

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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

1. Name of Property

historic name North Highlands Historic District
other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Nottingham Drive, Boulevard, and Clinton Road.
city, town Macon (N/A) vicinity of
county Bibb code GA 021
state Georgia code GA zip code 31211
(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	240	87
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	240	87

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:
Shirley Hills Historic District (overlap); 16 contributing.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official

10/21/93
Date

Elizabeth A. Lyon
State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Marg M. Way 11/22/93

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

for _____
Signature, Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC; single dwelling
COMMERCE; department store

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC; single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

QUEEN ANNE
NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL
COLONIAL REVIVAL
TUDOR REVIVAL
ENGLISH VERNACULAR REVIVAL
SHINGLE STYLE
BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	brick, frame
roof	asphalt shingles
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The North Highlands Historic District is a historic planned residential suburb in the city of Macon that developed from the 1890s into the 1940s. The neighborhood is located on the east side of the Ocmulgee River on a high bluff overlooking the city to the west, and is approximately one mile from Macon's central business district. North Avenue is the principal street that runs north to south through the neighborhood's center, and other streets radiate off of North Avenue. Nottingham Drive, Boulevard, and Clinton Road form a perimeter around the district's edges. On the northwest, the district borders on the National Register-listed Shirley Hills Historic District with a partial overlap.

The district consists primarily of houses constructed from the 1890s into the early 1940s. It also includes the ca. 1850 Melrose House located in the middle of the district in the northwest corner of the intersection of North and Summit Avenues (Photo no. 1). This house was the plantation home of the Alexander Melrose family. The oldest section of North Highlands consists of North Avenue and Boulevard, Laurel, and Summit Avenues that radiate off of North Avenue on the west side. In 1921, a new section was opened for development between Nottingham Drive and Boulevard. At about the same time, another section in the northeast corner of the neighborhood, bounded by North Avenue, Boulevard, Clinton Road, and Curry Place, was laid out. The lots and houses in these areas are smaller in scale than in the rest

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of the neighborhood. The period of greatest growth for the neighborhood was 1920 to 1925.

The houses in the older section along North Avenue and its radiating streets are predominantly older and larger than those in other sections, and are set on larger lots. The majority of these houses are fairly large one- and two-story wood-framed houses. Stylistically, they represent the Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical Revival styles that were popular in the 1890s to 1910s period when the majority of these houses were built. Other houses were built in the same area in the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s and represent styles such as English Vernacular Revival and Craftsman. Many of these later houses are also brick-veneered.

The newer sections contain houses built on a smaller scale and set on smaller lots. These houses are both wood-framed and brick-veneered and generally represent Craftsman and English Vernacular Revival stylistic influences. The development along Nottingham Drive from Curry Drive to Senate Place has been included in both the North Highlands and adjacent Shirley Hills neighborhoods at various times, and is currently listed on the National Register as part of the Shirley Hills Historic District. Because it has at times been considered part of North Highlands, this area will be included in this district as well.

At the center of the district at the intersection of North and Summit Avenues, the highest point in the area, is the ca. 1850 Melrose House. The house reportedly stands on the foundation of an earlier limestone and flint structure dating from ca. 1815 and used as a residence and trading post. Apparently, log additions were made to this structure during the 1840s, and it burned around 1850. Alexander Melrose rebuilt the house and used it as his family home from the 1850s to 1880s when the property was sold to Senator A. O. Bacon (1839-1914), whose estate was nearby. The Joiner family purchased the house and a small amount of land from Bacon during the early development of North Highlands. In 1941, the Joiners sold the property to the Barton family, who made alterations to the house, including replacing the front porch with the existing one.

There is one small commercial structure in the district located at the southwest corner of Clinton Road and Everlena Street (photo 34). It is a one-story wood-framed building with a front-facade parapet wall that hides the building's gabled roof. The building served as a neighborhood general store and is found on the 1920 Sanborn map.

Landscaping in the district is informal and includes large lawn spaces, shrubs, and mature trees. Many of the sidewalks with

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hexagonal pavers remain intact. This informal landscaping was characteristic of early 20th-century neighborhoods.

There are a small number of outbuildings scattered throughout the district. They are both historic and non-historic and were built to serve as garages, storage sheds, utility buildings, and for other purposes. They are usually located at the rear of the property. Many of these small buildings have been altered in recent years.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance:

ca. 1850-1941

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

None identified.

