

QA-563
Belle Point
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County

Constructed ca. 1932
Privately owned

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Belle Point, constructed ca. 1932, consists of a main house and guest house that stand on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. The main house is a large, brick Colonial Revival residence with a 2 ½-story, 4-bay main block flanked by dependencies. The main house features an early 1930s mural that depicts Belle Point surrounded by recreational activities. West of the main house is a 1 ½-story, 3-bay, wood-frame guest house. Belle Point occupies a flat, 5-acre lot with several mature specimen trees.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Belle Point is a large Colonial Revival house that was constructed on the west bank of the Wye River ca. 1932 by Chicagoan T. Harris Smith. Belle Point reflects the trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore during the 1920s and 1930s. The house was completed about the time Prohibition was lifted in 1933 and features an unsigned mural, entitled "Belle Point on the Wye," that depicts recreation activities and geographic features named for cocktails.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-563

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Belle Point
other Greenwood Farm, T. Harris Smith House, Wye River Farms

2. Location

street and number 218 Alynn Way not for publication
city, town Queenstown X vicinity
county Queen Anne's

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

name Kenneth K. and Cheryl A. Cleeland
street and number 218 Alynn Way telephone (410) 827-9665
city, town Queenstown state MD zip code 21658

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Queen Anne's County Circuit Court liber SM 700 folio 688
city, town Centreville tax map 66 tax parcel 86 tax ID number 05-042240

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 at MHT
 Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	2 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0 structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	0 objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	2 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. QA-563

Condition

excellent deteriorated
 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.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Belle Point, constructed ca. 1932, consists of a main house and guest house that stand on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. The main house is a large, brick Colonial Revival residence with a 2 1/2-story, 4-bay main block flanked by dependencies. The main house features an early 1930s mural that depicts Belle Point surrounded by recreational activities. West of the main house is a 1 1/2-story, 3-bay, wood-frame guest house. Belle Point occupies a flat, 5-acre lot with several mature specimen trees.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Belle Point originally consisted of a ca. 1932 house, guest house, barn, and other outbuildings. Only the house and guest house are included in this survey form.¹ Belle Point stands on the west bank of the Wye River south of Queenstown in Queen Anne's County. It occupies a 5-acre lot that is bordered on the east and south by the Wye River and on the north and west by the Belle Point Farms subdivision. The lot is flat with a slight bluff above the river and features many mature trees including yew, elm, magnolia, and oak. One oak tree has a trunk that measures more than five feet in diameter. Also on the lot are a recent pool and a recent dock.

Belle Point, constructed ca. 1932, is a large Colonial Revival residence that faces south onto the Wye River. The house consists of a main block flanked by dependencies. A 1993 addition extends east from the east dependency.² An enclosed walkway extends north from the east dependency and connects to a freestanding garage. Belle Point is constructed of whitewashed, 6-course common bond brick and has a compound, asphalt-shingle gable roof with shallow eaves and narrow vergeboards. There are massive, brick corbelled chimneys on the west wall of the main block, the north wall of the east dependency, and the south wall of the garage. Most of the windows are wood 8/8 sash with paneled shutters. There are a few 6/6 and 16/16 windows.

The main block is 2 1/2 stories tall and 4 bays wide with three gabled dormers on the south slope of its roof. Main entry is in the east bay of the north elevation, facing the driveway. The entry consists of a 6-panel door with 3-light sidelights and a surround of fluted pilasters and a flat pediment. A portico with a balcony on the second story shelters the entry. A 1-story, wood-frame porch with recent screening stretches across the south elevation of the main block. The porch has four segmental arch bays and a hipped roof.

The 1 1/2-story, 2-bay west dependency has an entry vestibule on its west wall and a recent bay window on its south elevation. The 2-story, 2-bay east dependency extends to the north via a 1 1/2-story cross-gable wing that connects to a 1-story walkway. The walkway is enclosed in brick and has round-arch openings with French doors.³ Connecting to the north end of the walkway is the 1 1/2-story, 2-bay garage. The garage has gabled wall dormers on its south wall and garage bays on its north wall.

The interior of Belle Point has several interesting features. Within the basement crawl space is a remnant of a fieldstone foundation wall from a previous building on the site. Also visible in the basement are concrete and steel mesh subfloors and a lead-encased furnace room.⁴ The most interesting feature, however, is a painted mural in the second story lounge over the garage. The unsigned, early 1930s mural, entitled "Belle Point on the Wye," depicts the entire point that is now Belle Point Farms and shows the house, guest house, and barn as well as a boat house that has been demolished. The mural also depicts a fox hunt, sailing, fishing, golf, and other recreational activities. Geographical features on the mural are named for cocktails and include Bacardi Bay, Dry Martini Beach, Old Fashioned Cove, Side Car Flats, and Gin Fizz Creek.⁵

¹ The barn and two outbuildings now stand on separate tax parcels that are under separate ownership.

² Photographs from 1945 show a 1-story porch at the location of this addition.

³ Photographs from 1945 show the walkway open.

⁴ Owners of the property have passed down the story that Belle Point's builder, T. Harris Smith, was afraid of house fires.

⁵ The mural was presumably painted right after Prohibition was lifted in 1933.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-563

Belle Point
Continuation Sheet

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West of the main house at Belle Point stands the guest house. The 1 1/2-story, 3-bay guest house also faces south and has a brick foundation, wood weatherboard with cornerboards, and an asphalt-shingle gable roof with shallow eaves and narrow vergeboards. There are two gabled dormers on the south slope of the roof and three on the north. Main entry is in the center bay of the south elevation and consists of a small projecting entry vestibule with a paneled door. The 1/1 vinyl windows are recent. There is a massive central brick chimney as well as a smaller brick chimney against the north wall. There are 1-story shed additions on the west and north elevations; the addition on the north leads to a small greenhouse.

Three outbuildings formerly associated with Belle Point stand on separate tax parcels that are under different ownership and therefore were not available for close inspection during this survey. Northwest of the main house stands a pair of 1-story, wood-frame, shingled outbuildings, one of which appears to have been a stable. Northeast of the main house stands the wood-frame, gambrel roof barn that has been converted to a private residence.

8. Significance

Inventory No. QA-563

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

Specific dates ca. 1932 (construction) **Architect/Builder** unknown

Construction dates ca. 1932

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

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 projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Belle Point is a large Colonial Revival house that was constructed on the west bank of the Wye River ca. 1932 by Chicagoan T. Harris Smith. Belle Point reflects the trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore during the 1920s and 1930s. The house was completed about the time Prohibition was lifted in 1933 and features an unsigned mural, entitled "Belle Point on the Wye," that depicts recreation activities and geographic features named for cocktails.

RESOURCE HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Belle Point was constructed ca. 1932 by T. Harris Smith, a Chicagoan who served on the Board of Trustees of Washington College (Chestertown) during the early 1940s.⁶ Smith remained at Belle Point until 1943, when he sold it to Ralph E. Dutcher. Dutcher, a dirt-moving contractor from Baltimore City, combined Belle Point and six other farms along the Wye River into an Aberdeen-Angus cattle ranch known as "Wye River Farms."⁷ Belle Point has been through several owners since Dutcher's widow sold it in 1959, and its parcel has been reduced each time.

Belle Point reflects the trend of wealthy non-residents establishing second homes on the Eastern Shore during the 1920s and 1930s. Robert Brugger documented this trend as follows:

For many years, people of outside wealth had been buying up old estates along the Chesapeake and its Eastern Shore rivers as country homes or hunting retreats. In the summer of 1925, the *Queenstown News* reported Centreville "aroused" at word that Wintora, an old home on Corsica Neck, had gone to the wife of a du Pont and General Motors millionaire; having paid thirty-five thousand dollars for the house and its 655 acres, she planned to make the place "a thoroughly modern country estate." Such purchases formed a pattern in the 1930s, when more than a few Eastern Shore farmers went bankrupt. A New York advertising man bought almost four miles of waterfront property and commuted to Manhattan using a seaplane. Parke Sedley, a St. Louis carburetor magnate, bought Shipping Creek Farm on Kent Island to go with his Colorado ranch. The president of Pittsburgh Steel purchased Marengo on the Miles River in Talbot County, while his counterpart at Steuben Glass became owner of Wye Plantation.⁸

Acquisition by non-residents resulted in a shift in land use from agriculture to recreation. Although some new property owners operated farms as hobbies, they were not dependent on agriculture as a sole source of income. On the mural at Belle Point, most of

⁶ Smith's address is listed in the 1932 deed as 231 South La Salle Street in Chicago. Census research for 1930 turned up no definitive match. The 1940-1941 Maryland Manual lists Smith as a Trustee of Washington College with a term ending in 1945. Washington College does not have biographies of its Trustees.

