The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

REPORT ON DESIGNATION LPB 283/11

Name and Address of Property: **Barksdale House**
13226 42nd Avenue Northeast

Legal Description:
Lot 3 in Block 3 of Cedar Park No. 3, as per plat recorded in Volume 29 of Plats, page 27, Records of King County Auditor; Situate in the City of Seattle, County of King, State of Washington.

At the public meeting held on June 15, 2011, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Barksdale House at 13226 42nd Avenue Northeast as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction; and

E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Location and Surroundings

The Barksdale property is located at 13226 42nd Avenue NE, on the east side of the street, overlooking Lake Washington. The property is located in Cedar Park, which runs generally north-south along Lake Washington, from NE 145th Street at the north to about NE 120th Street at the south, and somewhat east of 35th Avenue NE.

The topography in the area of 13226 42nd Avenue NE has the form of a stepped bluff facing east toward Lake Washington. The top of the slope, at about 280 feet above the lake, is generally along the north-south street, 39th Avenue NE. 100 to 400 feet east of 39th Avenue NE the land slopes steeply down to a bench (a somewhat more level, but still sloped area). 42nd Avenue NE runs along the center of this bench, with lots sloping upward to the west and downward to the east. From 42nd Avenue NE, the land slopes to the Burke-Gilman Trail about 400 feet to the east. The Trail has an elevation about 20 feet above the Lake; Riviera

Place NE, parallels the east side of the Burke-Gilman Trail at about 10-12 feet above the Lake.

The bench along which 42nd Avenue NE runs is not level, but falls to about 75 feet above Lake Washington and rises to an elevation about 175 feet above Lake Washington. 42nd Avenue NE is a two-lane road without curbs, gutters or sidewalks. It connects to the city street grid only at NE 123rd Street and at NE 145th Street. The narrow road, rising and falling grade, and large amounts of vegetated slope, give the area a surprisingly rural feeling even though it is within the City of Seattle.

Prior to the 1920s, the land was owned by the Puget Mill Company. In the 1920s, the land was subdivided and sold. In the 1920s, most owners considered the area vacation property. Most of the construction was in the form of small cottages. By the late 1930s, however, owners began to construct year-round residences. After World War II the area was filled in with single-family homes. Even with the short-platting of some properties since the 1970s, the area retains a somewhat more rural feeling than more densely developed parts of Seattle. Many of the houses in the immediate vicinity have gardens and the slopes to the west and east of 42nd Avenue have significant vegetation.

Because the area was primarily vacation property until the late 1930s, there are only a few older homes along 42nd Avenue NE. Most houses date from 1940 or later and the largest number of houses reflect post-World War II influences. There are "modern traditional" houses, 1940s and 1950s "ranch houses," and a number of houses showing the influence of Northwest regional modernism.

Barksdale Property

The property at 13226 42nd Avenue NE measures 100 feet wide north to south. The north property line measures 396 feet west to east; the south property line measures 383 feet west to east. The west property line follows the curve of 42nd Avenue NE; the east property line follows the curve of the Burke-Gilman Trail. The eastern 200 feet of the property is in a steep slope ECA (Environmentally Critical Area).

Beginning at 42nd Avenue NE at the west, about 170 feet above Lake Washington, a section through the site slopes gently down from 42nd Avenue NE to the house. The easternmost 200 feet of the property is in a steep slope, dropping to only 20 feet above Lake Washington at the Burke-Gilman Trail. The northeast portion of the house is a full story lower, allowing outdoor access directly to basement.

Along the west property line, gravel driveway for 13226 42nd Avenue NE veers off 42nd Avenue NE at an angle and then makes a sweeping curve leading to the front door of the house. A fence facing 42nd Avenue along the east side of the driveway starts at the ground at the southwest property corner, then runs along the top of a concrete block retaining wall that curves to the east along the south side of the driveway and leads toward the front door to the house. Although an original site plan does not survive, this curving fence and block wall,

which lead from the street to the front door in a single gesture, are shown on a small site plan included on the drawing of the 1955 addition. Thus, they were designed by Lionel Pries.

The west side of the house is located almost 80 feet east of the property line along 42nd Avenue NE. Adjacent to the west side of the house is a level area with a concrete patio and garden. In addition to the patio near the house, the area between the house and 42nd Avenue includes a small lawn, but is mostly developed with perimeter gardens along the south, west and north sides of the lawn. (The north side of the north perimeter garden is the concrete block wall along the inside of the sweeping curve of the driveway.) These gardens were planted near the time the house was built. Lionel Pries likely contributed to their design. Today they include 50- to 60-year-old rhododendrons, azaleas and other well-established plantings.

The south side of the house is located just four feet from the south property line. The north side of the house is just over 35 feet from the north property line. There is a three-foot wide shed three feet south of the north property line. The roof of this shed cantilevers southward to become the roof of a carport. Even with the north deck (which extends north from the kitchen), and the shed, there is still a 20-foot wide space allowing a view from the driveway area east to the lake.

Along the northeast side of the house, the land is a full story lower, allowing outdoor access directly to basement. East of the house is a second small lawn area. North of the lawn is another planted area; many of the plantings in this area are only a few years old, others are older and there are four fir trees approximately 60-80 years old. At the east end of the lawn, a small stone path leads to a small stone patio overlooking the lake. The steep slope down to the Burke-Gilman Trail begins east of the planted area, the concrete patio and the lawn. This steep slope is overgrown with a variety of natural vegetation.

Barksdale House Exterior Features

General Description

The Barksdale house has an area of 2690 gross square feet according to King County Tax Records for Parcel Number 1454600165. The house contains a 2160 s.f. main floor and a 530 s.f. basement which is partially daylit and has direct outside access.
The house has an extraordinarily irregular perimeter that defies easy description. The outside dimensions of the footprint are 60 feet north to south and 65 feet east to west. The front entrance, facing northwest, is located at the center of a re-entrant 90 degree angle. The northeast wall of the house has the form of a zig-zag facing the view east and north toward Lake Washington. The roof is also irregular, composed primarily of gabled forms with differing slopes; there is an area with a flat roof at the front entrance. The irregularity of the form of the house is not immediately apparent to a visitor because the driveway leads to a series of steps up to the northwest facing double-door entrance located at the re-entrant angle of two walls of concrete block.

The primary exterior materials of the house are concrete block and dark brown stained cedar siding. Most of the cedar siding is vertical although there are a few areas of horizontal siding close to the roof level. The block is nominally 8" x 16" (actual 7-1/2" x 15-1/2" with ½" mortar joint). The vertical cedar of the 1949-50 house is nominally 1 x 10 boards (the exposed width measures 9-1/4").

The 1955 addition, the easternmost portion of the house, was constructed in the location of the outdoor terrace that had been part of the house when completed in 1950. This terrace was accessed through double doors in the south wall of the living room. In 1953, the owner of the adjacent lot to the south built a house that blocked the view of Mount Rainier from the terrace. The 1955 addition turns away from this adjacent structure and orients to the views toward the east and north. The vertical cedar of the 1955 addition matches the house in character but is nominally 1 x 8 boards (the exposed width measures 7-1/4" wide). Although this is narrower than the rest of the house, few visitors notice the difference.

Doors

There are eight exterior doors, six on the main floor and two at the basement level. The northeast-facing front entrance is a double door; each solid core wood door of the pair measures 35" wide and 80" tall. The left-hand leaf as one approaches the house is the primary operable leaf. The exterior of this door is painted a dark green; the interior face is mahogany. Above the front door is a 12" high fixed glass transom. From the outside through the glazing one can see a carved Japanese transom panel.

The two bedrooms on the west side of the house each have an exterior door leading to the concrete patio. These doors are solid wood measuring 30" wide and 79" tall. Each has a fixed glass panel 19" wide and 59" tall. The wood appears to be cedar or fir.

On the east side of the 1955 addition, there is a 96" wide, 79" tall sliding glass door. Originally, the narrow rails and stiles of this door were steel, but by 2006 the door had severely rusted, so operated poorly, provided little thermal insulation, and could not be closed securely. The current owners replaced this door with a similar sliding door with wood stiles and rails to match the materiality of the other doors throughout the house. The exterior of this door is finished with a solid stain; the interior is mahogany matching the wood paneling of the interior.

On the east side of the living room is a double-door leading from the living room to the deck. This door measures 48" wide and 79" tall; each door of the pair is 24" wide and has a fixed glass panel 13" wide, and 57" tall. The exterior of this door is finished with a solid stain; the interior is mahogany matching the interior wood paneling. When the house was completed in 1950, this location was a large fixed glass window--one of three on the east wall of the living room. When Lionel Pries designed the 1955 addition, he drew a door in this location; however, the Barksdales never removed the fixed glass and installed the door. In 2006, the current owners replaced the fixed glass with the double-door following the design Lionel Pries had drawn 51 years before.

At the north end of the kitchen, a door leads out to the deck. This door measures 30" wide and 80" tall and has a fixed glass panel 19" wide, and 59" tall. The exterior of this door is finished with a solid stain; the interior is mahogany matching the interior wood paneling. When the house was completed in 1950, this location was a rectangular casement window that aligned with the adjacent kitchen windows. In 1955, when Lionel Pries designed a proposed carport topped by a deck, he drew a door in this location; however, the Barksdales never built the carport and deck, so never installed this door. In 2006, the current owners built a portion of the proposed deck and installed a door in this location following the design Lionel Pries had drawn in 1955.

There are two doors at the basement level that lead directly to the exterior. The north-facing solid wood door that connects to the primary basement interior space measures 32" wide and 79" tall. The exterior of this door is finished with a solid stain; the interior is clear stained. The east-facing solid wood door to the laundry/utility room measures 36" wide and 75" tall. The exterior of this door is finished with a solid stain; the interior is unfinished.

Windows

There are 33 windows, 28 on the main floor and five in the daylight basement. All are rectangular. Window frames are wood, with the exception of a single aluminum window in the laundry/utility room at the basement level. A majority windows are single sheets of fixed glass oriented vertically, although windows in the dining room and kitchen are horizontal. Those in the living room stretch from the floor to close to the ceiling. The glazing was originally single pane, but most has been replaced with thermopane. This replacement was feasible because the large sheets of glass are simply "stopped-in" with wood trim.

Operable windows in the kitchen and dining room are casements. In addition to the doors and casement windows, ventilation is provided by wood louvers with insect screens below the fixed glass in the entry hall and the two original bedrooms.

The two windows adjacent to the front entrance are fixed glass measuring 49" wide and 63" tall. Below each of these windows are fixed horizontal wood louvers allowing for ventilation. An interior 10" high wood panel must be removed to allow air flow. In the west and south walls of the original master bedroom are fixed glass windows with wood louvers below. The west facing windows measure 28" wide and 48-1/2" wide; the south-facing window measures 48-1/2" wide; all three are 63" tall. In the west wall of the second bedroom (at the southwest corner of the house), there is a similar fixed glass window with wood louvers below; the window measures 47-1/2" wide, 63" tall. In the south wall of this bedroom are four windows in a horizontal row--each measures 34-1/2" wide, 22" tall. The first three have fixed glass; the eastern window is a horizontal slider. Two more matching windows with fixed glass are found in the adjacent bathroom (for a total of six in the row).

In the south wall of the 1955 addition (currently used as the master bedroom) is a band of three windows, each 49" tall and 46" wide. These windows were originally single panes of fixed glass, but are now horizontal sliders. The change, made by the current owners in 2006 to facilitate cross-ventilation did not alter a character-defining feature of the house because

these were never view windows. On the outside they are only four feet from the fence along the neighboring property to the south. On the inside they have always been covered with shoji screens. Lionel Pries designed them to introduce light into this room, through the shoji screens, but not to allow a view out or a view in. Since the shoji screens are horizontal sliders, the central vertical bar of each pair of screens exactly aligns with the central vertical bar of the sliders behind, maintaining the visible appearance and the quality of light filtering through the shoji screens as Lionel Pries designed it in 1955. In the north wall of the 1955 addition, adjacent to the sliding door in the east wall, is a fixed glass window, 49" wide and 79-1/2" tall.

Three fixed glass windows provide illumination to the east end of the living room, two in the east wall, and an adjacent one in the north wall. Each measures 49" wide and 79-1/2" tall. Five windows illuminate the dining room. Four are fixed glass. The two facing east measure 59" wide and 46" tall; the two facing north measure 49" wide and 47-1/2" tall. The fifth window, at the east end of the north wall is a wood casement window, 24" wide, 47-1/2" tall. A wood casement was originally found in this location. However, at some point the Barksdales substituted a metal-framed window with fixed glass over a hopper. The current owners restored the window to the original appearance in 2006.

There are four windows in the kitchen, including the eating area at the north end of this room. In the east wall, above the sink, is a fixed glass window, 47" wide, 34-1/2" tall. Next is a casement 24" wide, 47-1/2" tall. A wood casement was originally found in this location. At some point the Barksdales substituted a metal-framed window with fixed glass over a hopper. The current owners restored the window to its original appearance in 2006. The northeast corner of the kitchen is an eating area, with fixed glass windows in the east wall and the north wall; each measures 49" wide and 47-1/2" tall.

There are three fixed glass windows in the main basement room, one in the east wall and two in the north wall. These measure 49" wide and 70" tall. The fixed glass window in the east wall of the laundry/utility room measures 49" wide, 63-1/2" tall. The aluminum sliding window in the north wall of this room measures 72" wide and 36" tall.

Along the east and north wall of the dining room, and the east wall of the kitchen, angled wood brackets support a narrow balcony to facilitate washing the outsides of the windows in these rooms. (This feature shown on Lionel Pries's drawings making it an original part of the design of the house.)

Decks

The east and northeast-facing deck, accessed from the living room and from the 1955 addition (master bedroom) was added by the Barksdales at an unknown date. The north deck off the kitchen was added in 2006, by the current owners, in part following Lionel Pries's 1955 design. However, the deck includes a stair to grade not part of the 1955 design.

Carport/Shed Structure

At an unknown date the Barksdales built a shed structure (3 feet deep, 32 feet long) along the north property line adjacent to the driveway. This inexpensively constructed structure was used for storage of outdoor tools, firewood etc. By 2006, this shed was suffering from leaks, rot and showed significant deterioration. The current owners replaced it in 2009 with current shed structure (with a similar footprint, 3 feet wide, 32 feet long) that includes an extended roof that serves as a carport. The new shed is clad in vertical cedar siding stained to match the exterior of the house.

Barksdale House Interior Features

Similar to all Lionel Pries houses of the late 1940s and early 1950s, the house is designed around a sequence of spaces that lead to the view. The visitor entering the house through the double front doors encounters and irregular entry space connected to a diagonal hall that leads from the entry area to the living and dining rooms which face east and northeast and open to the view overlooking Lake Washington through a series of large windows. There is also a stair from the entry area that provides access to the basement.

The walls of the entry area are concrete block, matching the exterior walls on either side of the front entrance. Walls throughout the interior of the main floor are mahogany veneer plywood. Trim is minimal, in keeping with the modern character of the house. Closet doors in the front hall and in the original master bedroom are flush with the walls when closed, producing a continuous wood surface. The ceilings of the living room, dining room, kitchen and original master bedroom are also mahogany veneer plywood, cut in 24" x 24" squares with the wood grain alternating to form a checkerboard pattern. The ceilings of the entry, the bedroom hall, the second bedroom, and the 1955 addition are white-painted plaster (or plaster board). The floors of the living room, dining room, kitchen and bedroom hall are slate ("bluestone"); the floors of the original master bedroom and second bedroom are rose-colored terrazzo. The floor of the 1955 addition is carpeted; beneath the carpet is concrete,

The kitchen includes built-in cabinets of mahogany. Trim is minimal in keeping with the modern character of the house. Since the walls and ceiling are mahogany veneer plywood, the cabinets are fully integrated with the visual character of the kitchen. The stove is a General Electric four-burner stove that was part of the 1950 house. The refrigerator has been replaced several times and is not original.

Heat throughout the main level is radiant hot water with copper pipes located in the floor. The 1955 addition, however, has electric baseboard heating. A small electric hot air wall heater provides supplemental heat to the eating area at the north end of the kitchen.

Detail features found inside the house include shoji screens that slide to open up the kitchen to the adjacent hall and which open or close a "pass-through" from the kitchen to the dining room. Shoji screens were also used at the large east-facing floor-to-ceiling windows of the living room to provide morning shade from too much direct sunlight. (Although only one of these screens is currently in use, all three remain in the house.) Shoji screens are also found

in the three south-facing windows of the 1955 addition. These screens were not intended to be operable; they allow daylight into the room, but provide privacy from the adjacent owner's property just four feet away. Shoji screens also serve in place of a door to divide the 1955 addition from the adjacent living room.

On the inside of the clear glass transom over the front door is a carved Japanese transom panel or "ramma" (held in place by two small pieces of trim). This panel is carved on both sides as it can be seen from inside and from outside (through the glass). It is believed that Lionel Pries gave this ramma to the Barksdales as a gift at the time the house was completed. Pries often gave his clients artistic embellishments that would become part of their houses.

Unlike the irregular form of the main floor of the house, the basement is primarily rectangular. The basement stair, with walls of concrete block, leads from the front entry hall to the basement level. The walls of the basement are concrete block, although some have been covered with plywood paneling. The basement is primarily one large room, plus a bathroom. The northeast corner of the basement has an exterior wall on a slight diagonal, directly under the wall of the dining room, where three large windows allow a view to the northeast lawn area. The basement also includes a utility/laundry room directly under the kitchen.

Overall Character

The design of the Barksdale house and the surrounding property can be seen as embodying a single gesture--the curved drive leading to the entrance, leading to a hall, opening to a view to Lake Washington and beyond. Pries's students recall that he taught that a building and its site should be designed in a coherent way; this approach is evident in the Barksdale design. The curved drive leads to the front door. On either side of the front door are opaque concrete block walls. Passing through the front door one is led along a hall to the living and dining rooms with expansive glazing looking out over Lake Washington. From 1950 to 1953, the sequence ended on an outdoor terrace with a view up and down the lake. After construction on the adjacent site blocked the view to the south, Pries designed the addition constructed in 1955 turning the primary view to the east and north. Today the sequence leads logically to the doors proposed by Pries in 1955 to the east deck.

The Barksdale house shares with other Pries houses of the era, design that creates a sense of a space apart from the city, the "private oasis." Plantings along the north and south property lines serve to limit the views of adjacent houses creating a high degree of privacy while still opening to the view.

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY AND THE BUILDING

Original Cottage

The Barksdale house, as it is seen today, appears virtually unchanged since 1955. Most of the house, with the exception of the 1955 addition, is little changed since 1950. Changes that have been made are small, and have not affected character-defining features. Thus, the Barksdale house is properly considered the design work of Lionel H. Pries, the architect of both the 1950 house and the 1955 addition. However, the history of the house actually begins earlier.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the neighborhood now known as Cedar Park was considered vacation property. When the area was first developed in the 1920s, the structures that were built were primarily small cottages.

When the Barksdales acquired their property in August 1939, it included one of these small cottages dating from 1926. That cottage was a simple rectangular structure measuring 26 feet east to west, and 24 feet north to south. The cottage rested on a concrete block foundation with a crawl space. The cottage had a gable roof, with the ridge running east to west. As part of converting the cottage into their primary residence, the Barksdales constructed a concrete block basement into the side of the hill, and moved the cottage on top of the new basement.

The Barksdales lived in the cottage as their primary residence only a short time before World War II. During with war, with Julian Barksdale serving in the Navy, Marajane Barksdale closed up the house and moved to an apartment north of Ravenna Park. During a time of gasoline rationing and rubber rationing this is not surprising. Also, Cedar Park retained its rural character and likely seemed insecure during the war.

1949-50 Transformation

While serving in the Navy, Julian Barksdale encountered A. Quincy Jones, a 1936 graduate of the University of Washington Department of Architecture. Barksdale told Jones about his ambitions for the property. Jones suggested Barksdale look up Lionel Pries. After the war Barksdale returned to teaching at the University of Washington, where Pries was also a faculty member. In 1948 or 1949, the Barksdales commissioned Pries to design their expanded house at their Cedar Park property.

Pries's design kept the existing rectangular cottage as the core of the new house. He added to the cottage in every direction--to the north for the kitchen and a small part of the dining room, to the east for the east portion of the living room, to the south for the second bedroom, and to the west for the (original) master bedroom and front entry. Thus, the cottage was completely buried within the new house. By introducing the diagonal hallway from the front entry, and the zig-zag wall facing northeast, any sense of the rectangular enclosure of the cottage was erased. Inside the main floor, one has absolutely no sense of the rectangular cottage.

The form of the cottage is more evident in the basement, since the west, south and east walls of the basement are the original walls of the cottage basement. Even here, however, the sense of the original cottage is lessened by stair down from the entry area which is outside the original cottage perimeter, and the diagonal northeast facing wall with the large windows. Part of the form of the original cottage room can also be seen by looking at the west elevation of the house from the west lawn area--the north portion of the main roof gable is the original form of the north portion of the cottage gable roof. (Few visitors notice this feature unless it is pointed out.) Pries's genius is evident in that he saw the small rectangular cottage and envisioned the house that the Barksdales built in 1949-50--that house is largely intact today.

1955 Addition

The 1950 house was designed as a spatial sequence that led from the front entry into the living and dining room, and ultimately out to a terrace at the southeast corner of the house. This outdoor terrace offered more than a 180-degree view of Lake Washington (including Mount Rainier to the south and Mount Baker to the north).

In 1953, the owner of the adjacent property to the south built a new house directly south and southeast of the Barksdale terrace, completely blocking the view toward Mount Rainier and the south portion of Lake Washington.

In 1954 and 1955, the Barksdales turned to Pries for the design for additions to the house. Pries designed a new wing in the location of the original outdoor terrace. Although initial drawings were prepared in 1954, the final design was not resolved until 1955 when the addition was constructed. This addition effectively turned its back to the property to the south and reinforced the view to the east and northeast. (Some elements of the design were resolved only during construction; the sliding door in the east wall of the new wing was not shown on the blueprints.)

This addition included the series of south-facing windows, fitted with shoji screens to allow light to enter, but preserving privacy. The addition also required adding a new door from the addition to the small bathroom that was attached to the original second bedroom.

Pries's drawings showed the addition of a door to provide outdoor access from the living room (to replace the lost access to the outdoors that had been in the living room south wall). The Barksdales never installed the door.

Unbuilt 1955 North Addition

In 1955, Pries also designed a carport and deck addition north from the kitchen. The Barksdales never constructed this addition. The proposed carport would have had a horizontal roof that would have supported a wood deck accessed through a new door in the north wall of the kitchen. (Why the Barksdales did not build the carport and deck addition is not known.)

Subsequent Changes during Barksdale Ownership

Pries's 1949 drawings and a later photo show the basement-level space under the kitchen without enclosing walls. Sometime after 1959, the Barksdales enclosed this space as a utility room. Perhaps at the same time the Barksdales enclosed the area below the kitchen, they built a shed along the north side of the driveway. The shed was a light frame building, on a shallow foundation, with a shingle roof, clad in one layer of plywood.

