

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAR 23 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Fontenette-Durand Maison Dimanche

and/or common Andre Olivier's Evangeline Museum (a part of)

2. Location

street & number ^{LA} Highway 94 N/A not for publication

city, town ~~1 1/4 miles from~~ Breaux Bridge X vicinity of

state Louisiana code 22 parish ~~county~~ St. Martin code 099

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

4. Owner of Property

name Robert Edward Smith

street & number Rt. 2, Box 1220

city, town Breaux Bridge vicinity of state LA 70517

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Martin Parish Courthouse

street & number Main Street (no specific address) P. O. Box 308

city, town St. Martinville state LA 70382

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			June 9, 1983 (12 miles)

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche is a 1½ story Creole style building of heavy mortise tenon, pegged frame construction that was infilled with brick between posts, plastered on the interior and exterior gallery walls but sided on all remaining exterior walls with 8" wide cypress weatherboards. Based upon the fact that this structure has glazed French doors, and some of its original hardware is identical to that found on Lady of the Lake Plantation, built in 1827, by Alexandre and Terence Bienvenu Devince, this building date and attribution of builders are conjectured,

The structure measures 28 feet wide by 28 feet deep, and is a miniaturization of the typical Creole house floor plan of two main rooms arranged on either side of a central double fireplace with a "cabinet" room to the rear of the bedroom, and an open gallery to the rear of the salon. The window sashes are six over six type with heavy single beaded batten shutters with hand-wrought iron strap hinges signed "Perks." The three exterior door openings are closed by matching heavy beaded batten shutters set on large strap hinges, also signed "Perks," as well as a pair of glazed French doors of a distinctive style having an unusually high single wood raised panel at the bottom.

The colonnettes are chamfered with lamb's-tongues and are interspaced with a single element 18th century French-styled handrail. The ceilings are of exposed dressed and beaded beams and overboards. The original fireplace mantels are mortised and tenon pegged cypress construction and are the French "wrap-around type" with, rarely seen in Louisiana, Louis XIV style designs and moldings.

The house is set off the ground approximately 24 inches on brick piers, and is roofed with hand-split cedar shingles.

One unusual feature is double access to the attic level; 1) A trap door entrance from the front gallery and 2) A full size door on one gable end.

The rear cabinet, 6' x 14', and rear gallery, 6' x 14', are almost entirely reconstructions but should not be regarded as overly detrimental to the architectural significance of the structure because these spaces were always of secondary value to the main front gallery and two principal rooms which are largely original. The reconstruction to the rear of the building was carefully articulated to match in detail and materials the original extant portion of the structure and coincided with archaeological evidence of the form and design of these rear spaces.

Paint coloration of 6 out of 7 colors is based on original layers of paint extant. The 7th color, that of the weatherboard, was completely missing but a documented color from the Latiolais house was copied for this missing color. The Latiolais house had strikingly similar colors to this structure for its exterior door and window trim, gallery ceilings, shutters, columns and baseboards; so copying its weatherboard color seemed appropriate.

Note from State Historic Preservation Office: As can be seen in the photos, the mantels are marbled. This was done by the present owner as part of his restoration project.

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Continuation sheet Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche Item number 7

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Item 7 - Addendum by State Historic Preservation Office

Summary Paragraph:

The Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche (c.1827) is a small one-and-one-half story Creole structure with brick between posts construction. It is presently located in flat farm country one-and-one-fourth miles southwest of the town of Breaux Bridge on the grounds of the Henri Penne House (N.R.). It was moved approximately twelve miles from its original location in St. Martinville in June of 1983. Despite the move and despite a few changes, the house retains its National Register eligibility.

Assessment of Integrity

I. Changes

Since construction the following changes have been made in the house:

1. The rear gallery has been rebuilt due to deterioration.
2. The cabinet has had to be largely reconstructed for the same reason.
3. The chimney and piers have had to be rebuilt due to the move.
4. The interior has been covered in sheetrock.
5. The southeast side window has been reconstructed.

In the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, these changes have not compromised the Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche's architectural integrity. The case for its significance is based upon historic features which it still retains (see Item 8). Moreover, changes of this kind occur frequently in houses of this age in Louisiana.

II. The Move

The twelve mile move has not affected the house's architectural significance because the house is still within its original parish. Hence it has not been moved out of the area which is the context for its architectural significance (i.e., southern Louisiana).

