## **National Register of Historic Places Inventory**—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## Name

Georgian Court (George Jay Gould Estate) historic

## Location

Georgian Court College and or common

Lakewood Avenue

code

Lakewood city, town

... vicinity of

county

state

street & number

### Classification 3.

New Jersey

**Present Use** Ownership Status Category \_\_\_\_ district \_ public \_\_ occupied \_\_ agriculture \_ museum  $\underline{\mathbf{X}}$  building(s) X\_\_ private \_ unoccupied \_ commercial \_ park \_ structure X\_\_\_educational both work in progress private residence X\_site **Public Acquisition** Accessible entertainment religious X\_\_\_yes: restricted government X\_\_ object \_ in process scientific \_\_\_\_ yes: unrestricted industrial being considered \_ transportation military no other:

#### **Owner of Property** 4.

Sister Barbara Williams, President, Sisters of Mercy name

Lakewood Avenue street & number

Takowood

city, town	Lakewood	vicinity of	state	New Jersey	08701
5. Lo	ocation of Le	egal Description			
courthouse	e, registry of deeds, etc.	Ocean County Court House (C	ounty Clerk's	3 Office)	
street & nu	mber 118 Washir	ngton Street			
city, town	Toms River		state	New Jersey	
6. R	epresentatio	on in Existing Surve	eys		
title		has this property beer	n determined elig	ible? yes	no
date		fe	deral state	county	local
depository	for survey records				

not for publication

code

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city, town

## 7. Description

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Check one \_\_\_\_ original site

\_ moved date \_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Georgian Court, formerly owned by George Jay Gould, railroad magnate, now known as Georgian Court College, is situated in the northwest part of Lakewood and borders Lake Carassaljo. The site, originally 177 acres, was a pine forest purchased by Mr. Gould from the Bricksburg Land and Improvement Co. on January 14, 1896. Because of its proximity to the Jersey shore, the soil contains a large proportion of sand. Mr. Could instructed his builders to cover the entire estate with a foot of good top soil and he eventually imported and planted many other types of tress. The estate is encolsed on two sides by a beautiful wrought iron fence with cream colored terra cotta posts and on the other sides by wire fencing, wooded areas, or private properties. The original buildings include: The Mansion, Stables, Gatekeeper's Lodge, and Casino (orginally called Bachelor's Court).

Work was begun on the Mansion on December 29, 1897. The foundation of the building rests on a bed of brown building sand, found at a depth of eight feet below the natural surface of the ground. Above this is a conglomeration of white sand, loam, clay and marl in stratas, veins, layers, and mixtures. This foundation absorbs surface drainage and has insured a very dry cellar.

The foundations and walls of the Mansion, as in all the work of Georgian Court, are of hard New Jersey brick, laid up in cement mortar. The piers and walls supporing the greater loads are laid in Portland cement mortar. The quoins of the building and all arches of the exterior are made of the Powhatan Clay Manufacturing Co.'s white brick, molded to forms and shapes required. The terra cotta, cream white in color, was made by the Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Co. from designs and models approved by Bruce Price, the architect. Some of this terra cotta is semi-glazed; the rest has a dull finish.

The main walls of the exterior are finished in grayish white stucco, made of Atlas Portland cement and white beach sand applied in two coats, the surface being finished with Brussels carpet floats. The marble of the exterior work came from quarries of the of the Vermont Marble Co. at Proctor, VT. The floors of the south verandah and of the terraces are laid with red terra cotta, Welch quarries, imported especially for this work.

The design of the Mansion is English Georgian with a French chateau roof. The building is rectangular - two hundred feet long and fifty feet wide. The main section is four stories high and seven bays wide; the east section is three stories high and four bays wide; the conservatory at the west end is own story. The original roof has been replaced by a light gray asbestos shingle roof. There are three tall red brick chimneys on the front side of the roof and five on the rear.

## 8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–		community planning conservation economics X education engineering exploration/settlement		e religion science Xsculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1898	Builder/Architect	Bruce Price (1845-19	903)

#### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Bruce Price was one of the most successful of the artist-executives that florished at the end of the 19th century along with Richardson, McKim and Stanford White. As tastemakers on equal terms with their clients, they were independent creative personalities who developed a new architecture built on an enlarged scale but based on earlier American styles. Georgian Court is a much expanded "Georgian Revival" estate built for the wealthy second generation Gould family. Revivalism in architectural history, generally called "eclectic" embraces many revivals: Georgian, Jacobean, Spanish, Queen Anne and so on. Price was one of the most brilliant and successful practicioners working in the last quarter of the 19th century and Georgian Court is an outstanding example of his work.

On January 4, 1896, George Jay Gould (1864-1923), the eldest son of Jay Gould, financier and railroad magnate, purchased this site bordering on Lake Carasaljo from the Bricksburg Land and Improvement Co. Lakewood was then the most fashionable winter resort in the eastern part of the United States. Mr. Gould planned to erect a large and palatial residence in the style of the comfortable English country homes where he could entertain lavishly and pursue his interests as a sportsman. He engaged the services of the architect, Bruce Price, to design the buildings as well as landscaping of the estate. The Gould family occupied the Mansion from 1898 to 1923 and used the facilities of the estate, not only for their personal enjoyment, but also as the training grounds for the American Polo Association, and as a mecca for court tennis players.

Bruce Price (1845-1903), was one of America's most able and best known architects during the last quarter of the nineteenth centry. Price's work encompassed not only private homes but also a variety of buildings in the United States and in Canada. His most important achievement was Tuxedo Park in New York, which he designed for Pierre Lorillard, in 1885-1886. The archetypal images of the early houses there are of profound importance for the later development of creative American domestic building. Price also achieved recognition for his development of the prototype "tower" skyscraper in New York and other major cities, after 1890. Notable commissions include: the American Surety Building and St. James Building in New York City; the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec; Royal Victoria College, Montreal; Welch Dormitory, Yale University. Of all Price's domestic commissions, Georgian Court was the most elaborate, and of great importance to his professional status. Although built on a relatively limited budget, this house became one of the showplaces of the Nation.

The excellent firm of J. H. L' Hommedieu's Sons & Co. was contracted for the building, the grading of the grounds, the laying out of the roads and paths, and the seeding and planting. The company confined itself to the construction of the finer class of dwellings, and its reputation was achieved along those lines. "When a man spends an ordinary fortune upon such a house as Georgian Court he wants a structure that will

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographic	al Data		
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uadrangle name <u>Lakewood</u> TMReferences			Quadrangle scale 1;24,000
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anization Georgian Cou eet & number National Par		dat tele	ephone (202)343-8172
or town Washington		sta	ite DC
2. State Histor	ric Prese	ervation C	<b>Officer Certification</b>
evaluated significance of this pr	operty within the s	state is:	
national	state	local	
the designated State Historic Pre 5), I hereby nominate this property cording to the criteria and procedu nte Historic Preservation Officer si	v for inclusion in th ures set forth by th	he National Register a	ic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89– and certify that it has been evaluated lice.
			4. 4.
9			date
	ty is included in t	he National Register	
For NPS use only I hereby certify that this proper	ty is included in t	he National Register	date
	ty is included in t	he National Register	

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## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received date entered

OMB No. 1024-0018

Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet	Item number 7	Page	2

The soft gray of the exterior walls is complemented by white wood trim around windows and doorways. Other decorative features in the Georgian style include: Pedimented dormers, balustrades, and ball and urn finials. Handsome, creamy terra cotta quoins adorn and emphasize the corners of the house. The north entrance is indicated by a handsome portecochere with a low hip roof supported by eight marble colonettes with Ionic capitals. The colonettes support a two-part wooden architrave separated by a space adorned with six pairs of dolphin forms. The large double entrance doorway of heavy glass and picturesque wrought iron grillwork leads into a marble vestibule illuminated by narrow window panels in Art Nouveau style.

The south side of the Mansion facing Lake Carasaljo is flanked by a full length verandah. There are two arched entrance doorways spearated by arched windows of similar size. The doorways are emphasized by the general architectural treatment, i.e., above each is situated a large second story window with a curvilinear wrought iron balcony. Directly above each window is an elaborate Baroque style broken pediment. The decorative details of stucco or marble around the windows and doorways suggest the lavish late Georgian style. Flanking the approach to the verandah are two statues, cast in bronze, mounted Falconers, ca. seven feet in height, executed by E. Lancere dated 1876 and 1878 respectively.

The interior workmanship of the Mansion is of the finest, and materials are of the very best. The marbles used for the interior work are Green Vermont, Pavanazza, Royal Irish Green, Black Egyptian, and Gray Billear Roman. The woods are quartered white oak, Zambesi, East Indian mahogany, San Domingo mahogany, white pine, poplar.

The marbled entrance vestibule on the north side leads into the great hall or foyer. The hall runs through two stories with a gallery and balcony on the south side of the room. Four huge imitation marble columns of the Roman Ionic order support the curvilinear marble architrave and balcony balustrade. The ornamental balustrade is of gilt bronze and continues into a curving marble staircase. It was modeled and cast by the John Williams, Inc., Bronze Foundry, New York City in 1898, from the designs of the architect, Bruce Price. The handrail which continues along the balcony and balustrade is covered with deep crimson velour and terminates at the last step with a newel of a large leaf motif topped with a ram's head.

Pendant from the center of the highly ornamented ceiling of the great hall is a large chandelier composed of 150,000 separate pieces of glass. The style is a lustre of French form, done in classic detail. The chandelier illuminates the huge frieze of the "Canterbury Pilgrims" which occupies the upper portion of the wall on the east, north, and west sides. The frieze was painted on canvas by Robert Van Vorst Sewell in his New York studio according to the dimensions supplied by the architect. It measures seven feet in height and eighty-four feet in length. It was begun in 1897 and affixed to the wall when the building was completed.

## **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPB u	ee atiy	
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OMB No. 1024-0018

Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet	item number 7	Page 3

At the west end of the hall there is a huge marble fireplace framed in free standing columns of modified Doric order and topped by a large pediment of Italian Baroque style.

The inside of the entrance door of the hall is ornate Baroque design. Free-standing gilt columns flank the double glass doors. The column shafts are of spiral form with grape motif decor. The capitals are Composite style. Two huge windows on the north side have similar, enormous, Baroque pediments adorned with classic urns and fruit swags in the Adam tradition.

From each end of the main hall, to the right and left, runs a spacious corridor that connects all the first floor rooms. Directly across from the main entrance to the great hall stands the music room whith gilded plasterwork and with panels painted in French Rococo style. These panels on walls and ceiling, fourteen in all, were painted by the artists Charles M. Shean, G. W. Maynard, Harper Pennington, and Irving R. Wiles. The panels on the walls depict lovely goddesses in flowing garb surrounded by typical eighteenth century floral designs. On the ceiling, panels of musical instruments alternate with those of lords and ladies in garden settings in the Fragonard mode.

To the left of the music room is a formal dining room of classic Georgian design. Originally the walls were cream color and the panels covered with deep green velour. All the classic gilt decoration remains unchanged. Alternating wall panesl and exquisitely proportioned Ionic pilasters constitue the general design. On the north side of the room, a fireplace of Royal Irish Green marble provides the dominant color note.

To the right of the music room, the drawing room reechoes the Rococo style. The color tones are white and gold and the ceiling is ornamented with gilt plasterwork. Over the doorways and the fireplace of grey-grained marble, handsome broken pediments and garland design complete the rich decor.

Across the corridor, on the north side, is the library with mahogany panelling and upper wall decor in ornamental relief. Above the bookshelves are burnt wood panels designed by J. W. Fosdick. In coat of arms design, the panels highlight British literary figures. The elaborately painted beamed ceiling resembles French chateau ceiling decoration. On it, the names of famous artists, musicians, writers, philosophers, and characters from mythology are enframed with rich colors in Italianate style. A black marble fireplace on the east wall is flanked by mahogany engaged columns of Tuscan style.

Adjacent to the library and morning room at the west end of the house is what was once a large floral conservatory. It is now used as a chapel. (Above the entablature is a leaded glass roof.)

## **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPB use only received claim entered

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet	Item number	7	Page <sub>4</sub>
			rage 4

At the east end of the corridor, across from the dining room is a room originally used as a billiard room. It is now a lounge. The walls are panelled in oak and adorned at top with a tapestry landscape frieze. The room has not been changed except for the removal of the tripart chandelier which illuminated the billiard table. The ceiling is beamed and ornamented with decorative plasterwork. At the west end there is a fireplace of Gray Billear Roman marble.

Much of the east wing of the Mansion us used as service area. It contains the pantries, offices, kitchen, servants' dining room, a few guest rooms, and, when used by the Goulds, rooms for the servants. The walls are of plaster or white glazed tile, the flooring is tile.

On the first sleeping floor of the main part of the building, a corridor runs the length as on the main floor. Its slightly curved ceiling is decorated with plaster-work in low relief. The eight bedrooms are tasteful reproductions of Georgian rooms. The second sleeping floor has ten bedrooms and a small lounge, the fourth floor has five bedrooms.

Thoughout the Mansion, the lighting fixtures are all handsome reproductions of historic styles and conform to the decor of each room. They are designed by the architect, Bruce Price, and executed by the Black & Boyd Mfg. Co.

The Stables (now known as Raymond Hall)

This building, originally two hundred twelve feet long and one hundred feet wide, has undergone extensive alteration and adaptation for use as classroom and offices area, dining hall and kitchens. The exterior on the south side closely resembles the original architectural design except that a handsome tower in the center of the building caught fire in 1932 and had to be removed. The design is Georgian but less elaborate than the Mansion. In 1925 a small Catholic church in Lakewood, built in 1890, was moved to the campus and placed just north of the Stable wings. Modified, stuccoed, painted and attached to the north end of the classic Doric colonnade connecting the four wings of the Stable, it confroms architecturally to the Georgian style of the original building.

The Gatekeeper's Lodge (now the Chaplain's Residence)

This small building, thirty-one feet long and thirty-seven feet wide, is situated near the Seventh Street gate. The design is Georgian and echoes the Mansion decor on a small scale. The building has not been structurally altered.

The Casino (now the Student Union Building and Auditorium-Gymnasiun)

This large sports and recreational building was begun late in 1898 and completed on December 21, 1899. The exterior design resembles that of the Mansion. Large sculptures

## **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

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OMB No. 1024-0018

Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet	Item number

**Page** 5

7

in high relief are in place in semicircular spaces over the east and west entrances. It is located on a rise of ground to the north of the Italian Gardens. It is two hundred fifty feet long by one hundred seventy-five feet wide. It is built of brick and stone with a roof of glass (now replaced by Wood) trussed up and supported by light iron girders and braces. The center of the building was a riding ring covered with tanbark. (This is now an auditorium-gymnasium with a wooden floor.) Around the riding ring on the north, west, and south sides, spaces about forty feet in width accomdate various sport facilities. The interior walls of the central section are of red and white brick, with a slanting wooden wainscot four feet in height. The brick walls are broken occasionally by lion heads and grotesque medallions of stone in relief. Balconies for spectators overlook the arena from opposite sides. The four corners afford entrance to the building. At the southwest entrance, space was given to a paddock for the horses.

There is a swimming pool on the south side of the building constructed of porcelain-faced brick. The surrounding floor is tile, the walls and supporting pillars are of marble, the railings brass. There are bowling alleys on the west side of the building, indoor tennis courts on the north, and squash courts on the west. Above the sports facilities, on the second floor, are rooms which formerly accomdated about thirty-five guests. A full length verandah on the north side of the Casino overlooks a balustraded terrace and on the outdoor sports area. The entire building is in good condition and has not been structurally altered except for the addition of the wooden floor and the stage as mentioned above.

### Landscape Architecture

Bruce Price, the architect of all the buildings, also directed the landscape so that all would be in harmony - the architecture, the design of the gardens, and the natural surrounds. The classic gardens, known as Italian Gardens, were inspired by the Gardens at Versailles. Almost a quarter of a mile in length, and five hundred feet at the widest point, they extend from the south lawn of the Casino down to lake Carasaljo. A good example of axial landscaping, they contain small fountains, stone statuary, floral urns - marble and terra cotta, two marble peristyles, marble and stone benches, wrought iron lamp posts on marble bases and appropriate shrubbery. The gardens terminate with a sunken garden and lagoon which connects with the lake. The descent to the sunken garden is by way of a marble and red brick paved, balustraded esplanade. A marble stairway, from both sides of the esplanade, leads down to the lagoon. The bridge over the lagoon was also designed by Price in 1899. Over it is the public roadway, Lake Drive.

The largest focal point of the roads and paths of the Italian Gardens is the Fountain of Apollo designed and executed by the Scottish-American sculptor, John Massey Rhind in 1902. The main figure of Apollo, ten feet in height, and the chariot, a colossal nautilus shell topped by an octopus, are cast in bronze. The fountain is electrical; the machinery is underneath the esplanade of the sunken garden. When in operation, streams of water flow from the nostrils of the seahorses, the conch shells of the mermaids, and from the large fish held by the cherubs.

## **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form



Page 6

OMB No. 1024-0018

Exp. 10-31-84

Continuation sheet Item number 7

Set in a smaller path-converging point in the gardens is a huge wrought iron eagle perched on a dragon and set on a nine foot base made of stone boulders. It was purchased for Mr. Gould by Messrs. Tiffany and Co. from the Japanese section of the Paris Exposition of 1900.

Off to the right of the Italian Gardens is a full-scale Japanese Garden created by the noted garden designer, Takeo Shiota. The garden is entered through a hooded gateway in a stick fence. Several stone lanterns are placed near a cement enclosed brook that meanders among the planting.

## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet	Item number	8	Page 2

endure. To fill many houses with the magnificent furnishings, decorations and art treasures used at Lakewood would be like setting the Kohinoor in brass "1. Many of the fine companies selected by the architect and the builder are advertisers in the Architectural Record of 1899.

The sculptor of the Apollo fountain was John Massey Rhind (1860-1936). A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, he came to the United States in 1889. According to Wayne Craven, it was a most propitious time. American architects, following the Beaux-Arts style, were begining to incorporate decorative sculpture into their architectural designs, and John Massey Rhind was soon to become one of the leading carvers of such oramentation. Soon after setting up his studio in New York City, Rhind became acquainted with Bruce Price and did the sculptural ornamentation for Price's American Surety Building. This successful collaboration undoubtedly influenced Price's choice of Rhind as the sculptor for his Georgian Court Garden focal point. Rhind completed the Fountain in 1902. Other notable works of the sculptor include: decorations for the Alexander Commencement Hall at Princeton University; statue of John C. Calhoun, Charleston, South Carolina; Rufus King Memorial Fountain, Albany, New York; statue of John Wanamaker, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The third significant contributor to the artistic embellishment of Georgian Court was Robert Van Vorst Sewell (1860-1924), the painter of the "Canterbury Pilgrims" frieze. The painting was commissioned by Mr. Gould in 1897 when construction on the Mansion was under way. Sewell had studied in Paris under Jules Lefebvre and Gustave Boulanger and had been influenced by the murals of Puvis de Chavannes. By 1897, his reputation as a mural painter was established. The selecton of subject of the Georgian Court painting was made to the satisfaction of both patron and artist; Gould, the sportsman, delighted in a subject which would depict horses, and Sewell, a student of the early English writers, had a particular fondness for the work of Chaucer.

The Japanese Garden was created by Takeo Shiota (1881-1946) who has been credited with the greatest number of Japanese gardens on the Atlantic Seaboard, if not in the United States. Born in a little village forty miles west of Tokyo, he came to the United States in 1907 to practice the art he had studied so carefully and made his headquarters in New York City. Among his notable works is the Japanese landscape in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden near the Brooklyn Museum.

After the death of George Jay Gould in 1923, the estate of Georgian Court was put up for public auction. Advised by diocesan authorities, the Sisters of Mercy of North Plainfield, New Jersey, bid for the estate. After suitable deliberation, Kingdon Gould, the eldest heir, decided to sell the estate to the Sisters, making the one request that they retain the name of the estate. It, therefore, became Georgian Court College as of May 19, 1924. The conversion of this lavish estate into a liberal arts college was carried out with careful consideration and planning. New buildings, surrounded by luxuriant aging tress, co-exist beautifully with Bruce Price's Georgian structures. The over-all integrity of the estate has been preserved.

## **National Register of Historic Places** Inventory—Nomination Form

For NFS use ant/ receives date entered

	Continuation sheet	Item number 8, and 10	Page	3
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#### Footnotes

1 "The Builder", "Great American Architect Series, No.5", Architectural Record (June, 1899), p.131.

### Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of Case Road and Arbutus Drive proceed 100 feet NE; thence proceed 500 feet NNW; thence proceed 2600 feet ENE; thence proceed 1800 feet SSE; thence proceed 1500 feet W; thence proceed 1400 feet S to Lake Drive; proceed along Lake Drive 2000 feet WNW; thence proceed 2600 feet N to the point of origin.

## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HPP see only received date entered

OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

	9	1
Continuation sheet	Item number	Page

Graybill, Samuel Huiet. "Bruce Price, American Architect, 1845-1903." unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Fine Arts, Yale University, 1957.

"Great American Architects Architects Series, No. 5", Architectural Record (June, 1899).

"Fountain in Sunken Garden", The Art Interchange. Vol. II, No.3 (New York), September, 1903.