

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Hotel Clermont

other names/site number Bonaventure Arms Apartments, Clermont Hotel

## 2. Location

street & number 789 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

city or town Atlanta

state Georgia code GA county Fulton code 121 zip code 30306

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Signature of certifying official/Title: Dr. David C. Crass/Historic Preservation Division Director/Deputy SHPO Date \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register  removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
2	0	objects
3	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: hotel

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: hotel

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS- Colonial Revival: Georgian Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

roof: OTHER: composite

other: OTHER: cast stone

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### SUMMARY

The Georgian Revival-style Hotel Clermont was completed June 17, 1924. It was constructed as the Bonaventure Arms Apartments with 85 units and common areas occupying eight stories. The short leg of this L-shaped building fronts Ponce de Leon Avenue on the north, with the long leg of the "L" running parallel to Bonaventure Avenue on the east. The exterior is clad in Flemish Bond brick that is 12" thick. Floors and ceilings are poured concrete, and concrete piers are embedded in the hollow clay tile corridor walls that frame the central hallways of the building. The roof is flat with a parapet wall along the primary (north) elevation, and the east elevation. The remaining elevations do not have a parapet wall, but do have a metal railing added during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation of the building. There are two types of windows on the building: six-over-six double hung windows, and two-over-two double hung windows (only found on the west elevation). These windows were installed during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation. These new windows are a profile and dimensional match to the historic windows. Georgian Revival style features of the building's exterior include overall symmetry; emphasis of the front entrance by offsetting of the central bay with a pediment on the parapet wall; linear detailing of the cornice on level 4; a cast stone beltcourse connecting the first floor window sills; quoins differentiating the division between the three bays of the front elevation, as well as the side elevations corners; and restrained classically inspired ornament, such as a modillion with garland swags in the pediment, and turned urn finials topping the parapet wall. All of these stylistic elements of the building are all original to the building. The primary entrance of the building, centered on the north façade, opens into the lobby that features a reception area in the northeastern corner of the building. An original stair is accessed from the south wall of the lobby, located roughly in the elbow of the building's L plan of the building. The north/south leg of the first floor houses offices, bathrooms and guest rooms, while the east/west leg houses a bar and lounge areas. Below the lobby level, levels A through C house various public and guestroom spaces, including a restaurant and kitchen, the Clermont Lounge nightclub, offices, and storage and mechanical rooms for the hotel. Above the lobby, levels 2-5 are composed of an original L-shaped corridor with original plaster finish on the ceilings and walls, lined with guest rooms. On all floors, the corridor walls are historic, but all other demising walls date to the 2016-2018 rehabilitation. Some door openings are historic, while others were created during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation. All functioning doors in these corridors date to the 2016-2018 rehabilitation.

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### Narrative Description

According to the City of Atlanta building permit (Attachment 5), the Hotel Clermont was completed June 17, 1924. It was constructed as the Bonaventure Arms Apartment with 85 units. Originally the building was planned to show six stories on the primary (Ponce de Leon Avenue) elevation, and include eight stories overall.<sup>1</sup> Due to the slope of the lot, the building was constructed with five exposed stories on the front elevation, and three basement levels (levels A – C) overall. Building analysis suggests that the Ponce de Leon Avenue elevation likely included window wells that enabled light to get into the lower first (or ground) floor where there were apartments on the north side of the building. The historic photographs (Attachments 17-20) do not show that area in detail.

#### EXTERIOR

The front elevation (Photograph 1) faces north and fronts Ponce de Leon Avenue. This symmetrical elevation features a central bay that minimally projects from the main elevation and is capped with a pediment. Cast stone quoins delineate each bay of the front elevation. Historic window and door fenestration on this elevation is intact with windows being found in pairs and singly in a symmetrical arrangement. The front entrance (Photograph 6) is centered at grade on this elevation. The pink and black marble front door surround may date to the 1939 conversion of the building from apartments to hotel according to a postcard just after the conversion (Attachment 19). Originally, there was a pedimented entrance (Attachment 17). A green-enameled steel marquee sign projects from the façade above the primary entrance. It features two horizontal angled panels and a central vertical blade. Neon lettering in an Art Deco-influenced font on the horizontal panels reads "Clermont," and the vertical blade reads "Motor Hotel." In addition to the neon lettering, the horizontal panels feature light boards with channels for interchangeable plastic lettering. A continuous cast stone beltcourse

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<sup>1</sup> "Bonaventure Arms To Be Six Stories High in the Front." *The Atlanta Constitution*, 15 July 1923, 2.

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connects all of the window sills of the first floor on this elevation. A metal cornice (Photograph 5) separates level 1 from level 5. A large cast stone modillion with garland swags is centered in the pediment of the central bay (Photograph 7).

The east side elevation fronts Bonaventure Avenue (Photographs 4 & 10). Along this elevation two of the levels below the entrance / first level are visible. These are levels A and B. The continuous cast stone beltcourse that connects all of the window sills on the first floor of the front elevation continues along this side elevation. Another continuous cast stone beltcourse connects the lintels of level A on this elevation (Photograph 9). Below this beltcourse, levels A and B are sheathed in brick that is laid in bands that are six bricks tall, creating a rusticated base (Photograph 11). This elevation also has three bays like the front elevation. Cast stone quoins separate each of the three bays from each other. The northern- and southernmost bays feature a slight jog between the outermost paired window column and the outermost unpaired window column. The metal cornice that separates level 1 from level 5 on the front elevations, continues along this side elevation. Windows are found singly, and paired, and a triple window is centered in the center bay on each level.

The rear (south) elevation is the least ornamented of the building's facades: the façade is composed entirely of running bond brick with no cast stone ornament, and window sills are brick as opposed to the cast stone sills found on the building's other elevations. This elevation consists of two main bays. The easternmost bay is the long arm of the L-plan of the building, which fronts Bonaventure Avenue (Photograph 4). This bay is symmetrical with a paired window and a single window framing a column of single windows in the middle of the façade these middle single windows are between levels as they are on the interior staircase landing. The staircase in this bay exits on level A onto a historic concrete bridge over the window well at level B (Photograph 11). The westernmost bay of this elevation is the short arm of the building's L-plan. This bay is almost symmetrical with levels A – 5 having paired and single windows creating a symmetrical fenestration. At the crook of the L there is a small, single window on levels A – 5. A small projection on this elevation at level C was historically the coal storage room. On top of this room is a terrace for entrance to the Clermont Lounge on level B (Photograph 3). The grade sharply slopes towards the north / south ell of the building from this terrace (Photograph 46).

