

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received MAR 11 1987

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic

and or common Sullivan-Charnley Historic District

**2. Location**

street & number

N/A not for publication

city, town Ocean Springs

N/A vicinity of

state Mississippi

code 28

county Jackson

code 59

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Owners

street & number

city, town

vicinity of

state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Chancery Clerk, Jackson County Courthouse

street & number Canty Street

city, town Pascagoula

state Mississippi

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Survey of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1979

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Mississippi Department of Archives and History

city, town Jackson

state Mississippi 39205

## 7. Description

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located between Weeks Bayou on the west, Halstead Bayou on the east, and Davis Bayou on the south, the Sullivan-Charnley Historic District is comprised of the two adjoining waterfront estates once owned and developed by the Chicago architect, Louis Sullivan, and his friends and clients, the James Charnleys, also from Chicago. The two properties which occupy the northeast corner of the intersection of Shearwater Drive and Holcomb Boulevard are several times deeper than they are wide. The buildings are located somewhat closer to the southern boundary than to the original northern property line and rest on the crest of a low bluff which slopes down to Shearwater Drive and the beach beyond. The former Sullivan estate is thickly planted with trees and shrubbery which obscure the view of the house from both Holcomb Boulevard and Shearwater Drive. It is not possible to discern any remnants of Sullivan's original landscape design. The Charnley buildings command an extensive view of Davis Bayou, Biloxi Bay, and Dear Island by virtue of a relatively open sweep of lawn which stretches from the drive up to their doors. The grounds behind the houses are more thickly planted. Of the six buildings in the district one is determined to be pivotal and five are contributing.

- P - Pivotal buildings qualify for listing in the National Register of Historic Places by reasons of individual architectural and/or historical significance.
- C - Contributing buildings are essential to the district's sense of place and sustain the architectural and historical significance of the district.
- M - Marginal buildings do not presently contribute to the architectural significance of the district, but by their scale, material, or setting do not overly compromise the integrity of the district. Marginal buildings include those historical buildings which have been remodeled to such a degree that their architectural character has been seriously compromised. Restoration of original features could cause these buildings to become contributing. Marginal buildings also include deteriorated buildings that contribute to the district but whose condition is so deteriorated that their future is uncertain.
- NC - Non-contributing buildings do not contribute to the historical character of the district, but, because they are compatible to the contributing historic buildings in scale, mass, materials, and setting, they do not detract from the visual cohesiveness of the district. Non-contributing buildings include those residences that were constructed after the period of significance and are compatible in scale, mass, material, and setting--if not

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in detail.

- I - Intrusive buildings by their scale, materials, condition, or setting severely disrupt the cohesion of the historic environment.

INVENTORY OF BUILDINGS

1. Sullivan House. 6 Holcomb Boulevard. One story, shingle clad wood frame house with hip roof. Full-width, five-bay undercut porch with shingled piers and balustrade on the south (main) facade. Center entrance into living room which is flanked by polygonal bedrooms to form the cross bar of the T-plan. The stem of the T consists of a service wing which projects northward. The original porch was enclosed and a two-bay flat roofed glass-enclosed porch was added. ca. 1890. (C)  
Small original servants quarters; wood frame with hip roof. ca. 1890. (C)
2. Charnley House. 509 Shearwater Drive. One story, shingle-clad, wood frame house with hip roof. Three-bay full-width undercut porch with shingled piers and balustrade. Plan similar to original T-plan of the Sullivan House. Sustained early fire damage. House was restored according to original design. ca. 1890. (C)  
Two wood framed, side gabled roofed dependencies with full-width shed roofed galleries. Late nineteenth century. (C)
3. Charnley Guest Cottage. 509 Shearwater Drive. One story shingle-clad wood frame building with a conical roof over its octagonal plan. Three-bay undercut porch with shingled piers and balustrade. Hip-roofed polygonal projection on northeast wall. Shed dormer ventilators. ca. 1890. (P)

Total contributing elements: 6 buildings

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1890-1910 **Builder/Architect** Louis Sullivan

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Sullivan-Charnley Historic District is significant in the history of American architecture for its association with two of America's most noted architects, Louis Sullivan (1856-1924) and Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959). The district consists of six buildings on the adjoining estates once owned by Sullivan and his friends, Mr. and Mrs. James Charnley. At least four of the buildings were designed by the Chicago-based architectural firm of Adler and Sullivan. The definite attribution of the designs of these structures remains a subject of debate.

Following his Herculean efforts on the design and construction of the famous Auditorium Building in Chicago (1886-1889) Sullivan, an insomniac, sought a quiet retreat. Considering California to be often too damp and always too earthquake-prone, and New Orleans to be far too dirty, Sullivan was persuaded by the Charnleys, to visit the small Mississippi Gulf Coast village of Ocean Springs in 1890. Sullivan was entranced by the quiet, densely wooded little town. He and the Charnleys acquired adjoining properties which faced the beach east of the town. Sullivan states in his autobiography that "he (Sullivan) planned for two shacks or bungalows 300 feet apart with stables far back; also a system of development requiring years for fulfillment... The building work was left to a local carpenter." (Robert Twombly, Louis Sullivan, His Life and Work [New York: Viking Press, 1986], pp.198-205, 490). (Sullivan usually wrote of himself in the third person.) This somewhat ambiguous statement has convinced some historians of Sullivan's responsibility for the architectural as well as the landscape designs. His authorship of the once glorious, now obscured garden design is beyond dispute. (Lyndon P. Smith, "The Home of an Artist-Architect," Architectural Record 17:[June 1905] pp. 471-491.)

Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959) assumed credit for the Ocean Springs buildings in his book, Genius and the Mobocracy, (New York: Horizon Press, 1971, p. 67). Wright was employed in the office of Adler and Sullivan from 1887 to 1893 and was responsible for most of the firm's residential designs during that period.

The Sullivan and Charnley cottages and their respective servants' and guests' quarters are the only buildings in Mississippi whose attribution to Louis Sullivan is supported by substantial evidence. Only one Mississippi structure has been positively ascribed to Frank Lloyd Wright. This house, "Fountainhead," in Jackson County (National Register, 1980), was designed in 1948 and reflects Wright's mid-twentieth-century Usonian Period. The simple shingle-clad Ocean Springs buildings offer a striking contrast to Sullivan's well known,

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property app. 6.25 acres

Quadrangle name Ocean Springs

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	3	2	6	0	9	5	3	3	6	4	0	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

1	6	3	2	6	3	8	0	3	3	6	4	0	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

1	6	3	2	6	3	8	0	3	3	6	3	5	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

1	6	3	2	6	0	9	5	3	3	6	3	7	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The district is composed of city parcels 60132190, 60132220, 60132230, and 60132240 which constitute the original Sullivan and Charnley properties.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brian Berggren, Architectural Historian

organization Miss. Dept. of Archives and History

date May 15, 1986

street & number P. O. Box 571

telephone (601) 354-7326

city or town Jackson,

state Mississippi 39205

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

     national   X   state      local

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

Kenneth H. P. Pool

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 4, 1987

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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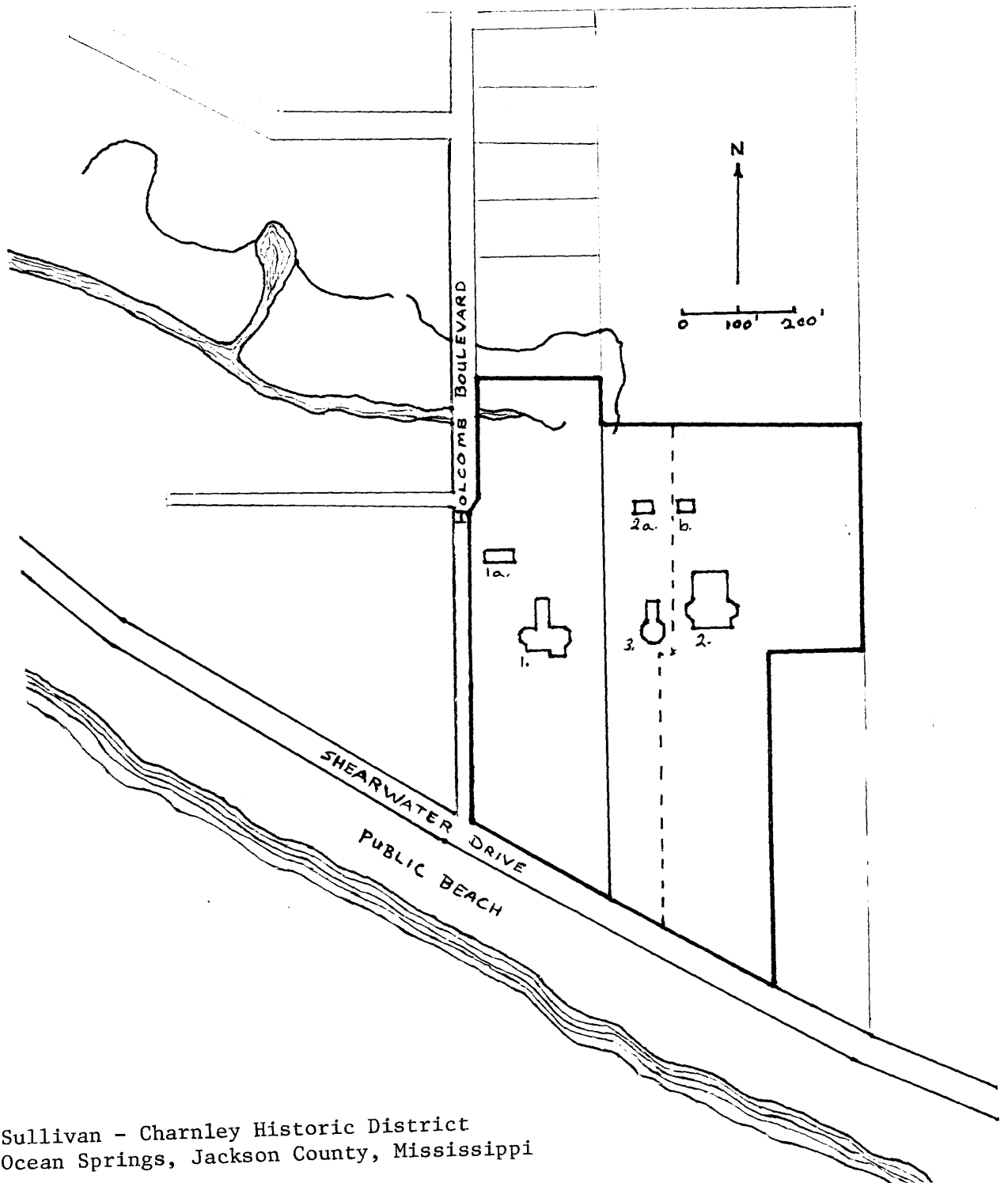
**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

