

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Bellecourt Apartments

other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 1107-1123 Bellevue Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Richmond Heights [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Louis County code 189 zip code 63117

## 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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( see continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

Date 31 July 02

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Bellecourt Apartments  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
County and State

**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**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling \_\_\_\_\_  
 Domestic: Secondary Structure \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling \_\_\_\_\_  
 Domestic: Secondary Structure \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 walls BRICK \_\_\_\_\_  
 STONE \_\_\_\_\_  
 roof ASPHALT \_\_\_\_\_  
 other TERRA COTTA \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Bellecourt Apartments  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
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.
[X] 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1924

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- [ ] 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[X] Other
Name of repository: Institute for Sustainable Development

Bellecourt Apartments  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	[1][5]	[7][3][3][9][5][0]	[4][2][7][9][0][4][0]	2	[ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	[ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]	4	[ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]	[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ]
							[ ] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie C. Doering

organization Institute for Sustainable Development date March 25, 2002

street & number 112 East High Street telephone (573) 634-5008

city or town Jefferson City state MO zip code 65101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Pete Rothschild (contact person); Ownership: 50% Rothschild Development Limited; 50% Larry and Pam Cherry

street & number 4746 McPherson Avenue telephone 314-361-7117

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63108

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

### Narrative Description

#### **Summary:**

The Bellecourt Apartments, a three-story, multi-family apartment complex, are located in a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood at 1107-1123 Bellevue Avenue immediately west of St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond Heights, St. Louis County, Missouri. Built in 1924 this Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival building has a flat roof and front-facing U-shape with a noncontributing carport at the southern rear side of the property. A vernacular building, the Bellecourt Apartments incorporate Italian Renaissance features and applied affinities, such as a symmetrical façade, rusticated foundation with smooth wall finish above, decorative quoins, and dentiled cornice and roofline parapet.<sup>1</sup> The building's five slightly recessed entryways are each within separate projecting bays. The entryways have hooded segmentally arched crowns above doorways that contain large-pane glazing as well as sidelights. The less elaborate third story windows are another element common to Italian Renaissance style. The interior design features three different floor plans suitable for families of varying sizes. The present condition of the Bellecourt Apartments' Italian Renaissance features, the overall condition of the building, and the lack of significant alterations contribute to its high degree of historic integrity.

#### **Elaboration:**

The Bellecourt Apartments, a thirty-unit apartment complex built in 1924, are situated in a front-facing U-shape floor plan (see Photo 1). Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps showing the land before and after construction are included as Continuation Sheets 4 and 5. Since the building's floor plan is U-shaped, it features a large courtyard within its main or east façade. A Plat Map clearly showing the layout of the property is included as Continuation Sheet 6. For purposes of clarification in describing the entire east façade, the courtyard elevations will be designated as the left wing elevation, center elevation, and right wing elevation with the ends being denoted the end wing elevations. The center elevation, which has one recessed entryway within the projecting third bay, is five bays wide. Both wing elevations are seven bays wide. On the left wing elevation, the third, fifth and seventh bays project outward an equal distance from the main building. The third bay contains one entryway and interior stairwell. In addition, the sixth bay of the left wing elevation projects further away from the building than the other projections. This bay contains the elevation's second entryway and interior stairwell. The right wing elevation is a mirror image and features identical projections: the second bay contains one entryway and interior stairwell and is the furthest projected while the first, third and fifth bays are slightly less projected from the building. The fifth bay contains the other entryway and interior stairwell. The end wing elevations are both three bays wide and identical in appearance. The consistency of the features on all elevations of the façade ensures the building's symmetrical appearance.

The detail on this vernacular building's exterior follows the characteristics of Italian Renaissance architecture, a subcategory of Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals style. At the ground level, the foundation appears rusticated, as the stonework is rough and exposed (see Photo 2). Evenly spaced throughout the stonework are single sashes of unornamented windows. Moving upward, the basement's rustication is separated from the smooth brick of the upper floors by a stone belt course, and corner wall intersections of the brickwork are

<sup>1</sup> Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000) 397.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

decorated with stone quoins (see Photo 2). Each of the apartment's five main entrances are accessible by way of a concrete path that circles the interior courtyard with spokes running to each doorway (see Photo 1). Hedges flank each entryway, which contains a segmentally arched doorway with hooded crown detail reading BELLECOURT (see Photo 3 and 4). The large-pane glazing within the one-step-up, slightly recessed door is accented by sidelights. Small ornamental porch lights flank the top of the entryway.

There are a variety of windows on the exterior of the apartment complex. As is customary with Italian Renaissance buildings the windows on the lower stories are more decorative than those on the upper story; however, all the windows of the Bellecourt Apartments are fairly simple in design. The most elaborate windows are in the bays of the five entryways to the building. Above each entryway are two windows stacked on top of one another with approximately a foot of brick separating them (see Photo 5). The windows have terra cotta surrounds with a circular pattern and a kind of four-leaf clover detail at the top corners of both windows. The higher window has a simple concrete sill while the lower window's concrete sill is supported by additional square stones. Every bay of every elevation within the courtyard façade contains either paired windows separated by a mullion or simplified Palladian windows (see Photo 6). On the end wing elevations, the windows in the first and third bays appear to be the simplified Palladian windows while the windows in the second bay, which correspond to the apartment bathrooms, are smaller single windows. On the first and second stories, all windows of the building's façade are 6/1 or 4/1 windows with muntins separating glass panes above. Each window has a simple concrete sill below it and a keystone above each mullion. Slightly simpler are the third floor windows, which have only concrete sills and no decorative keystones.

Above the third story windows of the building's east façade is a decorative dentiled stone cornice. Above the cornice a parapet extending the length of the roofline and capped in stone conceals the building's flat roof. Centrally located within each entryway bay, the parapet rises to form an elaborate semi-circular edge that is flanked by triangular-shaped points (see Photo 7). Terra cotta decorative cartouches with animal motifs are affixed to the brick directly below the triangular-shaped points and combine with an elongated decorative cartouche below the semi-circular design to form an elaborate configuration. Also, at the corner roofline intersections of the end wing elevations the parapet rises again to create a rectangular edge below which are orange hexagonal cartouches trimmed in stone affixed to the brick.

The outer or north and south elevations and rear or west elevation of this U-shaped building are less ornamented and more functional in appearance than the façade. Each of the thirty apartments has rear entry via a deck and stairway shared by two apartments on each story (see Photo 8). The outer and rear elevations have either single or paired windows with simple concrete sills. No roofline parapets or other exterior decorations are visible on these elevations. The rear elevation is painted red and has two green doors that provide restricted access to the unfinished basement containing the boiler room at the southwest corner of the building. These doors are in the center of the rear elevation and are a few steps down from ground level. The concrete, flat roof of the boiler room is located at the intersection of the west and south elevations, only extends to the height of the rusticated level, and has an old wooden door on its southern elevation (see Photo 9).

The south elevation abuts a narrow alley that separates it from the building's non-contributing carport (see Photo 9). This noncontributing carport is completely detached from the apartment building and can be accessed either through its main entrance on Wise Avenue or from Bellevue Avenue via the alley. This

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

carport provides residents with a total of 26 spaces arranged in two rows of thirteen. The main entryway to the carport is flanked by a brick wall approximately four feet high with both edges rising higher to form a parapet topped with stone. Both rows of covered parking spaces are supported by brick columns, one on each end and two within the row, all of which extend above the height of the flat roof. Slender green iron poles provide further support and separate each parking space. The roof is sealed with tar while the underside remains exposed wooden beams. Refer to Continuation Sheet 6 for a clear depiction of the Bellecourt Apartments and adjacent carport.

The Bellecourt Apartments have an unfinished basement and three stories of apartments. The basement floor plan is simple while the floor plan for the apartment levels, which are identical for each floor, are more complex. The total square footage of the basement is 8262.5 and the total square footage of each floor above is 7724.27. Each floor contains ten one- and two-bedroom apartments, four in each of the side wings and two in the middle wing. There are a total of 30 apartment units: 18 efficiency, 6 one-bedroom, and 6 two-bedroom. Floor plans of the basement and a representative upper floor are included on Continuation Sheets 7 and 8. Each of the five entryways features a tile floor and enclosed marble stairway with wooden handrails and black iron spindles. The walls of the ground level entryway are finished in marble to the height of the first floor staircase landing. The remainder of the wall space has a smooth plaster finish. The apartments contain all the necessary amenities while remaining simple and functional in design.

### **Alterations and Integrity Issues:**

The Bellecourt Apartments remain a fine example of a vernacular building with Italian Renaissance applied affinities. Throughout the years they have retained many identifying features of this architectural style. These features include a symmetrical façade, rusticated foundation with smooth wall finish above, less elaborate third story windows, decorative quoins, and dentiled cornice and roofline parapet. Each of the five entryways has a hooded segmentally arched crown above its door, and the door contains large-pane glazing on it as well as sidelights. While little information is available as to the Bellecourt Apartments' construction, in its present condition, there is no reason to believe that historic integrity has been compromised.

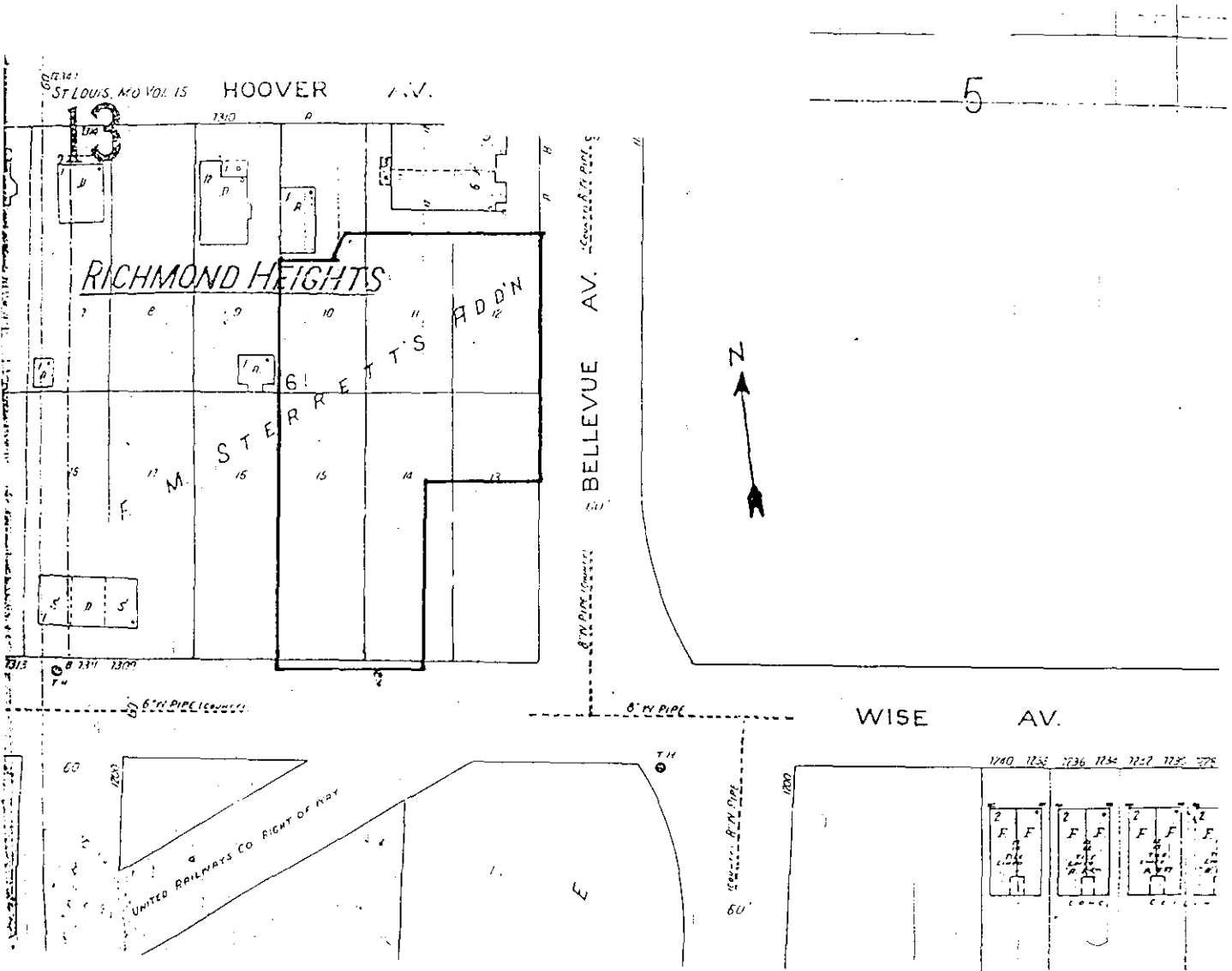
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, ca. 1920





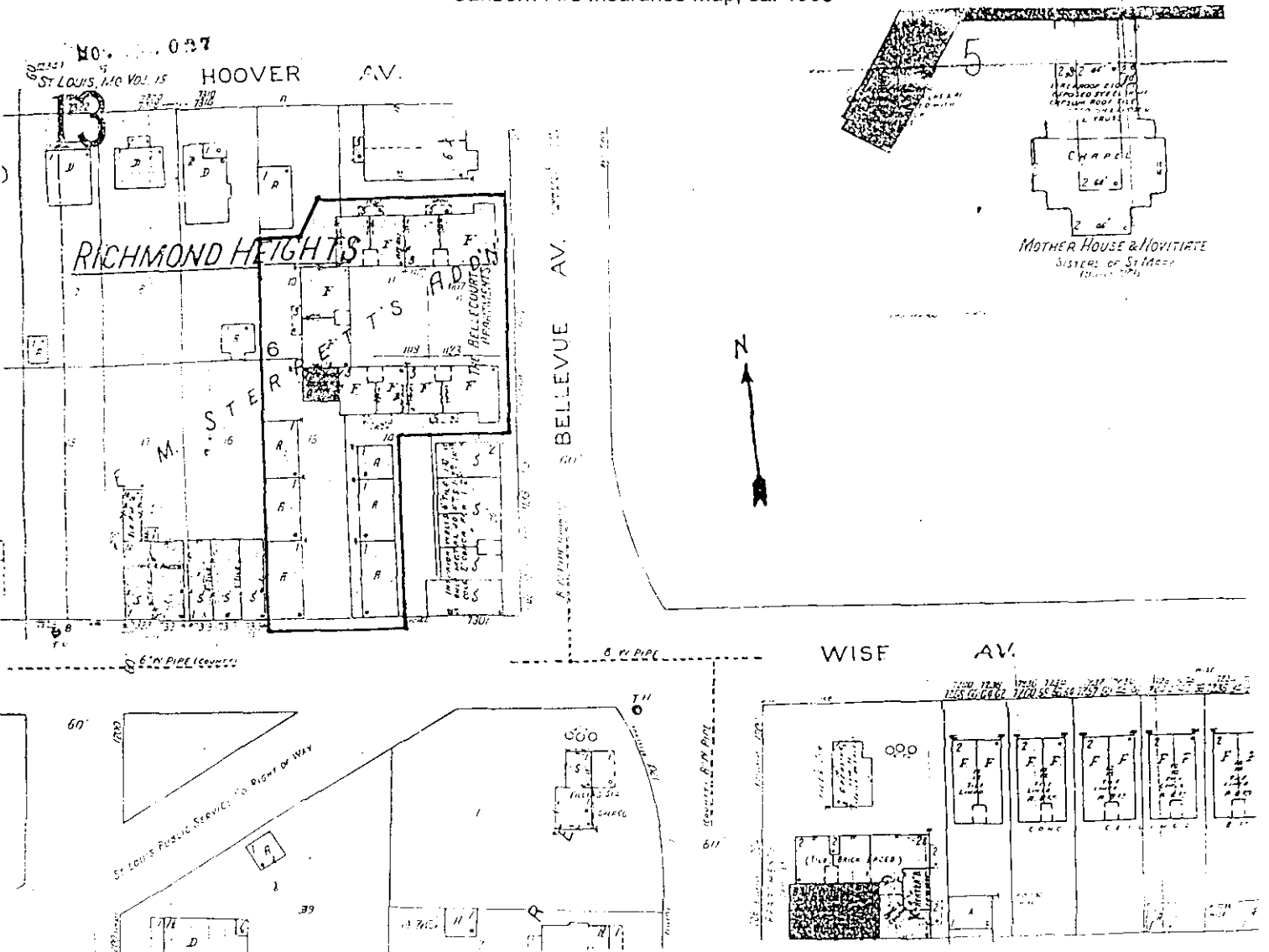
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

## Bellecourt Apartments St. Louis County, Missouri

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, ca. 1938



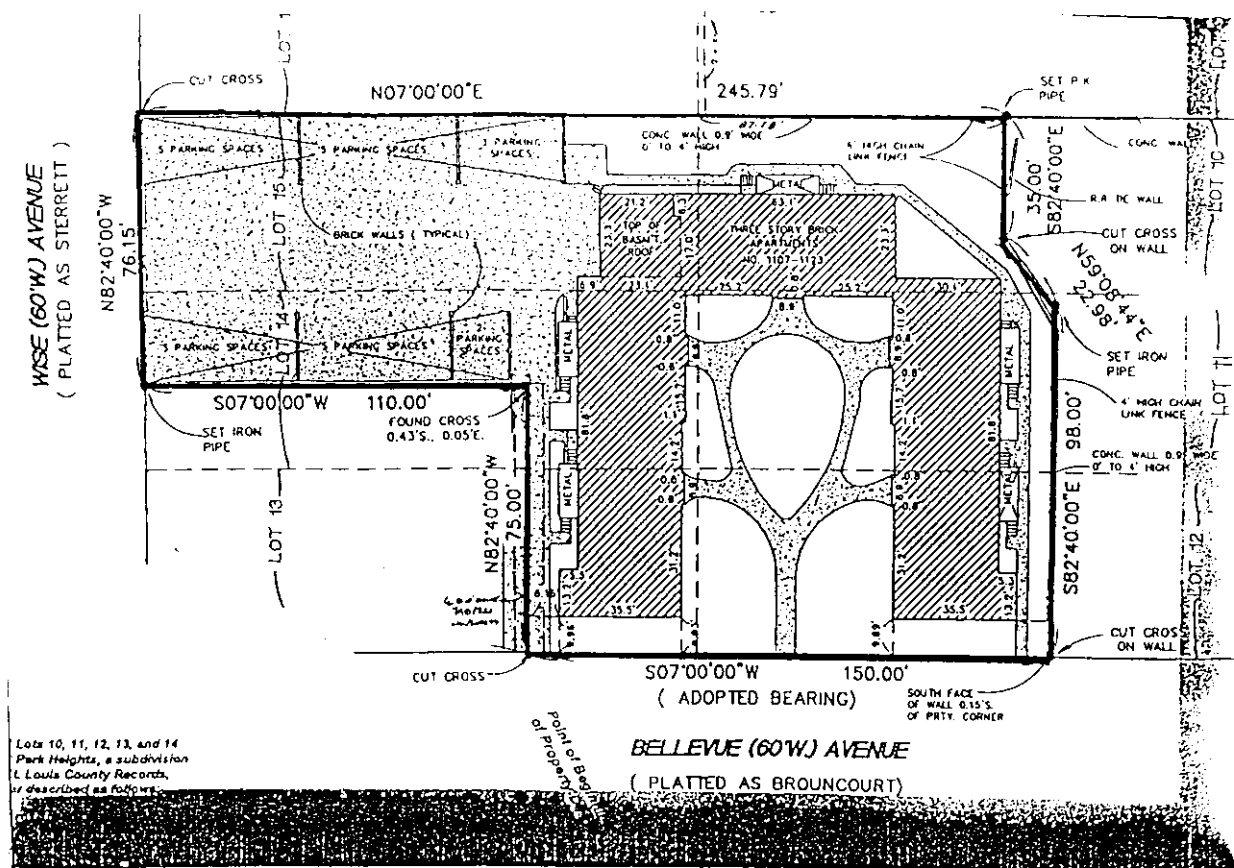
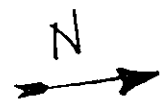
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Plat Map of Bellecourt Apartments



Lots 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14  
Park Heights, a subdivision  
of St. Louis County Records,  
is described as follows:

**BELLEVUE (60'W) AVENUE**  
( PLATTED AS BRONCOURT )

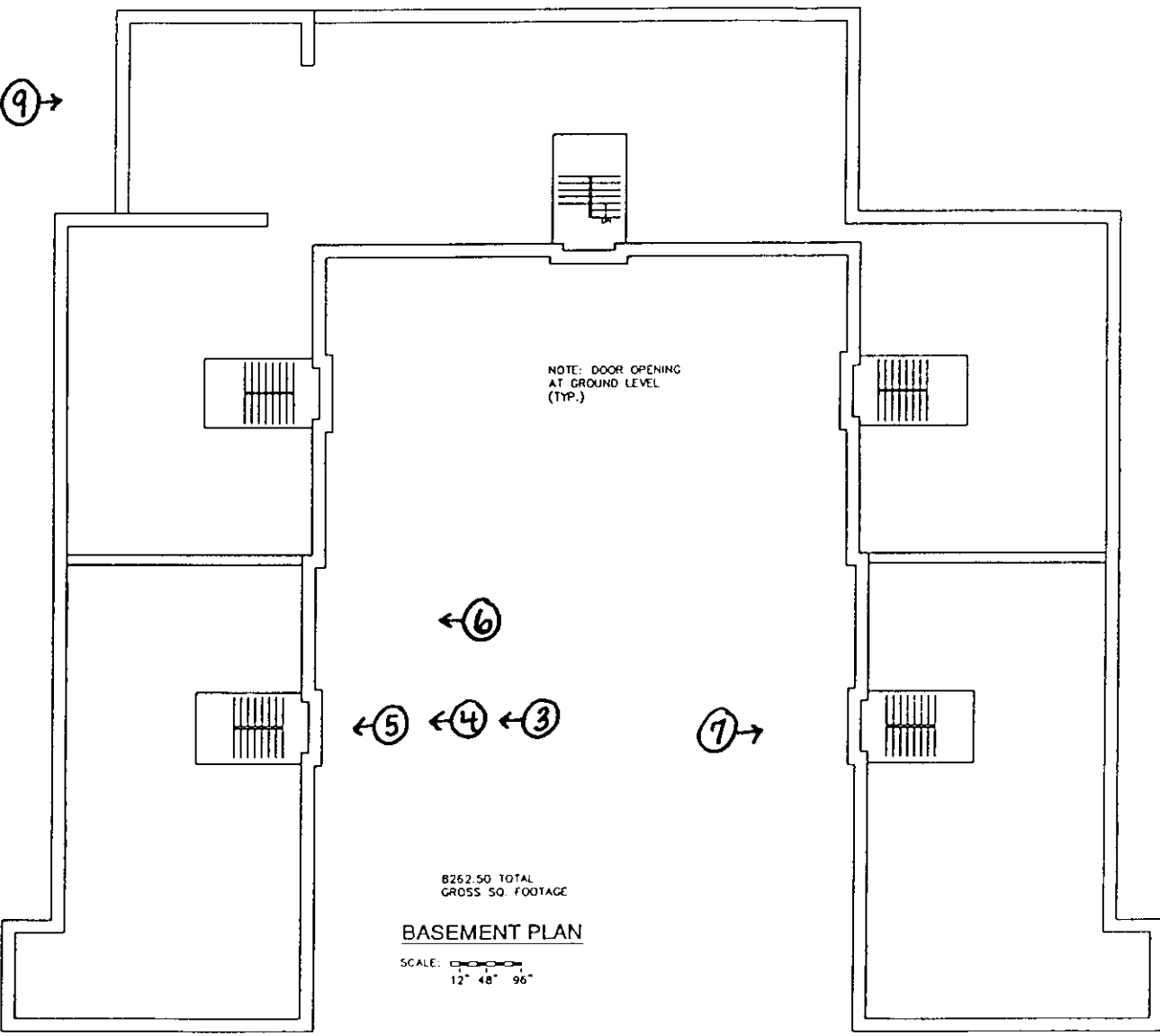
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

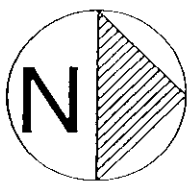
**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Basement Floor Plan & Photo Key



1107 BELLEVUE AVENUE - BASEMENT PLAN

ONEAL DESIGN AND DRAFTING  
7227 WOODLARK AVENUE, MAPLEWOOD, MISSOURI 63143  
314-447-0010  
ISSUED: 5/1/2001



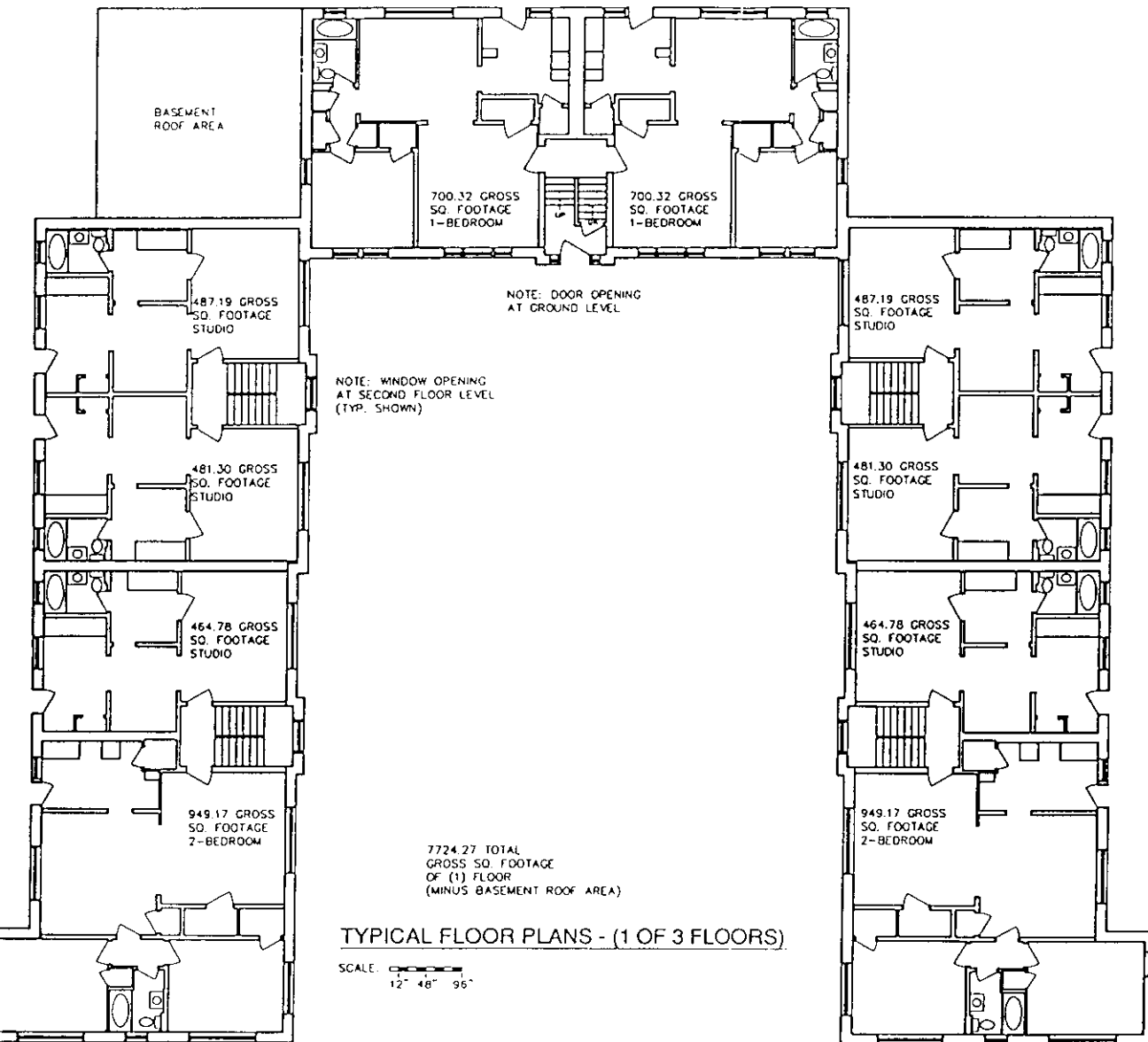
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

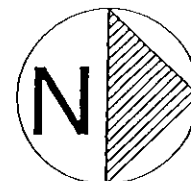
**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Representative Upper Floor Plan



1107 BELLEVUE AVENUE - (1 OF 3 FLOORS TYPICAL)

ONEAL DESIGN AND DRAFTING  
7227 MOLLER AVENUE, MAPLEWOOD, MISSOURI 63143  
314-647-0020  
ISSUED: 5/1/2001



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

**Bellecourt Apartments**  
**St. Louis County, Missouri**

### Narrative Statement of Significance

#### **Summary:**

The Bellecourt Apartments, located on Bellevue Avenue across from St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond Heights, St. Louis County, Missouri, are locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. This flat-roofed, U-shaped, vernacular brick building contains identifying features of Italian Renaissance architecture, such as a rusticated foundation, decorative quoins, dentiled cornice, arches above doors, upper story windows that are less elaborate than those below, and a symmetrical façade. One of a handful of courtyard style apartments in the Richmond Heights area, the Bellecourt Apartments have functioned as a multiple-family dwelling complex throughout their history. They were strategically built on Bellevue Avenue just north of Wise Avenue, the pathway of the Forest Park streetcar loop in the 1930s and 1940s. Therefore, this locale provided residents with easy access to downtown St. Louis. As individuals began moving out of the inner city and commuting to work, the Bellecourt Apartments were a convenient choice for families wanting to live a more suburban lifestyle but still work in the city. Today, the Bellecourt Apartments continue to function as multi-family housing and remain strong in historic integrity due to minimal interior and exterior alterations. Nominated for its local significance in architecture, the period of significance for the Bellecourt Apartments is 1924, the year of its construction.

#### **Elaboration:**

The Bellecourt Apartments, a fine example of a vernacular building with Italian Renaissance characteristics and applied affinities, are located in Richmond Heights, a community in St. Louis County that is bordered by the City of St. Louis, Maplewood, Clayton, Brentwood, and Ladue (see Continuation Sheet 13). Richmond Heights, originally part of the Gratiot League Square, an old Spanish land grant, was incorporated on December 29, 1913. As historic accounts detail, in 1887, a wealthy St. Louis real estate man named Frederick E. Niesen stumbled upon the land now known as Richmond Heights while quail hunting and immediately believed it had great potential for development. After purchasing property from Armand Francois Robert, the Count de Giverville (a Cabanne family heir by marriage), he built a mansion and moved his family there in 1892.<sup>2</sup> Other families soon followed his lead, and approximately 18 families lived in the area near the turn of the century prior to any formal establishment of the community of Richmond Heights. While adults worked on tenant farms, children played in old Union Army powderhouses, which were located on the present site of St. Mary's Hospital directly to the east of the Bellecourt Apartments.<sup>3</sup> This small settlement continued to grow as suburban expansion out of downtown St. Louis increased. The completion of electric streetcar lines, such as 51 Laclede and 52 Market, to the southern end of Forest Park in 1895 enabled the St. Louis downtown area to become accessible to more rural areas and encourage those beginning to move out of the city to form suburban communities.<sup>4</sup> For those seeking an opportunity to live a more residential lifestyle, the link to the downtown area provided by streetcars was vital in promoting the development of Niesen's rural settlement into the community of Richmond Heights. The Richmond Heights area received attention during the World's Fair, as it attracted real estate developers, such as John Rankin Dyer, who owned 120 acres

<sup>2</sup> "Richmond Heights" 171 and 173.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Hillard, "Know Your County: Richmond Heights," St. Louis Star-Times 21 Feb. 1946: N. pag.

<sup>4</sup> "Richmond Heights" 171 and Andrew D. Young, The St. Louis Streetcar Story (Glendale, CA: Interurban Press, 1988) 204.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

along the south side.<sup>5</sup> Some of the first homes built in Richmond Heights upon the conclusion of the World's Fair used building materials that were reportedly scavenged from the World's Fair buildings.<sup>6</sup> As a result, these homes became known as the "Forty Thieves."<sup>7</sup> Soon, an additional streetcar line connected the West End Heights loop to the center of Richmond Heights.

When the city of Richmond Heights was officially incorporated in 1913 with a population of approximately 500, the town boundaries extended to the City of St. Louis on the east, Wise Avenue on the north, Pennsylvania (now Big Bend) on the west, and Bruno Avenue on the south.<sup>8</sup> This boundary did not include the land on which the Bellecourt Apartments eventually were built. An annexation northward to Clayton Road in 1920 encompassed the Bellecourt Apartments site as well as the site of the Sisters of St. Mary's Hospital, which opened in 1924. In 1924, the Bellecourt Apartments multi-family housing complex was built on Bellevue Avenue across from the hospital. The apartments were situated just to the north of streetcar loop 51 Forest Park, a line that had consolidated 51 Laclede and 52 Market in 1933. The Forest Park line ran along the southern edge of Forest Park, turned south onto Yale, and then turned west onto Wise, running across Bellevue Avenue just south of the Bellecourt Apartments before looping back toward the city. This locale made the Bellecourt Apartments convenient housing for individuals who worked in the city but desired a home in the suburbs (see Continuation Sheets 14 and 15 for the Forest Park Streetcar route). Richmond Heights continued to grow, primarily westward, until annexations extended all the way to the present western boundary at Lay Avenue in 1928. The population reached its peak at 15,622 in 1960 before declining again due to the construction of Highway 40 through the middle of the city.<sup>9</sup> Richmond Heights is only a few miles from the center of the metropolitan St. Louis' population. In addition, it is situated at the crossroads of Highway 40 and I-170. Richmond Heights is primarily residential with single-family homes in abundance and a current community population of 11,516. Therefore, in Richmond Heights, a community primarily comprised of single-family residential housing, the multi-family apartment complex of Bellecourt Apartments is significant for both its rarity in occurrence and uniqueness of architectural design.

The Bellecourt Apartments complex is a vernacular building constructed in 1924. Vernacular buildings such as the Bellecourt Apartments, which function as multi-family dwellings, usually share many common features. They are rarely over three stories tall, are built of masonry or brick over a frame construction, are symmetrical, have rear porches for each story and place emphasis on the horizontal lines associated with the foundation, windows of each story and cornice.<sup>10</sup> They may also have projecting and receding bays, sash windows and a concentration on the façade's design features. The Bellecourt Apartments clearly incorporate many design features of vernacular buildings. In addition, they contain applied affinities of Italian Renaissance architecture.

Italian Renaissance architecture, widespread but less commonly found than Craftsman, Tudor, and Colonial Revival styles, was popular throughout the America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, approximately 1890-1935.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Richmond Heights" 171.

<sup>6</sup> Pat Kent and Betsy Feldman, "Forty Thieves," Down Memory Lane, comp. Historical Sunday and Tour of the City (St. Louis: The Print House, May 15, 1988) 2.

<sup>7</sup> Kent 2.

<sup>8</sup> "Richmond Heights" 173 and Hillard N. pag.

<sup>9</sup> "Richmond Heights" 173.

<sup>10</sup> Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, American Vernacular Design: 1870-1940, (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1988) 4-5.

<sup>11</sup> McAlester 398.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   11  

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

According to Cyril M. Harris' *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, the Italian Renaissance Revival style, which emulated the Renaissance palazzi of northern Italy, is often divided into two smaller categories—North Italian or Venetian and Romano-Tuscan or Florentine.<sup>12</sup> The Bellecourt Apartments more closely correspond to the Romano-Tuscan subcategory. Prior to its arrival in the United States circa 1840s, the Romano-Tuscan subcategory was introduced to London by Charles Barry in 1829. Barry designed the Travellers' Club on Pall Mall in London, thus initiating a "revival of the astylar Italian palace of High Renaissance Rome and Florence." It was recognized as a free adaptation of Raphael's Pandolfini Palace in Florence.<sup>13</sup> In 1847, John Notman designed the Athenaeum in Philadelphia. This building was one of the first in America to incorporate Italian Renaissance design. Just over forty years later, in the late 1880s and 1890s, the Italian Renaissance style was popularized in America as a dramatic contrast to the Gothic-inspired Shingle or Queen Anne style and more closely resembled Italian originals than the preceding Italianate style. The main use of the Italian Renaissance style prior to World War I was for architect-designed landmarks in major metropolitan areas. By the 1920s, masonry veneering techniques were more polished and vernacular interpretations, such as the Bellecourt Apartments, appeared in many areas. After the 1930s popularity of the Italian Renaissance style diminished.<sup>14</sup>

Examples of Italian Renaissance architecture differ slightly in appearance depending on which of the four principle subtypes influenced their architectural design. The four principle subtypes of the Italian Renaissance style are simple hipped roof, hipped roof with projecting wing(s), asymmetrical and flat roof. The simple hipped roof subtype is the most common while the asymmetrical subtype is least common. Similar but less elaborate than Beaux Arts houses, most commonly the flat roof variation is an architect-designed landmark built of stone.<sup>15</sup> Examples of the flat roof Italian Renaissance style include the Faust House in St. Louis, Missouri, and the Hill House in Dallas, Texas.<sup>16</sup> The Bellecourt Apartments contain characteristics and applied affinities of Italian Renaissance architecture typical of the flat roof subtype. The Bellecourt Apartments have a symmetrical façade, rusticated foundation with smooth wall finish above, decorative quoins, and dentiled cornice and roofline parapet.<sup>17</sup> The building's five recessed entryways have hooded segmentally arched crowns above each door, and the door contains large-pane glazing on it as well as sidelights. Another common feature of Italian Renaissance architecture illustrated by the Bellecourt Apartments is their third story windows, which are less elaborate than those below. While the Bellecourt Apartments are clearly a vernacular interpretation, they do illustrate key characteristics of Italian Renaissance architecture.

In touring Richmond Heights, specifically in the neighborhood immediately surrounding the Bellecourt Apartments, other similarly styled U-shaped apartment buildings can be seen; however, none have the proximity to the streetcar lines offered by the Bellecourt Apartments. In 1924, the Bellecourt Apartments were the first of these apartment complexes to be built. Construction of the others followed from 1926 through 1961. A map of the seven neighboring apartment buildings with their dates of construction and proximity to the Bellecourt Apartments demonstrates the pattern of growth for this section of Richmond Heights and is

<sup>12</sup> Cyril M. Harris, *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998) 186.

<sup>13</sup> Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, (Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1969) 75.

<sup>14</sup> McAlester 398.

<sup>15</sup> McAlester 397.

<sup>16</sup> McAlester 406.

<sup>17</sup> McAlester 397.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   12  

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

provided as Continuation Sheets 16. Photographs of each individual apartment complex are included on Continuation Sheets 17-20. All seven of these apartment complexes are wood framed with brick veneer, while five are U-shaped, one is L-shaped and one is rectangular with a diagonal wing extending off one end elevation. Similarities and differences among the Bellecourt Apartments and the seven neighboring complexes are evident in a comparison of the photographs. Common features include an emphasis on the horizontal lines of the units, more elaborate entryway bays and a small inner courtyard. Differences include low-pitched roofs on Apartments 3 and 5 and flat roofs with decorative parapets on Apartments 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7. In addition, Apartments 5 and 7 are far simpler in design than any of the other complexes. The noteworthiness of the Bellecourt Apartments over its seven neighboring apartment complexes can be summarized in its significance as the first apartment complex built in the area and its proximity to the streetcar lines connecting it to downtown St. Louis. In addition, it illustrates a larger quantity and better quality of Italian Renaissance design characteristics than its neighboring apartment complexes.

While the Bellecourt Apartments were popular for their proximity to streetcar lines connecting suburban Richmond Heights to downtown St. Louis, they remain locally significant for their architecture. As a vernacular apartment complex with Italian Renaissance applied affinities in a community of single-family houses, the Bellecourt Apartments are locally significant for their uniqueness of style and rarity of occurrence. The present condition of the Bellecourt Apartments' Italian Renaissance affinities, the overall condition of the building, and the lack of numerous or significant alterations contribute to their high degree historic integrity.



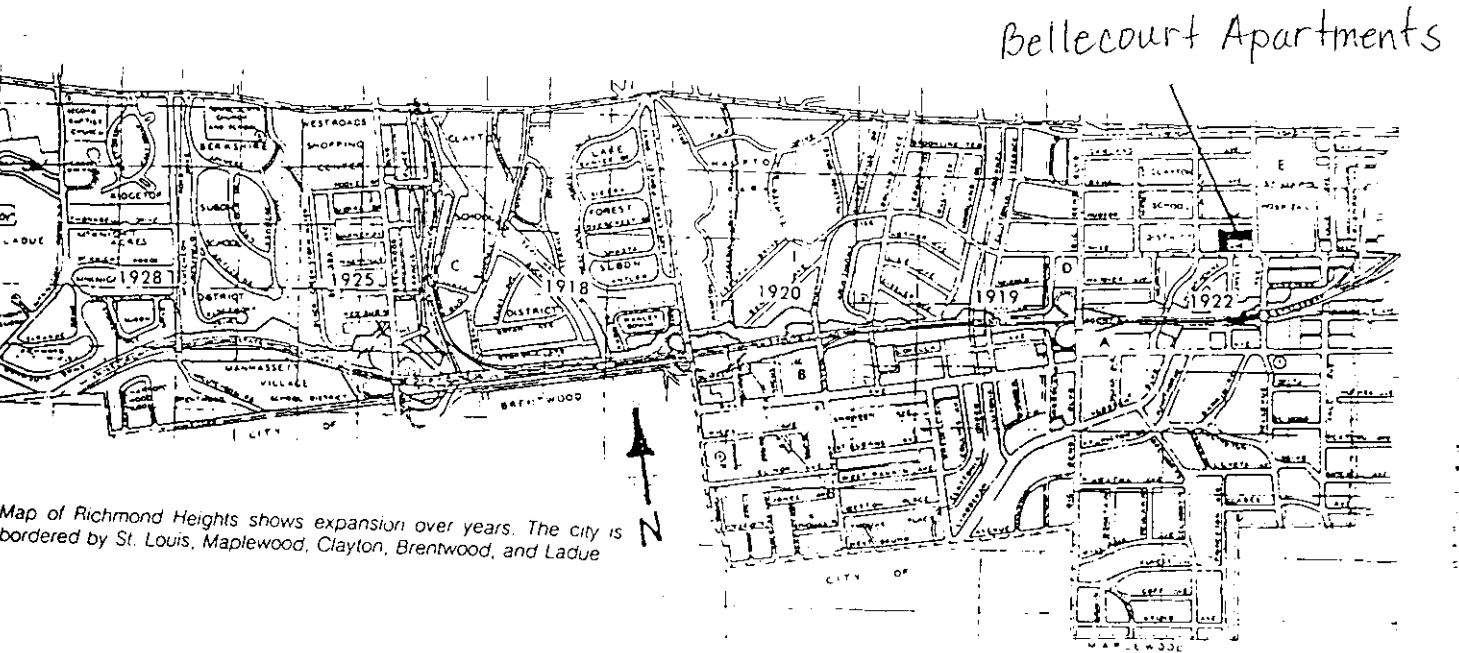
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

City of Richmond Heights  
Expansion Over the Years



Map of Richmond Heights shows expansion over years. The city is bordered by St. Louis, Maplewood, Clayton, Brentwood, and Ladue

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

## Bellecourt Apartments St. Louis County, Missouri



ST. LOUIS PUBLIC SERVICE Company

SCALE: 0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1 MILE

It may be necessary to change the data contained in this folder, without notice.

**STREET CAR ROUTES**

01 Kirkwood Freymann	38 Cox
02 Florissant	32 W. Union
04 Clayton	40 Broadway
05 Creve Coeur	11 Lou
10 Delmar	42 South
11 University	50 Southwestern
12 Maryland	52 Forest Park
15 Union	53-54 St. Nicholas
14 Clayton (University)	57 Brentwood
15 Northfront	65 Woodson
16 City Limits	70 Grand
17 Page	72 E. Franklin
18 Taylor	73 B. Franklin
21 Tower Grove	80 Compton
22 Jefferson	81 Park

**BUS ROUTES**

Coordinated

30 Cherokee	107 Loughborough
33 39th St.	108 Salisbury
32 Lindbergh	109 Linn Ferry
70 Kingshighway	110 Midland
94 W. Florissant	115 Clayton
98 McCombs	114 Brentwood
99 Russell	115 St. Peters
101 Vandeventer	116 Marine
102 Vandeventer	117 Comstock
108 Arsenal	119 St. Louis Ave.
104 Federal Bridge	120 Baker
106 Gravois	121 Elder
106 B. Taylor	121 E. Holly Hill

**BUS ROUTES**

Selective Service lines only

92 Delmar 93 Lindell 94 Page 97 Pumphrey

Source:  
 Young, Andrew D. The St. Louis Streetcar Story.  
 Glendale, CA: Inter-urban Press, 1988.

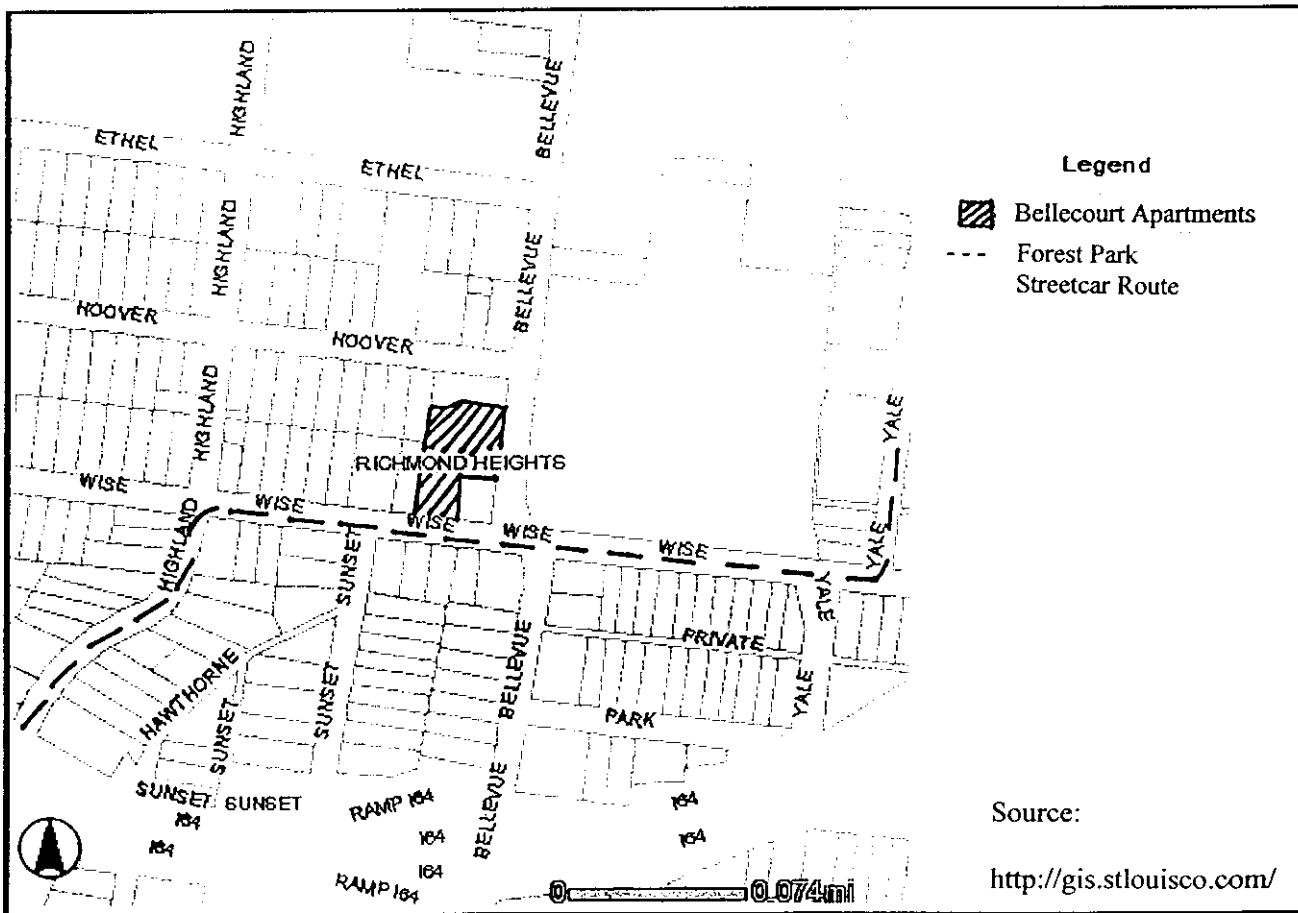
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Route of the Forest Park Streetcar  
in Relation to Bellecourt Apartments



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

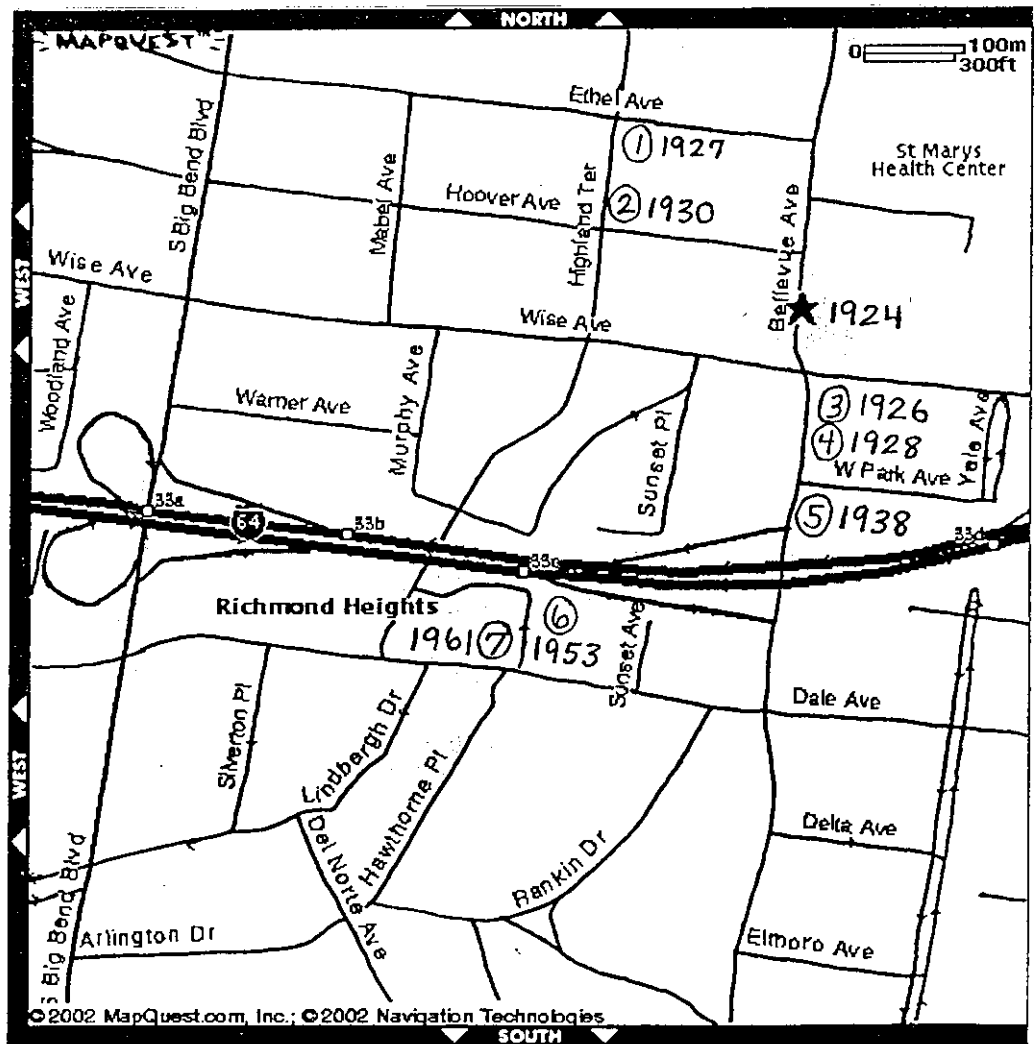
Section number 8 Page 16

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

Map of Neighboring Apartment Buildings  
(Bellecourt Apartments represented by star.)

1. Ethel Court Apartments  
7342-7350 Ethel Avenue
2. Apartment Building  
7347-7351 Hoover Avenue
3. Bellevue Garden Apartments  
1204-1206 Bellevue Avenue
4. Apartment Building  
1214-1220 Bellevue Avenue
5. Bellevue Apartments  
1222-1228 Bellevue Avenue
6. Apartment Building  
1330-1338 Hawthorne Place
7. Apartment Building  
7361-7365 Dale Avenue

\*Year of construction for each apartment building is shown on the map



Source: <http://www.mapquest.com>

The following four continuation sheets include photographs of these apartment buildings.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

## Photographs of Neighboring Apartment Buildings



1. Ethel Court Apartments on Ethel Avenue at the corner of Highland Terrace



2. Apartment Building on Hoover Avenue at the corner of Highland Terrace

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

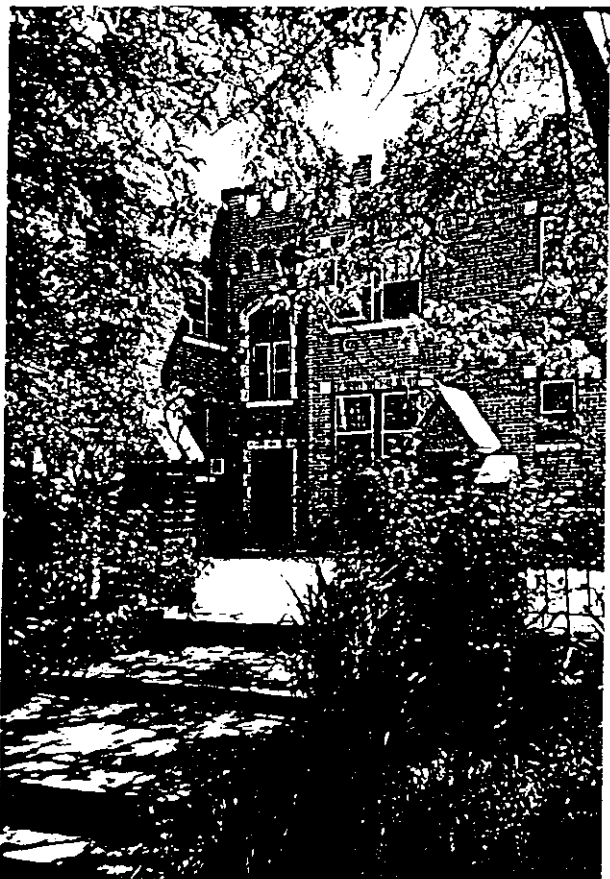
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

## Photographs of Neighboring Apartment Buildings

3. Bellevue Garden Apartments  
on Bellevue Avenue immediately  
south of Wise Avenue



4. Apartment Building on Bellevue Avenue  
immediately north of West Park Avenue

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

## Photographs of Neighboring Apartment Buildings



5. Bellevue Apartments on Bellevue Avenue immediately north of Highway 40 overpass



6. Apartment Building on Hawthorne Place immediately north of Dale Avenue

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 20

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

## Photographs of Neighboring Apartment Buildings



7. Apartment Building on Dale Avenue immediately west of Hawthorne Place

All photographs taken by Julie Doering.  
Photographs 1, 2 and 5 taken in March 2002.  
Photographs 3, 4, 6 and 7 taken in May 2002.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 21

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

### Sources

- Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings. American Vernacular Design. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1988.
- Harris, Cyril M. American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- Hillard, Robert. "Know Your County: Richmond Heights." St. Louis Star-Times 21 Feb. 1946: N. pag.
- Kent, Pat, and Betsy Feldman. "Forty Thieves." Down Memory Lane. Comp. Historical Sunday and Tour of the City. St. Louis: The Print House, May 15, 1988. 2.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2000.
- "Richmond Heights." St. Louis Neighborhoods. 1983. 171-174.
- Young, Andrew D. St. Louis and its Streetcars: the way it was. St. Louis: Archway Publishing, 1996.
- . The St. Louis Streetcar Story. Glendale, CA: Interurban Press, 1988.
- Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1969.

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

Lot 15 and Part of Lots 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 in Block 6 of F.M. Sterrett's Addition to Forest Park Heights, according to the plat thereof recorded in plat book 4 page 47 of the St. Louis County records and described as: beginning at a point in the west line of Bellevue Avenue, 110 feet north of the intersection of said west line of Bellevue Avenue with the north line of Wise Avenue, formerly Sterrett Avenue, thence running westwardly and parallel with the north line of Wise Avenue, 75 feet to a point, thence southwardly and parallel with Bellevue Avenue, 110 feet to the north line of Wise Avenue, thence westwardly with the north line of Wise Avenue, 76 1-3/4 inches to the southwest corner of said Lot 15, thence northwardly with the west line of said Lots 15 and 10, a distance of 245 feet 9 1/2 inches to a point in the west line of said Lot 10, thence eastwardly and parallel with the north line of Wise Avenue, 35 feet to a point, thence northeastwardly 23 feet to a point distant westwardly from the west line of Bellevue Avenue 98 feet, measured on a line parallel, with the north line of Wise Avenue and distant northwardly from the north line of Wise Avenue 260 feet, measured on a line parallel with Bellevue Avenue, thence eastwardly and parallel with the north line of Wise Avenue, 98 feet to the west line of Bellevue Avenue, thence southwardly with the west line of Bellevue Avenue, 150 feet to the place of beginning. (See Plat Map on Continuation Sheet 18.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10, Photos      Page 22

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**

### Boundary Justification

This is the legal described boundary for the entire parcel historically associated with the location of the Bellecourt Apartments.

### Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Bellecourt Apartments

St. Louis County, Missouri

Julie C. Doering

Photographs #1-#7: December 2001; Photographs #8-#9: March 2002

Negatives on file with Julie C. Doering, Institute for Sustainable Development, 112 East High Street,  
Jefferson City, MO

### Photo Descriptions:

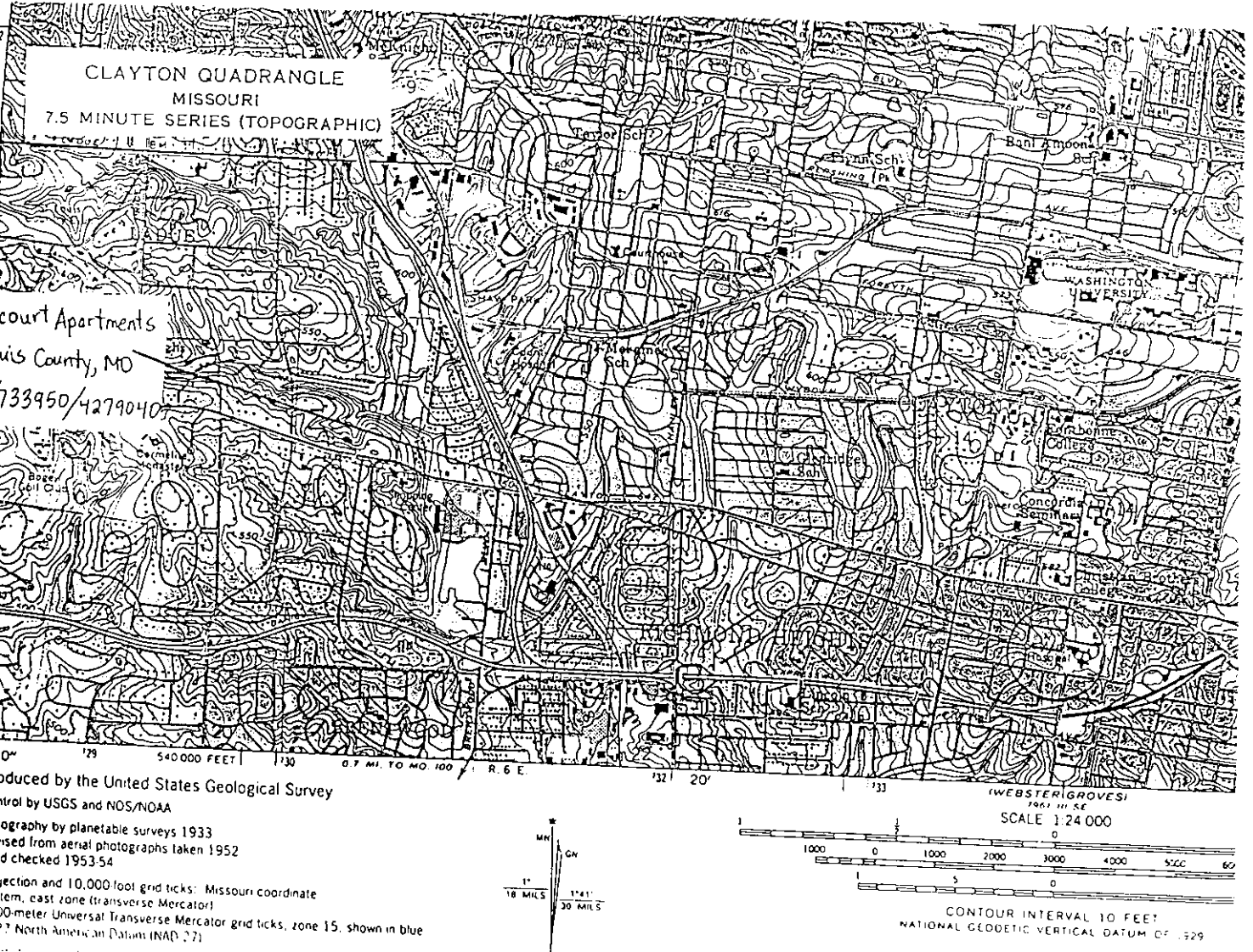
1. Facing west, view of U-shaped Bellecourt Apartments building and inner courtyard, note circular pathway with sidewalks leading to each of five entryways
2. Facing southwest, view of rusticated basement, stone belt course, and stone quoins
3. Facing south, view of entryway in third bay of the left wing elevation
4. Facing south, view of entryway, which contains a segmentally arched doorway with hooded crown detail and large-pane glazing within the one-step-up, slightly recessed door that is accented by sidelights
5. Facing south, view of the windows with terra cotta surrounds that are above each entryway
6. Facing south, view of a set of paired windows
7. Facing north, view of the decorative parapet above each of the five doorways and on the end wing elevations
8. Facing south, view of the north elevation, notice the shared decks and simpler windows
9. Facing north, view of the south elevation from the carport

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 23

**Bellecourt Apartments  
St. Louis County, Missouri**



Court Apartments  
 Louis County, MO  
 /733950/4279040



38°37'30"  
 90°22'30"

Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by planetable surveys 1933

Revised from aerial photographs taken 1952

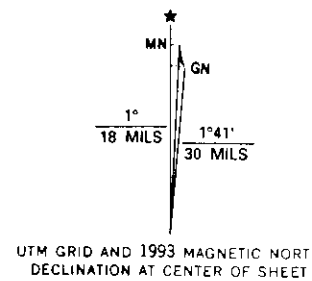
Field checked 1953-54

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Missouri coordinate system, east zone (transverse Mercator)

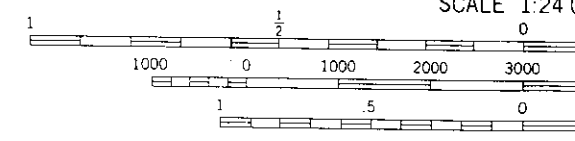
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue 1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks  
 The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1993 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL

COMPLIES WITH U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO  
 AND DIVISION OF GEOLOGY AND MINERALS, MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND...



(KIRKWOOD)  
 7961 III SE







BELLECOURT

BELLECOURT







ELLECOUR







