

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Wisconsin	
COUNTY: Milwaukee	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 30 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Villa Terrace Museum of the Decorative Arts

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Smith, Lloyd R., House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
2220 North Terrace Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 55 COUNTY: Congressional District: 5th CODE: 079

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
County of Milwaukee

STREET AND NUMBER:
901 North Ninth Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 55

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Milwaukee County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
901 North Ninth Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Milwaukee

STATE: Wisconsin CODE: 55

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

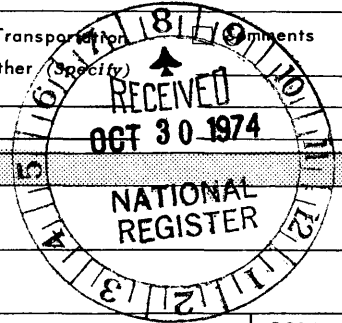
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 20540



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7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the east side of North Terrace Avenue, on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan, the Smith mansion takes the form of a hollow rectangle with two-story wings on north, east, and south sides of a central courtyard and a single-story wall between north and south wings on the west. To the east are paved terraces and the landscaped bluff, with twin staircases leading down to the formal gardens and lawns at the lake level.

In style, the house reflects the Mediterranean trend that became popular during the 1920s. More specifically, its design was inspired by Italian villas of the 15th and 16th centuries. The walls are red Illinois brick painted white and trimmed with gray stone at door and window openings. The roofs are orange-brown barrel tile. An elaborate wrought-iron gate in the west elevation opens onto the courtyard with its gray stone colonnades, gardens, fountain, and pebble-paved paths.

In the north wing are kitchen, pantries, and servants' quarters; in the south wing and on the second story of the east wing are the children's playroom, bedrooms, and guest rooms. And on the main floor of the east wing, the principal rooms, all of which open onto the east terrace, are (from north to south): the dining room, with beamed ceiling of Georgia pecky cypress; the living room ("great hall"), with hand-stenciled cypress ceiling, stone fireplaces in north and south walls, and pegged walnut floor; and the library, with panelling, built-in cabinets, shelving, and floor of walnut.

Conversion of the mansion into a museum during the mid-1960s brought no major alterations to either exterior or interior. The south and east wings now comprise the museum's exhibition rooms and offices, while the north wing houses the caretakers' suite.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1923-24**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The HABS data-report includes this statement of significance:

"Inspired by Italian Renaissance villas, this attractive, well-preserved building, for forty years a private residence and now a public museum, is an admirable example of the traditional architecture of this century and of the work of Chicago architect David Adler. Its setting is also noteworthy: the Smith house stands on a terraced, landscaped bluff overlooking Lake Michigan."

The mansion was erected for Lloyd R. Smith, an executive of the A. O. Smith Corporation, and in the 1960s was donated to Milwaukee County by his widow. Since June 1967 it has served as the Villa Terrace Museum of the Decorative Arts, operated by the Milwaukee County War Memorial Center, Inc. and Milwaukee Art Center. It houses a fine collection of furniture, china, glass, and silver, with some items dating from as early as the 16th century, but with emphasis on British and American pieces of the mid-17th through early 19th centuries.

Superior materials and workmanship went into construction of this home, and, happily, there have been no important alterations and maintenance has been excellent. It was designated as a Milwaukee Landmark in 1968 and documented for the Historic American Buildings Survey two years later.

The superb landscape architecture to be found on this property, especially on the bluff overlooking Lake Michigan, is certainly too significant not to be mentioned specifically.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Perrin, Richard W. E., The Architecture of Wisconsin, Madison, 1967, 115-116.

Perrin, Richard W. E., Milwaukee Landmarks, Milwaukee, 1968, 100, 102-103.

Pratt, Richard, David Adler, New York, 1970, 18-19, 88-89, 199.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

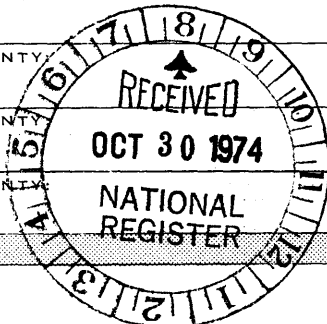
HR
UTM
OK

U.T.M. Zone 16:
428,280 E.
4,767,380 N.

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2.0**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mary Ellen Wietczykowski, Chairman

ORGANIZATION: **Milwaukee Landmarks Commission** DATE: **Aug. 17, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER:
734 North Ninth Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Milwaukee** STATE: **Wisconsin 53233** CODE: **55**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: James Morton Smith
James Morton Smith

Title: Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Date: Oct. 23, 1974

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

AP Warkentau
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 12/30/74

ATTEST:

W. Wietczyk
Keeper of The National Register
DEC 27 1974

Date: _____

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(Continuation Sheet)

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Wisconsin	
COUNTY	
Milwaukee	
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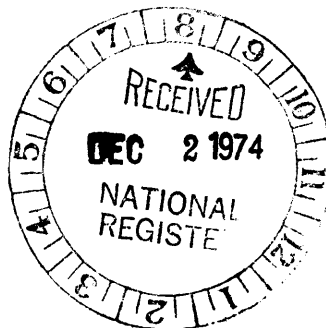
(Number all entries)

VILLA TERRACE MUSEUM OF THE DECORATIVE ARTS

7. In writing of the Villa Terrace, Perrin states: "Mediterranean stylism-- a mixture of Spanish and Italian motifs--was surprisingly popular in Wisconsin, but because of climatic conditions, severe limitations were imposed on the use of patios, courts, open galleries, and other outdoor living areas which actually are the most distinguishing characteristics of original Spanish and Italian work. A notable exception and a classic example of the best use of the Mediterranean tradition is the former L. R. Smith house...now Villa Terrace...in Milwaukee...From the street side the house appears secluded and almost forbidding, but once inside the cortile with its delightful garden, fountain, and open staircase to the galleries, an immediate impression of great beauty is gained. To the back east of the house, cross-vaulted porches and extending terraces, one hundred feet or more above water level, provide an excellent, high elevation view of Lake Michigan. The slope down to beach level is well landscaped and terraced, including a cascading waterfall from top to bottom..."¹

1. Perrin, The Architecture of Wisconsin, 115-116

8. The landscape architect was the well-known Rose Standish Nichols, of Boston, and as indicated, the work was not only excellent but was one of the features so vital in maintaining in the Villa Terrace some of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Mediterranean tradition upon which the architect drew. Landscape architecture therefore seems to be as important an area of significance as architecture alone in this nomination.



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VILLA TERRACE MUSEUM OF THE DECORATIVE ARTS

6. Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Buildings and Sites (State)

1971

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

816 State Street

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

Code: 55

11. Donald N. Anderson, Asst. Director, Historic Sites & Markers

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

October 2, 1974

816 State Street

Madison

Wisconsin 53706

Code: 55

