

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**JUNE 25, 2012**  
**DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS**  
**HDP-2012-0187**  
**2707 HEMPHILL PARK**

**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1915 house.

**ARCHITECTURE**

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One-and-a-half story rectangular-plan Dutch Colonial Revival-style brick house with a protruding central shaped brick parapet over the front door and shaped parapets on both sides of the side-gabled plan roof. The house has a full-width shed-roofed independent porch on large rectangular brick posts; central front door with a multi-light transom and sidelights; multi-light casement fenestration; historic and non-historic wood additions to the rear. The house is one of a handful of houses remaining in Austin demonstrating the shaped parapets of the early Dutch Colonial Revival; this style of house is much more typical of the Mid-Atlantic states, and has its origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century brick farmhouses and townhouses of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.

**RESEARCH**

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The house appears to have been built in 1915 for S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, who lived here until their deaths. Leroy Brown was a very prominent professor of physics at the University of Texas; he established KUT radio station at UT in 1915, the first commercial radio station in Texas – it later became KNOW, and later built a high-speed mechanical calculator that served as a precedent for digital computers. His wife, Josephine, ran a tea-room in this house in the 1930s. She passed away in 1959; he died in 1966. The house then became the home of the Zivley Typing Service for many years, and more recently has been associated with the Fiji Fraternity, just to the south of the house.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

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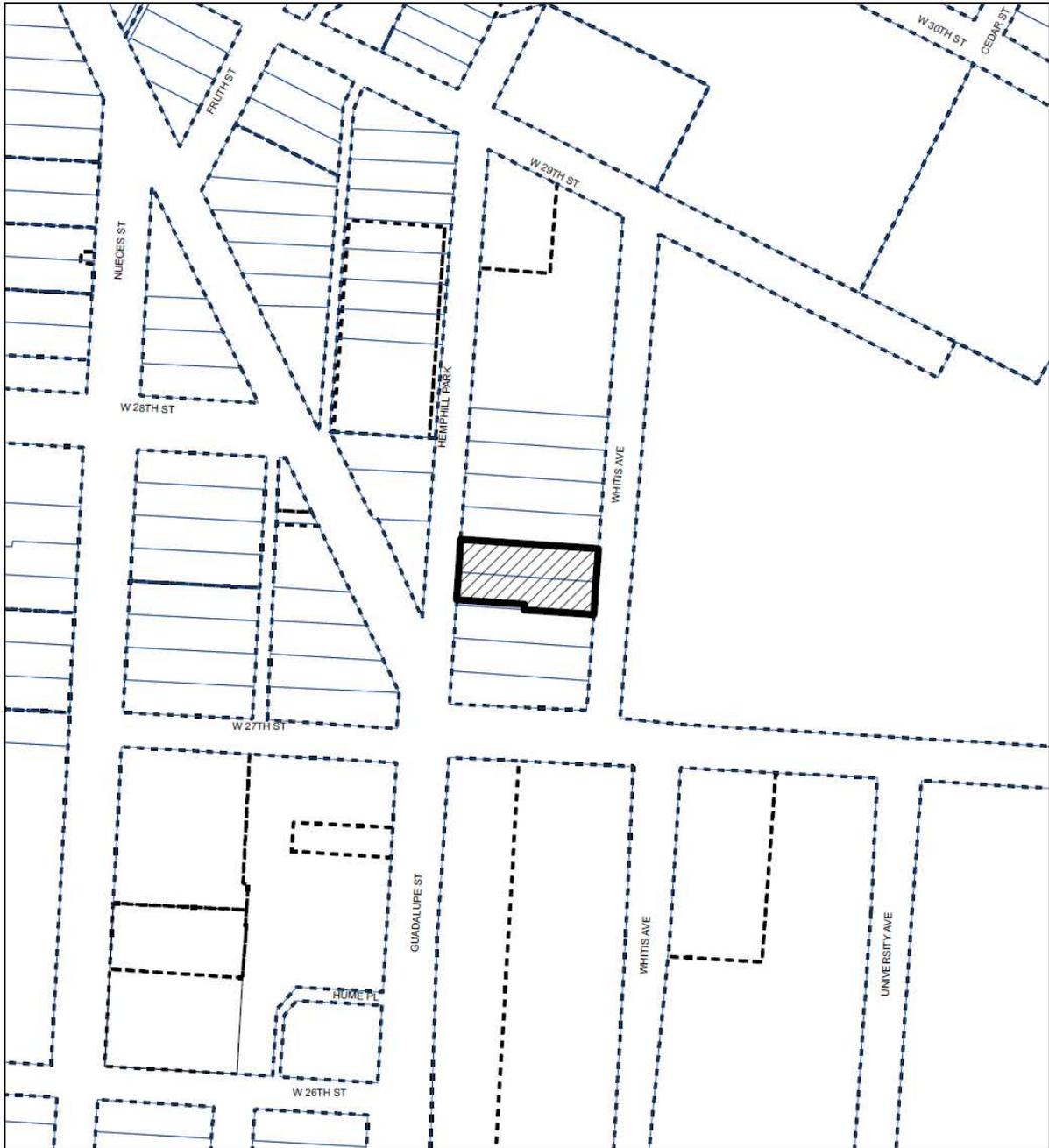
The house is a Priority 2 for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Initiate historic zoning. The house has sufficient architectural and historical significance to warrant further consideration as a historic landmark.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

CASE#: HDP-2012-0187  
LOCATION: 2707 Hemphill Park



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by the Planning and Development Review Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

2707 Hemphill Park Avenue  
ca. 1915





## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 2707 Hemphill Park Avenue

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
May, 2012

1992	Zivley Typing Service
1985-86	Zivley Typing Service
1981	Zivley Typing Service
1977	Zivley Typing Service
1973	Zivley Typing Service
1969	Zivley Typing Service NOTE: S. Leroy Brown died in 1966.
1964	S. Leroy Brown, owner Professor, University of Texas NOTE: Josephine E. Brown died in 1959.
1958	S. Leroy and Josephine E. Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas
1953	S. Leroy and Josephine E. Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas
1949	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas
1947	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
1944-45	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
1941	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
1939	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
1937	S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners Professor, University of Texas NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.

- 1935 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1932-33 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1930-31 Simpson Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor, University of Texas  
Also listed is the Cat n' Fiddle Tea Room, operated by Henrietta Winslow, who lived at 112 W. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1929 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor, University of Texas  
Also listed is the Little T Shop, a restaurant operated by Mrs. Josephine Brown.  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1927 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor of physics, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1924 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Professor of physics, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1922 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Associate professor of physics, University of Texas  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1920 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Associate professor of physics, University of Texas, and instructor, U.S. School of Military Aeronautics  
NOTE: The address is listed as 2707 North Guadalupe Street.
- 1918 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Adjunct professor of physics, University of Texas
- 1916 S. Leroy and Josephine Brown, owners  
Adjunct professor of physics, University of Texas
- 1914 The address is not listed in the directory. S. Leroy Brown is listed as an adjunct professor of physics at the University of Texas. He lived at 2620 Rio Grande Street.



S. Leroy Brown

in: obitua.

**S. LEROY BROWN**  
~~S. Leroy Brown, 83, of 2707~~  
 Hemphill Park, died Tuesday  
 afternoon.

at Dr. Brown was Professor  
 re Emeritus of Physics at The  
 it University of Texas.

ak Survivors are one daughter,  
 Mrs. Elizabeth B. Meyer of  
 w; Victoria; one granddaughter,  
 Judith Ellen Campbell of Aus-  
 th tin; and one grandson, James  
 A. Campbell Jr. at Victoria.

ra a.m. Friday at Weed-Corley  
 Funeral Home. Cremation will  
 lo follow in San Antonio.

Obituary of S. Leroy Brown  
 Austin American, March 16, 1966

na: obitua.

**S. LEROY BROWN**  
 Funeral services for S. Leroy  
 He Brown, 83, 2707 Hemphill Park,  
 ity will be held at 10 a.m. Friday  
 at the Weed-Corley Funeral  
 Home. Cremation will follow in  
 st San Antonio.

is Dr. Brown, professor emeritus  
 of physics at the University of  
 e Texas, died suddenly Tuesday  
 afternoon.

Survivors are one daughter,  
 m Mrs. Elizabeth B. Meyer, Vic-  
 S. toria; one dranddaughter,  
 Judith Ellen Campbell, Austin  
 id and one grandson, James A.  
 1; Campbell Jr., Victoria.

a Those who care to do so may  
 ld make a memorial contribution  
 to their favorite charity.

Funeral notice for S. Leroy Brown  
 Austin Statesman, March 16, 1966

## Final Rites Set Today For Brown

Funeral services for S. Leroy Brown, 83, a member of The University of Texas physics faculty for almost half a century, will be conducted Friday at 10 a.m. at Weed-Corley Funeral Home.

Cremation will follow in San Antonio.

Prof. Brown died Tuesday afternoon. He lived at 2707 Hemphill Park.

He gained world-wide recognition in 1939 for building a high-speed mechanical calculator known as a "multi-harmonograph." The machine was in some ways a forerunner of the modern digital computers.

Prof. Brown joined the UT faculty in 1911, serving as professor of physics until his retirement to emeritus status in 1954.

Born in Indiana, he taught at Purdue and Lehigh Universities before coming to Texas. He was a graduate of Indiana University and the University of California at Berkeley.

Survivors are a daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth B. Meyer of Victoria, and two grandchildren.

Funeral notice for S. Leroy Brown  
Austin American, March 18, 1966

### IN MEMORIAM S. LEROY BROWN

S. Leroy Brown, Professor of Physics Emeritus, died March 15, 1966, at the age of 85 years. Following graduation from Bloomfield, Indiana High School he received degrees from the

University of Indiana -- the B.A. degree in 1905 and the M.A. degree in 1907. His doctorate was from the University of California in 1909, with major in physics and minor in electrical engineering and mathematics. During the graduate study he was a Whiting Fellow and was an elected member of Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Xi.

Dr. Brown held student appointments as Assistant Instructor at Purdue University and Instructor at Lehigh University. He came to The University of Texas as Instructor of Physics in 1912 and retired as Professor of Physics in 1954. During World War I he was President of the Academic Board, Air Service School in Austin, where he succeeded well in setting up emergency training and teaching facilities for radio operators. Later, he was consultant to the War Research Laboratory of the Department of Physics during World War II, and later to its successor, the Military Physics Research Laboratory. He served many years as Chairman of the Department of Physics. Among various organizations he was a Fellow of the American Physical Society and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His biography was carried in Who's Who in America and Who's Who In American Education.

In 1911 Dr. Brown married Miss Josephine Brown (known to her many friends as Dearie). She operated a tearoom on North Guadalupe Street for a number of years before her death on September 18, 1959. Dr. Brown is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth B. Meyer, of Victoria, Texas, and two grandchildren.

In many respects Dr. Brown was one of the early great teachers at the University. His freshman and sophomore classes were large and enthusiastic, and they were taught by a dedicated man in a loud and convincing voice. His points of view in class were driven home as if by a hammer, as were also his points of view in discussions outside the classroom. While advanced and graduate classes in physics were small during most of his teaching years, his classes were usually larger than the departmental average.

To those of us who were members of his class and who were encouraged to become teachers, Dr. Brown was an inspiration and a force as well. He put such people through a strict, but friendly, regime of stand-by and unexpected emergency teaching from day to day -- usually with little or no warning. When funds were tight, as they always were during the depression years, he somehow saw to it that the young teacher had a long-session appointment and a little work in the summer. If things got worse he made loans to them to bridge their fiscal gaps.

In the Twenties and early Thirties money for research was almost non-existent. Moreover, there was little encouragement for a member of the faculty to do research or to publish or to attend national meetings. Nevertheless --and indifference and some ridicule--S. Leroy Brown managed to get together enough crude items of equipment to use day and night in his laboratory, with the few advanced students who were around the wooden shacks housing the physics department. From such efforts came some 30 articles in national Journals and three textbooks. He regularly attended meetings of the American Physical-Society, mostly at his own expense.

Dr. Brown was working in the field of high-frequency circuits when radio was in its infancy and, later, when the vacuum tube was invented. He and his students built the first broadcasting station in Austin -- known first as WCM and later as KUT. One of his students, Robert Shelby, was the station operator and later became chief television engineer of NBC. Others did the announcing, built equipment, played the piano and organ. Although the broadcasting venture was short-lived and was soon turned over to the Extension Division, it somehow served to persuade more students to take up advanced physics and to go on to more academic matters. Dr. Brown's days in

research were mostly those of no funds (except those slightly diverted from M&E), temporary space under leaky roof and whistly floors, and no equipment except string and sealing wax.

S. Leroy Brown's research was in a number of areas -- some of them restricted to problems for which he could find a piece of equipment. If there was no equipment, his paper was only a paper study of the problem. The topics covered included heat transfer, Bernoulli's Principle and the curving of a baseball, new types of resistance thermometers, thermal electromotive forces, radio-frequency electrical measurements, residuals of inductance and capacitance in resistance coils, and other subjects. He conceived and built a complex mechanical harmonic synthesizer analyzer, which was, in many respects, a forerunner of electrical analogue computer. Late in 1939 he did extensive work on his multi -harmonograph for solving pairs of non-linear simultaneous equations and transcendental equations, and in doing certain types of network analysis. Dr. Brown was in physics during what may now be termed its classical period. Particle physics was slowly developing, nuclear fission was not at hand, and there were neither massive particle accelerators nor magnificent amounts of Federal funds. For the most part, in the days of his prime there was nothing to do but teach and to make-do in research with what he could put together. Both of these things he did -- and did well.

C. P. Boner, Chairman

H. L. Lochte

W. S. Stone

Filed with the secretary of the General Faculty by Mr. C. P. Boner, Chairman of the Special S. Leroy Brown Memorial Resolution Committee, May 25, 1966.

Distributed among the members of the General Faculty by the University Stenographic Bureau, June 1, 1966.

From the Handbook of Texas entry on Radio in Texas:

1) As part of his experiments in high-frequency radio, University of Texas physics professor S. Leroy Brown built radio equipment and began broadcasting weather and crop reports from a physics laboratory on the UT campus in 1915.

2) During World War I, using the call letters KUT, the university's Division of Extension operated Brown's equipment to broadcast reports from the United States Marketing Bureau and Department of Agriculture. By March 1922 the station had combined with a second campus station (call letters 5XY) and, with a 500-watt power rating, was one of the best-equipped and most powerful stations in the nation. The usual broadcasts were from 8 to 10 P.M. on three nights a week; programming consisted of music, lectures, and agriculture and marketing reports. In addition, a church service was aired on Sunday.

From norwoodtower.com – Norwood Firsts:

## C.9 - 12

Atop the Motoramp Garage was the exclusive Austin Club, set back and surrounded by landscaped gardens. Its floors were decorated with bluebonnet and cactus tiles. The Austin Club was located on the fifth floor, with entry through the main building, until the 40s. KNOW Radio took its place, broadcasting from here for the next 25 years. Louis R. Cook managed the station from 1947 until 1969. KNOW was the immediate descendant of Austin's first radio station. Founded in 1922 by a physics professor at UT, Dr. S. Leroy Brown, KUT became Austin's first commercial broadcast station in 1927, when UT decided the radio business was too costly and sold it to the Rice Hotel in Houston. By 1930, it was located in the Driskill Hotel, and in 1932 its new owners, Hearst Publications, changed the call letters to KNOW.