

QA-561
Bryan-Preston House
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County

Constructed ca. 1860, 1930
Privately owned

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Bryan-Preston House is a 2-story, 3-bay, double-pile ca. 1860 house that was approximately tripled in size by a 1930 addition. The 1930 addition incorporated an early outbuilding that features a transitional frame with brick nogging. The Bryan-Preston House stands on a point (now called Parks Point) on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. The flat, open site also includes a ca. 1930 garage and shed.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bryan-Preston House illustrates two major episodes in the history of Queen Anne's County: the mid-nineteenth century era of small farms, and the 1920s and 1930s trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore. The Bryan-Preston House was constructed ca. 1860 as a farm house on a 112-acre parcel that had been carved from a 752-acre estate. The property remained in agricultural use until 1929, when it was bought by Frances F. C. Preston, widow of President Grover Cleveland, and her second husband Thomas J. Preston, Jr. The Prestons converted the property to recreational use as a second home.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-561

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Bryan-Preston House (preferred)
 other George L. Bryan House, Thomas J. Preston, Jr. House, Rutledge, Russell Dale

2. Location

street and number 120 Parks Point not for publication
 city, town Queenstown vicinity
 county Queen Anne's County

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

name Mr. H. Emslie Parks
 street and number 120 Parks Point telephone (410) 827-5720
 city, town Queenstown state MD zip code 21658-1154

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Queen Anne's County Circuit Court liber MWM 545 folio 429
 city, town Centreville tax map 73 tax parcel 9 tax ID number 05-012716

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	Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1 0 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	0 0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	2 0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0 0 objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	3 0 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. QA-561

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 good ruins
 fair altered

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

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The Bryan-Preston House is a 2-story, 3-bay, double-pile ca. 1860 house that was approximately tripled in size by a 1930 addition. The 1930 addition incorporated an early outbuilding that features a transitional frame with brick nogging. The Bryan-Preston House stands on a point (now called Parks Point) on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. The flat, open site also includes a ca. 1930 garage and shed.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Bryan-Preston House is a ca. 1860 house that was approximately tripled in size by a 1930 addition. The 1930 addition incorporated an early outbuilding. A ca. 1930 garage and shed also stand on the site. The Bryan-Preston House stands on a point (now called Parks Point) on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. The Wye Acres subdivision and Bennett Point Road lie west of the house. The house occupies a 7.88 acres site that is flat and open with water frontage on the north, east, and south.

The 2-story, 3-bay, double-pile ca. 1860 house faces west away from the water. It has a brick foundation, aluminum siding, and an asphalt-shingle, side-gable roof with open eaves.¹ The house has brick interior end chimneys, and the chimney in the south end is off-center. The 6/6 wood windows have flat surrounds and vinyl shutters. The main entry is in the off-center middle bay and consists of double half-glass doors with a plain surround and a 4-light transom, all dating to the 1970s.² A 1-story porch wraps the west and south elevations. The porch has a brick pier foundation, a tongue-and-groove floor, chamfered wood posts, and an asphalt-shingle, hipped roof with exposed rafter tails. The interior floor plan appears to have been three rooms originally but has been modified during the 20th century. Interior finishes include wide plank floors, flat baseboards, deep crown moldings, 4-panel doors, and beaded door and window surrounds. The second floor has beaded door and window surrounds with peaked lintels.

The 2 1/2-story 1930 addition extends to the east and is the full width and twice the depth of the original house. A small wing extends south from the center of the addition. The addition has a poured concrete foundation, aluminum siding, and a compound, asphalt shingle roof with open eaves. There are brick chimneys in the center and on the east end of the addition as well as on the south wing. The 6/6 wood windows have flat surrounds and vinyl shutters. The east end of the first story has large picture windows. There is a full-height recessed porch on the north elevation. The porch has a concrete foundation, a tongue-and-groove floor, square wood posts with brick bases, and a flat roof with a deep cornice. Within the porch is an entry consisting of a 4-panel door with stained-glass sidelights and a plain surround. The interior of the 1930 addition has a rambling plan with a stair passage, small sitting room, large sitting room, and enclosed outbuilding. Finishes in the 1930 addition include narrow tongue-and-groove floors, flat baseboards, and unornamented plaster walls and ceilings.

Enclosed within the 1930 addition is the first story of an early outbuilding. The outbuilding measures 13'6" wide by 17'2" deep on the interior and stands about 12 feet east of the original house. The outbuilding has a transitional frame with circular-sawn studs of varying sizes on 24-inch centers, down braces, and brick nogging. Leach marks indicate that plaster was removed to reveal the frame and nogging. Both wire and cut nails were found in the studs. The joists have hewn sides and circular-sawn tops and bottoms. The joists are not aligned over the studs. The ceiling has reused boards. The outbuilding has a tongue-and-groove floor, a fireplace in its west end, and 6/6 wood windows that all appear to date to ca. 1930. There are batten doors with wrought iron strap hinges in the southeast corner (leading to a closet) and the center of the south wall (leading to the hall). The framing for a winder remains in the northwest corner.

¹ A 1920s photograph of the house shows open eaves with brackets.

² The current door and surround date to the 1970s. The current owners were told that the original door was in the east bay, however an early-20th century photograph shows it in the middle bay.

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Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

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Name
Continuation Sheet

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A ca. 1930 garage and shed stand west of the house. The garage has a concrete-block foundation, wood weatherboard with mitered corners, and an asphalt-shingle gable roof with a boxed cornice. There are three garage bays with batten doors and wrought-iron strap hinges on the north elevation. On the east and south elevations are 6/6 wood windows with vinyl shutters. The shed has a concrete-block foundation, vinyl siding, and an asphalt-shingle gable roof with exposed rafter tails. The shed has recent flush doors and vinyl windows with vinyl shutters.

8. Significance

Inventory No. QA-561

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 checked="" 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 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 ca. 1860 (first construction), 1930 (Preston additions) **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates ca. 1860, 1930

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.)

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bryan-Preston House illustrates two major episodes in the history of Queen Anne's County: the mid-nineteenth century era of small farms, and the 1920s and 1930s trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore. The Bryan-Preston House was constructed ca. 1860 as a farm house on a 112-acre parcel that had been carved from a 752-acre estate. The property remained in agricultural use until 1929, when it was bought by Frances F. C. Preston, widow of President Grover Cleveland, and her second husband Thomas J. Preston, Jr. The Prestons converted the property to recreational use as a second home.

RESOURCE HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Deed and census records indicate that George L. Bryan constructed the core of the Bryan-Preston House ca. 1860. George L. Bryan was born in 1837 in Queen Anne's County. In 1860, he bought a 112-acre tract of land that had been part of the estate of his grandfather, "Captain" Valentine Bryan (1782-1848).³ George L. Bryan appears in the 1860 census as a 23 year old single farmer with \$6,000 in real estate and \$10,000 in personal estate. He went on to marry Mary Wilson. Census data indicate that the couple had at least ten children. Also included in the household were Bryan's mother-in-law, a boarding schoolteacher⁴, and several farm laborers, domestic servants, and their children. George L. Bryan died between 1900 and 1910. In 1913, Mary Bryan sold the property to John K. and Eva Bryan of Baltimore City (relationship unknown). However, Mary Bryan continued to live on the property with several grown children at least until 1920. In 1923, the Bryans sold the property to Herman and Edna Kehm. The deed included farming implements.

In 1929, the Kehms sold the property to Frances F. C. Preston (1864-1947), widow of President Grover Cleveland, and her second husband Thomas Preston, Jr. Frances F. C. Preston was born Frances Folsom in 1864. Grover Cleveland was a friend of the Folsom family, law partner of her father, and administrator of her father's estate. Cleveland courted Folsom while she was in college, and the couple married in the White House in 1886, the second year of Cleveland's presidency. Cleveland was 49, and Folsom was 21. Considered pretty and approachable, Frances Folsom Cleveland was a popular First Lady, so much so that advertisers used her image to sell products. After Cleveland's second term as President, the couple retired to Princeton, New Jersey. Grover Cleveland died in 1908. In 1913, Frances Folsom Cleveland married Thomas J. Preston, Jr., professor of archaeology at Princeton University. The Prestons acquired the modest Bryan property in 1929 and remodeled it into a rambling, Colonial Revival second home. This reflects the trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore during the 1920s and 1930s. Robert Brugger documented this trend as follows:

³ Valentine Bryan's estate was called "Russell Dale" and included 752 acres.

