

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. 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. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Walter Anderson Thematic Resources

B. Associated Historic Contexts

I. The Life and Work of Walter Inglis Anderson

II. Ocean Springs Multiple Resource Area

C. Geographical Data

This group of resources consists of several properties in and near the city of Ocean Springs in Jackson County, Mississippi

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Kenneth H. P'Pool

July 7, 1989

Signature of certifying official

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Greg A. [Signature]

8/24/89

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

I. The Life and Work of Walter Inglis Anderson

Walter Inglis Anderson (1903-1965) was an exceptionally creative and talented artist whose work has only recently acquired national recognition. He worked in many media, including charcoal, pencil, ink, oils, ceramics, murals, wood sculpture, linoleum, and fabric, but is perhaps best known for his watercolors.

Although his work was not widely recognized or appreciated in his lifetime, it has recently come to the attention of art critics on the national scene with exhibits at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, the Luise Ross Gallery in New York, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In the April 1987 issue of Art in America, Lawrence Campbell wrote of Anderson, "his originality merits him an honored place in the history of American 20th Century art."

Walter Anderson was "an authentic genius," wrote Clarius Backes in the Chicago Tribune Sunday Magazine, "since the days of Paul Gaughin and Vincent Van Gogh the world has seen nobody else like him." Edward J. Sozasky of the Philadelphia Inquirer compared Anderson's command of color to Van Gogh: "...in the way they bombard the viewers...they project a grandiose intensely poetic interpretation of the natural world." Robert J. Knight, former director of the Brooks Memorial Art Gallery in Memphis, said: "Walter Anderson's ability to innovate may be exceeded only by Matisse." Art critic John Russell of the New York Times called his work "...among the best American watercolors of their date." In the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, Mary Abbe Martin called Anderson "the most outstanding artist the south has produced."

Walter Inglis Anderson's productivity was incredible. From the sixty-two years of his life, his estate has catalogued forty thousand (40,000) watercolors, wood blocks, ink drawings, and paintings. This is a conservative estimate of his total work, since more of his work is being discovered yearly.

Born in New Orleans at the corner of Broadway and St. Charles Avenue (his birthplace no longer stands), Walter Inglis Anderson studied art in Philadelphia at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and later studied in Europe when he won the Cresson Award Travel Grant. He returned to his family home in Ocean Springs in 1929 where he lived most of his life, with occasional trips that took him as far as Costa Rica and China. Towards the end of his life he spent most of his time on Horn Island, twelve miles southeast of Ocean Springs, in the Mississippi Sound. His work can be roughly divided into three periods: the Early Period (to 1940), Oldfields Period (1940-1948), and Horn Island Period (1948-1965).

Early Period

During much of his Early Period, Anderson was at the family enclave now known as Shearwater. Purchased by Walter Anderson's mother, Adele McConnell Anderson, in the 1920s, the twenty-six acre wooded tract on the Mississippi Sound was a beloved vacation place for her three boys, Peter, Walter, and Mac. Known as Fairhaven, or the Tiffen Place, the estate consisted initially of a Greek Revival main house (ca. 1850), servant cottage, carriage house and stable building. Mrs. Anderson envisioned this place as an art colony, a place where her family could concentrate on their art. Shearwater Pottery and the Shearwater Pottery Gallery were built and operated by her son, Peter, while Walter and Mac

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attended art school. After finishing their studies they returned to live and work at Shearwater. The Pottery is still in operation today. Family members have built homes on parts of the original tract, but the site retains integrity of setting, with heavy vegetation screening much of the new construction.

Included in the Shearwater enclave are the following properties:
Fairhaven - In his early period Walter Anderson first lived with his parents in the main house (1923-1929). He was away at school much of the time. Fairhaven is important as the main house of the Shearwater Complex and because it contains a mural executed by Walter Anderson in 1960.

The Barn - After studying in Europe, Walter Anderson returned to Ocean Springs, where he worked in the family Pottery. He lived on the second floor of the Barn, until his marriage in 1933.

Walter Anderson's Cottage - In 1933, when Anderson married Agnes Grindstead, he moved to the Cottage. He remodelled the building extensively, including built-in furniture and shelving of his own design. He lived here until 1940, although some of this time was spent in mental hospitals. His murals in the Old Ocean Springs High School date from this era. He later returned to live here (1947-65) during his Horn Island Period.

Shearwater Pottery - Built by Walter Anderson's older brother Peter Anderson in 1927, Shearwater Pottery was the income source for Walter Anderson's artwork. He designed and produced figurines, called "widgets," and decorated pottery.

Shearwater Pottery Gallery - Also built by Peter Anderson, the gallery was the exhibit area for the family's work. Walter Anderson's public art was sold here: the pottery, linoleum blocks on fabric and wallpaper, and his figurines. Walter Anderson felt that his public art, which he sold very reasonably, was the artist's duty to the public, and that the income derived from this public art could then be used to pursue the artist's own private art. The building is still in use as the gallery for Shearwater Pottery.

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Oldfields Period

Walter Anderson's Oldfields period began in 1940 when he moved with his wife and children to Oldfields, his wife's childhood home in Gautier. Here Anderson had a happy family life and enjoyed his children, who were a comfort to him. Here, where Anderson felt loved and useful, he produced many joyful pen and ink drawings, mammoth block prints, sketches of the classics, large watercolors, and calendar drawings of daily activities. As he became immersed in his work, the presence of the others became unbearable. Unable to cope with this, he moved to the Cottage at Shearwater in 1948 when his Horn Island Period began.

Horn Island Period

In 1948 Walter Anderson moved back to his Cottage and continued his reclusive life, spending more and more time at Horn Island. Horn Island was so much a part of his life that it should almost be included in this nomination; however, he left no mark on the island, although the island influenced his work greatly. He often stayed two to five weeks on the island, where he camped out primitively so that he could study and paint from the nature around him (he called it exploring). He tied himself to a tree on Horn Island during Hurricane Betsy to experience the force of the storm as the trees did. He began to find a oneness with nature which is evident in his work from this period. In 1950 he began work on the murals in the Ocean Springs Community Center, and his murals in his Cottage also date from this time.

Although Walter Anderson spent much of his time at Horn Island during this period, he resided and did much of his work at Shearwater, which was his home from 1948 until his death in 1965.

Anderson was considered an eccentric by most people in the community. His art was not widely recognized or exhibited until after his death in 1965.

II. Ocean Springs Multiple Resource Area. See nomination for the Ocean Springs Multiple Resource Area, Jackson County, Mississippi, submitted previously.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type (A) Properties associated with Walter Anderson's life and work

II. Description

These are properties specifically associated with Walter Anderson's life. They consist of one district (Shearwater) containing several houses along with workshops and a sales gallery, and one house (the Col. Alfred Lewis House/"Oldfields"--already listed in the National Register).

III. Significance

These properties are significant under criterion B for their intimate association with the life and work of Walter Inglis Anderson. He resided in three separate buildings in the Shearwater district, a family enclave, at various times in his productive life, and worked in the pottery there.

Between 1940 and 1948 Anderson dwelt at "Oldfields" in Gautier.

IV. Registration Requirements

In order to be considered eligible as a part of this group, a property:

- a. Must have been a home or workplace of Walter Anderson during his productive years, and
- b. Must retain a high degree of overall integrity from the period of his association with the property, especially integrity of location, design, feeling, and association.

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet for additional property types

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type (B) Properties displaying murals by Walter Anderson

II. Description

Each of these properties contains one or more murals painted by Walter Anderson. The three properties are:

- a. Ocean Springs Community Center
- b. Fairhaven (in the Shearwater District)
- c. Walter Anderson Cottage (in the Shearwater District)

A fourth property containing an Anderson mural, the Old Ocean Springs High School, is not included in this group because the murals are to be removed from the building for curation.

III. Significance

These four properties contain the only murals known to have been executed by Walter Anderson. These murals were executed at different times in his career and reflect different phases of his artistic development.

IV. Registration Requirements

Each property, in order to be considered eligible, must retain its Anderson mural(s) intact and retain integrity of setting and association from the time that the artwork was done.

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

In June 1985, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) contracted with Consultant Maria Bargas to prepare a thematic National Register nomination for properties associated with Walter Anderson. The first draft of this nomination was presented to MDAH in August 1985. About the same time, MDAH undertook the preparation of a Multiple Resource Area nomination for the City of Ocean Springs, where most of the Walter Anderson properties are located. The MRA nomination was completed in 1986 and submitted to the National Register office in March 1987. The Shearwater District, originally intended as part of the MRA, was returned for correction and additional information about Walter Anderson. It was decided to wait until the Walter Anderson group nomination was submitted before resubmitting the Shearwater District, so that it could be included in the thematic group.

In 1986 the draft of the Walter Anderson nomination was reviewed by Patti Carr Black, director of the Museum Division, MDAH and an authority on Mississippi art history. The final text reflects her comments.

In late 1988 and early 1989, the nomination was revised to conform to the new Multiple Property submission format.

