Background photo: Cranston Street Armory, Providence, RI (Jack Boucher, HABS). Bottom photos, left to right: Philadelphia Toboggan Company Carousel #6, Burlington, CO (NHL collection); Archeologist excavating at the Jamestown National Historic Site, Jamestown Island, VA (Sarah Pope); Windsor Covered Bridge, Windsor, VT (NHL Collection); Lolo Trail, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Lolo Hot Springs vic., ID (NHL collection); Madison Historic District, Madison, IN (Jack Boucher, HABS).
The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, it is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service under the Secretary of the Interior.

Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register includes:

- all historic areas in the National Park System;
- National Historic Landmarks that have been designated by the Secretary of the Interior for their significance to all Americans; and
- properties significant to the Nation, State, or community which have been nominated by State historic preservation offices, Federal agencies, and Tribal preservation offices, and have been approved by the National Park Service.

America's historic places embody our unique spirit, character, and identity. Representing important historical trends and events, reflecting the lives of significant persons, illustrating distinctive architectural, engineering, and artistic design achievement, and imparting information about America's past, historic places tell compelling stories of the Nation, and of the States and communities throughout the country. The National Register helps preserve these significant historic places by recognizing this irreplaceable heritage. Its primary goals are to foster a national preservation ethic, promote a greater appreciation of America's heritage; and increase and broaden the public's understanding and appreciation of historic places.

The National Register encourages citizens, public agencies, and private organizations to recognize and use the places of our past to create livable and viable communities for the future.

Opposite: Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Park, CA (Jack Boucher, HABS)
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"I don't think without the National Register designation of the Warehouse district we could have gotten the investor interest and the interest of public officials in taking a bunch of old buildings that people were knocking down for parking lots and turning them into a vibrant retail, residential, and office district." (Hunter Morrison, City of Cleveland Planning Office)

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Listing properties in the National Register often changes the way communities perceive their historic places, and strengthens the credibility of efforts by private citizens and public officials to preserve these resources as living parts of our communities. Listing honors a property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or the Nation. The National Register, which recognizes the values of properties as diverse as a dugout shelter of an Oklahoma pioneer settler, the Breakers Mansion in Newport, and a 12,000-year-old prehistoric site, has helped many citizens to appreciate the richness and variety of the Nation's heritage.
One of the most common questions that property owners have about the National Register is, “Will there be restrictions on my property after listing?” Owners of private property listed in the National Register have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so. Owners can do anything they wish with their property provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved. For the private property owner, Federal funding for historic buildings usually comes in the form of Federal tax credits for rehabilitation. Owners of National Register properties who choose to participate in the preservation tax incentive program must follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and receive approval by the National Park Service of the rehabilitation project in order to receive the tax credit.

Local historical commissions, design review committees, or special zoning ordinances are established by State legislation or local ordinances, and are not part of the National Park Service’s National Register program. The State Historic Preservation Officer and the mayor, city council or other community officials can provide information on any State or local law which may affect a historic property.

Results of Listing in the National Register

- Listing in the National Register honors the property by recognizing its importance to its community, State, or the Nation.

- Federal agencies, whose projects affect a listed property, must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects on the property. See “Federal Activities” on page 11.

- Owners of listed properties may be able to obtain Federal historic preservation funding, when funds are available. In addition, Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation and other provisions may apply.

- Owners of private property listed in the National Register have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so. Owners can do anything they wish with their property provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved.
Private preservation efforts, spurred by the honor of National Register listing and made feasible by financial incentives, have resulted in a rise in the value of historic property and in the creation of construction, business, and employment opportunities throughout the Nation. Documentation used for evaluating and registering historic properties is the basis for decisions about which properties merit tax incentives or available Federal, and, in some cases, State and local assistance, and how these properties should be treated to respect their historic character.

Federal Tax Incentives for Rehabilitation. Since 1976, the Federal Internal Revenue Code has contained a variety of incentives to encourage capital investment in historic buildings and to spur revitalization of historic properties. These incentives, including a 20% investment tax credit, encourage the preservation of historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings listed in the National Register by allowing favorable tax treatments for rehabilitation and discouraging destruction of historic properties.

