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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

Camp Salmen House, St. Tammany Parish, LA

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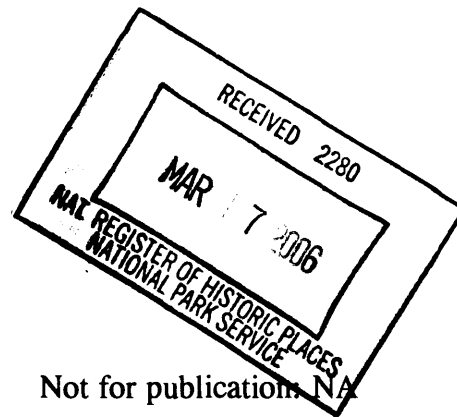
United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Camp Salmen House

Other Name/Site Number:



2. LOCATION

Street & Number 35122 Camp Salmen Road

Not for publication NA

City/Town Slidell

Vicinity: NA

State: Louisiana Code: LA County: St. Tammany Code: 103

Zip Code: 70460

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
 Nationally: ___ Statewide: ___ Locally: X

Jonathan Fricker
 Signature of Certifying Official/Title Jonathan Fricker
 Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

3/16/06
 Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official/Title

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- Entered in the National Register
Determined eligible for the National Register
Determined not eligible for the National Register
Removed from the National Register
Other(explain):

Daniel J. Vivian

4/24/06

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private:
Public-Local: X
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing
1

Non contributing
buildings
sites
structures
objects
0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: Louisiana's French Creole Architecture

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: domestic Sub: single dwelling

Current: vacant Sub:

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: other: French Creole

Materials:

Foundation: brick

Walls: brick, weatherboard

Roof: asphalt

Other:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Camp Salmen House (c. 1830) is a medium size French Creole residence of brick and frame construction with transitional Federal/Greek Revival details. It overlooks Bayou Liberty in a rural setting on the former Camp Salmen Boy Scout property on the edge of Slidell. Modifications have been on the whole relatively minor; the house easily retains its French Creole architectural identity and hence its Register eligibility.

The front range of rooms, the core of the house, is of common bond brick construction. Behind it is a wood frame *cabinet*-loggia range. The generous attic and front gallery are also wood frame. This combination of bearing wall brick and wood frame is unusual. Some sources have suggested that the brick core is older than the rest of the structure. However, the accessible architectural evidence does not support this. The base of the brick core is constructed to provide for the attachment of the floor beams of the rear rooms and the floor beams of the front gallery. Secondly, the decorative detailing and architectural work is consistent throughout. Finally, the three rear doorways of the core are configured in a way that is consistent with the attachment of the *cabinet*-loggia range. The middle doorway (which opens to the loggia) has an original set of French doors. The side doorways (which open into the *cabinets*) are constructed as interior passages. In sum, the overwhelming weight of evidence is that the entire present house was constructed at the same time. The circa 1830 date being used for this nomination is based on the architectural evidence.

The brick core rests on an extremely thick foundation. The foundation consists of four walls laid up in common bond. Originally the core was divided into three roughly square rooms by wood frame partitions. Two of these rooms (the northern most and the middle) were heated by fireplaces served by the house's single interior chimney. A third room to the south was unheated. In the twentieth century a partition wall was removed, creating a single room 30 feet wide. There is still a

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rough, unfinished, notched beam in the ceiling showing where the partition was. On the rear range, the *cabinets* are unusual, being both very large (the larger is 9' by 17') and of unequal size. The house's capacious gable end roof has a fairly simple rafter and post structure. (An earlier French Creole house would have a much heavier, overbuilt roof structure.) The huge attic was never finished or inhabited.

