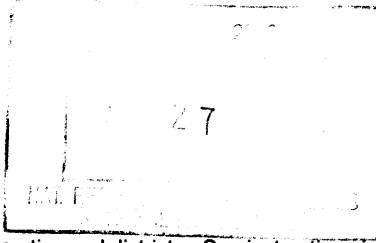


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "P/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (P S Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Morton, Benjamin, House  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 4084 Kingston Pike N/A  not for publication  
city or town Knoxville N/A  vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Knox code 093 zip code 37919

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays 9/24/04  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson Brall 11/10/04  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "P/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Knoxville and Knox County MPS

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Domestic/secondary structure

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling

Domestic/secondary structure

**7. Description**

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

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Slate

other Marble

Copper

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations N/A**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Conservation

**Period of Significance**

1927-1952

**Significant Dates**

1927

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

Morton, Benjamin

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Baumann and Baumann (architect)

Allison, Alma (landscape architect)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Knox County Archives, McClung Historical Collection, Metro Planning Commission

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 3.30 acres Knoxville 147 NW

**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>231736</u>	<u>3981643</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Porting		Zone	Easting	Porting
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Hollie Beth Cook, Program Assistant

organization Knox Heritage, Inc. date January 29, 2004

street & number PO BOX 1242 telephone (865) 523-8008

city or town Knoxville state TN zip code 37901

**Additional Documentation**

submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SH O) or F O for any additional items

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SH O or F O.)

name Mrs. Condon (Betsey) Bush

street & number 4084 Kingston Pike telephone (865) 524-9964

city or town Knoxville state TN zip code 37919

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

## Narrative Description

The Benjamin Morton House is located at 4084 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee (population 173,890). The house was designed by Baumann and Baumann of Knoxville and built in 1927. It is a notable example of the Colonial Revival style with Georgian elements. The two and one-half-story L-plan brick house is located on a ridge above Kingston Pike, a major thoroughfare, with a slope that falls sharply away from the house towards Kingston Pike to the north and the Sequoyah Hills residential development to the south. It is bounded on the east by the Greek Orthodox Church and on the west by a house and a privacy hedge of hemlocks. A brick wall delineates the property from the street, while a curvilinear drive leads to the house. The circa 1934 landscape design by the Knoxville firm of Charles Lester was rehabilitated in 1994-1996. The three acre site contains towering hardwoods such as beech, oak, and maple; various boxwoods; and seasonal plantings. Also in 1994-1996 the owners renovated the house itself, maintaining the character defining features such as the main entry, shuttered multi-light windows, and interior woodwork. The Benjamin Morton House retains its architectural integrity.

The Benjamin Morton House is a two and one-half-story, load-bearing Flemish bond brick dwelling with one-story wings attached at the side elevations. The house has an end gable roof with original slate roof tiles. The symmetrically patterned north façade has a modillion cornice with full cornice returns. The south elevation repeats this pattern; other roof wall junctions have boxed cornices. Paired original wood louvered shutters are located on each window opening except the dormers. All shutters have shutter dogs and tiebacks; East Tennessee marble forms the sills of the windows. Brick interior end chimneys flank the main body of the house. Also seen on the house are louvered wood attic vents, copper downspouts, and an internal gutter system with embellished downspouts.

The central/primary part of the north façade of the house has two interior end chimneys and a modillion cornice with dentil molding in the frieze and full cornice returns. Four six over nine double-hung windows are on the first story, with five six over six double-hung windows on the second story. All windows are flanked by original shutters and capped by brick jack arches with stone keystones. The half-story has three front facing gable roof dormers with six over six double-hung windows flanked by pilasters. Slate shingles cover the sides of the dormers and a decorative rondel is found in each pedimented dormer gable. A heavy swan's-neck pediment with a pineapple finial, a Georgian feature of the Colonial Revival style, defines the main entry to the house. Console brackets with acanthus leaf decoration and fluted pilasters surround the sides of the recessed paneled entry. The transom is composed of semi-circular and diamond tracery glass. Steps leading to the door are carved from East Tennessee marble and are flanked by curved wrought iron balustrades with historic wrought iron and glass lanterns set within the end of the curve. The one story wings to the west and east sides of the primary structure are identical having an end gable slate roof and paneled French doors with shutters. The French doors give the appearance of jib windows, which are a feature of older classically styled houses.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

The east elevation maintains the symmetry of the façade. The east elevation of the primary structure has an interior end chimney, and four six over six double-hung windows. The east wing attached to the primary structure has a gable end slate tiled roof, a small gable window, and six by six casement windows below a three-point (basket handle) arch. South of this section, the elevation contains a series of eight by eight casement windows, flanked by shutters, on both stories. There is a brick interior chimney located at the southern end of the roof. Two gable wall dormers with six over six double-hung windows penetrate the end of this elevation. Below the dormers are entrances to the house: one is a paneled double-leaf French door with a semi-circular arch louvered shutter above the door, while the other is a glass and wood door below a modern gable roof porch. Brick steps lead from the French door to the ground level. On the first story, between the two entrances, is a six over six double-hung window flanked by shutters.

The south elevation consists of the rear of the primary structure and the rear of the ell. The south elevation of the primary structure has a one-story flat roof porch that runs along the entire length of the south elevation. Two gable roof dormers with six over six double-hung windows are in the half story. The second story has a semi-circular arch double-hung window and pair of paneled French doors that open to a balcony with a stylized wood Chippendale balustrade. On the first story, there are three sets of French doors that open to the covered patio, with its original bead-board ceiling and slate floor. The slate is laid in a random pattern in colors of green, gray, and red. Round, tapered wood columns with Doric capitals and round bases support the second story balcony. The rear (south elevation) of the ell has an interior end chimney, and four symmetrically spaced six over six double-hung windows. The one story section of the house that is visible in this elevation has paneled French doors like those on the second story. In 1994-1996, new slate with a similar color scheme and pattern was added to extend the patio to the end of the one story wing.

Like the east elevation, the west elevation is composed of the west elevations of the two and one-half story section of the house, the west elevation of the one story wing, and the west elevation of the ell. All of the windows and doors are shuttered and include three over six and six over six windows, as well as multi-light paired French doors. Brick jack arches with keystones further delineate openings. The east elevation of the house replicates the details of the west elevation.

The principal entry of the Morton house opens into a hall with paneled wainscoting and an open well, two-run staircase. The slender wood balusters support a rounded wood railing. Wainscoting extends along the stair up to the landing; paneling below the stairway hides storage space. The landing has a large arched, multi-paned, double-hung window framed by pilasters and a molded arch. Hanging in the entry hall is an original suspended glass lantern (electric). Paneled double doors lead to a rear hall. Throughout the house, the multi-light windows and doors provide daylight and excellent ventilation.

To the west of the entry hall is the living room/drawing room, which has original oak flooring and paneled wainscoting. The room has an original hand carved mantelpiece and shouldered architrave

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

overmantel. Slender paired pilasters rest below the molded mantelshelf with its dentil molding. The mantel frieze is embellished with reeded cartouches and a delicate floral pattern. The marble hearth and surround on the fireplace has a white and gray pattern. Originally, this was black marble, but due to its poor condition it was replaced circa 1994. There is an elaborate cove molding comprised of dentil-work and a frieze containing rosettes interspersed with reeding. At the south side of the room are two sets of paired twelve-light French doors that open onto a covered patio. A reading room/smoking room extends from the east off this room. The room is reached through the paired panel doors in the living room. The interior walls of the reading/smoking room are paneled with knotty pine and the room has a beamed coffer ceiling and oak flooring. Paired eight-light French doors open onto the rear patio. The doors are flanked by reeded pilasters on paneled bases and topped by patera.

