

1609

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 Bonin House

other names/site number Bienvenu House

2. Location

street & number 421 North Main N/A not for publication

city or town St. Martinville N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county St. Martin code 099 zip code 70582

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.)

Jonathan Fricker 12/20/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of 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 commenting 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Maq M. V... 1/27/97

Bonin House
Name of Property

St. Martin Parish, LA
County and State

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)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(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

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Italianate

Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls vinyl, wood (weatherboard)

roof metal

other

Narrative Description

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

The Bonin House is a two story frame residence featuring elements of the Greek Revival, Italianate, and Colonial Revival styles. Developed in 3 stages, it achieved most of its present appearance in the early twentieth century. The present single story rear wing appears to be a circa 1950 replacement of an earlier single story rear wing. Other changes include the installation of bathrooms and the sheathing of most of the exterior of the house in vinyl siding. Despite these alterations, the house retains those qualities that establish its architectural significance within the context of St. Martinville.

The Bonin House has a rather complicated architectural history. Its development was determined using an early twentieth century photograph and a large number of extant clues noted in a recent site inspection by a member of the staff of the Division of Historic Preservation. Evidently the house began as a two story, four bay, Greek Revival town residence in about 1850. The two story front gallery had colossal posts with relatively plain capitals. The first floor consisted of an off-center hall with two rooms on each side and a staircase ascending toward the rear to an almost identical plan on the second floor. On both the first and second floors, the hall culminated on the facade with a large opening featuring transoms and side lights.

Noteworthy surviving early features include a large number of door and window surrounds and three aedicule style mantels upstairs. In addition, some of the window surrounds feature decorative panels beneath. Another noteworthy feature from the original period of construction is the set of massive sliphead windows that provide access to the upper gallery.

In about 1875, the house was remodeled in the Italianate style. Large curvaceous brackets were added to the tops of the gallery columns, along the eave of the rear elevation, and along the side gables. Decorative trim was also placed between the gallery columns on both stories. In addition, each of the side gables was fitted with a triple arch window. Finally, richly turned balustrades were added to the upper gallery. Surviving features from this period include the curvaceous brackets on the rear elevation and the side gables, the triple arch window on each side elevation, and evidently the balustrade (see below for balustrade).

In about 1910, the house was again remodeled, this time in the Colonial Revival style. This remodeling was far more extensive than the previous one. The floor plan was made more open, reflecting the taste of the period. On both floors, the front half of the hall was combined with the front room on the north side. This created a new large

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

entrance parlor downstairs and a larger bedroom upstairs. The original staircase was removed. Evidently the parts were reused to construct the present three flight, two landing staircase in the rear northern portion of the house. Three of the rooms downstairs were fitted with standard Colonial Revival mantel/over-mantel sets with free-standing columns. The front south room downstairs was fitted with a paneled alcove. In addition, the windows and window openings were replaced in both the downstairs front rooms with the present Colonial Revival window treatment. This consists of a pair of triple windows with long vertical panes in the upper sashes and large single panes below. The house also received a tile roof at this time and a small covered entrance at the rear of the northern side elevation.

The most significant change was the removal of the original columns and the Italianate brackets on the facade. These were replaced with the present front gallery treatment which consists of a four bay, double tier of elegant Tuscan columns, with each group rising to a narrow entablature. Evidently the previously mentioned Italianate balustrades on the second floor gallery were re-used when this new gallery treatment was installed.

Non-Historic Alterations

As previously mentioned, the current one story rear wing appears to date from about 1950. Although Sanborn insurance maps indicate that a single story rear wing was in place as early as 1903, architectural evidence indicates that this wing was re-built and enlarged some time after the close of the historic period. A carport has been appended at the rear of the wing.

Another change has been the installation of vinyl siding on the sides and rear of the house. Although this is regrettable, the substitute siding does not impact the front elevation. In addition, it is very similar in appearance to the historic wood siding beneath it, and thus its visual impact is minimal.

When the present owner acquired the house the above mentioned tile roof was deteriorated and needed to be replaced. Due to the expense involved, the owner elected to substitute a metal roof.

Other changes include the partitioning off of portions of some of the upstairs rooms for bathrooms, the installation of crown moldings in some rooms, the

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 3

replacement of the front door and transom lights on both stories, and the enclosure of a small, presumably early twentieth century porch on the southern side elevation.

Assessment of Integrity

Despite these non-historic alterations, the house remains a landmark within St. Martinville, as explained in Part 8. In reference to the roof replacement, it should be stressed that the roofing material on a two story house is not a major visual element. The new metal roof is visible only from a distance. Also, the tile roof was not integral to the house's architectural identity as it would have been, for example, with a one story Mission Revival "hacienda."

Note: There is a small (roughly 10 X 10) storage shed to the rear of the house. It is not being included in the count because it does not appear to meet the "substantial in size and scale" threshold. See photo #4. In this view the shed appears larger than it actually is in relationship to the house. In any event, its history cannot be documented. No building is shown in this location on the latest Sanborn map for St. Martinville (1938).

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 N/A
(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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1850, c. 1875, c. 1910

Significant Dates

c. 1850, c. 1875, c. 1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Bonin House
Name of Property

St. Martin Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than an acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5
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6	1	2	8	8	0
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3	3	3	3	3	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

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 National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date November 1996

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 Alfred Leonpacher 318-232-7855 (home)

street & number 126 Acacia Dr. telephone 318-856-5981 (work)

city or town Lafayette state LA zip code 70508

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 to amend existing 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.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 1

The Bonin House is of local significance in the area of architecture. Taken as a whole, its rich architectural development and complex stylistic legacy establish it as a landmark within the City of St. Martinville.

The Division of Historic Preservation's historic structures survey has identified some 258 buildings within the city which are fifty years old or older. The Bonin House is conspicuous among this group for several reasons, beginning with its mid-nineteenth century character. The parish seat of St. Martinville is among Louisiana's oldest communities, having been settled in the eighteenth century and incorporated in 1817. Located at the sometime head of navigation on Bayou Teche, it thrived in the antebellum period, and up until the late nineteenth century, due to its status as a major interior port. Despite the city's great age, there are only a limited number of pre-Civil War buildings surviving (approximately 20). The Bonin House's massing, upper story fenestration and its interior woodwork, including three aedicule style mantels, establish it as a member of this small but important group which comprises the city's earliest architectural heritage.

The house derives additional importance from its Italianate features -- i.e., its over-scaled roofline brackets, balustrades and distinctive triple arch windows in the gables. The survey reveals that in all of St. Martinville, there are only three structures which evidence even a trace of the domestic Italianate. This is important for the community because the domestic Italianate, as opposed to commercial, is rare in Louisiana outside New Orleans.

Finally, the Bonin House's two story Colonial Revival gallery accords it an important place in the city's early twentieth century architectural heritage. The vast majority of buildings from this period are hesitantly styled or unstyled bungalows, cottages or shotgun houses. The Bonin House gallery is one of a limited number of relatively grand architectural statements of that era in the community. This is revealed in the survey. In St Martinville the Colonial Revival overwhelmingly takes the form of columnar galleries. According to the survey, there are a total of twenty-four Colonial Revival galleries in the community. Of these, only three are fully two stories in height and scale, one of which is the Bonin House gallery.

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Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 2

Historical Note:

For the purposes of this nomination the house is being referred to as the Bonin House. Luke and Blanche Bonin purchased the property in 1904, and it remained in the family until 1964. The Bonins owned the house for the longest period of time and it was during their ownership that the Colonial Revival remodeling occurred. The house was purchased by Luke and Blanche Bonin's grandson, Dr. Willie Z. Bienvenu, in 1969. In April 1996 Dr. Bienvenu sold the house to the present owner, Alfred Leonpacher, whose daughter has converted it into the Bienvenu House Bed and Breakfast.

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Continuation Sheet**

Bonin House, St. Martin Parish, LA

Section number $\frac{9}{10}$ Page $\frac{1}{1}$

BIBLIOGRAPHY

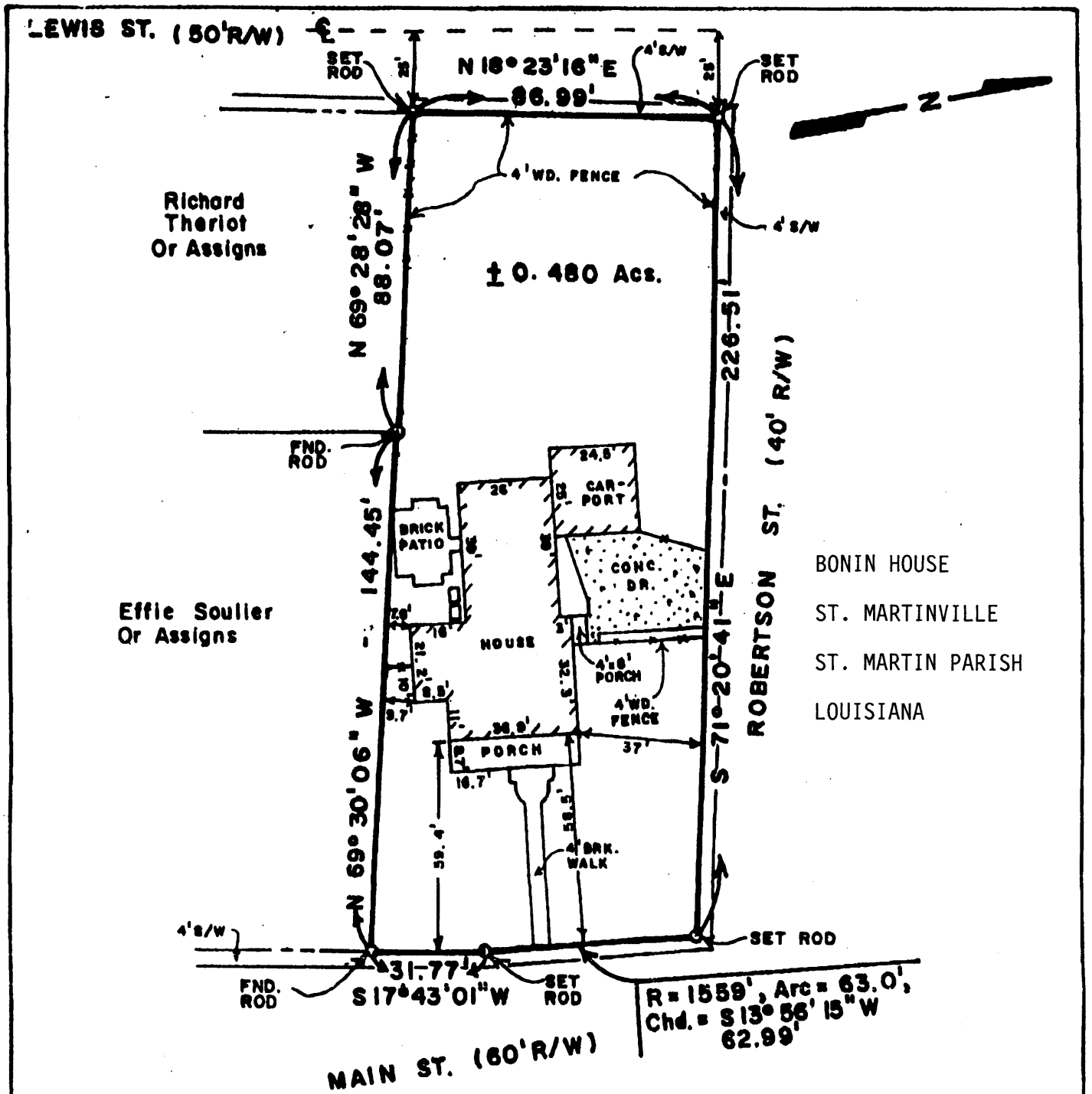
Historic Structures Survey, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Title Search Summary, copy in National Register file, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

Sanborn Insurance Company Maps, 1903, 1909, 1927, 1938.

Boundary Description: Please refer to enclosed plat map.

Justification: Boundaries follow property lines of the parcel of land upon which the nominated resource is located.



BONIN HOUSE
 ST. MARTINVILLE
 ST. MARTIN PARISH
 LOUISIANA

NOTE: THIS PROPERTY IS
 LOCATED IN ZONE C (areas
 of minimal flooding)
 ACCORDING TO THE F.E.M.A.
 FLOOD INSURANCE RATE
 MAP DATED 12/16/80
 Panel No. 220191 0001 C

A MAP OF SURVEY SHOWING PROPERTY
 AND IMPROVEMENTS TO BE ACQUIRED BY
 ALFRED BERNHARD LEONPACHER & WIFE
 SHIRLEY MONTGOMERY LEONPACHER

BEING ± 0.480 ACRES LOCATED IN
 THE 1st WARD OF THE CITY OF
 ST. MARTINVILLE, SECTION 82,
 T-10-S, R-6-E, ST. MARTIN PARISH,
 LOUISIANA

PRELIMINARY

PREPARED BY:

A. E. MONTAGNET
 R.L.S. NO. 4484
 C.E. NO. 18667

MONTAGNET AND DOMINGUE, INC.
 136 CLARA VON DRIVE
 LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA 70503
 PHONE: (318) 981-2130 FAX: (318) 981-3280
 DATE: APRIL 12, 1996 SCALE: 1" = 40'

REVISED: MAY 2, 1996