

## **CAPSULE SUMMARY**

### **Wheeler House**

HA-1787

28 West Gordon Street

Bel Air, Harford County

1941 c.

Private

The front of this house gives the appearance of a large stone Cape Cod house with its side-gable roof, three bays façade for the main block, and the three gable dormers above the roof. A two-bay-wide hyphen and a one-bay, wood-frame garage, appear to have been constructed in the late 1950s. The main block appears as one-and-a-half stories on the façade and two stories on the rear. The gable-roof hyphen is one story on the façade and one-and-a-half stories on the rear elevation. The front-gable garage integral to the hyphen is one-and-a-half stories.

The Wheeler House is not common of Colonial Revival-style dwellings built in the early 1940s within the Indian Hill subdivision to the Town of Bel Air, Maryland. It is unusual because it appears as a one-and-a-half story Cape Cod cottage on the façade and the rear elevation appears as a modest two-story Colonial Revival with wall dormers typical of the 1940s. The original block has a rectangular footprint, symmetrical fenestration, gable dormers, and a side-gable roof with two exterior-end chimneys, all characteristics common of Cape Cod dwellings. This dwelling provides the appearance of the contemporary and prominent style of the day from the early 1940s. The Wheeler House is also important as a representative work of Henry Edward Wheeler, who owned a large lumber yard and worked in construction as a builder during the second quarter of the twentieth century. Wheeler constructed this house as his family's residence.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. HA-1787

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Wheeler House

other

## 2. Location

street and number 28 West Gordon Street not for publication

city, town Bel Air vicinity

county Harford County

## 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name The Harford Mutual Insurance Company

street and number 200 North Main Street telephone N/A

city, town Bel Air state MD zip code 21014

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bel Air Courthouse liber 1110 folio 1032

city, town Bel Air tax map 301 tax parcel 485 tax ID number 011216

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>
				1

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## 7. Description

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

### Exterior Description

Facing southeast, the Wheeler House built circa 1941 is located at 28 West Gordon Street in Bel Air, Maryland. The house is set back from the road on a level grassy lot fronted with foundation plantings and surrounded by several trees and shrubs. A paved driveway leads from Cedar Alley to the attached garage on the rear elevation.

The front of this house gives the appearance of a large stone Cape Cod house with its side-gable roof, three bays façade for the main block, and the three gable dormers above the roof. A two-bay-wide hyphen and a one-bay, wood-frame garage, appear to have been constructed in the late 1950s. The main block appears as one-and-a-half stories on the façade and two stories on the rear. The gable-roof hyphen is one story on the façade and one-and-a-half stories on the rear elevation. The front-gable garage integral to the hyphen is one-and-a-half stories.

Resting on a random rubble foundation, the first story of the main block is constructed of random rubble and the upper stories are wood-frame clad with weatherboard siding with cornerboards. Two random rubble chimneys rise above the asphalt-shingle roof. Other architectural features include brick rowlock sills, wide fascia board, and a molded wood cornice with returns. The stone used for this house appears to be Butler stone from the Butler Stone Quarry in Baltimore County.

The façade features an integral, screened corner porch supported with square chamfered wood posts. The first story of the main block is pierced with two 6/6 double-hung, wood-sash windows. Each of the windows (except where noted) are double-hung, wood sashes. The upper story contains three gable, weatherboard-clad dormers each with one 6/6 window. The hyphen is pierced with one 8/8 window and one 8-light wood casement. The front elevation of the garage contains one 8/8 window on the first story and one 6/6 window in the upper story. The basement of the garage contains one 3-light metal awning window with a brick well.

The northeast elevation of the main block has a single, 9-light/3-horizontal panel storm door on the first story and one 6/6 window on the upper story. The northeast elevation of the garage is pierced with one 8/8 window and one 6-panel wood door on the first story, and there is one 3-light metal awning window in the basement.

Continuing to the rear elevation, the symmetrical fenestration of the first story of the main block contains a central entry flanked by two tripartite windows. The central entry contains a 9-light/3-panel wood storm door, which is flanked by two tripartite windows, each containing an 8/8 window flanked by two, 4-light fixed wood windows. Covering the 4-light windows are 2-light storm windows. The second story of the main block contains three gable wall dormers each with one 6/6 window.

The first story of the hyphen on the rear elevation is pierced with one tripartite window containing 8-light wood casements covered with 2-light storm windows. The upper story of the hyphen features one gable dormer with a 6/6 window. The projecting garage, has one wide, roll-up paneled door and the upper story contains one 6/6 window.

The southwest elevation of the main block is pierced with a 6/6 window both on the first and second stories. The southwest elevation of the garage has one 6/6 window.

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### Interior Description

The primary entry into the Wheeler House is into a small hall, which has a quarter-winder stair to the second floor. Through this small hall is access to the living room to the north and to a small office to the west. Located between the hall and office is an enclosed stair to the basement. Continuing to the east from the living room, the dining room, kitchen, pantry, garage, and storage room are placed in a linear fashion. An enclosed stair between the garage and storage room provides access to the attic above the garage.

The floors throughout the house are random-width pine floorboards, and the walls and ceilings are painted plaster. The exterior door into the hall is a 6-panel wood door with slightly-raised panels and a replacement knob. This door is inset with a flush reveal and a brick rowlock sill. The door casing is four inches wide, rests on high plinths, and the molding profile consists of a cyma recta, a raised filet, a small fascia, and terminates in an astragal bead. The baseboard is six inches high, has a rounded base molding, and a quarter-round shoe molding. The stair is an open stringer with a curtail step and newel post, the tapered balusters rest on square blocks, and the balustrade rail is rounded. The ceiling in the hall features molded finial drops where the stair posts stand on the staircase. Each of the windows throughout the house has a canted reveal, the window sills are one foot deep, and the casings are similar to the door surrounds.

The office west of the hall has similar floors, walls, ceiling, casings, and baseboards as the hall. Both doors to the office and to the basement are 6-panel similar to the doors throughout the house.

The living room has a wood-stove fireplace on the southwest wall with a clay tile hearth and a brick surround. This southwest wall is covered with plywood and contains non-historic shelves. Two inset radiators are located on the northwest wall flanking the central exterior door. The door is a 9-light/cross-braced Dutch door with a brass knob. The ceiling is brushed plaster.

From the floor up to the chair rail, the walls in the dining room are covered with vertical-board wainscoting with cyma recta moldings covering the joints. This wainscoting does not appear to be original. It appears that the fireplace that stood on the northeast wall of the dining room has been covered over and the hearth removed when the kitchen, pantry, and garage were added. The chair rail in the dining room is a projecting bank flanked by cyma recta moldings. The baseboard in the dining room is five inches high with no base molding and a quarter-round shoe molding. The ceiling is similar to the living room.

The kitchen located in the 1950s hyphen addition has a vinyl-tile floor, the baseboard is similar to the hall, and the ceiling is brushed plaster similar to the living room. It has the original metal cabinets and appliances. The chimney on the southwest wall is not visible because it was enclosed when the hyphen was added. To the east of the kitchen is a small square hall, which provides access to the pantry, to the storage room/garage, and to the exterior. The floor, baseboards, and walls in the hall are similar to the kitchen. The ceiling is smooth painted plaster. The exterior door is a 9-light/cross-braced paneled wood door. The pantry has a similar floor, baseboard, walls and ceiling as the hall. The 8-light casement window in the pantry has no casing.

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The storage room has a vinyl-tile floor and the doors to the second floor and to the garage are both 6-panel doors similar to the doors throughout the house. There is a 6-panel exterior door on the northeast wall in the storage room. The garage has a poured concrete floor and a portion of the walls are clad with horizontal-beaded siding. The walls that are not covered with this horizontal siding exhibit exposed framing. The dropped ceiling is not original.

The second floor contains one hall closet, a separate bathroom, and three bedrooms, one of which is currently used as an office space. A corridor connects each of the bedrooms and the bathroom. The bathroom has a linoleum tile floor, and the bottom half of the walls are ceramic tiles and the upper half are painted plaster. The bathroom contains a linen closet with a thin 3-panel wood door and the fixtures in the bathroom appear to be original. The two bedrooms have similar materials as the living room on the first floor. The office, which originally functioned as the master bedroom, connects to the master bathroom, which has a vinyl tile floor covering, and the walls are original similar to the first bathroom mentioned on the second floor. The fixtures in this bathroom appear to be original.

The basement is accessed from the first floor through an enclosed quarter-turn stair. The stair wall and the ceiling above the stair is painted plaster. The staircase is clad with beaded vertical-board siding and the stair features a square newel post and turned balusters. The basement walls are random rubble, approximately two feet in width, and have been painted. The ceiling has exposed beaded joists with a portion of the ceiling covered with dropped ceiling panels between the joists. A stone fireplace is located on the southwest wall and features a brick hearth and a square-edged stone mantel shelf. The basement is illuminated with 8-light casement windows. The basement underneath the garage is separate and has a straight-flight stair ascending to an exterior door. The stair is an open stringer and has no balustrade. This section of the basement is illuminated with 3-light metal awning windows.

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

**Specific dates** 1941 c., 1950s **Architect/Builder** Wheeler

**Construction dates** 1941 c., 1950s

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### Statement of Significance

The Wheeler House is not common of Colonial Revival-style dwellings built in the early 1940s within the Indian Hill subdivision to the Town of Bel Air, Maryland. It is unusual because it appears as a one-and-a-half story Cape Cod cottage on the façade and the rear elevation appears as a modest two-story Colonial Revival with wall dormers typical of the 1940s. The original block has a rectangular footprint, symmetrical fenestration, gable dormers, and a side-gable roof with two exterior-end chimneys, all characteristics common of Cape Cod dwellings. Ubiquitous throughout the United States, Cape Cod cottages, which were built during the late 1930s through the 1940s, are numerous in Bel Air and are scattered throughout town in each of the 1920s and 1930s additions such as Indian Hill. Beginning in the 1930s throughout the United States, the trend was for small, economical, and mass-produced houses, which was fulfilled by the modest Cape Cod style cottages. This dwelling provides the appearance of the contemporary and prominent style of the day from the early 1940s. The Wheeler House is also important as a representative work of Henry Edward Wheeler, who owned a large lumber yard and worked in construction as a builder during the second quarter of the twentieth century. Wheeler constructed this house as his family's residence.

### Development of Bel Air: Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The proximity to Baltimore City, the arrival of the railroad, the introduction of the automobile, and improvement of roads allowed for greater prosperity within Harford County and particularly the Town of Bel Air. Bel Air was home to a building boom of the late nineteenth century and again after World War I. Hays, Richardson's, and the two Dallam's Additions are the primary residential developments of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century that took place within the Bel Air town limits.

Hays Addition is bounded on the south by Baltimore Pike, to the west by Archer Street, to the north by Thomas Street, and to the east by Bond Street. The Hays Addition was platted in 1886 and only three lots sold at this time. Between 1887 and 1917 only nine more lots were sold in this section of Bel Air. Marilyn M. Larew, historian, states that the

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reason for the slow building pace in Hays Addition could be the lots were priced much higher than lots in other sections of Bel Air such as in Dallam's Additions and Richardson's Addition.<sup>1</sup>

The boundaries for Richardson's Addition are Bond Street to the east, Alice Anne Street to the south, Richardson Street to the west, and Nichols Street on the north. Lots began selling in 1886, however, it was not officially platted and recorded until 1911. By 1917, fifteen houses stood along Alice Anne Street, which became an African-American working class neighborhood. Not including the dwellings on Alice Anne Street, seventeen houses were constructed in Richardson's Addition between 1914 and 1945.<sup>2</sup>

Major Dallam's Addition was platted in 1883 and the boundaries are the MA & PA Railroad to the south, Dallam Avenue to the north, Rockspring Avenue to the east, and several lots past Mast Street to the west. Due to the proximity to the railroad, several lots were built upon for industrial and commercial uses as well as worker's housing. Dallam's second addition is located to the north of Dallam's first addition including Roland Avenue, Rockspring Avenue, and Hall Street. In the late 1880s, the west side of Rockspring Avenue was built upon followed by construction on Roland Avenue after 1890. Eleven houses were constructed in Dallam's second addition between 1885 and 1914.<sup>3</sup>

Following World War I, Bel Air prospered with numerous suburban developments on the outskirts of the downtown core. Three of the larger additions to Bel Air during the 1920s include Fulford Park (1922), Ingleside (1923), and Kenmore (1924). The area that is Fulford Park originally was made up of 18 acres running from Main Street and Fulford Avenue, South to Linwood Avenue, and East to Ewing Street. Other streets included in Fulford Park are Maitland Street and Powell Avenue. Unlike the slow development of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century developments of Hays and Richardson's Additions, the lots in Fulford Park sold quickly and construction began immediately. The real estate agents responsible for selling the lots of Fulford Park advertised and auctioned the lots on one day in 1922 soon after it was platted. One hundred thirty six lots sold in one day bringing in a total of \$12,000.

The area known as Ingleside off North Hickory Avenue is bounded by Wright Street to the south and McCormick Lane to the north. This section of Bel Air was subdivided and platted by J. Edwin Webster, son of Colonel Edwin Hanson Webster, in April 1923. Oliver T. Wallace and Samuel Dameron were the real estate agents responsible for the sales. According to Larew, Ingleside was the "place to build between the wars" and continued to expand after 1945.<sup>4</sup> Similar to Fulford Park, Ingleside held an auction to handle the sales of the lots which occurred in April or May of 1923. Ingleside developed rapidly, much more so than any other previous development made to Bel Air. According to Larew, the "first two blocks on East Broadway and Webster were full" by the end of the 1920s. A total of sixteen houses were constructed in the 1920s—"faster than any previous addition in town."<sup>5</sup>

In 1919, Robert and Anne Heighe purchased 99 acres of Hanway's farm, which was platted in 1924 by the local real estate firm of Vaughn, Warren, and Wells, using their namesake for the subdivision. Today, the addition is better known

<sup>1</sup> Marilyn M. Larew, *Bel Air: An Architectural and Cultural History, 1782-1945* (Bel Air, MD: Town of Bel Air, 1995), p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> Larew, p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> Larew, pp. 173-176.

<sup>4</sup> Larew, pp. 181-183.

<sup>5</sup> Larew, pp. 181-181.

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as the Kenmore addition. The lots were auctioned ~~the lots~~ on September 22, 1924 and a total of 199 lots were sold equaling \$19,500.

Due to the building boom in Harford County in the 1920s and 1930s, the pre-World War I developments in Bel Air were being steadily built upon similar to the new developments of the early 1920s. A section of Dallam's second addition, which includes Hall Street, was re-surveyed and platted in 1931 as the Rock Spring Addition. This new plat consisted of two blocks with a total of 102 lots and is bounded to the north by Vale Road, to the east by Rockspring Avenue, to the south by Hall Street, and to the west by Roland Avenue. Robinson Street runs north south and connects Hall Street to Vale Road, originally called Bel Air-Watervale Road. Block A of Rock Spring Addition was platted with fifty-five lots, the majority of which are equal size of twenty-five feet wide and 100 feet deep. Block B of this addition contains forty-seven lots, most of which were of similar size to the lots in Block A.

After the platting of the Rock Spring Addition, several more residential developments were constructed within the town limits. Development slowed dramatically between the mid-1930s and the early 1950s. Because of the Town's proximity and association to the Aberdeen Proving Ground, a U.S. Army Installation Management Agency, Bel Air experienced a remarkable population decline during the mid- to late-1940s due to the Proving Ground downsizing after World War II. In the early 1950s, Bel Air regained its population numbers as it was experiencing in the 1930s and numerous developments occurred during the 1950s and early 1960s including such examples as Howard Park (1951), Shamrock (1955), and Homestead Village (early 1960s).

### Wheeler House

The Wheeler House at 28 West Gordon Street in Bel Air, Maryland is located in the Third District of Harford County. The Wheeler House was constructed circa 1941<sup>6</sup> by Henry Edward Wheeler on lots 18 through 21 and 28 through 33 of the Indian Hill Plat. Indian Hill was subdivided and recorded on March 4, 1931 and the surveyors and engineers responsible for the platting was the prominent local engineering firm of Somerville and Somerville. The name Indian Hill comes from the dwelling/hotel that was located at the corner of North Main Street and Bond Street. *Indian Hill* was built during the mid-nineteenth century for Dr. E. Hall Richardson. Dr. Richardson died in January of 1893 and *Indian Hill* eventually became a hotel named the Yew Tree Inn.<sup>7</sup> The Yew Tree Inn was demolished by the Harford Mutual Fire Insurance Company, who built their new headquarters at this location around 1963.

The Indian Hill subdivision consisted of only 34 lots on a single block bounded by William Street to the southwest, Main Street to the northeast, Gordon Street to the southeast, and finally Cedar Alley to the northwest. Compared to many of the other plats in the surrounding area, Indian Hill is one of the smallest subdivisions added to Bel Air. The 1915 plat that depicts Richardson's Addition to the Town of Bel Air encompasses this block, however, it was not subdivided at that

<sup>6</sup> The 1941 date to this dwelling is taken from the original MIHP form for the Wheeler House.

<sup>7</sup> According to Larew, the Richardson house, Indian Hill, had become the Yew Tree Inn by 1930, *Bel Air: An Architectural and Cultural History, 1782-1945*, p. 171.

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time. This block was then subdivided and called Indian Hill in 1931. Lot 34 of Indian Hill remained a sizeable piece of land which became the lot on which the large brick structure that houses the Harford Mutual Insurance Company now stands. Eleven lots faced William Street, thirteen lots faced Gordon Street, and nine lots faced Cedar Alley. Each lot was twenty-five feet wide and ranged in depth from 125 feet deep to 175 feet deep.

In March 1923, Joseph A. Kraft and his wife, Elsie W. Kraft, purchased half a block west of Bond Street, north of West Gordon Street, and east of William Street, which later became the Indian Hill subdivision. Immediately after their purchase, the Krafts sold a mortgage for \$16,000 to the Germantown Permanent Building Association #2 of Baltimore County. This was a Savings and Loan organization located in Perry Hall, of Baltimore County that assisted owners by providing loans to construct new houses. After defaulting on the mortgage, Frederick J. Schlosstein, a Baltimore City attorney in charge of the property, sold the property in 1927 to the Germantown Permanent Building Association, owners of the property's mortgage. Germantown Permanent Building Association proceeded to sell lots in the Indian Hill subdivision beginning in 1931. The property on which 28 West Gordon Street is located was sold in 1935 to Henry Edward Wheeler, who owned and operated a sizable lumber yard in Bel Air on West Broadway behind the Presbyterian Manse. It appears that Wheeler was a speculative builder in Bel Air having constructed several buildings under his ownership and then quickly selling them once they were complete. It appears that this dwelling was not a speculative dwelling but rather the residence for Henry Edward Wheeler. The adjacent dwelling at 34 West Gordon Street is another example of a property that Wheeler purchased and built upon and sold upon completion in 1935 to Eliza P. Anderson (HA-2056).

Henry Edward Wheeler was born in 1908 to James A. and Lillian Wheeler who resided on Main Street in Bel Air. James A. Wheeler worked in hatchery as a poultryman according to the 1930 Federal Census. In his late twenties, Henry E. Wheeler began purchasing lots and started his lumber company to build speculative houses. During his early thirties, Henry E. Wheeler joined the U.S. Army Air Corps as a pilot and served during World War II. According to Wheeler's obituary dated 1984, he died at the age of 76 in Fort Myers, Florida.

Research completed by Marilyn M. Larew states that the dwelling at 28 West Gordon Street was built in 1941. After twenty-one years of ownership of 28 West Gordon Street, Edward Wheeler and his wife, Lucille B. Wheeler, sold the property as well as his Lumber business in 1956 to the Kefauver Lumber Company, Inc. Ownership switched from the Kefauver Lumber Company to Melvin E. and Helen M. Kefauver in 1959 who then sold it in 1961 to Harford Mutual Insurance Company. In 1970, Harford Mutual Insurance Company conveyed the property to Donald C. and Barbara L. Mitrovich, who then re-sold it back to the Harford Mutual Insurance Company in 1979. Under the ownership of the Harford Mutual Fire Insurance Company, the dwellings at 34 and 28 West Gordon Street have become single-family rental houses.

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### Chain-of-Title

All information taken from the Bel Air Courthouse.

April 7, 1927	Grantor: Frederick Schlosstein, Attorney Grantee: Germantown Permanent Building Association No. 2 of Baltimore Co. Deed Book: DGW 203 Folio 135
November 12, 1935	Grantor: Germantown Permanent Building Association No. 2 of Baltimore Co. Grantee: Henry Edward Wheeler Deed Book: SWC 239 Folio 111
December 6, 1956	Grantor: Henry Edward Wheeler and Lucille B. Wheeler Grantee: Kefauver Lumber Company, Inc. Deed Book: GRG 473 Folio 20
January 1, 1959	Grantor: Kefauver Lumber Company, Inc. Grantee: Melvin E. and Helen M. Kefauver Deed Book: GRG 526 Folio 465 <i>Mortgage</i>
September 1, 1961	Grantor: Melvin E. and Helen M. Kefauver, et al Grantee: Harford Mutual Insurance Company Deed Book: GRG 577 Folio 320
March 30, 1970	Grantor: Harford Mutual Insurance Company Grantee: Donald C. and Barbara L. Mitrovich Deed Book: GRG 843 Folio 134
December 3, 1979	Grantor: Donald C. and Barbara L. Mitrovich Grantee: Harford Mutual Insurance Company Deed Book: HDC 1110 Folio 1032

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. HA-1787

Bel Air Courthouse, Land Records. Bel Air, MD

Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Baltimore City. *Harford County Telephone Directory, 1936, 1950-1951, 1951-1952, 1963*, Baltimore City, MD.

Harford County Historical Society. Vertical Files. Bel Air, MD.

Larew, Marilyn M. *Bel Air: An Architectural and Cultural History, 1782-1945*. Bel Air, MD: Town of Bel Air, MD, 1995.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. The Census of 1920-1930, Harford County, Maryland. Census searched from

<<http://persi.heritagequestonline.com/hqoweb/library>> (7 December 2004).

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.86 acres

Acreage of historical setting Unknown

Quadrangle name Bel Air, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Wheeler House is located at 28 West Gordon Street in the Third District of Harford County in the Town of Bel Air, Maryland and is associated with tax map 301 parcel 485.

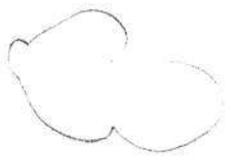
## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Kristie Baynard/Architectural Historian		
organization	Arcadia Preservation, LLC	date	March 8, 2005
street & number	1209 Powhatan Street	telephone	703.798.8124
city or town	Fredericksburg	state	VA

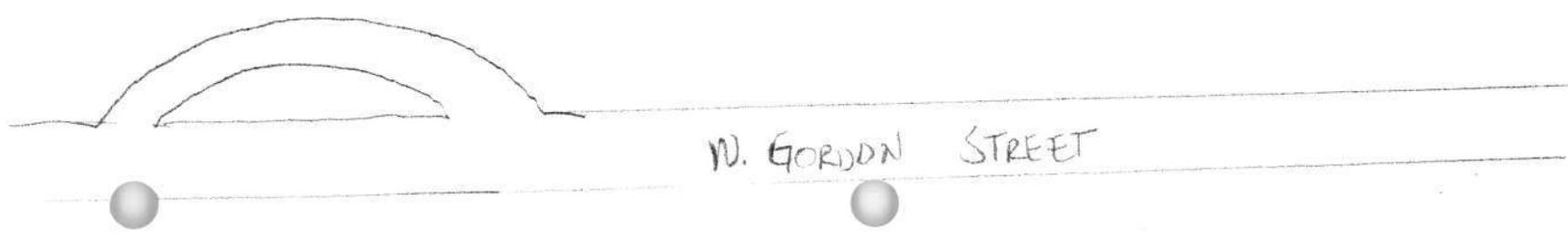
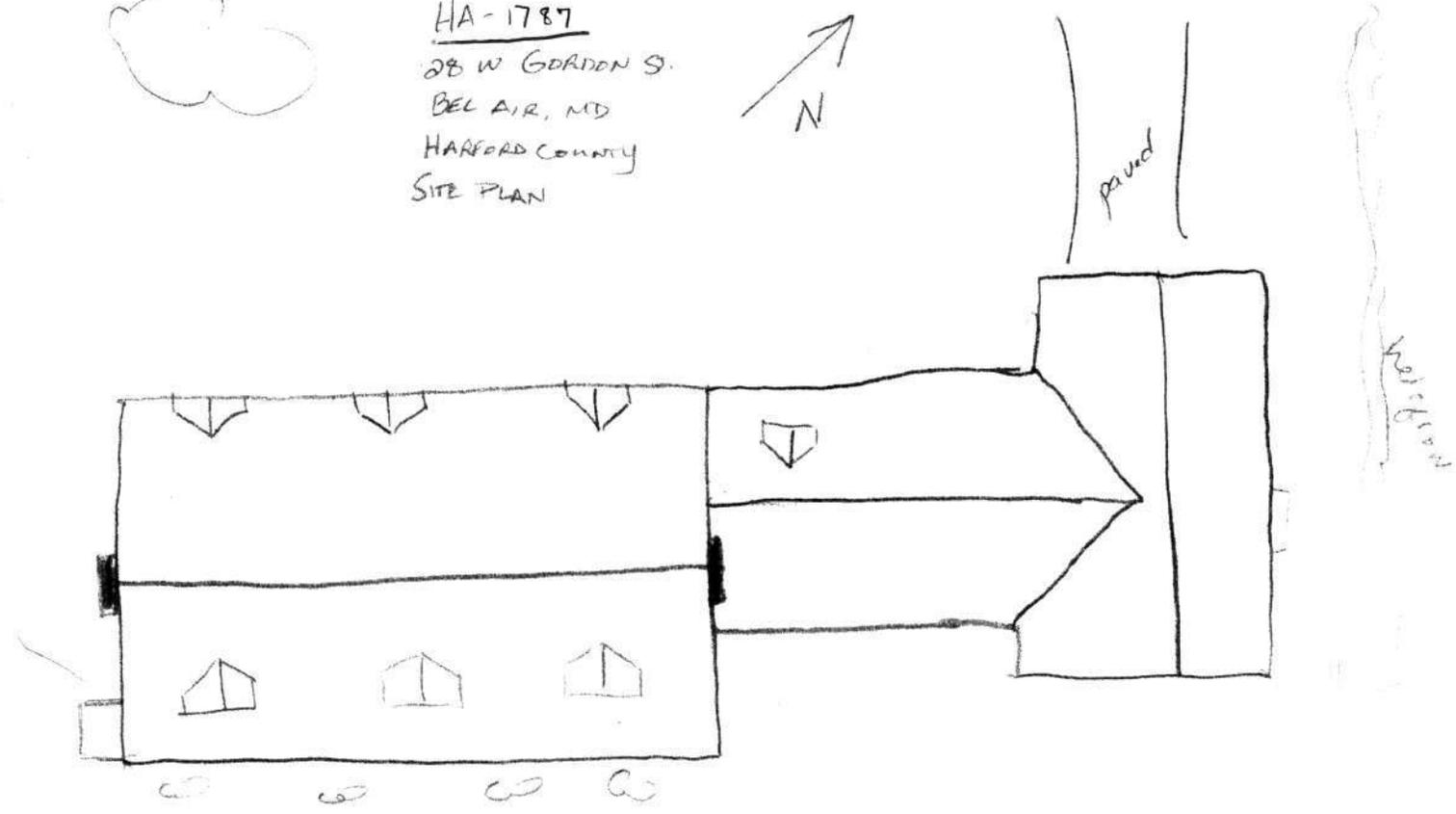
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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

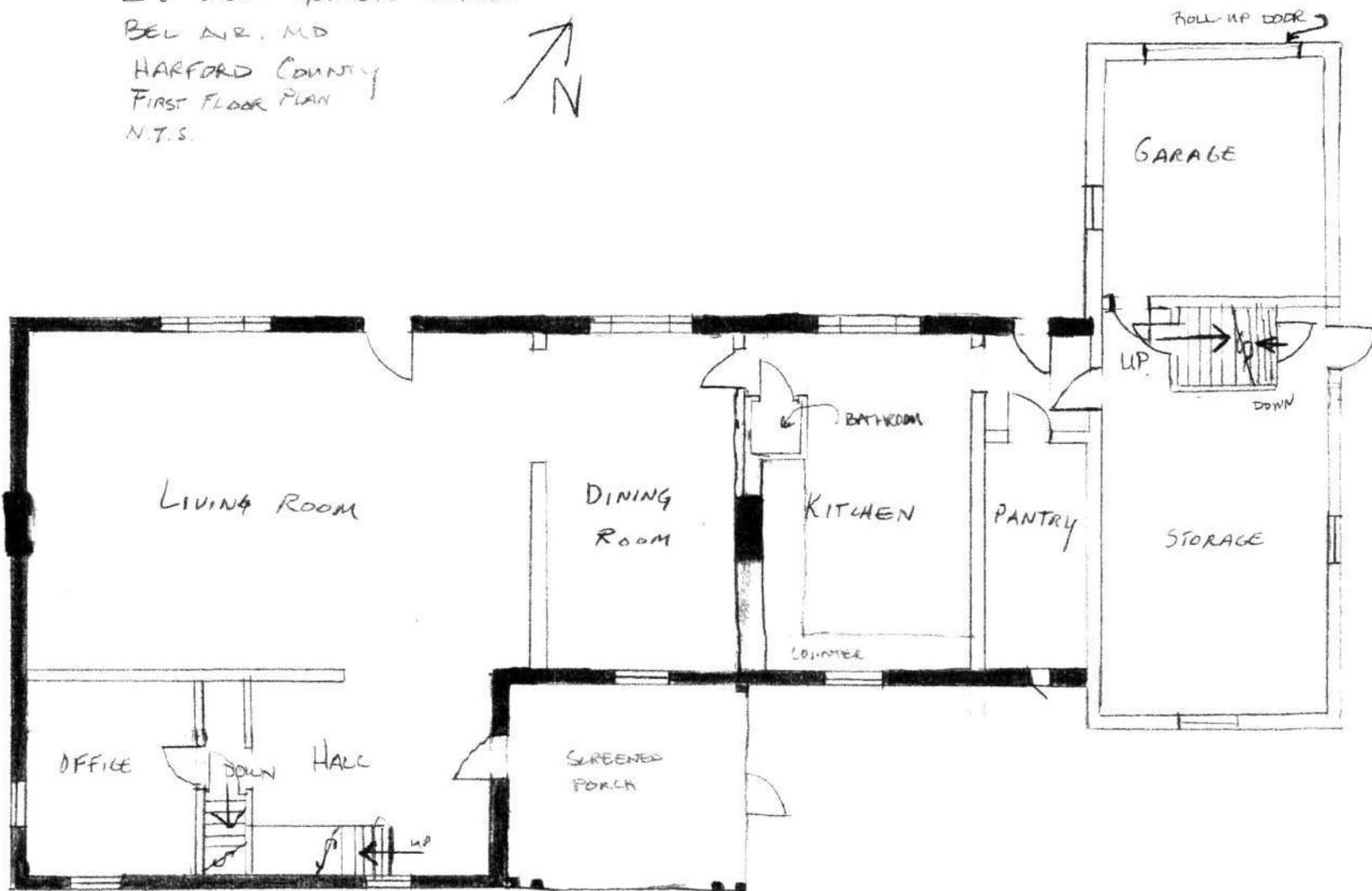
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600



HA-1787  
28 W GORDON ST.  
BEL AIR, MD  
HARFORD COUNTY  
SITE PLAN

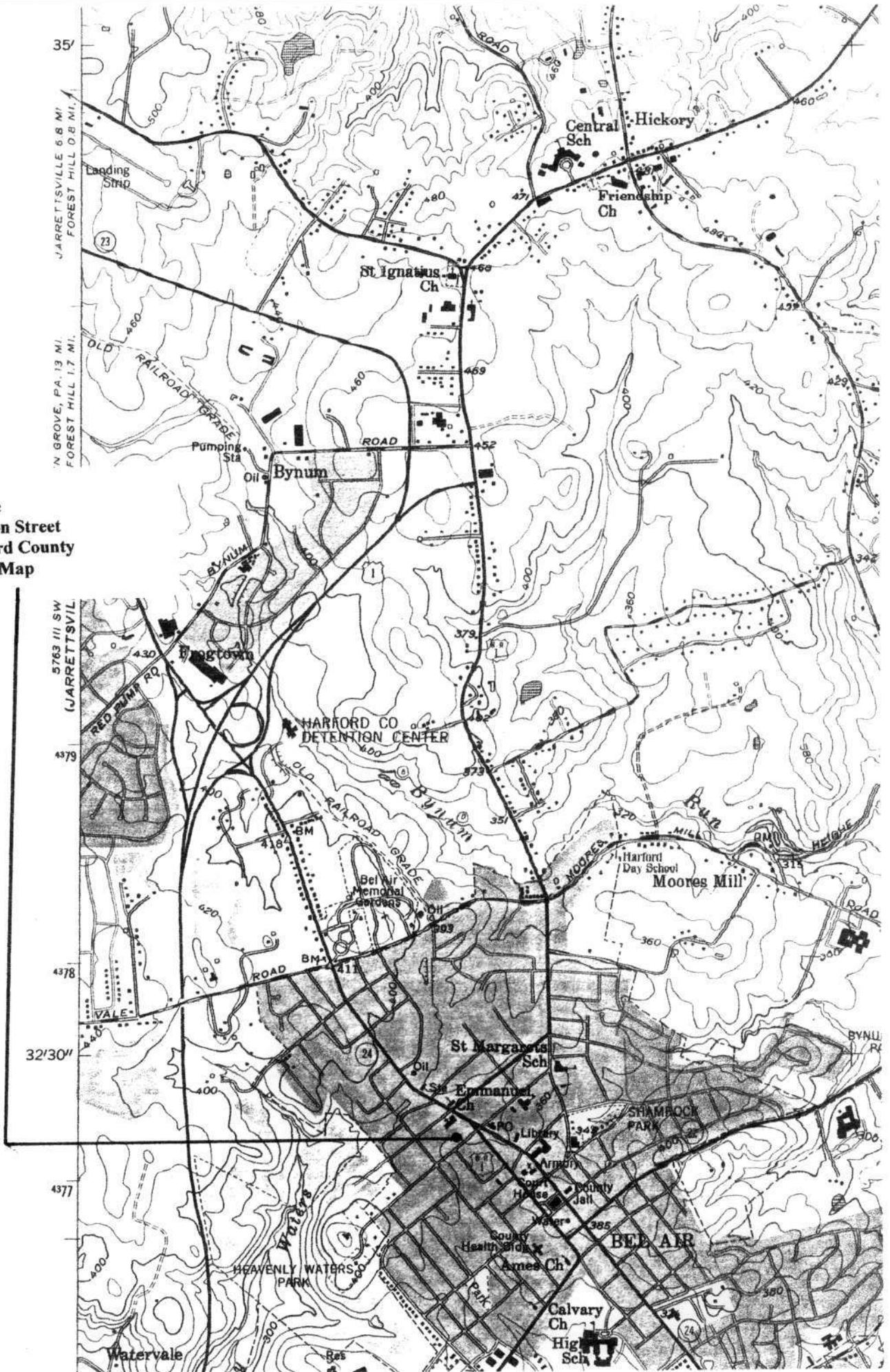


HA-1787  
WHEELER HOUSE  
28 WEST GORDON STREET  
BEL AIR, MD  
HARFORD COUNTY  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
N.T.S.



■ STONE  
□ WOOD FRAME

HA-1787  
Wheeler House  
28 West Gordon Street  
Bel Air, Harford County  
Bel Air USGS Map





HA-1787

Henry Edward Wheeler House

28 W. Gordon St

Harford Co., MD

Arcadia

11/2004

MD SHPO

NW ELEVATION!

1 of 8



4A-1787

Henry Edward Wheeler House  
28 W. Gordon St.  
Harford County, Bel Air, MD  
Arcadia

11/2004  
MD SHPO

SE ELEVATION

2 of 8



HA-1787

Henry Edward Wheeler House

28 W. Gordon St.

Harford County, MD

Arcadia

11/2004

MD SHPD

Interior, center hall, looking south

3 of 8



HA-1787

Henry Edward Wheeler House

28 W. Gordon St.

Harford County, MD

Arcadia

11/2004

MD SAPO

Interior, view of stair & rear foyer, looking NE

4 of 8



HA-1787  
Henry Edward Wheeler House  
28 W. Gordon Street  
Harford County, MD  
Arcadia

11/2004  
MD SHPO

Interior, 1st floor, living room, view looking NW

5 of 8



HA-1787  
Henry Edward Wheeler House  
28 W. Gordon St.  
Harford County, MD  
Arcadia  
11/2004

MD SHPO  
1st floor, dining room, view looking NE  
6 of 8



HA-1787

HENRY EDWARD WHEELER HOUSE  
28 W. Gordon St.  
Harford County, MD  
Arcadia

11/2004

MD SHPO

1st floor, Kitchen, view looking SW

7 of 8



HA-1787  
Henry Edward Wheeler House  
28 W. Gordon St.  
Harford County, MD  
Arcadia

11/2004  
MD SHPD  
1st floor, Storage room, view looking NW  
8 of 8

HA-1787

1941

Bel Air

Private

28

The Wheeler House, <sup>28</sup>26 W. Gordon St., faces south, set deeply back from the street on a large lot among trees and shrubs, approached by a winding stone walk. Looking rather like a Cape Cod, the house, built in Richardson's Addition in 1941, is a 3 bay, 1 1/2 story, gable-roofed structure, stone down, with clapboard up in the rear (north) and in the gables. Three gabled dormers break the roof line in front. The rear 3 dormers, also gabled, are set in the clapboard. The main block, with a deep white cornice, is linked by a stone hyphen to the east to a large gable-roofed clapboard garage whose axis is at right angles to that of the main block. The east bay of the main block is recessed, with a screened porch flush with the plane of the stone segment there. This is a more complicated house than was usually built at this time in town, if the hyphen and garage are original. The size of the garage argues against this. Stone was not a common building material in town at that time.

Building began west of Main St. in Richardson's Addition in the 1880s; it and the Hayes Addition begun at the same time are the oldest extensions of the town. It is a mix of styles from Victorian to brick rancher, and a mix of classes as well, with working-man's housing along the north and south edges and middle class homes through the center. The Wheeler House was built by Edward Wheeler, owner of Wheeler's Lumber Yard on the next street over, W. Broadway, probably in 1941. Its stone main block looks from the front rather like a Cape Cod, except for the screened porch on the east side of the facade. The stone hyphen and clapboard garage may be original, in which case it was a very complex house to be built in town in 1941. The size of the garage, however, argues for addition at a later date. Around the same time Edward Robinson built a clapboard house in Ingleside that looks from the front like a Cape Cod [HA-1805]. That one has a front ell. Genuine Cape Cods would be built in town after 1945. In any case, stone construction was unusual in Bel Air before 1945.

HA-1787  
Wheeler House  
Bel Air, Harford Co.

FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

3. Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

11. Industrial/Urban Dominance 1870-1930

12. Modern Period 1930 - present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme:

2. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community  
Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Architecture

Historic Environment: Urban

Historic Function and Use: Private Residence

Known Design Source: unknown

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. HA-1787

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Wheeler House

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 28 W. Gordon St. n/a not for publication

city, town Bel Air \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 3rd

state MD county Harford

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Harford Mutual Insurance Co.

street & number 200 N. Main St. telephone no.: 838-4000

city, town Bel Air state and zip code MD 21014

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Courthouse liber 1110

street & number folio 1032

city, town Bel Air state MD

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. HA-1787

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing resource count: one

The Wheeler House, <sup>28</sup>26 W. Gordon St., faces south, set deeply back from the street on a large lot among trees and shrubs, approached by a winding stone walk. Looking rather like a Cape Cod, the house, built in 1941, is a 3 bay, 1 1/2 story, gable-roofed structure, stone down, with clapboard up in the rear (north) and in the gables. Three gabled dormers break the roof line in front. The rear 3 dormers, also gabled, are set in the clapboard. The main block, with a deep white cornice, is linked by a stone hyphen to the east to a large gable-roofed clapboard garage whose axis is at right angles to that of the main block. The east bay of the main block is recessed, with a screened porch flush with the plane of the stone segment there. This is a more complicated house than was usually built at this time in town, if the hyphen and garage are original. The size of the garage argues against this. Stone was not a common building material in town at that time.

Stone exterior chimneys rise in the gable ends of the main block. The rear (north) elevation of the main block has a center door flanked by large 1/1 windows with 4 pane side lights. The rest of the windows are 6/6 double-hung sash, including the one in the gable of the north facing garage. Entry is in the southeast bay of the main block, inside the screened porch. The roof is in red asphalt shingles.

The interior was not accessible. A kitchen seems to occupy the hyphen, which has a narrow white cornice, 2 windows down, and a gabled dormer up.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. HA-1787

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 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 c. 1941 Builder/Architect unknown

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or

Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Building began west of Main St. in Richardson's Addition in the 1880s; it and the Hayes Addition begun at the same time are the oldest extensions of the town. It is a mix of styles from Victorian to brick rancher, and a mix of classes as well, with working-man's housing along the north and south edges and middle class homes through the center. The Wheeler House was built by Edward Wheeler, owner of Wheeler's Lumber Yard on the next street over, W. Broadway, probably in 1941. Its stone main block looks from the front rather like a Cape Cod, except for the screened porch on the east side of the facade. The stone hyphen and clapboard garage may be original, in which case it was a very complex house to be built in town in 1941. The size of the garage, however, argues for addition at a later date. Around the same time Edward Robinson built a clapboard house in Ingleside that looks from the front like a Cape Cod [HA-1805]. That one has a front ell. Genuine Cape Cods would be built in town after 1945. In any case, stone construction was unusual in Bel Air before 1945.

In 1956 Wheeler sold both this house and the lumber yard to Melvin Kefauver. The Kefauvers may have added the hyphen and garage. Kefauver sold it to Harford Mutual Insurance Company in 1961, apparently as the insurance company was building its new headquarters on the lot to the east facing Main St. The Kefauvers may have continued to live there, for they acquired it back in 1970, and then finally sold it to Harford Mutual again in 1979. The insurance company still owns it. Gary Clark, proprietor of the Georgetown North restaurant on Main St. [HA-1447] is the current occupant.



HA-1787  
Wheeler House  
26 West Gordon St.  
Bel Air, MD 21014

owner: Harford Mutual Insurance Company

1110/1032            3 Dec 1979  
Donald K. Mitrovich and Barbara L.  
to  
Harford Mutual  
\$95,000

843/134            30 Mar 1970  
Harford Mutual  
to  
Donald K. Mitrovich and Barbara L.  
plat in 577/323 shows frame and stone house and frame  
house on alley

577/320            1 Sept 1961  
Melvin E. Kefauver and Helen M.  
Henry Edward Wheeler, mortgagee  
to  
Harford Mutual

526/465            1 Jan 1959  
Kefauver Lumber Co., Inc.  
to  
Melvin E. Kefauver (Pres. of the co,) and Helen M.  
assume \$65,000 mortgage 6 Dec 1956, 473/23

473/20            6 Dec 1956  
Henry Edward Wheeler and Lucille B.  
to  
Kefauver Lumber Co.  
two parcels on Broadway and this parcel on West Gordon

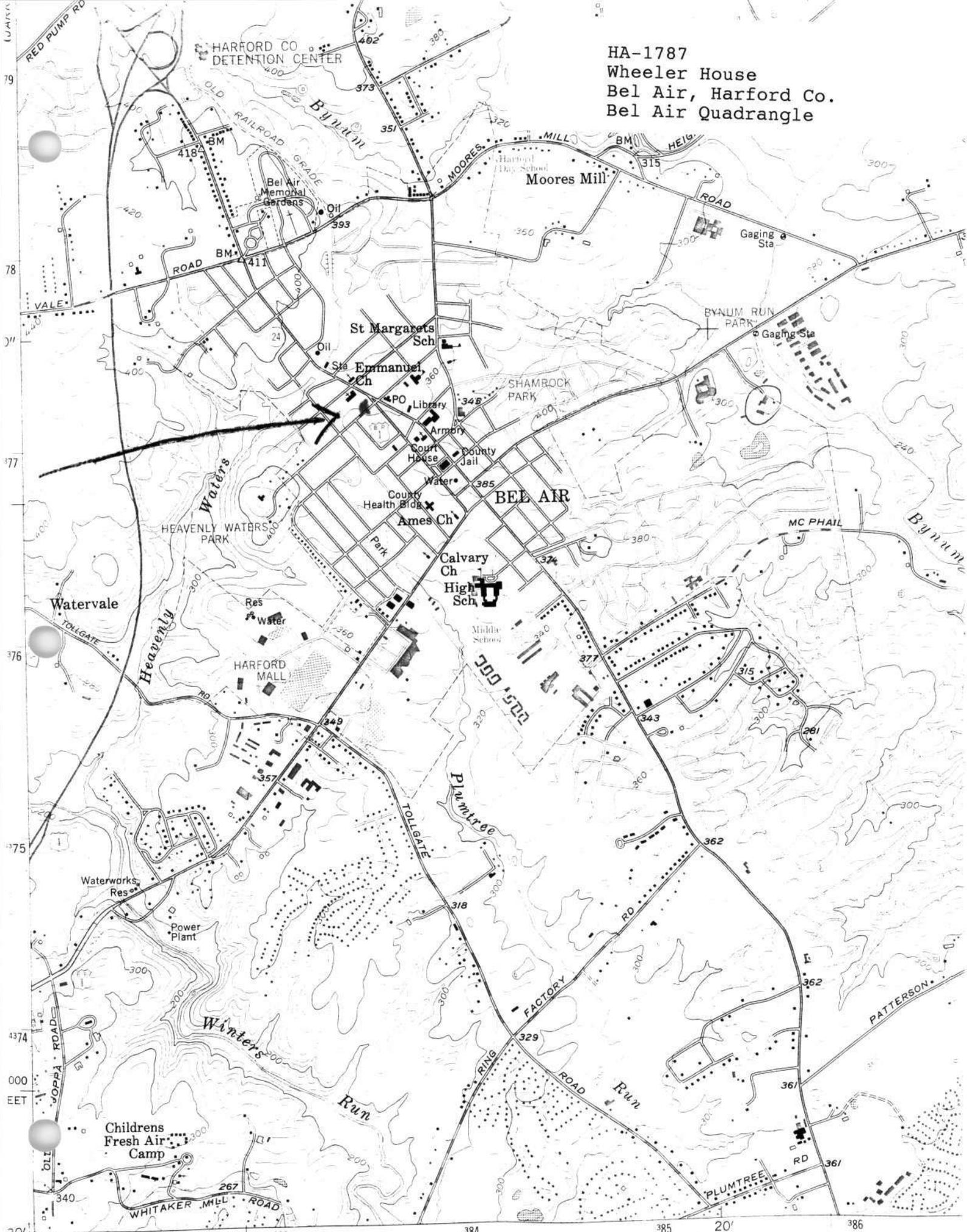
263/432, 433      8 Jan 1941  
to and from Leo Sullivan to get Lucille on

239/111            12 Nov 1935  
Germantown Permanent Bldg. Assoc. #2 of Balto. County  
to  
H. Edward Wheeler

203/135            7 Apr 1927  
defaulted mortgage, 182/84  
property sold to Germantown

- 182/84      the mortgage  
              16 Mar 1923  
Joseph A. Kraft and Elsie M.  
              to  
Germantown Permanent Bldg. Assoc.  
\$16,000  
this is the whole nw side of the unit block of W.  
Gordon
  
- 181/304      16 Mar 1923  
Harvey K. Miller and Sallie E.  
              to  
Joseph A. Kraft and Elsie M.  
the land as above
  
- 181/306      27 Feb 1923  
William E. Robinson and Minnie  
John L.G. Lee and Caroline H.  
              to  
Harvey K. Miller and Sallie R.
  
- 176/143      15 Oct 1921  
defaulted mortgage dated 1 Mar 1915 C. Chapman Rouse et  
al to William S. Archer, 148/217. James J. Archer, the  
assignee, sold the land to Frank H. Jacobs (148/217), who  
assigned it to James J. Archer (see Equity docket V/89).  
Archer died. Robert Archer, trustee. Jacobs has sold  
the land to William E. Robinson and John L.G. Lee, and  
Jacobs and wife, Elizabeth, join in the deed to Robinson  
and Lee. C. Chapman Rouse, Henrietta Rouse, his wife,  
and Mary Richardson, his sister-in-law (the et al) own  
the land. It is part of the Richardson home place.

HA-1787  
Wheeler House  
Bel Air, Harford Co.  
Bel Air Quadrangle





HA-1787

WHEELER HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD.  
C. DEIBEL

6/93

SHPD

S. ELEV.

172

28

26 W. GORDON ST  
BEL AIR



HA-1787

WHEELER HOUSE  
HARFORD CO., MD

C. DEIBEL

6/93

SHPD

N. ELEV.

2 of 2

~~26~~<sup>28</sup> W. GORDON ST

BEL AIR