At an unknown date, the Barksdales built the deck along the east and north side of the living room. In plan, this deck generally follows the alignments of the existing north and east walls of the house. The deck was accessible through the sliding door in the east end of the 1955 addition.

The character of the finishes in the basement after construction was completed in the 1950s is not known. However, it seems likely that the vinyl tile floor, the wood panel walls, and the acoustic tile ceiling of the basement are not original.

Sometime between 1981 and 1999, Marajane Barksdale replaced the original casement windows in the dining room and kitchen with metal-framed fixed glass and hopper windows.

At some point a portion of the wood fence that ran on top of the curving concrete block wall along the south side of the driveway was removed (it is likely the removal was due to structural failure due to age). Sometime between 1999 and 2006 the adjacent owners to the south built a fence along their north property line, the Barksdale property south property line.

In 2005-6, when Tucker Barksdale was preparing to sell the property, he made a number of small changes, such as upgrading the plumbing by adding a hook-up for washer and dryer to the utility room.

Changes by the Present Owners

The present owners took possession of the house in June 2006. Since then they have worked to preserve the house, also adding needed improvements and enhancements:

- Added smoke alarms.
- Upgraded electrical service to 200 amps.
- Replaced all single-pane glazing (and all failed thermopane glazing) with new thermopane glazing.
- Added electric baseboard heat to basement (which previously had no heat).
- Added weatherstripping to all doors.
- Replaced hopper windows with casements matching Pries's original design.
- Installed double doors from living room to deck following Pries's 1955 design.
- Replaced rusted steel sliding door (which did not close completely and provided no insulating value) with wood sliding door with compatible design to house (located in the east end of the 1955 addition).

- Added small deck north of kitchen generally following Pries's 1955 design (but with a stair to grade not included by Pries).
- Added handrails and benches to east deck (as required by insurance).
- Added under-cabinet lighting and more electrical outlets in kitchen; extend cable TV wiring to kitchen.
- Replaced leaking roof with new metal roof. (Note: Measured slopes of the existing roof vary from 2:12 to 6:12. Shingle roofing should not be used under 3:12. Evidence of leaks suggests that neither the cedar shake roof of the 1950s, nor the later asphalt shingle roof(s) were watertight. The only material that could be applied over the entire roof and guarantee water-tightness was metal. Since the roof surface is not a character-defining element of the design, the current owners selected a metal roof as the only choice that would fully protect the unique interior of the house.)
- Renovated gardens; add irrigation. Extend the landscape to the east and cut back the invasive species (blackberries, morning glory, etc.)
- Replaced fence along west end of property after old fence blew down in December 2006 windstorm--design exactly matching old fence, but with enhanced structure.
- Replace old shed with new shed, with better construction and roof extension to provide carport; new shed exterior faced in vertical cedar stained brown to match house.
- Added new cedar and mesh fence along western portion north property line to increase security.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cedar Park and 42nd Avenue NE

The Cedar Park area was not subdivided until the mid-1920s. Prior to that time, King County Kroll Maps show the property east of 39th Avenue NE was largely owned by the Puget Mill Company. It had been timber land, but once logged, the Mill Company sold the land for residential development. The land east of Lake City Way to 39th Avenue NE had developed earlier and the street grid extended east from State Highway 522 (now Lake City Way NE) to the top of the bluff facing Lake Washington at about 39th Avenue NE. But east of 39th Avenue NE the land slopes down toward the lake and is less easily accessible.

In the mid-1920s, 42nd Avenue NE was put through from NE 123rd Street at the south to north of the 135th Street right-of-way along the bench above Lake Washington. At this point, the street "forks" and 42nd Avenue NE winds down to Riviera Place along the shore of Lake Washington (parallel to what is now the Burk-Gilman Trail, which was an active railroad line in the 1920s). The left fork (as one faces north) is 41st Avenue NE which continues north to NE 145th Street. NE 123rd and NE 145th provide the only vehicular access to 42nd Avenue NE.

The houses that were built along the lake on Riviera Place NE, and along 42nd Avenue NE were typically small cottages that were weekend homes and/or vacation properties in the late

1920s and 1930s. Although a few of these cottages still survive, most have disappeared, replaced by later construction.

At some point, two stairways were also constructed--at the NE 135th right-of-way a stair with 196 steps leads from 42nd Avenue NE up to the top of the bluff; at the NE 130th right-of-way, a path and stair with 86 steps lead down to the Burke-Gilman Trail, Riviera Place and the lake. From 1959 to 1981, the stair upward (with 196 steps) was the route that children in this neighborhood used to get to Cedar Park Elementary School, located at the top of the bluff at NE 135th Street and 37th Avenue NE. (The school building survives, but now houses the Artwood Studios and a private gym.)

The area along 42nd Avenue NE developed as a single-family residential neighborhood from the late 1940s to the 1970s. Because the land had been platted in 100 foot wide lots extending east and west of 42nd Avenue NE, even as the area became more densely developed, it retained the feeling of a more rural area.

Houses in this area have varied character. There are a few older homes reflecting earlier historical styles, but these are comparatively rare. Much more common are the typical house forms and styles of the postwar era--modern traditional houses, ranch houses, and some houses reflecting Northwest regional modernism (which some people characterize as a "northwest style"). In addition to the Barksdale house by Lionel Pries, there are houses in the neighborhood along 42nd Avenue NE by Seattle modern architects such as Fred Bassetti and Jerry Gropp.

This neighborhood was annexed to the City of Seattle in 1954 when the City Limits were extended north to 145th Street. It is not evident that this annexation had a significant effect on the development patterns of the area. The zoning in the vicinity was established as single-family 9600, which, along with the steep slope areas, served to maintain the more rural character of the area.

Since the 1970s, the neighborhood has developed by in-fill and by expansion or replacement of older homes. Some of the long lots 100 feet wide have been short platted so that several houses stand where previously only one house did. Even with short-platting, many properties in the neighborhood along 42nd Avenue have substantial plantings providing a high degree of privacy and retaining at least some of the previous rural character.

