NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Heighe House

other names/site number: HA-1770 (See HA-931;932)

2. Location

street & number: Southampton and Moores Mill roads — [N/A] not for publication

city, town: Bel Air — [X] vicinity

state: Maryland code: MD county: Harford code: 025 zip code: 21014

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
[X] private	[ ] building(s)	4	1 buildings
[ ] public-local	[X] district	1	sites
[ ] public-State	[ ] site		structures
[ ] public-Federal	[ ] structure		objects
	[ ] object	5	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official — Date: 9/4/90

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [ ] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation stone
walls stone, weatherboard
roof slate
other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Heighe House complex, located on a steeply sloping 17-acre site along Bynum Run, consists of a Colonial Revival 2 1/2-story stone main house built on and incorporating the stone foundations of the c. 1745 Moores Mill; a 1 1/2-story frame chauffeur's cottage; garage; and a 1 1/2-story stone and frame guest house. The buildings were designed by John M. Donn, AIA, and built in 1928 for Anne McE. Heighe (Mrs. Robert), a prominent horse-breeder and generally admired as the "first lady of Maryland racing." The structures are gently nestled in a romantically designed landscape, laid out at the same time the buildings were built and clearly planned so as to show them off. The garden's principal physical features are the remains of the old mill race and the meandering course of Bynum Run. Around these waterways were constructed an elaborate system of ponds and streams and waterfalls all embowered in a native hardwood forest underplanted in rhododendron and azalea spinneys and vast drifts of wildflowers. The structures are joined by service roads and footpaths which meander throughout the property. The resource forms an easily identified and virtually unchanged--picturesque, rural entity isolated amidst hundreds of acres of ranch- and townhouse developments that have sprung up around it within the past decade.

[X] See continuation sheet 7.1
for GENERAL DESCRIPTION

8. Statement of Significance

HA-1770

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☐ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☒ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1928 - 1953	1929-1953
Commerce (horse breeding)		

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Significant Person: Heighe, Anne McE.

Architect/Builder: Donn, John M., architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Heighe House, a country estate developed in 1928, is significant for its architectural character and for association with its creator, Anne McElderry Heighe (d. 1953), a woman widely regarded as "the first lady of Maryland racing" who played a key role in the development of the Maryland thoroughbred horse industry by her efforts at her own farm and by inducing breeders of international renown to locate in the state. The house, with its complementary guest house and chauffeur's cottage, and its contemporaneously laid out grounds, now at full maturity, remain in virtually unchanged condition. They stand as the earliest and best Harford County example of a 20th century "American Country House." This is an informal manner of building instantly distinguishable from the previous generation's gilded age mansions, a manner of building that still dominates the horse country north of Baltimore. "The American Country House" was much analyzed at the time by critics and architects such as Fiske Kimball in national periodicals such as Architectural Record and Architectural Forum in the years between the two world wars.

☒ See continuation sheet 8.1 for HISTORICAL CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

9. Major Bibliographical References

HA-1770

See Continuation Sheet 9.1

[X] See continuation sheet

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
- [ ] Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 16½+ acres

USGS quad: Bel Air, MD

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	385220	4378640
B	18	385210	4378240
C	18	384660	4378530
D			

[ ] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property consists of parcels 97, 536, and 352 on State Tax Assessment Map 41 for Harford County. See Continuation Sheet 10.1

[X] See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries have been draw to include the lands that have been historically associated with the property and that are necessary to maintain its historic and visual integrity in the presence of rapid suburbanization.

[ ] See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Weeks, Preservation Planner

organization Department of Planning and Zoning date May 1990

street & number 220 South Main Street telephone (301) 838-6000

city or town Bel Air state Maryland zip code 21014

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Heighe House complex consists of four historic structures set amidst 17 acres of romantically landscaped gardens at the intersection of Southampton (originally Heighe) and Moores Mill roads in central Harford County, Maryland, approximately one-half mile northeast of the county seat, Bel Air. The entire unified composition dates to c. 1928 when the structures were designed by John W. Donn, AIA, and the landscape was laid out as the country estate of Anne McE. Heighe (Mrs. Robert), an internationally renowned horse breeder, well known as "the first lady of Maryland racing."[1] The acreage slopes steeply down to Bynum Run which, at the site, flows swiftly over a series of rocky falls to pass from the Piedmont to the coastal plain. The resulting water power made milling a natural activity and the eponymous Moores Mill stood on the site from c. 1745 until 1928. Mrs. Heighe, her architect, Donn, and her gardener, a Mr. Primrose[2], were sensitive to the site, its history and its possibilities, as they constructed the complex. A public road bisects the site, creating a natural boundary between the owner's house and other housing: the Heighes' 2 1/2-story stone house and its surrounding gardens were built on the south side of the road on the site of the mill while the north side was given over to a 1 1/2-story frame chauffeur's cottage and a 1 1/2 story stone and frame guest house.

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[1] The Maryland Horse, October, 1953, p. 29.

[2] Conversation between Christopher Weeks and Bradford McE. Jacobs, April 4, 1990; Mr. Jacobs is Mrs. Heighe's nephew and was executor of her estate. It is important to note that Mrs. Heighe was a very strong-willed woman; "She knew what she wanted," according to Jacobs. And, according to Jacobs, she played a direct role in designing the house and garden.

See Continuation Sheet 7.2

Main House and Grounds

(1 contributing building; 1 contributing site)

Mrs. Heighe kept the millrace and mill pond intact, lining their banks with azaleas, wild daylilies, and ferns and planting clumps of Louisiana Iris at the edge of the pond. She and Mr. Primrose constructed a 10-foot waterfall so that water could picturesquely tumble down from the pond to the swiftly flowing Bynum Run which, just below the falls, splits to form a quarter-acre island. They constructed a gently arched redwood bridge (with Japanese overtones) over the stream so one could sit and view (or just listen to) the falls; they laid flattened rocks across the stream so one could gingerly walk from the mainland to the island; they placed an elaborate system of paths and bridges to crisscross the property. The wildness of the property is heightened by Mrs. Heighe's plantings. Large drifts of what were thought to be native azalea and rhododendron edge the waterways and the public road (at the latter forming a natural, evergreen screen. Grass is kept to a minimum, being used only in the most formal areas such as between the driveway and the house. The "lawn" is made up of vast drifts of wildflowers including blue bells, wild strawberries, dog tooth violets, sweet woodruff, several species of violas, May apples, wild foxglove, ferns, and thousand of bulbs of naturalized

See Continuation Sheet 7.3

narcissus "Actea", an ancient species well-suited to such informal plantings.[3] Dozens of dogwood trees provide an intermediate layer of flower and fall color while the pond, enjoyed year-round by a pair of blue heron, is the migratory home to mallards and Canada Geese; tulip poplars and sycamores tower above it all.

Mrs. Heighe and Donn decided to built the new house on the foundations of the venerable Moores Mill, built c. 1745 and by the 1920s badly deteriorated. A photograph of the ruined mill accompanied a story in the February 2, 1928, issue of the local weekly, The AEgis; the story, titled "House to Replace Ancient Mill," observed that Mrs. Heighe's "attractive stone residence" would be "specially designed to suit the picturesque location in which it will be situated. The beauties of woods and streams afforded in this spot will be developed and utilized and those familiar with Mrs. Heighe's rare taste and ability are confident her new home when completed will possess a charm of its own."

Clearly only the most picturesque house would suit this site. Donn and Mrs. Heighe chose to build a relaxed Colonial Revival structure, placing the new stone and frame house as the mill had been, into a hill just a few feet north of the stream; they planted beds of mint, hosta, and asarum between foundation and stream bank to take advantage of every shady inch. Because of the slope,

[3]Conservation between Christopher Weeks and Leith S. Griswold, March 28, 1990; Mrs. Griswold was the first Chairman of the Board of the Ladew Topiary Gardens and was recently (May 7, 1990) given a Distinguished Achievement Award by the Garden Club of America.

See Continuation Sheet 7.4

the house is 2 1/2 stories on its stone south (entrance) facade and 3 1/2 stories tall on the stone and frame north facade toward the stream. It has a three-bay central section flanked by an enclosed one-story frame and glass porch (overlooking the waterfall) on the west and a two-story, stone and frame library wing to the east. The main section and library wing are topped by steeply sloping, slate-covered gable roofs with slates carefully calibrated and laid so that their size diminishes as they ascend towards the roof's crest; a single-pitch shingle roof covers the porch. All windows in main and library wings are simply framed in wood and have six-over-six panes, wooden sills, and massive eye-catching stone lintels; windows are flanked by their original shutters (panelled on the ground floor and louvered above) held in place by large, elaborate wrought-iron hinges and unusually intricate shutter dogs all designed by Donn for Mrs. Heighe. The massive and panelled entrance door is sheltered by a one-story, one-bay porch with panelled end walls and with one of the old Moores Mill millstones incorporated into its floor.

The west facade is dominated by the enclosed porch, reached from the living room by French doors, and by a massive, off-center stone chimney; the three visible windows (two on the second floor, one in the third) resemble those on the main facade in framing, paning, shutters, and use of huge lintels.

Overlooking the small island, the north facade towers 3 1/2 stories over Bynum Run. It is not only a massive facade, it is an involved one as well for Donn and Heighe seem to have given free rein to their picturesque imaginations. The weathered 18th-century foundations of the mill are fully

See Continuation Sheet 7.5

exposed above the stream (with violas and moss freely growing from the mortar joints) and similar foundations were laid beneath the library and service wings to the east. The house's service wing is low and built into the hill so an to be invisible from the entrance. To ensure textural interest, Donn laid the stones with protruding mortar joints.

The bulk of the house is set back about three feet to allow for a small terrace with a simple iron railing, which spans the entire main floor; the terrace has steps leading down to the path by the waterfall and is reached from the living room by three French doors framed by panelled shutters. All three bays of the second story are French doors; with panelled shutters; the shutters are marked by iron balconies whose narrowness makes them strictly decorative. A large frame oriel with a pair of small casement windows juts out from the center of the third story and is flanked by six-over-six windows; a central double dormer and two smaller dormers protrude from and add rhythm to the attic. The library wing has six-over-six windows on its ground story and casement windows in its frame second story and attic. The smaller service wing has a door and a single six-over-six window. A simple redwood bridge leads from the lower service wing to the island.

The east facade basically consists of the blank walls of the service and library wings all dominated by a massive off center stone chimney whose five flues are indicated by the clearly visible pottery chimney pots--yet another picturesque touch.

Whoever wrote the anonymous 1928 AEgis article was observant enough to note that Mrs.

See Continuation Sheet 7.6

Heighe's house would be "entirely different in its style from any in this section." This is true for the house's elevations and it is just as true for its plan which has no known precedent (see plan sketch). Mrs. Heighe abandoned the traditional Harford County centerhall (or sidehall) plan to create a series of rooms unlike any in the area but which, in size and flow, completely suited the idiosyncratic needs of her and her husband. Twin but separate stairhalls span the front of the main section and go back roughly one-third its depth. The west (entrance) stairhall leads from the front door to the living room and the stair twists up angular three flights to bedrooms. On the upper levels, bedrooms and bathrooms are placed in an irregular, rambling manner appropriate to the house's romantic masonry and they remain largely untouched; bathrooms still boast their original porcelain furnishings, such as sinks, tubs with feet, and glass/toothbrush holders. The eastern stairhall, reached from the living rooms, is given over to a gracious elliptical stair which leads gently and invitingly to the dining room below. Balusters and newel posts on both sets of stairs are simply turned; the rail is slender and graceful.

The large, roughly 20' by 40', living room is focused on an elaborate colonial revival mantel and fireplace wall at the western end; it is flanked by matching French doors which lead to the enclosed porch. Three French doors on the north wall overlook the falls of Bynum Run and, when open, guarantee that the sounds of swift-flowing water fill the house. Except for the mantel the room is simply finished with beaded baseboards and exposed ceiling joists and lock/pulls for the French doors as the only architectural features.

See Continuation Sheet 7.7

This is not so in the library, reached by a six-panel door in the living room's northeast corner. This room is fully panelled in mellow-toned beech wood; delicate carved beech moldings crown the built-in bookcases; exposed unpainted beech ceiling joists punctuate and add rhythm to the white plaster ceiling; the beech fireplace surround, which resembles a full entableture, and panelled overmantle are particularly notable. Unfortunately it is not known whom Donn employed as artisans to execute the library woodwork.

The southern half of the library's fireplace wall is given over to a concealed built-in liquor closet, a somewhat surprising feature in a house built during the middle of Prohibition.

With the glass doors to the west stair hall open, circulation would flow easily down to the dining room, a twin of the living room in size and treatment, except that its three French doors open onto a terrace. The exposed beamed ceiling, beaded baseboards, French door trim and Colonial Revival mantle are simple and closely resemble those in the living room.

Kitchen and service areas lead off from the dining room to the east and still largely maintain their original appearance. The kitchen retains much integrity, down to its original tall glass-door cabinets and to the panel with maids' bells. In fact, except for rewiring to obtain more wattage, the house's entire complicated electrical system is largely intact--no small statement considering that the Heighes had their own private telephone system with 17 separate lines to connect each room in the main house with the various outbuildings.

See Continuation Sheet 7.8

Garage (1 contributing building)

The driveway to the main house slopes down northwesterly from Southampton Road, passes in front of the house, then continues west to rejoin the public highway. In so doing, it passes the original flat-roofed 1928 one-story frame two-car garage. The garage's walls are covered in German siding.

Chauffeur's Cottage (1 contributing building)

The 1928 1 1/2-story frame chauffeur's cottage, directly across the public highway from the end of the driveway, is built in a thoroughly informal manner, an effect not diminished by the large stands of lilacs planted around it. The entrance (north) facade is the north gable end and faces the road. A low brick wall separates the cottage from the road and allows space for a small slate covered terrace. The main door is panelled and is placed to the east with a bay window to the west. A six-over-six window is in the center of the upstairs story. Other facades display informal fenestration and casement, sash, and bay windows appear in seemingly random fashion. Dormers with hinged windows pierce the roof's east and west slopes. Another slate covered terrace is off the southwest corner of the cottage and is appropriately bordered in hollyhocks. Other flower beds are informally placed here and there throughout the cottage's sunny grounds.

Guest House (1 contributing building)

A meandering hedge of lilac, rhododendron, and hemlock screens the chauffeur's cottage from the

See Continuation Sheet 8.9

1928 guest house. Placed on the highest point in the property, shaded by venerable white oaks, and surrounded by informally placed hollies and boxwoods, the self-sufficient guest house is a two-part structure with rooflines running east-west. The larger section is stone, two stories tall and three bays wide; windows downstairs around the central entrance are nine-over nine; those on the second story are six-over-six; shutters are louvered. The cornice is plain. The ground floor is somewhat elevated and the front door, sheltered by a small portico, is reached by a single flight of wooden steps. A slightly smaller, three-bay, gambrel roof frame wing stretches off to the west. In addition to the scores of now mature rhododendron, the guest house grounds are given privacy from the main house by a split rail fence, dating to the Heighe era and now more romantic than ever in its somewhat dilapidated condition.

Storage Shed (1 non-contributing building)

A modern metal storage shed stands near the garage.

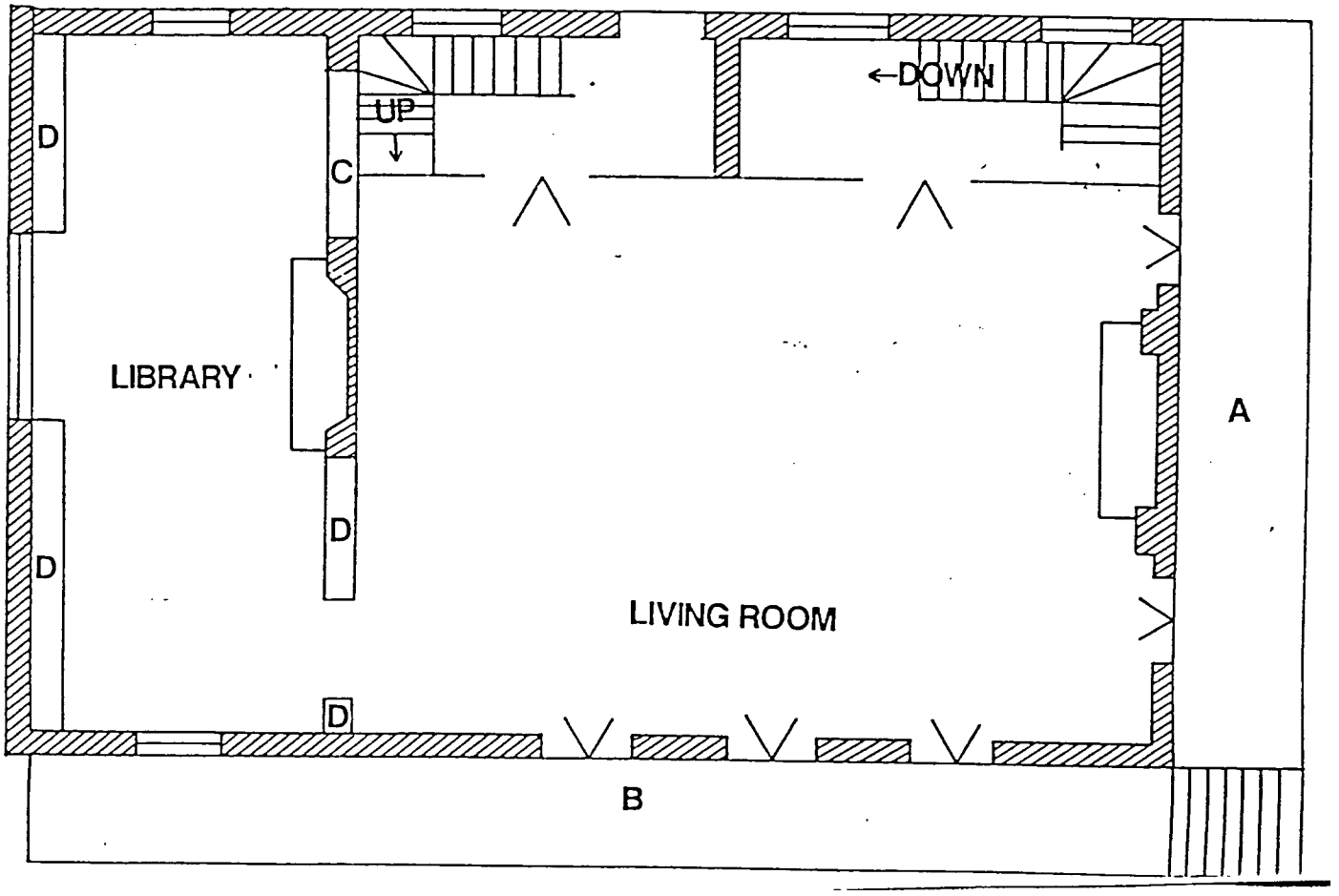
See Continuation Sheet 7.10

First Floor Plan 1990

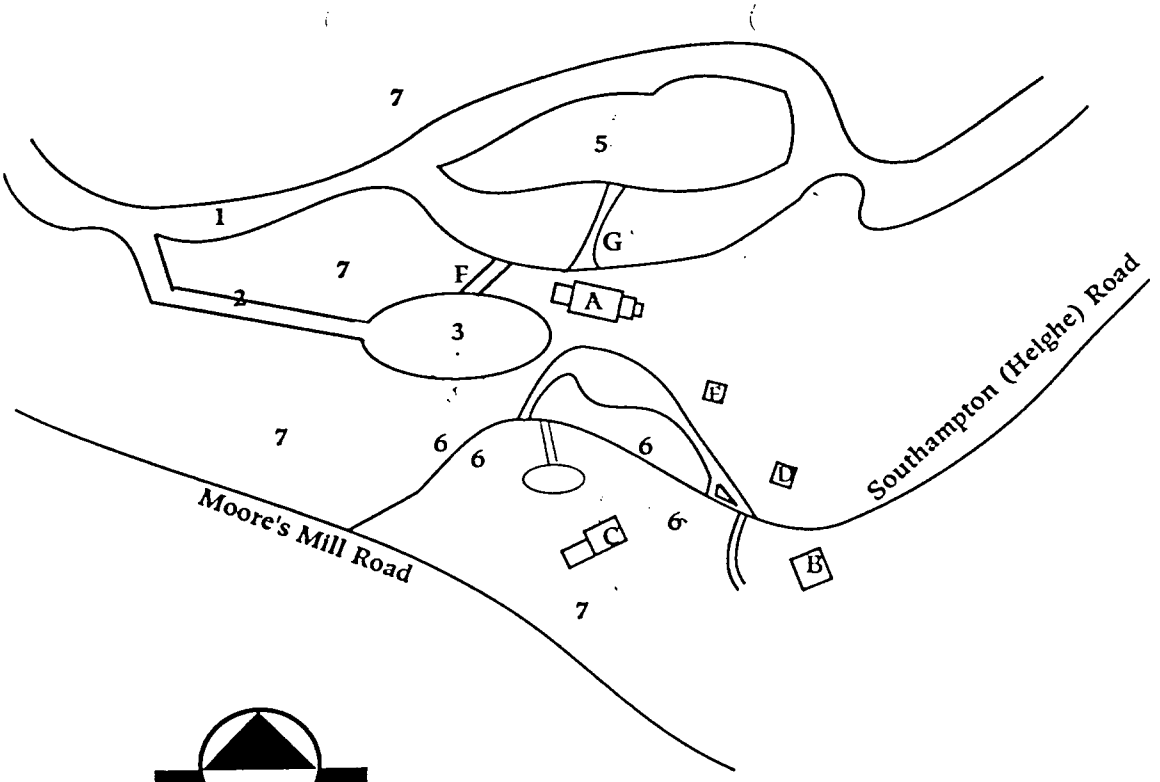
Main House

A Enclosed Porch
B Terrace
C Liquor Closet
D Book Cases

HEIGHE HOUSE
HA-~~931~~ 1770
Harford County, Maryland
not to scale
TANIA BENFIELD - JUNE, 1990



See Continuation Sheet 7.11



HEIGHE HOUSE SITE PLAN 1990
HA-~~93k~~ 1770
Harford County, Maryland
June 1, 1990
Not to Scale
Tania Benfield

Landscape Features:

1. Bynum Run
2. Millrace
3. Millpond
4. Waterfall
5. Island
6. Rhododendron Hedges
7. Hardwood Forests

Architectural Features:

A. Main House
B. Chauffeur's Cottage
C. Guest House
D. Garage
E. Storage Shed (non-contributing)
F. Waterfall Bridge
G. Island Bridge

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance	A.D. 1870-1930
Modern Period	1930-Present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Agriculture

Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Community Planning

Resource Type:

Category: District

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Known Design Source: Architect/John M. Donn, AIA

See Continuation Sheet 8.2

HISTORIC CONTEXT

In 1928 Anne McElderry Heighe (Mrs. Robert), a Harford County native and horse-breeder generally esteemed as "the first lady of Maryland racing", commissioned Washington architect John M. Donn, AIA, to design a country house on the edge of the county seat, Bel Air.

During the 1920s and '30s wealthy members of the international "horsey" community were being drawn to Harford County from all across the eastern United States, lured by the county's rich soils (which proved perfect for growing grasses) and captivated by the picturesque countryside. Harvey Ladew, in his day a well regarded equestrian but now best known for his gardens (see Ladew Topiary Gardens, HA-1245, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976) bought a farm in Harford County in 1929. He best summed up the sentiments of his age when he wrote, "What a natural wonderful country I found in Harford!...There were many nice farmers, who for the most part sympathized with fox-hunting and enjoyed it themselves...Cattle grazed contentedly in lush green pasture land. The fields...were fenced with some posts and rails, and...there were still many snake fences to be seen. There was not a strand of wire anywhere."[1] Ladew's Pleasant

[1]Harvey S. Ladew, "Random Recollections", pamphlet published by the Ladew Topiary Gardens, Monkton, Maryland.

See Continuation Sheet 8.3

Valley Farm was adjacent the Harford Hunt Club. That organization merged with the Elkridge Hounds in 1935, after the latter group decided that its location nearer Baltimore City had grown too suburban, to produce the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club,[2] a still-flourishing enterprise drawing members from throughout the region and intimately involved with such events as the Manor Race, the Maryland Hunt Cup, and other related activities which dominate the April calendar in northern Baltimore and Harford counties.

The year before Ladew bought his farm, Anne McElderry Heighe had commissioned Washington architect John M. Donn, AIA, to design a country house for her and her husband, Robert, on the edge of Bel Air; the location allowed easy access to the shops and banks in the county seat, and just as importantly it was located just five miles from the Harford Hunt Club where Mr. Heighe was manager.[3]

The Heighes had been living in a stone house in Bel Air (on Heighe Street) and their decision to relocate to the country drew considerable local attention, including a February 10, 1928, piece in the weekly newspaper, The AEgis, which didn't usually comment on such things. In an article

[2]Conservation between Christopher Weeks and Mary H. Cadwalader, April 7, 1990; Miss Cadwalader is preparing a history of the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club.

[3]Jacobs and Weeks.

See Continuation Sheet 8.4

entitled "House to Replace Ancient Mill," an anonymous writer noted that "Mrs Robert H. Heighe has entered into a contract of sale to purchase the well known Moores Mill property....The intended purchase, however, means no manufacturing enterprise. Instead, the old mill...will be razed an on its site will arise shortly an attractive stone residence. Already tentative plans have been drawn up by John M. Down [sic], a well known Washington architect who has inspected the site. The house will be entirely different in its style from any in this section being specially designed to suit the picturesque location in which it will be situated. The beauties of woods and streams afforded in this spot will be utilized and those familiar with Mrs. Heighe's rare taste and ability are confident her new home when completed will possess a charm of its own."

Mrs. Heighe would also establish in Harford County one of America's leading stud farms. She inherited her interest in horses from her aunt, Mrs. Herman B. Duryea. Mrs. Heighe's nephew, Bradford McE. Jacobs, described Mrs. Duryea as heiress to a New York shipping fortune who expatriated herself to a large horse-breeding established in France. Mrs. Duryea's greatest success came on May 30, 1914, when her prize stallion, Durbar II, won the last pre-War English Derby, an upset victory over King George V's favored horse that caused headlines in newspapers throughout Europe: the London Times headlined its story "Doleful Derby"; the Daily Mirror described the event as "the greatest racing upset of the season"; even the French press (which presumably would have been sympathetic to a British defeat by a Normandy-bred--if American

See Continuation Sheet 8.5

owned--horse) devoted columns to the "fait remarquable" at "Le Derby Diabolique".[4]

When Mrs. Duryea died, she left her horses (and other property) to her niece, Mrs. Heighe; she transported the operation to Harford County, Maryland, where she bought an old family house largely because of the lush grass grown on its surrounding "180 acres of good strong rolling Harford County land," as The Maryland Horse observed in 1936. The home known as the Hays-Heighe House (HA-152; National Register) was built in 1808 by Archer Hays; the Hays, Jacobs, Bradford, and McElderry families are thoroughly intermarried. Here she brought over what The Maryland Horse called "the cream of mares at the Haras du Gazon [the Duryea farm]." Included was Durbar II who "died in 1932 at the Heighe stud...and was buried on the farm"[5] (another source "on the lawn at Bel Air")[6] but not before he had been bred several times to guarantee that "his blood is still a potent factor at the stud." According to a 1947 article on Mrs. Heighe's equestrian successes, "Durbar II, of course, was an exceptional broodmare sire and his daughters are highly prized." Mrs. Heighe employed "the capable Fritz Boniface, whose interest in Harford County breeding is

[4]Clippings in files of Bradford Jacobs, Stevenson, Maryland; there are German and Austrian newspaper accounts, too. Mr. Jacobs noted that his aunt, Mrs. Heighe, kept the same green and white racing colors her aunt, Mrs. Duryea, had used.

[5]Maryland Horse, August 1947, p. 13.

[6]The Baltimore Evening Sun, May 28, 1953.

See Continuation Sheet 8.6

intense" as manager of her operations. She would later employ Boniface's son, Jack,[7] in the same capacity (the family has remained active in the racing world) and the horses they bred and trained enjoyed enormous success on American tracks from Canada to Florida to California and several of their Harford-produced brood established still-valid track records including "the six-furlong at Pimlico...[and] the six-furlong track record at Golden State Park;"[8] Mrs. Heighe's horses won on the international circuit, too; her horse, "Tourbillon...[was] France's leading sire in 1940, 1942, and 1945."[9] She bred her stallions and mares throughout the world; when one of her horses would win a particularly important race "at, say, Hialeah or Pimlico" there would be a big party at her Harford County home and "up would the American, British, or French flag," depending on the victor's place of birth.[10]

Mrs. Heighe not only had a significant influence on horse racing because of her triumphs at the track, she also drew some of the most respected members of the profession to Maryland. Her nephew recalls that she convinced Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt to come to Maryland where he

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[7]Maryland Horse, August 1947.

[8]The American Racing Manual, 1953; that these records still stand was confirmed in a conversation between Christopher Weeks and the staff of the Maryland Horse, April 11, 1990.

[9]Maryland Horse, December 1936, p. 6.

[10]Jacobs and Weeks.

See Continuation Sheet 8.7

established Sagamore Farms, "Maryland's largest Thoroughbred nursery"[11] and the two of them managed to lure the redoubtable Larry MacPhail, baseball magnate and sportsman extraordinaire, to the Free State;[12] just after World War II Col. MacPhail established Glenangus Farms near Bel Air (about three miles from Mrs. Heighe's house) and his horses would later set the record at the yearling sales at Saratoga.

Mrs. Height's significance in the racing world continued into the National Register 50-year cut-off period. She received considerable press attention throughout the 1940s and early '50s and when she died in 1953, The American Racing Manual hailed her contributions as "vice-president of the Maryland Horse Breeders' Association" (she remains the only woman to have served on that organization's Board) and to the "Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association." The Baltimore Evening Sun called her "Maryland's foremost horsewoman" and noted that her horses "influenced breeding throughout the State." The publisher of The Maryland Horse reckoned her to have been the undisputed "first lady of Maryland racing" and the directors of Laurel Race Course decided, as a tribute to the "many memorable triumphs" her horses won there to honor her memory at "a feature race [which} will bear her name" and the "Laurel management will give a

[11]Maryland Horse, August 1947.

[12]John Dorsey, "The Lives of Larry MacPhail," in the Baltimore Sunday Sun Magazine, November 27, 1966.

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trophy" in her name to the winner. She is buried in Baltimore's Greenmount Cemetery.

Mrs. Heighe's horses lived in stables at the Hays-Heighe House but she viewed "the Moores Mill Road house as home," according to her nephew; she bought the Hays-Heighe House and farm for its pastureland but she never lived in the older--and much larger-- stone house, preferring instead the romantic picturesqueness of the 1928 house on Moores Mill Road. In its own way, that 1928 house was just as great a triumph as any that her stables enjoyed.

Desiring recreation, wealthy sportsmen had been drawn to Harford County for generations before Mrs. Heighe set about building her house on Moores Mill Road. One of the earliest was General George Cadwalader, who, beginning in the 1840s sought to establish a duck-hunting retreat where he could escape the gilded rigors of formal Philadelphia. Around the turn of the 20th century the process quickened: in the 1890s Johns Hopkins Hospital's Dr. Howard Kelly brought Baltimore architects Wyatt and Nolting out to design Liriodendron (HA-230; National Register) on a 200-acre tract on the edge of Bel Air and in 1905 James L. Breese of New York hired Stanford White to design additions to Oakington, a large estate overlooking the Chesapeake Bay near Havre de Grace.

These were enormous undertakings: Cadwalader's "retreat" eventually took in 9,000 acres (and

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remained in the family until appropriated by the government for army use during World War I); Liriodendron is a vast, stuccoed neoclassical chateau. The name Stanford White speaks for itself (White and Evelyn Nesbit are said to have been frequent guests at Oakington and Breese is said to have imported "a bevy of Ziegfield Follies girls down for weekends.")[13] and Oakington is a rambling stone pile that, after the Breese ear, was maintained by Leonard Richards, Commodore of the New York Yacht Club and, later, by Sen. Millard Tydings and his heiress wife, Eleanor Davies Cheseborough.

Eventually a reaction to such excesses began to set in, not just locally but nationwide. One of the first to notice this reaction was Fiske Kimball, pioneering scholar on the works of Thomas Jefferson, Professor of Architecture at the University of Virginia, and eventually Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (among his many accomplishments). Kimball wrote a landmark essay on "The American Country House" which ran to over 100 pages and comprised the entire October 1919 issue of the magazine Architectural Record. Rather than gilt and marble and show, which dominated country-house building in the late 19th century, Kimball argued that "modern" country house architecture was a result of "the great wave of renewed love of out-of-door life and nature which swept over America in the...opening years of the twentieth century....Predominant in it, no

[13]Material in the Oakington file, Harford County Department of Planning and Zoning.

See Continuation Sheet 8.10

doubt, is the fondness for out-of-door sports...[and] a fuller enjoyment of gardening." He suggested that in America "absence of social pretensions permit a more modest establishment" than in England or than was deemed desirable a generation or two earlier in this country. Basically, wrote Kimball, and "to sum up current tendencies in design of the country house, we need only emphasize its fundamental character of simplicity. There are no rooms not in every day use, there is no ornament...and the fundamental expression--for which even the parvenu learns to strive--is that of unpretentious decency and comfort." Similar sentiments were quickly voiced by other architects and theorists. A sample of their prose output would include William Lawrence Bottomley's "The Design of the Country House" in the October 1921 Architectural Record and Aymar Embury II's "The Country House" for the Architectural Forum of September 1928, the same year Mrs. Heighe was building on Moores Mill Road.

Simple visual evidence suggests that Mrs. Heighe and her architect, Donn, had fully absorbed the advice to seek "unpretentious decency and comfort;" Donn, in fact, seems to have made a career of following such precepts. His work was often featured in professional journals of the time: his house for Burr N. Edwards, Chevy Chase (The American Architect, September 6, 1916), is a simple three-bay clapboard structure with French doors in all ground floor rooms and with two-tier porches whose combined square footage surpasses that of the main body of the house; similarly, his "Addition to Country Seat of S.L. Dunlop" (designed with Walter Peter and illustrated in the

See Continuation Sheet 8.11

American Architect and Building News) is a five-bay brick structure with massing and details firmly within the conservative architectural mainstream of the Chesapeake region.

While Mrs. Heighe and Donn may have given the Moores Mill Road house a few touches chosen for their pictorial effect (such as the massive lintels and delicate shutter dogs), the over-riding impression is understatement. It would be easy to assume that the placement of the guest quarters and the chauffeur's cottage and garage in separate structures rather than combined on one large mansion may have been done to avoid any semblance of flashiness (see Description).

Certainly the gardens at Moores Mill Road, containing as they do nothing but what is (or was thought to be) native to the region, are in full compliance with Kimball's argument that "the strength and saneness of American traditions of informal landscape design, based not on artificial picturesqueness but on preservation and expression of the native local character." How pleased he would have been at Mrs. Heighe's preservation of the old mill race and mill pond, at her placement of the house so it overlooks the wildness of Bynum Run, at her incorporation of the millstone into the new house's entrance porch, a constant reminder of the "native local character."

Mrs. Heighe created the Moores Mill Road estate in 1928; as noted, the next year Harvey Ladew bought his farm in Harford County and settled down to a life of hunting and gardening; many

See Continuation Sheet 8.12

other bon vivants soon followed, often friends of Mrs. Heighe and induced to settle here because of her. From New York came Mr. and Mrs. Peter Jay, who moved to Windmill Hill (HA-678) in 1946 to raise and race horses; Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Bliss established their extensive stables (HA-156) between the Heighes and the Jays and moved their Monet paintings from New York to the house there in the '40s; B. Vaughn Flannery was an advertising executive who in 1931 bought and restored an old stone house (HA- 183) near Deer Creek and built an adjacent studio from which he turned out scores of paintings of race horses for an international clientele. (The Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Survey form notes that Flannery also raised his own horses and that he "had some success in the world of racing, but not as great as his own success at illustrating horses for such owners as Calumet Farms in the 1940s.") In 1948 Mr. and Mrs. James MacLean established Monmouth Farms (HA-703) south of Bel Air after they "grew weary of cafe society"[14] and Larry MacPhail, as discussed above, moved to Harford County after he grew weary of baseball. Baltimore and Washington produced Gilman Paul, a foreign service officer (representative at the Versailles Peace Conference 1918-'19, later postings at embassies in Rio, Paris, and The Hague) and public spirited Baltimore native (President of the Board of Trustees of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Trustee of the Johns Hopkins University and the Peabody Institute) who bought and restored the old stone house Land of Promise (HA-575) in the 1950s.

[14]Conservation between Christopher Weeks and Mrs. James MacLean, April 27, 1990.