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Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The North Highlands Historic District is a planned residential suburb that developed from the late 19th through the early 20th century. It is significant in architecture for its very intact collection of houses from the 1890s through the 1940s. These houses represent styles, types, and materials used during this period. The range of architectural styles include Queen Anne, Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, Shingle Style, Tudor Revival, English Vernacular Revival, and Bungalow/Craftsman. Most of the houses retain original craftsmanship which identifies the house with a particular style, while there are many others that do not fit into the characterization of a style, yet retain original materials and form. The district is significant in community planning and development as a good example of a planned residential suburb that provided a pleasant suburban setting for middle- to upper-middle-class white residents. The setting included a hill-top location, radiating and curving streets, and informal landscaping schemes. Restrictive covenants were placed on properties to control the use, size, and cost of the dwellings and their uniform setback from the street. Most of the area that is now North Highlands was encompassed in the Melrose family plantation during the 19th century. In the 1880s the Melrose heirs sold the land primarily to Senator A. O. Bacon, whose estate was nearby. Bacon in turn sold the land for development during the 1890s. The land for the later development of the Shirley Hills neighborhood next to North Highlands also came from Bacon's estate. The current district retains the original street patterns established as the neighborhood was developed and thus exemplifies how a modern neighborhood grew in increments from an original estate/farm.

National Register Criteria

This nomination meets National Register Criterion A because it is associated with events that made a significant contribution to our past in that it exemplifies the suburban development or growth that overtook so many American cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Based upon the lands of the Melrose Family plantation, the area was laid out and roads cut over several stages until the last pieces were subdivided and sold in the 1920s and 1930s. This was the typical growth pattern found in many American cities and especially many other cities in Georgia. Today, the neighborhood has a cohesive look and represents itself as one neighborhood, which it is, based on its growth from one source.

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The nomination also meets criterion C because the variety of houses in this almost total residential neighborhood represent distinct characteristics of methods of construction, types and styles of American architecture. Many were designed by some of the city's finest architects, although none have been specifically identified. Because the neighborhood's growth spans the greatest building period in America, from the 1890s-1940s, all the major styles are represented, including the Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival and Neoclassical Revival, as well as in the later-built areas the ever-popular English Vernacular Revival and Craftsman style homes. The homes for the most part are well built for middle-class life. The only historic non-residential building is a historic frame general store which served a part of the neighborhood and represents the typical architecture of that type of building.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance runs from the creation of the surviving Melrose family plantation home (ca. 1850) until the end of the historic period, 1941, when building generally was put on hold due to the U.S. joining World War II.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The 240 contributing properties are those properties which were built before 1941 which still retain their historic fabric. This number (240) includes the principal historic buildings, that is the main building on a property, usually the dwelling house. It does not include the outbuildings. The noncontributing properties (87) are either those built after 1941 which in the future may be contributing properties or those which are otherwise deemed intrusions for their non-compatibility to the rest of the district or those with major changes rendering them noncontributing. There are also three vacant properties. The outbuildings located within this district, as mentioned above, have not been enumerated or individually inventoried because they are not considered substantial buildings in size or scale. For this reason, they are not included in the resource count itemized above.

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Developmental history/historic context (if applicable)

The area of Macon known as North Highlands was first settled prior to the founding of Macon itself (1821). Just below the Fall Line on the east bank of the Ocmulgee River, Indians had inhabited the region known now as the Ocmulgee Old Fields for centuries. When the Creeks ceded their lands between the Oconee and the Ocmulgee Rivers to the United States in 1806, the Fields were set aside as a military outpost and trading center. The land on the east side of the Ocmulgee, in which this district lies, were distributed to white citizens of Georgia in the 1807 Land Lottery. The 15 square mile reserve around Fort Hawkins was not included in the lottery. Fort Hawkins was garrisoned from 1807-1819, although it never saw military action. Only fifteen of the original 100 acres reserved for the outpost itself were used by the fort, and by 1818, white settlers had leased the surrounding lands for settlement.

After the lottery, the land was located within Jones County. It remained a part of Jones County until the state legislature transferred it to Bibb County in 1834 / or 1853-54. This area became known as Newtown as early as the 1820s with the founding of Macon on the west bank of the river.

