Capsule Summary

Survey # AA 822

Dr. John R. Francis House
1340 Bay Avenue
Highland Beach, Maryland

c. 1900

Private Residence

The John R. Francis house is one of the landmark houses in Highland Beach. It was the summer home for a prominent black family in the historic planned community. It's design established a stylistic precedent in the community and its position is a majestic and monumental statement about the quality of architecture and planning at the turn of the century.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST AA 822

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC Dr. John R. Francis House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1340 Bay Avenue

CITY, TOWN Highland Beach ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1 Annapolis

STATE Maryland

COUNTY Anne Arundel

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
X STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME James H. Henderson and Dena Soloman Telephone #: 703-560-2053 301-263-8370

STREET & NUMBER Box 247 Tuskegee Institute

CITY, TOWN Tuskegee ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code Alabama 36088

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Anne Arundel County

Liber #: 3234
Folio #: 484

STREET & NUMBER Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Annapolis,

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

AA-822

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The home of Dr. John R. Francis is a two and one half storey frame cottage with a gabled roof. It is a large and impressive structure with a two storey porch that wraps around the eastern and northern views of the lot. The first storey porch is screened while the second storey porch is open and supports a pedimented roof.

The Dr. John R. Francis house is located on a lot in Highland Beach which is bordered by Black Walnut Creek on the north, the Chesapeake Bay on the east, and it is contiguous with Wayman Avenue on the same eastern end while Douglass Avenue and Langston Avenue frame the southern and western views of the lot respectively. Highland Beach is approximately ten miles southeast of Annapolis, Maryland. Generally, the site slopes towards the Chesapeake Bay and the adjoining creeks. Vegetation is dense and the site resembles a woods rather than a beach in the developed area.

The house is supported by a pier foundation which is constructed of rock faced stones. The space between the stone columns is decorated with wooden lattice-work which is painted green to coordinate with the window trim on the cottage. The house is located on a "corner" lot and has the distinct advantage of facing two aquatic views. The eastern view faces the Chesapeake Bay while the northern view faces Black Walnut Creek.

Facing east, the cottage is constructed principally of two bays on the first and second floors, and one bay on the half storey or gable end. The first two storey bays are asymmetrical with the narrower section cantilevered from the large, central bay. Encircling the wider bay, is a three bay, two tiered porch which is partially enclosed. The first storey porch exhibits a symmetrical wall system that utilizes wooden posts to construct a decorative pattern. The decorative, triangular stick work is a stylistic element that can be identified on several Highland Beach houses. The second storey veranda is also three bays wide but does not continue the stick theme to this degree of detail.

The windows on the narrow bay of the eastern extension are double hung with six lights over six lights on the first floor. A set of similar but larger windows on the wider bay complement these windows. All of the windows are finished with trim with a small cornice at the top on this view. A single pane window can be observed on the second storey while on the half storey above, a two lights over two lights double hung window is exhibited.

The exterior finish on the cottage is beveled siding painted white. The roof overhang on the eastern view is interestingly graced with a shingled pediment while the slope of the southern view houses two dormers. The dormers have shed roofs and double hung windows recessed into the architrave trim. The second storey of the southern view exhibits two oval, stained glass windows set above a shed roofed entrance. Other windows on this view include single pane and double hung six lights over six lights placed symmetrically on the facade. The main entrance is protected by a hallway extension which is covered by a shed roof. Roofing shingles are laid in an even and symmetrical pattern on all views.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

AA-822

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
REHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	X COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(Please see the Highland Beach Settlement Survey form also)

Highland Beach, Maryland is a historic black town that was founded by the son of Frederick Douglass. The town was conceived by Major Haley R. Douglass to be a resort community for prominent blacks in the late Nineteenth Century. Highland Beach is a unique, existing reminder of town planning and architectural history as it relates to vernacular and high style design exhibited by black people. Most of the architecture in Highland Beach is located on the original sites and building expansions were performed within a ten to fifteen year time frame. This enables us to have a concise history of design, space planning and architecture in a homogeneous extant community.

The cottage of Dr. John R. Francis is one of the oldest cottages on the site. The structure was probably completed C. 1900 although the exact date of construction can not be determined. Most residents of the beach constructed their homes over several years. This house is particularly significant in the town because it exhibits a style of architecture which was emulated by many designers in the area. The stick work is portrayed in this structure and its predecessor, "Twin Oaks", a house designed for Frederick Douglass around 1895.

Dr. John R. Francis was a venerated leader in the Highland Beach community as well as Washington, D.C. society. His house became a focal point for orientation and design of subsequent houses in the community. The schemata that is exhibited here is the stick style or stick work theme which is artfully portrayed in this structure. Unfortunately, we do not know who designed the house, but, the horizontal emphasis of the second storey porch complements the dynamic upward thrust of the movement on the first storey. The design of the porch facade is exceptionally self-conscious and the artful way in which the roof overhang is capped with the pediment on the eastern view is a surprising element that can not be ignored. The scale of the structure as a totality is monumentality was meant to be buffered by the use of asymmetrical, cantilevered, and factored components. The house is brilliantly conceived and lends itself for further study and evaluation.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

AA-322

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Survey Form - Highland Beach Settlement

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lts A, B; Block 2, Highland Beach

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Barbara Collins Turner	April, 1982
ORGANIZATION Morgan State University	DATE 301-444-3225
STREET & NUMBER Center for Built Environment Studies	TELEPHONE
CITY OR TOWN Baltimore, Maryland 21239	STATE 21239

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

Betty Henderson
Bay ave

A (2)

AA 822

Joseph H. Douglass

To ~~Deed~~ 2/13/1895 J.C B 2 42

John R. Francis

To

J.R. Francis had several sister which said property passed thru

To

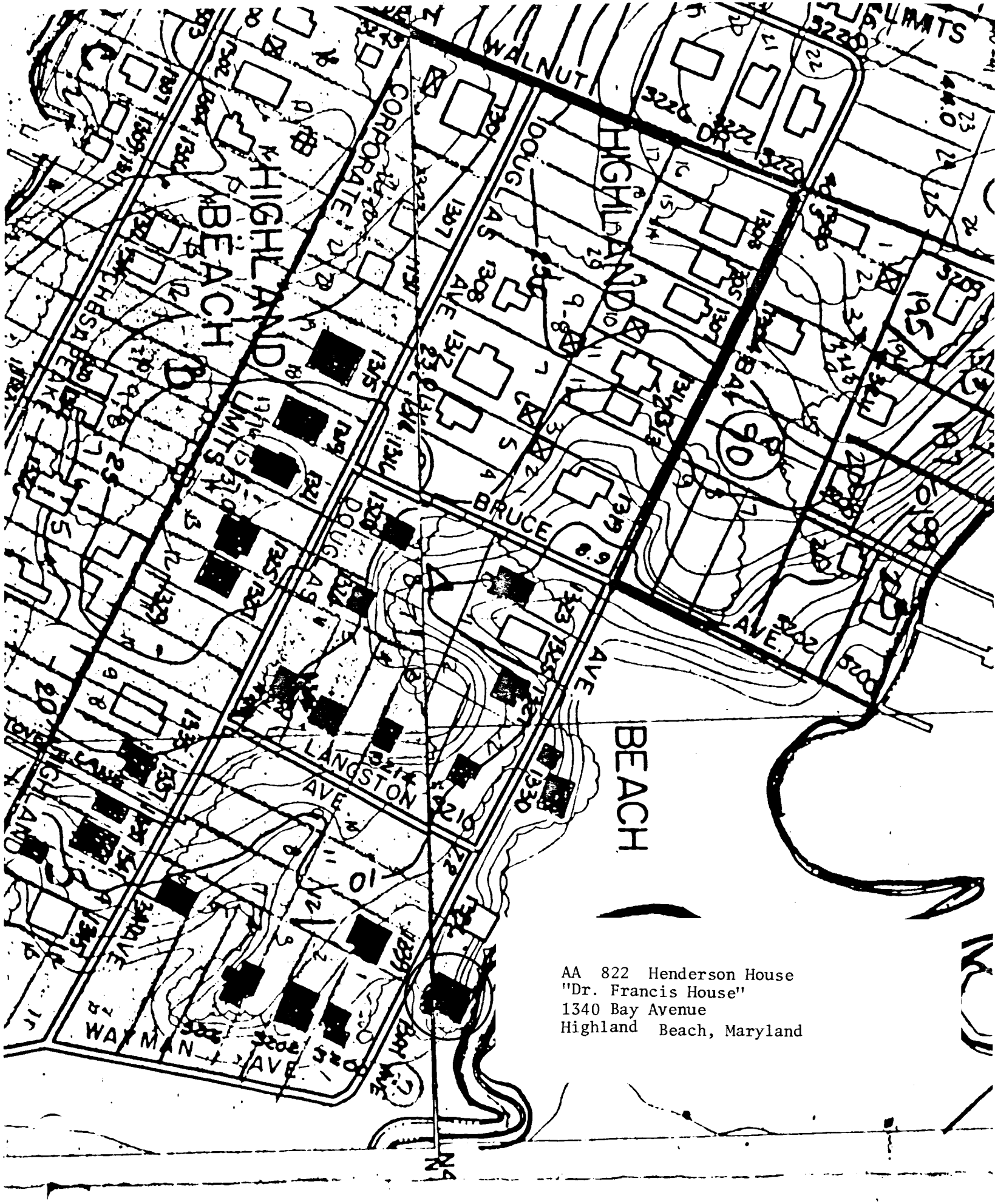
Edwin B. Henderson & Mary E.

To 7/23/53 L771 35

James H.M. Henderson &Betty F.

To 8/21/79 3234 484

James H.M. Henderson & Betty F. Dena Soloman.



AA 822 Henderson House
"Dr. Francis House"
1340 Bay Avenue
Highland Beach, Maryland

NO
PARKING

AA 822 Dr. Francis House
1340 Bay Avenue
Highland Beach, Maryland
General View
Fern Eisner, Photographer
March, 1982