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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

OCT 6 1987

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name KEEWAYDIN CLUB

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number North End of Key Island

not for publication

city, town n/a

vicinity Naples

state Florida

code FL

county Collier

code 021

zip code 33939

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

10

10 buildings

0

0 sites

2

6 structures

0

0 objects

12

16 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously

listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

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.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

*Alma Byer* entered in the National Register

12-22-87

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation: Outdoor recreation

Domestic: Camp

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation: Outdoor recreation

Domestic: Camp

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

No style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls asbestos

roof Asphalt

other Stone Chimneys

Wood porches

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Keewaydin Club is a complex of 20 buildings and 8 supporting structures located at the north end of Key Island south of Naples, Florida. The complex consists of a main lodge, 13 detached cottages, 6 service buildings, a ferry landing, employee docking, shuffleboard and tennis courts, a swimming pool and a dining patio. The club was initially developed in 1935 and expanded between 1950-56. Ten of the club's buildings, including the lodge, were constructed in 1935; the remainder of its developments date from the second period of construction. The later group of buildings are identified as non-contributing resources because of their recent date of construction; however, they are virtually identical in appearance to the club's earlier buildings and do not weaken the overall physical integrity of the complex. All of the club's buildings are simple, frame vernacular structures set on brick piers, clad with asbestos siding and covered by gable, hipped or pyramidal roofs. Alterations to the buildings include porch enclosures, window replacements, changes in floor plan and other interior remodelings.

The Keewaydin Club is located at the north end of Key Island, a narrow, 7-mile-long barrier island. The island is separated from the mainland by Gordon Pass and the mangrove backwaters of an island waterway. Development of the club has had a relatively minor environmental impact on the island. The island retains most of its original vegetation, configuration and overall physical appearance. The naturalistic feeling of the island is reinforced by the informal layout of the club's buildings and supporting structures.

The major contributing resource associated with the Keewaydin Club is the 1935 lodge. The lodge is a one-story, irregular-shaped building constructed of yellow pine and cypress and covered with asbestos siding. The building originally featured a wrap-around screened porch (now enclosed) and casement (now awning) windows. The interior of the building features an impressive open timber ceiling in its main lounge, four native rock fireplaces, plank floors and board and batten walls. Numerous interior remodelings and expansions have had a serious effect on the integrity of the building, although the main lounge retains most of its original appearance.

Contemporary in date of construction with the lodge are seven detached cottages: Everglades, Juonia, Palmetto, Pectin, Pelican, Poinsettia and Scotch Bonnet. The cottages are one-story, frame vernacular buildings set on masonry piers and covered with asbestos siding. Gable, hipped, or pyramidal roofs punctuated by stone chimneys cover the buildings. Alterations to the cottages include the replacement of original casement windows with modern awnings, porch enclosures and major interior modifications to the Everglades and Poinsettia cottages. Also constructed at the same time as the cottages was a two-story boathouse (burned and rebuilt in 1946), a firehouse, pumphouse, water-tower (demolished in 1981), dock and the Kokomis ferry landing. Another cottage, the Hoffman House (constructed pre-1935) was moved from the south cove shoreline onto the Keewaydin property in the late 1940s and renamed the Bayview cottage.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Education  
Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1935

Significant Dates

1935

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Chester Kittredge, builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Keewaydin Club is significant primarily through its association with the educational movement of the same name. Initiated by Frederick William Gunn in 1849 under the auspices of the Gunnery Preparatory School for Boys, the Keewaydin Movement promoted the concept of education through contact with the physical environment. The 1935 Keewaydin Club south of Naples, Florida, is one of a series of camps established by the Keewaydin organization to promote their educational philosophies. Architecturally, the modest, rustic-like buildings of the club are typical of the Keewaydin clubs and of Florida vernacular architecture in general. The club is the only facility of its type in Florida.