According to an article published in The Macon Telegraph, dated October 27, 1828, much of the land east of the river was parceled and sold at the same time that some Reserve lands and remaining town lots were sold in the city of Macon. Most of the land east of the river not identified as part of Newtown was partitioned into 100 acre lots. This included the original 100 acre tract associated with Fort Hawkins. Thomas Woolfolk of Jones County purchased the former fort site and its associated buildings, as well as additional parcels. According to a newspaper account, "all these lots contained 100 acres each, part of North Highlands on the river and extending to Walnut Creek being included in them." (As with each of the land lottery areas, there was here a Reserve of land, some 15 square miles, which was set aside for the Indians or other special use, and once that ceased, the land could be auctioned off. The land in the reserves was not subject to the land lottery which distributed the surrounding lands.)

Mr. Woolfolk later partitioned his property and sold off certain parcels as plantations and small farms. According to land records, the property where the Melrose-Barton House now stands was sold in 1832 to W. J. Gibson and S. W. Bennett, and in 1833 to Isa Ella Clarke. The property included a one-story structure of limestone and flint dating from the same period as Fort Hawkins. The building was reportedly used as a house and trading post before the founding of Macon. Mrs. Clarke's nephews, Hugh and Daniel McLeod, lived in the

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house and were active in the barge trade on the Ocmulgee River. Apparently Hugh and Daniel McLeod added a log second story to the one-story limestone and flint house. The house was inherited by Alexander Melrose, who married Daniel McLeod's daughter. Around 1850, the house burned, and Mr. Melrose replaced it with the existing structure. It is believed that at least part of the original first floor still remains as part of the existing building.

In 1884, Melrose's nieces inherited the house and property. Upon the death of the Melrose nieces, Senator A. O. Bacon (1839-1914), whose estate was nearby, purchased the Melrose estate for the North Highlands Land Company. It is not clear whether the Land Company was the only developer or just one of several interested parties, but the suburb was developed in the last years of the 19th century on land belonging to Bacon and his son-in-law Willis Sparks. An 1898 advertisement lists Henry Horne, "the well-known real estate agent", as the potential developer of "Melrose Heights". No further mention of him exists, however, and local historian Ida Young's History of Macon (1950) credits Bacon and Sparks as the developers of the area. Property ownership shown on the 1916 City Ward Maps would seem to support this view.

In 1901 Senator A. O. Bacon donated an initial gift of ten acres of land, plus an additional 50 acres, to the Masons for an orphanage. The Masonic Home was located overlooking the river just northwest of present-day Shirley Hills and North Highlands (outside of the proposed district). In 1904, the county constructed a road from the Clinton Road to the Masonic Home. This thoroughfare, now part of present-day Boulevard and Briarcliff Circle, now forms one of the boundaries of the North Highlands neighborhood.

By 1906, several houses had been built along North Avenue and Summit Drive. These structures were designed in the Queen Anne style with multiple gables, wraparound porches, and dentil moldings. A few of these also had decorative shingles in the gables. Although the builder's name remains unknown, it is thought that all of these houses were constructed by the same person due to their remarkable similarity.

Both the 1908 Sanborn Maps and the 1909 City Directory referred to the area as North Highlands. Residences in North Highlands were first listed in city directories in 1909. The initial listing included eight houses on Boulevard, ten on Laurel Avenue, nineteen on Summit Avenue, and eleven on North Avenue. In 1910, all of East Macon including the North Highlands area was annexed into the city of Macon. That same year Senator Bacon donated land at the junction of Clinton Road and North Avenue for a school. Alexander III School was built at the cost of \$10,000 and paid for by the Elam Alexander Trust. A 1914

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map of Macon shows the layout of much of North Highlands, including Boulevard, North Avenue, Laurel and Summit Avenues, and Masonic Home Road. On this map, the city limits ran along Boulevard and up to the initial portion of Masonic Home Road. Senator Bacon died in 1914; however, and his land holdings in North Highlands passed on to his estate.

Bacon's holdings were apparent on the 1916 ward maps for North Highlands. His estate held 63 lots, none of which were developed. Other undeveloped lots were held by Willis Sparks and the Willingham Land and Trust Company. Of the 180 lots shown, exactly half had structures. These developed lots were predominately around the junction of Summit and North Avenues, the junction of Laurel and North Avenues, and those portions of Boulevard and North Avenue north of Summit. The Melrose House and five lots were now owned by Charles Joiner, and P. L. Hay owned a large house and three lots at the junction of Laurel and North Avenues. The land located north and west of Boulevard and Masonic Home Road was parceled for sale with a small area set aside for a city park. The city of Macon later expanded the original park parcel and purchased all of that property prior to its development.