Owners of National Register properties who choose to participate in the preservation tax incentive program must follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and receive approval by the National Park Service of the rehabilitation project in order to receive the tax credit. Information about the Federal Historic Preservation tax incentives program is on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/>, or can be obtained by contacting Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30 of this brochure. Information about this program can also be obtained by contacting your State historic preservation office. Information on obtaining the address and phone number for your State historic preservation office is also found under the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Easement Donations. The Federal Internal Revenue Code also provides for Federal income, estate, and gift tax deductions for charitable contributions of partial interests in real property (land and buildings). Taxpayers’ gifts of qualified interests must be “exclusively for conservation purposes.” One of these purposes is defined as “the preservation of an historically important land area or certified historic structure.” Further information on easements may be obtained from the sources listed above in the rehabilitation tax incentives section.

Federal Historic Preservation Grants. Owners of National Register listed properties may be able to obtain Federal historic preservation funding, when funds are available. Information about Federal historic preservation grant assistance is available on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/grants.htm> or by contacting your State historic preservation office. Information on obtaining the address and phone number for your State historic preservation office is found under the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30 of this brochure.

State Historic Preservation Grants and Tax Programs. States also administer State grant assistance programs and many of them allow for property tax abatements.
and State income tax credits for rehabilitated historic properties. Information about State administered historic preservation grant assistance, property tax abatement, and State income tax credit programs may be obtained by contacting the appropriate State historic preservation office. Information on obtaining the address and phone number for your State historic preservation office is found under the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

"Many New Mexico communities are facing new development which, although it may be welcome from an economic perspective, will mean change. At the same time, local officials and private citizens are thinking more about preserving buildings, structures, roadway corridors, archeological sites and places where 'important things' happened or may yet happen, before they disappear. Through careful planning, new development can proceed and New Mexico's cultural heritage can be preserved.” (Excerpt from Grass Roots Preservation, published by the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division)

THE NATIONAL REGISTER AS A PRESERVATION PLANNING TOOL

Information gathered during identification, evaluation, and registration is important in identifying preservation needs and in planning protection strategies for historic places on a Federal, State, and local level.

Federal Activities

Federal agencies are required by law to locate, inventory, and nominate to the National Register historic properties in Federal ownership or control. The Federal agencies also are responsible for preserving historic properties under their ownership or control and for assuring that any property that might qualify for inclusion in the National Register is not inadvertently transferred, sold, demolished, substantially altered, or allowed to deteriorate significantly. If, as a result of Federal action or assistance, a historic property is to be substantially altered or demolished, records are to be made for deposit in the Library of Congress or other agency designated by the Secretary of the Interior, for future use and reference.

Otowi Historic District, San Ildefonso vic., NM (Los Alamos Scientific Lab, Santa Fe, NM)
Agencies proposing projects that may affect a property listed in or eligible for the National Register must allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (an independent Federal agency that provides a forum for influencing Federal activities, programs, and policies as they affect historic resources) an opportunity to comment prior to funding, licensing or granting assistance on such projects. The law does not mandate preservation by the Federal agency and its purpose is not to impede or halt development. Rather this process assures that the value of historic properties is given direct consideration in project planning decisions. For more information on this process, go to the following Web site <www.achp.gov>, or contact the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at the address given in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Consideration of historic values is also a part of the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit, in accordance with the Surface Mining and Control Act of 1977.

State and Tribal Activities

In addition to nominating historic properties to the National Register, the State Historic Preservation Officer prepares and implements a comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan, administers the State program of Federal assistance for historic preservation within the State, conducts a statewide survey of historic properties, assists in administering the Federal preservation tax incentives, and cooperates with Federal, State, and local officials and others to assure that historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development. The State Historic Preservation Officer also provides public information, education and training, and technical assistance relating to the Federal and State historic preservation programs. Tribal Historic Preservation Officers perform the same type of preservation planning activities as those performed by the State Historic Preservation Officers. These activities, however, are associated with historic properties located on Tribal lands.

