

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	<b>Pennsylvania</b>
COUNTY:	<b>Bucks</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Nicholas Biddle Estate**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Andalusia**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Bensalem Township**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE: COUNTY: **Bucks** CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
			Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Mr. Charles J. Biddle**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1100 Philadelphia National Bank Bldg., Broad & Chestnut Sts.**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Philadelphia**

STATE:  
**Pennsylvania**

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

Ownership of 1000 W. ... 11. ...

P.M.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"Andalusia" lies on the Delaware River in Bucks County, about sixteen miles north of Philadelphia. The beautiful grounds and handsome residence jointly attest to the taste, culture, and manifold interests of Biddle.

The main house consists of the original structure and additions erected by the banker. John Craig, a Philadelphia merchant, purchased the land at "Andalusia" in 1794 and then erected the north section of the present house. His wife still retains the honor of having designed the north front, an outstanding example of the Regency style in the United States. The front's semioctagonal east and west wings stir especial admiration for Mrs. Craig's design.

Biddle's association with "Andalusia" began with his marriage to Jane Craig on October 4, 1811. Ten years later he made the house his permanent residence and in the early 1830's he made a number of additions to it.

Employing Thomas U. Walter, Biddle added a south wing to the Craig house in 1834. The two men produced a handsome projection that reflected Biddle's long affection for classical Greece. The new wing resembled a Greek temple, its six well proportioned Doric columns in front looking toward the Delaware River. Although adding a new style to the house, the Biddle wing, facing in the opposite direction from the front, eliminated any conflict in architectural mode. Today, trees hide the wings of the front section and make the Biddle wing appear even more an individual entity.

The interior of the house has not been changed from Biddle's day. Furthermore, the furniture and furnishings also, for the most part, date from Biddle's era. All of the first floor rooms reflect elegance and taste. Of especial interest is the library. This room was added in 1834 by Biddle and still contains its original bookcases and much of his library. Paintings of the Biddle family throughout the ground floor also contribute to the presence of the most famous of the Biddles.

There are a number of outbuildings of interest at "Andalusia." Biddle's gaming house stands near the bank of the river. The first floor was the billiard room and the second floor was the card room. Up the river from it is another small building. It was Mrs. Biddle's retreat. In back of the residence are the remains of Biddle's greenhouses. Only their backwalls now stand, but they attest to Biddle's great interest in horticulture.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |                                       |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As President of the Second Bank of the United States between 1823 and 1836, Nicholas Biddle clashed with President Andrew Jackson in an epochal political-economic struggle. Biddle's defeat assured the triumph of Jacksonian democracy, and his humiliation remains a major event in American history.

Biddle's background and early career did little to prepare him, in a technical sense, for the presidency of the Second Bank. Born in Philadelphia on January 8, 1786, to parents of old Quaker stock and of social position, he was named after his father's brother, a naval hero of the American Revolution. Biddle entered the University of Pennsylvania when only ten and was ready for graduation when thirteen. The University thought him too young to be graduated, so he did not receive a degree. Present-day Princeton University, then known as the College of New Jersey, did not demur at Biddle's youth, and accepted him as a student in 1799. At his graduation in 1801, he spoke as the valedictorian.

About three years after leaving the College of New Jersey, Biddle spent several years abroad. He sailed for Europe in October 1804 after his appointment as the private secretary to America's minister to France. Biddle was now about five-foot-seven inches tall, had chestnut eyes and hair, and a fair complexion and handsome visage. A keen intelligence completed a winning personality. After reaching Paris, he quickly became very useful to Minister John Armstrong and handled many negotiations for him. The following year saw Biddle begin his extensive travels, he visited Switzerland and southern France in 1805. Biddle in 1806 continued his travels, traversing the ancient roads of Italy, Sicily and Greece, and visiting the classical ruins of those areas. The first American to tour the home of the ancient Greeks, Biddle measured temples and transcribed inscriptions. After his return from Greece, he became the secretary of the legation in London, which position he filled until July 1807, when he returned to America.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

