

<b>LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT</b>
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**LANDMARK NAME:** Mr. and Mrs. William H. Eyssen House**AGENDA ITEM:** II.A**OWNERS:** Daniel and Melanie Ringold**HPO FILE NO:** 13L279**APPLICANTS:** Same**DATE ACCEPTED:** 05/01/2013**LOCATION:** 3449 Overbrook Lane - River Oaks**HAHC HEARING:** 05/16/2013**SITE INFORMATION**

Lot 5, Block 62, River Oaks Section 7, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a historic two-story, brick single family residence.

**TYPE OF APPROVAL REQUESTED: Landmark Designation****HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY**

The Mr. and Mrs. William H. Eyssen House was built by architect, contractor, and home developer Charles W. Burkhard in 1939, and was first occupied by the Eyssen family. William Eyssen was an independent oil operator. The house is designed in a simple Colonial Revival style and very typical of the period.

The Mr. and Mrs. William H. Eyssen House meets criteria 1, 3, 4, and 8 for Landmark Designation.

**HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE***William and Boog Eyssen*

William H. Eyssen was born in 1891 in Ohio. He grew up in Kansas, and entered the oil business as a teenager, and his travels for his independent oil work took him around the country, from Wyoming to Colorado to Texas. He married his second wife, Boog Sears of Abilene, Texas, in 1929. (The name "Boog" was Mrs. Eyssen's childhood nickname; she legally changed her name to it at the age of 13). Mrs. Eyssen's family had long ranching ties in Abilene. The Eyssens moved around Texas in the 1930s, and settled in Houston in 1941. An article written about Mrs. Eyssen in 1986 stated:

*Bill was in the oil business, and his activities took them on a number of moves around Texas. They lived briefly in Abilene, and twice in Tyler, where they lived through some of the important history of the East Texas oil boom. Twice they lived in Houston and twice in Fort Worth. After having made 13 moves, they returned to Abilene in 1947 and moved into the home where Boog still lives. Bill died in 1970.*

The Eyssens' move to River Oaks was announced in the July 1939 edition of *River Oaks Magazine*:

*Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Eyssen and their young son, Tim, age 4, are now in their new residence at 3449 Overbrook Lane. Their home is an immaculate white – white painted brick, white tri, and white shingle window blinds. It is distinguished further by the interesting treatment of the brick around the doorway. Brilliant petunias and hydrangeas in the planting add a bit of effective color against the white walls. Mr. Eyssen's son, W.H. Eyssen, Jr., will be with the family when he returns from the University of Texas where he has completed his law course. Mr. and Mrs. Eyssen*

*moved to Houston from Fort Worth quite recently. Mr. Eyssen is an independent oil operator.*

The Eyssens remained at 3449 Overbrook Lane until 1947, when they returned to Abilene. They were extremely active in the Abilene community.

### *Subsequent Owners*

The house was next lived in by Robert L. and Winifred Freeman Davis. Mr. Davis was the Secretary of the American General Life Insurance Company. They lived in the home just a few years, until it was sold to Hugh and Dorothy Benbow in 1959. Mr. Benbow was an oil operator. In 1968, Jack and Patsy Sowell purchased the home. Patsy Sowell lived in the home until 2001, when it was sold to Cleo Pike. The current owners purchased the home in 2012.

### *Charles W. Burkhart*

Charles W. Burkhart was born in Granger, Texas, on October 1, 1897. He moved to Houston in 1917. Burkhart started his professional life as an electrician, but by 1929, he was listed as a residential building contractor. He worked throughout his life building homes in Houston. A March 14, 1946 article in the *Southwestern Times* entitled “Let’s Get Acquainted – Charles W. Burkhart”, reported that Burkhart was constructing a lumber yard and hardware store in the 2400 block of Times that would serve the building boom of the post-war era. He was planning to construct G.I. housing. Burkhart lived in numerous homes in West University. He died on November 11, 1989.

According to River Oaks Property Owners, Inc., records, 3449 Overbrook appears to be the only home built by Burkhart in River Oaks. However, one might assume that he built his own personal homes in West University, which include: 2917 Rice Blvd., 2604 University, 3504 Georgetown (demolished), and 6530 Vanderbilt (demolished).

## **RESTORATION HISTORY AND CONDITION**

3449 Overbrook Lane is a 3,076 square foot Colonial Revival-style home sited facing North in the center of an 8,905 square foot lot. It is located in River Oaks Sec.7, popularly known as the “St. John’s Quadrant”.

The house is designed in a simple Colonial Revival style and very typical of the period. It is three bays wide, topped with a side gable roof. The roof slightly overhangs the house, and features a wood cornice decorated with dentils.

The front entry is located in the center bay of the façade. A wood and glass door is surrounded by a detailed wooden surround. The brick around the front door has been plastered over. The entry is topped with a small portico. The portico has slender square piers and is topped with a front gabled roof. Pilasters mirror the piers on the façade of the house. The piers and pilasters are fluted. The portico has a curved underside. As can be seen on the Sanborn maps, this portico is not original to the house. However, this later feature matches homes of the same period. Above the entry on the second story is a pair of small, 6-over-6 wood sash windows with working shutters. All of the original windows have been replaced with new windows that match the originals.

Symmetrical bays flank the center bay. Each of the two bays feature 9-over-9 wood sash windows with working shutters. Above these windows, on the second story façade, are 6-over-6 wood sash windows with working shutters.

The home is in good condition and is in the process of being renovated.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

“Boog Sears Eyssen: She Shares Her Love of Music,” *McMurry College Chieftain*, Volume 35, Number 3, Fall 1986.

City Directories

“Let’s Get Acquainted – Charles W. Burkhart,” *Southwestern Times*, March 14, 1946.

Various resources from Ancestry.com

“W.H. Eyssen,” *Abilene Reporter News*. February 18, 1970.

*The information and sources provided by the applicant for this application have been reviewed, verified, edited and supplemented with additional research and sources by Matthew Kriegl Planning and Development Department, City of Houston.*



**EXHIBIT A**

**PHOTO**

Mr. and Mrs. William H. Eysen House  
3449 Overbrook Lane



# CITY OF HOUSTON

Archaeological & Historical Commission

Planning and Development Department

## EXHIBIT B

### SITE LOCATION MAP

Mr. and Mrs. William H. Eysen House  
3449 Overbrook Lane

