

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

PHO 677256

FOR NPS USE ONLY			
RECEIVED	MAR 28 1979		
DATE ENTERED		MAY 8 1979	

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

1 NAME *The Thomas-Carithers House*
HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

530 S. Milledge Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Athens,

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10th - Barnard

STATE

Georgia

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

13

Clarke

059

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE
BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	MUSEUM
STRUCTURE	BOTH	WORK IN PROGRESS	COMMERCIAL
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION		EDUCATIONAL
OBJECT	IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	ENTERTAINMENT
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT
		NO	INDUSTRIAL
			MILITARY
			TRANSPORTATION
			OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTYNAME
Gamma Alpha House Corporation c/o Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority

STREET & NUMBER

530 S. Milledge Avenue

STATE

CITY, TOWN

Athens

VICINITY OF

Georgia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Clarke County CourthouseSTREET & NUMBER
Athens

Georgia

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Structures Field Survey: Clarke County, Georgia

DATE

1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR

SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Preservation Section, Dept. of Natural Resources

CITY, TOWN

Atlanta

STATE

Georgia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In keeping with the area on Milledge Avenue in Athens, Georgia, the Thomas-Carithers House is a large older home owned and utilized by a sorority.

The house is one of the more elaborate on "fraternity row", with its Ionic columns, balustrades, dentils, and its stylized frieze of Corinthian order decorating the crowning entablature. The exterior as a whole has a Chicago World's Fair influence with Victorian highlights.

The northern rear of the house has a large dorm-like cinder block addition utilized as sleeping and dining quarters for the sorority. This addition along with the rear of the main house form an L-shape which surrounds an old garden with benches, brick walks and patios now in disrepair.

The front facade has a one story, portico with veranda which continues on both sides of the house. The two walk-through verandas proceed from the porch and shelter the steps as well as a walkway and drive. The front veranda is capped with an ornate entablature and balustrades which surrounds an area used as a sun porch. The southern veranda is in alignment with the portico.

The main entrance is indented and surrounded by ornately detailed woodwork of scrolls and dentils while wainscoting bases the intricate stained glass windows to either side. The doors themselves have glass windows made of lead strips applied so as to form squares which contain small pieces of cut glass, so numerous as to obstruct any view.

On the interior of this entrance is a grand entry room which is almost as deep as the rest of the house. It includes fourteen foot high ceilings, ten-foot high doors, a now-carpeted parquet floor, and unlike the rest of the house the woodwork is a natural dark oak. The entry is surrounded by wainscoting around the base and dentiled cornice and rose garlands with goat heads around the top of the room. To either side of the doorway there are two large sliding doors which lead to the sitting rooms and two arched L-shaped seats which are inset and crowned with lion head armrests. The rear of the room, which is divided from front by two wooden Ionic columns, has two archways (on the north and south ends) and the main staircase on the west or (rear) side. The stairway, which is flush with the rear wall, is enhanced by a stained glass window, paneling in keeping with the wainscoting design, and scrolled metal between its balusters. In the vertical rectangles of the paneled wood is a long inset seat at the base of the stairway, also with lion head carving. Under the staircase is a small walk-through with a closet, an original bathroom and an exit to the rear porch.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> X OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

History

SPECIFIC DATES	1896	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	W. W. Thomas
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas-Carithers House is architecturally and historically significant to Athens as a representative of the Neo-Classical Revival in the Eclecticism of the 1890s. Its design is said to have been influenced by the owner-architect's visit to the Columbian Exposition (Chicago World's Fair) of 1893. Historically, it is significant because of the owner, a local architect and businessman, who had time, despite his business and civic responsibilities, to design and build a house of monumental proportions.

William Winstead Thomas (1848-1904), an Athens native, had long been involved in Athens' financial, civic, and cultural life before he built this home. In 1878 he married Pamela J. Brown, a niece and adopted daughter of former Georgia governor Charles J. Jenkins, who had served from 1865-68. Thomas had graduated from the University of Georgia in 1868, was a classmate of Henry W. Grady and others who became notable, and later obtained a degree in civil engineering. He pursued a career in civil engineering in Georgia and South Carolina until 1875. It was during this period of his life that he designed the map of Athens in 1874. Later these talents were used to design not only his own home, but others in the Athens area. His one known work outside Athens is the First Presbyterian Church of Thomasville, Georgia, for which he submitted the plans in 1887.

Thomas, who had been the first chairman of the Clarke County Commissioners, was a member of the commission for the building of the new Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta from 1883 to 1889. Certainly his position on the group allowed him to advise on architectural features as well as construction techniques and cost.

Thomas was a son of Stevens Thomas, a civic figure in Athens, and president of the Southern Mutual Insurance Company. It was to this firm that W. W. Thomas went in 1875 as an adjuster, rising to the presidency in 1894. It was at this point, the peak of his career with the company, that his home was built.

The property was purchased in 1895 from Mrs. Emma H. Carlton, widow of Joseph B. Carlton and her daughter Julia, for \$6,000. The present house is said to have been completed the following year. The undated plans for the house remain in possession of his descendants.

Perhaps the most notable social event during the Thomases' ownership of the house was the wedding of their daughter, Isabel, which took place in the front parlors on September 7, 1904 while Thomas himself was ill and dying.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Clark County Will Records.
Day, Kathleen A., Personal inspection, Fall 1976
Day, Kathleen A., Personal interview with members of the Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority.
Deed Books of Clarke County.
History of Athens and Clarke County, H. J. Rowe, publisher; The McGregor Co.,
Athens, Georgia.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 1 & one half acres.

QUADRANGLE NAME Athens West, Georgia

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	2 7 9	3 4 10	3 7 5 8 1 8 7 0
ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING
C				
E				
G				

B				
ZONE	EASTING			NORTHING
D				
F				
H				

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION - Starting at the corner of Milledge Avenue and Baxter Street (southwest corner) and continue southwest 348 feet following Baxter Street to a point and then go south 129 feet to a point then go east 320 feet to Milledge Avenue then follow Milledge 250 feet to the southwest corner of Milledge and Baxter

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

As shown as Parcel F-1, Clarke Co., Georgia Tax Map 12-2-D-4. Same as 1939 Deed.

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Kathleen A. Day, Consultant

Kenneth H. Thomas Jr., Historic Preservation Section, Historian

ORGANIZATION Department of Natural Resources DATE

Historic Preservation Section

STREET & NUMBER 270 Washington Street TELEPHONE

404-656-2840

CITY OR TOWN Atlanta STATE

Georgia

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 Elizabeth A. Lyon

3/20/79

TITLE Elizabeth A. Lyon, Ph. D.

DATE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer.

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 5-8-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER B. O. Tolson

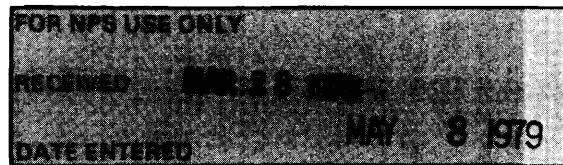
DATE May 3, 1979

ATTEST: B. O. Tolson

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION S. G. Tolson

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Through the sliding door on the southern side of the entrance is a very ornate sitting room with floor-length windows and dentiled cornices with intricate flowers. Farther south is a small office which has a very narrow door that houses a closet of unusual size that extends northward the length of the large sitting room just described. The southern archway off the entry room includes two closets and a doorway to a room with a large bowed window used as the sitting room for the house mother. Connected to this room is a rear room used as her bedroom, which includes an original bathroom and an exit to the rear porch.

Through the northern sliding door there is a very formal parlor with ornate cornices and entablatures crowning floor length windows and mantel. Another doorway leads back to the dining room which also gives access to the entry through the northern archway. This room has a bowed window symmetric with the southern one, a vaulted ceiling, and a four-walled mural of a country scene reputed to be High Shoals, a waterfall near Athens.

A rear swinging door leads to what was once a kitchen with huge built-in cabinets, a pantry to the right, an entrance to the new rear addition, and access to the rear porch. This now enclosed porch houses the rear staircase and leads to the second floor.

On the second floor the main square hall gives access to the rear upstairs porch, two bathrooms, a large sitting room now used as a bedroom, four other bedrooms, a small hallway, and the stairway to the attic. The southeastern bedroom has a small room off of it which is very similar in size and location to the downstairs office. The small hallway has one small room and leads to the rear modern addition. The second floor ceilings have been lowered so that no cornice work is visible. On the interior of the entire house there are radiators, some very elaborate and turn of the century mantels with mirrors and tiles.

NOTE: Some of the photographs date to 1976. However, they present an accurate view of the character and appearance of the building at the present time.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

2

After Thomas' death here on November 30, 1904, his widow remained there alone. Of their four daughters, only two grew to maturity. Isabel, who married in 1904 and Gertrude, who died unmarried shortly after her father. It was not long before the widow joined her married daughter and the house was leased to George Henry Hulme a wholesale grocer and his wife Willie Matthews. The Hulmes had brought their two children with them to the large home, and it was here that their daughter Katherine's wedding reception was held February 25, 1909, upon her marriage to Homer Clifton Smith of Winder. The Hulmes officially purchased the home from Mrs. Thomas October 15, 1909 for \$21,000. Perhaps the Hulmes found the house too large for them and their remaining child, for they sold it in 1913 to James Yancey Carithers. A picture painted of the house by Katherine Hulme Smith (done while she was a student at the Lucy Cobb Institute) hangs in the house today, a gift to the sorority.

J.Y. Carithers, born 1854, was an original organizer of the Athens Electric Railway, had served on the Athens City Council and been a state senator from 1905 to 1906, by the time he purchased the house. He was also a large land owner and reknown in surrounding counties for his philanthropy. He had lived their barely four years when he died.

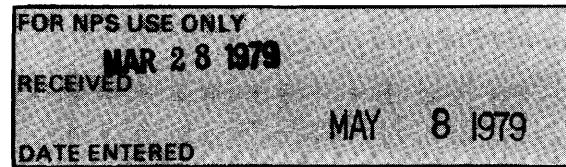
Eula Witcher Carithers, second wife and widow of J.Y. Carithers, continued to reside there during the next two decades until 1939, when she sold the house and lot for \$21,000 to the Gamma Alpha House Corporation, representing the Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority. They continue to be the owners.

The sorority has adapted parts of the homeplace into a dormitory for members and uses the house for meetings and social functions.

This home is significant both architecturally and historically as a representation of a local architect-builder's creation of his own dwelling house in the Neo-Classical revival style of the 1890s. This home is the finest of his known creations and reflects the influence upon him of national trends in architectural building as evidenced in the fairs and expositions of the era. Historically, the house has been the home of locally prominent families who have contributed much to the financial, civic and cultural life of the city through personal involvement and leadership.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

Telephone Interviews with Patricia Cooper, of Athens; Franklin Garrett of Atlanta; Office of Bates Block Attorney; Thomas descendants; Mrs. Charles A. Cooper Jr. of Winston-Salem, N. C. and Mrs. Richard J. Patterson of Athens (owner of the plans of the house); and Mrs. Garland Hulme of Athens, Georgia.

Obituary of W. W. Thomas, The Athens Weekly Banner, Dec 2, 1904.

A. L. Hull, Annals of Athens, Georgia, 1801-1901 (Athens, 1906).

Charlotte T. Marshall, Oconee Hill Cemetery (Athens, 1971).

University of Georgia Alumni Catalog (1885)

"James Yancey Carithers" sketch in William J. Northen's Men of Mark in Georgia (Atlanta, 1912) Vol. VI.

"William W. Thomas" sketch in Memoirs of Georgia (Atlanta, 1895), Vol I.