In its previous location (the small town of St. Martinville), the house faced east onto Pineau Street. It was the rear dependency of a larger house located on Bridge Street. The maison dimanche was deteriorated and in imminent danger of demolition by neglect. Had the present owner not bought the structure and moved it, there is no doubt that it would not be extant today. For many years the previous owner had been unwilling to maintain the house and unwilling to sell the property. In its present location (adjacent to the Henri Penne House, N.R.), the building faces southwest. It stands about thirty feet from the Penne House and serves as a dependency for the property. Although the present setting is more rural than the original setting, the maison still conveys its architectural importance.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 c. 1827

Builder/Architect uncertain

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion C

The Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche is significant for its 1) status as a rare survivor and 2) its refined Creole architectural articulation. The civilized custom of the neighboring wealthy Creole plantation owners building small refined pavilions in town for their convenience on weekends was a short-lived extravagance which would have produced only a few structures of this type to begin with. The survival of it into the 20th century is thus even more amazing; there are only two other similar structures which survive to date in St. Martinville.

The surprisingly refined architectural detail is that which you would expect to find in a large, late 18th century plantation house. The Bienvenu brothers, who are believed to have built this structure, were from a house-building family and being familiar with their father's and grandfather's buildings in Louisiana, were evidently building in an 18th century, Louis XIV architectural vocabulary in 1827.

The similarly proportioned but differently ornamented fireplace mantels form the focal points of the two front rooms and are particularly fine examples of the rarely seen Louis XIV style in Louisiana. The only other examples of this style mantel in Louisiana, known to this observer, are in Madame John's Legacy, the Cabildo, the Pitot House, and the Blanc House on Bayou St. John.

Some interest also arises out of one of the structure's early owners, Charles Durande. The notorious M. Durande of Pine and Oak Alley Plantation must have made quite a spectacle to behold, descending in all his finery from one of his gilded carriages in front of his Maison Dimanche after the six-mile long ride down the continuous alley of pines and oaks which shaded his ride from his country plantation house to this structure, his in-town pavilion.

Long live extravagance in personal comfort and style!

Reason for the 1983 relocation-

The previous owner was planning to demolish the structure in order to clear the property for the construction of a series of apartments. After much persistence, I convinced the owner to sell the structure to me to be relocated and restored to its original period.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Chain of Title, St. Martin Parish Conveyance Records

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property @ 1/16th of an acre

Quadrangle name Breaux Bridge, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 15 6013 11410 313 418 51210
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C
Zone Easting Northing

D
Zone Easting Northing

E
Zone Easting Northing

F
Zone Easting Northing

G
Zone Easting Northing

H
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to enclosed sketch map and Item 10 continuation sheet.

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

name/title Robert Edward Smith

organization N/A date November 2, 1983

street & number Route 2, Box 1220 telephone (318) 332-2852

city or town Breaux Bridge state LA 70517

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 *Robert B. DeBlieux*
Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer date March 19, 1984

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

Entered in the National Register

date 4/19/84

J. Melrose Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

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Fontenette-Durande Maison

Continuation sheet

Dimanche

Item number 8

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Item 8 - Addendum by State Historic Preservation Office

The Fontenette-Durande Maison Dimanche is locally significant in the area of architecture as a superior example of Creole architecture within the context of southern Louisiana.

Despite its small size, the house presents the typical appearance of a Creole plantation house. It has a hall-less plan with the chimney set in the center, a chamfered columnar front gallery, and French doors. It also has wraparound mantels and an under gallery facade finished off with plaster as though it were an interior wall. The house is typical of many throughout southern Louisiana built during the first forty years of the nineteenth century.

The mantels, however, qualify it as a superior example within this context. Both mantels feature motifs derived from French sources of the eighteenth century, including lozenges, molded side pilasters, cornerblocks, and central entablature panels. Many otherwise Creole houses have Adams mantels due to the Anglo-American influence.* Those which do not generally have mantels which are much plainer than the ones at the Maison Dimanche. They usually do not have cornerblocks or molded side pilasters. Most consist of a flat entablature board with a few relatively crude cutout lozenges, circles, or other shapes. By contrast, the mantels at Maison Dimanche feature molded, not cutout, shapes, with multiple lozenges and lozenges set within lozenges.

*Although these usually wrap around the flue in the French manner, their basic design is in the Adams style.

NB: One occasionally hears of Maison Dimanches, or Sunday Houses, in southern Louisiana. The basic idea is that these were town houses occupied by planters on Sundays when they came to town to go to church. The applicant's assertion that the subject property was built as a Sunday House is an assumption based largely upon architectural evidence (i.e., that it is a very well built and well detailed small house originally located in a town and owned by a planter).

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Continuation sheet Fontenette-Durand Maison

Item number 10

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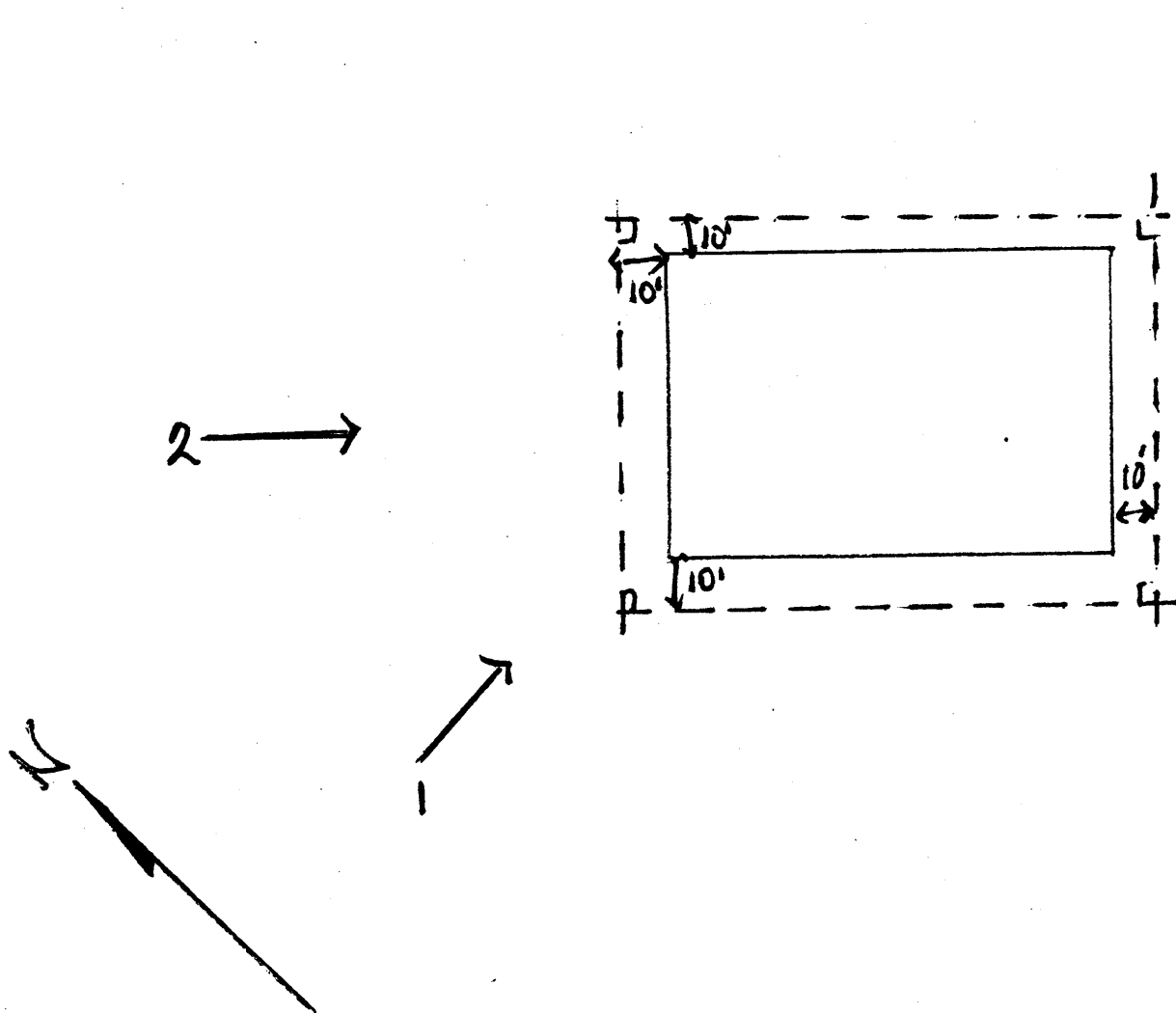
Dimanche

10. Boundary Justification: (from State Historic Preservation Office)

The boundaries were chosen to discretely encompass the significant resource. The building has been moved onto an existing National Register property (the Henri Penne House). The choice of a small, discrete nominated area was confirmed as the correct course of action in a telephone conversation with our reviewer, Carol DUBY, on 3/13/84.

NB: The nominated area does not encompass the previously nominated Penne House.

FONTENETTE - DURAND MAISON DIMANCHE, BREAUX BRIDGE VICINITY, ST. MARTIN PARISH



@ 30' from
maison dimanche
to Penne House
→ Henri Penne
House (N. R.)

NOT TO SCALE

Site boundaries are parallel
to building facades, distances
as shown.