

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NEListed 2-11-04

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bellaire Court Historic District

other names/site number Bellaire Apartments

2. Location

street & number 637 Park Avenue

☐ not for publication

city or town Hot Springs

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Garland code 051 zip code 71901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

I, 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 for 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.)

Cathie Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/08/03
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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): _____

Bellaire Court Historic District

Name of Property

Garland County, Arkansas

County and State

Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Era Architecture,
1910 - 1965

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotel

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH and EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **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 values, 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

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1936 - 1954

Significant Dates

c. 1936

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ 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
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☒ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

Garland County Historical Society

Bellaire Court Historic District

Garland County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 495137 3820124
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

S28 T2S R19W, Block 148, Lots 6 and 14, part of Lot 5, Hot Springs Reservation

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all resources historically associated with the Bellaire Court.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill Wiedower

organization AHPP

date September 19, 2003

street & number 1500 Tower Building 323 Center St.

telephone 501-324-9880

city or town Little Rock

state Arkansas

zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

in the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Jeff and Kate Hilton, Jonquil Enterprises, Inc.

street & number 221 Pine Meadows

telephone 501/262-4757

city or town Hot Springs

state Arkansas

zip code 71913

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Summary

Located at 637 Park Avenue in Hot Springs, the c.1936 Bellaire Court is composed of a Craftsman bungalow owner's residence/manager's office connected to five attached Craftsman bungalow style guest units and a separate building consisting of three bungalow guest units designed in the same style. Laid out in a recurrent tourist court arrangement, the "L" shaped plan, the Bellaire has undergone minor exterior and interior alterations, little of which have affected its historic integrity. The wood-framed, brick veneer cottages are currently rented as apartments.

Elaboration

All of the structures are of wood frame construction, with buff-colored brick veneer and brown brick trim at the window sills, lintels, and at the arched parapets above the original garages. The cottages have porches with brick pedestals and battered wood columns. Railing on the porches consists of decorative terra cotta tile units laid horizontally to create a geometric pattern. The gable ends of the roofs of both the owner's residence/manager's office and each rental unit have a clipped gable, or jerkin head, facing the front. The roofs are covered with composition shingles. The original windows are double hung wood, with the upper sash having 12 lights over a single-light lower sash.

Bellaire Court is laid out in an "L" shape, with the inside of the "L" being the auto court accessed from Park Avenue. The "L" shape layout was one of the most common for tourist courts of this era. The owner's residence/manager's office faces Park Avenue with the long leg of the "L" running perpendicular to Park Avenue. Five of the cottages face the auto court, while the remaining three face Magnolia Street to the north.

Each of the cottages originally had a one car garage. The façade of the garage has an arched brick parapet above the garage door. The garage was at grade level, with the rental units and porches raised three steps above grade. The garages were enclosed for use as additional interior space when the units were converted to apartments during the mid-1970's. The five units facing the auto court were enclosed with 12" wood lap siding, painted brown to match the brick trim. They have a 2'x3' sliding glass window, and various styles of exterior doors. The garages of the three units facing Magnolia Street were enclosed with three double-hung windows which filled the garage door opening, with brick below the windows to match the existing walls.

With the exception of the enclosure of the original garages, the exterior of the buildings are very close to original construction. A few of the units, including the owner's residence/manager's office, have had aluminum awnings installed over some doors and windows.

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Summary

The Bellaire Court Historic District is being nominated under **Criteria A and C** with **local significance** as an important contributing to highway and transportation-related architecture in Arkansas between the years 1910–1965. Bellaire Court is one of the finest extant examples of a Craftsman style tourist court on Park Avenue in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The district consists of two buildings. The larger of the two buildings contains the owner's residence/office, which is attached to five connected guest units. The smaller building contains three guest units. Bellaire Court remains virtually intact on both the interior and exterior of the building.

Elaboration

Bellaire Court was one of the first tourist courts to grace Park Avenue as the conversion from large residential homes to commercial businesses aimed at automobile travelers began in the mid to late-1930s. Beginning with the completion of the paved Little Rock-Hot Springs highway (Highway 70) in 1925, Park Avenue being the final stretch into "the Spa City," residents of Hot Springs and Park Avenue saw an opportunity to "make a buck" off the growing automobile traffic the highway guaranteed. In addition to being a convenient overnight stay en route to Dallas, Texas, Hot Springs thrived as a tourist destination. Known primarily for the healing powers of the thermal waters that flowed from its hillsides, Hot Springs also boasted alligator and ostrich farms, a horse-racing track, several theaters, and two amusement parks during its visitation peak. With the growth of automobile traffic, and the expansion of the city of Hot Springs in the 1930s–40s, travelers began looking for convenient and accessible overnight lodging near highways. The high-class downtown hotels could not offer on-site parking for the most part, and carried additional expenses such as porter's fees for baggage handling and charges for clubs and social offerings.

As a result, traveler services, including tourist courts and service stations, began appearing along Park Avenue because of its proximity to Hot Springs' major attractions and entertainment venues. The tourist courts along Park Avenue are generally a conglomeration of widely-circulated tourist court "plan books" and popular architectural styles of the period, with a little of the individual owner's/builder's personality thrown in for good measure.

The Bellaire Court, built circa 1936, consists of a Craftsman bungalow serving as the owner's residence/manager's office, and eight individual cottages in the Craftsman style. The Craftsman style utilized by the builder was a popular residential architectural style during the 1930s. Tourist courts aimed to "a home away from home" for their guests, so it is no surprise that popular residential styles were used in commercial construction during this period. The wood-framed building is covered in brick veneer with Craftsman detailing on the interior and exterior. The condition of the building, fine Craftsman details, and

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minimally-altered exterior and interior of Bellaire Court's guest units and owner's residence/manager's office make it eligible for nomination under Criterion C to the National Register.

Early records of Bellaire Court are minimal, with the primary identifying information coming from the City Directories of Hot Springs. The building first appears as lodge apartments in the 1938 City Directory under the ownership of Frank I. Clark. Little is known about Mr. Clark and his occupation, but he did convert the original Bellaire Lodge Apartments to Bellaire Tourist Camp in 1939, and finally to Bellaire Tourist Court in 1943. By the early-1950s, medical advancements made drugs more readily available for ailments previously treated with thermal baths. Combine this with the rise in popularity of several recreational lakes south of Hot Springs, and tourists began to abandon the courts of Park Avenue. In the 1951 City Directory, ownership of Bellaire Courts shifts to John H. Howard, and was converted back to apartments in the mid-1970s as it remains presently. Because Hot Springs moved south and west toward the lakes and because of the availability of land open to development surrounding the city, many of the tourist courts along Park Avenue have remained virtually unaltered. In their current state, neglect has been their biggest enemy, although the majority remaining are used in some capacity, several still hosting travelers as motels.

Bellaire Court Historic District is being nominated under **Criterion A** for **local significance** because of its role as one of the earliest tourist courts on Park Avenue serving automobile travelers along the Little Rock – Hot Springs Highway as the city changed with the demand for convenient, accessible, and stylish overnight lodging for visitors to Hot Springs. It is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of a Craftsman designed tourist court. The nomination is being submitted under the multiple property listing "**Arkansas Highway and Transportation Era Architecture, 1910-1965**" in conjunction with the historic context "**Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965.**"

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Bibliography

Baeder, John. Gas, Food, and Lodging: A Postcard Odyssey, Through the Great American Roadside. New York: Cross River Press, Ltd., 1982.

Garland County Tax Records, 1938 – 1953, 2000 – 2001.

Interview with Jill Curran, Director, Encyclopedia of Arkansas, August 2003.

Interview with Jeff and Kate Hilton, owners of Bellaire Apartments, September 9, 2003.

Interview with Bobbie Jones McLean, Executive Director, Garland County Historical Society, August 2003.

Hot Springs City Directory, 1930, 1938, 1940, 1942, 1944, 1948, 1951, 1953, 1955.