Because 42nd Avenue NE connects to the city street grid only at NE 123rd and via 41st Avenue NE at NE 145th, the neighborhood remains unknown to most residents of Seattle.

Northwest Modernism

The Modern Movement in architecture traces its roots to the progressive tendencies of the early twentieth century, including those in the United States, but is generally thought to have coalesced in Europe in the mid to late 1920s. Once launched, the Modern Movement spread worldwide by the mid to late 1930s, often generating new regional variants. In the Western Hemisphere, the earliest work showing the influence of Modernism, dating from the late

1920s, was found in Mexico and Latin America, along with a few residential buildings in Southern California. By the early 1930s, works showing the influence of European Modernism appeared on the East Coast and, simultaneously, a regional version of modernism emerged on the West Coast, initially in California and subsequently in Oregon and Washington.

Although there were early Modern buildings in Seattle and the Puget Sound region in the mid to late 1930s, Modernism did not become the dominant approach to architectural design in this region until after World War II.

In the postwar era, the dominant approach to Modernism in the United States was strongly influenced by examples from Europe and by new materials and technologies. Locally, Paul Thiry is the architect most associated with the emergence of this form of Modernism. In Seattle, this approach was most evident in works such as the Museum of History and Industry (Paul Thiry, 1947) and in office buildings such as the Norton Building (Skidmore, Owings and Merrill with Bindon & Wright, 1956-59). The buildings of Century 21, the 1962 Seattle World's Fair (Paul Thiry, supervising architect), also reflects the technological emphasis of the period.

The earliest houses in Seattle with a modern vocabulary date from the mid 1930s. Typical is the Paul Thiry house in Denny-Blaine dating from 1936 which is an asymmetrical white box that reflects the influence of the International Style, the approach to modern architecture that came to the United States from Europe. Also dating from 1936 is the Ambrose and Viola Patterson residence in Laurelhurst, designed by Jack Sproule and reflecting Ambrose Patterson's awareness of modern architecture in Europe from his years studying art in Paris.

The earliest attempts to create a modern architecture that was regionally responsive in Seattle and the Puget Sound region date from the end of the 1930s. Houses by Lionel Pries and by others suggest the influence of modern regionalist approaches in northern California and in Oregon (in California in works by William Wurster and in Oregon in works by John Yeon and Pietro Belluschi). However, regionalist modernism in Seattle did not become a significant tendency until after World War II.

In the postwar period, Seattle's modern architects, when designing residential and small institutional buildings, sought to create an architecture responsive to the region's climate, to available materials, and to the specifics of individual sites. The postwar period was an era of low energy prices and houses were often developed with open plans, natural materials, large areas of glass, and a visual flow of space from inside to outside.

Characteristics common to residential works of Northwest regionalist modern architecture in the years from 1946 to the early 1970s include use of natural materials (primarily wood), open or flowing plans (at least in the "public" spaces within the house), large areas of glass, planning in response to the particular site, indoor-outdoor connections and very often orientation to a view. However, a close review of the chronological development of regionalist modern architecture in the Seattle area suggests works after about 1951 were slightly different from those that came before. After 1951, wood post-and-beam construction

became increasingly ubiquitous, very often with the structure exposed as a feature of the architectural interior.

Before 1951 works that can be characterized as regional modern architecture have open plans that are responsive to sites and views, and use natural materials, usually wood, but structure is seldom if ever expressed. There are comparatively fewer works in these five years (1946-51) that have all these modern regionalist features. Architects in this period were still finding their way to a fully realized architecture that was modern but also regional.

As late as 1953, there was still a debate about whether a regional variant of modernism was developing in the Northwest. In that year, when the American Institute of Architects held its national convention in Seattle, the April issue of *Architectural Record* ran a series of essays in response to the question, "Have We an Indigenous Northwest Architecture?" Paul Thiry spoke in favor of the existence of a Northwest architecture, but Victor Steinbrueck was surprisingly skeptical. By the 1960s, Steinbrueck would no doubt have agreed that a regional variant of modernism had emerged, but his skepticism as late as 1953 shows how prescient Pries's works of the late 1940s and early 1950s actually were.

The Barksdale house, a well-developed example of regional modernism, is notable for its completion at an early date, 1949-50.

Julian and Marajane Barksdale

Julian Barksdale (28 September 1904 - 20 December 1983) was born in Texas. He grew up in Beaumont, a city associated with early oil drilling on the Gulf Coast. Barksdale worked for several years with the oil companies and that led to his academic career. Barksdale enrolled at the University of Texas, staying for two years, then transferred to Stanford University, where his studies focused on sedimentary rocks. He earned a B.A. in geology from Stanford in 1930, and then worked for oil companies for several years. He returned to Stanford for graduate work in petrology. Barksdale received his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1936. He began his University of Washington career in fall 1936.

Julian D. Barksdale married Marajane Burns Warren (5 March 1908 - 21 September 1999) on June 14, 1937. The couple had one son, (Julian) Tucker Barksdale, born May 31, 1946. Marajane Barksdale taught art in elementary schools in the Seattle area.

Julian Barksdale taught in the UW Geology Department (now Earth and Space Sciences Department) until the onset of World War II when he took a leave of absence for military service. He served as a Lieutenant Commander in naval aviation and became a supply officer in the South Pacific. After the war he returned to teaching at the UW. Barksdale taught graduate and undergraduate courses in geology and organized and led fieldwork seminars. He served as an undergraduate advisor for the geology department from 1969 to 1973. Barksdale pursued geological research in the Methow Valley on the east side of the Cascades for nearly four decades.

Nicknamed "Barky," Julian Barksdale is remembered as a person who befriended everybody.

As a result, he was very active in the broader University of Washington community. He served as the head of the UW Honors Program in 1964. He was a frequent participant on committees of the Faculty Senate, serving as senate president 1960-1961. His university-wide service also included the Faculty Council on Academic Standards and the Library Advisory Committee. He also served on multiple committees in the College of Arts and Sciences.

