

Lake Acworth Beach and Bathhouse Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

ATLANTA (January 20, 2010) – The Lake Acworth Beach and Bathhouse, located on the north shore of Lake Acworth, in Cobb County, Georgia, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 7, 2010. The nomination was sponsored by the City of Acworth Historic Preservation Commission; the city, which owns the building; and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which holds title to the property. A consultant prepared the nomination materials.

In 1950, one year after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed Allatoona Lake, Acworth Mayor Hilton Nichols closed the floodgates, thereby creating Lake Acworth. City leaders hoped Lake Acworth, a sub-impoundment of Allatoona Lake, would reduce the ill effects of seasonal mud flats and boost the city’s economy. During a campaign visit to Acworth in 1950, Governor Herman Talmadge promised the city \$25,000 to build a beach and bathhouse, but later earmarked \$100,000 for the project. The city of Acworth hired the Marietta architectural firm of Bothwell & Nash to design “a large, rustic beachhouse” with an accompanying manmade beach. Governor Talmadge attended the beach and bathhouse dedication on August 12, 1953.

The Lake Acworth Beach and Bathhouse is significant as an excellent example of an early mid-century modern building that includes elements of the Colonial Revival style integrated into a long, low rectangular form characteristic of modern design. In Georgia and the South, column-lined porticos persisted long after other regions had turned from classical building traditions to the increasingly popular International Style. The bathhouse colonnade and low-slung hip roof allude to Mount Vernon and antebellum plantations of the Deep South. The horizontal emphasis of the roof is also characteristic of modern architecture. The combination of these antithetical styles—Colonial Revival style and International Style—in one building represents a transitional period in American architecture in the South in the mid-20th century.

The Lake Acworth Beach and Bathhouse is also important for the social and entertainment role it played as a post-World War II recreational facility that served the needs of the local community and drew visitors who sought a temporary escape from the heat and congestion of Atlanta. It was the only such facility on Lake Acworth and the largest on Allatoona Lake.

The bathhouse sits above the crescent-shaped beach at the west end of the property with views of the 325-acre lake. It is rectangular-shaped with a low-slung hip roof and a colonnaded porch on all sides. A louvered cupola surmounts the roof. The interior plan includes a concession stand, basket (locker) room, storage rooms, and men’s and women’s dressing rooms and bathrooms. In 1962 a

meeting building was joined by a breezeway to the rear of the bathhouse. Three nonhistoric picnic pavilions were built on the property between 1960 and 1970.

The National Register of Historic Places is our country's official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. The National Register provides formal recognition of a property's architectural, historical or archaeological significance. It also identifies historic properties for planning purposes and insures that these properties will be considered in the planning of state or federally assisted projects. National Register listing encourages preservation of historic properties through public awareness, federal and state tax incentives, and grants. Listing in the National Register does not place obligations or restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of private property.

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources serves as Georgia's state historic preservation office. Their mission is to promote the preservation and use of historic places for a better Georgia. HPD's programs include archaeology protection and education, environmental review, grants, historic resource surveys, tax incentives, the National Register of Historic Places, community planning and technical assistance.

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's natural, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and industry that utilize sound environmental practices.

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Contact: Helen Talley-McRae, 404-651-5268 and helen.talley-mcrae@dnr.state.ga.us