The west side elevation consists of two main bays. The northernmost bay is the short arm of the L-plan. This bay has symmetrical fenestration consisting paired and single windows. Levels A and B are below the Ponce de Leon Avenue grade. Adjacent to this elevation, stairs lead from grade down to level B and the property's rear parking lot. During the 2016-2018 rehabilitation, one of the paired windows on level 1 in the northwestern corner was replaced with a fire door, and a double leaf egress door was installed on level A where the two four-over-four double hung windows were on this elevation. The southernmost bay is the long arm of the L-plan, which that fronts Bonaventure Avenue. The fenestration for levels C – 5 consists of paired and single windows.

The parcel on which the Hotel Clermont is built slopes down steeply from the building's principal (north) façade to the parking lot located behind (south) of the building. The building's principal entrance is fronts Ponce de Leon Avenue and is separated from the street by a scored concrete driveway and parking area. The east side of the parcel features a sloped planting bed and historic retaining wall that runs parallel to Bonaventure Avenue, as three levels of the building are below grade on this side. A driveway on the east side of the parcel provides access from Bonaventure Avenue to the parking lot located to the south of the building. The rear parking lot includes 40 spaces and today features a lift system of parking to maximize the number of spaces available to patrons. Despite its urban location, the parcel features two mature hardwood trees; one to the east of the building and one to the west. Additional foundation planting was installed along the building's north, east and south sides during the building's 2016-2018 rehabilitation. The planting includes shrubbery and groundcover along the north, east, and south sides, and oak trees and hollies on the east and south sides of the parcel. A paved sidewalk parallels Ponce de Leon Avenue to the north of the building and Bonaventure Avenue to the east.

Two free-standing historic signs located along the Ponce de Leon side of the building advertise the hotel and the Clermont Lounge. The larger sign is nearly centered on the north parcel boundary. It is green enameled steel and features neon lighting on white lettering. It is a two-sided rectangular design mounted atop a metal pole in a planting bed between the sidewalk and paved parking area in front of the building. The sign reads "Motor Hotel" and features minimal detailing above and below the lettering. This sign is believed to date to the building's conversion to a hotel in 1939, and was repaired during the rehabilitation. The smaller sign is a two-sided rectangular lightbox mounted atop a metal pole adjacent to the retaining wall demarcating the west parcel boundary. The white plastic sign, framed by black metal, says "Clermont Lounge." Illustrations of two bikini-clad women frame the lettering. A black arrow points south across the bottom of the sign, and features the words "Free Parking" in white font. The sign is believed to date to the opening of the Clermont Lounge in 1968. Both signs are counted as contributing objects for the purposes of this nomination.

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A distinctive feature of the built-up composite roof is the tall metal framework tower, which proclaims "Hotel Clermont" (Photograph 38). The historic tower had failed connections and was deemed structurally unsafe. It was dismantled and the globe finial and channel letters for the neon lights were retained and re-used on a new mast tower that was built to the same dimensions and profile as the original (Photograph 38), and placed in the same rooftop location as part of the 2016-2018 rehabilitation. The tower may have been added when the apartment building was converted into a hotel, as it is present in the 1940s postcard (Attachment 19). The flat roof has a low parapet wall on the north, east and part of the south and west sides of the building. A metal railing of the same height is present on the less visible section of the roof (Photographs 36 & 37).

## INTERIOR

The primary entrance of the building opens into the first floor (level 1) lobby (Photographs 14 - 15) with historic pink marble flooring. There is a reception area (Photograph 13) in the northeastern corner of the building. An original grand staircase (Photographs 14, 25 & 33) is off of the lobby to the south and is roughly located in the elbow of the L plan of the building. This staircase accesses levels B - 5 and has an original plastered concrete cheek wall topped with an original wood handrail. Treads and landings are of original terrazzo, and walls are plaster. A metal and glass handrail (Photographs 25 & 33) was added during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation to bring the staircase to code. During the recent rehabilitation, a standpipe (Photograph 33) was embedded in the west staircase wall. Immediately east of the stair, the original hand-throttle controlled service elevator is intact in the bottom of the elevator shaft, and the doors on each floor have been fixed shut (Photograph 30) so that the shaft may be used as a mechanical chaise. The original passenger elevator shaft is intact just south of the service elevator with a new cab, and a second new passenger elevator that also accesses the roof is just south of it. All three elevators are located together on the west side of the north / south corridor near the crook in the L-shaped plan of each floor.

The north / south leg of the L-shaped first floor has offices, bathrooms and guest rooms and terminates in an original secondary stairwell. This secondary stair (Photograph 21) is concrete the stairwell retains historic plaster walls. The handrail for this staircase was adapted to meet current code regulations during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation by the addition of a wire mesh beneath the handrail.

The east / west leg of the L-shaped first floor today houses a lounge and bar in spaces that were historically guest rooms. These rooms feature plaster and wallpaper finishes along with non-historic wood trim, except where historic baseboard is found along the perimeter walls. Window surrounds are simple and approximately 50% of them are historic with the remainder being non-historic in-kind replacement. A metal staircase with wood treads accessing level A (Photograph 39) was installed during the recent rehabilitation, in the space that was historically the lobby level east-west corridor.

Level A has originally featured the same L-shaped corridor plan that is found on levels 2-5. Originally there were 14 guest rooms with bathrooms on this level. During the 2016-2018 rehabilitation all demising walls for the guest rooms were removed. At this time four of the guest rooms on the western leg of the building were converted into a restaurant with the kitchen located just east of this. The remaining seven rooms on this level, in the north/south leg fronting Bonaventure, were converted into eight bunkrooms (up to two bunk beds per unit). New bathrooms are generally in the same location as they were historically for these guest rooms. Along the corridor accessing these rooms, historic door openings with fixed in-place historic doors are painted white, while the new, operable door openings installed during the 2016-2018 rehabilitation are painted black. These new doors are metal, with metal frames. Where the new, operable doors are in historic locations, historic trim was removed, refinished, and reused; and compatible new trim was applied over the metal frames where new openings were created.

