

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 930 Dean Avenue (Summer House) and portions of 950 Dean, including Studio not for publication
city, town Highland Park vicinity
state Illinois code 012 county Lake code 097 zip code 60035

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Highland Park Multiple Resource
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0 (DOE)

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official William L. Weber, SHPO Date 3-28-91
ILLINOIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION AGENCY

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single-family dwelling

Commerce/Trade: professional

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Shingle Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, concrete slab

walls wood/shingle

roof asphalt

other stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The following (first) paragraph of the text is taken verbatim from the HIGHLAND PARK MULTIPLE RESOURCE INVENTORY SHEET on the Jens Jensen House and Studio, March, 1983. Further information corrects and clarifies the original nomination.

Shingle style with Tudor overtones, the house is a one-story, gabled structure of wood clapboard. A large window on the north overlooks an open area typical of Jensen's work. It is bounded by a flower garden and low foliage on the edges of a clearing with trees at the house. A sun lane slopes northwest toward the ravine. Stone posts mark the entrance to the access road for 950 and 954 Dean. These and stonework around the house and along the ravine are all that remains of the Jensen landscape design, apparently. What is left contributes to the significance of the house.

The Jensen Summer House and Studio property being nominated to the National Register faces Dean Avenue on the East. Boundaries on the North and West extend to the center of deep ravines. The boundary is drawn to exclude a 1950's ranch house at 950 Dean Avenue and to include the full lot of the Jensen Summer House. A part of the Jensen property, a vacant lot to the south of 930 Dean Avenue is not included in the nomination because it contains no significant landscape features. There are two buildings, a garage intrusion, a council ring, a bird feeding station and some original stonework on the property, most of which was designed by Jensen. The Summer House at 930 Dean Avenue is set back about 50' from Dean Avenue and is located at the south end of the property being nominated. The studio building (which was known as 954 Dean Avenue when it was occupied as a residence several years ago) is entered from a walk off a driveway with two stone gateposts, presumably added in the 1950's to access the ranch house. The Studio, with its entrance facing Dean Avenue, stands approximately 40' from the street. Roughly 30' to the west of the Studio stands the two car garage intrusion. The council ring is located at the point where two ravines intersect, at the northwest corner of the table land included in the nomination. The bird feeding station is located just to the north of the Summer House.

The Summer House, is an L-shaped structure which stands one story with intersecting gable roofs. It is sheathed in shingles. The construction date is difficult to pin down. It is known he purchased the property on which the Summer House and Studio are located @1908 from photos located at the Morton Arboretum. During this period he lived in the Humboldt Park area of Chicago. According to his grandson, Hudson Wheeler, he maintained an office at Steinway Hall after 1912. It is likely the Summer House was constructed sometime after 1908, but before 1918 when Wheeler noted that he moved his office to Ravinia. The house was unchanged until after

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Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio

Jensen left the Chicago area in 1934. A garage was added to it sometime in 1938, four years after Jens Jensen moved his practice to The Clearing in Ellison Bay, Door County, Wisconsin. The entrance to the house is located in the rear intersection of the "L". It is reached through an arched opening separating the house and the garage. A second addition was attached on the west side of the house in 1970. Both are shingled. Despite additions, the floorplan of the original house is basically unaltered. On the interior there is hand-carved woodwork designed and executed by Marshall Johnson, Jens Jensen's son-in-law, also a prolific and well-respected landscape architect, who was Jensen's draftsman and assistant for his private practice which operated out of his Highland Park studio. Johnson moved into Jensen's Summer House in 1920, (when Jensen moved from Chicago to Wilmette), lived there with his family and subsequently took over Jensen's practice, in 1934. The Johnson family remained in the Summer House until 1938. The house is in excellent condition and being rehabilitated by the current owner.

The Jens Jensen Studio, which photographic evidence from the Morton Arboretum indicates was built sometime after 1908, served as Jens Jensen's office from 1918 until he moved to The Clearing. This information was provided in an unpublished autobiographical sketch prepared by Hudson Wheeler and corroborated by Jensen scholar Robert Grese, who notes in his forthcoming book that Jensen relocated his office from Steinway Hall to Ravinia sometime around World War I. Covered by brown shingles, the studio is a small irregularly shaped one-story structure with four rooms and a garage, capped by multiple gable roofs. It is set directly at the top edge of the steep slope of the north ravine. The base of the wood frame structure at the ravine side is supported by concrete footings with stone foundations between the piers. On the other sides, the wood framing comes to grade and appears to rest on a brick foundation at grade. The southern foundation (away from the ravine) consists of wood frame on concrete slab on grade. A large stone chimney visually anchors the structure to the ravine. Windows are wood casement with multiple divided lights throughout, with views of Jensen's landscape framed by these openings.

