

F-7-1  
Fat Oxen  
Urbana  
Private

C. 1783

Fat Oxen is a one and half story brick residence, five bays wide and two bays deep, laid in Flemish and common bond with one and half story brick kitchen addition.

Beaded chair rails, baseboards, flat paneled shutters in the window reveals and paneled interior doors are exhibited on the interior of the residence. Each of the four main rooms in the main block have back to back corner fireplaces with unusual mantels with raised panelled over face design which continues down only one side of the fireplace opening.

The basement area has remained rough and unfinished except for the stairway with original plank cellar partitions and sorting bins.

The residence is unusual in its diminutive size, proportions, and architectural style in comparison to other residences of the eighteenth century in the area.

As early as 1783, the house may have been owned by Charles Beall, of the Beall family, one of the earliest English families to settle in the Urbana area.

By 1808, the house was owned by Captain Thomas Sprigg as indicated by the Varle map of that year.

The house and adjoining properties were resurveyed and the tract was named "Hampton" in 1879 when Ann Graham Ross, granddaughter of Governer Thomas Johnson gained possession.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

F-7-1

1101022204

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Fat Oxen

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East side of Md. Route 355, South of Tabler Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Urbana

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6th

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

Frederick

CODE

021

**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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS - rented
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Leisure Tech. Northeast, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

1 Airport Road

CITY, TOWN

Lakewood

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey 08701

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Frederick County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

North Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Frederick

STATE

Maryland 21701

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

F-7-1

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fat Oxen is located one-third of a mile northeast of Urbana, Frederick County, a quarter-mile off of Maryland Route 355. The structure is unpretentious, yet elegantly refined. Constructed of Flemish bond brick, the house rises from a knoll one and one-half stories over a high rough stone foundation. The kitchen wing is attached to the southeast elevation and is also one and one-half stories in height. Both the main block and subsidiary wing are unusually deep for a house of this scale. The roof rises at a very gradual pitch. Fat Oxen dates from the third quarter of the eighteenth century and is basically Georgian vernacular in style.

The house has two double parlors with a partially open center hall and is five bays wide and two bays deep. The wing is two bays wide and two bays deep. A high wooden mid-nineteenth century porch with railings shaded the two doors on the facade until it was removed in 1976. The doorway in the third bay is original. The subsidiary door in the fourth bay appears to have been added at a later date. Perhaps this doorway was a window at one time. This change would greatly enhance the stylistic refinement. Two period dormers grace the roof over the facade. A basement bulkhead entrance is located at the northwest corner of the structure. Most window sash are six-over-six. Central enclosed chimneys are found at either end of the house and an extremely wide stone chimney originally covered the southeast elevation. A more modern brick stack now rises through the gable end.

The rear elevation has been greatly altered throughout the life history of the structure. However, the original 18th century door frame and nine-over-nine sash remain.

The interior of Fat Oxen exhibits many alterations, and woodwork from every period can be found. However, much of this woodwork is of great merit, including beaded chairrails, baseboards, flat panelled shutters in the window reveals and interior doors. Each of the four main rooms in the main block have back to back interior corner fireplaces. The mantels are rare due to the fact that the raised panelled over face design continues down only one side of the fireplace opening. This design alternates from the left to right side of the opening, depending upon which direction the opening faces. The chimneys are rare in that they are asymmetrically placed along the roof ridge line. This arrangement is most evident on the basement level. Only one brick hearth remains visible. The period stairway exhibits heavy moulded handrails and simple rectangular balusters. A heavy chairrail runs across the stair landing and continues to the second floor level.

The second floor consists of four extremely simple rooms with windows in the gable ends. All original flooring materials are random width pine. Some of the flooring has been covered with modern materials.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 1)

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FREDERICK COUNTY

CONTINUATION SHEET #1                      ITEM NUMBER 7      PAGE 1

The basement area is perhaps one of the few intact period cellars in the area. A finished wooden stair descends from under the main stair to the dirt floor. Original plank cellar partitions and sorting bins are extant in the southeast half of the basement and make this level of the structure extremely interesting to the architectural historian and archeologist.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

F-7-1

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 checked="" 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 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fat Oxen has been owned by a long line of distinguished citizens of Maryland. As early as 1783, it may have been owned by Charles Beall of the Beall family, one of the earliest English families to settle in the Urbana area, according to Scharf's History of Western Maryland. The property was then purchased by Captain Thomas Sprigg, a member of another English family which settled early in the Frederick area.

After Sprigg's death, the property was put up for public auction and purchased by John McPherson Sr. He arrived in Frederick from Pennsylvania in 1781. As a commissioned lieutenant in the Revolutionary Army, he became an agent in charge of supply rations for British prisoners. Later, he worked as president of the Common Council for the local legislature. Scharf states that he was one of the largest manufacturers of iron and owners of real estate in Western Maryland. In his will, McPherson instructed that any income from the property be given to his brother Edward but that at his brother's death, the land be given to the child or children of his son, John McPherson, Jr.

In 1879, the house and adjoining properties were resurveyed and the tract was named "Hampton." Ann Grahame Ross, daughter of John McPherson, Jr., gained possession of the property on which the house was standing at this time. Ann Ross was the granddaughter of Governor Thomas Johnson and resided at the famous Ross house on Court House Square in Frederick. Her father owned and operated Catoctin Furnace for some time and managed the Central National Bank. He founded Araby Mills in 1830 and was a prominent projector of the National Turnpike from Washington to Wheeling.

Although, Fat Oxen has always been a farmhouse, its owners have made outstanding contributions to the community of Urbana and indeed, Western Maryland.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Swann, Don. Colonial and Historic Homes of Maryland. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1939. Reprint, 1975. P.70.  
 Lake, Titus & Co. Atlas of Frederick County, Maryland. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1873. P.21.

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# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Jack L. Finglass/Cherilyn Widell

ORGANIZATION Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

Frederick Co. Planning & Zoning Commission 12/76

STREET & NUMBER 21 State Circle

TELEPHONE 269-2438

Winchester Hall

663-8300-Ext 266

CITY OR TOWN Annapolis

STATE 21401

Frederick

Maryland 21701

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

EST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

4359  
4358  
4357  
20  
4355  
4355  
4355  
4350

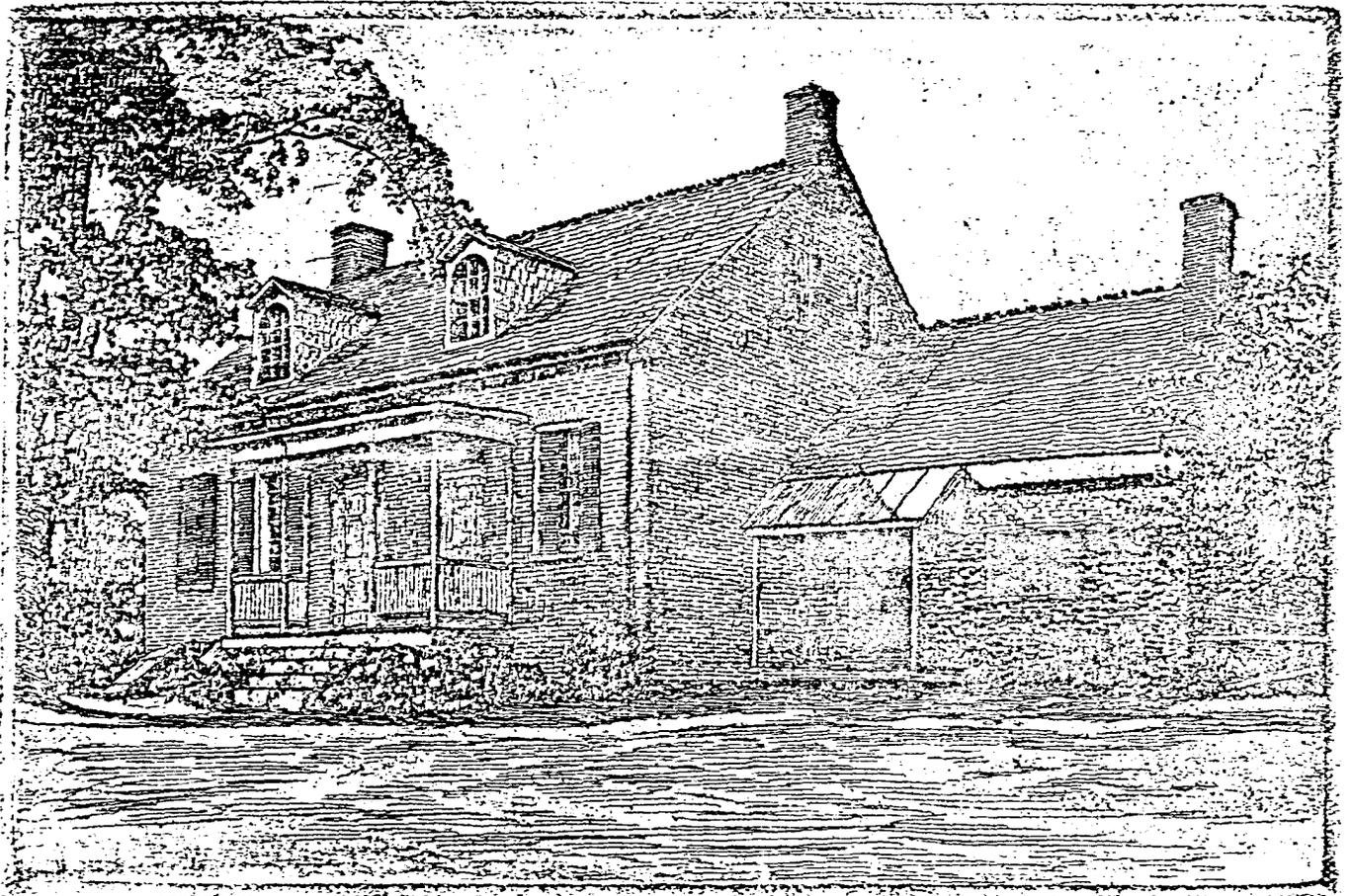
FREDRIK 0.5 MI.  
BUCKEY TOWN 3.1 MI.  
BUCKEYSTOWN

Urbana  
Quad  
F-7-1



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F-7-1





FAT OXEN

Urbana, Frederick Co., Maryland

Photographer: Jack R. Finglass

Negative Located: MHT

Date Photograph Taken: Winter 1976

Exterior View

F-9-1

FAT OXEN  
FREDERICK COUNTY

Exterior



FAT OXEN

Urbana, Frederick Co , Maryland

Photographer: Jack L Finglas S.

Negative Located: MHT

Date Photograph Taken; Winter 1976

Exterior - Rear View

F-7-1

FAT OXEN  
FREDERICK COUNTY

F-7-1

Rear