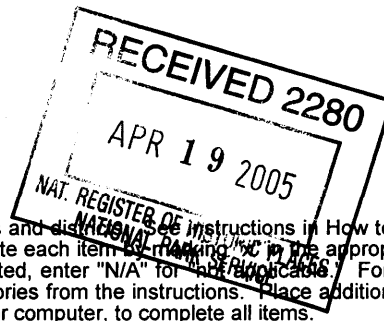


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



501

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

1. Name of Property

historic name BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 5050 Brywill Circle N/A not for publication

city or town Sarasota N/A vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Sarasota code 115 zip code 34234

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara C. Mattick, DSHPO for Survey & Registration 4/18/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

6/1/05
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	2	structures
0	0	objects
2	3	total

Name of related multiple property listings

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure/Garage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure/Guest House

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/

Mediterranean Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Stucco

roof Clay Tile

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1925

Significant Dates

1925

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: Unknown

Blder: Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of Repository

#

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
Name of Property

Sarasota Co., FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	3	4	5	7	8	0	3	0	2	9	0	4	0
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
2															

3															
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
4															

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paige McMichael, Owner/Carl Shiver, Historic Preservationist

organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date April 2005

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 South Bronough Street telephone (850) 245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Paige McMichael and Robert Casella

street & number 5050 Brywill Circle telephone (941) 359-6327

city or town Sarasota state Florida zip code 34234

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

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

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

The Bryson-Crane House, located at 5050 Brywill Circle in Sarasota, Florida, is a one- and two-story Mediterranean Revival Style residence that is noteworthy for its well-preserved architectural details. The house is constructed of stuccoed hollow tile walls and has a continuous foundation. The building features an irregular ground plan and a multi-level roof surfaced in barrel clay tile. The other contributing resource on the property, in addition to the main house, is a free-standing building, originally designed as a garage in 1925 and now used as a guest house. There are three noncontributing resources associated with the house: a two-car garage, a quatrefoil shaped swimming pool, and a masonry privacy wall that surrounds the property.

SETTING

Sarasota is a city with a population of approximately 51,000 located in western Florida about 55 miles south of Tampa. The city is situated on Sarasota Bay, an inlet to the Gulf of Mexico. The downtown area contains a mixture of historic and modern buildings, most of the latter having been constructed within the last 30 years. The central business district is bordered by residential subdivisions, most of which developed in the 1920s and later. Much of the recent commercial development has take place north and south of the downtown core along the Tamiami Trail (U.S. Highway 41). The Bryson-Crane House is located in the Sapphire Shores Subdivision approximately 2.5 miles north of downtown Sarasota near the county line with Manatee County. The Bryson-Crane house occupies Lot 1 Block A, Lot 2 Block G and a portion of Lot 2 Block A in Sapphire Shores Subdivision. It is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Brywill Circle and Mecca Drive and is bounded on the east by Eastchester Drive and on the south by the residences at 5048 Brywill Circle and 5033 Eastchester Dive. The intersection of Brywill Circle and Mecca Drive comprise part of a focal intersection informally known by local residents as "Little Five Points," due to the confluence of the streets of Bayshore Road, Mecca Drive, Sapphire Drive, Sandy Way, and Brywill Circle, which surround a small public park. The Bryson-Crane house is one of a cluster of seven remaining Mediterranean Revival houses in the neighborhood dating from the 1920s.

DESCRIPTION

Exterior Description

The Bryson-Crane house is a one- and two-story Mediterranean Revival style residence with an irregular L-shaped floor plan. Various intersecting blocks form the plan, with numerous cross gable roofs surfaced in clay tile. A contributing free standing guest house, originally the garage, stands to the south of the house, near the juncture of the one- and two-story sections. The current street address of the house is found at the west

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

entrance on Brywill Circle, but was originally located at the north entrance on on Mecca Drive.¹ Both the western and northern views of the house present exterior entrance doors, and the change in address did not reflect any alterations to the house. As a result of the dual entrances, the house presents a primary facade at both the western and northern elevations.

