

Dallas Landmark Commission Landmark Nomination Form

1. Name

historic Everette DeGolyer House - Rancho Encinal
and/or common DeGolyer House and Gardens

2. Location

address 8525 Garland Road land survey _____
location/neighborhood Easy Dallas block,lot,tract _____ tract size _____

3. Current Zoning

4. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other

5. Ownership

Current Owner: City of Dallas - Parks Phone: _____
Address: 6 F North, City Hall City: Dallas State: _____ Zip Code: _____

6. Form Preparation

Name & Title Ron Emrich/Senior Planner Organization Planning & Development
Contact _____ Phone 670-4121

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) local state national National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) A B C D Recorded Tx Historic Ldmk
1985 Historic Resource high medium Tx Archaeological Ldmk
Oak Cliff _____
Victorian Survey _____
1987 Historic Resource high medium Other _____

For Office Use Only

8. Date Rec'd: 10/1/07 Survey Verified: YN by: fe 9. Field Check by: fe, BC

10. Nomination:

Archaeological Structure(s) District
 Site Structure & Site Petitions needed

11. Historic Ownership

original owner Everett L. DeGolyer
significant later owner(s)

12. Construction Dates

original 1938-40
alterations/additions

13. Architect

original construction Denman Scott, Burton Schutt
alterations/additions

14. Site Features

natural gentle sloping land from house to White Rock Lake; signif. foliage
urban design

15. Physical Description

Condition	Check One:	Check One:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved (date: _____)
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance; include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc.). Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

The DeGolyer House and Historic Gardens consists of a large, one story hacienda-like house in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and its immediately surrounding acres of gardens, as well as the entrance gates on Garland Road. The house sits on a gentle incline above the eastern shore of White Rock Lake, with a "Great Lawn" leading to the lake's edge.

The primary elevation of the DeGolyer House borders three sides of an octagonal "auto court" facing essentially southeast. The massive stone wall of the center section is symmetrical, with twelve foot paneled wood double doors, flanked by small quatrefoil stained glass windows and large French windows beyond, set back to suggest thick walls. Wrought iron grilles protecting the French doors are the primary ornamentation of the facade. The south wing (to the left of the main entry), is set off from the main block at a 45 degree angle and has smaller versions of the center windows with wrought iron grilles, while the north wing, also at a 45 degree angle, contains a bull's eye window, a porch and porte cochere supported by two massive stone columns.

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Uncoursed stone, stucco and brick are the primary materials used on the exterior of the house; these are contrasted by use of ornamental wrought iron grillework and a generous compliment of porches, some of which are arcaded with immense stone arches, such as the dramatic porch facing the Great Terrace and White Rock Lake beyond. Others are supported by strong Doric columns. Terra cotta tile in a deep red sheathes the roofs, suggesting the Spanish missions of California; the low roofline varies in height from eight to 20 feet to accomodate the varying ceiling heights on the interior, and is broken by a series of picturesque chimneys and a small bell tower.

The interior of the house also reflects an elegant and personalized Spanish Colonial Revival style. The entrance hall in the main block has a floor of red octagonal tiles and a vaulted ceiling with an immense 17th century hammered silver lantern which formerly hung in a Spanish church. The livingroom, entrance hall and diningroom are placed enfilade to create a single long vista; ten foot mahogonay doors with raised panels may be closed to separate the chambers. All three rooms have 20 foot ceilings and, to the west, magnificent lake views.

The south wing of the house is built in the form of a quadrangle surrounding an interior patio; bedrooms are located on three sides and the library on the fourth. Of the four bedroom suites, the master is the most noteworthy, with its dressing and sitting rooms adjacent, all with 15 foot ceilings and decorated in a 1930s interpretation of the Adam style.

