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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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**SECTION E: Historic Contexts**

**I. Early Formation of Women's Clubs in Florida**

The seeds of the national women's movement were sown during the years immediately following the Civil War, a period that witnessed the emergence of the first generation of self-supporting often unmarried, college-educated women. In the country's major urban centers, women's groups such as Sorosis clubs and literary societies began to take a more proactive stance on political and social issues. Popular women's organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the settlement house movement arose in response to the specific problems of alcoholism and immigrant resettlement, and then expanded their focus to combating a wider range of social ills. In smaller towns and cities, village improvement societies formed to lobby for local beautification and improvement projects.<sup>1</sup>

Between the late 1890s and World War I, the so-called "Progressive era," the United States experienced a period of significant development, spurred by economic forces different from those of earlier decades. Characterized by reform movements in business, education, government, labor, politics, and women's rights, the Progressive era dramatically altered the nation's political, economic, and social fabric. For the first time in American history, women emerged as a major force in directing policy at the local, state, and national levels. Improved technology and prosperity of the early twentieth century furnished many middle- and upper-class women relative freedom from the domestic burdens that had previously chained them to home and family.

**Florida Federation of Women's Clubs**

It was during this era of radical change that one of the state's most visible women's organizations, the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs (FFWC), was formed.<sup>2</sup> The FFWC was part of a larger national organization called the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). Founded by Jennie Croly in New York City in 1890, the GFWC sought to unite a wide variety of

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<sup>1</sup>Sarah M. Evans, *Born For Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 147-148; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Gage, eds., *History of Women Suffrage, 1840-1920*, 6 vols. (New York and London: Arno Press, 1969), 3: 402-403, 571; Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), 65.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Hofstadter, ed., *The Progressive Movement* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963); Michael Gannon, *Florida: A Short History* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1993), 67-76; William O'Neill, *The Progressive Years: America Comes of Age* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1975); Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).

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women's organizations throughout the country to work towards common goals, including child welfare, conservation, education, equitable taxation, health, and town beautification. It also contributed to the larger woman suffrage movement, which adopted aggressive tactics to ensure that women's voices were heard in the political process. Within five years of its founding, the GFWC had established affiliations with 500 clubs nationwide and had an enrollment of 100,000 members. By 1914 membership swelled to 2,000,000.<sup>3</sup>

Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio were the earliest affiliates. Florida's involvement began in 1895, when representatives of village improvement associations from Crescent City, Green Cove Springs, Jacksonville, Orange City, and Tarpon Springs met in Green Cove Springs to incorporate the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs. Most of these charter clubs had formed in the 1880s to address beautification, health, and literary needs within their respective towns. The charter adopted during the conference directed the federation "to bring the (state's) women's clubs into acquaintance and mutual helpfulness." Within a decade, twenty clubs had affiliated with the FFWC, which emerged as the state's most powerful women-led organization with some 1,600 members in 1910. Four years later, the FFWC boasted 6,000 members enrolled in thirty-six clubs. By 1917, membership had risen to 9,163 with fifty-nine new clubs having joined the FFWC, bringing the total of affiliates to 109. It should be noted that not all women's organizations joined the FFWC, however, or the GFWC. In particular, clubs from conservative areas, such as west Florida, declined offers made by the FFWC, accusing the organization of "radicalism."

During Florida's Progressive Era, which is generally defined as the years encompassed by the administration of Governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward (1905-1909) and World War I, the FFWC began to test its political effectiveness. In 1907, the FFWC drafted a child labor bill, which was introduced into the Florida Legislature and later signed into law by Broward. The organization promoted Stephen Foster's *Old Folks At Home* as the state song, and, more importantly, lobbied for the establishment of a State Industrial School for Girls at Ocala and a State Industrial School for Boys at Marianna. Subsequent legislation enacted in large part due to the influences of the FFWC led to reforms in the state's school systems, improvement in health care, temperance, and women's suffrage. Highway construction, land reclamation, cattle dipping

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<sup>3</sup>Genevieve McBride, *On Wisconsin Women* (Madison and London: Wisconsin University Press, 1993), 157-160; Mary Wood, *History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs* (Norwood: Norwood Press, 1912), 58; Linda Vance, *May Mann Jennings: Florida's Genteel Activist* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1985), 55.

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legislation, and women's political and economic rights were other important activities of the FFWC in the early twentieth century.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1912 and 1926, the FFWC developed a traveling library program. During the period twelve "libraries," each containing some 260 volumes, circulated throughout the state, mostly in smaller towns. Clubwomen served as librarians and housed the books in their homes. To expedite transporting the libraries and facilitate housing the collections, the boxes in which the books were shelved and shipped opened in the center on hinges, providing a ready-made bookcase. In 1926, when the traveling libraries were decommissioned, the FFWC donated the volumes and cases to the Florida Library Commission.<sup>5</sup>

One of the FFWC's daunting tasks was the development of Royal Palm Park southwest of Homestead. As early as 1905, May Mann Jennings, a club leader and activist, helped develop a strategy for acquiring the unprotected land. Clubwomen worked in campaign drives, lobbied legislators, and appealed to the National Audubon Society and other organizations for assistance. Through the club's strenuous efforts, the funds necessary to purchase the 960 acre tract of land were raised and the park was dedicated in 1916. In order to keep the park open, the FFWC lobbied the legislature for annual funds, and in 1925 published 24,000 picture postcards of various park scenes, which were sold in banks, hotels, and businesses throughout Florida. Additional land purchases were made and by the mid-1930s the park had grown to some 500,000 acres.<sup>6</sup>

During World War I, club members sold liberty bonds, assisted the Red Cross in its activities, such as bandage making and rolling, and lobbied for shorter hours and better conditions for workers in munitions factories, many of whom were women. A few Florida women also served on the National Defense, War Liberty, and Savings councils, and on Florida's State Food Commission. The FFWC sponsored clothing drives for war-torn victims in Europe and women nursed the sick during a devastating influenza epidemic in 1918.<sup>7</sup>

Suffrage ranked high as a priority. As early as 1913, an amendment to the state constitution to enfranchise women had been introduced in the Florida Legislature. Although several legislative attempts to grant women equal voting rights failed between 1911 and 1919, by 1918 sixteen towns and twenty Florida counties enfranchised women in municipal elections, an

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<sup>4</sup>Blackman, *Women of Florida*, 1: 137, 140, 141; Vance, *Jennings*, 56-58, 102, 159; Meyer, *Leading the Way*, 84-87.

<sup>5</sup>Blackman, *Women of Florida*, 1: 138.

<sup>6</sup>Vance, *Jennings*, 80-86, 130-132; Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 82, 103, 126, 159.

<sup>7</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 87-90; Vance, *Jennings*, 101-105.

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achievement accomplished in large measure because of the efforts of local clubwomen. During the national ratification process of woman's suffrage, the Florida Legislature continued to resist granting women the vote. The Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, enfranchised women throughout the country without the blessing of the Florida Legislature, which eventually went through the formality of approval in 1969.<sup>8</sup>

**II. Florida Land Boom, 1921-1926**

The FFWC reached a peak in its membership during the Florida Land Boom of the mid 1920s. The federation began publication of a monthly magazine called the *Florida Clubwoman* (initially *Florida Bulletin*) in September 1921. Prior to the circulation of the *Clubwoman* "newspapers of the large cities welcomed the columns of carefully written club items sent to them weekly by the appointed Federation editors." Those essays often appeared on the "Federation Page," or in social columns. The *Clubwoman*, a monthly journal averaging between sixteen and twenty-eight pages, was distributed at a nominal fee. Articles addressed club news, conservation, education, politics, and lobbying efforts by members at state and national levels. A wide range of social concerns and methods for beautifying highways, city parks, and homes also appeared in its pages. Replete with photographs of well-manicured parks and yards, lavish home furnishings, club officers, and clubhouses, the journal reached a circulation of 16,884 in 1927. In 1929, the masthead of the magazine claimed it represented 17,000 women and 228 clubs throughout the state.<sup>9</sup>

FFWC affiliate clubs spawned new organizations, the best example being the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, which was established in 1922 largely through the efforts of the Woman's Club of Jacksonville. FFWC members often contributed to or helped create other local chapters of women's organizations, such as Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Junior League, Parent-Teacher Associations, Red Cross, Sorosis, Women's National Indian Association, and Young Women Christian Association clubs.<sup>10</sup>

Issues supported by the FFWC during the 1920s included prohibition, a concern the organization had first addressed in 1914. May Jennings, one of Florida's most prominent female

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<sup>8</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 91; Elizabeth Taylor, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 36 (July 1957), 42-60.

<sup>9</sup>Blackman, *Women of Florida*, 1: 145; *Florida Clubwomen*, September 1921, March, June, and August 1929, February 1939, March 1930, January 1940.

<sup>10</sup>Vance, *Jennings*, 91, 94-95, 118, 132-133; Harry Cutler, *History of Florida*, 3 vols. (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1923), 1: 53, 167.

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activists; Ivy Stranahan, a highly-visible activist from Ft. Lauderdale who served as president of the Florida State Suffrage League; and other Florida women lobbied nearly two decades on behalf of Seminoles for federal designation of lands for a reservation in south Florida. In 1917, the state set aside nearly 100,000 acres of Monroe County for the Seminoles, only about 5 percent of which was arable. The federation redoubled its effort, and in 1931 the Florida legislature deeded the Seminole's Dania Reservation in south Florida to the federal government. The FFWC initiated highway beautification projects working with the Florida State Chamber of Commerce, Dixie Highway Association, and Tamiami Trail Association, among others, to enhance and improve safety along Florida's roadways.<sup>11</sup>

Although many clubs were founded in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the heaviest period of clubhouse construction occurred in the 1920s. Affiliates developed their own clubhouses independent of one another, and typically employed professionals in the building trades to design and construct a building. No standardized plan for clubhouses was adopted by the FFWC, or the nationwide GFWC. Some were large, expansive facilities, such as the Tudor Revival clubhouse in Jacksonville, large Mediterranean Revival designs in St. Petersburg and Tallahassee, and Coconut Grove's Mission-style building. Clubhouses in smaller towns, such as DeLand, High Springs, Lakeland, Ruskin, and Wauchula, are modest in size but often display the influences of formal styles and the craftsmanship of professional architects and contractors. Increasing numbers of members and well-planned financial campaigns resulted in no fewer than twenty-five new clubhouses throughout Florida during the interval.<sup>12</sup>

### **III. Great Depression, World War II and Aftermath, 1929-1995**

The FFWC suffered lean years during the Great Depression. Its troubles began in 1930 when the failure of the Bay of Biscayne Bank resulted in a loss of the federation's savings. Several clubs withdrew from the FFWC, which occasionally was unable to pay its dues to the GFWC. Income from dues fell by one-third, and the rise of junior women's clubs threatened to erode participation. By 1938, membership had fallen to 9,000, but rose to 11,500 in 1940.<sup>13</sup>

Notwithstanding membership losses and financial obstacles, the FFWC continued its valuable work in relieving despair and promoting culture. In 1931, it surveyed Florida's county jails, recommending improvements in medical treatment, education reforms, and rehabilitation

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<sup>11</sup>Vance, *Jennings*, 91, 94-95, 118, 132-133; Cutler, *Florida*, 2: 239.

<sup>12</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 102.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 110, 112, 115, 131, 133; Vance, *Jennings*, 135.