D.A.B.; Harold D. Eberlein and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbard, Portrait of a Colonial City, Philadelphia, 1670-1838 (Philadelphia, 1939); Harold Eberlein and Horace M. Lippincott, The Colonial Homes of Philadelphia and Its Neighbourhood (Philadelphia, 1912); Thomas Payne Govan, Nicholas Biddle, Nationalist and Public Banker, 1786-1844, (Chicago, 1959); Bray Hammond, Banks and Politics in America, (Princeton, New Jersey, 1957); Reginald C. McGrane, The Correspondence of Nicholas Biddle (Boston, 1909); Ross M. Robertson, History of the American Economy (New York, 1955); Walter B. Smith, Economic Aspects of the Second Bank of the United States, (Cambridge, Mass., 1953).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **225**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: **S.S. Bradford** (Revised boundary 1973)

ORGANIZATION **Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER: **1100 L Street NW**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**      **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <b>10-31-73</b></p>
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS

*APR 10 1973*

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	Pennsylvania	
COUNTY	Bucks	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
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Andalusia, Nicholas  
Biddle Estate

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

8. Significance

(Continued)

page 1

Once back in Philadelphia, Biddle seemed destined for a combined literary and political career. He completed his legal studies and was admitted to the bar on December 11, 1809. In the following year he began writing his account of the Lewis and Clark expedition, which he completed in 1812. About two years later the work, History of the Expedition of Captains Lewis and Clark, appeared in print. It is still an outstanding history of that amazing expedition. By the time the book had appeared, Biddle had been editor of the Port Folio, America's leading literary periodical, for almost two years. A rising political career, however, induced him to leave the Port Folio. Having served a term in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1810-11, Biddle won a seat in the state senate in 1814. There he interested himself in many matters and served most capably until he gave up his seat in 1817. He subsequently ran for the Federal Congress, but was twice defeated.

Defeat at the polls did not demolish Biddle's political hopes. When he began his association with the Second Bank, the ambitious Biddle regarded his position, in part, as a move toward higher office. In January 1819, he became one of the five governmental directors of the bank. Ill-equipped to perform his duties, he studied banking assiduously and soon exhibited an amazing knowledge of financial theory and practice. And on January 6, 1823, he was elected president of the Second Bank of the United States.

Biddle, as the chief officer of the bank, succeeded as a banker but failed as a politician. His shrewd leadership had transformed the once-shaky institution by 1830. An indefatigable worker, Biddle dominated his bank and successfully applied the policies he thought best. Thus, the Second Bank came to control state banks, regulate currency, and protect the commercial operations of the Nation. By the end of 1829, both Biddle's and the bank's position appeared secure, almost impregnable.

But success frequently spawns danger. As the Second Bank became dominant, enemies arose. The numerous state banks adhorred the stringent control of the Philadelphia institution. New York City, hoping to supplant Philadelphia as the Nation's financial center, disliked Biddle's accomplishment. Most important, a political phenomenon was occurring. The eastern seaboard's control of politics had been broken by Jackson's election in 1828 and the victors intended to consolidate their triumph. That meant the extension of both financial and political democracy, which implied the death of the Second Bank.

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Andalusia, Nicholas  
Biddle Estate

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(Number all entries)

8. Significance

(Continued)

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The contest that erupted between the pro and anti-bank factions centered about the renewal of the institution's 1816-charter. Biddle, at the suggestion of Henry Clay, interjected the charter into the presidential campaign of 1832. Legislation for the bank's continuation was approved by Congress before the election, but Jackson vetoed the bill. His vigorous veto message, according to Biddle, had "...all the fury of a chained panther biting the bars of his cage."<sup>1</sup> Despite Biddle's indignation, Jackson won the election. The bank appeared to be doomed.

Not to Biddle, though. Displaying his namesake's courage and his own foolhardiness, Biddle engaged in a campaign to force Jackson to recharter the bank. The Philadelphian demanded that state banks redeem their notes in specie, but most of those institutions could not and many failed. That did nothing to increase Biddle's popularity among a very vocal and politically influential group. Biddle, by that and similar acts, appeared to substantiate Jackson's argument about the dangers inherent in a strong central bank. Furthermore, he failed to cause Jackson to reverse his decision. The bank's charter expired on March 1, 1836.