MAIN HOUSE

West Elevation

The western elevation of the house (Photos 1 & 2) exhibits a single story wing running north-south along Brywill Circle. This building block is more or less rectangular in shape, presenting a double-roof gable end offset above the entrance, with the forward gable extending to encase the southern end of this wing. The northern end of this wing presents a gable edge to the western elevation. A one-story, front-gable porch shelters the main entrance to the house. The porch features a dramatic archway that curves sharply at the sides to merge with the short piers that flank the low stoop at the front of the porch. The piers now support concrete planters and were probably designed for that purpose. The arch bears little connection to the more familiar forms of traditional Mediterranean Revival decorative elements, rather being more akin to Italian Mannerism of the early sixteenth century, which was largely limited to some public and private buildings found in Florence and Rome. Mannerism had only a brief flowering in the visual arts and architecture before it was overwhelmed by the more robust and bombastic Baroque style. The front entrance is centered at the rear of the porch and features a solid wooden door, arched at the top, with a circular viewing window, approximately 24 inches in diameter, which holds a wrought iron decorative inset. The door is flanked by two of the original single leaf wood casement windows. Other fenestration along the west elevation includes a bank of three large double-casement windows at the north end of the wing and a bank of two double-casements at the south end of the wing. The wing terminates at its southern end with a covered porte-cochere (Photos 3 & 4).

North Elevation

The northern elevation of the house features the original c. 1925 single story 'short' wing (Photos 5 & 6), together with the northern elevation of the two-story 1930 addition. Centered in the 1925 section is a modern wooden pergola which leads to the entrance, that still contains its original French doors. The 1925 section of the north elevation includes three separate gables, the central section protruding approximately 15 feet beyond the flanking gabled sections and included in the entrance door. The 1930 addition is most visible from this elevation, with the two story section located at the eastern end of the north elevation, supporting a hip roof. The hip roofed two story section is joined to the triple-gabled portion of the house by the edge of an enclosed gable roof section. The fenestration of the north elevation is as follows. At the west end, there are

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Sarasota (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1926-1963).

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

three double-casements. In the center entrance section, set in the west and east side walls of the protruding section on either side of the French doors are single casements. To the immediate east of the entrance section there are two double casements. An identical set of two double casements is set in the north exposure of the connecting room between the wings. Finally, the two-story section presents two sets of very large double-casements.

East Elevation

The eastern elevation of the house shows the side of the two story bedroom wing (Photos 7 & 8), each floor of which presents two narrow sets of windows. On the second floor, these openings are single casement windows; on the first floor they are narrow garden doors. Immediately to the south of these openings, each floor contains a single casement window at the bathroom.

From the east, the main two-story section ends immediately after the bathroom window, but set back from the main eastern wall is the small sleeping porch section which extends from the south wall of the bedroom. The east wall of the sleeping porch is visible from this elevation is constructed of wood framing with banks of double-hung wood sash windows, original to the porch. The sleeping porch is the only room in the house constructed of wood and having double hung windows. The eastern elevation of the long, one-story wing running north-south on Brywill is also visible. This includes a set of double French doors, identical to the original entrance at the north elevation.

South Elevation

The south elevation (Photos 9 & 10) of the house presents the southern section of the two story section of the house, as well as the southern side of the original 1925 construction. At the two story section, the sleeping porch is visible above with its banks of double hung windows (three at this elevation). Below the sleeping porch, originally an open grass area beneath the porch, the supporting columns of the porch have been enclosed with stucco walls to create an expansion to the first floor bedroom area. The original columns are still visible and have not been structurally altered. The connecting section presents a single doorway to the south. The original long wing along Brywill presents its side aspect to the south, including the kitchen entrance. The original kitchen door was not salvageable, but the same door opening was utilized to hold a conforming French door that matches the other original French doors on the southern elevation. The kitchen door is flanked by single casements. To the immediate east of the kitchen door section is a set of large double casements. To the immediate west of the kitchen door section are original double French doors opening under the porte-cochere, with a set of two tiled steps leading to the ground level.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 4 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

Interior Description

The main house consists of eight main rooms, together with various utility, bath and closet rooms. Since construction, there have been no substantive changes to the interior of the building, except as specifically disclosed below. From the west elevation of the house, the entrance door leads directly into a rectangular living room. On the southern wall of the living room is a brick and stucco fireplace, which is inset into the southern wall of the room (Photo 11). To the north of the living room is the den, or music room (Photo 12). To the east of the study, running along the eastern side of the living room, is the kitchen (Photo 13) which is joined on the east by a former bedroom now used as the dining room. Immediately to the east of the music room, at the eastern end of the living room, is the foyer of the northern entranceway (Photo 14). To the immediate east of the entry on the north side of the house, is the family room (Photo 15). The original use of this room may have been a bedroom prior to 1930. From 1930 forward, it is likely that it served as a living area, since it serves as a corridor (Photo 16) to the 1930 section of the house. It provides stairwell access and an entry to the first floor bedroom.