⁴ The local school stood at the west end of the property along Bennett Point Road.

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For many years, people of outside wealth had been buying up old estates along the Chesapeake and its Eastern Shore rivers as country homes or hunting retreats. In the summer of 1925, the *Queenstown News* reported Centreville "aroused" at word that Wintora, an old home on Corsica Neck, had gone to the wife of a du Pont and General Motors millionaire; having paid thirty-five thousand dollars for the house and its 655 acres, she planned to make the place "a thoroughly modern country estate." Such purchases formed a pattern in the 1930s, when more than a few Eastern Shore farmers went bankrupt. A New York advertising man bought almost four miles of waterfront property and commuted to Manhattan using a seaplane. Parke Sedley, a St. Louis carburetor magnate, bought Shipping Creek Farm on Kent Island to go with his Colorado ranch. The president of Pittsburgh Steel purchased Marengo on the Miles River in Talbot County, while his counterpart at Steuben Glass became owner of Wye Plantation.⁵

The Colonial Revival style of the 1930 remodeling and the inclusion of the former outbuilding indicate that the Prestons shared in the popular interest in Colonial American history. The two-story porch on the north elevation resembles the river-facing elevation of Mount Vernon. The outbuilding enclosed within the addition was given a rustic appearance through removal of plaster to expose structural members.

The Prestons held the property until 1940. The family of the current owners acquired the property in 1956.

⁵ Brugger, 521-522.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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- Biography of Frances Cleveland. www.whitehouse.gov/history/firstladies.
Brugger, Robert J. Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.
First Lady Biography: Frances Cleveland. www.firstladies.org/biographies.
Queen Anne's County Circuit Court. Land Records. ww2.mdlandrec.net.
United States Federal Census Manuscripts for 1840 through 1930. www.ancestry.com

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 7.88 acres
Acreage of historical setting approximately 112 acres
Quadrangle name Queenstown Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary for the Bryan-Preston House corresponds to the boundary for Queen Anne's County Tax Map 73, Parcel 9. The boundary encompasses 7.88 acres, the only land that is still associated with the house. The former George L. Bryan farm is now a subdivision; the agricultural land formerly associated with the house no longer exists.

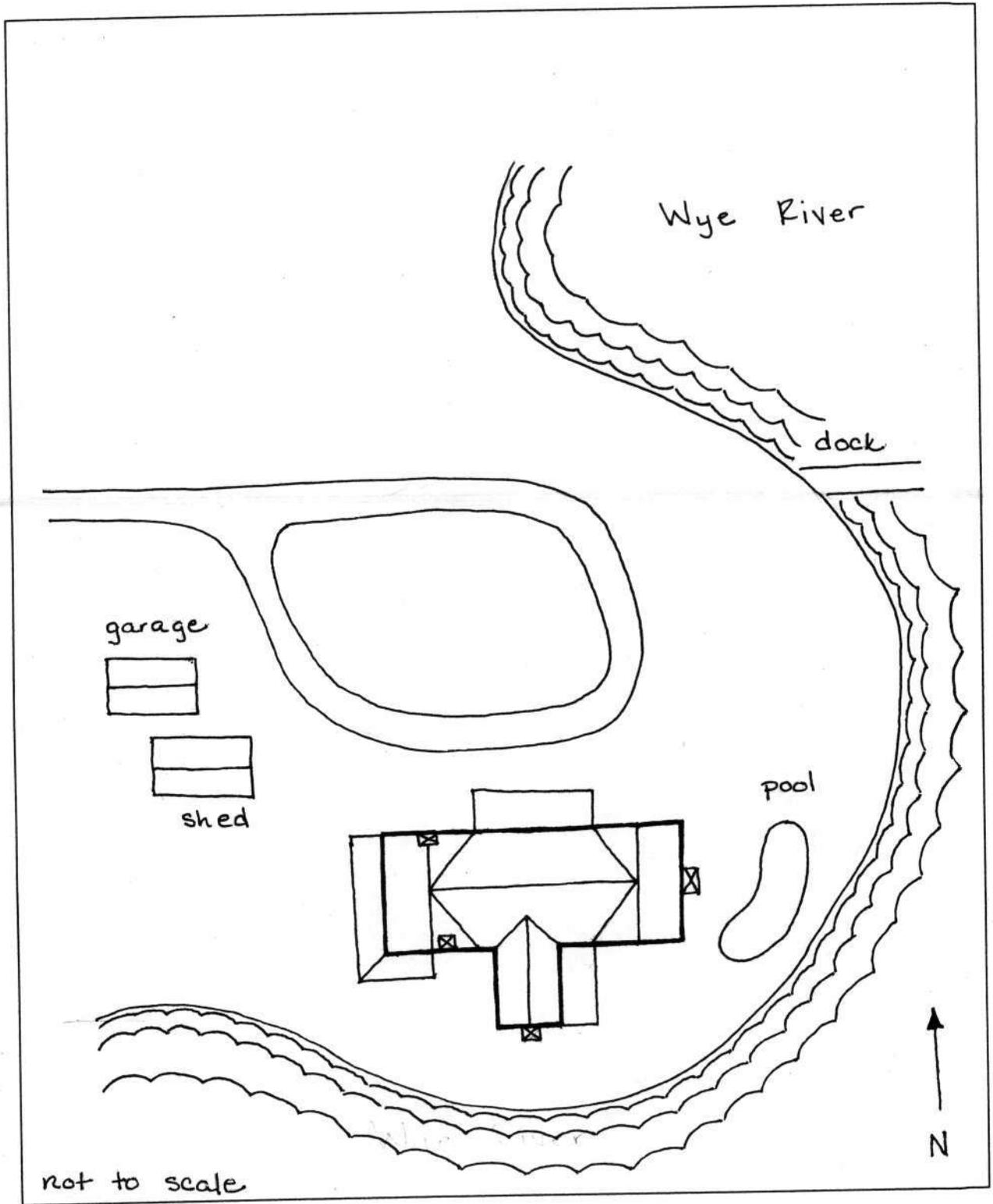
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Julie Darsie		
organization	Betty Bird & Associates LLC	date	October 2005
street & number	2607 24 th Street NW, Suite 3	telephone	(202) 588-9033
city or town	Washington, District of Columbia	state	N/A

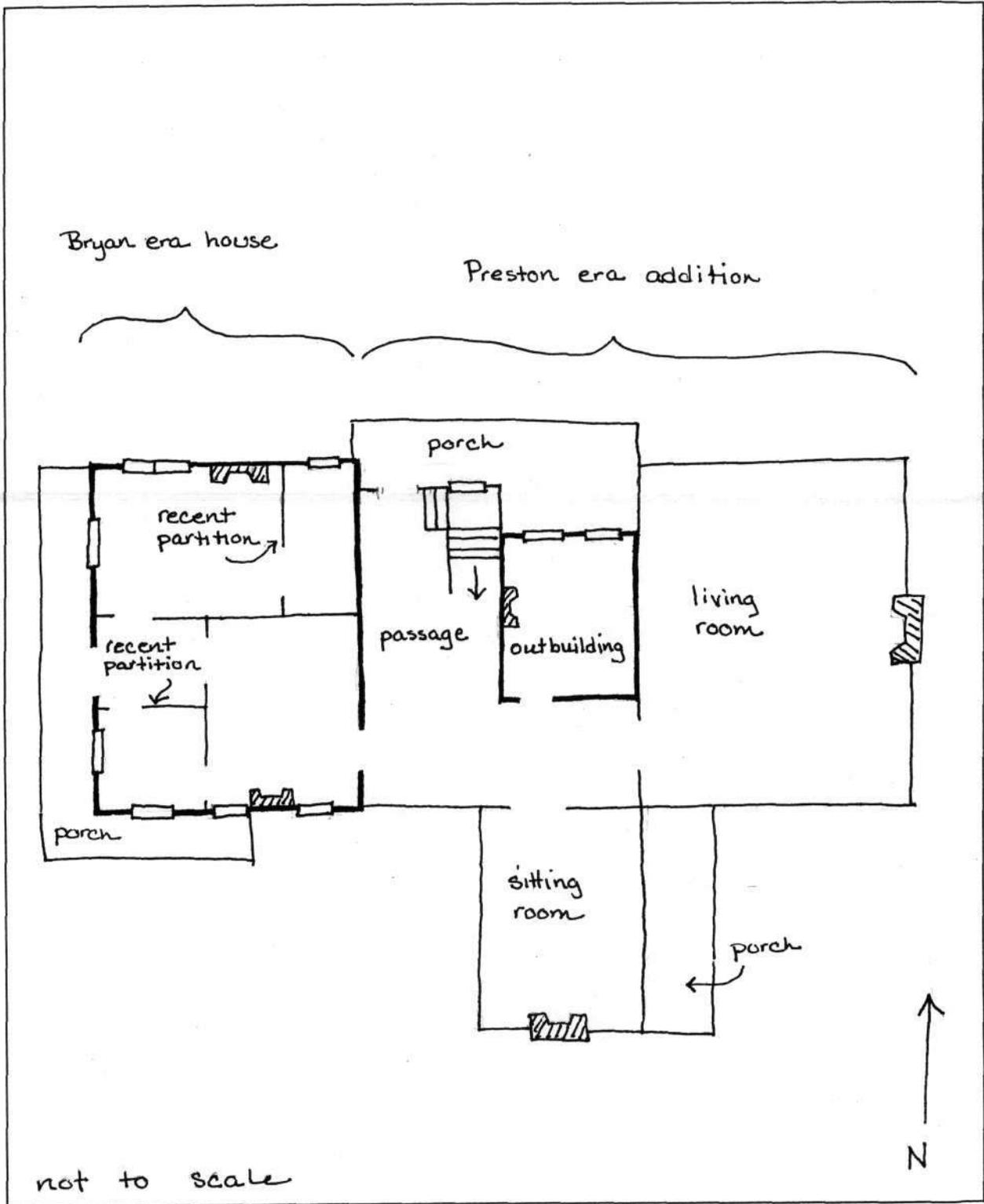
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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



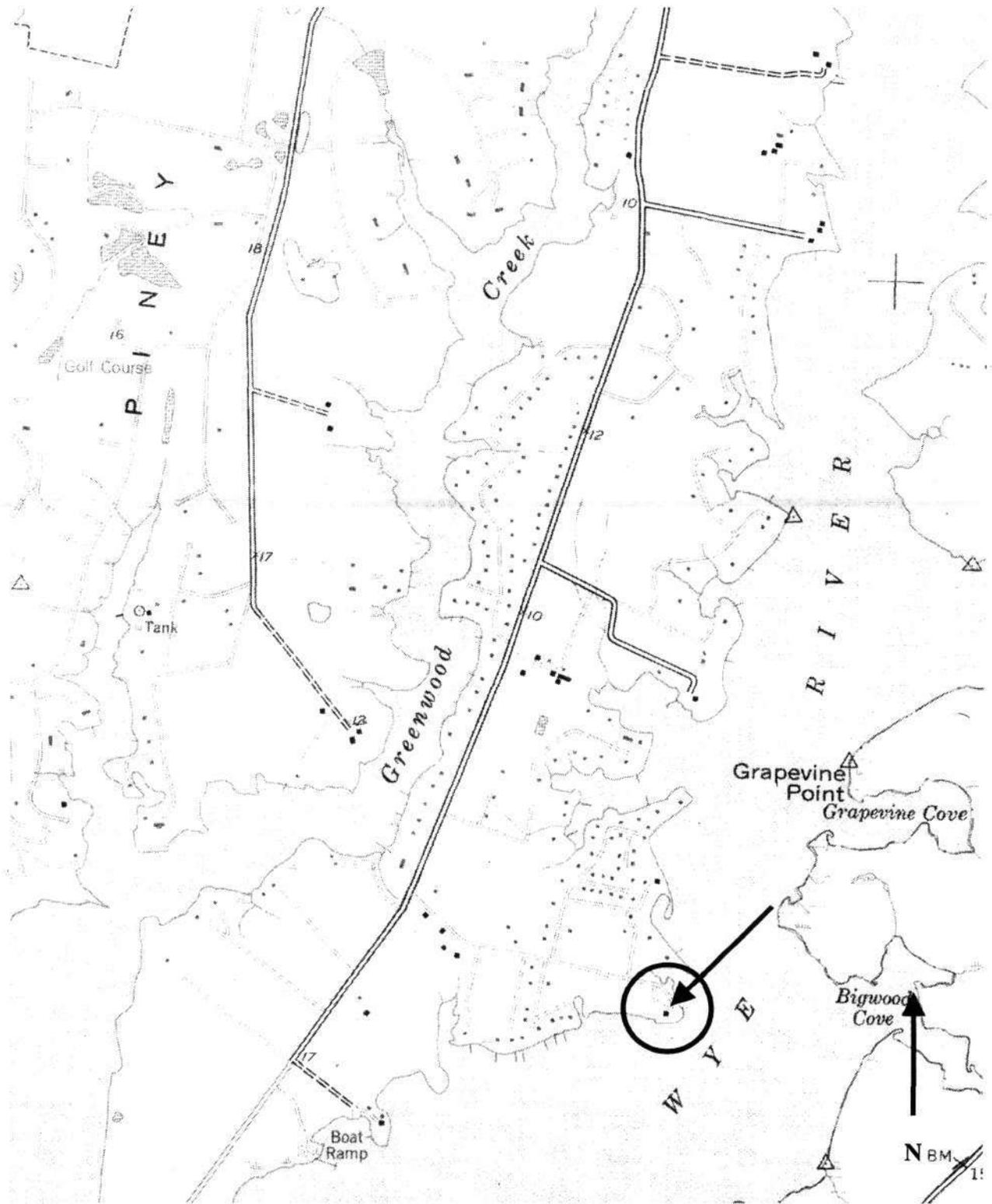
Site Plan
QA-561
Bryan-Preston House
Queenstown Vicinity, Queen Anne's County, Maryland



Floor Plan
QA-561
Bryan-Preston House
 Queenstown Vicinity, Queen Anne's County, Maryland



Ca. 1920 photograph of west elevation
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Bryan-Preston House
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County



QA-561
Bryan-Preston House
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County
Queenstown, Maryland Quadrangle (1:24,000)



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Bryan-Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsic for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

North and west elevations, 1860 house on right.

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Bryan-Preston House

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MLD SHPO

North elevation. 1860 house on right, 1930 addition in center and on left.

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Bryan - Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Daisie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MWD SHPO

East elevation, showing 1930 addition

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Bryan-Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

West (front) and south elevations, Ca. 1860 house on
left, addition on right.

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QA-561

Bryan - Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to SW within outbuilding incorporated into house.
S of V



QA-561

Bryan - Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to NW within outbuilding incorporated into house.

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QAR561

Bryan-Preston House

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to NE within outbuilding incorporated into house.

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QA-561

Bryan - Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsic for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to SE within outbuilding incorporated into house.

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QA-561

Bryan-Preston House

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Jude Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to SW within dining room of 1860 house

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QA-561

Bryan-Preston House

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Jule Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to NE showing garage in background, shed,
and house on right

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QA-561

Bryan Preston House

Green Annel's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

View to SW showing garage.

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