



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104
PHONE: 832-6621



ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

COUNTY Baldwin

PRESENT NAME Pinewood Pottery Kiln HISTORIC NAME Same

LOCATION (Street and number) 401 Oak Street

TOWN (Give directions if rural) Fairhope, Alabama

PRESENT USE Unused HISTORIC USE Preservation of a facility, bridging prehistoric and present pottery craft

OWNERSHIP: Public ( ) Private (X) Public acquisition being considered ( )

OWNER'S NAME Eastern Shore Art Association (Civic Organization)

MAILING ADDRESS Box 443, Fairhope, Ala, 36532

CONDITION: Excellent ( ) Good (X) Fair ( ) Ruins ( )

INTEGRITY: Original site (X) Moved ( ) When?

From where? Occupies original site Give details in significance

THREATS: No ( ) Yes (X) By what? Vandalism, which occurs to unused structures

RESTORATION WORK: Being considered ( ) Underway (X) Completed ( ) Not planned ( )

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open land ( ) Woodland (X) Scattered buildings (X)
Park
Highway building density ( ) Commercial ( ) Industrial ( )
Residential (X) Rural ( )

If there are numerous buildings in the area, could this structure be part of a Historic District? No

SIGNIFICANCE: Why is this important (X) associated with events, persons, or movements
Local (x) State ( ) National ( )
(X) a good example of a type or style of structure
example of man's effort to perpetuate one of
( ) other the pre-historic crafts.

Explain: The Pinewood Pottery is one of a number of establishments that located in Fairhope, Alabama because of two innovative socio-political institutions that built the town at the beginning of the century. The Single Tax Colony settled in Fairhope in 1894 to implement the theories of Henry George. Within the decade Marietta Johnson, a Minnesota Educator joined the Colony and was persuaded to put her theory of organic education into practice in the small community. Both institutions drew gifted and committed people. Among them were Converse and Edith Maxwell, who brought their pottery from the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, N.C., to Fairhope, Alabama in 1938. The grounds adjoining the Art Center are being developed as an arboretum through Garden Club efforts, and the adjoining ravine, Bayou Chandon is part of the proposed Bartram Recreation Trail. Thus the kiln will be surrounded by public park property on land managed by a widely supported civic organization.

Date of Construction 1939 Date of additions \_\_\_\_\_Architect or Builder Converse and Edith Harwell

Give a complete but concise history of the structure.

Harwell designed and built a ground-hog type kiln soon after his arrival in Fairhope. The initial kiln was replaced a year later (1939) by a more efficient downdraft kiln which used wood as fuel. The kiln was operated until 1964 when wood was no longer an economical fuel for the high temperatures required. Some brick used in the construction had been used in 1824 in a kiln several miles north of Fairhope near the mouth of Fly Creek. Additional brick were obtained by Harwell from the shipyard on Pike Island near Mobile where foreign ships were being repaired or converted to other fuels. Some brick in the kiln predates the kiln construction by more than a century and thus adds to its historic interest. The Fly Creek Kiln operated by two Frenchmen who designed and made utility ware for the Visitation Convent, founded in Mobile in 1839.

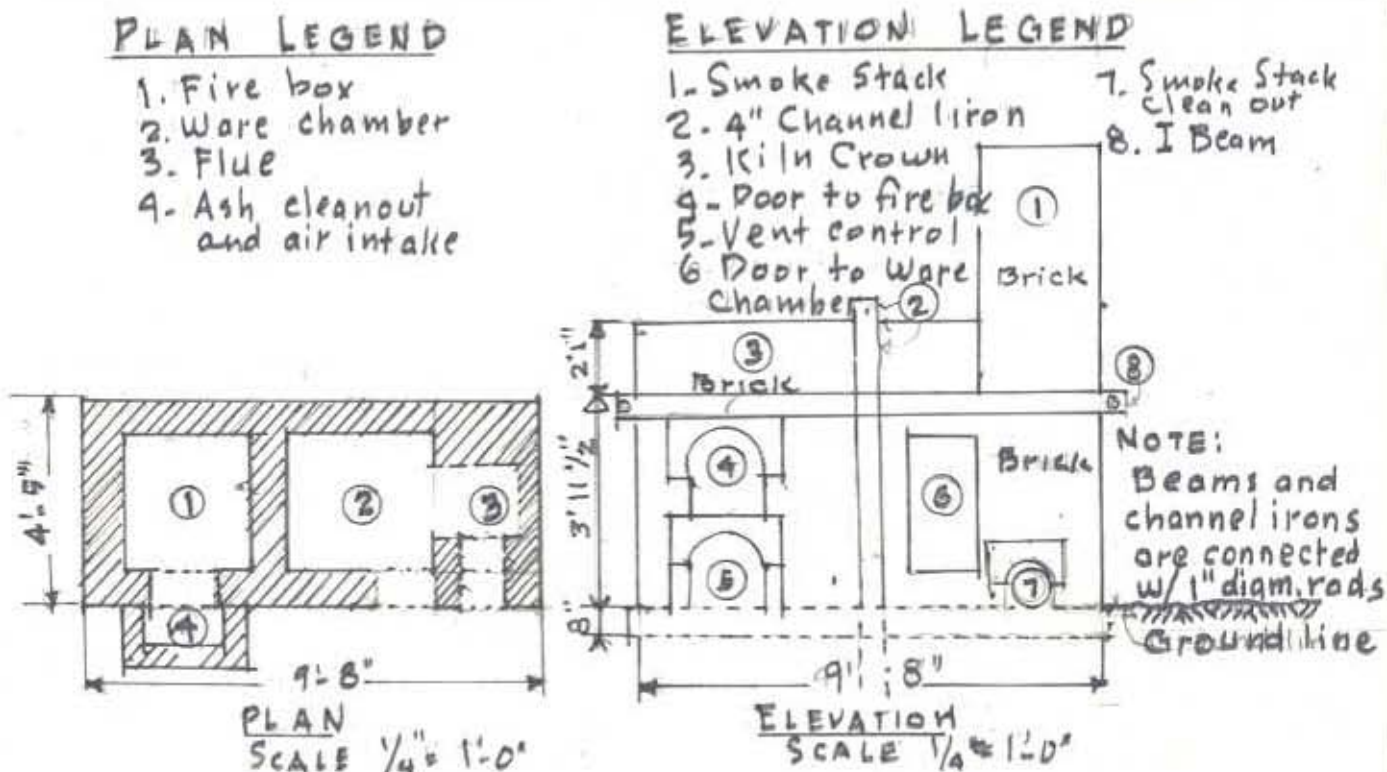
State sources of information for the above:

