

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

THEME: Architecture

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

 SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS
**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Presbytere

AND/OR COMMON

The Presbytere

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

713 Chartres Street

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

VICINITY OF

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

Louisiana

CODE

22

COUNTY

Orleans

CODE

071

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**
 \_\_DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 \_\_STRUCTURE  
 \_\_SITE  
 \_\_OBJECT
**OWNERSHIP**
 PUBLIC  
 \_\_PRIVATE  
 \_\_BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 \_\_IN PROCESS  
 \_\_BEING CONSIDERED
**STATUS**
 OCCUPIED  
 \_\_UNOCCUPIED  
 \_\_WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 \_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 \_\_NO
**PRESENT USE**
 \_\_AGRICULTURE  
 \_\_COMMERCIAL  
 \_\_EDUCATIONAL  
 \_\_ENTERTAINMENT  
 \_\_GOVERNMENT  
 \_\_INDUSTRIAL  
 \_\_MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 \_\_PARK  
 \_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 \_\_RELIGIOUS  
 \_\_SCIENTIFIC  
 \_\_TRANSPORTATION  
 \_\_OTHER
**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Louisiana administered by Louisiana State Museum

STREET &amp; NUMBER

751 Chartres Street

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

VICINITY OF

STATE

Louisiana

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**
 COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Orleans Parish Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

421 Loyola Avenue

CITY, TOWN

New Orleans

STATE

Louisiana

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (22 sheets, 15 photos)

DATE

1934

 FEDERAL  
 \_\_STATE  
 \_\_COUNTY  
 \_\_LOCAL

 DEPOSITORY FOR  
 SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress/Annex Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                                 RUINS  
 FAIR                                  UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Presbytere, together with its matching structure, the Cabildo, is the finest extant example of Spanish Colonial formal public building architecture in the United States. As completed around 1813, it was a two-story brick building with flat balustraded roof, topped by urns. The lower story has an arcaded open gallery with a second story gallery above. The lower arcade is formed by slightly elliptical arches which spring from square piers with two Doric pilasters to halt the rhythm at the corners. The upper story is of similar design, but Ionic pilasters are applied to the piers between the glazed arches. A central pediment crowned the center three bays where engaged columns on both levels have been applied to the piers.

When the mansard roof was added to the Cabildo in 1847, the Presbytere was also altered to retain the similarity of appearance. A rear wing was added in 1840. Otherwise, the exterior has been little altered. The interior was restored and renovated in 1962-63, to make modern offices on the third floor. A natural science museum is located in the lower section.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1791-1813

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Guilberto Guillemard

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Presbytere, originally known as the Casa Curial, was designed by Gilberto Guillemard in 1791 as the rectory of the St. Louis Cathedral. Construction halted in 1798 and the building remained unfinished, only one-story high, until it was completed by the wardens of St. Louis Cathedral in 1813. Guillemard also designed the Cabildo on the other side of the Cathedral, using the same design. This design continued to be followed in the Presbytere upon its completion. Together with the Cabildo, the Presbytere presents an impressive formal architectural ensemble creating one of the most important architectural plazas in the United States.

## HISTORY

In the early days, the site of the Presbytere was occupied by a Capuchin monastery. The present building was designed by Guilberto Guillemard, a French architect in the military service of Spain, in 1791 as the rectory of the St. Louis Cathedral. The building was originally called the Casa Curial, which has a similar meaning in Spanish as Presbytere does in french.

The foundations were set before the Cabildo, sometime before the fire of 1794. Construction was halted in 1798 by Don Almonester y Roxas, who was then actively engaged in the construction of the Cabildo. The building remained one story high until it was completed by the wardens of St. Louis Cathedral in 1813. The building was never used for its intended purpose. The United States government rented the space for its lower courts, the court of appeals and the supreme court from 1813 until 1833. In March 1831, the City of New Orleans paid the wardens \$10,500 for land in the rear of the Presbytere. The building itself was bought for \$55,000 in 1853. In 1911, the ownership was transferred to the State of Louisiana for use as a museum, as was the Cabildo. It serves this purpose today with the offices for all museum operations located in the upper story.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Arthur, Stanley, Old New Orleans, New Orleans, 1926.  
 Ricciuti, Itale, New Orleans and Its Environs, New York, 1938.  
 Wilson, Samuel, Jr., A Guide to the Early Architecture of New Orleans,  
 New Orleans, 1960.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>15</u>	<u>783380</u>	<u>3317590</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Presbytere is bounded by St. Ann Street for about 108 feet on the east, by Chartres Street for about 117 feet on the south, by Pere Antione Alley for about 108 feet on the west, and by adjacent buildings for about 118 feet on the north as shown on the Plat Map labeled Sketch Map A.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Patricia Heintzelman, Architectural Historian, Landmark Review Project;  
original form prepared by Charles W. Snell, 1968

ORGANIZATION	DATE
<u>Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service</u>	<u>6/30/75</u>
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
<u>1100 L Street NW.</u>	<u>202-523-5464</u>
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
<u>Washington</u>	<u>D.C. 20240</u>

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE      LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)*

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)*

DATE

2/11/79  
12/8/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER