

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Other: pottery & gallery

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Other: pottery & gallery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century (#4 & 6)

No Style (other buildings)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls wood

earth (#7)

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Shearwater Historic District occupies a site which is bounded on the north by Shearwater Drive, on the west by the Inner Harbor, and on the south by the Bay of Biloxi. The district is heavily wooded, primarily in pines with very dense undergrowth. A small area of marshland extends along the Inner Harbor shore. A tightly curving private road leads southward from Shearwater Drive through the district.

Of the ten buildings which constitute the district, six have been determined to contribute to it, four of these having pivotal significance. The four remaining elements have been judged to be non-contributing. Three of the buildings (Inventory nos. 4, 6, and 10) date from the nineteenth century Tiffen estate. The others were all built under the ownership of the Anderson family. Eight of the buildings originally served as residences or were altered to residential use by the Andersons. The Shearwater Workshop Pottery and the Shearwater Gallery (Inventory nos. 1 and 5) are the only non-residential elements. With only one exception (Inventory no. 7) all of the buildings are of wood frame construction and of vernacular design with few stylistic pretensions.

- P - Pivotal buildings qualify for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by reasons of individual architectural and/or historical significance.
- C - Contributing buildings are essential to the district's sense of place and sustain the architectural and historical significance of the district.
- NC - Non-contributing buildings do not contribute to the historical character of the district, but, because they are compatible to the contributing historic buildings in scale, mass, materials, and setting, they do not detract from the visual cohesiveness of the district. Non-contributing buildings include those residences that were constructed after the period of significance and are compatible in scale, mass, material, and setting--if not in detail.

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INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

1. Shearwater Pottery. Informal grouping of one story, gable-roofed, board-and-batten buildings raised on brick piers. Ca. 1930. (P)

Built by Walter Anderson's older brother Peter Anderson in 1927, Shearwater Pottery was the income source for Walter Anderson's artwork. He designed and produced figurines, called "widgets," and decorated pottery.
2. William W. Anderson House. One story, brick-veneered, wood frame building. Ca. 1965. (NC)
3. Agnes B. Anderson House. One story, wood frame house with cedar siding. Ca. 1978. (NC)
4. Walter I. Anderson Cottage. One story, wood frame house, raised on brick piers with a gable roof. Glazed sliding doors. Walter Anderson murals fill the walls of one room. Built as servants' quarters for Tiffen estate. Vernacular Greek Revival. Ca. 1850. (P)

In 1933, when Anderson married Agnes Grindstead, he moved to the Cottage. He remodelled the building extensively, including built-in furniture and shelving of his own design. He lived here until 1940, although much of this time was spent in mental hospitals. His murals in the Old Ocean Springs High School date from this era. He later returned to live here (1947-65) during his Horn Island Period.

Anderson's daughter Mary Anderson Pickard believes that the mural dates from 1951-53, following his murals in the Community Center. It may have been in frustration at not having completed the Community Center mural that he began a mural of his own in a small room of the cottage where he lthen lived. "Creation at Sunrise" covers the walls and ceiling of the "little room," illustrating the 104th Psalm (Mary Anderson Pickard). Even the door knob, mantel, and masonry wall are decorated. Walter Anderson worked on this room secretly and kept it padlocked from everyone, including his family. It was not discovered until

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after his death in 1965.

Stylistically derived from the Community Center Murals, the cottage mural was executed in Anderson's "Horn Island" period. The mural, divided into the four stages of the day, presents an environment where the figures, human or animal, are camouflaged by the environment, and not any more in focus than the surroundings. Although unfinished, this mural is his most intensely personal and intensely painted mural. It has been compared to an ornate funerary chamber of an ancient tomb (Mary Anderson Pickard).

5. Shearwater Pottery Gallery. One story, wood frame, gable-roofed, board-and-batten building with a T-shaped plan. Partially glazed double doors. Horizontally-sliding windows. Ca. 1930. (C)

Also built by Peter Anderson, the gallery was the exhibit area for the family's work. Walter Anderson's public art was sold here: the pottery, woodblocks on fabric and wallpaper, and his figurines. Walter Anderson felt that his public art, which he sold very reasonably, was the artist's duty to the public, and that the income derived from this public art could then be used to pursue the artist's own private art. The building is still in use as the gallery for Shearwater Pottery.