Local Activities

Local governments can receive Federal assistance for their preservation activities by obtaining Certified Local Government status from the National Park Service and the appropriate State historic preservation office. Certified Local Governments receive small matching grants and technical assistance from the National Park Service and the State historic preservation office to aid local preservation projects, such as producing historic theme or context studies, cultural resource inventories, assessments of properties to determine their eligibility for local and National Register designation, building reuse and feasibility studies, design guidelines and conservation ordinances, and publications to educate the public about the benefits of historic preservation. For more information on the Certified Local Government Program, go to the following Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/hps/clg>, or contact the Certified Local Government Program at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.
NOMINATIONS AND LISTING PROCEDURES

Anyone can prepare a nomination to the National Register, working with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer, Federal Preservation Officer, or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Their offices are partners of the National Park Service and are responsible for surveying and evaluating properties in their jurisdictions, determining which of these properties are eligible for listing, working with individuals to prepare nominations to the National Register, and officially nominating properties to the National Register. The procedures for nominations are found in 36 CFR Part 60, which is available on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/regulations.htm>. 36 CFR Part 60 can also be obtained by contacting the National Register Reference Desk at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Standard registration forms are used for all National Register nominations and are available on disk by contacting the National Register Reference Desk. The forms can also be downloaded from the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/forms.htm>. Instructions for completing the registration forms are found in National Register bulletins, available by contacting the Reference Desk, and are also available on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins.htm>.

State Nominations

Ordinarily, local citizens or the staff of the State Historic Preservation Officer prepare National Register nomination forms. Next, a State review board, composed of professionals in the fields of American history, architectural history, architecture, pre-contact and post-contact archeology, and other related disciplines—and sometimes citizen members—reviews the nominations. This review board makes a recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer either to approve each nomination, if in the board’s opinion it meets the National Register criteria, or to disapprove the nomination if it does not.

During the time the State Historic Preservation Officer is reviewing the proposed nomination, property owners and local authorities are notified. All property owners are given the opportunity to comment on the nomination. Owners of private property are given the opportunity to concur in or object to the nomination. If the owner of a private property (or the majority of such owners of a property) or district with multiple owners object to the nomination, the State Historic Preservation Officer forwards the nomination to the National Park Service only for a determination about whether the property is eligible for listing. If a majority of private property owners do not object, the State Historic Preservation Officer may approve the nomination and forward it to the...
National Park Service to be considered for listing. If the property is approved by the National Park Service, it is officially entered in the National Register.

Further information on the procedures to nominate properties to the National Register and the preservation program within your State is available from the appropriate State historic preservation office. You can receive the address and phone number for your State historic preservation office on the Web at <grants.cr.nps.gov/Shpo/SHPO_Search.cfm> (note, this Web address does not begin with “www”), or by contacting the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

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**Federal Nominations**

Nominations to the National Register for properties under Federal ownership or control are submitted to the National Park Service through Federal Preservation Officers appointed by the agency heads. Federal agencies prepare National Register nominations, notify local officials and provide the State Historic Preservation Officer an opportunity to comment prior to sending nominations to the National Park Service. The Federal Preservation Officer approves each nomination and forwards it to the National Park Service for final consideration. If the National Park Service approves the nomination, the property is officially entered in the National Register.
Information on Federal nominations to the National Register and other preservation programs of Federal agencies is available from the Federal Preservation Officer for each agency. A list of Federal Preservation Officers is found on the Web at <www.achp.gov/fpo.html>, or by contacting the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Tribal Nominations

Nominations to the National Register for properties on Tribal lands are submitted to the National Park Service through Tribal Historic Preservation Officers appointed by each Tribal government. The process for considering nominations is substantially equivalent to the process used by the State historic preservation offices. Before a Tribe can assume these responsibilities, the Secretary of the Interior must approve a Tribe’s plan for carrying them out.

