

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET
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NOV 18 1977

SEP 12 1977

DATE ENTERED

APR 6 1978

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

THE "OAKS"

AND/OR COMMON

William N. Monroe House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

250 North Primrose Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Monrovia

VICINITY OF

26

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

California

06

Los Angeles

037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

☒ OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

☒ BUILDING(S)☒ PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

☒ WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

George & Sheila Dragan

STREET & NUMBER

250 North Primrose Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Monrovia

VICINITY OF

California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Los Angeles Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

320 West Temple Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Los Angeles

California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

California Historic Resources Inventory

DATE

May 1977

FEDERAL ☒ STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Sacramento

California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
☐ EXCELLENT	☐ DETERIORATED	☐ UNALTERED	☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ GOOD	☐ RUINS	☒ ALTERED	☐ MOVED DATE _____
☒ FAIR	☐ UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The "Oaks" is a two-story and attic, wood-frame residence in a combination of Stick and Eastlake styles with elaborate decoration. The basic floor plan is square with gables protruding from the east the west sides and the southeast corner of the facade, and a two-story, square tower extending from the southwest corner. The facade, which faces south, was originally composed of a large gable on the eastern side that abutted a very decorative porch with a spindle gallery and other ornamentation and entrances on either side.

The numerous decorative features of the house include an ornate boxed cornice with brackets, two corbelled chimneys, stickwork in the gables, fishscale shingles, several dormers, an iron crocket on the tower, and some window decoration. The interior still contains the original redwood panelling and staircase, its high ceilings, and the original fireplace mantels.

Alterations to the structure have consisted of an addition on the north end, the removal of the porch on the facade, the removal of most of the original ironwork on the roof, enclosure of the porch on the second story of the tower, and the removal of most of the window shutters and hoods. During World War II, the interior was sectioned into separate rooms for boarders. The new owners are currently restoring the house as closely as possible to its original appearance. They will be removing the addition on the north end, adding as much of the original ornamentation as can be found, and completely refurbishing the interior as a single-family dwelling.

The house is set to the rear of a large lot in a residential section of Monrovia.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☐ PREHISTORIC	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☒ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☒ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1885

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Solomon I. Haas

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The "Oaks" was built in 1885 for William Newton Monroe, the founder (with E.F. Spence and J.D. Bicknell) of Monrovia, and for whom the city was named. Born in Indiana in 1841, Monroe became a contractor and railroad builder, handling construction for both the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific. In 1884 he purchased 240 acres of Lucky Baldwin's ranch and helped to found the city of Monrovia two years later. Monroe was very active in the early development of the community serving as its first mayor, building and becoming a director of the Granite Bank of Monrovia, establishing a transit system, and donating property for the building of the first Monrovia school, and the Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist churches.

Monroe had his first residence built in Monrovia in 1884, the first residence in the new community. The following year, he commissioned Los Angeles architect Solomon I. Haas, whose firm was responsible for the Los Angeles City Hall in 1888, and many other distinctive buildings in the area, to design what he thought would be his permanent home in Monrovia. Since there were no hotels in the young community which was to be founded the following year, the home became the social center for most Monrovia visitors and its early citizens. Monroe stayed there for only four years, selling the "Oaks" to E.F. Spence and Judge Bicknell who transformed the structure into "Monrovia Ladies' College of the University of Southern California" in 1890. The college failed after one year and the house again became a private residence. During World War II, the house was divided into separate rooms for boarders. It was sold in 1977 and restoration work has begun on the now single-family residence to transform it back to its original condition.

The William N. Monroe House today is the second oldest residence in the city of Monrovia and the most important link to its early settlement. Besides its association with the founder of that town, it is also one of the best examples of Victorian architecture in the city.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Assessment Records of Monrovia, 1889-. Monrovia City Hall.

Monrovia Planet, December 4, 1886.

Monrovia Messenger, January 16, 1890.

-cont.-

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/3

UTM REFERENCES

A 11 407640 37179720
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A lot commencing at a point on the eastern side of Primrose Avenue 300' north of Oaks Avenue, extending 100' northward along Primrose, 141' eastward, 100' southward, and then 141' westward to the original point.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Tom Sitton Curatorial Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History

DATE

September 7, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

900 Exposition Blvd.

TELEPHONE

746-0410

CITY OR TOWN

Los Angeles

STATE

California

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

K. M. M. M.

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE November 17, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. M. M. M.

DATE

4/6/78

ATTEST:

W. M. M. M.

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/4/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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McGroarty, John S. History of Los Angeles County. 3 vols. Chicago:
America Historical Society, 1923.

Wiley, John L. History of Monrovia. Pasadena: Pasadena Star News, 1927.

THE "OAKS"

MONROE A, CA.

