings on the Gulf Coast. Second, Town combined his experience with Modernist design with Louisiana's traditional and vernacular forms.<sup>1</sup> These two periods of Town's career had a brief overlap as he transitioned from commercial into residential building design.

The designs of A. Hays Town are the subject of this multiple-property nomination. The designs of A. Hays Town may be significant under Criterion C as significant examples of property types and styles popular during particular periods of construction within the contexts of the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. Town can be considered a master architect; his career as an accomplished designer whose work has been recognized by his peers and who developed an architectural signature that is distinct and readily identifiable sets him apart from the majority of architects working in Louisiana and Mississippi during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Foundations and Early Influences*

Albert Hays Town was born June 17, 1903 in Crowley, Louisiana to Joshua Hays Town and Mary Francis Labaye Town. His father, Joshua Hays Town, owned a general store for the surrounding agricultural community. Joshua Hays Town was a successful business man who never turned away a person in need, regardless of their ability to pay for goods.<sup>2</sup>

Around 1910, the Town family moved to Lafayette, Louisiana, because the city was growing in commerce and Mr. Town saw an opportunity for a new business. Young Hays continued to work for his father once they were in Lafayette. Through his time working in his father's stores, Hays learned both business skills and compassion for people.

As a child, Town was inspired to draw his surroundings. In school, he drew the scenes of the bayou and other Louisiana settings. As he grew older, he began to sketch the plantations nearby. These sketches influenced Town to recognize the relationship between architecture and its landscape.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "A. Hays Town (1903-2005)," in *KnowLA, Encyclopedia of Louisiana* (Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 2014), <http://www.knowla.org/entry/476/>.

<sup>2</sup> David H. Sachs, *The Life and Work of the Twentieth-century Louisiana Architect, A. Hays Town* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sachs, *The Life and Work*, 8.

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In addition to the cultural influences, there was a history of building construction in the Town family. Town's grandfather and great-grandfather built buildings in St. Francisville, Louisiana (located 45 minutes north of the capitol, Baton Rouge). Furthermore, Town's father moved the family into dilapidated buildings while he renovated them for resale.<sup>4</sup> While living in the homes, Town observed construction techniques of the past and present.

Town's first foray into architecture came at the age of fifteen when a local building and family friend asked Town to design a house and assist with supervising its construction. Following this successful design, Town was asked to design several other homes.<sup>5</sup>

### *Education*

A. Hays Town graduated high school in 1918. When choosing a career, Town wanted to pursue painting – his first love. However, his father encouraged a “more lucrative vocation.”<sup>6</sup> Town chose to enroll in the engineering program at Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette).

With his knowledge of engineering, building construction, and love of painting, Town chose to pursue architecture following his undergraduate studies. In 1921, Town enrolled at Tulane University in New Orleans. During his educational career, Town spent his summers working at the firm of Armstrong and Koch.<sup>7</sup> Richard Koch was a leading spokesman for the preservation movement of the time. While working under Koch, Town worked on the restoration of Oak Alley Plantation and the Horace Grima House in New Orleans (now the Hermann Grima House, listed on the National Register in 1974). Town also assisted with several homes “designed in the ‘old spirit of the place.’”<sup>8</sup> Town also helped Koch with the Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré – a “modern building... frequently mistaken for an old one.”<sup>9</sup> Working with Koch gave Town his first experience with the vernacular architecture of Louisiana. This experience likely influenced Town's later residential career.

As a student at Tulane, the primary architectural method was the Beaux Arts Method Style. This method stressed the study of Classical Greek and Roman forms and emphasized drawing. Schools like Tulane, which were subscribing to the Beaux Arts methods, tailored their programs to the interests and talents of their faculty. Students' completed projects, assigned by their professors, were sent off to the Beaux Arts Institute of Design in New York for grading. The assignments became more complex to reflect advancing curriculum, beginning with mastery of the basic architectural skills, and including more complex design projects, quick sketch problems, and other drawing assignments. Known for its attention to order and symmetry, formal design, and elaborate ornamentation, the Beaux Arts method surely made an impression on A. Hays Town, which can be seen in his work's attention to detail

<sup>4</sup> Sachs, *The Life and Work*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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among other skills.

In addition to the Beaux Arts skills taught at Tulane, the professors during Town's studies influenced the budding architects. A fellow classmate, Bernard Lehman remembered that Nathaniel Cortlandt Curtis (father of well-known Mid Century Modernist, Nathaniel C. Curtis, Jr. whose house is listed on the National Register), taught his students to make sensitive and reasoned design decisions and "an appreciate of Louisiana traditional buildings and an understanding of the general lessons implicit in the regional background."<sup>10</sup> This influence is also evident in Town's later residential work.

***Historic Context: Overstreet and Town***

When A. Hays Town graduated from Tulane in 1926, he moved to Jackson, Mississippi, under the recommendation of a professor to apply as an intern draftsman in the office of N.W. Overstreet and Associates. By 1926, Overstreet's architecture firm was the largest in Mississippi.<sup>11</sup> Town was recruited to assist with the State Insane Asylum, the firm's largest commission. Under the lead draftsman, Town was assigned the design of the supporting buildings such as the convalescents' cottages. These buildings were designed to "reflect the State's antebellum architectural heritage" featuring simple gables, red brick cladding, and green shutters.<sup>12</sup> Town assisted with the design of numerous Southern Colonial style buildings through 1928 when the project was suspended by the state. Overstreet had to release many staff members, however Town had proven himself a hard worker and was retained.<sup>13</sup> When the firm received a commission for a large hotel in Jackson, Town convinced his employer to let him lead the design. Because of Town's work on this project - the Walthall Hotel, Town quickly moved up through the firm from lead in the drafting room to chief designer and primary architect.

A. Hays Town was influenced by the changing architectural styles of the 1920s. The influence of American modernism can be seen in Town's 1929 design of Jackson, Mississippi's Plaza Building (Standard Life Building, Banker's Trust Building), which would be described as what came to be known as Art Deco. This twelve story office building was organized in a u-shape around a central light court.<sup>14</sup>

The exterior of the building was fairly simple with a block face with a grid of windows. The building's base, cornice, and entranceway featured cast stone ornamentation. The interior contained many elements of art deco detail. These include a sunburst terrazzo floor pattern, a stylized stair rail, and a plaster zigzag relief ceiling and cornice.<sup>15</sup>

Town's work during the 1920s continued to represent the art deco style through 1930. Town and Overstreet worked together to ensure that this new style of building was successful and lasting. Overstreet ensured the buildings were "economical, well planned, sturdily contrasted, and reflective of

<sup>10</sup> Sachs, pg. 16.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

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the latest trends.”<sup>16</sup> Town assured the buildings were studied and composed in both form and detail. This partnership allowed Town to experiment with design techniques and to solely focus on the architecture of the buildings.

*The Great Depression*

As the 1920s came to a close, N.W. Overstreet and Associates was booming and optimistic despite the stock market crash. However, the economic downturn meant that many construction projects, both private and public, were abandoned. As work slowed, Overstreet ultimately had no choice but to dismiss his staff, retaining only A. Hays Town. When it became apparent that Overstreet could no longer pay Town’s salary, he offered to share the revenues of the firm by bringing Town in as a partner. N.W. Overstreet and Associates became Overstreet and Town in 1932.<sup>17</sup>

Many architecture firms in Mississippi closed their doors, but Overstreet and Town managed to stay open. Town used down time to study the changing architectural developments from around the world.<sup>18</sup> One of these developments that Town learned about was the International Style. In Europe, architects viewed the massive supporting walls, distribution on structural elements, and lack of ornamentation as a modern movement driven by concerns over “sanitation, ventilation, and lighting.”<sup>19</sup> Town and other American architects viewed this building style as a more economical design over the decorative Art Deco style of the past. In addition to the economic advantages, Americans favored the new style as a progressive design symbolic of the hope of a better future.<sup>20</sup>

In 1933, the federal government created the Historic American Building Survey (HABS). The survey established 71 districts with a district officer to lead the efforts. A. Hays Town was chosen to head the Survey in Mississippi.<sup>21</sup> Town, with a group of young architects, worked at documenting the historic buildings in the state. In addition, Town served as a consultant to Richard Koch, District Officer in Louisiana. Town devoted much of his time to the survey and had most of the work complete by 1934, which meant that the surveys in Mississippi became the example for national documentation standards.<sup>22</sup> This experience gave Town a greater appreciation for the architectural heritage of Mississippi. Town credited this experience with a heightened sensitivity to historic form and proportion, which would become key attributes to his later designs.<sup>23</sup>

In 1934, the Public Works Administration (PWA) was created to offer federal subsidies to local governments for constructing public facilities. In 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was

<sup>16</sup> Sachs, 39.

<sup>17</sup> Albert Hays Town, "Questionnaire for Architects' Roster: A. Hays Town, Architect," December 2, 1947, The American Institute of Architects Archives, Washington, D.C.,

[http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/Rosters/TownAHays\\_roster.pdf](http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/Rosters/TownAHays_roster.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Sachs, 45.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 46.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 47.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 48.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 47.

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created as a work relief program that included construction projects to be completed by large numbers of unskilled workers rather than contracting firms. One of the challenges of this program was the requirement of hiring large numbers of unskilled workers. Town realized that concrete was the perfect building material for this endeavor. Concrete was relatively cheap and required few skilled persons to build forms, but many unskilled persons to mix, carry, and place the concrete. Town’s first experiment with concrete as an exterior surface material, rather than just a structural material, was the 1935 Holmes County Jail in Lexington, Mississippi.