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measures in the state's penal system. General education, health care, and public service projects were undertaken. Clubs also helped fund music and art programs in public schools that boards of public education threatened to eliminate because of revenue shortfalls. In 1932, after several years of lobbying efforts by the woman's clubs, a landscape architect was appointed to the Florida State Road Department to help beautify and enhance safety on the state's highways. Twelve clubs sponsored radio broadcasts, and the federation organized a statewide poetry contest in 1939.<sup>14</sup>

The FFWC archives expanded in the late 1930s when Mrs. John R. Dykes and Maud Knight began collecting photographs of clubhouses. Earlier, an archives had been established to preserve the records of annual meetings, yearbooks, and special occasions. Histories written of the oldest eighteen clubs were collected and published in the 1928/1929 yearbook. Lucy Blackman, president of the FFWC between 1923 and 1926, and wife of William Blackman, president of Rollins College, prepared a history of the FFWC that appears in her *The Women of Florida*, which was published in 1940. Blackman's two volume, 450 page narrative describes the contributions of women in the Spanish and British Colonial, Territorial, and late nineteenth and early twentieth century periods. Also included are histories of statewide women's organizations and 108 biographical sketches of prominent Florida women.<sup>15</sup>

The FFWC took advantage of the federal government's "New Deal" programs implemented during the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt. Because of successful lobbying efforts by May Jennings and other clubwomen, in 1933 a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp was established at Royal Palm Park to conserve the landscape and develop trails and paths. A fire tower, power house, and shelters were eventually built, and the 1917 lodge repaired. Royal Palm Park, the charge of the FFWC since the second decade of the twentieth century, was devastated by hurricanes in 1926 and 1935. The Florida Legislature appropriated \$10,000 following the 1926 natural disaster and responded again in 1935. At least one clubhouse was developed using assistance from the Works Progress Administration (WPA).<sup>16</sup>

The FFWC responded with moderate success to the plight of minorities. Some clubs assisted Black neighborhoods and communities, donating to hospital and school funds. One sponsored a WPA program to train maids. The state federation lobbied the Florida Legislature for an industrial school for Black girls in the late 1930s to no avail. Additional lands were deeded

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<sup>14</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 110, 112, 115, 131, 133; Vance, *Jennings*, 135; Works Progress Administration, *Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 111.

<sup>15</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 127, 133, 143.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 129-130, 134; Blackman, *Women of Florida*, 1: 142; Vance, *Jennings*, 99, 118.

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from the state to the federal government for Seminole reservation lands in 1936, adding to reservation lands officially recognized in 1931.<sup>17</sup>

Although revenue was scarce, fifteen buildings were completed between 1930 and 1941, tangible reminders of the accomplishments of those clubs during our nation's bleakest economic period. Expansive buildings were completed in Coral Gables and northeast Miami; smaller edifices appeared in Lake City, Macclennay, Madison, Ocoee, and Orange Park.

During World War II, numerous clubhouses were opened to assist in the war effort, especially for Red Cross work and events sponsored by the USO. A few even ceased meeting, and temporarily turned over their clubhouses to those organizations. Some 100,000 books were collected and sent to Camp Blanding, a 125,000 acre U.S. Army training center in north Florida. The federation supported the voluntary enlistment of women in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WACS), urged the curtailment of non-defense activities by the government, and opposed a federal law to require the filing of joint income tax returns by husbands and wives. Clubs sponsored aluminum drives, developed "victory gardens" in municipal parks and around clubhouses, and sold war bonds. The FFWC's "Buy A Bomber" bond campaign raised \$3,000,000, making it among the nation's most successful fund-raising state federations.<sup>18</sup>

Following the war, the federation turned its attention back to the projects it had been working on before the conflict. In 1947, Royal Palm State Park was deeded to the National Park Service as part of Everglades National Park. Responding to pleas by the federation, the Florida Legislature enacted a fence law in 1949 designed to prevent automobile accidents involving roaming livestock. By 1950 the FFWC consisted of 185 clubs of which 138 owned clubhouses. In 1956, the FFWC dedicated its first headquarters, located at 106 East Orange Street in Lakeland. The City of Lakeland donated the land for the building, which cost \$35,000 and was acquired by the City in 1988 after the FFWC moved to a location farther south in the city.<sup>19</sup>

The FFWC attained its greatest popularity in the mid 1960s when enrollment hit an all-time high of nearly 33,000. During the period, the FFWC was among the fastest growing national affiliates of the GFWC. Within a decade, membership began to decline, however, attributed to a number of factors, including increasing numbers of women joining the work force, competing organizations such as the Junior Welfare League, and more single mothers. By 1990 membership

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<sup>17</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 129-130, 134; Vance, *Jennings*, 99, 118.

<sup>18</sup>Meyer, *Leading The Way*, 136-138, 155, 158, 177.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 164, 165, 172, 177-178, 198, 218, 240.

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had declined to 22,392. In 1995, the state federation consisted of 210 clubs with 114 of those owning clubhouses. The organization continues to play an important role voicing concerns and influencing legislation regarding children, crime, education, the environment, and improving the quality of life for all Floridians.<sup>20</sup>

**IV. National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, 1896-1995**

The 1890s also saw the establishment of a national organization for African American women's clubs. In 1896, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin (1842-1924), the founder of the first colored woman's club in Boston, Massachusetts, founded the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACWC). She had been very active in several women's organizations in New England and in the General Federation of Women's Clubs. During the Civil War she had helped to recruit soldiers for the 54<sup>th</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiments and worked with the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a forerunner of the American Red Cross.<sup>21</sup>