Personal Letter; Converse Harwell. Covers history of the kiln and description of operation.  
 THIRTY YEARS WITH AN IDEA; Marietta Johnson. University of Alabama Press 1974  
 FAIRHOPE: 1894-1954; Paul E. and Blanche R. Alyea. University of Alabama Press 1956

## DESCRIPTION

(For bridges, trestles, viaducts, tunnels, canals, railroad lines, or objects - see supplement form 1)

Make a sketch of the floor plan of the building, showing dimensions, related structures, and north arrow. Also indicate front of structure.



PINE WOOD POTTERY KILN  
 CONSTRUCTED AND OPERATED BY CONVERSE AND EDITH HARWELL  
 1939-1964

## DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Number of stories N/A Foundation \_\_\_\_\_ Basement \_\_\_\_\_

WALL MATERIAL: (Note changes from one floor or wing to another)  
 (clapboard, brick, stone, wood shingle, board and batton, stucco over wood  
 or brick, metal, logs) PLEASE NOTE TYPE OF BRICK BONDING AND LOG NOTCHING.

The kiln was constructed of brick which was reinforced with beams and channel  
 irons as shown on photograph and drawing.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM (If known) Wood frame( ) Load-bearing masonry (X) Iron or steel (x)  
 As noted above.

ROOF TYPE: (Gable, Gambrel, Mansard, Flat, Hipped, Combination)

The top of kiln is semi-circular in design and formed by the use of triangular  
 shaped brick.

ROOF COVERING: Wood shingle ( ) Asphalt ( ) Tile ( ) Metal ( ) Slate ( )  
 Brick

ROOF TRIM: (If any) N/A

CHIMNEYS: (Number, location, and material)

One located at the vent end of the kiln.

PORCHES Front N/A Type \_\_\_\_\_

Rear N/A Type \_\_\_\_\_

Side N/A Type \_\_\_\_\_

DOORS: Describe entrance door. N/A

Describe other doors. Removable steel plate doors were used for inclosing  
 fire box and brick were used to close the opening to the ware box.

WINDOWS: Types and number at each floor: N/A

INTERIOR: Describe mantels, stairways, wainscoting, plasterwork and any unusual features.

N/A

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

OTHER: Use this space to describe any additions, alterations, outbuildings or other features of the structure and its surroundings.

The plan and photograph provide specific information concerning dimensions and design. The plan shows a firebox and ware chamber, separated by a baffle wall which deflects the heat from the firebox into the ware chamber where the pottery is placed for drying or glazing. The floor, laid on bricks turned on edge, provided air space under the ware chamber floor. The throat of the smoke stack opens into air space under the chamber floor to secure proper draft.

\*A MAP WITH THE STRUCTURE MARKED AND PHOTOGRAPHS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM.\*

Map: A U.S. Geological Survey Map is preferred, but if you are unable to obtain one a county highway map may be used.

Photographs: Must be black and white, glossy finish and either 5 x 7 or 8 x 10.

PREPARED BY Thomas R. Horne DATE June 1976  
ADDRESS 708 Fairhope Ave PHONE (205) 928-5889  
TOWN Fairhope, Ala. 36532 ORGANIZATION Eastern Shore Art Assoc.  
Fairhope, AL

For Alabama Historical Commission use only

Map Reference: Map \_\_\_\_\_ Site number \_\_\_\_\_

Thematic Category \_\_\_\_\_

Added to ALABAMA REGISTER \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER Potential

U T M

Latitude 30° 32' N

Longitude 82° 54' W



Location of kiln  
 Eastern Shore Art Association  
 Latitude 30° 32' N Longitude 82° 54' W



Map: From Fairhope Quadrangle  
 U.S. Geological Survey  
 Scale -- 1 = 50,000  
 Contour Interval 10 feet



PINEWOOD POTTERY BEFORE RESTORATION  
Constructed and operated by Converse and Edith Harwell  
1939 - 1964  
Present owner Eastern Shore Art Association  
Fairhope, Alabama