The studio is entered from one exterior wood door, with a herring bone pattern, facing the street. Jensen's office, accessed from a narrow hall, is finished in board and batten wood paneling with a coved wood paneled ceiling and a large stone fireplace. To the rear of his office is a drafting room with a band of windows overlooking the adjacent ravine. The shape of the room, with a cathedral ceiling, is original but but is finished in plaster and fitted with kitchen cabinets. At the rear of the drafting room is a small paneled room with a large window facing the ravine. A bedroom and bath is located one step up, off the drafting room. The garage, integrated into the building, is located just next to the front door. It hasn't served as a garage since 1938, when a garage was added to the summer house. Building records indicate that there was a 1931 addition. At that time, the office (the room with a fireplace) was extended 6'4" east-southeast toward Dean Avenue. It is also suspected that the portion of the studio constructed on a concrete slab (the bedroom and bath) was an addition. The interior finishes, some original and others later, vary in condition. Overall, the building has suffered water damage and is in deteriorated condition.

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Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio

The Jensen Summer house was home to Jensen's daughter and her husband Marshall Johnson from 1920 until 1938. Later they subdivided the property and the large 1950's ranch style house was built. At the same time the driveway flanked by two gate posts was added. Marshall Johnson landscaped the area surrounding the house.

Many of Jensen's characteristic landscape features and much of his original stonework is intact. Noteworthy Jensen features include remnants of the main clearing or sun opening extending north and northwest from the Summer House, the council ring, the bird feeding station, and a square platform with a bench and stone table. Next to the platform is a rocky ledge with a pool beneath the ledge. East of the sun opening, where the two ravines meet, is a players hill (characteristic Jensen motif — where plays were actually given) and a stone path leading to Jensen's first council ring (which currently has a barbeque pit on the south side of it). The siting of the major elements — Summer House, Studio, council ring and clearings — is seemingly informal but is actually carefully planned. Jensen planned his landscapes to look natural. The plant materials consist primarily of native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. The stonework of the council ring, bench, table and pool area, consisting of horizontal slabs of rock with weathered edges laid up with mortar recessed (where used) is representative of the way in which Jensen placed rocks as landscape elements.

Nature has caused some change to the site. It is not possible to tell how much some of the original soft landscape features (herbaceous and woody plant material) have been changed by time, the elements and subsequent construction to the property. The ravine is becoming severely eroded and two paths known to lead from the studio to the council ring cannot be seen. There is no longer evidence of a brick path leading from the house to the studio. A new stone wall has been added to stabilize the bluff on which the council ring is situated, (the wall does not touch the council ring and is composed of like materials intended to blend into the landscape). Despite these changes, old photos indicate that most of the hard landscape features are original; most are also in good condition. The historic character is very strong in feeling as evidenced by comparing the property today with historic photos from the Morton Arboretum and from an article by Karl B. Lohmann published in Landscape Architecture Quarterly in 1926. There is a great deal of original fabric.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Landscape architecture

Period of Significance
@1908-1934

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Jens Jensen , Jens

Architect/Builder
Jens Jensen , Jens

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The following (first) paragraph is taken verbatim from the HIGHLAND PARK MULTIPLE RESOURCE INVENTORY SHEET on the Jens Jensen House and Studio, March, 1983. Additional research, (including a Highland Park landscape sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Highland Park Historic Preservation Commission, and the Highland Park Park District, and information provided by Bruce Johnson, Jens Jensen's grandson who grew up in the Jensen Summer House) necessitates including further material which corrects and adds information on the significance of the property. In addition, the owner of 950 Dean Avenue (who owns the property on which the Studio and council ring are located) was inadvertently left out of the original nomination and not properly notified.

This house was Jens Jensen's residence in Highland Park from 1915, when he designed it as a home and studio, until the early 1930's when he moved to Wilmette. He kept his office at 954 until his retirement to "The Clearing" @1934. It was from here that he designed the Rosenwald estate, the Florsheim estate, the Loeb property and numerous other landscapes that are significant to the history of landscape design and the appearance of Highland Park. The stonework, clearing and some of the plantings remain on the property as evidence of his contribution. Jensen's first stone council ring, which was Jensen's artistic signature, is located at the rear of what is today 950 Dean. It has been altered to include a barbeque fireplace so has not been included in this nomination.

The Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio meets Criteria B and C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The property is significant because it contains the office of nationally known landscape architect Jens Jensen, his summer house and important landscape features including his first council ring, Jensen's signature. It is unknown whether Jensen landscaped his residence in Chicago, and it is known that his property in Wilmette was neither designed by him nor landscaped. This property served as his studio from 1918 until 1934, when he retired to The Clearing. Jensen's landscape architecture - his development of the Prairie Style - arguably represents the Midwest's most significant contribution to the field landscape architecture, comparable to Frank Lloyd Wright's

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Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio

development of the Prairie School in architecture. The Summer House and Studio are the most important structures in the Chicago area associated with Jensen's life, and the property embodies numerous features that characterize his style. His studio at Steinway Hall no longer exist since the building has been demolished.

Jens Jensen (1860-1951) was a dedicated and influential landscape architect who became known as the dean of the "Prairie Style" of landscape design. The term Prairie Style was coined by Wilhelm Miller, a professor at the Landscape Extension of the Horticulture Department of the University of Illinois, in 1915. He defined the style as "...an American mode of design based upon the practical needs of the middle-western people and characterized by preservation of typical western scenery, by restoration of local color, and by repetition of the horizontal line of land or sky, which is the strongest feature of prairie scenery." According to Miller, Jensen was the first who "consciously took the prairie as a leading motive.

Jensen was fascinated by the Midwestern landscape, and it inspired him to create a style which was meant to artistically emulate the prairie. In addition to his use of his native plant material in informal arrangements, easily recognized elements of his style are: sun openings or clearings carved from curving walls of vegetation, horizontally layered native stonework, meandering paths drawing one into spaces, water features such as reflecting pools and his design signature, the council ring, a circular arrangement of rock derived from a combination of the Danish folk and Native American council fires. He developed this expression of the Prairie Style over time, but much of his experimentation took place on his own property in Highland Park, and all the characteristics of his style mentioned are found on this property. It was from his Highland Park studio that Jensen designed the Rosenwald estate, the Florsheim estate, the Loeb property, elements of the Ford in Dearborn Michigan and numerous other landscapes that are significant nationally to the history of landscape design and locally to the appearance of Highland Park. Jensen was clearly attracted to Ravinia, where many of his clients and colleagues who worked with him on conservation efforts lived. Ralph Fletcher Seymour, publisher of his writings, was a Ravinia resident.

In 1908, Jens Jensen purchased some land in the Ravinia area of Highland Park, where he subsequently built his summer home and the year-round studio on the wooded ravine site. He called the property "The Clearing", a name he was to use again when he retired to Ellison Bay, Wisconsin in 1934.

It is believed that from just after 1908 to 1920 Jens Jensen lived in Chicago and spent summers in Highland Park. After 1920 he lived in Wilmette, and the Marshall Johnson family resided in the Summer House. Jensen maintained a busy private practice from his studio. It was in 1909 that Jensen shifted from

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Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio

the position of General Superintendent and Chief Landscape Architect to consulting Landscape Architect for Chicago's renowned West Park System. By the time he parted from the system in 1920, he no longer had an office in Steinway Hall and worked exclusively in the studio. Marshall Johnson stayed with him until Jensen's retirement and continued work on the site in the Jensen idiom. He designed the foundation plantings and rockwork surrounding the 1950's ranch house.

The Jensen Summer House is the residence and the Studio is the office most closely associated with Jensen's design career. A 1929 home movie shows he never landscaped his house in Wilmette, a fact corroborated by his grandson Bruce Johnson. Jensen developed his ideas and gave expression to them in his designs for the Ravinia property. It was on this site that he built the first council ring (He comments in Siftings) "on the slope of the ravine, the first council ring was built - a new adventure. In this friendly circle, around the fire, man becomes himself. Here there is no social caste. All are on the same level, looking each other in the face. A ring speaks of strength and friendship and is one of the great symbols of mankind. The fire in the center portrays the beginning of civilization.... Many of these rings have I built since this first attempt." In his writings Jensen also spoke of the clearing, rocky ledge and pool. The Highland Park property was undoubtedly his favorite. "A few of the homes I have had the pleasure of planning give me pleasure to this day, although I would consider none the final work. They all seem to be a part of a long list of work, each one discarded when a new one came on the horizon to receive my full attention. Out of the many looms one place that has become dear to me during the years." That place is this property.

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Jens Jensen Summer House and Studio

Johnson, Bruce. Interview. November, 1990.

Lohmann, Karl B. "Landscape Architecture in the Middle West." Landscape Architecture Quarterly. Vol. 16, No. 3, April, 1926. Pp. 157-168.

Miller, Wilhelm. "The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening." Extension Bulletin 184. University of Illinois, 1915.

Nathan, Jo Ann. Interview. November, 1990.

Opportunities for Preserving the Jens Jensen Studio and Landscape, 950 Dean Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois. Report of the Preservation Advisory Services Team: Holly Harrison Fiala, Cheryl A. Inghram, Arne McGuire, Jo Ann Nathan, Gary R. Papke. Sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Midwest Regional Office, Highland Park Historic Preservation Commission and the Highland Park Park District, April, 1989.

Photos in the collection of the Morton Arboretum.

Sniderman, Julia, Chicago Park District. Interview, November, 1990.

Wheeler, Hudson, Unpublished biographical material on Jens Jensen.

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The boundaries are described as follows:

The property includes all land from a point at the southeast corner of the property line of 930 Dean Avenue 200' west, then 35' north, then west 90' and south 35' to jog around the house. It then continues west 120' in line with the first property line mentioned. From there it follows the property line of 950 Dean, 225' north along the bottom of the ravine, 435' east along the bottom of the ravine and finally 315' along Dean Avenue - the east boundary of 930 and 950 Dean - to the starting point.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Eaton, Leonard. Landscape Artist in America: The Life and Work of Jens Jensen. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964.

Grese, Robert E. Jens Jensen, Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press. In publication, 1990.

Highland Park, Illinois Historic Landscape Survey Final Report. Highland Park: Highland Park Historic Preservation Commission, July, 1988. Written by Julia Sniderman and Jo Ann Nathan and sponsored by the Park District of Highland Park and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. (Unpublished)

Jensen, Jens. Siftings: The Major Portion of the Clearing and Collected Writings. Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour Publisher, 1939.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property three

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The current nomination includes 930 Dean Avenue and portions of the property known as 950 Dean Avenue, excluding the ranch house. It includes property with integrity from the period of significance. The boundary area includes the acreage historically associated with Jens Jensen containing elements reflective of his work.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the acreage associated with Jensen's occupation of the property that has retained sufficient historic integrity.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Benjamin
organization Highland Park Historic Presevation Comm. date November 9, 1990
street & number 711 Marion Avenue telephone 708/432-1822
city or town Highland Park state IL zip code 60035

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/743-9542.

JUN 28 1991

WEEKLY LIST OF LISTED PROPERTIES
6/21/91 THROUGH 6/21/91

KEY: Property Name, Multiple Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Certification Date, Reference Number, NHL status

ARIZONA
Pima County
Gunsight Mountain Archeological District
10000 N. Oracle Rd.
Three Points vicinity 8/21/91 90000986

ILLINOIS
Lake County
Jesse White House, Summer House and Studio
1000 N. Main St.
Highland Park 8/19/91 91000785

LOUISIANA
Acadian Parish
Boggs
215 Park Ave.
Baton Rouge vicinity 8/20/91 91000705

MAINE
Aroostook County
Church of the Advent
Church St., Block 5 of 6S, with NE 228
Limestone 6/21/91 91000767

NEW YORK
First Congregational Church, Former
1000 N. Main St.
Batavia 8/21/91 91000768

MARYLAND
Bristol County
Millsie O'Leary Historic District
1000 N. Main St.
Baltimore 6/21/91 91000769

MASSACHUSETTS
Norfolk County
Hawthorn Hill
200 N. Main St.
Dorset 8/17/91 91000885

MONTANA
Beavertown
3750 Eastline Hwy
Beavertown 8/19/91 91000726

MISSISSIPPI
Buck
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/18/91 91000727

MISSISSIPPI
Buck
405 Buck St.
Stevensville 8/18/91 91000728

MISSISSIPPI
Buck
217 Buck St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000729

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
116 Church St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000730

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000731

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000732

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
301 Main St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000734

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
401 Church St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000735

MISSISSIPPI
Cochran
300-305, 306-308 Main St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000736

MONTANA
Beavertown
3750 Eastline Hwy
Beavertown 8/19/91 91000726

MONTANA
Buck
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000727

MONTANA
Buck
405 Buck St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000728

MONTANA
Buck
217 Buck St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000729

MONTANA
Cochran
116 Church St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000730

MONTANA
Cochran
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000731

MONTANA
Cochran
313 East Side Hwy.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000732

MONTANA
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301 Main St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000734

MONTANA
Cochran
401 Church St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000735

MONTANA
Cochran
300-305, 306-308 Main St.
Stevensville 8/19/91 91000736

MONTANA
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