See Continuation Sheet 8.13

The Moores Mill Road estate was divided and sold when Mrs. Heighe died in 1953 (Mr. Heighe had predeceased her in 1952); the main house, guest house, and chauffeur's cottage went to different owners and some of the acreage was sold off. Nonetheless, the subsequent owners of the three houses have taken care to keep them structurally intact (even retaining the servants' bells and 17 phone lines in the main house). Moreover, the 17 landscaped acres included in this nomination is enough to embrace all the 1928 structures and the most important landscape features so that the estate is essentially unchanged since it was home to Anne Heighe, the "first lady of Maryland racing."

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

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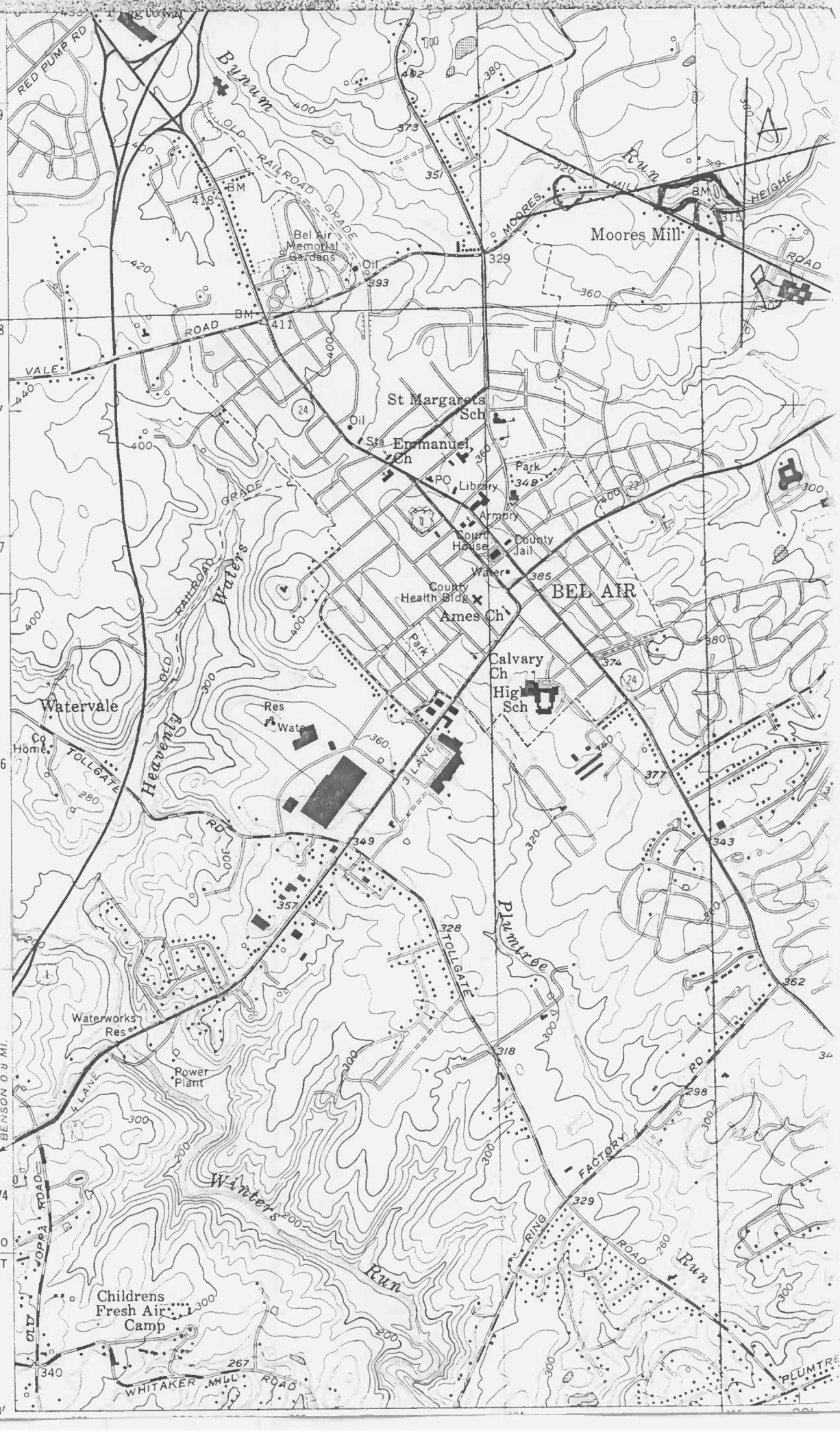
Heighe House
HA-1770
Harford Co
Maryland

A 18/385220/
4378640

B 18/385210/
4378240

C 18/384660/
4378530



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OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NA-1770