The library, the single most important room in the house, measures 35 by 50 feet, with 15 foot ceilings and contains floor to ceiling bookcases which once contained over 15,000 volumes. The shelves are interrupted by the large fireplace with its Texas walnut overmantle, as well as regularly spaced oak pilasters. The west end of the library is splayed inward and terminates with a semi-circular box window offering a panoramic view of the lake. At this end of the room are found two small hidden rooms entered through sliding bookcases; these were used for storing the rarest, largest and most unwieldy volumes. The library is also distinguished for the use of indirect fluoreescent lighting, said to be the first such installation in a residence.

The Historic Gardens of the DeGolyer Estate, as originally deisgned by the Bergers, are formally laid out, and are characterized by a number of distinctive spaces, vistas and allees of trees. Alterations of plantings and the expansion of pedestrian pathways have not obscured these original spatial features.

16. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

Everette Lee DeGolyer, in the words of social philosopher Ferdinand Lundberg, "compare[d] with most oil hunters as a Stradavarius with a banjo." DeGolyer's achievements as a businessman and scientist in the oil industry would be adequate to make him a man of note, but his interests went beyond that. He was a major book collector, scholar, writer, philanthropist and a man with an extraordinarily wide range of interests. Architecturally, DeGolyer's house on White Rock Lake reflects this variety of interests and an affection for the Southwest. An important example of a Spanish Colonial Revival residence, the house, by architects Schutt and Scott, is reminiscent in size, detailing and massing to the masters of that style. The landscape and gardens, by prominent Dallas landscape architect Arthur Berger, are an integral part of the overall design. The architects planned the house around the existing trees, views of White Rock Lake and vistas of the meadows and woodlands. The landscape architects planned the site to complement the functions and fenestrations of the different pavillions of the house, as well as to conform to the topography and existing vegetation.

Of remote Huguenot ancestry and born in 1886 in a sod house in Greensboro, Kansas, Everette DeGolyer developed an early interest in petroleum exploration, his chief activity the development of scientific rather than trial-and-error means of locating oil. Before graduating from the University of Oklahoma, he accompanied Dr. C. Willard Hayes on a trip to Mexico to assist in a search for oil. After successfully making one find under DeGolyer's advice, a second well was drilled which resulted in the world's single largest oil well: Potrero de Llano #4, which produced 100 million barrels of oil. Fresh from this success at barely 24 years of age, DeGolyer co-founded the Amerada Corporation, which was perhaps the most influential single event in the application of scientific techniques to the locating of oil reserves. Under DeGolyer's direction, the seismograph refraction and torsion balance methods, the magnometer and other devices were developed and refined to help oil prospectors locate the underground salt domes which are a geological feature of oil fields. He later created Geophysical Corporation (an outgrowth of which became Texas Instruments) and Eastern Transunion, and finally DeGolyer and MacNaughton, consulting engineers. The firm was recognized as the best in its field and its counsel was sought after by the United States and other governments.

17. Bibliography

National Register of Historic Places nomination; Rogers, John W., The Lusty Texans of Dallas; Lundberg, Ferdinand, The Rich and the Super Rich

18. Attachments

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District or Site map | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional descriptive material |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> Footnotes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photos (historic & current) | |

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According to his biographer, Lon Tinkle, "DeGolyer was a restless, energetic and inquiring man whose interests were far broader than geology, the art of prospecting for oil or the entire world oil business. He was an omnivorous reader, especially on subjects which appealed to him. Two of these were the history of science and the early history of the Southwestern United States."

His interests led him to assemble one of the finest libraries on the history of science in the Western Hemisphere. As a result of these disparate interests, author DeGolyer's list of published works ranged from articles in scientific journals, to a life of Santa Ana for the Encyclopedia Britanica, a book (Across Aboriginal America), and many book reviews of volumes about the Southwest. Also the Chairman of the Board of the Saturday Review of Literature magazine, he published mostly regional works through his own, amateur Peripatetic Press. In addition to his literary pursuits, DeGolyer's civic activities in Dallas drew people from many fields and with many interests to his home on White Rock Lake. He served on the boards of the Dallas Theatre, Inc., Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas Council on World Affairs, the Dallas Historical Association and the Arboretum Foundation, as well as several corporations and banks. He served during World War II as Assistant Deputy Coordinator for National Defense, and was a member of the Advisory Committee on Raw Materials for the Atomic Energy Commission.

