HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SIMON HEROLD HOUSE

HABS No. LA-209

Location:

1050 Ontario Street between Fairfield Avenue and Glen Iris Boulevard in the Glen Iris Addition subdivision of the South Highlands neighborhood in Shreveport, LA.

UTM Reference: 15.429320.3592075

Latitude, Longitude: 32°27'49" N, 93°45'07" W

Significance:

The Simon Herold house, designed by William B. Wiener, Sr. for attorney Simon Herold and his family, is a wonderful artifact of mid-century modernism and has remained mostly unaltered since its construction in 1954. William B. Wiener, Sr. (1907-1981) and his older half-brother Samuel G. Wiener (1896-1977) produced some of the earliest (beginning in 1931) modern buildings designed by American-born architects in the South and indeed the entire United States. After World War II, the brothers' practices evolved and were influenced to a greater extent by American trends as opposed to European modernism as was the case before the war. The house is located in the South Highlands Historic District which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 4/29/1999.

Description:

The Simon Herold house is an example of a post-war residence utilizing a binuclear planning strategy (pioneered by Marcel Breuer in 1945) where public areas are segregated from private areas. The Wiener brothers most commonly organized their bi-nuclear plans in a "T" shape. The Herold house differs from that norm in that the house is very compact and almost square in shape in response to a dramatically sloping trapezoidal site. The line of demarcation between public and private areas runs east-west at approximately the roof ridge. Of the scores of projects designed by the Wieners, only two are organized around interior open-air courtyards or atriums – the Herold house (1954) and the Dr. Julian Wiener house (1959) located in Jackson, MS.

The atrium was originally designed to be open to the sky; however, the Herolds' had the opening covered with fiberglass corrugated roofing supported by a grid of 2x4 wood framing. The intent of covering the atrium was to control water and direct sunlight from entering as well as moderating temperature swings. The resultant enclosure was not ventilated which encouraged mildew growth and contributed to rot making the atrium less pleasant to occupy. The current owners had the roofing installed by the Herolds removed and replaced it with a 9-panel grid of 2x4 wood framing with a fiberglass insect screen covering. Interestingly, the grid of 2x4 framing is quite similar to the grid Sam Wiener designed for the Dr. Julian Wiener house (1959) located in Jackson, MS.

Due to the sloping site, the house employs two different types of foundations: 1) slab on grade construction at the carport, game room, kitchen, and bedroom #1 – (owner's bedroom) and 2) pier and beam construction at the living room, dining room, breakfast room, bedroom #2, and bedroom #3. Both approaches utilize cast-in-place reinforced concrete grade beams supported by drilled reinforced concrete caissons spaced approximately at 6'-0" on center. Both Wiener brothers used drilled caisson foundations for houses beginning in the early 1930's to control differential movement that could cause cracking on the exterior and interior finished surfaces. Cracking would frequently occur in houses that didn't benefit from a robust foundation due to Shreveport's highly expansive soils. The roof structure is slightly sloped from a high point at the ridge (running east-west) to the north wall of the bedrooms and to the southernmost edge of the carport. The mild slopes were measured with an inclinometer and determined to be approximately 3 degrees south of the ridge and approximately 4 1/2 degrees north of the ridge. Many of the interior spaces have sloped ceilings which echo the diminutive roof slopes - the most obvious occurring in the large combination living/dining room.

The exterior of the house is clad with clear-finish reddish brown 1x4 v-joint tongue and groove vertical siding – traditionally known as car siding. The soffits at overhangs are finished with v-joint tongue and groove car siding like the vertical walls except the soffits are painted. Exposed brickwork is used at the exterior storage areas, atrium, and the plinth of the house below the first floor wood structure. The serving niche off the dining room is clad with standing seam copper on the walls and roof. The carport is conspicuous because it dominates the façade facing Ontario Street illustrating the importance of the car in post-war society. The structure at the carport is constructed of exposed painted 2x10 rafters and exposed painted v-joint tongue and groove decking (inverted car siding) as opposed to plywood. The carport rafters on the south end of the house are supported by a beam fashioned from (2) 2x10's with a steel flitch plate bolted together and (3) 3" diameter painted steel pipe columns.

The majority of the interior is clad in painted gypsum board except for the kitchen and game room which have some clear-finish birch or mahogany paneling. The interior door frames have no casing giving the interior a taut, clean appearance. One exposed brick wall is used on the interior to separate the foyer from the atrium. Strip pine flooring is used in the living/dining room and bedroom #2 and 12" x 12" cork flooring is used in the breakfast room, bedroom #3, and the game room. The kitchen and service porch presently have linoleum sheet flooring and bedroom #1 – (owner's bedroom) presently has wall-to-wall carpeting installed over the original pine flooring. All of the bathrooms have ceramic tile on the walls, as well as, on the floors. The foyer has quarry tile flooring for ease of maintenance. Ceilings throughout the house are painted gypsum board except the game room,

kitchen, and breakfast room which have 12"x12" concealed spline acoustical tile.

The HVAC air handling unit is located in a small mechanical basement located below the dining room. Ductwork extends up into the house through a chase north of the dining room to a series of fur downs where the supply ductwork runs horizontally. The furred down areas are carefully positioned to provide spatial compression before opening into the larger volumes of the principal spaces as seen at the foyer, game room, breakfast room, kitchen and the bedrooms.

Originally, the majority of the fenestration was operable in the form of painted steel casements with the remainder being painted steel framed or wood framed fixed picture windows. Even though some of the steel casements have been replaced, casements on the north and east façades are original to the 1954 construction. The large steel-framed picture windows (interspersed with the casements) on the north façade still exist though they have been covered with storm windows. Large sliding doors connect the breakfast room to the atrium as well as the game room to the atrium. These doors are not constructed from aluminum but rather steel making the doors quite heavy.

The main entrance to the house is directly off of the carport facing south and leads into the foyer. The fover provides access to the living room to the west and the game room to the east and is illuminated by clerestory glazing on top of the exposed brick wall separating the fover from the atrium. The largest space in the house is the combination living/dining room with its long dimension facing west and east. Wiener handled this unfortunate solar orientation by having no windows facing west but rather south and north at a serving niche off the dining room and a south facing window on the short side of the living room. A small atrium is surrounded by and provides natural light to the living room (on the west side), breakfast room (on the north side), game room (on the east side), and fover (on the south side). The game room is positioned to the east of the fover and atrium and opens onto the exterior terrace on the east side of the house. The game room includes some of the original built-in Hi-Fi equipment – a turntable and a tuner/amplifier. The wall-mounted speaker was removed by the current owners after the remaining equipment was decommissioned. The centrally located breakfast room to the north of the atrium accommodates the majority of the house's circulation by providing access to the game room, kitchen, dining room, and the bedrooms. A large piece of partial-height millwork in the breakfast room shields the bedroom entrances and houses HVAC return air in the recessed base. The three bedrooms are aligned on the north wall of the house which features a half-height steel-frame glazed curtain wall interspersed with 4x4 wood structural posts. The bathroom/closet compositions provide a semi-private entrance sequence to the bedrooms on the south end similar to strategies

employed in motels. The kitchen is located to the east of the breakfast room and is an authentic, period-correct example of mid-century modernism. The east wall of the kitchen, service porch and game room has a steel-frame glazed curtain wall interspersed with 4x4 wood structural posts similar to the north wall of the bedrooms. Between the kitchen and the game room is a service porch that opens onto the terrace on the east side of the house. Servants enter the house from the carport, through the exterior terrace, and finally though through the door to the service porch.

After the current owners (Osborne and Sullivan) purchased the house, Elaine Herold's children cleaned the house in preparation for occupation by the new owners. Before Osborne and Sullivan moved in, they visited the house and found a trash can full of blueprints of the Simon Herold house. The drawings scheduled for the landfill included schematic schemes, shop drawings and working drawings which were, thankfully, retrieved and saved by Osborne and Sullivan. These drawings were helpful in providing specificity to the historical background of the house.

History:

In mid-1953, attorney Simon Herold purchased a trapezoidal lot (Lot #14 in Block #1) in the Glen Iris Addition subdivision of the South Highlands neighborhood in Shreveport, LA for the purpose of building a house for his wife Elaine and their two children, Arthur and Rita. Simon Herold hired noted modernist William B. Wiener, Sr. as the architect for his families' home.

Most of Samuel G. and William B. Wiener, Sr.'s residential clients were either family or close friends as were the Herolds, and almost all were members of the small, close-knit and influential Jewish community in Shreveport. Simon Herold, Elaine Herold, William B. Wiener, Sr., and Samuel G. Wiener were all members of the B'nai Zion Congregation. Interestingly, Simon Herold's mother, Eda Loeb Herold, was related to William B. Wiener, Sr.'s mother, Florence Loeb Wiener making the relationship between architect and client even closer.

In December 1953, William B. Wiener, Sr. produced the first schematic design proposal for the Herolds – this scheme was highly developed. In March of 1954, Wiener produced two additional schematic designs based on additional input from the Herolds. Later in 1954, Wiener made minor modifications to the third schematic scheme and produced working drawings that were completed in May, 1954. In 1962, the Herolds return to William B. Wiener, Sr. as the architect for a number of modifications to the house's interior. The cantilevered shelf in the foyer and additional millwork in bedroom #2 were the only modifications executed from this contract.

On April 27, 1998, Simon Herold dies at age 85. His widow, Elaine remained in the house until 2013 when she could no longer live alone due to her health – she died on August 8, 2016 at age 100. In 2014, current owners James Osborne and Bryan Sullivan purchased the Simon Herold house and have kept it in pristine mid-century modern condition.

Historian:

Kendell Knight Webb; graduate student, School of Design, Louisiana Tech University; February 2017. Reviewed and edited by Guy W. Carwile, Louisiana Tech University and Mike Varnado, Division of Historic Preservation.

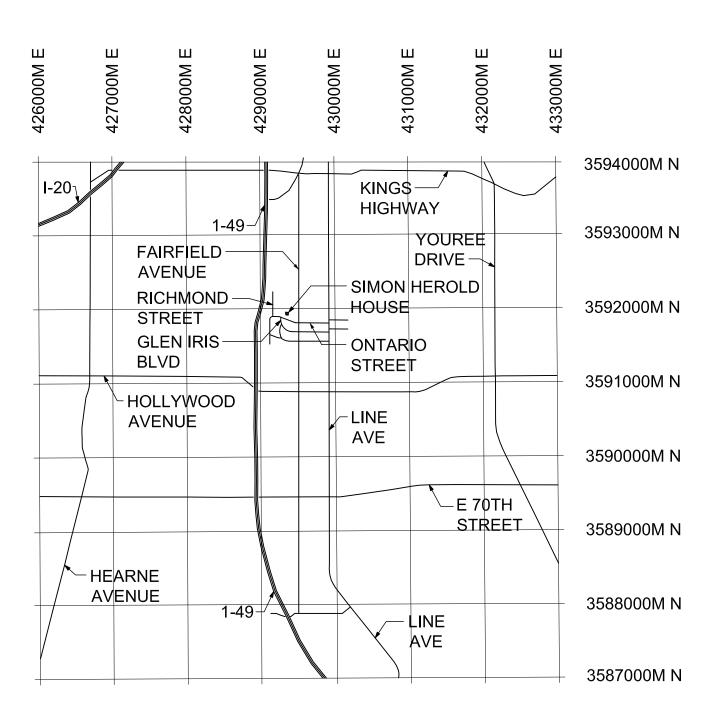
Sources:

Kingsley, Karen and Guy W. Carwile. *The Modernist Architecture of Samuel G. and William B. Wiener: Shreveport, Louisiana, 1920-1960.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016.

Kingsley, Karen. *Buildings of Louisiana*. Buildings of the United States, New York: Oxford University Press and the Society of Architectural Historians, 2003.

Project Information:

Field notes and drawings were produced as part of the Arch 403 - Project Documentation course held in the winter quarter, 2017. Trent Harrison, Ashley Kettenring, Andrew Lopez, Matthew Roberts, and Kendell Knight Webb from the Architecture Program in the School of Design at Louisiana Tech University documented the structure under the guidance of Guy W. Carwile, Architect Emeritus and Ken Hollis Endowed Professor. Dimensions and construction materials were recorded at the site using hand methods. Access to the house and site was graciously provided by current owners, James Osborne and Bryan Sullivan who also provided additional archival information.



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LOCATION MAP

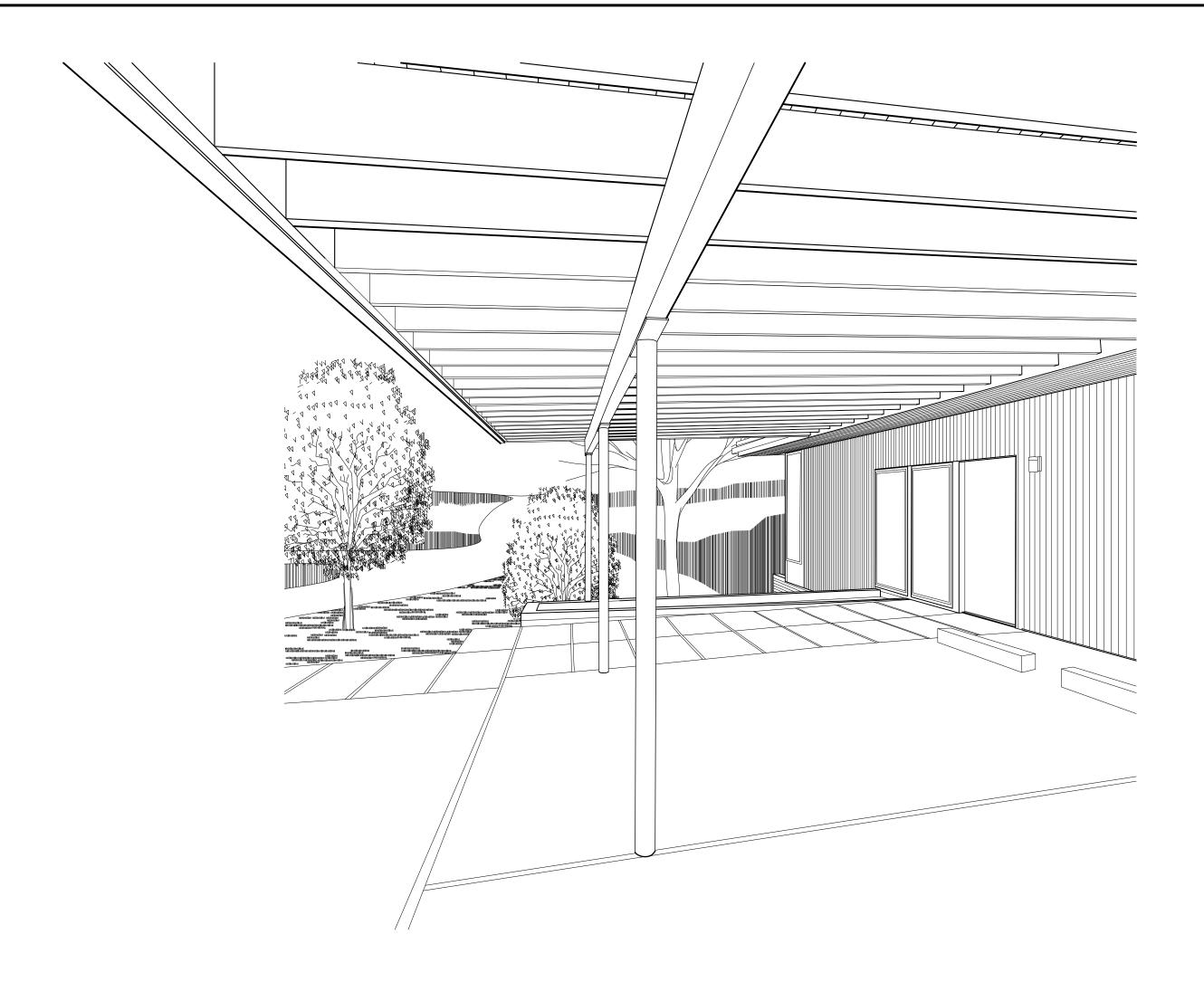
FEET 3/4" = 5,000'-0"

METERS 1:40,000

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ADAPTED FROM THE FOLLOWING USGS SOURCES

SHREVEPORT WEST QUADRANGLE - 7.5 MINUTE SERIES - REVISED 1992 SHREVEPORT EAST QUADRANGLE - 7.5 MINUTE SERIES - REVISED 1992



SIMON HEROLD HOUSE

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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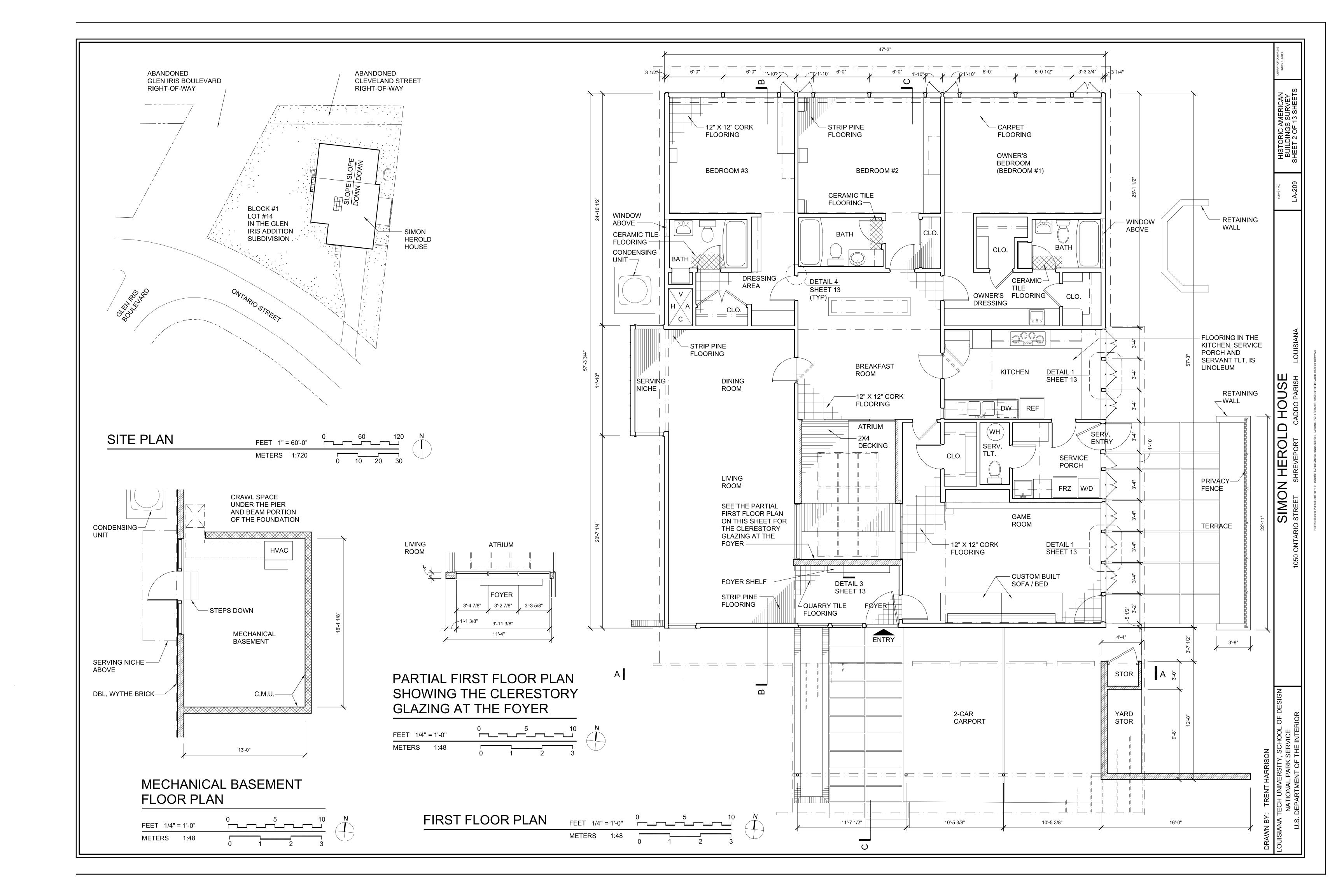
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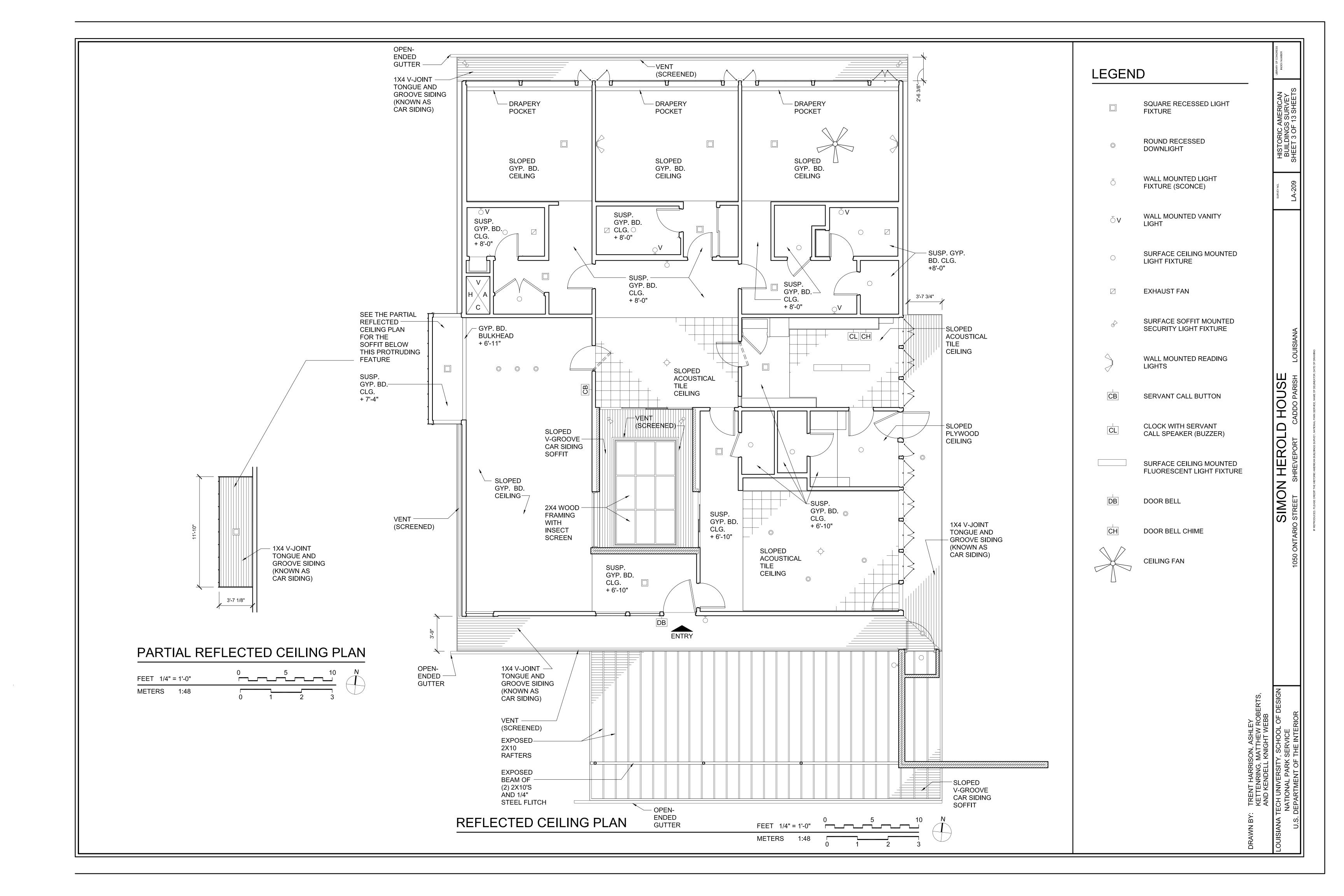
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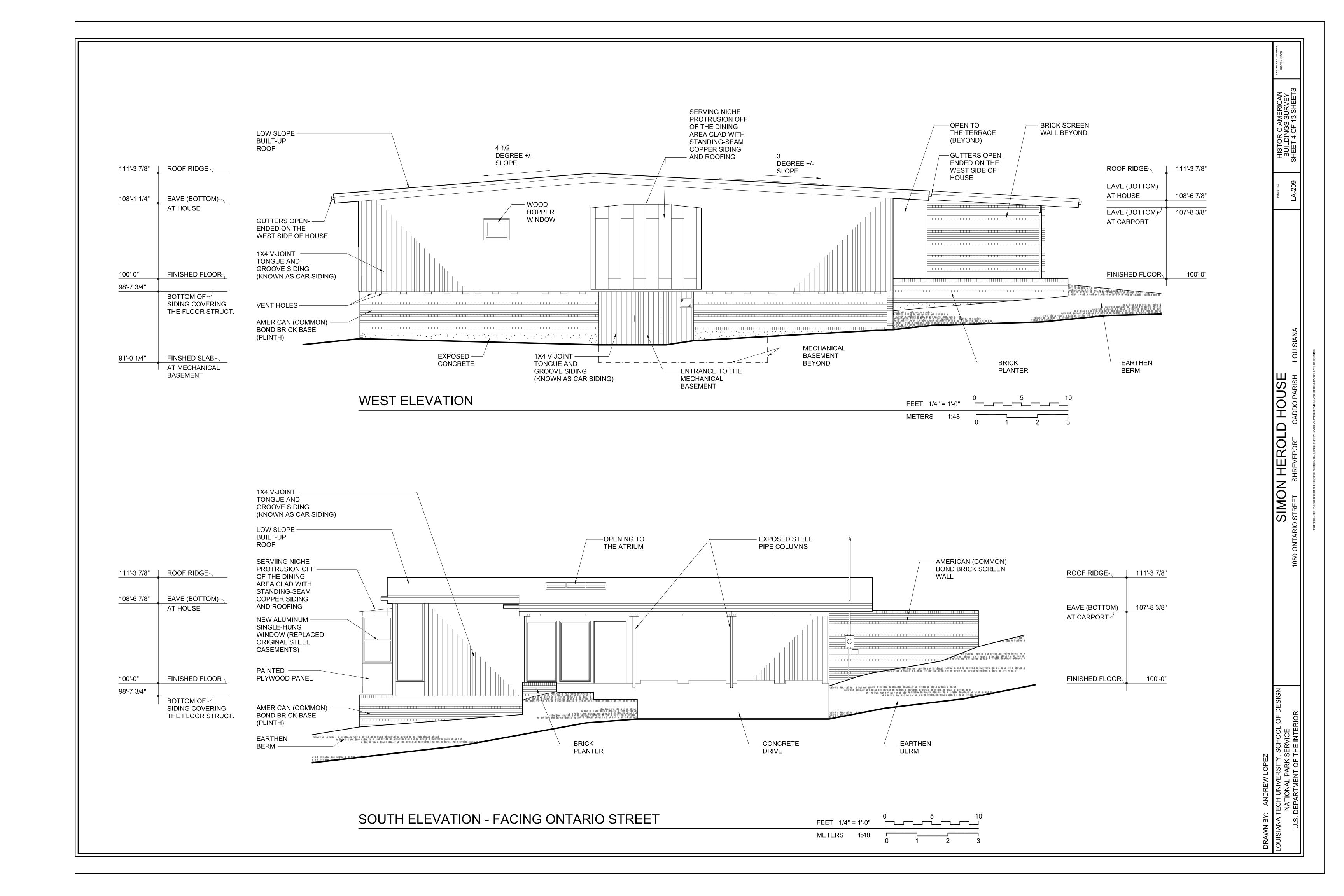
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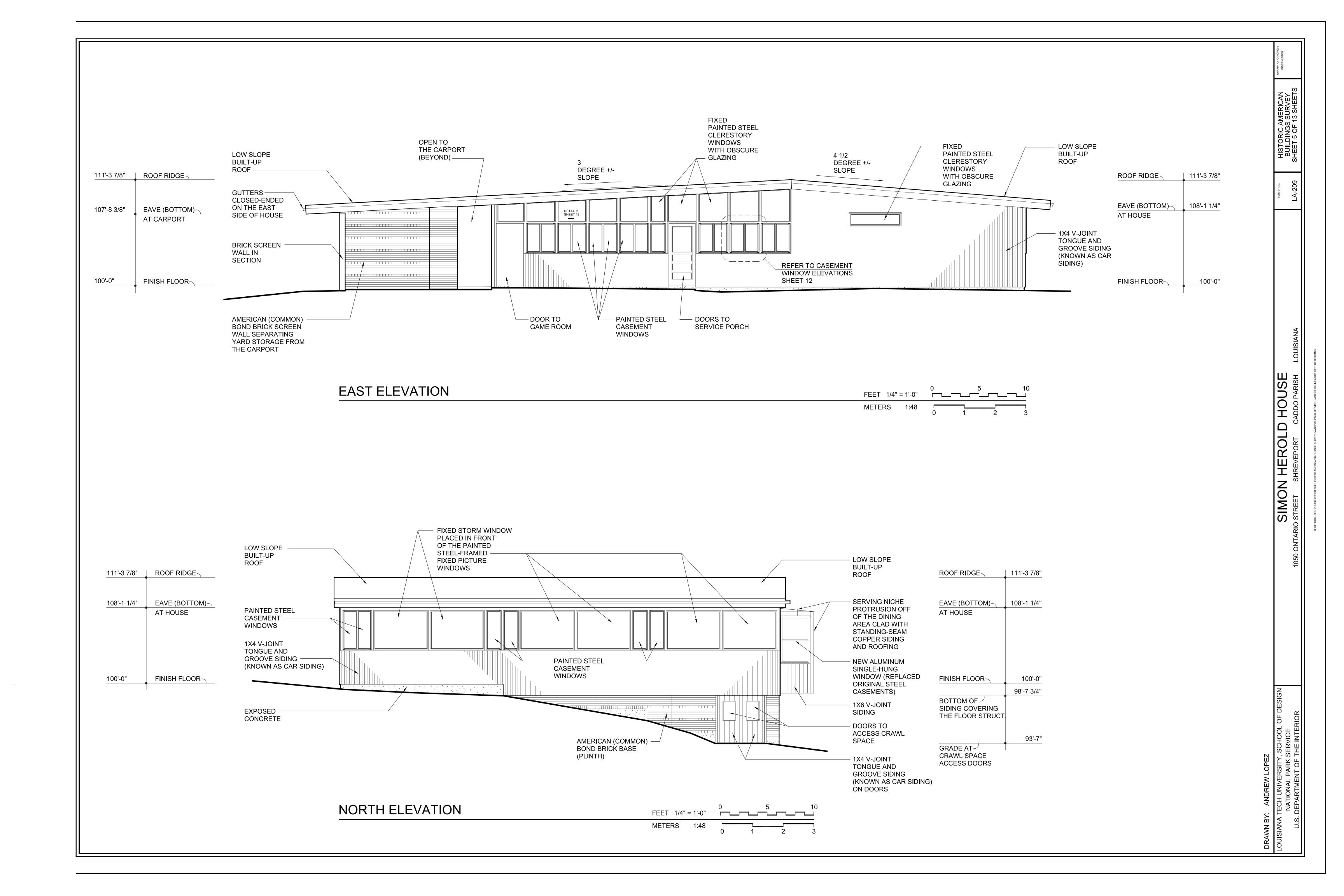
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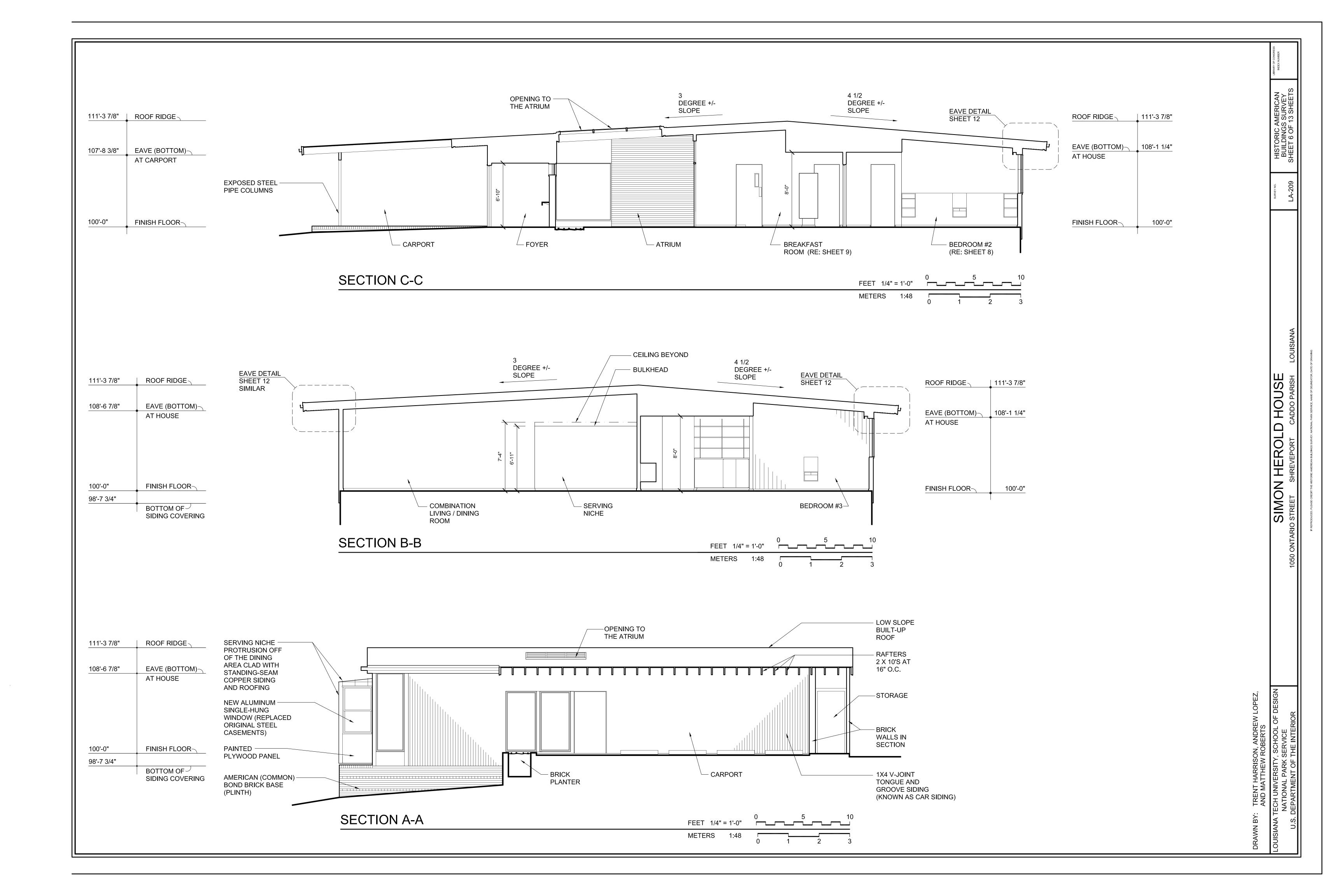
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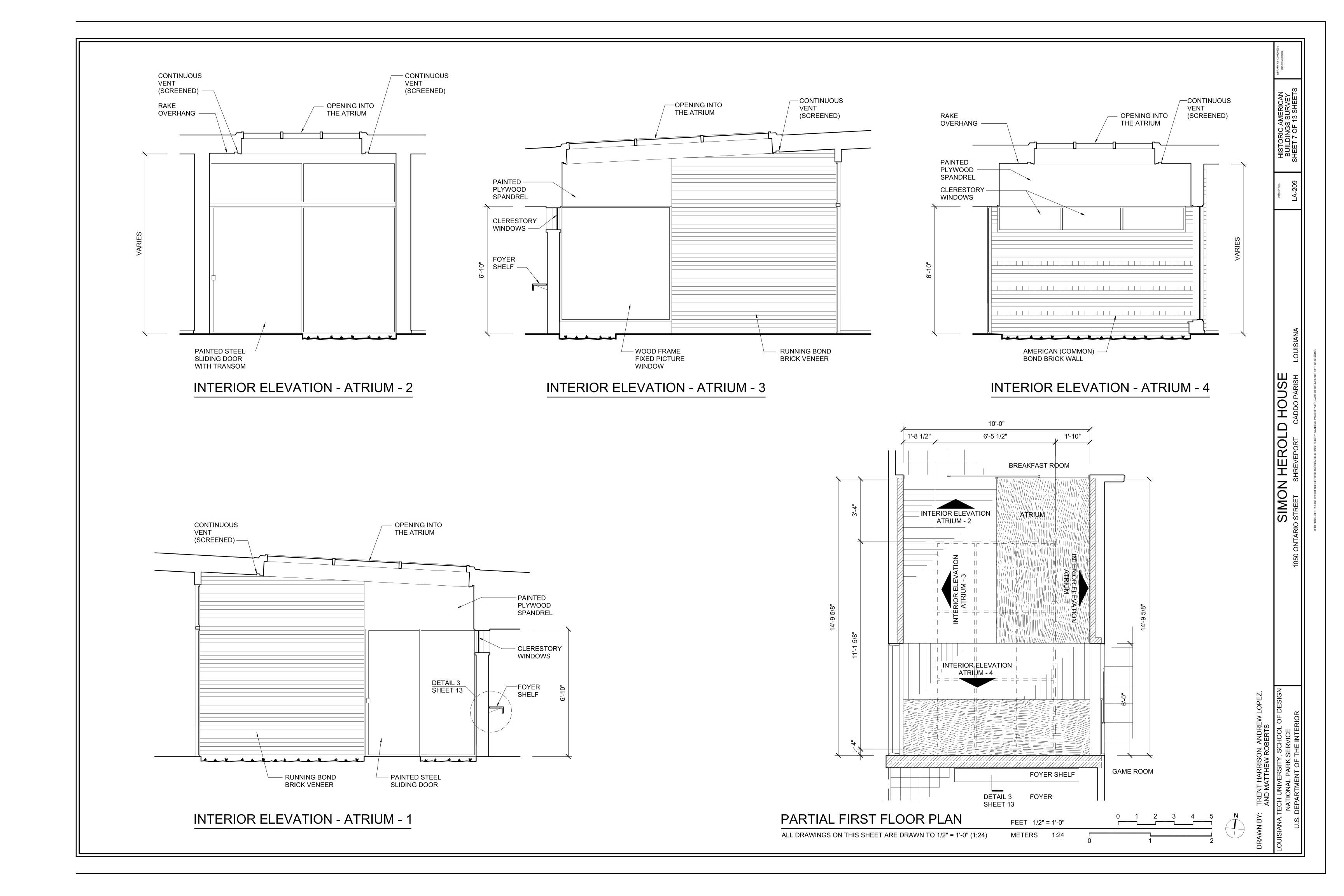


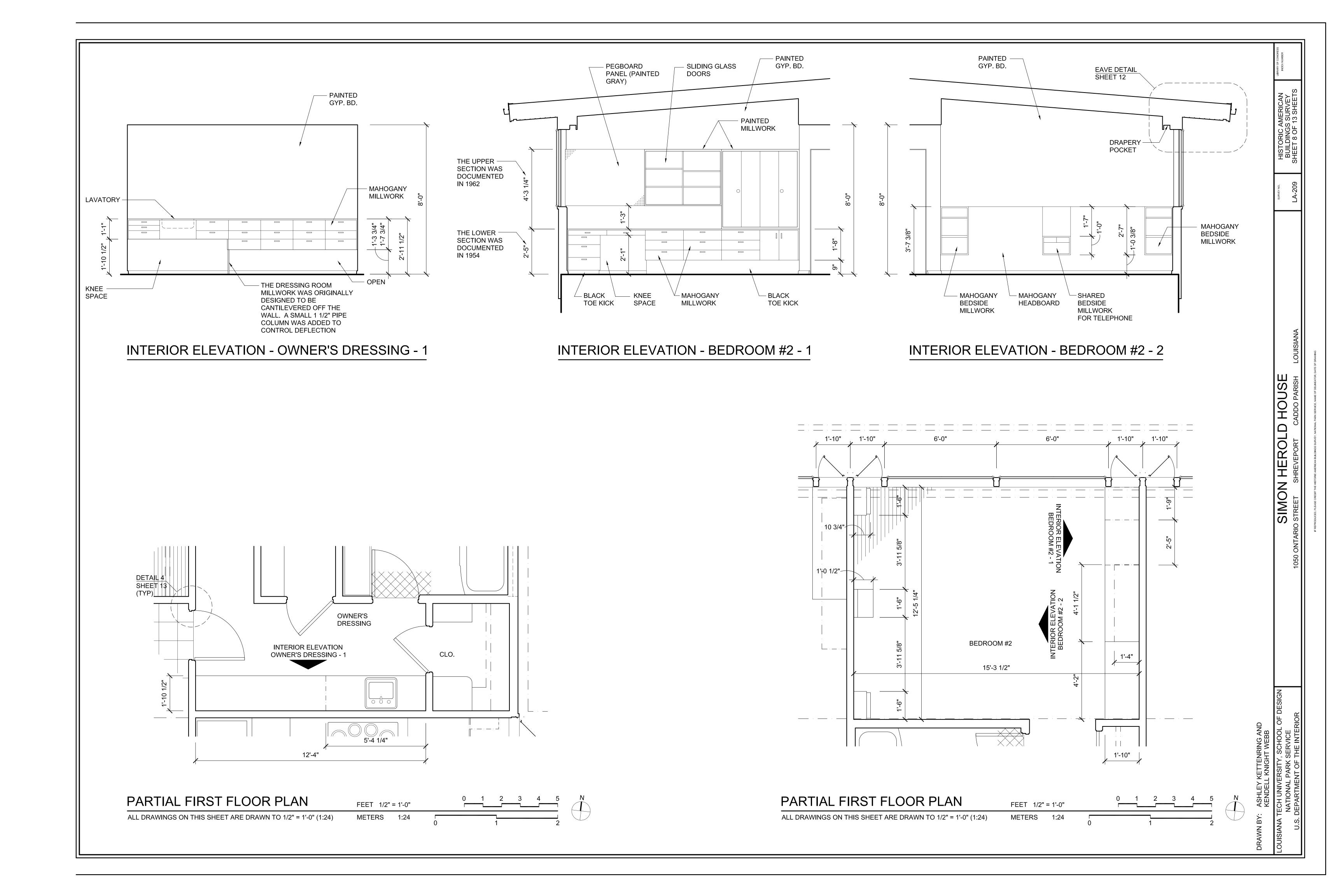


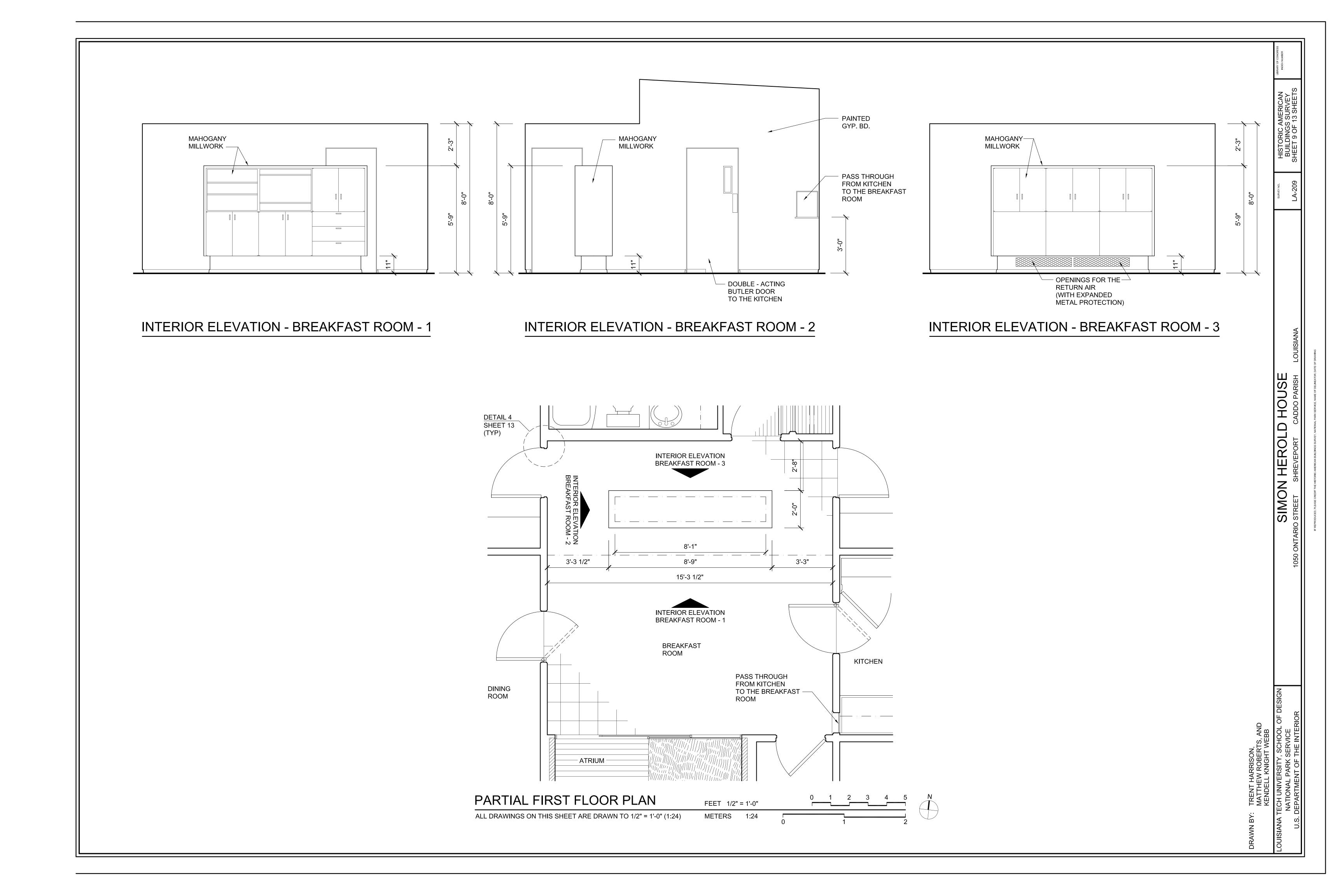


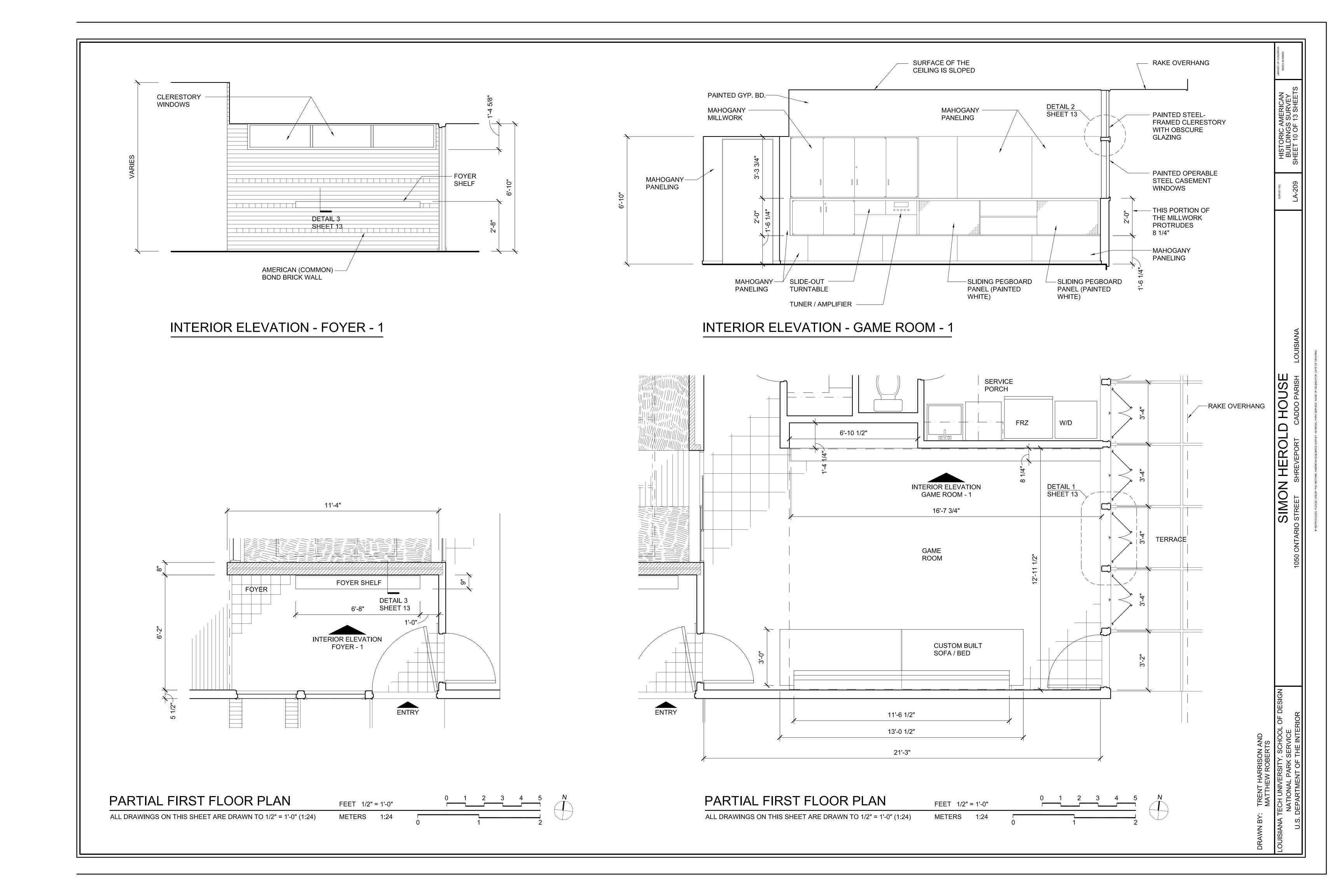


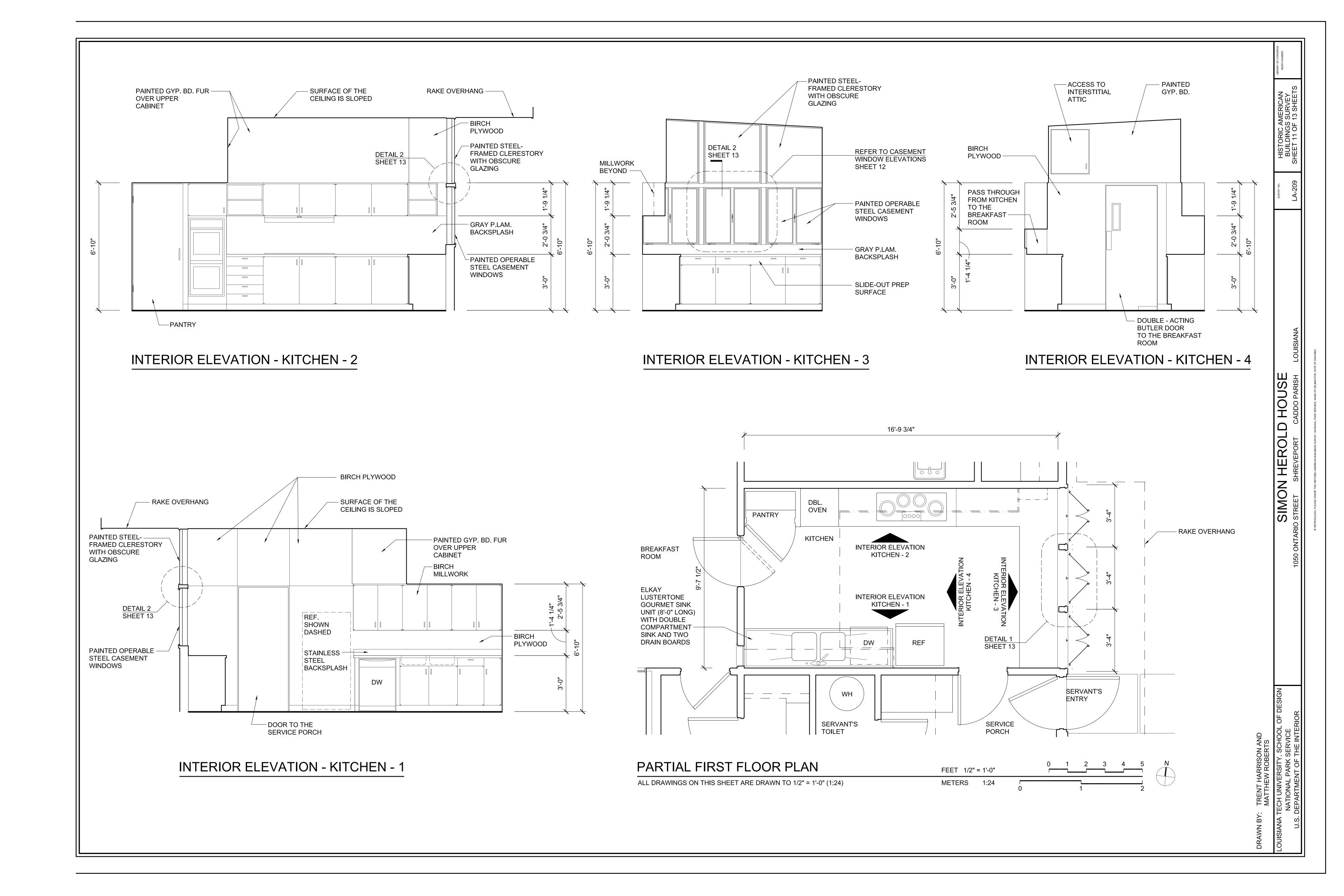


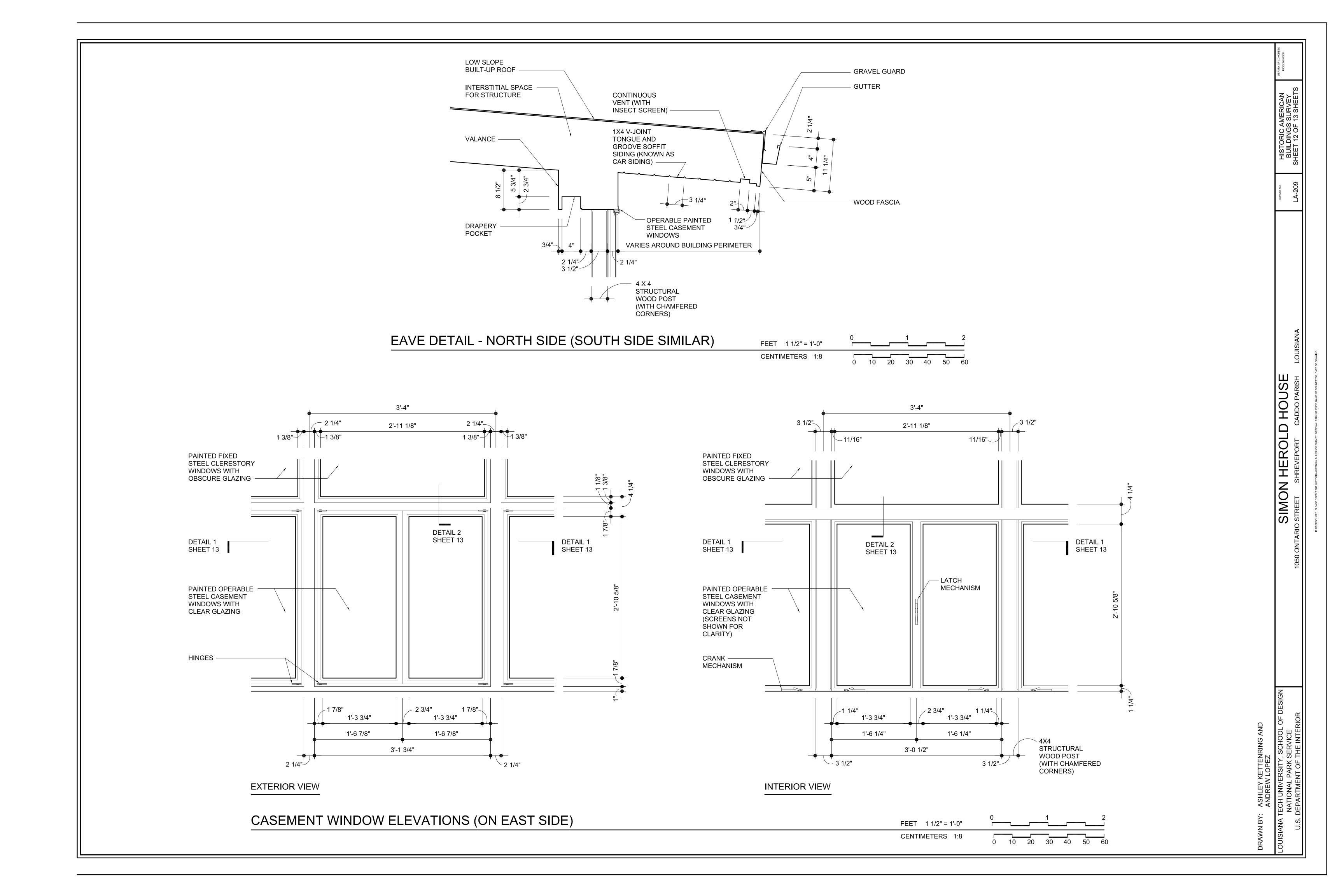


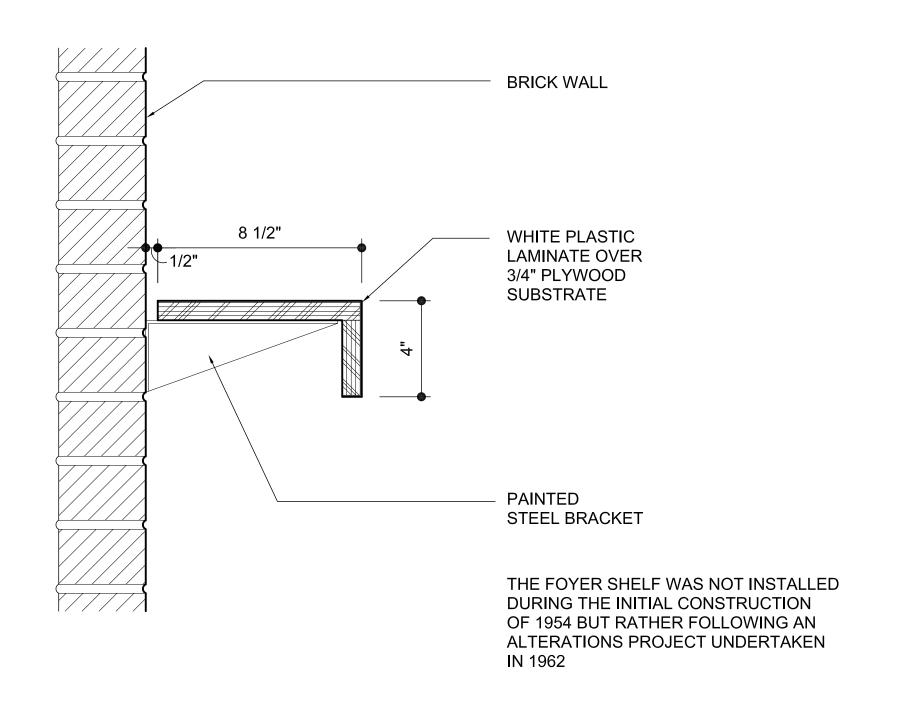




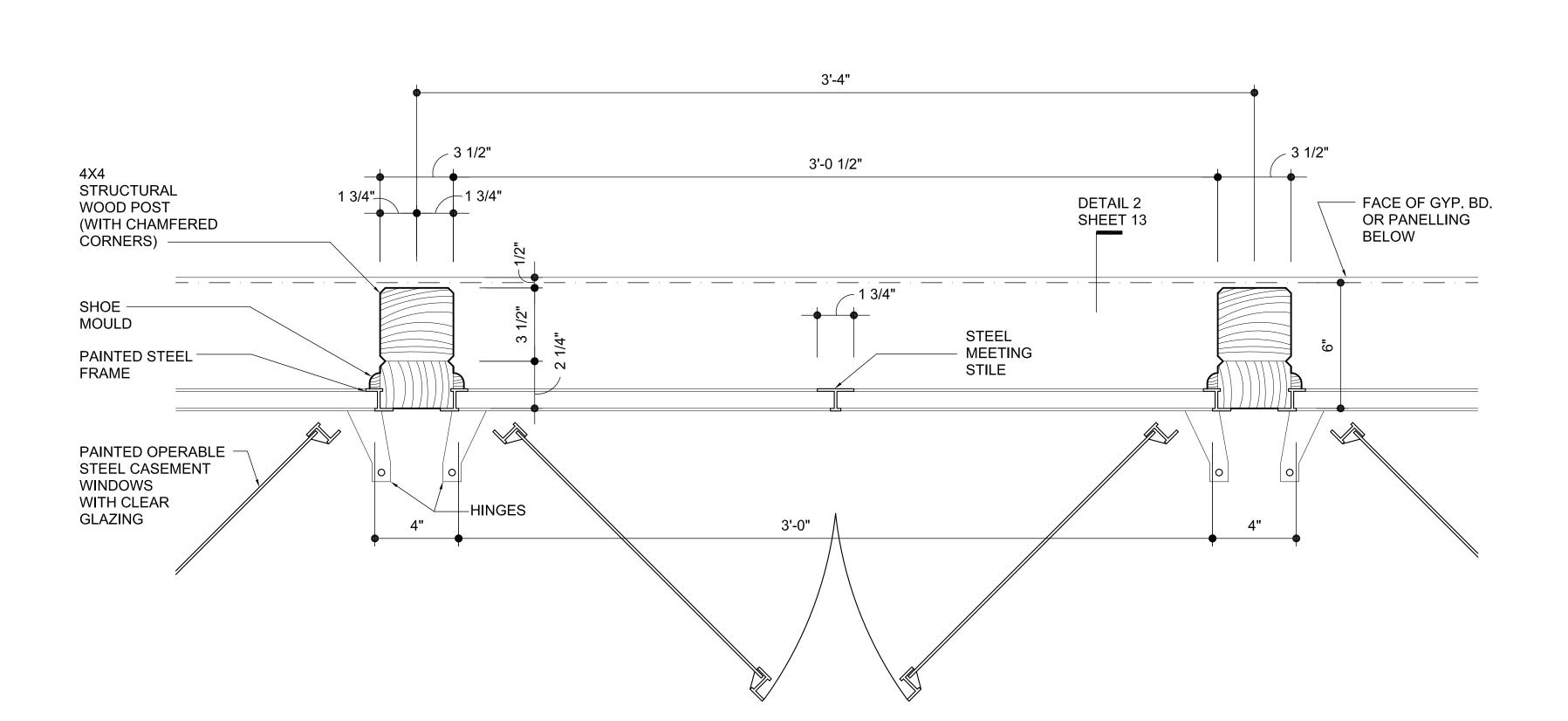






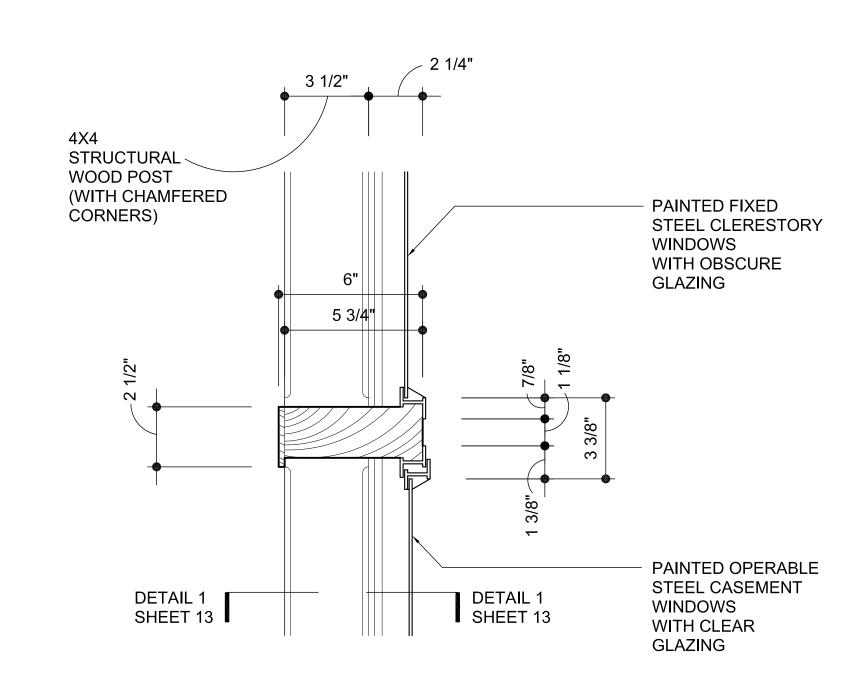


DETAIL 3 - SECTION VIEW - FOYER SHELF



1/2" GYP. - ROUGH BUCKS BOARD -NOT VISIBLE 1/4 ROUND - SINGLE GYP. BD. RABBET EDGE TRIM WOOD DOOR FRAME

DETAIL 4 - SECTION VIEW - SINGLE RABBET DOOR JAMB (TYP)



DETAIL 1 - PLAN VIEW - TYPICAL CASEMENT WINDOWS (EAST SIDE)



DETAIL 2 - SECTION VIEW - WHERE CASEMENTS MEET CLERESTORY (EAST SIDE)

DETAILS

ALL DRAWINGS ON THIS SHEET ARE DRAWN TO 3" = 1'-0" (1:4)

FEET CENTIMETERS 1:4 EROLD HOUSE SIMON HE