The Keewaydin Movement dates to the establishment of the Gunnery Preparatory School for Boys in 1849 by Frederick William Gunn. Gunn (1816-81) founded the school in his hometown of Washington, Connecticut to promote his concept of education through contact with physical environment. Gunn formulated his concept of a more rounded education while completing his own studies at Yale. A man known for his physical feats, he was well-versed in the writings of Emerson, Carlyle and Theodore Parker, and gifted with great teaching abilities. His notions of reform led to his expulsion from Washington in 1845. Four years later, as society became more lenient toward his educational philosophies, he returned to his hometown to found the Gunnery. The school became widely known and many boys who later attained prominence attended.

Gunn fulfilled his requirement of contact with the environment by summer camping trips, the first of these being a 40-mile trek to Welch's Point on Long Island Sound. One of Gunn's students, Albert Sidney Gregg Clarke, expanded the theme with a summer-long canoe/camping trip to Maine in 1893. By 1901, the summer forays had moved to the wilds of the Canadian wilderness, home of the Algonkian Indians. From them, Clarke incorporated their name for the Home Wind, or northwest wind, which brings good omens and fair weather. Its name, made famous in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Song of Hiawatha, is Keewaydin.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

"The Angels of Keewaydin." Palm Beach Life, November, 1966, pp. 38-40.

Back, Brian. The Keewaydin Way. Temagami, Ontario: Keewaydin Camp, Ltd., 1983.

Moores, Ted and Merilyn Mohr. Canoecraft: A Harrowsmith Guide to Fine Woodstrip Construction. Cameden East, Ontario: House Publishing, Ltd., 1983.

Chase, Kay. "The View to the South." Naples Now, Vol. I, No. 6, April, 1977.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Keewaydin Club, Golden Anniversary, 1935-1985. n.p., n.d.

Ohles, John F., editor. Biographical Dictionary of American Educators, Volume 2. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

See continuation sheet

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Apx. 35 acres

**UTM References**

A 117 | 41971010 | 21881591010  
 Zone Easting Northing

C 117 | 421011210 | 21881551110

B 117 | 421001410 | 21881591710  
 Zone Easting Northing

D 117 | 41981910 | 21881541410

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Reference accompanying base map

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property includes all historic and non-historic buildings associated with the Keewaydin Club.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Michael Zimny / Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date September 1987

street & number Department of State telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32301

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation sheet 1

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The Keewaydin Club experienced a major period of development between 1950-56. During this time, six additional cottages (Bougainvillaea, Flamingo, Hilltop, Jewel Box, Pines and Sunrise/Sunset) were constructed, in addition to the administrative offices, shuffleboard court, swimming pool, bathhouse and patio area, fishing docks and the tennis court. As noted earlier, these later buildings are very similar architecturally to the Club's 1935 buildings and do not detract from its original character. The addition of the other structures has had a more sizeable impact, although the club still has a very naturalistic appearance.

RESOURCES INVENTORY

1935 (Contributing) Resources

Dock  
Everglades cottage  
Fire Station  
Juonia cottage  
Kokomis ferry landing  
Lodge  
Palmetto cottage  
Pectin cottage  
Pelican cottage  
Poinsettia cottage  
Pump house (storage building)  
Scotch Bonnet cottage

1950-56 (Non-contributing) Resources

Bathhouse  
Boathouses (2)  
Bayview cottage (moved to complex)  
Bougainvillaea cottage  
Chimpanzee cage (Chickee hut)  
Dining patio  
Fishing docks  
Flamingo cottage  
Hilltop cottage  
Jewel Box cottage  
Offices  
Shuffleboard courts  
Sunrise/Sunset cottage  
Swimming pool  
Tennis court

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Continuation sheet 2

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Clarke's canoe/camping expeditions reflected a growing interest in outdoor recreation in the country. By the mid-1800s, the average American family began spending more and more time in the city, with less and less time for outdoor recreation and sports. It looked for activities that would incorporate limited leisure time with the desire for physical activity. Vacations became part of the American way of life as railroads and roads were improved. Canoeing became a favorite sport as popularized by John McGregor in 1866 with his journal A Thousand Miles in the Rob Roy Canoe on Twenty Rivers and Lakes of Europe. By the turn of the century, a light-weight cedar-canvas canoe made canoeing a sport easily adapted to camping and forays into the woods of the Northeast. Gunn and Clarke would capitalize on this sport and incorporate it into the Keewaydin Movement. The Keewaydin name would be lent to one of these newer canoes as they perfected the designs to accommodate their strenuous treks. Today, this design is known as the "Traditional Keewaydin" or KW-16.

