

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received FEB 7 1985
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Whittier Hall

and/or common Institute of Neurology and Psychiatry at Fairhope

2. Location

street & number 201 Magnolia Avenue NA not for publication

city, town Fairhope NA vicinity of Congressional District 1

state Alabama code 01 county Baldwin code 003

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Drs. James and Beverly Brylski

street & number 201 Magnolia Avenue

city, town Fairhope NA vicinity of state Alabama 36532

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baldwin County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Bay Minette state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Surrounded by ancient magnolia, tulip and pecan trees, Whittier Hall is a two-story frame of pine ship lap-siding. The house was built ca. 1905 by single tax colonists and is a good example of the New England coast summer home architecture popular during the early 20th century. The spacious wrap-around porch has a shed roof of composite shingles, Tuscan order colonnettes set on pedestals, and a wood balustrade with turned balusters. The main roof, which retains its original pressed tin shingles, has wide central cross gables and overhanging eaves trimmed with incised bargeboards. Each gable is accentuated by a round louvered vent.

The Eastlake-styled paneled front door seems to be original; fanlight and sidelights at back entry are almost certainly post 1910's, and are probably from the 1940's alteration. Three other entries exist, all varied in design, and the single sash windows run primarily in ranges of two's. The three original interior chimneys remain, although only one is functional as a fireplace.

The interior has been somewhat renovated to accommodate its present use, including the application of sheetrock throughout; however, the original pine baseboard and paneled wainscotting, bi-directional balustered stairs, and most of the wood flooring remain.

In the 1940's several additions and alterations were made, including the removal of the original wrap-around porch; however, beginning in 1977 these alterations were removed in order to reconstruct the porch and restore the general contours of the structure. Restoration also included the stripping of the exterior paint layers and the application of the original colors. Other additions include a brick and wrought iron fence, and the construction of a Colonial-styled garage adjacent to the house.

Situated on Single Tax leased land in what was once the center of the Single Tax community in Fairhope, the house currently serves as the residence and offices of the owners of the Institute of Neurology and Psychiatry of Fairhope.

8. Significance

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) recreation/entertainment |
| Specific dates | 1905 | Builder/Architect | unknown | |

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion A - commerce; recreation/entertainment

Whittier Hall is significant for its associations with the early 20th century commercial development of Fairhope, Alabama as a popular health and vacation resort. Located in Baldwin County on the crest of the highest hill on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, Fairhope is primarily known as the oldest and largest Single Tax colony in the country. The town's appeal as a cultural hub filled with people with progressive and diverse interests enhanced the natural wealth of opportunities for a wide range of recreational activities and excursions that have gained Fairhope and several other small municipalities in the surrounding area distinction as a well-known resort/tourist area. Situated still on Single Tax leased land, the house was restored in 1978 and survives as one of only two boarding facilities of the period in the city. Colonial Inn, a popular "bayfront" hotel, also survives but is unoccupied and in ruin.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Fairhope Courier; 1903-1925

Alyea, Paul A. and Blanche R. Fairhope, 1894-1954: The Story of a Single Tax Colony, 1956.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Daphne

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The South 214' of Lot 1 and the West 85 $\frac{1}{4}$ ' of the South 214' of Lot 2, Block 5, Division 1, Lands of Fairhope Single Tax Corporation.

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

state NA code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shirley Qualls, Historic Resource Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission

date September 10, 1984

street & number 725 Monroe Street

telephone 205 261-3184

city or town Montgomery

state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date January 29, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 3-7-85


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Whittier Hall

In 1894 at the peak of a period characterized by widespread economic depression and financial panics, a small group of people met on a bleak stretch of bay shore near Mobile, AL to establish and conduct a "model community or colony, free from all forms of private monopoly." This group, initially known as the Fairhope Industrial Association evolved into the first single tax colony in this country and founded Fairhope, Alabama in hope of making a practical test of the doctrines of 19th century American social reformer, Henry George (1839-1897). George, the originator of the "single tax" principle believed land to be a free gift of nature, and that all men should have an equal right to its use. Accordingly, the Fairhope colonists hoped that their demonstration of the efficacies of the single tax theory would help cure the social and economic evils they had fallen victim to by promoting economic progress with justice in the distribution of income and wealth.

Confronted with a number of disadvantages, including inadequate financing and control over largely sub-marginal land, the colony needed a sound economic basis for its existence. Repeated efforts to establish an agricultural-based economy met with little success. Moreover, prevailing wages along the eastern shoreline section of Baldwin County were extremely low, and prospective colonists were warned not to seek homestead at Fairhope unless they possessed an unusual skill or had a competence which could sustain them for an indefinite period.

The eastern shore of Baldwin County has been noted as a major recreation/resort area in the state since the latter portion of the 19th century. It is one of only two counties in Alabama that touch salt water. Mobile County is the other. Although the western half of Baldwin County is a prosperous truck farming area, the favorable climatic conditions and opportunities for good hunting, fishing and camping are most favorable along the shore.

By the turn of the century, the Fairhope Courier began an intensive campaign to attract prospective colonists and tourists to the area. Wisely reserving the most beautiful bayfront for parks and public beach facilities, the colony management soon saw the advantages of the area as a health and summer vacation resort. It also became clear that tourism may very well suffice as a primary economic base for the town and colony.

In 1901 Fairhope had only one hotel (The Fairhope House). The success of The Fairhope House and the town's long awaited access to steamboat transportation to Mobile (The Fairhope, 1901) became important, positive economic factors that encouraged many to invest in the establishment and construction of furnished cottages, hotels and boarding houses in Fairhope. By 1905, when Whittier Hall was constructed for summer boarders, the Fairhope community, according to the Courier, led all the towns on the bay in boarding conveniences. Yet, in 1907, at the time of Fairhope's incorporation, only three hotels were listed in the Courier's assessment of commercial and community facilities on colony leaseholds. Seemingly, boarding houses and cottages constituted the bulk of the boarding conveniences the Courier had reference to.

After several successful summer seasons, Fairhoppers began analyzing the advantages of the area's mild winters as a relief to northerners. Up to the turn of the century, only the Grand Hotel at Point Clear offered winter accommodations. The Whittiers of Whittier Hall did not join the winter season plan until 1911 hoping to attract winter-worn northerners. Advertisements in the Courier stated that

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Whittier Hall

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"Whittier Hall is now open for winter boarders. The house is new, has magnificent verandas, fine grounds and cement walks...lovely view of Mobile Bay...bathrooms with hot and cold water, and lovely, airy well-furnished rooms."

Later newspaper accounts reveal that Professor A. N. Whittier and his wife, both members of the Single Tax Association, often hosted stimulating "intellectual lectures" on topics such as gardening and single tax theory, and socials for fellow colonists. In the mid-teens and early 1920s, Whittier Hall's popularity seemingly peaked as it became a feature construction of the Courier's tourists promotion brochures.

In the late 1940s, several additions were made to Whittier Hall unfortunately causing the elimination of the original wrap-around porch; however, in 1978 restoration of the building was completed, including the reconstruction of the porch. The building is now a residence and Neurology and Psychiatry Institute. It survives as one of only two boarding (hotels or boarding houses) facilities of the period. The Colonial Inn, a popular hotel of the early twentieth century, survives but is reported to be in a deplorable state of decay.

SUMMIT
STREET

MAGNOLIA

AVENUE

Purchaser:
J.R. & B.M. Brylski

Iron Pipe Found

Concrete Block Found

Iron Pipe Found
2.2' N of Fence Corner

Concrete Block Found

Iron Pipe Found

75'

85.25'

214' (Rec)

214' (Rec)

160.25' (Rec)

160.25' (Rec)

33'

33'

33'

33'

Survey Of
the South 214' of Lot 1,
and the West 85 1/4' of
the South 214' of Lot 2,
Block 5, Division 1, Lands of
Fairhope Single Tax Corp.

at the request of

Faye L'Orange, Helen T.
Barkstale and Mike Ford

Dated October 10, 1978



SCALE: 1"=40'

| | | | |
|--|---------------|----------|----------|
| FAIRHOPE TITLE & SURVEY CO., INC. | | | |
| 100 NORTH BANCROFT STREET | | | |
| FAIRHOPE | | 928-8140 | |
| | | ALABAMA | |
| <i>Claude W. Orullo</i> | | | |
| C.E. & L.S. ALABAMA REG. NO. 1276 | | | |
| DATE | NOTE LOCATION | DRAWN BY | FILE NO. |
| 10/10/78 | LL 1 PG | J FLAGG | |