To the east of the entry hall is the dining room. The dining room has paneled wainscoting and an elaborate cornice molding with an arcaded design and stylized applied flowers interspersed with fluting like that found on the living room cornice. Dentil molding also forms a part of the cornice. The dining room also has a central plaster ceiling medallion decorated with pineapples and a large stylized oval floral motif. Paired reeded colonettes on simple bases delineate the fireplace mantel. Above them, on the mantel frieze, the decorative reeding is also found on the round and oval patera. Dentil molding further enhances the molded mantelshelf. Above this is a paneled wood overmantel. Other features of the room include oak flooring and the original black marble with gray veining that forms the hearth and surround. An original crystal chandelier is centered in the ceiling medallion, and an original sterling wall sconce is located on the south wall of the dining room. Multi-light windows are on the north and west walls. In the one story wing on the east elevation, through double panel doors exiting the dining room, is the breakfast room. The room has eight-light paired French doors. There are built in cabinets under the casement windows, added during the 1994-1996 rehabilitation, and finished in natural wood. Four doors topped with full arched recessed panels provide access to storage space in the cabinets. The wallpaper located in this room is historic, although portions of it were replaced in 1989, prior to the Bush's rehabilitation.

The kitchen is located to the rear of the breakfast room, with additional access through a door at the rear of the dining room. The kitchen was renovated in 1994-1996, including the addition of a kitchen island. To provide space for this island, a wall was removed in the kitchen and a hall was incorporated into the new kitchen space. Two sets of the twelve-light paired French doors leading out to the terrace were added during this time. The added doors match the design of the original French doors found elsewhere in the house. Cabinets and appliances were also replaced in 1994-1996. The windows, one set of the paired twelve-light French doors that access the outside patio, and location of the kitchen fireplace are original. The changes that have been made are not intrusive and are in keeping with the integrity of the house.

Behind the kitchen fireplace on one side is a butler's pantry/larder, which has its original cabinets and design. On the other side of the fireplace is an original back hall, which accesses a half bath,

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

back staircase, and a laundry room. Historically, a breezeway connected the main house to a laundry room. This area was enclosed with French doors during the 1994-1996 renovation. The laundry now serves as an office and has built-in bookcases and a modern bathroom.

The second-story contains the family's private rooms. On the west side of the second story is a master bedroom with an adjoining bath. There are paired eight light French doors that exit onto the second story balcony at the rear of the house. Original wood paneling forms the wall below the windows. New closet space and shelves were added to the bedroom. On the east side of the second story is a second bedroom. This room has an original mantel and a black marble hearth and surround. An original bathroom also adjoins this room. On a separate level through an arched passageway is access to the ell of the second story. This area includes the attic staircase and two additional bedrooms. Between the two bedrooms is a rear stair hall with a second set of stairs, originally for the servants' use. A full archway provides a separation from the bathroom and laundry room (originally a sewing and linen room) located above the breezeway and the second story bedroom located at the rear of the house.

There is a detached garage (C) off the side of the east elevation at the rear of the lot. Constructed at the same time as the house, it is a one-story brick structure with a slate roof, two gable dormers, and a brick end chimney. Originally, the garage also was used as servant quarters. Using brick similar to the original brick, the original footprint of the garage was enlarged on the south elevation by about one foot during the 1994-1996 rehabilitation, in order to accommodate the size of present day automobiles. There is also an in-ground swimming pool (c. 1950s, NC) in the rear yard.

An additional element of the Benjamin Morton House are the gardens (circa 1934) located at the rear of the structure, including the extensive system of brick walks and stone walks. (C). The gardens follow the downward slope on the back of the ridge where the house sits. Alma Allison, an employee of Charles F. Lester, a local landscape architect, originally designed the gardens.

Years of neglect almost led to the disappearance of the gardens. When the Bush's bought the property Mrs. Bush decided to take on the large task of restoring the gardens. From 1996 through 2002 Mrs. Bush did extensive research to determine the original design and plantings. This included repairing the brick wall, which remains about 75% original. The wall begins at Kingston Pike, along the eastern property line, and extends to the southern property line. Today, features of the garden landscape include tiered planting beds laid out to follow the slope of the hillside. The different tiers are connected by walkways and stairs made of brick and stone. Millstones, part of the original design, decorate the walkways and provide landings at the top and bottom of the stairs. A system of lanterns provides light on the paths winding throughout the gardens. Four original fountains, one of which is a fishpond, work their way down the hillside and re-circulate the water throughout their system. Decorative elements added during the garden rehabilitation include metal arches, fountain statuary of copper cranes and a bench of stained glass embedded in a concrete base. A bench made from a millstone is original to the garden. A brick wall, newly constructed in 1996,



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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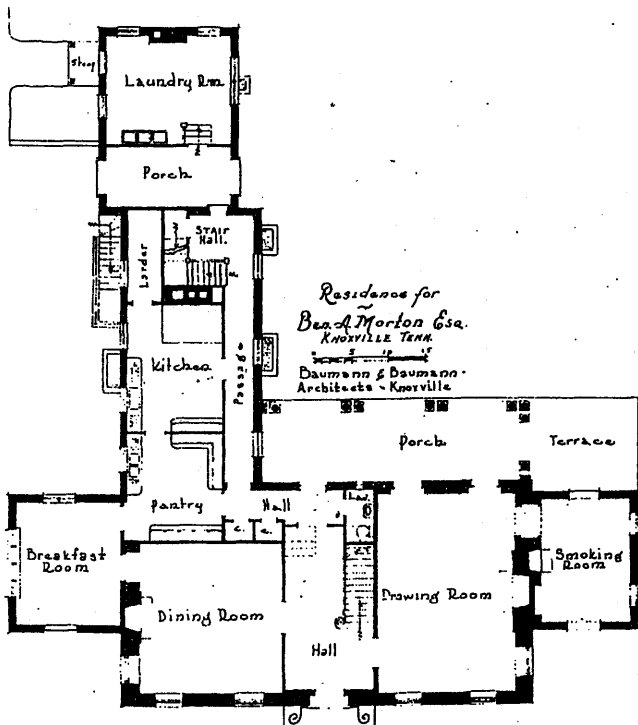
Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

continues from the original brick wall on the east side of the garden. Mature oak and dogwood trees dot the landscape and provide patches of sun and shade that allow the planting of varieties of perennials with different lighting requirements. At the base of the garden is a newly planted boxwood knot garden appropriate to the 1930 garden design. Although the form of the gardens has been restored, and the mature trees that were present in the original garden have been retained, the plantings currently found in the garden are contemporary and reflect the current sun patterns.

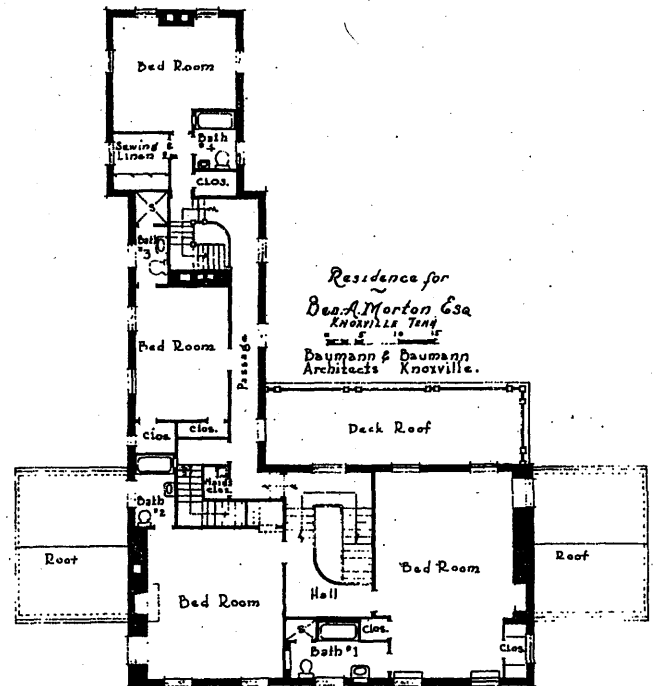
Floor plan as shown in *Southern Architect and Building News*

not to scale

↓ N



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

HOUSE OF BENJAMIN A. MORTON, ESQ., KNOXVILLE, TENN.  
BAUMANN & BAUMANN, ARCHITECTS

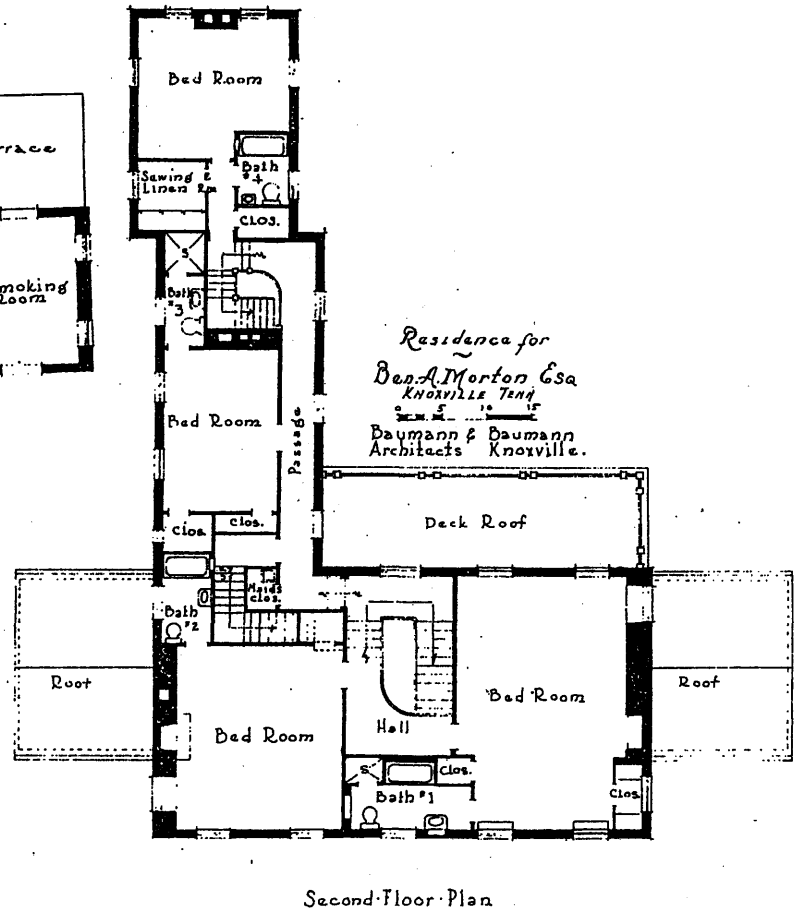
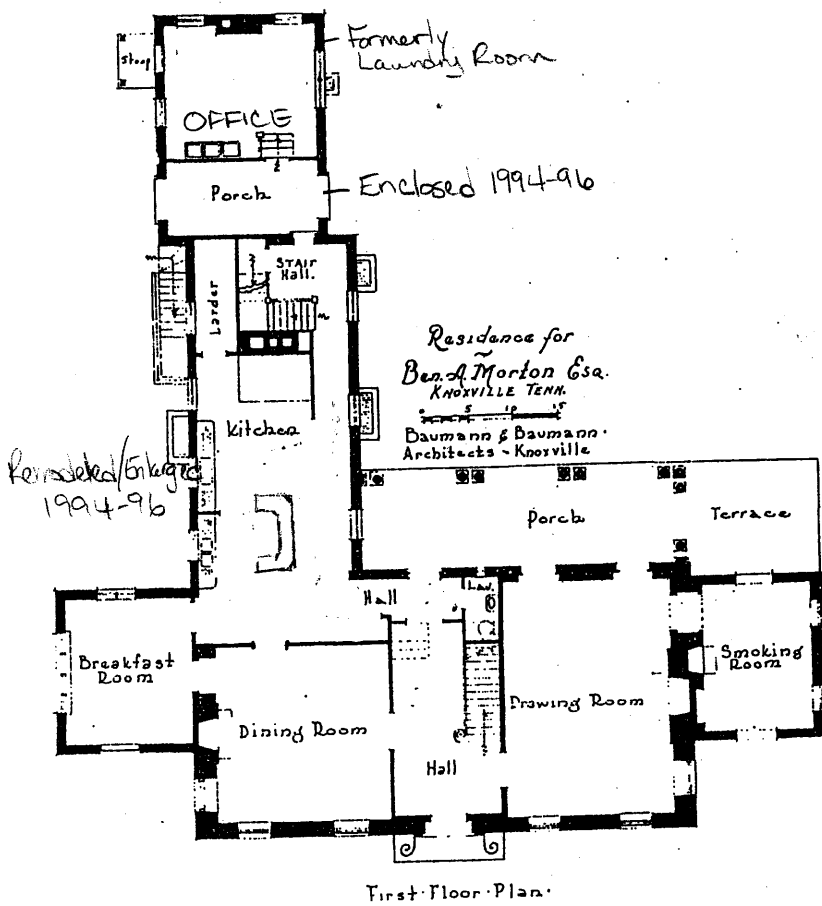
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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

