

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Gray, Jr., Philip H. & Margaret, House
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number	6115 North Highlands Avenue	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Madison	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI	county Dane	code 025
			zip code 53705

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Gray, Jr., Philip H. & Margaret, House

Dane

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 structure
 site
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Gray, Jr., Philip H. & Margaret, House
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1940

Significant Dates

1940

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kaeser, William V.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- 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:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 1.79 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 397670 4772560
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Timothy F. Heggland	date	July 7, 2019
organization		telephone	608-795-2650
street & number	6391 Hillsandwood Road	zip code	53560
city or town	Mazomanie	state	WI

[Type here]

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Raheel Ahmed and Ambar Haleem	date	July 7, 2019
organization		telephone	608-416-9334
street & number	6115 N. Highlands Ave.	zip code	53705
city or town	Madison	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Gray, Jr., Philip H. & Margaret, House
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin

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Description:

The excellent, highly intact Modern Movement style Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. house is located on the far west side of the city of Madison, it was designed for the Grays by Madison architect William V. Kaeser, and it is set on a sloping 1.79-acre parcel that is situated in a very up-scale early twentieth century suburb known as the Highlands.¹ This well-landscaped parcel is now surrounded by other similar parcels containing large single-family residences, but the Gray's house still enjoys sweeping views that look northeast over the houses that surround it to the west, north, and east toward the not far distant Lake Mendota thanks to its elevated position and to Kaeser's careful siting. The Grays purchased their parcel in 1939, construction on their house began in 1940, and the work was essentially completed by the end of that year.² This almost 8,000-square-foot irregular plan house sits on a basement story that is partially exposed thanks to the slope of its site and this story contains two separate two-car garages and various service rooms. The principal living areas, however, are located in the house's second story, while most of its seven bedrooms are located in the third story, along with a large wood-clad playroom. The walls of the house's basement story are fashioned out of poured reinforced concrete, but where the exteriors of these walls are exposed, they are covered in the same variegated brick that covers the rest of the exterior of the house, and these walls are sheltered by the very wide overhanging eaves of the house's asphalt shingle-clad main roof. In addition, the house also possesses an excellent, highly intact interior that features wood floors and plastered walls and ceilings, and the core of the house consist of a two-story entrance hall whose curved stairway is edged by a beautifully designed wooden balustrade of Contemporary design. The resulting house is believed to be locally significant and eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion C (Architecture) for its architectural significance as a very fine, highly intact and early example of William V. Kaeser's designs and as an outstanding example of late pre-World War II modern design.

The suburb in which the Gray house is situated is known as the Highlands and it covers portions of a large hill located on the far west side of the city of Madison that lies adjacent to what is now the east edge of the corporate boundaries of the city of Middleton. This suburb came into being in 1911 when a group of investors purchased an existing farm and portions of others that totaled approximately 130 acres of contiguous land. Historically, most of this land had been devoted to crop raising, and even though there were some wood lots scattered about its southern edge, this was essentially open land at the time of platting. The highest portion of this land lies along the southern edge of the plat and from there it slopes gradually downhill towards the west, north, and east, and because this land and the land surrounding it was all undeveloped at the time of platting and was mostly devoted to farming, the views from the plat were unobstructed and extended for miles, with the nearby Lake Mendota and even the distant State Capitol in Madison's downtown being easily visible at that time.

¹ Madison is the capitol of the state of Wisconsin and in 2010 it had a population of 233,209.

² William V. Kaeser Papers. Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

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To design their plat, the investors chose the Chicago-based landscape gardener Ossian Cole Simonds, who is considered to be one of the fathers of what he called the Prairie Style of landscape gardening and who was already well known to them from his previous work with the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association, for which he had designed Madison's Tenney Park, Vilas Park, Brittingham Park, and the Yahara River Parkway. Simonds' plat design for the Highlands was an excellent example of the more organic, topographically sensitive type of planning that first appeared in Madison in the design of the University Heights plat in 1893. Simonds' plan for the Highland had a curvilinear loop street plan (N. and S. Highlands Avenue) with parcels within the plat being located both within the loop this road created and also along its north and west edges, there being 37 parcels in all, which ranged from 1.32 to 4.97 acres in size.³ Access from the plat to the surrounding area and to Madison and Middleton was via the connections that both ends of the loop road made at the east end of the plat with the Middleton Road (today's Old Middleton Road). In addition, Simonds also provided a sketch plan of how the various parcels in the plat might be developed, which included suggested house sites for each parcel, each site of which was to be reached by a long curving driveway that terminated in a loop that was positioned adjacent to the front of the house and its main entrance.

Once the plat was opened for development in 1912, several of the new property owners purchased multiple parcels in order to create what were essentially small suburban estates, and this pattern of development was still typical of the Highlands in 1939 when the Grays bought Parcel 21, which originally included 3.26-acres. This quadrilateral-shaped parcel slopes downhill from its narrower southwest end towards its wider north end, which fronts onto N. Highlands Avenue, and at the time construction on the house began the land in this parcel was almost completely open and was not landscaped. In order to maximize the views that could be seen from this parcel, Kaeser positioned the Gray's house at the highest, southwest end of their parcel and he positioned the main block of the house so that it had elevations that looked northeast towards Lake Mendota and east towards Madison. Fortunately, this parcel was large enough and private enough to allow Kaeser to give every elevation of the house views of the surrounding landscape, and while subsequent development around this parcel and the growth of landscaping has curtailed these views somewhat, in winter, the views from the house are still extensive.

When the Gray's house was built there were only nine other houses in the Highlands, and with the exception of the Craftsman Style Prof. J. Pyre and Prof. W. Hart houses, the rest were all examples of the Period Revival styles, among which were and are several of the Madison area's largest and finest examples of the Colonial Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Norman Revival, and French Provincial styles.⁴ The modernist design of the Gray's house, with its Wrightian influences, was the first house in the Highlands whose design broke with the design precedents of the past and which looked forward

³ Three smaller roads, Hillside Avenue, Park Place, and Willow Lane, also cut across and into the loop portion of the plat as well and they provide access to the few parcels in the interior of the loop that did not have access to Highlands Avenue.

⁴ Several of these houses also had outbuildings associated with them, however.

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to the future. Which is not to say that the Gray's house started a trend. By the end of the 1960s, almost every original parcel in the Highlands had been built upon, but even so, the overwhelming majority of the houses that followed the Grays were examples of the Period Revival styles. It was not until a bit later, when the process of subdividing some of the larger parcels in the Highlands began, that more houses designed in Contemporary styles began to appear there.

Today, there are some 76 houses in the Highlands and no more than a handful of its original 37 parcels are still completely intact. The same is true of the Gray's parcel as well, which was subdivided into three parcels between 1976 and 1993. The other two parcels now occupy most of the land that fronts onto N. Highlands Ave. and they are associated with a large Contemporary Style house located at 6107 N. Highlands Ave. that was built in 2005 and which occupies one of these parcels. This leaves the Gray's house occupying the 1.79-acre flag-shaped remainder of its historic parcel. Fortunately, since one of the two subdivided parcels has not yet been built upon, the setting of the Gray's house is still much as it was originally. A long-blacktopped entrance drive runs in a southerly direction from N. Highlands Ave. along the northerly edge of the original parcel up to the house, where it loops around a small landscaped circle before arriving at the entrance court and the house's northwest-facing entrance elevation. Mown lawns encircle three sides of the house and today they are shaded by both old and new ornamental trees and shrubs. The southwest-facing rear elevation of the house's main block, however, and its southwest-facing side elevation both face onto a broad masonry terrace that encircles the south corner of the house and this terrace looks out over the lawn to the southeast. In addition, low stone walls also edge the southwest-facing side of this terrace, which lies at the foot of the heavily wooded uphill rearmost portion of the parcel that lies to the west and southwest of the house, and they form the base of a rock-garden that is part of Kaeser's original landscaping plan for the house.

All of the buildings in the Highlands are single family residences, nearly all, like the Grays', are architect-designed, and they display a mix of Period Revival and Modern Movement styles. In general, these houses are large, they were expensive to build, and most, but not all, are two stories in height. Regardless of size or style, however, houses in the Highlands are very well maintained and most of them are fine representative examples of their various styles. Parcels in this suburb typically now possess a number of mature shade trees, and while landscaping approaches vary, being dependent in part on how heavily treed the parcel is, most have the majority of their surface areas covered in mown lawns and are professionally landscaped while others, by choice, exist in more of a semi-wild state. Streets in this suburb are covered in asphalt, but none of them have sidewalks, curbs, or gutters, and this is also true of N. Highlands Ave., where the Gray's house is located.

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Exterior:

The Gray house has an irregular plan that consists of an 85-foot-long by 47-foot-deep two-story-tall main block to which is attached a 22-foot long by 12-foot-deep one-story-tall service wing, which is positioned at a right angle to the south end of the main block. Both the main block and its service wing rest on a full basement story as well, but much of this basement story is inset into the slope of the site. As a result, the basement story of the northwest-facing entrance elevation of the main block and the northeast-facing elevation of its service wing, both of which face onto the house's entrance court, are fully exposed, as is the northeast-facing side elevation of the main block and a portion of its southeast-facing rear elevation. The house rests on poured concrete foundation walls whose exteriors above grade are clad in variegated brick and the same brick covers most of the walls that rest on this foundation, which are all sheltered by the wide overhanging boxed eaves of the house's shallow pitched multi-hip roof, whose soffits are clad in plaster and whose slopes are clad in asphalt shingles. Each elevation of the house is asymmetrical in design, and in general, the window openings on the main block's first story consist of large single or grouped picture windows while the second story's windows are smaller and are often grouped and are positioned in a band that is placed just below the eaves of the house's main roof. Windows are double-glazed throughout and are original and they are still set into their original wood frames.

