National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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Typo an ontine	so complete applicable of	COLIGING		
1. Nan	ne			
historic Car	sa De Muchas Flores			
and/or common	n Miller-Babat Hous	se		
2. Loc	ation			
street & numbe	or 1446 Park Street	North		$\underline{\mathrm{N/A}}$ not for publication
city, town St	. Petersburg	$\frac{\mathrm{N/A}}{\mathrm{A}}$ vicinity of		
state Flo	orida code	012 county	Pinellas	code 103
3. Clas	ssification			
Category districtX building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered N/A	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park x private residence religious scientific transportation other:
street & number	ster Babat, M.D.	North		
	. Petersburg	N/A vicinity of	state	Florida
	ation of Lega		on	
courthouse, reg	jistry of deeds, etc.	Pinellas County	Courthouse	
street & number	r	315 Court Stree	t	
city, town Cle	earwater		state	Florida
6. Rep	resentation i	in Existing	Surveys	
lilla.	urg Architectural and	has this pro	perty been determined e	ligible?yesno
date 19	78 - 1981		federal sta	ate county _ <u>x</u> local
depository for s	survey records St. Pet	ersburg Planning D	ept.	
city, town	St. Petersburg		state	Florida

7. Description

Condition _x_ excellent good/	deteriorated	Check one unaltered x altered	Check one _X_ original site moved date
fair	unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Casa de Muchas Flores is located on 2.5 acres on the shore of Boca Ciega Bay in the "Jungle" neighborhood of St. Petersburg. The house is an imposing masonry building of two and three stories and has an irregular floor plan. It is built of hollow tile and the exterior is covered with a stucco finish and has a barrel tile roof. The Mediterranean Revival style house was designed by St. Petersburg architect Henry H. Dupont and is similar in style to his NR Don Cesar Hotel of 1926. The house has remained virtually unaltered since its completion. The interior is highlighted with wrought iron, decorative tile work, marble floors and beam ceilings. The landscape design of the grounds, covered with lush vegetation, has also remained intact.

Casa de Muchas Flores was built in three phases, but employed the same architect, and the same type and finishes of building materials. The original 1926 house of Alpine Lucas (the first owner) contained the two-story great hall, flanked by a dining room, library, kitchen and double garage. On the second floor, four bedrooms and two baths flanked the great hall to north and south. In the second phase of construction, 1927, the north wing of two stories, containing a dining room, hall and service area below, and two bedroom and baths on the second floor, plus a tower containing the stairs were added. The cost was \$25,000.00. The third phase of work in 1934 was in four areas around the core of the original house. A one story room on the east facade was added, two wings on the west facade, and a third floor suite and stair tower on the southwest corner of the house. Interior partitions in areas of the original house were also moved. The cost was \$38,000.00. In 1935 a painting and general repairs permit was issued, signalling the end of construction. The house as it appeared in that year will be considered "original," and any subsequent construction as alterations.

The house is an asymmetrical grouping of one, two and three story elements that break up the 11,000 square foot mass of the building. Although irregular in plan, there is a dominant north-south axis of 120 feet that gives a strong horizontal profile, relieved by the picturesque placement of vertical towers and chimnies. The house is masonry, of hollow tile construction with stucco and cast stone exterior finish. The roofs are: (1), gabled barrel tile with overhanging eaves and exposed wooden rafter ends; (2), hipped barrel tile with overhanging eaves and exposed wooden rafter ends; (3), flat roofs of built-up tarpaper and gravel with copper flashings. The barrel tile is of three different shades of unglazed terracotta; the flashings, gutters and downspouts are copper. There are four chimnies, three exterior; all are stucco finish.

The main facade faces east. It is 120 feet long, contains the formal entrance, and faces park Street. The horizontal sweep of the facade is relieved by the irregular roof planes and the strong vertical lines of the chimney by the front door and the engaged octagonal stair tower. The contrasting use of arched and rectangular openings gives variety to the facade. All windows, save one, are steel casement type, with 8 or 10 lights per case. A large window (8' x 11'), next to the chimney, lights the great hall and is a focal point of the facade. It is of leaded stained glass oeil de boeuf roundels, covered by an ornate wrought iron grille. Grilles or "rejas" of the same style cover the other arched fan lighted windows of the main facade. An ornate wrought iron gate covers the front door.

Cast stone, the color of limestone, is used with restraint to ornament important architectural features. These include the two stair towers which have cast cornices and the coping on the wings with flat roofs.

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 x 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture x architecture art commerce communications	community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement	X landscape architectulaw literature military music philosophy politics/government	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater
Specific dates	1926, 1927, 1934	Builder/Architect Henry	H. Dupont (St. Pet	tersburg)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Casa de Muchas Flores is an architecturally distinguished estate, that survives virtually unaltered, to reflect an era and a way of life important to Florida history. The 1926-34 Mediterranean Revival style house was the largest and most important designed by local architect Henry Dupont. The house is important to local history for its ownership by wealthy and prominent people. The Casa de Muchas Flores was the first waterfront estate built in the "Jungle" area, setting the tone for future development along the bay, which is still the most affluent neighborhood in St. Petersburg.

The Casa de Muchas Flores sits on 2.5 acres of coastal hammock known as the "Jungle." No archaeological features are visible on the site, but 250 feet to the north is the important ceremonial complex of shell mounds known as the Narvaez Site. This is the landing and camp site of the ill-fated 1528 "entrada" of Panfilo de Narvaez.³

The "Jungle" was bisected by Park Street in 1910. To the west of Park Street are one-acre-plus water lots subdivided by Alpine Lucas in 1925 and named Jungle Shores. To the east of Park Street is the Jungle Country Club and Golf Course subdivision of Walter Fuller. Both subdivisions have retained their status as expensive residential areas. Adjacent to the Casa de Muchas Flores on the north is the 1928 Mediterranean Revival Emil Brach estate covering 2.5 acres. To the south of the Casa are masonry houses of post World War II construction. To the west is Boca Ciega Bay, and to the east Park Street North.

The Casa de Muchas Flores was the first house built on the water side (west) of Park Street in the Jungle Shores subdivision of Alpine Lucas. His land holdings extended from 9th Avenue to 30th Avenue to Park Street along the bay. The house plans were drawn by Henry Dupont in early 1926. At the same time Dupont designed a Mediterranean Revival style house for Lucas nearby at 1800 Country Club Drive. The Lucas family spent that summer in Europe. On their return both houses were completed. The Casa was sold to Thomas W. Miller for \$125,000. The Lucas family moved into the other house where they remained until 1980.

Thomas W. Miller was the owner of Faultless Rubber Co. and Miller Tire Co. of Ashland, Ohio. 10 Miller was typical of his class of Midwestern industrialists that come to winter on the West Coast of Florida. They were not "socially acceptable" to Palm Beach society; yet they desired to live in the same style, and so settled on the Gulf Coast. Thomas Miller purchased a house in 1925 at 1538 Park Street (land side). The family wintered in this house until 1928 when Dupont finished the north wing of the Casa. 12 In 1931 Miller's son was almost kidnapped. A ten-foot wrought iron fence was erected on the street and a ten-foot metal fence on the other sides of the estate. 13 In 1934 the Casa de Muchas Flores was enlarged again at a cost of \$38,000. This was the last significant work done on the estate, except for a gargan and greenhouse built in 1939. After Thomas Miller's death in 1946, his son, Parken Miller, lived in the house with his new bride for one year. They abandoned the house due to its seriously leaking roof and Mrs. Thomas Miller's unwillingness to spend any money on it. In 1950 the Casa sold for \$50,000 to Clayton Lynch. 17 He was the owner of Lynch Oil Company of Evanston, Indiana,

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Sheet)

10. Geograph	ical Data	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Acreage of nominated property	2.5 acres		
Quadrangle name <u>Seminole</u>		Qua	drangle scale 1:24,000
UT M References			
	310 714 61010 lorthing	B Zone Easting	Northing
		F	
G L L L L L		H	
/erbal boundary description	and justification		
11 of lots 8 and 9, blo	ock E, according ries include all	significant buildings a	es" as recorded in Plat Bo nd grounds historically
ist all states and counties	for properties overla	pping state or county bound	aries
tate N/A	code N/A	county N/A	code N/A
tate N/A	code N/A	county N/A	code N/A
1. Form Prep	ored Dy		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
rganization Florida Divis			er 11, 1984 4) 487-2333
ty or town Tallahasse	e	state Flor	ida
12. State Hist	toric Prese	rvation Office	r Certification
he evaluated significance of th	is property within the st	ate is:	
national	state	X_ local	
	perty for inclusion in the cedures set forth by the	r the National Historic Preservate National Register and Certify the National Park Service	
		7	late 12/12/84
George W. Percy, Sta	ate Historic Pres	ervation Ufficer	
I hereby certify that this pr	operty is included in the	National Register	
1 Selvest	year :	eres in the contract	late /-3/-85
Keeper of the National Regis	iter		
Attest:		Maria Care Care	ate
Chief of Registration	- 1994 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1994 - 1		

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The other principal facade of the house is the west one, facing the bay. Like the east facade, it is 120 feet long and broken by the projection of two wings. These form a court-yard from which three french doors lead to the great hall. The wing at the south end of this facade is three stories high with a stair tower projecting into the courtyard that is similar to the tower on the east facade. The other wing that frames the court-yard is two stories and contains the kitchen and service areas on the first floor. All window opening are rectangular with plain concrete sills and contain steel casement windows of 6 or 8 lights per case.