Clarke's summer expeditions were so successful that a series of summer camps were established under the Keewaydin name. The camps continued to grow and by 1920 Clarke had built the concept into a business, Keewaydin Camps, with many camps and a board of directors. By 1935, after the economic depression had forced the closing of several camps, the company still boasted 11 campsites, the newest being the Keewaydin Club near Naples, Florida. The Naples camp was the brainchild of board member Chester Kittredge.

Kittredge had risen from the ranks as a camper, then guide, to director, to his position on the board. As his position increased, so did his enthusiasm. The concept of a club in the South, where members could enjoy nature in the winter, appealed to him. In keeping with the Keewaydin concept of education through the environment, the Naples camp was located on a pristine barrier island on the Gulf of Mexico. Here, Kittredge believed, member families could vacation or "winter" while their children remained in school.

Kittredge used his own resources to construct the Naples Keewaydin Club in 1935. The Club originally included a lodge, 5 individual cottages and 2 school buildings. The schools included an Upper School (now Pectin) for children above primary age and a Lower School (now Pelican) for younger children. The abundant marine and avian life of the island provided numerous opportunities for nature study in an undisturbed setting. A boat house, fire station, water tower, pump house and dock were also constructed to ensure that the camp would be self-sufficient.

Architecturally, the Keewaydin Club is typical of South Florida frame vernacular design. Although none of its buildings, save for the interior of the lodge, possesses individual architectural significance, the complex as a whole should be considered architecturally significant as a good example of a seasonal camp. It should also be noted that the club's later buildings are very similar architecturally to its 1935 structures and do not detract from the camp's original naturalistic appearance.

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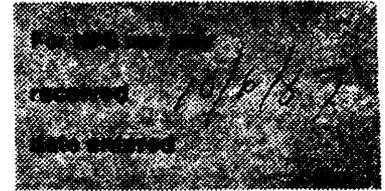
Following Kittredge's death in 1936, Executive Director of the Keewaydin Camps John "Speedy" Rush became owner of the Keewaydin Club. Rush continued the Keewaydin concept of education until the Second World War. In 1945, Rush sold the camp to Lester and Dellora Norris. A dedicated conservationist, Lester Norris (1900-81) purchased the club with the desire to limit development as much as possible. Although several buildings and other structures were added to the club under his ownership, Norris was instrumental in saving the fragile ecosystem of the island. When Hurricane Donna destroyed much of the north pass in 1960, Norris built a rock jetty to protect the island. Stating that to wait for federal funds would take too much time and endanger both the island and the navigable channel, he spent \$50,000 to protect Gordon Pass, the inlet to Naples.

In 1980, the Rookery Bay, a 5,400-acre sanctuary adjacent to the island was dedicated as an important research and education center, as well as a nature preserve. Norris contributed heavily to the Rookery's acquisition fund, and served as vice-president of the Collier County Conservancy. The Conservancy was the leading force behind the Rookery's creation. He also donated a 4,000 foot strip of beach as a public trust so sand dredged from Gordon Pass could be deposited there.

Norris continued the tradition established by the Keewaydin Camps more than a century earlier. Today, members of the Keewaydin Club still use the island as a retreat. The Rookery, as well as the Norris family's dedication to conservation, protect this still largely undeveloped barrier island. It should be noted that the Naples Keewaydin Club is the only camp of the three remaining Keewaydin properties which still retains the Keewaydin name.

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Continuation sheet 4

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Roberts, Kenneith G. and Phillip Shacklton. The Canoe, A History of the Craft from Panama to the Atlantic. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1983.

Who's Who in America, 42nd Edition. Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, Inc., 1982.

Wyatt, Leslie. "Lester Norris: A Man and his Land," The Naples Star, March 13, 1981, pp. A10-A13.