Biddle, following the expiration of the charter, caused the bank to be reorganized as the Bank of the United States of Pennsylvania. He remained with the new institution until March 1839.

Following the end of his banking career, Biddle retired to "Andalusia." There he occupied himself with social and intellectual pursuits until his death on February 27, 1844.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Thomas P. Govan, Nicholas Biddle, Nationalist and Public Banker, 1786-1844 (Chicago, 1959), 202-03.

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE <b>Pennsylvania</b>	
COUNTY <b>Bucks</b>	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

*(Number all entries)*

Beginning at Delaware River at southern terminus of Station Avenue; continuing along western side of Station Avenue to State Road; continuing along southwest side of State Road in a northwesterly direction to Gravel Pike; continuing on Gravel Pike in a northwesterly direction to right-of-way of Penn Central Railroad; continuing southwesterly along Penn Central right-of-way to Kings Lane; continuing southeasterly along east side of Kings Lane to its terminus and then continuing in a straight line to the Delaware River; continuing along west bank of Delaware River to beginning point.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

Because of irregularity of property — 6 points of longitude and latitude are identified:

1.  $40^{\circ} 3' 54''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 59''$  long

2.  $40^{\circ} 41' 10''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 26''$  long

3.  $40^{\circ} 4' 4''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 22''$  long

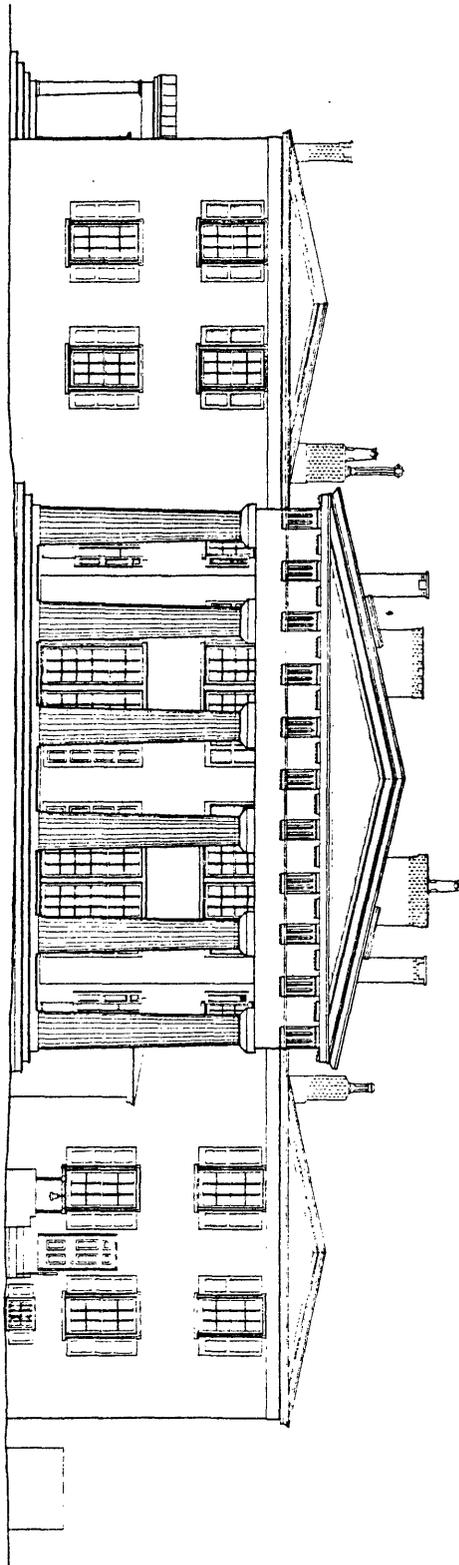
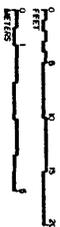
4.  $40^{\circ} 4' 4''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 5''$  long

5.  $40^{\circ} 3' 52''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 1''$  long

6.  $40^{\circ} 3' 36''$  lat  
 $74^{\circ} 57' 48''$  long

HABS  
PA,  
9-ANDA,  
1-

(Rear)  
SOUTH ELEVATION  
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



MARTIN J. ROSENBLUM, DEL. 1974  
ANDALUSIA PROJECT 874  
OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
UNIVERSITY CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

STATE ROAD

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE  
**'ANDALUSIA' - THE BIG HOUSE**  
1.5 MILES NORTH OF GRANT AVE  
ANDALUSIA  
BUCKS COUNTY

PENNSYLVANIA

PA  
8248

HISTORIC AMERICAN  
BUILDINGS SURVEY  
SHEET 7 OF 14 OF 25 SHEETS

From Prints & Photographs Div., Library of Congress

↳ PA 1248

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 5,6,7 Page 1

Andalusia (Added Information - Pen Ryn)

Bucks County, PA

## 5. Classification

Pen Ryn is privately owned. It fits under the classification of "building(s)" and contains two Contributing buildings, two Contributing structures and no Non contributing resources.

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

### Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC/Federal  
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone  
walls stucco  
roof slate  
other \_\_\_\_\_

## Narrative Description

The Pen Ryn estate is located within the Andalusia National Historic Landmark. The property included within the Andalusia NHL property consists of four traditionally separate properties which were joined in the twentieth century by the Biddle family. The main portion of the NHL property is the estate traditionally known as Andalusia.

The Pen Ryn property consists of four contributing resources; a large, high style, Federal house with an associated swimming pool and garden wall and a large carriage house. Pen Ryn today represents one of Bucks County's classic Federal style houses. Overall, the house has a Palladian, three part appearance. It consists of a central, stuccoed brick, main block, with hyphens to wings on both ends. The main block is five bays wide and two rooms deep. It is almost three full stories high with a virtually flat roof. The main facade faces easterly to the Delaware River. On the facade, windows are aligned horizontally and vertically in symmetrical rows. There are projecting belt courses above the first and second story windows and below the third story windows. Above the third story windows is a denticulated cornice. There is an ornate entranceway in the central bay. The entranceway consists of double doors surmounted by a with semi-circular fanlight; all of which is embellished by a pedimented door surround with fluted pilasters with lozenge capitals. The central bay of the second floor has a classic Palladian window with ornate pilasters supported by carved consoles. Currently, the third floor has five 3/3 sash windows. Late nineteenth century (1893) and early twentieth century photographs indicate that

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Section number     7     Page 2

Andalusia (Added Information - Pen Ryn)

Bucks County, PA

Narrative Description (continued)

the central window was altered in the twentieth century; and there was a semi-circular window in the central bay of the third floor. In 1893 this window consisted of two quarter round windows and in 1912 a single semi-circular unit. Other historic photographs indicate that through different periods of its existence the house had a cornice line balustrade in the early twentieth century.

The main block of the house has undergone a number of changes, beginning in the late eighteenth century. The Federal period appearance is actually an alteration to an older structure. Historic documentation, supported by evidence in the basement indicates that the original building was five bays wide, but only one room deep. The house underwent several major periods of renovation after its Federal make-over. In circa 1900, a rear two story wing was added. During this period a rear, four story, hip roof tower was also constructed. In 1909 a wing was added to the south end of the building. This wing was originally built as a library with no windows and a glass ceiling. In circa 1920 a complimentary wing was added to the north end giving the house a Neo-Palladian symmetry and a Colonial Revival appearance. This northerly wing became the new library. At that time the south wing was altered from a library into a drawing room. Windows were installed and the glass roof was covered over. The owner at this time, Mrs. Seton Henry, had one story and two story extensions constructed to the rear of the house as well. She also ordered the construction of the garden wall and the installation of a swimming pool.<sup>1</sup>

In 1995, in order to facilitate the restoration and rehabilitation of the main house, a large, one story, masonry, banquet facility was added to the rear elevation along side the rear wing. It was designed to be compatible with the historic portions of the building. A one story addition was constructed along the northerly side of the circa 1920 two story, rear section as well.