In 1921, a new section of 50 lots in North Highlands was opened for development. These lots were bounded by North Avenue, Boulevard, Curry Drive, and Nottingham Drive. Located next to newly established Baconsfield Park, these lots were advertised as being "the only ideal building lots close in [with] all city conveniences [and] on the car line". About the same time, a small number of lots were developed at the northeast corner of North Highlands bounded by North Avenue, Boulevard, Clinton Road, and Curry Place. According to local tradition, these lots were purchased by railroad employees who wanted to live near a good neighborhood even though they could not afford substantial houses like those in existing North Highlands.

During this five-year period between 1920 and 1925, more properties were developed than in any other five-year period in the neighborhood's history. The 1922 Lot and Block Map of Macon published by Dolph and Stewart showed the North Highlands subdivision in virtually its final historic form. "Clinton Street" was never opened, however, and the lots on North Avenue between Terrell Street and Curry Place were adjusted to a larger size of up to three acres each.

Development continued in North Highlands until the United States became involved in World War II (December, 1941). Since that time, only a small number of small frame or brick houses have been added. The neighborhood is now undergoing a renaissance, and its recently-established neighborhood association is expanding its membership and its influence in local development policies.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Groce, Julie C., Historic Preservation Services. "National Register Nomination: North Highlands Neighborhood Macon, Georgia, 1989-1990", HISTORIC PROPERTY INFORMATION FORM, June 1, 1990. On files at the Office of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): () N/A

- () preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- (X) previously listed in the National Register part of this nomination was also included in the Shirley Hills Historic District.
- () previously determined eligible by the National Register
- () designated a National Historic Landmark
- () recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- () recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- (X) State historic preservation office
- () Other State Agency
- () Federal agency
- () Local government
- () University
- (X) Other, Specify Repository: Macon Heritage Foundation, Macon, GA; and the Middle Georgia Historical Society Collection, Washington Memorial Library, Macon, GA.

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approx. 130 acres.

UTM References

- A) Zone 17 Easting 254720 Northing 3638720
- B) Zone 17 E254980 N3638360
- C) Zone 17 E254400 N3637460
- D) Zone 17 E253920 N3638060

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of this district are marked on the enclosed property map based on the Bibb County Tax Assessors maps.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property has as its boundaries several major roads which formed the historical boundaries of the subdivision as it was being developed incrementally. Some boundaries were created to leave out non-contributing properties on the edges of the district. All of these are marked on the accompanying tax maps.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian; Debbie Curtis, Architectural Historian.
organization Office of Historic Preservation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30334
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** October 15, 1993

(HPS form version 10-29-91)

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Photographs

Name of Property: North Highland Historic District
City or Vicinity: Macon
County: Bibb
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: December, 1991

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 36: Summit Avenue at North Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
- 2 of 36: Summit Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 36: Summit Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 4 of 36: Summit Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 5 of 36: Summit Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 6 of 36: Laurel Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 7 of 36: Laurel Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 8 of 36: Laurel Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 9 of 36: Intersection of Laurel, North and Garden Terrace; photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 36: North Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 11 of 36: North Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 36: Intersection of Boulevard and North Avenue; photographer facing southwest.
- 13 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing northwest.
- 14 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing northwest.
- 15 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing northwest.
- 16 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing north.

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Photographs

- 17 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing north.
- 18 of 36: Boulevard; photographer facing north.
- 19 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing north.
- 20 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing southeast.
- 21 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing northwest.
- 22 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing southeast.
- 23 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing northwest.
- 24 of 36: Nottingham Drive; photographer facing southeast.
- 25 of 36: North Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 26 of 36: North Avenue, just north of Garden Terrace (North Garden Apartments); photographer facing northeast.
- 27 of 36: North Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 28 of 36: North Avenue; photographer facing north.
- 29 of 36: Boulevard, at North edge of district; photographer facing southwest.
- 30 of 36: Boulevard, at Briarcliff Road; photographer facing northeast.
- 31 of 36: Briarcliff Road (at edge of district); photographer facing north.
- 32 of 36: Boulevard at Highland Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
- 33 of 36: Clinton Road at Davis Street (northern edge of district); photographer facing northwest.
- 34 of 36: Clinton Road at Everlena with General Store; photographer facing northwest.
- 35 of 36: Clay Avenue at Everlena; photographer facing north.
- 36 of 36: Curry Place; photographer facing northwest.