⁷ Barton, William M. Wye River Farms, Queenstown, Maryland. *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*. Volume 27 (September 1945). 32-33, 129.

⁸ Brugger, Robert J. Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980, 521-522.

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Belle Point
Continuation Sheet

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the land is shown as the site of recreational activities such as fox hunting, golf, and sailing. A single rye field is the only indication of agricultural use.

Assuming that construction began soon after T. Harris Smith acquired the land in April 1932, Belle Point was probably completed about the time Prohibition was lifted in December 1933. The mural in the main house depicts the property as a recreational site, and the cocktail names on the mural indicate one of the primary recreational activities.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. QA-563

- Barton, William M. Wye River Farms, Queenstown, Maryland. *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*. Volume 27 (September 1945). 32-33, 129.
- Brugger, Robert J. Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.
- Queen Anne's County Circuit Court. Land Records. ww2.mdlandrec.net.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 5.01 acres
Acreage of historical setting 152 acres
Quadrangle name Queenstown Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary for Belle Point follows that of Queen Anne's County Tax Map 66, Parcel 86. The boundary encompasses 5.01 acres and includes the house and guest house. This is the only land still associated with Belle Point; the rest of the 152-acre tract, including the land on which the three remaining outbuildings stand, has been subdivided and is under separate ownership.

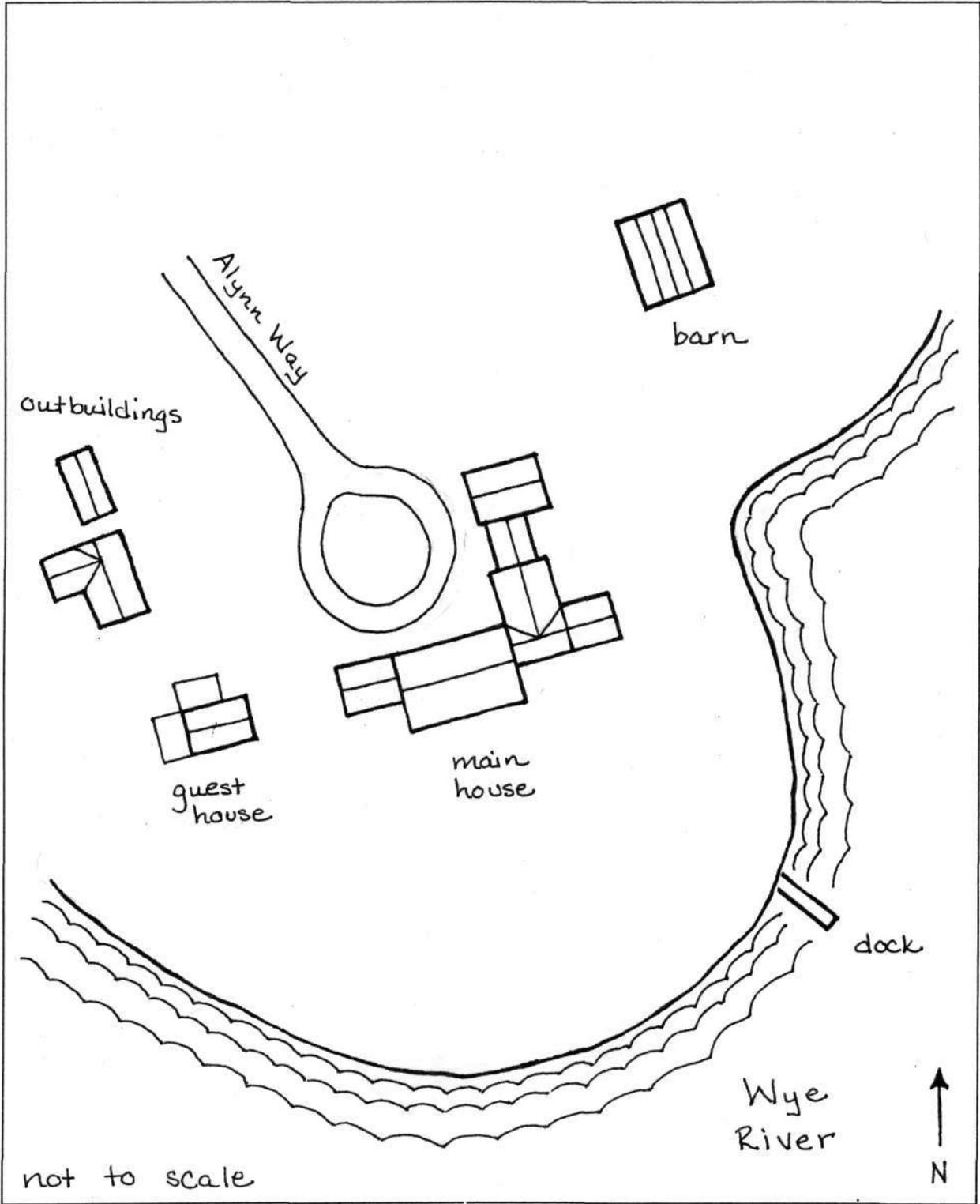
11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Julie Darsie		
organization	Betty Bird & Associates LLC	date	October 2005
street & number	2607 24 th Street, NW, Suite 3	telephone	(202) 588-9033
city or town	Washington, District of Columbia	state	N/A

