

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Louisiana
COUNTY:	St. James
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Oak Alley Plantation

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Bon Sèjour

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
State Route #18, 2½ miles upriver from

CITY OR TOWN:  
Vacherie

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
8

STATE: Louisiana CODE: 22 COUNTY: St. James CODE: 093

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Oak Alley Foundation, c/o Mr. Robert R. Rainold

STREET AND NUMBER:  
225 Baronne Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
New Orleans

STATE:  
Louisiana

CODE:  
22

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
St. James Parish Clerk of Court

STREET AND NUMBER:  
St. James Parish Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:  
Convent

STATE:  
Louisiana

CODE:  
22

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
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DATE OF SURVEY:  
 Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE:  
CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:  
COUNTY:  
ENTRY NUMBER:  
DATE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally named Bon Sèjour, Oak Alley was built in 1837-39 by George Swainey for Jacques Telesphore Roman. Madame Roman's father, Joseph Pilié, was an architect and is thought to have provided the design. Its most distinguishing architectural feature is a full peripteral colonnade of 28 colossal Doric columns. The steep hip roof is crowned by a simple platform and balustrade. On each side are three gabled dormers with round-headed windows and delicate Federal detail which date from the 1920s restoration. The gallery railing is a delicate wheat sheaf design in wood.

Extensive restoration by architect Richard Koch dates from 1925-26 after the property was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Stewart. The pale pink of the plastered columns and walls and the blue green of the louvered shutters and gallery railing were color choices of Mrs. Stewart at that time.

Square in plan, the interior has a central hall from front to rear on both floors. At each end of both halls the doors have broad fanlights and sidelights framed with slim, fluted colonnettes. Square rooms at the first floor rear were partitioned and adapted to modern uses at the time of restoration. The long parlor and dining room at the front are minimally altered. Notable interior ornament is limited to the carved rose in the corner block trim of door and window openings. Mantels are simple. Stairs are straight open runs at the rear of the central halls.

The interior is open to the public on payment of a fee but furnishings and interpretation fail to measure up to the promise of the exterior or the magnificent setting with its alley of 28 ancient live oak trees, some 31 feet in girth, connecting the house to the levee landing. No outbuildings of importance remain. There is a formal garden to the east of the house.

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**4. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1837-39**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture  | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Full peripteral plantation houses were once scattered along the lower Mississippi valley. Although some of those destroyed were larger and more opulent, Oak Alley is probably the finest of the few remaining. Externally it maintains the integrity of its original design. The interiors, though less distinguished, represent a significantly early professional restoration, predating restoration at Colonial Williamsburg.

Equally significant is the double row of giant live oak trees which form the oak alley, about 800 feet long, from which the property derived its present name. Planted before the house was constructed in 1837, this formal planting is a historic landscape design long recognized for its beauty.

An important event in American horticultural history occurred in the winter of 1846-47 when Antoine, a slave gardener at Oak Alley, first successfully grafted pecan trees. His work resulted in the first named variety, Centennial, and the first commercial pecan orchard at nearby Anita plantation.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Blank area for major bibliographical references.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	
NW	30°	0'	18"	90°	46'	43"	°   '   "	
NE	30°	0'	25"	90°	46'	33"	°   '   "	
SE	30°	0'	10"	90°	46'	30"	°   '   "	
SW	30°	0'	9"	90°	46'	41"	°   '   "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **25 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Paul Goeldner, Architect, Historic Sites Survey**

ORGANIZATION **Division of Historic and Architectural Survey**      DATE **7/3/74**  
**National Park Service**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1100 L Street N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE **D. C.**      CODE **11**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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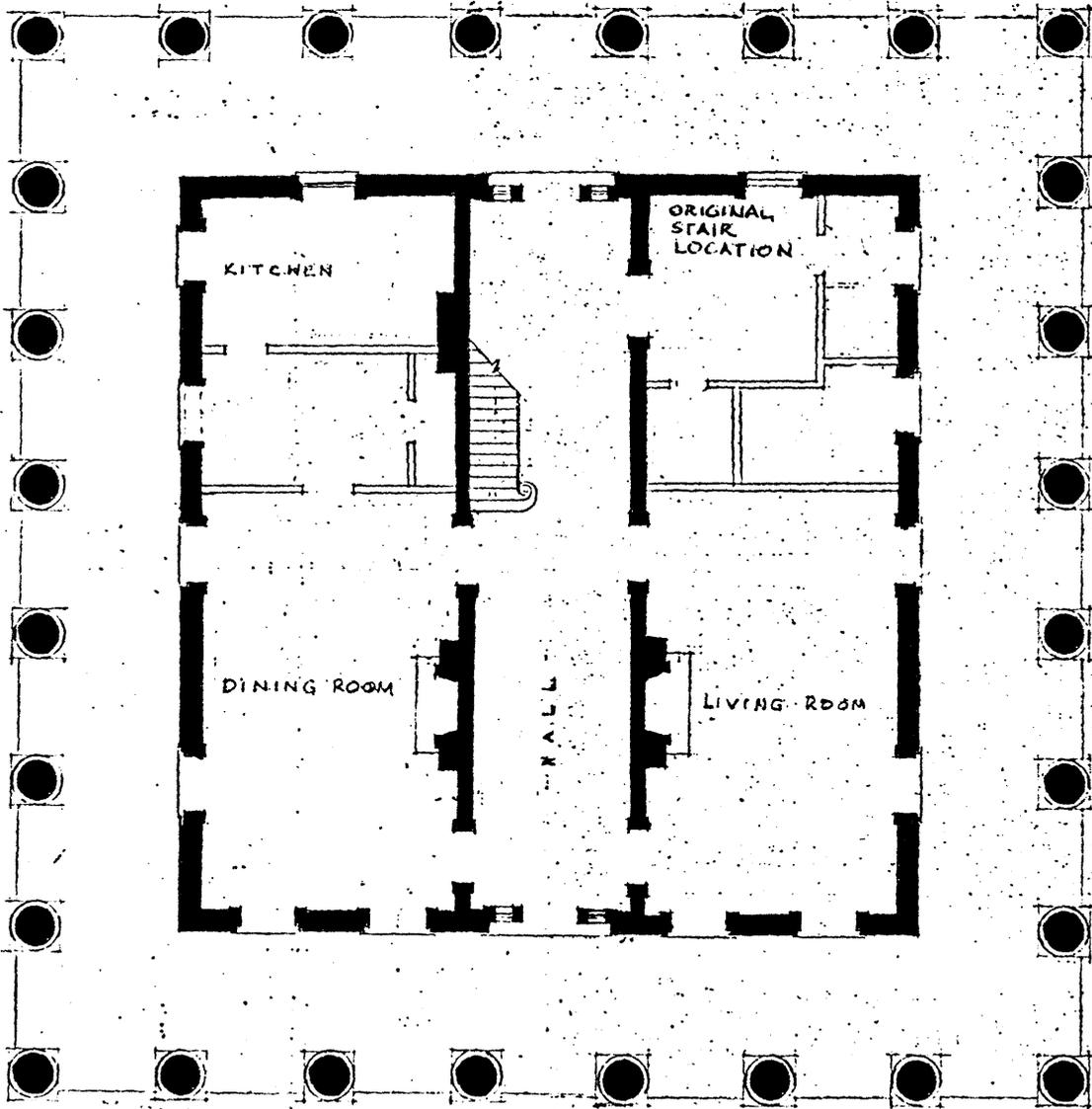
(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Louisiana	
COUNTY St. James Parish	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. Description

Oak Alley Plantation, Vacherie, Louisiana



First Floor Plan