

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUN 8 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Wilder House

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number corner of Shell and Pine Streets, N/A not for publication

city, town Chatham N/A vicinity of

state LA code 22 county Jackson Parish code 049

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Karl D. Hayes, Jr. home: 318-249-2536
work: 318-323-6247
318-323-3793

street & number Box 440

city, town Chatham N/A vicinity of state LA 71226

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jackson Parish Courthouse

street & number Main Street (no specific address) Courthouse Building

city, town Jonesboro state LA 71251

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wilder House (1904) is a substantial story-and-a-half frame Queen Anne Revival cottage located near the center of the rural town of Chatham. Despite a few alterations, the house retains its National Register eligibility.

The Wilder House features a central hall plan, three rooms deep, with a small rear wing. Two of the rooms terminate in semihexagonal bays. The main roof of the house, which is more or less pyramidal, is enlivened by the use of five projecting gables, two of which are set asymmetrically in the front. The front also features a three-bay Eastlake gallery. Most of the single pane plate glass sash windows are mounted in pairs under a single cornice. The front door has three plate glass transoms and single pane side lights. The original Eastlake screen door survives as does the interior staircase.

The following changes have been made in the house since construction:

- (1) The interior wall surfaces have been covered in sheetrock.
- (2) All of the original mantels have been replaced.
- (3) The old rear porch has been replaced due to deterioration.

Assessment of Integrity:

Despite the above changes, the Wilder House retains its obvious identity as a Queen Anne cottage, owing to the previously described features. Moreover, its architectural significance is based upon the attributes mentioned in Item 8, all of which still survive. In any case, in the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, the Wilder House is eligible for the Register, despite the above few changes, because there is so little left of the historic patrimony of Jackson Parish.

The Wilder House is also being nominated in the area of exploration/settlement because of its association with the founding of the town of Chatham. It easily retains enough of its original appearance to represent this association.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1904 **Builder/Architect** Builder: Dr. Samuel O. Wilder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criteria A and C

The Wilder House is locally significant in the area of exploration/settlement because of its close association with the founding of the town of Chatham. It is also locally significant in the area of architecture as a superior example among the few surviving late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century residences in Jackson Parish.

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT:

The town of Chatham traces its beginnings to 1903, when the Tremont and Gulf Railroad began to continue their line from Eros on toward Womack. The company planned to establish a town somewhere in between. The initial choice was a small community called Dalley (or Veal Farm), which was apparently on a more direct line between Eros and Womack. The railroad officials called a meeting in Dalley to discuss the matter, and only two citizens attended, Dr. Samuel O. Wilder and Mr. E. W. Ramsey. Because of this apparent lack of interest, the railroad company decided to locate the town on land they owned about two miles east of Dalley. The town was named after Noah J. Chatham, a local farmer and early settler in the area.

The Wilder House was the first house erected in Chatham. The Tremont and Gulf Railroad officials were well acquainted with Dr. Wilder and desired his services as the railroad's doctor. Upon hearing that he was contemplating a move to Mer Rouge, they told him that if he would locate in what was to be Chatham, they would give him the lot of his choice. When the railroad surveyed the town, Dr. Wilder chose a corner lot and construction of the present house was begun in 1904. The town of Chatham then grew up around the Wilder House.

NB: The above is common knowledge in the town of Chatham and is based largely upon oral history. A taped interview with Herman Wilder, the son of Dr. Samuel O. Wilder, was used in compiling the above. Mr. Wilder was 12 in 1904 and 90 at the time of the interview.

ARCHITECTURE:

Over the years the rural piney woods parish of Jackson has lost almost all of its historic structures.* This loss has been so complete that for almost a year the State Historic Preservation Office tried without success to find a Register worthy property. Of the handful of late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century residences which have been identified in the parish, the Wilder House is one of the finest. It has a central hall, which most of its fellows do not. It is a full three rooms deep, as opposed to the usual one or two, and it has a relatively elaborate roofline. Complexity of the roofscape was one of the hallmarks of the period and the Wilder House probably has more projecting gables than any other house in the parish. Moreover, the Wilder House has one of the

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Jackson Parish Conveyance Records

Taped interview with Herman Wilder, son of Dr. Samuel O. Wilder. Tape in possession of owners (Item 4).

*Womack, Nell A. As They Remembered. April 1965. No other publication information given.