One of Town’s more prominent designs in Mississippi was the Bailey Junior High School. Listed as part of the Belhaven Historic District in 1992, the school is located at 1900 North State Street. Construction started in 1936 and was completed in 1937 on the large L-shaped monolithic poured concrete school. From the National Register nomination, the school is described as:

“The main façade of the building is visually broken into several sections including ones for the gymnasium, stair tower, classrooms, central entrance, and projecting auditorium. The sections are all two story except for the entrance block which projects from the rest of the façade and has a tower form that rises a story taller than the rest of the building and has stepped buttresses at the corners tapering to the top. The entrance on the first level is accessed by monumental stairs. The building has decorative features including bas-relief panels and sculptures.”<sup>24</sup>

The design also featured a rear automobile drop off with a wide cantilevered balcony.<sup>25</sup> A set of spectator stands, also of poured concrete, was built at the same time on the western side of the school’s football field. These followed the slope of the land and have arched openings on each end of the stands.<sup>26</sup>

The Bailey Junior High School allowed Town to develop an understanding on the potential uses of concrete construction. Bailey Junior High School was the first building to receive the Mississippi Chapter AIA Historic Building Design Award – “an award given to a building of more than 25 years of age that had a significant and lasting impact on the architecture of the state.”<sup>27</sup> The school was also featured in Martin Grief’s 1975 survey of American Architecture in the 1930s as part of an illustrated “survey of projects by the Public Works Administration.”<sup>28</sup> The school was also pictured in *Life Magazine* on a two page spread to show the impact of the PWA. The article, “PWA has changed face of U.S.,” writes:

“Bailey Junior High School is a modern adaptation of classic architecture. It is built of reinforced

<sup>24</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Belhaven Historic District, Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, National Register #12000920.

<sup>25</sup> Sachs, 52.

<sup>26</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Belhaven Historic District.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 66.

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concrete with structural steel trusses over the auditorium and gymnasium. It costs \$388,641.”<sup>29</sup>

After working on Bailey Junior High, Overstreet and Town went on to design more schools in Mississippi. A tornado hit Tupelo in Lee County in 1936, which destroyed many of the city’s schools. Overstreet and Town were commissioned to design three replacement schools. Church Street Primary School, constructed in 1936, is individually listed on the National Register for its Moderne architecture.<sup>30</sup> Town also worked on Tupelo High School as well (now Milam Elementary).

The commissions in Tupelo led to other school projects throughout Mississippi. In 1938, Town designed the Columbia High School. It was featured in numerous magazines including the *Architectural Forum*, the Portland Cement Associations’ *Architectural Concrete*, the French Journal *L’Architecture D’aujourd Hui*, and the *New Yorker*. The Portland Cement Association also used the school in their advertisements.

In addition to new school structures, Town was commissioned to expand existing schools. His designs were sympathetic to the existing school buildings. For example, the 1937 addition to Canton High School, a 1923 Prairie Style school, featured patterns in the brickwork and matched the fenestration patterns of the original building. Only the cast stone detail and grillwork revealed the addition’s true age.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to schools, Overstreet and Town also designed hospitals for the PWA and WPA programs. Two of their overall three small concrete hospitals were featured in magazines – *Architectural Concrete* and *Architectural Record*.<sup>32</sup> These small hospitals’ only detail was horizontal lines in the concrete by the entrance and above and below the windows. Other public buildings constructed during this time included city halls, courthouses, and other government buildings.

It was during Town’s time with Overstreet that he began designing some residential properties, drawing on the popular modern design and the more traditional architectural styles, which contrasts with his later personalized style. One of these includes the Kirby Walker House, built for Jackson’s Superintendent of Education in the late 1930s. This was a contemporary ranch style house with antebellum features on the interior including mantles and moldings in historic proportions rather than sleek lines and clean surfaces, which were popular in ranch house interiors at the time.<sup>33</sup>

In 1937, Overstreet and Town received the commission for the Heymann House in Lafayette, Louisiana. Herbert Heymann, a Lafayette entrepreneur, chose a French provincial home design featuring many aspects of modern design while retaining a traditional feeling. This work represents Town’s first professional work back in his home state of Louisiana.

<sup>29</sup> “PWA has changed face of U.S.” *Life*. April 1, 1940. Pgs 61-63.

<sup>30</sup> National Register of Historic Places, North Church Primary School, Tupelo, Mississippi, National Register #92000164.

<sup>31</sup> Sachs, 57.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 60.



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***Historic Context: A. Hays Town, Commercial Designs, 1939-1968***

In 1939, Town announced his intentions to leave the firm of Overstreet and Town to pursue his own Louisiana practice.<sup>34</sup> Under the terms of dissolution of partnership, Overstreet retained all projects in Mississippi and Town took over the projects in Louisiana. They agreed not to take work in the other's state while the other was still working. While they had this agreement, Town did end up designing residences in Mississippi throughout the rest of his career.

Town became the architect for Herbert Heymann's Oil Center project, a low rise office complex featuring simple, flat roofed, brick buildings and located in Lafayette, Louisiana. His first project on the site was the Heymann Medical Clinic. Town continued to work on projects at the Oil Center for over 20 years<sup>35</sup> Town incorporated the preservation of existing trees and native plants as a part of the overall building and site design. The landscape is still a centerpiece of the office complex today.<sup>36</sup>

Town's first major commission, on his own without Overstreet's involvement, was the Iberia Parish Courthouse in New Iberia, Louisiana, which still serves the parish today. Completed in 1941 in a Classical style, the design features a four-story pavilion flanked by symmetrical two-story wings.<sup>37</sup> The classical, but Modernist design features five monumental openings and a pair of formal fountains. The classical elements include balance and symmetry and an engaged colonnade. The first floor houses public service offices in cross-axial circulation corridors. The second floor matches the first, but also contains the courtroom on the front side. The third and fourth floors contain the sheriff's offices and the jail.<sup>38</sup>

When reform Governor Sam Jones took office in 1940, he sought an architect that was neither corrupt nor associated with Huey P. Long or his successors. Being new to the state as a professional architect, A. Hays Town had no associations with the former governors. Governor Jones hired A. Hays town to construct numerous maintenance buildings and other governmental buildings in Louisiana.<sup>39</sup> Town received several public commissions from both Governor Jones and his successor, Governor Jimmie Davis. A. Hays Town also designed some of the Louisiana State University Buildings in the Spanish Colonial style including the Agriculture department classroom building (1947), the Chemistry building addition (1949), Coates Hall (1949), and the Baptist Student Union (1950).

During World War II, many architectural projects were postponed. However, Town remained busy designing outbuildings for the Baton Rouge Standard Oil Plant, the new Airport Terminal for Baton

<sup>34</sup> Albert Hays Town, "Questionnaire for Architects' Roster: A. Hays Town, Architect," December 2, 1947, The American Institute of Architects Archives, Washington, D.C., <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/AIA%20scans/Rosters>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>36</sup> John D. Cramer, "Back to the Future with Louisiana Architect A. Hays Town," *HPRES-ist* (blog), entry posted January 24, 2013, <http://johndcramer.wordpress.com/2013/01/24/back-to-the-future-with-louisiana-architect-a-hays-town/>.

<sup>37</sup> Sachs, 58.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 71.

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Rouge Airport, and Jamie’s Steak House near Baton Rouge. The Steak House consisted of two flat-roofed one-story buildings pivoted around a central entry point with full-height walls of windows. Town also served as the consulting architect for the Southern District of Borden Dairy Company and designed processing plants in Jackson, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Midland, Texas. On these projects, Town returned to Modernism for the most part. The exception to that is for the commission he designed for Louisiana State University, which was designed in the Italian Renaissance style in the 1920s and 1930s. The campus was listed on the National Register in 1988.<sup>40</sup> Taking cues from the ever present red tile roofs on the original campus buildings, Town designed classroom buildings for the agriculture department, an addition to the chemistry building, Coates Hall, and the Baptist Student Union. All of these are still standing today utilizing the same red tile roofs and roughcast exterior finish. For these buildings, Town showed that he could easily adapt to a client’s wishes. For the projects where he was not constrained by the client’s wishes, he returned to his modernist designs.

In 1956, Town designed the Union Federal Savings and Loan building in Baton Rouge. The building featured a concrete structural grid pulled to the exterior which gave the building a sense of weight. Brick masses marked elevator cores, and the fire stairs were put on the exterior to break up the main block. A new innovation on the building was the use of reflective colored window glass, which helped the building stay cooler during the hot Louisiana summers. The first floor features entry canopies to add depth and focus. This building was constructed adjacent to the already developed downtown Baton Rouge, which had a large collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings, and the Union Federal Savings and Loan building became one of the first modernist buildings in downtown. This building stood out on the street not only because of its modern design, but also because of its six story height and small adjacent garden. This building served as a basis for subsequent building designs in the growing downtown core.

Two years later, Town designed the Louisiana Department of Highways building in Baton Rouge. The design is similar to the Union Federal Savings and Loan building, although the structural grid is pulled to the exterior, but not past the building plane and the exterior façade is a wall of windows in between the structural members. The elevator core was pulled away from the office block and sits at the rear elevation. The offset massing provides “a sculptural backdrop to the small lake,” located to its left.<sup>41</sup> In 1960, Town similarly designed the Copolymer Company building, but in this instance the structure was set back from the surface of the wall, which allowed the interior to be insulated. Using the same design, Town designed the Waterworks building in 1961. This building hid the structural grid behind the surface of the wall.<sup>42</sup>

A. Hays Town approached the commissions for public schools in Louisiana in a similar fashion to his commercial structures. Westdale Junior High School (1956) and Capital High School (1960), both in Baton Rouge, were also set into a structural grid which was arranged in long rows to allow for

<sup>40</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Louisiana State University Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, National Register #88001586.

