

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 123 North Almer Street

City or town: Caro

State: MI

County: Tuscola

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national

___ statewide

X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A

___ B

X C

___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

2

Noncontributing

0

buildings

2

0

sites

5

0

structures

2

0

objects

11

0

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC – single dwelling

DOMESTIC – secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE – professional

SOCIAL – clubhouse

RECREATION AND CULTURE – sports facility

LANDSCAPE – garden

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC – single dwelling

DOMESTIC – secondary structure

RECREATION AND CULTURE – sports facility

LANDSCAPE – garden

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS – Tudor Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD – shingle, STONE, ASPHALT,
CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House is located at 123 North Almer Street in Caro, Tuscola County, Michigan. The house was built in 1868 and renovated in 1923-1924 to its present Tudor Revival-style appearance. The two-story house is of frame construction, clad with wood shingles and stone veneer, and features a complex roofline with distinctive dormers on the side elevations. The house retains a prominent, tapered stone chimney on the façade, stone porches on the front and south elevations, and multi-light wood and steel windows. The irregular floor plan has public spaces oriented toward the front of the first floor and private family spaces arranged at the rear of the first floor and on the second floor. The interior retains original stained window and door surrounds, multi-light wood and steel doors, paneled wood doors, stone fireplaces and mantels, a decorative wood and steel balustrade and newel post, and oak parquet floors. The house sits on a one-acre parcel with a grassy lawn and mature trees. The property also includes an 1868 carriage house, also renovated in 1923-1927; 1917 swimming pool, lotus pond, and pump house; and extensive landscaping built 1923-1927 that includes stone and concrete walkways, a rock garden, stone benches, a concrete foot bath, steel light poles, a stone and steel grape arbor, a concrete fountain, and stone pillars. The Moore House possesses historic integrity and conveys the significance of William J. Moore's architectural designs, engineering accomplishments, and retains the notable landscape features that played a role in the recreational and entertainment history of Caro.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Narrative Description

Setting

The Moore House is located in the city of Caro in Michigan's Thumb region, about forty-five miles east of Saginaw. With a population of just over 4,000 people, the city encompasses about three square miles of central Tuscola County and serves as its county seat. The house is located in a residential neighborhood about one block west of Caro's commercial core. The house is located at the southwest corner of North Almer and West Lincoln Streets, oriented to face east toward North Almer Street, and sited on an unusually large lot, encompassing roughly four standard lots in an L-shape. A secondary entrance faces south toward a porte-cochere and the swimming pool, lotus garden, pump house, and rock garden. A stone driveway extends from North Almer Street to the porte-cochere, then continues to the carriage house at the southwest corner of the property. A narrow alley extends north from the driveway along the west side of the house to West Lincoln Street. A concrete path covered by a stone and steel grape arbor leads to a concrete fountain north of the house. The east and north sides of the property are bordered by a hedgerow with tapered stone pillars and mature trees, providing a screening border around the property on the parcel lines. Most of the open areas of the property are maintained as grassy lawn.

The property is sited on a notably larger lot than the surrounding lots and features elaborately landscaped grounds. Located in Block 9 of the 1865 village plat, it encompasses Lots 3, 6, 7, and 8, as well as portions of Lots 4 and 9, totaling approximately one acre.¹ The house is located in the approximate center of the roughly L-shaped lot and accessed from Almer Street to the east by a stone driveway and sidewalks and from West Lincoln Street to the north by a gravel alley. The carriage house is located in the southwest corner of the property, accessed from Almer Street to the east by the stone driveway and from Pearl Street to the west by a grass and gravel driveway. A grassy tennis court with original exterior lighting is located in the northeast corner of the property, and a stone fountain and stone and steel grape arbor are located north of the house. An expansive swimming pool is located south of the house, with a lotus pond to its immediate east and a rock garden and pool pump house in the southeast corner of the property. These features are connected by a network of stone walkways, and the property is enclosed by a perimeter wall of stone pillars connected by hedgerows.

In addition to these large-scale features, a number of small-scale elements are also original to the Moore period of ownership. Much of the property included flower gardens featuring small-scale statues, benches, and foot baths, much of which is no longer extant. A contemporary landscaping sketch indicates a total of seven benches were placed in the flower gardens, near the pool, and in the rock garden; of these, two stone benches remain extant on the north side of the pool near the carriage house and a third faux bois bench remains extant in the rock garden. The swimming

¹ "The Storybook House of Caro"; Mark Putnam, "Caro's Most Loved and Admired House," Moore Family Collection; "W.J. Moore Buys Home," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, April 7, 1914, Moore Family Collection.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

pool retains a stone lighthouse statue, concrete and metal bridges, metal ladders and railings, and diving board bases, and the pool is enclosed by a wrought-iron fence with an elaborate wrought-iron and stone gate. An irrigation system circulated water from the swimming pool, and a number of tall, metal sprinkler posts remain extant, though no longer functional. The property was lit at night by a number of light posts of varying styles. Five extant light posts feature light bulbs mounted on the bottom of Purple Martin birdhouses, which hung from tall steel posts. Four of these remain at the tennis court and one near the fountain. Two smaller light posts are also extant, one under the grape arbor and one near the swimming pool. An eighth light is located at the east end of the swimming pool and is partially encapsulated in a large tree. A steel hitching post remains extant in the North Almer Street right-of-way near this entrance to the property, just outside the perimeter wall.

The following inventory includes all large-scale, independent features of the property, including two contributing buildings, five contributing structures, two contributing objects, and two contributing sites. There are no non-contributing resources included within the nomination boundary. In general, small-scale elements are not included in the inventory or resource counts, though some small-scale elements that are integrated into larger features have been included in the appropriate inventory description.

**William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House
c.1868, c.1890, 1923-1924**

Contributing Building

Exterior Description

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House is a two-story, front-gable frame house built in 1868. Prior to the Moores' acquisition of the property in 1914, the house featured Queen Anne-style massing and detailing, with a complex roofline of intersecting gables; tall, narrow windows, some set in pairs; a wrap-around porch supported by turned posts with sawn brackets and a turned balustrade; and a tall, corbelled, interior chimney.

The Moore House was renovated to its current appearance in 1923-1924, featuring a distinctive Tudor Revival-style exterior with a false thatched roof, flared and rolled eaves, and a two-story wing on the northwest corner that gives the house an L-shaped plan. The house retains a combination of cedar shingle siding and stone veneer, multi-light steel windows and doors, and peaked drip moldings throughout. Windows are a combination of double-hung, casement, and fixed window types, sometimes set in banks or groups. Box gutters drain to ground level within the stone piers, which are tied by pointed arch spandrels at the first story. The house sits on a stone foundation, has an asphalt roof, and retains interior and exterior tapered stone chimneys.

The front (east) elevation faces North Almer Street and is dominated by a large, exterior tapered stone chimney. An inset porch at the northeast corner of the house is supported by a heavy tapered stone column and shelters the entrance, a set of paired multi-light steel and wood doors flanked by sixteen-light steel sidelights and set in a peaked surrounds with drip moldings. This porch has stone steps with wrought iron railings and is accessed by stone walkways from the

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

driveway to the south and North Almer Street to the east. The front elevation is clad in stone veneer at the first story and cedar shingles at the upper story.

The north elevation, facing West Lincoln Street, features a three-bay dormer with gables at each end, one partially obscured by a one-and-one-half-story gabled wing at the northwest corner. A flat-roof, corner porch with a stone floor is supported by a wrought iron column and railing and shelters entrances into the main block and the northwest wing. This porch is accessed by a stone walkway that wraps around the house from both sides. At the porch roof is an uncovered balcony, without a railing, that is accessed from a second-floor bedroom.

The west elevation features a narrow, one-story, flat-roof projecting bay, from which a small gabled bay extends. The gabled bay contains a twelve-light-over-one-panel steel and wood door leading to the basement. There is also an uncovered stone and concrete porch and rear entrance into the northwest wing. A concrete sidewalk extends along this elevation and underneath a stone and steel grape arbor that leads to a concrete fountain north of the house. The west elevation faces a short alley leading from West Lincoln Street, along the west property line, to the carriage house. The house is screened from the alley by a wood fence with diagonal boards and a square wood post. The fence and post have decorative steel detailing and the post is topped with a decorative birdhouse with a false thatched roof.

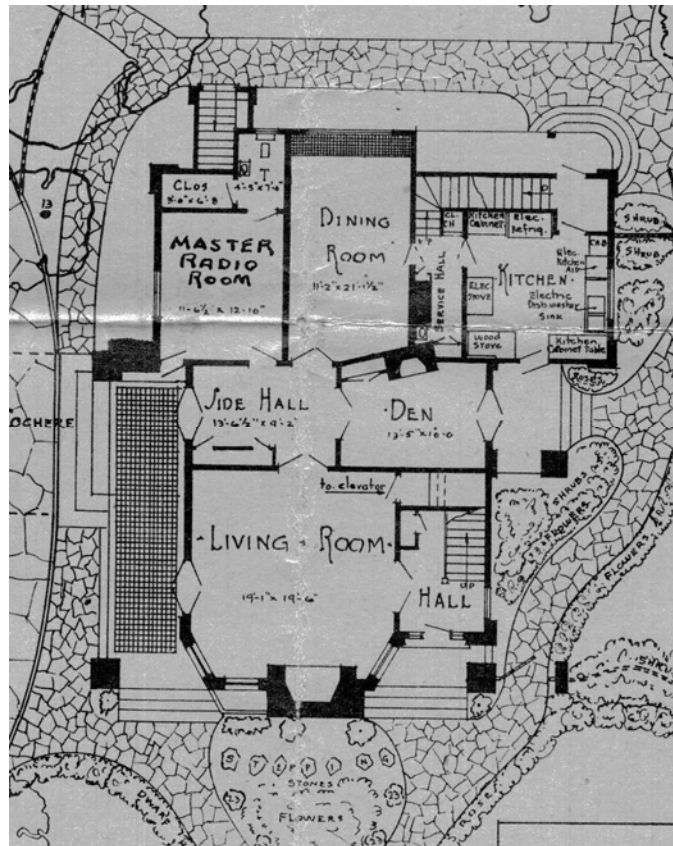
A porte-cochere supported by heavy tapered stone columns extends from the south elevation and is accessed by a stone driveway from North Almer Street. An aquarium was built between the columns on the south side of the porte-cochere but is no longer extant. A wide porch with a tiled floor shelters three entrances on this elevation, two with paired doors. The second story features a wide, three-bay dormer matching that of the north elevation, and each bay contains paired doors leading to a wide balcony that extends over the porte-cochere and is enclosed by a wrought iron railing.

Interior Description

The interior of the William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House dates to the 1923-1924 remodel and retains the irregular floor plan. The front entrance leads to an entry hall at the northeast corner of the house, which leads south into the living room. At the south entrance, a side hall connects to the porte-cochere to the south, the master radio room to the southwest, the dining room to the west, the den to the north, and the living room to the east. The kitchen is located in the northwest wing, accessed from the dining room to the south. The second floor may be accessed by the main staircase in the entry hall, opening to a wide hallway at the second floor that leads to three bedrooms on the south side of the house and one on the north side, a bathroom at the west end of the hall, and a maid's room and bathroom in the northwest wing. A second staircase leads from the maid's room at the second floor to the kitchen at the first floor.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State



*Image 1: First Floor Plan, Excerpt from 1924 Plat of Property
(Note the expansive stone walkways which surround the house.)*

The center hall, living room, and dining room on the first floor share many of the same finishes, including tall cherry or oak wainscot, unpainted wood door and window surrounds, oak parquet floors in a basketweave pattern, and textured plaster ceilings, and the rooms are separated by paired forty-light wood and steel doors. The main entrance on the east side of the house opens to a small entry hall with narrow oak flooring and an oak staircase with an elaborate wood and wrought iron balustrade and newel. An early burglar alarm, developed by Moore, remains intact behind a panel of wainscot. The living room to the south features a large stone fireplace with a stone mantel and hearth, which dominates the east wall. Above the fireplace is a painting of the Moore Family's ancestral homestead, established by Andrew Moore in 1723 near Philadelphia. Around 1945, William J. Moore commissioned local artist Florence Stader to create the painting, which hung in this location until 1971 and was returned in 2023.² The living room contains an elevator used primarily to transport firewood from the basement to the first floor. The elevator is approximately three feet wide and six feet deep, and the ceiling drops from nine feet at the entrance to five feet at the rear to accommodate the pulley system above the ceiling, which was

² Personal Communication with the Moore Family by Cheri Szcodronski, November 2023, via email. Note: Florence Stader was a talented artist, though she was a teacher by training. Stader was close friends with Vera Moore, daughter of William J. and Lovila Moore.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

purchased around 1950 from the Otis Elevator Company in New York, New York. The elevator weighs approximately 350 pounds and can transport up to four hundred pounds.³ The living room also features rolling screens over the windows, an unusual window treatment for the era, which were purchased from Rolling Screens, Inc., of Brooklyn, New York.

A pair of doors lead west from the living room into the side hall, which may also be accessed by the porch and porte-cochere on the south side of the house. The doors in the side hall are wired to open automatically at the push of a button mounted on the wall. The side hall retains a custom cabinet containing a master electrical control panel for the house and grounds, which operated indoor and outdoor lighting; door locks and automatic doors in the house and carriage house; the pool pumps and waterfall; and indicator light panels throughout the house that alert to activity in these systems. The master control panel is contained within a small closet, which features automatic lights and pull-out hanger racks. Instructions for how to operate the controls and when to adjust specific switches, authored by William J. Moore, were posted next to the controls. The closet also features a false floor that conceals the automatic door opener mechanism and a glass door that provides access to the mail slot.

The side hall leads west to the dining room, one of the most lavishly ornamented rooms in the house. The dining room features the same wainscot, door and window surrounds, and parquet flooring as the hall and living room, but additionally is decorated with elaborate plaster crown molding and walls hand-painted by local artist Florence Stader, featuring scenes of birds and flowers. An arched alcove on the west wall of the room contains a built-in counter and cabinets finished with tile, leaded glass, lion-head carvings, and decorative wrought iron screens. The tile is believed to have been hand-crafted by the Pewabic Pottery studio in Detroit (NR1971, NHL1991), significant as the only historic pottery studio in Michigan and for its substantial role in the early twentieth century Arts & Crafts Movement throughout the United States.⁴ The dining room also contains a custom dining table with a built-in paging system with four buttons around the bottom of the table, cradles at each end to hold telephones, wiring through the center of the table into a floor outlet, and elaborate winged lion carvings. A china cabinet features multi-pane glass with steel mullions and lion-head carvings, and mail desk also features lion-head carvings. A double-hinge swinging door separates the dining room from the kitchen.

The master radio room and the den may also be accessed from the side hall. The master radio room, at the southwest corner of the house, contains the controls to a Regina Music Box that played steel records for the entire house, with speaker connections in each room throughout. This room has simpler finishes than most of the first floor, with five-panel wood doors, narrow oak flooring, and plain window and door surrounds. A small full bathroom connects to the master radio room at the west wall and retains a tile floor, wood window and door surrounds, and a five-panel wood door. The den, located north of the side hall, retains a large stone fireplace with a stone mantel and hearth, but has been altered with the addition of late-twentieth-century wood

³ W.J. Moore to Otis Elevator Company, November 2, 1950, Moore Family Collection.

⁴ Personal Communication with the Moore Family by Cheri Szcodronski, November 2023, via email.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

paneling and a dropped ceiling. A pair of multi-light doors lead to the small porch on the north side of the house.

The first floor of the northwest wing contains the kitchen and a service hall, as well as a staircase leading to the maid's room on the second floor. The kitchen has been updated with woodwork and finishes that date to the mid-1980s, as well as modern appliances.⁵ A small service hall, or butler's pantry, contains built-in cabinets and a small sink. A double-hinge wood door with a small window leads south from the kitchen and service hall into the dining room. A staircase at the west end of the kitchen leads to the basement; a sixteen-light-over-three-panel wood and steel door leads to the rear entrance bay; and a forty-light wood and steel door leads to the north porch.

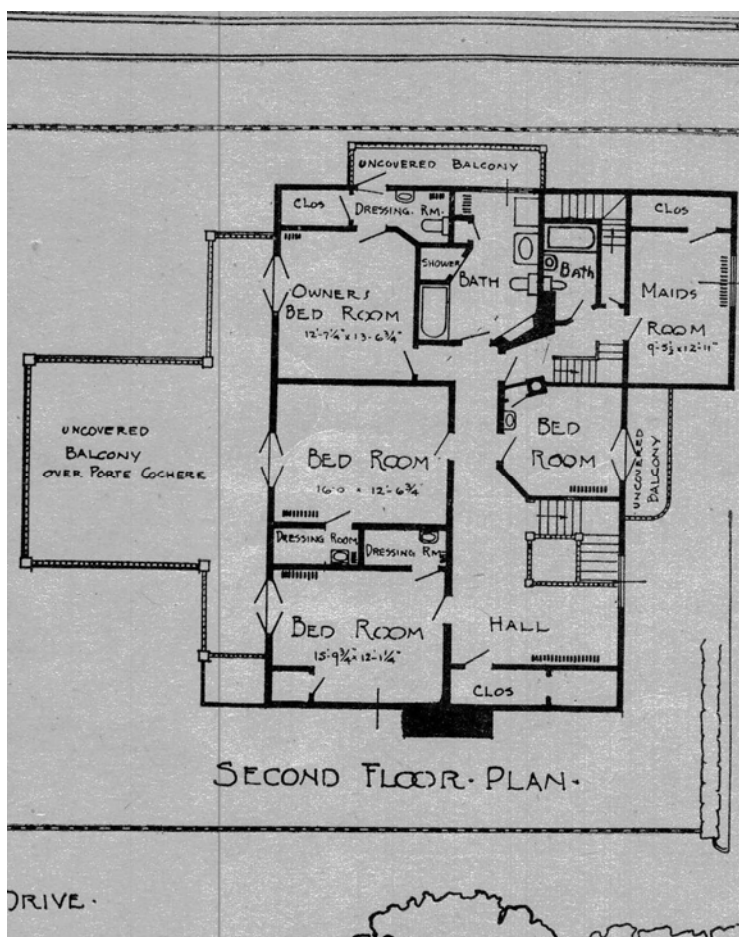


Image 2: Second Floor Plan, Excerpt from 1924 Plat of Property

The finishes on the second floor of the house are much plainer than those of the first floor, with narrow oak flooring, slab wood doors, wide plain baseboards, simple or no crown molding, and

⁵ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan (former owner) by Cheri Szcodronski, December 5, 2023, via telephone.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

plain window and door surrounds, most of which are painted. The staircase opens onto a small hall that leads to the four family bedrooms and a full bathroom. The rooms are modest in size, each with small closets and dressing rooms that each contain a small sink and built-in medicine cabinets with mirrors. The three bedrooms on the south side of the house have paired multi-light wood and steel doors that open onto the balcony above the porte-cochere. The fourth bedroom, on the north side of the house, opens onto a small balcony that has no railing, though the original railing remains in storage. The bathroom features original tile flooring, walls, and window and door surrounds; the original tile fireplace; and most of the original fixtures, including sinks, bathtub, toilet, and faucets.

The upper half-story of the northwest wing contains a small bedroom, utilized as a maid's room, and bathroom with an unadorned boxed staircase leading to the kitchen on the first floor. Though most of the finishes in the house date to the 1923-1924 renovation, this room retains five-panel wood doors, beadboard, fluted window and door surrounds, and bullseye cornerblocks that likely date to the late 1800s.

A narrow staircase leads to an unfinished attic above the main block of the house and is lit by an irregularly shaped, polygonal, stained-glass window.

A staircase at the west end of the kitchen leads down to an unfinished basement with food storage rooms, laundry area, a full bathroom, a valuables vault, house systems, firewood storage, access to the elevator, and a wine cellar with a wine press. An indoor aquarium built into the west end of the basement provided winter housing for the fish from the porte-cochere aquarium and remains extant, though no longer in use.

Carriage House
c.1868, c.1890, 1923-1927

Contributing Building

Exterior Description

A two-story, gambrel-roof carriage house is located at the west end of the stone driveway. It appears to have been built in two stages, with the one-story rear wing built c.1868 at the same time as the house and the two-story front portion built around 1890; both appear on the 1909 Sanborn Map, the first to include this block. Prior to the Moores' purchase of the property in 1914, the carriage house was a large, two-story gambrel-roof building with a shed-roof sheltering the entrance at the north end of the façade, a bay window at the south end of the façade, wheel windows between the two stories, shingle siding in the gambrel-end, and gabled dormers on the north and south elevations.

The building was renovated to its current appearance in 1923-1927 and is similar to the Moore House in style and materials, with a false thatched roof, stone veneer and cedar shingle siding, a prominent exterior stone chimney, and multi-pane wood and steel doors and windows. A dirt driveway extends along the north side of the building, connecting Pearl Street to its west with the

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

alley and the driveway, and passing under a stone arch with wooden gates extending north from the northeast corner of the carriage house.

The east elevation features stone veneer and cedar siding, a multi-light Palladian window at the second story, an exterior stone fireplace, and a shed roof with heavy sawn wood brackets that shelters paired multi-light-over-two-panel wood and steel doors. The concrete floor at the entrance is inscribed "Private Club and Garage of W.J. Moore." Above the entrance is a projecting model car with the inscription: "On this, our club garage, we imitate the first horseless carriage owned in Caro or the Thumb which we bought in France in 1899, before cars were manufactured in Michigan. Mr. & Mrs. W.J. Moore." The building's original wheel windows were incorporated into the relief as the wheels of the car.

The north, west, and south elevations are clad in German-profile weatherboard and retain a combination of six-over-one double-hung windows, one-over-one double-hung windows, and single-light awning windows. The north and south elevations feature gabled wall dormers with paired doors leading to small, uncovered balconies supported by heavy, sawn wood brackets and without railings, though the original railings remain in storage. The dormers have false thatched roofs matching the east elevation, though the remainder of the side and rear elevations lack this detailing.

A one-story, hip-roof wing extends from the rear of the carriage house to the west and appears to predate the east end of the building. It retains narrow weatherboard siding, batten doors, one-over-one double-hung windows, and a gabled dormer on the north elevation.

Interior Description

The interior dates to the renovations 1923-1927, with the first-floor interior an open space that could house fifteen automobiles. It has a beadboard ceiling and wainscot, concrete floor, and wood stairs along the north wall to the second floor. Large doors on the west elevation could be opened remotely by switches inside the house. The south side of the building was used as a manufacturing space for Moore's telephone company. An elaborate motorized pulley system motors operated the front (east) garage doors, the rear (west) garage doors facing Pearl Street, and the trapeze zipline over the swimming pool.

The upper floor served as an event space, possibly a clubhouse for the Veteran Motor Car Club of America, of which Moore was a member, or other automobile enthusiast groups. The second floor is a large open space with a stone chimney, unpainted beadboard wainscot, and narrow oak flooring. An alcove at the west end of the room was utilized as a stage area for events; the room hosted community plays, dances, and meetings. The space also served as the gymnasium for high school basketball games prior to the construction of the high school gymnasium in the late 1950s. At that time the ceiling extended into the current attic space, with the current, lower ceiling installed sometime prior to 1967.⁶ Small, recessed bays on the north and south sides of

⁶ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

the room lead to small rooms with five-panel wood doors, some of which are numbered, likely used for storage. Each bay also contains paired ten-light-over-one-panel wood doors with sixteen-light transoms that lead to small balconies lacking cover or railing.

An unfinished attic is accessed by a steep, wood staircase at the west end of the building.

The basement is accessed by a concrete staircase and includes a four-stall changing room for pool-goers with batten doors, concrete block walls, and a poured concrete floor. Boilers in the basement heat the garage and swimming pool.

Tennis Court 1914

Contributing Site

A grassy tennis court was built at the northeast corner of the property in 1914. It is a rectangular, level plot of grass with exterior lighting provided by lamp posts topped with Martin birdhouses. The net attached to hooks on two centrally placed light posts, which remain extant though the court is no longer in use.

Swimming Pool 1917

Contributing Structure

A tile and concrete in-ground swimming pool with an irregular curvilinear shape measuring approximately 109 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 7 feet deep was built immediately south of the house in 1917. It is enclosed by a wrought iron fence with tapered stone pillars and elaborate gates leading to the house. The pool has several stairs, ladders, water cannons, and diving boards. A zipline consisting of a small-scale airplane with a trapeze lowered guests from the porte-cochere balcony into the pool, with a landing base on the pool's south side. The zipline was removed for safety reasons in 1968, but the anchors on the balcony and poolside remain extant, and the airplane remains in storage in the carriage house.⁷ On the north side of the pool, a concrete bridge with a metal railing passes over a small stream flowing from the driveway into the pool, known as "Iris Creek." There is a large, decorative stone lighthouse, notable for a small man carrying a lantern around the top platform when the lighthouse was illuminated. A long, narrow entrance to the pool at the west end is covered by a concrete bridge with a wrought iron railing. Mature trees, flowerbeds, stone benches, statuary foot baths, and tile, brick, and concrete walkways surround the pool, which was lit by lights mounted to steel light posts or directly to trees; one of the latter remains extant.

Lotus Pond 1917

Contributing Structure

⁷ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

A lotus pond is located east of the swimming pool, between the pool and the rock garden and inside the wrought iron fence encircling the pool. It features a large, stone waterfall at the south end that circulated water from the pond. A concrete faux bois footbath with a small bench is located at the north end of the lotus pond. It is a circular water feature with a statue of a draped woman holding a cup and bowl from which water flowed into the basin.

Pump House
1917

Contributing Structure

An underground pump house containing pool equipment is located southeast of the pool and accessed via the rock garden. It is covered with batten doors, lined with concrete block, and accessed by concrete steps. A small concrete and metal vent provides air flow near the lotus pond waterfall. The pool water could be accessed by the fire department via a manhole near the sidewalk east of the pool in the event of a fire in the community.

Rock Garden
1923-1927

Contributing Site

A rock garden is located east of the pool adjacent to North Almer Street. The garden contains a collection of boulders collected by William J. Moore and representing each county in Michigan's Thumb region. It is landscaped with a variety of mature trees, low shrubs, and ground cover plantings, and meandering paths of dirt and stone.

Perimeter Wall
1923-1927

Contributing Structure

Tapered square stone pillars, most with pyramidal stone caps, flank the driveway and sidewalks and mark the edges of the property on the east and north parcel lines. The pillars are connected by tall hedges to screen the house and yard from North Almer and West Lincoln Streets. The pillars flanking the sidewalk at the front (east) of the house are slightly taller and topped with decorative caps engraved "Moore" on the south pillar and "219," the original house number, on the north pillar. Slightly taller pillars topped with stone urn planters are located in gardens north and south of the house.

Grape Arbor
1923-1927

Contributing Object

A grape arbor northwest of the house is constructed of heavy, round, stone columns and topped with a steel lattice. The grape arbor covers a concrete sidewalk leading to the concrete fountain

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

north of the house. William J. Moore grew a variety of grapes for his wines, which were made and stored in the basement of the house.⁸

Fountain 1923-1927

Contributing Object

A round, concrete fountain with a floral-motif central spout is located north of the house and surrounded by a stone walkway.

Stone Driveway and Walkways 1923-1927

Contributing Structure

A distinctive stone driveway leads from North Almer Street to the porte-cochere on the south side of the house, then continues west to the Carriage House. Stone walkways lead from the driveway to the house, encircle the house and pool, and meander the property's extensive gardens.

Integrity Statement

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House and grounds retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association that continue to convey the property's historic significance. The house and contributing resources in the nomination boundary remain in their original locations within a residential, landscaped setting that is generally unchanged.

The house embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Tudor Revival style and retains its form, massing, plan, and fenestration following the 1923-1927 renovations. Exterior elements characteristic to the false thatched roof subtype of the style remain intact, primarily the distinctive flared and rolled eaves, and are not known to be found elsewhere within the Thumb region of Michigan. Like the exterior features, the interior floor plan, finishes, and decorative elements are largely unchanged from Moore's design. Interior technological features designed by Moore also remain, including exterior doors that could be electrically opened with the push of a button, a custom-designed burglar alarm system, all rooms wired with individual telephone connections and radio jacks, and master controls for electrical features in the house, the carriage house, and throughout the grounds. The carriage house also retains its Moore-era exterior design and character-defining interior spaces, utilized to house Moore's collection of automobiles, build telephones and related equipment, and hold special events. The property was well-documented during the period of significance, and this photographic record clearly demonstrates that it largely retains original materials, workmanship, and design.

⁸ Personal Communication with the Moore Family by Cheri Szcudronski, October 2023, via email.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Within the grounds, nearly all of the landscape features, including a large pool, tennis court, perimeter wall, ponds, gardens, and other features, have been retained through multiple subsequent owners. The photographic record shows these resources are little changed from their original design, maintaining the feeling and association with the Moore years of ownership and the recreational opportunities they provided for friends and the community.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture
Engineering
Recreation/Entertainment

Period of Significance

1914-1955

Significant Dates

1914 – tennis court constructed
1917 – pool constructed
1923-1927 – house & carriage house renovations

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Moore, William J. (engineering, design)
Kelly, Seymour (builder/carpenter)
Putnam, Claude (stone mason)
Balch, Alvin (metal work)

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House is significant at the local level under Criterion A for Recreation/Entertainment. The swimming pool, built in 1917, served as one of the only opportunities for public swimming in Caro in the early twentieth century. The carriage house was renovated in the 1920s to include a large room used as a dance hall and gymnasium, smaller rooms used as dressing rooms for the swimming pool, and a showroom for Moore's collection of automobiles. Lighted tennis courts were built on the grounds, which also feature a rock garden, custom-designed lighting, faux bois benches, fountains, and flower gardens. The Moores were well-known for hosting swimming, dancing, and dinner parties, and they also gave tours and offered meeting space to a variety of local and national organizations.

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House is significant at the local level under Criterion C for Architecture and Engineering. The house and carriage house, built around 1868, were remodeled 1923-1927 to the current Tudor Revival-style appearance with distinctive rolled eaves and a false thatched roof, the only known example of this subtype in the Thumb region of Michigan. During the Moores' ownership, the house and carriage house were fitted with a variety of electronics invented and engineered by William J. Moore himself, including a burglar alarm, automatic doors, and as many as twenty-three telephones, with the house serving as a showroom for potential customers to view these designs in use.

The period of significance begins with the Moores' purchase of the property and construction of the tennis courts in 1914. The period of significance ends in 1955, encompassing the periods of renovation to the property, the installation of Moore's engineering designs, and the primary period of private and public recreation.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Background – Early Development of Caro

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House is located in the city of Caro, the county seat of Tuscola County in the east-central region of Michigan's lower peninsula, known as the Thumb region. Tuscola County is bordered to the north by Lake Huron and Huron County, to the east by Sanilac County, to the south by Lapeer and Genesee Counties, and to the west by Saginaw and Bay Counties. Caro is approximately twenty-five miles east of Saginaw and approximately thirty-five miles northeast of Flint.

The Cass River flows northeast to southwest through the county and follows the southeast boundary of Caro, eventually joining the Saginaw River and flowing into the Saginaw Bay of Lake Huron. The availability of water combined with the flat topography of the county made the

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

area attractive agricultural land for Indigenous peoples. The Chippewa, or Ojibwe, are known to have inhabited present-day Caro in the early nineteenth century, where they cultivated corn, potatoes, and other crops. The area was known as “Indian Fields” to European settlers and later became Indianfields Township. The Chippewa lands of the Thumb region were ceded to the United States in the Saginaw Treaty of 1819, along with about one-third of the present-day lower peninsula of Michigan, a total of nearly six million acres of land. Tuscola County was surveyed in 1835 and split off from Saginaw County in 1840, though it did not establish its own government until 1850.⁹

As with much of Michigan, lumber played an important role in the European settlement of the Thumb region, including Caro. In 1847, Curtis Emerson established a lumber camp near present-day Caro, sending lumber down the Cass and Saginaw Rivers to the port at Bay City. William E. Sherman, a lumberman at the camp, “was so well pleased with the country that he reported his impressions to his father, Samuel P. Sherman,” who purchased 263 acres of present-day Caro in 1852.¹⁰ Within a few years, several families had moved to the area and formed a small settlement called Centerville. In 1857, construction began on a road connecting Bridgeport, about twenty-five miles southwest of Centerville, to Forestville, about forty miles northeast of Centerville, and this connectivity contributed to the growth of the settlement. By the 1860s, the settlement included hotels, stores, a shoemaker, a doctor, a foundry, a blacksmith shop, and a brickyard. In 1865, the Tuscola County seat was moved from Vassar, in the southeastern part of the county, to the more centrally located Centerville.¹¹

Soon the growing village was platted and incorporated. Peter D. Bush purchased a large tract of land around 1857 and hired D.A. Pettibone, a surveyor from nearby Lapeer, to survey the property. In 1865, Bush platted the village and began selling lots with assistance from Samuel P. Sherman and others, with fifty additional acres platted by William E. Sherman the following year. Also in 1866, the first post office was established, known as Tuscola Center. The differing names caused confusion, however, and in 1869 the name of the town and the post office were both changed to Caro, shortened from Cairo, Egypt. Caro was incorporated in 1871, by which time the population had grown to nearly five hundred people, and there were over one hundred houses, more than forty businesses, at least two churches, and a school.¹²

Genealogical Background –William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore

William James Moore was born in 1870 in Burford, Ontario, to Samuel K. Moore and Elizabeth Fox Moore. His father was a lumberman and in 1875 the family moved to Sandusky, Michigan, just under thirty miles east of Caro. Moore studied accountancy at the International Business College in Saginaw, graduating in 1889, then attended Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, 1889-

⁹ Caro Centennial Committee, “Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet, 1852-1952,” 3, University of Michigan Libraries; Helen Hornbeck Tanner, ed., *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 98-99, 134.

¹⁰ “Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet,” 3.

¹¹ “Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet,” 3-4, 7.

¹² “Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet,” 4, 11-16.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

1890. Moore married Lovila Wooley in 1896. She was born in Ontario in 1870, the daughter of Marilla and Hiram Wooley. Lovila and William Moore had five children: Claude, Earl, Vera, Maurice, and Andrew, though Claude Moore died of complications of pneumonia at nineteen years of age.¹³

Moore learned a great deal from his cousin and mentor Elisha Gray, a renowned electrical engineer known for a number of inventions, including one of the first telephones, a self-adjusting telegraph, and needle annunciators for hotels and elevators. An article in *Telephone Engineer* later described their relationship: "Years ago a small boy sat spellbound hanging onto every word of his famous cousin as he told of the wonders of talking over a wire and the developments which were to come. It was then that he decided he would be a telephone man."¹⁴ Moore himself later recalled, "My cousin aroused in me an intense curiosity about telephones. Before I was through college I had devoted much of my spare time to inventing telephone devices."¹⁵

While at Oberlin College, Moore developed a telephone transmitter, which he patented in 1897, followed by the development of a switchboard. Using his designs, he founded the Moore Telephone Manufacturing Company and Moore Telephone System (MTS) in 1892, manufacturing telephones and providing the first telephone services to the Thumb region of Michigan, starting with his hometown of Sandusky.¹⁶ He later recalled, "People here were eager for telephone service when I returned home after finishing school."¹⁷ The company soon expanded to Marlette (about twenty miles southeast of Caro), establishing a switchboard center there in 1894 that served just over twenty customers.¹⁸

¹³ The Moore Family, "The Storybook House of Caro and the Man Behind It All: W.J. Moore," *W.J. Moore*, <https://thewjmoore.com/his-story-1>; US Census Bureau, *1880 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; US Census Bureau, *1900 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; US Census Bureau, *1910 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; US Census Bureau, *1920 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; US Census Bureau, *1930 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; "Michigan, US, Marriage Records, 1867-1952" Collection, Ancestry.com; International Business College Diploma to W.J. Moore, June 1889, Moore Family Collection. Note: International Business College merged with Bliss Alger Business College in 1911 to form the Saginaw Business Institute, which is now closed.

¹⁴ "House of 21 Telephones a Real Sales Aid," *Telephone Engineer*, April 1935, Moore Family Collection; Lawrence McCracken, "Trapeze to Swimming Pool One of Many Improvements," *Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1935, Moore Family Collection.

¹⁵ "House of 21 Telephones a Real Sales Aid," *Telephone Engineer*, April 1935, Moore Family Collection; Lawrence McCracken, "Trapeze to Swimming Pool One of Many Improvements," *Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1935, Moore Family Collection.

¹⁶ "Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet," 12; "The Storybook House of Caro"; United States Patent Office, "William J. Moore, of Elmer Michigan, Telephone-Transmitter," Patent No. 579,003, Moore Family Collection; W.J. Moore Rites Today; Phone Genius at Caro," unidentified newspaper clipping, June 21, 1955, Moore Family Collection.

¹⁷ "House of 21 Telephones a Real Sales Aid," *Telephone Engineer*, April 1935, Moore Family Collection; Lawrence McCracken, "Trapeze to Swimming Pool One of Many Improvements," *Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1935, Moore Family Collection.

¹⁸ "Moore Telephone Head Announces Changes in Lines," *The Marlette (MI) Leader*, January 31, 1930, Moore Family Collection.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

At the invitation of local leaders, Moore visited Caro in January of 1896 to discuss putting in a telephone exchange there.¹⁹ Moore told the community that it would cost \$1,200 to establish an exchange for forty subscribers and that each share of stock sold would include installation of a telephone. He returned at the end of January to start looking for an appropriate location for the exchange, while local leaders raised funds to provide a monetary bonus to further entice Moore to relocate the business. Later that year, he closed the Sandusky exchange and opened the new Caro telephone exchange at 201 Montague Avenue. He and his family initially lived in the apartment on the second floor.²⁰

Architecture Context – The Moore House and Carriage House

In 1914, William and Lovila Moore purchased the c.1868 house at 219 Almer Street (now 123 Almer Street). Starting in 1923, the couple undertook an extensive renovation that took four years to complete and resulted in its current Tudor Revival-style appearance. The Tudor Revival style was adapted from late Medieval and early Renaissance English designs that experienced a revival among British architects starting in the mid-nineteenth century. The style was popularized in the United States by pattern books that circulated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is characterized by a steeply-pitched roof, often with flared eaves and prominent gables; multi-pane windows, usually set in groups and often tall and narrow in shape; massive chimneys, often prominently placed on the front elevation and featuring decorative masonry patterns; masonry walls of stone, brick or stucco, sometimes with faux half-timbering; and sometimes arched entryways. The false thatched roof subtype of the style is an uncommon subtype that mimics the thatched roofs of rural England with rolled eaves of textured materials suggesting layers of grass thatching.²¹

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House exemplifies the Tudor Revival style in the United States with a front-gabled form and a wide, tapered, stone chimney prominently centered on the façade. Flared and rolled eaves are typical of the false thatched roof sub-type of the style. The house features distinctive three-bay, gabled dormers on each side elevation. Multi-light steel windows of various sizes, set in peaked drip moldings, are a combination of double-hung, casement, and fixed window types, sometimes set in banks or groups. The house also features stone detailing, including partial walls, porch floors, and porch columns. Though the Tudor Revival style is common in Michigan, the false thatched roof subtype is quite rare. A small number are known to exist in the southeastern region of Michigan, and self-taught architect Earl Young designed over fifty false thatched roof-style houses in Charlevoix in northwest Michigan,

¹⁹ “W.J. Moore, Telephone Pioneer, Dies Sunday,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, June 24, 1955, Moore Family Collection.

²⁰ “Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet,” 12; “The Storybook House of Caro”; “Twenty-Five Years Ago: Taken from The Advertiser of November 6, 1896,” unidentified newspaper clipping, Moore Family Collection; “W.J. Moore, Telephone Pioneer, Dies Sunday,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, June 24, 1955, Moore Family Collection.

²¹ Virginia McAlister, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 448-466.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

twenty-six of which remain extant. The Moore House is the only known example of the subtype in the Thumb region.²²

Around the time the house was renovated, the Moores also renovated the carriage house into a garage and clubhouse in the same false thatched roof subtype of the Tudor Revival style. The carriage house features a front-gambrel form featuring a wide, tapered stone veneer chimney and exterior fireplace prominently located on the façade. Flared and rolled eaves, typical of the false thatched roof subtype of the Tudor Revival style, match those of the house, as do multi-light steel windows and doors. Stone detailing also complements the house, with the first story of the façade clad in stone veneer.

William J. Moore designed the house and carriage house renovations himself, and he hired Seymour Kelly, a local carpenter, as the head builder/carpenter. Kelly was assisted by Otis Hamilton, another local carpenter, and Frank Berry, a local electrician. Claude Putnam was the stone mason who constructed the porches, chimneys, and other stone details. Alvin Balch, a local mechanic and machinist, was hired to do the metal work, including the wrought iron detailing on the main staircase, railings on the balconies, and the elaborate wrought iron swimming pool gates.²³



Image 3: 1926 photo in the Tuscola County Advertiser

²² Personal communication with Michigan State Historic Preservation Office staff by Cheri Szcodronska, in person and via email, October 2023.

²³ Dick Allen, "Landmark Still Stimulates Curiosity After 38 Years," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, March 18, 1965, Moore Family Collection.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

Engineering Context – Moore's Customizations

William J. Moore was an electrical engineer during an era of national enthusiasm for newly developed electronic conveniences, a sentiment that is reflected in the creativity and practicality of Moore's designs. Over time, the Moore House became a showroom for his various inventions and engineering designs, many of which he invited potential customers to view in use at his home. Though numerous contemporary newspaper articles state Moore held several patents, with the exception of the telephone transmitter, additional patent records have not been found. However, contemporary reports are clear that Moore was a gifted engineer and offered several of his custom designs for sale to the public. The display models of these inventions remain in place in the Moore House.

Moore installed as many as twenty-three telephones in the house and carriage house, "believing that to really sell telephones successfully, one must actually show the public the many conveniences, application and the value of telephone service."²⁴ Telephones were installed in the living room, dining room, den, all five bedrooms, three bathrooms, the carriage house, and even the swimming pool's pump house, most initially having their own separate phone number. Many of the phones had customized installations, such as the dining room telephones, which were wired through the dining room table and installed on custom shelving under each end of the table.²⁵

Moore also invented and installed a number of electronic conveniences in the house and carriage house, all controlled by a master electrical panel in the side hall and many of which remain functional today. Button controls opened doors on motorized hinges in the side hall, with the option to open the door for one visitor, a small group, or indefinitely, and "for salesmen, truculent folk, and enemies, a special button flips the door impudently open, [then] snaps it like whip in their faces."²⁶ A similar device operated a pulley system that controlled both the front and rear doors of the carriage house. A small elevator lifted wood from the basement storage in the house to the living room for use in the first-floor fireplaces. Indicator light panels throughout the house utilized a series of multi-colored lights to notify occupants if lights were turned on, doors were opened, or swimming pool equipment was not working properly. A master radio room included a radio panel that connected the radio to each room in the house and in the carriage house; speaker jacks in each room allowed occupants to connect to the radio room if desired.²⁷ Moore also invented and held the patent on a telephone transmitter, which was used in the manufacture of telephones under the Moore Manufacturing Company name on the south side

²⁴ "House of 21 Telephones a Real Sales Aid," *Telephone Engineer*, April 1935, Moore Family Collection.

²⁵ Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, June 2023 at the Moore House; "Private Branch Exchange at Home of W.J. Moore," 1943, Moore Family Collection.

²⁶ "Hello?" *Time Magazine*, February 12, 1940, Moore Family Collection; Kendrick Kimball, "Who's Who and Why," *The Detroit News*, June 15, 1944, Moore Family Collection.

²⁷ "The Storybook House of Caro"; Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, June 2023 at the Moore House and October 2023 via email.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

of the carriage house. The company address was on Pearl Street at the west side of the property.²⁸

One of the most innovative of Moore's inventions was a burglar alarm installed inside the wall of the house's entry hall. In a solicitation letter selling alarm systems to local businesses, Moore explained, "We will not be at liberty to show you this apparatus in operation in any public place as such must be kept as secretive as possible, but the writer [Moore] will be glad to show you this service and how it is arranged in the writer's home." He went on to describe his personal burglar alarm, which would be triggered by opening or breaking windows or doors in the house or carriage house. The system, which was connected to the master electrical panel, would then turn on all the lights in the house, in the carriage house, and around the grounds; light up the location of the intrusion on the living room indicator light panel; and light up a similar panel at the MTS switchboard office, signaling the switchboard operator to immediately notify the police. The system could be installed by MTS or Charles Middaugh, an electrical contractor in Caro, and it could be customized to trigger to any combination of windows or doors, to sound horns or bells, or to control lighting.²⁹ Moore's design was remarkably forward-thinking; although burglar alarms were invented in the mid-nineteenth century, they did not become widespread until the late twentieth century.

Additional gadgets were installed throughout the grounds. Water from the pool was pumped through a heating system and back to the pool. The grounds were lit with over twenty light posts, some custom designed with hidden light bulbs at the bottom and Martin birdhouses on top, and lighting suitable for evening swimming parties or playing tennis at night. These lights, as well as swimming pool lights, fountain lights, and interior lights in the house and carriage house were controlled by the master panel.³⁰ An extensive irrigation system pulled water from the swimming pool to water flowerbeds and trees, and some of the original sprinkler posts remain extant.³¹ The property also featured automatic garage door openers. Metal pressure plates in the driveways from both Almer and Pearl Streets activated mechanized door openers at the front or rear of the carriage house. Installed in the 1920s, this was another forward-thinking convenience; present-day garage door openers were invented in the 1930s and did not become widespread until the 1970s.³²

One of the most eccentric and well-known of Moore's inventions was a mechanical zipline featuring a large model airplane. A gate in the second-floor balcony provided access to the zipline, which would carry its passenger to the pool where they could drop into the water. The zipline could also be accessed from a landing pad on the south side of the pool to carry

²⁸ Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, October 2023 via email.

²⁹ W.J. Moore to Mr. C.L. Bougher, March 24, 1939, Moore Family Collection; The Moore Family, "The Storybook House of Caro"; Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, June 2023 at the Moore House and October 2023 via email.

³⁰ "The Storybook House of Caro"; Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, June 2023 at the Moore House and October 2023 via email.

³¹ "The Storybook House of Caro."

³² Personal communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, October 2023 via email.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

passengers back to the second-floor balcony.³³ Moore described his daily use of the trapeze to *The Detroit News*, “I take my short plunge between 6:00 and 7:00 in the morning, having friends with me when I can get them out at that early hour. After such a plunge one feels as ‘rugged as an oak’ the rest of the day.”³⁴



Image 4: Newspaper photo of William J. Moore demonstrating use of the zipline, Saginaw News, August 17, 1949

Recreation Context – The Grounds and Carriage House

³³ The Moore Family, “The Storybook House of Caro”; Lawrence McCracken, “Trapeze to Swimming Pool One of Many Improvements,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 27, 1935, Moore Family Collection; “Keeps Him Healthy,” *The Saginaw News*, August 17, 1949, Moore Family Collection; “Hello?” *Time Magazine*, February 12, 1940, Moore Family Collection; Bud Whitely, “Moore Home at Caro Has Beautiful Setting,” *Sandusky (MI) Republican-Tribune*, October 5, 1939, Moore Family Collection.

³⁴ Kendrick Kimball to Mr. William J. Moore, May 12, [1944], Moore Family Collection; W.J. Moore to Kendrick Kimball, June 17, 1944, Moore Family Collection.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

Upon purchasing the property, the Moores undertook a substantial landscaping project to reshape the relatively expansive grounds surrounding the house and carriage house. In 1914, even before they moved into the house, the Moores installed a grassy tennis court at the northeast corner of the property. Extensive renovations in 1917 included the construction of a large swimming pool, sculptures, fountains, fruit trees, flower gardens, an irrigation system, and lighting, nearly all of which remains extant.³⁵ Mature trees, some as big as sixty feet in height, were moved to the grounds using a custom machine designed by Moore.³⁶ A fifteen-foot glass aquarium at the north end of the pool, constructed in the south wall of the porte-cochere, contained Japanese ornamental fish, which were moved to a holding tank in the basement during the winter months. The glass has been removed from the outdoor aquarium, while the basement aquarium remains in intact, though unused.³⁷

The main attraction of the grounds was the swimming pool, completed in 1917. The Moores became well-known for hosting swimming parties, which were often reported in the Society pages of the local newspaper. A 1927 newspaper article reported, "Nearly 100 persons took advantage of personal invitation by Mr. and Mrs. W.J. [and Lovila] Moore to enjoy a swimming party...It was the first of the season and was very much enjoyed... [the party] attracted numerous observers from the street." A similar article in 1930 remarked, "Every summer Mr. and Mrs. [Lovila] Moore give a series of parties to their friends, and the pool never fails to be a source of delight to swimmers of all ages."³⁸ Moore explained, "Invitations to swimming party guests have to be given with very little time between the invitation and the party, since such a party depends on the weather... Most of our swimming parties take place in the afternoons or evening."³⁹ The water circulation system heated the pool, and the massive stone fireplace on the east elevation of the carriage house was used often during evening swimming parties.⁴⁰ A guest thanked the Moores for their invitation to a "Fairylane Swimming Party," enthusiastically describing that, "Indeed it looked and felt just as though we had been transported to another world."⁴¹ In the winter, when the pool froze, the Moores hosted ice skating parties. "I met your grandfather at a skating party," Helen Atherholt Sheridan recalled in a memory journal to her grandchildren. "I was invited by Andy Moore and we were having a good time skating when two boys came in wearing bear-skin fur coats, Derby hats, and smoking 'Sherlock Holmes' pipes – we all had a good laugh and then I was introduced to Tim Sheridan and Bruce Gee."⁴²

³⁵ "The Storybook House of Caro"; Mark Putnam, "Caro's Most Loved and Admired House," Moore Family Collection; "W.J. Moore Buys Home," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, April 7, 1914, Moore Family Collection.

³⁶ Blanche E. Simmons, "A Twenty Years' Chore: Caro Home a Grand Hobby," *The Flint Journal*, August 15, 1937, Moore Family Collection; Dick Allen, "Landmark Still Stimulates Curiosity After 38 Years," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, March 18, 1865, Moore Family Collection.

³⁷ Blanche E. Simmons, "A Twenty Years' Chore: Caro Home a Grand Hobby," *The Flint Journal*, August 15, 1937, Moore Family Collection.

³⁸ "Social News," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, August 1, 1930, Moore Family Collection.

³⁹ W.J. Moore to Kendrick Kimball, June 17, 1944, Moore Family Collection.

⁴⁰ Bud Whitely, "Moore Home at Caro Has Beautiful Setting," *Sandusky (MI) Republican-Tribune*, October 5, 1939, Moore Family Collection.

⁴¹ Mel Hull to Mrs. [Mabel] Moore, August 8, 1944, Moore Family Collection.

⁴² Helen Sheridan, "When You Met," from memory journal provided to author by David Dost (Sheridan grandson).

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

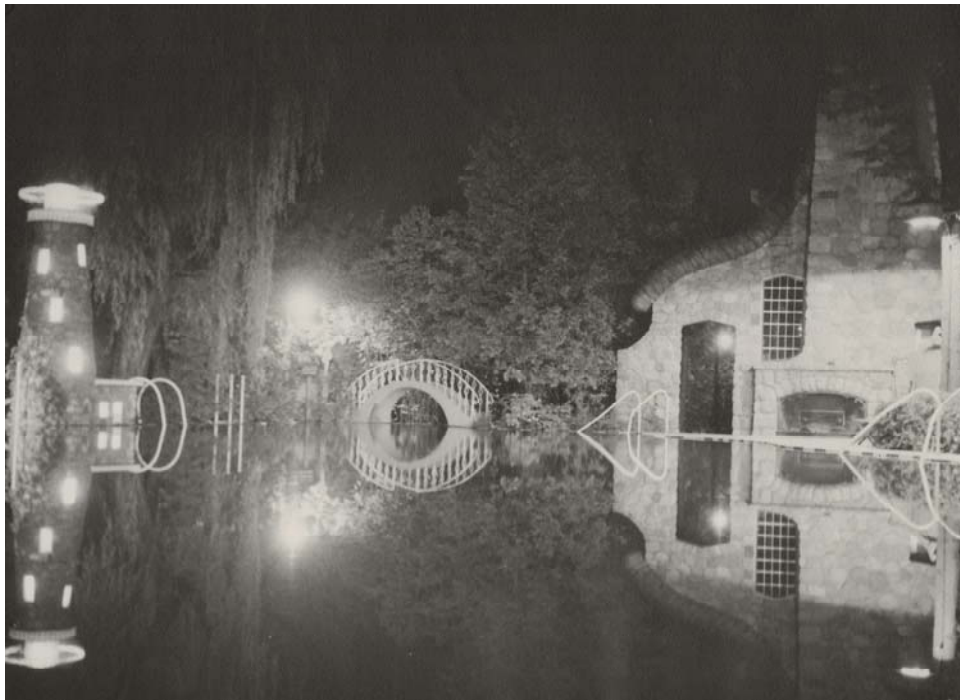


Image 5: The swimming pool illuminated at night, date unknown

Public and private opportunities for swimming appear to have been limited in Caro at this time, and the Moore swimming pool appears to have served as the primary location for the town's youth to swim. Though Lake Huron is nearby, Caro does not have immediate access to the lake, with beaches in Sebewaing and Bay City approximately 20-30 miles away. In addition, public swimming pools were not commonly constructed in Caro, or elsewhere in the Thumb region, until the 1950s through the 1970s.⁴³

The Moores' swimming pool was therefore the only known pool with any type of public access in the early twentieth century. William and Mabel Moore (Moore's second wife) permitted public use of the pool in the 1940s and 1950s. Members of the public could pay a small fee to swim on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 2:30 to 3:30 pm. Sometimes the fee was paid directly to William J. Moore, who sat in the driveway to greet pool-goers in the early 1950s. The funds were used in part for pool maintenance, with the remainder set aside to be put toward the future construction of a public pool. Swimmers were given a small wood token to indicate they had paid the fee, which they then hung on hooks by the pool.⁴⁴ There were strict rules for public use of the pool, however: "No one is allowed through the swimming pool gate except those who

⁴³ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; Personal Interview with Judy Westerby (former MTS employee) by Kathy Moore (descendant), November 30, 2023, via telephone.

⁴⁴ Personal Interview with Judy Westerby; Untitled clipping, *Tuscola County Advertiser*, August 12, 1927, Moore Family Collection; "Local Briefs," *Tuscola County Advertiser*, June 1949, Moore Family Collection; Gordon Wayne Nusz, comment on Szcodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7053330358067145. Note: public recollections of the pool fee range from 5 cents to 25 cents to 50 cents.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

have been invited, which includes chaperones. The swimming pool gate must not be left unlocked even for a minute so that small children and others who are not wanted in the swimming pool enclosure may be kept out. By gettin[g] into the water garden, the most expensive feature of our landscaping, dogs can effect a complete ruin in five minutes.”⁴⁵ Local resident Judy Westerby recalls swimming in the pool in the late 1940s and early 1950s under the watchful eye of William J. Moore. “You had to behave,” she remembers, “once there were two boys... who got in a fight in the middle of the pool. He called them out and you didn’t see them back in the pool. That was the end of them!”⁴⁶

The Moore House swimming pool is also notably large, especially for a historic residential pool, and especially in the Midwest. At 109 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 7 feet deep, the pool contains over 250,000 gallons of water and covers just over one-tenth of an acre. By comparison, the largest known public pool in the United States is the Venetian Pool in Coral Gables, Florida, built in 1924, which covers four acres, is up to eight feet deep, and contains 820,000 gallons. The largest hotel pool is the Biltmore Hotel pool in Miami, Florida, also built in the 1920s, which is 150 feet by 225 feet at its widest points, covers just over one-half of an acre, and contains 600,000 gallons. The largest privately owned residential pool is the Mobley Family pool located in El Campo, Texas, built in 2009, measuring about two acres, and containing 700,000 gallons. Other historic pools include the Neptune pool and Roman indoor pool at Hearst Castle in Simeon, California. Neptune pool, built 1924-1936, is 104 feet long, 58 feet wide, and up to 10 feet deep, containing 345,000 gallons. Roman indoor pool, built 1927-1934, is 81 feet long, 31 feet wide, and up to ten feet deep, containing 205,000 gallons.

In 1931, Moore added to the extensive landscaping with the construction of a rock garden east of the swimming pool. Family tradition indicates the garden was built from stones gathered by Moore from counties throughout the Thumb region.⁴⁷ A local newspaper summed up the aesthetic of the grounds in 1937, saying “on the [north] side of the grounds is a grass tennis court, a fountain, and an old fashioned flower garden. Inviting seats lure one to shady nooks among the wildflowers as well as the gorgeous blooms of the cultivated flowers.”⁴⁸

During the house renovations in 1923-1927, the carriage house was also renovated and became known as the “Private Club and Garage of W.J. Moore,” which is inscribed in the concrete floor of the entrance. The term “private club” appears to have been loosely applied rather than an organization with a formal structure, with “friends, family, colleagues, organizations and groups... invited to various activities and events.”⁴⁹ The first floor of the building could accommodate as many as fifteen automobiles and served as a showroom, as Moore’s personal

⁴⁵ “Detailed Instructions for Manipulating the Switches on the Panel in the South Hall,” 1953, Moore Family Collection.

⁴⁶ Personal Interview with Judy Westerby.

⁴⁷ “150 Ladies Visit Moore’s Gardens,” *The Marlette (MI) Leader*, September 7, 1934, Moore Family Collection; Bud Whitely, “Moore Home at Caro Has Beautiful Setting,” *Sandusky (MI) Republican-Tribune*, October 5, 1939, Moore Family Collection.

⁴⁸ Blanche E. Simmons, “A Twenty Years’ Chore: Caro Home a Grand Hobby,” *The Flint Journal*, August 15, 1937, Moore Family Collection.

