

Memo to file

July 17, 2015

From: Casey Pecoraro  
Inventory Registrar

Re: M: 35-29-2  
R.A. Charles Castle

The R.A. Charles Castle is located at 5417 Mohican Road, Bethesda, MD 20816 (premises address). The current land area of the property is 33,753 sq. ft. and is limited to Part Lot C, Glen Echo Heights, corresponding with the legal description of the property (State Department of Assessment and Taxation).

The property owner notes that this differs slightly from the information recorded in Section 10, Geographical Data, of the MIHP form prepared in April 1979, which at the time of survey included all of Lot B (currently 5419 Mohican Road) in the verbal boundary description and 52,572 sq. ft. as the acreage of nominated property.

Per July 8, 2015 e-mail from property owner, Mr. Ross McNair.

## ACHS SUMMARY FORM

M:35-29-2

(date)

1. Name: R.A. Charles' Castle
2. Planning Area/Site Number: 35/29/2 3. M-NCPPC Atlas Reference: Map 20  
Coordinate J-15
4. Address: 5417 Mohican Road  
Glen Echo Heights
5. Classification Summary
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Category <u>building</u>             | Previous Survey Recording <u>MNCPPC</u>                                      |
| Ownership <u>private</u>             | Title and Date: <u>Historic Sites Inventory</u><br>1976                      |
| Public Acquisition <u>N/A</u>        |  |
| Status <u>occupied</u>               |  |
| Accessible <u>no</u>                 | Federal <u>    </u> State <u>  x  </u> County <u>  x  </u> Local <u>    </u> |
| Present use <u>private residence</u> |  |
6. Date: 1890 7. Original Owner: R.A. Charles
8. Apparent Condition
- a. good b. altered c. original site
9. Description: This three bay by one bay, two and a half story stone "castle" faces south, and is smaller than #5415.  
Constructed of bluestone, the house has a two story screened porch with a flat roof at the southeast corner of the south elevation. The enclosed second level is supported by three columns at the first level.  
There is a screened porch on the north elevation that wraps around to the west elevation. Six columns support the half-hipped porch roof. A two story tower is located at the northwest corner of the west elevation with a conical roof.  
There are one-over-one double-hung windows with stone lintels, and a variety of multi-paned transoms or upper sashes above single light lower sashes. The south elevation has a hipped dormer window. The house has a hipped roof with red slate covering. There are two interior chimneys with corbelled caps.
10. Significance: This unusual dwelling is a reminder of a grandiose scheme to create a Washington "Rhineland of the Potomac". Twin brothers Edwin and Edward Baltzley bought 516 acres of land in 1888, built the Glen Echo National Chautauqua, and sold lots for a planned development across the street. Houses were to be of brick, stone or metal, but the use of granite was encouraged by offering stone delivered at quarry cost. This house was built for R.A. Charles in 1890 and was the second of two "castles" built in the planned development. The Baltzley castle was larger than this one and was probably intended as a model home.  
A disastrous fire at the Glen Echo Cafe in November, 1890, coupled with rumors of malarial mosquitoes, put an abrupt end not only to the Glen Echo Chautauqua, but also to the Baltzleys' real estate business.  
The Charles family owned this house for many years. The present owners purchased the "castle" in 1962, and rent it out.
11. Researcher and date researched: Candy Reed/Architectural Description  
Carlotta Anderson 4/79
12. Compiler: Peg Coleman 13. Date Compiled: 6/79 14. Designation Approval
15. Acreage: 54,572 sq. ft.

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC R.A. Charles' Castle

AND/OR COMMON Baltzley "Castle"

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 5417 Mohican Road

CITY, TOWN Glen Echo Heights VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 8

STATE Maryland COUNTY Montgomery

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Dr. Paul W. and Elizabeth Carol Schafer Telephone #: 229-4190

STREET & NUMBER 5415 Mohican Road

CITY, TOWN Glen Echo Heights VICINITY OF STATE, zip code Maryland 20016

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #: 3041  
Folio #: 365

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland 20850

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites

DATE 1976  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Park Historian's Office

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland 20855

M:35-29-2

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

This three bay by one bay, two and a half story stone "castle" faces south, and is smaller than #5415.

