

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #67-20 Building Date: ca. 1891

Building Name: Bonnet-Duck House

Location: 5617 Seminole Street, Berwyn Heights, Maryland

Private/Residence/Occupied/Good/Inaccessible

Description

The Bonnet-Duck House is a two-and-one-half-story square pyramidal-roof house of the "classic-box" design. It stands on one of the original lots of the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights. The main block is sided with white aluminum; it is three irregular bays by two bays, with entrance in the third bay of the three-bay main north facade. The door has twelve border lights of clear glass, around a large central pane of glass; all are bevelled. Across the north facade is a one-story flat-roof porch supported by square aluminum posts. The first bay of the west facade is a two-story semi-octagonal bay. The hip roof is covered with gray asbestos shingle; a corbelled brick chimney rises from its center. The roof slopes to deeply overhanging eaves with a narrow aluminum soffit. Piercing each plane of the roof is a two-bay gable dormer. Extending to the rear (south) is a slightly lower ell shaped addition, with shallow hip roof. Filling the southeast corner of this ell-shaped addition is a one-story hip-roof enclosed porch.

Significance

The Bonnet-Duck House is a prominent example of the Four-Square, "Classic Box" type of domestic architecture which was popular, particularly in suburban areas, at the turn of this century. Although significantly altered, this large house is a conspicuous landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights. It is one of the early houses constructed in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights (now known as Berwyn Heights). The Town of Charlton Heights was platted in 1888 by Edward Graves, on 383 acres of land bounded by the Branchville Road and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Graves sold the land to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company in that year, and the company immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. The subject house was built ca. 1891 for John Conrad Bonnet, on unimproved lots which the Bonnet family had purchased from the Charlton Heights Improvement Company earlier in that year. The house was acquired in 1956 by members of the Duck family, who retain it today. The Bonnet-Duck House is one of the earliest homes built in Charlton Heights. Although considerably altered, the house is (by its size and location) a conspicuous landmark in Berwyn Heights.

Acreage: 10,243 square feet

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bonnet House

and/or common Duck House

2. Location

street & number 5617 Seminole Street ___ not for publicationcity, town Berwyn Heights ___ vicinity of congressional district 5state Maryland county Prince George's

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Sheila Duck

street & number 5617 Seminole Street telephone no.:city, town Berwyn Heights state and zip code MD 20740

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #4660street & number Main Street folio 73city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<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 of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The Bonnet-Duck House is a two-and-one-half-story square pyramidal-roof house of the "classic-box" design. It stands on one of the original lots of the 1888 town of Charlton Heights, now known as Berwyn Heights.

The main block is sided with white aluminum; it is three irregular bays by two bays, with entrance in the third bay of the three-bay main north facade. The door has twelve border lights of clear glass, around a large central pane of glass; all are bevelled. Across the north facade is a one-story flat-roof porch supported by square aluminum posts; it rests on concrete piers with lattice infill. Opening onto this porch in the third bay is a narrow double door; each leaf of the door consists of three lights over one molded panel. Windows are generally 8/1 or 1/1 double hung sash, and have plain aluminum surrounds and no shutters. The first bay of the west facade is a two-story semi-octagonal bay, with two 6/1 windows in each level of its west face.

The hip roof is covered with gray asbestos shingle; a corbelled brick chimney rises from its center. The roof slopes to deeply overhanging eaves with a narrow aluminum soffit. Piercing each plane of the roof is a two-bay gable dormer with 6/1 double hung sash windows. The foundation is of brick, painted white, and encloses a basement.

Extending to the rear (south) is a slightly lower ell shaped addition, with shallow hip roof. It rests on concrete piers infilled with brick. Filling the southeast corner of this ell-shaped addition is a one-story hip-roof enclosed porch on a concrete-block foundation.

8. Significance

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 ca, 1891 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Bonnet-Duck House is a prominent example of the Four-Square, "Classic Box" type of domestic architecture which was popular, particularly in suburban areas, at the turn of this century. Although significantly altered, this large house is a conspicuous landmark in the community of Berwyn Heights. It is one of the early houses constructed in the 1888 town of Charlton Heights (now known as Berwyn Heights).

In 1887, Edward Graves of Washington, D.C. purchased 383 acres south of the Branchville Road and bounded on the west by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. He engaged the firm of Newby and Howell to survey and plat a new residential community, and called it Charlton Heights.¹ The plat of 1888 showed 50-foot-wide streets, criss-crossing at varied angles, and lots of approximately 50 by 200 feet. Graves sold the land in 1888 to the Charlton Heights Improvement Company, which immediately began construction of dwellings ordered by pattern through the mail. Within the same year, the Company began to sell lots, some unimproved, and some with new houses already erected.² By the end of the first year, approximately 20 houses had been built, and the new town became the home principally of professionals who used the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to commute into Washington, D.C.³

For the next three years, the Charlton Heights Improvement Company continued to sell lots, but with only limited success. In 1892, Edward Graves, the developer, and James Waugh, secretary of the Company, both of whom resided in Charlton Heights, bought the remaining unsold lots; they continued to sell them, and the Charlton Heights Improvement Company ceased operations. In 1896, by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, the town was incorporated, and its name was changed to Berwyn Heights. It continued to grow slowly; by 1910, the population was slightly over 150, and there were 38 dwellings.⁴ Today most of the lots have been filled in by 1950's subdivision housing, and Berwyn Heights is a quiet residential community with curving streets and old trees, set back and somewhat secluded, between two major highways.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG#67-20

Cf. notes, Item #8

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 10,243 square feet
Quadrangle name Washington East, section C

Tax map #33, lots 8 and 9
Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

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	<u>Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian</u>		
organization	<u>P.G. Historic Preservation Commission</u>	date	<u>August 1986</u>
street & number	<u>c/o County Planning, M-NCPPC</u>	telephone	<u>952-3521</u>
city or town	<u>Upper Marlboro</u>	state	<u>MD</u>

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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

The subject house was built ca. 1891 for John Conrad Bonnet, on unimproved lots which the Bonnet family had purchased from the Charlton Heights Improvement Company earlier in that year.⁵ Conrad Bonnet had immigrated from Germany, and engaged in real estate in the Washington area.⁶ The house and lots passed in 1915 to John C. Bonneford, a carpenter, and then through a series of short-term owners. It was acquired in 1956 by members of the Duck family who retain it today.⁷

The Bonnet-Duck House is one of the earliest homes built in Charlton Heights. Although considerably altered (by rear additions, aluminum siding and moldings, etc.), the house is by its size and location a conspicuous landmark in Berwyn Heights today.

Notes

¹ Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #9:127, 130; Prince George's County Plat, JWB #10:309.

² Prince George's County Deeds, JWB #11:543; R. W. Shoppell Modern Houses, 1887; Artistic Modern Houses at Low Cost, 1888; Beautiful Homes, 1887; Building Plans for Modern Low Cost Houses, 1884, etc.; cf. Charlton Heights Improvement Company deeds, 1888.

³ Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1888-1890; Census for Prince George's County, E. D. #1, 1900.

⁴ JWB #20:496; JWB #21:225; JWB #22:53; G. M. Hopkins map, 1894; Census for Prince George's County, E.D. #1, 1900, 1910; Prince George's County Tax Assessments 1890-1910; Skarda, D.D., Berwyn Heights - History of a Small Maryland Town.

⁵ Prince George's County Deed JWB #25:515.

⁶ Census for Prince George's County, 1900.

⁷ Prince George's County Deeds #109:435; #163:141; #250:598; #324:50; #271:520; #470:219; #483:320; #572:221; #687:311; #794:128; #965:449; #1418:343; #1976:265; #4660:73.

GREENBELT RD.

96-67-20

I-1



M.M.C. & P.C.
 82/448 4.37A.
 P.64

R-R

R-55

R-55

R-R



CHARLTON HTS.
 2307

CHARLTON HTS.
 2307

BERWYN HTS.
 2384

BERWYN HTS.
 4984

SMITHS ADD
 5393

COLLEGE KNOLLS

SECT. 2
 579





P.G. #67-20

Bonnet-Duck House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
Northeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-20

Bonnet-Duck House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
East elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-20

Bonnet-Duck House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
South elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G. #67-20

Bonnet-Duck House
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
April 1986
Northwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.