⁴⁹ Private Communication with the Moore Family by Cheri Szcodronski, November 2023, via email.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

automobile collection attracted much local attention. In 1899, he brought the first automobile to the Thumb region, importing a De Dion Bouton from France that was reportedly such a curiosity that “it seemed that half the people of the town had gathered around to celebrate the unpacking.” A wooden relief of the car is on the carriage house façade, and the wheels form the windows of the ladies’ dressing room on the second floor.⁵⁰ Among his other vehicles, he purchased a Model 51 Cadillac in 1914, for which he designed a custom body that was manufactured by C.P. Kimball Company of Chicago. The car included swivel seats and a rear seat that could be converted to a bed; a small refrigerator that could store food and drinks or be used to air condition the vehicle; and an alarm and portable telephone. This automobile is now part of the collections of the Louwman museum in the Netherlands.⁵¹

The second floor of the carriage house included a large, central room used as a dance floor and stage where the Moores hosted community dances, plays, and meetings. It also served as the location of high school basketball games prior to the construction of the high school gymnasium in the late 1950s. The ceiling originally extended into the current attic space, with the current, lower ceiling installed in the 1960s. Former resident and owner Kim Vaughan recalls, “We put the basketball hoop up in there, and it should have been at ten feet, but we only had it at eight feet, which was kind of cool because were up there dunking like we were in the NBA.”⁵² Mens’ and ladies’ dressing rooms for the adjacent swimming pool spanned the north and south sides of this room.⁵³

The Moores were well-known for hosting various groups for special events and tours of the property. Often noted in the newspaper’s Society pages, the Van Winkle Club, of which Lovila Moore was a member, met periodically at the Moore House throughout the 1920s.⁵⁴ In 1930, about fifty members of the Caro Garden Club met at the Moore House to tour the grounds and hear speakers.⁵⁵ About 150 members of the Tuscola County Republican Women’s Fitzgerald-for-Governor Club visited the Moore House in 1934, where “Mrs. [Lovila] Moore graciously received the visitors at the gate... and started them on the tour of the garden inspection.”⁵⁶ In 1939, the *Tuscola County Advertiser* reported that Moore had not hosted the usual “social

⁵⁰ W.J. Moore, Automobile Booklet, Moore Family Collection; “The Storybook House of Caro.”

⁵¹ Blanche E. Simmons, “A Twenty Years’ Chore: Caro Home a Grand Hobby,” *The Flint Journal*, August 15, 1937, Moore Family Collection; W.J. Moore, Automobile Booklet, Moore Family Collection; “Phone Pioneer, W.J. Moore Dies,” *The Saginaw News*, June 20, 1955, Moore Family Collection; The Louwman Museum, “Cadillac Model 51 V8,” *Louwman Museum*, 172, Moore Family Collection; “The Storybook House of Caro.”

⁵² Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁵³ Personal Communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, October 2023, via email; Cheri LaFlamme Szcodronski, “Hello everyone! I’m not from Caro, but I’m a historian working with the Moore family,” Facebook, November 19, 2023, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744/>; James Putnam, comment on Szcodronski, “Hello Everyone!” Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7053898968010284.

⁵⁴ “Social Calendar,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, December 7, 1923, Moore Family Collection; “Social News,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, April 1929, Moore Family Collection.

⁵⁵ “Garden Club Members, Guests Hold Meeting,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, July 18, 1930, Moore Family Collection.

⁵⁶ “150 Ladies Visit Moore’s Gardens,” *The Marlette (MI) Leader*, September 7, 1934, Moore Family Collection.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

entertainments” at the house since Lovila Moore’s death two years earlier, noting that the swimming pool was empty and the club garage was used as storage, but that he was again “inviting groups of friends to dinner parties in the home and to dancing or play parties in the club. Also, during swimming season, there were many groups of friends invited to afternoon and evening swimming parties in the pool.”⁵⁷ The article went on to name guests at a recent dinner party, including Mabel Tribbey; she and William Moore were married later that year.⁵⁸ In 1950, the Veteran Motor Car Club of America (now the Vintage Motor Car Club of America, VMCCA) held its annual gathering at the Moore House. In preparation for the event, Moore wrote to Henry Seipp, secretary of the VMCCA Michigan region, “Of course, you will all bring your bathing suits for the swim and a ride on the famous airplane from which one may drop into the pool... All the doors of our home will be open to all and everything else will be at your disposal. As to eats, we can make it a picnic and eat out on the grass tennis court on the grounds.”⁵⁹

The Moore property’s function as a public recreation site largely ended with the death of William J. Moore in 1955. His son, Andrew Moore, took over ownership of the property and did not continue public access to the swimming pool after that time, though residents recall that he did continue to invite family, friends, and neighbors to use the pool on weekends.⁶⁰ This change was likely due to the availability of other public recreation opportunities in Caro during the mid-twentieth century, especially for the city’s youth. Caro residents recall the fairgrounds serving as the primary recreational area in the 1960s and 1970s, offering a public pool with nominal fees, crafts in the recreation barn, ping-pong tables, tennis courts, football and baseball fields, and a playground (all no longer extant). In addition to the public pool, young people swam at two local gravel pits, Green’s Gravel Pit southeast of Caro on East Dayton Road and Peterhans Brothers Gravel Pit #2 southwest of Caro on South Sheridan Road. Young people visited downtown Caro to visit the Strand Theater (101 South State Street), Helen Klea’s Fitzgerald hobby store (222 East Grant Street, no longer extant), or the bowling alley (location not known), and they also participated in community sports leagues and church-related activities.⁶¹

⁵⁷ “W.J. Moore Resumes Social Entertainments,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, March 31, 1939, Moore Family Collection.

⁵⁸ “Michigan, U.S., Marriage Records, 1867-1952” Collection, Ancestry.com.

⁵⁹ W.J. Moore to Henry C. Seipp, May 31, 1949, Moore Family Collection.

⁶⁰ George Savage, comment on Szcodronski, “Hello everyone!” Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7051291291604385; Judy Williams Tinturin, comment on Szcodronski, “Hello everyone!” Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744/?comment_id=7051291291604385&reply_comment_id=7053809251352589.

⁶¹ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; Cheri LaFlamme Szcodronski, “Thanks to everyone who left comments on my first post about the Moore House!” Facebook, November 29, 2023, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425>; James Schantz, comment on Szcodronski, “Thanks to everyone,” Facebook, November 29, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425?comment_id=7084751108258403; Mark Uhl, comment on Szcodronski, “Thanks to everyone,” November 29, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425/?comment_id=7084751108258403&reply_comment_id=7084988024901378; Elaine Simington Vickers, Patrick Sleight, and Michelle Eschelbach, comments on “Thanks to everyone,” Facebook, November 29, 2023,

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Conclusion – The Moore House Since 1955

William J. Moore retired from the Moore Telephone System in 1947, but retained an advisory role to the company's board of directors and also continued to live at his home on Almer Street. He turned the company over to his son, Andrew, who also lived in his childhood home with his wife, Delores Nugent Moore, and their children. After her death in 1957, Andrew Moore married Hildegard Felske, an elementary school teacher. Like William Moore, Andrew and Hildegard Moore were known for hosting parties, and Hildegard invited her class to visit the house at the end of each school year.⁶²

Local resident Charles Vaughan was charmed by the house. "We used to go to the church right across the road," his son Kim Vaughan recalls. "It was the Baptist Church, and every Sunday after church, we'd come out of that church and my dad would say, 'One of these days, I'm going to buy that house.'"⁶³ In 1967, Charles and Dorcus Vaughan bought the property from the Moores. Charles Vaughan had joined the Navy following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, then returned to Caro where he started a ready-mix concrete and gravel company. He married Dorcus Dorman in 1947, and they had two sons, Timothy (d.2008) and Kim.⁶⁴

The Vaughans invested in the preservation of the property as the Moores had designed it. Kim Vaughan recalls that his parents "didn't want to change anything to the house because [they] wanted to keep the house as original as possible."⁶⁵ They restored the pool, fish ponds, and basement aquarium soon after taking ownership. Charles Vaughan built a shingle-making machine from a repurposed log splitter to make shingles for siding and the roof. They also hired

https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425?comment_id=7084843988249115; Patricia Woern, comment on Szcodronski, "Thanks to everyone," Facebook, November 29, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425?comment_id=7085187978214716; Kelli Ellis Robinson, comment on Szcodronski, "Thanks to everyone," Facebook, November 29, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425?comment_id=7084955261571321; Michelle Eschelbach, comment on Szcodronski, "Thanks to everyone," Facebook, November 29, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425?comment_id=7085456341521213.

⁶² "Michigan, U.S., Marriage Records, 1867-1952" Collection, Ancestry.com; U.S. Census Bureau, *1950 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; Obituary for Andrew J. Moore, *Tuscola County Advertiser*, September 1, 1971, via Find A Grave; Obituary for Hildegard C. Moore, *Tuscola County Advertiser*, October 23, 2002, via Find A Grave; Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan (former owner) by Cheri Szcodronski, December 5, 2023, via telephone; Marcia M. Dievendorf, Patricia E. Frazer, and Mark O. Keller, *The Caro Area* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 34-35.

⁶³ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁶⁴ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; "Michigan, U.S., Marriage Records, 1867-1952" Collection, Ancestry.com; U.S. Census Bureau, *1950 United States Federal Census*, Ancestry.com; Obituary for Charles George Vaughan, *Tuscola County Advertiser (assumed)*, 2011, via Find A Grave.

⁶⁵ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

local handymen and carpenters to help maintain the property and make repairs, a gardener to help maintain the grounds, and a caretaker.⁶⁶

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Vaughns continued the tradition of public recreation at the house, though to a lesser extent than under William J. Moore's ownership. Kim Vaughan recalls, "A lot of the kids [in the neighborhood] would come over and want to swim... my mom would... give them a little chore and then allow them to go swimming."⁶⁷ Many residents recall doing chores to earn swimming time, including John Flikkie, who explains, "In order to swim, you had to do 'time' helping with whitewashing the pool after they did patch up, general sweeping, raking, and picking up around the yard. I got to help Mr. Vaughan in the pump room a few times."⁶⁸ Kim Vaughan also recalls that sometimes he just had close friends over, "and then there were days we had a lot of people... there were days we had three hundred people in that pool... days they came out of the woodwork."⁶⁹ In addition, Dorcus Vaughan taught Sunday School and hosted her a gathering for her class each year.⁷⁰

Though the Vaughns did not utilize the tennis court for playing tennis, the kids in the neighborhood, including Kim Vaughan, organized football teams and played games on the tennis court at night. "It was a big thing, [playing] under the lights," Vaughan recalls.⁷¹ They were also well-known in town as a must-see stop on Halloween. "[The house] has the electric doors there, so people would come up to the house and you could push the electric door button and the door would [creak open], and they'd just be looking around. And my brother used to have scary music playing from the upstairs. It was a quite a place for Halloween."⁷² They would get as many as three hundred trick-or-treaters each year, Vaughan recalls, and many local residents remember the house for the full-size candy bars they gave out.⁷³

The Vaughn family retained ownership of the property until 2017, and since 2021, the house has again been owned by descendants of William J. and Lovila Moore. Though the house is a private

⁶⁶ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; Michael Urban, comment on Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, November 30, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7052536078146573.

⁶⁷ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁶⁸ John Flikkie, comment on Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7050798244987023&reply_comment_id=7052418878158293; Chip Gentry-Lasiewicki, comment on Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, November 19, 2023,

https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7050798244987023; Gwen Miller, comment on Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, November 20, 2023, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7053156934751154.

⁶⁹ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁷⁰ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; Alesia Tait Albin, comment on Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744?comment_id=7053790814687766.

⁷¹ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁷² Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

⁷³ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan; Szczodronski, "Hello everyone!" Facebook.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

home, the current owners offer historic tours periodically.⁷⁴ Through these changes in ownership, the house, carriage house, and grounds remain remarkably intact, retaining nearly all original elements, materials, forms, detailing, and custom innovations.

The William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House, carriage house, and grounds have been a community curiosity in Caro for a century. A 1937 newspaper article characterized the attraction: “You can hop out of your guest room window on the second floor and swing right into a bathing pool surrounded by flower beds, stone pillars, and rustic benches; you can walk along one edge and gaze into an aquarium alive with gorgeous Japanese ornamental fish, alongside a waterfall, a beautiful rock garden, and a Japanese bridge, or you may go into the garage and there find several types of cars, one as old as 38 years.”⁷⁵ In 1965, similar thoughts were shared by the local newspaper: “Back in 1927 passersby viewed the W.J. Moore residence with curiosity and awe, for it was completely different than anything else they were accustomed to seeing. Some termed the massive, rolling thatched roofed landmark as eccentric, imaginative, unique, or just plain crazy. However, all agreed that the entire estate was a creation of lasting beauty, and they still do some 38 years later.”⁷⁶ This sentiment has stood the test of time; a 1990 newspaper remarked simply, “[The property is] truly a landmark in Caro and a tribute to the genius of W.J. Moore, and of his era.”⁷⁷ Kim Vaughan believes William J. Moore and his father, Charles Vaughan, “were both the perfect owners of that house. They were both very intelligent, both very hands-on people. W.J. was way ahead of his time.”⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Personal Interview with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski, June 2023 at the Moore House; Mark Putnam, “Caro’s Most Loved and Admired House,” Moore Family Collection.

⁷⁵ Blanche E. Simmons, “A Twenty Years’ Chore: Caro Home a Grand Hobby,” *The Flint Journal*, August 15, 1937, Moore Family Collection.

⁷⁶ Dick Allen, “Landmark Still Stimulate Curiosity 38 Years Later,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, March 18, 1965, Moore Family Collection.

⁷⁷ Jim Sparling, “W.J. II,” *Tuscola County Advertiser*, 1990, Moore Family Collection.

⁷⁸ Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Caro Centennial Committee. "Caro Centennial Souvenir Booklet, 1852-1952." University of Michigan Libraries.

Dievendorf, Marcia M., Patricia E. Frazer, and Mark O. Keller. *The Caro Area*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Historic Photograph Collection. Moore Family Collection.

McAlister, Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015.

Michigan, US, Marriage Records, 1867-1952. Ancestry.com.
<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/9093/>.

Moore Family Documents. Moore Family Collection.

The Moore Family. "The Storybook House of Caro and the Man Behind It All: W.J. Moore." *W.J. Moore*. <https://thewjmoore.com/his-story-1>.

Newspaper Clippings. Moore Family Collection.

Personal Communication with Michigan State Historic Preservation Office staff by Cheri Szcodronski. In person and via email. October 2023.

Personal Communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski. June 2023. Moore House, Caro, Michigan.

Personal Communication with the Moore family by Cheri Szcodronski. October and November 2023. Via email.

Personal Communication with Tammy Szidik (local resident) by Cheri Szcodronski. October 2023. Via telephone.

Personal Interview with Judy Westerby (former Moore Telephone System employee) by Kathy Moore (descendant). November 30, 2023. Via telephone.

Personal Interview with Kim Vaughan (former owner) by Cheri Szcodronski. December 5, 2023. Via telephone.

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Szcodronski, Cheri LaFlamme. "Hello everyone! I'm not from Caro, but I'm a historian working with the Moore family..." Facebook, November 19, 2023.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7050471035019744/>.

Szcodronski, Cheri LaFlamme. "Thanks to everyone who left comments on my first post about the Moore House!" Facebook, November 29, 2023.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/184597664940483/posts/7084407554959425/>.

Tanner, Helen Hornbeck, ed. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987.

Telephone Engineer. Moore Family Collection.

Time Magazine. Moore Family Collection.

Tuscola County Advertiser. Moore Family Collection.

US Federal Census Collection. Ancestry.com.
<https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/usfedcen/>.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 43.490627

Longitude: -83.397611

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The following legal description corresponds to tax parcel 050-500-109-0300-00 (derived 2023) as defined by Tuscola County:

575-0051-000 SEC 03 T12N R9E LOTS 3, 6, 7 & 8 & N 1/2 OF LOT 9 BLK 9 ALSO A STRIP OF LAND 37 FT WIDE OFF N END OF E 1/2 OF LOT 4 EX COM 33 FT S OF NE COR OF LOT 4, TH S 25 FT, TH W 21 FT, TH N 25 FT, THE 21 FT TO POB ALSO W 1/2 OF ALLEY LYING E OF LOTS 1 & 2 BLK 9. ORIGINAL PLAT VILL OF CARO.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the current and historic parcel as of 1914, including the house, carriage house, and significant landscape features.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Cheri Szcodronski, Owner & Architectural Historian
organization: Firefly Preservation Consulting, LLC
street & number: 58 Fox Hill Court
city or town: Chelsea state: MI zip code: 48118
e-mail: cheri@fireflypreservation.com
telephone: 615-604-5618
date: October 2023

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: William J. and Lovila (Wooley) Moore House
City or Vicinity: Caro
County: Tuscola State: MI
Photographer: Cheri Szcodronski
Date Photographed: June 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #0001: House – Northeast Elevation

Photo #0002: House – North Elevation

Photo #0003: House – West Elevation

Photo #0004: House – Southwest Elevation

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan

County and State

Photo #0005: House – South Elevation

Photo #0006: House Interior – First Floor – Entry Hall Staircase

Photo #0007: House Interior – First Floor – Entry Hall Burglar Alarm Detail

Photo #0008: House Interior – First Floor – Living Room facing East

Photo #0009: House Interior – First Floor – Living Room facing Northwest

Photo #0010: House Interior – First Floor – Living Room Elevator Detail

Photo #0011: House Interior – First Floor – Side Hall facing North

Photo #0012: House Interior – First Floor – Side Hall facing South and Master Control Panel

Photo #0013: House Interior – First Floor – Dining Room facing West

Photo #0014: House Interior – First Floor – Master Radio Room facing Southeast

Photo #0015: House Interior – First Floor – Kitchen facing Southwest

Photo #0016: House Interior – Second Floor – Hall

Photo #0017: House Interior – Second Floor – Southeast Bedroom

Photo #0018: House Interior – Second Floor – South-central Bedroom

Photo #0019: House Interior – Second Floor – Balcony facing South

Photo #0020: House Interior – Second Floor – Southwest Bedroom

Photo #0021: House Interior – Second Floor – Primary Bathroom

Photo #0022: House Interior – Second Floor – Maid's Room

Photo #0023: House Interior – Second Floor – Staircase to Attic

Photo #0024: House Interior – Basement facing North

Photo #0025: House Interior – Basement Vault for Valuables Detail

Photo #0026: Carriage House – East Elevation

Photo #0027: Carriage House – Southeast Elevation

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House
Name of Property

Tuscola, Michigan
County and State

Photo #0028: Carriage House – Southwest Elevation

Photo #0029: Carriage House – Northwest Elevation

Photo #0030: Carriage House Interior – First Floor – facing West

Photo #0031: Carriage House Interior – First Floor – facing Southeast

Photo #0032: Carriage House Interior – Second Floor – Dance Hall/Gymnasium facing West

Photo #0033: Carriage House Interior – Second Floor – Dance Hall/Gymnasium facing East

Photo #0034: Carriage House Interior – Second Floor – Dressing Room Detail

Photo #0035: Carriage House Interior – Second Floor – Dressing Room Detail

Photo #0036: Carriage House Interior – Basement – Dressing Rooms

Photo #0037: Grounds – Tennis Courts facing North

Photo #0038: Grounds – Swimming Pool facing West

Photo #0039: Grounds – Swimming Pool facing East

Photo #0040: Grounds – Swimming Pool – Wrought Iron Pool Gate facing South

Photo #0041: Grounds – Lotus Pond

Photo #0042: Ground – Pump House

Photo #0043: Grounds – Rock Garden facing South

Photo #0044: Grounds – Perimeter Wall – East Entrance Gates

Photo #0045: Grounds – Grape Arbor

Photo #0046: Grounds – Fountain and Sprinkler Post facing South

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460

Moore, William J. and Lovila (Wooley), House

Tuscola, Michigan

Name of Property

County and State

et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 805