After Barksdale retired from teaching in 1973, he was deeply involved with retiree and senior citizens' organizations, including the UW Retirement Association, the Coalition of Retired and Higher Education Employees, and the Senior Citizens' Lobby. He died in 1983. Marajane Barksdale died in 1999. She resided at the Barksdale house in Cedar Park until her death.

Julian D. Barksdale and Marajane Barksdale acquired their Cedar Park property from Cecil G. Turner (the original owner) in 1939. They jointly owned the property as community property until Julian Barksdale's death in 1983. Marajane Barksdale inherited the property on her husband's death and she retained ownership until her own death in 1999. Julian Tucker Barksdale inherited the property under the terms of his mother's will. He was the owner until 2006 (a renter lived on the Barksdale house from 2000-5).

Lionel H. Pries

Lionel Henry ("Spike) Pries (1 June 1897-7 April 1968) was a significant architect, artist, and educator, and an early leader in developing Northwest regional modern architecture.

Pries was born in San Francisco and was raised in Oakland. His father worked at Gump's, the famed importer of European and Asian art objects and Pries was exposed from childhood to a wide range of artistic traditions. Pries was educated during the years when the Arts & Crafts Movement was at the peak of its influence in the Bay Area of California. The Arts & Crafts Movement and the experience of Gump's shaped Pries's understanding of the place of art and culture in our lives, and this understanding, in turn, influenced Pries's work throughout his career.

Pries received his B.A. in Architecture with Honors from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1920. He studied under Paul Cret at the University of Pennsylvania in 1920-21, receiving his M.A. in Architecture in 1921. In 1923, he returned to California and practiced in San Francisco and Santa Barbara until late 1927, when his Penn classmate, William J. Bain, invited him to join his firm in Seattle.

Pries arrived in Seattle in February/March 1928 and for the next 3-1/2 years was the design partner in the firm Bain & Pries. The work of the firm reflected the tendencies of the period, with works drawing upon a variety of precedents to create new works in variations of historical and revival styles. Well-known works of the firm include the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity House in the University District, the Bel-Roy Apartments on Capitol Hill, and the Children's Convalescent Home in Magnolia (now destroyed). The firm was successful but could not survive the economic collapse of the Great Depression, dissolving in late 1931

because they had no work.

In fall 1928 Pries had begun teaching in the architecture program at the University of Washington, and he soon emerged as the inspirational leader of the program. He would teach at the UW until 1958. Among his students from the 1920s to the 1940s were Minoru Yamasaki, A. Quincy Jones, George ("Pete") Wimberly, Perry Johanson, Victor Steinbrueck, Paul Kirk, Roland Terry, Fred Bassetti, Wendell Lovett, Keith Kolb, Dan Streissguth, and many others who would be contributors to the development of modern architecture after 1945. (Indeed, among the major leaders of Northwest Modernism, only Paul Thiry was not a Pries student, as he graduated from the UW in June 1928, just a few months before Pries began teaching.)

Pries was also a notable artist. In 1931-32, he served as director of the Art Institute of Seattle (predecessor to today's Seattle Art Museum). He regularly exhibited his work in the region and was known especially for his watercolors. For a time he was close to Morris Graves and Guy Anderson.

Beginning in the late 1920s, Pries spent his summers in Mexico. Pries was a friend of William Spratling, known for his revival of the silver crafts of Taxco, and through Spratling, Pries encountered the work of the emerging Mexican School--artists such a Rivera, Orozco, Covarrubias and others who were seeking to create an art that was modern but also Mexican. Pries also became familiar with the architectural work of Juan O'Gorman who was seeking to create a modern architecture appropriate to Mexico.

In the late 1930s, Pries accepted a few commissions under his own name. Pries's designs (particularly the Willcox residence and the Gayler residence, both on Hood Canal) reflected his growing awareness of the new directions in architecture in Mexico, as well as the regional modern work of architect William Wurster (whose years at UC-Berkeley overlapped with Pries). In 1941, Bain and Pries reinstituted their partnership for a period of nine months, but the work of this period is usually more suggestive of the typical work of Bain's firm than of Pries's emerging ideas of architecture.

In the late 1940s, Pries entered a period of significant creative productivity, designing works that signal the emergence of Northwest regional modernism. About this time, at a lecture to the Monday Club (the town-gown society connected to the UW), Pries expressed his concern about what he perceived to be an overemphasis on technology. Pries's postwar houses often used contrasting materials to suggest a balance between technology and nature, and Pries often provided a setting for hand-crafted art objects that would contrast with the products of industrial technology. His projects of this period were primarily residential: the Lea weekend residence, Lopez Island (1946-47), the Morris residence, Seattle (1947-48), the Pries residence, Seattle (1947-48; altered), and the Barksdale residence, Seattle (1949-50, 1954-55). His work in the 1950s reflects his continuing creativity including the Hall residence, Seattle (1952-53; destroyed), the Robertson residence, Bellevue (1955-56), and the Lea residence, Seattle (1956-57; destroyed).

In October 1958, at age 61, Pries was forced to resign from his position at the University of

Washington due to his homosexuality. With few financial resources, he worked as a draftsman, first at Durham, Anderson and Freed, and then at John Graham and Company, retiring in 1963. He continued to take occasional commissions. His last major design was the Gurvich residence, Seattle (1964-65). Pries died of a heart attack in April 1968.

Although his projects were occasionally published during his lifetime, after his death Lionel Pries was remembered primarily as a legendary teacher. Only occasionally did his work attract notice. Victor Steinbrueck showed Pries's house and noted Pries's significance in *Seattle Cityscape* (1962) and again in an essay in *Space, Style and Structure* (1974). In their *Guide to Architecture in Washington State* (1980), Woodbridge and Montgomery called Pries's influence on the postwar generation of Northwest modern architects "profound," but included just two of his postwar buildings.

