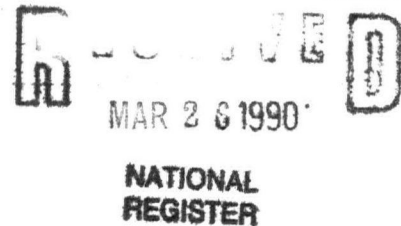


United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 42 Ocean Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Oak Bluffs Martha's Vineyard N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code 025 county Dukes code 007 zip code 02557

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	_____ objects
			_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.

Valerie Talmage March 1990
Signature of certifying official Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Date Commission;
State Historic Preservation Officer
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.
☐ 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:) _____

Beth R. Sarge

10-22-90

80

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Cast Stone and Brick

walls Wood: Weatherboard and Shingle

roof Asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage is located in the Town of Oak Bluffs, Dukes County, Massachusetts, on the northeastern side of the island of Martha's Vineyard. The Vineyard is located approximately four miles off the southwestern tip of Cape Cod. Oak Bluffs, a summer resort community, is bounded on the east and north by Nantucket Sound, on the west by Vineyard Haven Harbor and the town of Tisbury (Vineyard Haven), and on the south by Edgartown. The Tucker Cottage, built in the Stick Style in 1872, was substantially altered by its original owner in 1877 into a rambling Queen Anne summer house with carriage barn behind. The cottage today stands on a quarter-acre lot (70' by 130'), set back from the property line five feet on the north, south, and east sides and twenty-five feet on the west side, on a prominent site overlooking Ocean Park and Nantucket Sound. Because the property borders town land, the setback from Ocean Avenue is an additional twenty feet. Topographically, the site is flat and slightly elevated above the Park. Landscaping is minimal, with recently planted low coniferous shrubs on the north front between the house and the asphalted public walkway which runs along the front elevations of the row of cottages comprising this section of Ocean Avenue. Elaborate and eclectic Victorian landscaping, once almost as well known as the architecture of the site, is entirely obliterated.

The Tucker Cottage is part of the Ocean Park neighborhood of Oak Bluffs, a residential enclave of large, late nineteenth century summer cottages of ornamented Victoriana. The street pattern here, primarily curvilinear in form, is dictated by the siting of Ocean Park, a seven-acre, semi-circular, slightly concave green space which faces Seaview Avenue and the Sound beyond. This results in an arrangement of narrow residential lanes forming ever-expanding crescents around the west side of the Park. The Tucker Cottage fronts onto Ocean Avenue, the innermost crescent, closest to Ocean Park, overlooking its bandstand.

Almost nothing is known of the architecture of the Tucker property as it was originally designed by the Boston firm of Hartwell and Swasey in 1872, other than its Stick Style aesthetic and its construction cost of \$11,000. It was the second known building on the site, presumably replacing an earlier one built by Dr. Tucker when he first took up summer residence in Oak Bluffs immediately after the Civil War. The cottage today demonstrates the extensive

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The first story of the center section of the north facade is glazed: double-leaf doors at either end flank four abutting windows in the middle. Above the center section's first story is a shed roof, intersected over the doors by gable-end hoods supported on large braces and decorated in their gable ends with diaperwork surrounding a central rondel. On the second story is a three-bay open porch set within the mass of the house: a double-leaf door is located in the easternmost bay of the south wall; windows are in the east and west walls and the other bays of the south wall. On the north facade, the eastern projecting pavillion has open porches on the first and second story and double-leaf glazed doors centered on both stories. Centered above the doors on the second story is an oculus. The first-story porch, which wraps around the northwest corner of the building and extends along the east wall, is covered by a shed roof. The low balustrade of the first-story porch is partially filled with flat, pierced geometrical-pattern panels. The second-story porch has an open latticework balustrade, and its upper section includes decorative trusswork similar to the roof structure of the belvedere, including king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces, and hammerbeams.

The east elevation of the main block of the building has a full-width first-story porch, a continuation of that on the east elevation of the facade, a chimney near its center, and a tower that breaks from the mass of the house near the north end of the second story. Windows flank the chimney on the first story, and a window is south of the chimney on the second story. The common-bond brick chimney (believed to be original to 1877), which breaks through the gabled dormer, tapers above the porch roof; at its cap is a low gable above two rectangular openings on the east and west sides. The semi-octagonal tower has narrow, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows in the southeast, east, and northeast walls; arched braces with quatrefoil motifs support the soffit of the steep, flaring pyramidal roof. The south elevation of the main block has paired windows on the first story, a single window centered on the second story, and an oculus centered in the attic. Above the first-story windows is a shed-roof hood supported by arched braces. The gable end has decorative trusswork similar to that on the north gable end, including king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces, and hammerbeams.

There is an ell at the rear of the building. The east elevation of the ell has a four-bay shed-roof extension the width of the first story. The two northernmost bays frame a porch, set within the building's mass; within the porch is a centered window on the east wall and a door on the north wall. The bay immediately south of the porch has vertical-board siding with two, symmetrically placed, vertical, one-light windows. The southernmost bay has a centered, vertical one-light window. The second story of the ell's east side has two symmetrically placed windows. The ell's south elevation has a three-bay first and two-bay second story. A full-width, shed-roof hood, supported on arched braces, shields the first story, which has a door at its

(continued)

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west end and two windows. Symmetrically placed windows are on the second story. Centered in the attic is a blind rondel. The gable end has simulated king post and tie beam. To the east of the porch and at the southern end of the east elevation's one-story extension is a shed-roof bulkhead. The west elevation of the ell has two symmetrically placed, vertically stacked windows on the first and second stories.

The garage, twenty-two feet square, was originally the carriage barn. It has a low gable roof and exterior sheathing like that on the main house, save for the east side, which has vertical-board siding. The south elevation has two double-leaf doors; each leaf has a glazed, eight-light upper section (with missing rails) and a larger, match-board lower section with superimposed X-plan bracing. Centered above the door frame is a square medallion with a low-relief bust of an animal's head. The west elevation has a window to the east and a wide, four-panel door to the west; the lower panels of the door have superimposed X-plan bracing. The east elevation is blind. The building is located southeast of the house and fronts onto Samoset Avenue. It is likely that the roof form of the garage is not original, but no documentary evidence has been found to either confirm or deny this.

The interior of the Tucker house retains almost nothing from either the 1872 or the 1877 building campaigns. The structure was divided into six units in the early 1930s, destroying the celebrated "open plan" described in early sources. Surviving interior details include (original ?) soapstone fireplaces in three of the apartments and the main entryway staircase with pine treads and black walnut rails and balusters.

Webb's Cottage City Directory, published in 1885, cited in H.B. Hough's Martha's Vineyard: Summer Resort, provides a detailed description of how the Tucker residence appeared shortly after receiving its Queen Anne alterations:

The architecture of the villa is a combination of several different designs, so blended as to make a more attractive whole than had a single style been followed. Broad piazzas, of elaborate design, with spacious balconies above them; bay windows, affording a resting place for rare and beautiful plants; panels in patchwork of cathedral glass in the outer hall doors; griffins in terra cotta on the pediments that cover the steps leading to the piazza in front of the halls, and grotesque heads of the same material inserted in the sides of the brackets and spandrils (sic) of the piazzas and balconies; the apex of the roof to the bay window over the park is crowned with a griffin sitting position (sic) facing the park.

The entire outside surface of the villa is covered with clapboards, alternating with fancy cut shingles, and the painting throughout the building is striking and elegant. The

(continued)

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Harrison Tucker Cottage
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

shingles of the roof are dark green, on the second story Indian red; the clapboards of the first story are of Quaker drab, the trimmings bronze green, and the chimneys terra cotta. (pp. 188, 189)

On the exterior of the cottage, much of the rich ornamentation of 1877 has been modified or is missing. No longer extant are the original wood shingle roofs with iron cresting and elaborate finials; a decorative gable over the upper porch of the recessed central section of the north facade; many of the pierced board panels in the upper and lower balustrades; and a first story porch in the recessed central section. Modifications have been made over time to many of the balustrade elements on all elevations of the residence.

(continued)

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Harrison Tucker Cottage,
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Archaeological Description

No prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property or in the general area (within one mile). Little evidence is also present for historic archaeological resources on the property other than sheet refuse and limited trash deposits possibly related to house construction and/or late 19th, early 20th century occupation of the house. Because of these factors, small lot size (1/4 + acre) and the impacts of house construction on the lot, the potential for significant archaeological remains, either prehistoric or historic is low.

(end)

8. Statement of Significance Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Mar 10 1990

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture1872-18911872Health/Medicine1877Social History

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Dr. Harrison A. Tucker

Architect/Builder

Hartwell and SwaseyHammond, John S.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Built by a nationally prominent manufacturer of patent medicines in 1872 and substantially altered by him in 1877, the property is significant as the summer residence of Dr. Tucker who, in addition to his involvement with patent medicines, served as Oak Bluffs' most conspicuous host and civic minded citizen from immediately after the Civil War until his death in 1891. During this period, the Tucker Cottage was the scene of luminous social events, including a visit by President and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant in August 1874. The property is also important as the most ornate Queen Anne cottage in Oak Bluffs, a summer resort community that came to epitomize the latest fashion in architectural taste during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The highly embellished residences constructed then render Oak Bluffs a significant enclave of late Victorian architecture of eminent artistic value. The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage thus fulfills Criteria A, B and C of the National Register of Historic Places. This outstanding building also stands within a potential district.

As an early example of a planned subdivision designed on romantic ideals, the community of Oak Bluffs was laid out originally in 1867 adjacent to the famed Methodist camp meeting at Wesleyan Grove, which was founded in 1835. That year lay exhorter Jeremiah Pease chose an oak grove near Squash Meadow Pond in what later became Oak Bluffs for his camp meeting for Island Methodists. The religious activities there became so popular that by 1868, camp meeting drew attendees from all over New England who occupied six hundred tent and cottage lots in that part of the Vineyard. The Island also attracted visitors seeking respite from the summer heat of the mainland, leading to the formation in 1866 of an ambitious speculative development scheme unrelated to the religious objectives at Wesleyan Grove. The goal of the developers was to create one thousand new houses.

Within a few years, this resort community, originally called Cottage City

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Hough, Henry Beetle. Martha's Vineyard: Summer Resort. Edgartown, Massachusetts:
Privately printed for Avery's 1966.

Public records at Oak Bluffs Town Hall, Edgartown Town Hall, and Dukes County Registry
of Deeds.

Weiss, Ellen. City in the Woods: The Life and Design of an American Camp Meeting on
Martha's Vineyard. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested HPCA # 11163 MA
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ 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:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 19 369890 4590300
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage coincides with that of the Town of Oak Bluffs Tax Assessor's Lot #4, no Plat # given. The boundary represents the limit of land that encompasses the resource and its immediate setting, both at the time of construction and today. See Assessor's map which accompanies this form.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire town lot that has historically been associated with the Tucker Cottage.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Baumhofer, Owner, with Karen L. Jessup, Consultant, and Betsy Friedberg,
organization NR Director Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 24, 1989
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02116

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Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

and renamed Oak Bluffs in 1907, became a major attraction for the middle class, often carrying forward the spiritual values espoused by the closely situated camp meeting, although not formally associated with Methodism. By 1870, it was evident that this new resort borrowed both physical planning ideals and architectural tendencies from camp meeting for the project at Oak Bluffs. The buildings and settlement pattern of the nascent Cottage City were thus seen as an extension of many aspects of Wesleyan Grove.

Robert Morris Copeland, a landscape gardener experienced in rural cemetery layout and a contemporary of Frederick Law Olmsted, was hired by the developers to plan the lots and streets of the new community. One of Copeland's early scenarios for the site (in 1867) called for a seven acre park in an area near the bluffs, opening the land considerably and providing relief from the intensity of tiny house lots that were the mainstay of the development scheme. Named Ocean Park, this green space is today the most distinctive landscape feature of Oak Bluffs. The 1867 Copeland plan was amended at least twice, in 1870 and 1871, to incorporate an additional forty acres purchased by the Oak Bluffs Land and Wharf Company. What results is an imaginative and romantic land planning scheme that uses primarily curvilinear forms borrowed from the physical aesthetic of the camp meeting, but translated into scale required of traditional neighborhoods. Lots in the early stages of Cottage City's growth are thirty-five by sixty-five feet, and those of the 1870, 1871 sections are fifty by seventy-five feet. Campground lots at Wesleyan Grove were only fourteen to twenty feet wide. Deed restrictions in Cottage City further required set backs of ten feet at the front and five feet at the sides of the buildings, defining the normal relationship of house and privately owned land to the public streets. By 1870, success seemed guaranteed for the new community. The developers embarked on an extensive two year program of construction, which came to include a grand hotel and non-sectarian chapel, demonstrating an advanced level of architectural ambition as they moved beyond small cottage construction exclusively. It was also during this period that cottages on a scale more pretentious than that seen before were built. Dr. Harrison A. Tucker's 1872 Stick Style residence by the Boston firm of Hartwell and Swasey was one. Four small, standard lots were combined into a single parcel of 70 feet by 130 feet, making it the largest residential property of the time in Oak Bluffs.

Harrison Tucker, who maintained his permanent residence at 393 Clinton Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, was perhaps Oak Bluff's best known figure from the time he began his summer sojourns on the Island until his death there in late May 1891. Prior to constructing his 1872 cottage at 42 Ocean Avenue, he occupied another cottage on the Vineyard, possibly at the same site. He has been described as one of Oak Bluffs' earliest cottagers, and a man "whom an earthquake would hardly incommode, ... the incarnation of passive strength." (Hough, p. 186) Tucker was born on 18 March 1832 in Norton, Massachusetts.

(continued)

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After schooling at the medical colleges of Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania, he opened a physician's practice of undetermined specialty and eventually maintained offices simultaneously in Boston, Providence, Brooklyn and Martha's Vineyard. Tucker's medical reputation is based on his discovering, compounding, and marketing various patent medicines, of which Diaphoretic Compound #59 became the most popular. This particular medicine was ameliorative for a wide range of maladies, from complaints of nervousness, convulsions, and headache to problems associated with disease of the gums. Dr. Tucker also distributed other patented preparations, and had a huge consultative practice, both of which no doubt enabled him to build and furnish opulent residences and donate generously to philanthropic causes, especially in Oak Bluffs.

Harrison Tucker's contributions to the community where he established his summer home were many. In addition to constructing architectural showplaces, as the resort's most noted host, he "opened and closed the season...and knew everyone worth knowing," often entertaining dignitaries visiting the Island. (Hough, p.186) He was active in local political and social affairs, including his advocacy of Cottage City's secession from Edgartown and as a supporter of the cause of Cottage City as "the showplace of Martha's Vineyard." He underwrote the cost of summer programs of brass bands and fireworks, and is reputed to have financed the construction of the bandstand in Ocean Park, which he could view from the extensive verandas of his cottage. He was the co-founder of Oak Bluffs' Trinity Episcopal Church. As a "lover of good living," his hospitality was almost limitless. On 23 August 1874, President and Mrs. Grant visited the Island toward the close of the season and were entertained by Dr. Tucker where they shared a view from a balcony of his house of the grand exhibition of fireworks and the Illumination, the first of what was to become an annual tradition. For this event, the residence seemed to be in a "mimic state of conflagration all evening" with lanterns and colored lights inside and out. "The whole interior (of the house) was irradiated." (Hough, pp. 114, 115)

Here the cultivated life of Cottage City had its perfect flowering. Here Dr. Tucker drew about him with a sure instinct all that was consonant with the ideals of his people and his time, and radiated the atmosphere which was the essence...of the resort. (Hough, p. 189)

Toward the end of his life, Harrison Tucker was involved in the founding of two major social organizations on the Island. Both the Oak Bluffs Club and the Martha's Vineyard Club, incorporated in 1886, owe much to his vision of civic improvement. The Oak Bluffs Club became the scene of entertainment and companionship for a group of prominent summer residents who were the "gay and expansive set." (Hough, p. 194) Tucker was its first treasurer and official host, welcoming members of the New York Yacht Club on their summer cruise.

(continued)

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Queen Anne modifications made in 1877 and designed by John S. Hammond of Mattapoisett, Massachusetts. It maintains its 1877 siting and form, but has lost some of its highly decorative Queen Anne detailing.

The Tucker property includes an asymmetrical T-plan house and a small, two-bay garage/carriage barn. The house is an irregularly, asymmetrically massed, two-story, plank frame structure with extensive and elaborate porches, low cross-gable roof, pyramidal-roof tower at the northeast corner, and prominent belvedere at the northwest corner. The building sits on a low rock-face cast-stone and brick veneer foundation. Twenty percent of the house has a full basement; the rest, a crawl space. On the first story, the wall surface is clapboard with a four-course band of fish-scale shingles above the fifth or sixth clapboard course from the sills; below the shingled band are wide cornerboards, sillboards, and simulated structural posts below and coterminous with sides of the window frames. The second-story wall surface is fishscale shingles. Windows, unless otherwise noted, are two-over-two, double-hung sash. The porches have turned posts and intricately sawn and carved brackets. The gable ends have exposed, simulated trusswork; the trusses on the north and south gable ends of the west section of the building are filled with flat, pierced panels of scrollwork.

The asymmetrical north elevation divides into three discreet sections: a recessed center flanked by a corner tower on the west and a projecting, gabled pavilion on the east. The western tower, forty-six feet at its apex, has porches on the first and second stories of the north elevation: both have shed roofs, and that on the first is double the depth of that on the second; centered within the pavilion's north elevation on both first and second story are double-leaf glazed doors. On the west elevation of the tower are centered, paired windows on the first story, a centered window on the second story, and a centered, horizontal, two-light window at the attic story level. The first- and second-story windows are shielded by shed-roof hoods supported by arched braces; the braces on the first story are ornamented with latticework and diaperwork. The first story of the tower's south elevation has a window at the west end and a post-and-beam porch at the east end; the porch has flat, pierced panels of scrollwork in its balustrade and its valence. The second story of the tower's south elevation is blind; it intersects with the gable end of the main block, which has simulated trusswork in the gable end and a pair of windows on its south side. Atop the tower is an open, exposed post-and-beam construction, gable-roof belvedere. The roof structure, similar to the decorative work in the east gable end, has king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces and hammerbeams. The west tower was destroyed during the hurricane of 1938, and was rebuilt between 1984 and 1986 using old photographs for evidence of form and articulation. Not all original detailing was reconstructed.

(continued)

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Operating on a scale of grandeur beyond the means of its treasury, the Oak Bluffs Club finally ceased to exist, but only after Tucker's death. The Martha's Vineyard Club, with Dr. Tucker as its first president, had promotion of Cottage City as its objective. As such, it was the precursor of improvement societies and chambers of commerce which were to become part of the civic landscape of so much of early twentieth century America.

The summer residence of Harrison Tucker in the Ocean Park neighborhood of Oak Bluffs embodies distinctive characteristics of its type, period, and method of construction. It is substantially more grand in scale than those residences which existed on Oak Bluffs at the time of its construction, and epitomizes the desire of some in the community to move beyond the middle class associations of camp meeting and bring to the Island an element of social ambition and even pretention. In terms of its architecture, the cottage is the largest and most ornate Queen Anne summer house in Ocean Park and one of the best known of the cottages on the Vineyard. Tucker was one of the first to buy a lot and build in Oak Bluffs outside the camp ground. He chose a prime site with a commanding perspective, facing the Park and the Sound beyond. Neither the architects for the original construction of 1872, Hartwell and Swasey, nor that for the Queen Anne modifications of 1877, John S. Hammond, are well researched figures. In a town filled with ornate resort architecture, the late Victorian excesses of the Tucker Cottage are remarkable. As a superb exemplar of the Queen Anne aesthetic, it was adorned with a variety of decorative wood carvings: 68 lion heads, 60 doves, 2 dragons, 12 falcons, 142 flowers, 4 John the Baptists, one star, and 12 wolves and goats. Many survive today in the panels of the balustrades on the porches and balconies and on elements projecting from the face of the building, testimony to the woodworkers' skill which gives Oak Bluffs so much of its character. The flora and fauna in the fretwork of the Tucker residence are repeated in a small number of other buildings in Wesleyan Grove and Oak Bluffs, although in less profusion: two in the camp ground and one residence in Ocean Park, that owned by George Landers, a furniture magnate and neighbor of Dr. Tucker's.

(end)

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of Massachusetts agencies from aerial photographs taken 1977 and other source data. This information not field checked. Map edited 1979

EDGARTOWN QUADRANGLE
MASSACHUSETTS-DUKES CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

by Massachusetts Department of Public Works

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

EDGARTOWN, MASS.
N4120—W7027.5/7.5

1972
PHOTOREVISED 1979
AMS 6866 I NE—SERIES V8I

HARRISON TUCKER
COTTAGE
42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS



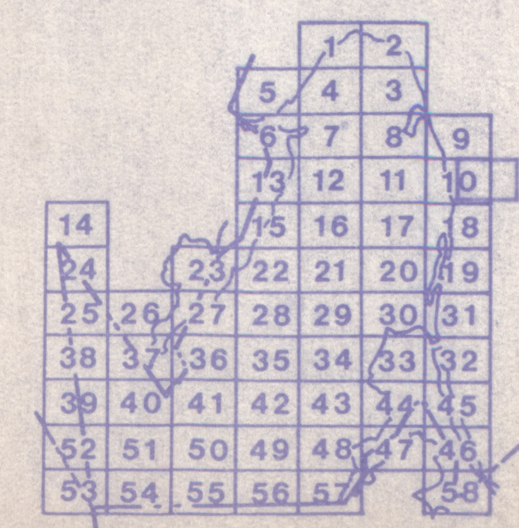
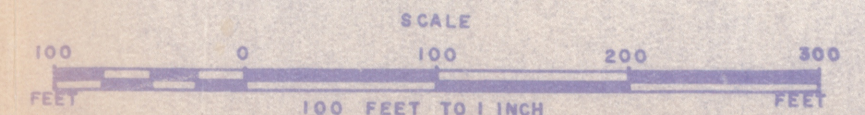
TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS MASSACHUSETTS

ASSESSORS MAPS

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PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & REGISTERED LAND SURVEYORS
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STATE ROAD, VINEYARD HAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS

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TO BE CONSTRUED AS HAVING
SUFFICIENT ACCURACY FOR
CONVEYANCES



REVISION DATES	SHEET No.
	10



Dr. Harrison Tucker Cottage
42 Ocean Avenue
Oak Bluffs, MA

NORTHERN (FRONT) ELEVATION

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988

By DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BAUMHOFFER
EDGARTOWN, MA



Dr. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE
42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS, MA

17 15-3-1-2-3 242

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988
BY DIANE ST. PIERRE

NORTHERN (FRONT) ELEVATION

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BRAUMHOFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

MAY 10 1990



Dr. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE

42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS, MA

CARRIAGE HOUSE BEHIND COTTAGE (SOUTHEASTERN VIEW)

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988

By DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES WITH MARK BAUMHOFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

17 15-3-1-2-3 2 42

MAY 10 1990



Dr. HARRISON TUCKER Cottage
42 Ocean Avenue
Oak Bluffs, MA

Southeastern Elevation

Photographed April 1988

By Diane St. Pierre

Negatives are with Mark Bauhofer
Edgartown, MA

171531-23242

MAY 10 1990



DR. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE
42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS, MA

WEST ELEVATION (TOWER)

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988.

BY DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BAUMHOFFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

17 15-3-1-2-3 2 42

MAY 10 1990



Dr. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE
42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS, MA

17 15-3-1-2-3 242

SOUTHERN ELEVATION

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988

BY DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BAUMHOFFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

MAY 10 1990



DR. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE

42 OCEAN AVENUE

OAK BLUFFS, MA

CARRIAGE HOUSE BEHIND (SOUTHEASTERN VIEW) OF COTTAGE

PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988

BY DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BAUMHOFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

17 15-3-1-2-3 2 42

MAY 10 1988



Dr. HARRISON TUCKER COTTAGE
42 OCEAN AVENUE
OAK BLUFFS, MA.

17 153-1-2-3 242

NORTHWESTERN ELEVATION
PHOTOGRAPHED APRIL 1988
By DIANE ST. PIERRE

NEGATIVES ARE WITH MARK BAUMHOFER
EDGARTOWN, MA

MAY 10 1990

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Tucker, Dr. Harrison A., Cottage

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Dukes

DATE RECEIVED: 1/07/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/23/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000678

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2.23.13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER

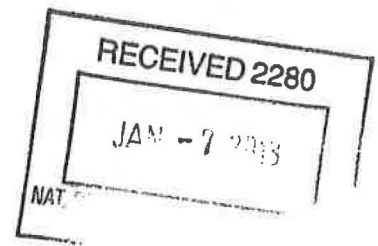
DISCIPLINE

TELEPHONE

DATE

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

December 26, 2012

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Re: Address changes for properties listed on the NRHP

As we digitize our inventory of historic resources, we are discovering discrepancies in property addresses due to renumbering, changing the address to a side street that abuts the parcel, or assigning a precise addresses where none had existed. In some cases, property owners have notified us of an incorrect address. We are, therefore, writing to request technical corrections in the National Register records for the following:

Bedford (Middlesex County)

Page, Christopher House, First Period Buildings of E. Mass NRTRA/IND—new address is 2 Meyers Lane (formerly 50 Old Billerica Road)

Brewster (Barnstable County)

Old Higgins Farm Windmill, NRIND 6/10/1975—new address is 51 Drummer Boy Road (formerly, off Lower Road)

Brookline (Norfolk County)

Brookline Town Stable, Brookline MRA 10/17/1985—new address is 235 Cypress Street (formerly 237)

Orrock, Rev. John House, Brookline MRA/IND 10/17/1985—new address is 64 Winchester Street (formerly 68)

Haverhill (Essex County)

John Greenleaf Whittier Homestead, NRIND 7/30/1975—correct address is 305 Whittier Road (had been incorrectly reported as 105 Whittier Road)

Oak Bluffs (Dukes County)

Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage, NRIND 10/22/1990—new address is 61 Ocean Avenue (formerly 61 Circuit Avenue)

Wellesley (Norfolk County)

Eaton Moulton Mill, NRIND 5/13/76—new address is 35 Walnut Street (formerly 37)

Westborough (Worcester County)

Fisher, Nathan A. House, NRIND 3/25/1980, NRDIS/MPS 7/25/1994—new address is 34 West Main Street (formerly Turnpike Road) 80001679

Maples Cottage, NRIND 3/25/1980, NRDIS/MPS 7/25/1994—new address is 155 Oak Street (formerly Oak Street) 80001681

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

National Register of Historic Places

Archivist note to the record

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Tucker, Dr. Harrison A., Cottage

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Dukes

DATE RECEIVED: 9/07/90

DATE OF PENDING LIST:

DATE OF 16TH DAY:

DATE OF 45TH DAY:

10/22/90

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000678

NOMINATOR: STATE

DETAILED EVALUATION: Y

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 10/22/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Totally significant Queen Anne
summer residence associated with
prominent citizen and medical manufacturer
Dr. Harrison A. Tucker in the summer
resort community of Oak Bluffs.*

*Initial return comments have been
addressed.*

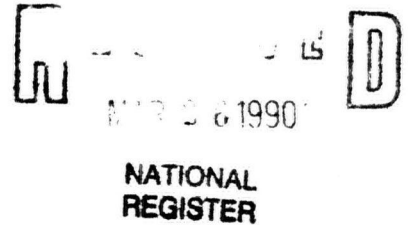
RECOM./CRITERIA Accept B + C

REVIEWER Judge

DISCIPLINE Architectural History

DATE 10-22-90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y ☒ see attached SLR Y ☒



March 12, 1990

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

-Harrison A. Tucker Cottage, 42 Ocean Avenue, Oak Bluffs, (Dukes County),
Massachusetts.

-Union Chapel, Oak Bluffs, (Dukes County), Massachusetts

Both have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed
by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending
State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were
afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached
to the nomination form.

Sincerely,

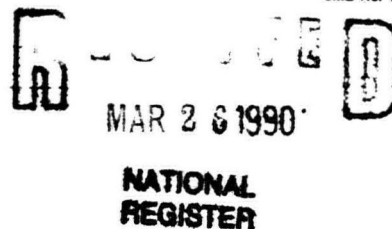
Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure:

BF/cd

Massachusetts Historical Commission, Valerie A. Talmage, *Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer*
80 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116 (617) 727-8470

Office of the Secretary of State, Michael J. Connolly, *Secretary*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 42 Ocean Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Oak Bluffs Martha's Vineyard N/A vicinity
state Massachusetts code 01 county Dukes code 007 zip code 02557

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>2</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.

Valerie Talmage
Signature of certifying official Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical
State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

March 1990
Date Commission;

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.
☐ 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 the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single DwellingDomestic: Secondary Structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple DwellingDomestic: Secondary Structure**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Cast Stone and Brickwalls Wood: Weatherboard and Shingleroof Asphalt

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage is located in the Town of Oak Bluffs, Dukes County, Massachusetts, on the northeastern side of the island of Martha's Vineyard. The cottage is located approximately four miles off the southwestern tip of Cape Cod. Oak Bluffs, a summer resort community, is bounded on the east and north by Nantucket Sound, on the west by Vineyard Haven Harbor and the town of Edgartown (Vineyard Haven), and on the south by Edgartown. The Tucker Cottage, built in the Stick Style in 1872, was substantially altered by its original owner in 1877 into a rambling Queen Anne summer house with carriage barn behind. The cottage today stands on a quarter-acre lot (70' by 130'), set back from the property line five feet on the north, south, and east sides and twenty-five feet on the west side, on a prominent site overlooking Ocean Park and Nantucket Sound. Because the property borders town land, the setback from Ocean Avenue is an additional twenty feet. Topographically, the site is flat and slightly elevated above the Park. Landscaping is minimal, with recently planted low coniferous shrubs on the north front between the house and the asphalted public walkway which runs along the front elevations of the row of cottages comprising this section of Ocean Avenue. Elaborate and eclectic Victorian landscaping, once almost as well known as the architecture of the site, is entirely obliterated.

The Tucker Cottage is part of the Ocean Park neighborhood of Oak Bluffs, a residential enclave of large, late nineteenth century summer cottages of ornamented Victoriana. The street pattern here, primarily curvilinear in form, is dictated by the siting of Ocean Park, a seven-acre, semi-circular, slightly concave green space which faces Seaview Avenue and the Sound beyond. This results in an arrangement of narrow residential lanes forming ever-expanding crescents around the west side of the Park. The Tucker Cottage fronts onto Ocean Avenue, the innermost crescent, closest to Ocean Park, overlooking its bandstand.

Almost nothing is known of the architecture of the Tucker property as it was originally designed by the Boston firm of Hartwell and Swasey in 1872, other than its Stick Style aesthetic and its construction cost of \$11,000. It was the second known building on the site, presumably replacing an earlier one built by Dr. Tucker when he first took up summer residence in Oak Bluffs immediately after the Civil War. The cottage today demonstrates the extensive

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National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Queen Anne modifications made in 1877 and designed by John S. Hammond of Mattapoisett, Massachusetts. It maintains its 1877 siting and form, but has lost some of its highly decorative Queen Anne detailing.

The Tucker property includes an asymmetrical T-plan house and a small, two-bay garage/carriage barn. The house is an irregularly, asymmetrically massed, two-story, plank frame structure with extensive and elaborate porches, low cross-gable roof, pyramidal-roof tower at the northeast corner, and prominent belvedere at the northwest corner. The building sits on a low rock-face cast-stone and brick veneer foundation. Twenty percent of the house has a full basement, the rest, a crawl space. On the first story, the wall surface is clapboard with a four-course band of fish-scale shingles above the fifth or sixth clapboard course from the sills; below the shingled band are wide cornerboards, sillboards, and simulated structural posts below and coterminous with sides of the window frames. The second-story wall surface is fishscale shingles. Windows, unless otherwise noted, are two-over-two, double-hung sash. The porches have turned posts and intricately sawn and carved brackets. The gable ends have exposed, simulated trusswork; the trusses on the north and south gable ends of the west section of the building are filled with flat, pierced panels of scrollwork.

The asymmetrical north elevation divides into three discreet sections: a recessed center flanked by a corner tower on the west and a projecting, gabled pavilion on the east. The western tower, forty-six feet at its apex, has porches on the first and second stories of the north elevation: both have shed roofs, and that on the first is double the width of that on the second; centered within the pavilion's north elevation on both first and second story are double-leaf glazed doors. On the west elevation of the tower are centered, paired windows on the first story, a centered window on the second story, and a centered, horizontal, two-light window at the attic story level. The first- and second-story windows are shielded by shed-roof hoods supported by arched braces; the braces on the first story are ornamented with latticework and diaperwork. The first story of the tower's south elevation has a window at the west end and a post-and-beam porch at the east end; the porch has flat, pierced panels of scrollwork in its balustrade and its valence. The second story of the tower's south elevation is blind; it intersects with the gable end of the main block, which has simulated trusswork in the gable end and a pair of windows on its south side. Atop the tower is an open, exposed post-and-beam construction, gable-roof belvedere. The roof structure, similar to the decorative work in the east gable end, has king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces and hammerbeams. The west tower was destroyed during the hurricane of 1938, and was rebuilt between 1984 and 1986 using old photographs for evidence of form and articulation. Not all original detailing was reconstructed.

(continued)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

The first story of the center section of the north facade is glazed: double-leaf doors at either end flank four abutting windows in the middle. Above the center section's first story is a shed roof, intersected over the doors by gable-end hoods supported on large braces and decorated in their gable ends with diaperwork surrounding a central rondel. On the second story is a three-bay open porch set within the mass of the house: a double-leaf door is located in the easternmost bay of the south wall; windows are in the east and west walls and the other bays of the south wall. On the north facade, the eastern projecting pavillion has open porches on the first and second story and double-leaf glazed doors centered on both stories. Centered above the doors on the second story is an oculus. The first-story porch, which wraps around the southwest corner of the building and extends along the east wall, is covered by a shed roof. The low balustrade of the first-story porch is partially filled with flat, pierced geometrical-pattern panels. The second-story porch has an open latticework balustrade, and its upper section includes decorative trusswork similar to the roof structure of the belvedere, including king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces, and hammerbeams.

The east elevation of the main block of the building has a full-width first-story porch, a continuation of that on the east elevation of the facade, a chimney near its center, and a tower that breaks from the mass of the house near the north end of the second story. Windows flank the chimney on the first story, and a window is south of the chimney on the second story. The common-bond brick chimney (believed to be original to 1877), which breaks through the gabled dormer, tapers above the porch roof; at its cap is a low gable above two rectangular openings on the east and west sides. The semi-octagonal tower has narrow, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows in the southeast, east, and northeast walls; arched braces with quatrefoil motifs support the soffit of the steep, flaring pyramidal roof. The south elevation of the main block has paired windows on the first story, a single window centered on the second story, and an oculus centered in the attic. Above the first-story windows is a shed-roof hood supported by arched braces. The gable end has decorative trusswork similar to that on the north gable end, including king post, collar beam, queen posts, arched braces, and hammerbeams.

There is an ell at the rear of the building. The east elevation of the ell has a four-bay shed-roof extension the width of the first story. The two northernmost bays frame a porch, set within the building's mass; within the porch is a centered window on the east wall and a door on the north wall. The bay immediately south of the porch has vertical-board siding with two, symmetrically placed, vertical, one-light windows. The southernmost bay has a centered, vertical one-light window. The second story of the ell's east side has two symmetrically placed windows. The ell's south elevation has a three-bay first and two-bay second story. A full-width, shed-roof hood, supported on arched braces, shields the first story, which has a door at its

(continued)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

west end and two windows. Symmetrically placed windows are on the second story. Centered in the attic is a blind rondel. The gable end has simulated king post and tie beam. To the east of the porch and at the southern end of the east elevation's one-story extension is a shed-roof bulkhead. The west elevation of the ell has two symmetrically placed, vertically stacked windows on the first and second stories.

The garage, twenty-two feet square, was originally the carriage barn. It has a low gable roof and exterior sheathing like that on the main house, save for the east side, which has vertical-board siding. The south elevation has two double-leaf doors; each leaf has a glazed, eight-light upper section (with missing rails) and a larger, match-board lower section with superimposed X-plan bracing. Centered above the door frame is a square medallion with a low-relief bust of an animal's head. The west elevation has a window to the east and a wide, four-pane door to the west; the lower panels of the door have superimposed X-plan bracing. The east elevation is blind. The building is located southeast of the house and fronts onto Samoset Avenue. It is likely that the roof form of the garage is not original, but no documentary evidence has been found to either confirm or deny this.

The interior of the Tucker house retains almost nothing from either the 1872 or the 1877 building campaigns. The structure was divided into six units in the early 1930s, destroying the celebrated "open plan" described in early sources. Surviving interior details include (original?) soapstone fireplaces in three of the apartments and the main entryway staircase with pine treads and black walnut rails and balusters.

Webb's Cottage City Directory, published in 1881, cited in H.B. Hough's Martha's Vineyard: Summer Resort, provides a detailed description of how the Tucker residence appeared shortly after receiving its Queen Anne alterations:

The architecture of the villa is a combination of several different designs, so blended as to make a more attractive whole than had a single style been followed. Broad piazzas, of elaborate design, with spacious balconies above them; bay windows, affording a resting place for rare and beautiful plants; panels in patchwork of cathedral glass in the outer hall doors; griffins in terra cotta on the pediments that cover the steps leading to the piazza in front of the halls, and grotesque heads of the same material inserted in the sides of the brackets and spandrils (sic) of the piazzas and balconies; the apex of the roof to the bay window over the park is crowned with a griffin sitting position (sic) facing the park.

The entire outside surface of the villa is covered with clapboards, alternating with fancy cut shingles, and the painting throughout the building is striking and elegant. The

(continued)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Harrison Tucker Cottage
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

shingles of the roof are dark green, on the second story Indian red; the clapboards of the first story are of Quaker drab, the trimmings bronze green, and the chimneys terra cotta. (pp. 188, 189)

On the exterior of the cottage, much of the rich ornamentation of 1877 has been modified or is missing. No longer extant are the original wood shingle roofs with iron cresting and elaborate finials; a decorative gable over the upper porch of the recessed central section of the north facade; many of the pierced board panels in the upper and lower balustrades; and a first story porch in the recessed central section. Modifications have been made over time to many of the balustrade elements on all elevations of the residence.

(continued)

Returned

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetHarrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, MassachusettsSection number 7 Page 5

Archaeological Description

No prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property or in the general area (within one mile). Little evidence is also present for historic archaeological resources on the property other than sheet refuse and limited trash deposits possibly related to house construction and/or late 19th, early 20th century occupation of the house. Because of these factors, small lot size (1/4 + acre) and the impacts of house construction on the lot, the potential for significant archaeological remains, either prehistoric or historic is low.

(end)

Returned

8. Statement of Significance Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

1990

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ArchitectureHealth/MedicineSocial History

Period of Significance

1872-1891

Significant Dates

18721877

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Dr. Harrison A. Tucker

Architect/Builder

Hartwell and SwaseyHammond, John S.

State significance of property, and justify criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Built by a nationally prominent manufacturer of patent medicines in 1872 and substantially altered by him in 1877, the property is significant as the summer residence of Dr. Tucker who, in addition to his involvement with patent medicines, served as Oak Bluffs' most conspicuous host and civic-minded citizen from immediately after the Civil War until his death in 1891. During this period, the Tucker Cottage was the scene of luminous social events, including a visit by President and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant in August 1864. The property is also important as the most ornate Queen Anne cottage in Oak Bluffs, a summer resort community that came to epitomize the latest fashion in architectural taste during the last decades of the nineteenth century. The highly embellished residences constructed then render Oak Bluffs a significant enclave of late Victorian architecture of eminent artistic value. The Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage thus fulfills Criteria A, B and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

As an early example of a planned subdivision designed on romantic ideals, the community of Oak Bluffs was laid out originally in 1867 adjacent to the famed Methodist camp meeting at Wesleyan Grove, which was founded in 1835. That year lay exhorter Jeremiah Pease chose an oak grove near Squash Meadow Pond in what later became Oak Bluffs for his camp meeting for Island Methodists. The religious activities there became so popular that by 1868, camp meeting drew attendees from all over New England who occupied six hundred tent and cottage lots in that part of the Vineyard. The Island also attracted visitors seeking respite from the summer heat of the mainland, leading to the formation in 1866 of an ambitious speculative development scheme unrelated to the religious objectives at Wesleyan Grove. The goal of the developers was to create one thousand new houselots.

Within a few years, this resort community, originally called Cottage City

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

and renamed Oak Bluffs in 1907, became a major attraction for the middle class, often carrying forward the spiritual values espoused by the closely situated camp meeting, although not formally associated with Methodism. By 1870, it was evident that this new resort borrowed both physical planning ideals and architectural tendencies from camp meeting for the project at Oak Bluffs. The buildings and settlement pattern of the nascent Cottage City were thus seen as an extension of many aspects of Wesleyan Grove.

Robert Morris Copeland, a landscape gardener experienced in rural cemetery layout and a contemporary of Frederick Law Olmsted, was hired by the developers to plan the lots and streets of the new community. One of Copeland's early scenarios for the site (in 1867) called for a seven acre park in an area near the bluffs, opening the land considerably and providing relief from the intensity of tiny house lots that were the mainstay of the development scheme. Named Ocean Park, this green space is today the most distinctive landscape feature of Oak Bluffs. The 1867 Copeland plan was amended at least twice, in 1870 and 1871, to incorporate an additional forty acres purchased by the Oak Bluffs Land and Wharf Company. What results is an imaginative and romantic land plan in a scheme that uses primarily curvilinear forms borrowed from the physical aesthetic of the camp meeting, but translated into scale required of traditional neighborhoods. Lots in the early stages of Cottage City's growth are thirty-five by sixty-five feet, and those of the 1870, 1871 sections are fifty by seventy-five feet. Campground lots at Wesleyan Grove were only fourteen to twenty feet wide. Deed restrictions in Cottage City further required set backs of ten feet at the front and five feet at the sides of the buildings, defining the normal relationship of house and privately owned land to the public streets. By 1870, success seemed guaranteed for the new community. The developers embarked on an extensive two year program of construction, which came to include a grand hotel and non-sectarian chapel, demonstrating an advanced level of architectural ambition as they moved beyond small cottage construction exclusively. It was also during this period that cottages on a scale more pretentious than that seen before were built. Dr. Harrison A. Tucker's 1872 Stick Style residence by the Boston firm of Hartwell and Swasey was one. Four small, standard lots were combined into a single parcel of 70 feet by 130 feet, making it the largest residential property of the time in Oak Bluffs.

Harrison Tucker, who maintained his permanent residence at 393 Clinton Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, was perhaps Oak Bluff's best known figure from the time he began his summer sojourns on the Island until his death there in late May 1891. Prior to constructing his 1872 cottage at 42 Ocean Avenue, he occupied another cottage on the Vineyard, possibly at the same site. He has been described as one of Oak Bluffs' earliest cottagers, and a man "whom an earthquake would hardly incommode, ... the incarnation of passive strength." (Hough, p. 186) Tucker was born on 18 March 1832 in Norton, Massachusetts.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAY 10 1970

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

After schooling at the medical colleges of Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania, he opened a physician's practice of undetermined specialty and eventually maintained offices simultaneously in Boston, Providence, Brooklyn and Martha's Vineyard. Tucker's medical reputation is based on his discovering, compounding, and marketing various patent medicines, of which Diaphoretic Compound #59 became the most popular. This particular medicine was ameliorative for a wide range of maladies, from complaints of nervousness, convulsions, and headache to problems associated with disease of the gums. Dr. Tucker also distributed other patented preparations, and had a huge consultative practice, both of which no doubt enabled him to build and furnish opulent residences and donate generously to philanthropic causes, especially in Oak Bluffs.

Harrison Tucker's contributions to the community where he established his summer home were many. In addition to constructing architectural showplaces, as the resort's most noted host, he "opened and closed the season...and knew everyone worth knowing," often entertaining dignitaries visiting the Island. (Hough, p.186) He was active in local political and social affairs, including his advocacy of Cottage City's secession from Edgartown and as a supporter of the cause of Cottage City as "the showplace of Martha's Vineyard." He underwrote the cost of summer programs of brass bands and fireworks, and is reputed to have financed the construction of the bandstand in Ocean Park, which he could view from the extensive verandas of his cottage. He was the co-founder of Oak Bluffs' Trinity Episcopal Church. As a "lover of good living," his hospitality was almost limitless. On August 1874, President and Mrs. Grant visited the Island toward the close of the season and were entertained by Dr. Tucker where they shared a view from a balcony of his house of the grand exhibition of fireworks and the illumination, the first of what was to become an annual tradition. For this event, the residence seemed to be in a "mimic state of conflagration all evening" with lanterns and colored lights inside and out. "The whole interior (of the house) was irradiated." (Hough, pp. 114, 115)

Here the cultivated life of Cottage City had its perfect flowering. Here Dr. Tucker drew about him with a sure instinct all that was consonant with the ideals of his people and his time, and radiated the atmosphere which was the essence...of the resort. (Hough, p. 189)

Toward the end of his life, Harrison Tucker was involved in the founding of two major social organizations on the Island. Both the Oak Bluffs Club and the Martha's Vineyard Club, incorporated in 1886, owe much to his vision of civic improvement. The Oak Bluffs Club became the scene of entertainment and companionship for a group of prominent summer residents who were the "gay and expansive set." (Hough, p. 194) Tucker was its first treasurer and official host, welcoming members of the New York Yacht Club on their summer cruise.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAY 10 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Harrison Tucker Cottage,
Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Operating on a scale of grandeur beyond the means of its treasury, the Oak Bluffs Club finally ceased to exist, but only after Tucker's death. The Martha's Vineyard Club, with Dr. Tucker as its first president, had promotion of Cottage City as its objective. As such, it was the precursor of improvement societies and chambers of commerce which were to become part of the civic landscape of so much of early twentieth century America.

The summer residence of Harrison Tucker in the Ocean Park neighborhood of Oak Bluffs embodies distinctive characteristics of its type, period, and method of construction. It is substantially more grand in scale than those residences which existed on Oak Bluffs at the time of its construction, and epitomizes the desire of some in the community to move beyond the middle class associations of camp meeting and bring to the Island an element of social ambition and even pretension. In terms of its architecture, the cottage is the largest and most ornate Queen Anne summer house in Ocean Park and one of the best known of the cottages of the Vineyard. Tucker was one of the first to buy a lot and build in Oak Bluffs outside the camp ground. He chose a prime site with a commanding perspective, facing the Park and the Sound beyond. Neither the architects for the original construction of 1872, Hartwell and Swasey, nor that for the Queen Anne modifications of 1877, John S. Hammond, are well researched figures. In a town filled with ornate resort architecture, the late Victorian excesses of the Tucker Cottage are remarkable. As a superb exemplar of the Queen Anne aesthetic, it was adorned with a variety of decorative wood carvings: 68 lion heads, 60 doves, 2 dragons, 12 falcons, 142 flowers, 4 John the Baptists, one star, and 12 wolves and goats. Many survive today in the panels of the balustrades on the porches and balconies and on elements projecting from the face of the building, testimony to the woodworkers' skill which gives Oak Bluffs so much of its character. The flora and fauna in the fretwork of the Tucker residence are repeated in a small number of other buildings in Wesleyan Grove and Oak Bluffs, although in less profusion: two in the camp ground and one residence in Ocean Park, that owned by George Landers, a furniture magnate and neighbor of Dr. Tucker's.

(end)

9. Major Bibliographical References Tucker Cottage, Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Hough, Henry Beetle. Martha's Vineyard: Summer Resort. Edgartown, Massachusetts:
Privately printed for Avery's 1966.

Public records at Oak Bluffs Town Hall, Edgartown Town Hall, and Dukes County Registry
of Deeds.

Weiss, Ellen. City in the Woods: The Life and Design of an American Camp Meeting on
Martha's Vineyard. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested HPCA # 111 MA
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible for the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings
Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository:

Massachusetts Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 19 369890 4590300
Zone Easting Northing
C

B
Zone Easting Northing
D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Dr. Harrison A. Tucker Cottage coincides with that of the Town of
Oak Bluffs Tax Assessor's Lot #4, no Plat # given. The boundary represents the limit
of land that encompasses the resource and its immediate setting, both at the time of
construction and today. See Assessor's map which accompanies this form.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire town lot that has historically been associated with the
Tucker Cottage.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark Baumhofer, Owner, with Karen L. Jessup, Consultant, and Betsy Friedberg,
organization NR Director Massachusetts Historical Commission date November 24, 1989
street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state Massachusetts zip code 02116

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Tucker, Dr. Harrison A., Cottage

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Dukes

DATE RECEIVED: 3/26/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/10/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/26/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/10/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000678

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	Y	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	Y	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

___ACCEPT ☒ RETURN ___REJECT 5/10/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Return
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 5-10-90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) *The cottage is but*

___summary paragraph

___completeness

___clarity

☒ applicable criteria

___justification of areas checked

___relating significance to the resource

___context

___relationship of integrity to significance

___justification of exception

___other

an individual property within a much larger potentially (probably) eligible historic district. The case has not been adequately justified for the individual significance of the cottage under Criterion A. Please specify its individual eligibility under A or delete A from a resubmission. B is most applicable for Tucker with area of medicine, but covers social history as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed *Beth A. Savage*

Phone *(202) 343-9540*

Date *5-10-90*



August 31, 1990

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Schull:

Please find enclosed the following resubmitted nomination:

Harrison Tucker Cottage, 42 Ocean Avenue, Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard (Dukes County), Massachusetts, 02557.

All corrections have been made in accordance with your comments.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosure: