

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE NUMBER: C14H-06-0038

HLC DATE:

November 27, 2006

PC DATE:

September 25, 2007

APPLICANT: George and Matilde Schade

HISTORIC NAME: Cranfill House

WATERSHED: Shoal Creek

ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:

1901 Cliff Street

ZONING FROM: SF-3-CO-NP

TO: SF-3-CO-H-NP

SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan (SF-3-CO-NP) combining district zoning to single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan – Historic (SF-3-H-CO-NP) combining district zoning.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION: November 27, 2006: Recommended the proposed zoning change from single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan (SF-3-CO-NP) district to single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan – Historic (SF-3-CO-H-NP) combining district zoning. Vote: 6-0 (Arend, Leary and Mather absent).

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: Recommended the proposed zoning change from single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan (SF-3-CO-NP) district to single family residence, conditional overlay, neighborhood plan – Historic (SF-3-CO-H-NP) combining district zoning. Vote: 8-0.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Cranfill House is not listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) because it has only recently become eligible for historic designation.

CITY COUNCIL DATE: October 18, 2007

ACTION:

ORDINANCE READINGS: 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

CASE MANAGER: Steve Sadowsky

PHONE: 974-6454

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION: Caswell Heights Neighborhood Association

### **BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The 1955 Cranfill House is an excellent example of mid-century modern residential architecture by master architect and educator Harwell Hamilton Harris. The house was designed while Harris served as the first Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas (1951-1955). Dr. Thomas Cranfill was a professor emeritus of English at the University of Texas and an art collector.

### **Architecture:**

The Thomas Cranfill House was designed by Harwell Hamilton Harris (1903-1990), who was one of the leading practitioners of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century modern design. The Cranfill House is one of only a few houses built in Austin during the period which Harris was the Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas. It is an outstanding example of his work, similar in design to his earlier wood homes in California, but executed in native cypress instead of redwood. The Cranfill House has an L-shaped plan with separate garage, creating a private interior courtyard screened from the street. The house has north facing clerestory windows projecting from a low pitched hipped roof, originally wood shingles now composition shingles; natural cypress board and batten siding; glass windows and doors opening onto the courtyard sheltered by deep overhanging eaves and a projecting trellis of exposed structure; additional courtyards are formed by wood screen walls projecting onto the site and screening the interior spaces from the street view. The Cranfill House reflects a transition in Harris' work as he adapted his regional (California) style to the different climate and environmental factors found in Austin.

### **Historical Associations:**

The 1955 house was constructed for University of Texas at Austin English professor, Dr. Thomas Cranfill. Dr. Cranfill specialized in Shakespeare and the literature of the Renaissance and served as an editor of the *Texas Quarterly*, a nationally known review of literature. With Robert L. Clark Jr., he published *An Anatomy of 'The Turn of the Screw,'* a study of the Henry James masterpiece.

Professor Cranfill twice held a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship in Mexico. He organized the Mexican modern graphics collection for General Motors of Mexico and a Latin American art collection for Braniff International. Dr. Cranfill began his personal collection of more than 1,000 pieces of American, European, Latin American, and oriental art in 1958. Works of art in the Cranfill Collection include paintings, prints, etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs by Matisse, Picasso, Sully, Duveneck, and Toledo.

The current owners of the house, George and Matilde Schade purchased the house from the heirs of Dr. Cranfill. The owners were friends of Dr. Cranfill and have maintained the house in its original condition save the conversion of the art gallery into a library.

**PARCEL NO.:** 01130011110000

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Lot 10 & 11 and the South 40 ft of Lot 12, Block 3, Carrington Subdivision, Austin, Travis County, Texas

**ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$5,682.53 (owner occupied)

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$ 487,444.00

**PRESENT USE:** Residence

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNER**

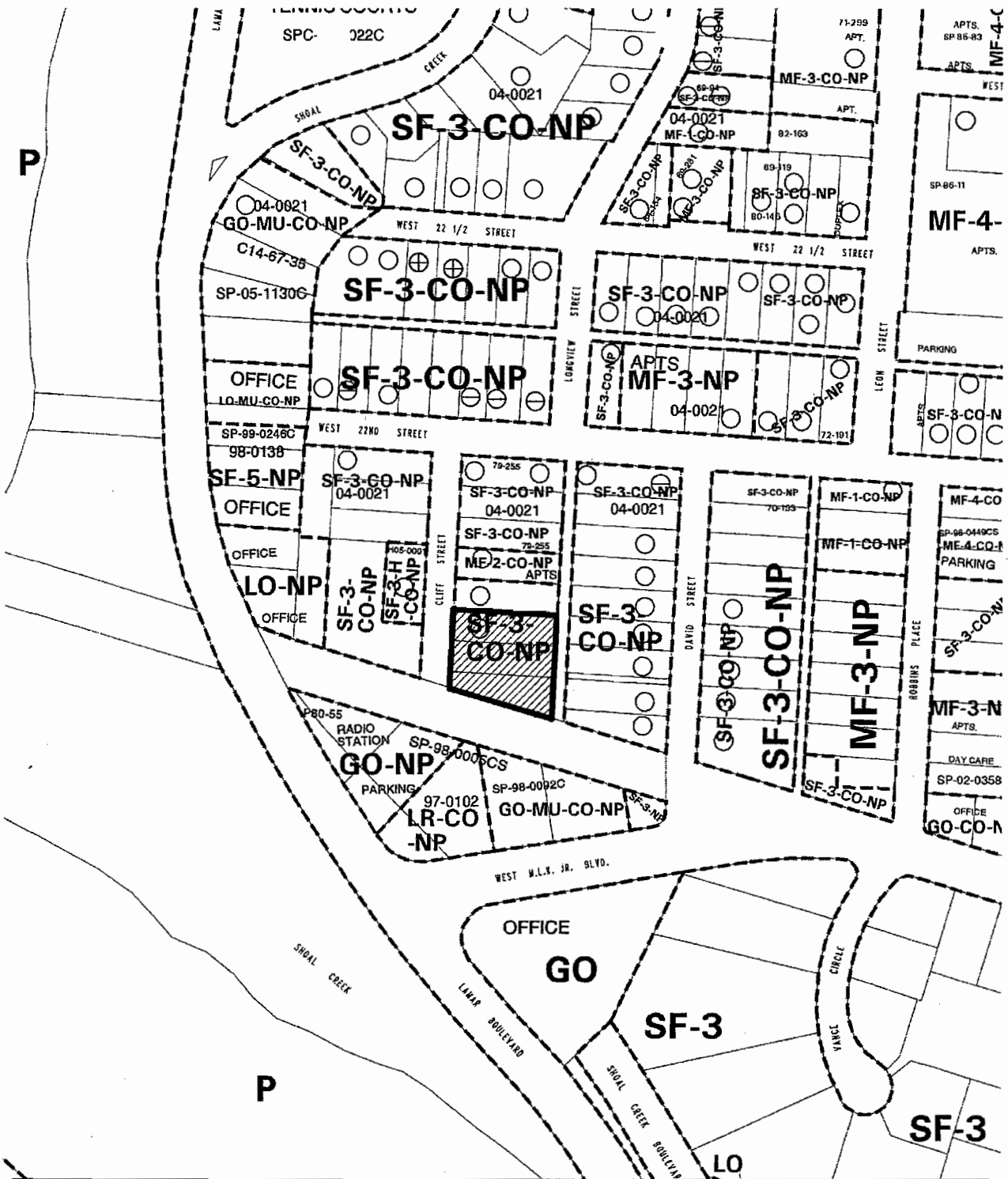
George and Matilde Schade  
1901 Cliff St.  
Austin, TX 78705

**DATE BUILT:** 1955

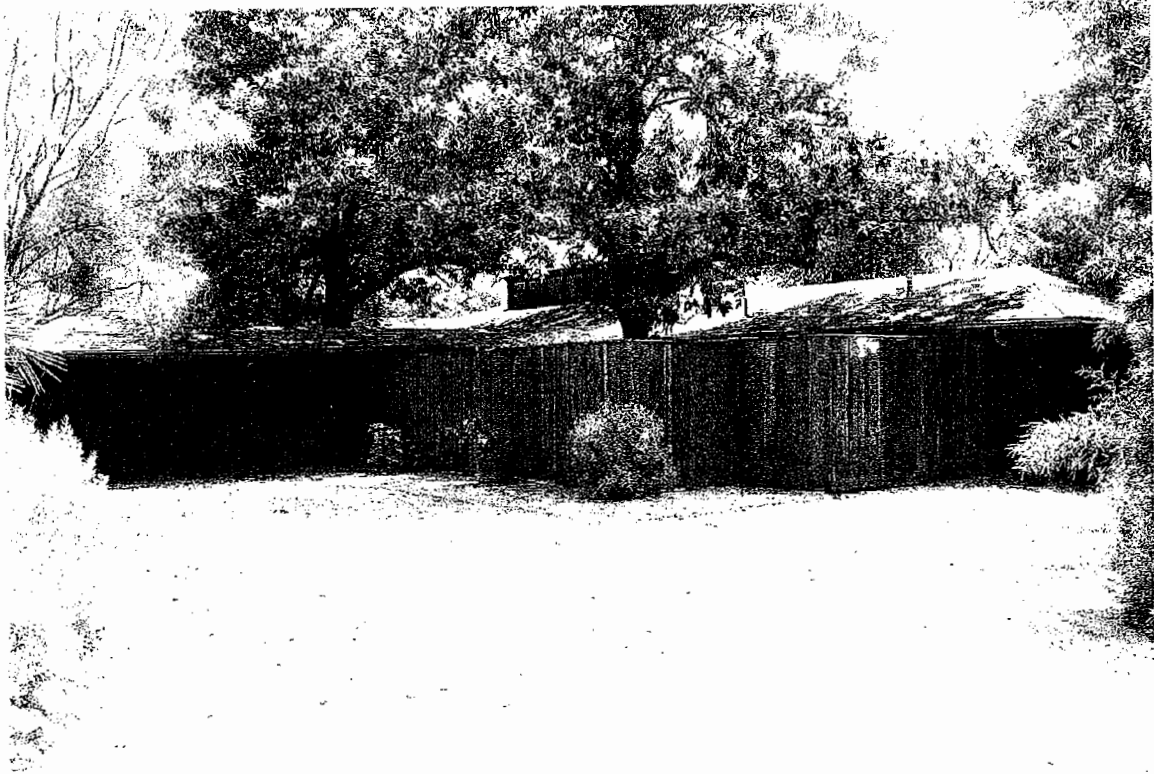
**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** Cedar shingle roof replaced with composition roof shingles; conversion of entry art gallery to library; removal of original carpet and subsequent staining and finishing concrete slab; paint color of plaster accent walls has changed

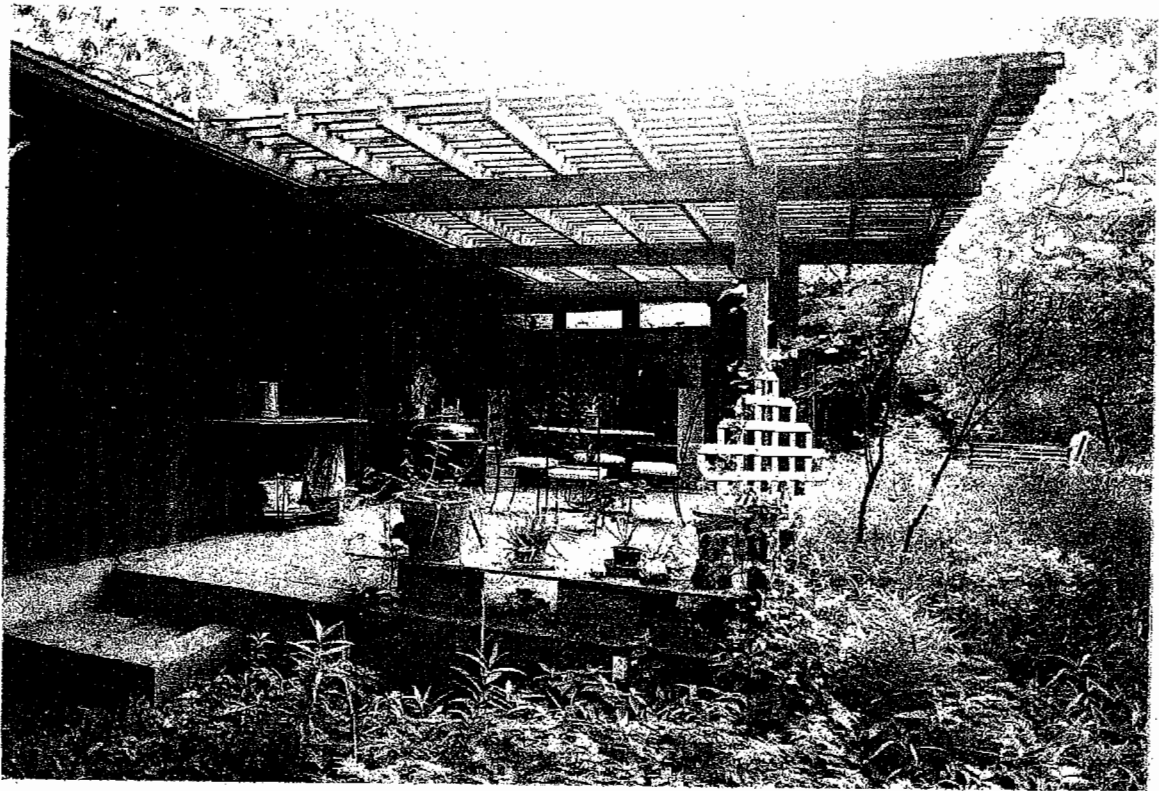
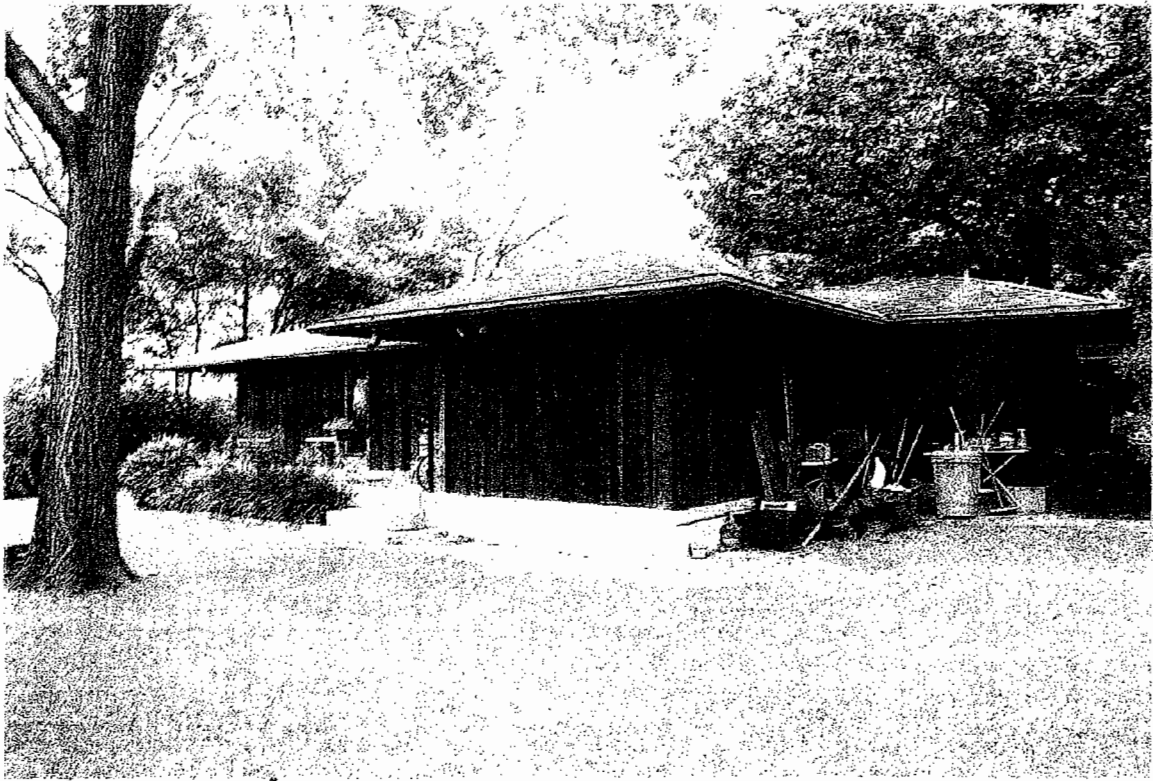
**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Dr. Thomas M. Cranfill

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** None

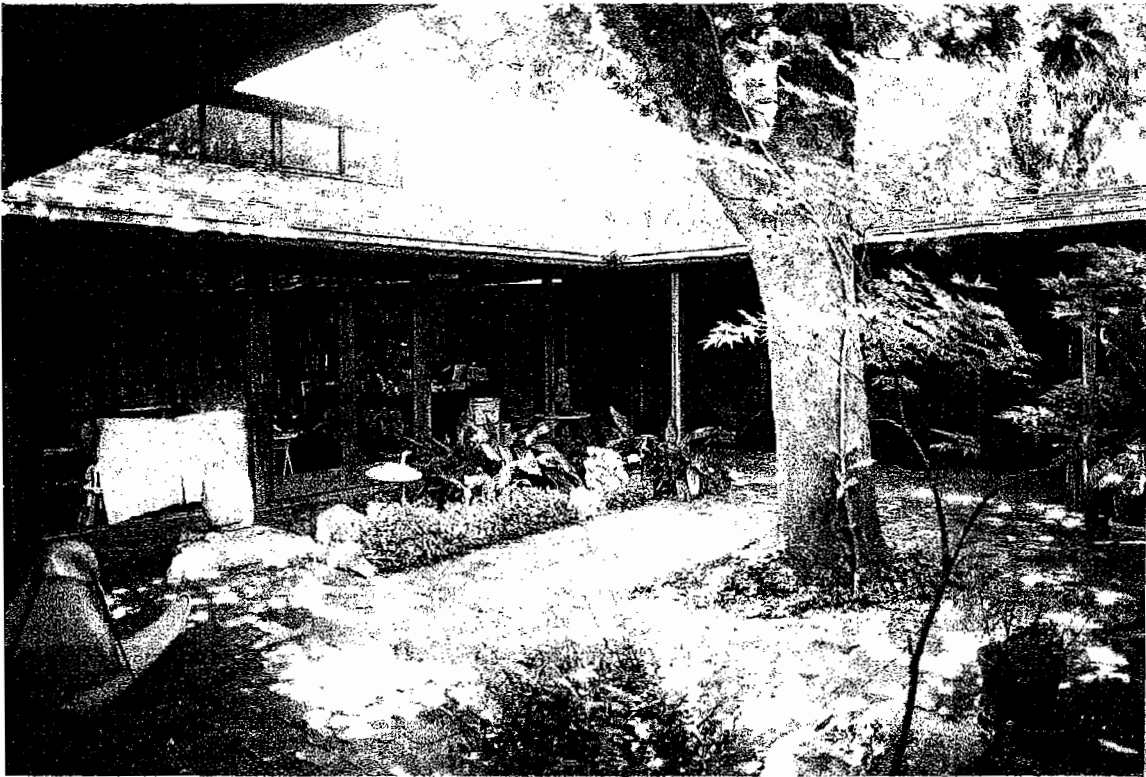
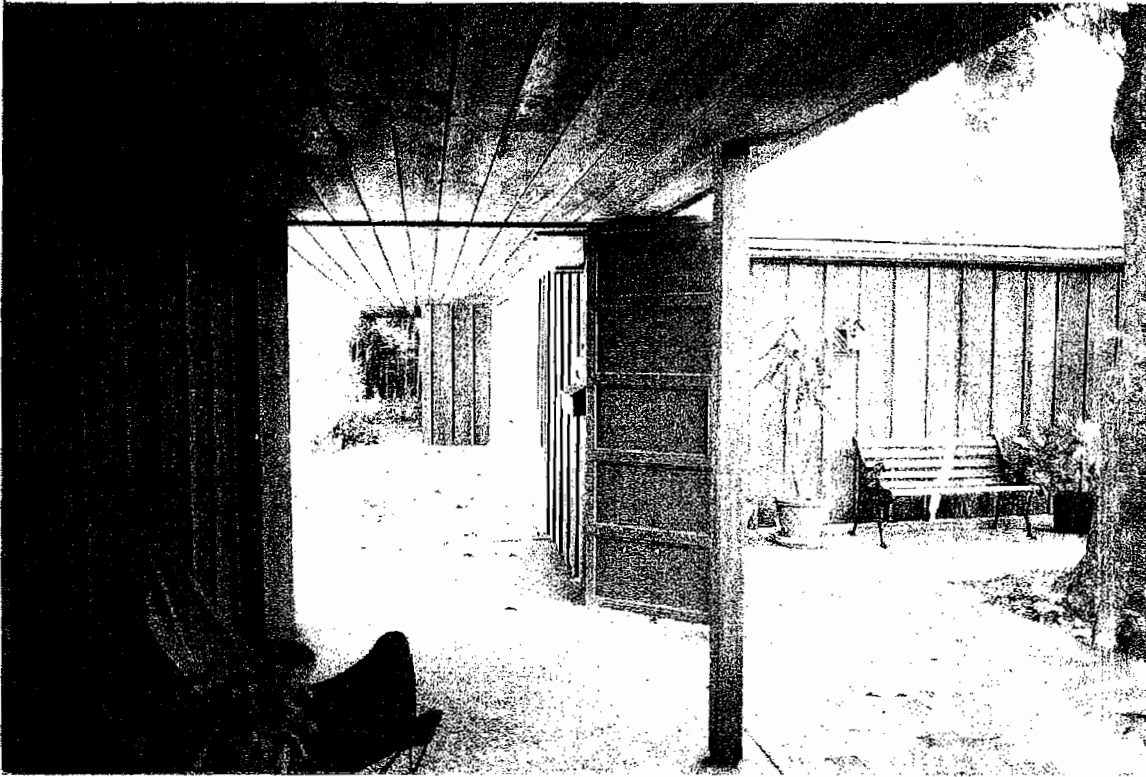


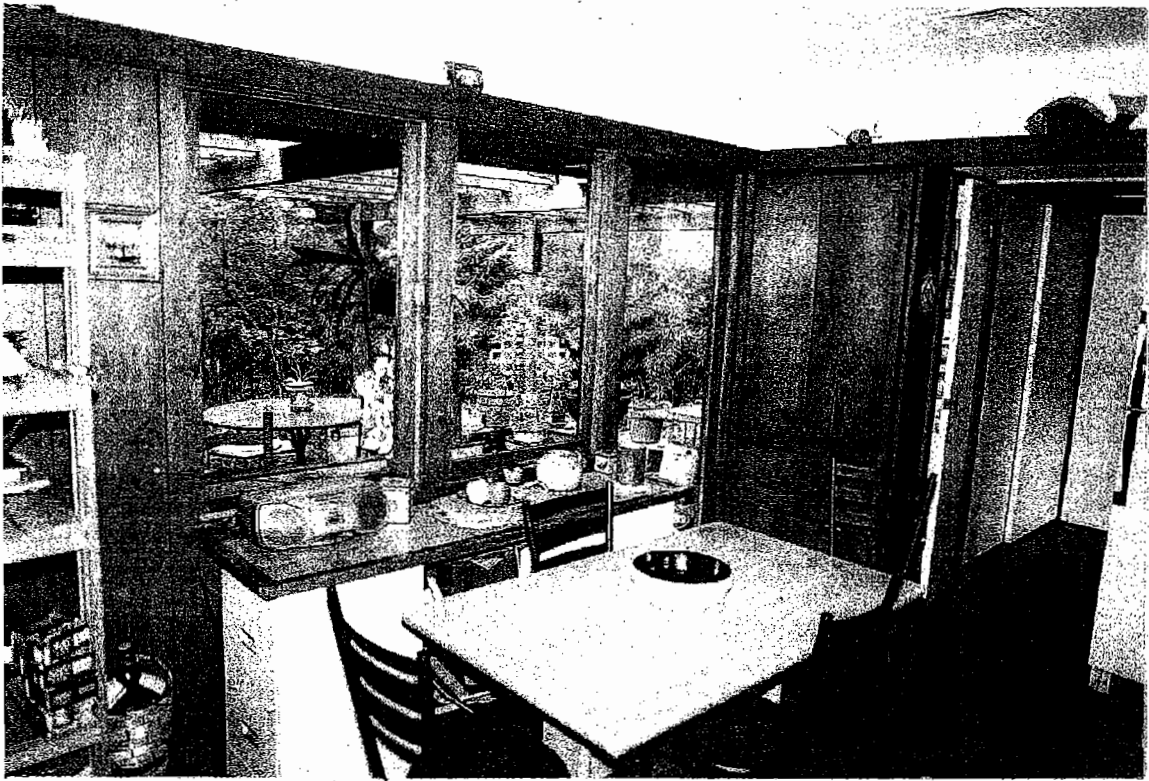
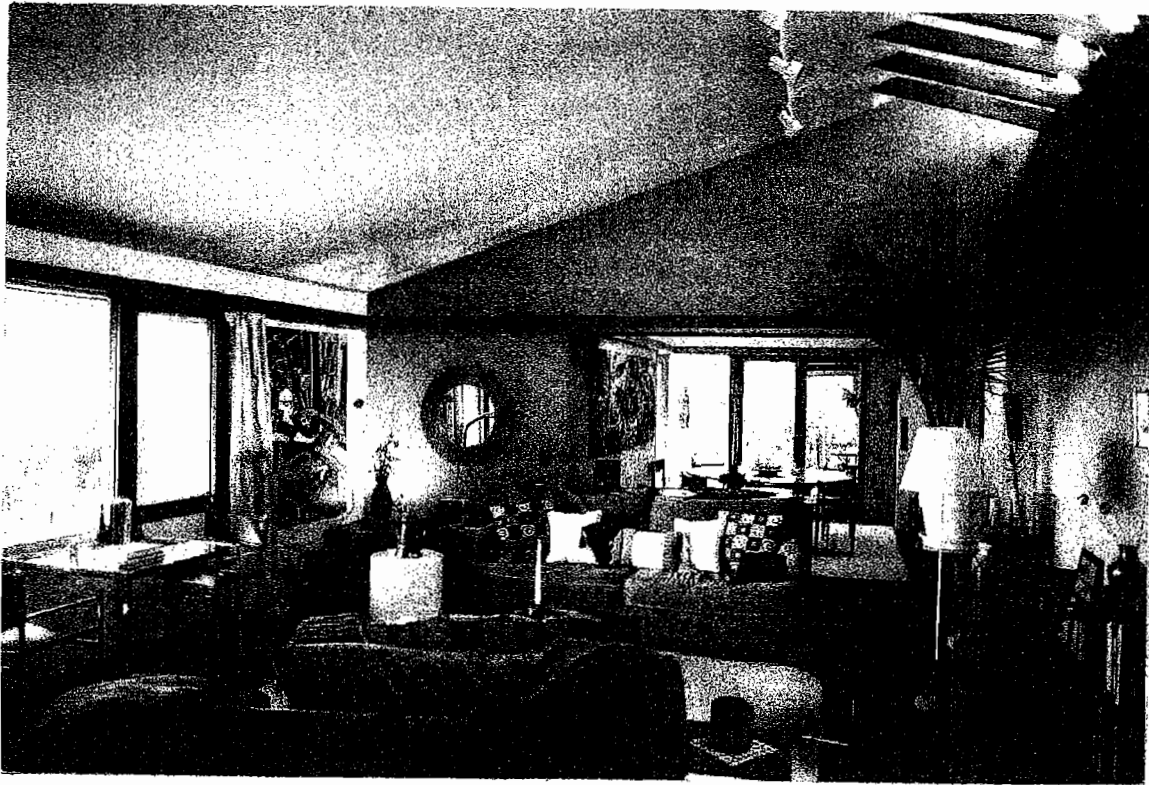
 1" = 200'	SUBJECT TRACT		HISTORIC ZONING		CITY GRID REFERENCE NUMBER  H23
	PENDING CASE				
	ZONING BOUNDARY		CASE #: C14H-06-0038	DATE: 06-11	
	CASE MGR: S. SADOWSKY	ADDRESS: 1901 CLIFF ST	INTLS: SM		
	SUBJECT AREA (acres): N/A				













(Oct. 1990)  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Cranfill, Thomas, House  
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 1901 Cliff Street  
CITY OR TOWN: Austin  
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Travis CODE: 453 ZIP CODE: 78705-5309  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A  
VICINITY: N/A

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 ( ☐ nationally ) ( ☐ statewide ) ( ☒ locally ). ( ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

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**5. CLASSIFICATION**

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**OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY:** Private

**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY:** Building

<b>NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:</b>	<b>CONTRIBUTING</b>	<b>NONCONTRIBUTING</b>
	1	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	0	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	1	0 TOTAL

**NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER:** 0

**NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:** N/A

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**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

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**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** Domestic : Single Family Dwelling

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:** Domestic : Single Family Dwelling

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

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**ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** Modern/Ranch

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION Concrete  
WALLS Wood/Cypress siding  
ROOF Asphalt Shingles  
OTHER Wood/Cypress Trim & Privacy Screens

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-7).

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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**APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA**

- ☐ **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 VALUE, 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:** N/A

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:** Architecture

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1955

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:** 1955

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT/BUILDER:** Harwell Hamilton Harris, Architect/J. M. Odom, General Contractor

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-8 through 8-11).

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheet 9-12).

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS):** N/A

- ☐ 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 #

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☒ University: Alexander Archive at The University of Texas at Austin
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	620054	3351051

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** Lot 10 & 11 & South 40 Ft. of Lot 12, Blk. 3 OLT 26-28 DIV D  
Carrington Subdivision, City of Austin, Travis County, Texas.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:** Nomination includes all property historical associated with the building

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**11. FORM PREPARED BY** (with assistance of Gregory Smith, National Register Coordinator, THC)

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**NAME/TITLE:** David Bentley, MS in Historic Preservation Graduate Student

**ORGANIZATION:** The University of Texas at Austin

**DATE:** May 18, 2004

**STREET & NUMBER:** 3707 Meredith Street

**TELEPHONE:** 512 482 8400

**CITY OR TOWN:** Austin

**STATE:** TX

**ZIP CODE:** 78703-2020

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**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

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**CONTINUATION SHEETS**

**MAPS** (see continuation sheet 13 Map-#1)

**PHOTOGRAPHS** (see continuation sheet 19 Photos-#1-4)

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS** (see continuation sheets 14 through 18 Figures 1-7)

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**PROPERTY OWNER**

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**NAME:** George and Matilde Schade

**STREET & NUMBER:** 1901 Cliff Street

**TELEPHONE:** 512 478 7424

**CITY OR TOWN:** Austin

**STATE:** TX

**ZIP CODE:** 78705-5309

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Thomas Cranfill house in Austin, Texas was constructed in 1955 for the University of Texas English Professor and art collector. The house is located west of The University campus at the end of Cliff Street, on a steeply sloping site overlooking Shoal Creek Basin. The house and connected garage are single-story wood frame structures on a concrete slab foundation with exterior walls of vertical board and batten natural finish cypress siding. A shallow pitched hip roof with deep overhangs, originally of wood shingles, now replaced by asphalt shingles, caps the walls. An interior wall of smooth cut native limestone separates the living room and former art gallery. Natural finish cypress doors, windows, trim, light cove, and original custom cabinetry are found throughout the interior. The house is an outstanding example of mid-century modern design, by one of its early practitioners, the architect and educator, Harwell Hamilton Harris. The property was purchased by the present owners, George and Matilde Schade, long time friends of Thomas Cranfill, from the estate following his death in 1995.

### Geographic Setting and Site

The Thomas Cranfill house was designed for the University of Texas at Austin English professor in 1952, one of the first projects of Hamilton Harwell Harris outside of his native California. The house is located on a small lot at the end of Cliff Street, a quiet street at the back of the neighborhood west of the University, along the bank overlooking the Shoal Creek Basin. The street ends at the property, with the driveway extending from the end of Cliff Street, turning to the left to enter an asphalt parking court with exposed aggregate concrete walks, defined by a two-car garage structure to the east and a wooden screen privacy wall enclosing a service court to the south. The house is sited along the top of the bank and opens to the view from Shoal Creek basin to the west to the downtown skyline to the south. A exposed aggregate concrete raised patio with wooden trellis above extends along the south side of the house outside the kitchen and dining areas. A walk continues along the south side of the dining room stepping down to a larger open patio of exposed aggregate concrete pavers set in gravel outside the living area. A gravel path continues to the east connecting to a grass lawn surrounded by perimeter plantings off the bedrooms. Significant trees are located around the perimeter of the house, including one located in the central courtyard between the house and garage. Significant vegetation buffers the site to east and north isolating it from the surrounding neighborhood.

### Exterior Design

The Cranfill house consists of two single-story pavilions on a concrete slab foundation with exterior walls covered with vertical cypress board and batten siding. A shallow pitched hip roof with deep overhangs, originally of wood shingles, now replaced by asphalt, caps the walls and connects the two structures with a covered entry porch. Deep overhangs project from just above the head casing of the windows and doors, with soffits finished in horizontal cypress, mitered at the corners. The house is an L shape plan elongated across the site overlooking the steep hillside to the rear. The garage is sited adjacent to the north end of the bedroom wing

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

creating three sides of a central open courtyard. The covered entry completes the courtyard, shielded from the street with vertical wooden privacy fencing, and an enclosed service court north of the kitchen and utility area. A characteristic bank of clerestory windows open to the north above the hip roof, allowing daylight into both sides of the living room while maintaining privacy from the street. Entry to the house is off the parking court through a solid double door in the screen wall adjacent to the garage door and through the covered porch along the courtyard. A double French door at the opposite end of the porch originally provided access to an art gallery that stretched along the south side of the courtyard. A second set of French doors at the end of the gallery provides access to the present entry. French doors and windows are single panels of glass enclosed in a natural finish cypress rail and style frame. Large fixed glass window units are flanked by operable casement units or French doors. Framed openings conform to a three foot grid with a uniform six foot eight inch head height for full or half height units. Custom details designed by the architect include wood exterior light fixtures at the entrance and entry porch and geometric overlay patterning on the single panel double garage door.

### Interior Design

Typical of a Harris design, the plan of the house was laid out on a uniform three foot grid. The modularity of the plan appealed to his modern sense of organization and organic design. The nature of the module made growth and change easy by extension of the established grid. The grid is extended into three dimensions by incorporating a uniform lighting molding around the interior spaces at the head height of the doors and windows. Fluorescent lighting tubes illuminate the upper walls and ceilings above creating a greater feeling of spaciousness than the eight foot ceilings would usually impart. Executed in natural finish cypress, the lighting cove unites the wood trimmed openings around the room and provides a sense of human scale and a feeling of coziness. Walls and ceilings are of gypsum wallboard, except the wall separating the original gallery from the living space, which is clad in smooth finished shell limestone on both sides. Floors are finished in a beige terrazzo in the gallery, kitchen, baths, and utility areas and roughened unfinished concrete elsewhere for carpet floor coverings.

The interrelationship between interior and exterior space is evident throughout the house. The house is entered through the solid doors in the screen wall proceeding along a covered porch open to the central courtyard. French doors at the opposite end lead to the gallery which leads along the courtyard by a wall of glass panels and French doors. Projecting wall panels from the supports between the openings provided locations for hanging paintings. The living room is shielded from view by the limestone rear wall of the gallery, accessed through an opening at the opposite end. The living room looks out to the patio terrace and view to the south beyond through a picture window with flanking casements. The ceiling is vaulted to the north facing clerestory over the gallery wall. The living area is open to the dining area with French doors accessing the trellis covered outdoor terrace to the west. The kitchen and utility areas are located to the west of the gallery entry with doors leading to the dining area and gallery by way of the pantry. The two bedrooms, with separate baths and closets, are located in the wing to the east of the living area. The south bedroom, originally used by Thomas Cranfill's mother, opens to a view of the city through a bay window, extending the feeling of interior space into the environment, with its projecting glass panels and deep overhangs above. Custom cypress cabinetry designed by



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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

the architect is found through the house, including kitchen and bath cabinets, pantry and storage units, and a custom dresser in Thomas Cranfill's dressing area off the north bedroom. A third bedroom and bath are attached to the north side of the garage, with separate outside access from the parking court, originally used by an attendant for Dr. Cranfill's mother.

Construction documents for the house and supervision of its construction were completed by Eugene George, an architect and former professor at the University of Texas School of Architecture.

Harwell Harris also designed a three-unit two-story apartment block for Thomas Cranfill, constructed in 1958, behind a modest house at 1911 Cliff Street.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Thomas Cranfill house was built in 1955 for the University of Texas English Professor and art collector. Designed by one of the leading practitioners of mid-20th century modern design, Harwell Hamilton Harris, the house is one of the few projects completed in Austin by the nationally recognized architect during his tenure as the first Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas from 1951 to 1955. The design of the house is similar to that of his early wooden houses in California executed in local materials. The property is nominated at the local level of significance under Criterion C as an outstanding example of mid-century Modern design by a Master Architect of the style.

### Harwell Hamilton Harris

Harwell Hamilton Harris was born in Redlands, California on July 2, 1903, the only child of Fredrick Thomas Harris and May Julia Hamilton. His father was an Architect of local renown in the fashionable eclectic styles of the period, including the Craftsman and Mission Revival. In 1913 the Harris family relocated to a ranch in the Imperial Valley of southern California near the town of El Centro. These early influences in Harwell's life remain evident in the regional characteristics of his later work. After briefly attending Pomona College in nearby Claremont, Harwell trained in sculpture at Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles. While a student, he was introduced to the early work of Frank Lloyd Wright by a visit to his highly sculptural 'Hollyhock House' for Aline Barnsdall on Olive Hill in downtown Los Angeles. In 1928, he sought out Wright's former apprentices now practicing independently in Los Angeles, Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra. Pioneers of early modern architecture in California, Schindler and Neutra were designing reinforced concrete structures, influenced not only by the organic ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright, but also the 'machine for living' approach being advocated by the early modern European architects, including Erich Mendelsohn, LeCorbusier, and the German Bauhaus School. Harris abandoned his plans to pursue a formal architectural education at The University of California at Berkeley to go to work for Neutra, assisting on his first significant modern masterpiece, The Lovell Health House. He met the author and future architectural historian, Jean Murray Bangs in 1931 and they were married in 1937. She remained a strong influence in his life and work until her death in 1985.

### The Architecture of Harwell Harris

Harwell Hamilton Harris started his independent practice in 1932 in Los Angeles developing a unique architectural style that integrated the sculptural qualities of Frank Lloyd Wright with the modularity and clean lines of the European Modernists. His first commission, a house for Pauline Lowe and his friend Clive Delbridge, employed a simple L-shaped plan with adjacent garage to encompass the courtyard between in an organic fashion similar to that found in the work of Wright. Like his work with Neutra, Harris proposed to use steel frame construction with bubble stone wall panels and a flat roof. But in order to receive a mortgage for construction, he had to redesign the house as a wood frame structure with a low pitched hip roof and redwood

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

vertical board and batten siding. Based upon the modularity of Neutra's design influence, wooden framing members and sliding window and door panels, were organized on a three foot repetitive module, creating an interior similar in appearance to a traditional Japanese house. The house won an honorable mention in the 7<sup>th</sup> annual House Beautiful Competition and was published in the October 1934 edition of the magazine, and again in the January 1935 edition of California Arts and Architecture. Harris received further publicity when an apparent plagiarized version of his plan, submitted by Schweikher and Lamb, won the General Electric small house competition and was published in Time magazine. The accusations were widely reported in Architectural Forum and California Arts and Architecture, attracting considerable favorable attention to Harris's early work. He continued to develop his unique residential style through the design of a series of private houses in California throughout the 1930's and early 1940's. As in the use of the garage in front of the Lowe house, creating privacy from the street, while allowing light and transparency within, was a common characteristic of his residential style. In the De Steigurer house of 1936, he raised and extended one side of the low pitched hip roof form to create a clerestory, allowing light into the building while screening the attached shop space from the street, a device he would return to in many of his houses. In what is acknowledged to be his masterpiece, the Haven house of 1939, Harris used the steeply sloping Berkley site overlooking the San Francisco Bay, to create a free standing house open to the spectacular view, accessed by a bridge from a separate garage structure and wooden screen wall that provide privacy along the street above.

By 1942, the Second World War had brought almost all residential building to a halt. Harwell and his wife Jean moved to New York during 1943 and 1944 to wait out the war. Upon their return to southern California at the end of 1944, Harris accepted a position teaching design at The University of Southern California and resumed his design practice while Jean began research on the architecture of Greene and Greene. Harwell and Jean reunited the architects for a photograph and paid for photographs of all of the Greene and Greene houses, which they organized into a traveling exhibition. Jean's article appeared as a feature in the October 28, 1948 issue of Architectural Forum. The similarities between the regional characteristics present in the Greene brothers houses and his own, influenced the direction of Harris's later work. Low pitched gable roofs with extended overhangs replaced the hip or flat roofs of his earlier wooden houses. The building structure was expressed with the use of exposed beams and rafter ends under the deep eaves, in place of the enclosed wooden soffits found in earlier work. In the Johnson house of 1947-48, exposed beams unite indoors with outdoors penetrating through the glass wall to support an open trellis structure beyond. The similarities between the work of Harris and that of San Francisco architect William Wurster, also influenced by the indigenous wooden architecture of California, led Lewis Mumford to describe their work together in a 1947 article in the New Yorker as a uniquely American form of modernism he called the 'Bay Area Style'.

In 1951, as the Korean Conflict threatened, architectural work once again started to diminish. Harris decided to take advantage of the opportunity to leave California to become the first director of the School of Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin. He hired several new young faculty members of similar educational interests, including Colin Rowe, Lee Hirsche, John Hedjuk, Robert Slutsky, Irwin Rubin, and Marcus Whiffen, who, along with Bernhard Hoesli, a new faculty appointment before Harris became director, provided the basis of his plan for the school. He reorganized the curriculum to focus on architectural theory, historic and

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

contemporary, an abstract, freehand approach to drawing, lectures on theory in the design studio, encouraging collaborative projects between faculty and students, and an emphasis on design process and spatial logic. In 1954, Harris was given the design commission for the House Beautiful Pacesetter Home, to be built at the Dallas State Fair, financed by the Dallas Power and Light Company. He used the opportunity to involve his students in a real life project, designing the house in collaboration with six of them. Two of the students spent the summer in Dallas with Harris completing the detail drawings for the house. Similar to the late California work, board and batten sided wings, covered with a shallow gable roof of exposed rafters extending into trellis, enclose a central courtyard. Wooden screen walls extend from the house to define additional private outdoor space. Over 80,000 people visited the house during the Fair and the February 1955 issue of *House Beautiful* was devoted to its design. The house and its architect received considerable publicity in magazine and newspapers bringing Harris a new Texas clientele. In 1955, he resigned his position at the University of Texas and moved to Fort Worth to complete a home for Ruth Carter Stephenson. Unlike any of his previous work, the Stephenson house was constructed of brick with a deep horizontal overhang and panel above in stucco capped by a flat roof. The sculptural quality of the design strongly suggests the early influences of Frank Lloyd Wright's Hollyhock House. He and Jean moved to Dallas in 1958 where Harris continued his architectural career with an increasing emphasis on commercial projects and a national practice. He returned to teaching as an adjunct professor at Columbia University in New York in 1961 and 1962, and left Dallas for Raleigh, North Carolina, to accept a teaching position at North Carolina State University in 1962. He retired from teaching in 1975 but continued to practice architecture until just before his death at his studio/home in Raleigh, North Carolina, on November 18, 1990.

### The Significance of the Thomas Cranfill House

The Thomas Cranfill House is one of the few projects designed during the period Harwell Harris was the Director of the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin. It is an outstanding example of his work, stylistically similar to his early wooden houses in California, but executed in local cypress instead of redwood. The house shares characteristics of the Lowe house in its natural finish board and batten wood siding, low pitched shingled hipped roof, and L-shaped plan with separate garage creating a private interior courtyard screened from the street. The north facing clearstory projecting prominently from the shallow pitched hipped roof, similar to that first used in the De Steigurer house, provides additional day lighting to the main living spaces, while minimizing heat gain from the harsh Texas sun. As in other houses designed by the architect, the Cranfill house successfully merges interior and exterior space through the use of ample glass windows and French doors, opening onto outdoor courtyards, sheltered by deep overhanging eaves and a projecting trellis of exposed structure. Like in the Haven house and its contemporary, the Pacesetter home at the Dallas State Fair, wood screen walls extend into the environment to create private courtyards and screen the living spaces from the street. The Cranfill House is unique in its place as a transitional structure in the work of Harwell Harris as he adapted his distinctive regional style to a different set of climatic and environmental conditions. The majority of his later work abandoned wood construction for one principally of masonry. Subsequent projects tended to be larger and more elaborate as in the house for Ruth Carter Stephenson. The Cranfill house shares

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

the essential characteristics of Harris's work as they developed early in his career building smaller houses on a limited budget.

The house is currently owned by George and Matilde Schade who purchased the house from the heirs of Thomas Cranfill in 1995 following Professor Cranfill's death. Former friends of Professor Cranfill, the current Owners have maintained the house in near original condition, with the exception of converting the former art gallery entry into a library. The original cedar shingled roof was replaced with asphalt shingles prior to their possession. They removed the original carpeting, staining and finishing the concrete slab beneath. The paint color of the plaster accent walls has been changed, and the furnishings replaced. Natural finish cypress trim and interior cabinetry and exterior natural finish cypress siding and trim remain in excellent condition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 12

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

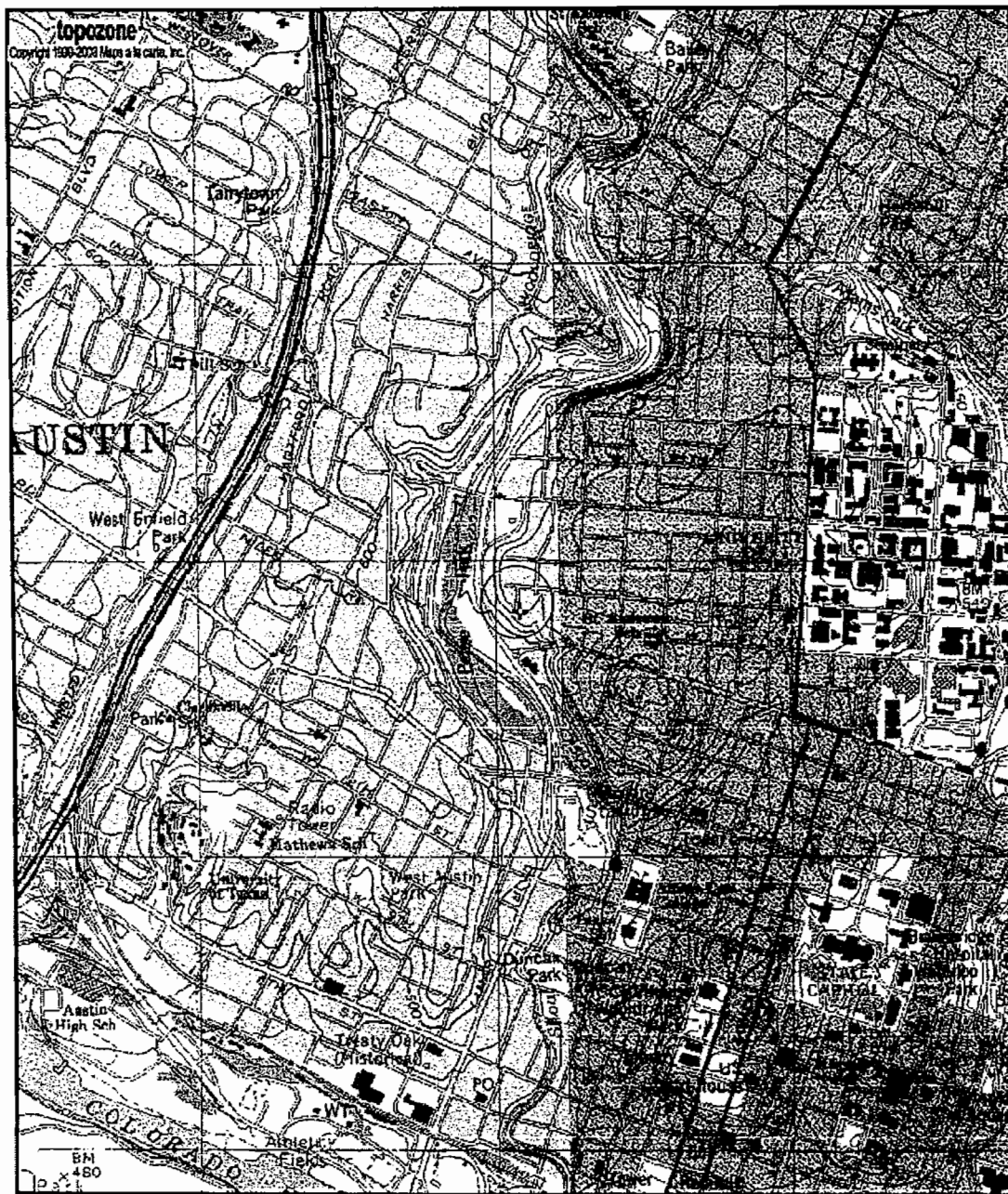
Germany, Lisa. Harwell Hamilton Harris. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1991.

Germany, Lisa. Harwell Hamilton Harris, a catalog produced in conjunction with an exhibition of his works. Austin: Center for the Study of American Architecture, 1985.

Harris, Harwell Hamilton. The Organic View of Design. Los Angeles: Oral History Program at the University of California, 1985.

Harris, Harwell Hamilton. Correspondence, Photographs, and Drawings donated to the Alexander Archives at the University of Texas School of Architecture.





0 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 1.5 km  
0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 mi

Map center is UTM 14 620044E 3351051N (WGS84/NAD83)  
**Austin West** quadrangle  
Projection is UTM Zone 14 NAD83 Datum

M  
M=5.528  
G=0.63

<http://www.topozone.com/print.asp?z=14&n=3351051.00004193&e=620044.00000061&s...> 4/17/2004

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 14

- 22 -

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 15

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

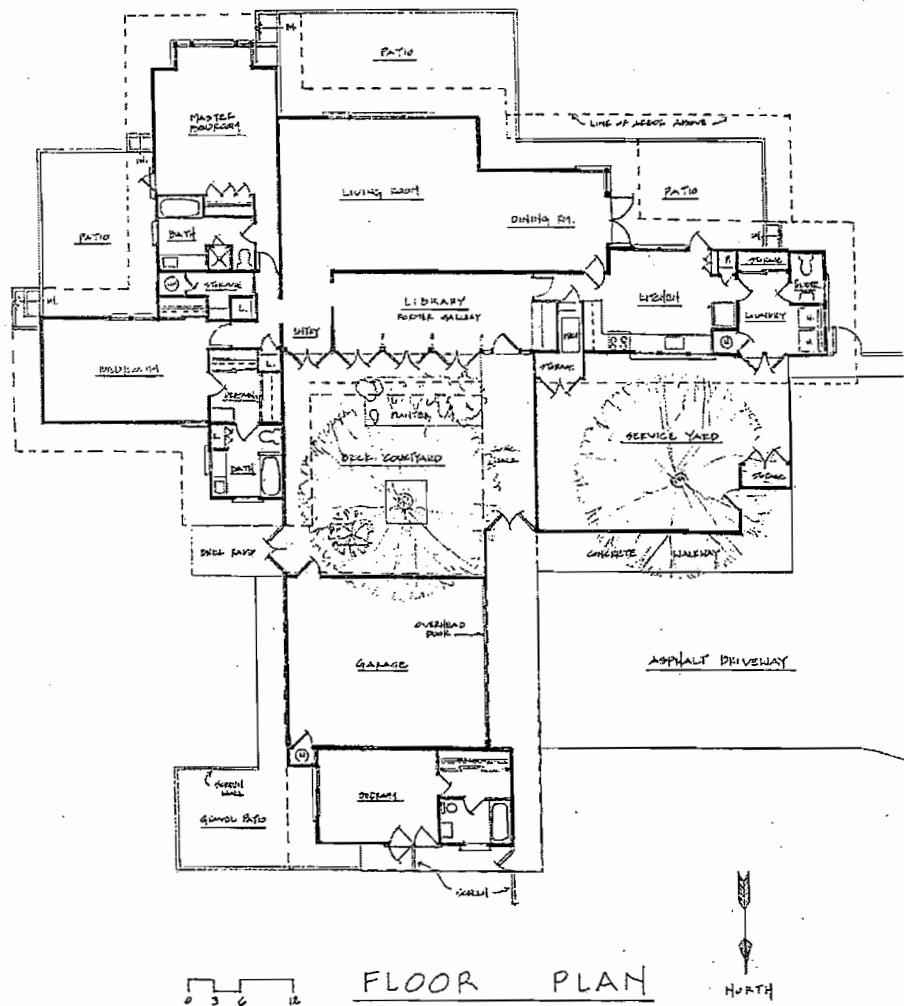


Figure 2: Existing Floor Plan drawn by Elizabeth Churchill based upon original design drawings in The Alexander Archive at the University of Texas at Austin and field measurements.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 16

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

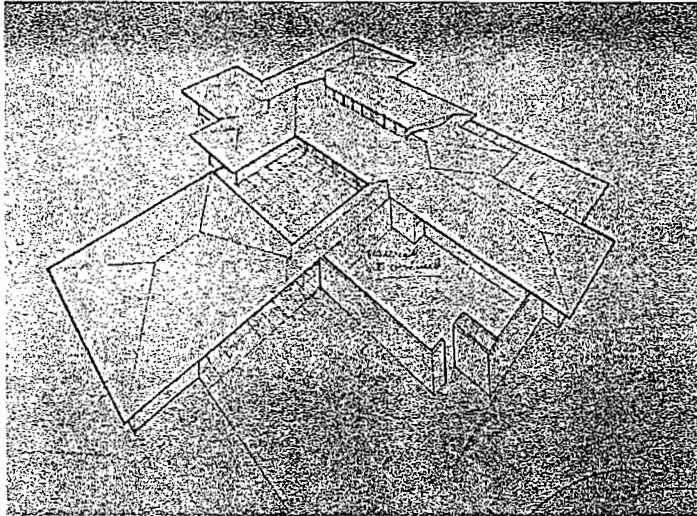


Figure 3: Drawing of the Thomas Cranfill House by Harwell Hamilton Harris from The Alexander Archive at The University of Texas at Austin



Figure 4: Photo of the Architect in 1955 on the grounds of the State Fair House, Dallas, Texas from Harwell Hamilton Harris by Lisa Germany

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 17

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

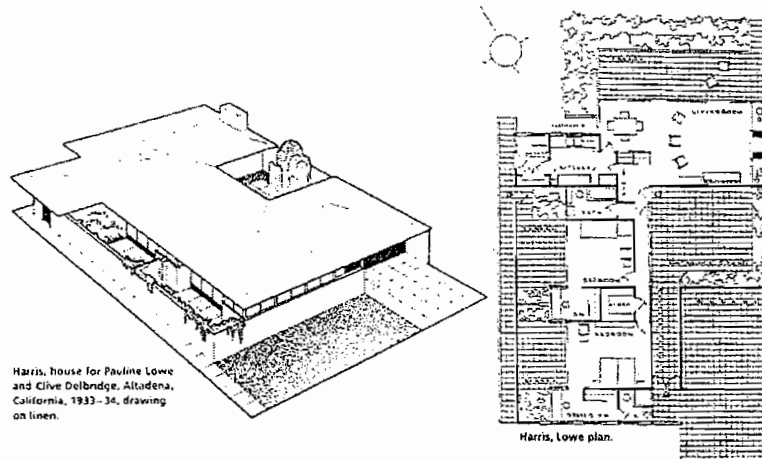


Figure 5: Pauline Lowe House from Harwell Hamilton Harris by Lisa Germany

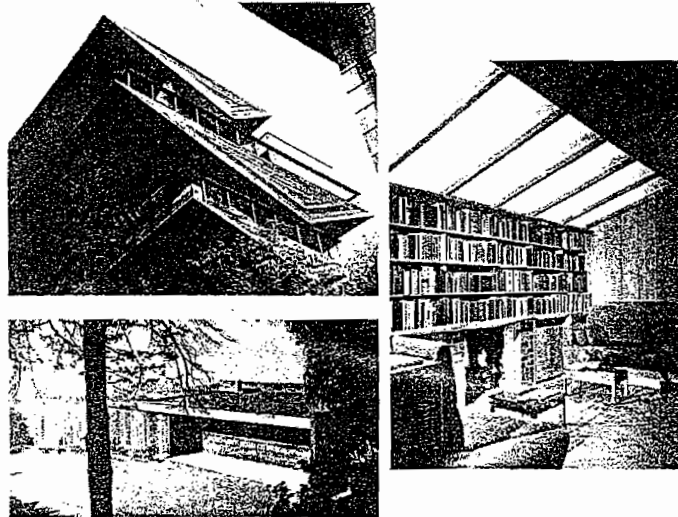


Figure 6: Weston Havens House, Berkeley, 1940-41  
from Harwell Hamilton Harris by Lisa Germany

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 18

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

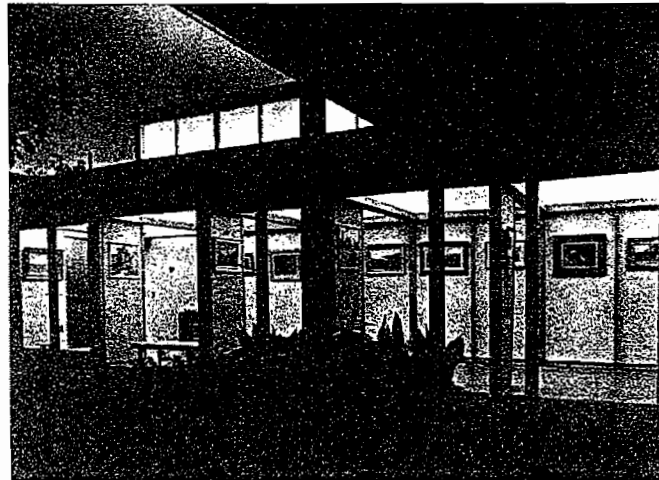
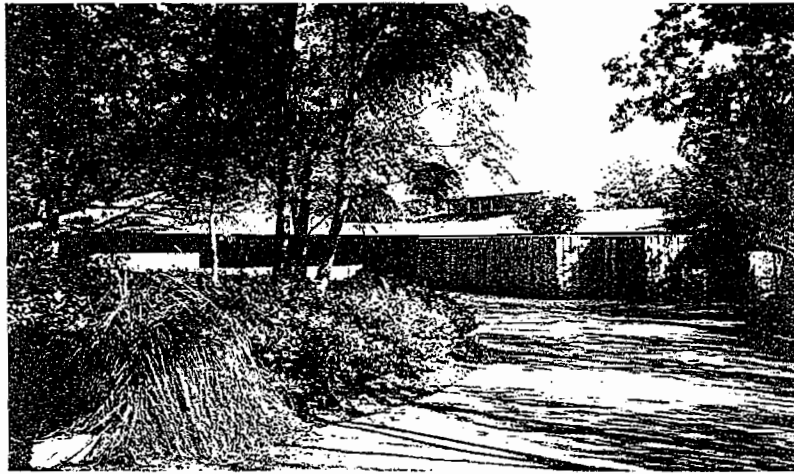


Figure 7: Thomas Cranfill House exterior and original gallery entry photographs by Hans Beacham Photo in 1963, from Harwell Hamilton Harris by Lisa Germany. Original photographs are in The Alexander Archives at The University of Texas at Austin



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Photo Page 19

Thomas Cranfill House  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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### Photograph Inventory

Thomas Cranfill House  
1901 Cliff Street  
Austin, Travis County, Texas

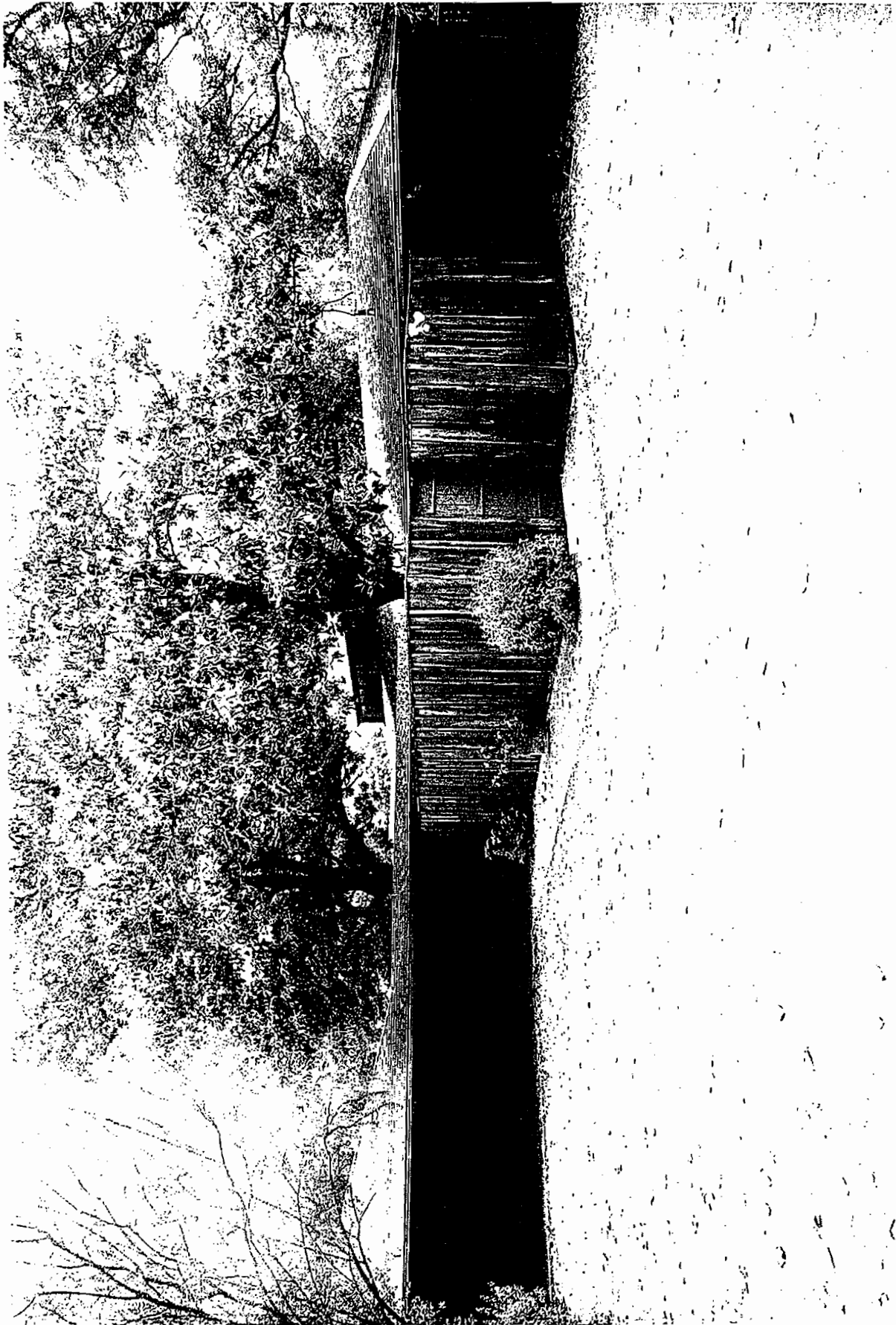
Photographed by David Bentley, May 2004  
Negatives on file with Texas Historical Commission

Photo 1 of 4  
Exterior street side elevation  
Camera facing southeast

Photo 2 of 4  
Courtyard entry and former gallery  
Camera facing southeast

Photo 3 of 4  
Interior of living room with clerestory  
Camera facing northwest

Photo 4 of 4  
Exterior patios and trellis  
Camera facing northeast





## A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING

### PROJECT INFORMATION:

DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY	
APPLICATION DATE: <u>11-8-00</u>	FILE NUMBER(S): <u>0144-06-0038</u>
TENTATIVE REC. DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE REC. DATE: _____	
TENTATIVE REC. DATE: _____	
CASE MANAGER: <u>SEAN SCHROEDER</u>	CITY INITIATED: YES / NO
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: _____	ROLLBACK: YES / NO

### BASIC PROJECT DATA:

1. OWNER'S NAME: <u>GEORGE &amp; MATILDE SCHADE</u>	
2. PROJECT NAME: <u>1901 Cliff St.</u>	
3. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range): <u>1901 cliff st.</u>	
ZIP: _____	COUNTY: _____
IF PROJECT ADDRESS CANNOT BE DEFINED ABOVE:	
LOCATED _____ FRONTAGE FEET ALONG THE <u>N. S. E. W.</u> (CIRCLE ONE) SIDE OF	
(ROAD NAME PROPERTY FRONTS ONTO), WHICH IS	
APPROXIMATELY _____	DISTANCE FROM ITS
INTERSECTION WITH _____	CROSS STREET.

### AREA TO BE REZONED:

4. ACRES _____		(OR)	SQ. FT. _____		
5. ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION:					
EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING USE	TRACT# (IF MORE THAN 1)	ACRES / SQ. FT.	PROPOSED USE	PROPOSED ZONING
<u>SF3-CO-NP</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### RELATED CURRENT CASES:

6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
8. SUBDIVISION? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____
9. SITE PLAN? (YES / NO)	FILE NUMBER: _____

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):**

**10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Block(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Outlot(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Plat Book: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**10b. METES AND BOUNDS** (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available or

**DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:**

11. VOLUME: \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ TAX PARCEL I.D. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER PROVISIONS:**

**12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE? YES / NO**

TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD, NP, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES / NO**

**14. IS A TIA REQUIRED? YES / NO** (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)

TRIPS PER DAY: \_\_\_\_\_

TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNERSHIP TYPE:**

15. ☐ SOLE ☐ COMMUNITY PROPERTY ☐ PARTNERSHIP ☐ CORPORATION ☐ TRUST

If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet.

**OWNER INFORMATION:**

**16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION**

SIGNATURE: Matilde Schade NAME: Matilde Schade  
FIRM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS: 1901 Ciff St  
CITY: Austin STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78705  
EMAIL ADDRESS: schade@mat.utexas.edu

**AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):**

**17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

SIGNATURE: Elizabeth Churchill NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM NAME: Bentley & Churchill TELEPHONE NUMBER: 482-8400  
STREET ADDRESS: 3707 MEREDITH ST.  
CITY: AUSTIN STATE: TX ZIP CODE: 78703  
CONTACT PERSON: ELIZABETH CHURCHILL TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: TOECHURCHILL@aol.com

## D. SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION AND INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

### SUBMITTAL VERIFICATION

My signature attests to the fact that the attached application package is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that proper City staff review of this application is dependent upon the accuracy of the information provided and that any inaccurate or inadequate information provided by me/my firm/etc., may delay the proper review of this application.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND  
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Matilde Schade 11-7-06  
Signature Date

MATILDE SCHADE  
Name (Typed or Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firm (If applicable)

### INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION

As owner or authorized agent, my signature authorizes staff to visit and inspect the property for which this application is being submitted.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT NAME BELOW SIGNATURE AND  
INDICATE FIRM REPRESENTED, IF APPLICABLE.

Matilde Schade 11-7-06  
Signature Date

MATILDE SCHADE  
Name (Typed or Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firm (If applicable)



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MATILDE SCHADE  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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Matilde Schade 11-7-06  
Signature Date

MATILDE SCHADE  
Name (Typed or Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firm (If applicable)

TAX CERTIFICATE  
Nelda Wells Spears  
Travis County Tax Assessor-Collector  
P.O. Box 1748  
Austin, Texas 78767  
(512) 854-9473

NO 125150

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 01-1300-1111-0000

PROPERTY OWNER:

SCHADE GEORGE D & MATILDE  
1901 CLIFF ST  
AUSTIN, TX 78705-5309

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:

LOT 10&11 \* & S 40 FT OF LOT 12 BLK  
3 OLT 26-28 DIV D CARRINGTON SUBD

ACRES 0.000 MIN% .00000 TYPE

SITUS INFORMATION: 1901 CLIFF ST

This is to certify that after a careful check of tax records of this office, the following taxes, delinquent taxes, penalties and interests are due on the described property of the following tax unit(s):

YEAR	ENTITY	TOTAL
2005	AUSTIN ISD	*ALL PAID*
	CITY OF AUSTIN (TRAV)	*ALL PAID*
	TRAVIS COUNTY	*ALL PAID*
	HOSPITAL DISTRICT	*ALL PAID*
	ACC (TRAVIS)	*ALL PAID*
TOTAL SEQUENCE 0		*ALL PAID*
TOTAL TAX:		*ALL PAID*
UNPAID FEES:		* NONE *
INTEREST ON FEES:		* NONE *
COMMISSION:		* NONE *
TOTAL DUE ==>		*ALL PAID*

TAXES PAID FOR YEAR 2005 \$6,935.35

ALL TAXES PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO AND INCLUDING THE YEAR 2005 EXCEPT FOR UNPAID YEARS LISTED ABOVE.  
The above described property may be subject to special valuation based on its use, and additional rollback taxes may become due. (Section 23.55, State Property Tax Code).  
Pursuant to Section 31.08 of the State Property Tax Code, there is a fee of \$10.00 for all Tax Certificates.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE ON THIS DATE OF 05/22/2006

Fee Paid: \$10.00

Nelda Wells Spears  
Tax Assessor-Collector

By: 