To the east of this stairwell is the first floor bedroom (Photo 17). Serving this bedroom are a bath and a large closet/dressing room. The closet has had two sinks added, but otherwise remains unchanged. To the rear of the original closet, a window was replaced by a doorway and an open area beneath the second story sleeping porch was enclosed to create a shower room. The second floor contains a guest bedroom, bath (Photos 18 & 19), and closet that mirrors the arrangement of the first floor bedroom. No changes were made to these rooms. Above the first floor shower is the original sleeping porch, also unchanged.

GARAGE/GUEST HOUSE

A free standing building, originally designed for a garage in 1925 and now used as a guest house, is visible from both the west and south elevations of the house. Its main elevation faces west and is set back to the east of the property, with its leading edge approximately even with the end of the kitchen entrance section on the southern side of the main house. It is joined to the main house at this point with a decorative stucco arch.

West Elevation (Photos 20 & 21)

The guest house section originally presented a double set of high arched openings to the west, set symmetrically under a gable roof end. Extensive restoration was undertaken to uncover and recreate these original arches. While the original arch insets were located and reinstalled, the original doors were not found and French doors consistent with the remainder of the house were custom built to fit the original arch openings. To the south of the double arched openings there is a single entrance door and double casement window, set under a second gable.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 5

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

North Elevation

The north elevation of the guest house section faces the main house. It has no windows and presents the gable edge of its roof.

East Elevation (Photo 22)

The east elevation of the guest house section includes two window openings, one of which accommodates a single casement. The other would not accommodate a casement window and was closed with a double hung wooden window consistent with the architecture of the house.

South Elevation

The south elevation of the guest house section includes a single opening for a double hung wooden window, also chosen for consistency with the house architecture and the preservation of the original window opening.

Garage/Guesthouse Interior

The original garage consists of two adjoining bays which form a single large room, together with a small adjacent room. At some time between construction and the current owners' occupancy in 2000, the rear of this small room was plumbed for bathroom use.

Alterations/Restorations

The property was somewhat modernized in the 1960's and 1970's.² These changes were removed and the property restored to its original design in 2001. The modernization was not particularly extensive and did not result in any change in fenestration size to the exterior. It did not change interior design or structure in any way.

Windows: Most of the original wooden windows in the house were replaced with aluminum double-hung windows in the early 1970's. Window opening were not changed. In 2001 the aluminum windows were removed and full wood casements consistent with Mediterranean Revival houses in the area were custom made and installed, again retaining original fenestration size.

² Oral account of Everett Hancock, former owner, at closing of title on his sale, 2000.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 6

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

Garage/Guest House Doors: The original garage arches had been closed in to form smaller rectangular openings from the exterior, and aluminum sliding doors replaced the existing doors. Again, original opening sizes were still retained at the interior and the size change from the exterior was only a frame/stucco insert. In 2001, the frame addition was removed and the original arched openings revealed. An original wood arch inset was found in storage and reinstalled. The doors below were custom crafted to fit the original openings in all wood French style doors consistent with all other existing exterior doors to the house.

Garage/Guest House Interior Divider: The single large bay in the former garage was divided into two rooms with a frame and paneling dividing wall in the 1970's. This was removed in 2001 to restore the original single bay design. All added paneling and sheetrock was removed to reveal the original clay block and stucco interior treatment.

Courtyards:

The exterior courtyard areas at the southwest of the main building (kitchen entry) and west of the garage were poured with concrete in the 1960-1970 period. During the same period a swimming pool was added to the south of the poured area. In 2001, this concrete pad and the pool were broken up, removed and the excavations filled. The courtyard was re-covered in brick pavers removed from a building in Chicago circa 1920's to recreate the original material used in contemporaneous Mediterranean Revivals in the immediate neighborhood, and the pool area was returned to gardens.

Other Reconstruction Work in 2001

The Bryson-Crane house was in poor physical condition in 2001. Most of the plumbing was unusable, wiring was far short of code requirements, and some water damage was visible to the interior walls, ceilings and floors. The current owners undertook restoration to remove and restore any changes made to the property in previous decades, as summarized above. The house was repaired and plumbing, electrical and finishes restored. The original stucco walls, both interior and exterior, were repaired, and any repaired areas were matched in finish to the original surfaces surrounding them. Original exterior doors were in poor condition and were removed, repaired, filled where damaged, painted and re-hung. All electrical fixtures were retained. Years of paint were removed and finishes meticulously restored. All electrical fixtures were rewired and reinstalled. All original hinges, key and door knob assemblies, glass knobs and decorative brass hardware were retained, refurbished and reinstalled.

Construction work in 2001 also included the replacement of flooring in three small rooms with replicas of the original oak slat flooring that had suffered rotting and other deterioration. One rotted exterior kitchen door was replaced with a new French door consistent with those at the other exterior doorways on the building. A dividing wall was added to the first floor common bath after it was determined that neither the floor nor the

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 7

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DESCRIPTION

bathub in the original bath could be salvaged. The area once occupied by a tub was used to create a utility room. An archway was created in the kitchen wall to allow direct access to the next room.

Other Changes Made to the Property

At the time the property was purchased by its present owners the property still retained one length of fencing along the southerly border, and there were signs in the grounds that various walls and fences had from time to time existed on the property, particularly along the eastern edge of the property. All of the surrounding Mediterranean Revival homes at the Five Points intersection were fully or partially walled. A determination was made to install, or to reinstall, a wall along the eastern property line (Photo 23) and a portion of the northern line, connecting back into the house at the beginning of the first floor (northeast) bedroom. A wall was also constructed from the freestanding new garage to the porte-cochere along the western property. A new swimming pool (Photos 24 & 25) was constructed in the southeast section of the grounds. The pool is not covered with a cage and is not connected to the house. A separate, unattached and free standing garage (Photo 26) was constructed at the far southwest corner of the property. The garage was constructed of cement block finished with stucco to match the existing property exterior. It presents a barrel tile roof matching the existing house and cypress garage doors. An original window to the main house, which was deemed slightly too damaged to be utilized in the main house, was refurbished and installed in the northern wall of the free standing garage (Photo 27), facing the kitchen courtyard. The drive access to the garage from Brywill Circle was poured to match exactly the existing drives to the porte-cochere on the property. The porte-cochere was preserved and blocked from the street by the addition of a cypress gate (Photo 3), attached to the port columns by removable screws. The structural integrity of the porte-cochere was carefully retained.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 1 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

The Bryson-Crane house is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It is a good example of Mediterranean Revival domestic architecture dating for the Florida "Boom" period of the 1920s. Constructed in 1925, the house retains major features of its exterior and interior design and of its setting. The Mediterranean Revival style gained popularity in Florida during the 1920s, being promoted by architects and land developers as the "natural" style for the semi-tropical climate and as a picturesque and attractive counterpoint to the more plain American house types. The house is one of the few residences constructed in the neighborhood as part of the planned real estate developments undertaken in Sarasota by John Ringling and Ralph C. Caples. The house possesses significance due to its integrity, size, execution, and excellent condition.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Prior to 1900, Sarasota's development was mostly limited to settlement by homesteaders and fishermen. In the 1880s an effort to create a Scottish immigrant community had failed and the next 20 years saw little growth mainly due to a lack of railroad access to the population and commercial centers to the north. Upon the arrival in 1903 of the Florida West Shore Railroad, Sarasota began to grow,³ real estate prices began to rise and Sarasota began to develop an identity as a winter tourist haven. Most Sarasota homes had telephone service, electricity, water and sewers by 1913. Streets were paved with brick and asphalt and sidewalks and seawalls were built of concrete. A brass band provided entertainment for the growing community. Roads were shared by automobiles, and wagons and carriages pulled by animals.⁴ Influential people arrived in Sarasota during the first decade of the century setting the stage for significant development. John and Charles Ringling of Ringling Circus fame were two such citizens who brought other and prominent people to the city. Sarasota County was formed from a part of Manatee County in 1921 and Sarasota became the county seat.⁵

In the 1920s, a real estate land boom in Florida stimulated the platting of residential subdivisions throughout an expanded Sarasota city limits. The relatively low cost of land and the promise of quick profits spurred the city into rapid development.⁶ Sarasota's downtown development was coupled with expanding suburban residential areas and a City was quickly replacing the fishing village image that it had with that of a developing resort community. Considerable construction after the First World War made Sarasota a modern city. Over five hundred structures were completed in 1925 and 1926, half of them residences.⁷

³Historic Preservation Element, City of Sarasota Comprehensive Plan, City of Sarasota, Florida, July, 1986, pg. 9.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., p. 11.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Kira Zender, "Revised Historic Summary for Historic Preservation Element," March 29, 1991.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 2 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