Current floor plan not to scale ↓ N



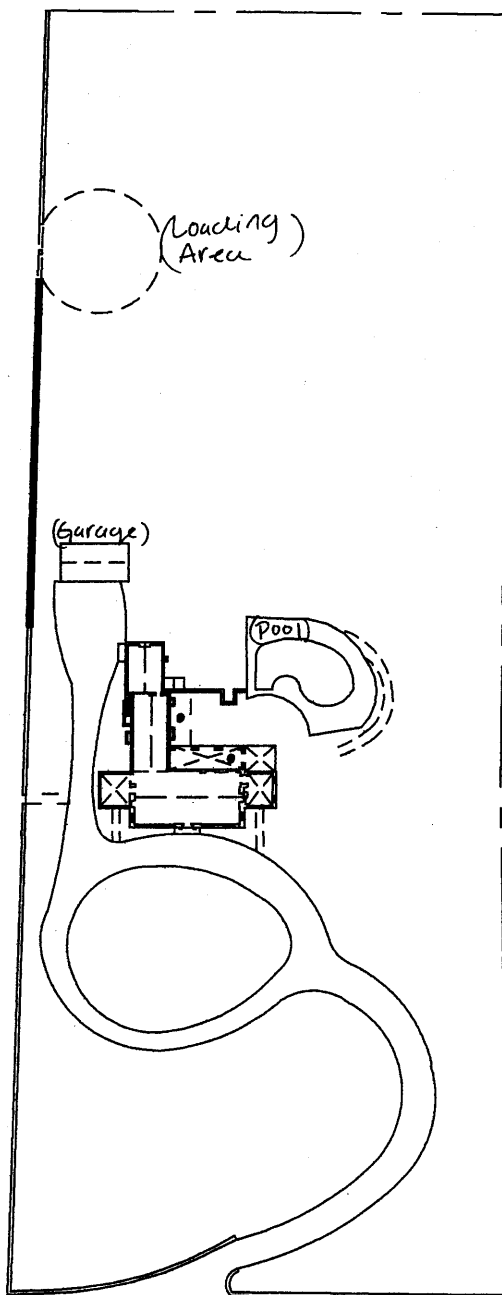
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet





Section number 7 Page 7

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

Site plan not to scale ↓ N



### Legend

-  original wall
-  new wall
-  original patio
-  new patio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

## Statement of Significance

The Benjamin Morton House is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion B for its association with the first owner of the house, Benjamin A. Morton. Morton was known for his leadership in the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and for his civic devotion as Mayor of Knoxville during the years 1923-1927. The house was built for Morton in 1927 and served as his home until his death in 1952. The Benjamin Morton House is also being nominated under criterion C as an excellent representation of the Colonial Revival style. Designed by the Knoxville architectural firm of Baumann and Baumann, notable Colonial Revival features on the exterior include the classically detailed entry with its broken pediment, multi-light French doors, windows flanked by shutters, and pedimented dormers. Inside, the house retains crown molding, elaborately detailed fireplace mantels, paneled wainscoting, and paneled doors. The house retains a high degree of architectural integrity and meets the registration requirements of the Knoxville and Knox County MPS.

