

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1312 RECEIVED  
AUG 14 1998

Ala. Historical Commission

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Gleissner, John D. and Katherine, Lustron House

Other Names/Site Number: Gleissner House

RECEIVED 2000  
JAN 28

2. Location

Street & Number: 2420 Cahaba Road Not for Publication: N/A

City or Town: Birmingham Vicinity: N/A

State: Alabama Code: AL County: Jefferson Code: 073

Zip Code: 35223

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide X locally. (\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official

Alabama Historical Commission  
(State Historic Preservation Office) 1/20/00  
State or Federal agency and bureau Date

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. (\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official State or Federal agency and bureau Date

4. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Signature of Keeper

2/24/00  
Date of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	0 buildings
0	0 sites
0	0 structures
0	0 objects
1	0 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.):

Lustron Houses In Alabama

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:  
DOMESTIC

Subcategory:  
Single Dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Category:  
DOMESTIC

Subcategory:  
Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Lustron House

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
roof Metal: Steel  
walls Metal: Steel  
other Metal: Steel, Glass

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

(See Continuation Sheet Section 7 Page 1)

John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
Name of Property

Jefferson County, Alabama  
County and State

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8. Statement of Significance

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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.) N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

Architecture  
Engineering

Period of Significance

1949

Significant Dates

1949

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder:

Koch, Carl and Associates (Architect)

Lustron Corporation (Builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

(See Continuation Sheet Section 8 Page 3)

John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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: \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	<u>165205403</u>	<u>3705530</u>	3	_____
2	_____	_____	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.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Gene A. Ford, Architectural Historian; Susan Enzweiler, AHC Historian; Trina Binkley, AHC Reviewer

Organization: The University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Services Date: September 9, 1997

Street & Number: 13075 Moundville Archaeological Park Telephone: (205) 348-7774

City or Town: Moundville State: Alabama Zip Code: 35474

John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
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Additional Documentation

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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)

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Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name: Cynthia M. Thomas

Street & Number: 2420 Cahaba Road Telephone:

City or Town: Birmingham State: Alabama Zip Code: 35223

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
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The John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House, located in Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama, is a one story, metal, prefabricated house. Built in 1949, the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House features a metal side gable roof. Exterior siding consists of 2 ft. square porcelain enamelized metal panels. Two openings, a window and a door, both of which coincide with the living room, punctuate the front facade of the house. An awning extends from the house over the entry. There is a downspout attached to the northwest corner of the prefab. A metal and glass panel door and three aluminum frame windows pierce the east side of the all metal house. Fenestration on the rear facade includes two aluminum frame windows. Three aluminum frame windows punctuate the west side of the prefabricated home. The home rests on a concrete block foundation. Inside, the Lustron features metal wall and ceiling panels and built in cabinets, shelves, and a vanity. The John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House, a fine example of the three bedroom Westchester model (the only such model in Alabama), retains a high degree of integrity and is in excellent condition.

The John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House is situated on a 51 ft x 213 ft lot in a post World War II subdivision of Birmingham, Alabama. The all metal prefab is surrounded by numerous wood frame minimal traditional cottages. The Westchester model measures 31 ft x 39 ft and resembles the quintessential ranch house with its low profile, side gable roof, and sleek rectangular configuration. One must make a double take to realize that this prefabricated house is slightly different than its neighbors. A scattering of foliage embellishes the associated yard.

A side gable roof of metal panels crowns the Lustron House. The panels are fashioned to imitate the look of ceramic tiles. Painted brown, the porcelain enamelized metal panels are bolted to metal roof trusses. Vertical metal panels cover the gable ends. Attached to the roof and extending along the entire front facade is a metal gutter. A downspout conducts rain water from the gutter to the ground below.

The exterior skin of the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House consists of porcelain enamelized panels. Painted a permanent tan, the panels measure 2 ft. square. The tan finish of the exterior is factory produced and represents one of the seven basic stock colors of the Lustron palette. There are a few signs of fading at the gable ends; otherwise the Lustron House appears to be free of rust, fading, and other deleterious effects from the elements.

Two openings, a window and a door, constitute the fenestration of the front facade. Measuring 6 ft x 8 ft, the window features a large, fixed, central, plate glass window flanked on either side by a four-light casement window. The frame is constructed of aluminum. A louvered metal screen door fronts the metal and glass panel entry door. An awning projects out over the doorway. Both door and window coincide with the living room.

Three window openings and a door are cut into the east wall of the prefabricated house. The southern most window is similar in design to that of the front facade. The window coincides with a bedroom. Measuring 2 ft x 4 ft, the other two windows have three light casements. The northern most window is situated above the kitchen sink while the other is associated with the bathroom. Similar in design to that of the front door, the east elevation door leads to the utility room.

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Section 7 Page 2

John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
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Two rectangular openings pierce the south wall of the Lustron House. They each feature six light casement windows; the windows measure 4 ft square and correspond to the two southern bedrooms.

Fenestration on the west elevation of the Lustron House consists of three openings. The southern most window opening measures 4 ft square and is fitted with a six light casement window. It allows light to permeate the southwest corner bedroom. The other two windows favor that of the front facade. The middle window coincides with the middle bedroom and the northern most window, which slightly projects from the house, with the living room.

The interior of the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House appears much as it did when it was erected in 1949. The ceiling and wall panels have not been covered or replaced with sheetrock, wood paneling, or other nonoriginal material. Emitting from the porcelain enamelled panels is a lustrous sheen that glows as much as the day the panels were removed from the Lustron Corporation plant ovens in Columbus, Ohio. Throughout the interior, there are throw rugs. The original linoleum lies beneath the throw rugs.

Intact in the interior of the house is an array of built in creature comforts. The living room features a built in book shelf and a complimentary cabinet. The wall divider between the dining room and kitchen has space saving metal cabinets, drawers, and shelves. Metal cabinets line the walls of the kitchen. The original furnace located in the utility room gave out a number of years ago; it has been replaced with a contemporary heating unit. The master bedroom retains its built in vanity and closets. Metal closets are also featured in the other two bedrooms. The oval, metal, Lustron identification placard bearing the serial number of the house, #2056, is present on one of the utility room walls.

Archaeological Component

Although no formal archaeological survey has been conducted, there is the potential for subsurface remains.

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John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
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Significance

The John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House meets the standards established by Criterion C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and falls under the "Lustron Houses in Alabama" MPS. The Lustron House is significant in the areas of architecture and engineering for its associations with the prefabricated housing industry and nation wide housing shortage immediately following World War II. The John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House rates as an outstanding example of the component part technology and all steel construction that the Lustron Corporation utilized in the manufacture of its prefabricated houses from 1946 to 1950. The prefabricated house is the sum total of a critically acclaimed engineering process that included a state of the art factory, production line, storage and distribution system, and marketing strategy. Additionally, the Lustron House embodies the distinct characteristics of post World War II architecture, such as an overall design that was at once contemporary and historic, durability, easy maintenance, and built in creature comforts. It is historically linked with Realty Investment, the dealer of Lustron Houses in Birmingham, which played a critical role in sales and dissemination of information. As one of only eleven extant Lustrons in the state of Alabama, the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House is part of a small yet significant group of houses that represent the development of prefabricated housing in the state. The house is the only three bedroom Westchester model in the state. As Lustron promotional information boasted, the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House has retained a high degree of its original appearance through its history and is likely to do so for the next half century as well.

Historical Summary

In terms of its individual history, the John D. and Katherine Gleissner House is one of three extant Lustron Houses in Birmingham, Alabama. The house was one of three Lustrons marketed by Realty Investment. Realty Investment owned the Lustron distribution rights for Birmingham (Lustron Corporation 1950). The John D. and Katherine Gleissner House was erected on the same street as the Bernice L. Wright Lustron House. A wood frame ranch house stands between the two Lustrons. The Gleissner House is the only three bedroom Westchester model in Alabama.

According to the Alabama Property Record Card (APRC), there have been only two owners of this house. The Gleissners, the original owners, sold the home to Cynthia M. Thomas on August 24, 1988 as recorded by Deed Book 3450, Page 0167. Thomas paid \$64,500 for a house and lot that originally sold for somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10,000. The Lustron house currently serves as rental property.



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Sections 2,10 Page 4

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Bibliography

Alabama Property Record Card. Tax document maintained on file at the Jefferson County Courthouse,  
Birmingham, Alabama. 1997.

Deed Book 3450, Page 0167. Document maintained on file at the Jefferson County Courthouse,  
Birmingham, Alabama. 1997.

Lustron Corporation. Dealer Performance Report. Columbus. 1950.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House is demarcated in Figure 2, which is  
derived from Jefferson County Tax Map #28-00-06-04-022.

Boundary Justification

The delineated boundaries include the house and lot historically associated with the John D. and Katherine  
Gleissner Lustron House located at 2420 Cahaba Road, Birmingham, Alabama.

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Section Photographs Page 5

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Photographs

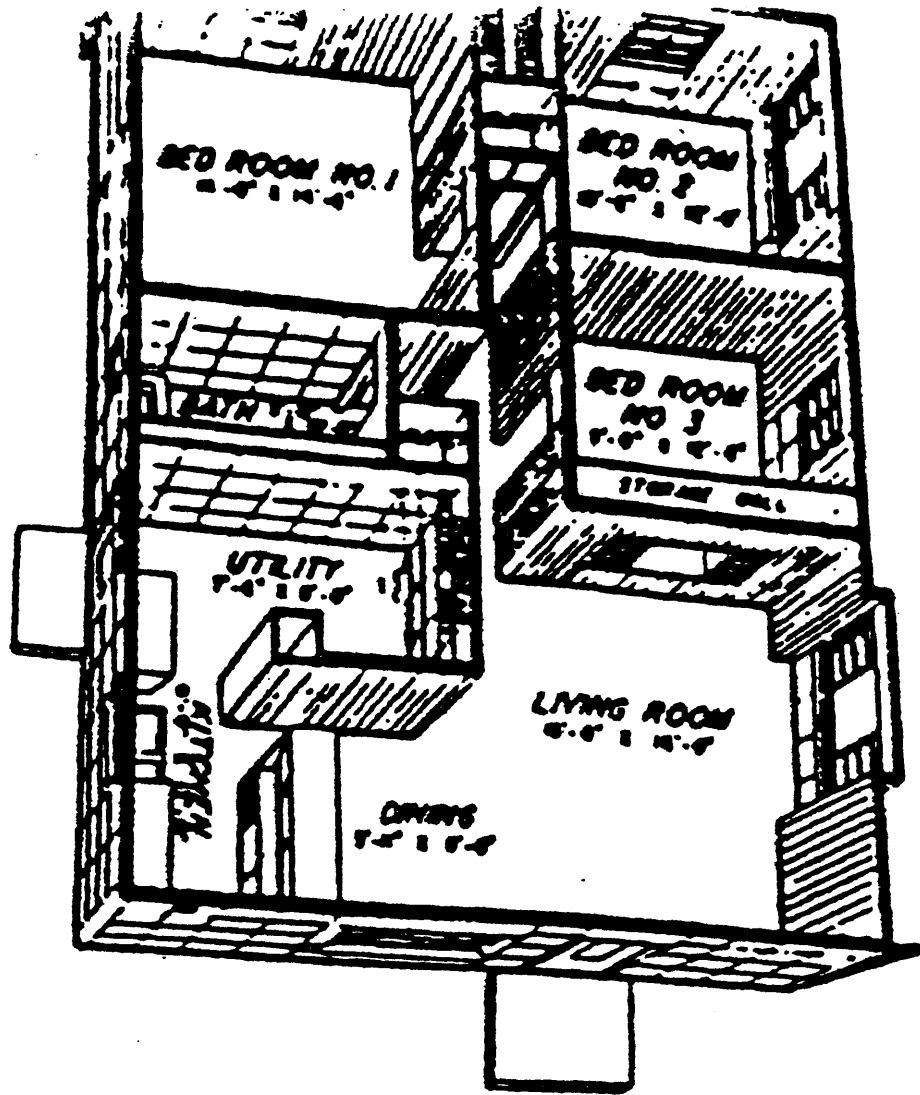
John D. and Katherine Gleissner Lustron House  
Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama

Photos By: Gene A. Ford  
Office of Archaeological Services  
Moundville, Alabama 35474

Negatives: Alabama Historical Commission  
468 South Perry Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

Date: December 26, 1996

1. Front and West Elevations.
2. Front and East Elevations.
3. Rear and East Elevations.



Floor plan,  
Westchester three-bedroom  
model.

Figure 1.  
JOHN D. AND KATHERINE GLEISSNER LUSTRON HOUSE, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA