

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

For NPS use only

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

received DEC 10 1986

date entered

JAN 7 1987

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

**1. Name**

historic A. C. Freeman House

and/or common Gilchrist House

**2. Location**

street & number 639 East Hargreaves Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Punta Gorda

N/A vicinity of

state Florida

code 12

county Charlotte

code 015

**3. Classification**

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Status   | Present Use                                       |
|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied                    | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                  | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted  | <input type="checkbox"/> government               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted           | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial               |
|   | N/A   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                          | <input type="checkbox"/> military                 |
|   |   |  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant |

**4. Owner of Property**

name Medical Center Foundation

street & number Post Office Box 1309

city, town Punta Gorda

N/A vicinity of

state Florida

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charlotte County Courthouse

street & number 116 West Olympia Avenue

city, town Punta Gorda

state Florida

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date N/A

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A

state N/A

## 7. Description

|  |                                       |   |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input type="checkbox"/> original site              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved date 1985 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |

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

The A. C. Freeman House is a large, two-story frame building located in a residential section of Punta Gorda, Florida. Designed in a vernacular adaptation of the Queen Anne style, the 1903 building is distinguished by a square corner tower, a one-story porch with turned columns, a bracketed cornice, three pedimented gables and elaborate interior finishes. Major alterations to the building include the replacement of its original cedar shake roof with asphalt shingles, the addition of shutters to most windows and the replacement of a porch roof and porch columns. The building was moved in 1985 and occupies a location two blocks from its original site.

The Freeman House is constructed of Dade County pine with an exterior siding of four-inch clapboards. The building is basically rectangular in plan and rests on a modern continuous concrete foundation. It is covered by a series of 6:12 intersecting gable roofs covered with asphalt shingles. A bracketed cornice with stylized dentils and a plain frieze wraps completely around the building at its second story, forming three pedimented gables. A square ventilation tower covered by a pyramidal roof with a slight flare is located at the northeast corner of the building. Opposite the tower on the south-east slope of the roof is a rectangular brick chimney with a corbelled cap.

The principal distinguishing element of the building is a one-story, flat roofed porch located on the northeast corner of the house. The porch extends across the entire north elevation and approximately a third of the east elevation of the house. It is supported by thin paired columns (contemporary reconstruction) which in turn support a bracketed cornice. A metal railing at the porch roof replaces a similar earlier wooden railing.

Fenestration is generally double hung sash, two over two, placed singly and in pairs. Contemporary fixed shutters have been added to most of the windows but are presently in the process of being removed. Louvered ventilators are located on two sides of the corner tower and within each of the pedimented gables. A square, single pane window rotated forty-five degrees appears on the east elevation.

The interior of the Freeman House includes an elaborate stair with turned balusters and large newel posts. A very fine lattice type screen with a symmetrical intertwining pattern separates a double parlor. Two elongated, unfluted Ionic columns support the lattice. The dining room includes a fine oak mantel with fluted columns and an overmantel containing a bevelled rectangular mirror. The second parlor contains a large mantel with unfluted columns which extend uninterrupted to the height of the overmantel. The overmantel itself contains a bevelled oval mirror flanked by a vine and torch motif. Doors are generally five panel and retain their original hardware. All walls and ceilings are plaster with no indication that wallpaper was ever used. The floors throughout are pine tongue and groove; the wainscoting beaded panelling.

In May 1985 the Freeman House was moved two blocks from its original location at the corner of Marion Avenue and Booth Street to its present location at the corner of Hargreaves Avenue and Booth Street. The move was necessitated when a neighboring funeral home purchased the property for expansion. The building retains its historic orientation at its new location within a residential neighborhood nearly identical in appearance to that of its former location.

### Resources Inventory

Contributing resources: 1 Building  
Non-contributing resources: 0

# 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/         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> music                          | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899        | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy                     | <input type="checkbox"/> theater         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> industry               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

**Specific dates** 1903 **Builder/Architect** A. C. Freeman, builder

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The A. C. Freeman House is significant both architecturally and historically to Punta Gorda. Displaying the influence of the Queen Anne style, a style rarely seen in South Florida, the building is one of the most architecturally distinguished structures in Punta Gorda. Historic significance is demonstrated through the house's association with Augustus C. Freeman, a locally prominent businessman and political figure. Although the building has been moved, its historic orientation and general surroundings remain unchanged. It is the first building from Punta Gorda to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

At the time of A. C. Freeman's arrival in Punta Gorda from Jasper County, Georgia, the population of the newly named town was only 300.<sup>1</sup> Freeman prospered in several business ventures in Punta Gorda, including ownership of a hardware store and a citrus grove. An advertisement which he ran regularly for more than a year noted "Handsomest line of rockers in the state/we have everything/A. C. Freeman/Furniture and Hardware".<sup>2</sup> Freeman was also active politically, serving as Punta Gorda Tax Collector (1894–95); member of City Council (1896); City Treasurer (1898–99) and Mayor of Punta Gorda (1900–04).<sup>3</sup> In the 1902 mayoral election he was described as "Industrious, frugal and obliging. . . well-to-do, but probably not a millionaire".<sup>4</sup>

In 1903, Freeman and his wife Edna (nee camp, of Louisville, Kentucky) purchased four lots in Block F of William Wood's Second or Eastern Addition to Trabue from Albert Gilchrist. Gilchrist later went on to become Governor of Florida and the local legend began that the Freeman House had belonged to him. On July 13, 1903, the Freemans borrowed \$881.25 from Elva L. Harvey to build their house. The terms of the warranty deed gave them one year to pay off the full amount or lose their property.<sup>5</sup>

It may be assumed that Freeman acted as his own building contractor for the construction of his house. It also appears (but has not been documented) that a L. L. Barnhill may have served as his architect, as Freeman had earlier used his services. The Punta Gorda Herald of October 31, 1902 noted:

"A. C. Freeman has the contract to build a two story, seven room addition to Mrs. Quednau's home on the west end of Marian Avenue. L. L. Barnhill is the supervising architect."<sup>6</sup>

Freeman remained active in community life following the construction of his Punta Gorda house. Despite a hotly disputed contest, he was elected to the post of DeSoto County Sheriff, an office which he held until 1912. After the death of his first wife in an automobile/train accident in Kentucky, Freeman remarried. In October, 1913, he sold the house to J. E. McEver for \$2,000 and moved to California.<sup>7</sup>

The house went through a series of owners following its sale by Freeman, although it continued to be maintained as a single family residence. In 1985, the house was threatened with demolition by the expansion of a neighboring funeral home. In an effort

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1

Quadrangle name Punta Gorda

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

|   |           |               |                |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| A | <u>17</u> | <u>396660</u> | <u>2979860</u> |
|   | Zone      | Easting       | Northing       |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| B |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| C |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| D |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| E |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| F |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| G |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

|   |      |         |          |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| H |      |         |          |
|   | Zone | Easting | Northing |

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 9-12, Block K, W. F. Woods 2nd Addition to Trabue. This area includes all contributing resources associated with the A.C. Freeman House.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

|       |            |      |            |        |            |      |            |
|-------|------------|------|------------|--------|------------|------|------------|
| state | <u>N/A</u> | code | <u>N/A</u> | county | <u>N/A</u> | code | <u>N/A</u> |
|-------|------------|------|------------|--------|------------|------|------------|

|       |            |      |            |        |            |      |            |
|-------|------------|------|------------|--------|------------|------|------------|
| state | <u>N/A</u> | code | <u>N/A</u> | county | <u>N/A</u> | code | <u>N/A</u> |
|-------|------------|------|------------|--------|------------|------|------------|

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann J. Kelly/Michael Zimny

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date October 1986

street & number The Capitol telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida

# 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *George W. Perry*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 11/26/86

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*James A. Lorentz* Entered in the National Register date 1-7-87

Keeper of the National Register

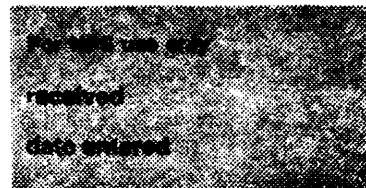
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet 1

Item number 8

Page 1

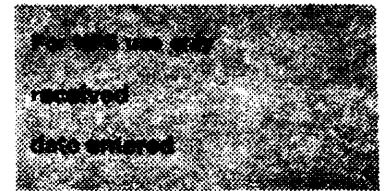
to secure its preservation, the house was moved a distance of two blocks from its original location at the corner of Marion Avenue and Booth Street to its present address at 639 East Hargreaves Avenue. The National Register eligibility of the house has not been compromised by its relocation. The building continues to maintain its historic orientation on a corner lot identical to its previous location. Further, the residential character of its present surroundings is nearly identical to its former setting. The house is presently undergoing a very sensitive restoration.

NOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Barbara Thorp Gunn, A Latent Love Store  
(Punta Gorda: Renshaw Press, 1984) m o, s,
- <sup>2</sup>Punta Gorda Herald, March 21, 1902.
- <sup>3</sup>Vernon Peeples, personal interview by Ann Kelly.
- <sup>4</sup>Punta Gorda Herald, September 26, 1902.
- <sup>5</sup>Abstracts of Title, McEver Estate.
- <sup>6</sup>Punta Gorda Herald, October 31, 1902.
- <sup>7</sup>Abstract of Title, McEver Estate.

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 9

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Charlotte County Official Records

Frisbee, Louise K. Peace River Pioneers. Miami: E. A. Seeman Publishing Co., 1974.

Gunn, Barbara Thorp. A Latent Love Story. Punta Gorda: Renshaw Press, 1984.

McEver Estate. Abstract of Title. Prepared by First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Charlotte County.

Peeples, Vernon. Punta Gorda Pictorial. Unpublished manuscript, 1986.

Punta Gorda Herald. 1902-1904, 1908.

Punta Gorda Herald. March 19, 1926.

# CHARLOTTE ENGINEERING & SURVEYING INC

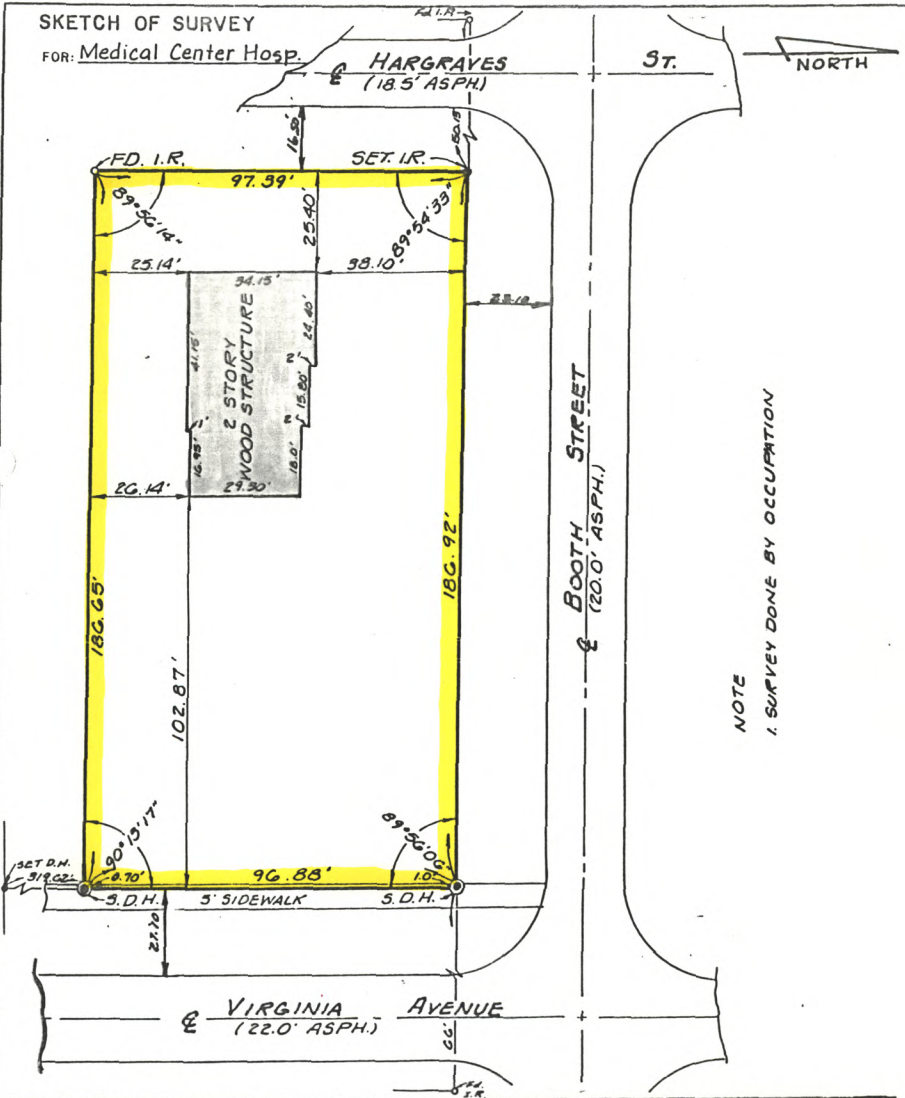
CIVIL ENGINEERS · LAND SURVEYORS · PLANNERS

LAND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

1700 EL JOBEAN RD., PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA, 33953 • (813) 639-4168

## SKETCH OF SURVEY

FOR: Medical Center Hosp.



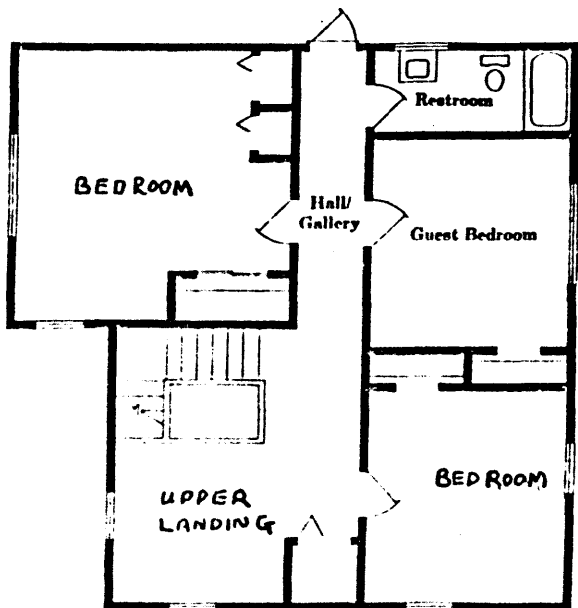
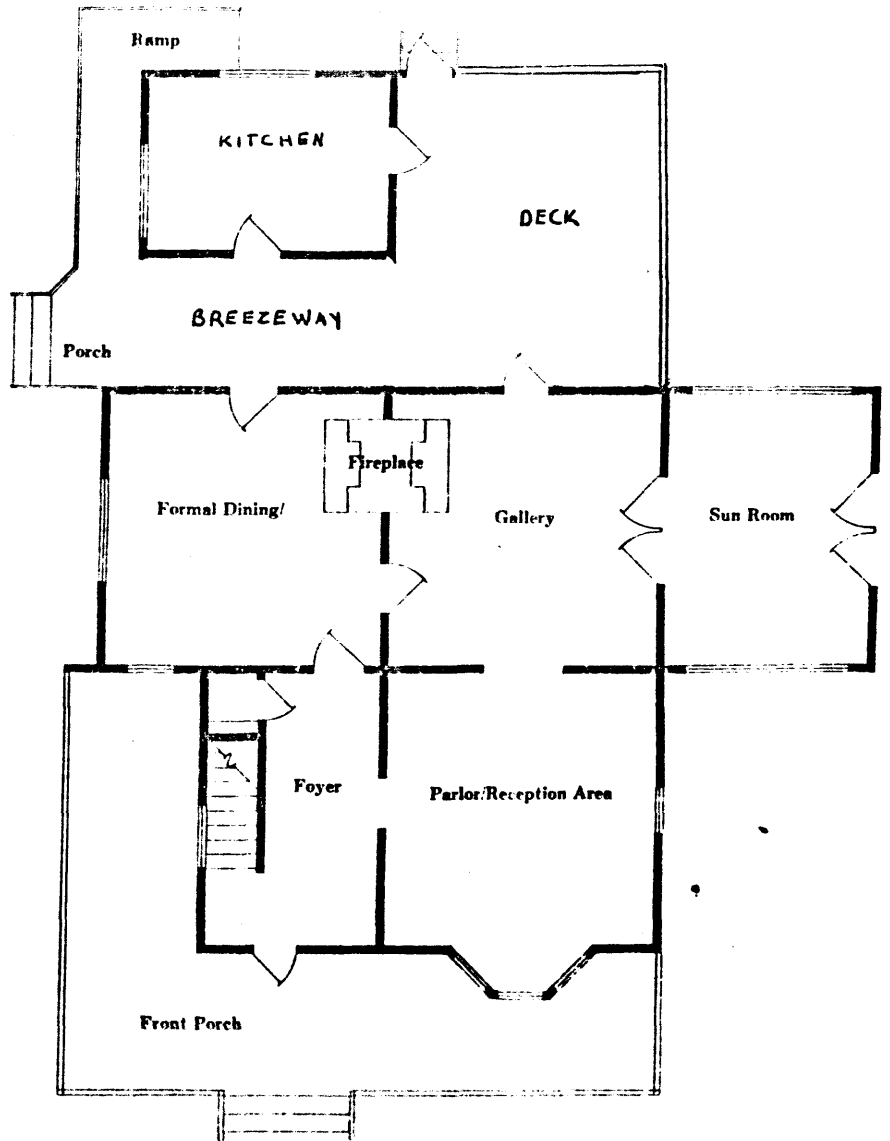
NOTE

1. SURVEY DONE BY OCCUPATION

# THE FREEMAN HOUSE

MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