From 1899-1901, member clubs of the NACWC in Florida were in Jacksonville: the Jacksonville Woman's Christian Industrial and Protective Union, the Phyllis Wheatley Chautauqua Circle, and the Afro-American Woman's Club.<sup>22</sup> The Afro-American was the first of these clubs to be affiliated with the national organization. It had been organized at Divinity High School, later known as Edward Waters College. Among its first officers was Eartha M. White, who was well known for her social work in Jacksonville.<sup>23</sup>

After attending a meeting of the national organization, Mrs. White and other Florida delegates issued a call for the formation of a state organization of African American woman's clubs in Florida. Meeting in St. Augustine on March 10, 1908, the State Federation of Colored Woman's Clubs was established. The state organization was chartered as a non-profit corporation in Florida on October 27, 1927, in Tampa. The stated goals included: maintaining higher and nobler ideals; promoting civic movements; advocating welfare units to support moral, religious, social, literary, and inter-racial advancement; establishing wholesome recreational facilities for young women; and encouraging the organization of new clubs.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 198, 218, 240; Jessie Meyer, comp., "1995 Centennial Album of GFWC Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, Inc. Clubhouses," FFWC scrapbook, Lakeland, 1995.

<sup>21</sup> <sup>21</sup>Charles Harris Wesley, *The History of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs* (Washington, D.C.: NACWC, Inc., 1984), 13-14.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 284.

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Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, the well known educator and founder of Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, served as the president of the state federation from 1916-1920. During that time, addressing the needs of delinquent girls was adopted as a major project area, which eventually led to the Legislature's establishment in Lowell, Florida, of Forest Hills, a facility for delinquent African American girls. This paralleled the support the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs rendered in establishing the Florida Industrial School for Girls, a facility for delinquent white girls, located in Ocala (see the NR nomination for East Hall, listed 1995). In 1919 the Southeastern Association of Colored Woman's Clubs was temporarily organized at Bethune-Cookman College, with Dr. Bethune as the Chairman. Six months later it was permanently moved to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, and Dr. Bethune was elected as the first president. Dr. Bethune also served as the National Association president from 1924-1928.<sup>25</sup>

One of the new programs promoted by the National Federation in the 1930s and 1940s was the establishment of Youth Clubs. The National Association of Girls' Clubs was established in the 1930s; the first Youth Club in Florida was established in Bradenton in 1939, eventually leading to the founding of the Florida Association of Girls Clubs. The National Association of Boys' Clubs was established in the 1940s. The national organizations have since been combined as the National Association of Youth Clubs. Today, the Youth Clubs, which include chapters on numerous college campuses, are a strong component of the National Association of Colored Woman's Clubs' program. Another major project during World War II was the sale of U.S. bonds.<sup>26</sup>

African American woman's club membership continued to grow in Florida, until by 1980 there were 91 local clubs throughout the state. Clubs in six communities had clubhouses: Bradenton, Belle Glade, Ft. Pierce, Ft. Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and Palmetto. Other clubs met in homes, schools, or churches. Also in 1980, the Florida Association of Auxiliary of Men was established, the first boys attended a state convention as delegates, and a history of the Forest Hills Home for Delinquent Girls was published. Youth work continued, and in 1984, Youth Clubs were active in Belle Glade, Bradenton, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Pierce, Lakeland, Ocala, and West Palm Beach.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 96, 246.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 285.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 289.

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Today, there are 45,000 members in the National Association of Colored Woman's Clubs, including Youth Clubs, nationwide. There are 15 chapters of the national association in Florida. They, along with the state organization, the Florida Association of Women's Clubs, pursue universal issues related to all women, such as civic service, education, social service and philanthropy, working effectively with other organizations, both black and white.<sup>28</sup>

**Conclusion**

Increasing property values and maintenance costs have compelled some woman's clubs to sell their clubhouses. Those that sold buildings have either developed smaller buildings, or meet in public libraries or in members' homes. This trend of using a variety of public and private buildings to convene meetings parallels the experiences of many early twentieth century clubs who met in members' homes prior to the construction of permanent meeting places. Clubhouses have met a variety of fates, some having been adapted into community centers, libraries, museums, or theaters; others have been demolished, burned, or destroyed by hurricanes. Those that stand contribute to our state's social history.

The woman's clubs also have a presence in Florida's historic preservation community. Since 1974, some fifteen clubs have demonstrated a commitment to preserving their heritage by consenting to the listing of their clubhouses in the National Register of Historic Places. Nearly ten additional clubhouses contribute to historic districts recognized in the National Register. Thousands of women have contributed to woman's clubs since the late nineteenth century; the clubhouses that remain are tangible reminders of the contributions made by Florida's women to the well being of the state's citizens and its heritage.

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<sup>28</sup> Telephone interview, NACWA, July 1997.

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CLUBHOUSES OF FLORIDA'S WOMAN'S CLUBS  
PROPERTY TYPES

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**PROPERTY TYPE: F.1**

**1. Name of Property Type: Clubhouses**

**2. Description:**

Historic clubhouses associated with Florida's Women's Clubs represent a small but significant collection of historic architectural resources. According to data compiled in 1996 from the records of the National Register of Historic Places and the Florida Site File, thirty-five clubhouses have been documented in Florida. Additional buildings were documented from records maintained by the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs (FFWC) in Lakeland. Most continue to serve the function for which they were built and retain their architectural integrity to a high degree. A few buildings have been severely modified, others sold and adapted by organizations for use as community centers, libraries, museums, professional offices, or theaters.

Clubhouses developed by women's clubs were, with a few exceptions, designed and constructed by professional architects and skilled builders who drew upon traditional building techniques and contemporary stylistic preferences for their inspiration. The primary consideration was given to providing functional and comfortable spaces for club members. Decorative features were often liberally applied.

The FFWC did not adopt a standard plan for clubhouses, but instead encouraged affiliates to develop buildings based on individual needs, available funding, and appropriate scale and massing within a particular setting. Consequently, a variety of styles or influences, including Art Deco, Art Moderne, Bungalow/Craftsman, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Prairie, and Tudor Revival, were applied to the clubhouses.

The clubhouses display a variety of massing, scale, and design features and typically contain between 1,000 and 5,000 square feet of interior floor space. Although a small percentage rise three or four stories, most are one or two stories in height. Some occupy prominent sites in historic commercial areas; others appear in transitional areas linking a downtown sector with an older residential neighborhood. Forms vary, with side-facing and front-facing gable or hip roofs. A few display complex roof plans and parapets. Most roofs were initially surfaced with either ceramic barrel tile, metal shingles, or slate. Those materials typically have been replaced with composition shingles. Corbeled brick chimneys and dormers pierce some roof lines.

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Building plans are generally irregular in form, with a variety of projecting bays, extensions, and porches extending from a primary rectangular unit. Structural systems include brick, hollow tile, or wood balloon frame walls. Exterior wall fabrics consist of brick, stucco, or wood products such as clapboard, drop siding, weatherboard, or wood shingles. Foundations range between brick and concrete piers, continuous brick or concrete, or poured concrete.

Porches are common features on many older buildings. They appear as verandas, porticoes, or simple entrance porches that open along the main facade. Porch roofs are typically supported by either columns with Classical influences or tapered square wood columns on brick piers. Formal entrances consist of paneled wood doors with multiple lights or French doors embellished with transoms and sidelights. Ribbon arrangements of French doors often appear along the facade or an elevation of the building.

Fenestration varies with double-hung sashes and casements displaying multiple panes set in metal alloy or wood frames being common treatments. Buildings that display Bungalow/Craftsman, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival influences typically exhibit asymmetrical facades and irregular fenestration. Buildings derived from Classical or Colonial Revival influences typically display a symmetrical facade with regular fenestration.

**Clubhouses as a Specialized Building Type**

Clubhouses are a specialized building type designed and constructed to serve a social function. Plans often consist of a centrally-located meeting hall, great room, or auditorium, the hub of activity and largest interior space. Stages, fireplaces, and inglenooks enhance some meeting halls. Smaller spaces, including kitchens, libraries, parlors, restrooms, reading, sitting, and sun rooms, are located off the main hall. Circulation patterns offer freedom of movement between rooms. French doors often divide public spaces, such as between meeting hall and parlor, while paneled wood doors separate public from private areas. Textured plaster, wainscot, and a variety of moldings finish interior walls, and door and window surrounds. Ceilings rise between ten and twelve feet, and floors are finished in heart pine or hard woods. Bands of windows and lighted doors opening onto porches, courtyards, and patios blur the distinction between interior and exterior spaces. The design of clubhouses evolved in response to changing functional and symbolic needs.

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Most clubhouses were developed to serve as a meeting hall. The proportion and style of a particular building is indicative of the membership of the club and the level of wealth within a community at the time the building was developed. Women's clubs were early proponents of history and preservation. Most clubs developed buildings that embody specific historic architectural traditions. Others acquired and adapted older dwellings, such as those in Marianna and Monticello (1864 and c. 1885, respectively), for use as clubhouses. The Lake Butler Woman's Club is located in the former Union County Courthouse, which was constructed in 1923 and converted in 1936.

**Architectural Styles of Clubhouses**

A review of historic clubhouses documented in records held by the National Register, Florida Site File, and the archives of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, indicates that clubhouses embody a variety of architectural influences, including Art Deco, Art Moderne, Bungalow/Craftsman, Classical Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Italian Renaissance, Prairie, and Tudor Revival. Some are also derived from traditional vernacular influences.

**Art Deco**

The term "Art Deco" was first coined in 1968 by historian Bevis Hillier to describe America's last national style. The first of the modernistic styles to gain popularity in America, Art Deco represented a complete break with traditional design, emphasizing futuristic concepts rather than invoking architectural precedents. The style derived its name from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs and Industriels Modernes held in Paris in 1925. Like the European Art Nouveau movement of the 1890s and early twentieth century, Art Deco was an artistic movement that transcended all areas of the art world from architecture to painting. Its decorative geometric patterns were applied to a wide variety of products including household appliances, clothing, furniture, and jewelry. Art Deco was most popular as a commercial building style during the 1920s and early 1930s because its decorative designs were especially suited to tall buildings.

In Florida, Art Deco buildings are most often found in communities that continued to grow despite the collapse of the speculative land boom in 1925. Miami contains the most extensive collection of Art Deco commercial buildings in Florida. After 1930 the related Art Moderne style emerged as the most popular modernistic style. Characteristics of the Art Deco

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style include a flat roof, irregular plan, sharp, angular geometric forms with stucco facades, and polychromatic relief ornamentation in straight line, zig-zag, geometric floral, and chevron designs. In Europe, the ornamentation was influenced by Cubanism; in the United States, Art Deco designs were derived largely from North and South American Indian art work.

**Art Moderne**

The Art Moderne style, derived from the earlier Art Deco style, represents a complete break with traditional design, emphasizing futuristic concepts rather than invoking architectural antecedents. The style, often referred to as "Streamline," supplanted Art Deco as the most popular modernistic style in the United States shortly after 1930, when industrial designs began to exhibit streamlined shapes. The idea of rounded corners to make automobiles and airplanes more aerodynamic was applied to kitchen appliances, jewelry, and many other products where function was less important than the desirable shape. Buildings with Art Moderne styling have a machine-like appearance with flat roofs, smooth exterior surfaces, glass blocks, horizontal bands of stripes and grooves, cantilevered overhangs, and rounded corners to emphasize the streamline effect.

In Florida, Art Moderne buildings are most often found in cities that continued to grow during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Numerous coastal communities successfully developed a tourist industry, despite the financial trauma of the depression. Bumper crops in agricultural regions also fueled growth. The style was usually applied to commercial and apartment buildings; private residences exhibiting the Art Moderne style are less common. Some buildings developed in earlier periods were remodeled to display influences of the style during the 1930s and 1940s.

**Bungalow/Craftsman**

The term "Bungalow" is derived from the Bengali "bangla," a low house with porches developed by the British in the Far East during the nineteenth century. One observer remarked that the building was, "a purely utilitarian contrivance developed under hard and limited conditions." While the origin the Bungalow and some of its design features were Bengalese, many of its details were of Oriental inspiration. Japanese construction techniques, exhibited at the California Exposition of 1894, placed emphasis on an extensive display of structural members and the interplay of angles and planes, which became integral parts of Bungalow design. In the United States, Gustav Stickley, a craftsman that later gained a national reputation, established in 1901 *The Craftsman*, a monthly journal through which he stressed the importance of constructing Bungalows in harmony with the immediate surroundings and employing low broad proportions

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with minimal ornamentation. Stickley believed that the character of a Bungalow should be, "so natural and unaffected that it seems to sink into and blend with any landscape." He urged the use of local materials in Bungalow construction and that they be "planned and built to meet simple needs in the simplest and most direct way."

In contrast to Stickley's philosophy, some early models were large residences designed by trained architects for use as either seasonal homes on the New England coast or year-round homes in California. One of the important architectural firms of expansive Bungalows, Greene & Greene received commissions for a number of large projects in California, including the Gamble House (1908) and the Irwin House (1909). Both Stickley and the Greenes eventually used the terms "Bungalow" and "Craftsman" to describe projects. By 1910, the building market became flooded with catalogs of plans for inexpensive designs. Among others, Sears, Roebuck and Company made available by 1916 Bungalow kits that contained standardized materials, which also helped to subvert Stickley's emphasis on local designs and materials. *Bungalow Magazine*, another early twentieth-century architecture journal, featured house plans and articles about economical use of space, interior decoration, and landscaping. Plans in those magazines were duplicated across the United States and reinforced humbler aspects of the Bungalow, which eclipsed the earlier grand versions. In Florida, the Bungalow emerged as a popular residential design about 1910, flourished during the land boom of the 1920s, and slowly lost acceptance in the 1930s.

Some relatively small public buildings, including clubhouses used by chambers of commerce, civic organizations, country, golf, and yacht clubs, and women's clubs, were developed in the style. They display many characteristics commonly found on dwellings built in the style. Facades are often symmetrical with patios and loggias blending into porches and verandas. A variety of wood sidings clad clubhouses, and fenestration consists of bands of casement or double-hung sash windows and French doors.

The most prominent characteristic of the style is its lack of height. With rare exceptions the Bungalow is a one or one-and-one-half-story building with a shallow-pitch roof pierced by a shed or gable dormer. Although side-facing and front-facing gable roofs were common design features, some elaborate models display a complex roof structure with camelback or airplane dormers. The typical Bungalow has two rooms across the main facade, emphasizing horizontality at the expense of height. The porch, an integral part of a Bungalow, generally complements the main block. The choice of exterior sheathing materials vary from log, wood shingle, weatherboard, and drop siding, stucco, and stone veneers. Fenestration is consciously

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asymmetrical, although small windows typically flank the chimney. Double-hung sash windows frequently appear in groups of two or three, with upper sashes divided into several vertical panes. Other features include carved rafter ends and knee braces mounted under the eaves.

**Classical Revival**

The Classical Revival style evolved from an interest in the architecture of ancient Greek and Roman cultures. The first period of interest in Classical models in the United States dates from the colonial and national periods, which extended between the 1770s and 1850s. A second revival was spurred by the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893. Many of the best known architects of the day designed buildings for the Exposition based on classical precedents. Examples varied from monumental copies of Greek temples to smaller models that drew heavily from designs of Adam, Georgian, and early Classical Revival residences erected in the early nineteenth century. The Exposition, which drew large crowds, helped make the style fashionable again. In Florida, Classical Revival became a relatively popular design for commercial, government, and public buildings.

Some of the characteristics of Classical Revival architecture include a symmetrical facade dominated by a full height porch on classical columns, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals; gable or hip roofs with boxed eaves, frequently with dentils or modillions beneath the roof and a wide frieze band surrounding the building; doorways featuring decorative pediments; double-hung sash windows, usually with six or nine panes per sash; and roof line balustrades.

**Colonial Revival**

Colonial Revival was a dominant style of American architecture during the first half of the twentieth century. The term "Colonial Revival" refers to a rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic Seaboard. The Georgian and Adam styles were the backbone of the Revival, which also drew upon Post-medieval English and Dutch Colonial architecture for references. The style was introduced at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876, when the centennial of the Declaration of Independence sparked renewed interest in the architecture of the colonial period. Many of the buildings designed for the Exposition were based on historically significant colonial designs. Publicity on the Exposition occurred simultaneously with efforts made by national organizations to preserve Old South Church in Boston and Mount Vernon. About the same time a series of articles on eighteenth century American architecture appeared in the

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*American Architect* and *Harpers*. The publicity the Colonial Revival style received helped to make it popular throughout the country.

In Florida, the popularity of the style was eclipsed in the early 1920s by the Bungalow and Mediterranean Revival styles. The typical Colonial Revival design in Florida is an eclectic mixture of several of colonial forms rather than a direct copy of a single plan. The influences of the Prairie style and American Foursquare plan often appear on models. The style appeared in the state in the late 1880s and reached the height of its popularity in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. Some identifying characteristics of Colonial Revival architecture include gable, hip, or gambrel roofs, often pierced by dormers; an accentuated door, normally with a classical surround, either solid or glazed; simple entry porches supported by slender columns; a symmetrical facade (although it is fairly common for the door to be set off-center); double-hung sash windows, usually with multi-pane glazing in each sash; and windows that are frequently set in pairs.

**Frame Vernacular**

Frame Vernacular, the prevalent style of architecture in Florida, refers to the common wood frame construction technique employed by lay or self-taught builders. The Industrial Revolution permitted standardization of building materials and parts, which exerted a pervasive influence over vernacular building design. Popular magazines helped to disseminate information about architectural trends throughout the country. The railroad provided affordable and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to a myriad of finish architectural products from which to create their own designs.

Frame Vernacular buildings are typically one or two stories in height, with a balloon or platform frame structural system built of pine. They are mounted on masonry piers, most often made of bricks, and plans are usually rectangular, though L-shape plans were often used to maximize cross-ventilation. Most display gable roofs steeply-pitched to accommodate an attic. Horizontal wood weatherboard, drop siding, and wood shingles are common exterior wall fabrics. Often employed as original roof surfacing materials, wood or pressed metal shingles have nearly always been replaced by composition shingles in a variety of shapes and colors. The facade is often placed on the gable end, making the height of the facade greater than its width. Porches are also a common feature. Windows are generally double-hung sash with multiple panes. Decoration, generally limited to ornamental woodwork, includes tapered or round porch columns, balustrades or knee walls, and knee braces, purlins, and exposed rafter ends.

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**Italian Renaissance**

The Italian Renaissance style gained popularity in the United States between 1890 and 1935. The earlier Italianate style, which persisted between 1840 and 1885, was loosely based on Italian models, resulting in considerable artistic license in the reproduction of prototypes. In the 1880s, the firm of McKim, Mead, and White gave impetus to the Italian Renaissance style, which was part of the Second Renaissance Revival movement, with the Villard Houses in New York. In the 1890s, fashionable architects employed the style, which provided contrast with Gothic-inspired Shingle and Queen Anne styles. After World War I, the perfection of simulated masonry exterior veneering fabrics made possible the accurate representations even in modest examples of the style.

Although Florida has a number of fine examples of the style, it was not as popular as contemporary Spanish Colonial or Mediterranean Revival designs. Italian Renaissance was one of many architectural types with Mediterranean precedents that gained popularity in Florida during the land boom of the 1920s. Most of the state's Italian Renaissance style buildings were erected between 1920 and 1930, although the style had made significant advances nationally by 1910. Identifying features of public models often include a symmetrical facade; a flat roof with parapets and balustrades; cornices and frieze bands; and projecting extensions. Entrances are often recessed within the main block of the building and display classical influences, including arched or Palladian openings, pilasters or columns with capitals, and parapets or roofline balustrades. Brick or stucco serve as exterior wall fabrics, and terra cotta, cast crete, and ashlar veneers are often applied liberally.

**Masonry Vernacular**

The term "Masonry Vernacular" applies to buildings that display no formal style of architecture and is defined as the common masonry construction techniques of lay or self taught builders. Prior to the Civil War vernacular designs were local in nature, transmitted by word of mouth or by demonstration and relying heavily upon native building materials. With the coming of the American Industrial Revolution mass manufacturers became the pervasive influence over vernacular building design. Popular magazines featuring standardized manufactured building components and plans, and decorating tips flooded consumer markets and helped to make building trends universal across the country. The railroad also aided the process by providing cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, the individual

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builder had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to select to create a design of his own.

Masonry Vernacular is more commonly associated with commercial building types than with residential architecture, where wood frame buildings dominate. In Florida, most masonry houses predating 1920 were brick, but a number of older examples feature the rough-faced cast block popularized by Henry Hobson Richardson in his Romanesque buildings of the late nineteenth century. The Masonry Vernacular designs of the 1920s and 1930s were often influenced by popular Art Deco, Art Moderne, Bungalow/Craftsman, and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival designs of the period. Hollow tile and brick persisted as popular building materials until World War II, when cinder block construction reduced material and labor costs.

**Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival**

The Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style, largely found in those states with a Spanish colonial heritage, embraces a broad category of subtypes of Spanish revival architecture in America, including Mediterranean and Mission revival, and Spanish Eclectic styles. The style gained popularity in the American Southwest and Florida during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Mission Revival originated in California during the 1890s, primarily through the impetus of the Southern Pacific Railway, which applied the style to depots and resort hotels. Architects used regional historical precedents to design buildings within a local context. The influence of Mission, Spanish, and other Mediterranean-derived styles found additional expression through a study of Latin American architecture made by Bertram Goodhue at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915. The exhibition prominently featured the rich Spanish architectural variety of South and Central America. Encouraged by the publicity afforded the exposition, architects began to look directly to the Mediterranean basin where they found more building traditions.

In Florida, the popularity of the Spanish Colonial Revival style soared in the 1920s and maintained a pervasive influence on building design until World War II. The style came to symbolize Florida architecture during the 1920s and was adapted for a variety of building types ranging from churches, country clubs, townhouses, commercial and government buildings, hotels, mansions, railroad depots, theaters, and small residences, the latter often referred to as "Spanish bungalows." Magazines and journals featured articles on the style. In June 1925, *House Beautiful* characterized the style as "a new composite style...producing a type of small villa distinctly for and of Florida." Even small models were often picturesque, displaying an "architectural blend that

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make it essentially appropriate for adaptation in Florida. Informal in its essence as well as in its execution, this Mediterranean style accords well with the informal life of the great winter resort to which yearly thousands repair to escape all that reminds them of the North." For a brief period during the late 1910s and 1920s, the style gained popularity throughout the country. Sears, Roebuck and Company offered a number of ready-to-assemble house kits between 1918 and the late 1920s that displayed Spanish influences.