The building's use as a school beginning in the mid 1940s resulted in the construction of a number of new walls and other alterations. These have been removed and the original eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century elements have been uncovered or replaced. Many of the decorative elements including wainscoting, interior doors and the original front doors were found in the carriage house and replaced in their original locations. The original hand laid mosaic floor in the southerly wing was re-exposed and restored. Decorative plaster in both wings was repaired.

The primary interior alteration in the main section of the house that was made as part of the building's current use as a banquet facility was the removal of the center hall partitions in the front portion of the main block. At the same time, a small section of the second floor was

<sup>1</sup> Investigation of the records at the Athenaeum in Philadelphia (including the database used for the preparation of the *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects*) as well as the review of contemporary newspapers during the period do not provide any information as to the names of the architects of the various alterations and additions.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Andalusia (Added Information - Pen Ryn)

Bucks County, PA

### Narrative Description (continued)

removed and a small balcony created to give a view of the main first floor space from the second floor. As part of the upgraded banquet kitchen, several walls were removed in the rear wing which had been previously transformed into a kitchen and living quarters for a caretaker in the 1940s. On the second floor, what had been made into separate boys and girls restrooms was altered into three rest rooms (one for handicapped individuals). Vacant storage space was converted into office space and a new rear stairway was constructed.

The carriage house was constructed in circa 1905. It is a stuccoed masonry building with a hip on hip roof surmounted by a large octagonal cupola. The lower portion of the bottom hip is flared out to present a small kick. There are round arched wall dormers on each facade. The elevation facing the mansion is of tri-partite design separated by wide pilasters. Two thirds of the way up the walls is a wide belt course. It highlighted by a wide, elliptical topped entranceway in the central bay. The outer bays project out slightly from the central bay and are surmounted by hip roofs. There is a round arched wall dormer in the central bay with a small wrought iron balcony. The outer bays have simple, large circular windows.

The traditional Andalusia property contains the Andalusia Mansion and a number of other residences and ancillary resources. These are the Andalusia Mansion which is a Doric high style Greek Revival pillared mansion, built of brick and stone, roughcast, 55' wide and 73' deep, with two wings extending 40' on either side; the Biddle Cottage; a High style Victorian Gothic house with cross gables; the Grotto, a Victorian Gothic "rustic ruin"; a one story masonry engine house along the river; a two story, temple-form billiard house at the river; a one story privy behind the main house and adjoining laundry building; a large stable building with a water tower adjoining graperies; and a one story, hip roof tenant house. There are a number of other Andalusia staff housing and farm buildings on the main property. These include a Gothic cottage with two cross gables; a two and a half story, frame residence called the Wharf Cottage which was moved from the river front; a two and a half story, frame, tenant house under rehabilitation; a frame/stone barn with conical piers, corn crib, and stone spring house.

To the south of the Andalusia farm is another river front mansion with accessory buildings. Chelwood is a circa 1850 stone house, two and three quarter stories tall, five bays wide, two piles deep. The river facade has a central projecting pavilion with gambrel roof. There is a rear two and a half story wing with a unique rounded corner. There are a one story, gable roof outbuilding with decorative barge board and stable on the property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Andalusia (Added Information - Pen Ryn)

Bucks County, PA

### Statement of Significance

Pen Ryn is locally significant under criterion C in the category of architecture as a combination of high style Federal and Colonial Revival architecture. Pen Ryn is a large river front mansion which was occupied by wealthy owners for much of its history. Therefore, the building has undergone a number of changes since the mid eighteenth century. These changes reflected changes of life styles during the years. While undergoing upgrading and additions for three centuries, the building has remained an important landmark along the Delaware River front. Its period of significance is 1744-1946. Pen Ryn is representative of a small, but locally significant, distinguished group of large mansions along the Delaware River. These include four houses located within the boundaries of the Andalusia National Historic Landmark (but not noted in the original Landmark designation) as well as several others along the river in Bensalem Township.

Pen Ryn, was originally the seat of the Bickley family. It is located on the Delaware River next to "Andalusia" the Biddle family estate. In the twentieth century, this property was acquired by the Biddle family; and although not described in the Andalusia National Historic Landmark nomination, is included within the boundaries of that Landmark designation. Abraham Bickley, the originator of the family in Pennsylvania, was a prosperous Philadelphia shipping merchant and prominent political figure.