crisply geometric and terra-cotta-foliated designs of the Guaranty Building in Buffalo and Chicago's Carson, Pirie, Scott Store. Although they do not greatly resemble Wright's urban and suburban, vaguely historical houses of the time, the simplicity and profound horizontality of the Sullivan and Charnley buildings are markedly similar to a ground-hugging, broad-eaved and hip-roofed design which Wright submitted to Sullivan when applying for a job in 1888 (Wright p. 60) and to his later Prairie Style houses.

The Charnleys retained ownership of their Ocean Springs property for only a few years. However, Sullivan's estate remained his winter residence for twenty years. The professional, financial, and personal reverses which followed the dissolution of the Adler and Sullivan partnership in the mid-1890s eventually led to the mortgaging and, ultimately, to the sale of Sullivan's cherished Ocean Springs home in 1910.

**9. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Smith, Lyndon P. "Home of an Artist-Architect," Architectural Record 17:471-491.
- Sullivan, Louis H. The Autobiography of an Idea. 1924, New York: Dover Press ed. 1986.
- Twombly, Robert. Louis Sullivan His Life and Work. New York: Viking Press 1986.
- Wright, Frank Lloyd. Genius and the Mobocracy. New York: Horizon Press, 1971 (reprint of the 1941 edition).



Sullivan - Charnley Historic District  
Ocean Springs, Jackson County, Mississippi





Mississippi Sound

General view to south from district

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>HRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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September 1986

Photo 1 of 12



Charnley Estate

General view of main house and guest cottage, oblique view to northwest

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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September 1986

Photo 2 of 12, inv. # 2 and # 3



Charnley House

South facade and west elevation, oblique  
view to northeast

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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September 1986

Photo 3 of 12, inv. # 2



Charnley House

Detail of southwest bay, view to northeast

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MSA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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Photo 4 of 12, inv. # 2





Charnley Guest Cottage

South facade and east elevation, oblique  
view to northwest

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs,<sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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Photo 5 of 12, inv. # 3



Charnley Estate

General view of dependencies, view to north

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

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Photo 6 of 12, inv. # 2a and 2b



Sullivan Estate

General view to northeast

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

Mississippi Dept. of Archives & History

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Photo 7 of 12



Louis Sullivan House

South facade and west elevation, oblique  
view to northeast

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MAP</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

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Photo 8 of 12, inv. # 1







Louis Sullivan House  
Porch detail, oblique view to northwest  
Sullivan - Charnley Historic District  
Ocean Springs, <sup>MS</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi  
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Photo 9 of 12, inv. # 1



Louis Sullivan House

North (rear) wing, oblique view to the  
southeast.

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District

Ocean Springs, <sup>MDA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi

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Photo 10 of 12, inv. # 1



Sullivan Servants' Quarters  
South facade, oblique view to northeast  
Sullivan - Charnley Historic District  
Ocean Springs, ~~MS~~ Jackson County, Mississippi  
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Sullivan Servants' Quarters

North and west elevations, oblique view  
to southeast

Sullivan - Charnley Historic District  
Ocean Springs, <sup>MRA</sup> Jackson County, Mississippi  
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