Further information on the procedures to nominate properties on Tribal land to the National Register and the Tribal preservation programs is available from the appropriate Tribal Preservation Officer. A list of Tribal Preservation Officers is available on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tribal/>, or by contacting the Tribal Preservation Program at the address given in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Nominations by persons and local governments

The National Park Service may accept a nomination directly from any person or local government for inclusion of a property in the National Register if the property is located in a State where there is no State historic preservation program approved by the National Park Service.
EVALUATING PROPERTIES FOR LISTING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

The National Park Service has established a set of criteria that historic properties must meet in order to be eligible for or listed in the National Register. The National Register's criteria for evaluating the significance of historic places were developed to recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have made a contribution to our country's history and heritage. The criteria are designed to guide State and local governments, Federal agencies, Tribal governments and others in evaluating potential entries in the National Register.

Criteria for Evaluation

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that meet the criteria, or if they fall within the following categories:

a. a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
b. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which 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 if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or
d. a cemetery that derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or
e. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association 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 past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.
DETERMINATIONS OF ELIGIBILITY

The National Historic Preservation Act also gives the Keeper of the National Register authority to determine that historic properties are eligible for listing in the National Register, without formally listing them. This occurs when Federal agencies request a determination of eligibility to assist in their planning (see "Federal Activities" on p. 11). Frequently, consensus on the National Register eligibility of a property that may be affected by a Federal project is achieved between the Federal agency, the State or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and any interested parties, which may include Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations, local governments, and permit or license applicants. When consensus cannot be achieved between the parties, the Federal agency will request the Keeper of the National Register to determine whether or not the property is eligible. More information on this process is found in the National Register procedures 36 CFR Part 63. In addition to the regulations, information can be obtained from the following Web site <www.achp.gov>, or by contacting the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation at the address given in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Determinations of eligibility also occur when:
• the private property owner—or for properties with more than one owner, a majority of private property owners—objects to listing in the National Register.
• National Park Service certifies that State or local districts meet the National Register criteria for purposes of Federal investment tax credits for rehabilitation.
• the Secretary of the Interior makes a unilateral determination of eligibility, after an investigation and onsite inspection, when this action will assist in the preservation of a historic property. The Secretary may make this determination in unusual circumstances.

As is the case with formal listing, determinations of eligibility do not restrict the rights of private property owners to do what they wish with their property, provided that no Federal license, permit, or funding is involved.

"There's a story beneath the ground, everywhere around historic buildings, even where the buildings are gone. And the story is a dynamic story—it's not a relic. What archeologists are trying to uncover is a way of life and a sequence of events—time passing. That's an exciting part of a National Register historic site." (William Kelso, Jamestown Rediscovery)
NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

To recognize the national significance of properties that possess exceptional values or qualities in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior designates some historic places as National Historic Landmarks. National Park Service historians and archeologists study and evaluate these properties within the context of major themes of American history. Properties judged to be nationally significant are nominated by the National Park Service and forwarded to the National Park System Advisory Board, which may recommend to the Secretary of the Interior that the property be designated a National Historic Landmark. If not previously listed in the National Register, National Historic Landmarks are automatically listed in the Register when they are designated. For more information on the National Historic Landmarks program, go to <www.cr.nps.gov/nhl>, or contact the National Historic Landmarks Survey at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

The preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of Americans. (Excerpt, National Historic Preservation Act of 1966)
RESEARCH, EDUCATION, TOURISM, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The National Register is a rich source of information for public education, interpretation, tourism, and research on our past and the places that document the contributions of all people. Detailed information about the National Register and its various research, education, tourism, and technical assistance efforts is located on the National Register homepage at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>.