Identifying features of the style include complex roof plans, often a combination of flat, gable, and hip roofs with ceramic tile surfacing or cresting along shaped parapets or pent eaves. Bell towers and arcaded wings embellish large models. Textured stucco exteriors often originally displayed pigments mixed with the cement to form a rich intensity or a light tint. Medallions, sconces, and ceramic tiles adorn walls and chimneys exhibit arched vents and caps with barrel tile cresting. Entrance porches and loggias are contained within arched openings and multi-light casement and double-hung sash windows, often deeply set in the walls or arched openings, admit natural lighting into the interior. Wrought-iron balconets typically protect small balconies with French doors, and pergolas, fountains, and trellises or patios often appear in the surrounding landscape.

**Prairie**

The Prairie style, one of few indigenous American architectural forms, was developed by a creative association of Chicago architects. The style was mastered by Frank Lloyd Wright whose Winslow House, constructed in 1893, was among the first residences completed in the style. The heaviest concentrations of Prairie style buildings are located in the Midwest. Although pattern books helped to distribute vernacular forms of the style throughout the country, the Prairie style was a short-lived architectural form with its popularity rising and falling from favor between 1895 and World War I.

In Florida, the Prairie style never gained wide acceptance. The style was eclipsed by revival styles of the American colonial period and from Europe and the Mediterranean basin, which gained popularity and flourished during the land boom of the 1920s. Perhaps the largest collection of buildings displaying the style in Florida, and indeed the South, are located in Jacksonville, where architects widely applied the form to buildings constructed there following a devastating fire in 1901.

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Distinctive features of the Prairie style include a two-story design, often with a bold interplay of horizontal planes against a vertical block and secondary vertical details. Low-pitched gable, flat, or hip roofs with boxed eaves often contrast with dormers, massive chimneys, and horizontal ribbons of windows, often treated with leaded glass. Cantilevered overhangs, one-story porches, porte cocheres, or extensions with massive column supports are secondary features. Brick, stucco, tile, or rough face cast stone exterior wall fabrics often appear in combination with wood. Classical, Mission, or Italian Renaissance influences, such as tiled roofs or cornice line brackets, are prominent in some models.

**Tudor Revival**

The Tudor Revival style gained popularity in America during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The style was loosely based on a combination of references to the architecture of early sixteenth century Tudor England and a variety of Medieval English prototypes ranging from thatched-roof folk cottages to grand manor houses. The first American examples of the style were erected in the late nineteenth century and were generally large landmark buildings rather closely related to the English precedents. The style was adapted to smaller residential designs in the early twentieth century, when it lost much of its resemblance to English antecedents.

Most buildings exhibiting the influences of the Tudor Revival style in Florida date from the 1920s, when the style reached its peak in popularity throughout the country. Some of the typical features of the style include steeply pitched roofs with intersecting extensions, dormers, and decorative half-timbering and stucco siding. Fenestration often consists of tall, narrow casement windows with multi-paned glazing, and massive exterior chimneys rise along the front facade of the building.

**3. Significance:**

The historic women's club clubhouses of Florida are significant at the local level under the National Register criteria A and C. The clubhouses served as social centers in their respective communities and consequently may possess significance for their association with Florida's social history. Clubhouses may in some cases also possess significance in the areas of community planning/development and exploration/settlement. Art, conservation, entertainment/recreation, literature, performing arts, politics/government, and other occasional or routine historic functions of a resources should not be attributed to a property's areas of significance unless the activity contributed to the broader pattern of the local history of a community.

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Local stylistic trends in architecture are consistent with those found in Florida during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because the FFWC and most other statewide women's organizations did not adopt standardized plans for clubhouses, building designs were developed by local affiliates. The resulting buildings have further significance as examples of national trends in architecture during the period in which they were constructed.

**4. Registration Requirements:**

For buildings to be eligible for nomination under this cover they must have either been constructed as a clubhouse or served as a clubhouse for a significant period of time during one of the historic periods outlined in Section E. In addition, the building must be at least fifty years old and meet the architectural integrity standards established by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Secretary of the Interior's *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* shall serve as a guide for gauging the eligibility of clubhouses. Alterations sensitive to the original design and appearance of the building will not preclude eligibility. Such additions generally appear on the rear of buildings. The addition of small bays or oriels, porte cocheres, and dormers that contribute to the character of a clubhouse and do not disrupt the original rhythm and styling are acceptable. Asbestos shingles installed over the original exterior siding during the historic period does not preclude a property from eligibility. Enclosing porches in a manner that results in a diminution or loss of historic character, such as using solid materials like wood, stucco, or masonry, will exclude a building from eligibility. Replacement windows should display original sash, casement, or hopper glazing appearance. Clubhouses that display materials inconsistent with the historic period, or the removal of significant architectural details are excluded from eligibility.

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The geographical limits are the state line and the coastal limits of the State of Florida.

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IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

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**SECTION G: Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

In 1995, Old Arlington, Inc. of Jacksonville, a non-profit cultural association and an affiliate of the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, was awarded a grant to prepare a Multiple Property Submission (MPS) nomination covering clubhouses associated with women's clubs in Florida. The methodology used to prepare the MPS largely consisted of a literature search to determine the founding, development, activities, and personalities significant to the development of Florida's women's clubs. Studies of the national and statewide women's movements were useful in placing Florida's women's movement within a national context. Research was conducted at the FFWC archives in Lakeland, P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History in Gainesville, and the Florida State Library in Tallahassee. The National Register of Historic Places and Florida Site File contained listings of previously documented historic women's clubhouses.

The research furnished sufficient information to prepare the historical narrative in section E and the architectural description appearing in section F of the MPS. The development of historical and architectural contexts for evaluating clubhouses in Florida constituted a major portion of the project.

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