6. "Fairhaven" (Tiffen House or Front House). One-and-one-half story, side gabled, wood frame house on brick piers. Shed-roofed full-width gallery across south facade. Gable dormers. Imbricated shingles on flanks of the gallery roof. Greek Revival Vernacular. Ca. 1850. (P)

In his early period Walter Anderson lived with his parents in this house (1923-29). He was away at school much of the time. Fairhaven is important as the main house of the Shearwater Complex and because it contains a mural executed by Walter Anderson in 1960. Locally significant as the circa 1850 Greek Revival main house to the Tiffen Place.

Executed in 1960 as a commission for his brother Peter Anderson, the mural, a canvas panel on a wood frame, is built into the ceiling of the dining room at Fairhaven, and was designed to keep out drafts. A highly decorative descriptive style is used to render the islands of the Mississippi Sound, in the manner of

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antique hand painted maps, including decorative titles and notes of soundings, etc.

7. James McConnel "Mac" Anderson House. One story, hip roofed building of rammed earth construction; offcenter entrance sheltered by a porch. Ca. 1937. (C)
8. One story prefabricated frame house. Ca. 1970. (NC)
9. Mary Anderson Pickard House. Three story frame house. Ca. 1981. (NC)
10. Barn. Frame, two story, gable front building with shed-roofed aisles. Central entrance. Altered for use as a residence for the Walter I. Anderson family. Ca. 1870. (P)

After studying in Europe, Walter Anderson returned to Ocean Springs, where he worked in the family Pottery. He lived on the second floor of the Barn until his marriage in 1933.

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS: 6 Buildings
TOTAL NONCONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS: 4 Buildings

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Art

Period of Significance
1924 - 1965

Significant Dates
1924 - 1965

Architectural (local significance
only, #4, 6, & 10)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Anderson, Walter Inglis (1903-1965)
Other members of Anderson family (State/
local significance)

Anderson, James M. (#7)
Anderson, Peter (#1, #5)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Shearwater Historic District derives major significance from its association with the life and work of nationally-noted artist Walter Inglis Anderson (see cover nomination for Walter Anderson Thematic Resources).

The Shearwater Historic District is significant in the history of American art as the home and atelier of a renowned family of multi-faceted artists which established and continues to operate the famous "Shearwater Pottery." Three of the buildings are architecturally significant in the context of Ocean Springs history because they constitute the most complete mid-nineteenth century waterfront estate now extant in the city (Inventory nos. 4, 6, and 10).

Formerly the Tiffen estate, the twenty-five-acre property fronting on the Bay of Biloxi was purchased in 1924 by Annette McConnell Anderson of New Orleans. Mrs. Anderson, an accomplished painter and sculptress, acquired the property as a summer retreat for her family where she could pursue her artistic interest. The estate later became the permanent home of Mrs. Anderson, her husband George Walter Anderson, and their three sons, Peter, Walter Inglis and James McConnell ("Mac").

Peter Anderson (1901-1984) attended the Newman School in New Orleans, an institution specializing in manual arts training. His first lesson at the potter's wheel was in 1924. Following an unsuccessful first attempt to establish a pottery in Ocean Springs he received additional training in ceramics at the Conestoga Pottery in Pennsylvania and at the New York State School of Ceramics between 1924 and 1928. He returned to Ocean Springs and founded the Shearwater Pottery in 1928. Peter erected the kiln, workshops, and showroom in addition to throwing the pots and developing the glazes. Famed for his great sensitivity for form and line, Peter potted for fifty-five years and was acknowledged as American's oldest working master potter in 1983. He remained involved in the pottery's operation during his final illness, being present in the workshop every working day. (No author cited. "Founder of Shearwater Pottery Dies." Ocean Springs (Miss.) Record, Dec. 27, 1984.)

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Walter Inglis Anderson (1903-1965) was educated at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the Parsons School of Fine and Applied Arts, and the Fountainebleau School in Paris. Upon joining Peter at work at the pottery, Walter Anderson produced finely carved glazed decorative work including a series of small figurines he called "widgets." He was torn between participating in the family business and developing his own art and was once heard to protest "I am a painter. Why do I have to make silly figures in clay? I am a painter. I must paint" (Agnes Grinstead Anderson. "Walter Anderson: The Man, the Artist." The Southern Quarterly 24:179-180). Walter did, indeed, become known posthumously as one of the greatest Southern painters of the twentieth century.

