

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

**NATIONAL
REGISTER**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name Bunche, Ralph House other names/site number N/A

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number 1510 Jackson Street, NE not for publication N/A
city or town Washington vicinity N/A
state District of Columbia code DC county N/A
code 001 zip code 20002

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally X statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert L. Wallatt 8/27/93
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the
National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for
additional comments.)

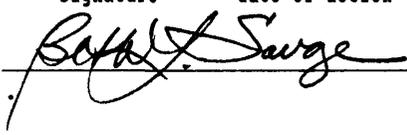
Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- | | signature | date of action |
|---|--|----------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the
National Register
____ See continuation sheet. |  | <u>9/30/93</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible
for the National Register
____ See continuation sheet. | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible
for the National Register | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the
National Register | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____
_____ | | |

=====
5. Classification
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/ International Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Slate
walls Brick
other Cast Concrete

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # DC-360
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	328025	4310650	3		
	--	-----	-----	--	-----	-----
2				4		
	--	-----	-----	--	-----	-----
	___ See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title Melissa Plotkin /intern, Glen Leiner /NR coordinator
organization D.C. State Historic Preservation Office
date 17 August 1993 street & number 614 H Street, NW, room 305
telephone (202) 727-7360
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20001
=====

Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____
telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____
=====

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Description

The Ralph Bunche House is a free standing, rectangular-plan brick house located on Jackson Street in the largely residential Brookland section of Washington. The south-facing residence sits approximately forty feet from the street on a gently sloping lot. The overall form of the house is simple and orderly and distinguished by its shallow-pitched hipped roof with broad eaves. The exterior, which is of medium-toned red brick laid in American bond is defined by its unusual fenestration. The two-story residence stands in contrast with the more traditional free standing houses which typify the surrounding neighborhood.

The south facade has several notable features. The first story has a large circular window to the east and a group of three double hung windows to the west. This trio of windows has a continuous sill which extends to the west as the cap of a brick garden wall containing a distinctive wooden gate. A similar gate and brick post is located at the southeast corner of the house. The second story has two widely spaced windows. All windows are enframed by a single projecting band of brick.

The west facade contains the main entrance and is accessed by the southwest garden gate. The simple structure of the entry porch, which rests on a brick base, features two square wood posts supporting a flat roof. A section of joists are fully exposed on the south portion of the roof. The entry opening contains both a glazed storm and a panelled door with an adjacent fixed single-light window. The first story and partially-exposed basement extend to the north and support a second story roof deck. A group of five one-over-one windows are separated by one course of bricks. The windows and entry are unified by a continuous projecting frame of brick.

The north facade contains a simple framed door and three asymmetrically placed windows. The house's only chimney, which does not project beyond the brick wall surface, is visible from the rear yard area. The second story has wood siding and opens onto the sun porch.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 2

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Description (continued)

The east facade contains regularly spaced windows and a kitchen door approached by the southwest garden gate.

The residence has a sloping rear yard which abuts a public alley at the north. Overall, the house is in good physical condition and there is no evidence of any exterior alterations.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Significance

The subject property was the residence of Dr. Ralph Bunche, the distinguished African-American diplomat and scholar from 1941 to 1947. The home was designed for him by Hilyard R. Robinson, a noted Washington architect, in the International Style. Located in the Brookland neighborhood, the residence is significant for its association with Ralph Bunche, as an important work by Hilyard Robinson, and as a rare example of an International Style house in Washington, DC.

Ralph Johnson Bunche (1904-1971) was an internationally known scholar who served as Undersecretary-General of the United Nations and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1949. He was born in Detroit and after excellent scholastic performance in both high school and undergraduate work at UCLA, earned fellowships from Harvard University for both of his advanced degrees. In 1928, shortly after receiving his Masters degree, he began teaching at Howard University and organized the political science department. While at Howard, Bunche pursued the study of race relations which included various fellowships and posts in the United States and abroad. He served as co-director of the Institute of Race Relations at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania (1935), studied anthropology at the London School of Economics and Capetown University (1937), was a Julius Rosenwald Fellow in West and North Africa (1932-33), and did field work South and East Africa, Malaya, and the Netherlands East Indies (1936-38). He also served as an advisor for the NAACP. In 1934, he became the first Black student to earn a Ph.D in political science at Harvard. In 1939, Bunche was recommended by the Carnegie Foundation to assist Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal with a two-year study of African-Americans in the United States. As chief aide, Bunche traveled with Myrdal throughout the deep South and conducted interviews. The result of this endeavor were published in 1944 as the two-volume study, An American Dilemma.

