

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Historic Preservation Division

Noel Holcomb, Commissioner

W. Ray Luce, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
34 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 1600, Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Telephone (404) 656-2840 Fax (404) 651-8739 <http://www.gashpo.org>

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Helen Talley-McRae, 404-651-5268
helen.talley-mcrae@dnr.state.ga.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

J. Herbert and Julia Johnson Raised Tybee Cottage Listed in National Register

Built in 1932, it retains a high level of historic integrity.

ATLANTA (June 10, 2008) – The J. Herbert and Julia Johnson Raised Tybee Cottage, located on Jones Avenue, Tybee Island, Chatham County, was listed in the National Register on May 21, 2008. The property owner sponsored the nomination and a consultant prepared the nomination materials.

J. Herbert and Julia Johnson built the cottage in 1932 on one of two side-by-side lots that they had purchased the previous year. Johnson, a salesman with the Georgia Supply Company, resided in Savannah when he built the cottage. By the early 1950s, the Johnsons had sold the undeveloped second parcel. The Johnson's sons, William and J. Herbert Johnson, Jr., inherited the cottage in 1991. The cottage remains in the Johnson family.

The J. Herbert and Julia Johnson Raised Tybee Cottage is significant in the area of architecture as an excellent example of a raised Tybee cottage, a house type that developed as a standard beach house design for middle-class families on Tybee Island between c.1925 and 1949. The main living quarters are raised a full story to protect against high water and to provide ocean breezes and views to the ocean. The lower level accommodates automobiles, boat storage, and sometimes servant quarters.

more

J. Herbert and Julia Johnson Raised Tybee Cottage listed in the National Register, page 2

The Johnson house is a two-story, wood-frame cottage raised on wood posts and covered with a hip roof. The first floor, screened by wood lattice, includes a living/dining room, kitchen, bedroom and an automobile stall. In the 1950s and 1960s, a rear porch was converted to a bathroom. The bedrooms, located on the upper floor, are surrounded by screened porches on two sides. An exterior stair provides access to the second floor. The interior Georgian plan features four bedrooms divided by a central hall. The Johnson House has changed little since its construction in 1932 and retains a high level of historic integrity.

The cottage is also significant in the areas of community planning and development and entertainment/recreation because it represents the first period of intensive resort development on Tybee Island. In the first decades of the 20th century, Tybee Island, also known as Savannah Beach, developed as a coastal resort for residents of nearby Savannah. The opening of the Tybee Road in 1923, a causeway that linked the island with Savannah, fueled the demand for oceanfront property. Many lots were subdivided to accommodate the construction of seasonal beach houses.

The National Register is the federal government's official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. According to Richard Cloues, deputy state historic preservation officer, listing in the National Register recognizes a property's significance and ensures that the property will be taken into account in the planning of federally funded or licensed projects. In addition, owners of income producing National Register properties may be eligible for rehabilitation tax incentives.

For more information on the National Register and other preservation programs, contact the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources at 404-656-2840 or visit our Web site at www.gashpo.org.

###