

The National Register of Historic Places

What do the Poinsett Bridge, the Santee Indian Mound, the village of Newry, and the Robert Smalls House have in common? They are all significant historical, architectural, or archaeological resources in South Carolina that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Altogether, over 1,200 South Carolina properties—some individual properties, some entire districts—have been listed in the Register. These properties link us tangibly to our past and contribute to our understanding of the history of our communities, our state, and our nation. All are irreplaceable cultural resources.

A State Historic Preservation Officer in each of our states and territories receives and reviews nominations to the National Register and, in conjunction with the State Board of Review, submits them to the Department of the Interior for listing. In South Carolina, the State Historic Preservation Officer is Dr. Rodger E. Stroup, Director of the Department of Archives and History; the State Board of Review is composed of historians, architectural historians, archaeologists, architects, and other preservationists. South Carolina's Board of Review meets two or three times each year to consider National Register nominations and to evaluate properties using the National Register criteria.

Results of listing in the National Register

In South Carolina, listing in the National Register helps to preserve our historic and archaeological resources because:

- ◆ A listed property is recognized by the federal government as a valuable resource with historical or archaeological significance. This recognition alerts individuals and communities to the value of their historic and archaeological resources and reinforces preservation efforts.

- ◆ A listed property receives some protection when plans are being made for federally-assisted projects. These include projects that involve federal funds—highway or public housing projects, for example—or projects that require federal permits or licenses—construction of new banks or filling wetlands, for example. A National Register property cannot be altered or demolished by a federally-assisted project until the State Historic Preservation Office is consulted and the historic value of the property is carefully considered. This protection is also extended to properties that are eligible for, though not listed in, the National Register.

- ◆ A listed property receives some protection from projects that require permits or certifications from either of two divisions of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). A property listed in the National Register cannot be altered or demolished by projects involving mining permits from the Division of Mining and Solid Waste Permitting or permits or certifications from the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) until its historic value has been carefully considered. This same protection is also extended to properties that are eligible for, though not listed in, the National Register.

- ◆ A listed property that is owned or leased by the State is given some protection under state legislation. Agencies must consult with the State Historic Preservation Office before alterations or changes are made to state-owned or leased National Register properties.

- ◆ A listed building that is rehabilitated may be eligible for federal and state income tax credits. A 20% federal rehabilitation tax credit is available for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing buildings that are listed in the National Register. Under South Carolina law taxpayers who qualify for the 20% federal tax credit also qualify for a 10% state income tax credit for rehabilitation expenditures. A National Register-listed building that is an owner-occupied

residence is eligible for a 25% state income tax credit for rehabilitation expenses incurred in a certified rehabilitation of the building.

- ◆ A listed property that has a current or planned public use may be eligible for state historic preservation grants when funds are available. Nonprofit organizations, religious organizations, and local governments may apply for these matching grants, which can be used to stabilize historic properties or to protect them from the adverse effects of the weather. A listed property within a Certified Local Government (CLG) may be eligible for federal CLG grants. These grants can be used to stabilize historic buildings and protect them from the adverse effects of the weather or for survey, planning, or education projects.

Misconceptions about National Register listing

- ◆ Listing does not require private property owners or local governments to preserve or maintain their properties unless they apply for and accept federal funding or a federal license or permit, a DHEC permit or certification, a preservation tax credit, or a State Historic Preservation Office preservation grant. In some communities, local ordinances may establish protections for historic properties, but these ordinances are established by local governments; they are not part of the National Register program.

- ◆ Listing does not guarantee the owners state or federal funds or a low interest loan for renovation.

- ◆ Listing does not require the owners to provide public access to the properties.

Listing is used primarily to encourage the preservation of our national heritage. Listing does not burden owners of significant properties. It rewards them.

National Register Criteria

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and:

- A. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C. embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; possess high artistic values; or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Exceptions to Criteria

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years are considered ineligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria, or if they can be categorized as:

- A. a religious property that derives its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- B. a building or structure that has been removed from its original location but is significant primarily for its architectural value or because it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

- C. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance when there is no other site or building directly associated with the individual's productive life; or
- D. a cemetery that derives its primary significance either from the graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
- E. a reconstructed building that is accurately executed, is located in a suitable environment, is presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same associations has survived; or
- F. a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance; or
- G. a property achieving significance within the last fifty years if it is of exceptional importance.

For more information about the National Register program, write or call:

**S.C. Department of Archives & History
State Historic Preservation Office
8301 Parklane Road
Columbia, SC 29223-4905
803-896-6178**

*or visit this location on our website:
www.state.sc.us/scdah/*

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**State Historic
Preservation Office**

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