

Form 10-300  
 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: South Carolina	
COUNTY: Aiken	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	JUN 10 1974

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
 Phelps House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
 Sheffield Phelps House, Rose Hill

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Barnwell Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
 Aiken

STATE: South Carolina      CODE: 045      COUNTY: Aiken      CODE: 003

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
 Claudia Lea Phelps

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Barnwell Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
 Aiken

STATE:  
 South Carolina

CODE:  
 045

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
 Aiken County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Park Avenue and Chesterfield Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
 Aiken

STATE:  
 South Carolina

CODE:  
 045

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
 Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina

DATE OF SURVEY: 1973       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
 South Carolina Department of Archives and History

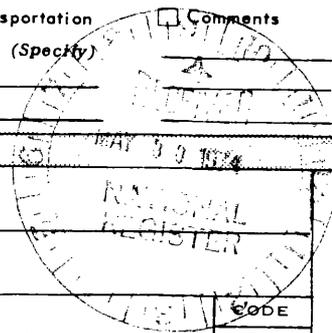
STREET AND NUMBER:  
 1430 Senate Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
 Columbia

STATE:  
 South Carolina

CODE:  
 045

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:  
 COUNTY:  
 ENTRY NUMBER:  
 DATE:  
 FOR NPS USE ONLY

**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Exterior: An example of the shingle style, this two story house was built in the early 1900s on the foundations of an antebellum house destroyed in the War Between the States. Designed as a winter home, the house has an exterior surface of wooden shingles broken by windows, gable, and doorways trimmed in white.

Entrance to the house is through a porte-cochere supported by Doric columns; the doorway is flanked by diamond-paned windows of varying shapes and sizes. Gabled dormer windows are found on the second story facade, and the roof is low pitched. There are five interior brick chimneys.

The rear entrance is a double door of leaded glass panes and is surmounted by a broken pediment. Flanking the doorway are two double sash, diamond-paned windows. A high gable with a triangular pediment extends above the door, and a semi-circular fanlight ornaments the gable.

Interior: The Phelps house contains over twenty rooms. Located on the first floor are living room, dining room, billiard room, kitchens, laundry, trophy room and school room. Five family bedrooms and three servants' rooms are found on the second floor. Billiard room with its low beamed ceiling, paneled walls, and heart-pine mantel with fluted Ionic columns is typical of rich decorative work. Interior furnishings include oriental rugs, collections of china and stemware, and a library of 17th, 18th, and 19th Century texts.

Surroundings: The estate covers an entire city block: 4.2 acres. House is surrounded by an elaborate formal garden. Designed by Mrs. Sheffield Phelps, who owned the estate until 1955, the garden contains camellias, magnolias, hollies, and other plants and shrubs.

Outside buildings, including original stables, garage, and kennels, now house the art department of the University of South Carolina at Aiken. Other dependencies are three greenhouses, toolhouses, and a children's playhouse.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |  |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **early 1900s**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                             |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The house is a noteworthy example of the shingle style, frequently used in late 19th and early 20th Century resort homes for the wealthy, but relatively rare in South Carolina. The Phelps estate, which served as the location for the first meetings of the Garden Club of South Carolina, contains a formal landscaped garden. The elegant home and landscaped grounds are characteristic of many such estates owned by the wealthy in pre-income tax America.

Architectural: The Phelps house is an example of the shingle style, identified by the shingled facade and exterior horizontal emphasis. One of the most innovative features of shingle style houses is the free-flowing, asymmetrical floorplan. Originally used in New England in the 1880s for medium-sized private houses, the shingle style is relatively uncommon in South Carolina.

Landscape Architecture: Original owner of the house, Mrs. Sheffield Phelps, landscaped the grounds and formal gardens containing camellias, azaleas, hollies, and English boxwood. Camellias were of particular interest to the owner who imported rare varieties from Japan and developed a new variety on the estate, the Rose Hill Red.

In addition to an interest in the practical aspects of landscaping her own garden, Mrs. Phelps collected books on botany and horticulture. The collection, donated to the South Caroliniana Library in 1959, contains valuable 18th and 19th Century books. Works include 49 volumes of The Botanical Magazine, published in London 1787-1820, and a 1721 edition of Mark Catesby's Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands.

The Phelps house was the location for the first meetings of the Garden Club of South Carolina, organized in 1930 by Mrs. Phelps, who served as honorary life president. Patterned after the Garden Club of America, the statewide group promotes gardening, landscaping, and conservation. At present there are approximately 13,000 members in the Garden Club of South Carolina.

Social Humanitarian: In the early 1900s Aiken was a popular resort for wealthy northerners. Attracted by the mild climate and riding facilities, Winter Colony residents participated in fox hunts, polo, steeple chases, and races. Typical of the cosmopolitan population which included wealthy publishers, railroad magnates, and copper industry tycoons, the Phelps

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Lawrence, Kay, Heroes, Horses and High Society. Columbia: R.L. Bryan Company, 1971.

Lawrence, Kay, "Miss Claudia Phelps" Sandlapper, March, 1970, pgs. 47-50. The Memorial Collection of Garden Books of Mrs. Sheffield Phelps and Miss Claudia Lea Phelps, Unpublished brochure from South Carolina Library.

Scully, Vincent, The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory And Design From Richardson to The Origins of Wright, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

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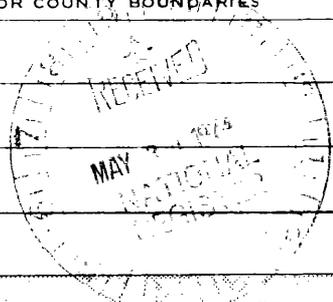
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		33	33	56
NE	° ' "	° ' "		81	43	29
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **4.2 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



117  
174-7-10  
27116

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **Nancy Alexander Wilds, Director**  
**Nenie Dixon** **Rose Hill Art Center**

ORGANIZATION: **South Carolina Department of Archives and History** DATE: **April 26, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER: **1430 Senate Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Columbia** STATE: **South Carolina** CODE: **045**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Charles E. Lee  
 Charles E. Lee

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date May 20, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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

Ernest Allen Gentry  
 Chief, Office of Administration and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: JUN 19 1974

Charles DeHaven  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 6/11/74

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

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE South Carolina	
COUNTY Aiken	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 5574	DATE JUN 10 1974

(Number all entries)

Phelps House  
# 8 Significance (continued)

family lived in Aiken from November to May and usually spent summers in Bar Harbor, Maine, or Europe. The life style of the Sheffield Phelps and other Aiken residents is reflected in their spacious, elegant homes, containing servants' rooms and rooms for leisure activities. The Phelps house, built in the shingle style, is an example of the private resort house built by the wealthy in early 20th Century America.



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STATE	
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(Number all entries)

Phelps House  
# 9 Major Bibliographical References (continued)

Smith, Harry Worcester, Life and Sport in Aiken and Those Who Made It, New York: The Derrydale Press, 1935, p. 6.

Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide To The Styles, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1969 "The Shingle Style" p. 127-132.