<sup>41</sup> Sachs, 77.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 78.

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ventilation.<sup>43</sup> The rooms in both schools were connected with unenclosed balconies. Westdale was innovative in that Town designed the classrooms to be raised above the ground to create covered playspace. Westdale was made with concrete, but the Capital High School was Town’s opportunity to use a steel grid to make it stronger.

Town also received the commission to design the new buildings at Southern University in Baton Rouge. These included the gymnasium, dormitories, and classroom buildings. These buildings all feature Town’s use of concrete columns and slab construction with brick or glass infill. They were all constructed around semi-enclosed courtyards as well and utilized breezeways to cover the main entrances into the buildings.<sup>44</sup>

As time passed, Town grew increasingly weary of his modernist style. He began to feel like the modern style was less challenging and never really felt like his other modernist peers, who were continually invent new forms of modernist design. He also believed the modernist designed structures were out of place in their surroundings. He increasingly looked to the area’s architectural heritage of the building’s location for influence on the building’s design.

This sentiment in Town’s rhetoric first began to appear in 1951 with the Vermillion Parish Courthouse in Abbeville. This building was classical in its design, but it also featured local architectural details. These include the “six grand two-story Tuscan columns supporting the main entry portico pediment... reminiscent of the colonnades” on many of the antebellum homes in the area, specifically Shadows-on-the-Teche in nearby New Iberia.<sup>45</sup> Town commissioned a local artist to paint local landscape scenes in the corridors.<sup>46</sup> While the courthouse is constructed in the plantation style, it also features many modern materials of the time including terrazzo floors.

This change to traditional design would be a slow process that wouldn’t fully take over Town’s work until c. 1960. It was a slow and long-lasting transition and by 1960, Town had broken from his Modernist roots, eschewing modern design for Traditional design that would one day be termed “Town Style.”

Town’s aptitude for designing buildings with a traditional context brought many church commissions to his office. His churches typically featured a prominent pedimented entry set above a colonnade.<sup>47</sup> Some of his churches include First Presbyterian in Lafayette (1948), First Baptist in Lafayette (1948), Saint Joseph’s Catholic Church in Loreauville (1953), and First Baptist in Baton Rouge (1955).

By the early 1960s, A. Hays Town delegated much of the modern architecture commissions to his staff. The last modern commercial building Town designed was the Blue Cross Building in Baton Rouge

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Sachs, 79.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 81.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 82.

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completed in 1968. It was well detailed with a variety of materials and motifs, but Town recognized that this building and his other modern buildings of the 1960s were less refined than those of his employees and younger architects.<sup>48</sup> Town attempted to apply tradition designs to the larger commercial and institutional commissions that his firm took on, but he found that traditional design was not as compatible with contemporary issues, primarily the ethos at the time of valuing economy and efficiency over design.

In 1967, Town constructed the University Art Museum at his alma mater, University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.) The property was donated by the Heymann family, whom Town had designed for in the past. This building clearly shows the transition away from Modern architectural styles and the embrace with the vernacular. The building was modeled after the 1812 Hermitage Plantation in Darrow, Louisiana. The building is surrounded on all sides by brick Doric Columns covered in plaster.<sup>49</sup> Town designed the house to be a pale pink using an authentic reproduction of coloring a house – “crushing old brick and mixing brick dust with the paint base” which fades to the desired color in a few years.<sup>50</sup> Town reused materials, including the staircase rail, newel post, and over 200,000 bricks from the old administration building, which had been demolished in 1963. He also reused cypress flooring from a New Orleans convent and French slate tiles for the roof that had been used as ballast in sailing ships.<sup>51</sup>

After the late 1960s, Town no longer sought out commercial commissions; however he was occasionally persuaded to design non-residential projects. Starting with the late 1960s and continuing through the end of his career, Town did not enjoy working on commercial projects as he did not appreciate the impersonal profit driven nature of the projects.<sup>52</sup> These later projects were only taken for established clients and/or friends and were typically designed in the Town Style, not in the popular styles of the time.

***Historic Context: A. Hays Town Residential Designs and the “A. Hays Town Style”, 1940-1991***

Even before officially eschewing commercial architectural projects, A. Hays Town took his architecture career and his passion for Louisiana vernacular to “develop a formal vocabulary and organizational strategy that was derived from past styles.”<sup>53</sup> Town proved that traditional, historic models of architecture could be transformed for contemporary lifestyles. The first residential house Town designed was the Eastland House in 1940. It was a raised Creole cottage designed for a friend on a limited budget.

While he designed his first house in 1940, the next two decades focused on his commercial architecture

<sup>48</sup> Sachs, 85.

<sup>49</sup> "About the Museum," Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum, <http://museum.louisiana.edu/about-the-museum>.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Sachs, 86.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 87.

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career. By the 1960s, Town began to focus on more residential designs. He preferred the person to person contact that was available to him in residential work.<sup>54</sup> During the 1960s, traditional architecture was being lost due to the demand for ranch style suburban homes both in Baton Rouge and across the state. Large tracts of land were cleared to make room for the suburbs which led preservationists to push for saving the vernacular homes. Town found himself in the middle – his designs were new, but reflected the traditional architecture. The demand for new traditional homes gave Town the perfect in to become a high demand architect. With each commission, Town learned and changed his design for the next commission. No two Town buildings are exactly the same.<sup>55</sup>

Town admired the historic homes of Louisiana, but recognized their inefficiency to modern conveniences. Historic homes generally had large plots of land and were designed with cross ventilation to keep the houses appropriately and effectively heated and cooled. The houses Town was designing starting in the 1960s were usually on smaller plots of land, the invention of air conditioning negated the need for natural ventilation, and a more informal family life and plan was preferred over the formal lives of plantation owners of the past. Using this knowledge, Town incorporated the timeless characteristics of the vernacular styles such as space, patterns, and materials.<sup>56</sup>

A. Hays Town reused salvaged building materials from historic buildings to create his designs. Many of his buildings feature outdoor living space. According to Leslie Gladney, Hays’ granddaughter, Town would not design a building without seeing the landscape and designing the building and lush landscape together.<sup>57</sup>

Town began to truly develop his own style while constructing his family home beginning in 1950. When he first began construction, he designed a simple, economical home for his wife and two children. The main house was an ell-shaped bungalow that contained the main living quarters. The bedrooms extended into a wing which also created a rear courtyard. During construction of his family home, Town found out about the demolition of a warehouse in New Orleans. He asked the contractor for the used brick. In a similar fashion, he acquired slate for his roof.<sup>58</sup> He loved using the salvaged materials and began to watch for other demolitions to purchase various materials to reuse, including brick, slate, ceramic ridge caps, wood beams, paneling, windows, shutters, doors, flooring, and more. Using the salvaged materials, Town designed porches, patios, bay windows, sheds, and other outbuildings first for his own home and then used them on his future designs. Town used his own home as a sort of laboratory for his designs to see what would and would not work. Once he tested a design at his home and found it to be successful, he would use it in further designs.<sup>59</sup> By using salvaged material alongside new, Town also became adept at treating new material to look old. One of the more common treatments was to treat

<sup>54</sup> Cyril Vetter and Philip Gould. *The Louisiana Houses of A. Hays Town*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999; pg. Xi.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 88.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>57</sup> Leslie Hays Gladney. Interview by Nicole Marie Kennelly. Baton Rouge, LA. May 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Sachs, 93.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 94.

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the brick floors with a combination of beeswax, turpentine, and linseed oil.<sup>60</sup>

Another unique characteristic of Town during this period is that he liked to work alongside the craftsmen. He was involved in the building process, not just the design. Town would also assist with the development of the landscape. He would plant many species of plants, learning how they grow and where they grow best. Town created a garden alongside his family home which helped him when designing a concept drawing for a client. Town always included landscape design with his architectural services.<sup>61</sup>

Town was a holistic designer; in addition to the building itself and the landscape that surrounded it, Town also turned his attention to the interior design. Town wanted to fill the buildings with furniture that would complement the space, similar to other famous architects who came before him like Frank Lloyd Wright. Town was a big believer that handmade objects were superior to machine made. In furniture and ornamentation, Town tended to select the simple, hand-crafted pieces from the eighteenth century.<sup>62</sup> He chose eighteenth century European landscape art and nineteenth century Louisiana landscape art. For the floors, Town chose muted Persian rugs. Town preferred to help clients furnish the home, but always let them choose for themselves. In addition to furnishes, Town also liked to suggest décor, which often included religious artifacts.<sup>63</sup>

A. Hays Town was familiar with and understood many different Louisiana vernacular styles. Some of his designs, including the Collette House in Baton Rouge (1978), and the Lawton House in Sulphur (1983), represent the Norman cottages, “progenitors of the Louisiana style.”<sup>64</sup> These homes are simple one-story brick buildings that sit on the ground with a tall slightly flared roof. The entry pavilions featured an arch leading to a landscaped central courtyard. An adaption of this style is in a slightly earlier house, the Ohmstede House, in Baton Rouge (1976). This building was similar to the above, but featured a heavy timber frame gallery the full length of the house. The home also featured a two story section, which featured wood posts on the second floor, but had plaster Doric posts on the first floor, similar to the Colonial style homes.

Town’s designs also represented the Louisiana Creole Cottages. The Chance House (1961) and the Rickey House (1962), both in Lafayette, are similar to the early Creole houses of Louisiana. The Chance house features a simple side gabled roof akin to “the Cottage” in St. Francisville, ca. 1795. Town even designed the infill below the gallery to resemble bousillage construction.<sup>65</sup> The Rickey House featured a taller hipped roof with dormers, a veranda, and a fanlight above the entry. This house is similar to the Oakland, an 1821 home in Natchitoches.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Sachs, 94.

