

Hermit's home, other

Historical Development Commission selects Old Daphne Methodist Church, Masonic Lodge and 'Beehive Building'

Staff Report

FAIRHOPE — A Masonic lodge, a Civil War-era church and the "Beehive Building" are among the structures joining the Baldwin County Historic Register.

In its summer awards presentation, the county Historical Development Commission's architectural review committee conveyed the status on eight structures:

■ The Old Daphne United Methodist Church, which is being converted into a city museum. The church was built in the 1840s near the Daphne bayfront. Its adjoining cemetery includes graves marked as early as 1847.

■ Greeno Masonic Lodge 598, a two-story stone building constructed in 1909 on South Section Street in downtown Fairhope.

■ The Beehive Building, a one-room, igloo-shaped brick-and-masonry structure that Henry James Stuart, the self-proclaimed "Hermit of

Montrose," built as his home in 1925-26. The structure — one of three on the list of honorees owned by Eastern Shore businessman Ken Niemeyer — is surrounded by a professional office park off U.S. 98 at Parker Road in Montrose.

■ An art deco cottage built in

owned by Niemeyer.

■ A sprawling bay cottage built in the early part of the century at 155 Short St. in Fairhope, the third Niemeyer property to join the historic registry.

■ A Creole cottage built in 1904 at 12 Fels Ave. in Fairhope. The home is owned today by Sandra Dyer.

■ The bay cottage built in 1936 at 100 N. Bayview St. in Fairhope, which

is owned today by Dr. Marshall Shoemaker.

■ The Early American-style home built at 18248 Wisconsin St. in Robertsdale in 1905 by T.P. Hamm. The home is owned today by Barney Eugene Kilgore.

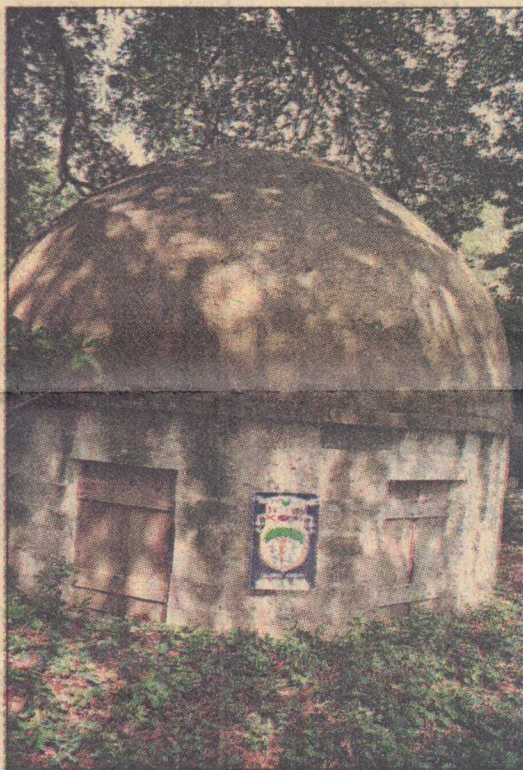
The Historic Development Commission, an advisory board appointed by the County Commission, announces its selections to the register twice each year.

The historic buildings program is designed to help catalog older buildings in the

county.

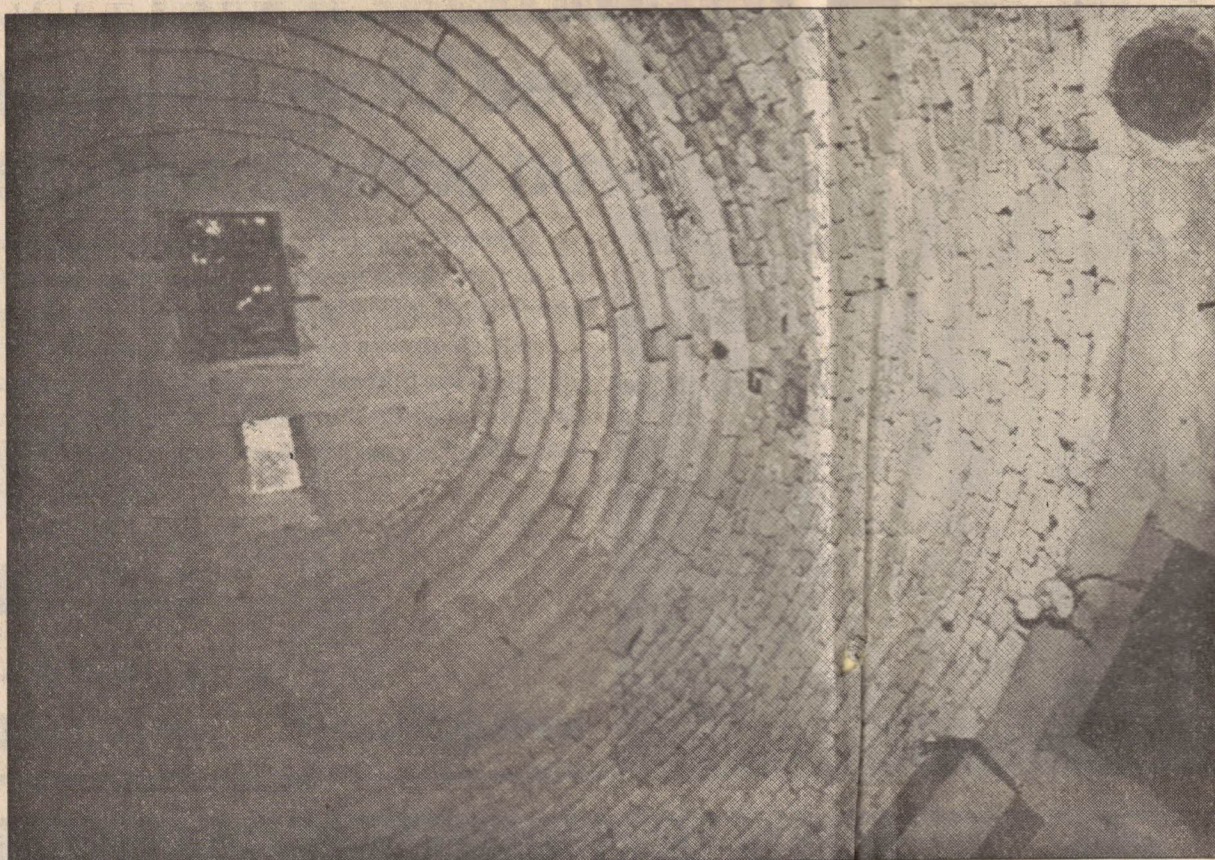
For a structure to be named a historic building, it must be at least 50 years old and either be maintained in its original condition or restored to reflect its origin.

Since the register began in 1985,



JOEY BUNCH/Register

The Beehive Building, added recently to the Baldwin County historical registry, was constructed in 1925-26 by Henry James Stuart, who was called the "Hermit of Montrose." It was built from bricks made at nearby Rock Creek.



The view of the interior dome of the Hermit's House on Parker Road in Montrose resembles a meticulous, but crude cathedral. Built by Henry James Stuart, who found delight in nature, people and animals, slept in a hammock, high in the air, strung across his round home. The hooks, secure in the lower dome, are still visible today.

Registry helps log historic structures

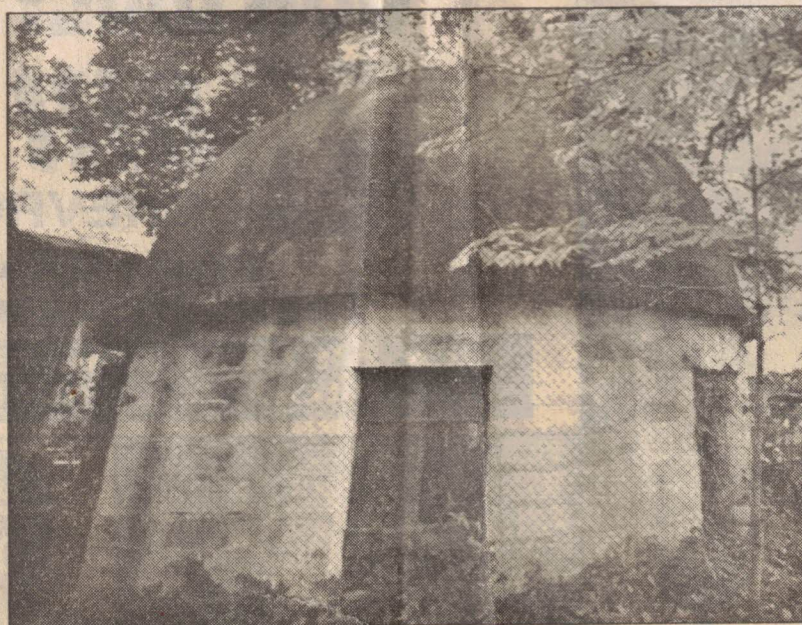
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more than 220 homes, businesses, churches and other structures throughout Baldwin County have received the designation and sign to display on their property.

After an owner applies for the designation, the outside of the building is inspected to determine whether it still adequately represents the period in which it was constructed, including continued use of the same type of building materials used at the time of its original construction.

The historic designation does not place any restrictions on the property, but if the owner makes major changes to the building, the designation can be removed.

Applications are available from the County Commission office at the Baldwin County Satellite Courthouse in Fairhope. For information, contact Kay Milstid at 928-3002.



Stuart's home still stands at the corner of U.S. 98 and Parker Road in Montrose.