

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JAN 20 1982

date entered MAR 9 1982

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

1. Name

historic ALPHEUS GAY HOUSE

and/or common BOWEN HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 184 Myrtle Street not for publication

city, town Manchester vicinity of First congressional district

state New Hampshire code 33 county Hillsborough code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Currier Gallery of Art

street & number 192 Orange Street

city, town Manchester vicinity of New Hampshire state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds
Hillsborough County Courthouse Book #2751, page #260

street & number 19 Temple Street

city, town Nashua state New Hampshire 03060

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input 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

The Alpheus Gay House is an expansive dwelling in the Italian Villa style. It is a frame house of two and a half stories, covered with sand-painted flush boarding and standing on a foundation of split granite blocks. Like many dwellings of its period and style, the Gay House has a complex plan. The main part of the building is composed of four gable-roofed wings of equal height which radiate outward, pinwheel fashion, from the geometric center of the dwelling. Adding to the visual interest of this complex plan is a three-story hip-roofed tower which rises through the house at the intersection of the south and west wings. The romantic aspect of the house is further enhanced by a variety of bays, porches and projections which embellish each elevation and render the house one of the most visually complex examples of the Italian Villa style in New Hampshire.

The focal point of the Gay House is the tower or companile, which affords the principal entrance to the dwelling. At the tower's base is a rusticated porch with granite steps, an arched entrance, a heavy modillioned cornice, and a flat roof. Until recently, this roof was crowned by a balustrade with urn-shaped balusters and corner dies topped with ball finials. This feature had deteriorated and was removed for safekeeping until the building's present owners can restore it. Above the porch, on the second story, is an arched doorway (temporarily closed with boarding) surmounted by a projecting arched cornice that rests on sawn consoles. The third story of the tower, visually separated from the lower stories by a continuation of the building's ogee-moulded cornice, is pierced by a pair of arched windows on the south and west elevations. Each pair of sash is set in a semicircular-arched enframing topped by a hood mould that springs from a pair of turned label stops. Above these windows, the tower is capped by a boldly-projecting ogee cornice supported by sawn brackets which alternate with square panels set against the frieze.

The west wing, being adjacent to the entrance, is treated with imaginative elaboration. Its gable end has a square bay window on the first floor. This is lighted by paired arched windows on its west front and articulated by narrow arched recesses on its sides. This window is capped by a balustrade with ornamental finials at its corners, forming a balcony accessible through a pair of windows on the second floor of the gable end. The balcony, in turn, is sheltered by a canopy supported by stick-work brackets, trimmed with a valance, and surmounted by a concave hipped roof. In the gable end of this wing, as in those of the other wings, is an arched attic window.

Extending from the base of the tower along the west elevation of the southern wing is an open porch enclosed by a turned balustrade. Its concave hipped roof is supported by square columns. The intervals between these supports are spanned by segmental arches, below which thin elements of semicircular tracery spring from brackets on the sides of each column. The modillioned cornice of this porch is supported by heavy sawn brackets above the capital of each column. The second floor windows of this wing, and of the eastern wing as well, are rectangular in shape and have flat caps supported by sawn brackets at the upper corners of each architrave.

The gable end of the southern wing is treated with an elaboration befitting its prominence as a principal street elevation. On the first floor is a semi-octagonal bay with narrow segmental-arched windows, a deeply-projecting cornice supported by bracketed bed mouldings, and a concave roof with a flat deck. Below the arched attic window is a small balcony supported by two deep sawn brackets and enclosed by a turned balustrade.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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The eastern wing has arched first floor windows surmounted by horizontal caps supported by two brackets and treated in their centers with triangular pediments. Second floor windows are rectangular, and the attic window is arched, as elsewhere.

The northern wing is similar, except that a doorway on the first floor, opposite the main tower entrance, is sheltered by a porch with square columns. Above this, in a projection at the landing of the main staircase of the house, is a pair of arched stained glass windows surmounted by a bull's eye window and capped by a semicircular hood mould.

All four wings of the main house have deeply projecting ogee cornices supported by closely spaced sawn brackets. Most roof surfaces are covered with slate. The house has three chimneys, one having rectangular panels and the others with arched panels in their sides and all with flat caps supported by corbels.

Extending eastward from the northern wing is a long servants' wing which is somewhat lower and plainer than the main house. This wing has rectangular windows, those on the first floor being slightly elaborated by segmental-arched top casings. The cornice is modillioned, and the attic has recently been modernized as caretakers' quarters.

Connected to the servants' wing by an enclosed porch is a small two-story stable. Its main entrance in the center of a projecting gable-roofed pavilion, has a rectangular transom sash and a flat cap supported by sawn brackets. Above this is an arched hayloft door. To the left (west) of the central doorway is a large window with paired rectangular sash, while to the right (east) is a double carriage door. The cornice of the stable is supported by widely spaced sawn brackets. In the center of the roof is a square cupola with a concave hipped roof and louvers for ventilation.

Original appearance: Except for the temporary removal of a roof balustrade above the front doorway (noted above), and for general but minor deterioration, the Gay House is in original condition. Paint analysis reveals that the house was originally painted light tan. It was subsequently painted gray, and is now covered with a weathered coat of yellow ochre. Like most dwellings in its section of Manchester, the Gay House was originally the only structure on a full city block measuring 220 feet square. This block was subsequently divided, and three other houses now share the land. While little evidence of the original landscaping treatment of the full block remains, photographs dating from the 1890s document the plantings in the immediate vicinity of the house during the late nineteenth century. The dwelling is presently shaded by tall Norway spruces which are part of an early, if not original, landscaping scheme.

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 type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 c. 1870 **Builder/Architect** Alpheus Gay (builder & owner)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Alpheus Gay House, built by 1870, is one of the most elaborate and least altered dwellings in the Italian Villa style in New Hampshire. Built by a local contractor for his home, the house is said to have been patterned after plans in a design book. In its style, picturesque massing, broad ornamental vocabulary, and original coloration and landscaping, the Gay House clearly reflects the influence of Andrew Jackson Downing and his partner and fellow author Calvert Vaux.

Though a relatively late example of the Italian Villa style, the Gay House is a perfect summation of that fashion. Its elaborate radiating plan, picturesque silhouette, varied but coherent ornamentation, and high level of craftsmanship recall the aesthetic theories of Downing, whose writings had been influential for nearly thirty years when the house was constructed. Although he does not seem to have had any formal architectural training, Gay was an able builder and contractor in Manchester (and later its mayor), constructing several large schoolhouses and other structures designed by local architects. Certainly familiar with the numerous architectural pattern books of his era, Gay appears to have followed Downing's advice and utilized the suggestions of such volumes to design a villa that reflected not only his personality but also his skill and soundness as a builder.

The unaltered state of the Gay House makes the dwelling a model for the study of design, construction and amenities of post-Civil War domestic architecture in New England. Except for the introduction of electricity, the main section of the house has not been modernized. The main house has no water closets, the only plumbing being chamber lavatories in two rooms. The house retains an interesting one-pipe steam heating system fitted into the fireplace of the main parlor. First and second floor hallways have frescoed ceilings, while the rooms retain their marble and simulated marble mantelpieces, their gas chandeliers and wall branches, and original painted graining.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Sara B. Chase, SPNEA, "Study of Present Conditions, Preservation and Conservation Recommendations for the Alpheus Gay House, Manchester, New Hampshire" (unpublished manuscript prepared for The Currier Gallery of Art).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .34 (110' x 135')

Quadrangle name Manchestersouth, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	9	2	9	9	7	2	0	4	7	6	3	3	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification: Easterly on Beech Street, there measuring 110 feet; southerly on Myrtle Street, there measuring 135 feet; westerly on land now or formerly of Annie M. Gay, there measuring 110 feet; northerly by land of said Gay, and by land now or formerly of Julia Shea, there measuring 135 feet. Tax map #1, Parcel #12

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	James L. Garvin*
	Philip D. Zimmerman, Associate Curator
organization	New Hampshire Historical Society*
	The Currier Gallery of Art
street & number	30 Park Street*
	192 Orange Street
city or town	Concord*
	Manchester
date	October 30, 1980
telephone	(603) 225-3381*
	(603) 669-6144
state	New Hampshire*
	New Hampshire

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

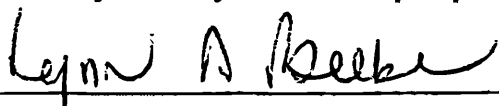
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

Commissioner, Department of Resources & Economic Development

title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date February 12, 1981

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



date 3/9/1982

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET #2 SKETCH MAP ITEM NUMBER PAGE 1

Alpheus Gay House

