

DATA SHEET

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wisconsin
COUNTY: Milwaukee
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE JAN 17 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:
Charles Allis Art Library

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Allis, Charles, House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1630 East Royall Place

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
5th

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 53202 COUNTY: Milwaukee CODE: 079

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

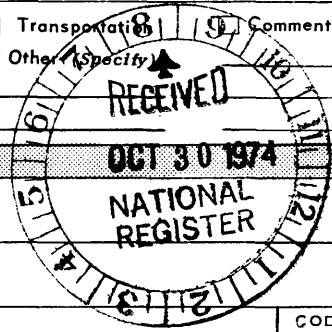
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
City of Milwaukee

STREET AND NUMBER:
200 East Wells Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 53202 55



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Milwaukee County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
901 North Ninth Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 53233 55

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1973 (photos only) Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 20540 11

STATE: Wisconsin
COUNTY: Milwaukee
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Allis house stands on the northwest corner of East Royall Place and North Prospect Avenue on Milwaukee's near east side. Traditional in style--its design was inspired by Tudor prototypes--it is traditional, too, in terms of the visible building materials--brick, sandstone, marble, mahogany, walnut, bronze, leaded glass. But it is said that steel and concrete were also employed in its construction, for the original owner intended from the outset that in due course his home would become a public building. And so it did on the death of his widow twenty-nine years ago. The house now belongs to the City of Milwaukee and is operated, under the aegis of the Milwaukee Public Library System, as a public museum, housing the splendid collection of paintings, graphics, small sculpture, and decorative arts assembled by Charles Allis and his wife.

The Allis house is a rectangular building two and one-half stories in height, with walls of mauve-brown Ohio brick trimmed with Lake Superior sandstone of a similar but lighter hue. Steeply pitched intersecting gabled roofs crown the composition. Facade (south elevation) and first floor plan are symmetrical. A small entrance foyer on the south opens into the main hall, which has marble flooring, marble-panelled walls, and an arched ceiling with elaborate plaster ornament. To the west are the dining room, kitchen, and pantry; to the east are the living room and library, the latter opening onto a small porch that occupies that northeast corner of the first floor. Dining room and library are panelled with Honduras mahogany; the living room woodwork is Circassian walnut. All three rooms retain their original furnishings. A marble staircase with bronze balusters and mahogany stair rail joins the main hall and second floor. Rooms and corridors on the upper story are also used to exhibit the Allis collection as well as changing displays of other collections and work by regional artists.

Adjoining the west side of the house is a one and one-half story wing that served originally as the garage and has been remodelled for use as a meeting and lecture room. There have been no other major alterations to interior or exterior, and building and grounds are well-maintained.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1909; 1945**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering ^{WV}	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Association with a</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	<u>historically significant person</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Designated as a Milwaukee Landmark in 1972, this elegant building was designed by the distinguished local architect Alexander C. Eschweiler for Charles Allis, first president of the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company. After the death of Sarah Ball Allis in 1945, ownership of the mansion and its contents--a fine collection of art objects and furnishings--passed to the City of Milwaukee, and the residence became a museum, operated as the Charles Allis Art Library by the Milwaukee Public Library System. It survives in an excellent state of preservation. The Allis collection includes oriental porcelains, ceramics, and carvings; small bronzes dating from the Renaissance era and the 19th century; graphics by Albrecht Dürer, Rembrandt, and James A. M. Whistler--among others; 18th century French furniture; and landscapes by Thomas Gainsborough, Winslow Homer, C. F. Daubigny, J. B. C. Corot, and others.

A son of E. P. Allis, founder of the important Edward P. Allis & Company in Milwaukee, Charles Allis became a prominent Milwaukee industrialist and financier and served as secretary-treasurer of the company after his father's death in 1889. He was president of the newly formed Allis-Chalmers Company (1901-1905), vice-president and director of the Milwaukee Trust Company, director of the First National Bank, trustee of the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, and organizer and president of the Chicago Belting Company. Charles Allis took a deep interest in art and was the first president of the Milwaukee Art Society and a trustee of the Layton Art Gallery. (Excerpted from the Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography).



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

American Heritage, Historic Houses of America Open to the Public, New York, 1971, 312.

Building permits and other records, General Office, Department of Building Inspection and Safety Engineering, 1010 Municipal Building, Milwaukee.

The Charles Allis Art Library, Milwaukee, n.d.

Perrin, Richard W. E., Milwaukee Landmarks, Milwaukee, 1968, 91-92.

Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1960, 9.

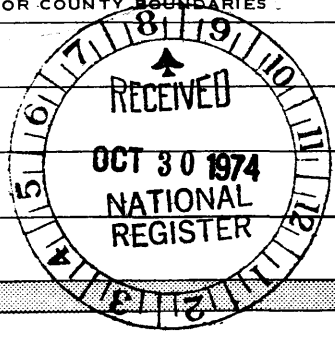
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 1.0

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mary Ellen Wietczykowski, Chairman

ORGANIZATION: Milwaukee Landmarks Commission DATE: Aug. 15, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
734 North Ninth Street

CITY OR TOWN: Milwaukee STATE: Wisconsin 53233 CODE: 55

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: James Morton Smith
Title: Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Date: Oct 23, 1974

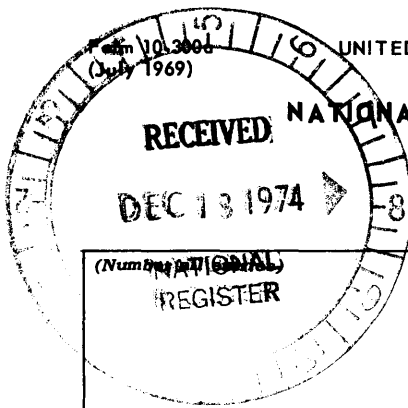
NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Arthur H. Hartzman
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 1/17/75

ATTEST:
Charles H. Hartzman
Keeper of The National Register
Date: 1.15.75



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

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Milwaukee	
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(Number 10,300)
REGISTER

CHARLES ALLIS ART LIBRARY

7. After 1945, when ownership of the house passed to the City of Milwaukee, a 1½-story wing on its west side which had originally served as a garage was converted into a meeting and lecture room. As already stated, there were no other major alterations to the house, either inside or out. To regulate visitor traffic, two or three doors were rehung so that they opened in the opposite direction from the original, and to meet code requirements a door in the basement was replaced with a fire door. The house had been built originally to be fireproof because Charles Allis, for whom it was built, wished to protect his art collection, which was extensive. Except for the garage wing alteration mentioned above, therefore, no structural changes were required to convert the Allis house to a museum.

8. "Art" is deleted as an area of significance.

The house's architectural significance derives from both its architect and the style it exemplifies plus the materials used for both exterior and interior. Details are given in the description, paragraphs one and two. As to style, the description already states in part, "its design was inspired by Tudor prototypes." (Marcus Whiffen would probably label it Jacobethan Revival.) The architect was the distinguished and important Alexander C. Eschweiler, of Milwaukee, of whom Richard W. E. Perrin writes, "Few architects could lay claim to as many consistently well-designed buildings as A. C. Eschweiler...While never slavishly copied, his early work leaned heavily toward Elizabethan and Jacobean forms...One of his finest earlier houses, now accessible to the public, is the Allis Art Library, 1630 E. Royall Place which was built in 1909 for Charles Allis, first president of the Allis-Chalmers Company."¹

To summarize, the house is an architecturally important Milwaukee mansion, designed by an important architect of the end of the last century and most of the first half of this one, and built for a person of significance to the local history of the Milwaukee area, Charles Allis, industrialist, financier, art collector and art patron. Further details about the local historical significance of Allis are given in the last paragraph of the original statement of significance. The association of Allis with the house was that he built it, lived in it until his death (1918), housed his important and valuable art collection there, and arranged for both the house and the art collection to become public Milwaukee property upon the death of his widow.

1. Perrin, Milwaukee Landmarks, 91-92.

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Wisconsin	
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Milwaukee	
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	JAN 17 1975

(Number all entries)

CHARLES ALLIS ART LIBRARY

11. Donald N. Anderson, Asst. Director, Historic Sites & Markers Division

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

October 2, 1974

816 State Street

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

Code: 55