Northwest-Facing Entrance Elevation

The 78.25-foot-wide asymmetrically designed entrance elevation of the main block faces onto the entrance court and it is three-stories in height and is four-bays-wide, with the first two stories of its right-hand bay consisting of the northwest-facing end elevation of the service wing.

The first two stories of the main block's 18.75-foot-wide left-hand bay are clad in brick and its basement story contains a single flat-arched entrance door opening that opens into a basement utility room. This opening contains an original flat-panel wood door and the opening is enframed by a slightly raised brick surround that is composed of header course bricks.⁵ Placed in the first story above is a flat-arched window opening that serves the guest bedroom inside and this opening contains a pair of one-light wood-framed casement windows. The second story of this bay, however, is slightly recessed from the wall surfaces below it, it is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten, and it is part of a continuous band of this same siding that extends across almost the entire width of this elevation just below the eaves of the main roof. Groups of windows are set into this band at several points and these include a pair of one-light wood-framed casement windows that are placed at the extreme left end of this story in the left-hand bay.⁶

⁵ All the window and door openings on those portions of the exterior of the house that are clad in brick are outlined with the same raised surrounds, which are also composed of header course bricks.

⁶ This pair of windows is actually part of a continuous band of such windows that wrap around the north corner of the house

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The 22.5-foot-wide second bay from the left projects some three feet out from the wall surface of the left-hand bay and its basement story and first story are clad in brick. The basement story contains a single broad flat-arched two-car garage door opening that opens into the basement story of the house. This opening contains a multi-panel overhead garage door and the opening is also enframed by a slightly raised brick surround that is composed of header course bricks. Placed in the first story above is an equally wide flat-arched window opening that contains five pairs of one-light wood-framed casement windows and these windows provide light to a bedroom and to a reception room inside. The second story of this bay is also clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and it is part of the continuous band of this same siding that extends across the entire width of this elevation just below the eaves of the main roof. In this bay, however, the second story also projects out some three feet out from the wall surface of the left-hand bay and it contains a triple window group composed of three one-light windows that provide light to the second story study.

The 22-foot-wide third bay from the left contains the main entrance to the house, which is one of the house's finest and most visually striking features. This entrance is deeply inset into the elevation and the actual entrance door itself is located at the first story level. To reach it one ascends a gracefully curved flight of concrete steps whose treads actually begin outside the entrance itself. As one ascends from ground level the brick-clad wall surface on the right follows the curve of the steps and four curved brick planters that step up the length of the stairs are placed at the foot of this wall. In addition, two large curved window openings that are filled with glass blocks are placed high up on this wall surface as well and they provide light to the maid's dining room inside. A much larger brick planter that extends only half way up the staircase follows the curve of the steps on their left side and when one reaches the top of the stairs one enters into a small open entrance vestibule whose left side contains a large curved window opening filled with glass blocks that provides light to a reception room inside. Placed just to the right of this entrance is a projecting brick pier that extends up to the base of the first story and this pier is topped with a cylindrical glass light fixture that is positioned in the center of four flat evenly spaced boards that act as a shade for the light. Set in the wall surface to the right of this pier is a small entrance door that opens into the basement story and a single small window opening that contains a pair of one-light casement windows is set into the first story above this service door and it also provides light to the maid's dining room.

The second story of the third bay from the left steps out another three feet from the wall surface of the second bay from the left and its width actually overlaps a portion of the upper part of the first story of the elevation's second bay as well. That portion of this bay's second story that corresponds to the continuous band that extends across the entire width of this elevation just below the eaves of the main roof consists of a group of seven pairs of one-light casement windows that provide light to the second story girl's bedroom, a store room, and a bathroom. Here, however, the wall surface below these

and which provide light to the master bedroom.

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windows is clad in horizontal wooden board and batten, not brick, and it extends three feet further than the windows in both directions.

The basement story and the first story of the 15-foot-wide fourth bay from the left on this elevation are comprised of the northwest-facing end elevation of the house's one-story-tall service wing. The basement story of this elevation of the service wing has no openings of any kind, but its first story, which is slightly recessed from the wall surface below it, is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and it is part of a continuous band of this same siding that extends around the three sides of the first story of this wing just below the wide overhanging eaves of the wing's own hipped roof. A pair of one-light wood-framed casement windows are placed at the extreme right end of this band and it provides light to one of the maid's bedrooms.

The second story of the fourth bay of the main block of the house that is located above the roof of the service wing is also clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and it is part of the continuous band of this same siding that extends across the entire width of this elevation just below the eaves of the house's main roof. Here, however, there are just two single one-light casement windows located at either end of this story and these serve a boy's bedroom inside and a lavatory.

Northeast-Facing Side Elevation

The 66.25-foot-wide asymmetrically designed northeast-facing side elevation of the house looks out over the lawns that encircle three sides of the house and also to the distant views beyond and it is three-stories in height and is three-bays-wide, with its right-hand bay consisting of the northeast-facing side elevation of the service wing, which overlooks the entrance court.

The basement story of the 22.5-foot-wided northeast-facing side elevation of the one-story-tall service wing contains another broad, flat-arched two-car garage door opening that opens into the basement story of the house and this opening also contains a multi-panel overhead garage door and it is also enframed by a slightly raised brick surround that is composed of header course bricks. The first story above, which is slightly recessed from the wall surface below it, is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and it is part of a continuous band of this same siding that extends around the three sides of the first story of this wing just below the wide overhanging eaves of the wing's own hipped roof. Four small one-light windows are placed high up on the wall surface of this story, they are evenly spaced across its width, and they provide light to a hallway and the maid's bathroom.

The 23.75-foot-wide middle bay of this elevation is part of the main block of the house, its basement and first stories are clad in brick, and this bay is flanked by broad projecting piers at either end that rise up to the base of the second story. The basement story of this bay contains a single centered six-light metal sash window that provides light to a basement storage room. The first story above contains

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a large oblong window opening that contains two pairs of one-light casement windows that flank a large single light picture window, and this window group provides light to a guest bedroom, while the second story above is recessed and it contains a triple window group that consists of two smaller one-light windows that flank a large picture window, all of which provide light to the master bedroom.⁷

The 20-foot-wide left-hand bay of this elevation is also part of the main block of the house and its basement story is partly exposed, but instead of being clad in brick as elsewhere, here this story consists of the exposed concrete foundation wall itself, in which is placed a triple window group that is composed of three single-light windows that provide light for a shop located inside the basement story. The first story above, however, is clad in brick and it features a single very large window opening that provides light to the living room inside and which consists of two one-light casement windows that flank a 10-foot-wide single light picture window. The second story above is, as is true elsewhere on this block, slightly recessed, and it contains a band of six single-light windows that provide light to the playroom inside.

Southeast-Facing Rear Elevation

The 75-foot-wide asymmetrically designed rear elevation of the house's main block overlooks the lawn to the southeast of the house, it is five-bays-wide, and because of the slope of the site its height varies from two to three-stories, with the three-left-hand bays having no exposed basement story.

The right-hand bay is three-stories in height and its basement story, and first stories are both clad in brick. The basement story of this bay has no openings while the first story has a single flat-arched window opening to the right that contains a pair of one-light casement windows that provide light to the guest bedroom inside. The second story of this bay, however, is recessed slightly and it is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and it is part of the continuous band of this same siding that extends across the entire width of this elevation just below the eaves of the house's main roof. A pair of one-light wood-framed casement windows are placed at the right end of this story in this bay and they provide light to the master bedroom.

The second bay from the right projects some three feet further out than the wall surface of the right-hand bay and its basement story is only partially exposed, it is clad in brick, and it contains a single small square one-light window that provides light to a basement boiler room. The first story of this bay is clad in brick as well and it contains three more of these small square one-light windows, which provide light for the guest bedroom's bathroom. The second story of this bay, however, is recessed slightly, it is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten, and it contains three more small square one-light windows that provide light for the master bedroom's own bathroom.

⁷ See footnote 6.

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The first story of the third bay from the right is clad in brick and it has a large flat-arched window opening that contains two one-light casement windows that flank a large single light picture window that provides light for the living room inside. The second story is clad in brick as well and it contains two slightly recessed one-light windows that provide light to the second story playroom.

A very broad slightly projecting brick chimney stack is placed between the third and fourth bays from the right on this elevation and its upper portion pierces the slope of the main roof and has a stone cap.

The first story of the fourth bay from the right is clad in brick and it contains a single very large window opening that provides light to the living room inside that consists of two one-light casement windows that flank a 10-foot-wide single light picture window. The second story above is also clad in brick but its left-hand corner is cut out to accommodate a small second story balcony that has solid brick balustrades and there is a single one-light window located just besides this cut out portion that provides light to the playroom.

The fifth bay from the right has no openings in its brick-clad first story, but its second story is slightly recessed, it is clad in wide, stained, wooden board and batten, and it has a single one-light casement window in its left-hand corner that provides light for a boy's bedroom.

Southwest-Facing Side Elevation

The house's 66.25-foot-wide asymmetrically designed southwest-facing side elevation consists of portions of both the main block of the house and its service wing, it is three-bays-wide, and because of the slope of the site the two-right-hand bays have no exposed basement story. Rooms on this side of the house have views into the rock garden and the woods that occupy the west end of this parcel.

This elevation's right-hand bay is clad in brick and its first story contains a large flat-arched patio door opening that contains a modern pair of single-light patio doors and a single fixed light of equal size, all of which open out onto a terrace outside. The second story above is also partially clad in brick and it consists of a balcony having solid brick balustrades onto which two single-light windows and a two-light entrance door open, all of which provide light to the playroom inside.⁸

The second bay from the right project some 10-feet out from the first bay, its first story is clad in brick, and there is a single flat-arched window opening positioned to the right in the first story of this bay that consists of two small one-light casement windows that flank a single-light picture window, all of which provide light to the kitchen inside. Located to the left of this window group is an entrance door opening that contains the kitchen's still original one-light wooden entrance door, and another

⁸ This balcony is also now sheltered by a modern fixed awning placed above it that provides shade and which also directs rainwater away from the balcony and to downspouts that are attached to the awning.

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larger flat-arched window opening that consists of two small one-light casement windows that flank a single-light picture window is located to the left of the entrance door and it also provides light to the kitchen space. The second story of the second bay is slightly recessed, and it consists of a continuous band of nine pairs of one-light casement windows that provide light to three boy's bedrooms inside.

The first story of the third bay from the right consists of the first story of the service wing and it is sided in wide, stained, wooden board and batten and contains a pair of single-light casement windows located at its extreme left that provide light to a maid's bedroom. This bay's first story fronts onto a slightly raised rectangular plan concrete terrace (known as the maid's terrace on the plans) that also acts as part of the roof of the two-car garage that occupies the basement story of this wing. The partially exposed wall surface that comprises the basement story of this bay is clad in brick, a concrete exterior staircase runs downhill alongside this wall to the entrance court, and there are two small square four-light windows placed in this wall surface that provide light to the garage inside.

Interior:

One enters the Gray's house by ascending the curved staircase that is inset into the house's northwest-facing elevation, as was described earlier. At the top of this staircase is a partially open entrance vestibule whose floor is poured concrete and into which is set a molded rectilinear depression that holds an entrance mat. The solid wood one-light entrance door is original, and it opens into the first story entrance hall, which is essentially a 27-foot-long by 10-foot-wide rectilinear space that has the main staircase to the house located on the wall opposite the entrance door. This hall has a tile floor whose tiles are comprised of polished light-colored stone, and the walls and ceiling of this room are plastered and painted. Wood trim is kept to a minimum throughout the house and the walls of the hall and all the other rooms in the house have very narrow varnished or painted baseboards at their base. Doors throughout are solid wood and their openings are slightly recessed into the walls and these openings all have very narrow varnished or painted frames.

A door in the left end of the hall leads to a powder room and the guest bedrooms and their bathroom and a door at the right end of the hall leads to the pantry and the kitchen. Located to the left of the entrance just off the hall is the reception room, which has closets and built-in bench seating placed along one wall and a curved wall opposite it that contains a window filled with glass blocks that receives light from the entranceway staircase outside. Located on the wall opposite the entrance door just to the left of the staircase is the wide entrance to the living room, which can be closed off with a pair of sliding pocket doors. The living room is rectilinear in plan and measures 18-feet-wide by 38-feet-long, and it is two-steps down from the level of the hall. The floor of this room (and of most of the other rooms on the first two stories of the house) is fashioned out of narrow varnished wood boards and the ceiling of this room is encircled by a deep cove (called a light trough on the plans) whose slanting face is covered in varnished wood boards and which contains indirect lighting fixtures. This

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room is so designed that three of its walls consist mostly of large picture windows that look out to the surrounding landscape but centered on the wall opposite the room's principal entrance is a very large fireplace that has a brick surround made out of the same bricks that cover the exterior walls of the house, while the chimney breast above this is covered in panels of varnished wood.

A single door opening located at the opposite end of the same wall that contains the main entrance to the living room opens into the former pantry and into the kitchen. Originally, this service area was laid out so that the pantry was an enclosed space of its own with a door at one end that opened into the staff dining area and with another door that opened into the kitchen, but a later remodeling removed the wall between the pantry and the kitchen and the wall between the first maid's bedroom and the kitchen. As a result, the pantry, kitchen, staff dining area, and one maid's room now flow together to form a single irregular plan space that measures about 35-feet-long by 22-feet-deep at its widest point. The walls and ceiling are plastered here a well, the floor is made of narrow varnished boards, and while new kitchen appliances have now been installed, the original built-in pantry cabinetry is still in place as is the original kitchen sink and its associated cabinetry on the outside wall of the kitchen and the cabinetry that surrounds the stove, which is now centered on the kitchen's southeastern end wall.⁹

A door opening in the wall next to the pantry's original cabinets is two steps up from the kitchen floor level and it opens into the entrance hall, which is dominated by the beautifully designed and crafted varnished wood staircase that ascends to the second story. This geometrical plan staircase is treated almost like a piece of sculpture and its design was reputedly at least partly the result of Kaeser's being told by Gray that he wanted a staircase with a baluster wide enough for his children to slide down (he had four sons at that time). The graceful result is a masterly piece of modern design whose wide balustrade ascends from the broad circular newel at the bottom in an unbroken curve up to and surrounding the open well of the staircase, which it encircles at the second story level.¹⁰

Upon reaching the second story hall at the top of the staircase one can either turn left and proceed down and around the hall to the three boy's bedrooms at that end of this story, one can access either the sewing room and linen closets or the girls' bedroom that are located in front of you, or one can turn right and proceed towards the study and the master bedroom at the other end of this story. The entrance doors to all of these rooms line the hall and as one proceeds to the right there is yet another door located on the wall near the end of the balustrade that opens into the playroom. This 27-foot-wide by 38-foot-long room has a wood floor composed of narrow boards, its ceiling is open up to the ridge of the hipped roof that shelters this portion of the house, and the slopes of this ceiling are

⁹ In addition, there is now cove lighting that runs the length of the remodeled kitchen and it is not known if part of this is original to the kitchen or whether it is all the result of the later remodeling. It is, however, identical in design to the cove lighting in the living room.

¹⁰ There is a door opening set into the wall of the central landing halfway up the stairs that provides access to a second service staircase behind the main one that runs from the basement up to the second story.

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completely clad in varnished wood boards. The two end walls of this room are composed mostly of windows and have bookcases and cabinets placed below them, while the wall opposite the entrance to the room is mostly covered with wood shelving with the exception of a large fireplace that is centered on it and which has a semi-circular opening, a brick surround, and a brick chimney breast, this brick once again being the same as was used on the exterior of the house. In addition, part of the wall opposite the fireplace that contains the entrance to the room is covered by an open staircase that leads up to the attic of the house, while other portions of this wall contain built-in cabinetry.

The basement story of the house is divided into a number of rooms based on their functions, the two most notable being the two two-car garages it contains. Walls in this story are painted concrete, brick, or sheetrock, but the ceilings of some rooms are plastered, including the hall at the bottom of the stairs, the floor of which is completely covered in square white porcelain tiles. These same tiles are also used to cover the floor of the laundry room as well and in this room one can also see the open web steel joists that were used to support the floor of the first story.

Integrity:

Fortunately, the Gray's house and its setting still retains a very high degree of integrity today. Nearly every original feature of the exterior of the house is still extant and is still in very good condition today and the same is true of the interior. The alterations that have taken place in the kitchen area were made with great respect to the original materials used and the original design, the result being to make the house more suitable to life in a day when live-in staff is no longer available. Otherwise, most of the original features of the interior have simply been refreshed as needed; walls have been repainted, floors and trim have been re-varnished, etc., so that today most of the features of the interior of the house are virtually identical with the way they looked when first built.

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Significance:

Situated on what was originally a sloping 3¼-acre parcel in the Highlands, one of Madison's smallest but wealthiest suburbs, the highly intact Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House was the largest and one of the finest Modern Movement Style houses to have been built on the west side of the city of Madison when it was constructed in 1940. Philip H. Gray, Jr. was then at the beginning of his career as a professor of English literature when his new house was built, and his house was designed by William V. Kaeser, a Madison architect who was then at the beginning of his own career and who is now considered to have been one of the best of Madison's mid-century architects. The irregular plan house that Kaeser designed for the Grays is clad in brick and it is positioned on high ground towards the rear of its parcel, which gives it panoramic views in three directions from the large picture windows and groups of windows that are found on all of the house's elevations. The Gray house has 5500 square feet of living space spread over two stories and contains a two-story entrance hall, a large living room, an equally large playroom, a study, a large kitchen and pantry, six bedrooms, and two additional maid's rooms and their separate dining area. In addition, the house rests on a full 2400-square-foot partially exposed basement story that houses two separate two-car garages besides a number of service-related rooms. The resulting house is one of the most impressive and is by far the largest Modern Movement style house built in Madison in the years prior to World War II and it is one of Kaeser's early masterworks.

The Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House is believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under NRHP Criterion C (architecture) at the local level of significance. Research was undertaken to assess the potential for nominating this house to the NRHP utilizing the NR significance area of Architecture, a theme which is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the Gray House utilizing the Contemporary Style subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit of the CRMP.¹¹ The results of this research is detailed below and shows that the Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House is locally significant under NR Criterion C as an architecturally significant Contemporary Style single family residence that is the largest and one of the finest early works of William V. Kaeser, who was one of the most important architects working in Madison and in Wisconsin in the decades following the end of World War II.

History:

The land that now comprises the plat of the Highlands, which was developed in 1910-1911 and which is where the Gray house is located, was originally part of both the Town of Middleton and the Town of Madison and this land and the area surrounding it were still given over to agricultural pursuits in the

¹¹ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-37 (Architecture).

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years up until the plat was developed. Twenty years before, the growth of the city of Madison's population had led to the development of the city's first suburbs, of which the near west side plats of Wingra Park (1889, NRHP) and University Heights (1893, NRHP) were the first to cater to the more affluent members of the community. These were streetcar suburbs, so-called because of their proximity to streetcar lines that enabled new suburban homeowners to commute to their places of business in the downtown section of the city and at the rapidly expanding University of Wisconsin campus. Such proximity was critical to the success of these plats because in the pre-automobile era even middle-class families seldom had a horse and carriage of their own. Thus, families seeking to locate out in any of the new suburbs could usually do so only if the breadwinners of the family had some form of public transportation to take them to their places of work, nearly all of which were then still located downtown. Since streetcars were then Madison's only form of public transportation, reasonable proximity to one of the city's streetcar lines was essential. Streetcars also brought the citizens of the city out to its two cemeteries as well, beginning in 1897, when the local electric streetcar company constructed a new line that terminated at the foot of Speedway Road and adjacent to the entrances of both Forest Hill and Calvary (today's Resurrection) cemeteries.

These suburbs did not achieve real success until after 1903, however, when their annexation to the city finally supplied homeowners with such city services as sewers, water, gas, electricity, concrete streets and sidewalks, and a new school (Randall Elementary School). Once these services became available, suburban development on the west side of the city steadily increased.

Despite the gradual westward growth of the city, though, most of the land that was located further west was still rural at the turn of the century and persons living in this area were still only occasional visitors to the city itself. Access to this land was provided by the area's two principal historic roads; the Sauk Road (today's University Avenue and Old Middleton Road), and the Mineral Point Road (today's Speedway Road and Mineral Point Road), both of which had been in existence since at least the 1850s. In addition, there was also a third road, University Bay Drive/Lake Mendota Drive, which ran from the University of Wisconsin campus westward along the Lake Mendota shore to a point near Merrill Springs, after which it turned southwest and intersected with the Sauk Road (University Avenue). The oldest portions of this road had been developed by private individuals in 1888 as a public pleasure drive around University Bay and as far west as Eagle Heights just west of the campus, and its success spurred others to extend the drive still further westward to Merrill Springs. This, in turn, led to the formation of the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association (MPPDA) in 1897, a private membership organization that would play a leading role in developing Madison's nationally known park system in the decades that followed.

The presence of these three roads notwithstanding, however, historic plat maps of the Towns of Madison and Middleton show that even as late as 1911 most of the land west of the city was still divided into farms or into parcels of several acres or more, although the same maps also show that by

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1911 the city of Madison was slowly but inexorably growing westward towards these farms.¹² By 1911, new platting activity had brought the city's boundaries further westward; the new west side subdivisions of Mercer's Park, Highland Park, and College Park having encompassed almost all of the land that is bounded by today's Allen Street, University Avenue, Regent Street, and N. Franklin Avenue. Still, despite the growth that the city was experiencing during this period, it was an act of faith on the part of the developers of the Highlands plat to announce the opening of their new plat in 1912, at a time when this plat was located nearly three miles west of the city's then current boundaries.

In 1911 a group of Progressive idealists and businessmen—university professors and their friends—and landscape gardener Ossian Cole Simonds created the most elegant, expensively-packaged, rurally remote, and least salable of suburban plats, the Highlands. ... Among the board members of the company were prominent officers and subscribers of the Park and Pleasure Drive Association. Among them were Ernest N. Warner, president of the Association from 1913 to 1927 and donor of the extension of Lake Mendota Drive right-of-way which led to the suburb; Professor Edward T. Owen, the donor of the Sunset Drive (now in Frank Hoyt Park), and the owner of a nearby farm; Charles N. Brown, the secretary and later vice-president of the Association; Professor Andrew Whitson of the Agricultural School, an Association subscriber; and his neighbor in University Heights, also an Association subscriber, Sociology Professor Edward A. Ross. ...

The terrain of the suburb was part of the glacial moraine; it was hilly with marshes and upland oak woods broken by orchards, pastures, and cropland, and later by the lawns of the first homebuilders. ... the landscape vision was Simonds'. His subdivision planning for this suburb was more detailed than for any other executed in Madison. Not only did he lay out the curvilinear street pattern, indicate the topographical contours, subdivide the land, and specify the park spaces in a masterful fashion, he also provided a sketch plan for each lot indicating house sites, drive and parking circle configurations, and plant materials—in the best tradition of Olmstead. The house sites of the early dwellings were (and are) all magnificent, with extraordinary views. The Highlands Company, probably at Simonds' behest, had an architectural review clause in the homebuilder's deeds, presumably to guarantee that the site plans were followed, but not to mandate architectural expression.¹³

Despite its location several miles from Madison, the Highlands was actually not quite as remote as it might have seemed at first glance. The east end of the new suburb opened onto what today is called Old Middleton Road, but in 1912 this stretch of road, then called Middleton Road, was actually the

¹² *Standard Historical Atlas of Dane County, Wisconsin*. Madison: Cantwell Printing Co., 1911, pp. 30, 56-57.

¹³ Neckar, Lance. *Progressives, Suburbs, and the Prairie Spirit: Suburban Development in Madison, Wisconsin 1890-1920*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Master's Thesis, 1981, pp. 86-89.

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westerly continuation of University Avenue, with which it was combined to form what was then the principal highway that linked Madison with what today is the city of Middleton. In addition, the tracks of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad ran along the north side of the new suburb as well. This railroad connected the nearby community of Middleton, which is located a half-mile to the west of the Highlands and where there was a depot, to Madison, so it would actually have been possible for homeowners in the new suburb to travel from the Highlands by carriage to the depot in Middleton and take a train from there into Madison. Otherwise it was a three-hour trip by carriage to Madison via University Avenue.

The earliest and very understated newspaper advertisements for the Highlands could easily have been missed by anyone who was looking for a suburban homesite. The Frank B. Wynne Company of Madison was the selling agent and the first mention of the Highlands was to be found in an ad that listed it as just one of a number of other real estate offerings that the firm was advertising.

We have the sole management of Highlands, the most beautiful location for country home sites that has ever been placed on the market in Madison. This property lies west of the University on the Middleton Road, overlooking Lake Mendota.¹⁴

Subsequent ads stated that the suburb featured "Two to Five acre lots with all drives, walks, trees and shrubs already in, at less than farm land adjoining has recently sold for."¹⁵ And another ad in October of that same year touted the suburb's O. C. Simonds connection.

Highlands, Madison's Addition Deluxe. Nature has been very profligate in granting beauty and advantages to this spot, and adding the experience of O. C. Simonds & Co., the noted landscape gardeners [sic]. The whole furnishes to this city a suburb of more than usual charm as a place for those who desire a setting for a modern home.¹⁶

Natural attractions notwithstanding, sales in the new suburb were slow, but the tone of the suburb's future was set by two of the earliest purchasers of land within and just across the road from the plat. In 1916, Thomas E. Brittingham, Sr., one of Wisconsin's largest lumber yard owners, and Dr. Frederick Davis, a nationally prominent ophthalmologist, each built one of Madison's largest pre-World War II houses on their respective parcels, thereby creating two of Madison's few real country house estate properties in the process.

¹⁴ Frank B. Wynne Company Advertisement. *Wisconsin State Journal*, Feb. 16, 1912, p. 10.

¹⁵ Advertisement. *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 25, 1912, p. 14.

¹⁶ Advertisement. *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 5, 1912, p. 12.

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Documentation on the early investment and homebuilding activity in the Highlands is somewhat puzzling because the plat lay in two towns, Madison and Middleton; and because one of the first houses, the Thomas E. Brittingham House (1916), usually thought of as part of the Highlands, apparently lay just outside of it. It is clear, though, that the exclusivity of the suburb with its large lots and its remote location—five miles from the Capitol Square as the crow flies—deterred an immediate response by suburban investors and homebuilders. There were only four houses (not including the Brittingham's) in the plat after it had opened, and one of them, the Lighty farmhouse, had predated the suburb. The suburb was advertised as "A Plat Designed for Something New in Homes." Yet, of these new houses, only Professor J. F. A. Pyre's Swiss chalet, laid out on an L-plan with elevation reminiscent of the work of Prairie School architects, could be so considered. In fact Dr. Frederick Davis built a massive brick country house with an impressive colonnade appropriate for a man of wealth and position. The Professor W. W. Hart house was built on a corner lot in a modestly informal style with something of a Gothic feeling.¹⁷

What really *was* new about the Highlands was the size of its parcels, the smallest of which contained 1.83-acres and the largest, 4.97 acres. No other suburb that had been platted in the Madison area before this (or for many years afterwards, for that matter) offered parcels of such generous size, parcels that were clearly intended to appeal to owners wanting a country house style of living.

What would ultimately solve the problem of access to this still rural plat was, of course, the automobile, and by 1912 the growth of automobile ownership in Madison was such that other

¹⁷ Neckar, Lance. *Progressives, Suburbs, and the Prairie Spirit: Suburban Development in Madison, Wisconsin 1890-1920*, 89-91. The very large Colonial Revival Style Brittingham House (AHI# 103003), which Brittingham called "Dunmuven," was designed by Frank Riley and it is located immediately to the south of the Highlands on a 30-acre parcel of its own. Brittingham was also a subscriber of the MPPDA and was the donor of Brittingham Park in Madison. His house and its several outbuildings were ultimately gifted to the University of Wisconsin by the Brittingham family in 1955 and it is now used as the home of the president of the UW-System. The Prof. J. F. A Pyre House (AHI# 101928) is a Swiss Chalet style variant of the Craftsman Style, and the Prof. W. W. Hart House (AHI# 37517) is a stucco-clad Craftsman Style house built in 1915. The very large, brick-clad Neoclassical Revival style Dr. Frederick Davis House (AHI# 101930), built in 1916 and called "Edenfred" by Davis, was the largest house built in the Highlands and it and its extensive grounds constituted one of Madison's few historic estates. The Lighty farmhouse was originally owned by William S. Grubb and was built ca. 1860 (AHI# 37404). Lighty was a professor at the UW when he purchased this house in 1912.

The AHI numbers used here and elsewhere in this nomination refers to the record number of a building as it is given in the on-line database maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation; the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory (AHI). The Gray's House is AHI# 237579.

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developers began to create plats closer to Madison that were intentionally geared to appeal to potential buyers who already possessed one an automobile or soon would. In 1912, John C. McKenna and his University Bay Land Company platted the first part of his new O. C. Simonds-designed up-scale College Hills subdivision, which was located between University Avenue and Lake Mendota just west of the UW campus and which was the original portion of what would soon become the village of Shorewood Hills. Three years later, in 1915, McKenna platted his first addition to the original College Hills plat and in this same year the Madison Realty Co. platted the original portion of its own up-scale O. C. Simonds-designed Nakoma Subdivision, which was located on both sides of the historic Verona Road just north of Lake Wingra.¹⁸

Even the subsequent growth of Madison's population and the nationwide growth of automobile ownership was not enough to spur much construction in the Highlands in its early years, though, and even as late as 1939, the plat contained just nine houses, although several of these were among the largest and finest houses in the Madison area. This did not mean that the parcels themselves had not sold, however. A number of them had been purchased by persons already resident in the Highlands, either as investments or possibly as buffers that were intended to protect the superb views that the already existing homeowners in the plat enjoyed. One such parcel was the 3.26-acre Parcel 21, located in the plat of Highlands, Town of Middleton, which on October 25, 1939 was sold by Dr. Frederick A. Davis and his wife to Philip H. Gray, Jr. and his wife, Margaret Gray.¹⁹

Philip Hayward Gray, Jr. (1906-1978) was then 33 years old and was employed as an Instructor in the English Department at the University of Wisconsin and by that time he and his wife, Margaret Day Gray (1905-1965), already had four children; on the face of it an unlikely couple to be purchasing such a lot. Gray, however, had been lucky in his choice of his paternal grandfather, John S. Gray. John S. Gray (1841-1906) was born in Edinburgh, Scotland to Philip C. and Ameila Gray and he moved with his family to the United States in 1849. After a false start in Wisconsin, the family moved to Detroit in 1857, where Gray attended high school. In 1859, Gray went to work with his father, who had bought a toy store, which was sold in 1861 when the two became partners with C. Pelgrim in a candy company. This partnership was successful and continued until the retirement of both Pelgrim and Philip C. Gray, after which, with different partners, John S. Gray continued to operate the firm, which grew rapidly. When both of his partners died in 1881, Gray became the sole proprietor, and after incorporating the firm, which was known as Gray, Toynton and Fox, the firm grew even more rapidly. By 1891, the firm was making \$400,000 worth of candy per year and Gray had become a wealthy man. In the years that followed, Gray acquired additional business interests including becoming

¹⁸ College Hills was listed in the NRHP in 12/09/2002 as the College Hills Historic District (02001518); Shorewood was listed in the NRHP in 11/29/2002 as the Shorewood Historic District (02001432), and Nakoma was listed in the NRHP in 2/26/1998 as the Nakoma Historic District (98000168).

¹⁹ Real Estate Transfers" *Wisconsin State Journal*, Oct. 25, 1939, Part 2, p. 1.

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president of the German American Bank in Detroit in 1894. In 1903, Gray sold Gray, Toynton and Fox to the National Candy Company and became a vice-president in the latter. Also, in 1903, however, Gray was induced by a nephew to invest \$10,500 in a 10.5% stake in a new company in need of money that was searching for more investors. As luck would have it, this was the Ford Motor Co., of which, at the first stockholder's meeting, Gray was elected president and Henry Ford was elected vice-president. The company was immediately successful, and Gray continued as president until his death in 1906.

Gray's estate, however, retained control of his shares in the company, until Henry Ford bought them in 1919. For the 16 years that Gray and his heirs owned their stake in the company, they received total dividends of \$10,355,075. When the estate finally sold his shares to Henry Ford, the price was \$26,250,000, making a total return of \$36,605,075 on Gray's initial investment.²⁰

Among the heirs who benefitted from this investment was Philip Hayward Gray. Philip Hayward Gray (1865-1922) was the oldest of the four children born to John S. Gray and Anna Hayward Gray and he attended the Detroit public schools before entering the candy manufacturing concern owned by his father. Several years later Gray entered the insurance business and became a general agent for the New England Mutual Life Insurance Co. and he continued to pursue a successful career in this business until the philanthropic demands made on him by the success of his father's Ford Motor investment began to take up all of his time. Gray and his wife also had four children and upon his death in 1922, each of them inherited a sizable trust fund, which in Philip Hayward Gray, Jr.'s case amounted to some \$4,000,000 even in the depth of the Depression, an amount equivalent to some \$53,000,000 today.

Philip Hayward Gray, Jr.'s undergraduate years were spent at Yale University, from which he graduated with honors in 1928. After completing a PhD in English literature at Harvard, Gray met and married Margaret (Peg) Day, who had graduated from Smith College and whose father, Clive Hart Day (1871-1951) was a professor of economic history at Yale. After graduation, the Grays began to search for an academic position for Gray and 1936 found them arriving in Madison, Wisconsin, where Gray had been hired as a newly minted instructor in the University of Wisconsin English Department. Finding an academic position in the midst of the Depression was a challenge, as few universities and colleges were hiring and tenure track positions were even more scarce, so even with his financial advantages, Gray was lucky to have found a position. Upon arrival in Madison, the Grays rented the William F. Winterble House in University Heights, a superb Tudor Revival Style residence (AHI# 75853, NRHP) located at 2131 Van Hise Ave. that had been designed by the Madison firm of Law,

²⁰ <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_S._Gray_\(businessman\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_S._Gray_(businessman))> Accessed on June 26, 2019. \$36,605,074 is equivalent to \$478,539,047 today.

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Law, and Potter, and there they kept a kind of open house for colleagues and students even as their own family grew in size.

Among Gray's colleagues was another newly minted instructor of English named Wallace Stegner, who arrived in Madison with his wife, Mary, in 1937. Wallace Stegner (1909-1993) would go on to achieve fame as a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award-winning author, one who was especially associated with the American West in his writings, but in 1937 he was at the opposite end of the financial spectrum from Gray. Nevertheless, the two men soon became fast friends and Margaret Gray essentially adopted them as members of the Gray family. Over the decades that followed the friendship between the Grays and the Stegners grew and would endure and in 1987 Stegner celebrated this friendship in his last novel, *Crossing to Safety*, in which the story of the two couples is lightly fictionalized, with the Grays becoming Sid and Charity Lang, and the Stegners, Larry and Sally Morgan. The earliest portions of this novel deal with the time the two families spent in Madison and as it happens, several vignettes in the book actually concern the construction of the Gray's house in the Highlands. The first mention occurs late in 1938 or early 1939, by which time the Gray's had four young boys and an increasingly cramped household.

Once or twice when the weather let up they [Sally and Charity] took a stepladder out to the two acres that the Langs had bought in the suburb called Frost Woods, and climbed on its slippery steps to test the view or the solar exposure. For Charity had made up her mind that when Sid took the Wisconsin job that they were not going to be like other instructors, kept for three years and then turned out to start all over again in some other, probably lesser place. Sid was going to be so superior, and together they were going to make themselves so indispensable to the university and the community, that there could be no question of their being let go. She had spent the first year finding land she liked. They would spend this one planning the house they would build on it. No cautionary words had any effect on her. If you wanted something, you planned for it, worked for it, made it happen.

"It's making a schizophrenic out of me," Sid said to me on one of the midnight walks he was fond of. "I want her to have this palace, if that's what will please her, but I keep thinking of all the eyebrows that will go up among the senior members of the department—takes a lot for granted, doesn't he?—and the envy and jealousy a lot of my colleagues will feel. And maybe there are guys from the gashouse district who will see this schoolteach building a castle in the middle of a depression, and Jesus, look, he's got three hundred windas to bust. But Charity has the answer to at least one of these problems. She's going to make the house a weekend rest home for broken-down instructors. Even you may apply. Our friends are going to keep the guest rooms occupied, and we're going to lay down a law for ourselves: We never accept invitations on weekends. Its all going to be country walks, rough tweeds, a brace of setters,

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and on Sunday evenings, square dances and Varsovianas and korobotchkas and a convivial punch bowl.”

That was on a night when he was feeling good after a day that had gone well. Other times he was less relaxed. “It’ll look arrogant,” I heard him tell Charity once. “It’ll look as if we thought we could buy our way to promotion, or as if we thought ourselves so grand we could assume it. There’s absolutely no guarantee we’ll be here longer than this year and the next. Do you want to build it just to move out of? At least let’s not pour any concrete till the department has voted.”

“Pooh,” Charity said. “I’d like to *see* them uproot us. Just have some confidence.”

“Caution would be more appropriate.”

“No, sir,” she said. “You don’t budge me.”

She already had an architect drawing plans, and she was not restraining his imagination. She and Sally went over the sketches and scale drawings by the hour, and scratched them up with criticisms and questions and second thoughts, and sent them back to be done over. And over.²¹

The Gray’s real architect was William V. Kaeser of Madison and his commission for the Grays was the largest commission he had received since beginning his own practice in 1935. Kaeser had done post-graduate study with Eliel Saarinen at the Cranbrook School of the Arts in Michigan prior to coming to Madison and he was also a great fan of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his early designs incorporate elements of the work of both men in varying degrees. By the time the Gray commission came his way, however, Kaeser’s debt to Wright had become more and more evident as he evolved towards creating a style of his own. Various suggestions have been made as to the buildings that might have influenced Kaeser’s design for the Grays, including Purcell & Elmslie’s design for the Josephine and Prof. Harold C. Bradley House (AHI# 5792) in Shorewood Hills and Richard Neutra’s Lovell House in Los Angeles. A more likely candidate, however, is Frank Lloyd Wright’s Wingspread (AHI# 10717, NHL), the house Wright designed for Herbert F. Johnson in Racine, Wisconsin. A number of drawings associated with Kaeser’s first design proposal for the Gray commission can be found in the Kaeser Archives and this house displays the shallow-pitched hip roof, the long bands of windows placed above long wood-clad stretches of siding, and the pinwheel plan that are all features of Wingspread.²² It is not known whether or not Kaeser actually visited

²¹ Stegner, Wallace. *Crossing to Safety*. New York: Penguin Group, 1988, Chapter 7, pp. 105-107. This citation is for the first paperback edition. The hardbound edition was published in New York in 1988 by Random House and the pagination may differ. The suburb of Frost Woods is real and is in the city of Monona, Wisconsin, but it was meant to stand in for the Highlands.

²² William V. Kaeser Papers. Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, M94-246 2M, Drawer 5/Folder 14. This folder also contains sketches, drawings and floorplans of the house that was actually built for the Grays.

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Wingspread or saw drawings of the house on one of his visits to Taliesin but he undoubtedly saw the drawings and photos of the house that appeared in the special Frank Lloyd Wright edition of *Architectural Forum Magazine* that was published in January of 1938 and he may well have found Wright's solution to the design of a large country house to be a useful starting point for his own thinking. Whatever the true story may be, Kaeser's second design for the Grays, the one that was built, while both more compact and taller than the first design, is still recognizably related to Wright's design for Wingspread, and this is especially true of its entrance elevation.

The Gray's new house was under construction by early 1940, the contractor being Fritz Construction Company of Madison, and one incident in the history of its construction even made it into one of the local newspapers.

The Philip H. Gray, Jrs., who formerly lived at 2131 Van Hise avenue, have recently built a new home in The Highlands, just off the Middleton Road. About the time it was being finished, the milling company which was handling the finished lumber for it received a rush, emergency order for government materials and was forced to postpone delivery on certain pieces for the Gray house. Among these items was the wood for the stairway.

The remainder of the house was pretty well completed, however, so rather than wait several weeks, the Grays decided to move in immediately and use the ladder which the workmen had been using to get from one floor to the other, until the stairway could be completed.

This worked just fine for Mr. and Mrs. Gray and their four older children. In fact it was quite a lark for their four children...but for Harold, the fifth one, who is just 15 months old it was something else again. Harold is very active and very heavy, so that it proved too much of a risk for anyone to try and climb the ladder while carrying him...but still he had to be taken upstairs to sleep.

The answer was obvious... or at least it seemed so. They merely sat him in the roomy dumbwaiter which runs from the basement to the second floor and is propelled by pulling a rope. But Harold didn't like the look of it and set up a terrific howl. The dumb waiter compartment was too small for anyone else to get in it with Harold and it looked for a time as if Harold would be sleeping downstairs alone.

But Mrs. Gray is the mother of Harold, just as necessity is the mother of invention, and she wasn't going to have her baby sleeping downstairs alone...so she solved the problem. Standing on "Top" of the dumb waiter compartment, she took Harold on beside her, held him with one hand and operated the rope with the other, and they reached the second floor in

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safety...to the great amusement of the rest of the family. And for several days, until a stairway could be built, Harold and mother did all of Harold's elevating that way.²³

Stegner's *Crossing to Safety* also contains a glimpse of life in the newly completed house as it was in early 1941.

The new house, in March, still smelled of paint and plaster. The yard under its thawing snowbanks was littered with scraps of lumber and Sheetrock and tin and black flaps of building paper. The *alleé* that Charity planned, a long vista through woods to a far glimpse of lake, had been cleared, and rows of bare sapling poplars planted along its edges. We could sit in the overwarm living room, behind a wall of double-paned windows, and look at the view with the eye of imagination. In a playpen in a corner of the living room a golden retriever with eight puppies dozed while we looked. Charity was noticeably pregnant. Barney and Nicky had discovered the sliding properties of the curving banister, and chased each other up and down.²⁴

Later in that year the Grays had their sixth and last child, a daughter, and the next year a full-page illustrated newspaper article highlighted the square dance parties the Grays held at their house every other Friday.²⁵ Unfortunately, as the fictional Sid Lang had foretold, the real life Philip Gray, by now an Assistant Professor, failed to make tenure in his department, and by the summer of 1944 the Grays had sold their Highlands home and moved, first to Connecticut and then to Chicago, where Gray became a professor in the humanities division of the University of Chicago.²⁶ Gray would remain at Chicago until 1952, when he and his wife moved to Claremont, California, where he took up a professorship in English Literature at Scripps College for Women, a position that he continued to hold until his retirement in the 1960s.

Meanwhile, the Gray's Highlands house passed through several subsequent owners and from 1976 until 1993 it was the home of Dr. Paul P. Carbone (1931-2002) and his family. Carbone was an internationally renowned, highly respected, and greatly honored cancer researcher for whom the University of Wisconsin's Carbone Cancer Center is named. Fortunately, all the later owners of the Gray's house have treated it with respect and thanks to them and to the high quality of its construction

²³ Cass, Betty. "Day by Day." *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 14, 1940, Sec. 2, p. 14. Another article on what children do after the light dies outside in winter featured a picture of the four oldest Gray children, among others, and it discussed the merits of the built-in cabinets in the second story playroom of the Gray's house in some detail. Douglass, Lorna. "Twilight Dims Fun of Outdoor Sports, Sends Youngsters Home." *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 8, 1940, p. 17 (illustrated).

²⁴ Stegner, Wallace. *Crossing to Safety*, Part 2, Chapter 2, 220.

²⁵ Douglass, Lorna. "Now They Do It in Squares." *Wisconsin State Journal*, March 1, 1942, p. 13 (illustrated). Two of the participant couples at these parties were William V. Kaeser and his wife and Frederick "Fritz" Kaeser and his wife.

²⁶ "Gray to Receive Final Appointment." *Wisconsin State Journal*, January 9, 1944, p. 1.

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and the livability of Kaeser's design, the house is still highly intact today and is still in excellent original condition.

Elsewhere in *Crossing to Safety*, many years after the Madison portion of the story, Larry and Sally have come to Vermont, where Charity is dying, and Larry is talking with Hallie, the Lang's daughter, who by now is a grown married woman. As they reminisce, the talk goes back to the time the two couples had spent in Wisconsin and Hallie, who left the Highlands house at age three asks Larry "Do you remember that great house? Did you ever see it? To which Larry replies "Once, when I was bringing Sally home from Warm Springs. It wasn't quite finished yet, but it *was* a great house."²⁷

Architecture:

The Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House is eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level of significance for its associations with Criterion C (Architecture) because it is both an excellent example of pre-World War II Modern Movement Style single family residential design and because it is both the largest and one of the best and most striking early residential designs created by Madison architect William V. Kaeser. Kaeser was a highly important mid-century architect in Madison and elsewhere in Wisconsin and while the organic style of design he developed owed much to the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright it was also distinctly his own.

With the exception of the Art Deco Style, Moderne Style, and the International Style, the National Register of Historic Places groups all of the other architectural styles developed just before and after World War II into a general stylistic category that it calls the "Modern Movement." Most of these other styles do not have commonly accepted definitions and they are not discussed in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) either and the authors of the CRMP, which was written in 1986, acknowledged this problem in their discussion of buildings constructed from 1950 onward, which they called "Contemporary Style" buildings.

Contemporary architecture cannot be defined or described in the manner of other preceding stylistic movements. "Contemporary" can be used to designate any twentieth century building of distinction and potential interest, whose identity or features cannot be ascribed to styles and forms discussed in this report. Although architectural historians have invented names for some contemporary schools of architecture (i.e., Brutalism, The New Formalism, Neo-Expressionism, Late Modernism, Post-Modernism, etc.), buildings of these genres are not of sufficient age, and generally do not have widely-recognized and understood scholarly value, to be evaluated for significance according to National Register criterion. Other widely accepted terms for mid-twentieth century residential architecture such as "ranch house," "tract home,"

²⁷ Stegner, Wallace. *Crossing to Safety*, Part 2, Chapter 1, 217.

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and “split-level,” refer to buildings generally not surveyed in the Wisconsin program. As with contemporary schools of architecture, a terminology will likely be adopted as scholarship develops and as these buildings reach 50 years of age.²⁸

That these post-war buildings cannot yet be placed within accepted architectural stylistic categories and in some cases are less than 50-years-old does not mean that they are ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, though. The “House and Yard” chapter of the context developed by the authors of the *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs* specifically discusses “The Contemporary House,” and by extension, it acknowledges that such buildings can be eligible for NRHP-listing, depending on their age and the degree of architectural distinction that they possess.

Unlike the much more common Ranch and Split-Level Style houses of the early post-war years, Contemporary Style houses built during this period were mostly custom-built and they typically required the services of an architect in order to make them a reality. The important role of the architect in the creation of the Contemporary Style has also been noted by the authors of the *National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs* in their discussion of “The Contemporary House.”

The influence of Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Richard J. Neutra, Mies van der Rohe, and other modernists inspired many architects to look to new solutions for livable homes using modern materials of glass, steel, and concrete, and principles of organic design that utilized cantilevered forms, glass curtain walls, and post-and-beam construction. The contemporary home featured the integration of the indoor and outdoor living area and open floor plans, which allowed a sense of flowing space. Characteristics such as masonry hearth walls, patios and terraces, carports, and transparent walls of sliding glass doors and floor-to-ceiling windows became hallmarks of the contemporary residential design.²⁹

Many of these features can be found in the design of the Gray House, which was the work of Madison architect William V. Kaeser. William Vogt Kaeser (1906-1995) was born into a family of Swiss descent, his grandfather, Fridolin Kaeser, having been one of four brothers who all arrived in the United States from Glarus, Switzerland, in May of 1865. Upon arrival, Fridolin “Fritz” Kaeser (1847-1916) settled in Highland, Madison County, Illinois, where he was one of a number of recent settlers of Swiss descent. After six years spent managing a brickyard, Kaeser purchased a farm in the area, which he operated successfully until 1885. In that year, however, Kaeser became a founder and major stockholder in the newly formed Helvetia Milk Condensing Co. in Highland, which was the first

²⁸ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*. Madison: Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. 2, p. 2-37 (Architecture).

²⁹ Ames, David L. and Linda Flint McClelland. *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation For the National Register of Historic Places*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2002, pp. 66-67.

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concern in the world to produce non-sweetened canned condensed milk. Within a year, Kaeser became the superintendent of this concern and he continued in this capacity for the rest of his career, during which time he saw the firm become a major industry in Madison County, one which, nine years after his death, would be renamed the Pet Milk Company and would evolve into a national concern.

Fridolin Kaeser and his wife, Kathrina (Caindle) Kaeser (1849-1905) had eleven children, many of whom would also later be associated with the Helvetia Company, including William George Kaeser, the father of William V. Kaeser. William George Kaeser (1882-1947) grew up in Highland, attended the University of Illinois, and received a law degree but never practiced. Instead, he moved to Greenville, Illinois in 1907 to manage the new Greenville plant of the Helvetica Company and in 1927, he and his wife, Clara Margaretha Vogt Kaeser (1883-1983), moved with their family to Madison, Wisconsin, where he became district manager of District No. 7 of what by then was the Pet Milk Company, and he still held this position at the time of his death in 1947, by which time he was also a member of the company's board of directors.³⁰

William George and Clara Margaretha Kaeser had three sons, William Vogt Kaeser (1906-1995), Frederick "Fritz" Kaeser II (1910-1990), and George Arnold Kaeser (1915-1979). The oldest, William Vogt Kaeser, was born in Highland, Illinois and moved to Greenville, Illinois with his parents a year later. Graduating from Greenville High School in 1924, Kaeser spent the summers between 1927 and 1931, working as a draftsman in the architectural office of Frank Riley in Madison while attending the University of Illinois, from which he graduated in 1931. Following graduation, Kaeser then enrolled in the architecture program at MIT in Boston, which was one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious schools of architecture, and from which he graduated with a master's degree in architecture in 1932 and became a licensed architect. Kaeser then returned to Madison and again went to work for Riley (also an MIT graduate) from 1932 – 1933, but the classically derived Beaux Arts training that Kaeser had been exposed to at the University of Illinois and especially at MIT, and the Period Revival style designs that Riley's office favored did not accord with Kaeser's own growing belief that a new, more organic approach to architectural design that owed less to the past was the path that architecture had to follow in order to meet modern needs. As a result, Kaeser decided to immerse himself in his own study of the best contemporary design and then seek additional training in a more congenial, less conservative setting. Ultimately, his choice lay between Frank Lloyd Wright's newly opened Taliesin Fellowship in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and Finnish American architect Eliel Saarinen's Cranbrook Academy of Arts in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and despite his great respect for Wright and his

³⁰ Upon arrival in Madison in 1926, William George Kaeser bought a Craftsman Style house (AHI# 75243 NRHP) for his family that was located at 110 Ely Place in University Heights on a hilltop overlooking Camp Randall and Madison's downtown. This house, which is still extant and intact, is located next door to Frank Lloyd Wright's Eugene Gilmore House (AHI# 16079 NRHP-1973), which was built in 1908 at 120 Ely Place, and which William V. Kaeser would have seen every day during the summers of the years he spent living with his parents while working in Frank Riley's office and attending the University of Illinois.

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admiration for his work and the fact that William Wesley Peters, his best friend at MIT, had joined the Fellowship, it was at Cranbrook that Kaeser decided to continue his architectural education.

Kaeser's decision to attend Cranbrook became firm when he was selected for a fellowship based in part upon his design of a milk condensing plant theoretically to be constructed in St. Louis by the Pet Milk Corporation. More than the Cranbrook fellowship, Kaeser realized that the program with Saarinen would probably be more appropriate for him because Cranbrook was specifically structured for postgraduate level studies. Apprentices at Taliesin were typically younger, often with some training in architecture, but generally not with the academic credentials and professional licensure that Kaeser had already acquired.³¹

At Cranbrook Academy, under Saarinen's guidance, Kaeser's studies were centered primarily on urban and regional planning and his principal project while there was the creation of a comprehensive 50-Year development plan for the city of Madison, Wisconsin. In 1935, upon the completion of his 1½ year course of study at Cranbrook and his master plan for Madison, Kaeser returned to Madison to set up his own practice and not long afterwards he was also appointed to be a member of the City of Madison Plan Commission on the strength of his work at Cranbrook. In addition to this appointment, Kaeser was also given office space in City Hall by James Law, the mayor of Madison, and he became the City of Madison's first, albeit unofficial and unpaid, resident city planner, a role he continued to fulfill until 1938.³²

It was for his work as an architect, however, that Kaeser would become best known, and it was for his residential work that he was most esteemed.³³ Opening an architectural practice in Madison in the midst of the Depression was challenging and commissions for architects at that time were not plentiful. Nevertheless, Kaeser soon found clients willing to build, both in Madison and elsewhere in the state. His earliest identified house, built in 1935, was a clapboard-clad Colonial Revival style two-story hipped roof house in Baraboo, Wisconsin built for Herbert Risteen (AHI# 91232), and its traditional design probably owed more to the wishes of his client than it did to any enthusiasm on the architect's part. This may have been less true of the larger and more sophisticated brick-clad two-story Colonial Revival style Walter Conrad Dunn House (AHI# 5763, NRHP) that Kaeser designed in the Madison suburb of Shorewood Hills in the same year. Here, the exterior of this house has been stripped of almost all its historic details save only for the main entrance and its surround. Otherwise, this house's historic character consists largely of the massing of the main block of the house, its nearly symmetrical

³¹ Biebel, Anne E. "William Kaeser's Fifty Year Plan for Madison." *Historic Madison: A Journal of the Four Lakes Region*. Historic Madison, Inc.: Volume XIII, 1996, p. 44.

³² James Law was also the principal partner in the Madison architectural firm of Law, Law, and Potter, which in the 1920s and 1930s was Madison's largest and most prominent traditional architectural firm.

³³ See Biebel, Anne E. *The Residential Work of William V. Kaeser*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Master's Thesis, 1985.