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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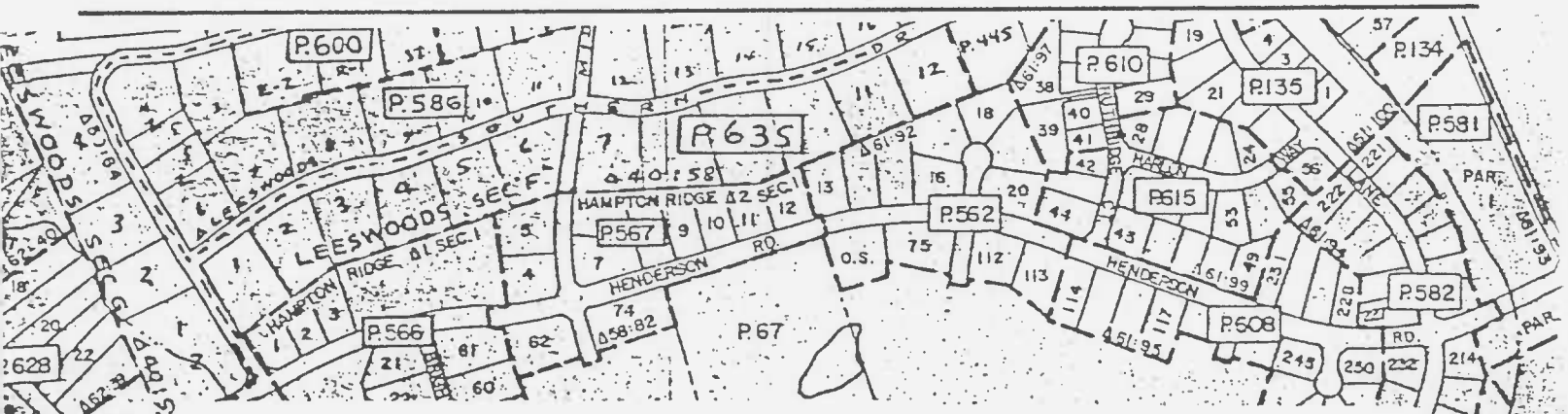
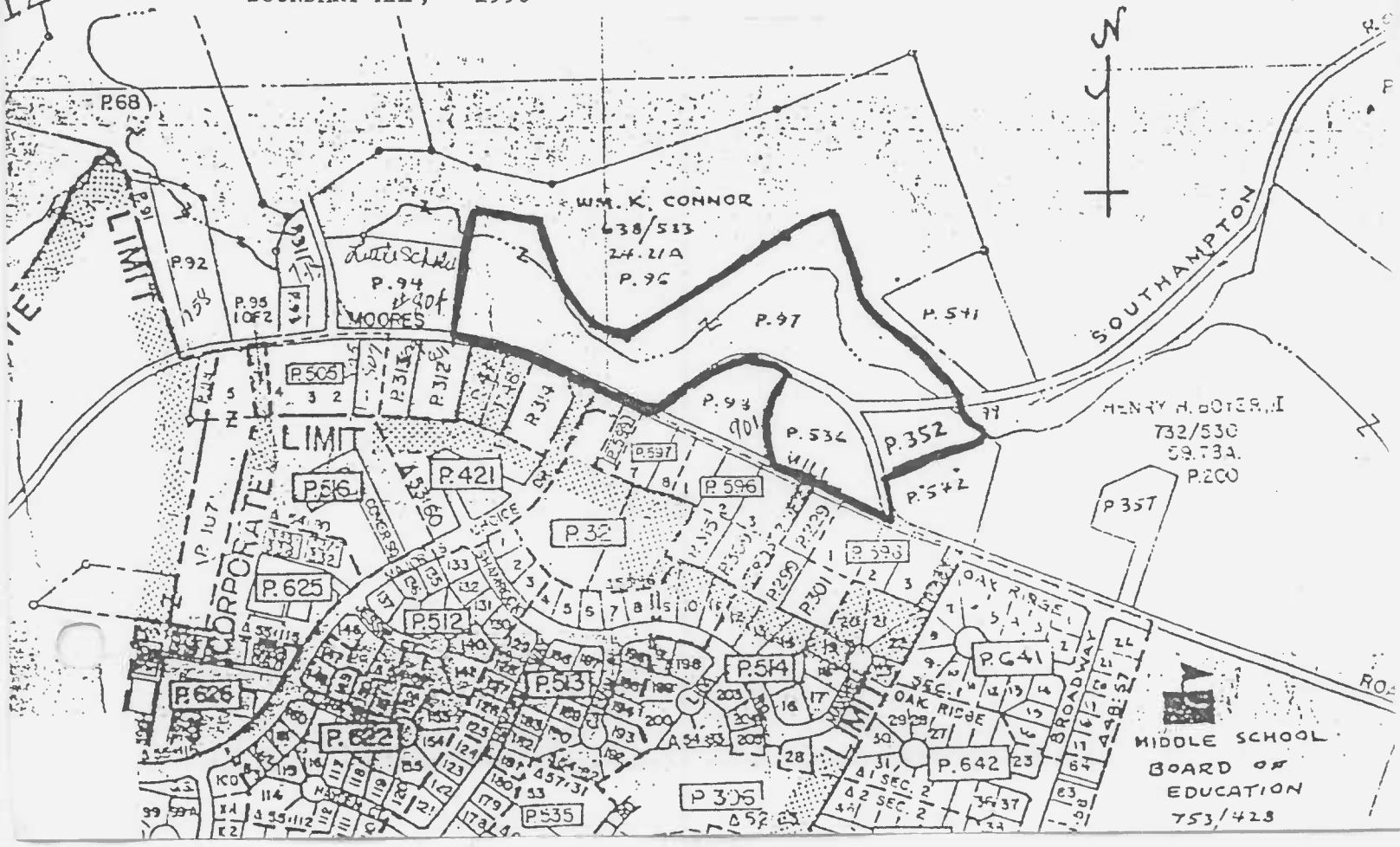


HEIGHE HOUSE

Bel Air vicinity
Harford County

State Tax Assessment Records:
Harford County
Map No. 41

BOUNDARY MAP, 1990



Heighe House HA-931 HA-1770

Harford Co., MD

photo: C. Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co Planning Dept.

S. facade with mill pond

1/17

1770

Heighe House HA-951

Harford Co, MD

photo C Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co Planning Dept.

S facade . detail

2/17

Heigle House HA ~~431~~ 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo C Weeks 4/90

neg. Harford Co Planning Dept

S facade .. mortar & lintel detail

3/17

Heigle House HA-931 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo: C. Weeks, 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

S. facade: old millstone

4/17

HA-1770

Height House HA-931

Harford Co. MD

photo: C Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

N facade

5/17

Heighe House HA-931 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo: J. Dudley 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

Living Room

6/17

Heights House HA 937 1770

Harford Co. MD

Photo: C weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

Living Room Mantle

7/17

1770

Heigh House HA ~~937~~

Hanford Co., MD

photo: C Weeks 4/90

neg: Hanford Co. Planning Dept.

Dining Room

8/17

1770

Height House #A 131

Hartford Co., MD

photo. J. Dudley 4/90

neg: Hartford Co. Plann., Dept.

Library detail

9/17

Heyle House HA 93t 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo: C Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co Planning Dept.

stair hall (up)

10/17

1770

Hengle House HA-931

Hanford Co, MD

photo: C Weeks 4/90

neg: Hanford Co Planning Dept.

bathroom

11/17

Heigle House HA-931 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo: C. Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

waterfall + landscape

12/17

Heights Hous HA-93T 1770

Harford Co. MD

photo: C Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

bridge over mill stream

13/17

1770

Height House HA-951

Harford Co., MD

photo: C. Weeks 4/90

neg. Harford Co. Planning Dept.

Bridge over Bynum Run

14/17

HA-1770

Heights House HA 931

Harford Co. MD

photo: C. Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

Driveways to main + guest houses; view to Chew Heir cottage

15/17

909

HA-1770

Heigle House ~~HA 931~~

Harford Co, MD

photo: C. Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co Planning Dept

Chauffeur Cottage

16/17

HA-1770

Heighe House HA-931

Harford Co. MD

photo C. Weeks 4/90

neg: Harford Co. Planning Dept.

Guest House

17/17