

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

1. Name: James and Olive Porter House

2. Location: 231 Tucker Road, Macon, Bibb County, Georgia

3a. Description: The James and Olive Porter House is an east-facing, one-story house on Tucker Road, at the southeastern edge of Wesleyan College's campus and about five miles northwest of downtown Macon. Built in 1928 as part of larger country estate, the house has an asymmetrical, nearly V-shaped footprint, consisting of two rectangular wings converging at a corner tower with a conical roof. There are two main entrances on the façade – one within the tower, which accesses the owner's quarters (the rectangular wing extending to the west), and one under a covered porch on the northern end of the façade, which accesses the caretaker or tenant's quarters (the larger rectangular wing extending to the northeast). The house is clad in a whitewashed brick-veneer and has a complex, terracotta tile roof with a front-facing gable projection creating the covered porch. This gable, which is clad in wood siding, contains ten bird roosts in its peak and is supported by four square columns with decorative pegs and bracing. The rear elevation has a similarly projecting gable, a covered walk supported by columns with pegs and bracing, and an open terrace accessed from the owner's quarters. A side entrance to the tenant's quarters is accentuated by half timbering, more decorative pegs, and diamond-patterned screening. Throughout the house there are single and paired three-light casement windows. Decorative brickwork is found encircling the top of tower and in the basket-weave pattern in portions of the exterior walls and flooring. Three large chimneys with multiple clay chimney pots dot the roofline. On the interior, the tenant's quarters is a fairly routine space consisting of a living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bathroom with simple finishes and mantels, wood floors, and a built-in china cabinet. In contrast, the owner's quarters is a dramatic space with soaring vaulted ceilings and exposed timber beams, arched built-in cabinetry and doorways, and a large stone fireplace in the living room. This room doubled as the Porter's bedroom, with a hideaway bed folded into one of the closets along the western wall. The owner's quarters also include the round tower room with flagstone flooring, a kitchenette, a bathroom, and a dressing room.

Moved to its current location in 2013 following encroachment of its formerly rural setting by a local church, the house was originally located on 27.5 acres south of downtown Macon. In addition to the house, the property contained secondary buildings, structures, and gardens, none of which were intact prior to the move. The house was recently rehabilitated and despite its change in location and loss of supporting resources, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

3b. Period of Significance: 1928

3c. Acreage: Less than one acre

3d. Boundary Explanation: The proposed boundary is the building footprint.

4a. National Register Criteria: Criterion C, Criteria Consideration: B

4b. National Register Areas of Significance: Architecture

4c. Statement of Significance: During the summer of 1927, philanthropists James and Olive Porter vacationed in Normandy, France. The couple drove throughout the countryside, marveling at the chateaus, grand estates, and cottages and determined if ever given the opportunity, they would build their own French-inspired house closer to home. Later that same year, the chance arose and the pair consulted with prolific Macon architect, W. Elliott Dunwody, Jr. to design a chateau-inspired "Normandy peasant cottage" on the outskirts of Macon. Dunwody, a Macon native and graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology, designed many residential, commercial, and institutional buildings in the region and across Georgia. The James and Olive Porter House is significant in the area of architecture for its association with Dunwody. Despite a substantial catalog of design employing the various popular styles of the time, this house appears to be his sole documented example of a French-style estate. In addition to being an anomaly in Dunwody's design portfolio, the house is also a good example of the French Eclectic style, as defined in McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*. The round tower with conical roof, half-timbering, varied hipped roof massing, casement windows, and arched entrance are all indicative of the style.

4d. Level of Significance: The James and Olive Porter House is significant at the local level for its association with architect W. Elliott Dunwody, Jr., as the only documented example of his work in the French Eclectic style.

4e. National Register Status: The James and Olive Porter House received final certification from the Historic Preservation Division for the state property tax abatement and tax credit programs on June 5, 2017 and final certification from the National Park Service for the federal tax credit program on June 19, 2017.

5. Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by the property owner, and nomination materials were prepared by Kim Campbell of the Historic Macon Foundation.