

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DEC 22 1992

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 instructions. 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 3 V Tourist Court

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 111 East Commerce Street N/A not for publication

city or town St. Francisville N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county West Feliciana code 125 zip code 70775

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.)

Gerri Hobdy December 18, 1992  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Gerri Hobdy, Date  
LA SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism  
 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:)

Signature of the Keeper entered in the National Register Date of Action 1/21/93  
Alonzo Byers  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3 V Tourist Court  
Name of Property

West Feliciana Parish, LA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	3	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
7	3	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/hotel

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

3 V Tourist Court, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1

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St. Francisville's 3 V Tourist Court stands well back from the road along one of the West Feliciana Parish town's main streets. Constructed in 1938, the court consists of six small frame rental units displaying Craftsman influences. Also on the site are a contemporary manager's house and three units which have been altered to the extent that their integrity has been severely damaged. The contributing units have also undergone some change, but their National Register eligibility remains intact.

Historic photographs and the locations of the surviving structures indicate that the court was originally built as a series of single cabins arranged in a "U" shape around an open parking area (see plan). The cabins in each segment of the "U" were connected by latticed carports, but each resulting row stood separate from the other two.

Five of the cabins on the eastern leg of the "U" survive, along with their connecting carports. One cabin and its accompanying carport were removed recently from the row, leaving a scar on the wall of one end building. (The current owner is negotiating to purchase and move the row's lost unit back to its original site.) On the western side of the "U" only one contributing cabin survives. It was formed by joining two cabins in an L shape and reads as a cabin to which a rear wing has been appended. The facade is identical to those on the eastern row. It still presents its historic front on to the parking lot and thus should be considered a contributing element. No contributing elements survive on the third side of the "U", as will be detailed later.

Each of the surviving rectangular cabins has a gabled roof, is covered by clapboard siding, and is reached by concrete steps rising directly to the door without benefit of a porch. Each door features a subdivided glass pane above horizontal wooden panels. Each facade is also pierced by a single window and an attic vent whose shape mimics the roof gable. Craftsman details found on each building include an overhanging roof with exposed rafter ends and a gable-shaped hood supported by plain brackets. The hood also mimics the shape of the roof and provides a measure of protection from the elements for each door and step.

The floorplan consists of one room with an enclosed bath and open kitchenette installed on the wall opposite the door (see plan). Several of the cabins have had paneling installed over their beaded board walls.

As mentioned above, a frame manager's house is also located on the site. It is being counted as a contributing element because historic photos show that it is contemporary with the motel units. A clapboarded folk bungalow with screened porch, the building has overhanging eaves and a jerkinhead roof but otherwise lacks stylistic ornamentation. The photographs show that it has changed little since its construction.

CONTINUED

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

3 V Tourist Court, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, LA  
Section number 7 Page 2

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Non-Contributing Elements

Also, as mentioned above, three frame buildings on the site are being counted as non-contributing elements. Two stand on the lower portion of the "U" and the third is located on the "U"'s western leg. Each has been formed by combining two of the individual cabins to create a larger structure. One is now a rectangular duplex (not to be confused with the "L" shaped contributing duplex unit described above), and the other two are enlarged single rental units. In the opinion of the State Historic Preservation Office, the re-working of these units has changed their appearance to the extent that their National Register eligibility has been lost.

Assessment of Integrity

Despite the foregoing changes, the 3 V Tourist Court retains sufficient integrity to merit Register listing. In short, it still looks like an early motel court. Because the eastern row survives almost intact, complete with its distinctive latticework connecting carports, a traveler from the historic period would easily recognize the property if he were to revisit St. Francisville today. It also should be noted that historic motel courts are so rare in Louisiana (see Part 8) that even partially surviving examples are quite important.

**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** N/A  
(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)

transportation

**Period of Significance**

1938-1942

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**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):** 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

3 V Tourist Court  
Name of Property

West Feliciana Parish, LA  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** @ .6 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 1 | 5 | | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 0 | | 3 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 0 |  
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.)