Between 1929 and 1941, Bunche lived in several Washington, D.C. homes, located in the general vicinity of the Howard University campus. While serving as a full professor at Howard University,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Significance (continued)

Bunche commissioned Hilyard R. Robinson to design a home in the Brookland area. The family moved into the completed house in 1941, the same year Bunche returned to Howard after a leave of absence and began work at the Library of Congress. He served as research analyst and chief of the Africa section at the Office of Coordinator of Information and Office of Strategic Services.

In 1944, Bunche became the first Black man to hold a desk at the State Department as an area specialist and technical advisor. He attended many international conferences in these positions and also as an American representative. His growing renown as an expert in his field prompted a "loan" of his services to the United Nations in early 1946, when he accepted the appointment of Director of the Trusteeship Council. In March of 1947, after accepting a permanent position with the United Nations, Bunche and his family moved to a home near Lake Success, New York. As a result of his role in the negotiations in Palestine, while at the U.N., he received the 1949 Nobel Peace Prize. In addition, Bunche was awarded the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, for his contributions to society and international peace.

Brookland during the 1940s was known as a quiet, suburban, middle-class white community of freestanding homes. Although a few Black families were found in Brookland as early as the mid-1890s, the substantial influx of Black residents to the community occurred between the 1930s and 1950s as a result of the opportunities and social change tied to the New Deal and wartime years. Among Brookland residents were such members of the Howard University as poet Sterling Brown and historian Rayford W. Logan. Robert Weaver, the first Black Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and entertainer Pearl Bailey also resided in Brookland.

The Bunche house, with its International Styling, stands in contrast with the eclectic architecture of the surrounding neighborhood, which includes bungalows and Colonial Revivals. Unusual window arrangements, hipped roof, and a side entrance

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Significance (continued)

distinguish the house from its neighbors. The exterior treatment of the freestanding residence is well-developed on all facades.

Architect Hilyard Robinson (1899-1986), the designer of the property, was the most prolific and successful Black architect in Washington, DC prior to his retirement in the 1960s. Robinson received both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Columbia University and trained under New York architect Vertner Tandy, the only licensed Black architect in the state, and Paul Lavelle. Robinson's affiliation with Howard University began during his senior year in 1924, when he taught Architectural Design and Construction Techniques and continued, with interruptions, through 1937. In 1930, Robinson began graduate studies at Columbia but took a leave of absence for travel throughout Europe and enrollment at the University of Berlin. His professional oeuvre was greatly influenced by the European urban planning, post-war housing developments, and Modernism which he studied.

In 1932, Robinson returned to Howard as director of the School of Architecture. Among his notable works in Washington are Langston Terrace (1935-38), and several campus buildings at Howard. Robinson also designed buildings for Hampton Institute, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, Livingston College, and Tuskegee Institute. In Brookland, Robinson designed a residence for Rayford Logan in 1943 and another for teachers Louise Atkins and Marcella Brown in 1937.

The straightforward and refined residence served the Bunche family for six years and is associated with the early career and accomplishments of Dr. Bunche. A later residence of the Bunche family in Queens, New York is now a designated National Historic Landmark. The significance of the Washington residence is chiefly tied to its association with Ralph Bunche, as an important example of the work of architect Hilyard Robinson, and as a locally-rare residential example of the International Style.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 9 Page 1

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Bibliography

- Ethridge, Harrison. "The Black Architects of Washington, D.C., 1900 - Present." Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1979.
- Greenlee, Marcia M. "*Ralph Bunche House.*" National Register of Historic Places Inventory- Nomination Form, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1976.
- Haskins, Jim. Ralph Bunche: A Most Reluctant Hero. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1974.
- Logan, Rayford W. Howard University: The First Hundred Years, 1867-1967. New York, New York: University Press, 1968.
- Leiner, Glen B. "*Langston Terrace Dwellings.*" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987.
- McDaniel, George W.; Pearce, John N.; and Aurand, Martin, eds. Images of Brookland: The History and Architecture of a Washington Suburb. Washington, D.C.: George Washington (University) Washington Studies, No. 10, 1982.
- Robinson, Hilyard. "*Major Projects in Washington, D.C. and Environs.*" Unpublished typewritten paper.
- Verrey, Robert and Henley, Laura. "*Report of Results of the Brookland Community/ Catholic University Survey Northeast Washington, D.C.*" Unpublished report, 1987.
- Washington Post, June 13, 1948, 2M.
- Washington Star, September 13, 1943.
- Wilson, Dreck Spurlock. "*Twelve Black Architects: A Historical Perspective.*" Unpublished Monograph, Washington, D.C., 1976.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 1

The Ralph Bunche House
Washington, DC

Verbal boundary description

The property occupies all of Lot 815 of Square 4013, a rectangular lot measuring 50' X 128' located at 1510 Jackson Street, Northwest.

Verbal Boundary Justification

Lot 815 of Square 4013 has been historically associated with the subject property.