FHD-630

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

F-1659

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Old Bopst Home

AND/OR COMMON: Bopst-Gates House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 118 E. Church Street

CITY, TOWN: Frederick ___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: Maryland

COUNTY: Frederick

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME:

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER:

CITY, TOWN: ___ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Frederick County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER: N. Court Street

CITY, TOWN: Frederick, Maryland

STATE:

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE:

DATE:

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

CITY, TOWN:

STATE:

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A tall, three story, three bay house built against the adjoining one on the west, the east side is on an alley. The front section is three bays long, has a 2-1/2 story, three bay wing along the west wall, a two story, four bay wing to the rear of that, and a two story, two bay wing behind that. All wings are two bays wide. All roofs are flat metal. There are scattered chimneys rising from the roof and brickwork is common bond. The doorway is framed by paneled pilasters with a flat projecting moulded cornice supported by cyma curved brackets. The recessed door area is composed of a four paneled door, framed by narrow square pillars and sidelights with paneling below. Above is a rectangular, four pane transom with sidelights. The doorway is approached by four sandstone steps with iron railings. A very large gas light lantern projects from beside the doorway. First floor front windows are rather unusual. They are tall, 4/6 sashes with the same side and top trim enclosure as a doorway. Those windows have vertical mullions as do those on the second and third floors which are 4/4 and enclosed in wide framing on sides and segmented arched tops. A similar 4/6 window faces the garden from the front section rear east bay and has long louvered shutters. All front windows have projecting moulded sills. The east side windows are all 6/6 sash except the end wing with 2/2 and all having wood lintels and sills with louvered shutters on the first floor, side and rear. There are no windows on the side of the front section. The eastern two bays on the rear of the third floor are lighted by a new multi-paned "picture" window which the present occupant uses as a sculpture s io. The rear doors are paneled and have sidelights. Front brickwork is covered by painted stucco but side and rear brickwork is exposed common bond. The projecting cornice along the front roof line is supported by closely spaced carved brackets with panels on the frieze in between and tied together by a moulded band. A herringbone pattern brick pavement fronts the house.

On the east side is a very unusual sculpture garden composed of welded auto parts mounted on pedestals among tall evergreens and enclosed by a tall brick wall with urns.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE

ERIOD

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	X 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
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

C1860-C.F. Bowers Date Survey/
Old Bopst Home

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

FNI-630

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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

STATE COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE *DOUGLAS M. GREENE*
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ORGANIZATION *HISTORICAL DISTRICT COMMISSION* DATE APRIL 1973
CITY of FREDERICK, MD. 21701

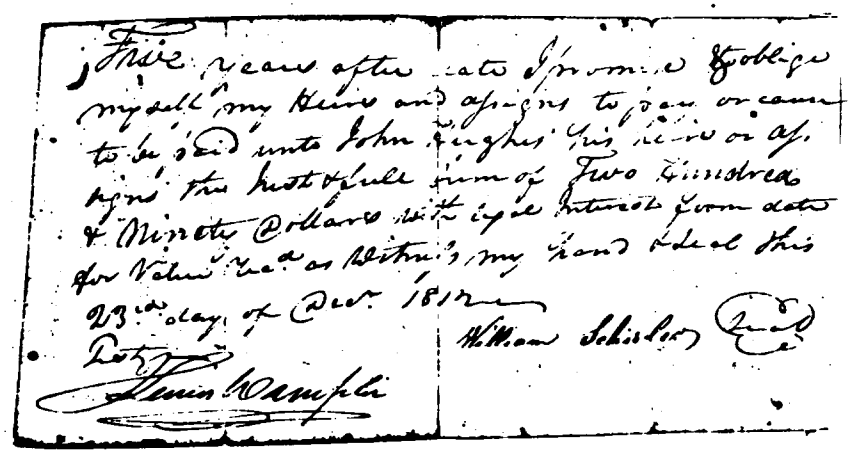
STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN STATE

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.

