

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dorvin House  
other names/site number Mollere House, Rosedon

2. Location

street & number LA Hwy 18 N/A  not for publication  
city, town Hahnville  vicinity  
state Louisiana code LA county St. Charles code 089 zip code 70057

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.  
Jonathan Fricker Deputy SHPO April 18, 1990  
Signature of certifying official Jonathan Fricker Date  
Office of Cultural Development, Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Louisiana  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:) \_\_\_\_\_  
Alan Byers 5/24/90  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

French Colonial style (Creole)

Greek Revival

Federal

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete block

walls weatherboards

roof asphalt

other

### Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Dorvin Home (c. 1840-1850) is a one-and-one-half story residence of cypress and briquette entre poteaux (brick between posts) construction. It combines features from the French Creole and American Federal and Greek Revival styles. Hence it is an example of the transitional houses erected in Louisiana after American architectural styles began to influence the French building tradition. Located on the River Road above Hahnville in St. Charles Parish, the building stands well back from the Mississippi. The home underwent a major restoration and also received a small rear addition after development pressures necessitated that it be moved a few hundred feet from its original site in the mid-1970s. Neither the move nor any changes that have been made have impacted the house's Register eligibility. It easily retains its significant character-defining elements and was moved only a very short distance within St. Charles Parish (the context for significance).

The Dorvin House originally stood close to the River Road (about 50 feet) on property immediately adjacent to the present site. When Shell Oil acquired the site in the mid-1970s, the move became necessary to save the house. The house was moved to the adjacent property, but was placed further back from the River Road (about 450 feet) and is partially hidden from view by modern houses standing between it and the road (see plat map). It still, however, faces the river in the traditional manner.

The house's Creole features include 1) a steeply pitched hipped umbrella roof, 2) briquette entre poteaux wall construction, 3) three sets of French doors (six lites per leaf) on the facade and one set at the rear of the original structure, 4) exposed beaded beam ceilings on the gallery and throughout the interior, and 5) four mantels which wrap around the chimney flues in the French manner.

The home's important Anglo-American features include its floorplan and certain decorative elements. The floorplan closely resembles the traditional Georgian and Greek Revival layout of two equal sized rooms on each side of a narrow central hall. However, the plan varies from this tradition in that each side also has a third, narrow room at the rear. Thus, the floorplan actually has three rooms on each side of the hall. This overall plan gives the facade a symmetrical appearance not found on earlier Creole homes. The building's decorative elements reflect the American Federal and Greek Revival styles. For example, a Federal fanlight surmounts the French door which opens into the

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central hall, while Greek Revival transoms decorate the French doors opening from the gallery into the two front rooms. Other Greek Revival elements in the home include simple mantels composed of pilasters with smooth bases, shafts, and capitals; the gallery columns and pilasters with their simple molded capitals; and the 1840s moldings which surround four panel interior doors. Also of interest are the home's ten inch wide baseboards and wooden floors of cypress and pine.

Assessment of Integrity:

As indicated above, the Dorvin Home has endured a move (mid-1970s) and a major restoration (1980-1985) in addition to the normal changes which happen to any historic building over a period of years. Dormers were added to the roofline sometime before the 1940s, and a stairway was installed in the right middle room during the 1960s. Otherwise, the relevant alterations to the original c. 1840-1850 structure occurred during the restoration and include the following:

1. stabilization of briquette entre poteaux walls damaged as a result of the move,
2. replacement (with drywall finished to look like plaster) of interior plaster damaged beyond repair by the move,
3. replacement of original hearths also damaged during the move,
4. the removal of a balustrade from a later period,
5. the removal of a small home which once connected to the building at the rear, and its replacement with a new glazed playroom whose roofline mimics that of the main structure,
6. replacement of original siding on the sides and rear,
7. the conversion of attic space to create a bedroom, bath, and closets,
8. the installation of a modern kitchen, and
9. the installation of bathrooms, a closet, and a utility area in the two narrow rear rooms.