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main façade which features window openings that seem to pierce the brick cladding, and its shallow-pitched hipped roof. The end result is a more modern contemporary-feeling interpretation of the Colonial Revival style whose overall appearance is somewhat akin to the residential designs that Eliel Saarinen had produced earlier at Cranbrook. At Cranbrook, Saarinen created adjoining houses there to house the director of the academy and his family and the school's sculpture teacher and his family, and while these two-story-tall, hipped roof, brick-clad houses are really culminations of Northern European Arts and Crafts Style thinking and designs, they share the same general massing, hipped roofs, brick-clad main blocks, and lack of historical details that Kaeser's designs were beginning to show and which culminated in the third house he designed in 1935, this being the Fred Runkel House (AHI# 5413) located in the Madison suburb of Maple Bluff. In the brick-clad, hipped roof, two-story Runkel house, all historic design references have been eliminated from both the exterior and interior and while the overall silhouette of the house still evokes a period revival past, its design is contemporary in spirit and very similar in many ways to Saarinen's own house in Cranbrook.³⁴

While Kaeser's earliest work reflects the influence of his time in Cranbrook and with Saarinen, the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright soon began to assert itself. In 1936, Kaeser designed a redwood board-clad house (AHI# 35888, NRHP) for a cousin, Fred Tangeman, in the Madison suburb of Nakoma and while it is also a two-story hipped-roof house it is also unequivocally a Contemporary Style house that owes nothing to past styles.³⁵ Certain characteristic features of Wright's designs such as large bands of single light windows, wide overhanging eaves, and the careful placement of the house on its sloping hillside site are all in evidence in the Tangeman house and these same features can also be seen in the quite different house he designed in the same year in Shorewood Hills for another family member, his brother, photographer Frederick "Fritz" Kaeser II (1910-1990). The brick-clad Fritz Kaeser house (AHI# 5761, NRHP) occupies a similar hillside site and it too is a two-story, hipped roof Contemporary Style house whose design also has no historic references.

Subsequent houses that Kaeser designed during the years before World War II more clearly reflected the influence of Wright and especially his concern with making a building compatible with its site. For instance, the one-story-tall Milford C. and Margaret Viles House in Madison (AHI# 78262, NRHP), built in 1938, and the one-story-tall James Wilkie House (AHI# 100038), also built in Madison in 1938, both reflect the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright's first house for Herbert A. and Katherine Jacobs (AHI# 16085, NHL), which was built in Madison in 1936-1937, and which is located just around the corner and three houses away from the eventual site of the Wilkie House. On the other

³⁴ For information on Saarinen's houses see: Wittkopp, Gregory (ed.) *Saarinen House and Garden: A Total Work of Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, publishers, 1995. See also: Jetsonen, Jari and Sirkkaliisa Jetsonen. *Saarinen Houses*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2014, pp. 148-165.

³⁵ Kaeser's client, Fred Tangeman (1907-1995), was an employee of the Pet Milk Co. in Madison. His mother, Lena Kaeser Tangeman (1876-1957), was one of the children of William George and Clara Kaeser and she was William V. Kaeser's aunt.

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hand, the Gordon McKenzie House (AHI# 5789, NRHP), built in Shorewood Hills in 1939, contains elements that reflect Wright's designs for both Falling Water, completed in 1935, and the house Wright designed for John and Ruth Pew in Shorewood Hills (AHI# 5784) in 1938.

By 1939, Kaeser was well known in Madison from his years as a city planner and from his occasional articles on modern design that had appeared in the Madison newspapers and from his lectures on the subject in the community, but the high quality and thoughtful modern designs of the steadily growing number of houses that he had designed and built in the Madison area were now bringing him to national attention as well. Kaeser's house for Fred Tangeman was published in the October 1939 issue of the *Architectural Forum* and his house for James Wilkie would appear in the April 1940 issue of the same magazine. How and why Kaeser came to be the choice of Philip and Margaret Gray when they decided to build on their newly acquired Highlands parcel is not known but in Kaeser they apparently found someone whose designs and personality they were comfortable with. In Kaeser, the Grays had an architect their own age and someone from a similar background who, like Philip Gray, had been able to take advantage of family money to pursue a career of his own choosing. For Kaeser, of course, the Grays were the kind of clients that every young architect dream's about; people with enough money to allow them to build what they wanted without any real budgetary constraints and with enough taste to appreciate what Kaeser was capable of.

Working with the Grays was not without its issues, however. Margaret Gray was a demanding client and Kaeser's first design for them, which appears to have been strongly influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's recently constructed Wingspread, which he designed for Herbert Johnson in Racine, did not survive the planning process. His second design, however, while also influenced by Wingspread, was more compact and taller, although not much smaller, and it was accepted. By early 1940, the house was under construction and by late 1940 the Grays and their four sons had moved into their new house, whose brick walls feature both Wrightian Style bands of windows and the large single light picture windows that are more typical of Saarinen's designs. Kaeser's final design for the Grays can therefore be seen as embodying the best of both Saarinen and Wright's influence on his thinking. Later in that same year, however, Kaeser designed a house for Dr. Garrett Cooper in Shorewood Hills (AHI# 5797 NRHP) which, while clearly influenced by Wright, was also very much Kaeser's own, and from that time on Kaeser's work followed his own path, which represented his individualistic take on the Wright legacy.³⁶

In the years that followed, Kaeser enjoyed a highly successful practice that is now best known for its residential commissions, among which was a large, excellent, stone-clad house that he designed in

³⁶ The Cooper House was published in: *Homes: Small Medium and Large*. Editors of Progressive Architecture: New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1947, p. 173. The same publication also included Kaeser's home for Prof. & Mrs. Cord O. Wells in Whitewater, Wisconsin, pp. 96-97.

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1950 at 5725 Old Middleton Rd. in the Highlands for his brother, George Arnold Kaeser (1915-1979), a mechanical engineer who spent most of his career with the Pet Milk Co. In 1951, Kaeser affiliated with Arthur McLeod, a structural engineer, in the firm of Kaeser & McLeod, later Kaeser, McLeod, & Weston, and this firm designed not only houses but also schools, churches, and commercial buildings, all within the modernist idiom and which together constitute some of Madison and Dane County's finest post-World War II architecture.

Conclusion:

Consequently it is believed that the Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House is eligible for listing in the NRHP at the local level of significance for its associations with Criterion C (Architecture) because it is both an excellent example of the kind of Contemporary Style designs that were starting to transform Madison and the rest of the country in the just prior to World War II and because it is also an outstanding early example of the organic designs produced by Madison architect William V. Kaeser. During his long career Kaeser produced many buildings of all types, but he was best known for his residential work, which comprised some of Madison's finest Contemporary Style mid-century architecture. Kaeser's earliest residential work was inspired by both the residential work of Eliel Saarinen, the director of the Cranbrook Academy, and by Frank Lloyd Wright, but most of the residential projects that he designed both before and especially after 1940 were influenced by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. Kaeser, however, was more successful in finding his own style within this powerful idiom than were most of those who followed the same path, and the large, highly intact house he designed for the Grays is one of the finest of his early residence designs and is also the culmination of his pre-World War II work, which combined elements of the residential work of both Saarinen and Wright.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Certified Survey Map No. 6862, as Recorded in Dane County Register of Deeds in Vol. 34, Page 141 of Certified Surveys, Lot 3. The original legal description was: Lot 21, plat of Highlands, town of Middleton.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries contain all the land that was historically associated with the nominated property, less two parcels sold off previously that are now associated with 6107 N. Highlands Ave. The original parcel contained 3.26 acres when the Gray family was in residence.

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Section photos Page 1

Items a-d are the same for photos 1 – 18.

Photo 1

- a) Philip H. and Margaret Gray, Jr. House
- b) Madison, Dane County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, April 12, 2019
- d) Wisconsin Historical Society
- e) NW-facing Entrance Elevation, View looking SE
- f) Photo 1 of 18

Photo 10

- e) Entrance Detail, View looking E
- f) Photo 10 of 18

Photo 11

- e) Entrance Hall, View looking S
- f) Photo 11 of 18

Photo 2

- e) General View, View looking S
- f) Photo 2 of 18

Photo 12

- e) Living Room, View looking S
- f) Photo 12 of 18

Photo 3

- e) NE-Facing Side Elevation, View looking SW
- f) Photo 3 of 18

Photo 13

- e) Staircase, View looking SW
- f) Photo 13 of 18

Photo 4

- e) General View, View looking W
- f) Photo 4 of 18

Photo 14

- e) Staircase Detail, View looking E
- f) Photo 14 of 18

Photo 5

- e) SE-Facing Side Elevation, View looking NW
- f) Photo 5 of 18

Photo 15

- e) Second Story Hall, View looking S
- f) Photo 15 of 18

Photo 6

- e) General View, View looking N
- f) Photo 6 of 18

Photo 16

- e) Playroom, View looking S
- f) Photo 16 of 18

Photo 7

- e) SW-Facing Side Elevation, View looking NE
- f) Photo 7 of 18

Photo 17

- e) Playroom Fireplace, View looking SE
- f) Photo 17 of 18

Photo 8

- e) General View, View looking E
- f) Photo 8 of 18

Photo 18

- e) Second Story, Boy's Bathroom, View looking NE
- f) Photo 18 of 18

Photo 9

- e) Entrance, View looking SE
- f) Photo 9 of 18

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Section photos Page 1

Figure 1: First Story Floor Plan.

Figure 2: Second Story Floor Plan.

Figure 3: Basement Story Floor Plan

Figure 4: Photo of the Living Room, undated but probably 1941-1942 and possibly by Fritz Kaeser.

[Type here]

___ Insert Figures

___ End Figures

CK GARDEN







