

THE STEWART RESIDENCE

4116 South Douglas Road

Designation Report



East and south elevations



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI
PRESERVATION OFFICER
TO THE HISTORIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF THE
STEWART RESIDENCE, 4116 S. DOUGLAS ROAD
AS AN HISTORIC SITE

Prepared by Ellen J. Uguccioni for
Janus Research, Consultant

Prepared by Kathleen S. Kauffman
Preservation Officer

Passed and
Adopted on _____

Resolution No. _____

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Names:

The Stewart Residence

Current Name:

The Lobree Residence

Location:

4116 South Douglas Road (aka 4116 S.W. 37th Ave)
Coconut Grove

Present Owner:

H. Baird and Melissa Lobree
4116 S. Douglas Road (aka 4116 S. W. 37th Ave)
Miami, Florida 33133-6820

Present Use:

Private Residence

Zoning District:

Residential / Single-Family

Tax Folio Number

01-4129-015-0040

Boundary Description

Lot 20 and the North 90 feet of Lot 19, J.W. EWAN'S SUBDIVISION, as recorded in Plat Book 1-51 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida

Classification:

Historic Site

II. SIGNIFICANCE

Specific Dates:

1914, Date of Construction
1968, Addition to the Rear

Architect:

Unknown

Builder/ Contractor:

Unknown

Statement of Significance

The residence at 4116 South Douglas Road is one of the few remaining wood frame vernacular houses that still possesses a great deal of original fabric, and that represents a distinctive type illustrating the skillful use of form and detail that exemplifies the period in which it was built. The two story residence is reminiscent of the Bungalow and Craftsman traditions that were popular designs in Miami's pre-Boom history.

Cocoanut Grove is one of the Greater Miami area's oldest communities, with a history that dates back to the 1860s, when in 1862 the federal government passed the Homestead Act. The law provided that any adult citizen who pledged to make improvements, and live at the homesteaded location for at least five years would be given a 160 tract of land gratis. The first homesteader in Cocoanut Grove was Edmund (Ned) Beasley who filed for a homestead in 1868.

He was soon followed by J. William Ewan, from Charleston, S.C. who filed for his land in 1876. That land included the parcel on which 4116 South Douglas Road was built. These early pioneers made their living through agricultural pursuits and "wrecking" which allowed them to salvage goods from hapless ships that were torn up on the numerous reefs in the Bay.

Commodore Ralph Monroe, a boat builder from Staten Island, New York, had made two previous trips to the Miami area, but came to Cocoanut Grove to permanently settle in 1886. In 1891 the Commodore built his own residence he dubbed "The Barnacle," fronting onto the Bay in Cocoanut Grove. Monroe convinced former Northerners Charles and Isabella Peacock that the Cocoanut Grove area would provide infinite opportunities if potential settlers had a temporary place to stay. The Peacock's bought some 31 acres from the Beasley estate and built the Bay View House in 1884, which later became known as the Peacock Inn (built on the present site of Peacock Park).

As more and more settlers found their way to the Grove, its future was insured. By 1893 there were over one hundred homesteads, and by 1896 the Grove had its own post office, public school, library, church, yacht club, and Woman's Club (called the "Housekeeper's Club"). With the coming of Flagler's Railroad, the City of Miami was incorporated in 1896 and its growth would ultimately impinge on the unique local community of Cocoanut Grove.

During World War I the Dinner Key Naval Airbase was opened to seaplane traffic, and became a noisy nuisance after the war ended and it continued to operate. Seeking to empower themselves, a meeting of Cocoanut Grove residents was held on March 18, 1919 for the purpose of incorporating the town. The people elected Irving J. Thomas as their mayor and an additional seven aldermen. It was also at this time that the "a" in "Cocoanut" was omitted from the Town's name.

Time was running out for the newly incorporated town, as the City of Miami was pursuing its annexation along with the communities of Lemon City and Silver Bluff located to the north of Coconut Grove. Though the "Grovites" fought for their independence, Coconut Grove was annexed on September 2, 1925.

The residence at 4116 Douglas Road is located within the J.W. Ewan subdivision. JW Ewan who filed the plat for the subdivision in Coconut Grove bearing his name, was an entrepreneur with a fortune in land holdings. His influence in town earned him the nickname "The Duke of Dade." Apparently, Ewan was a tough landlord, as one *Miami Herald* article claimed that the county seat was actually moved to Juno (although temporarily), when Ewan raised the rent in the former County offices then located in Old Fort Dallas.