Level B houses the Clermont Lounge (Photograph 42) in the east/west leg of its L plan. This lounge is in the original location of the Bonaventure Arms' Café (1937) that later became The Anchorage Club (1943), the first nightclub in the building. The north/south leg of level B's L houses additional guest rooms. Level B is basically the same floor plan as that of level A, except that the Clermont Lounge is located where the restaurant is on level A, and the fitness center is located where the kitchen is on level A. The Clermont Lounge has an exterior door (Photograph 3 & 46) on the south side of the space, and can also be access via a door from the L-shaped corridor. The Clermont Lounge is roughly rectangular in plan, with the entrance located on the rear (south) side of the building. A roughly horseshoe-shaped bar and stage is located on the east side of the room, while a raised platform for musicians is located on the west side. Dressing rooms for performers are located along the west wall, behind the platform. Restrooms and storage rooms are located along the northeast wall of the space. The Clermont Lounge features concrete floors and original brick walls with remnants of original plaster and sheets of wood paneling. Sprinklers were added to the lounge space during the recent rehabilitation, bathrooms were updated, and the space was repainted. The ceiling was also reinforced to support the restaurant space

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on level A. On levels A and B, the corridor features historic plaster walls and ceilings. Guest rooms feature repaired plaster on perimeter walls.

Level C originally housed the subbasement that included a garage, multiple storage rooms, and an electrical room in the north/south leg of the building. There is a crawlspace below most of the east/west leg of the building. The north/south leg of this level has new demising walls delineating an expanded electrical room, a laundry room, an elevator mechanical room, four offices, two storage rooms and an employee breakroom and bathroom.

Levels 2-5 have an original L-shaped corridor with original plaster finish on the ceilings and walls (photographs 19, 27 & 30-32). There are today 20 guest rooms with bathrooms (Photographs 22-24, 26, 28-29, 34-35 & 40-41) located along these corridors, while originally there were 23 guest rooms/apartments with bathrooms along these corridors. New bathrooms are generally in the same location as they were historically. Historic door openings with fixed in-place historic doors are painted white, while the new, operable door openings from the 2016-2018 rehabilitation are painted black. These new doors are metal, with metal frames. Where the new, operable doors are in historic locations historic trim was removed, refinished, and reused; and compatible new trim was applied over the metal frames where new openings were created. (Photographs 18, 30 & 31). During the recent rehabilitation, sprinklers were embedded in corridor walls.

### ALTERATIONS

In 1939, the building was converted from apartment to hotel use. Alterations noted in the 1939 article describing the renovations were: the filling in of the front yard to sidewalk level with shrubbery and walkway to the entrance, altered to 120 regular hotel rooms and 34 apartments, and garage facilities / free parking was provided onsite.<sup>2</sup>

According to Lannie Ethridge & Laura Sedicino in a 2002 report on the building, off of the lobby was a "registration desk to the left with an antiquated switchboard, and a tiny telephone booth to the right, complete with a glass-paned wood folding door."<sup>3</sup> By 2012 the antiquated switchboard and telephone booth mentioned in the Ethridge & Sedicino report were removed, and the registration desk had been significantly altered by enclosure with a painted wood veneer wall that created an enclosed office.

During the 2016 – 2018 rehabilitation of the building it was discovered that there appeared to have been window wells along the north front elevation that had been filled in at some point in the building's history, and any windows that might have existed, eliminated. It is likely this happened when the building was converted to hotel usage in 1939, as an article from that year states that the entrance level "was some 15 feet below the sidewalk level "due to grade changes along Ponce de Leon Avenue."<sup>4</sup>

During the 2016 – 2018 rehabilitation, the historic demising walls between the hotel rooms and apartments were removed on levels 1 – 5, to accommodate the new hotel rooms, public spaces, and back of house layout. On each floor, the west end of the corridor was truncated by 12 feet. Where this truncation occurred, a new wall with two doors was installed (Photograph 32). The new doors are slightly wider than the original doors. Wherever possible, original door openings were used to access the new hotel rooms. Due to access requirements, these door openings were widened, and historic trim was altered to fit the new openings. Where original doors could not be used, they were fixed shut (Photograph 31). Four original door openings with original doors were fixed shut on level 1, and five were fixed shut on each level of levels 2 – 5. Eight doors on levels 1 – 5 are in the location of original door openings, but have been widened and trim has been altered to fit the widened doors. There are eight new doors and with new door openings in the historic corridor walls on each of these levels.

Window and door trim, and baseboards along the perimeter and corridor walls is a combination of historic, and new trim milled to match the historic. All historic trim was removed during the course of the 2016-2018 rehabilitation, and re-planed and finished. This trim was then reapplied on these perimeter and corridor walls. Of the historic moldings along the perimeter and corridor walls on levels B – 5 (totaling approximately 4,300 linear feet of trim) about 75% was retained and reused (see photographs 16, 19, 27 & 31). The remaining 25% of baseboard was milled to match, so that all perimeter and corridor walls exhibit baseboard that is either original, or an in-kind replacement. All historic windows were replaced with new windows that matched the profile and dimensions of the historic windows.

<sup>2</sup> "Apartment Made Into Large Hotel," The Atlanta Constitution, June 25, 1939, p. 16A.

<sup>3</sup> Ethridge, Lannie and Laurie Sedicino. "The Bonaventure Arms Apartments" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> "Apartment Made Into Large Hotel," The Atlanta Constitution, June 25, 1939, p. 16A.

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The carpeting removed from the apartment units and hallways was not historic, although newspaper articles suggest the building was primarily carpeted. For this reason, carpeting is the primary floor covering found in hotel rooms and the corridors. The historic plaster (walls and ceilings) of the main staircase (Photograph 25), secondary staircase (Photograph 21), and corridors (Photographs 18 & 19) were retained and repaired. All new demising walls are frame finished in drywall. These new walls received a simplified baseboard based on the design of the historic baseboard design (Photograph 24).

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

**Period of Significance**

1924 - 1968

**Significant Dates**

1924: Construction of Bonaventure Arms

Apartments complete

1939: Building converted for use as hotel

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance for the Hotel Clermont is from 1924, when the building opened as the Bonaventure Arms Apartments, until 1968, the end of this historic period.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Hotel Clermont is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as an example of a large (more than 70 apartments; it had 85) hotel-type apartment building constructed in the Georgian Revival Style. The building features many of the hallmarks of the style, and retains the majority of its original exterior character defining features of the style. The Hotel Clermont is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of community planning and development. Constructed in 1923-24 as the Bonaventure Arms Apartments, it was one of a number of large apartment buildings built to house Atlanta's growing population during a time of significant change in residential development patterns and standards in the city. Rapid growth of the white middle-class population, rising property values, the expansion of streetcar lines, and the rise of automobile transportation led to the construction of apartments north and east of downtown Atlanta, primarily in what is known today as the Midtown area along Peachtree Street, and east of downtown along Ponce de Leon Avenue.<sup>5</sup> The Bonaventure Arms represented the height of modernity for its time, and is a good representative example of the apartment development that proliferated in Atlanta during the 1920s, as inflated land prices made multi-family rental housing an increasingly acceptable option for middle and upper-class residency. "Hotel services" offered by the Bonaventure Arms provided "every type of domestic service without the annoyances and responsibilities of maintaining a staff of private servants" ("Beautiful Bonaventure Arms Apartment Complete" 1924). Providing maid and messenger services, as well as private package delivery were part of the Bonaventure Arms' strategy to attract a middle and upper-class clientele. The Hotel Clermont is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation. Since 1943, the hotel has been recognized for the entertainment venues located in the building's basement. While the

1943: First documented use of the Clermont Lounge space as entertainment club

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Jesse L. Morrison (Owner Developer)

<sup>5</sup> Speno, Lynn. "696 Peachtree Street Apartments" *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, February 2012. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. 12.

tenants have changed over time, the building has long been a focal point of Atlanta nightlife and demonstrates the changing patterns of the city's entertainment industry following national trends. Since 1968, the building has gained notoriety as the location of the Clermont Lounge, an internationally known adult entertainment venue that proclaims itself "Atlanta's oldest strip club." The Clermont Lounge is the oldest running, and only documented historic, nightclub business in Atlanta.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Hotel Clermont is significant under Criterion A at the local level in the area of community planning and development as an example of an apartment building constructed in Atlanta during the 1920s at a time of changing residential development patterns and standards in the city. Atlanta's rising prominence in the late nineteenth century as an economic stronghold of the south was due in large part to its extensive transportation network. Not only was the city connected to points throughout the country by rail, Atlanta's streetcar development, which began in 1871, spurred growth throughout the city. By 1889, a streetcar line extended east from the city's main thoroughfare, Peachtree Street, along Ponce de Leon Avenue. Large single-family dwellings and businesses were built along the new route as the city continued eastward expansion. Atlanta's Great Fire of 1917 destroyed much of the city's residential building stock south of Ponce de Leon Avenue. With more than 10,000 left homeless as a result, the Great Fire spurred the need for housing, and the most economical way to provide this was by the construction of apartments.<sup>6</sup> However, a slow-down in the building trade in Atlanta would leave much of this demand unfulfilled for some time. Construction in Atlanta came very nearly to a standstill in 1918 as a result of the U.S.' commitment to World War I. This slow-down continued for several years; by the early 1920s there was a noticeable housing shortage in the city.<sup>7</sup>

Along with this existing acute area housing need, the 1920s brought significant relocation of upper- and middle-class populations into the city due to economic growth, job opportunities, and the establishment of regional corporate offices in Atlanta.

This exponential growth was due in part to the deliberate acts of several prominent civic boosters that contributed to Atlanta's growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Louie Newton, editor of the *City Builder* magazine, and Ivan Allen, Sr., who was president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, encouraged not only commercial growth but also the development of cultural, artistic, and sports activities and institutions that they hoped would transform Atlanta into an urban center of both regional and national importance. Led by local businessmen, this effort transformed the economic orientation of the city from a railroad hub to a regional business center. In 1925, Ivan Allen, Sr., president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, chaired the Forward Atlanta campaign, a national advertising campaign designed to lure new businesses to the city and to encourage national corporations to establish their regional headquarters in Atlanta. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the campaign brought 83 new businesses to relocate or establish themselves in Atlanta in 1925, 155 in 1926, 158 in 1927, and 175 in 1929.<sup>8</sup>

This period of great expansion for the city resulted in soaring real estate prices. Single-family homes, long an expectation in Atlanta, as with most other Southern cities, were becoming too expensive for many residents, and a new class of tenants emerged during the post-World War I era.<sup>9</sup> A 1924 *City Builder* article noted the importance of offering newcomers to Atlanta the advantages of climate and business, but most importantly, adequate and modern housing. Of apartment buildings, the article says, "In apartment houses the city has accomplished more in size, beauty of design, and permanence of construction than ever before in its history." The Bonaventure Arms Apartments, as the Hotel Clermont was originally known, is an example of an apartment building constructed during this era that offered fireproof construction and modern conveniences not found in the typical single-family home.<sup>10</sup> Among these were "hotel services-" including maid and messenger services as well as private package delivery and meal plans- that intended to appeal to a middle-

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<sup>6</sup> LaBrie, Brian. "Parkway Drive-Boulevard Apartment Historic District" Historic District Information Form, October 28, 2016. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>7</sup> Anderson, Holly. "61 16th Street Apartment Building" *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, June 2006. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. 10.

<sup>8</sup> <sup>8</sup> LaBrie, Brian. "Parkway Drive-Boulevard Apartment Historic District" Historic District Information Form, October 28, 2016. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, Holly. "61 16th Street Apartment Building" *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, June 2006. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Speno, Lynn. "696 Peachtree Street Apartments" *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, February 2012. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia. 12.

and upper-class clientele, just as housing demand and inflated land prices made multi-family rental housing an increasingly acceptable option for middle and upper-class residency in Atlanta.

The Bonaventure Arms was converted to a hotel in 1939 in response to further change in development patterns along Ponce de Leon Avenue and throughout Atlanta. Although the Great Depression had a significant impact on Georgia's agricultural economy, Atlanta's industrial economy continued to experience modest growth during the decade following the stock market crash. The continued expansion of the city's streetcar lines and the ever-increasing accessibility of automobiles allowed for the development of neighborhoods to the north and east of the city's commercial core. As the middle and upper classes moved further out of the urban core along these transportation lines, the Bonaventure Arms was converted to a hotel, as were other similar apartment buildings such as the Briarcliff Hotel (listed on the National Register in 1982), located just blocks away at 1050 Ponce de Leon Avenue.

The Hotel Clermont provided commercial hotel accommodation for a growing number of short stay tenants and visitors to the city. According to an article published in the Atlanta Constitution in June 1939, "the entire building has been made into one of the most modern hotels in the city – or perhaps the south – and with its new ultra modern furnishings will make of the Clermont one of Atlanta's most popular hostelryes." In addition to its interior appointments, garage facilities and free onsite parking were offered for the convenience of patrons. According to the article, the price tag for the hotel conversion was \$100,000.<sup>11</sup> This sizeable investment not only provided for needed short-stay accommodation, it also marked a shift in the development patterns along the Ponce de Leon corridor, as the street became increasingly commercial throughout the 1920s and 1930s, transitioning to overwhelmingly commercial during the 1940s and 1950s.

Additionally, the Hotel Clermont is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation as an extant historic night entertainment venue, or nightclub, in Atlanta. The entertainment space in the venue has been in use as such since 1943, and the current business operating in the space, the Clermont Lounge, has been in operation since 1968. Review of other such venues in the city determined that of the extant operational businesses, none appear to predate the 1970s, which would make The Clermont Lounge located in the Hotel Clermont the oldest running, and only documented historic, nightclub business in Atlanta. The Hotel Clermont hosted nightclub entertainment in the space during most of the building's period of significance. The nightclubs in this location have long been considered risqué, with near-nude dancing early on that evolved into the current exotic dance club and bar, The Clermont Lounge. Throughout its history, the nightclub has contributed to the vibrancy of Ponce de Leon Avenue and has provided entertainment to local residents and tourists alike. The Clermont Lounge has continued to attain notoriety through the present day in Atlanta and beyond: it was even featured in a Paris, France exhibit by artist Cyril Bailleul in his work entitled "Girls, Girls, Girls" featuring the dancers of the Clermont Lounge that was on display at the Espace Seven-Galerie Jacques De Vos in Paris, France in November 2017. This notoriety has made The Clermont Lounge a destination for celebrities when they are in Atlanta, and has garnered cameos on various TV shows.

Additionally, the Hotel Clermont is a locally significant example of Georgian Revival style architecture under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The building features many of the hallmarks of this architectural style, including overall symmetry; emphasis of the front entrance by offsetting of the central bay with a pediment on the parapet wall; grouped and single double-hung multi-light windows; and classically-inspired ornament including a simple classical cornice on level 4, a cast stone beltcourse, quoins differentiating the division between the three bays of the front elevation, as well as the side elevations corners, a modillion with garland swags in the pediment, and turned urn finials on the parapet wall.

The Georgian Revival style expressed a renewal of interest in American Colonial architecture based on English precedent. This renewed interest grew out of the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Following the exposition, a nationwide interest in the architecture of America's Colonial period ensued, and several notable architectural firms began designing prolifically in the Georgian Revival style. The Georgian Revival style was popular in Georgia from the 1890s through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

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## **Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

### **BONAVENTURE ARMS APARTMENTS**

According to Atlanta City Directories, the Hotel Clermont was known as the "Bonaventure Arms Apartments" from 1924-1927, and then as "The Bonaventure Arms" from 1928-1938. The building is located in District 14, Land Lot 17 on the southwest corner of the intersection of Ponce de Leon Avenue and Bonaventure Avenue in the area of Atlanta known as

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<sup>11</sup> "Apartment Made Into Large Hotel." *The Atlanta Constitution*. 25 June 1939, 16.

Poncey-Highlands. It comprises Lots 1, 2 and 3 of the George F. Payne property, which was subdivided in June 1905 (Attachment 8).

The original owner/developer of the building was Jesse L. Morrison. Morrison was described as an "Atlanta capitalist and business man."<sup>12</sup> He owned the Morrison Realty Company in Atlanta for at least 30 years. Morrison took out a building permit on August 14, 1923, but plans for the building were well underway before then. An article in the *Atlanta Constitution* on July 15 of that year described the planned "apartment house." "The Bonaventure Arms, when completed, will rank with the handsomest and most modern apartment houses in the south. It will be of reinforced concrete construction, faced with brick." The article went on to discuss the financing for the building, and finished with a description of the leasing arrangement.<sup>13</sup> As the building neared completion in the summer of 1924, *The Atlanta Constitution* published another article extolling the virtues of the new building. The entire article is included as Attachment 17, but a description of the amenities offered follows:

"...the Bonaventure will have the advantage of the well-known hotel service inaugurated in Atlanta by the Grant-Jeter company, an arrangement that provides every type of domestic service....A large dining room has also kitchens and breakfast rooms...Elevators running at all hours, private delivery of packages, maids and messengers....Among the features of the several one-room bachelor apartments...are Murphy in-door beds...Other features found only in this apartment building are carpeted floors for each apartment room, with high class linoleum for kitchens, hallways and baths...it is said to be one of the most elegant structures of its kind to be found in the city."

The article also indicates that construction of the Bonaventure Arms cost more than \$600,000, a large sum for 1924.<sup>14</sup>

It was anticipated the clientele for the new apartment building would consist primarily of middle to upper-middle class tenants. A brief survey of the early residents showed such occupations as salesman, sales manager, office manager and district manager. There were also several vice-presidents of widely varying types of businesses, and the president of the Phoenix Supply Company. There were a number of single men and women; also several widows. Unmarried women were teachers, secretaries and salesclerks. Several residents appeared to have two apartments, often adjoining. Interestingly, according to City Directories of the period, the turnover in the apartments from year to year, at least for the first three years, was close to 90%.

According to the numbering of the rooms, the café/restaurant was located on level B, in the present location of the Clermont Lounge. There were also eight apartments, including the restaurant operator's, on that level. They would have been located in the east wing of the building where there are guest rooms today (Attachment 22).

Morrison purchased the property on 9 August 1923 (Attachment 10), but a month before that, on July 2 he took out a series of bonds totaling \$475,000 to finance the apartment building (Attachment 11). When he was unable to pay his taxes, the building went into City of Atlanta receivership. It was sold in 1926 to W. C. Foster, who resold it to Asa G. Candler in 1928. Candler in turn sold the building to Bonaventure Arms, Inc. in 1931, and five years later it went to the Briarcliff Investment Company, who were listed as its owners when the apartment was converted to a hotel in 1939. (Attachments 12-15)

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<sup>12</sup> "Beautiful Bonaventure Arms Apartment Complete." *The Atlanta Constitution*, 8 June 1923, 11.

<sup>13</sup> "Bonaventure Arms To Be Six Stories High in the Front." *The Atlanta Constitution*, 15 July 1923, 2.

<sup>14</sup> "Beautiful Bonaventure Arms Apartment Complete." *The Atlanta Constitution*, 8 June 1923, 11.

## HOTEL CLERMONT

According to City of Atlanta Directories, from 1939 – 1956 the building was known as the “Hotel Clermont,” and later as the “Clermont Hotel” beginning in 1957. The rebirth of The Bonaventure Arms as the Hotel Clermont began on April 5, 1939 when the Briarcliff Investment Company took out a building permit (Attachment 6) to “make alterations & change Apartment House to Hotel.” The work was completed by 9 September of that year, and the change is reflected in an advertisement in the 1940 *Atlanta City Directory*, which described the Hotel Clermont as the “Newest in ATLANTA.”

The Clermont was always an “extended stay” hotel with rooms ranging from singles through one-bedroom apartments with small kitchens. Later ownership records are clouded, but Glenn S. Loudermilk is listed as proprietor in the 1958-59 *Atlanta City Directory* (Attachment 24). The Loudermilk family owned the hotel until 2003 when Lillian T. Loudermilk, widow of Glenn S. Loudermilk, sold it to Inman Park Properties. Loudermilk and his wife moved into the Clermont in 1975. He died in 1977, and she remained in the hotel, residing in Room #220, a one-bedroom apartment. Her son Philip, now deceased, lived in the apartment next door, Room #221, described as a “small efficiency.” The hotel was closed on December 31, 2009 by Fulton County health inspectors, citing unsanitary conditions.<sup>15</sup> It remained largely vacant, save for the Clermont Lounge, until 2018 when it reopened as a hotel.

## THE CLERMONT LOUNGE

When the building opened in 1924 as the Bonaventure Arms Apartments, there was a restaurant on level B. The 1937 *Atlanta City Directory* lists a Bonaventure Arms Café on the level 1 (Attachment 27). In 1943, the basement became a nightclub. It underwent at least five name changes, including a brief stint as a rogue Playboy Club, until it became the Clermont Lounge in 1968 (Attachments 28-32). Today, the Lounge is still operating and proclaims itself “Atlanta’s Oldest Strip Club”. It is under separate ownership from the hotel, and leased on a month-to-month lease, its recent international notoriety has been evidenced by photography displays in Paris, and nostalgic mentions in books like George Mitchel’s *Ponce De Leon : An Intimate Portrait of Atlanta’s Most Famous Avenue*. The club has “been featured on the Travel Channel’s “The Layover”, Real Housewives of Atlanta, Comedy Central and many more [programs]... Many celebrities frequent the Clermont Lounge such as Bill Murray, Robert De Niro, Pink, Carey Hart, Kid Rock, Woody Harrelson, Morgan Freeman and many more.”<sup>16</sup>

Entertainment has played a significant role in the history of the Hotel Clermont since it was first introduced at the building’s venue in 1943. During the 1930s, a number of factors contributed to the development of modern nightlife, both across the country and, more specifically, in Atlanta. As the country slowly emerged from the Great Depression and the economy began to grow, people again had access to disposable income which supported the urban entertainment market. The contemporaneous commercialization of film and music meant big business for both industries. Motion pictures gained in popularity following the development of “talkies” in the late 1920s and color film in the 1930s. Movie theatres proliferated in Atlanta in 1943, with forty-three white and six “colored” venues listed in the *Constitution*.<sup>17</sup> Jazz was the dominant form of popular music in the 1930s and 1940s. Big bands combined the influences of both white and black musical traditions to create a sound that was commercially successful and easy to dance to.<sup>18</sup> The end of prohibition also had an impact on the growing nightlife industry. Georgia’s prohibition period (1908-1935) both predated and outlasted national policies (1920-1933).<sup>19</sup> While speakeasies and juke joints had operated during prohibition, the legalization of alcohol led to the development of more reputable “night spots” throughout Atlanta.

One of the earliest advertisements for a nightclub at the Hotel Clermont appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution* on Christmas Eve, 1943. The listing read “The Anchorage – Clermont Hotel – Freddy Deland and his orchestra playing dinner dance music.” The Anchorage was one of six such establishments listed. Others included The Royal Palm, The Biltmore Hotel, The Ansley Hotel, The Henry Grady Paradise Room and The Shangri-La. Four of the nightspots featured dining and dancing. The Henry Grady Paradise Room and The Anchorage advertised dancing only.<sup>20</sup>

By August of the following year, The Anchorage was one of seven nightclubs advertising in the *Constitution*. “The Anchorage – Hotel Clermont – Open 5 til 12 – Wine, Beer, Champagne – Dance to Music of Woody King and His Trio – Playing Nightly Except Monday – Now two dance floors!” With increasing competition came the need for nightclubs to enhance their offerings and amenities. Not only was The Anchorage emphasizing alcohol service by 1944, it also featured

<sup>15</sup> “Deadline Arrives for 85 Year Old Clermont.” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 31 December 31 2009, Section B, 6.

<sup>16</sup> “About Us.” The Clermont Lounge. <https://www.clermontlounge.net>.

<sup>17</sup> “To Amuse Us Today.” *The Atlanta Constitution*. 24 December 1943, 6.

<sup>18</sup> Baldwin, Peter C. “Nightlife in the City.” Oxford Research Encyclopedia on American History.

<http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-178>

<sup>19</sup> Fahey, David M. “Temperance Movement.” *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. 25 September 2014. Web. 03 April 2018.

<sup>20</sup> “To Amuse Us Today.” *The Atlanta Constitution*. 28 August 1944, 12.

an additional dance floor. Just three months later, in November 1944, nine nightspots were advertised. An advertisement placed in the *Constitution* shows The Anchorage's response to the growing competition. "Dine and Dance at The Anchorage – Clermont Hotel – Now Serving Steaks, Chops, Chicken – Wine, Beer, Champagne – Delightful Dance Music by Woody King and His Trio – Playing Nightly 8-12 – Open 5 pm til Midnight."

As was true throughout the U.S., Atlanta's nightlife culture continued to change as GIs returned from WWII. Their exposure to continental nightspots required that venues explore new forms of entertainment in order to stay relevant. The variety show became a popular feature of many of Atlanta's nightclubs. An article from February 1949 highlights the performances at three Atlanta venues – The Copa Caprice at the Imperial Hotel, The Paradise Room and The Rainbow Roof. "Vaudeville Hits Atlanta in Comeback – Vaudeville went down for the count of nine in the nation's theatres during the depression, but the lineup of shows in three Atlanta night spots which feature stage reviews, demonstrates conclusively that vaudeville is still kickin'." <sup>21</sup> While the majority of performances featured singing, dancing and balancing acts, the transition from the vaudeville variety show to the bawdier burlesque floorshow was underway.

Contemporaneous newspaper advertisements indicate that, like other aspects of public assembly, nightlife in Atlanta was also subject to segregation. Therefore, at approximately the same time, a parallel nightlife economy was emerging in the black community, located primarily in the Sweet Auburn district of Atlanta. While audiences were not integrated, African-American musicians played at both white and black venues. The Poinciana Club on Auburn Avenue regularly featured African-American musician Freddy Deland, who was also the first advertised artist to play at The Anchorage at the Hotel Clermont. "Freddy DeLand, who was one of the greatest piano players in the country, was playing up on Peachtree. Every night, after they finished playing Peachtree, they came down to the Poinciana and jammed till six and seven o'clock in the morning."<sup>22</sup>

The advent of television began to have an impact on Atlanta's nightclubs as early as 1949. In September of that year, an advertisement in the *Constitution* read, "Anchorage – Clermont Hotel – Open 2 pm to Midnight – Dancing Nightly – Television." While other nightspots continued to advertise dinner and dancing and floorshows, The Anchorage appears to have been looking to differentiate itself from its competition. Along with other factors, the increasing prevalence of in-home television during the 1950s had a significant impact on the role of nightclubs in American society, and the demographic to which they catered.

By 1951, as entertainment at the Hotel Clermont continued to evolve, The Gypsy Room replaced The Anchorage and the variety floorshow was introduced.<sup>23</sup> One year later, "Tiny Lou," the traveling dancer is featured in an advertisement for The Gypsy Room, shown in exotic clothing.<sup>24</sup> By 1953, the featured dancer was advertised as performing "sensational exotic dances."<sup>25</sup> While "exotic" dancing did not necessarily indicate nudity, the nature of the dances had changed decidedly from the floorshows featured a decade earlier. Music was provided by Bob Herington and his Tempos and fine dining was replaced by a snack bar featuring "a variety of tasty sandwiches and delicatessen specialties." In 1955, The Gypsy Room relocated to Pine Street and the Hotel Clermont housed a succession of entertainment tenants until 1956, when The Anchorage was back in business. The variety shows offered during The Anchorage's second tenure at the hotel appear to have offered a higher tone of entertainment (Attachment 28), but after five years, Othal Turner, owner of The Anchorage, changed the name of his business to Atlanta's Playboy Club (Attachment 30). Turner was subsequently sued by HMH Publishing Company, Inc. and Playboy Clubs International for violating their trademark. The court documents state: "Defendant Turner purchased the nightclub known as "The Anchorage" in Atlanta in 1958, and operated it through the corporate defendant. In April 1962, the corporate defendant registered the trade names "Atlanta's Playboy Club" and "Playmate" in the Clerk's Office of the Superior Court of Fulton County (Atlanta), Georgia. At the time Turner knew of the existence of Playboy Magazine and of the Chicago and Miami Playboy Clubs which had been licensed by International. The name of "The Anchorage" was changed by defendants to "Atlanta's Playboy Club" and defendants began to advertise the club in Atlanta newspapers with a picture of a girl dressed in a costume closely resembling the famous bunny costume

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<sup>21</sup> Cullen, Frank, Florence Hackman and Donald McNeilly. *Vaudeville Old & New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performances in America*. New York and London: Psychology Press, 2007. Available:

<https://books.google.com/books?id=XFfnKq6BcAC&pg=PA703&lpg=PA703&dq=tiny+lou+dancer+1950s&source=bl&ots=5woDvQr8B4&sig=CX6VJ7cdz3mZK4a5bQt24u1I3Q&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjU2enysaHaAhUL9YMKHcgxAiA4FBDoAQg9MAQ#v=onepage&q=tiny%20lou%20dancer%201950s&f=false>

<sup>22</sup> Kuhn, Clifford M. *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2005. 296.

<sup>23</sup> "The Gypsy Room." Available: [http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1951\\_1117.htm](http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1951_1117.htm)

<sup>24</sup> "The Gypsy Room." Available: [http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952\\_0308.htm](http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952_0308.htm)

<sup>25</sup> "The Gypsy Room." Available: [http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952\\_0802.htm](http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952_0802.htm)

featured by HMH.”<sup>26</sup> Advertisements from 1963 indicate that the name was again changed to The Anchorage Supper Club. The Jungle Club operated in the Hotel Clermont from 1964 until 1968.

In Atlanta, as in many cities, the development of suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s led to the decline of the inner city. Rising crime rates in the 1960s and 1970s significantly impacted the urban nightlife culture. Downtown venues, including many of the city’s nightspots and movie palaces, were replaced by adult entertainment clubs and pornographic movie houses. The Clermont Lounge opened in 1968 against the backdrop of Atlanta’s inner city transition. Johnny Kirk, owner of the Clermont Lounge, also owned the Domino Club which was the former Copa Caprice Lounge at the Imperial Hotel. Both establishments featured adult entertainment and Johnny Kirk’s wife, Tami Roche, is said to have performed onstage at the Domino Club and the Clermont Lounge. Following Mr. Kirk’s death in 1976, the business was given to Stanley McDonald who transferred it to Kathy Martin and Tracy Brown in 1996. Martin and Brown continue to operate the venue today. While the nature of the entertainment has not changed in fifty years, the audience has grown significantly. The Clermont Lounge today attracts Atlanta patrons from all walks of life, as well as celebrities and international visitors

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The Fulton County Street Railroad was organized in 1883 and began operations in 1889 along its primary route, the “Nine-Mile Circle.” The route provided service from the city center to Ponce de Leon Springs, a landscaped park and pleasure ground that was popular among Victorian Atlantans. In 1923, the Georgia Railway and Power Company extended streetcar service from Ponce de Leon Springs along Ponce de Leon Avenue, beyond the Bonaventure Arms Apartments property, to East Lake Drive in the Druid Hills neighborhood. The avenue had by this time become a major artery between Peachtree Street (and therefore, downtown Atlanta), and developing suburbs including Druid Hills and the Virginia-Highland neighborhood. Sanborn maps from the same year, the earliest to document the corridor, show an area and street composed primarily of single-family residential buildings. The extension of the streetcar line along the Ponce de Leon corridor roughly coincided with a period of planned growth in Atlanta. In 1925, Ivan Allen, Sr., president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, chaired the Forward Atlanta campaign, a national advertising campaign designed to lure new businesses to the city and to encourage national corporations to establish their regional headquarters in Atlanta. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the campaign brought 83 new businesses to relocate or establish themselves in Atlanta in 1925, 155 in 1926, 158 in 1927, and 175 in 1929.<sup>27</sup> The growing population necessitated the construction of apartment buildings, many of which were located along the Ponce de Leon corridor. Sanborn maps from 1928 and 1931 show a growing number of large apartment buildings interspersed with single-family residential buildings along the street. The majority of these apartment buildings were located along Ponce de Leon Avenue, with single-family buildings along adjacent streets. Simultaneously, commercial development was becoming more prevalent along the avenue in this area. Major commercial enterprises, such as the Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant (699 Ponce de Leon Avenue) constructed in 1915, and the Sears, Roebuck and Company Mail-Order Warehouse and Retail Store (675 Ponce de Leon Avenue), constructed in 1926, developed initially along the railroad that crosses Ponce de Leon Avenue less than two blocks east of the Hotel Clermont. In the 1920s and 1930s, commercial development spread east along the avenue. Sanborn maps from 1941 show the corridor in a period of transition. By that time, two of the largest apartment buildings on Ponce de Leon Avenue, the Bonaventure Arms and the Ten Fifty Ponce de Leon Hotel, now known as the Briarcliff Hotel, had been converted to commercial hotels and there were a growing number of commercial buildings in the formerly residential area. By 1965, at least two other area apartment buildings had been converted into motels and large numbers of single-family residential buildings had been demolished and replaced by restaurants, shops and other businesses.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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<sup>26</sup> Othal L. Turner and On-the-town, Inc., D/b/a Atlanta's Playboy Club, Appellants, v. H M H Publishing Company, Inc., et al., Appellees. US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit - 380 F.2d 224 (5th Cir. 1967)

<sup>27</sup> LaBrie, Brian. “Parkway Drive-Boulevard Apartment Historic District” Historic District Information Form,” October 28, 2016. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

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"Gypsy Room." Atlanta Time Machine. Accessed April 9, 2018. [http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952\\_0308.htm](http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952_0308.htm)

"Gypsy Room." Atlanta Time Machine. Accessed April 9, 2018. [http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952\\_0802.htm](http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/commercialbldgs/clermont1952_0802.htm)

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Martin, Kathy. Interview with Carmie McDonald. Atlanta, Georgia. April 9, 2018.

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"To Amuse Us Today." *The Atlanta Constitution*. 24 December 1943, 6.

"To Amuse Us Today." *The Atlanta Constitution*. 28 August 1944, 12.

"To Amuse Us Today." *The Atlanta Constitution*. 30 September 1944, 13.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Atlanta History Center

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** Approximately .90 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

**Datum if other than WGS84:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)**

1. **Latitude:** 33.773543

**Longitude:** -84.361172

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the southwest corner of Ponce de Leon Avenue and Bonaventure Avenue, west along the south side of Ponce de Leon Avenue 161 feet; south 200 feet to lot line; west 14.5 feet; south 40 feet to southern boundary of an abandoned alley; east 161 feet; north along the west side of Bonaventure Avenue 240 feet to point of beginning. The property also includes an abandoned 40' wide alley behind the property, giving a total north-south depth of 240 feet, and adds an additional 14.5 feet to the west on the southwest corner of the property. The boundary of the nominated property is delineated with a heavy black line on the attached survey map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the intact legal acreage currently and historically associated with the Hotel Clermont.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Marion Ellis, Carmie McDonald & Brian LaBrie

organization Ray, Ellis & LaBrie Consulting

date 9-24-2018

street & number 1516 Peachtree Street NW

telephone 678-612-2833

city or town Atlanta

state GA

zip code 30309-2908

e-mail brian@rayandellis.com

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## Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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**Photographs:**

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Hotel Clermont

City or Vicinity: Atlanta

County: Fulton

State: Georgia

Photographer: Brian W. LaBrie, Ray, Ellis & LaBrie Consulting, LLC

Date Photographed: May 10, 2018 (Photographs 2 – 41, except 17); May 14, 2018 (Photographs 42-45) & September 21, 2018 (Photographs 1, 17 & 46)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. of 46. Front facade, photographer facing south.
2. of 46. West facade, photographer facing east.
3. of 46. Rear facade from southwest corner, at Basement level B, photographer facing northeast.
4. of 46. South facade, south wing, photographer facing northwest.
5. of 46. Northwest corner parapet, photographer facing southeast.
6. of 46. Exterior view along front and sign, photographer facing east.
7. of 46. Front facade, front entrance, photographer facing south.
8. of 46. Front facade, center, looking up at parapet, photographer facing south.
9. of 46. Front facade, photographer facing south.
10. of 46. Exterior, view along east facade, photographer facing south.
11. of 46. Exterior, south end of south wing, photographer facing west.
12. of 46. Rear parking lot south of building, photographer facing west.
13. of 46. Level 1, reception area in northeast corner, photographer facing east.
14. of 46. Level 1, doorway to main stair, photographer facing south.
15. of 46. Level 1, inside view of front entrance, photographer facing north.
16. of 46. Level 1, west end, photographer facing west.
17. of 46. Level 1, west end club rooms, photographer facing south.
18. of 46. Level 1, historic doors retained, south hallway, photographer facing northeast.
19. of 46. Level 1, south hallway from south end, photographer facing north.
20. of 46. Level 1, room 119 (southwest corner), photographer facing south.
21. of 46. Level 1, south stairs, photographer facing southeast.
22. of 46. Level 2, room 214 (east side), photographer facing north.
23. of 46. Level 2, room 214 east wall, photographer facing northeast.
24. of 46. Level 2, room 214 southeast corner, photographer facing southeast.
25. of 46. Level 2, main stair, photographer facing south.
26. of 46. Level 2, room 202, photographer facing west.
27. of 46. Level 3, hallway from west end, photographer facing east.
28. of 46. Level 3, room 304, photographer facing east.
29. of 46. Level 3, room 304, photographer facing north.
30. of 46. Level 3, south hallway elevators, photographer facing southwest.
31. of 46. Level 3, south hallway, photographer facing southeast.
32. of 46. Level 4, hallway, photographer facing west.
33. of 46. Level 4, main stair, photographer facing south.
34. of 46. Level 5, room 505, photographer facing west.
35. of 46. Level 5, room 514, photographer facing north.
36. of 46. Roof, east side, photographer facing south.
37. of 46. Roof, photographer facing west.
38. of 46. Looking up at sign on roof, photographer facing southwest.
39. of 46. Basement level A, stairs to level 1, photographer facing east.
40. of 46. Basement level A, room A18, photographer facing south.
41. of 46. Basement level A, room A18, photographer facing south.
42. of 46. Clermont Lounge; photographer facing northeast.
43. of 46. Clermont Lounge; photographer facing west.

- 44. of 46. Clermont Lounge; photographer facing south.
- 45. of 46. Clermont Lounge, entry vestibule; photographer facing east.
- 46. of 46. Exterior, view along south elevation of east / west leg of hotel; photographer facing northeast.

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