~~*Typescript available at Louisiana State Library which contains a historical sketch of Chatham.~~

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .2 acre

Quadrangle name Chatham, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

UTM References

A

1	5	5	5	2	6	5	10	3	5	7	4	4	10	10
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

ASSISTED BY OWNERS

name/title National Register Staff, Division of Historic Preservation

organization State of Louisiana

date April 1983

street & number P. O. Box 44247

telephone 504-342-6682

city or town Baton Rouge

state LA 70804

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Robert B. DeBlieux
Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 23, 1983

For NPS use only

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

Patrick Andrews

date 7/13/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Wilder House

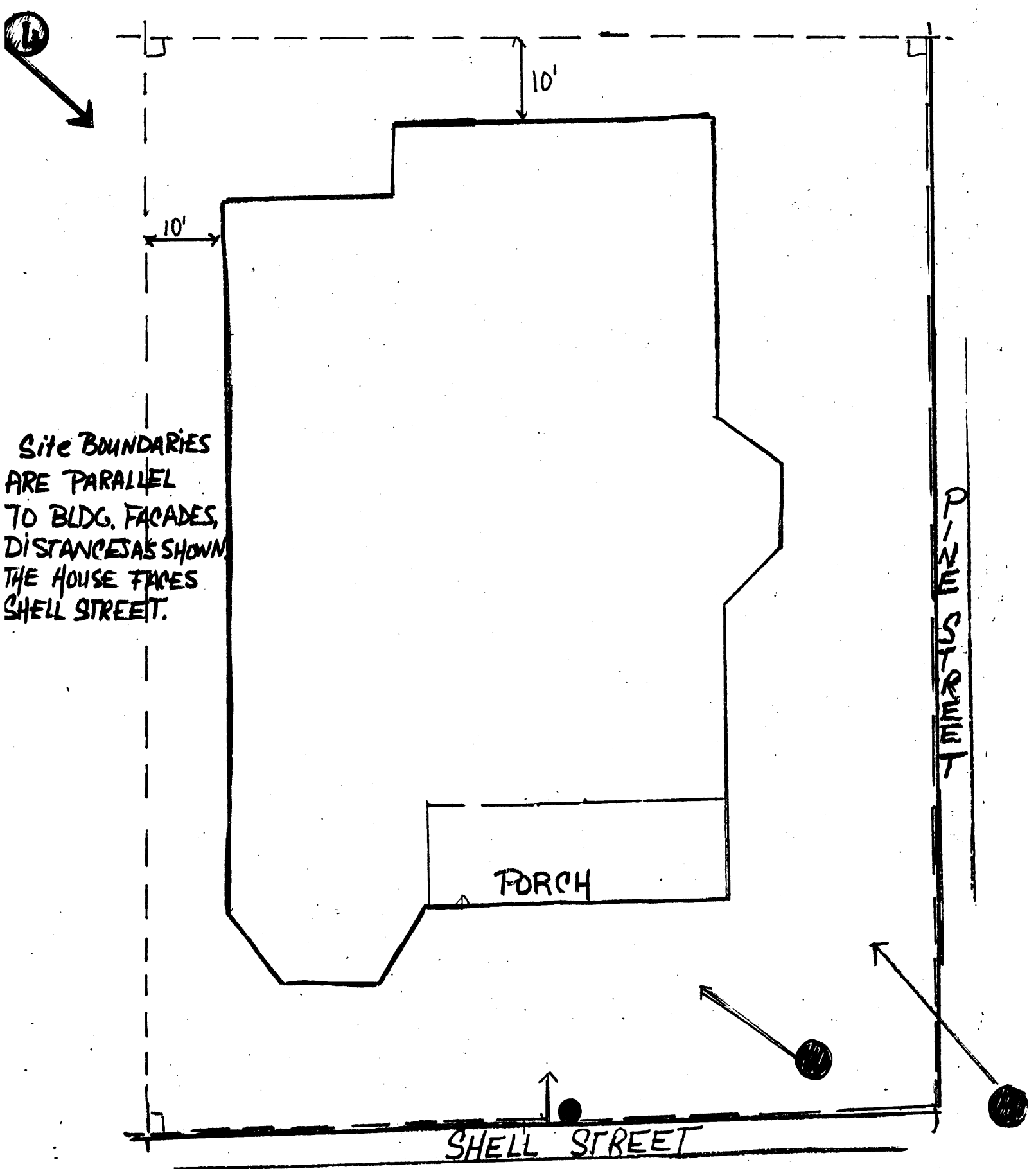
Item number 8

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8. Significance (continued)

parish's very few surviving Eastlake galleries. Finally, it has fully two semi-hexagonal bays, whereas most other period residences in the parish have none.

*This does not include the parish's numerous small nondescript 1920's bungalows.



WILDER HOUSE, CHATHAM, LA.

JACKSON PARISH