

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCERS use only  
received  
date entered

**1. Name**

**RECEIVED**

historic John C. Bell House

NOV 12 1980

and/or common

PH & MC

Historic Preservation

**2. Location**

street & number 229 S. 22nd Street

not for publication

city, town Philadelphia

vicinity of

congressional district

Second

state Pennsylvania code 42

county Philadelphia

code 101

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Patricia F. Harner ; Elizabeth F. Trotman

street & number 2214 Rittenhouse Square Street

city, town Philadelphia

vicinity of

state Pa. 19103

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Philadelphia City Hall

street & number Broad Street and Penn Square

city, town Philadelphia

state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Documentation ... for Determination of Eligibility of Properties within ...  
file Impact of HUD Project #034-35140-PM has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

Wanamaker House Towers

date December 21, 1979

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historical Commission of Philadelphia

city, town Philadelphia

state Pennsylvania

# 7. Description

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

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John C. Bell House was built in 1906 as a single family residence. The house was sold in 1944 and the new owners, Anna and Elizabeth Kaneff, made alterations to the building which converted it from a single family dwelling to separate apartment units.

The Bell House is located on the NE corner of 22nd Street and Locust Street. The 3 1/2 story building is of the Neo-Georgian style and employs flemish bond brick with black headers and white marble trim. The facade on 22nd Street is divided into three bays with the end bays projecting slightly in front of the central entry bay (refer to photo #1). The end bays are composed of windows in tri-part configuration with the first floor window being crowned with a jack arch with projecting keystone. The second floor has a slightly taller double hung window creating the appearance of a french door and covered with a segmental arch enclosing a raised medallion ornament on a field of plain marble and framed from its floor line sill with an iron balcony. The third floor double hung windows are composed of a grouping of three windows with a central 6/6 flanked each side by a narrow 2/2. The composition is terminated with a 6/6 window in a segmental arch dormer.

The entry bay is divided into 3 stacks of 6/6 windows with a raised and slightly projecting entry composed of a marble engaged Tuskin column superimposed over a pilaster and surmounted with a marble arch surrounding a fanlight. (refer to photo #2)

The Locust Street facade is divided into a tri-part composition with stacked windows. Visual interest is focused on the second floor window which is a Palladian composition with detached vertical 4/6 windows flanking the central composition of 2/4 and 6/6 double hung windows. The central composition of windows is surrounded by an iron balcony and capped by a segmental arched marble ornament similar to the windows on the front facade on the 2nd floor.

Each floor is punctuated with a brick string course. The slate hip roof with hidden gutters rises above a deep terra cotta cornice with strongly projecting modillions.

\*\* (see additional statement below)

### First Floor

A small entry vestibule opens on to the Main Hall which contains a well proportioned spiral staircase. This large vestibule space has 2" oak strip flooring with mahogany accent stripes and painted floor to ceiling wood paneling in an alternating rectilinear panel pattern with a projecting chair rail and a cornice with dentils (refer to photos #3,4).

This Main Hall originally opened on to the Dining Room on the north side of the building and the Drawing Room on the south side. Each of these rooms was converted into an apartment in the 1940's. Each room contains (continued)

\*\*The only alteration to the exterior is the 1940's addition of a firetower in matching flemish bond. The firetower is setback from the NW corner of the building and does not alter the original composition of the facade.

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floor to ceiling paneling in the same pattern as the Main Hall and a fireplace with a white marble surround and mantle. The former Dining Room and Main Hall have a cornice composed of a crown moulding and a dentil course. The former Drawing Room has a cornice composed of a crown moulding, a modillion course and a running spiral patterned frieze. (refer to photos #5,6 )

In order to create an apartment a wall was inserted between the Main Hall and the former Dining Room. The infill wall was made of the same paneling and cornice as the other walls and does not detract from the original design. A small bedroom was inserted in the NW corner of the former Dining Room and it, too, was covered with the identical paneling and cornice. A kitchen was inserted in the former Butler's Pantry and a bathroom was placed in the former servants stair. None of the alterations have any significant effect on the principal architectural features of the former Dining Room or the Main Hall.

The former Drawing Room has no significant alterations. A small closet and a unit kitchen were inserted along the west and north walls. The bathroom was an alteration of an original powder room.

#### Second Floor

This floor originally contained an 18'x23' Library; an 18'x23' Main Hall opening on to the spiral staircase; a den; a bedroom; and a bathroom. The Library has a white marble fireplace front with a carved console supporting either side of the mantel (refer to photos #7,8). The same fireplace front was used in the First Floor Drawing Room. The cornice is a simpler design than the First Floor cornices with a dentil course, but no frieze. China cabinets have been inserted on either side of the fireplace, but the original cornice runs untouched above them.

The major alteration on this floor is the insertion of a wall closing off the Main Hall and the spiral staircase in order to create an apartment. The inserted wall echoes the oval curving wall of the staircase and is a sensitive alteration to the design. The only other alterations are the insertion of a small kitchen in the former Main Hall and the conversion of the servants stair to a laundry room.

#### Third Floor

The third floor originally contained Mr. and Mrs. Bell's two bedrooms and two additional bedrooms. None of these rooms contained architectural details of note, but were quite plain. The major alterations to this floor occur to the north side of the spiral stair area in the form of a hallway leading to the firetower. This hallway runs through the former servants stair and along the east wall of the house. This hallway necessitated the closing up of the fireplace in the NE bedroom and the rearranging of partition walls. This is the only major architectural detail which was altered on this floor.

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Fourth Floor

This floor contained one guest bedroom and 4 servants rooms. A similar alteration occurred on this floor due to the creation of the hallway leading to the firetower. The hallway is the single alteration to this floor.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1906

Builder/Architect Horace Trumbauer, Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John C. Bell House is significant because it is a fine example of the work of the famous Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer, and because of its connections with two important Philadelphia citizens, John C. Bell and John C. Bell, Jr. John C. Bell served as the State Attorney General of Pennsylvania and the District Attorney of Philadelphia County. John C. Bell, Jr. served as Lieutenant Governor, Governor, and Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

The Bell House designed by Horace Trumbauer in 1906 in the Neo-Georgian Style is an interesting and unusual townhouse design. It presents a wide and bold facade to 22nd Street which gives it great presence within the neighborhood. Unlike many of Trumbauer's designs, it is not particularly ornate, but employs rigidly masculine details characterized by straight-forward simplicity. The feeling expressed in the design can most probably be attributed to the strong character of the owner, John C. Bell.

The building is sited on the corner of Locust Street and 22nd Street and forms a compositional gateway on Locust Street by stylistic association with the Neo-Georgian Style building on the adjacent corner of 22nd Street. These two buildings make an imposing statement on the streetscape and act as landmarks within the neighborhood.

In a study entitled "Documentation to accompany request to Secretary of Interior for determination of eligibility of properties within the area of potential environmental impact of HUD Project No. 034-35140-PM Wanamaker House Towers", John Dickey, AIA, noted that the Bell House was a major component of the neighborhood.

The House attains additional significance from its association with John C. Bell for whom the building was designed. Mr. Bell (1861-1936) graduated from the Law School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1884 with the two highest honors of the Law Faculty, the Meredith Essay Prize and selection to deliver the law oration on Commencement Day.

Mr. Bell was appointed District Attorney of Philadelphia County by the Board of Judges to fill an unexpired term. He was subsequently elected and served a three year term. At the end of this term he chose to decline renomination in 1907. A banquet was held for him upon retirement from this office and the number of legal notables who spoke in his honor served as testimony to his respected position within the law profession. Those at the speakers table included Chief Justice Mitchell of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania; the Hon. Samuel W. Pennypacker, former Governor of Pennsylvania; the Hon. Hampton L. Carson; Lieutenant-Governor Robert S. Murphy;

(continued)

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Hon. Charles B. McMichael, Judge of the Common Pleas Court; Emanuel Furth, Esq.; Hon. Owen J. Roberts, later to become a Justice of the United States Supreme Court; Ex-Superior Court Judge Porter; and Hon. John H. Fow.

In 1911 Mr. Bell was appointed Attorney General by Governor John K. Tener. During his tenure in this office, Mr. Bell argued two cases before the United States Supreme Court, Commonwealth vs. Patsome; and Plymouth Coal Company vs. Commonwealth. Each of these cases was decided in favor of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Bell was an active supporter of his Alma Mater and served as a Trustee for approximately 20 years. He gave substantial donations to the construction of the Irvine Auditorium on the University of Pennsylvania campus. This auditorium was also designed by the architect of his residence, Horace Trumbauer. Mr. Bell received honorary degrees of the Doctor of Laws from Temple University (1912) and the University of Pittsburgh (1918).

John C. Bell, Jr. (1892-1974), the first son of John C. Bell, lived in the House until approximately 1930. Mr. Bell, Jr., like his father, attained prominence within the fields of law and government.

Mr. Bell, Jr. graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1917. He served as assistant city solicitor of Philadelphia from 1921-22; Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia, 1922-1925; and State Secretary of Banking, 1939-1943.

Mr. Bell, Jr. served as Lieutenant-Governor, President of the Senate and chairman of the State Board of Pardons from 1943-47. On January 2, 1947 Mr. Bell, Jr. was sworn in as Governor of Pennsylvania to fill the last 20 days of Gov. Edward Martin's term of office. Gov. Martin had resigned in order to be sworn in as U.S. Senator on January 3, 1947.

On March 18, 1950 Mr. Bell, Jr. was appointed an Associate Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. He served in this position until 1961 at which time he was appointed Chief Justice to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. He served in this high office until 1971. Mr. John C. Bell, Jr. is one of the few, if not the only man, to serve all three branches of the Pennsylvania Government, the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.

# 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

1. John Cromwell Bell, LL.D. Prominent member of Bar. 10p. typescript (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania) May 18, 1932.
2. Montgomery, Thomas Lynch. Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1923, vol. XIV  
(continued)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property ~~less than 1 acre~~ .04

Quadrangle name Philadelphia, Pa. - N.J.

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

### UMT References

A	118	4814	81210	414	21					B									
	Zone	Easting		Northing							Zone	Easting		Northing					
C										D									
E										F									
G										H									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Block 70, Lot 136. Situate at the Northeast corner of 22nd and Locust Streets in the Eighth Ward of the City of Philadelphia.

(continued on #9 Major Bibliographical References continuation sheet)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth M. Dowling, AIA *Elizabeth M. Dowling*

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 255 S. 24th Street telephone 215-545-4656

city or town Philadelphia state Pennsylvania

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title _____	date _____
For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
Keeper of the National Register	date _____
Attest:	date _____
Chief of Registration	

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3. Montgomery, Thomas Lynch, editor. Pennsylvania and its University and other addresses of John Cromwell Bell. 1918. (copy at Historical Society of Pennsylvania).
4. Teitelman, Edward; Longstreth, Richard W. Architecture in Philadelphia: A Guide. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1974.

Verbal boundary description and justification  
continued

Containing in front or breadth on the said Locust Street 26 feet and extending of that width in length or depth Northward along the East side of the said 22nd Street 75 feet 3 inches.

Description of boundaries is taken from the property deed.





PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA CO  
CAMDEN CO

PENNSYLVANIA  
NEW JERSEY

2.7 MI. TO U.S. 130  
ATLANTIC CITY 62 MI.

(CAMDEN)  
5963 I NE

4425

4424

4423

4422

4421

57'30"

5963 I NE