The south facade of the Casa de Muchas Flores is 12 feet from the lot line, devoid of ornament, hidden from view and impossible to photograph. It contains only rectangular windows of the steel casement type. The north facade is only 20 feet wide, contains a garage on the first floor and two steel casement rectangular windows on the second floor.

On the interior, numerous grade changes occur on the first floor of the house, which is built over a 2 to 4-foot crawl space. The public rooms are floored in Florida travertine except the dining room and lounge. The service areas and entrance vestibule are glazed terracotta tile. The second floor has 2-inch wide oak flooring except for the two bedrooms of the north wing, which have floors of pink Georgia marble. All bathrooms have ceramic tile except the two baths of the north wing which have floors of pink Georgia marble.

All interior walls and partitions are of sand-textured plaster over wooden lathe. All ceilings, save the great hall, are of the same material.

On the first floor of this house there are three rooms of primary significance. These are the Great Hall, Dining Room and Lounge. The Great Hall is the core of the house and all rooms radiate from it. Two stories high it measures 30' by 35' with a 10-foot wide two-story gallery that runs along the west side of the room. The gallery is reached by a straight run staircase that rises along the south wall. It has oak treads and risers with a wrought iron balustrade and mahogany handrail. The gallery is supported by four Florida travertine columns. Above these are pairs of pecky cypress posts that support the dentiled entablature. An ornate wrought iron railing matching the stairs completes the gallery. On the east wall is a large limestone renaissance style fireplace, flanked by a big leaded glass window and the archway of the entrance vestibule. The north wall is dominated by a second floor wrought iron balcony that leads through cypress doors to a bedroom. Beneath, a wide doorway to the library is decorated with wrought iron gates. The ceiling is of pecky cypress supported by stencilled beams of the same material. A pair of wrought iron electroliers hang from the beams.

The dining room is 16' by 20' with a groined vaulted plaster ceiling. The archivolts rest on ornamented consoles. The carved limestone fireplace on the south wall is renaissance in style and dominates the room. The floor is pink Georgia marble with a black marble border. A row of four large casement windows on the west wall face the bay.

The lounge room is 18' by 22' with a floor of random broken glazed polychrome tile set in gray concrete. The fireplace on the south wall is rusticated granite. Four arched wooden french doors (12 light) lead to a screened loggia that faces tha bay.

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Three other structures are located on the grounds of the Casa de Muchas Flores. The earliest is a two car garage and greenhouse, built in 1939. A swimming pool near the bay was built in 1969. Near the pool is a boathouse built the same year.

The Casa de Muchas Flores has never suffered exterior alterations. In the recent restoration all original windows and doors were stabilized and repaired. The only exterior change has been the addition of a wooden decking at the kitchen door. Interior alterations have occured only in the bathrooms and kitchen areas. The grounds retain their original drives and landscape design. The addition of a pool and boathouse near the bay are the only features added to the original concept.

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which he sold upon his retirement to St. Petersburg in 1950. Lynch was a serious gardener with a famous orchid collection. For awhile the house lived up to its name. Then in 1961 a robbery occurred. Someone tied up the maids, and Mrs. Lynch claimed 50,000 worth of jewelry had been stolen. The case was never solved, and Mrs. Lynch refused to live in the house. 19

The Casa de Muchas Flores stood vacant from 1961 till 1969, decaying and vandalized. Charles Morgan bought the estate in 1969 and repaired the house. Morgan was owner of Morgan Yachts and Enterprise Yacht Co. and an internationally known designer of racing yachts. Financial problems plagued Morgan, and by 1982 his creditors sold the house to Chester Babat, M.D. 20

Between 1982 and 1984 the house and its grounds were carefully restored by Dr. Babat following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Henry H. Dupont was born in 1870, the son of Aristide and Mary M. Dupont. ²¹ His schooling and architectural training are unknown, although Harold Anderson, who worked in his office in the 1920s, says Dupont had training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. ²² Dupont started his career as an architect in Indianapolis, Indiana. ²³ While there, he invented a device that permitted the opening of locked doors from the inside by applying pressure on a horizontal bar. ²⁴ He jointly held the patent on this "Von-Du-Prin" mechanism with two others. ²⁵ These "panic bars" were first installed in Indianapolis schools. ²⁶ Dupont was secretary and treasurer of the Indianapolis AIA, which he helped to found. ²⁷ He moved to St. Petersburg in 1914, ²⁸ although he had wintered here earlier and designed several buildings including the 1910 Veillard House (listed in National Register on October 29, 1982). ²⁹ His first office was at 305 Central (1915-1926), and his first home at 600 Sixth Street North. ³⁰

