

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. PG 28-4-58
Magi No.
DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Kerfoot House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 5907 Cleveland Ave. not for publication

city, town Riverdale vicinity of congressional district

state 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 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 Charlene M. and Michal F. Hoffman

street & number 5907 Cleveland Ave. telephone no.:

city, town Riverdale state and zip code Maryland 20737

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 4784

street & number 14735 Main St. folio 588

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland 20772

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

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Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" 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.

Built in 1904, the Charles E. Kerfoot residence was one of the first two houses built on block 53 of Riverdale Park. The other house was next door and belonged to Kerfoot's sister and her husband Mr. Dodge. The two-and-one-half story frame house is a simple example of the Queen Ann- Victorian style that was popular from 1880 to 1910. The house is somewhat rectangular in shape, has a dominant front facing gable, and a covered porch that stretches across the front and halfway down one side. It also has a side facing gabled dormer with a half-circle or eyebrow window. From the old photograph, it looks like there may have been some lace-like brackets at the top of the porch posts, but this seems to have been the only decorative feature. The posts are plain now.

The porch posts are not the only parts that have been altered. The porch on the side of the house now has the middle chunk taken out of it where one of the residents must have enlarged the living room. It is obvious by comparing the old and new photographs that there are no longer two chimneys in the house. Only the back one is left, and we assume that the front one was sacrificed in the living room renovation. What was originally covered in wood siding is now covered in two shades of artificial grey siding. The lot on the other side of the house was once part of the yard, and according to lifetime residents, was very beautiful. The lot was sold along the line somewhere, and a non-descript 1940s or 1950s type of house stands there now.

8. Significance

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1900

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 Kerfoot home is a fine example of a turn of the century middle class family household. Charles E. Kerfoot was a self employed photographer. By the time Riverdale Park Co. was selling lots, Kerfoot was able to purchase the majority of lots in Block 53. He built the house on Lot 6 for his young and still small family. It was not until much later, when his economic affluence increased, that he moved to a larger home in Riverdale Park. (That house has since been destroyed.)

As opposed to some of the larger "summer homes" of Riverdale Park, Kerfoot's house was a modest sized family home. He built it to be lived in all year round. Since his ownership, the house has been owned by different families, who come from middle class backgrounds. The Kerfoot home is a fine example of modest living today; as well as it was at the turn of the century.

The land on which this suburb was built, had been part of the Riversdale plantation from 1801, when Henri Joseph Stier, a Belgian aristocrat, had purchased approximately 800 acres north of Bladensburg, and had begun to develop his plantation. After Stier's return to Belgium in 1803, completion of the Riversdale mansion and management of the plantation were taken over by his daughter and her husband, Rosalie and George Calvert. The Riversdale plantation became a model of its type, and remained in Calvert family possession for three generations.¹ After the death in 1864 of Charles Benedict Calvert (son of George and Rosalie Calvert), a commission was appointed to divide the plantation among his heirs; a 300-acre dower lot, including the mansion and the family burial ground to the northwest, was laid off for Calvert's widow.² This 300-acre dower lot (as well as the 175-acre lot adjoining it on the north) was sold in 1887 by the Calvert heirs to John Fox, president of the Riverdale Park Company, a New York real estate syndicate which then began development of the suburb of Riverdale Park.³ The land was platted in 1889 by surveyor D.J. Howell. Streets were laid out in a grid pattern, straddling the Washington line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which ran north and south through the new community, and offered to residents easy commuting

into the Federal City. Park spaces, and circles of green were provided in the plan, and parkland was reserved around the Calvert mansion which was preserved "as a sacred relic of an era replete with historic memories."⁴ Streets were named for the Presidents of the United States, Washington through McKinley, as well as for other distinguished statesmen such as Clay, Lafayette and Beale.⁵

Construction of dwellings began in the 1890's. All were of frame construction, and reflected the popular taste of the period, as illustrated in the house plan catalogs of those years. Some were pyramidal-roof Foursquares, others front-gabled or cross-gabled; many were highlighted by projecting bays or corner towers, and almost all had prominent wraparound porches with jigsawed decorative detail. By the turn of the century, the new suburb had approximately 60 dwellings, a Presbyterian Church, a handsome Victorian schoolhouse and railroad station; the latter two public buildings were built by the Riverdale Park Company. There were several general stores, and telephone and telegraph communication was available. Concrete sidewalks were constructed, and sewers were provided for the principal streets.⁶ Because of its convenient location, its efficient line of transportation into the City, its primary school, and its picturesque tree-lined streets, Riverdale Park became one of the most desirable residential suburbs in the Washington area.

Notes

- 1 See Riversdale, Historic Structures Report, 1979, Part II, History (S.G. Pearl).
- 2 Prince George's County Equity #475.
- 3 Prince George's County Deeds JWB #E:426, 520; JWB #12:484; JWB #13:614.
- 4 Riverdale Park Real Estate booklet (undated), circa 1904.
- 5 Prince George's County Plat JWB #5:747, 688; Riverdale Park Real Estate brochure (undated) circa 1904.
- 6 Riverdale Park Real Estate booklet; "Riverdale Park" article, source unknown, ca. 1899.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Prince George's County Plat JWB #5:474, 688

County Records; Chain of Title

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 8,340 sqare feet

Tax Map 42, Block 27, Lot 6

Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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

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

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name title Carolyn Weber and Robert Hardesty, Students

organization U. of Md. Historical Preservation date December, 1989

street & number Prof. Flack's Hist419 Class telephone 454-2435

city or town _____ state _____

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