Please see enclosed sketch map.

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date October 1992

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

city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

**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 Robin Roberts

street & number P. O. Box 298 telephone (504) 635-0032

city or town St. Francisville state Louisiana zip code 70775

**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.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

3 V Tourist Court, West Feliciana Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

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The 3 V Tourist Court is significant at the state level in the area of transportation history because it is an extremely rare example of a stage in the development of the motel industry. The period of significance ranges from the construction date of 1938 to the fifty year cutoff date of 1942.

The mass production of the automobile in the early years of the twentieth century brought a new freedom of mobility to the masses. For the first time, the average family could travel purely for pleasure, a privilege previously reserved to the wealthy. This new mobility spawned a whole line of roadside industries to service traveling Americans, from gas stations, to diners, to motels, to tourist attractions, to automobile dealerships.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of roadside architecture is the development of the motel. When Americans first began touring the country, they simply camped along the roadside, often littering the countryside and tangling with roadside property owners. Because of the need for control and the desire to lure these potential customers downtown, towns began around 1920 to provide free municipal campgrounds. Then to keep out undesirables, towns began to charge a fee, which in turn opened the field to private development. A transition from pay camps to tourist cabins occurred in the mid to late 1920s, marking the beginnings of the motel industry.

The first tourist cabins were little more than shacks where the patron still camped out, but at least he had a roof of sorts over his head. Due to intense competition, cabins continued to be upgraded until they were homey cottages, complete with flower boxes and a picket fence. A typical early cabin complex consisted of rows of free-standing cabins with a central building containing bathroom facilities. Later the cabins would be connected by perhaps carports and later still would be totally joined to resemble today's motels.

It is not possible to know exactly how many tourist courts were built in Louisiana during the historic period. Several major highways ran through the state at this time, and each must have had a number of courts along its route. However, most of these have vanished. The Division of Historic Preservation is aware of only four which have survived to represent the earliest type -- i.e., individual cabins, whether completely free-standing or joined by carports. St. Francisville's 3 V Tourist Court is one of these.

The court was built in 1938 by three brothers named Vinci (hence the name "3 V" Tourist Court), who also operated a gas station, combination cafe/dance hall, and a store in St. Francisville. The other brothers eventually withdrew from the motel business, but Samuel Vinci continued to rent the rooms until shortly before his death in 1991. The current owner, Robin Roberts, saved the property from demolition, and the court is in use for weekly rentals.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

3 V Tourist Court, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, LA

Section number   9   Page   1  

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Historic Structures Survey for West Feliciana Parish. Louisiana Division of  
Historic Preservation.

Fricker, Donna, "Architecture of the Automobile Age," Preservation in Print,  
November 1989, pp. 7-9.

Interview with Ike Snowden, long-time neighbor of the 3 V Tourist Court,  
October 24, 1992.

Historic photographs of the 3V Tourist Court, St. Francisville, LA; copies in  
National Register file.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