Benjamin Andrew Morton, Sr. was born in Blount County, Tennessee on August 15, 1875. He was the son of Dr. Benjamin Andrew and Martha Jane (McCamey) Morton. The Morton's had come from North Carolina and settled along Six Mile Creek in Blount County shortly after the area had been opened to the influx of settlers in 1795. Morton attended Harrison Chilhowee Academy located in Sevier County and graduated when he was eighteen. Shortly after Morton completed his schooling, he moved to Knoxville, Tennessee. Within a short time Morton enrolled in Knoxville Business College and worked part time in the meat department of a Knoxville grocery. By 1895, at the age of twenty, Morton accepted a job with the H.T. Hackney Company as a bookkeeper. The H. T. Hackney Company began as a wholesaling firm soon after the Civil War when Knoxville became the second largest jobbing center south of the Ohio River. The company still does business in Knoxville. Morton fit well into the Hackney enterprise, discovering a flair for selling, and began to make quite a name for himself. Soon Morton was traveling to North and South Carolina selling coal to the cotton mills in those states. His advancement in the company was rapid over the next few years and after the death of company owner and president H.T. Hackney in 1899, Morton became president of the wholesale grocery enterprise. Within months the company was operating more successfully than ever before. This was one of Morton's longest business relationships; he was president of H. T. Hackney from 1899 to 1945, when he was elected Chairman of the Board. He continued to serve as Chairman of the Board until his death.

Benjamin Morton had an eclectic career as a banker, merchant and civic leader. Historic records show that Morton was associated with a number of other companies in Knoxville, although the degree of his association with some of them is uncertain, and none of the companies have survived. Some of these companies included: Security Mills (President, 1920-1945 and Chairman of the Board 1945-1952), the Johnson City (Tennessee) Mills (President 1916-1940), the New Imperial Company (Secretary-Treasurer 1917-1952). Morton also served as a director of many Knoxville companies, including the Knoxville Brick Company, C. M. McClung and Company, Morton-McCrary Motors,

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

Park Motors, J. Allen Smith and Company, Fidelity-Bankers Trust Company, the Harvey Copal Corporation, the Seven-Up Bottling Company of Knoxville and the Seven-Up Bottling Company of Nashville. While Morton's direct involvement with these companies is unknown, the fact that he was involved in some way with these firms indicates his prominence to the business community in Knoxville.

Morton was also heavily involved in the civic life of Knoxville and the region. Most notable was his leadership in the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Many prominent Knoxvilleians were actively involved in establishing the park. Morton handled the financial aspects of acquiring land that formed the park. General Frank Maloney, an engineer and a former Adjutant General for Tennessee with the rank of Brigadier General in the Tennessee National Guard, handled the surveys and maps of the park. In addition to the involvement of Morton and Maloney, other persons instrumental in forming the park were Willis P. Davis and his wife Ann. Davis was manager of the Knoxville Iron Company, and drew the inspiration for forming the park from a trip he and his wife made to the western United States in 1923. Davis called the first meeting of the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce in the latter part of 1923 to discuss founding the park. Morton attended this meeting.

The effort to form the park took place slowly. In 1923, many of Davis' associates considered the idea unimportant to Knoxville. However, Colonel David C. Chapman, a Knoxville businessman, considered to be the father of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, began to work full time on the idea of the park. Maloney and Morton joined the campaign. Willis Davis served as the first president of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, with Colonel Chapman succeeding him as association president. Approximately \$500,000 was raised in Knoxville and surrounding communities to purchase the land for the park, with an additional \$2 million coming from the Tennessee legislature and \$2 million appropriated by North Carolina. Morton was instrumental in securing the purchase of a 92,814-acre tract in the "rear" of the park that was owned by the Champion Fibre Company. A Sevier County, Tennessee jury had set a value of \$2.5 million for just one-third of the tract in the Tennessee section of the park. That implied a total cost of over \$7 million for the entire acreage. This number far exceeded the amount raised for the National Park, but the tract was essential to the park's formation. Morton was the pivotal figure in negotiating an agreement to buy the entire 92,814 acres for only \$3 million. After three years, in May 1926, President Calvin Coolidge signed a bill creating the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina.

A marker placed less than a mile north of Newfound Gap on the Tennessee side of the park recounts Mr. Morton's contribution to the formation of the park:

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Morton, Benjamin, House  
Knox County, Tennessee

## “MORTON OVERLOOK”

“Named for Ben A. Morton (1865-1952) civic leader and conservationist of Knoxville, Tennessee. He worked hard to assure the preservation of the Great Smokies as a National Park.”

