

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number All

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30. Name: Johnson House (~~Common name — Masonic Temple~~)

Location: 1030 Belvin Street

Classification: Category - building; Ownership - private; Status - occupied;
Accessible - yes, restricted; Present use - other (Masonic Temple).

Owner of property: San Marcos Masonic Lodge #342
George Wilhite, Secretary
P.O. Box 576
San Marcos, Texas 78666

Description: Condition - good, Altered (very slightly); Original site.

The Johnson House is an H-shaped residence of two stories plus basement built of buff brick. It consists of a symmetrical design of pavilions extending from the center toward the front, sides, and rear. Classically derived elements are applied with a light hand, lending the house a Renaissance Revival air.

Over the long axis and the front-facing pavilions are hip roofs covered in composition shingles. The flat-roofed, one-story extensions on the side walls have red barrel-tile pents at the roofline. Inset across the front facade is a three-bay porch surmounted by a spindle-railed balcony supported by four brick piers and six Ionic columns. Its floor is terrazo, edged with black-and-white ceramic tile in a Greek key motif. The paving spreads across the entire facade to form an open piazza, delineated by another spindle rail, short piers, and built-in planters.

The rear facade is also symmetrical, but simpler. It repeats the window boxes above scroll brackets found under the second-floor windows on the front. A one-story room occurs between the truncated wings.

Fenestration is primarily of eight-light casements, many of them in pairs. Sashes in 4/4 and 8/8 configurations are on the side walls and wings. Chimneys rise through the eaves at the building's corners.

Decoration is restrained, but effective. The entrance is framed by four feathery, Corinthian-derived columns and capped by an architrave of shields, dentils, and egg-and-dart molding. The architrave is repeated, as is the porch cornice. Cartouches and swags decorate the brick spaces. Simply carved brackets support the wide overhanging eaves, beneath which is a band of vertical bricks and green tile diamonds, which reappear on the chimneys.

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One enters the 15-room house directly into the living room, facing a beautiful fireplace (one of four) edged with elaborate matte-finish ceramic tiles in a grape and foliage design. Overhead is an original silverplated light fixture. To the left is the dining room with plaster wall-panel moldings and another tile mantel, this one showing peacocks. Beyond is the kitchen, with its original sink and cabinets. In the rear is the spindle-railed stair. All closets are lined with cedar.

The Masons have maintained the house well, and refurbish the rooms as funds are available. The only noticeable change is the paint on the upstairs window panes, which they hope to remove soon.

Significance: Period - 1900- ; Areas of significance - architecture.
Specific dates - 1919. Atlee B. Ayres, architect.

Construction of Lloyd and Jessie Johnson's home on Belvin Street created quite a stir. It was easily the most elaborate, ambitious residence in the San Marcos of 1919. The notice given the house is well deserved. It is a bold reflection of the Renaissance Revival style so popular earlier in the Northeast. With its low hipped roofs and indented spaces, the Johnson House even bears a slight resemblance to one of the archetypes of the style, the Breakers of Newport, Rhode Island. Atlee B. Ayres, arguably the best of the early 20th-century Texas architects, designed the home using the finest materials on the interior and exterior.

Johnson, a native San Marcan, was a very wealthy man, having made his fortune as president of the Mutual Mercantile Company and owner of 3,000 acres in Hays County. He was director of the State Bank and Trust Company and president of the Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Johnson was well known and active in social and church circles. Reports on the cost of building their home varied widely, from \$45,000 to 75,000. At any estimate, it was an expensive project. It appears they gave architect Atlee Ayres a free hand. The house easily measures up to any of the grand mansions he built in San Antonio and elsewhere.

The Johnson family occupied the building until 1937, when it was sold to the Masonic Lodge, which continues to use the building for meetings and social occasions.

Bibliography:

San Marcos Record, October 31, 1919.

New Encyclopedia of Texas, p. 2238.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks files, Texas Historical Commission

Interview with Jack Wood, June 10, 1982.

Geographical data: Acreage - approxiamtely one acre.

UTM reference - 14 / 601090 / 3305430

Verbal Boundary Description - H.E. Barber Addition, Block 4, lot 5 and southern 18 feet of lot 4.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Johnson House (San Marcos MRA)
Hays County
TEXAS

Working No. 7-14-83
Fed. Reg. Date: 2-17-84
Date Due: 8/11/83 - 8/28/83
Action: ACCEPT 8/26/83
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name _____

2. Location _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property _____

5. Location of Legal Description _____

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

Johnson House (San Marcos, CA)
State County
CA 92068

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____
Quadrangle name _____
UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas

#30. Johnson House

Photo by Melinda Koester/Stuart Strong, 1978.
Negative on file at Texas Historical Comm.

East oblique, camera facing west.
Photo 120 of 150.

MASONIC & TEMPLE



Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas
Johnson House

#30.

Photo by Lissa Anderson, July, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Detail of southeast facade, camera facing
northwest.
Photo 121 of 150.



Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas

#30. Johnson House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, May, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Livingroom fireplace, camera facing northwest.
Photo 122 of 150.



Historic Resources of San Marcos
San Marcos, Hays County, Texas

#30. Johnson House

Photo by Lissa Anderson, May, 1982.
Negative property of HASM, on file at SMPL.

Detail of livingroom fireplace.
Photo 123 of 150.

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000853