The last eighteen years of Anderson's life were, artistically, his most productive. During this period, the increasingly reclusive artist lived alone in the small servants' cottage in the family compound and made frequent solitary trips to Horn Island, an uninhabited barrier island twelve miles off the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Although some of his works embraced historical or fairy tale themes, Walter Anderson is best known for his drawings and watercolors of Gulf Coast animal life and vegetation. He believed that his art represented only a part of his interaction with the natural world. His vibrantly colored, intensely personal interpretations of the life on Horn Island reflect his nearly total immersion into, and unity with, its harshly beautiful environment.

James McConnell ("Mac") Anderson (b. 1907) studied architecture at Tulane University before rejoining the family in Ocean Springs in 1929. A painter in oils and watercolors and woodcarver and furniture maker, Mac is known for his finely carved vases, reticulated bowls and slip-glazed wares. Mac also erected one of the structurally more interesting buildings in the district. His adobe house was built in 1937 of mud from which the vegetable matter had been removed. Tamped into molds, the mud was laid up in eighteen inch thick walls. The building required two months to build and dry and has remained structurally sound.

Succeeding generations of Andersons are maintaining the family tradition of art and artisanship at the Shearwater Pottery. They utilize the same tools and methods that were developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Although additional family homes have been erected within the twenty-five acre district, they are of a similar scale to the early buildings and are so situated in the dense foliage that they do not significantly intrude on the integrity of the district.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 25 acres

UTM References

A	<u>1, 6</u>	<u>3 2, 5 0, 9, 0</u>	<u>3 3 6 4 8 8 0</u>	B	<u>1, 6</u>	<u>3 2, 5 2 3 0</u>	<u>3, 3 6, 4 7, 6, 0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1, 6</u>	<u>3 2, 4 9, 4, 0</u>	<u>3 3 6 4 4 6 0</u>	D	<u>1, 6</u>	<u>3 2, 4 8 6 0</u>	<u>3, 3 6, 4 5, 7, 0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Shearwater Historic District conform to those of Lots 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G, 1H, 1J, 1K, 1L, 1M, 1N, 1P, 1R, 1S, 1T, of Block 183, page 11 of the City of Ocean Springs Map adopted by the Board of Aldermen, 1983..

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Boundary Justification

These lots constitute the original 25 acre property purchased by Annette McConnell Anderson which has been divided among Anderson descendants.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon (from old-format draft compiled by Brian N. Berggren, May 1986)
 organization Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History date Feb. 17, 1989
 street & number P. O. Box 571 telephone (601) 354-7326
 city or town Jackson state Mississippi zip code 39205

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9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anderson, Agnes Grinstead. "Walter Anderson: The Man, the Artist." The Southern Quarterly 24:170-194.

Donaldson, Susan V. "Forsaking the Certainty of Shore: Walter Anderson and the Loneliness of Horn Island." The Southern Quarterly 24:151-169.

Harvey, Nedra. "Shearwater, Fifty Years of Imaginative Pottery." Down South on the Beautiful Gulf Coast vol. 28 no. 4:3-4,8.

McDavid, O. C. "J. M. Anderson Paintings, LaFont Goodwill; Many Others." Clarion-Ledger Feb. 13, 1972.

McIntire, Carl. "Shearwater Legacy at Old Capital Museum." Clarion-Ledger April 15, 1979.

Smalhorst, Lynda. "The Old Earth House Stands Solid Against Coastal Winds." Clarion-Ledger April 24, 1979.

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Section number Photos Page 1

Photograph Identification

The following information is applicable to the 5 X 7 photographs (Photos 1-8)

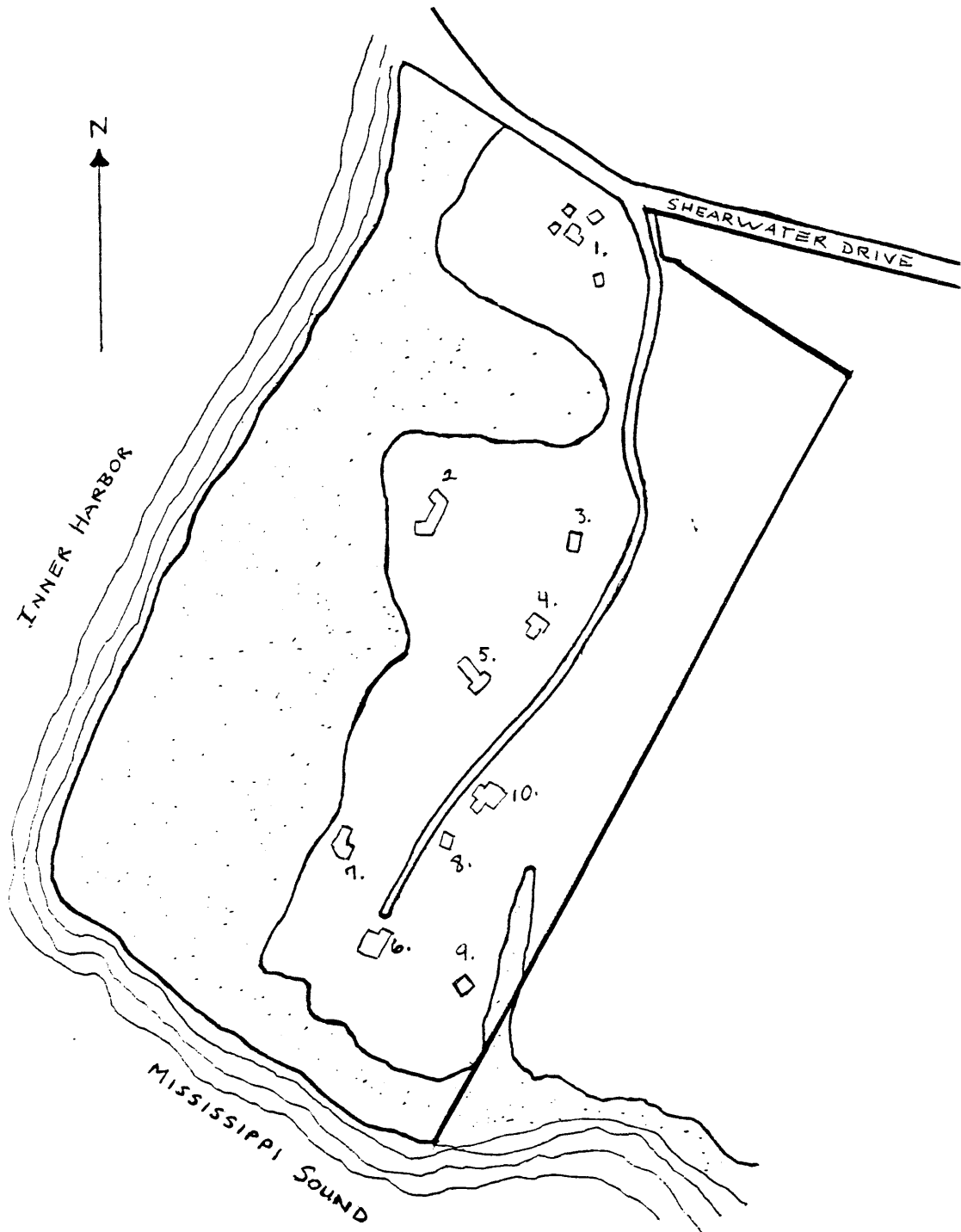
- 1) Property: Shearwater Historic District
- 2) Location: Ocean Springs, Jackson County, Mississippi
- 3) Photographer: Brian Berggren
- 4) Photo date: October 1986
- 5) Negatives at: Mississippi Department of Archives and History

The following information is applicable to the 8 X 10 photographs (Photos 9-13)

- 1) Property: Shearwater Historic District
- 2) Location: Ocean Springs, Jackson County, Mississippi
- 3) Photographer: Susan Duckworth
- 4) Photo date: June/July 1985
- 5) Negatives at: Mississippi Department of Archives and History

The photographs are identified as follows:

- Photo 1: Workshop Complex (Inv. No. 1), view to south
- Photo 2: Walter Anderson Cottage (Inv. No. 4), view to northeast
- Photo 3: Shearwater Showroom (Inv. No. 5), view to northwest
- Photo 4: "Fairhaven" (Tiffen House) (Inv. No. 6), oblique view to north
- Photo 5: "Fairhaven" (Tiffen House), oblique view to east
- Photo 6: Rear of "Fairhaven," oblique view to south
- Photo 7: James McConnell Anderson House (Inv. No. 7), view to southeast
- Photo 8: The Barn (Inv. No. 10), oblique view to south
- Photo 9: Shearwater Pottery Workshop (Inv. No. 1), view to southwest
- Photo 10: Mural in Walter Anderson Cottage (Inv. No. 4), view toward north wall
- Photo 11: Interior of Shearwater Gallery/Showroom (Inv. No. 5)
- Photo 12: "Horn Island" Panel of Mural in "Fairhaven" (Inv. No. 6)
- Photo 13: "Round Island" Panel of Mural in "Fairhaven" (Inv. No. 6)



0 50' 100' 200'

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