

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0682551

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 21 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 1 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Phillips, Waite, Mansion

AND/OR COMMON

Philbrook Art Center

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

2727 South Rockford Road.

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Tulsa

VICINITY OF

No. 1

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Oklahoma

40

Tulsa

143

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Southwestern Art Association

STREET & NUMBER

2727 South Rockford Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Tulsa

VICINITY OF

Oklahoma

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Tulsa County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Tulsa

Oklahoma

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Special Philbrook Survey

DATE

1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Oklahoma Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Oklahoma City

Oklahoma

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED (one	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED wing added)	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Aside from its art collections Philbrook is something of an artifact in its own right - an artifact of the Italian Renaissance, the style in which it was built and furnished, and an artifact as well of the flamboyant 1920s when Oklahoma oilmen, in Tulsa, Ponca City, Bartlesville, and elsewhere, were investing their newly won wealth in the traditional trappings of affluence.

Waite and Genevieve built their palatial home in 1926-1927, some say largely to give their two teenage children a suitable place in which to entertain their friends. Edward Buehler Delk of Kansas City was the architect. General contractor was the John Long Company, builders of Kansas City's Nelson Gallery of Art. Building contractor was Henry Lohman of Tulsa. Herbert Hare of Kansas City was responsible for layout of the formal gardens and landscaped grounds of the 23-acre estate. Construction was by Phillip Thomas, a Tulsa landscape contractor.

Stained glass windows in the Villa Philbrook entranceway were made by the D'Ancenzo studios of Philadelphia. Scene in the large center window depicts the story of Dante and Beatrice. Iron work throughout the home was designed by Oscar Bach of New York, who also did the columns in the Great Hall. Ceiling of the Great Hall was painted by Cooper and Gentihomo, mural decorators of New York, its motifs taken from authentic Italian Renaissance ceilings. Music room murals were by George Gibbs.

The Phillips, their children grown, gave Philbrook to the City of Tulsa in 1938, along with an endowment for maintaining it as a museum and art center. Alterations to accomplish this purpose have included installation of galleries, studios, period rooms, display rooms for the Indian exhibits, auditorium, and kitchen. But these have been managed with little perceptible change in the architectural structure itself. Similar care was taken to maintain its integrity in the 1960s when a new east wing was added to accommodate the institution's expanding educational facilities. Through the years Philbrook has retained the appearance of an Italian residence, inside and out. Much of the Italian Renaissance decoration on the main floor has been left unchanged.

The entire ground floor of the Philbrook Art Center is given to permanent and rotating exhibitions. Much of this, understandably, reflects the state's rich Indian heritage. Philbrook's period rooms are permanent exhibitions designed to dramatize the French, Spanish, and English cultural influences on the Southwest. The Italian room is included because of its homogeneity to Philbrook's architecture, but also because the Italian Renaissance period directly influenced both the French and Spanish cultures.

An integral part of Philbrook's resources are the 23 acres of grounds, landscaped with Southwestern trees and plants and so planned as to produce "beautiful pictures in nature." The botanical gardens are both esthetically and scientifically attractive. A formal garden on a slope below the terrace at Philbrook's back side is a pleasant pattern in the otherwise natural landscape. Seasonal plants and flowers keep it colorful year-round. Fountains and pools, stone bridges and benches, and a white columned temple all add life and color to the scene. While the grounds offer beauty to the visitor, they also provide an esthetically satisfying setting to both classes and individuals involved in art, dramatics, and other aspects of the center's comprehensive educational program.

A broad sweep of lawn stretches out in front of Philbrook. A semi-circular driveway is entered through massive iron gates at either end of the property.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1927 to present BUILDER/ARCHITECT Edward Buehler Delk (villa)
Herbert Hare (grounds)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Philbrook is significant on at least two counts. As noted in No. 7, it is significant as an artifact - an artifact of both the Italian Renaissance and Oklahoma's flamboyant oil industry. But Philbrook is also significant as an impressive memorial to a man and his philosophy of life. Two quotes from Waite Phillips underscore this latter area of significance. "All things should be put to their best possible use," he once said. And ... "The only thing we ever keep is that which we give away."

* * *

Oil brought Waite Phillips to Tulsa in 1918 and brought him almost immediate wealth. He sold his oil interests in 1925 for \$25 million ... and promptly gave his employes \$2.5 million, the Boy Scouts of America some \$5 million, the City of Tulsa \$6 million. In 1926-1927 the Phillips built Philbrook. But by 1938, their two children grown, they gave the 23-acre estate to the city, with downtown real estate as endowment for its maintenance. With the magnificent mansion itself went valuable pieces of furniture, fine fixtures, and many art objects. The Southwestern Art Association was created to administer the property. Philbrook Art Center opened in October 1939. Since then a series of gifts and purchases have made its continually expanding permanent collections outstanding in Oklahoma and attracted nation-wide attention. This is particularly true in the case of its American Indian collections and paintings.

Complementary to Philbrook's exhibits and displays is its comprehensive program of involvement in all aspects of the community's cultural life - music, theatre, films, art, literature. Summer concerts on the lawn ... film showings under the stars ... dramas in the auditorium ... research projects in the library ... art classes in the formal gardens ... all - and more - make up Philbrook's contribution to the Tulsa cultural scene. And help to fulfill Waite Phillips' wish that "All things should be put to their best possible use."

The magnificent Villa Philbrook - heroically conceived, carefully maintained, tastefully expanded, and imaginatively utilized - is today a prime cultural asset ... of Tulsa, of the State of Oklahoma, and of the world itself. A thing of beauty, it is also an instrument of education, of enjoyment, of inspiration. And an impressive memorial to a man and to an industry.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lefebvre, Irene Sturm, "The Philbrook Art Center," Oklahoma Today, Autumn 1977, pp. 12-19
 Randle, Judy, "Philbrook," The Tulsa World, Nov. 23, 1975
 Miscellaneous materials supplied by the Philbrook Art Center

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 23 acres

UTM REFERENCES

NW	A	1.5	23,261.10	40,016.40	NE	B	1.5	23,287.5	40,016.30
		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
SW	C	1.5	23,261.0	40,012.70	SE	D	1.5	23,285.8	40,012.70
		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SEE TELE. RPT. 11/30/78

"Book 1469 } county deeds records
 Page 147 } Tulsa County

ok. Shufy

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Kent Ruth, Deputy

ORGANIZATION

Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

Historical Building

CITY OR TOWN

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

DATE

November 1977

TELEPHONE

405/884-5456

STATE

Oklahoma

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Harry L. DeFries M.D.

DATE

7-14-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles A. ...

DATE

12-1-78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Marcella Shufy

DATE

12-1-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER