

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 25, 2013  
NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT  
NRD-2013-0009  
OLD WEST AUSTIN  
1601 West Lynn Street**

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**PROPOSAL**

Demolish a contributing house and detached garage.

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**RESEARCH**

Travis Central Appraisal District lists the existing house as constructed c. 1925. The earliest listing of the address in the 1927 City Directory indicates Lee and Lillian Joseph as the owners of the house (with the address being 1315 West Lynn Street), residing there with their son Donald Joseph. At that time Lee Joseph is in the real estate business. Lee Joseph likely died in 1936 as Donald Joseph is the only resident listed in 1937 and his mother Lily (aka Lillian and Lillie) is listed as living with him as a widow in the 1939 Directory. Donald and Lily continue to reside at the house until 1947, by which time the address has been changed to 1601 West Lynn Street. During those years Donald Joseph is listed as an Assistant Professor at the University of Texas and a writer. After the Joseph's the next long-term resident and owner is Anna M. Casewell, a lecturer at the University of Texas who resided there from 1955 to about 1969.

The most noted occupant is the writer and University of Texas Assistant Professor Donald Joseph. Donald Joseph was born in August 22, 1895 and died in San Antonio January 20, 1975. He wrote such novels as *October's Child* (1929), *Long Bondage* (1930), *Four Blind Mice* (1932), *Straw in the South Wind* (1946), and *Lud Daingerfield* (1956). Referred to in some literature as an "almost forgotten novelist," Donald Joseph seems to be most noted for having declined acceptance to be a charter member of the Texas Institute of Letters in 1936 stating that, "not half a dozen people in Texas are doing nationally recognized creative writing". Interestingly records indicate that by 1966 he had become a member of the organization. After leaving Austin Donald Joseph became editor for the Naylor Company in San Antonio.

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**PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

The existing house is an approximately 2,830 sq. ft., two-story with stucco cladding. The façade has little adornment with the only significant architectural detail being wrought iron columns supporting a faux balcony above the front door. Given the style of this feature it is not likely original to the house, possibly being added when a remodel was carried out in 1952 by the owner at that time Dr. Hugh Emerson. There are with multiple, asymmetrical casement style windows, and double, French doors at the faux balcony.

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing house and detached garage and construct a new residence. Plans have not been submitted for the new residence, but must be submitted to the Historic Landmark Commission prior to release of a building permit.

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**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

The existing property is contributing to the Old West Austin National Register Historic District. Applicable general design review guidelines state:

- The distinguishing original qualities or character of a property and its environment shall not be destroyed. Removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided.
- All properties shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
- Changes which have taken place in the course of time may have acquired significance in their own right, and shall be recognized and respected.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a property shall be treated with sensitivity.
- Reconstruction of a part or all of a property shall be undertaken only when such work is essential to reproduce a significant missing feature in a historic district, and documentation exists to ensure an accurate reproduction of the original.

Although the property is listed as contributing to the Old West Austin National Register District it is likely that significant changes have been made to the property since its construction in 1925. Its most prominent resident was a relatively unknown writer, Donald Joseph for which little could be found regarding his influence on the literary world beyond what is already noted in this report. It is also likely that the existing appearance of the façade dates to after Donald Joseph's period of residency.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Release the permit after review of new construction plans by the Historic Landmark Commission.

PHOTOS

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OCCUPANCY HISTORY  
1601 West Lynn Street

From City Directories, Austin History Center  
City of Austin Historic Preservation Office  
February 2013

August, 2012

- 1990      Lee and Virginia Lahourcade, owners  
            Employed by Rust Capital Investments, 114 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street.  
            NOTE: The directory indicates that Lee and Virginia Lahourcade were new residents at this address.
- 1985-86   Roy P. and Anna M. Ward, owners  
            Retired
- 1981      Roy P. and Anna M. Ward, owners  
            Retired
- 1977      Roy P. and Anna M. Ward, owners  
            Retired
- 1973      Roy P. and Anna M. Ward, owners  
            Retired  
            NOTE: The directory indicates that Roy P. and Anna M. Ward were new residents at this address.
- 1968      Anna M. Caswell, owner  
            Widow, W.T. Caswell, Jr.  
            Assistant professor, University of Texas  
            NOTE: Roy P. Ward (no wife) is listed as a lawyer living at 3003 Belmont Circle; his office was at his house.
- 1962      Anna M. Caswell, owner  
            Widow, W.T. Caswell, Jr.  
            Lecturer, University of Texas
- 1957      Anna M. Caswell, owner  
            Widow, W.T. Caswell, Jr.  
            No occupation listed
- 1953      Hugh and Anna M. Emerson, owners  
            Dentist  
            NOTE: Anna M. Caswell is not listed in the directory.
- 1949      Lawrence H. and Maurine Morris, renters  
            Pipeline contractor
- 1947      Mrs. Lilly Joseph, owner  
            Widow, Lee Joseph

No occupation listed  
Also listed is Donald Joseph a writer.

Rear is vacant.

1944-45 Lee Joseph, owner  
No occupation listed  
NOTE: This listing is likely for Lilly Joseph, the widow of Lee Joseph.  
Also listed is Donald L. Joseph, a professor at the University of Texas.

Rear is vacant.

1941 Donald M. Joseph, owner  
Assistant professor, University of Texas  
Also listed is Lillie T. Joseph, the widow of Lee Joseph; no occupation stated.

Rear is vacant.

1939 Donald M. Joseph, owner  
Assistant professor, University of Texas  
Also listed is Lily Joseph, widow of Lee Joseph, no occupation stated.  
NOTE: The house is listed as 1315 West Lynn Street.

1937 Donald Joseph, owner  
Assistant professor, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address directory indicates State Senator John S. and Hazel Redditt as a tenant and Bertha Davis residing in the rear unit. This is likely a misprint as Donald Joseph's is listed as residing at 1315 West Lynn in the name directory.

1935 Lee Joseph, owner  
Assistant State Auditor  
Also listed is Lillian W. Joseph and Donald Joseph, Adjunct professor, University of Texas.

1932-33 Lee Joseph, owner  
Loans, 10 New Masonic Building  
Also listed is Lillie T. Joseph and Donald Joseph, Adjunct professor, University of Texas.

1930-31 Lee Joseph, owner  
Loans, 309 W. 7th Street  
Also listed is Lillie T. Joseph and Donald Joseph, Adjunct professor, University of Texas.

1929 Lee Joseph, owner  
Loans, 225 Littlefield Building  
Also listed is Lillie T. Joseph and Donald L. Joseph, Adjunct professor, University of Texas.

1927 Lee Joseph, owner  
Real estate, 401 Littlefield Building

Also listed is Lillie T. Joseph and Donald Joseph, Adjunct professor of Romance Languages, University of Texas.

1924      No listing for West Lynn Street  
             No listing for Lee, Lillie or Donald Joseph.

The 1940 U.S. Census report shows Lilly and Donald Joseph living at 1315 West Lynn Street (this house before the address changed to 1601 West Lynn). They owned the house, which was worth \$12,000. Lilly Joseph was a 68-year old widow who had been born in Texas and had no occupation listed in the census report. Donald Joseph was then 42, had been born in Texas, and was a teacher at the University of Texas.

The 1930 U.S. census shows Lee and Lily Joseph with their sons, Edgar and Donald, living in this house. Lee Joseph was then 64, had been born in Texas, and was a loan broker. Lily Joseph was then 61, had been born in Texas, and was an educational lecturer. Edgar Joseph was then 41 and was an insurance salesman. Donald Joseph was then 34, and was a professor of writing at the University of Texas. The family also had an African-American live-in servant, Annie Guest.

The 1920 U.S. census shows Lee and Lillian T. Joseph and their son Donald living in San Antonio.



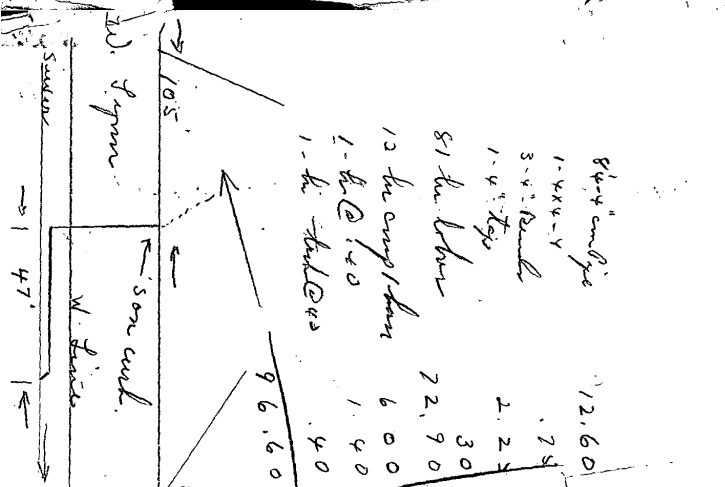
1935 Sanborn Map (indicates property previously 1315 West Lynn).



Sir:—  
I hereby make application for sewer connection and instructions on premises owned by High Emerson at 1001 West Lynn Street,  
further described as Lot 35 Block — Outlot — Division —  
subdivision Enfield B<sup>1</sup> Plat 17, 200 which is to be used as a res  
In this place there are to be installed — fixtures. Plumbing Permit No. 706-A  
I agree to pay the City of Austin, the regular ordinance charge.

Depth at Prop. Line 2 <sup>3 - at man</sup> Respectfully,  
 Sub. Out } approx 105' - 5' of NW <sup>(Location)</sup> Greg Rly Co  
 Connected } 6 - 5 - 52 <sup>(Son in law)</sup> W. L. Lipp  
 Date: 6 - 5 - 52  
 By: Ramond

NOTE: Connection Instruction  
Mem 16-3-EGWIK A 733




Dr. Hugh Emerson	1601 West Lynn St.
147 35	- - -
Enfield "B"	

50608 4-11-52 \$2400.00

1952 remodel permit for 1601 West Lynn



 SUBJECT TRACT

 ZONING BOUNDARY

## NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT

CASE#: NRD-2013-0009  
LOCATION: 1601 WEST LYNN STREET

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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