During World War I he was employed by the government in Key West where he assisted in building an army airplane base. He also designed the submarine base for the navy at Key West, and when the aviation services were suffering through losses of wrecked airplanes that could not be salvaged from the shallow waters surrounding the Keys, he designed a special barge with a draft of only 18 inches which solved the problem. 31

During the 1920's Henry Dupont designed some of St. Petersburg's larger buildings and many houses. His work was never as prolific as some firms in the area, because he kept a small office with only three or four draftsmen and did all his own mechanical and electrical design. 32 His most important work in this era was the Don Cesar Hotel in 1926-28 (listed in the National Register on April 3, 1975). After initial plans the developer, Thomas Rowe, fired Dupont because the hotel was "too plain." The project was finished by Carlton Beard and Thomas Rowe. 33

Dupont never retired from practice, ³⁴ although during the Depression there was virtually no construction. He spent his last years with his wife, Lois, at 627 Highland Street North, ³⁵ a Mediterranean Revival style house he built in 1926 ³⁶ (demolished by the city in 1979). ³⁷ He died suddenly of a heart attack at his home March 30th, 1941, at age seventy-one. ³⁸

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FOOTNOTES:

- l Henry H. Dupont, "Residence for Mr. Alpine Lucas, St. Petersburg," Blueprints, five sheets, 1926, (Archives of Joan Lucas Appleyard, St. Petersburg, Florida)
- ²Joan Lucas Appleyard, personal interview with Howard Hansen June 12, 1984 (notes on file 3810 20th Avenue North, St. Petersburg); also Polk's St. Petersburg City Directories; Jacksonville, R.L. Polk & Co., 1920-1926.
- Florida Master Site File 8Pi54, Navarez Midden. Although no detailed archaeological research has been undertaken, the Navarez Site originally consisted of a cemetery and middens. The cemetery was excavated and destroyed with the construction of a restaurant in the 1920s. Several houses, including the Casa de Muchas Flores are probably built on top of portions of the remaining midden. Artifacts recovered from the area indicate that this site was inhabited by a Safety Harbor Period culture. Spanish-made artifacts have also been located.
 - City of St. Petersburg, Subdivision Plat Books of City.
 - ⁵City of St. Petersburg, Subdivision Plat Books of City.
 - Appleyard, personal interview.
 - 7 Subdivision Plat Books.
 - Bupont, "Residence for Mr. Alpine Lucas, St. Petersburg."
 - Appleyard, personal interview.
- 10 Parker W. Miller, telephone interview with Howard Hansen, June 15, 1984 (notes on file 3810 20th Avenue North, St. Petersburg).
 - 11 ibid. Also Polk's City Directory of St. Petersburg, 1926-28.
 - 12 ibid. Also City of St. Petersburg, Building Permit Records, 1446 Park Street.
 - ¹³Miller, personal interview.
 - 14 City of St. Petersburg, Building Permit Records, 1446 Park Street.
 - 15 ibid.
 - ¹⁶Miller, personal interview.
 - 17 ibid.
 - ¹⁸St. Petersburg Times, Obituary of Clayton Lynch, October 12, 1964, p. 11B.

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- 19 St. Petersburg Times, Interview with Mrs. C. Lynch, April 1, 1967, p. 5B.
- 20 Polk's City Directory of St. Petersburg, 1961-1970, R.L. Polk & Co., Jacksonville, Florida.
- 21
 St. Petersburg Evening Independent, Obituary of Henry H. Dupont, March 31, 1941,
 p. 18.
- Harold Anderson, personal interview with Howard Hansen, September 1979, RE: Veillard House (Notes on file 3810 20th Avenue North, St. Petersburg).
 - 23 St. Petersburg Evening Independent, March 31, 1941.
 - 24 Ibid.
 - Anderson, personal interview.
 - St. Petersburg Evening Independent. March 31, 1941.
 - 27 Ibid.
 - 1bid. Also Polk's City Directory of St. Petersburg, 1912-1915.
 - Harold Anderson, personal interview with Howard Hansen, September 1979.
 - 30
 Polk's City Directory of St. Petersburg, 1914, R.L. Polk & Co., Jacksonville.
 - St. Petersburg Evening Independent, 1961-1970, R.L. Polk and Co.
 - Harold Anderson, personal interview with Howard Hansen, September 1979.
 - Hurley, June, History of the Don Cesar, 1971.
- ³⁴Polk's City Directory of St. Petersburg, 1930-1944, R.L. Polk & Co., Jacksonville, Florida.
 - 35 Ibid.
 - 36 City of St. Petersburg, Building Permit Records, 617 Highland St., North.
 - 37 Ibid.
 - 38 St. Petersburg Evening Independent, Obituary of Henry H. Dupont, March 31, 1941.

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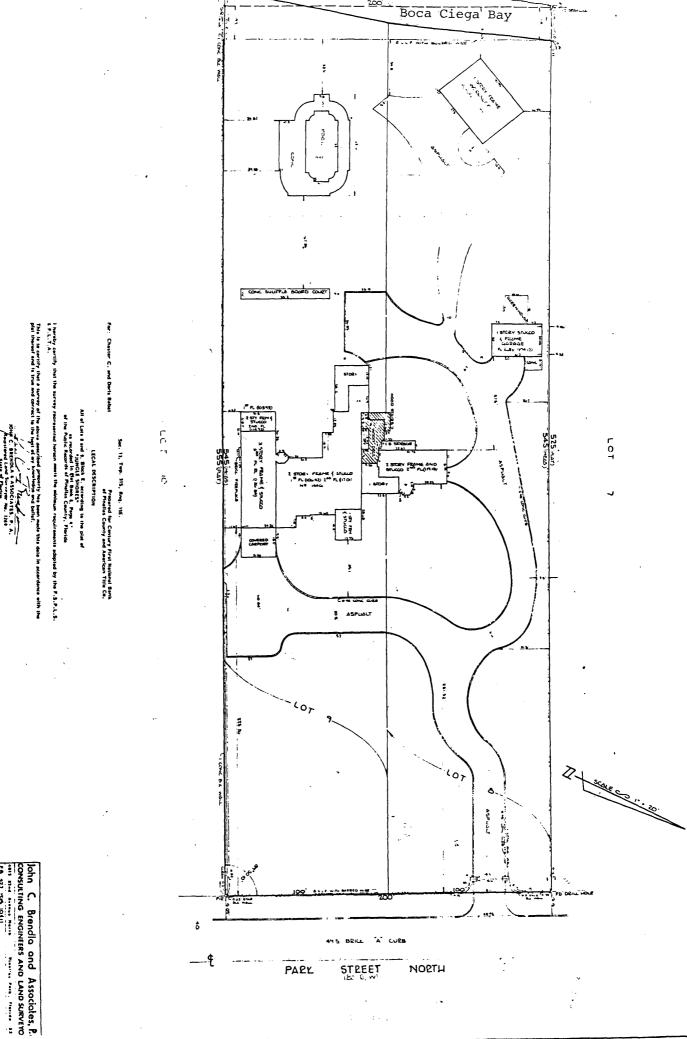
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- Anderson, Harold. Personal Interview with Howard Hansen. September 1979. Notes on file 3810 20th Avenue North, St. Petersburg.
- Appleyard, Joan Lucas. Personal Interview with Howard Hansen. June 12, 1984. Notes on file 3810 20th Avenue North, St. Petersburg.
- City of St. Petersburg, Office of Licensing and Permits, Building Permits, 1446 Park Street, 1926-1984.
- City of St. Petersburg, Office of Planning and Zoning, Subdivision Plat Books of St. Petersburg
- Dupont, Henry H., "Residence for Alpine Lucas, St. Petersburg, Fla." 1926, Blueprints, five sheets, Archives of Joan Lucas Appleyard; One Beach Drive S.E., St. Petersburg.
- Dupont, Henry H., "Residence for Mr. T.W. Miller, St. Petersburg, Fla," 1927, Blueprints, four sheets, Archives of Joan Lucas Appleyard; One Beach Drive S.E., St. Petersburg.
- Florida Master Site File. 8Pi54. Navarez Site, Suncoast Archaeological Society. August 21, 1970, St. Petersburg.
- Miller, Parker W. Interview with Howard Hansen. June 15, 1984. Notes on file. 3810 20th Avenue, North, St. Petersburg.
- Polk, R.L. and Co., City Directory of St. Petersburg, Jacksonville, 1912-1970.
- St. Petersburg Evening Independent, St. Petersburg, March 31, 1941.
- St. Petersburg Times, St. Petersburg, October 12, 1964; April 1, 1967.



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