

PH0664359

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 7 1978  
DATE ENTERED SEP 6 1978

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Myrtles Plantation

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

St. Francisville

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6th 8

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

COUNTY

West Feliciana Parish 125

CODE

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

### PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Steven Saunders

STREET & NUMBER

4065 Florida Boulevard

CITY, TOWN

Baton Rouge

VICINITY OF

STATE

Louisiana

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

West Feliciana Parish Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

St. Francisville

STATE

Louisiana

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Myrtles Plantation is a gracious 1½ story country house with a rear, detached kitchen, set in an opulently landscaped garden.

The boundaries of the nominated area were chosen to encompass the house and ten acres of landscaped grounds. Although the house originally controlled a considerably larger acreage, the garden is now surrounded by commercial properties and the area no longer conveys the sense of a great plantation.

The house itself is a broad, low, rambling frame mansion with a clapboard exterior. The main (east) frontal gallery is 107 feet long and the main facade is composed of ten irregular bays. The present house was built in two halves. The first half, which was built in 1796, forms the western six bays of the main facade. This part consists of four large rooms, two at the front (the ladies' and the gentlemen's parlors) and two at the rear (the dining room and the gaming room.) The present sizes and generous proportions of these rooms are largely the result of a mid-19th century renovation. At that time, walls were moved, the Adam's Cypress mantles were moved upstairs, and the present elaborate detailing was installed. Also at that time, the house received a southward extension which almost doubled its size. The extension included a 16 feet wide entrance and stair hall, which ran from the front to the rear of the house, three chambers, and the present cast iron supported galleries. The old pitched roofline was extended to encompass the new addition, and the old dormer pattern (a wide, two window, pedimented dormer flanked by single dormers) was continued over the addition. This created the present dormer pattern of two large pedimented dormers with three interspersed smaller ones.

The addition has a ceiling height of 13'6" which is one foot higher than the original house. However, a common roofline was maintained in the two halves by raising the floor in the second story of the addition by one foot.

The exterior detailing is worthy of note. The entire house is encompassed by a heavy entablature which dates from the 1850's renovation. It presents open galleries on all facades with cast iron supports in the front and sides, and wooden posts in the rear of the house. The cast iron supports are rich and elaborate with scrolled vine and grape patterns. Most of the windows reach to the floor and have ear molded frames with louvered shutters. The front door has a similar design with transom and side lights. The roof is particularly handsome with the large dormers articulated in full temple fronts with four Tuscan pilasters. The small dormers are decorated with framing and corner blocks.

Perhaps the most important feature of the house is its interior detailing. Most of the ground floor rooms have fine marble, arched mantles in the Rococo revival style, with central console keystones or cartouches. Most of the rooms have plaster ceiling medallions, no two of which are the same. Several are based upon the acanthus motif, but the most unusual one occurs in the gentlemen's parlor. This medallion, which is formed of fruits, cusps, crockets, and stylized

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foils, may best be described as Rococo-Gothic. The medallion in the large frontal chamber has an elaborate interlacing of fruits, carved heads, and acanthus leaves. All of the ceiling medallions in the house are of characteristic fineness and delicacy and depict an extraordinary naturalism in the fruit, leaf, and foliage motifs.

The entrance and stair hall, the ladies' and gentlemen's parlors, and the dining room have elaborately pierced and carved plaster cornices, with the delicacy of lace work. Most of these are executed in flower or vine and grape designs.

All of the flooring and most of the windows in the house are original. The rear frame kitchen dates from the late 18th century. Most of the glass, clapboarding, shutters and doors are original.

The house and kitchen dependency are set on ground which was terraced in 1850. To the rear of the house is a pond. There are several alleys of live oaks in front, and a cistern on either side of the house. The garden also contains five carved stone statues of cherubs, symbolizing the five senses.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY    | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899            | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES 1797

BUILDER/ARCHITECT General David Bradford

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Myrtles Plantation is an outstanding example of the expanded raised cottage form which characterized many Louisiana plantation houses by the mid-19th century. This can be seen in its size (with a 107 feet frontal gallery) and in its handsome detailing, both inside and out. The Myrtles is particularly notable for its unusually fine carved plaster cornices and ceiling medallions.

The Myrtles is also noteworthy as the home of General David Bradford, a wealthy judge and businessman from Washington County, Pennsylvania and a leader in the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794. The plantation which was later named "the Myrtles" was built in 1797. With the collapse of the Whiskey Rebellion, Bradford was forced to flee from the Federal Army. In 1796, he arrived by boat at Bayou Sara. The following year he obtained a Spanish land grant of roughly 650 acres by authority of Baron de Carondelet. (Bradford's original application for a land grant in Louisiana was made in 1792.) Evidently, Bradford had been interested in the area several years before the Whiskey Rebellion forced him to flee. He had been to St. Francisville before, and he had been involved in the Whiskey trade in the New Orleans area.

Bradford named his plantation "Richland." He held the property until his death in 1808, when it passed to his widow. In 1826 she sold "Richland" to the family's son-in-law, Clark Woodruff. Like his father-in-law, Woodruff was also a lawyer. He rose to some prominence, and was a friend to many of the powerful of his time. For example, he spent his honeymoon at the Hermitage as a guest of Andrew Jackson.

Shortly after Woodruff bought "Richland", his wife died, and in 1834 he sold the property to Ruffin G. Stirling. The Stirlings were a wealthy family of the first rank in the Louisiana area. They owned several great plantations, as well as a townhouse in Natchez. It was Ruffingray Stirling who renamed "Richland" "The Myrtles", and it was he who made the many renovations in the house which have been described previously.

In 1854, Stirling died and The Myrtles passed to his son, Steven Cobb Stirling. It remained in the Stirling family until 1894, after which it passed through a succession of owners.

The house was not substantially altered, but as the 20th century progressed, it fell into disrepair. In 1975, the present owners purchased The Myrtles and undertook a total restoration which was recently completed.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Application for Spanish Land Grant, Madrid, 1792, in David Bradford's name.
2. Certificate granting land, Bradford Collection, L.S.U. Archives.
3. David Bradford's will dated 1808 West Feliciana Courthouse.
4. Title Search - West Feliciana Courthouse.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY ten acres

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES			QUADRANGLE SCALE		
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
DA 15	654130	3408820	AA 15	654350	3408880
B 15	654410	3408640	C 15	654160	3408600
E			F		
G			H		

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

Begin at the intersection of Route 61 and the driveway; proceed south along Route 61 approximately 100 ft, thence at a right angle due west approximately 1000 ft., thence at a right angle due north approximately 900 ft., thence at

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jonathan Fricker

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

February 15, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Old State Capitol

TELEPHONE

389-5086

CITY OR TOWN

Baton Rouge

STATE

Louisiana

# 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

*Andrea Thompson*

TITLE Secretary, Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism (SHPO)

DATE 2/16/78

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *Charles [Signature]*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

9/6/78

DATE

8-5-78

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a right angle due east approximately 600 feet, thence due south along Route 61 to the driveway.