See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency

- Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository: _____

I. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon (from drafts submitted by Ms. Maria Bargas, Consultant, in 1985-86)
organization Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History date Feb. 17, 1989
street & number P. O. Box 571 telephone (601) 354-7326
city or town Jackson, state MS zip code 39205

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WALTER INGLIS ANDERSON (1903-1965)

Selected Bibliography

Books

- Anderson, Walter Inglis. The Horn Island Logs of Walter Inglis Anderson, edited by Redding S. Sugg, Jr. Rev. ed. (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1985).
- Anderson, Walter Inglis. An Alphabet. (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1984).
- Mississippi State Historical Museum. Walter Anderson for Children. (Jackson, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1984).
- Carroll, Lewis. Anderson's Alice: Walter Anderson Illustrates Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll. (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1983).
- Anderson, Walter Inglis. Robinson, the Pleasant History of an Unusual Cat. (Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 1982).
- Anderson, Walter Inglis. Walter Anderson's Illustrations of Epic and Voyage, edited by Redding S. Sugg, Jr. (Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press; London and Amsterdam, Feffer & Simons, 1980).
- Sugg, Redding S., Jr. A Painter's Psalm: The Mural in Walter Anderson's Cottage. (Memphis, Memphis State University Press, 1978).
- Anderson, Walter Inglis. The Horn Island Logs of Walter Inglis Anderson. (Memphis, Memphis State University Press, 1973).

Catalogs

- Walter Anderson: Realizations of the Islander, essay by John Paul Driscoll. (Ocean Springs, Estate of Walter Anderson, 1985).
- Sea, Earth, Sky: the Art of Walter Anderson: an exhibition at the Mississippi State Historical Museum. (Jackson, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1980).
- The World of Walter Anderson: a Traveling Exhibition of Drawings, Oils, Blockprints, Tempera, Watercolors. (Memphis, Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, 1967).

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Periodicals

Donaldson, Susan V., "Forsaking the Certainty of Shore: Walter Anderson and the Loneliness of Horn Island." Southern Quarterly, v. 24, 1985.

Anderson, Agnes Grinstead, "Walter Anderson: the man, the artist." Southern Quarterly, v. 24, 1985.

Burton, Marda, "Portrait of a Mississippi Artist." Mississippi Magazine, May/June, 1984.

Burton, Marda, "Portraitist of Nature." Horizon, the Magazine of the Arts, March, 1982.

Furrh, Mary Leigh, "Walter Anderson: Island Genius." Jackson Magazine, September, 1978, v. 2, no. 1.

Sugg, Redding S., Jr., "Southern Gentleman and Pope's Homer." Smithsonian Magazine, February, 1977, v. 7, no. 11.

BeVier, Thomas, "Aboard the Chariot of the Sun." Mid-South Magazine, November 15, 1970.

Backes, Claries, "Artist in the Eye of a Hurricane." Chicago Tribune Magazine, August 17, 1969.

Charbonnet, Grace, "The Anderson Story, Splendor in Mississippi." Delta Review, November-December, 1966, v. 3, no. 5.

Jeffries, Ida D., "A Legacy of Art." Dixie Roto Magazine, October 15, 1967.

Northrop, Guy, "The Secret Diary of a Man Possessed." Mid-South Magazine, February 12, 1967.

Other

Friends of Walter Anderson, Inc., a corporation to acquire, preserve, and exhibit the works of Walter Anderson, was established in 1974. In 1979, the group created the Walter Anderson Museum Building Fund and was granted a 50 year lease for land by the Jackson County Board to build a museum, now in the planning stages. The Walter Anderson Museum will be in Ocean Springs adjacent to the Community House where Walter Anderson's murals have been preserved.

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Film

"The Islander," TV production by Mississippi Educational Television,
1977. Selected for national distribution by P.B.S. Aired February
1978.

Exhibitions (partial listing)

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, New York
Luise Ross Gallery, New York City
Fitchburg Art Museum, Massachusetts
Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson
Mississippi State Historical Museum, Jackson
Gasperi Folk Art Gallery, New Orleans
Mobile Art Gallery, Alabama
Louisiana Nature Center
Rachel Davis Gallery, Houston, Texas
Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, Laurel
George Thomas Hunter Gallery, Chattanooga
Newcomb Art Gallery, New Orleans
New Orleans Museum of Art
Columbus Museum of Arts and Sciences, Georgia
Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock
Fayetteville Museum of Art, North Carolina
University Museums, Oxford, Mississippi
Montgomery Art Museum, Alabama
Brevard Art Center, Melbourne, Florida
Baumgardner Center, Clearwater, Florida
Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, Georgia
University of Minnesota Art Gallery
St. John's College Gallery, Annapolis, Maryland
Greenville County (North Carolina) Art Museum