Constructed of bluestone, the house has a two story screened porch with a flat roof at the southeast corner of the south elevation. The enclosed second level is supported by three columns at the first level.

There is a screened porch on the north elevation that wraps around to the west elevation. Six columns support the half-hipped porch roof. A two story tower is located at the northwest corner of the west elevation with a conical roof.

There are one-over-one double-hung windows with stone lintels, and a variety of multi-paned transoms or upper sashes above single light lower sashes. The south elevation has a hipped dormer window. The house has a hipped roof with red slate covering. There are two interior chimneys with corbelled caps.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

M.35-29-2

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1890

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This unusual dwelling is a reminder of a grandiose scheme to create a Washington "Rhineland of the Potomac".

In 1888, twin brothers Edward & Edwin Baltzley purchased 516 acres overlooking the Potomac River.<sup>1</sup> Edwin was a prolific inventor and had made about a quarter of a million dollars on a mechanical eggbeater he patented in 1885 -- money used to buy the land.<sup>2</sup> It extended from Cabin John Creek east to the Walhonding Road area overlooking Sycamore Island.

The brothers set up their real estate office in the wildly fanciful Glen Echo Cafe which they built above Sycamore Island. They sold lots only for "houses of brick, stone or metal of not less value than \$3,000", but encouraged "the erection of none but granite houses" and promised stone from five local quarries "at the bare cost of quarrying".<sup>3</sup> They planned a gigantic fortress-like riverview hotel to be called "The Mohican", and built their own Mohican Road house in imitation of a castle and probably as a model home for the area. They also deeded 80 acres in 1891 to the "National Chautauqua of Glen Echo" and became members of the board of trustees. By summer 1891, completed structures for this center of culture and education included an amphitheatre seating 8,000, a hall of philosophy, an entrance complex with two stone towers and a tent hotel.

In February 1890, R.A. Charles, an employee of the Treasury Department, purchased land from Edward & Laura Baltzley,<sup>4</sup> and constructed this house soon after. Theophilus Parsons Chandler, who designed the larger "castle" for the Baltzleys, may have designed this smaller one also.

A disastrous fire at the Glen Echo Cafe in November, 1890, coupled with rumors of malarial mosquitoes, put an abrupt end not only to the Glen Echo Chautauqua, but also to the Baltzleys' real estate business.

The Charles family owned this house for many years. The present owners purchased the "castle" in 1962, and rent it out.

## FOOTNOTES:

1. Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland, JA 11/70.
2. Article (and slide show) by Carol Barton, Glen Echo Park historian, "The Glen Echo Barometer: A History of Glen Echo Park." 1979, no paging.
3. Glen Echo on the Potomac, Edwin and Edward, Frank Gutekunst Press, Philadelphia, 1891, reprinted May 1978 by the Writer's Center, Glen Echo Park, p. 8, etc.
4. Land Records, Opt. Cit., 21/70.

Baltzley, Edwin & Edward, Glen Echo on the Potomac, Frank Gutekunst Press, Philadelphia, 1891, reprinted May 1978 by the Writer's Center, Glen Echo Park.

M:35-29-2

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Research by Richard Cook.

Levy, Benjamin, "Glen Echo Chautauqua on the Potomac", National Park Service, 1967.

Land Records of Montgomery County.

Baltzley, Edwin & Edward, The Glen Echoan; E.&E. Baltzley, 1892.  
CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 54,572 sq. ft.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Lot B & Part of C, Block 3 "Glen Echo Heights"

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

STATE COUNTY

STATE COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Carlotta Anderson

Candy Reed

Architectural Description

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

April 1979

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

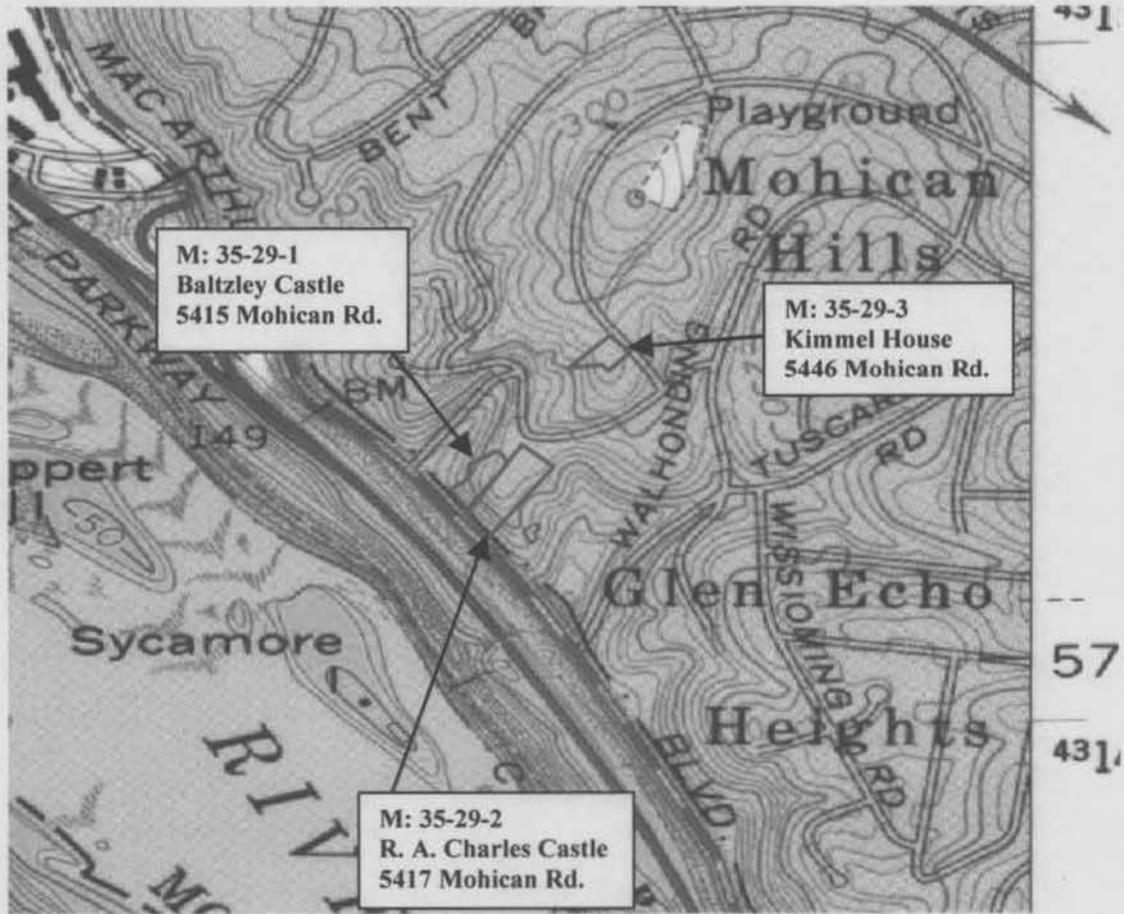
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

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  
The Shaw House, State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438~~

SUGARLOAF REGIONAL TRAILS  
Box 87, Stronghold  
Dickerson, Md. 20753  
(301) 926-4510

M: 35-29 - 2  
Baltzley Castles  
5415, 5417, and 5446 Mohican Road, Bethesda  
Falls Church Quad





# 35-29-2

NAME EDWIN BALTZLEY CASTLE

LOCATION SCIOTO Rd GLEN ECHO, Md

FACADE S

PHOTO TAKEN 9/11/74 MOWYER