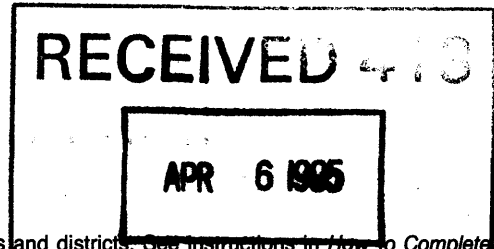


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 list provided. 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 REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE

other names/site number Beth Salem

2. Location

street & number 3004 53rd Avenue East n/a not for publication

city or town Oneco n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county Manatee code 081 zip code 34203

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.)

Suzanne P. Walker/Deputy SHPO 3/30/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
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 certifying 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 Edson B. Beall Entered in the National Register 5/4/95 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- Structure

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	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
Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling
Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Shingle Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick Pier

walls WOOD/ Shingle

Weatherboard

roof METAL

other

Narrative Description

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

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

(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)

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1896-1945

Significant Dates

1896

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Reasoner, Egbert

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: Burrows, Parke T.

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):

- 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:

Reasoner, Egbert, House
Name of Property

Manatee Co., Fl.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approx. 3.8 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>349180</u>	<u>3036660</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

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 Victoria "Mikki" Hartig/ Sherry Piland, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date March 1995

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Fl. zip code 32399-0250

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

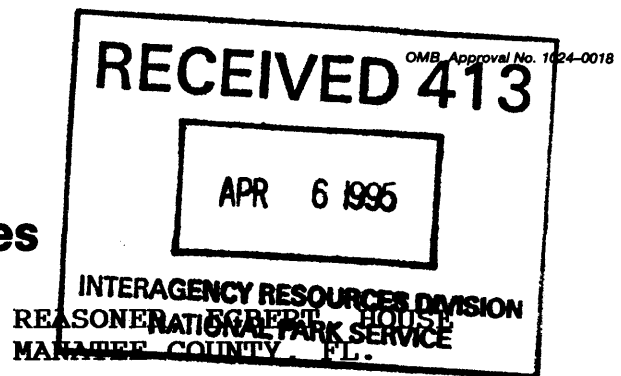
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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

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SUMMARY

The Reasoner House is located in Oneco, Florida, at 3004 53rd Avenue, E. The frame, two-story house has an irregular plan and rests on a brick foundation. A large veranda, with a low hip roof, extends across the facade. Exterior walls of the first floor are covered in cypress ship-lap siding. The exterior walls of the second and attic floors are finished with stained wood shingles. A cross-gable roof with boxed eaves covers the primary block of the house and is surfaced in original metal shingles. Interior brick chimneys project from the roof ridge at the east end of the house and from the east roof slope of the projecting rear wing. A detached pump house, at the rear of the residence, is also of frame construction with a wood shingle exterior. Both structures were completed in June, 1896.

SETTING

Oneco, Florida, is an unincorporated area approximately 6 miles from downtown Bradenton, the nearest incorporated city. The house fronts onto SR70, near the intersection of US 301. For most of its 98-year history, the house has been located in a rural area that has seen some minor development only within the last 30 years. Several large parcels of property continue to remain vacant or sparsely developed. The house was originally part of an approximately 140 acre parcel that was used for the Reasoner Brothers Nursery and greenhouses. The only other remaining historic structures are several abandoned greenhouses, west of the house, constructed around the turn of the century and no longer in the Reasoner family's ownership. The original 140 acre parcel was greatly reduced in 1936 due to the family's financial difficulties during the Depression. A widening of SR70 completed several years ago further reduced the size of the property and the original setback of the house. Another widening of the road is planned in the near future which will reduce the size of the property by another four feet. The remaining parcel consists of approximately 3.8+ acres and remains under the Reasoner family's ownership. Original landscape features on the site include bamboo plants and mature hickory and oak trees. Unspoiled wetlands, hidden by thick vegetation, extend along the rear of the site.

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REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
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EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The main facade of the house faces north (photo 1). A one-story, porch with a low hip roof extends across the facade and wraps around the corner to extend partially along the east elevation. Most of the porch is unscreened. A simple wood railing with 1"x1" balusters extends around the entire perimeter of the porch. Historic photographs reveal that some time between 1912 and 1931 (most likely during the prosperous early 1920s), the porch was enlarged at the west end with a pedimented extension (photo 2). This portion of the porch is screened. Probably at the same time, the porch was extended to the east to form a porte-cochere (photo 3). The porch roof over this section is supported by squat wood columns, resting on brick piers.

The main entrance to the house is sheltered by the porch. The half-panel entry door has a glass lattice pattern inset on the upper section and is flanked by side lights with the same lattice pattern.

An oriel window is located under the front-facing gable at the west end of the second floor (photo 1). Originally, a screened sleeping porch was to the east of this. The sleeping porch has been enclosed by the insertion of aluminum jalousie windows into the original screen openings.

The west elevation is fenestrated with 1/1, double hung sash windows, spaced in a regular pattern (photo 4). The middle window on the second floor has a decorative transom. A triple 6/1, sash window is placed in the gable end wall and a wood louvered attic vent is at the peak of the gable.

Historic photographs reveal that prior to 1931 a second floor balcony was located on the east elevation (photo 5). Probably at the same time as the other alterations to the house, the balcony was enclosed, enlarging an existing bedroom area. A shed roof extends over this enclosure.

A screened dining porch is recessed under the veranda roof on the northeast corner of the house (photos 6 and 7). This small porch is accessed from the interior of the house from the dining room and from the porte-cochere, on the east side of the front porch, through an original Victorian Style milled screen

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REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
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door. The porch rail and balustrades of this porch are identical to that of the larger front veranda.

The gable end of the east elevation reveals the framing pattern of a Palladian window (photo 7). It is unknown if this is an original design feature, or if, perhaps, a window was located here at one time. Instead of a window, the center portion is covered with wood shingles and is flanked by 8/2 double hung, sash windows.

A wing projects at the rear of the house (photo 8). It includes a screened service porch on the first floor with an entrance door inset at the southeast corner. The second floor of the south elevation is fenestrated with a tripartite grouping of 1/1, double hung, sash windows. Shed roof dormers are located on the east and west elevations of this extension.

INTERIOR

Access to the interior of the house for photographs was not obtained. The interior walls are plaster and the house retains all of its original interior doors and hardware. The first floor contains five rooms and a bath. The front entry opens into a large entry hall containing the main staircase. At the foot of the stairs, a short linear rear hall extends to the single first floor bedroom and bath. This bath appears to have been added in the 1930s or 1940s, although the space it occupies is original and may have served as an earlier storage room or closet. The main parlor, library and dining rooms are accessed from the front entry hall. The library has original built-in bookcases and a built-in window seat. The dining room features a built-in china cabinet with a pass-through to the kitchen. Both the living room and the dining room have original fireplaces and share the same chimney. The dining room fireplace has a walnut surround and mantle with decorative tile inserts. Matching tile is used on the hearth. The living room mantle is oak with hand-carvings depicting yellow jasmine vines and native mockingbirds. Carved on the upper section of the mantelpiece are the words "Beth Salem", (House of Peace), the date of construction, 1896, and the inscription "Peace be within thy walls". Solid pocket doors separate the public spaces from the central hall. A half-panel door with opaque glass leads from the dining room to a small screened dining porch on the east side of the house. The kitchen

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**REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
MANATEE COUNTY, FL.**

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is located to the rear of the dining room and retains its original shelving, wood cabinetry, and hardware.

The three bedrooms on the second floor are accessed from a central hall. To the rear of the hall a narrow linear hall accesses the original bath and an additional bedroom. The bath contains all of its original bath fixtures and cabinetry. The large attic on the third floor is accessed by narrow stairs off the second floor rear hall. The attic interior space is undivided and has full pine flooring.

PUMP HOUSE

A small pump house with a gable roof is located near the southwest corner of the house (photo 9 and 10). This small one-story, rectangular structure has battered walls, covered with wood shingles. A pedimented doorway is located on the south elevation.

ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS

The house has received only minimal interior alterations. The exterior alterations consist primarily of the enclosure of the sleeping porch, the extension of the veranda, and the addition of the porte-cochere. Those changes probably date from the 1920s. The house has been used as rental property for a number of years. Current plans are to renovate the property for use as an office.

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**REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
MANATEE COUNTY, FL.**

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The Egbert Reasoner Home, "Beth Salem," is associated with one of Manatee County's most prominent early pioneer families. Egbert Reasoner was a partner in the Reasoner Brothers Nursery, which had been established by his older brother, Pliny Reasoner, in 1881. The nursery, the first in Manatee County and one of the first two in the state of Florida, was a major contributing factor in the growth of Florida's important agricultural industry. Egbert became one of the leading horticulturists in the country.

The Reasoner Home, built in 1896, is being nominated at the state level under Criterion A, for its importance in the state's agricultural history and in Manatee County's commerce; under Criterion B, for its connection to the Reasoner family; and under Criterion C, as a significant local example of the Shingle style, and as an important design by Iowa architect, Parke T. Burrows.

The Reasoner Home is the most substantial structure remaining on what was the Reasoner Brothers Nursery property. It remains in the ownership of the Reasoner family.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In 1855, the Florida Legislature created Manatee County out of the southern half of Hillsborough County. Josiah Gates, who is credited with being the first settler in the county, founded the village of Manatee, now east of Bradenton. The settlement served as the first county seat. In 1856, Gates was named Manatee County's first Treasurer and Justice of the Peace. The Manatee County census of 1860 recorded 854 residents.

In 1881, seventeen year-old Pliny Reasoner moved to Manatee County from Princeton, Illinois. An experienced farmer and student botanist, he was attracted to the area's hospitable climate, orange groves, and year-round growing season. He purchased 40 acres at what is now 79th Avenue E and began to create a nursery. In his first year in Manatee County, he bought a variety of fruit and vegetable plants and budding stock to experiment with what could successfully be grown in the area. As he expanded his stock, he also began clearing his 40 acres for planting an orange grove. His exclusive use of budded trees introduced this practice for the first time south of the Manatee River, and he began selling his budding services to other grove

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**REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
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owners. Reasoner also planted banana trees, pineapple plants, and lime trees. By writing the United States Department of Agriculture for free seeds and seedlings and requesting seeds and plants from his family's farm in Illinois, he was able to assemble a tremendous variety of plants.

After the first year, Reasoner realized that the property he had purchased was not suitable for his nursery needs. In 1882, he purchased 160 acres at 53rd Avenue East, a location now known as Oneco, Florida. That land was cleared for planting and he continued his experiments in budding. In 1884, he began publication of a nursery catalog. Its offerings and format enhanced his reputation as a nursery grower.

In 1885, Pliny Reasoner was joined by his brother, Egbert, and the nursery was renamed the Reasoner Brothers' Nurseries. The following year Pliny took a vacation, traveling around the south gulf coast of Florida. He returned with several young Royal Palm trees. With this acquisition, Reasoner's nursery became the first in the country to introduce Royal Palms for propagation and sale. To capitalize on this asset, the nursery was renamed the Reasoners' Royal Palm Nurseries, Inc., a name it retained until 1937.

In January, 1886, a severe freeze destroyed many of the Reasoners' rare plants and tropical and semi-tropical fruit trees. Although this was a devastating financial blow, it also created a widespread public demand for plants for replanting, resulting in a substantial increase in nursery sales.

In 1887, the Reasoner brothers' father, Henry Chapman Reasoner, decided to move the rest of the family to Florida to join the nursery operation. He took charge of the shipping operations. Under the continued guidance of Pliny, Egbert increased his own extensive knowledge of botany and horticulture.

The 1887 publication of "Bulletin #1," a scientific report by Pliny Reasoner, is evidence of his growing national reputation as an authority on tropical and semi-tropical plants. With the absences that Pliny's prominence sometimes required, Egbert took on more of the responsibility of operating the nursery. He managed work crews; handled correspondence with botanical gardens and customers around the world; collected, bought, and propagated new specimens; and supervised research and experimentation.

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Collecting trips, undertaken in 1887 by Egbert and his father and by Pliny, expanded the nursery's inventory, which was reflected by the dramatic increase in selections offered in the 1887-1888 catalog. Pliny Reasoner was able to exchange plants with every major botanical garden in the world, further increasing the nursery stock.

In 1887, Pliny Reasoner was appointed Superintendent and Horticultural Commissioner in charge of an exhibit of tropical and semi-tropical plants for the Florida Subtropical Exposition held in Jacksonville. In May of 1888, he was invited to serve as one of three commissioners for the Florida exhibit at the Cotton States' Centennial in Cincinnati. He was also chosen to supervise the design of Florida's exhibit and to select the specimens to be displayed. Many of the Royal Palms Nursery's choice specimens were shipped to Cincinnati for the exhibition.

Shortly after Pliny's departure for Cincinnati, a yellow fever epidemic swept Manatee County. He rushed back to be with the family and help nurse the sick. A few days later, he too developed yellow fever and subsequently died on September 17, 1888, at the age of 24. In the seven years since his arrival in Manatee County, Pliny Reasoner had made a profound mark for himself in the field of horticulture and had laid a solid foundation for the nursery that continued to prosper under the family's ownership.

Following his brother's death, Egbert Reasoner, at age nineteen, took on the complete management of the nursery. Out from the shadow of his brother's fame, Egbert Reasoner set out to shape the nursery in his own image and to make his own mark on the history of Florida horticulture. Over the next few years, he increased the emphasis on research and experimentation. Distribution of the Royal Palm catalogue was expanded. Included in each catalogue was a report on the progress of the nursery. Correspondence was continued with horticulturists all over the world.

Egbert Reasoner was active in the Florida Horticultural Society and in the American Horticulture Society. In 1891, he took on the task of planning a major exhibit at an exposition in Ocala. In 1893 he was chosen to design and plan the Florida horticultural exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair. The exhibit

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REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
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resulted in national and statewide recognition of the Royal Palm Nursery and further increased the nursery's sales. In 1898 he was invited to contribute several articles to Bailey's Cyclopedic of American Horticulture.

The nursery continued to proudly introduce several other varieties of plants to the United States. Nutmeg was introduced from Singapore in 1890, avocado from Costa Rica in 1895, the first red hibiscus and the Oneco tangerine in 1900, and the Oneco Mandarin in 1903. Egbert is also credited with introducing the first pink grapefruit.

By 1890, the volume of catalog sales and record keeping necessitated the construction of a larger office. A tall cypress water tower was built to provide sufficient water power for a sprinkler system. The installation of a cable across the Manatee River in 1897 for telephone service created an entire new facet to the nursery's thriving mail-order business. Additional land for the nursery operation was purchased in 1903. The following year, the nursery was selected to supply and ship plants to George T. Kessler, official Landscape Architect of the St. Louis World's Fair, for use in landscaping the fairgrounds.

During a two-month trip to Europe in May 1910, Egbert Reasoner attended the International Horticultural Exposition in London, visited various parts of the continent, and collected a large number of plants to take back to Florida. In 1913, as a result of his experimental work, the nursery brought out a series of new hibiscus varieties and colors. About the same time, Reasoner also developed the Cleopatra mandarin root stock for citrus.

In 1918 Egbert Reasoner added a landscape architecture department to the nursery. This positioned the nursery to benefit from Florida's Land Boom of the 1920s. The landscape architect division was responsible for the landscape design of subdivisions and towns throughout the state, including Temple Terrace, Parkland Estates, and Gulf View Estates in Tampa; and the Harbor Hills Subdivision and Whitfield Estates Subdivisions, both in Manatee County. Other commissions included the landscape designs for the Manatee County Courthouse (NR 1976), the Sarasota homes of John Ringling (NR 1982), the Stewart Estate on Merritt Island, the mile-long mall at Avon Park (NR 1990), the Venetian Causeway between Miami and Miami Beach; and "Vizcaya," John

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Deering's estate in Miami (NR 1970). The landscape department became the training ground for many who would later work in landscape design throughout the country.

All three of Egbert's children (Norman, Pliny, and Julia) were taught the business literally from the ground up, pulling weeds when they were very young. The children found nursery work interesting and took special interest in the experimental work their father was conducting. Tragically, in October 1912, Egbert and Sarah Reasoner's second oldest son, Pliny, named after his deceased uncle, was accidentally killed during a hunting trip. Norman and Julia became full partners in the nursery operation in 1922. Julia Reasoner became the financial secretary of the corporation, only temporarily relinquishing her partnership in favor of marriage and motherhood. By 1924, Norman, recently elected president of the state Florists' Association, was actively managing the business. Egbert devoted most of his time to writing articles for various horticultural trade journals. He was also free to travel and obtain additional specimens for the nursery.

Egbert Reasoner died in 1926. The Florida Grower published numerous letters of tribute. The Dean of Agriculture at the University of Florida commented, "His place in Florida's horticulture cannot be taken by another and his contribution to the horticultural industries of Florida will remain forever a monument to his genius." Another prominent admirer said, "Egbert N. Reasoner or his spirit can never die in Florida for too much of his work has taken root in the soil." In 1981, Egbert N. Reasoner and Pliny Ward Reasoner were inducted into the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame in Tampa, the only two members of a single family to be so honored.

Norman Reasoner took over the nursery operation completely after his father's death, just as the Florida real estate boom collapsed. The nursery was sustained for several years by strong mail-order sales from other states. The stock market crash of 1929, however, brought a four-year period of serious economic depression to the nursery. When it became impossible to meet the payments on a loan taken in 1925 for expansion, a substantial amount of the nursery's land holdings were lost. The situation also called for the dissociation of the business with the Royal Palm name for the nursery. In spite of this terrible blow,

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Norman Reasoner continued to hold title to Beth Salem, the family home and its surrounding property. Reasoner, with some early assistance from his sister Julia, managed to sustain uninterrupted the continued existence of the nursery. Before the end of 1936, he and Julia re-incorporated the nursery under the name Reasoner's Tropical Nurseries, Inc., the name it bears today. Julia eventually left the business again and Norman became the sole owner.

Norman Reasoner made his own contributions to agriculture over his lifetime, just as his father, grandfather, and great-uncle had before him. He helped form the Manatee Chapter of the American Rose Society in 1928. In the early part of World War II, he was hired by the Corps of Engineers to landscape airbases. In 1950, Reasoner organized the American Hibiscus Society, served as its first president, and oversaw the society's eventual expansion to an international society.

Following his World War II military service, Norman's son, Egbert Samuel "Bud" Reasoner, enrolled in the University of Florida and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, with a major in Ornamental Horticulture. He became a partner in the nursery operation and established his own outstanding reputation in horticulture. He helped form the Florida Nurseryman & Growers Association and the Florida Association of Landscape Architects. In 1953, Bud married Rae Ferguson, who had majored in botany at the Connecticut College for Women. In 1952, she had produced her own catalogue of salt-tolerant species of plants. Her research in this area was presented to the Florida State Horticultural Society and is still used as a reference on the subject. From the time of their marriage in 1953, she has worked side by side with Bud at the nursery. Their two sons, Samuel Anderson Reasoner, "Andy" and Alan "Ward" Reasoner also joined the nursery operation.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Egbert Reasoner House was constructed in 1895 for Egbert Reasoner and Sarah Burrows Anderson who were married in October 1895. Construction of the house, a wedding gift from the bride's father, began in December, 1895. The house was estimated to cost \$4,000 and was built from plans given to the newlyweds by architect Parke Tunis Burrows. Burrows, at the time, was a

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draftsman with the Chicago architectural firm of Roeder, Coffin & Crocker. When the Reasoners' new home was near completion, the local newspaper described it as "one of the pleasantest of houses," and noted its cypress woodwork, running water supplied from the nursery's irrigation plant, and broad verandas.

The house was built on the nursery property and the landscaping around the house was laid out to "resemble the ways of nature" based on Egbert Reasoner's theory of "carrying out the informal groupings of the Great Gardener" as the ideal plan of landscape gardening. The landscaping of the house also served as an advertisement for the Royal Palm Nursery. One of the most personal features of the house was a carved mantelpiece in the living room, the work of Charles Hitchings, a friend and neighbor. The design, incorporating the name of the house, its date, plants, and birds, was probably conceived by the bride's father, a minister. The house had another distinction - Manatee County's first indoor bathroom. The couple moved into their newly completed home in June 1896.