Despite these changes, the Dorvin home retains its National Register eligibility. It stands very close to its original location and still faces the Mississippi in the traditional manner. The dormers are small, inoffensive, and do not detract from the Creole massing of the roof. Whenever possible, the home has been faithfully restored and changes in construction materials made only when the originals were damaged beyond repair. In addition, new materials (such as the replacement siding, for example) have been chosen and applied in such a way that they closely resemble the originals. Because the new kitchen, bath, and utility spaces were fitted into existing rooms, the original floorplan remains intact. Furthermore, the glazed playroom addition is inoffensive when viewed from the rear and cannot be seen from the front of the building. Finally, the home's Creole and Anglo-American characteristics remain intact. These include the steep hipped umbrella roof, the briquette entre poteaux walls, the full

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length gallery with original columns and pilasters, the four sets of French doors (three on the front and one on the rear), the wraparound mantels, and the Federal and Greek Revival woodwork within the home. For these reasons, the Dorvin Home is a legitimate candidate for the National Register of Historic Places.

Non-Contributing Element

A modern garage (built in the style of a Creole home) stands closely to the rear of the house. It, of course, is listed as a non-contributing element.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
architecture

Period of Significance  
c1840-1850

Significant Dates  
c.1840-1850

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Dorvin Home is locally significant in the area of architecture within St. Charles Parish because it is an extremely rare example of the French Creole influence in an area once dominated by this building tradition. Its transitional French-Anglo character is also rare within the parish.

Like the other parishes along the lower Mississippi, St. Charles was originally settled by Frenchmen who built houses in the Creole tradition. Hundreds of such structures must have existed at one time. However, the Division of Historic Preservation's Standing Structures Survey of remaining 50+ year old buildings in St. Charles indicates that probably less than ten Creole homes survive there. Unfortunately, most of these have been altered or have deteriorated to the extent that their historic integrity has been destroyed. As a result, only three Creole homes remain which stand with their historic character intact.

The Dorvin Home is one of these three survivors. Its significant and rare Creole characteristics include 1) a steeply pitched hipped umbrella roof, 2) briquette entre poteaux walls, 3) four sets of French doors, 4) exposed beaded beam ceilings on the gallery and throughout the interior, and 5) four mantels that wrap around the chimney flue.

Although these features alone justify the house's nomination to the Register, the Dorvin Home's Anglo influence (floorplan, symmetrical facade and Federal and Greek Revival woodwork) increase its architectural significance. The floorplan, described in Item 7, seems to be an adaptation of the traditional Georgian and Greek Revival plans favored by the Americans whose influence on Louisiana's French Creole architecture became strong as the nineteenth century progressed. Because St. Charles Parish's other Creole homes are from an earlier period and hence are more pure Creole, the Dorvin Home is the only one which displays this type of floorplan. It is also the only example in the parish to combine Creole features with American elements such as Federal and Greek Revival woodwork and overall symmetrical articulation with emphasis upon the center.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Standing Structures Survey of St. Charles Parish, LA

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 1 5 7 4 8 8 4 0 3 3 2 0 1 2 0

Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_

Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please refer to enclosed plat map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary lines follow property lines, as per enclosed plat map.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title National Register staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date February 1990

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

city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

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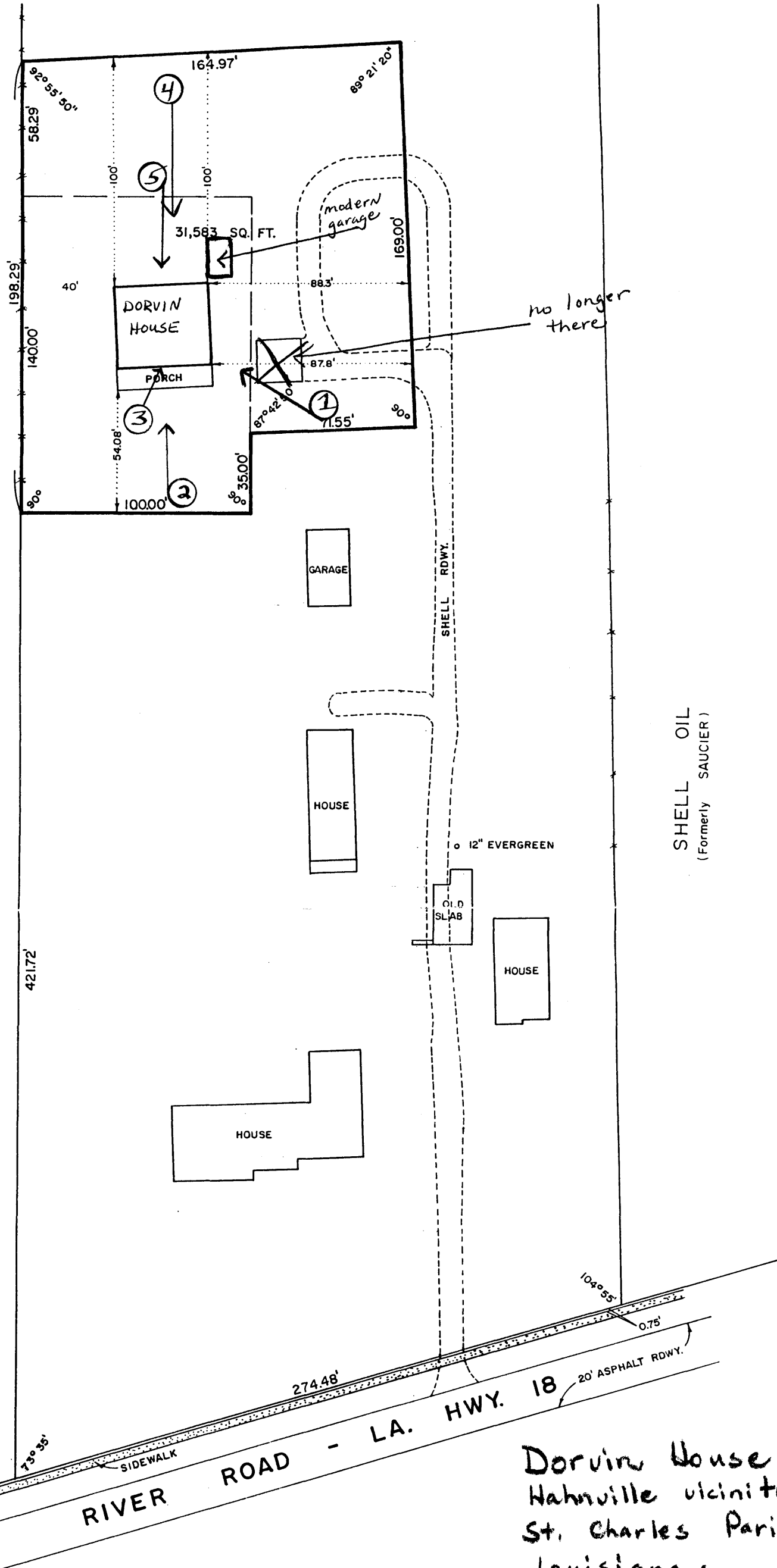
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Historical Note

Although land records for this property go back as far as 1785, the architectural evidence indicates that the house itself was erected in the 1840s. Because the property was owned by Andre Dorvin from 1839 to 1871, we have chosen to call the building by his name. The structure is also known in local circles as the Mollere House, named for the family which rescued and moved the building after its purchase by Shell Oil in the 1970s. The home is now the residence of the Don Ellis family, relatives of the Molleres, who were responsible for the building's restoration. The Ellises have renamed the house Rosedon.



LUKE TROXLER

SHELL OIL  
(Formerly SAUCIER)

Dorvin House  
Hahnville vicinity  
St. Charles Parish  
Louisiana

SKETCH  
SHOWING ADDITION TO A LOT  
BEING PART OF THE PROPERTY  
OF HAYDEL MOLLERE  
ST. CHARLES PARISH, LOUISIANA  
SCALE: 1" = 50' AUGUST 18, 1987

LUCIEN C. GASSEN  
Land Surveyor  
1026 Gasson Street  
LULING, LOUISIANA 70070