

BA 381  
Rainbow Hill  
10729 Park Heights Avenue  
Owings Mills, Md. 21117  
private

Rainbow Hill is an early twentieth century house carefully designed to recall an elegant house of the late eighteenth century England. General Douglas MacArthur lived there and named the house Rainbow Hill in honor of the Rainbow Division he had led during World War I. Lionel Atwill, the actor lived at Rainbow Hill. Henry Fosenberg, president of Crown Central Petroleum, owned the house in the 1940's.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA 381  
x-876.660  
y-577.420

MAGI # 0303811704

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC RAINBOW HILL

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

10729 Park Heights Avenue

Second

CITY, TOWN

Owings Mills

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Baptist Home of Maryland

Telephone #: 484-3324

STREET & NUMBER

10729 Park Heights Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Owings Mills

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Md. 21117

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore  
County Courts Building

Liber #: 3758

Folio #: 29

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

BA-381

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED	DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED			
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED				

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

RAINBOW HILL is a large formal mansion completed in 1917, its style recalling that of the late eighteenth century English Georgian. The principal entrance is centered in the north facade and the south overlooks a broad view of the valley. Two storeys in height, exterior walls are finished in smooth white stucco with white marble entrance surrounds, window sills and jack arches. The center block is five bays in length and short wings project north and south at each end, terminated by semi-octagonal bays extending the full two storeys in height. A modillioned cornice surrounds the entire mansion and a low-pitched copper roof rises above it. A large sun porch extends across the east end, its east wall slightly bowed. A two storey stuccoed service wing is perpendicular to the mansion's axis at the west end, recently extended to the south to enlarge the mansion's capacity in its present function -- a home for the elderly.

The central entrances north and south have marble surrounds, the northerly with a pediment, the southerly with a flat cornice. 12/12 windows are in the first storey of the central block, north facade, while tall casements are in the second, opening to small wrought-iron balconies at each window. All windows of the south facade are casements. The central windows of the semi-octagonal bays have arched heads trimmed with marble. All other openings have rusticated jack arches. French doors all around the sun porch have alternating square and semi-circular transoms.

The north entrance opens beneath the principal stair and a great hall extends across the south front, five bays in length. The stair hall is screened from the great hall by a Tuscan colonade consisting of fluted wooden columns painted in imitation of green marble. The columns support an order which extends around the hall. The stair rail is of ornamental wrought-iron. Floors are paved with black-and-white marble tiles and a fireplace with a highly ornamental green and white marble mantel is at either end of the great hall.

A dining room extends across the east end the full depth of the house and each end is terminated with semi-octagonal bays. It has been subdivided into several small rooms without damaging original architectural features including the highly carved mantel

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

of white marble and gold onyx. The sun porch is east of the dining room and its large fireplace has a carved limestone architrave surround supporting a plain frieze and cornice shelf.

The principal drawing room is at the west end of the great hall and its south end opens into the semi-octagonal bay there. The mantel on its north wall is of carved white and gray marble. A smaller library is to its north, opening into that semi-octagonal bay, its carved mantel of white and gold onyx.

The second storey is simpler but the hall and principal rooms retain all their original ornamentation. The master bedroom was above the drawing room and it has been subdivided into smaller rooms. A suite of rooms is across the south front and several more small rooms are above the dining room.

Two small frame cottages stand at the west edge of the south lawn, probably guest cottages from the Avalon Hotel which once occupied this site. They date from the first decade of the twentieth century. Both are nearly identical, one and one-half storeys in height, a porch extending across the east front, a high gambrel roof rising above house and porch, a steep gable centered in the roof rising nearly to the ridge. The cottages are two bays in length: a door in the north bay, a 6/6 window in the south. A pair of 6/6 windows is in the gable above.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

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**PERIOD**

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

**SPECIFIC DATES**

**BUILDER/ARCHITECT**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

RAINBOW HILL is an early twentieth century house carefully designed to recall an elegant house of late eighteenth century England. Two cottages remain from the earlier hotel which occupied the site.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## Rainbow Hill

Rainbow Hill sits appropriately on a hill high above the Green Spring Valley, immediately adjacent to Park Heights Avenue. Known today as the Baptist Home of Maryland, Incorporated, it serves as a retirement and nursing home for the elderly. But at various times in its history, this huge mansion was also home to several distinguished and well-known figures.

The house stands on the site of the old Avalon Inn, a popular resort hotel during the early twentieth century. The three-story structure was destroyed by fire in 1912. 1/ Thereafter the property was sold by the inn's owner and proprietress Sarah F. Wright to Eva Roberts Stotesbury of Philadelphia.2/

Mrs. Stotesbury's daughter, Louise Cromwell, had married Walter B. Brooks, Jr., a Valley resident, and Rainbow Hill was built for them on the hotel land in 1917 at a cost of \$1,000,000. The white stucco marble house measured 77 x 75 feet and contained a reception hall, dining room, drawing room, breakfast room, nine bedrooms, and six baths. Quarters for servants included ten rooms and three baths. A short distance away was a ten-car garage, with four servants' rooms on the second floor.3/

Mrs. Brooks remarried several times; her second husband was Major General Douglas MacArthur, who named the house Rainbow Hill in honor of the Rainbow Division he had led during World War I; her third husband was Lionel Atwill, the actor, and it was during their marriage that the house was sold in 1940 to Henry and Ruth (Blaustein) Rosenberg.4/

Mr. Rosenberg was the president of the Crown Central Petroleum Company. After his death, his widow sold the house and estate of some 90 acres to the Rainbow Hill Corporation. Since 1964 it has been owned by the Baptist Home of Maryland, Incorporated, who renovated the thirty-three room mansion to meet the needs of their elderly residents.5/

Rainbow Hill  
Footnotes

1/"Avalon Inn is Destroyed by Morning Fire," Baltimore American, 3 October 1912.

2/Baltimore County Land Records (BCLR), Liber W. P. C. no. 406, fol. 326, Towson Court House, Towson, Maryland.

3/"Hospital Planned for Valley Estate," Sun, 29 April 1924; "Some Palatial Homes in Baltimore Environs," Sun, 10 April, 1932; "'Rainbow Hill' Sold by Atwills," Sun, 4 August 1940; Seymour Kopf, "Man About Town," Baltimore American, 30 and 31 March 1971; BCLR, Liber C. W. B., Jr. no. 1117, fol. 546, Towson.

4/"Baptists Purchase Rainbow Hill," Sun, 9 January 1964; "Rainbow Hill, Former MacArthur Home, To Be Aged Baptist Residence," Sun, 19 May 1967; BCLR, Liber W. J. R., no. 3758, fol. 29, Towson.

Bibliography

5/Thomas, Dawn F. and Robert W. Barnes. The Green Spring Valley: Its History and Heritage, 2 vols. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1978.

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**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Dawn F. Thomas and Robert W. Barnes; The Green Spring Valley, Its History and Heritage, (Baltimore, Maryland Historical Society , 1978)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

James T. Wollon, Jr., A.I.A. / Dawn F. Thomas, Research Historian 2-10-80  
ORGANIZATION DATE

Valleys Planning Council 828-7808  
STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE

212 Washington Avenue Maryland 21204  
CITY OR TOWN STATE

Towson

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





BA 381

Rainbow Hill

GSVHD

Par. Hghts. Ave.

JTW

1/20/79

Md. Hist. Tr.

from north



BA 381-A  
Rainbow Hill  
Cottage  
Pe.Hghts.Ave.  
JTW  
8/30/79  
Md. Hist. Tr.  
from N.E.