The Sapphire Shores/Indian Beach Subdivision, in which the subject property is located, had seen some development prior to the 1920s. In the winter of 1890-91, Dr. Frederick K. Williams of Bristol, Connecticut, traveled through the Sarasota Bay region. He eventually chose a tract of land to purchase, just north of 33rd Street (later 27th Street and still later, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way).⁸ His land acquisition included 267 acres that had been owned by John J. Dunne. Dunne bought the property a few years earlier, paying only \$1 per acre, from the original settlers.⁹ Dr. Williams paid \$3,345.50. A group of investors participated and the tract was then subdivided. A plat was recorded in October of 1891, as the Indian Beach Subdivision. Syndicate members were allocated choice waterfront lots.¹⁰

Promotional material from this period of the subdivision's development called it the "ultra-exclusive residential area" of Indian Beach on Sarasota Bay.¹¹ That promotion also said, "This location is studded with the magnificent homes of wealthy people from all over the U.S. and some from foreign lands, who chose this beautiful spot on the land-locked, placid waters of the bay, after a world-wide search for the ideal winter home." It went on to say there were 93 of the "prettiest located lots to be found on the entire bay, nearby the palatial homes of wealthy northern tourists who spend their winters here." Among them were those of the Ringling Brothers (both listed in the N.R.); Col. C.M. Thompson of Buffalo Bill's Wild West (since demolished); D.L. Wooster, wealthy manufacturer of Cincinnati; O.W.F. Purdy (since demolished); the wife of Admiral Jack Philips, the commander of the battleship Texas of Spanish war fame; and Dr. W.W. Gurley.¹² John and Charles Ringling, of the Ringling Circus empire, were preeminent among these substantial investors. John Ringling purchased huge tracts of property along Sarasota Bay to the north and west of the city central, including the barrier island of Longboat Key. From prominent resident Ralph C. Caples, Ringling also purchased the property to his immediate south. By 1920, from his home at Ca'd Zan (approximately two miles north of the subject property), everything John Ringling surveyed from his second floor, bayfront office belonged to him.¹³

Prior to 1924, John Ringling and Ralph Caples dabbled in a prospective real estate development projects to the south of their mansions along the Bay, eventually filing a plat for a subdivision known as "Sapphire Shores" in February and March of 1924.¹⁴ Almost immediately thereafter, however, Ringling sold his interest in the subdivision to two developer/speculators, G.P. Petroustsa and James Demos (October 7, 1924).¹⁵ It is interesting to note that John Ringling, while no longer the nominal owner of the property, remained a key player

⁸ Karl Grismer, The Story of Sarasota, (Tampa, FL: The Florida Growers Press, 1946) p. 167.

⁹ Ibid., p. 169.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Indian Beach, a promotional book published by the Sarasota Board of Trade in 1913, copy on file at Sarasota County Department of Historical Resources.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Tour Guide, Ca'd Zan/John and Mabel Ringling house tour, February 2003.

¹⁴ Plat Map of Sapphire Shores Subdivision, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida, 1924.

¹⁵ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 3 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

in the development of the Sapphire Shores subdivision for years thereafter. Ringling took back a mortgage of \$80,000 at the time of the sale of the property, which remained as an encumbrance for the duration of the development of the subdivision.¹⁶

The property, still subject to the Ringling mortgage, was conveyed within three months to Ellas Investment,¹⁷ and a month thereafter to the final developer, Brywill Realty Company.¹⁸ The Sapphire Shores subdivision was re-platted in 1925 by Walter Bryson and others under the guise of Brywill Realty Company.¹⁹ The Brywill Realty Company was a combination of the names of Walter Bryson and J. Y. Wilson. Both Bryson and Wilson were residents of Jacksonville, Florida, where both were general contractors.²⁰ Unwilling or unable to relocate to Sarasota to oversee the development of the subdivision, Walter Bryson sent his son, Walter Bryson, Jr., and his son-in-law, Walter "Happy" Harvey to Sarasota to oversee the new company office.²¹

The development of Sapphire Shores began in earnest in 1925. Bryson's paving company began to lay out and pave the streets.²² The development was costly by 1925 standards, with estimates that \$ 2,000.00 per day was being spent.²³ By Spring of 1925, streets were paved, sidewalks laid and trees planted, particularly along Bayshore Drive, the wide palm-lined avenue that ran through Sapphire Shores to access the Mediterranean Revival mansions of the Ringling brothers (Charles and John) and the Caples family.²⁴ The emphasis in Sapphire Shores upon Mediterranean Revival architecture was included even in the deeds to those lots being conveyed. The rural character of the original Sarasota community was wiped out of the area, with prohibitions upon any livestock. Restrictions mandated that all homes be Spanish, Italian or Moorish in design. Building materials were limited to hollow tile or cement (concrete) block.²⁵