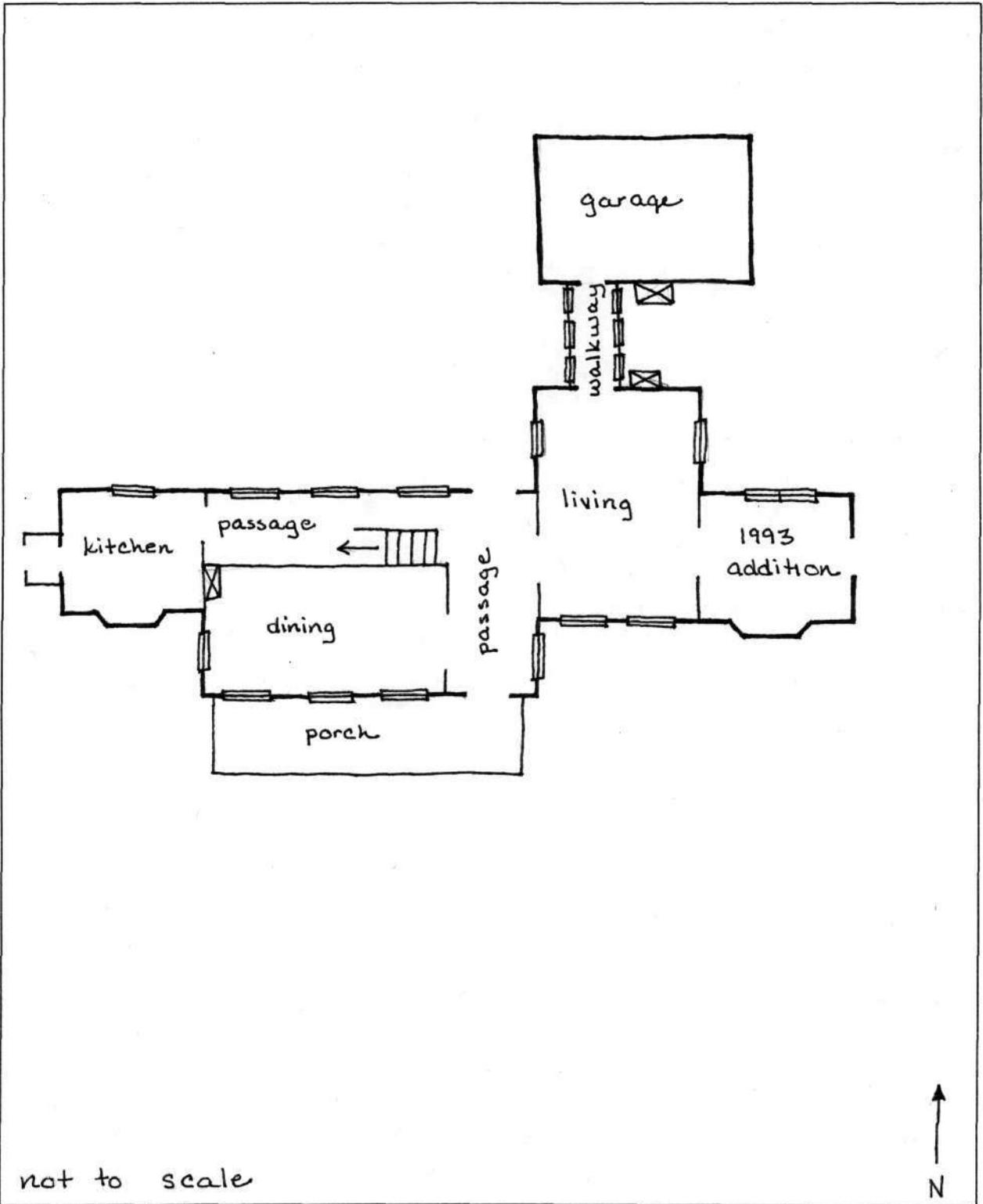
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

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 21032-2023
410-514-7600



Site Plan
QA-563
Belle Point
Queenstown Vicinity, Queen Anne's County, Maryland



Floor Plan
QA-563
Belle Point
Queenstown Vicinity, Queen Anne's County, Maryland



Mural in lounge over garage
QA-563
Belle Point
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County

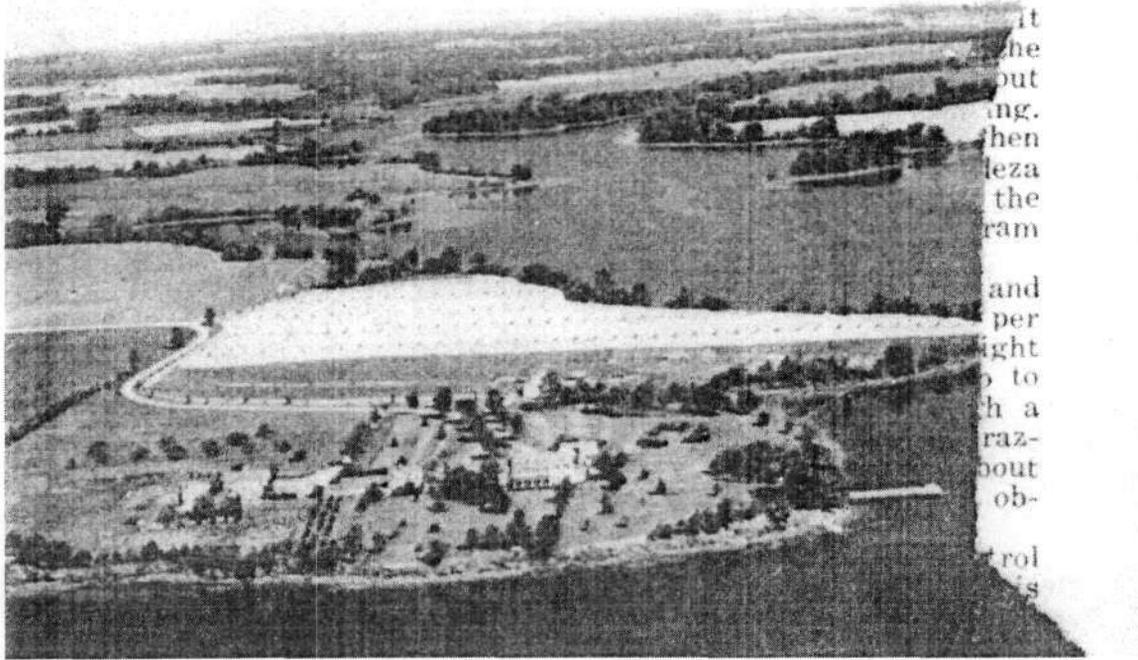


Remnant of stone foundation wall in basement

QA-563

Belle Point

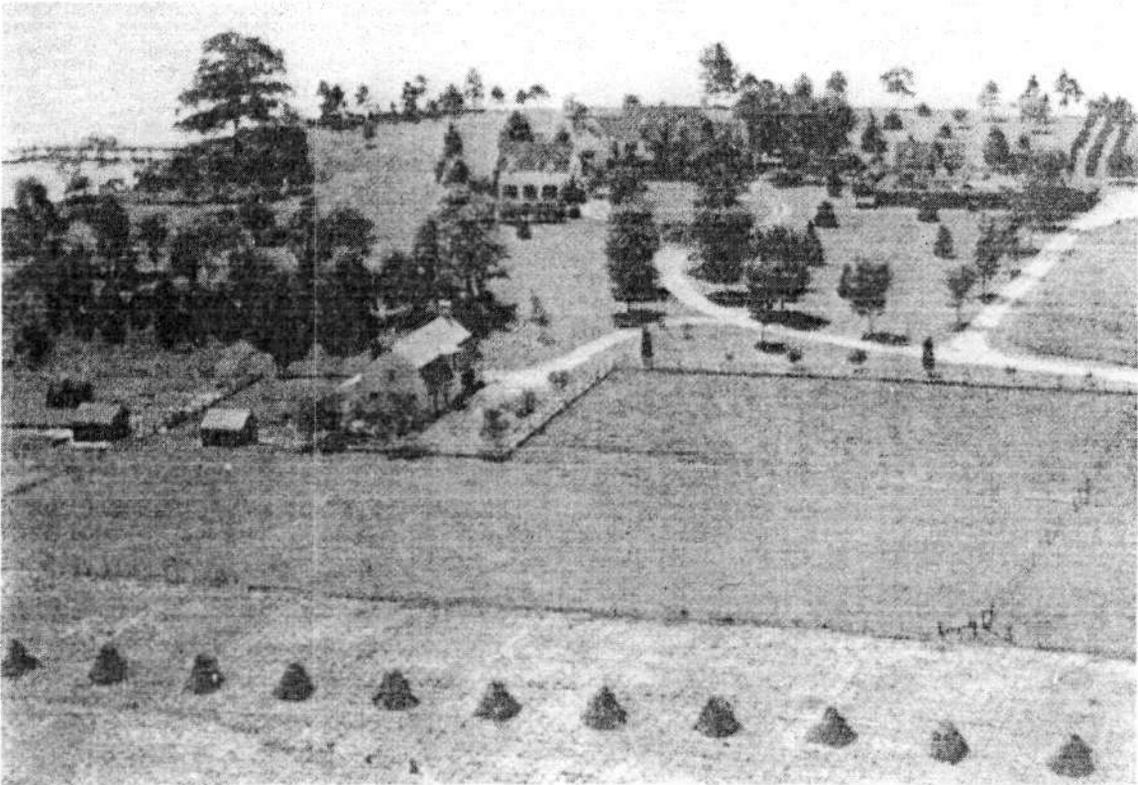
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County



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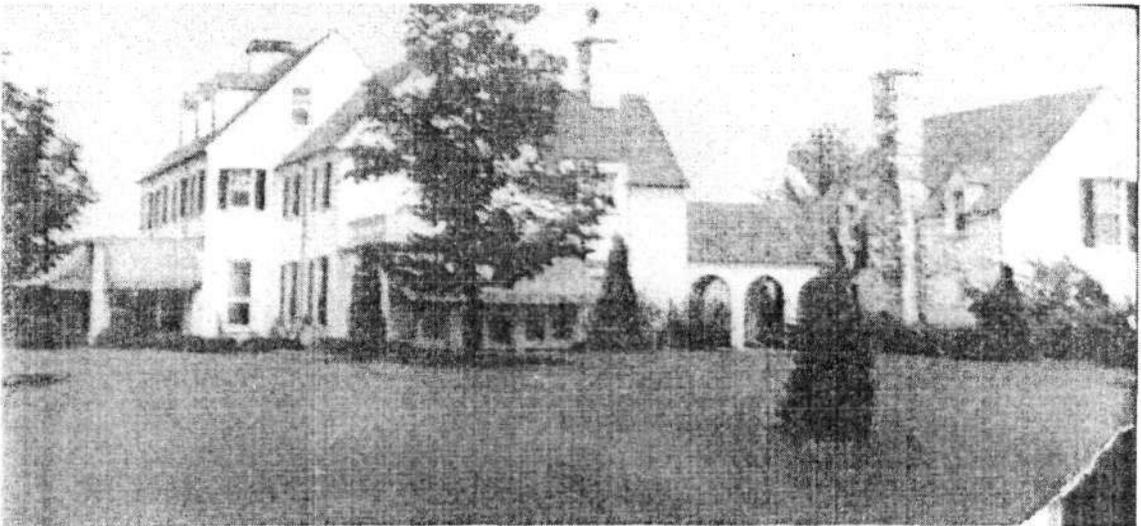
Historic Photographs (1945)

QA-563

Belle Point

Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County

Source: *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*, September 1945



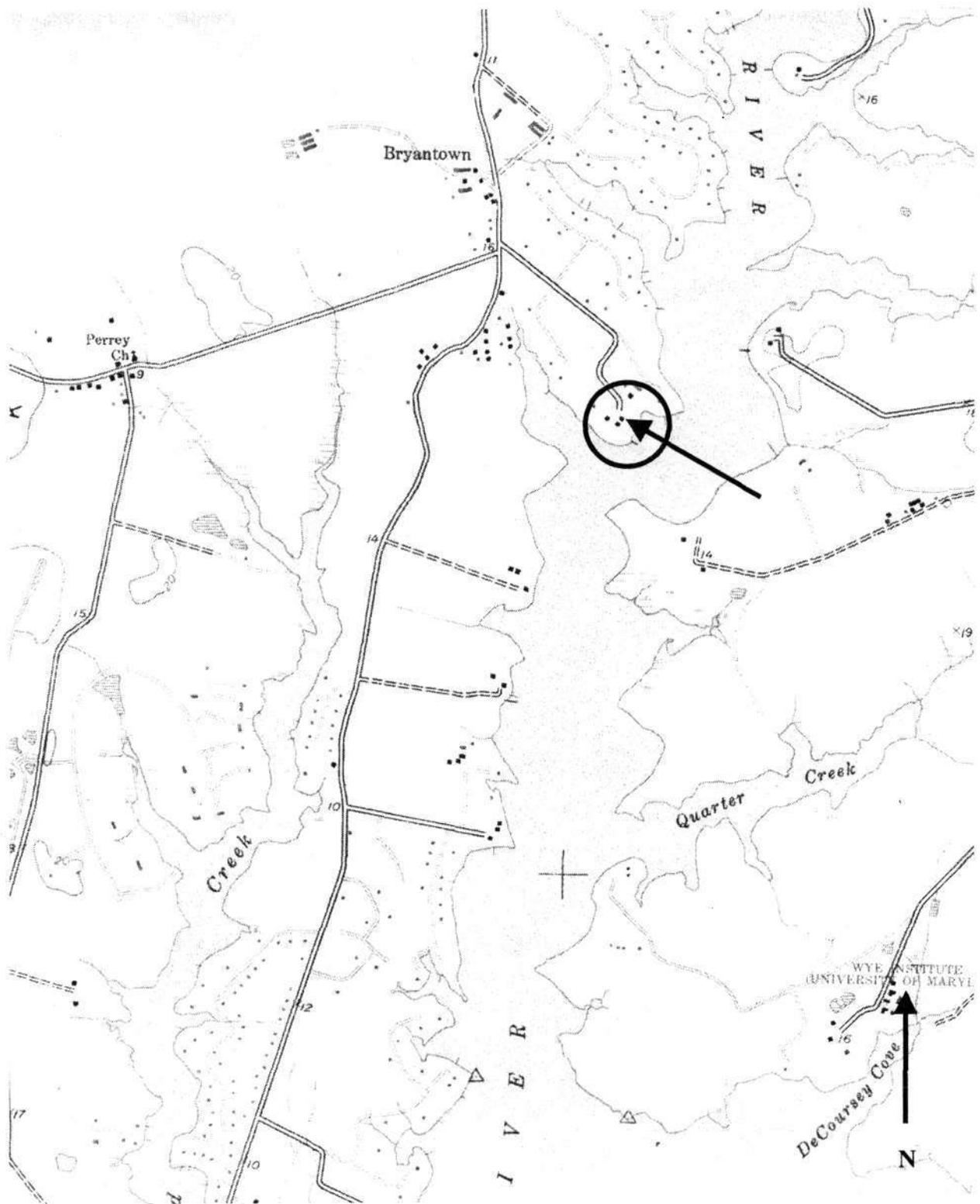
Historic Photographs (1945)

QA-563

Belle Point

Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County

Source: *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*, September 1945



QA-563
Belle Point
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County
Queenstown, Maryland Quadrangle (1:24,000)



QA-563

Belle Point

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Main house view from SW.

1 of 9



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Belle Point

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Main house, view from SE

of a



QA-563

Belle Point

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Main house, view from NW.

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0A-563

Belle Point

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Brod & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Main house, view from east showing 1993 addition, garage
on right

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QA-563

Belle Point

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Guest house, view from south

S of 9



QA-563

Belle Point

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Guest house. View from NW.

6 of 9



QA - 563

Belle Point

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Barn on adjacent parcel. View from SW.

7 of 9



QA - 503

Belle Point

Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird & Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Outbuildings on adjacent parcel. View from NE

8 of 9



QA-563

Belle Point

Queen Annes County, Maryland

Julie Darsie for Betty Bird Associates

August 2005

MD SHPO

Outbuildings on adjacent parcel, view from SE.

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