<sup>61</sup> Gladney, interview.

<sup>62</sup> Sachs, 97.

<sup>63</sup> Vetter and Gould, pg. 11.

<sup>64</sup> Sachs, 90.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

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Another variation Town would use as a design basis is the raised Creole Cottage. The Putnam House (1980) in Abbeville and the Carmouche House (1961) in Lake Charles are modern raised Creole Cottages. These homes are simple cottage form homes raised above a supporting lower story.<sup>67</sup> Town even retained the feature of the exterior stairs on the front of the home. Town designed a ceremonial entry from the gallery into a formal entry hall. Through the entry hall one could enter the formal living and dining rooms. In the rear, Town placed the primary family living space along with a more common entrance to the building. He maintained a more informal appearance in the family areas.<sup>68</sup> The Carmouche House even faced a wide bayou, retaining a setting similar to some of the early raised Creole Cottages.

While these designs are rural vernacular styles, Town also drew upon the more urban architecture of Louisiana’s past. This is shown in a pair of townhouses designed for doctors in Beaumont, Texas - The Campbell House and the Hager House (1985). These French Quarter style buildings feature iron railings on second floor balconies with arched porte-cocheres. The “French Quarter Style” refers to images of Old New Orleans that were revived in the mid-twentieth century. Many renovation projects in the French Quarter are of New Orleans as well as new construction picked up on the architectural details of the buildings of 1840s and 1850s New Orleans. Typical details include: urban party wall Creole cottage forms with and without front galleries; cast iron galleries in lacey plentitude; shallow cantilevered balconies with a wrought-iron look to the railings; simple Greek Revival denticular brick cornices; French doors; wooden galleries on buildings designed after the manner of rear Quarter dependencies; and Greek Revival columnar shop fronts.<sup>69</sup> The use of the French Quarter Style reached its apex c. 1960, but continued to be used throughout the 1960s and 1970s in New Orleans and other parts of the state.

A. Hays Town proved his knowledge of Louisiana architecture through his many building designs. He combined building styles and forms. His ability to adapt these Louisiana vernacular styles for contemporary lifestyles and landscapes is especially evident in his non-southern commissions. One such example is a vacation home in the Virgin Islands. Town took what he know from Louisiana vernacular and borrowed from the Caribbean traditions.<sup>70</sup> When Town worked in New Mexico and California, he borrowed from the Mission style architecture that was prevalent there. Town understood the importance of using vernacular architecture in its natural setting, whether that was southeastern Louisiana or the southwest.

The term, “Town Style,” was first defined by the Svendson House, designed in 1960. The use of the term was not widespread yet, but this house would become the first that incorporated the unique details that would come to be associated with Town including exposed ceiling beams, colonnaded breezeways,

<sup>67</sup> Sachs, 91.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>69</sup> National Register Nomination, Vieux Carré National Register Historic District, Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana, National Register Nomination #66000377; and update to the district, 2011, to include “French Quarter Style.”

<sup>70</sup> Sachs, 91.

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French doors, white painted brick, galleries on each side of an enclosed courtyard, brick floors, arched openings, and wide plank wood floors. The arrangement, around a courtyard, also was typical of what Town would be known for.<sup>71</sup> It wouldn't be until the 1970s Town's work was so popular and known throughout the city of Baton Rouge that the local newspaper called his work "Hays Town Style" houses. This defining term would stay with Town throughout the rest of his career and come to have a tremendous influence on Louisiana's architectural legacy (see pg 21 for further discussion of Town's influence).<sup>72</sup>

While no two Town homes are the same, the homes have similar characteristics that help unite them as "Town Style". For example, his choice to reuse salvaged building materials and landscaped lots can be found among his many designs.<sup>73</sup> Town also consistently used tall casement windows and/or French doors, though he would alter the proportions, the shape of the arch or lintel, add or remove side and transom lights, alter the fenestration of door panels, change colors, or even add shutters or trim.<sup>74</sup> The detail of the design was customized to the property and the person who had commissioned the work. Even with customization per the owner's preference, the designs always remained vernacular, down to the hardware. Further delineating features found in Town's houses include interior brick walls painted white (and sometimes exterior as well), exposed wooden lintels and beam ceilings, the use of texture through exposed brick walls and beams, hallways with interplays of light and reflection (the beeswax finish on the brick floors was reflective), salvaged or historically appropriate windows on either side of passages to allow an influx of light, and the ideal of letting the effects of nature and time becoming part of the house's character such as peeling paint or the growth of moss on elements.<sup>75</sup>

During Town's career as a predominantly residential architect, there are patterns that emerge. Town did not select one style to design a building. Many of his designs are a "collage of forms" taken from various styles.<sup>76</sup> Town's interiors became more open; however, the exterior typically featured relationships with different masses. A. Hays Town homes "fit so naturally into their surroundings that recently completed homes were sometimes mistaken for historic structures."<sup>77</sup> Town also liked to organize his forms around patterns of movement – most often utilizing courtyards surrounded by galleries and breezeways. He would organize rooms with specific purposes, such as kitchens, dining rooms, and living rooms that were each defined, but that flowed into each other. All were also closely associated with exterior spaces. Furthermore, he generally treated rooms across the front of the house as the formal spaces and the rest of the rooms were treated with a more rustic and informal feel. When a home was sited in a more rural location, near a body of water or a wooded area, an enclosed courtyard may not be used, but rather, he would leave the courtyard open to the natural feature. Nonetheless, he still made sure to make the house and each individual room relate to the outdoors.

<sup>71</sup> Vetter and Gould, pgs 22-25.

<sup>72</sup> Sachs, pg. 133.

<sup>73</sup> "A. Hays Town (1903-2005)," in *KnowLA, Encyclopedia of Louisiana*.

<sup>74</sup> Sachs, 92.

<sup>75</sup> Vetter and Gould, pgs. 31, 33, 42, 52, and 108.

<sup>76</sup> "A. Hays Town (1903-2005)," in *KnowLA, Encyclopedia of Louisiana*.

<sup>77</sup> Sachs, 110.



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As Town grew older, his designs were less frequent, but because of his love for design, he continued a modest practice until his health forced him to stop in 1998.

One of Town's contemporaries in the historical revival movement was William King Stubbs of Monroe, Louisiana. Stubbs worked in northern Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi.<sup>78</sup> Stubbs' architectural designs are predominantly Georgian and Greek Revival.<sup>79</sup> One of Town's contemporaries in the Baton Rouge area was Bodman and Murrell. Bodman and Murrell focused mainly on contemporary designs. In fact, most of Town's contemporaries were designing modern styles rather than historic revival.

*Timeline of A. Hays Town's Architectural Career*

**1903:** A. Hays Town is born in Crowley, LA

**1910:** The Town family moves to Lafayette, LA

**1918:** Town graduates from high school and enrolls at Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now the University of Louisiana-Lafayette) to study engineering

**1921:** Town enrolls at Tulane and begins studying architecture

**Summers from 1921-1925:** Town interns with Richard Koch, a leading architect and spokesman for the preservation movement in the state and works on the restoration of Oak Alley, the Herman Grima House, and other buildings "designed in the old spirit of the place"

**1926:** Town finishes architecture school and moves to Jackson, Mississippi, to work in the office of N.W. Overstreet and Associates

**1929:** Town designs his first major building on his own in Jackson – The Standard Life Building  
- Town became the only employee of the firm during this time due to the Great Depression

**1930:** N.W. Overstreet asks Town to be a partner in the firm; the name changes to Overstreet and Town

**1933:** The Historic American Building Survey (HABS) is created; Town is appointed the head of survey in Mississippi

**1936-37:** Town designs Bailey Junior High School in Jackson, which is featured in *Life Magazine*

**1939:** Town leaves Overstreet and Town and returns to Louisiana to open his own firm

**1940:** Town begins a 20 year relationship with the Heymann family in Lafayette by working on the Oil Center, a

<sup>78</sup> Jonathan Fricker and Donna Fricker, "Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965: The Past as Inspiration," in *Historic Contexts* (n.p.: n.p., 2010), 4. <http://www.crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/historic-preservation/national-register/historic-contexts/index>.

<sup>79</sup> Fricker and Fricker, "Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965: The Past," in *Historic Contexts*, 4.

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complex of simple, flat roofed brick buildings; he would later design houses for the Heymann family and a medical center in their name

**1941:** Town's first major commission, the Iberia Parish Courthouse is built

**1941-1950:** World War II and the post war years; While many architectural projects were postponed, Town designed outbuildings for Standard Oil, an airport terminal in Baton Rouge, a steak house in Baton Rouge, and new buildings for Louisiana State University

**1951:** Town designs the Vermillion Parish Courthouse; this building shows how Town was beginning to incorporate traditional design elements into Modernist structures

**1956:** Town designs Union Federal Savings and Loan Building in Baton Rouge; becomes one of the first modernist buildings in the city's downtown

**Early 1960s:** Town begins to eschew his Modernist roots and focus on traditional residential buildings; he aims to stay away from commercial work and assigns that to other designers in his office

**c. 1961:** Town begins to focus solely on traditional residential design; the only commercial buildings he designs are for close friends or longstanding business relationships.

**1968:** Town designs his last major commercial building – the Blue Cross Building in Baton Rouge  
Early 1970s: The term "Town Style" is used to describe Town's residential buildings.

**1977:** Town is named Alumnus of the Year by Tulane University

**1985:** Town is awarded the Arthur Ross Award from the National Academy of Design in New York

**1991:** A. Hays Town completes his last major design.

**1998:** Town officially retires from being a practicing architect.

**2005:** A. Hays Town passes away at the age of 101.

*A. Hays Town's Awards and Recognition*

Town and his works have been recognized in a variety of architectural publications over the course of his career including (this is not an exhaustive list, just a sampling):

*Progressive Architecture*

- "Airport Terminal in Baton Rouge," May 1953
- "Medium Airport Terminal," (May 1953)
- "Highway Restaurant in Baton Rouge, Louisiana," (June 1947), by A. Hays Town

*Architectural Concrete (7 times)*

- "Design for Concrete Armories – Mississippi," with N.W. Overstreet

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- "Design for Space Economy," by A. Hays Town
- "Justice in Iberia Parish, Louisiana," by A. Hays Town
- "Plan Two New Schools for the South," by A. Hays Town
- "Tupelo School – Symbol of Safety," by A. Hays Town

*Architectural Record*

- Bolivar County Health Center, October 1951
- "Governmental Buildings," February 1941
- "Recent Architecture in the South," (March 1924)
- "New Iberia Louisiana Courthouse," (February 1941)

*Architectural Forum*

- Columbia High School (February 1938)
- "Curtain Walls" (March 1950)
- "Design Decade" (October 1940)
- Edward J. Bailey Junior High School (February 1938)
- "Six Quality Schools at Reasonable Cost," (October 1956)
- "Weekend Lodge," (June 1951)

*Pencil Points*

- "Aesthetics of Concrete" (May 1938)
- "Design in Modern Architecture," (February 1931)
- "Concrete Virtues," (April 1939)

*House Beautiful*

- "Regional Wisdom," (October 1995)

*Architectural Review*

- "Monumentality, Symbolism, and Style," (April 1949)
- "The Architectural Future of America," (July 1937)

*Southern Living*

- "By the Master of The Louisiana Style," (September 1988)
- "The Art and Architecture of a Louisiana Legend," (October 1990)
- "Hays Town is His Own Tradition," (January 1982)

*Mississippi Architect*

- "Looking Forward to History," (1978)
- "The White Tower: A Closer look at Bailey Junior High," (1978)

*Southern Accents*

- "Master of Creole Architecture," (September/October 1994)

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*Louisiana Contractor*

- "A Man and His Work: A. Hays Town – Master Architect"

*Journal of Mississippi History*

- "The Works Progress Administration in Mississippi"

*The New Yorker*

- "The Sky Line," (April 30, 1938) (written by Lewis Mumford)

*Life Magazine*

- "PWA Has Changed Face of the U.S." (April 1, 1940)

In addition to being published in many different periodicals and writing articles for the popular architectural magazines of the day, Town was also honored with several awards throughout his career. In 1977, Tulane named him Alumnus of the year. In 1985, he was awarded the Arthur Ross Award from the National Academy of Design in New York, which is presented to an architect, painter, sculptor, or craftsman whose work has exhibited a continued excellence and integrity in its application of classical ideals and canons.<sup>80</sup> That same year, he was awarded the Natchez Historical Society's annual Preservation Award for his work with HABS. In 1991, Town received an honorary doctorate from Louisiana State University.<sup>81</sup>

Town's work was also recognized by Lewis Mumford, an American historian, sociologist, and literary critic. Mumford is noted for his studies of cities and urban architecture. Mumford served as an architectural critic for *The New Yorker* for over thirty years and also helped found the Regional Planning Association of America.<sup>82</sup> Mumford authored over 20 books and 1,000 articles and reviews and his book, *The City in History*, won the 1962 National Book Award for nonfiction. He was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964 and the National Medal of the Arts in 1986).<sup>83</sup> Having one's work recognized in a positive note by a man of Mumford's notoriety is quite an honor. About Town, Mumford wrote:

"Hays has shaped schools and courthouses into powerful compositions using emerging techniques of exposed, reinforced concrete....In the forty years since then, through concentration and steady, very disciplined work habits, he has applied a rare intelligence, innate sense of quality and great talents to shape an original and personal style of architecture, adapted to the southern climate, landscape and way of life. The style is inclusive, bringing the best of yesterday's and today's materials and craftsmanship into play and buildings sensitive to their sites and clients' needs and totally free of passing trends."<sup>84</sup>

<sup>80</sup> A. Hays Town. *The Architecture of A. Hays Town*. Baton Rouge: Franklin Press, Inc. 1985.

<sup>81</sup> Sachs, pg. 139.

<sup>82</sup> Eugene Halton. "A Brief Biography of Lewis Mumford (1895-1995). [www3.nd.edu/~ehalton/mumfordbio.html](http://www3.nd.edu/~ehalton/mumfordbio.html). Accessed March 17, 2015.

<sup>83</sup> Robert Wojtowicz. "City as Community: The Life and Vision of Lewis Mumford." [ww2.odu.edu/ao/instdv/quest/CityAsCommunity.html](http://ww2.odu.edu/ao/instdv/quest/CityAsCommunity.html). Accessed March 17, 2015.

<sup>84</sup> Vetter and Gould, pg. Xii.

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*A. Hays Town’s Influence on Louisiana’s Architectural Traditions*

One can easily drive around Louisiana’s neighborhoods that have been developed since A. Hays Town was practicing and notice the influence Town had on new construction and architectural styles. The residential style that he created has influenced the recent residential neighborhoods throughout Louisiana and the south as a whole.

Architects who interned under Town went off and started practices of their own, with some focusing on traditional residential design like Town. Even architects who didn’t work under Town were asked by their clients to copy Town’s design features in both residential and commercial buildings.<sup>85</sup> This influence even went beyond designers. Manufacturers and suppliers of lumber or metal fabricators who made moldings and iron work for Town were asked to standardize their stock to include Town-like designs that would be affordable to more consumers.

Town’s designs helped to further instill a renewed interest in regional design for new construction. At the time Town was beginning his rise to residential architect fame, the majority of what was being built in the city of Baton Rouge was referred to as “Baton Rouge B-Flat,” and was a typical suburban ranch house.<sup>86</sup> Other designers tried to experiment and copy Town early on, but their efforts fell short, mainly due to the fact that Town was using high quality and more expensive products and elements in his designs.

Architects throughout Baton Rouge and the state continued trying to copy Town’s designs until, in 1985, Town himself published a book, “The Architectural Style of A. Hays Town,” which featured 106 sketched elevations of his homes. The book’s popularity and influence was enormous with there were only a limited few editions of the book printed and some copies of the book, originally sold for \$50, went for as much as \$2000.<sup>87</sup>

As builders began to copy Town’s sketches, they began to better understand that quality was important in his designs versus finding a cheaper material for something such as moldings or columns. They began to expend the extra money and were rewarded as Town Style houses began to quickly outsell the “Baton Rouge B-Flat” models. The Town Style Houses were preferable because they had a traditional and regional look that locals enjoyed, but they also had the most up to date trends on the interiors. The broken massing floor plans helped to make smaller houses seem larger because they were more spread out, which was also popular with home buyers.

Town’s influence did extend beyond the city limits of Baton Rouge with the greatest concentration of Town’s houses in Lafayette and Jackson, Mississippi. His work was further emulated by areas throughout the south as traditional house designers came from all over the south to look at Town’s work. For his hard work, the residents of Baton Rouge and Louisiana began to recognize Town and several articles were written about his residential work in Baton Rouge magazines and newspapers. Other statewide publications like *The Louisiana Contractor* also published articles on Town’s work.

The mayor of Baton Rouge declared a “Hays Town Day,” and the governor created an award for service to the state to be known as the “A. Hays Town Award.”<sup>88</sup> A similar award would be created by the ubiquitous southern magazine, *Southern Living*, to honor southern architects beginning in 2013.

<sup>85</sup> Sachs, pg. 134.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, pg 135.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, pg. 139.

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There is no doubt that A. Hays Town’s work had a direct influence on new architectural trends in Louisiana and Mississippi following the middle of the twentieth century. The majority of new construction began to take on a more traditional look. Even today’s neighborhoods, in Louisiana at least, have a distinctly Louisiana feel to them with French, Creole, and Spanish inspired designs.

Andres Duany, a founder of the Congress for New Urbanism and a recipient of the Arthur Ross Award in Community Planning among many other honors and accolades, reverently paid homage to Town in the 1999 book, “The Louisiana Houses of A. Hays Town,” which perhaps, best sums up Town’s influence:

“The long, long career of A. Hays Town is like a bridge that brings forth the traditional architecture of Louisianan to the present generation of builders. His buildings have been so livable, such a good fit with the climate, the landscape, the materials, and the workmanship of the region that there is no compelling need to look elsewhere for sources.

There are very few places where regional architecture still rewards the visitor. Like so much of American culture, it has disappeared under the waves of generica that are said to be the condition of modernism.

Any attempt to preserve a local tradition is assumed to be gallant but hopeless. And yet, somehow there is the exception of Louisiana. The manner of speech, the cuisine, the way of making music, the buildings, these are still unique to this place. Why do such traditions survive and thrive here? Is it because of Louisiana’s unusual history, its peculiar geographic circumstance, perhaps the character of its people? Yes, all of these play a part – but there is evidence also of intervention by certain remarkable individuals.

As traditional skills are passed on, the process is usually anonymous and risks degeneration. Periodically a strong master must arise to codify and revive the tradition. Hays Town has been just that. His immense body of work stands as a counterpoint to generic building. And although his characteristic expression is the residential architecture so compellingly illustrated in this book, we must remember that he is an architect of great range, able to provide most of the buildings that make up a city. He has produced superb churches, commercial buildings, and even town houses. All of it is available for study.