SHINGLE STYLE

The Egbert Reasoner House is a well-preserved example of the Shingle style. Constructed for a wealthy family, in a rural setting, the house incorporated quality construction and up-to-date household conveniences. Although never widely popular in Florida, isolated examples of the Shingle style exist throughout the state. This style developed during the 1870s in the suburban residential work of architect Henry Hobson Richardson. The style eventually achieved popularity for seaside resort architecture in the northeastern United States between 1880 and 1900, and was used in residential architecture throughout the country. However, by the turn of the century, the style had lost its popularity. The Shingle style combines elements of the Queen Anne style (wide porches, shingled surfaces, asymmetrical form), the Colonial Revival style (classic columns, Palladian windows), and Richardson's own Romanesque Revival (rounded arches, and in some cases, stone lower stories). The Shingle style is more simplified and restrained than the Queen Anne style, with less variety in color and texture. The roof and the exterior walls of rough cut shingles are treated as a skin that encloses the living spaces. The frame is totally concealed - the aesthetic opposite of the structuralism of the Stick style. Roofs tend to be low

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pitched with broad gable ends. The sense of surface continuity is a predominant characteristic of the style.

ARCHITECT

The Reasoner House was designed by architect Parke T. Burrows (1871-1953), and built by Tampa contractor, George Primley. Burrows, a native of Davenport, Iowa, was Sarah Reasoner's cousin. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1892, then spent three years as an apprentice in several Chicago architectural offices. He returned to Davenport in 1895 and briefly practiced in partnership with J. P. Hubbell. From 1896 to 1904, he and Frederick G. Clausen were partners. The Clausen and Burrows firm designed several schools and the Scott County [Iowa] Jail (1896). Eventually, Seth J. Temple became associated with the firm. As Temple, Burrows and McLane, the firm designed schools, residences, and several commercial buildings in Davenport, including the Hotel Black Hawk. Burrows was with this firm until his retirement in 1925. From 1915-1917, he served as president of the Iowa Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to its national and international fame, the Reasoner Brothers' nursery made a significant impact on local commerce. It was the single biggest industry in the community of Oneco. When the Seaboard Air Line Railroad began plans for the construction of the first bridge across the Manatee River, Egbert, as one of the most significant shippers, was consulted. The continued growth of the nursery operation eventually made the existing land and greenhouses inadequate to fill the number of orders being received by the nursery. In 1917, additional land was cleared, additional plants were set out, and additional buildings were constructed. By 1920, two railroad lines, the East & West Coast Railroad and the Atlantic Coast Line, served the nursery. The nursery shipped carloads of plants, and received, by mail and steamer, tons of seeds, cuttings and rooted plants. The volume of business generated by the Royal Palm Nursery was so significant that the small post office in Oneco was expanded to a money order office, a higher classification in the postal system.

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The nursery also earned a local reputation for being one of the most interesting places to visit in Manatee County and eventually drew thousands of visitors. By 1917, the nursery property was referred to as "one of the show places of Manatee County." Located on the nursery grounds, the Egbert Reasoner House contributed to the visual appeal of the complex.

Upon Egbert's death in 1926, his daughter, Julia Reasoner Hastings, inherited the property. She resided in Beth Salem until her death in 1975. The property surrounding the house continued in plant production until well into the 1930s. Today only a small segment of the nursery grounds remain and the house is the only substantial reminder of this important element of Manatee County's history. The nursery operates today from a site several miles away. In more recent years the Egbert Reasoner house has been used as rental property by the Reasoner family. Current plans are to restore the house and use it as the business office for the nursery. Some of the surrounding property will be used for the nursery's retail operation. Today, because the nursery remains under the ownership and management of the Reasoner family, it is the oldest Florida family business. It is also the oldest continually operated business in Manatee County and one of the oldest continually operated nurseries in Florida.

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Davenport Survey. Davenport, Iowa: Department of Community Development, Iowa Office of Historic Preservation, 1982.