The Camp Salmen House is well detailed. The ceilings all feature exposed beaded beams and beaded boards inside and out. (The ceilings in the *cabinet*-loggia range are largely covered at present, but it is clear that the exposed beaded beams and boards survive.) The mantels in the previously mentioned heated rooms wrap around the chimney in the French manner. Both feature delicate pilasters and molded shelves. The one in the northern room also has a slight cornice marking the top of the chimney flue. The house's single surviving original French door set (in the rear center of the brick core) has ten lights to each door and is attached with ram's horn hinges. The thick board shutters (which also serve as interior doors) have decoratively molded battens. Shutters are attached using shaped strap hinges (affixed with screws). The front gallery's chamfered posts are pegged into the plate. They are spaced irregularly. Two near the center are paired as if to mark an entrance. Oddly, the narrow opening they create does not line up (exactly) with the central front doorway. Of final note are the tiny vaulted openings that mark the base of the brick core on either side. These were, no doubt, for ventilation.

The house has sustained the following alterations (in addition to those mentioned above). The eight-light French doors in the three front doorways are mid-nineteenth century. They are patched-in and appear to be salvaged from another building. Of the six front gallery posts, three are original, two are in-kind replacements (one at each edge), and one is a plain unpainted board. (The latter is placed a little to the side of the original slot.) In addition, "ghost marks" indicate that the gallery once had railings. In the twentieth century the *cabinets* were converted for a kitchen and a large bathroom. This work involved installing lowered ceilings and recovering the walls. Finally, the loggia has been enclosed with plywood in a jerry-rigged fashion and the brick walls have been plastered on the exterior.

These alterations have not unduly diminished the Camp Salmen House's status as one of the primary surviving French Creole residences of St. Tammany Parish. It easily retains the bulk of its character-defining features and hence has a strong French Creole identity.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Applicable National Register Criteria: A__ B__ C_X D__

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G__

Areas of Significance: architecture

Period(s) of Significance: circa 1830

Significant Dates: circa 1830

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: unknown

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Camp Salmen House is of local architectural significance as a rare and superior surviving example to represent St. Tammany's earliest architectural heritage (French Creole). Indeed, it is one of only 26 buildings in the parish dating from before the Civil War.

Located on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, St Tammany was historically rural, although there were three good-size towns (Covington, Mandeville and Slidell) and several small ones. The earliest settlement was in lower St. Tammany (between today's Interstate 12 and Lake Pontchartrain). For many years the French dominated this area. They arrived in the 1720s and their influence continued well into the nineteenth century. For example, French Creole planter Bernard de Marigny de Mandeville subdivided his north shore plantation in 1835 to create the town of Mandeville.

Given the foregoing settlement patterns, one would expect the parish to contain a fair number of French Creole dwellings and buildings reflecting other pre-Civil War architectural influences. However, St. Tammany experienced rapid and substantial growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries due to the area's popularity as a health resort and the lumber, brick making and ship building industries. Thus, the great majority of the parish's historic resources date from this later period. This is amply demonstrated by a

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comprehensive historic standing structures survey of the parish conducted in the mid-1990s. The survey identified some 2,336 buildings that were then 50 years old or older. Of these, only 26 are thought to be pre-Civil War and only 14 fully represent the French Creole heritage. (Later Greek Revival houses are Creole in form only.) The Camp Salmen House is among this select number.

Moreover, it is noteworthy among the parish's French Creole dwellings for its substantial size and architectural presence. The typical surviving Creole house is modest, with a width of two rooms and a minimal *cabinet*-loggia range in the rear. The Camp Salmen House is fully three rooms wide with large *cabinets* under a quite capacious Creole roofline. Among St. Tammany's few surviving Creole dwellings, it is of the first rank. (The parish does not retain any large fully raised Creole houses – i.e., of two stories.) The Camp Salmen House also retains a high degree of integrity when compared to most other French Creole houses in the parish.

Additional Information:

The candidate is best known locally for its association with the locally prominent Salmen family and later as part of a Boy Scout camp. Salmen Brick and Lumber Co. acquired the property in 1901. The company sold 72.5 acres to the Boy Scouts of America, New Orleans Counsel in 1924. The Boy Scouts retained ownership until 1984. The present owner, St. Tammany Parish, purchased the property in 2001 for projected use as a nature preserve. The parish is committed to preserving the house as well.

The Camp Salmen House is referred to sometimes as the "old trading post." Conveyance records in 1885 and again in 1899 mention the nearby ferry landing (the shape of which still survives) and a store on the property. For the record, the candidate is clearly a residence.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Chain-of-title research, summary in National Register file. Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- ___ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ Previously Listed in the National Register. (partially)
___ 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:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State Agency
___ Federal Agency
___ Local Government
___ University
___ Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: less than an acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
15 228280 3354180

Verbal Boundary Description: Boundary is shown as a broken line on the attached sketch map.

Boundary Justification: Following current property lines would have meant including excessive acreage and various buildings constructed during the Boy Scout period. Instead, boundaries were chosen to discretely encompass the significant resource and to recognize its location on Bayou Liberty.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: National Register Staff, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

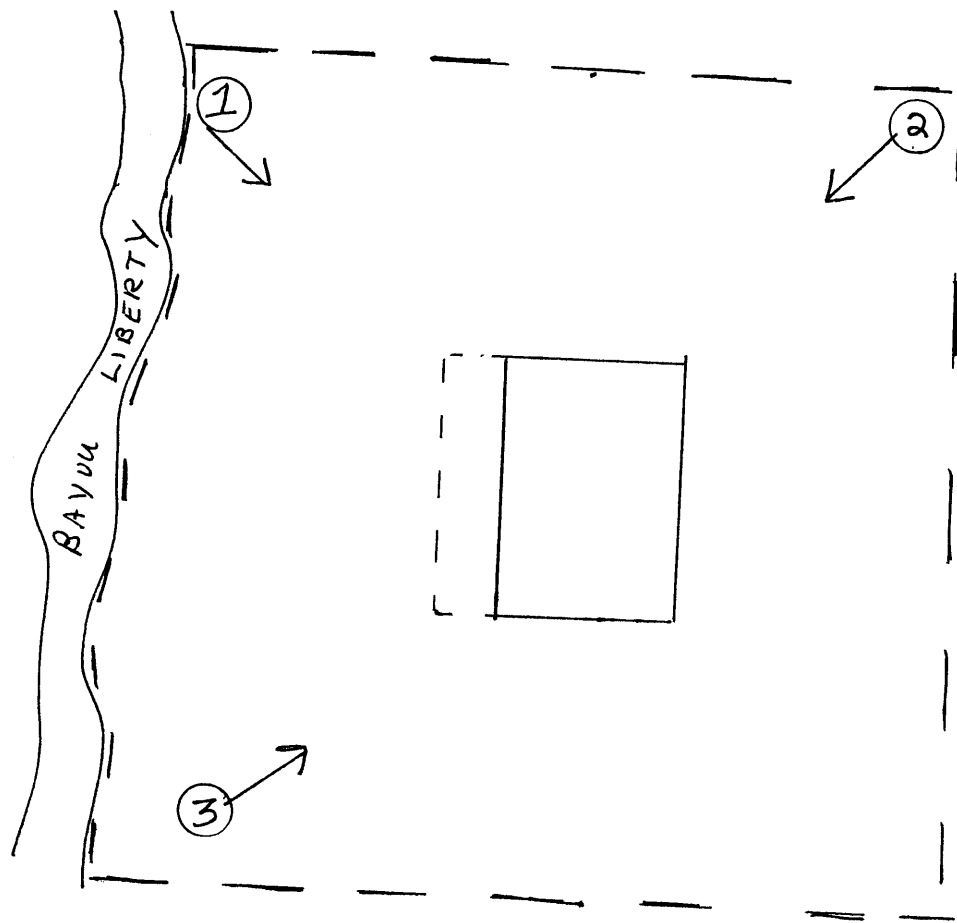
Address: P. O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Telephone: 225-342-8160

Date: February 2006

PROPERTY OWNERS

St. Tammany Parish



1" = 20'



--- BOUNDARY

Camp Salmen House
St. Tammany Parish, LA