The subdivision was actually platted by Robert L. Stewart, and it is his name written on the parcel where the future residence at 4116 Douglas Road would be built. The 1919 R.L. Polk City Directory lists his occupation as a "civil engineer," and his residence on "County Road." The chain of title indicates that "Mary Stewart" was the first owner of the parcel, and would have been its owner when the home was actually built.

The chain of title also indicates that at some point between 1915 and 1925, 4116 South Douglas Road was owned by Sheriff Dan Hardie. Hardie was elected Sheriff of Dade County in 1908. His platform included his promise to enforce restrictions on saloons and so called "bawdy houses," that were quickly appearing as Miami experienced more and more growth. Hardie had a number of interests in the Greater Miami area including a "Hardie's Casino" which he opened on Miami Beach in 1914, a year before Miami Beach was incorporated. (Parks: MMC, 93.) Hardie's influence in the Coconut Grove community is evidenced by the fact that the street that forms the southern edge of the J.W. Ewan subdivision was named "Hardie Road".

Chain of Title

First Party:	J.W. Ewan to	
Second Party:	Mary J. Stewart	Date Recorded: January 7, 1913
First Party:	J.W. Ewan to	
Second Party:	Courad	Date Recorded: May 26, 1915
First Party:	Courad to	
Second Party:	Eppensou	Date Recorded: October 9, 1915
First Party:	Hardie to	
Second Party:	Platt	Date Recorded: May 22, 1925
First Party:	Stewart to	
Second Party:	Platt	Date Recorded: July 23, 1930
First Party:	Caroline L. Platt to	
Second Party:	Bell	Date Recorded: Dec. 21, 1934
First Party:	Platt and Booth to	
Second Party:	Bell	Date Recorded: Dec. 27, 1934
First Party:	Bell to	
Second Party:	Mairs	Date Recorded: June 22, 1945
First Party:	Mairs to	
Second Party	Kaynor	Date recorded Jan. 24, 1961

The Kaynor's sold the home to Mr. and Mrs. H. Baird Lobree in July, 2003.

Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

The Lobree Residence has significance in the historic and architectural heritage of the City of Miami; possesses integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association; and is eligible for designation under the following criteria:

1. Are associated in a significant way with the life of a person important in the past.

The roster of residents of this house, from its construction on into the 1930s, is an impressive roll-call of individuals who have had significant impact on the history of Coconut Grove.

3. Exemplify the historical, cultural, political, economical, or social trends of the community.

The Lobree Residence is an exceptional example of the design and type of residence constructed in the early stages of Miami's history. It reflects a type once found in substantial numbers, and favored by the pioneers of this community.

4. Embody those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction.

The Lobree Residence is an outstanding example of a "Craftsman" design. The degree of excellence illustrated by the residence includes the retention of original windows (some with antique "wavy" glass,) and significant interior details such as the bead board wainscoting, original Dade County pine flooring and original coral rock fireplace with extruded grouting.

III. DESCRIPTION

Present and Original Appearance:

Setting:

The Lobree residence is located on the west side of Douglas Road (S.W. 37th Avenue) and faces east. The residence is located almost immediately north of the intersections of Douglas Road/ Park Avenue and Ingraham Highway. The residence itself is set well back from the edge of the roadway, and presently there is an open space between the house and the road that is unpaved.

Exterior Description

East (Main) and South Elevations

This two story frame-residence rests on an elevated foundation, and a central entrance is focused by a staircase approached by three risers. The entrance door is characterized by double-leaved doors with screens. The steps lead to a deep porch that extends the entire width of the east and south elevations. The porch is sheltered by a front facing gable that features wide overhanging eaves, wooden brackets at the sides and center extending beyond the roof eave, and narrow, vertical wooden strips that embellish the interior of the gable end.

The north side of the east porch is enclosed by screens and entered by a side doorway from the porch. The base of this element is comprised of horizontal lap siding (presently aluminum siding.) The south side of the porch is open, until approximately midway along the side, and then is also enclosed in a mirror image of the north end of the east elevation. A plain wooden

balustrade, composed of simple wooden balusters with a rectangular profile extends across the east and south elevations.

The second story extends above the line established by the porch roofs, and features paired one-over-one sash windows at the ends of the east elevation, and the same window type, but a variation of sizes on the second story, south elevation.

The east elevation features wide eaves and outrigger beams, and the south elevation features the same gable end and bracket treatment as on the first floor.