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Matthews, Janet Snyder, Journey to Centennial Sarasota. Tulsa: Continental Heritage Press, 1985.

Pinardi, Norman J. The Plant Pioneers. Torrington, Connecticut: Rainbow Press, 1980.

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Sarasota County Department of Historical Resources

Reasoner Family. Vertical biographical and photo file.

Central Manatee County Library, Bradenton, Florida

Hastings, Julia Reasoner. "Early Plant Introductions." Typed transcript of tape interview (MM 1C) of Manatee County Historical Society Meeting held on February 24, 1966.

Vanderipe, Edith Reasoner. Typed transcript taken from taped interview by Mary McMurria, 27 October 1977.

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Personal Collection, Egbert "Bud" Reasoner and Rae F. Reasoner

Reasoner family historic photo collection

Hastings, Julia Reasoner, "The Reasoner Brothers, Florida's
Pioneer Nurserymen", unpublished, typed manuscript, 1976;
copyright held by Eunice Hastings Gillespie.

Interviews (Conducted by Mikki Hartig):

Golby, Eric, Reasoner employee for 35 years, 24 June 1994.
Bradenton, Florida.

Reasoner, Alan Ward, 16 April 1994, Oneco, Florida.

Reasoner, Egbert Samuel "Bud", 16 April 1994, Oneco, Florida.

Reasoner, Rae Ferguson, 21 June 1994, Oneco, Florida.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin 120 feet west of the northwest corner of the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 17, Township 35 South, Range 18 East, for a point of beginning; thence south 638 feet to a point; thence northeasterly to a point located 330 feet east and 330 feet south of said northwest corner of the NE 1/4 of the NW 1/4; thence north 330 feet to graded road; thence west 450 feet along said graded road to the point of beginning, less east 125 feet thereof, less road R/W off North cont. 0.09 acre, more or less,; less land as described in OR 1120 P 1566; subject to easement as described in OR 1121 P 3443 PRMCF PI#17751.0000/9.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries encompass the approximately 3.8 acres of the Reasoner Brothers Royal Palm Nurseries that remain under the Reasoner family ownership. The Egbert Reasoner House is located within those boundaries. Adjacent to the boundaries on the west is land that was part of the nursery property, but is now owned by another party. The deteriorated remains of two of the Reasoners' greenhouses are on this adjacent property, but are not included in this nomination because of lack of owner interest.

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-
1. Egbert Reasoner Home, 3004 53rd Avenue, E.
 2. Oneco, Manatee County, Florida
 3. Alan Ward Reasoner
 4. July 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
 6. Main (north) facade, view looking south
 7. Photo 1 of 10

Numbers 1 and 2 are the same for the remaining photographs

3. Mikki Hartig
4. September 1994
5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
6. Detail, main (north) facade, view looking southwest
7. Photo 2 of 10

3. Mikki Hartig
4. September 1994
5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
6. East elevation, showing porte-cochere; view looking southwest
7. Photo 3 of 10

3. Alan Ward Reasoner
4. July 1994
5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
6. West elevation, view looking east
7. Photo 4 of 10

3. Unknown
4. Between 1912 and c.1931
5. Egbert Samuel Reasoner, 5030 18th Avenue, W., Bradenton, Fl.
6. Main (north) facade on right, east elevation on left; view looking southwest
7. Photo 5 of 10

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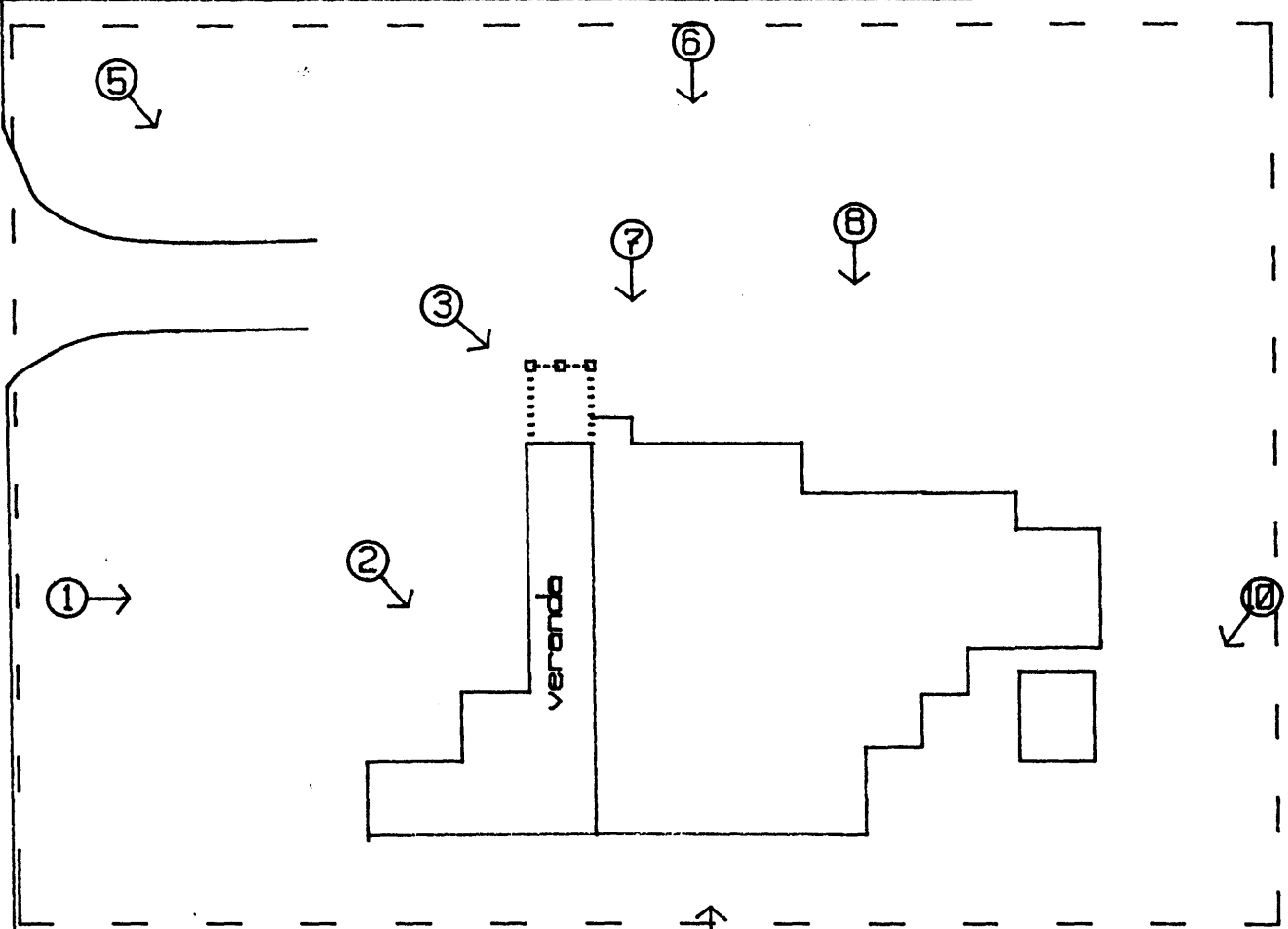
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REASONER, EGBERT, HOUSE
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Section number Photo Page 2

3. Mikki Hartig
 4. September 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, FL.
 6. East elevation, view looking west
 7. Photo 6 of 10
-
3. Mikki Hartig
 4. September 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
 6. Detail, east elevation; view looking ~~south~~west
 7. Photo 7 of 10
-
3. Mikki Hartig
 4. September 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
 6. Detail, south end of east elevation; view looking west
 7. Photo 8 of 10
-
3. Alan Ward Reasoner
 4. July 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
 6. Rear (south) elevation, view looking north; Pump house on left
 7. Photo 9 of 10
-
3. Alan Ward Reasoner
 4. July 1994
 5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl.
 6. Detail, pump house, south elevation; view looking northwest
 7. Photo 10 of 10

53rd Ave. East



REASONER HOUSE
Manatee County, Fl.
Boundary - - -
Photo Direction ○→
Approx. Scale: 1" = 24'