Construction of the Bryson-Crane House and Property Development

In 1925, as the Sapphire Shores area was being actively developed, the principal officer of the company, Walter Bryson, Sr., gave a prime lot at the central intersection of the platted subdivision to his son, Walter Bryson, Jr. and his son's wife, Irene.²⁶ The lot was located at the intersection of the four main streets of the subdivision (one of which continues through the intersection, thus the informal name of "Little Five Points"),

¹⁶ Mortgage -Docket No. 12560, Entry 20, Page 20, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

¹⁷ Deed - Docket 13169, Entry 22, Page 23, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

¹⁸ Deed - Docket 13270, Entry 26, Page 28, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

¹⁹ Plat 1, Entry 53, Page No. 62, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

²⁰ Polk's Sarasota City Directory (Richmond, VA: R.L. Polk Company), 1926; This Week in Sarasota, March 12, 1925.

²¹ Mikki Hartig, telephone interview with Walter Bryson III on March 6, 2002; Sarasota City Directory.

²² This Week in Sarasota, March 5, 1925.

²³ This Week in Sarasota, February 26, 1925.

²⁴ This Week in Sarasota, February 26 and March 5, 1925

²⁵ Deed Book 22, Pages 46 through 49, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

²⁶ Deed Book 48, Page 217, Public Records of Sarasota, Florida.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 4 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

across from a landscaped island, and thus was quite prominent in the area. Immediately across Mecca to the north, Bryson Sr. made a gift of an additional building lot to his daughter and son-in-law, Katherine Bryson Harvey and William "Happy" Harvey.²⁷ The home constructed on this lot is a restored Mediterranean Revival, smaller than the Bryson-Crane home (as expanded by Crane) but with a strikingly similar floor plan. The detail and exterior finish of the Harvey house, which was less extensively modernized, served as an excellent resource for the restoration of the Bryson-Crane house.

Walter and Irene Bryson constructed the Bryson-Crane House over the summer of 1925.²⁸ By October 1926, the Brysons were occupying the house. In that month, Irene Bryson delivered her daughter, Betty, in a hospital in Tampa, returning with the child to the family's new home.²⁹ Records of the time indicate that Irene Bryson was active in the social life of the prominent Sarasota citizens, hosting at her house a bridge club of which Mabel Ringling was a member.³⁰

In 1929, the Bryson family left Sarasota.³¹ The house was sold to Harley Kinney Crane and his wife, Minnie, late in 1929.³² Harley Crane, owner of a company manufacturing women's wear, moved to the Sarasota area from his home in Ohio to take up residence in the Bryson-Crane home in 1930.³³ Crane was a wealthy businessman, not only in textiles but also in the development of large tracts of land in Miami with his partner M.V. Cooper, former governor of the State of Ohio.³⁴ The Cranes immediately moved into prominence in the Sarasota social circuit, counting among their friends William J. Burns, principal of the Burns International Detective Agency; Samuel Gumpertz, well known in the circus business; Karl Bickel, former President of United Press; and, of course, both the Charles and John Ringling families.³⁵

On May 21, 1930, the Cranes purchased Lot 1 of Block A, which adjoined the original lot to the east from Willis Gowdy.³⁶ This permitted the expansion of the original 1925 house to include the two-story, two-bedroom addition at the northeast section of the property. It is important to note again that the 1930 addition conformed precisely to the design and construction specifications, materials and finishes utilized by Walter Bryson in building the original portion of the house.³⁷ The property was brought to its current boundaries by a final additional acquisition by the Cranes, who purchased a portion of Lot 2, Block A from Louell and Homer

²⁷ Abstract of Title to 5110 Brywill, held by William Carl Meyer of same address.

²⁸ Sarasota City Directory, 1925, 1926.

²⁹ Hartig, telephone interview with Betty Bryson, April 27, 2000.

³⁰ Sarasota Herald Tribune, September 16, 1926.

³¹ Hartig, interview with Betty Bryson, April 27, 2000.

³² Deed Book 110, Page 360, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

³³ Sarasota Herald Tribune, December 5, 1955.

³⁴ Hartig, telephone interview with Betty Bryson, April 27, 2000.

³⁵ Sarasota Herald Tribune, December 5, 1955.

³⁶ Deed Book 113, Pages 567-569, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

³⁷ Mikki Hartig, interview with architect Thorning Little, Spring 2001.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 5 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

McCreery in 1935.³⁸ The acquisition was not required to support any additional construction, but did serve to create a straight lot line on the southern boundary of the property.

The Cranes remained in residence in the Bryson-Crane house until 1946, when they sold the property to Mary F. Tipton.³⁹ Mr. and Mrs. Crane remained, however, life long residents of the City of Sarasota, relocating to an apartment close to the city center until their deaths in 1955 and 1963, respectively.⁴⁰ After the sale of the house to Ms. Tipton, little specific information can be found regarding the house's occupants until the late 1950's. In the interim, title to the property passed from Mary Tipton to Katherine Bourbon in 1948⁴¹ and from Bourbon to Lucille Huddleston on February 15, 1958.⁴²

Lucille Huddleston, a native of Tennessee, owned and managed the Oak Hotel in Palmetto, Florida, a town located approximately 15 miles north of Sarasota until she purchased the Bryson-Crane house in 1958.⁴³ In 1969, Lucille Huddleston sold the home to Everett and Pearl Hancock, retiring to an apartment house on Hyde Park Avenue in Sarasota until her death in April of 1989.⁴⁴ Everett Hancock was employed by the City of Sarasota as an engineer in the Public Works department from 1955 until 1985. During his ownership of the property, he undertook a modernization of the property, most of which took place in 1969. This included the removal of the original wood windows (which were deteriorating) and their replacement with aluminum double hung windows. An interior dividing wall in the kitchen may have been removed during this time, and the kitchen itself was updated with then fashionable cabinets. It was also during this period that the courtyard was paved and the first pool added to the home.⁴⁵ On November 15, 2000, Everett Hancock, then a widower, conveyed the property to the current owners, Robert M. Casella and Paige McMichael, husband and wife.⁴⁶ Casella and McMichael undertook the restoration of the property as detailed above.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Mediterranean Revival style of architecture initially gained popularity in California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was popularized in the Pan-American Exhibition in San Diego in 1915 and the work of transplanted Eastern architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. It became a critical aspect of

³⁸ Deed Book 147, Entry 46, Page 52, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

³⁹ Deed Book 210, Page 395, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

⁴⁰ *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, December 3, 1955; February 24, 1963.

⁴¹ Deed Book 240, Page 21, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

⁴² Official Records Book 81, Page 498, Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

⁴³ Hartig, telephone interview with Ernestine Huddleston, April 25, 2002.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Everett Hancock, Interview with owners Casella/McMichael, 2000.

⁴⁶ Official Records Instrument 2000146128.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 6 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

the “Spanish Boom” of the 1920's, which incorporated Spanish, Colonial, Byzantine, Moorish, Mission and Italian Renaissance decorative features. Collectively, the style became known as “Mediterranean Revival.”⁴⁷

The Mediterranean Revival style became popular in Florida by the mid-1920's, with some of notable examples of the style constructed in the Sarasota area.⁴⁸ The style soon became the prevalent design for most of the major buildings and residences in Sarasota, spreading beyond the large residential mansions on the Sarasota bayfront to encompass even modest residences.⁴⁹

The interest in Mediterranean Revival peaked in the mid-1920's, coinciding with a massive residential and commercial expansion in the area that included the construction of the John and Mabel Ringling mansion of Ca'd Zan on Sarasota Bay.⁵⁰ The upscale properties to the south of the Ringling mansion along Bayshore Road were predominantly similar in style. In the Sarasota area and elsewhere, the Mediterranean Revival style was typified by asymmetrical construction in either one or two stories. It usually contained at least one dominating feature with vertical emphasis. The structures were accentuated with a range of decorative elements, which could include ornate glazed tile, wrought iron in balconies, grates or window grills, pecky cypress doors and trim, and mullioned casement windows.

The development of Sarasota continued unabated until the Land Crash of 1926 and 1927. Development languished until after the Depression. Upon renewed development in southwest Florida, construction in the area did not emphasize Mediterranean Revival to any great extent. True examples of “Boom Time” Mediterranean Revival architecture in Sarasota are therefore limited. As land values increase and building lots become limited, especially in the original bayfront development areas initiated by Ringling and Caples, many new homeowners have elected to destroy the last remaining examples expensive-to-maintain pre-Depression era Mediterranean Revival houses in favor of erecting modern, energy efficient residences.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Mikki Hartig, historic memorandum on 5050 Brywill Circle, 2002.

⁴⁸ Bureau of Historic Site and Properties, Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Florida Department of State, “Historical, Architectural, and Archeological Survey of Sarasota, Florida; Prepared for the City of Sarasota,” Project Report Series No. 51, December 1997.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Sarasota Historical Society, Personal interview by Paige McMichael, February 2001.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 7

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
SIGNIFICANCE

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Bryson-Crane house (c. 1925/1930) was constructed in the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture at the apex of the style's influence in Sarasota. The style was spearheaded by the classic Mediterranean Revival mansions immediately to the north of the subject property, owned by the Ringling and Caples families. When upscale development was initiated by Ringling and Caples in the Sapphire Shores subdivision immediately to their south, deed restrictions mandating adherence to these architectural standards were imposed.

The architectural elements of the Mediterranean Revival style are classically presented in the Bryson-Crane House. At no point in its history has the house been subjected to changes in architecture, structure or fenestration location or size. Any anachronistic details that were discovered on the property have been restored to original design specifications and appearance. This house truly preserves and presents a fine example of original Mediterranean Revival architecture of the Boom Times era of Sarasota.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 2

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

All of Lot 1 and that part of Lot 2 described as follows: Begin at the NW corner of Lot 2; thence Southerly along the West line of Lot 2, 31 feet, thence Easterly to a point on the East line of Lot 2, which is 28.2 feet from the NE corner of said Lot 2; thence Northerly along the East line of Lot 2 a distance of 28.5 feet to the NE corner of said Lot; thence Westerly along the North line of Lot 2 to the Point of Beginning; All in Block G of Sapphire Shores Subdivision according to the Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 1, Pages 153, 154, 173-176 of the Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida.

Also, Lot 1, Block A of Sapphire Heights Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 142 of the Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida; Less the following portion of said Lot 1: Begin at the SW corner of said Lot 1; thence Northerly along the West line of Lot 1, 1.4 feet; thence Easterly to a point on the east side of Lot 1, the SE corner of said Lot; thence Westerly along the South line of Lot 1 to the Point of Beginning.

Also, A small tract of land at the North end of Block A marked Park in Sapphire Heights Subdivision, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 2, Page 142, Sarasota County, Florida.

Boundary Justification

The above boundaries encompass all of the historic resources associated with the Bryson-Crane House.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____ Page 1 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
PHOTOGRAPHS

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Bryson-Crane House
2. 5050 Brywill Circle, Sarasota (Sarasota County), Florida
3. Paige McMichael
4. May 2003
5. Paige McMichael
6. Main House, West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo 1 of 27

Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

6. Main House, West Facade, Entrance Porch, Looking East
7. Photo 2 of 27

6. Main House, Porte-cochere Gate, Looking East
7. Photo 3 of 27

6. Main House, Porte-cochere, Looking Northwest
7. Photo 4 of 27

6. Main House, Detail of North Elevation, Looking East
7. Photo 5 of 27

6. Main House, Detail of North Elevation, Looking West
7. Photo 6 of 27

6. Main House, East and South Elevations of 2-Story Section, Looking Northwest
7. Photo 7 of 27

6. Main House, East and North Elevations of 2-Story Section, Looking Southwest
7. Photo 8 of 27

6. Main House, Detail of South Elevation of One-Story Section, Looking North
7. Photo 9 of 27

6. Main House, View of 2-Story Section of South Elevation, Looking North
7. Photo 10 of 27

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____ Page 2 BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
PHOTOGRAPHS

- 6. Main House, Interior, Living Room, Looking South
- 7. Photo 11 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Living Room, Looking Northwest toward Music Room
- 7. Photo 12 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Kitchen, Looking East toward Dining Room
- 7. Photo 13 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, North Foyer, Looking North
- 7. Photo 14 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Family Room, Looking East from North Foyer
- 7. Photo 15 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, East Hallway, Looking West toward Family Room
- 7. Photo 16 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Master Bedroom, Looking Northeast
- 7. Photo 17 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Second Floor Bedroom, Looking Northeast
- 7. Photo 18 of 27

- 6. Main House, Interior, Second Floor Bathroom, Looking South
- 7. Photo 19 of 27

- 6. Guest House, Detail of East Elevation, Looking East from Porte-Cochere
- 7. Photo 20 of 27

- 6. Guest House, Detail of East Elevation, Looking East from Courtyard
- 7. Photo 21 of 27

- 6. Guest House, East Elevation, Looking West
- 7. Photo 22 of 27

- 6. Privacy Wall, Looking Southeast along Eastchester Drive
- 7. Photo 23 of 27

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____ Page 3

BRYSON-CRANE HOUSE
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
PHOTOGRAPHS

6. Swimming Pool, Looking North

7. Photo 24 of 27

6. Swimming Pool, Looking Southeast

7. Photo 25 of 27

6. Detached Garage, West Elevation, Looking East

7. Photo 26 of 27

6. Detached Garage, North Elevation, Looking South

7. Photo 27 of 27