3 V Tourist Court, West Feliciana Parish, LA

Section number 10 Page 1

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Boundary Justification

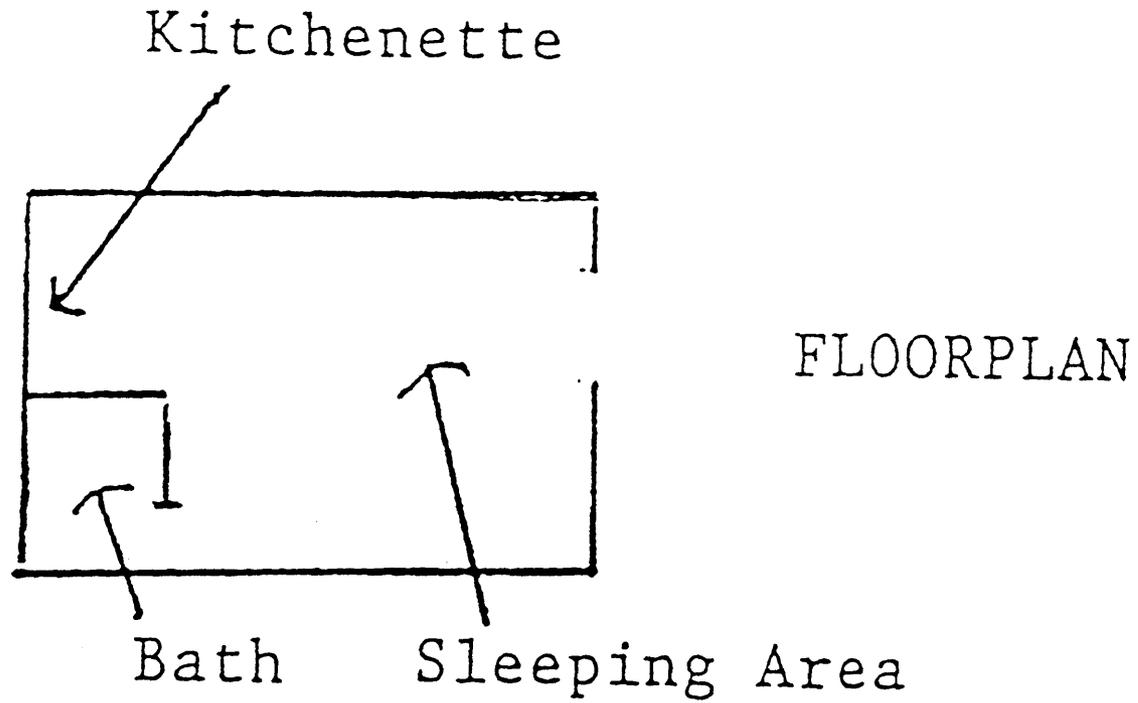
Boundaries were chosen to encompass the significant resource. They do not follow property lines because to have done so would have meant including non-contributing resources located elsewhere on the property.

3 V TOURIST COURT

St. Francisville

West Feliciana Parish

Louisiana

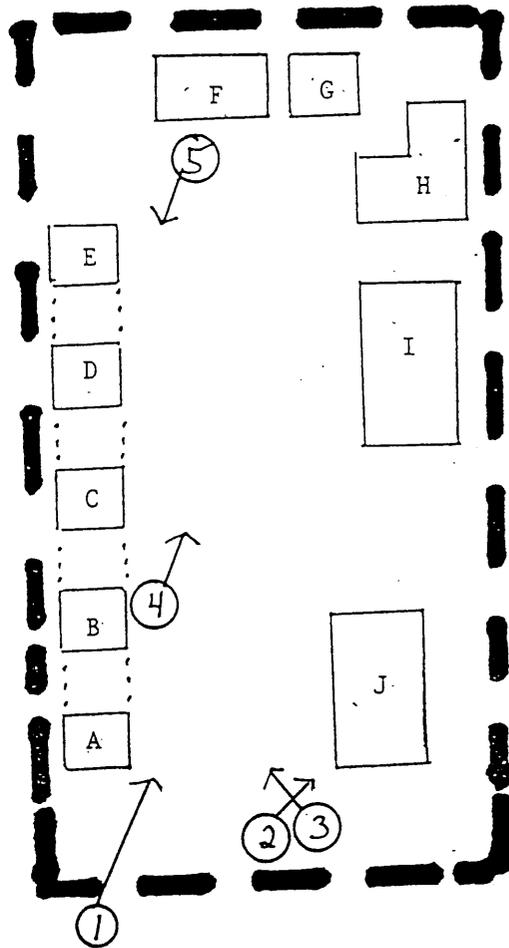


3 V TOURIST COURT

St. Francisville

West Feliciana Parish

Louisiana



- A - E Contributing Cabins
- F Non-Contributing Element
- G Non-Contributing Element
- H Contributing Cabin
- I Non-Contributing Element
- J Manager's House  
(Contributing Element)
- ⋮ Carports
- Boundary

Scale: 1" = 50'