Jakle, John A, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers. The Motel in America. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.

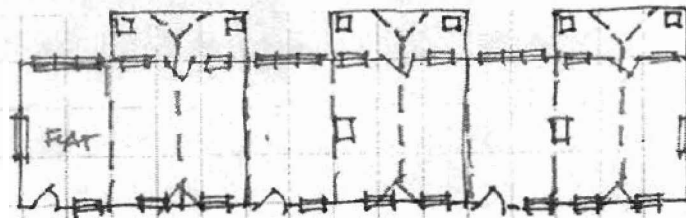
Liebs, Chester H. Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985.

Margolies, John. Home Away From Home: Motels in America. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.

Sanborn Insurance Company Maps - 1948, 1950.

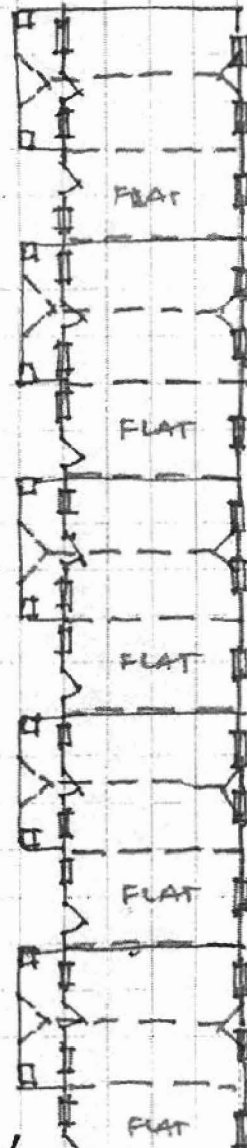
Magnolia S. street



3 guest units

Parking

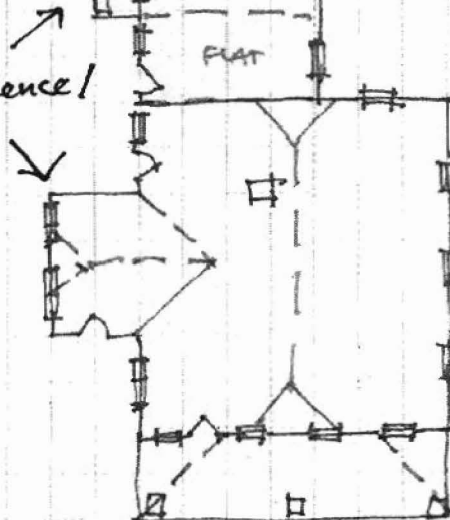
Bellaire Court



parking

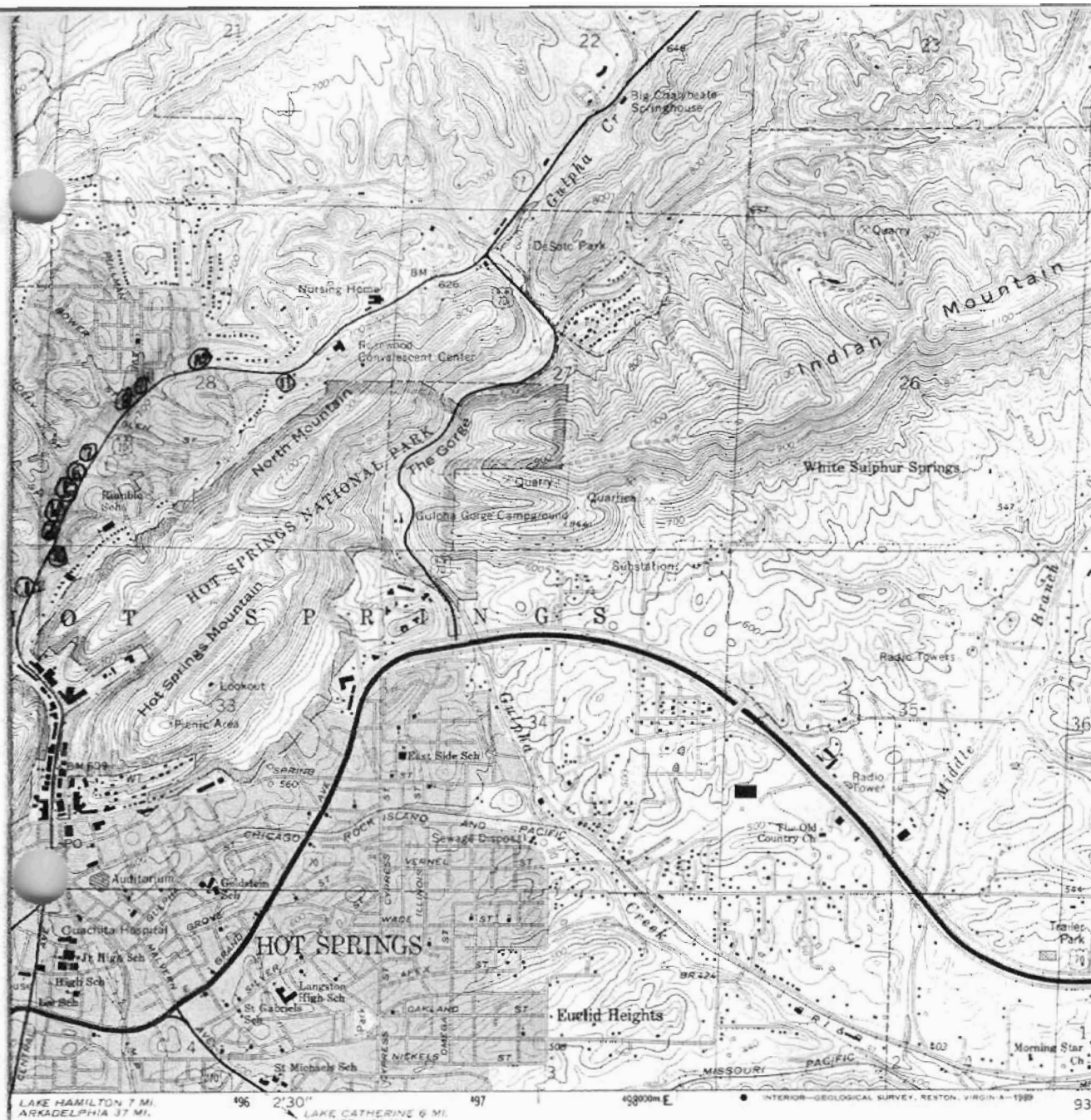
Open area

Owner's residence /
office
and
5 guest units



N
↑

Park Ave.



LEGEND

- ① LANGDON FILING STATION
311 PARK AVE.
15/444969/3819774
- ② BUTCHIE'S DRIVE INB
534 PARK AVE.
15/445075/381972
- ③ COTTAGE COURTS
603 PARK AVE.
15/445101/3820053
- ④ BELLWICK COURT
637 PARK AVE.
15/495137/3820124
- ⑤ COVE TOURIST COURT
711 PARK AVE.
15/445295/3820424
- ⑥ WHEATLEY COURT
811 PARK AVE.
15/445366/3820546
- ⑦ PARKWAY COURTS
815 PARK AVE.
15/445224/3820377
- ⑧ LYNNWOOD TOURIST COURT
857 PARK AVE.
15/445452/3820632
- ⑨ OPAL'S STEAK HOUSE
871 PARK AVE.
15/445502/3820083
- ⑩ PERRY PLAZA COURT
1007 PARK AVE.
15/445837/3820805
- ⑪ MOUNTAINEER HOTEL
1100 PARK AVE.
15/4476123/3820801

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Heavy-duty | Light-duty |
| Medium-duty | Unimproved dirt |
| U. S. Route | State Route |



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

HOT SPRINGS NORTH, ARK.
34093-E1-TF-024

1966
PHOTOREVISED 1976
DMA 7353 11 SE-SERIES 7884

JOY STANDARDS
25, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
K. ARKANSAS 72204
AVAILABLE ON REQUEST







