

26-19-4235

NR 10-8-76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Passmore House

AND/OR COMMON

Passmore-Lea House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

846 Park Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Hot Springs

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Third

STATE

Arkansas

CODE  
05

COUNTY  
Garland

CODE  
051

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Miss Wilhelmina Lea Estate

STREET & NUMBER

846 Park Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Hot Springs

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arkansas

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Circuit Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Garland County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Hot Springs

STATE

Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Passmore House in Hot Springs is one of the most picturesque Second Empire structures found in Arkansas. Built in 1873 by Dr. Pauldin Passmore, the one-and-one-half-storey, clapboard home stands amidst a thickly wooded estate at the base of North Mountain in Hot Springs. The building features a seven-bay facade (north elevation) set beneath a crested, multi-dormered mansard roof. Outstanding exterior features are the highly decorative temple dormers, dropping below the cornice line and embellished with an embossed design on the tympanum, and a protruding two-storey, central pavilion which is treated as a tower.

The chimneys found on the home are corbelled at the caps, and the cornice along the facade is moduled and bracketed. The apertures are rectilinear and present an extremely vertical appearance. The upper sash of the double-hung windows is as a rule bordered with small panes of stained glass. On both the first and second floor levels exterior doorways in the protruding central pavilion are double or French doors. A small quatrefoil lattice balcony fronts the door on the upper floor. In keeping with "General Grant" Style architecture, porches are attached to much of the open wall surface on the first floor. The rear and side elevations of the home are distinguished by numerous bays and insets, generally unadorned and completely contemporary with the original construction of the house.

The stairway, as is usual with Second Empire structures, is the focal point of interior decoration. It is constructed of turned hardwood and follows a dog-leg pattern. The Passmore House, however, contains an eccentric interior feature which reflects the original turn of mind of its architect-builder and initial owner, Mr. Passmore. Flanking the entrance hall is a paneled dining room encased beneath a domed ceiling. The stained glass which once formed a skylight in the middle of this large dome has since been replaced in an unauthentic manner, and the simple, painted, mural covering the interior surface of the dome is falling away, but the continued presence of the dome makes the room one of the most unusual in Arkansas.

Except for rare instances of chipped paint and tattered wallpaper the interior of the house remains in an excellent, original condition. Some unusual antique technological features such as a coal-base burner, and bathroom fixtures also remain.

The house, the property, and a single ancillary structure located behind the house have suffered no major alterations. Furthermore, the setting is sufficiently obscured by forest and mountain from its more modern surroundings that the mind can with good conscience wander back and be enveloped by the year of 1873.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
— HISTORIC	— ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	— COMMUNITY PLANNING	— LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	— RELIGION
— 10-1499	— ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	— CONSERVATION	— LAW	— SCIENCE
— 1500-1599	— AGRICULTURE	— ECONOMICS	— LITERATURE	— SCULPTURE
— 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	— EDUCATION	— MILITARY	— SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
— 1700-1799	— ART	— ENGINEERING	— MUSIC	— THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	— EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	— PHILOSOPHY	— TRANSPORTATION
— 1900-	— COMMUNICATIONS	— INDUSTRY	— POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	— OTHER (SPECIFY)
		— INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1873

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William P. Passmore

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Medicine and Hot Springs have long been joined in economic, if not spiritual, matrimony by the presence of thermal springs located on the eastern slope of Hot Springs Mountain. These waters, known as the "healing vapors," were greatly exploited for their ability to give relief to various arthritic and rheumatic conditions in the era before the "wonder" and "miracle" drugs. While some realized the potential which bubbled in the steamy springs as early as the 1840's, it was not until after the Civil War that the serious business of building Hot Springs into the nation's premier health resort was undertaken.

On duty as a Union surgeon for the Army Department of the West, Dr. Pauldin Passmore first passed through Hot Springs in the year 1863. He was pleased with Arkansas, and after the war settled in Little Rock, entering business as a druggist. Soon, however, the lure of Hot Springs drew him southward and he began what was to become a most successful apothecary trade in Hot Springs. He was present during the boom years, 1870-1890, when Hot Springs was transformed from a frontier settlement, noted by mountaineers and delta planters for its soothing bathing water, into a health metropolis connected to the nation by railway and by reputation. In the summer the city resembled a Victorian carnival. Dr. Passmore profitted from this phenomenal expansion, leaving behind three well-patronized drug stores at his death in 1896.

The construction of the Passmore residence took place in 1873. It was a sumptuous structure, befitting a man who had made good by being in the right profession at the right place and at the right time. Dr. Passmore designed the building and supervised construction. He displayed great imagination in fitting the Second Empire Style to his own personal preferences and needs.

The building was set on a forested knoll several hundred feet from the nearest thoroughfare, Park Avenue. The Park Avenue district was at the time the most exclusive new residential section of the city, and it was the safest, being well-removed from the older section of town, which was clustered in a narrow, fire-prone, valley along Hot Springs Creek.

Today, the one-and-one-half-storey clapboard house looks much as it did in 1873. Ornate iron cresting crowns the mansard roof, which in true Second Empire fashion is curved. Unusual temple dormers decorate the

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roof and extend down below the cornice line. A two-storey central pavilion, capped with a separate, crested mansard, protrudes from the facade (north elevation) of the house, foreshadowing the towered structures of the later Victorian period. All doorways and windows are expressed as severely vertical forms. The rear sections of the structure are composed of numerous unadorned bays and insets.

The interior is made unique by one eccentric element. The ceiling of the dining room is formed into a large dome broken in the middle by a stained-glass skylight. As was common in the more expensive Hot Springs homes of the period, hardwood was used for every conceivable type of moulding. The stairway is also an elaborate hardwood composition. A coal-base burner has been retained by the present owner, though it is no longer in use.

The exterior and interior of the home are in good condition. Trees and hills shield the home from unwelcome, out-of-character visual intrusions.

Miss Wilhelmina Lea, the granddaughter of Dr. Passmore, is the present owner of the home. Plans for the disposal of the house after her death are uncertain.

The Passmore House can stand, as much an example of economic history as it can of architectural history. It was built during the boom period of the City of Hot Springs and it represents the tastes and living standard of one who was able to profit from the rapid expansion.

# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Lea, Wilhelmina. Personal interview. Hot Springs, September, 1975.  
 Hallum, John. Biographical and Pictorial History of Arkansas. Albany: Weed, Parsons and Company, Printers, 1887.  
 Scully, Francis J. Hot Springs Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park. Little Rock: Hanson Company, 1966.

# GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,5	49,56,6,0	3,82,04,8,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mike Shinn, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

DATE

3-9-76

STREET & NUMBER

300 West Markham

TELEPHONE

501-371-1639

CITY OR TOWN

Little Rock,

STATE

Arkansas

# STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

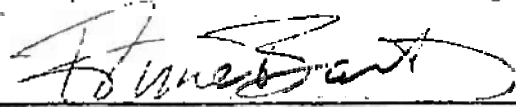
NATIONAL

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 Anne Bartley



TITLE State Historic Preservation Program

DATE 3-9-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER