

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

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

For NPS use only
received JAN 18 1985
date entered FEB 14

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

1. Name

historic BISHOP MANOR ESTATE

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number Argyl Road N/A not for publication

city, town St. Elmo N/A vicinity of Congressional District 1

state Alabama code 01 county Mobile code 097

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Ed Northington and Ms. Katherine Tomko

street & number 1659 Government Street

city, town Mobile N/A vicinity of state Alabama 36604

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mobile County Courthouse, Probate Court Division

street & number 109 Government Street

city, town Mobile, Alabama state Alabama 36602

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission

city, town Montgomery state Alabama

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in south Mobile County on Argyl Road, the Bishop Estate consists of 7 acres on which is located a number of buildings including the main house, guest house, servants' quarters, a large cement swimming pool, bathhouses, a small treillage, the original two-car garage, in addition to a new garage constructed in the 1960s. Originally the estate functioned as a dairy farm and although the dairy buildings remain standing, they are not located on the 7 acres currently under consideration for nomination to the National Register.

Main House - The main house with its southern orientation is a large two-story rectangular block of symmetrical ground plan with one-story central entrance porticoes along the front and rear elevations. One-story enclosed porches running the depth of the house are placed along both sides of the main block. The house is constructed of brick that has been stuccoed.

The front and rear elevations feature a central entrance under a one-bay portico. The portico is detailed with round stuccoed columns supporting a flat roof with extended, articulated rafters. The entrance to the house is composed of a single round-arched, multi-lighted door and flanking narrow round-arched conchae set into a smooth stuccoed, round-arched panel of a contrasting color.

To either side of the entrance portico is a large round arched French door flanked by narrow, round-arched sidelights. These windows are set in stuccoed arched panels as in the entranceway. The second-story facade displays 4/4 double-hung windows which are paired over the entrance portico and tripled over the French doors.

Along both sides of the main body of the house are enclosed porches which are detailed with round stuccoed columns supporting a flat roof which has extended, profiled rafters. Infilling between the columns is brick that has been stuccoed. Set into each panel is an 8/8 double-hung window. These replaced earlier round-headed openings, a portion of which is detailed in an early extant photo of the house.

The roof of the main body of the house is a slightly belled hip roof with ridge running from east to west. The finish material is terracotta tile. There are two stuccoed brick chimneys visible, one located on each side of the main block.

Since the time of its construction, the interior of the house appears to not have been significantly altered. A magnificent curved stairway is the focus of the entry hall. It is constructed of basswood with turned balusters supporting a curved cherrywood handrail. Following the curve of the stairhall is paneled wainscoting which continues to the second floor. The entry hall also displays an intricate cornice molding, picture molding and wainscoting. Floors in the entry are narrow heart pine tongue and groove boards.

To the right of the entry hall through a segmental arch is the living room. The same detailing found in the entry is present here with the addition of vertical wood moldings in each corner and at regular intervals along the walls. The fireplace in this room is functional from both the living room and the den and consists of a raised brick hearth, seating area and quartersawn oak mantel is recessed under a segmental arch. At the far end of the living room another arch enframes a small room which functions as a breakfast area. In the center of the living room space hangs a Waterford crystal chandelier which is original to the house.

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	FEB 14

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

Located in the enclosed east porch is the den which has a lower floor than the living room and is composed of brick laid in a herringbone pattern. The ceiling is composed of beaded board. The fireplace has a raised brick hearth and oak mantel.

The dining room is located on the other side of the entry hall and continues the cornice and wainscoting of the entry. Here, however, there is found no picture molding nor is the wall compartmentalized with vertical boards to form panels. In this room the fireplace has a marble hearth and surround with simple neo-classic mantel displaying fluted columns.

The west enclosed porch has black and white marble floor tiles and beaded board ceilings--evidence from the time these porches were open.

Located behind the dining room is the kitchen which is unusual in that the walls are glazed white ceramic tile from floor to ceiling. The floors are brick and the cabinetry in the space is new.

Each bedroom on the second floor has a center ceiling medallion and a fireplace with marble hearth and surround with classically detailed mantels (each room having a different design and color of marble.) Cedar lined closets can be found in each bedroom. Also located on the second floor are three bathrooms, two of which are in their original condition and one of which is currently being renovated.

Pool and Bathhouses - Although it cannot be stated definitively that George B. Rogers designed the estate, this feature of the estate--the pool and bathhouses--closely resembles a similar design done for the Mobile Country Club by Rogers in 1926. The pool itself is 13 feet deep at the extreme end with side steps rising from the bottom of the pool at each corner. The pool is surrounded by French drains which allow the pool to be drained despite the very low lying area. A small, round arched treillage is located in front of the pool and surrounded by palm trees. Behind the pool are the bathhouses interconnected by a flat roofed colonnade supported by square Tuscan columns. The bathhouses are one story in height, have low pyramidal tile roofs and are stuccoed.

Remaining Out-Buildings - Also located on the estate are a guest house, servants' quarters, the original two-car garage and a modern six-car garage. All of these structures with the exception of the six-car garage are constructed of stuccoed brick and have terracotta tile roof.

Front Entrance Gates - Gates span a distance of 15 feet and are made of wrought iron set between tall brick columns. To either side of the main gates are smaller walk-through gates some four feet wide. These smaller gates are also of wrought iron.

Landscaping - While some plantings were uprooted by the hurricane of 1979, camellias, crepe myrtles, live oaks and southern pines on the estate are thought to be part of the original c. 1925 landscaping scheme.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

ADDENDUM:

N.B. The U-shaped dairy building, two grain silos behind the dairy and the well in front of the dairy building are excluded from this nomination since they are not held under the same ownership as the main portion of the estate.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 c. 1925 **Builder/Architect** Steven Bishop

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion C - Architecture

Bishop Manor is the only known extant example in Mobile County of the extravagant estates built in the South by wealthy Northern families of the early 1900s. Another wealthy family from Chicago--the Daweses after whom Dawes, Alabama is named--built similar estates in Mobile and Baldwin Counties but these have long since been subdivided or demolished. Bishop Manor has not only survived, but has essentially survived intact.

The main house is particularly noteworthy as a well proportioned, beautifully crafted house that draws a great deal stylistically from Mediterranean architecture. Exceptional materials were used throughout the house including basswood paneling, moldings and curved staircase, cherrywood stairway railing, vari-colored marble fireplace surround and hearths, marble floors and glazed ceramic tile walls in the kitchen. Also worthy of note is the cement pool and bathhouses which are well integrated into the overall design of the complex.

* * * * *

Bishop Manor Estate and Dairy Farm is thought to be the work of Mobile architect, George B. Rogers, although clear documentation for this does not appear to exist. It is known that Rogers designed residences as far west as Biloxi, Gulf Port and Pascagoula, Mississippi. It is conceivable that he worked in South Mobile County. Not only does the design recall such documented works as Murphy High School, but the pool and bathhouses are closely allied to those at the Mobile Country Club--a documented Rogers design of 1926.

Bishop Manor was constructed c. 1925 by Steven Bishop who was originally from Chicago. Bishop, his wife, and their four children came to Mobile County in the early 1920s. This wealthy family was intent on establishing a fine dairy. Following the construction of the estate and dairy buildings, the Bishops invented and began mass producing Eskimo Pies. Unfortunately when the Depression of 1929 came, the Bishops lost the estate and the dairy was closed. Over the years, the estate passed through a number of ownerships. In the 1960s the main house was converted to a casino and an air strip installed between the pool bathhouses and the dairy.

Currently all of the buildings and the cement pool are being restored and will be used as a private residence with guest house and servants' quarters.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Deeds and wills from the Mobile County Probate Court; tax assessments; Mobile City Directories; oral histories from: Mrs. Ethel Herrington, owner of early photos and former neighbor to the Bishops; Mr. James McPhillips, married into family; Harry Inge Johnstone, architect that recalled the house; Tom St. John, personal friend of the family.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 7 acres

Quadrangle name Grand Bay

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	3	7	9	0	3	5	3	3	6	9	1	8	0
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 NE corner of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec 10, T7S, R3W equal to 674' front on Argyl Road by lot depth of 321.34'.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mobile Historic Development Commission- Robin A. Lang, Research Historian; Anne S. Bantens, Chief Research Historian; Ellen Mertins (AHC)

organization Alabama Historical Commission

date January 1984

street & number 725 Monroe Street

telephone (205) 261-3184

city or town Montgomery

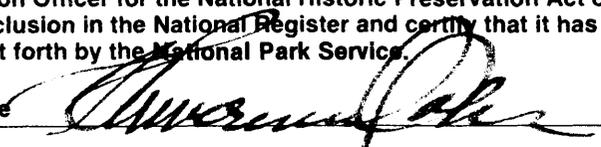
state Alabama 36130

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 

title State Historic Preservation Officer

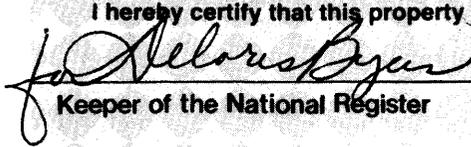
date December 11, 1984

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

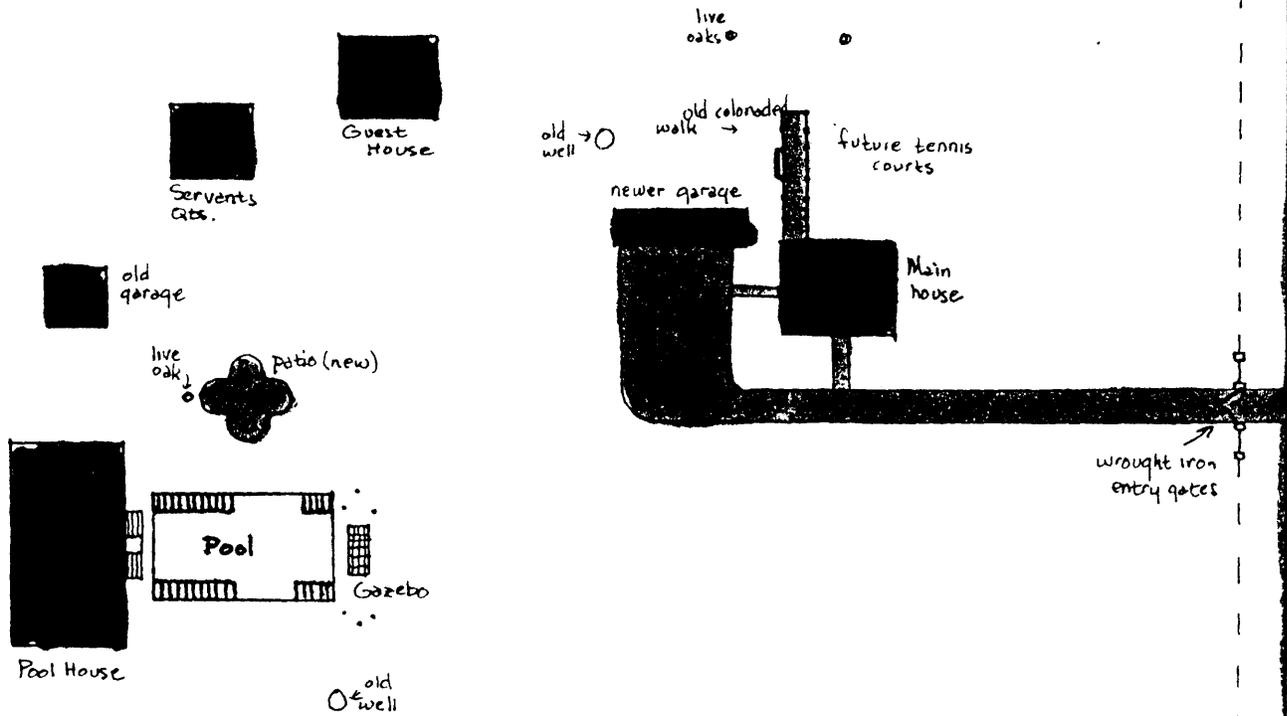
date 2-14-85

Keeper of the National Register 

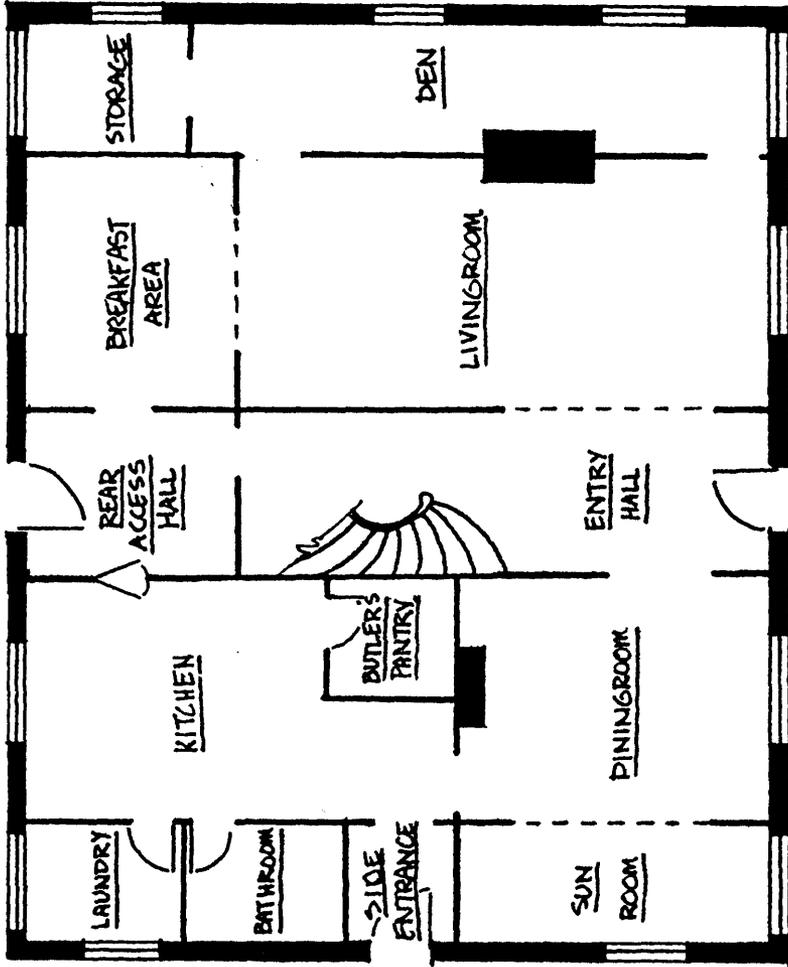
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



- Main House - stucco over brick w/ terra-cotta tile roofs; all interior walls are brick as well.
- Out buildings - also stucco over brick w/ terra-cotta tile roofs.
- Pool is 13' deep at deep end w/ surround of French drains.
- Gazebo is new
- Cloverleaf patio is new



BISHOP MANOR ESTATE
 MAIN HOUSE
 1ST FLOOR