

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUN 20 1978
DATE ENTERED	NOV 19 1978

**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

Harris-Banks House

AND/OR COMMON

White Arches

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

122 Seventh Avenue South

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

Second

STATE

Mississippi

CODE

28

COUNTY

Lowndes

CODE

127 87

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

Mr. and Mrs. Ned Hardin

STREET & NUMBER

122 Seventh Avenue South

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Mississippi 39701

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Chancery Clerk
Lowndes County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Second Avenue South

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Mississippi 39701

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1936

FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C. 20540

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 Harris-Banks House stands on a large, half-block lot on the southwest corner of Seventh Street South and Second Avenue South in Columbus, Mississippi. The two-story, three-bay-by-five-bay frame dwelling rests on a brick foundation and is sheltered by a nearly flat roof. The structure is a highly individualistic and elaborately detailed regional expression of the Italianate style combined with picturesque eclecticism. Deeply paneled pilasters set at each corner of the house carry a simplified classical entablature with a frieze pierced to accommodate vents covered with cast-iron grates. The facade, or north elevation, is dominated by a one-and-one-half-story engaged octagonal tower that is elevated on the single-bay, flat-roofed portico that shelters the central entrance. A graceful, classically inspired arcade is set between wooden, octagonal columns clustered around the square supporting piers that carry the tower. On each side of the portico are canopy-roofed galleries with coupled, attenuated, octagonal colonnettes linked by a lacey, millworked frieze composed of Tudor arches and pierced spandrels. Flat, sawn balustrades enclose the galleries.

The engaged tower is lavishly detailed in the eclectic mode with paneled pilasters that carry a full entablature and frame the double-leafed, glazed doors set in four of the five exposed faces on the principal level. Shallow, scalloped hoods, identical to those used throughout, cap each opening. The upper half-story echoes the arrangement of the principal level, with truncated pilasters flanking the small two-by-six-light windows that carry a much richer entablature with a diamond-fret frieze and an overhanging cornice crowned by a sawn balustrade.

In contrast to the tower, all other bays on the facade are set in frontispieces that repeat the detailing of the pilasters at the corners of the house and the accompanying entablature. Transoms are set over the recessed, glazed upper panel, double-leaf doors and side lights on the first level, but are omitted on the second. Etched-glass glazing is used throughout in the side lights and transom.

A three-bay gallery shelters the first level of the five-bay secondary facade, or eastern elevation, and is detailed with millwork similar to that on the galleries of the main facade. The southernmost bay has been enclosed to accommodate a solarium. A shallow pavilion emphasizes the simply detailed central entrance bay. Set above is a small balcony enclosed by a cast-iron balustrade and serviced by a single-leaf door, flanked by side lights and set in a simple frontispiece. The rear, or southern elevation, features a small, double-tiered gallery with giant-order, octagonal columns.

The L-shaped, double-pile plan of the interior is appointed in a more restrained, more classically inspired manner than the exterior. The wide central hall is dominated by a large, cantilevered dogleg staircase. To the rear of the central hall is a separate, secondary stair hall with a fully finished spiral staircase that provides access to the rear gallery. The western file of rooms contains double parlors, with an attached butler's pantry, which are joined by four-panel, double-leaf sliding doors, while the eastern file contains a library, a large cross hall, and a bedchamber with a separate dressing room off the rear.

Throughout the first level, battered-and-eared architraves carry a cornice, some of which feature applied rosettes. Handsome, richly carved grey-veined marble mantels are used in the three principal rooms, as are foliated, plaster centerpieces.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__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	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Harris-Banks House is the most distinctive Italianate-style house as well as one of the most elaborately detailed dwellings in Columbus, Mississippi, a community noted for its highly individualistic expressions of the popular antebellum architectural styles. The design of the house freely combines elements of the Grecian and the Gothic modes with towered, flat-roofed Italianate form and epitomizes the eclecticism characteristic of many Columbus-area dwellings constructed during the two decades prior to the Civil War. The Harris-Banks House was built between 1857 and 1861 by Jephtha Vining Harris, a wealthy cotton planter and statesman, and it remained in the family until 1967.

Jephtha Vining Harris (1816-1899), a native of Elbert County, Georgia, came to Mississippi in the early 1840s. He and several of his brothers and cousins were attracted to the area by the fertile lands in the recently acquired Choctaw cession. Harris purchased a considerable amount of cultivable land in the fertile Black Prairie region west of Columbus. He soon became one of the region's leading citizens, serving as a state senator from 1859 to 1861.

Situated on the eastern bank of the navigable Tombigbee River, Columbus became the financial, commercial, and social center of the productive, plantation-dominated Black Prairie region after the 1830 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, which opened the lands west of Columbus for settlement. Like many other wealthy planters, Harris and his family preferred life in the burgeoning community of Columbus to their isolated, rural plantations. In 1852, he purchased the "east half of Square Ten" in New Town (Moore's 1830 survey) from Thomas Christian (Deed Book 27:32).

With its rich and eclectic detailing added to the somewhat naive conception of a towered, Italianate villa, the Harris-Banks House is stylistically unique. One of only two houses in Columbus with a cross hall, it stands virtually unaltered with most of its nineteenth-century furnishings, including numerous Cornelius chandeliers and an impressive, walnut Renaissance Revival library suite built for the house, making it a valuable repertory of nineteenth-century decorative arts and an example of the mid-century fascination with the picturesque.

In 1873, the house was purchased by Mrs. Harris's brother, James Oliver Banks, a successful planter from Alabama. The Harris-Banks House remained the residence of his widow and his daughter, Lucy Banks Maxwell, until 1967, when the house and its furnishings were sold to Mr. and Mrs. Ned Hardin (Personal interview, Lucy Banks).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lowndes County, Mississippi. Chancery Clerk. Deed Book 27:32. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Microfilm.

Rowland, Dunbar, ed. The Official and Statistical Register of the State of Mississippi: 1908. Nashville, Tenn.: Press of the Brandon Printing Company, 1908.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Columbus, Miss.-Ala.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:62500

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 367050 3706125
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The eastern half of Square 10 of Moore's survey of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, on the southwest corner of Second Street South and Seventh Avenue South.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary McCahon Shoemaker, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 571

CITY OR TOWN

Jackson

DATE

April, 1978

TELEPHONE

(601) 354-6218

STATE

Mississippi 39205

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Warrn Matlock

TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE June 12, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles A. ...
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11-16-78

ATTEST: CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

Jann H. Gilmore

DATE

11/15/78

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 & 9 PAGE 1

7 - DESCRIPTION

The octagonal tower is not expressed on the first level but rather serves as a story-and-a-half solarium off the northern end of the central hall on the second level. A simple, spiral staircase set along the western wall of the tower chamber provides access to the upper half-story and the roof. The other rooms of the second level repeat the arrangement of the first.

Located immediately behind the southwest corner of the house are a late nineteenth-century, two-bay kitchen built of pressed brick and an interesting frame outbuilding. The latter is set on a high brick foundation over a cellar which is reached by a central bulkhead opening.

9 - MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Shoemaker, Mary McCahon, architectural historian. Personal interview with Miss Lucy Banks, granddaughter of J. O. Banks, February 6, 1978.

United States. Works Progress Administration. Lowndes County, Mississippi. Source Material for Mississippi History: Preliminary Manuscripts. Compiled by Statewide Historical Research Project. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.