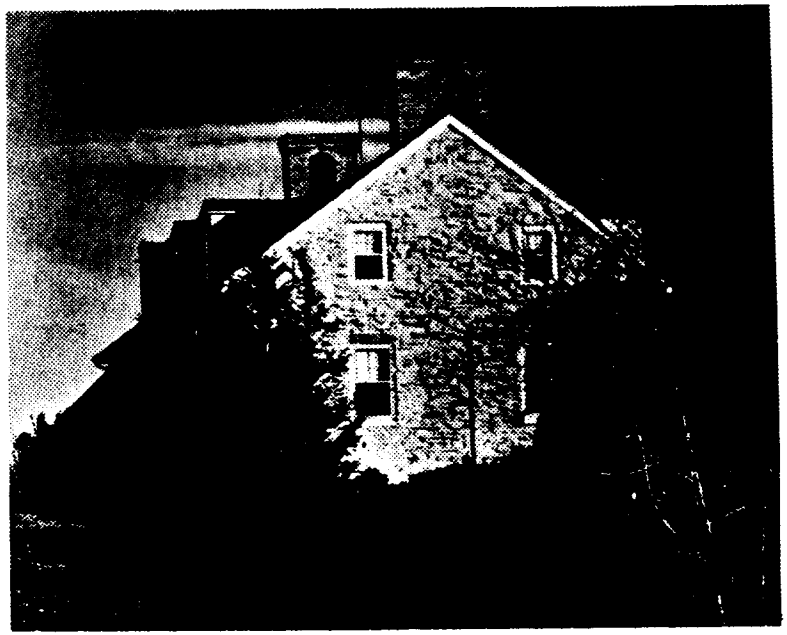
The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

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



Five years after date I promise to oblige myself my Heirs and assigns to pay or cause to be paid unto John Hughes his heirs or assigns the just & full sum of Two Hundred & Ninety Dollars with legal interest from date for Value Recd as witness my hand & seal this 23rd day of Dec. 1812

William Schisler



Witch escape hatch on Ray Smith roof.

Weinberg, Alyce T.
1979 Spirits of Frederick.
Frederick, Maryland: Studio 70, Inc.

FHD-630

Ghosts Aplenty

'First I thought I needed my head examined, but when other people started hearing the noises I decided maybe there was something to this. There really is a man, about fifty from the way he walks, two ladies who trip delicately, and a baby who cries that haunt that house," says Elaine Gates.

'That house," the original part built in 1810, is a three-story brick on East Church Street. A handsome antique gas-lit carriage lamp graces the wall beside the wide front door. And the side yard is covered with ivy, shaded by gnarled trees. Handcrafted surrealistic sculpture peeks at passers-by through locked iron gates.

H. I. Gates, who owns the house, and his former wife, Elaine, are well-known artists and teachers. She, especially, noticed that tools and brushes disappeared from a can kept handy beside her easel in the room used as a studio, only to reappear later exactly where they belonged. "It was very frustrating at times," said Mrs. Gates, "If I only had one of a kind."

Elaine does not mind talking about the ghosts. In fact, she seems to enjoy it.

"The man we heard most predominatly. He first came one Christmas, and around that time I smelled lilies of the valley so strong it was as if I had just picked them. My grandmother wore that perfume but you can't find it today.

"And several times we heard a baby crying in the front room of the first floor. It seemed to echo down from above, so loud it sounded like it was right in the room. Years ago,

when I first heard it, I looked outside for someone walking a carriage down the street but no one was in sight.

"We heard the man first, and I could usually feel a cold draft," Elaine continued. "I thought I was cold because I was scared, but others felt the draft, too. He goes to a specific guest room, and everyone who stays in that room hears him. They'll say, 'Did you hear something during the night? I heard someone come to my door and stop, but they didn't knock or anything.' All who have stayed in that room have heard something, including my parents. My mother almost got a coronary when I told her I thought we had ghosts.

'I've done some extensive investigating and found out that the people who lived in the house at the turn of the century, the people who put the addition on, were named Bopst. The two oldest daughters lived there and, apparently, one never married. The father died in the very room the man-ghost goes to. They were Catholic and his wake was held in that room.

"I heard chanting one night, and the mournful sounds grew and grew. It was definitely Latin. That really freaked me out. My hair stood on end. I was scared, really scared."

Elaine says she never kept a record. "I should have," she says. 'I don't know what day or what month I heard those things. It could have been on the anniversary of the old man's death.

"There was a doctor in town that I went to when we first moved into the house. An optometrist, I had some eye trouble. And he said, 'Oh, you're the people who bought the old Bopst place,' and we got into quite a conversation. 'That's a haunted house,' he said, laughing. And I said, 'I'm beginning to really think so. I hear a baby cry and there is no baby. I was so startled the first time I heard it I dropped a cup of coffee.'

"Then the doctor said, 'That house is cursed, there is always something happening there. Everyone who has owned it has died in it. And there have been some mysterious deaths.'