Without Hays Town, the architecture of Louisiana might well have dissipated into the mainstream. Instead, we have a wonderful thing, a fine tradition alive and well in America.”<sup>89</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Vetter and Gould, pg. 161.

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**F. Associated Property Types**

A. Hays Town was a prolific commercial and residential architect whose work was of a consistently high quality. During his six decades of practice, Town combined skills in modern design as well as a return to vernacular design adapted to modern needs in constructing new institutional, commercial, and residential buildings. One of his residences, the Rabalais House in East Baton Rouge Parish, was individually listed on the National Register in 2010. Town’s buildings reveal an in-depth knowledge of traditional Louisiana design precedents, both French and Spanish in influence. The Southeastern Architectural Archive at Tulane University in New Orleans holds many of his original drawings from 1937-1977.

Town’s institutional and commercial projects stand out as defining examples of his earlier work, which focused primarily on designs done in the popular styles at the time they were built. Town’s residential projects stand out as defining examples of his unique, individual “Town Style,” from the second phase of his career, which focused primarily on residential buildings beginning c. 1960. His buildings can be found throughout southeast Louisiana with the majority of his buildings being constructed in East Baton Rouge and Lafayette Parishes. His Mississippi buildings are found primarily in Jackson and other larger cities. The importance of Town’s buildings has been recognized with publications in articles and books about southeast Louisiana as well as books written specifically about A. Hays Town himself. The purpose of this multiple property submission nomination is to recognize and catalog Town’s significant contributions to modern institutional and commercial buildings as well as his significant contribution to traditional residential designs concentrated in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Eligible buildings, discussed below, designed by A. Hays Town are locally significant and meet National Register Criterion C because of the high quality of architectural design – Art Deco, Mid-Century Modern, and Vernacular mixed with modern (Town Style) - that is particularly characteristic of the two main phases of Town’s career. Additionally, his residential designs are further significant architecturally because they represent what has become identified as the “Town Style,” a distinctive blend of modern and traditional design utilized by A. Hays Town from c. 1960 through the 1990s that is reminiscent of the traditional architectural designs of Louisiana. Town’s work helped to popularize traditional design again at a time when mid-century modern design was at the forefront. While Town did not completely eschew Modernist design, he found a way to combine it with his love for vernacular Louisiana design, but in a way to make his new residences compatible with modern living. The quality of workmanship, along with the careful detailing found throughout, and the use of reclaimed and recycled historic materials, has contributed to the staying power of his buildings.

***Property Type: Public and Institutional Buildings***

***Property Description:***

Public and Institutional buildings designed by Town include schools, churches, governmental buildings, hospitals, etc. The buildings associated with this property type have been designed by A. Hays Town and built between 1926 and 1968. These buildings are located in Louisiana and Mississippi. Individual properties reflect the skills and principles of design demonstrated by A. Hays Town, who was an

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important architect of the gulf coast during the period of significance.

The majority of Town’s public and institutional building designs were in the popular architectural styles at the time of construction until the 1960s. Projects completed in the 1960s and thereafter were in the Town Style.

A. Hays Town’s architectural projects are consistent in their modern or art deco designs. These buildings are typically concrete structures with simple ornamentation. The simply designed structures feature large windows to allow natural light. In all of the designs, Town considered the landscape when creating the design. Town preserved existing trees and designed gardens with local plants to complement the design. Town did not have a typical design or geometry for his public and institutional buildings. As he was designing these during his Modernist days, he mostly just adapted the building’s design to fit the site and the needs of the clients. He often incorporated the necessary parking lots and other ancillary needs as well as the building design and a natural aspect like a courtyard. His Modernist public and institutional buildings did not subscribe to his later “Town Style” plans with formal and informal spaces or the same sort of flow needed in residential design. He did put a lot of focus on the exterior of buildings, including the landscaped features, and the main public spaces. More detail was added to the main public spaces, such as a bank lobby, elevator lobby, or main courtroom space than was done to individual offices.

*Property Significance:*

A. Hays Town’s non-residential architectural designs reflect the changes within architectural history. When Town began designing the public and institutional buildings, the modern style of architecture was just taking off. The United States was recovering from the Great Depression. Town was one of many architects tasked with WPA architecture. In addition for their significance under Criterion C, Town designed buildings that were part of the PWA or WPA could also be eligible under Criterion A for their historical significance. A. Hays Town began using concrete because it was inexpensive and required very few skilled workers. However, it would require many unskilled workers which created jobs. Town’s use of concrete began as a solution to the WPA projects, but continued throughout his career. A. Hays Town’s work with concrete to design buildings was recognized in trade journals and architectural magazines nationwide including *Architectural Concrete* and *Architectural Record*, for example.

Eligible buildings designed by Town are locally significant and meet Criterion C because of the high quality of architectural design that is characteristic of Town, during both his time at Overstreet and Town and as an independent architect. The significance of Town’s designs is based on their architectural significance with their regional context. The workmanship, materials, detailing, and setting contribute to the significance of the designs.

Town’s holistic approach to design, not just focusing on the building, but also on the site, are key to why his designs are both distinct and important. As with his residential designs, Town took into account the site he was working with and often tried to incorporate a courtyard or open space of sorts. Take for example, the Union Federal Savings and Loan Association Building. An integral courtyard was



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designed to help fill the buildings lot, which also included two parking lots to the east and south of the building. The six story portion of the building and the two story portion that formed an L to its south created the space for the courtyard that features a colonnaded breezeway on two sides. In the courtyard itself, there are planned flower beds, sidewalks, and benches. Thus, it is important that Town public and institutional buildings that survive retain features such as their original courtyards because these hold part of the overall property’s significance.

Town designed public and institutional buildings from his early days under Overstreet in 1926 through 1967. Town’s final modern institutional building was the University Art Museum at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (then called the University of Southwestern Louisiana) constructed in 1967.

*Property Registration Requirements:*

Town’s public and institutional buildings should be evaluated for their architectural integrity, distinction, and association within the historic contexts. These buildings should retain most of the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Town’s buildings exhibit a high quality of design with a number of features, described above that became emblematic of the architect’s work. Projects designed by A. Hays Town should be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places if they fulfill National Register Criteria and have a high degree of integrity, with minimal loss of original finishes and features. In addition, eligibility should be dependent on the following criteria:

1. An eligible Town designed building should be clearly documented as one of Town’s projects through original drawings or other forms of documentation.
2. All Town-Designed buildings must be fifty years old or be of exceptional significance while retaining their physical integrity with minimal loss of original finishes and features
3. The project should exhibit a minimum of five intact interior or exterior original features listed as typical of Town’s work. These features must be documented as original and include, but are not limited to, the following:

Common Exterior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Exposed structural concrete grid
- Large plate glass windows using either clear glass or reflective colored glass
- Articulated exterior details related to the individual resource’s architectural style
- Modernist, Art Deco, Classical, etc.
- An exterior space including a courtyard or open space with colonnaded breezeways, built in benches, paths, and flower beds

Common Interior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Original elevator vestibule and lobby details

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- Terrazzo floors
- Marble walls
- Hand painted murals
- Typically, upper floors, if applicable, are unornamented, speculative office space
- Other interior details related to the individual resource’s architectural style
- Modernist, Art Deco, Classical, etc.

4. The buildings should also retain scale, massing, original roof shape and pitch, and fenestration patterns so as to express a definite sense of their historic architectural character.

5. Window replacement or glass replacement is an acceptable alteration, but the window opening size may not be altered. The use of mirrored glass or smoke glass is acceptable as long as the original window opening size has not been altered.

6. Any additions should not obstruct the adjoining elevation and should be attached to the original building in a minimal and unobtrusive manner. The scale of the building should not be altered, including major changes in the façade, roof height, or architectural detailing. Those with carefully conceived or reversible additions could be eligible.

7. Eligible Town public and institutional buildings should retain original exterior materials and features, with minor changes. Original roof forms should remain intact and distinct from additions. They should retain major interior spaces, including primary entries and corridors, stairs, public spaces and major secondary spaces. Primary interior finishes such as plaster or marble walls, wood or terrazzo floors, and wood, plaster, or marble trim, should also remain intact.

8. An eligible Town-designed public or institutional building should retain a high degree of integrity at the interior and exterior. They should fulfill the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Specifically, an eligible building should retain a majority of its original windows and doors. If, for example, a colonnaded breezeway enclosing an integral courtyard has been infilled or enclosed, the breezeway should remain visible and continue to act as a link between buildings or functions. Any additions subsequent to the Town-designed construction must be minor in nature, or judged to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

***Property Type: Commercial Buildings***

***Property Description:***

Non-residential, non-public/institutional buildings associated with this property type have been designed by A. Hays Town and built between 1938 and 1983. These buildings are located in Louisiana and Mississippi. Individual properties reflect the skills and principles of design demonstrated by A. Hays Town, who was an important architect of the gulf coast during the period of significance. For the

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purposes of this MPS commercial buildings include banks, stores, office buildings, etc. – any building used for a commercial use that was not previously defined as an institutional building.

The majority of Town’s commercial commissions were in the popular architectural styles at the time of construction until the 1960s. Projects completed in the 1960s and thereafter were in the Town Style.

*Property Significance:*

A. Hays Town’s commercial architectural designs reflect the changes in architectural tastes, as well as in engineering and material design. Town’s simple, concrete, modern designs were influential in Louisiana. After World War II, Town’s business in Louisiana became successful in the postwar boom.