The National Register Collection and the National Register Information System

The National Register Collection documents the properties listed in and determined eligible for the Register. The documentation on each property provides a physical description of the place, information about its history and significance, a bibliography, photographs, and maps. Researchers can take advantage of this unparalleled collection in a number of ways. The National Register Information System (NRIS), a computerized index to the National Register, is available to the public through the Web at <www.nr.nps.gov>. Researchers can visit the National Register collection in Washington, D.C. during business hours, Monday through Friday except Federal holidays. Copies of documentation can be received by contacting the National Register Reference Desk at the address given in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

National Register Bulletins and Videos

The National Register has developed a broad range of published and audiovisual technical assistance materials to meet the needs of States, Federal agencies, national parks, local governments, Indian tribes, and private citizens seeking to nominate properties and use the National Register. A publications order form; the National Register Starter Kit, consisting of National Register Bulletins How to Complete the National Register Form, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, and Researching a Historic Property; registration forms; and a number of other technical bulletins are available on the Web at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/pubs>, or by sending your request to the National Register Reference Desk at the address given in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

Teaching with Historic Places

Teaching with Historic Places (TwHP) is an educational program that uses places listed in the National Register to enhance traditional classroom instruction of history, social studies, geography, and other subjects. Whether or not they can visit a site, students can investigate historic places near and far and discover how places all around us in our communities and States reflect broad themes in American history and connect us to the past. Through lesson plans, workshops and technical guidance, and an extensive Web site, TwHP provides information on topics such as using places in education; writing lesson plans; deciphering clues in the physical evidence of historic places; and forming interdisciplinary collaborations. The cornerstone of TwHP is a series of tested classroom lesson plans written by historians, educators, preservationists, historic site interpreters, and teams, and accessible in print, on the Web, or both. Teachers and others can search online lesson plans by theme, State, or historic time period. For more information on the program, and for a complete list of available lessons, visit the following Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/>.

The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people. (Excerpt, National Historic Preservation Act of 1966)
Discover Our Shared Heritage
Travel Itinerary Series

The National Register promotes heritage tourism through the Discover Our Shared Heritage travel itinerary series. The itineraries, some of which are available in print, others exclusively on the National Register Web site, explore a historic theme, region, or city by highlighting, describing and linking properties listed in the National Register. Each itinerary is a self-guided tour that provides descriptions of the properties, maps, and links to other pertinent Web sites. For more information, go to the following Web site <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel>, or contact Discover Our Shared Heritage at the address listed in the “Quick Reference” section on p. 30.

"Aliiolani Hale (Honolulu, Hawaii) was placed on the National Register in 1972. I think being on the Register is important not only for the people who live here, but it serves as a symbol to the Nation that this building is important because of its contribution to our national history, as well as to State history. I think it's important for people to understand that there are very unique differences throughout the Nation." (T. Lani Ma'a Lapilio, Executive Director, Judiciary History Center)
QUICK REFERENCE

National Register of Historic Places
National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, MS 2280, Washington, DC 20240
This address also applies to Teaching with Historic Places,
Discover Our Shared Heritage, and the National Register
Reference Desk.
202/354-2211; nr_info@nps.gov; <www.cr.nps.gov/nr>

National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Historic Landmarks Survey, National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, MS 2280, Washington, DC 20240
202/354-2210; nhl_info@nps.gov; <www.cr.nps.gov/nhl>

State, Federal, and Tribal
Historic Preservation Offices
State historic preservation office list: <grants.cr.nps.gov/
Shpos/SHPO_Search.cfm> (sic)
Or contact: National Conference of State Historic Preservation
Officers, 444 N. Capitol Street, NW, Suite 342, Washington, DC
20001, 202/624-5465
Federal preservation office list: <www.achp.gov/fpo.html>

Federal Historic Preservation
Tax Incentives
Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives
Heritage Preservation Services (2255), National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, MS 2255, Washington, DC 20240
202/513-7270 x.2; hps_info@nps.gov; <www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax>

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Old Post Office Building, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 809, Washington, DC 20004
202/606-8503; achp@achp.gov; <www.achp.gov>

Certified Local Government Program
Certified Local Government Program
Heritage Preservation Services, National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, MS 2255, Washington, DC 20240
202/513-7270 x.4; hps_info@nps.gov; <www.cr.nps.gov/hps/clg>
Quotes from individuals used throughout this brochure are taken from the video, *American Legacy: The Work of the National Register of Historic Places*. Information on obtaining the video is found on the National Register Web site at <www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/books.htm> or by writing to the National Register at the address on the back of this brochure.

Opposite: Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Park, CA
(Jack Boucher, HABS)