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NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 8-86)

NATIONAL REGISTER

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property:

historic name: Upper Oakhurst Historic District

other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_ na \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Location: Bluefield, West Virginia

street & number: Along Oakhurst<sup>Av.</sup>, Groveland<sup>Rd.</sup>, Edgewood<sup>Rd.</sup> and Mountain View.<sup>Rd.</sup>

not for publication: na\_

city/town: Bluefield

vicinity: na

state: WV

county: Mercer

Code: 55

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
37	9	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>37</u>	<u>9</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: na\_

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of South Bluefield, West Virginia.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

William C. Lanier Signature of certifying official 6/1/92 Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register William C. Lanier 7/29/92  
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
- See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

=====

6. Function or Use

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Historic: Domestic

Sub: Single dwelling

Current : Domestic

Sub: Single dwelling

=====

7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Neo Classical

Tudor Revival

Bungalow

Other Description: na

Materials: foundation brick; block; stone roof slate; metal;  
tile; asbestos; asphalt  
walls brick; stone; wood other na

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : na

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
Community Planning and Development  
Commerce

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1920 to 1941

Significant Dates : 1925 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s): na

Cultural Affiliation: na

Architect/Builder: Architect - Alex B. Mahood  
Architects - M.J. Garry & R.A. Sheffey  
Builder - E.S. Pedigo

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

na preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

na previously listed in the National Register

na previously determined eligible by the National Register

na designated a National Historic Landmark

na recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

na recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office

- Other state agency

- Federal agency

X Local government

- University

- Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 21.25 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A 17. 481700. 4124070. B 17. 481960. 4123700.

C 17. 481740. 4123580. D 17. 481530. 4123860.

-na See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_na See continuation sheet.  
See attached sketch map for site numbers etc. Beginning at the north west corner of the property lines of site no. M270; thence running east with the property lines of M22,21,20 to the north east corner of site M20, approximately 1000 feet; thence south along the property lines of M24,M28,M32 to the south east corner of site M32 approximately 800 feet; thence west to the intersection of Mountain View Road approximately 200 feet; thence south along the right of way to the intersection of Heatherwood and Mountain View approximately 300 feet; thence west along the north edge of Heatherwood to the intersection of Edgewood and the south west corner of site M62 approximately 1400 feet; thence north along the west property line of sites M62 and M17 to Oakhurst Ave. approximately 600 feet; thence west along the south side of Oakhurst Ave. to the intersection with the west property line of site M270 approximately 200 feet; thence north to the point of origin approximately 200 feet.

Boundary Justification: \_na See continuation sheet.  
The boundaries encompass the major architectural and historic significant sites identified. On the north, the natural terrain of the area rises to a hillside, and there are no additional residences. On the east the same is true, though there is some residential development, it is all later, post 1950 non-significant. On the south, the southern properties on Heatherwood comprise a large open area that was once a park and more recent ca. 1950 development. The same is true to the west of the western boundary.

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

Name/Title: Michael Gioulis  
Organization: N/A Date: \_\_\_Dec. 1, 1991\_\_\_  
Street & Number: 612 Main Street Telephone: (304) 765-5716  
City or Town: Sutton State: WV ZIP: 26601

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Section number 7 (Upper Oakhurst Historic District) Page # 1  
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The Upper Oakhurst Historic District is located in the north east corner of the city of Bluefield. It is a relatively small historic district centered around the intersection of Oakhurst, Edgewood, Groveland, and Mountain View Avenues. They all converge in this vicinity with a landscaped island as the focal point. The area is very residential in character with larger single family residences on large lots. There is a lot of front, rear, and side yard area on all of the properties. The smaller properties, along Heatherwood, are more uniform in style and configuration, in a more suburban atmosphere. The larger ones, on Groveland and Edgewood are almost palatial with large wooded lots and expanses of lawn.