"What baffles anyone who knew DeGolyer or who studies his career," writes Tinkle in the biography, "is where he found the time to turn his attention to all the multifarious things he did.... It was not the habit of wealth or any predatory instinct that drove him to ever-increasing activity; it was seeking for excellence, defined as the mind -- whether in practical or theoretical employment -- realizing itself." DeGolyer even won first prize in a chili-cooking contest at the 1948 State Fair of Texas.

In 1936, DeGolyer, his wife and four children moved to Dallas to be nearer to his work. Finding no conventional residence that could adequately accommodate the ever-growing collection of books, antiques and objets d'art collected on world travels, the DeGolyers decided to build a house. They chose as architects two young brothers from California, Denman Scott and Burton Schutt, whose forte was the design of large country or suburban homes with a strong southwestern influence. Along with David Williams of Dallas, O'Neil Ford of San Antonio and John Staubb of Houston, Schutt and Scott created buildings that reflected a distinctive regional style that did not mimic the work of Eastern architects of the time. While the brothers executed a number of other major commissions in Texas, the majority of their work was accomplished in California, primarily in Beverly Hills and Bel Air (including the Bel Air Hotel). Their work was widely published in architectural journals, particularly California Arts and Architecture. Unfortunately, both brothers died while comparatively young, before achieving full recognition for their work.

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The DeGolyers travelled throughout Southern California with Schutt and Scott, selecting details to be incorporated in their house, which would include areas to display the Spanish, Latin American and Indian furniture, art and artifacts they had collected. The site chosen for the house was a 43 acre, heavily wooded dairy farm bordered by White Rock Lake on two sides, within the Dallas city limits. From the immense, native live oak trees the estate derived its name, Rancho Encinal - Spanish for "Ranch of the Oaks" - and around the live oaks and lake views, the family and their architects planned their Texas hacienda and gardens. Its single story blends with rather than dominates the land and the simplicity of the exterior displays the typical inward quality of Spanish and Latin American architecture.

Construction of the house began in 1938 and was completed in 1940. In addition to its impressive size and striking appearance, the house is also noteworthy for several innovative design features, such as the use of the patio rather than an interior hallway to connect the bedrooms, and the first use of both a central air-conditioning system and indirect fluorescent lighting in a residence in the city.

The grounds were laid out by a Harvard-educated landscape architect, Arthur Berger, who worked closely with the DeGolyers and the architects. Berger had initially practiced in New York and Toledo, Ohio, before coming to Dallas in 1939 to execute the DeGolyer commission. He and his fellow landscape architect wife Marie, practiced together in Dallas following World War II and continued as prominent members of their field until Arthur Berger's death in 1960. The result of Berger's work with the DeGolyers was a rare and harmonious blend of architecture and landscape architecture laid out on a large scale.

Rancho Encinal was enjoyed by its owners and countless guests in the years that followed. As writer John William Rogers wrote in 1951: "Probably as in no other home in Dallas and few in America there is a steady stream of great scientists, authors, financiers, publishers and figures of the great world. And yet, these contacts are so born of mutual interests that the visitors find themselves naturally."

DeGolyer died in 1956 and his widow in 1972. The couple had long envisioned that the estate would become a study center, a modest version of the Huntington Foundation in California or Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. However, after the trustees of the DeGolyer Foundation turned over the extraordinary house, grounds and library and an endowment to Southern Methodist University, it was decided to remove the book collection to the university campus and offer the property for sale. After several years of uncertainty, the estate was purchased by the City of Dallas and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department, which owns and manages it today.