

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received AUG 1 1985
date entered SEP 12 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic J. G. WHITFIELD ESTATE
and/or common J. G. WHITFIELD ESTATE

2. Location

street & number 2704 Bayshore Drive N/A not for publication
city, town Sarasota N/A vicinity of
state Florida code 12 county Sarasota code 115

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
| <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 | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name John R. and Pat Taylor
street & number 2704 Bayshore Drive
city, town Sarasota N/A vicinity of state Florida

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sarasota County Courthouse
street & number 2000 Main Street
city, town Sarasota state Florida

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historical, Architectural and
title Archaeological Survey of Sarasota has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1982 federal state county local
depository for survey records 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | date _____ |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The J. G. Whitfield Estate consists of a rectangular, two-story Mediterranean Revival building located on a walled corner lot facing Sarasota Bay. The building is constructed of hollow clay tile with a rough cast stucco exterior. A low hip roof clad in clay barrel tile covers the building. Windows are generally six-pane with wood and steel casements. Major decorative elements include extensive bas relief ornamentation, bracketed eaves and wrought iron balconets. The building is in excellent condition and has undergone a minimum of alterations.

The residential building located at 2704 Bayshore Drive in Sarasota, Florida, was built in 1925 as the J. G. Whitfield Estate. The two-story Mediterranean Revival building and its attached garage dominate a walled corner lot at the intersection of Indian Beach Road and Bayshore Drive. The building is orientated in an east-west direction with the main entry on the west elevation. The building is covered with a barrel tile hip roof with a one-story porte cochere extending from its south elevation. A one-story bay, also hipped, projects from the west elevation of the building. A shed porch at the northwest corner of the building covers a small patio. A massive rectangular stuccoed chimney is located at the approximate center of the building.

Fenestration is generally wood and steel casement, usually in a six-pane configuration. The south elevation of the garage wing is lighted by two-pane steel casement windows, set between engaged limestone columns with Corinthian capitals. Fenestration on the west elevation of the building consists of three pairs of French doors with wooden muntins and mullions. French doors also appear on the central one-story bay which projects from the main block of the building. Second story windows of the west elevation are also French doors with wood muntins and mullions. Wrought iron balconets enframe the openings. The north elevation of the building is largely concealed from public view by vegetation. Little or no ornamentation appears on this elevation. The east elevation is similar to the north and is not a unified facade due to the extension of the garage wing.

The interior of J. G. Whitfield Estate has been meticulously maintained and remains largely unaltered except for an opening of the hearth wall of the chimney. In this alteration, the dividing wall of the hearth separating the living room and the kitchen was removed. The classically detailed carved limestone mantel was left intact. Elsewhere, floors are generally oak plank and have been restored in the living and dining rooms. The kitchen has pine floors and original wood cabinets. Where present, ceiling moldings are concave wood elements with a beaded floral motif. Baseboards are simple concave elements. Interior walls are finished in rough cast plaster. Entry to the living room is made through an arched opening supported by a pair of twisted Corinthian columns. Rusticated blocks surround the arches. A screened porch on the northwest corner of the building includes engaged columns and recessed arches which are repeated from the interior and exterior. Wrought iron light fixtures on this porch are original to construction. The exposed wood beams of the ceiling are stencilled with floral designs similar to that found in the Ca d'Zan and the John Ringling Towers.

Contributing resources: 2 Noncontributing resources: 0
1 Building (Whitfield residence)
1 Structure (Enclosure wall)

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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | |

Specific dates 1925 **Builder/Architect** Russell Currin, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The J. G. Whitfield Estate is significant through its association with John G. Whitfield, a local developer and political figure, and as a notable example of Mediteranean Revival architecture. Whitfield was the owner and developer of the Bay Haven Hotel, a boom-time Sarasota hotel. He also served on the Sarasota City Commission and was active in other civic organizations. His 1925 Sarasota residence is a textbook example of the Mediteranean Revival style, the favored architectural style of the Florida Boom. The building has undergone a minimum of alterations and possesses excellent physical integrity.

John G. Whitfield was born in Whitfield, Georgia and settled in Adelphia, Alabama where he was engaged in the wholesale grocery business.¹ Later, in Birmingham, Whitfield owned and operated a chemical fertilizer and vegetable oil factory from which he retired in 1920. Whitfield and his wife Pearl subsequently acquired their Sarasota residence from T. B. Ogburn et ux and W. V. Coleman et ux in 1925.² A 1927 rotogravue of the home states: "Fine residence of Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Whitfield, prominent Atlanta people, located on the Bayfront, Indian Beach Boulevard, Sarasota."³ The deed transfer stipulated that Whitfield would pay \$5.00 per year for the upkeep and maintenance of the Bay Haven subdivision.⁴ The mortgage of \$15,000 was settled a year later.

Although Whitfield may have come to Sarasota to retire, he soon became very active in local real estate, development and civic affairs. Specifically, he initiated the development of the Bay Haven Hotel in 1926 and also became quite involved in the local real estate market. The Bay Haven Hotel, presently the main campus of the Ringling School of Art, was heralded in an April 1926 article of the Sarasota Daily Times as a "beautiful structure" owned by J. G. Whitfield and constructed by the Echols Construction Company. As completed, the three-story Mediteranean Revival style building included seventy rooms, each with private bath, and a steam heat and water sprinkler system. The building was determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 1984.

Sarasota County deed records of the late 1920s indicate that Whitfield was party to a number of local land transactions. He was also quite involved in civic duties, serving on the Sarasota City Commission from 1920-31.⁵ Early in his term as a City Commissioner, Whitfield advanced a proposal to establish a zoning commission. Following acceptance of the proposal, Whitfield initiated another proposal for the clean-up and beautification of the central corridor of the city. He recommended the trimming and fertilization of trees already in place and volunteered to personally supervise the work until completed.⁶ Whitfield left office in December of 1931 following an unsuccessful bid at re-election. He died at his Sarasota estate in 1943. His obituary read "through his investments (he) made a special contribution to the city's development."⁷

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Sarasota

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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| 1 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
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| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 387, Bay Haven Subdivision. This area includes all significant properties associated with the J. G. Whitfield Estate.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gladys Cook/Michael Zimny, Historic Sites Specialist

organization FDAHRM date May 28, 1985

street & number The Capitol telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *George W. Perry*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 8/7/85

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

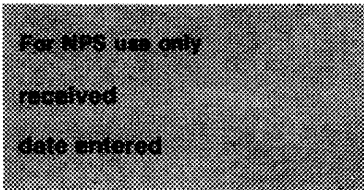
Alonzo Byers **Entered in the National Register** date 9/12/85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Whitfield's Sarasota estate was built in 1925 by local builder, Russell Curin.⁸ With its clay barrel tile roof and rough stucco walls, the building typifies the Mediterranean Revival style, the favored architectural style of the 1920s in Sarasota. Significant architectural elements include the original clay barrel tile roof and most fenestration, extensive bas relief sculpture, wrought iron work and classically derived columns and mantelpiece. Although the architect of the building has not been documented, it has been conjectured that the building was the work of Dwight James Baum. The speculation is made through the similarity of certain design features of the building with those present in other buildings designed by Baum, notably the Ca d'Zan and the Ringling Towers. It is also known that Baum's local supervisor, Ralph Twitchell, designed eight Mediterranean Revival houses in the Whitefield Estates, which was developed by J. G. Whitfield's brother.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Higel Scrapbook, vol. 3, Obituary, November 11, 1943, Sarasota County Historical Archives, Sarasota, Florida

² Sarasota County Deeds, Book 2, p. 612, August 13, 1925.

³ "Sarasota County Invites You Where Life is Worth Living and Smiling Summer Never Dies", 1927, owned by Marion Gruters, 1225 3rd Street, Sarasota, Florida.

⁴ Abstract of Title, Tamiami Abstract and Title Company, No. A69825, owned by John R. and Pat Taylor, Sarasota, Florida.

⁵ Grismer, Karl H. The Story of Sarasota, p. 263.

⁶ Ibid. July 23, 1930, pp. 267-70.

⁷ Higel Scrapbook, vol. 3, Obituary, November 13, 1943, Sarasota County Historical Archives, Sarasota, Florida.

⁸ Frances Currin, Widow of Russell Currin, Personal Communication, January 7, 1985, Sarasota, Florida.

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date entered

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"New Building to Contain 70 Rooms and Eleven Stores"
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