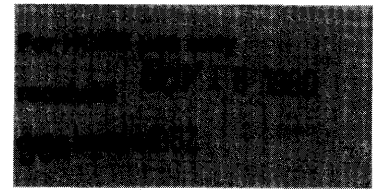


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 The Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity

and/or common Georgia Tech Chi Phi House

**2. Location**

street & number 720 Fowler Street, N.W. N/A not for publication

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of congressional district 5th - Wyche Fowler

state Georgia code 013 county Fulton code 121

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: fraternity

**4. Owner of Property**

name The Omega Trust Association; William W. Ranck, President.

street & number c/o William W. Ranck, 1039 Dawn View Lane N.W.

city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity of state Georgia 30327

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Fulton County Courthouse

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records none

city, town state

---

## 7. Description

---

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

---

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity is a two-story, brick structure with a steeply pitched, dormered slate roof. The original portion of the house is composed of a two-story, five-bayed block and attached one-story porch (now enclosed). The second bay (from the left) is a slightly protruding gabled entrance bay. The central bay is terminated by chimneys.

The fenestration throughout is mostly paired, double-hung windows, nine-over nine. On the first floor, the windows have a cast surround. The second-story window above the front door also exhibits this treatment. The front door takes the form of a large Tudor or Ogee arch, with a clearly expressed and embellished cast surround and label moldings. Two small windows flanking this doorway also have the stone treatment as does the window in the top of the gable. The entrance block has cast shoulders at the second-floor level. An addition was added to the rear of the house in 1955 that contains a kitchen on the first floor and sleeping rooms on the second floor.

Across the front of the house, there is a tile terrace that is about twelve feet wide. Below this terrace is a terraced lawn area that is about twenty feet wide. Between this area and the street is a steep bank about seven feet high. The house overlooks a park and is separated from it by Fowler Street.

Within the Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity, the most distinctive feature is a spiral staircase which begins in the basement and terminates in the attic. The stair's center is open from the first floor to the attic. The principal room on the first floor is the living room, which has a transverse and laterally beamed, painted ceiling and a highly ornamental mantelpiece at the end opposite the entrance hall. Beyond this room is the now enclosed screen porch. To the left of the entrance hall is presently a suite for the use of the house mother. This room, of dark oak paneling, was originally a library. Elsewhere on the first floor are the fraternity's dining and kitchen facilities.

The second floor of the house has bedrooms, one private bathroom and a gang shower room and bathroom. The attic has two bedrooms and a chapter (meeting) room. The basement of the house is a laundry room and contains little room for any other function. Most walls within are plaster lathe, some are covered with "barn beard" paneling.

The chapter house is located in an area abutting the Georgia Tech campus. South of the house is the Ceramic Engineering Building, built in the same modified Tudor style. To the north there lies the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity house, built in the 1940s.

[continued]

# 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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local History
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1928 **Builder/Architect** William Parsons, architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity is significant because of the part it played in Atlanta's local history and due to its architecture as a structure designed for a specific use that has remained in that use since its construction. The house also represents a good example of the Tudor eclectic style common in residential architecture.

The Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity has played a powerful role in the social history of the Georgia Institute of Technology since its founding in 1903. Alumni of other chapters who assisted in organizing the chapter at Georgia Tech were Phinizy Calhoun, George Winship Nunnally, and Lyman Hall, a past president of Georgia Tech. Among the first initiates was Jesse Draper, a man long associated with the real estate business in Atlanta.

Since its founding, many members have risen to positions of power in the city and have been able to effect changes in the way the city operates. Others were among the oldest families in Atlanta; indeed, many are fifth- or sixth-generation Atlantans. William A. Parker, Jr. (Class of 1919), became the president of Beck and Gregg Hardware in 1925. He served as the company's chairman of the board until his retirement. William C. Wardlaw (Class of 1927) was an Atlanta investment counselor and an organizer and partner of Wardlaw and Hunter, Inc. Joseph High Williams (1929) is the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Madison High, who donated their home to become the High Museum (and the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center). Alvin Cates (1937) is the president of Adams-Cates Real Estate Company, one of the oldest real estate firms in the city. James D. Robinson, III (1957), is the son of prominent Atlantans long connected with the First National Bank of Atlanta. Mr. Robinson is the chairman of the board of the American Express Company. Edward K. Van Winkle, III (1978), represents the third generation of Van Winkles who were members of the Omega Chapter of Chi Phi. The Van Winkles founded and owned the Van Winkle Gin and Machine Company shortly after the Civil War.

During the twenties, thirties and forties, the Omega Chapter of Chi Phi was the social leader on the campus. The Chi Phi Tea Dances held after every home football game were a Saturday-afternoon ritual that attracted not only college students but native Atlantans as well. The Chi Phi house's location on Fowler Street had a very direct effect on the migration of other fraternities to the

[continued]

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Material supplied by the Omega Trust Association.  
 Garrett, Franklin M. Atlanta and Environs, A Chronicle of Its People and Events.  
 University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1954.

# 10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED  
 UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Northwest Atlanta, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 16 7413410 373991810  
 Zone Easting Northing

B                    
 Zone Easting Northing

C                  

D                  

E                  

F                  

G                  

H                  

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary is marked on the enclosed Fulton County Tax Map 80-5. It is all the owner presently owns and all that is historically associated with this property.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

a) Spencer Tunnell  
 name/title b) Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historic Preservation Section contact person  
 a) private consultant  
 organization b) Historic Preservation Sec., Ga. DNR date June 27, 1980  
 a) 3028 Andrews Drive, N.W. a) (404) 237-7837  
 street & number b) 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone b) (404) 656-2840  
 city or town Atlanta state Georgia

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon  
 Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 10/31/80 10/4/21/82

For HCRS use only  
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
Entered in the  
National Register date 6/17/82  
 Keeper of the National Register  
 Attest: date  
 Chief of Registration

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

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

For HCRS use only  
received  
date entered

Continuation sheet Description

Item number 7

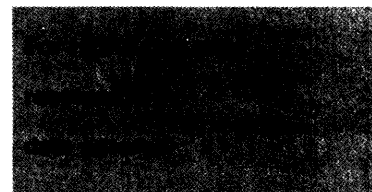
Page 2

Photographs

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in October, 1980 still provide an accurate view of the property. No significant changes have been made since that date.

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

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



Continuation sheet    Significance

Item number    8

Page 2

vicinity of Peters' Park, where the nucleus of fraternity social life still exists today.

The Omega Chapter of Chi Phi, built in 1928, was the second structure built exclusively as a fraternity house at Georgia Tech. Until that time, all fraternities were located in previously residential structures that served as fraternity houses. The move of the Beta Theta Pi house (constructed in 1926, still extant) to Fowler Street started a trend away from the Williams Street and Spring Street area three blocks away. The Fowler Street neighborhood became popular for the construction of new fraternity houses because of its proximity to the Tech campus and its location near Peters' Park, the only visible reminder of an ambitious late-1880s subdivision planned by Atlanta entrepreneur Richard Peters, that was never built.

The style of the Chi Phi house represents a good example of the eclectic ideal popular for fraternity house design in the 1920s. Fraternities experienced tremendous growth during the twenties. This was due in part to the trend in society of expanded freedom for young people (aided by the automobile) and the feeling of freedom following the First World War. The fraternity house filled a social void. There was no place for young people to drink and/or dance. The void was filled by the fraternity and the fraternity house, which played an immensely important role in the personality of a fraternity. Fraternity houses had to be designed to house twenty students, feed the fraternity membership and accommodate large groups of people for purely social purposes. A suitably dignified location was required, and the architecture of the fraternity house reflected the attitudes of the men who composed the fraternity at the time.

At other Southern institutions, the favored style for fraternity houses has been "Southern Colonial." To this day, when a new fraternity or sorority house is planned, a battle is waged over its style. Expense, rather than distaste for the traditional, is usually the deciding factor, most members favoring a brick house with "some columns and a porch." The temple form was not chosen for the Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity at Georgia Tech. Except for the original academic buildings at Tech, and those built since the 1940s, the predominant style for the dormitories and many classroom buildings was modified Tudor. It was extremely sensitive and appropriate for the Chi Phi house to have been designed in the style used in the central campus which it abutts.

The architect of the Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity was William Parsons, a 1922 graduate of the architecture school at Georgia Tech and a member of the Chi Phi Fraternity. Mr. Parsons was an architect in Augusta, Georgia, until his death in 1948.

[continued]

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

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



Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

Page 3

The Omega Chapter of the Chi Phi Fraternity continues today to function in the manner for which it was designed, as a social center for its members. Though growth in numbers has necessitated some change, evidenced by the additions or enclosure of rooms, the house's principal spaces still function in the way they did in 1929. The fact that this is so is a testament to the appropriateness of the design of this structure for its intended and continuing use.