"You know, one of the daughters, the one who never married, fell on hard times, and in the forties she rented out rooms. She had people staying there of all kinds, and one of them was a young girl who stayed up in the top third floor front.' And that's the room where the man-ghost stops in front of the door," Elain adds.

"'I know where she stayed,' said the doctor, 'because one Sunday Miss Bopst came and got me to deliver her baby, the girl roomer's. I was the closest doctor. The baby was born prematurely. The girl wasn't married, had no money, and didn't want to go to the hospital. So, I dashed over and delivered the baby. It didn't live long, and several days later the girl hung herself in the stairwell on the top floor of the house. It's her baby you probably hear.'

"It was in the spring," Elaine says, "and the doctor said he delivered the baby in the spring. Others have heard the crying, too.

"Whenever I had a party, doors slammed and opened and shut by themselves. My guests would say, 'What was that?' And I'd say it was nothing because it was a little hard to explain to a crowd. Besides, I got so I didn't notice every sound I heard.

"At Thanksgiving and Christmas there seemed to be more sounds that were unaccountable. Sounds of hustle and bustle and running feet. And more things disappeared, like screwdrivers and a bowl once."

Last winter an incredible thing happened, according to Elaine. "I was in the kitchen reading about 11 o'clock one night," she said, "the dog on the floor and the cat in my lap, when I heard this crash. 'A car has skidded into a signpost,' I said to myself, but nothing was wrong outside.

"When H. I. came home he went into the front of the house and came rushing back to ask me what had happened. I followed him down the hall to the living room and stood in the doorway speechless. Some one had tried to obliterate

everything on the mantelpiece. One huge three-and-a-half-foot Italian candlestick had landed in the middle of the room in pieces. A lifesize head was broken, a set of slave manacles was halfway across the room, rugs were overturned, the whole area was a mess. Vibration from the street traffic could never have caused such havoc, and no one had been in that part of the house the entire day. We kept that end shut off to conserve heat.

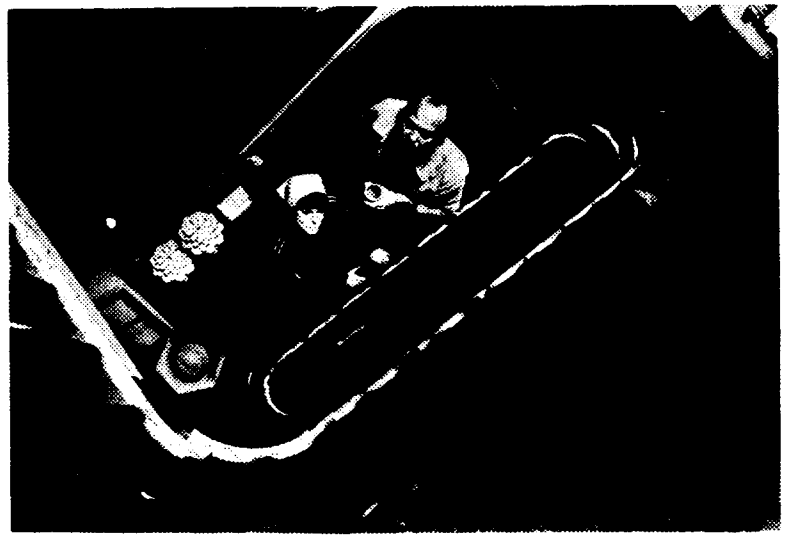
"The crash I had heard earlier was in my own living room. And just when I had begun to think our ghosts were harmless, even friendly. Were they fighting among themselves, or had they turned poltergeists?"

Mrs. Gates thinks the man-ghost followed them to their beach house. While they had a guest there last summer they were aroused from deep sleep by loud stomping in the attic. Elaine went to the guest room, where there is an overhead trap door, and found her friend sitting up in bed with the covers wrapped around her. Asked if she had heard the noise she answered she most certainly had. But she wasn't about to go up the ladder with her hostess to investigate.

Elaine found the attic covered with undisturbed dust and cobwebs and the windows locked. But there was no more sleep for anyone that night. They had coffee before daybreak, and the week-end guest found an excuse to leave that afternoon.

"Later, I was staying at the beach alone during the week and the thumper stomped again," says Elaine. "I didn't even bother to go look. I figured the heavy walker from home had followed us; that maybe he misses people when they go away, and that maybe he is friendly in his fashion.

"And that's fine, just fine," says Mrs. Gates, with a twinkling smile. "But I wish he wouldn't scare people away and break up valuable antiques."



Elaine and H. J. Gates on massive stairway.