It was not until *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator* was published in 2007 that it was possible to assess Pries's entire body of work. In response, *Seattle Times* art critic Sheila Farr wrote that Pries designed "some of the region's most distinctive and progressive houses in the 1930s to '50s." And she added:

> "Several things make Pries' design work stand out. Perhaps because of his extensive travels in Mexico, where modern architecture embraced both indigenous art and contemporary murals, Pries was likely the first in Seattle to incorporate Northwest Coast Indian and Asian design motifs into his houses and interiors. He designed to fit the specifics of each site, with tall windows and living spaces wrapped around gardens hidden from the street. Using shoji screens, mosaic work, wood paneling, seared cedar siding, open floor plans and horizontal geometries, Pries houses combine concrete block and industrial materials with handcrafted detailing--models of what we now think of as classic Northwest regional architecture. It's just that we usually associate those attributes with Pries' students instead of him."

And Portland architect and writer, John Cava, in his review of *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator* in the regional design journal *ARCADE,* wrote:

> "…the real tragedy is that someone with the high octane talent of Lionel Pries did not build a hundred buildings in the Seattle area, instead of the scant dozen or so lovely and sophisticated houses he managed to complete. For Pries was one of the few architects with the background, skills, and understanding to weave traditional and modern design together into a refreshing and new localized posture of modern architecture….his most powerful work is an original version of what is loosely known as the Northwest style."

Barksdale House and Pacific Northwest Architecture

An Early Work of Regional Modernism: The Julian and Marajane Barksdale house is an early example of the emerging Northwest regional modern architecture of the post-World War II era. Design work may have begun as early as 1948. The construction drawings are dated 4 July 1949. The Barksdales moved into their house in 1950.

Pacific Northwest regional modernism is loosely dated to the postwar era, roughly 1946 to 1973. However most works considered as examples of Northwest regional modernism date from the 1950s and 1960s. As late as 1953, there was still a debate about whether a regional variant of modernism was developing in the Northwest. Pries's works of the late 1940s and early 1950s are early examples of emerging regional modernism.

Design in Relation to the Site: Pries designed each of his houses of the postwar era to provide a spatial sequence that links the house to its setting, either to a view or to a garden, and to create a "private oasis" for the owners. From his experience in Mexico, Pries learned that a house could be designed as a kind of "threshold," that presents a relatively plain exterior to the outside (toward the street), and then opens up on the interior and links to a private garden, or, when the site would allow, to a view. The Barksdale house embodies this approach.

Materiality and Design: The Barksdale house embodies the contrast between technology and nature in the contrast between the concrete block that is used on the primary exterior wall surrounding the front entrance, and the cedar that faces the rest of the exterior. The contrast can also be seen between the concrete block and the mahogany veneer plywood, the primary material of the interior walls (and ceilings in the major rooms). The shoji screens and the Japanese ramma over the front door, are hand-crafted elements that contrast with twentieth century technology.

Romantic Modernism: Pries's approach to design in the postwar era has been described as "romantic modernism." At a time when many leading architects embraced a technological modernism, Pries offered an alternative--an architecture that used technology as a means, not an end.

Current Status of Pries's Postwar Buildings

A nearly complete list of Pries's buildings is found in *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator, From Arts and Crafts to Modern Architecture*. The following list focuses on the major works Pries did under his own name after 1945. These are significant works of Northwest regional modern architecture. Note that only six buildings are in Seattle, and two of these have been destroyed. None have been designated as Seattle Landmarks.

- **Richard, Jr., and Ruth Lea (weekend) residence**, 2200 Davis Bay Road, Lopez Island WA, 1946-47 (minor alterations). Survives in ownership of the Lea family.

- **Julia Flett (Mrs. Arthur) Morris residence**, 3704 48th Avenue N.E., Seattle WA, 1947-48 (minor alterations including added garage and new kitchen). Survives in private ownership in fine condition.

- **Lionel H. Pries residence**, 3132 W. Laurelhurst Drive N.E., Seattle WA, 1947-48 (partial third floor added about 1969-70; full third floor added ca. 1980). Survives in

private ownership in good condition, but exterior appearance was changed by added floor.

- **Julian and Marajane Barksdale residence**, 13226 42nd Avenue N.E., Seattle WA, 1949-50, 1954-55 -- the present nomination.

- **Stephen and Harriette Lea (weekend) residence**, 29807 Highway 525, Coupeville WA, 1949-51, 1963 (altered). Survives in private ownership with some changes.

- **Charles and Mildred Gates residence**, 5315 148th Avenue S.E. (Hilltop Community), Bellevue WA, 1950-51 (significantly altered by later expansions).

- **John and Dorothy Hall residence**, 1510 Parkside Drive East, Seattle WA, 1952-53 (***destroyed*** 2009). A lovely split-level home with private garden, now lost. (Omitted from *Lionel H. Pries, Architect, Artist, Educator*, as it was discovered only in 2007.)

- **Alonzo W. and Margaret I. Robertson residence**, 9529 Lake Washington Boulevard, Bellevue WA, 1955-56 (minor alterations including new kitchen). Survives in private ownership in good condition.

- **Richard, Jr., and Ruth Lea residence**, 230 40th Avenue E., Seattle WA, 1956-57 (***destroyed*** 2006). An extraordinary home designed around a collection of Japanese art, now lost.

- **Robert Winskill residence**, 50 Madone Park Circle, Mill Valley CA, 1960-61, 1965 (some alterations). Survives in private ownership with some changes.

- **Max and Helen Gurvich residence**, 3006 Webster Point Road N.E., Seattle WA, 1964-65. Survives in fine condition; sold to new owners in late 2010.

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Note: **The Landmark Nomination for the Rohrer House was prepared by Jeffrey Karl Ochsner in October 2010 (on file with the Historic Preservation Office for the City of Seattle). This Designation Report is based on the information provided in the Landmark Nomination.**

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved include:

- The exterior of the building; and
- The following elements of the interior of the building: the living room, dining room, and the hall from the main entry to the living room; and
- The site, excluding the carport/shed structure.

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