ADDENDUM

CH-652
John Grabis House
Charles County, MD
Bryantown vic.
Cathy Currey, November 2001

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7. Description

The John Grabis House was destroyed by fire in November 2001.

John Grabis House **C. 1922**
CH-652
Bryantown vic.
Private

The John Grabis House is a two-story, frame, cross-gable dwelling resting on a ten acre parcel surrounded by level open fields. The house is square in form with a four-room massed plan on both the first and second story. Also on the site is a small, 10 room tobacco barn covered in vertical board siding. Owned and likely built by John Grabis, a local carpenter of German descent, the site is significant in its association with the life of a local craftsmen and the history of German families in the region prior to World War II.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-652

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic	John Grabis House
other	

2. Location

street and number	6500 Olivers Shop Road	___	not for publication
city, town	Bryantown	X	vicinity
county	Charles		

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

name	George F. Forbes				
street and number	6500 Olivers Shop Road			telephone	301-274-3332
city, town	Bryantown	state	MD	zip code	20617-0001

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Charles County Courthouse	tax map and parcel:	35-71		
city, town	LaPlata	liber	332	folio	132

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
___ Other _____

6. Classification

Category
___ district
X building(s)
___ structure
___ site
___ object

Ownership
___ public
X private
___ both

Current Function
___ agriculture
___ commerce/trade
___ defense
X domestic
___ education
___ funerary
___ government
___ health care
___ industry
___ landscape
___ recreation/culture
___ religion
___ social
___ transportation
___ work in progress
___ unknown
___ vacant/not in use
___ other: _____

Resource Count

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	___	buildings
___	___	sites
2	2	structures
___	___	objects
3	2	Total

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
0

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-652

Condition

___ excellent	___ deteriorated
X 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.

The John Grabis House is a simple, unadorned two-story, cross gable frame dwelling constructed around 1922. The house faces west and is situated to the east side of Olivers Shop Road on a level ten acre lot surrounded by open fields. A tobacco barn stands to the south of the dwelling and a concrete block shed lies to the east. Non-contributing resources include a small mid-20th century frame workshop and a garage.

The dwelling is essentially square in form and has a wood frame resting on a continuous concrete block foundation. The steeply pitched cross gable roof is covered in asphalt shingles and the walls are covered with beveled novelty siding. A hipped roof porch, enclosed before 1945 is attached to the front elevation and a shed rear entrance porch is attached to the east wall. Original windows are 2/2 sash, although approximately half have been replaced with 6/6 sash.

The front elevation includes an off- center entrance door to the north that leads into the enclosed porch. The façade of the porch includes a total of five replacement windows, all 6/6 sash. On the second floor are two 2/2 windows.

Moving clockwise, the north wall includes paired 6/6 windows in the enclosed porch. Two 2/2 windows are found on the first floor to the east. A 6 light casement window is found to the west, representing a change in fenestration to compensate for the interior stair passage. On the second floor is a single, centrally placed 2/2 light window.

The rear elevation includes the shed porch that has been partially enclosed. This later addition now includes a 6/6 light window. The rear entrance is near the north wall and includes its original 4 light and panel door. Opposite the door to the south is an original 2/2 wood sash window. A single 2/2 window is found centered on the second floor.

The south elevation includes four symmetrical 2/2 windows on the first floor and a single original window above.

INTERIOR
The dwelling follows a square four room plan. The first floor has a hall and stair in the northwest corner above a living room to the southwest. The dining room is located in the southeast room below the kitchen to the northeast. The upstairs follows a similar four room plan with three rooms and a stair passage. One of the bedrooms converted to a bathroom c 1950.

TOBACCO BARN
The tobacco barn, c. 1930 is of frame construction with vertical board siding. It measures 26x40 and has 10 rooms. The roof is metal.

SHED
A concrete block shed, c. 1930 is located behind the house and is built into a shallow bank. Concrete blocks have been molded to resemble stone. The front gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-652

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

Specific dates 1922 **Architect/Builder** John Grabis

Construction dates 1922

Evaluation for:

_____ National Register _____ Maryland Register X 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 reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The John Grabis House is the home of, and likely built by, a local carpenter of German descent, John Grabis. As such, the site is significant as one of the few documented examples of historic standing structures associated with the life of a regional craftsmen and his family. Additionally, the site has the potential of increasing our understanding of German influences on the Charles County landscape prior to World War II.

