NAME

Fleming, Thomas W., House
AND/OR COMMON
Clubhouse of the Woman's Club of Fairmont

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
300 First Street

CITY, TOWN
Fairmont

STATE
West Virginia

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Marion County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
Adams Street

CITY, TOWN
Fairmont

STATE
West Virginia

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Woman's Club of Fairmont

STREET & NUMBER
300 First Street

CITY, TOWN
Fairmont

STATE
West Virginia

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
YES: UNRESTRICTED

PRESENT USE
MUSEUM
PARK
PRIVATE RESIDENCE

PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL

YES: RESTRICTED
NO

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

COUNTY
LOCAL
DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

~EXCELLENT
~GOOD
~FAIR

CHECK ONE

~UNALTERED
~MOVED

CHECK ONE

~Deteriorated
~Ruins
~Unexposed

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Thomas W. Fleming House, since 1938 the Woman's Club of Fairmont
Clubhouse, occupies the rear of a landscaped corner lot at 300 First Street
in an old and fashionable neighborhood of Fairmont, Marion County, West Virginia.
The Fleming House commands from its elevated site a panoramic view of the
Monongahela Valley and East Fairmont.

The architect's choice of design elements for Mr. Fleming's substantial
townhouse combined those of the American Neo-Colonial Revival and early
twentieth century motifs that define Beaux Arts Classicism. French influence in
the composition is apparent in an interesting geometry formed by the juxtaposition
of rectangles with semicircles and ellipses.

Entrance to the property from First Street is provided by a semicircular
driveway that meets the semicircular steps and rounded, glass-enclosed entrance
solarium of the house. The solarium is centered at the front elevation and is
flanked by gray stuccoed masonry walls whose windows are arranged in groups of
three. Tripartite design elements, in addition to the three front bays, include
three dormers with curvilinear broken pediments, and two, two-story bays with
half-cornice roofs at the side elevations that visually join the curving
entrance solarium to frame the symmetrical mass of the entire house.

The Fleming House is a two and one-half story, U-shaped stucco masonry structure
with a high-pitched truncated hip roof. Its rectangular central block is joined
at the rear by two short wings. The side elevations feature two, two-story
curving bays, the angle and space to the northeast of which is filled by an open
one-story sunporch, one on each side of the house. These rectangular porches
flank the central block of the house and join, via open promenades, the entrance
solarium across the front of the house.

The interior of the house is reached through an ornate vestibule whose
doorway is surmounted with a leaded semi-elliptical fanlight and flanked with
lead sidelights filled with elegant leaded and beveled glass. (The leaded
glass door panel was recently replaced with plain plate glass.)

Light within the central first floor hallway emanates from the landing
window of an expansive oaken stairway that rises in an open curvilinear well
at the rear of the house. The space of the first floor hallway from which the
stair rises is singular; it flows from room to room in the tradition of period
houses, but provides an inviting presence in the hallway itself with an oaken
inglenook. The principal lower room is the dining room, though its three
counterparts, a library and two parlors, are also elegantly finished.

A spacious oval at the southeast corner of the main block forms the dining
room. Its high ceilings are embellished with foliate relief plasterwork. The
walls, covered with a pressed fabric (lininrast) wainscoting, contain a fireplace
opening with an intricately carved hardwood single-shelf mantelpiece, and a
recessed, mirrored china cupboard with curving leaded glass doors. At the
southeast end of the room five double-hung windows with stained glass transoms
and curving glass sashes provide abundant lighting for the room.
A library, gold drawing room, music room, game room, and kitchen comprise other first floor space. The seven second floor bedrooms opening onto the hallway that encircles the stairwell contain secondary entrances that allow for passage through each room without entering the outer hall. The third floor, now used for apartments, originally accommodated the household servants.

The Thomas W. Fleming House became the clubhouse of the Fairmont Woman's Club in 1938. The integrity of the building's fabric has been enhanced by their ownership. In addition to the considerable portion of the Fleming furniture that survives, plasterwork, wainscoting, stained glass, and lighting fixtures have been preserved. The only major alteration occurred during the Club's early occupancy when a wall separating the gold drawing room and music room from the hallway was removed to provide ample space for meetings. A stained glass window at the stair landing, a leaded glass front door panel, and the original slate roof have been replaced over the years with substitutes.
The Thomas W. Fleming House is significant as one of the best preserved residences of the once fashionable neighborhood that was formed from lands adjacent to and in the vicinity of Fairmont Avenue in South Fairmont at the turn-of-the-century. Mr. Fleming was a partner in the Fairmont Development Company that opened up much of South Fairmont during an important boom period. As one of the leaders in the promotion of improvements for Fairmont, West Virginia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Mr. Fleming's contributions were motivated and supported by both political and business interests. It seems not unusual therefore that Mr. Fleming would have chosen one of the finest sites in the city for the construction of his new house.

The house was erected c.1901 from plans incorporating both Neo-Colonial and Beaux Arts modes at the rear of an expansive lot fronted with a sweeping lawn that provided an unobstructed view of a large section of the city. The rooms were elegantly furnished and detailed with fine plaster reliefs and carved and applied woodwork. A central hallway upon which the major rooms opened was designed with an impressive two-flight stair of oak. A stained glass window at its landing (now missing) was designed by Mrs. Annie Sweeney Fleming.

Thomas W. Fleming (1846-1937) was a descendant of a pioneer family that settled Fairmont. He spent his entire life in business ventures that helped Fairmont grow from a minor town into an important retail and industrial center in north-central West Virginia. Fleming served as Mayor of Fairmont for two terms in 1891-92 and was elected to the House of Delegates in 1905. He was one of the first to understand the significance of street cars and interurban lines in Fairmont. It was under his guidance as mayor that the first street in the city was paved, that being from the end of the South Side Bridge to Monroe Street. The first city waterworks was built under his administration from funds that he personally lent to the city. Mr. Fleming's wealth was secured in part from the development of coal and oil lands in Marion, Monongahela, Harrison, and Doddridge Counties.

Following Fleming's death in 1937, the family home passed to his heirs, and hence to the Fairmont Woman's Club who adapted the building for use as a clubhouse. Purchase of the residence from Allison Fleming in 1938 provided the organization with a permanent home.

The Fairmont Woman's Club was organized in the Fleming House in 1906, when Mrs. Sweeney Fleming invited a number of local women to her home to formulate details. Mrs. Fleming, a member of a prominent Wheeling, West Virginia family, became the club's first president. The President of the Woman's Club, at the time the Fleming home became the Woman's Clubhouse in 1939, was Mrs. E. A. Grose.
The Thomas W. Fleming House represents a significant period in the history of Fairmont, a period of growth and maturity that is reflected in the style of a house and in the prominence of its first owner. Significantly, the community minded spirit of its first occupant is reflected in the work of the present owners who continue service to many community health, welfare, cultural, civic, and church organizations.
**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCE**

Brochure of the Woman's Club of Fairmont, Mrs. Rex M. Smith, President. n.d.

Deed Book 343, p. 453, Marion County Courthouse, Fairmont, W.V.


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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**
The nominated property is located on a city lot on the southwest corner of First Street and Virginia Avenue in Fairmont, Marion County, West Virginia. The lot measures 157' x 120'.

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**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

WEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION
Fleming Papers owned by Mrs. Thomas Wilshire, Fairmont, W. V.

NOTE: RMS 6 AND 7 ARE TWO ROOM APARTMENT

RMS 1-5 ARE BEDROOMS

SECOND FLOOR