Samuel Bickley is credited as being the man who had the oldest part of Pen Ryn (then referred to as Pen Rhyn, it was also referred to as Penrin, Penn Rhyn and Penrynn) constructed for a country seat in 1744.<sup>2</sup> In 1793, his son Abraham Bickley III enlarged the house by adding what is now the front portion, the depth of a room, so that the old front doorway is now well back in the hall. Later, he added back buildings. The house, as Mr. Bickley left it, was similar in general plan and character to the majority of the country houses of that period in the neighborhood.<sup>3</sup> In 1939, it was noted that "About forty years ago, however, it was much altered and its eighteenth-century character obliterated. Then, in recent times, the present owners, while making further additions, also carried out praiseworthy restorations. With the removal of anomalous features and details, Pen Rhyn, once more presents a consistent aspect; it is obviously a

<sup>2</sup> The source of this information was Robert Wharton Bickley who contributed an article to the book The Bristol Pike in 1893. Other sources suggest that Abraham Bickley III built Pen Ryn on a tract of land then known as "Belle Voir" for his intended bride Mary Shewell. Abraham and Mary were married on September 28, 1758. It was Abraham Bickley III who changed the name from "Belle Voir" to Pen Ryn - "Penrin" having been the birthplace of one of his ancestors in England.

<sup>3</sup> Other sources indicate that Abraham Bickley III died in 1782 and the building was enlarged by his widow and children. Miniature portrait of him by Benjamin West (his brother-in-law) is "Abraham Bickley III Born 1731 Died Jan. 29, 1782 Etat 51 Years." Frick Art Reference Library, New York.

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Andalusia (Added Information - Pen Ryn)

Bucks County, PA

Statement of Significance

house that has experienced successive episodes of growth, but the result is both interesting and harmonious."<sup>4</sup>

In order to perpetuate the Bickley name, Isaac Bickley, the last surviving heir of Abraham Bickley III convinced a distant relative Lloyd Wharton to assume the surname Bickley. In 1843, he officially had his name changed to Lloyd Wharton Bickley. After Isaac Bickley's death, the property was given to his sisters Hannah and Elizabeth, and then at their death, to Lloyd Wharton Bickley.

Lloyd Wharton Bickley died owning the property. His wife Margaret Ann Howell died a year later, and the estate went to their four sons, Lloyd W. Bickley, Abraham W. Bickley, Robert W. Bickley, and Howell W. Bickley. The sons had the property seized by the sheriff. On August 20, 1878, J. D. K. Reinhart, High Sheriff of Bucks County, advertised the property for sale in local newspapers. At that time the house was described as a three story brick mansion house, having a two story brick rear addition, cellar underneath, with a large porch in front of house, and a rear porch, and the whole house having nineteen rooms. There were also a stone stable, carriage house, corn crib, and club room belonging to the mansion. The property also had a tenant farm.<sup>5</sup> On September 7, 1878 the sheriff sold Pen Ryn. Two months later, Lloyd Wharton Bickley II bought back the mansion and some of the surrounding land. During this period of time the property was leased to the Philadelphia Gun Club for a club house and shooting range. A photograph of Pen Ryn when occupied by the Philadelphia Gun Club shows a Victorian period, bracketed, porch and a semi-circular, central, window on the third floor.

Lloyd Wharton Bickley II died in 1890 and left the property to his wife Hannah. On July 2, 1890 she sold it to Lucy Wharton Drexel, a first cousin of her late husband. Lucy Wharton Drexel was married to Joseph W. Drexel, wealthy philanthropist and member of the well known banking firm of Drexel and Company of New York and Philadelphia. She bought a number of surrounding tracts of land that had been separated from the estate in the sheriff's sale of 1878.

Lucy Wharton Drexel made extensive renovations to the house and grounds. She added the south wing in circa 1900. In her time this was a windowless addition with a glass roof. Around 1905, the old barn adjacent to the house burned down and the current carriage house was constructed to replace it.

A 1912 photograph when Pen Ryn was the home of Lucy Wharton Drexel shows a new, more elaborate porch, a string course between the second and third floor windows, and a cornice line balustrade. The two-part semi-circular, central window on the third floor was replaced by a single semi-circular window.

Lucy Wharton Drexel died on January 25, 1912 and the property descended to her youngest daughter Josephine. Josephine lived in New York with her husband Seton Henry and turned Pen

<sup>4</sup> Harold Donaldson Eberlein and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbert. *Portrait of a Colonial City* J. B. Lippincott Company, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> *The Doylestown Democrat*. August 20, 1878.

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Ryn into their summer residence. They renovated the house, including removing the front porch, in circa 1920. At this time the original south wing was altered. They installed windows, covered over the glass roof, and converted it from a library into a drawing room. The north wing, which they added at this same time, now became their library.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Seton Henry also had the formal garden walls constructed.

Within twenty five years, the property became vacant and began to deteriorate. In a letter dated May 10, 1945 Mrs. Henry wrote "Ever since the beginning of the war, vandals have broken into Pen Ryn smashing everything."<sup>7</sup> On May 2, 1945, Pen Ryn was sold to Charles Biddle, the owner of the adjoining Andalusia property. Charles Biddle offered the house and surrounding house to the All Saints Episcopal School. He stipulated that the property should always be used as a school; otherwise it would revert to him or his family. In 1946, the school opened. It continued until 1963. After it closed, Pen Ryn reverted to Charles Biddle's son James Biddle. The house was vacated and boarded up. In September 1966, the building was again opened as a school under the auspices of the Christ Episcopal Church of Eddington. Twenty years later, the school moved out and the property was again left vacant. In 1988, James Biddle sold the property. By 1993, when purchased by its current owners, the building had again been vandalized. Since that time the building has been renovated.

Pen Ryn fits into the context of what was Bucks County's "Gold Coast" along the Delaware River. Through much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Delaware river front between Philadelphia and Bristol was the traditional location for grand mansions and country seats for many of Philadelphia's wealthy families. Beginning with the Foerderer estate, "Glen Ford" just across the Poquessing Creek in Philadelphia county, these estates included "The Ackley Place at Eddington" (destroyed) the duPont family's "Bellespoir" (destroyed), manufacturing chemist Thomas Harrison's "Windemere" (destroyed), Edward Duffield's "Edgewood", Dr. Rousseau's "Clock House" (destroyed), Dr. Charles King's "Devon", Secretary of the Navy [under President Grant] Adolph Borie's "The Dell", Dr. George Fox's two matching houses "Chestnut Wood" and "Traviskan", "Chelwood", the Biddle's "Andalusia", John Austin's "Brander" and the Logan family's "Sarobia" (destroyed) in Bensalem, and "China Hall" (destroyed) in Bristol Township. Many of the mansions were razed as the river front became industrialized. The four mansions at Andalusia represent part of the last remaining group of these mansions.

For the most part, these mansions were not typical rural vernacular farm dwellings found throughout Bucks County, but the homes of extremely wealthy families who sought refuge from the negative aspects of Philadelphia, while still being in close proximity to the city. They were built in the fashionable style of their day. Pen Ryn is a classic Federal style house. Andalusia is one of the leading Greek Revival buildings of its period in Pennsylvania. The Biddle Cottage on the Andalusia property is a classic high style Victorian Gothic residence. The Dell, which is

<sup>6</sup> A photograph of the house with the front porch still on and a single wing labeled "The home of Mrs. Seton Henry" appeared in *Old Roads Out of Philadelphia*, by John T. Faris (J. B. Lippincott, Phila. PA 1917 )

<sup>7</sup> Eberlein and Hubbert

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located approximately one half mile to the south of Andalusia is perhaps the finest Italianate style house in Bucks County. It is separated from the Andalusia property by the Chestnut Wood and Traviskan mansions.

Architecturally, there are very few other houses like Pen Ryn in Bucks County. The contemporary houses in Bucks County towns such as Bristol or Newtown were not as large or dramatic. Three-story buildings were uncommon in Bucks County until the mid nineteenth century. The house is cited as an example of how "To reduce their apparent height, three-story houses were foreshortened with square windows. Two-piece sashes were used, and the number of panes differed considerably. While a like number in both upper and lower sashes was the rule...[houses such as]...Pen Rhyn in Bensalem Township, Bucks County, have foreshortened windows with three-paned upper and lower sashes. Such foreshortened windows as all the above were usually employed with six- and nine-paned sashes on the stories below."<sup>8</sup> Bucks County architecture is overwhelmingly vernacular adaptations of prevalent styles. Most local families could not compete financially, with the wealthy, fashionable Bickley-Wharton-Drexel family who owned Pen Ryn. Pen Ryn, like other river front mansions such as Andalusia or The Dell were all among the leading examples of their particular architectural styles in the county.

The property is representative of the era (circa 1760 through the 1920s) when it was fashionable to have a country seat in bucolic Bucks County overlooking the Delaware River. These houses were large, lavish, and ornate. They were designed to be seen and admired from the river. Their elegant facades all face the Delaware, rather than the interior roads. Through its growth and development over the centuries, Pen Ryn has become one of the most striking mansions along the Delaware. It still commands a view of the river and retains its architectural integrity and readily evokes its period of significance. The major buildings on the site have all been retained in their original location, and the house in particular, due to its placement on an eminence overlooking the Delaware River dramatically retains the building's historic associations. The design of the property is such that the non-contributing additions are constructed in a setting behind the house, as not to detract from the contributing resources as viewed from its original facade. The design of the house itself is a classic Federal style used during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for houses of the affluent. The materials and workmanship that were used in the building are important components to this property's significance and integrity. The building is large, stately, and with its dramatic facade reflected the finer houses being constructed in the Philadelphia region. Befitting the status of its owners, from the Federal period through the early twentieth century, alterations to Pen Ryn were made with an extremely high level of craftsmanship.

The interior of the house, with its ornate finishes is mostly intact. The interior of the building has been altered throughout the years as part of its adaptive reuse as a school and most recently, great effort has been made to restore many of its original features. The Pen Ryn property retains its historic feeling and association. While certain interior historic materials

<sup>8</sup> *The Colonial Architecture of Philadelphia*. Frank Cousin and Phil M. Riley, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1920.

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have been removed throughout the years, the Pen Ryn mansion is an important historical and architectural resource that reflects its place among a small, but locally significant, distinguished group of large mansions along the Delaware River.

**Photographs**

Photographs 1 through 7 were taken by Jeffrey L. Marshall on February 20, 1996. Negatives are filed in the Historic Preservation Department, Heritage Conservancy, 85 Old Dublin Pike, Doylestown, PA 18901.

Photo 1 east facade showing wings, camera pointing west

Photo 2 east facade showing westerly wing in foreground, camera pointing northwest

Photo 3 southerly wing in foreground, new rear addition visible, camera pointing northwest

Photo 4 north elevation showing northerly wing (left) and early 20C two story wing at right, camera pointing south

Photo 5 east facade showing northerly wing and garden wall in foreground, camera pointing southwest

Photo 6 detail of east facade, camera pointing northwest

Photo 7 carriage house northern elevation, camera facing southwest

Photographs 8 through 16 were taken by Bill Haas on October 1, 1996. Negatives are filed at the property.

Photo 8 east facade showing wings, camera pointing west

Photo 9 carriage house northern elevation, camera facing south

Photo 10 detail showing southerly wing in foreground, new rear addition visible, camera pointing northwest

Photo 11 southeast corner of parlor with entrance to southerly wing visible at far right, camera pointing southeast.

Photo 12 northeast corner of parlor with entrance to northerly wing visible at far left, camera pointing northeast.

Photo 13 south end of gallery in southerly wing camera pointing south.

Photo 14 west wall of library in northerly wing camera pointing west.

Photo 15 southerly wall of dining room located on first floor in the southwest corner of main block, main stairway visible through open door, camera pointing northwest.

Photo 16 main staircase on first floor, camera pointing west.

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