CH-526 **1927**
Wampler Hunting Lodge
Fenwick vic.
Private

The Wampler Hunting Lodge, built in 1927, consists of a small Craftsman-inspired cottage with a massive exterior stone chimney at its gable end. The building has been significantly altered since its construction, but retains its original cladding and basic form.

The Wampler Lodge is a remnant of a bustling early 20th century community that started here around 1909 as a summer cottage resort. The building, which retains its original form and some of its original materials, is one of only a handful of early structures in the town that remain relatively intact. The lodge is significant for its associated with Morris T. Wampler, a famous criminal lawyer of the 1920s & 1930s, who defended such infamous villains as Al Capone and Bruno Hoffman.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST Inventory No. CH-526
MD INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

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1. Name of Property

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historic name Morris T. Wampler Hunting Lodge
Common/other name Wampler Cottage

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2. Location

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street & number 5660 Fenwick Road(rear) not for publication _____
city or town Fenwick vicinity X state Maryland code MD
county Charles code 017 zip code 20616

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

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4. National Park Service Certification N/A

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check all that apply)

X private
____ public-local
____ public-State
____ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

X building(s)
____ district
____ site
____ structure
____ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Is this property listed in the National Register?
Yes ____ Name of Listing _____
No X

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-526

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: Seasonal residence

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant Sub:

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Craftsman Bungalow

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation pier: poured concrete
roof side gable: asphalt shingles
walls wood frame: faux log cladding
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 7-1

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_X_ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

____ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

____ B removed from its original location.

____ C a birthplace or a grave.

____ D a cemetery.

____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

____ F a commemorative property.

____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-526

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

LAW
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1927 - 1938

Significant Dates 1927
1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
Morris T. Wampler

Cultural Affiliation Undefined

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet No. 8-1

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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(Cite the books, articles, legal records, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brown, Jack D., et al. *Charles County, Maryland, A History*. Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records. Charles County Courthouse, La Plata, Maryland.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. *The History of Charles County, Maryland*. La Plata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

Personal interview with Joseph Olcott, long time Fenwick resident and historian, April 1999. (Mr. Olcott retains numerous early photos of Fenwick places & people, as well as having completed in depth research on the residents and owners of the various early cottages).

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property 19.417 acres

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is designated as Parcel 55 on Map 5, Tract 1 on the Charles County Property Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Wampler Lodge has been associated with Parcel 55, Map 5 since its construction in 1926.

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-526

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11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Kathryn Gettings Smith, Architectural Historian
organization Charles County Planning Dept. date May 27, 1999
street & number P.O. Box B telephone 301-645-0689
city or town La Plata state MD zip code 20646

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12. Property Owner

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name Joseph S. Olcott
street & number 5660 Fenwick Road telephone 301-283-6232
city or town Bryans Road state MD zip code 20616

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The Wampler Hunting Lodge, built in 1927, consists of a small Craftsman-inspired cottage with a massive exterior stone chimney at its gable end. The building has been significantly altered since its construction, but retains its original cladding and basic form.

The lodge was originally erected of wood frame construction and clad with faux log cladding on both the exterior and interior. Prominent front and rear porches dominated the design. The most distinctive architectural feature of the building was its oversize stone chimney located at the south gable end. The chimney was reputedly constructed with boulders of various stone brought in from all regions of the United States. They are obviously not stones native to southern Maryland.

The lodge once featured a multi-light single wood door facing the water and 2/2 sash in its large window apertures. Two segmental casement windows lit the north gable end, while elongated 4-light casements flanked the fireplace along the south wall. Several historic photographs document the lodge's original interior. They show an elaborately finished interior featuring Craftsman-style light fixtures, leather chairs and sofa, oriental carpets, an exposed beam ceiling, and souvenir stuffed animal heads adorning the walls.

Today, the house stands atop poured concrete piers and features a full-width front porch that has been reconstructed since the building was erected. The facade contains a single-leaf 1-light wood door flanked by windows. The window left of the door is a single 1-light fixed window, while the right-hand aperture holds a triple window each with a single fixed light.

A 1-story rear extension made to the building circa 1960, added two small bedrooms and a bathroom to the lodge. The addition is clad in vinyl siding and features fixed single-light windows.

The lodge stands approximately one hundred feet east of the Potomac River shoreline between two circa-1950 to circa-1960 ranch houses. The property is open except for a few scattered trees and bushes.

The Wampler Lodge is a remnant of a bustling early 20th century community that started here around 1909 as a summer cottage resort. The building, which retains its original form and some of its original materials, is one of only a handful of early structures in the town that remains relatively intact. The lodge is significant for its associated with Morris T. Wampler, a famous criminal lawyer of the 1920s & 1930s, who defended such infamous villains as Al Capone and Bruno Hoffman.

The town of Fenwick began as "McGhiesport," a riverfront vacation spot developed by a Washington, D.C. real estate promoter, Layton McGhie. In 1909, McGhie purchased a tract of land along the Potomac River near what was, at the time, the Pomonkey Fishery.

The property had once been part of James Fenwick's early-19th century plantation known as "Pomonkey" or "Pomonkey Point." Deed records indicate that a house stood somewhere on the 500-acre property prior to 1844.[2] The existence of the Fenwick/Brent Family Graveyard in the present village suggests that the house was located in that vicinity (see Fenwick/Brent Family Graveyard, CH-541).

By the time McGhie purchased the property, there was a "old farmhouse" on the property, along with an "old wharf." A circa-1914 photograph in the possession of Joseph Olcott of Fenwick shows a 2-story, frame I-house with extensive wraparound porches. However, this is not likely the original Fenwick house. That house may have stood slightly farther south on the peninsula, closer to the remaining family graveyard.

In June 1909, McGhie submitted a plat of his new real estate enterprise. Named "McGhiesport," the village was divided into six unequal blocks, containing from four to seventeen lots of 25 feet by 100 feet. Five streets appear on the 1909 plat, including Park Avenue along the waterfront. Accommodation was made for parking, in various areas around the community. McGhie sold the lots for a small down payment and five dollars a month. By 1912 or 1913, approximately thirty summer cottages had been erected in McGhiesport. A post office and general store was also established during these early years. However, within two to three years

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[2] See deed from Robert J. Brent to Joseph H. Bradley, Charles County Land Records, Liber WM 1, Folio 11-18, recorded January 12, 1844.

(according to oral tradition) the residents and owners of lots in the town became disenchanted with Layton McGhie and his real tactics. Shortly thereafter, the residents took it upon themselves to change the village name from McGhiesport to "Fenwick" after the early owner of the property.

An attempt was made at building and maintaining a permanent Steamboat wharf in 1913-1914 by the Bellview Improvement Company. Incorporated in 1913, the company took up subscriberships and raised funds to erected a wharf. The wharf was completed in 1914, but was badly damaged by ice storms a few short years later. Lacking the funds to repair the wharf, the venture soon fell apart. The company was dismantled in 1918.

The early cottages built in Fenwick were tiny, insubstantial affairs that featured prominent porches, pier foundations, and board-and-batten exterior cladding. The post office and store was a 1-room building located along the waterfront.

Only a portion of the platted community was built as originally shown on the 1909 plat. What was once Park Avenue along the water has eroded away over the years. The resort continued to flourish as a vacation destination mostly for Washingtonians throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Slowly, the residents began expanding and winterizing their original cottages, and a year-round population appeared. Today, the population is nearly all full-time residents, and the modest summer cottages have been transformed or rebuilt as comfortable year-round houses.

The Wampler Lodge was erected in the area south of the town of Fenwick, where McGhie sold larger parcels spanning the peninsula between Pomonkey Creek and the Potomac River. This area developed more slowly than the resort town slightly north of it, and is thought to be the location of the original "Pomonkey House" of James Fenwick.

There were several prominent residents of Fenwick during the early decades of the 20th century. One, Morris T. Wampler, erected his a small, but lavish hunting lodge here around 1927. Wampler, an attorney by trade, served as legal council for gangster Al Capone during his famous tax evasion trial, as well as for Bruno Hoffman, the suspected kidnapper of the Lindbergh baby. Eventually tried and convicted of tax evasion himself, Wampler was disbarred and sent to prison in the late 1930s. When he was released from prison, he built a new dwelling at Fenwick which still stands on a portion of

his remaining land.[2]

Another prominent resident of Fenwick was federal Judge Daniel Thew Wright who retired from the bench after being linked to illegal dealings associated with the "Teapot Dome" scandal. Around 1925, he built a small summer cottage on the point of land where Pomonkey Creek empties into the Potomac River. The cottage was reputedly designed and built by Harry Wardman, a prominent Washington, D.C. builder. Wright served as Wardman's attorney, and at the time of his death, the judge's estate included several Wardman buildings in Washington, D.C.[3] The Wright Cottage has been significantly altered from its original appearance, but remains standing at the end of Fenwick Road (5610 Fenwick Road).

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[2] Interview and research of Joseph Olcott, local Fenwick resident and historian.

[3] Interview and research of Joseph Olcott, local resident and historian.

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Period (s):

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Modern Period, 1930-present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

GOVERNMENT/LAW
ARCHITECTURE

RESOURCE TYPE(S)

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function (s): DOMESTIC/Seasonal residence

Known Design Source: Unknown

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Chain of Title:

December 14, 1910:	Layton J. McGhie to ???? Deed of Trust Charles County Land Records Liber HCC22 Folio 457
Parcels 1 & 2: September 1, 1923:	Reuben A. & Flementine H. Bryant of Washington, DC to John MacKay & Anna Plowman $10 "Part of Pomonky Point Farm" 14.29 Acres Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 41 Folio 193
Parcel 3: June 15, 1916:	Gerald M. Johnson & William G. Johnson, Trustees to Louis E. Smoot of Charles County $300 Public sale - April 29, 1916 Sale made after default under provisions of Deed of Trust Charles County Land Records Liber HCC 29 Folio 654
December 18, 1917:	Louis E. Smoot & Mary (wife) of DC To Kate P. Johnson of DC $300 "Part of Pomonkey Farm" Plus a strip of land 135 ft. on river; Reserves right of way to Potomac River & right to extract from river Charles County Land Records Liber FBM 32 Folio 445
December 31, 1917:	Kate P. Johnson, unmarried of DC to Bart Pigman of DC $10 Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 34 Folio 145

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September 28,1923:	Bart B. Pigman & Eva R(wife) of DC to John C. MacKay & wife of Charles County $10 South parcel of land Pigman acquired from Kate P. Johnson, et al. Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 41 Folio 195
December 29,1926:	John MacKay & Anna (wife) to T.M. Wampler of Charles County $10 Part of Pomonkey Point Farm 14.29 Acres Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 46 Folio 394
March 18, 1938:	Liber WMA68 Folio 282 T.M. Wampler to Wyvil H. Wampler (wife) of Charles County Part of Pomonkey Point Farm Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 68 Folio 282
??????:	Wyvil H. Wampler to Hall
October 6, 1942:	Frank M & Louise B. Hall to Lester C. Flood Charles County Land Records Liber WMA 77 Folio 292
September 25, 1946:	Lester C. Flood & Margery C.(wife) to Paul S. Maguire & Eileen(wife) $10 Charles County Land Records Liber 84 Folio 106
August 3, 1973:	Paul S Maguire & Eileen (wife) to John F, Mary & Paul S. Maguire $10 Charles County Land Records Liber 300 Folio 57

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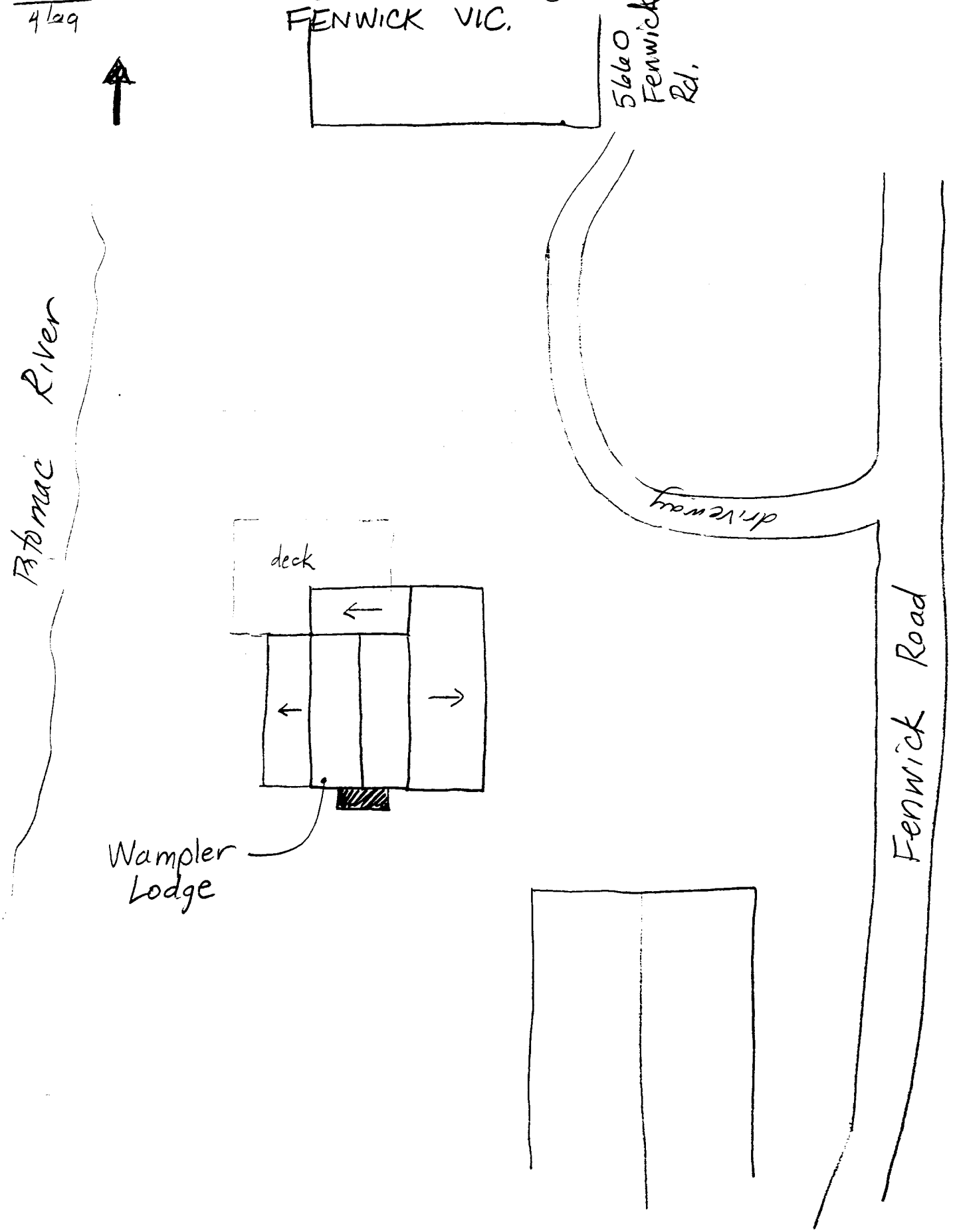
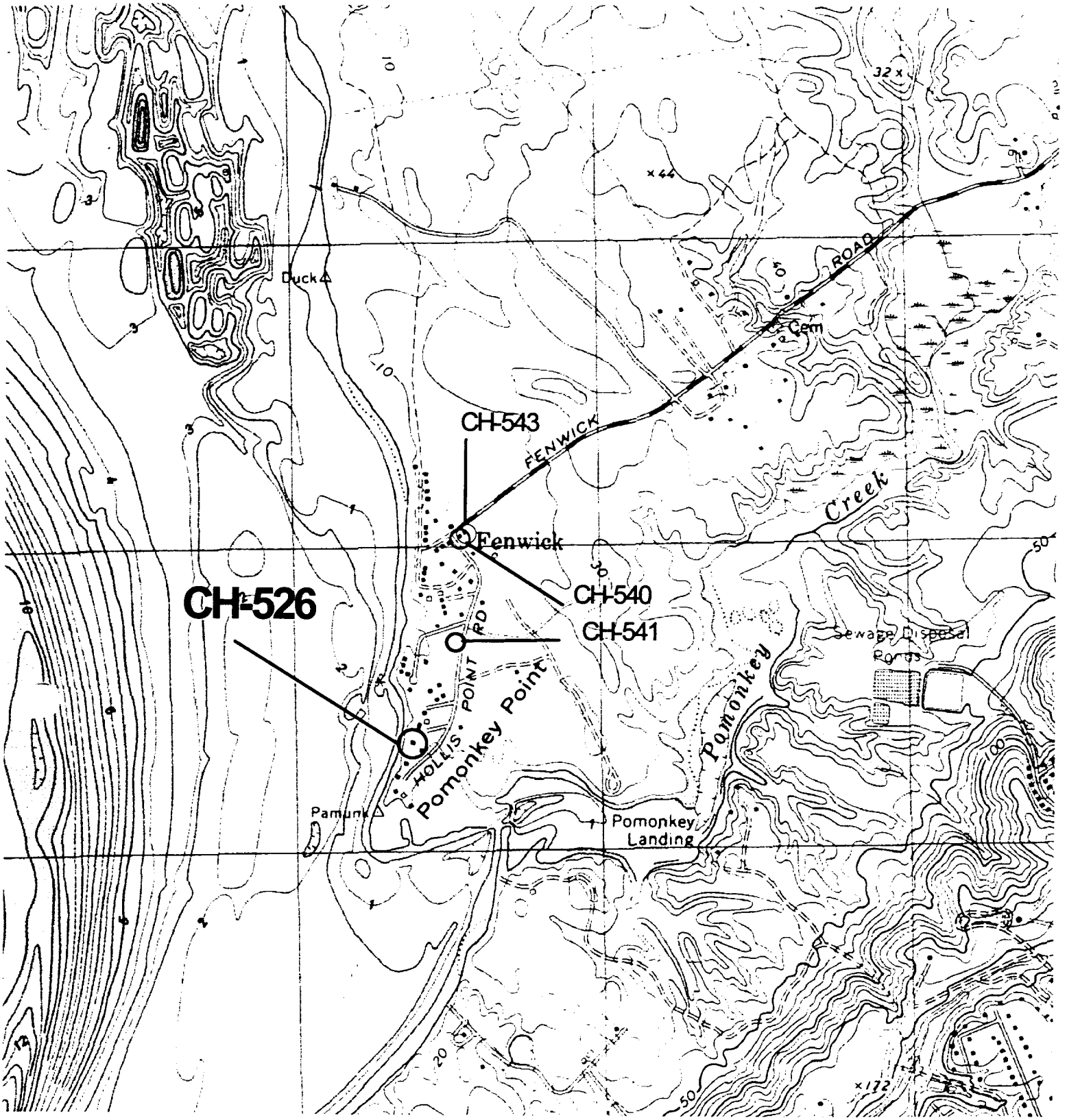
June 2, 1978	John F. & Mary Maguire, surviving Joint Tenants of Paul S. Maguire (d. March 24,1978) to John F.& Mary Maguire & Mary Ellen Esposito $10 Charles County Land Records Liber 579 Folio 87
October 30, 1978	John F. Maguire & Mary (wife)& Mary Ellen Esposito, Larry W. Gormley to Joseph S. Olcott "Part of Pomonkey Point Farm" 14.29 Acres Charles County Land Records Liber DGB 611 Folio 270

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP
4/09

MORRIS T. WAMPLER HUNTING LODGE CH-526
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
5660 Fenwick Rd. (REAR)
FENWICK VIC.





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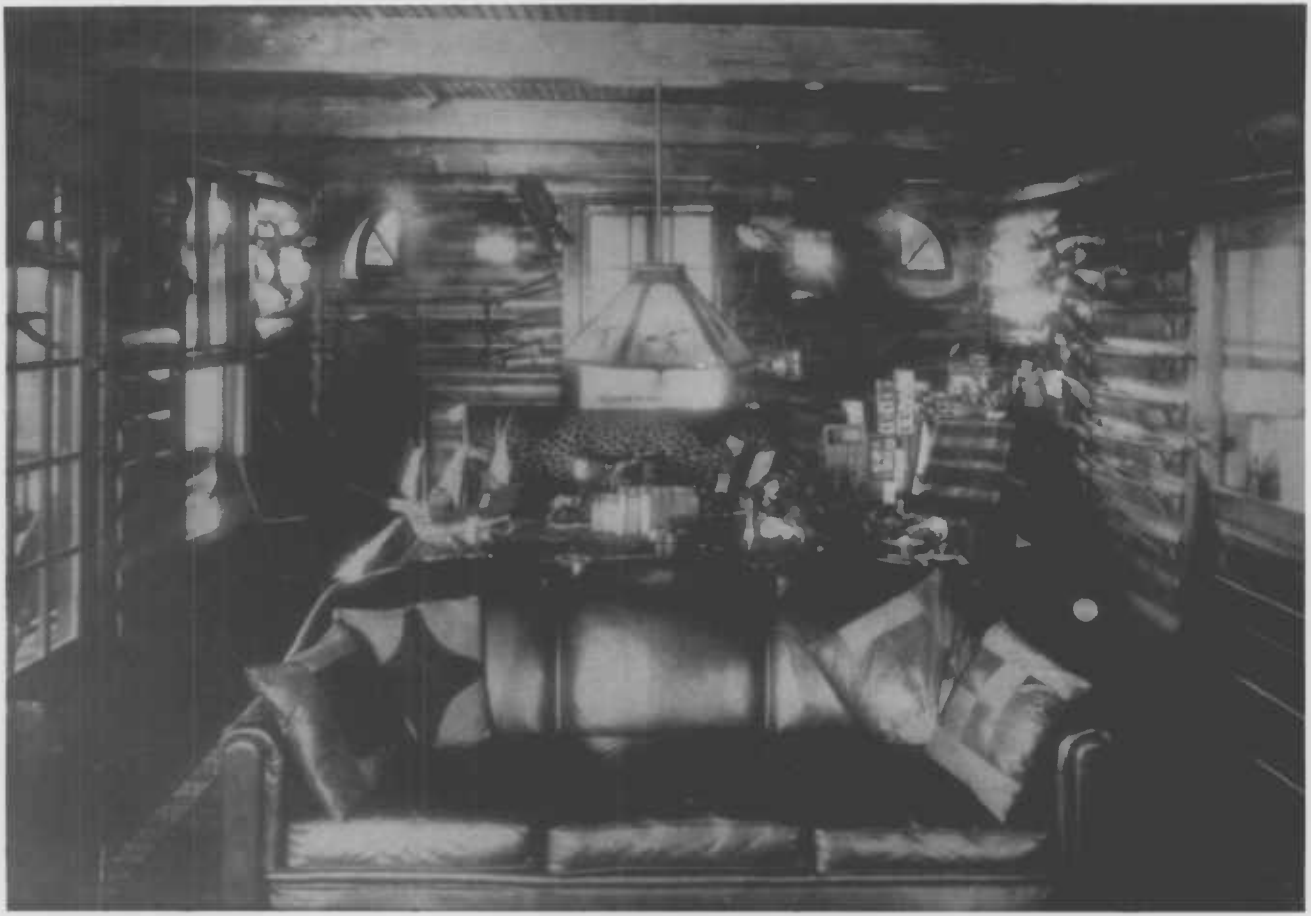
Wampler Hunting Lodge
Charles County, MD

CH-526

MOUNT VERNON, MD-VA QUAD

CH-526
WAMPLER LODGE
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
K.G. SMITH
4/99
MARYLAND SHPO
LOOKING NE
1 OF 3

CH-526
WAMPLER LODGE
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
K.G. SMITH
4/99
MARYLAND SHPO
HISTORIC INTERIOR PHOTO
2 OF 3



CH-526
WAMPLER LODGE
CHARLES COUNTY, MD
K.G. SMITH
4/99
MARYLAND SHPO
HISTORIC INTERIOR PHOTO
3 OF 3