Town continued to use concrete as a prominent aspect of his commercial designs. Town designed the buildings to fit the site while retaining the existing landscape. The buildings feature large windows and were designed to be built economically and to function economically as well. In 1956, Town designed the Union Federal Savings and Loan building, which was built of a concrete structural grid. This was the first time Town had used the concrete structural grid as an exposed element and was also his first Louisiana commercial commission to use colored glass windows. The Louisiana Department of Transportation building that he designed two years later also used these details.

Eligible buildings designed by Town are locally significant and meet Criterion C because of the high quality of architectural design that is characteristic of Town, during his time as an independent architect. The significance of Town’s designs is based on their architectural significance with their regional context. The workmanship, materials, detailing, and setting contribute to the significance of the designs.

Town designed commercial, non-residential, non-public/institutional buildings from 1938 through 1968. Town’s final modern commercial building was the Blue Cross Blue Shield building in Baton Rouge in 1968. Town’s commercial, non-residential, non-public/institutional buildings post 1968 will generally not be eligible for listing as they were often no longer designed by Town or had lost significant articulation of design, as described by Town himself.<sup>90</sup>

*Property Registration Requirements:*

Town’s non-residential, non-public/institutional buildings designs should be evaluated for their architectural integrity, distinction, and association within the historic contexts. These buildings should retain most of the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Town’s buildings exhibit a high quality of design with a number of features, described above that became emblematic of the architect’s work. Projects designed by A. Hays Town should be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places if they fulfill National Register

<sup>90</sup>Sachs, pg. 84.

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Criteria and have a high degree of integrity, with minimal loss of original finishes and features. In addition, eligibility should be dependent on the following criteria:

1. An eligible Town designed building should be clearly documented as one of Town’s projects through original drawings or other forms of documentation.
2. All Town-Designed buildings must be fifty years old or be of exceptional significance while retaining their physical integrity with minimal loss of original finishes and features. Town’s commercial, non-residential, non-public/institutional buildings post 1968 will generally not be eligible for listing as they were often no longer designed by Town or had lost significant articulation of design, as described by Town himself.<sup>91</sup>
3. The project should exhibit a minimum of five intact interior or exterior original features listed as typical of Town’s work. These features must be documented as original and include, but are not limited to, the following:

Common Exterior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Exposed structural concrete grid
- Large plate glass windows using either clear glass or reflective colored glass
- Articulated exterior details related to the individual resource’s architectural style – Modernist, Art Deco, Classical, etc.
- An exterior space including a courtyard or open space with colonnaded breezeways, built in benches, paths, and flower beds

Common Interior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Original elevator vestibule and lobby details
- Terrazzo floors
- Marble walls
- Hand painted murals
- Typically, upper floors, if applicable, are unornamented, speculative office space
- Other interior details related to the individual resource’s architectural style – Modernist, Art Deco, Classical, etc.

4. The buildings should also retain scale, massing, original roof shape and pitch, and fenestration patterns so as to express a definite sense of their historic architectural character.
5. Window replacement or glass replacement is an acceptable alteration, but the window opening size may not be altered. The use of mirrored glass or smoke glass is acceptable as long as the original window opening size has not been altered.

<sup>91</sup>Sachs, pg. 84.

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6. Any additions should not obstruct the adjoining elevation and should be attached to the original building in a minimal and unobtrusive manner. The scale of the building should not be altered, including major changes in the façade, roof height, or architectural detailing. Those with carefully conceived or reversible additions could be eligible.

7. Eligible Town commercial buildings should retain original exterior materials and features, with minor changes. Original roof forms should remain intact and distinct from additions. They should retain major interior spaces, including primary entries and corridors, stairs, public spaces and major secondary spaces. Primary interior finishes such as plaster or marble walls, wood or terrazzo floors, and wood, plaster, or marble trim, should also remain intact.

8. An eligible Town-designed commercial building should retain a high degree of integrity at the interior and exterior. They should fulfill the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Specifically, an eligible building should retain a majority of its original windows and doors. If, for example, a colonnaded breezeway enclosing an integral courtyard has been infilled or enclosed, the breezeway should remain visible and continue to act as a link between buildings or functions. Any additions subsequent to the Town-designed construction must be minor in nature, or judged to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

***Property Type: Residential Buildings***

***Property Description:***

Residential buildings associated with this property type have been designed by A. Hays Town and built between 1940 and 1991. These buildings are concentrated in Louisiana and Mississippi, though there are some houses scattered across the country. Individual properties reflect the skill and principles of design demonstrated by A. Hays Town, who was an important architect in the gulf coast during the period of significance. Town’s residences are found in a variety of styles including Mid-Century Modern (Modern Movement) and his own “Town Style.”

***Property Significance:***

In the 1960’s, Town began to turn his attention to residential designs. Town used his experiences as a student in New Orleans and from his youth growing up in Louisiana and combined those with his experience designing modern buildings to create a new architectural style, now known today as the “Town Style”.

It is important to note that prior to developing the “Town Style,” Hays Town also designed houses in the Mid-Century Modern style such as the James Boyce House in Baton Rouge (1956). A separate section for Town’s Mid-Century Modern Houses has been included within the registration requirements to help determine eligibility of these earlier Town designs.

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The “Town Style” reflects the Louisiana vernacular styles of the past, but retained a more modern interior for contemporary use. Town’s designs were inspired by Creole cottages, Norman Cottages, Townhomes, and revival styles. Town was known for reusing salvaged building materials from historic buildings. Town was also known for designing the landscape to complement the building.

Common features of Town Style buildings are salvaged building materials and carefully landscaped lots. Town also consistently used tall casement windows and/or French doors, though he would alter the proportions, the shape of the arch or lintel, add or remove side and transom lights, alter the fenestration of door panels, change colors, or even add shutters or trim. The detail of the design was customized to the property and the person who had commissioned the work. Even with customization per the owner’s preference, the designs always remained influenced by traditional design, down to the hardware.

Common features of the Town Style include:

1. Slate roofs with ridge tiles
2. Large gallery porches with deep overhangs
3. High Ceilings with old warehouse wood beams
4. Exterior French doors with full length operable shutters
5. Walls of large windows
6. Interior brick walls painted white
7. Arched doorways
8. Antique brick floors with a special beeswax finish
9. Reclaimed wide plank heart pine floors
10. Antique cypress doors and cabinetry
11. Bevolo French Quarter gas lanterns
12. Porch swings, wooden rockers, and old church pews
13. Massive antique French olive jars
14. Hand-carved religious artifacts and niches for statues
15. Landscaped interior courtyards with fountains and crepe myrtles
16. Weathered fences, concrete statuaries, and sugar kettles
17. a Pigeonnier (dovecote) in the yard.

*Property Registration Requirements:*

Town’s residential designs should be evaluated for their architectural integrity, distinction, and association within the historic contexts. These buildings should retain most of the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Town’s buildings exhibit a high quality of design with a number of features, described above that became emblematic of the architect’s work. Projects designed by A. Hays Town should be considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places if they fulfill National Register

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Criteria and have a high degree of integrity, with minimal loss of original finishes and features. In addition, eligibility should be dependent on the following criteria:

1. An eligible Town designed building should be clearly documented as one of Town’s projects through original drawings or other forms of documentation.
2. All Town-Designed buildings must be fifty years old or be of exceptional significance while retaining their physical integrity with minimal loss of original finishes and features. Town’s residential buildings will typically date from 1960 through 1991. There are a few houses that he designed prior to 1960 and these should be evaluated using the same registration requirements spelled out here.
3. Residences in Mid Century Modern Style:
  - a. The project should exhibit a minimum of five intact interior or exterior original features listed as typical of Town’s work. These features must be documented as original and include, but are not limited to, the following:

Common Exterior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Original exterior cladding material (masonry, siding, etc)
- Large plate glass windows using either clear glass or reflective colored glass
- Articulated exterior details related to the individual resource’s Mid Century Modern architectural style
- An exterior space including a courtyard or open space

Common Interior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Original interior details as documented by plans or original specifications
- Terrazzo floors
- Other interior details related to the individual resource’s Mid Century Modern architectural style

4. Residences in the “Town Style”:  
 The project should exhibit a minimum of five intact interior AND exterior original features listed as typical of Town’s work. These features must be documented as original and include, but are not limited to, the following:

Common Exterior Materials and Characteristic Details

- Landscaped interior courtyards with fountains and crepe myrtles
- Weathered fences, concrete statuaries, and sugar kettles
- a Pigeonnier (dovecote) in the yard
- slate roofs with ridge tiles
- large gallery porches with deep overhangs
- exterior French doors with full length operable shutters

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- walls of large, salvaged, or appropriately built wood windows. These will generally have true divided lites with appropriate proportions in lite size and muntin size.
- exterior walls of brick or stucco
- wrought iron railings or porch accents
- arched doorways
- Bevolo French Quarter gas lanterns
- porch swings, wooden rockers, and old church pews integrated into the exterior furniture
- massive antique French olive jars

Common Interior Materials and Characteristic Details

- High Ceilings with old warehouse wood beams
  - Interior brick walls painted white
  - Arched doorways
  - Antique brick floors with a special beeswax finish
  - Reclaimed wide plank heart pine floors
  - Antique cypress doors and cabinetry
  - Hand-carved religious artifacts and niches for statues
  - Arched doorways
  - Floor plans with broken massing including formal rooms located at the front of the house near the entrance and more rustic, informal rooms along the periphery
- a. If the “Town Style” house had a courtyard as part of the original design, it is of utmost importance that the courtyard is intact, including the breezeways or colonnades around it. If, for example, a colonnade or breezeway enclosing an integral courtyard has been infilled or enclosed partially, the colonnade or breezeway should remain visible and continue to act as a link between buildings or functions. A fully enclosed breezeway, that was originally open to the courtyard or outdoor open space, could render a property ineligible, particularly if other original features have been altered or damaged. If this is the only alteration to the property, it may still be eligible depending on its visual and functional impact on the property.
5. The buildings should also retain scale, massing, original roof shape and pitch, and fenestration patterns so as to express a definite sense of their historic architectural character.
  6. An eligible building should retain a majority of its original windows and doors. Minor window replacement on non-street facing elevations is acceptable as long as the window replacements match the original windows in design, proportions, and size. The window opening size may not be altered. Door replacement follows the same requirement – if the door matches or is very similar to the original door design in size, proportions, and design, it is acceptable.



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7. Any additions should not obstruct the adjoining elevation and should be attached to the original building in a minimal and unobtrusive manner. The scale of the building should not be altered, including major changes in the façade, roof height, or architectural detailing. Those with carefully conceived or reversible additions could be eligible.
8. Eligible Town residential buildings should retain original exterior materials and features, with minor changes. Original roof forms should remain intact and distinct from additions. They should retain major interior spaces, including primary entries and corridors, stairs, public spaces and major secondary spaces. Primary interior finishes such as plaster walls, wood or brick floors, and wood or plaster trim, should also remain intact.
9. An eligible Town-designed residential building should retain a high degree of integrity at the interior and exterior. They should fulfill the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Any additions subsequent to the Town-designed construction must be minor in nature, or judged to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

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**10. G. Geographical Data**

A. Hays Town is an architect of statewide significance. This multiple property nomination is based on a list of buildings designed by A. Hays Town. This list was compiled through a list that A. Hays Town provided to the Foundation for Historical Louisiana in 1989, as well as discussions with Town’s granddaughter, Leslie Gladney. A list of buildings he designed in Mississippi can be found through the Mississippi Department of Archives and History Historic Resources Inventory Database, which includes an Artisan Search. The list details every building designed by Overstreet and Town between 1931 and 1939 in Mississippi as well as all buildings specifically designed only by Town between 1928 and 1985. The attached spreadsheet of Town’s residential work is not exhaustive. It is known that some of his buildings are not on this list as this is the first time any of Town’s Louisiana works that could be identified have been compiled together. A list of his commercial and public and institutional buildings has not been compiled as of date.

The majority of Town’s designs are concentrated in Louisiana and Mississippi. However, Town designed buildings can be found in Texas, California, and other locations around the world. This MPN is only covering the higher concentration of his buildings in Louisiana and Mississippi.

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**H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

The multiple property listing focuses on the designs of A. Hays Town. This project was started by a conversation with architect Dyke Nelson regarding a specific building and its rehabilitation. Through conversation it was determined that a multiple property submission was the ideal method of moving forward rather than an individual nomination for the building. Background research began at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. Research continued with discovering newspaper articles, both online and at the Foundation for Historical Louisiana Archives. The research also involved interviews with Ms. Leslie Gladney, granddaughter of A. Hays Town.

Historic Contexts are organized chronologically through Town’s lifetime. The property types were determined to be public and institutional, commercial, and residential. Eligibility requirements were determined by the National Register Criterion and conversations with the Town family.

There has never been a comprehensive inventory of Town’s work. His career spanned seven decades and several states. His records are scattered and incomplete. There is an on-going project undertaken by the Foundation for Historical Louisiana, beginning in 1989, to identify each of Town’s works. The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has a database of Town’s works as well as Town and Overstreet’s works in the state. Town designed roughly 5 commercial and public/institutional buildings on his own and 15 residences. While with Overstreet and Town, he designed 3 residences and around 80 commercial and public/institutional buildings, a large number of which were schools. In Louisiana, Town designed approximately 200 residences and around 200 commercial and public/institutional buildings.

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County and State

The Architecture of A. Hays Town in  
Louisiana, 1939-1991

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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The Architecture of A. Hays Town in  
Louisiana, 1939-1991

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## Residential

Building Name	Address	City	State	Year Constructed	Current Status (if known and different from construction)
Ben Puckett Sr. House	3981 Dogwood Dr.	Jackson	MS	1977	
Bottrell House	850 Avondale	Jackson	MS	1940	
Bouligny House		Lafayette	LA	1982	
Buntin-Baskin House	145 Bayou Road	Greenville	MS	1976	
Burgess House		Baton Rouge	LA	1964	
Calvin Wells House	3520 Hawthorne Dr.	Jackson	MS	1939	
Campbell House	4325 Thomas Park	Beaumont	TX	1985	
Carmouche House		Lake Charles	LA	1961	
Carol Ann Smith House	5300 Beach Boulevard	Gulfport	MS	1985	
Chance House		Lafayette	LA	1961	
Chester R. Underwood House	807 Pinehurst Street	Jackson	MS	c. 1938	NR Listing - Belhaven Historic District
Collete House		Baton Rouge	LA	1978	
Daves House		Baton Rouge	LA	1974	
Devall House	2356 Oleander St.	Baton Rouge	LA	1954	
Devallier House		Eunice	LA	1978	
Durrett House		Baton Rouge	LA	1950	
Eastland House		Baton Rouge	LA	1940	
Elliott House		Brookhaven	MS	1983	
Felts House	3200 Rollins Street	Moss Point	MS	1977	
Freeman House		Baton Rouge	LA	1964	
Gianiloni House		Baton Rouge	LA	1941	
Governor's Mansion	316 Capitol Street, East	Jackson	MS	c. 1935	NHL - April 1975; Town "redecorated"
Graber House		Beaumont	TX	1969	
Greeson House					
Gugliamo House		Opelousas	LA	1986	
Hager House	1330 Audubon	Beaumont	TX	1976	
Hamilton House		Baton Rouge	LA	1974	
Handy House	533 Duncan Ave.	Natchez	MS	1964	
Heymann House		Lafayette	LA	1937	UL Lafayette Alumni Center
Hines House		New Orleans	LA	ca. 1999	
Hutchison House		Baton Rouge	LA	1988	
J. Kane Ditto House	3972 Stuart Place	Jackson	MS	1983	
J.R. Flint House	2777 Terry Road	Jackson	MS	c. 1947	
James Boyce House		Baton Rouge	LA	1956	
Jeffersonian Lampton House		Columbia	MS	1962	
Lambert House			LA	1981	
Landry House	319 Woodbluff Dr.	Lafayette	LA	1982	Poolhouse added later.
Lawton House		Sulphur	LA	1983	
Lee House		Baton Rouge	LA	1983	

Levi House				
McDade House		Lafayette	LA	1974
McMillian House		Jackson	MS	1983
Moore House	1611 East Lakeshore Dr.	Baton Rouge	LA	1939 This home was built for Mr. Moore, President of the Louisiana National I
Odom House	10249 Ellerbe Road	Shreveport	LA	1972
Ohmstede House		Baton Rouge	LA	1976
Owen House	18175 Owen Road	Prairieville	LA	ca. 1974
Putnam House		Abbeville	LA	1980
Rabalais House	1300 Steele Boulevard	Baton Rouge	LA	1955 Individually Listed - June 2010
Rackley House				1991
Richards House				
Rickey House		Lafayette	LA	1962
Schwartzenburg House		Baton Rouge	LA	1991
Sturgis House		Jackson	MS	1970
Svendson House		Baton Rouge	LA	1964
Thad Lampton House	1316 Church Street	Columbia	MS	1960
Town House	2211 Tulip St.	Baton Rouge	LA	1950s+
Vann House				
W. B. Taylor House	905 Belhaven Street	Jackson	MS	c. 1943 NR Listing - Belhaven Historic District
W. E. Walker House	3974 Dogwood Dr.	Jackson	MS	1980
Westerman House		Baton Rouge	LA	1978
Williams House		Jackson	MS	1989
	3721 Floyd Drive	Baton Rouge	LA	1977
	80506 LA 44	Convent	LA	c.1984
	1044 Manship Street	Jackson	MS	1939 NR Listing - Belhaven Historic District
Daly House	408 Beverly Drive	Lafayette	LA	ca. 1959
LeBlanc House	207 South Saint Valerie	Abbeville	LA	1926 The family confirmed that the 1926 renovation after a fire was designed b

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE Architecture of A. Hayes Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991 MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: LOUISIANA, Multiple Counties

DATE RECEIVED: 10/16/15

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16<sup>th</sup> DAY:

DATE OF 45<sup>th</sup> DAY: 12/01/15

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501253

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 11.23.2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Sets forth Reg. Requirements for work of A. Hayes Town;  
Focus on later "Townstyle" A Recognizable  
Vernacular Revival Dedicated to local, LA Vernacular  
& Folk Forms.  
Early Career reflects Modernist styles in Commercial  
& institutional Bldgs*

RECOM./CRITEREA Accept Cover

REVIEWER [Signature] DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N [initials]

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





RECEIVED 2280

OCT 16 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

JAY DARDENNE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**State of Louisiana**  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM  
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

CHARLES R. DAVIS  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

PHIL BOGGAN  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

October 16, 2015

TO: Mr. James Gabbert  
National Park Service 2280, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor; National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" Street, NW; Washington, DC 20005

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator  
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: The Architecture of A. Hays Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991, Multiple Property  
Submission, LA

Jim,

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the multiple property submission for "The Architecture of A. Hays Town in Louisiana, 1939-1991," to the National Register of Historic Places. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595 or [jrichardson@crt.la.gov](mailto:jrichardson@crt.la.gov).

Thanks,

Jessica

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places MPDF form
- CD with electronic images (tif format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- Other:

Comments:

- Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: