

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED **APR 9 1982**
DATE ENTERED

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Swearingen, John J., House

AND/OR COMMON

Langford, R.H., House

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

690 E. Church Street

N/A -- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bartow

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

N/A -- VICINITY OF

8

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Polk

CODE

105

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

N/A

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

(See Continuation Sheet)

STREET & NUMBER

(See Continuation Sheet)

CITY, TOWN

Bartow

STATE

Florida

N/A -- VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Polk County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

101 E. Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bartow

STATE

Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Polk County Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management

CITY, TOWN

Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The John J. Swearingen House in Bartow is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architectural style. Set back on a corner lot in a residential area, the rectangular, double-pile central hall, two-story, five-bay brick house, with its monumental Ionic portico, is notable for its strict adherence to classical detailing.

The roof is hipped, and has two end chimneys. A gable pediment projects from the south entrance roof slope. The entrance facade is dominated by a monumental portico. Two pairs of Ionic columns support a pediment with full entablature, bearing a decorative bullseye window in the tympanum. The portico entablature also extends around the main block of the house.

Fenestration on both stories is regular five bay. The main entrance is a ten-light door flanked by ten-light sidelights and an elliptical fanlight. The remaining first story fenestration is six over one double hung sash with masonry sills and lintels. Fenestration on the second story is composed of central paired doors, and six over one double hung sash windows with masonry sills and lintels.

There is a one-story gallery across the entire first story entrance facade. A porte-cochere extends from the western side. The porte-cochere and gallery have Tuscan columns and entablature. The porte-cochere gallery roof serves as a second story deck. This deck extends the length of the south facade and has simple balusters and decorative posts with finials.

The house rests on a brick wall foundation, and a series of four brick steps lead up to the entrance gallery. Except for a possible change in the roofing material, the exterior of the Swearingen House is unaltered.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES +1923 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Bonfoey, B. Clayton; Tampa, Florida

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The John J. Swearingen House is significant as one of the finest examples of the Colonial Revival architectural style in Polk County, Florida. The house has been occupied by two prominent Floridians: John J. Swearingen, the first owner, was a leading Florida attorney and a member of the state senate; Richard H. Langford, Swearingen's son-in-law, was a well-known agronomist and civic leader. B. Clayton Bonfoey, a major Florida architect responsible for designing many of Tampa's finer buildings, designed the Swearingen House.

John J. Swearingen was born in Newnan, Georgia, in 1878. His family emigrated to Florida in 1883. The Swearingens settled in Homeland, Polk County, where the elder Swearingen operated a farm. John Swearingen attended school and graduated from the Summerlin Institute in Bartow. He enrolled at Washington and Lee University in Virginia, but the Spanish-American War interrupted his college studies. He enlisted in a Polk County company, "Ray's Immunes", and spent many months in active service in Cuba. In 1902, Swearingen received his law degree from Washington and Lee University.¹

Upon graduation Swearingen began practicing law. His first office was in Arcadia (DeSoto County). In 1907 he returned to Bartow where he entered into partnership with two brothers, Thomas L. Wilson and Charles C. Wilson. Charles Wilson was a former state senator from Polk County. The firm, Wilson and Swearingen, was regarded as "one of the outstanding law firms of all south Florida." Swearingen and his partners specialized in corporate law, and numbered "phosphate companies, banks and other large business concerns" among their major clients.²

Besides being a partner in one of the state's most respected law firms, Swearingen was involved in many local activities. He was a director of the Bartow Board of Trade, President of the Summerlin Academy Alumni Association, and a Trustee of Southern College.³

Swearingen's other interests included Florida banking. He was a director of the State Bank of Bartow, and the Bank of Mulberry. His commercial directorships included the Roux Crate Company of Bartow and the Gulf Life Insurance Company of Jacksonville. Swearingen was also a director of the Florida Chamber of Commerce.⁴

Swearingen served as Senator of the 7th District (Polk County), from 1924 until his death in 1931. He was on the Rules and Procedures, Mining and Mineral Resources, and Public Roads and Highways committees. His work in the Senate won him "state-wide recognition." John J. Swearingen died in 1931.⁵

In 1908 Swearingen married Mary Harding Rainey of Milton, North Carolina. They had two children, Katherine Swearingen, born in 1909, and William Swearingen, born in 1911.⁶

Katherine Swearingen married Richard Hickson Langford, a fourth generation Floridian,

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one (1).

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

QUADRANGLE NAME USGS Bartow

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 min.

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 417710 3086000
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All that part and parcel known as Lytle's first addition, lots 8 & 9.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

P. Ana Gordon (Assistant Historian)

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management December 3, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

The Capitol

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Tallahassee

Florida

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

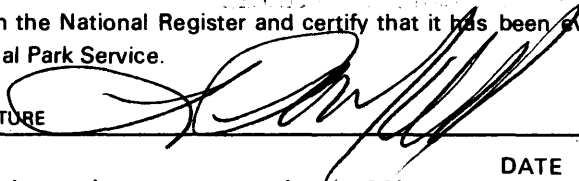
NATIONAL

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



TITLE

L. Ross Morrell, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/25/82

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

William H. Strickland

DATE 5.13.82

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

William H. Strickland
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 5/13/82

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET one ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

Mary J. Love
710 E. Church St.
Bartow, Florida

The Estate of Mary Hendrix
710 E. Church St.
Bartow, Florida

Katherine S. Langford
690 E. Church St.
Bartow, Florida

Elizabeth S. Orr
650 E. Church St.
Bartow, Florida

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CONTINUATION SHEET two ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

in 1938. At a later date, the couple moved into the Swearingen House. Katherine Swearingen Langford was a graduate of the Florida State College for Women, and Richard Langford was a graduate of the University of Florida and the Georgia School of Technology. Langford owned citrus groves in Polk and Highland Counties, and also bred Brahmin cattle. Langford was a citrus consultant to agricultural firms around the state, and served as a director of the National Farm Loan Association. He was a president of the Bartow Kiwanis Club.⁷

B. Clayton Bonfoey, a prominent Florida architect, designed the John J. Swearingen House. He was born in Connecticut in 1873. His father was a contractor, and in his teens the younger Bonfoey worked for his father as a carpenter. Later, he became a construction superintendent. In all, Bonfoey worked in this trade for fifteen years. Bonfoey received his technical training at the Hillyer Institute in Hartford, Connecticut.⁸

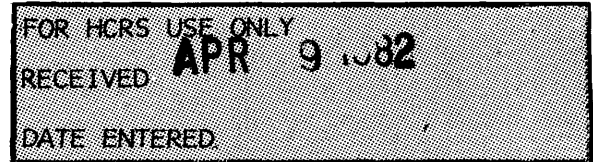
In 1903, on his way to a prospective job in Key West, Bonfoey stopped in Tampa. He liked the city, and decided to stay. His first jobs were as the in-house architect for various lumber firms, including the Jetton-Dekle, Tampa-Havana, and Bates, Huchell & Jetton, companies.⁹

In 1908 the thirty-five year old Bonfoey joined forces with M. Leo Elliott, a twenty-one year old architect. Their firm, Bonfoey and Elliott, won competitions for several of the most prestigious local commissions of Tampa's pre-World War I era. Their first design was the Tampa YMCA building, completed in 1909. Later buildings included the Circulo Cubano Clubhouse (built in 1909, National Register 1972), the Centro Asturiano de Tampa (a Cuban men's club, built 1914, National Register 1974), and the Tampa City Hall (built 1915, National Register 1974). Other significant structures by the firm are the Leiman-Wilson House, the Gordon-Keller Hospital, and numerous houses in Suburb Beautiful (now Hyde Park).¹⁰

During World War I, both partners went their separate ways. When the partnership dissolved in 1919, Bonfoey opened his own office. The Stoval Professional Building, the Strange Theater, the Falk Theater, and more homes in Suburb Beautiful were among his individual commissions. By 1922, a total of 608 buildings in and around Tampa were attributed to Bonfoey.¹¹ In 1923, Bonfoey built the John J. Swearingen House in Bartow.

Bonfoey was a member of the AIA. He was registered in Florida, and served one term as First Vice-President of the Florida Association of Architects. Governor Park Trammel appointed Bonfoey to the State Board of Architects. This appointment was renewed by Governor Sidney J. Catts.¹²

In 1927 Bonfoey "lost practically everything" when the bottom fell out of the Florida land boom. His professional investments in several large projects were never realized. Bonfoey suffered a severe stroke one year later, and although he recovered partial mobility, he never practiced as an architect again. B. Clayton Bonfoey died on the eighteenth of February, 1953.¹³



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET three ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

B. Clayton Bonfoey married Mattie Redditt in 1904. They had a son, Kenneth, who presently lives in Tallahassee.¹⁴

FOOTNOTES:

¹State of Florida. Journal of the twenty-fourth regular session. April 4 to June 2nd, 1933. May 4, 1933. p. 296. This page is an address given by Senator Spessard Holland (D-Polk) commemorating the life and career of John Swearingen, late Senator of Polk County.

²Ibid.

³M.F. Hetherington, History of Polk County, Florida: Narrative and Biographical. (St. Augustine: The Record Company, 1928) p. 58.

⁴Donald B. McKay, Pioneer Florida: Personal and Family Records, Vol. III. (Tampa: The Southern Publishing Company, 1939), p. 154.

⁵Journal of the State Senate of Florida of the Session of 1927, Vol. II, p. 5157.

⁶State of Florida, Journal of the Senate, 1933. p. 296.

⁷Pioneer Florida, p. 154.

⁸Interview. Kenneth Bonfoey, son of architect B. Clayton Bonfoey, conducted by Mary McMahon, Historic Tampa/Hillsborough Preservation Board. September 10, 1980.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.; Men of the South (New Orleans: Southern Biographical Association, 1922), p. 281.

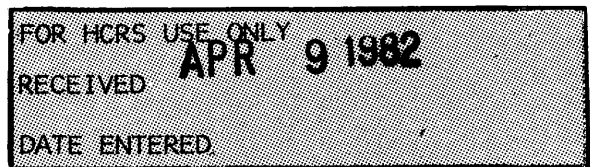
¹²Men of the South, p. 281.

¹³Interview with Kenneth Bonfoey.

¹⁴Ibid.

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(11/78)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET four

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Bonfoey, Kenneth. Interview with Mary McCahon, Historic Tampa/Hillsborough Preservation Board. September 10, 1980.

Hetherington, M.F. History of Polk County, Florida: Narrative and Biographical. St. Augustine

McKay, Donald B., Pioneer Florida; Personal and Family Records, Vol. III, (Tampa: 1939)
The Southern Publishing Co., p. 154.

Men of the South (New Orleans: Southern Biographical Association, 1922), p. 281.

State of Florida Journal of the Senate 1927, Vol. II.

State of Florida Journal of the Senate 1933, Vol. I.