At present there is a later addition that extends from the north elevation at the rear of the residence that is somewhat visible from the east elevation. The condition of that addition is poor, with serious structural concerns, and the applicant has received permission to demolish that structure, which will become the location for a one-car garage.

West (Rear) Elevation

The southernmost bay of this side is dominated by the enormous, random coursed coral rock chimney that extends from the first through the second stories and then terminates above the roof line. The plan of the residence departs from its square plan shape at this location to create an "L" with a section extending perpendicularly from the main block.

In 1968 a deck and terrace were added to this location, which will be removed in the plans for the rehabilitation and addition.

Original window configurations on the rear, repeat the same configurations (one-over-sash) as found elsewhere across the façade.

North (Side) Elevation

This side features a bay window on the first floor that extends from the house and is covered with a shed roof. Even here, the detail is evident in the overhanging eaves that maintain the outrigger beams found in the overall roof design.

Similarly, the second floor maintains the fenestration pattern, and the gable end is defined by wooden brackets and the vertical strips on the interior of the gable end. This is the location of the two story addition that extends out perpendicularly from the main house. This addition will be replaced with a two-story addition in plans previously approved by the Miami Historic and Environmental Preservation Board.

Style

The design for the Lobree Residence is best described as "Craftsman." The Craftsman style actually originated at the beginning of the Twentieth Century with the work of Charles Sumner and Henry Mathers Greene, brothers who practiced together in Pasadena, California. Around 1903, the Greene's began to design simple bungalows that were influenced by the English Arts and Crafts Movement, as well as Oriental architecture. The bungalow form and the Craftsman details became hugely popular nationwide, thanks largely to the extensive publicity that the style received in such magazines as *Western Architect*, *House Beautiful*, *Good Housekeeping*, and the *Architectural Record*. Pattern books were published that circulated around the country, making the Craftsman bungalow one of the most popular small houses in America.

The Lobree Residence is an outstanding example of the style as adapted for the climate of South Florida. The house is built of Dade County pine, and features such Craftsman details as low-pitched front gable roofs; wide, unenclosed eave overhang; wide, exposed roof rafters; knee braces under the gable, and a partial width porch that extends across the front and sides.

ALTERATIONS

Aluminum siding was applied to the home in 1950s. The question as to the condition of the wood siding below the aluminum siding has been partially answered through some random sampling and evaluation by the owner.

In 1968 an addition was made to the residence that included a deck at the rear and a second story addition. That addition is proposed to be removed as a part of this request before the Historic and Environmental Preservation Board.

A pool was added in 1965.

a. ACCELERATED CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

On November 1, 2005 the City of Miami's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board met to consider the following:

- i. Preliminary evaluation of a proposal for designation for conformance with the criteria for designation as a historic site.
- ii. Application for the rehabilitation of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the subject property, including the demolition of a rear addition, the construction of a two story addition, and the installation of fences and walls.

The improvements were designed by Florian N.J. Hutt & Pedro Bravo, LLC, and copies are on file in the City of Miami's Historic Preservation office.

The Board unanimously approved the plans, with two conditions:

- a. That the shed roofed structure covering the pedestrian entrance be removed, and that,
- b. That the applicants consider an alternative to the rear staircase design.

THIS DESIGNATION APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED ACKNOWLEDGING THE NEW CONSTRUCTION, AND ASSERTS THAT WITH THE ADDITION AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS THAT THE RESIDENCE STILL RETAINS ITS HISTORIC INTEGRITY.

Contributing Structures:

The contributing structure on the site is the residence itself. The chickee hut and swimming pool are non-contributing structures.

IV. Planning Context

Present Trends and Conditions:

This unique reminder of an independent Coconut Grove inhabited by only the hardiest of pioneers has virtually vanished from the City of Miami. The owners are challenged by the economic realities of present day, and their desire to preserve and make livable this extraordinary architectural monument. The plan, as described in the previously approved Accelerated Certificate of Appropriateness application, will achieve both these goals.

Preservation Incentives:

The owner will later apply for the ad valorem tax incentives allowed in Miami-Dade County for historic structure rehabilitation. The historic designation will also make it possible for the building official to exercise some flexibility when applying the Building Code to the plans for the rehabilitation and new construction.

Report prepared by: Ellen J. Uguccioni
 Janus Research
 January 2006

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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H. BAIRD AND MELISSA LOBREE RESIDENCE

4116 Douglas Road



location



site plan



4116 S. Douglas Road
East Elevation, c. 1945
Courtesy, City of Miami