The district is adjacent to the major development of the South Bluefield section of the city and subsequently subject to many of the same influences. The area developed slightly before the South Bluefield area proper. The earlier sites in the district are the Fox house and the Cooper House.

The residences in the district represent most of the revival styles of the period with many in the Colonial Revival Style and the Neo Classical Style.

Alex Mahood is well represented in this neighborhood. His commissions include:

- 618 Mountain View, M218
- 625 Mountain View, M22
- 909 Groveland, M21
- 915 Groveland, M20
- 908 Groveland, M23
- 909 Edgewood, M24
- 908 Edgewood, M28
- 800 Edgewood, M46

The majority of his work is in the traditional and revival style of architecture that he usually employed. A particularly interesting example is the residence at 908 Edgewood, (M28). It was constructed in 1925 for Russell S. Ritz, noted attorney and City Attorney in 1923. It is a grand Neo Classical Revival building with a huge pedimented entrance portico with swag and garland

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details in the tympanum. There are narrow dormers in the front elevation and a single story side wing with mostly glazed walls. 205 Oakhurst is another of Mahood's Neo Classical- Style residences. It contains a large flat- roofed portico with a wide entablature supported by Doric columns. Another major commission of Mahood's is the Thomas H. Cooper house at 909 Edgewood. This is a Tudor Revival with interesting details and variations on the theme. The facade material is one of the interesting aspects of the house. There are projecting bricks of coal refuse in the facade, referring to the source of Cooper's wealth. The house is reported to be a copy of an edifice in Britain that Thomas Cooper built for his wife to entice her to Bluefield.

Another prominent architectural firm in the Bluefield vicinity was the firm of M.J. Garry and R.A. Sheffey. This firm is identified predominantly in the 1923 article on Bluefield as being associated with a number of residential commissions in the vicinity. Their work identified in this district includes:

615 Oakhurst (M62) a Tudor Revival residence with rubble stone siding.

In addition to the sites mentioned above another notable site is M47, an interesting Tudor Revival house with brick facade. M50, a good example of a Bungalow Style house with a large roof overhang with paired brackets and a front porch with battered brick posts is also architecturally significant. It has a side porch addition in a Colonial Revival style. An interesting aspect of the district is the row of similar massing and style houses on Heatherwood, M51 to M55. These are all two-story single family houses in either a Colonial Revival or modified Four Square Style. They are all modest in size and embellishment with similar setbacks and lot placement.

In all there is a fair amount of cohesiveness in the district. The few intrusions are single family houses from a more recent construction period, ca. 1960.

There are a total of 46 structures in the district. 37 contribute to the district; 9 are non-contributing. A list follows:

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- M20) 915 Groveland - Two story, stucco, Tudor Revival. 1925. Criteria A/C. Contributing.
- M21) 909 Groveland - Two story, painted brick, Four Square. 1926. Criteria A/C. Contributing.
- M22) 625 Mountain View - Two story, red brick, Colonial Revival. 1922. Criteria A/C. Contributing.
- M23) 908 Groveland - Non-contributing. Garage, non-contributing.
- M24) 909 Edgewood - Two story, red brick with crenelated entrance. Tudor Revival. 1925. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M28) 908 Edgewood - Large, two story, brick, Neo Classical. 1925. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M29) 2112 Mountain View - One and one half story, side gable. Criteria A. ca. 1935 Contributing.
- M30) 2116 Mountain View - Highly modified. Non-contributing.
- M31) 2120 Mountain View - Non-contributing.
- M32) 2111 Mountain View - One and one half story, brick/stucco, Colonial Revival. ca. 1935. Criteria A. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M46) 804 Edgewood - Two story, brick, Georgian Revival. 1941. Criteria A. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M47) 800 Edgewood - One and one half story, brick, Tudor Revival. ca. 1940. Criteria A. Contributing.
- M48) 718 Edgewood - Modern. Non-contributing.
- M49) 714 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Mediterranean Revival. ca. 1937. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M50) 700 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Bungalow. ca. 1928. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M51) 723 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Vernacular/Bungalow. ca. 1929. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M52) 725 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Colonial Revival. ca. 1935. Criteria A/C. Contributing.
- M53) 727 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Mediterranean Revival. 1929. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M54) 801 Heatherwood - Two story, brick veneer, Colonial Revival. 1937. Criteria A. Contributing. Garage, contributing.
- M55) 815 Heatherwood - Two story, painted brick, Mediterranean



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Revival.1937. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage and pool house, contributing.

M56) 819 Heatherwood - Modern. Non-contributing.

M62) 615 Oakhurst - Two story, fieldstone, Tudor Revival.1928. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Two garages and a shed, contributing.

M63) 701 Edgewood - Modern. Non-contributing.

M64) 711 Edgewood - Modern. Non-contributing.

M65) 721 Edgewood - Modern. Non-contributing.

M217) 614 Mountain View - Two story, stucco, Tudor Revival.ca. 1939. Criteria A. Contributing.

M218) 618 Mountain View - Two story, red brick, Neo Classical. 1928. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.

M219) 805 Groveland - One and one half story, brick/siding, Colonial Revival.ca. 1930. Criteria A. Contributing.

M220) 611 Mountain View - Two story, red brick, Georgian Revival.ca. 1925. Criteria A/C. Contributing. Garage, contributing.

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The Upper Oakhurst Historic District is significant under Criterion C for its association with major architectural styles of the early 20th Century, namely the Neo Classical and Colonial Revival Styles. The area is also significant under Criterion C for its association with noted West Virginia architect Alex Mahood, who designed many of the structures in the district. The district is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of the area and Bluefield itself. It reflects the 1920 era boom in Bluefield's economy through its representation of a major wealthy residential neighborhood and its association with the coal wealth of the area in the boom period.

The resources in the district are significant as representatives of major architectural styles of the time. These are mainly the Colonial Revival, Neo Classical Revival and Tudor Revival. The Cooper House M24, is a good example of Tudor Revival architecture with the steeply pitched varied massing roofs and rusticated brick siding. The Bungalow Style is well represented by number M50, 700 Edgewood.

One of the finest houses in the district and all of Bluefield is the Russell Ritz House, M28, 908 Edgewood. This is a fine example of the Neo Classical Style. Other architectural styles of the period are represented in the district such as the more modest Colonial Revival of 804 Edgewood, M46, also a Mahood house. The smaller Colonial Revival and Bungalow Styles on Heatherwood also are significant interpretations of those styles of the period. Also associated with the district is the architectural firm of M.J. Garry and R.A. Scheffey. This firm is identified predominantly in a 1923 newspaper article on Bluefield as being associated with a number of residential commissions in the vicinity. Most of the structures represented in the South Bluefield area are of the Colonial Revival Style.

Also associated with this district is the work of Alex Mahood. Alex B. Mahood, architect, contributed immensely to Bluefield's development. Mr. Mahood was a noted West Virginia architect and his commissions ranged throughout West Virginia and the surrounding states. He designed many of the public and private structures in the city and his list of commissions is staggering. He

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was born in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1888 and studied at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris. This is where many of the turn-of-the-century American architects learned of the Renaissance Revival and Classical Revival styles prevalent in Europe at the time. Charles F. McKim of McKim Mead and White in Chicago, is perhaps the most famous of the American architects who brought home the European styles, but many others contributed to the proliferation. Mahood is representative of this group. The presence of a professional of this caliber, concentrating his talents in Bluefield and southern West Virginia, is amazing. His influence is seen in many contemporary buildings throughout the state. His prowess is evident on the designs and details of his commissions.

Mahood came to Bluefield in 1912 and set up business. He was the architect for the West Virginia Hotel and for many of the projects in which the Cole Realty stockholders participated. In fact, most of his residential commissions are from stockholders and officers of the board. Many of his major residential works are in the South Bluefield area.

In other portions of the state, his commissions were also impressive. These include the Women's Dormitory at the West Virginia University in Morgantown, United States Steel Building in Gary, Skyway Drive-In Theater in Brush Fork, the Deco-Style Mercer County Courthouse in Princeton, and the Guyan Theater in Logan, as well as a number of coal company offices and stores in the southern West Virginia region. Sites in this district associated with Mahood are:

618 Mountain View, M218  
625 Mountain View, M22  
909 Groveland, M21  
915 Groveland, M20  
908 Groveland, M23  
909 Edgewood, M24  
908 Edgewood, M28  
800 Edgewood, M46

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Under Criterion A the district is significant for its association with the development of Bluefield in general as an indicator of the building boom and expansion of the city in the 20th century.

The second decade of the twentieth century saw growth of the city, although at a somewhat less frantic rate than at the beginning of the century. By 1920 the population stood at 15,292.

Bluefield's new City Hall, a monumental piece of Classical Revival architecture designed by prominent architect Wilbur T. Mills, was constructed as part of an \$850,000. bond issue passed in 1923. By 1930, the population of Bluefield had reached 19,339, greater than it's present population.

The 1920's period saw one of the greatest booms in residential development in Bluefield. This was centered in the South Bluefield area. The 1923 West Virginia Realtor magazine, January issue, rated Bluefield as the 7th largest city in the state. They state that the assessed valuation of properties in Bluefield in 1923 was \$23,329,282.00 and that 402 building permits were issued for new construction in 1922 and 314 in 1921. This represents a major percentage of structures in town.

The second residential boom followed late in the Depression. Bluefield managed to hold its own through these years, despite the general economic slump. The Writers Works Project describes this period as one of intense activity with considerable development and construction. This included a new sewage disposal plant and new residential sections added to the city in 1937-38. This was the South Bluefield area. An ambitious street improvement program began in 1938. Here, according to the 1939 Semi-Centennial issue of the Bluefield Daily Telegraph, over 200 residences were constructed between 1934 and 1935. 50 were underway in 1939 alone in this residential section of the city.

Also under Criterion A, many of the residents of these grand homes were the bank presidents, architects, mine operators and owners, contractors, merchants, etc. who shaped the destiny of Bluefield. They were the "movers and shakers." They also were connected through the West Virginia Cole Realty Corporation in

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the development of downtown Bluefield and the West Virginia Hotel. Through the vision and cumulative importance of these prominent residents the face of South Bluefield was changed forever. Many of the prominent residences are those of stockholders and officers in the company.

Associated with the development of the coal industry in West Virginia and the opening of the Pocahontas coal field in this region is Thomas Cooper. He is associated with Edward and John Cooper, his father and grandfather. John Cooper was the first to open a mine in the Pocahontas coal field and Edward moved to nearby Bramwell in 1900. He served two terms as a US Congressman. Thomas, Edward's son, moved his new bride to Bluefield to be in "civilization." The house was constructed in 1925 and is reported to be a copy of a castle in Great Britain. He thought that such a grand gesture would persuade his wife to come to Bluefield.

Other prominent families associated with the development of Bluefield in the district include A. Kingdon, 618 Mountain View M218. He was an attorney and associated with the West Virginia Cole Realty Company. Another house associated with Kingdon is M20, 915 Groveland. Dr. C.M. Scott, associated with the Bluefield Sanitarium lived at 909 Groveland, M21. J.B. Belcher, a prominent lumber wholesaler had the Bungalow Style house at 700 Oakhurst, M50, built.

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KEY

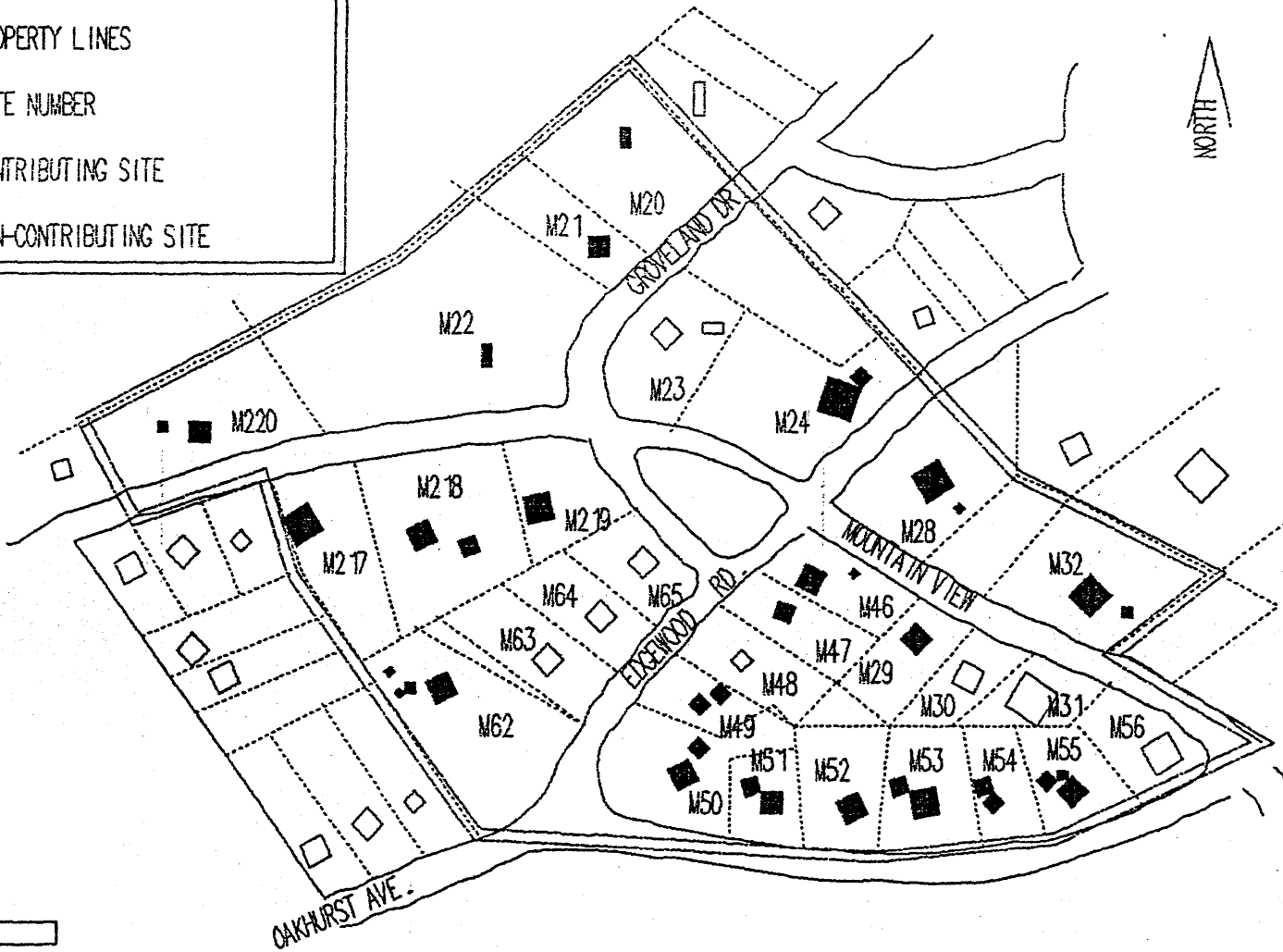
== HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

- - - - PROPERTY LINES

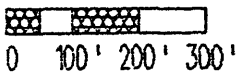
M000 SITE NUMBER

■ CONTRIBUTING SITE

□ NON-CONTRIBUTING SITE



SCALE



UPPER OAKHURST HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BLUEFIELD - WEST VIRGINIA

M. GIOLIS  
NOV. 1991