In 1922, John P. Grabis purchased 10 acres from Matthew P. and Josepha Therres. The Grabis family lived at the site until 1948 when the property was sold to George Forbes. Grabis was an established carpenter who also developed a cottage industry of making rock-faced concrete block on site for sale throughout the region. Similar concrete blocks were used as primary building materials in several Charles County domestic and commercial buildings including the Dudley and Lyons Department Store (CH-489), and several homes along Washington Avenue in LaPlata. Grabis worked with another tradesman of German descent named Kilhofer, and they were the contractors who built the Waldorf School (CH-391).

The cross gable house is not well represented in Charles County and no other examples of similar forms have yet been identified.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-652

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 10

Acreage of historical setting 10

Quadrangle name Hughesville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The John Grabis House is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 32, Grid 22, Parcel 71.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Cathy Currey/ Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	Charles County Planning Department	date	3/6/01
street and number	200 Baltimore Street	telephone	301-396-5815
city or town	LaPlata	state MD	zip code 20646

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
410-514-7600

Chain of title:

January 9, 1922	Matthew P. and Josepha Therres to John Grabis. **38:649**
February 16, 1948	John and Barbara Grabis to George F. Forbes. 10 a. **86:320**
April 2, 1974	George F. Forbes , Jr. to George F. Forbes Jr and Barbara M. Forbes, his wife. 10 acres. **332:132**

Major Bibliographic References:

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

Charles County Circuit Court Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

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

RESOURCE SKETCH MAP

Date: 1/2001

North arrow:

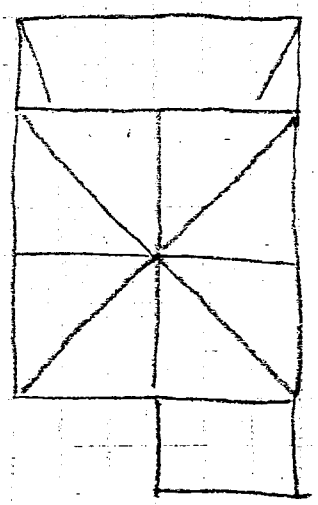
Name: JOHN GRASS HOUSE

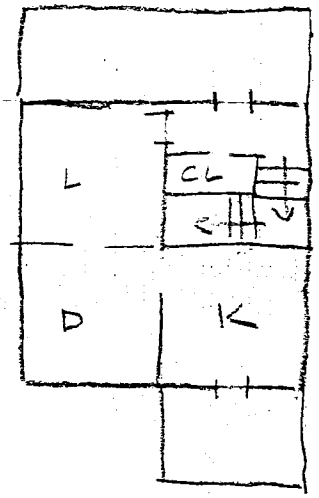
Address: 6500 OLIVERS SHOP ROAD

CH - 652

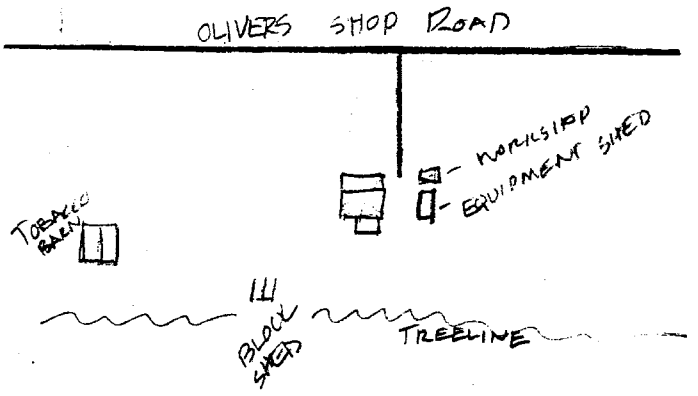
Charles County, Maryland

BRYANTOWN ☒ Vicinity

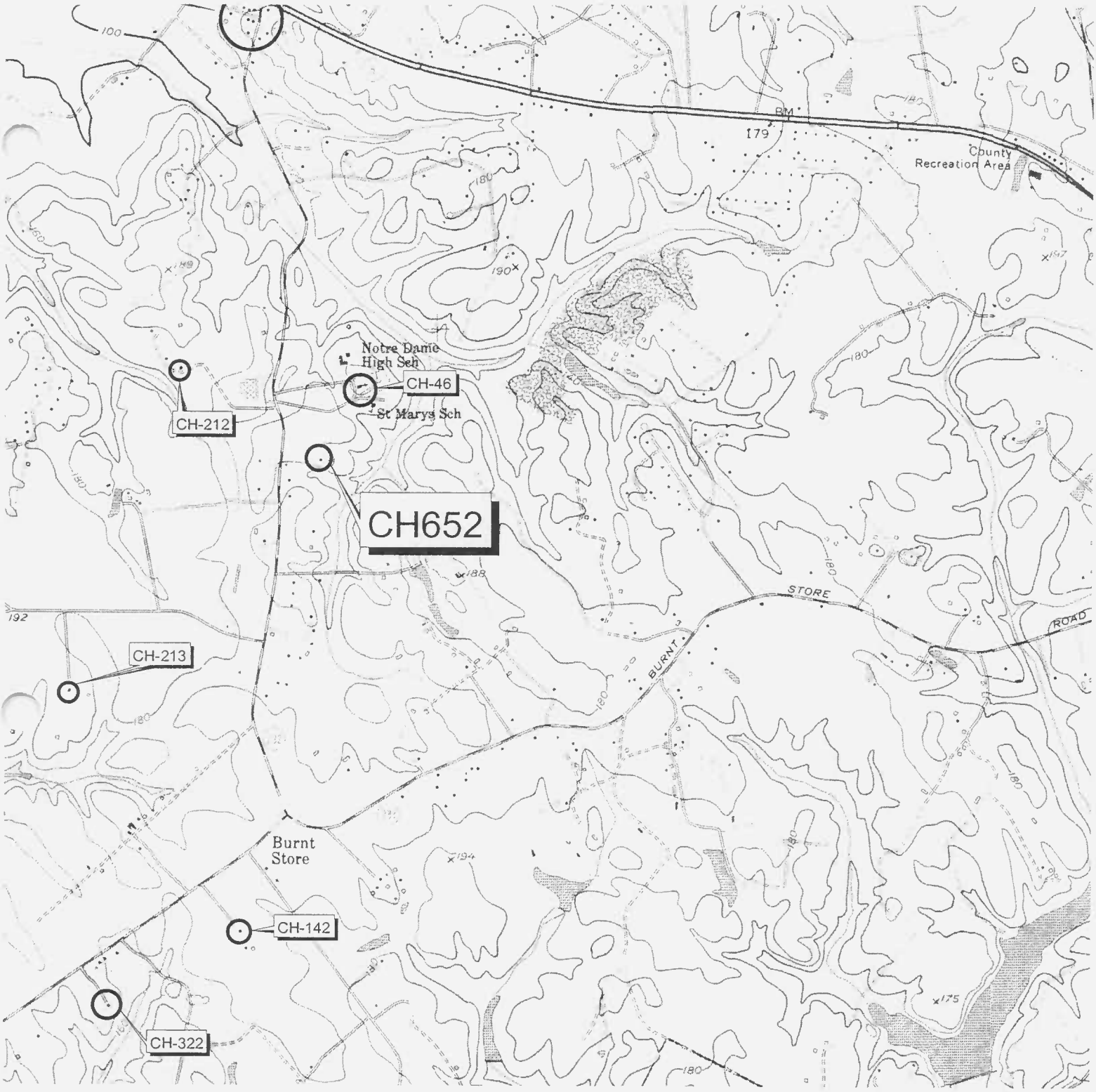




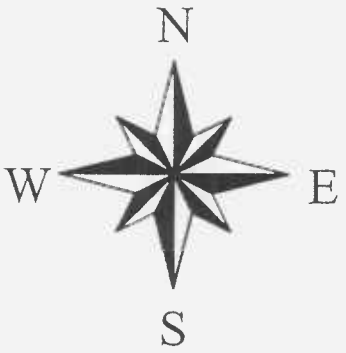
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Not drawn to scale



CH-652
John Grabis Property
Bryantown vic.
Hughesville Quad



CH-152
JOHN GRABS HOUSE
BRYANTOWN VIC
11/2001
C CURREY
MD SHPO
LOOKING NE
1 OF 4

CH 652
JOHN GRABIS HOUSE
~~CH~~ BRYANTOWN VIC
1/2001
C. CURRETY
MD SHPO
LOOKING W
2 OF 4

CH-652
JOHN GRABIS HOUSE
BRYANTOWN VIC
2001
CURREY
MD SHPO
SHED, LOOKING NE
3 OF 4

CH-652
JOHN GRABIS HOUSE
BRYANTOWN VIC
2001
C. CURRIER
MD SHPO
TOBACCO BARN, LOOKING S
4 OF 4