Horace M. Albright, former Director of the National Park Service, in a 1956 letter written to a friend in Knoxville, noted that Morton was a “natural leader at a time when such leaders were indispensable to the success of the great public projects such as the establishment of the National Park in the Great Smokies. Mr. Morton played a vital part in this great enterprise.”

During the same time as he was helping establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Morton was elected Mayor of the City of Knoxville. Progressiveness marked his two terms as Mayor (1923-1927), which were highlighted by the issuance of \$2.5 million in bonds for a new water plant. During his administration the first city Equalization Board (tax commission) and the City Planning Commission were created. Another effort of Mayor Morton was to rehabilitate City hospitals and insure that they were fully staffed. As noted above, Morton continued to remain active in Knoxville business community until his death in 1952. Ann Morton, his widow, lived here until her death in 1985. The house sat abandoned for seven years until Mr. and Mrs. Condon Bush bought the house from the Morton estate in 1992. Mrs. Bush continues to live here.

### Architecture and Landscape Architecture

The Colonial Revival style has been described as the style that is a celebration of American spirit, the longest living style founded in America; most popular between the years 1880-1955. The Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 is credited with first awakening an interest in colonial architectural heritage. Two subtypes were most common before 1910: the asymmetrical form with superimposed colonial details and the more authentic symmetrical hipped roof shape. The economic depression of the 1930s, World War II, and changing postwar fashions led to the simplification of the style in the 1940s and 1950s, most often of side-gable type, simple stylized door surrounds, cornices, or other details that merely suggest their colonial precedents rather than closely mirroring them.

The Knoxville based architectural firm of Baumann and Baumann designed the Benjamin Morton House in 1927. The house was showcased in the *Southern Architects and Buildings News* in March 1930. The article featured photographs and plans of the house and a detailed text of the architectural and interior design.

“The visitor to Knoxville, Tennessee will observe immediately two very distinct and fine characteristics about the city. Those wonderful mountains that can be seen at every turn of the eye... the second characteristic which no student of architecture could

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overlook is the refined simplicity of the domestic architecture...an atmosphere about the domestic work of the local architects which is as different from that in any city as it is charming in itself...it is indicative of the refined good taste of the people and ability of the architects to do the hardest of architectural problems...one of the finest of these houses is that of Benjamin A. Morton, along the Kingston Pike, a Georgian house reminiscent of the best of its Virginia prototypes.”

The article continues to illustrate the architectural and design elements of some of the interior of the house. The interior of the dining room of the house was also featured five months earlier in November 1929 in the official catalog for the Southern Architectural and Industrial Arts Exposition held in Memphis Tennessee from November 9-16, 1929.

Baumann and Baumann consisted of Albert B Bauman and his son Albert B. Baumann Jr. The firm took the name Bauman and Baumann in 1924. Baumann Sr. was born in 1861 in Knoxville and received his architectural training from his older brother Joseph F. He practiced with his brother from 1891 to 1913 in a firm also known as Baumann and Baumann. Baumann Sr. practiced independently from 1913 to 1921. In 1921 Baumann Sr. and Baumann Jr. formed the firm of A.B. Baumann and Son. A.B. Baumann Jr. was born in 1897 in Knoxville; he attended Georgia Technological Institute. After working for the Aluminum Company of America and the Southern Railroad, in September of 1919 he entered the University of Pennsylvania where he studied architecture for two years. He returned to Knoxville in 1921, working in his father's office. In 1924 Baumann Jr. received a full partnership and the firm became Baumann and Baumann. Baumann Jr. died at the age of 55 in 1952. Knoxville has numerous example of the Bauman firm's architecture. Examples include the Beaux Arts Andrew Johnson Hotel in 1930 (NR 7/9/80), Georgian Revival Park City Junior High School in 1925 ( NR 6/30/83), and the Normandy house style of the Cherokee Country Club in 1928. The United States Court House and Post Office in downtown Knoxville (NR 5/24/84) is known as a fine example of Bauman and Bauman's New Deal Architecture since it combines Neoclassical design with Art Moderne and Art Deco detail.

After several years of neglect, Betsey and the late Condon Bush rehabilitated the house. This included additions of cabinets in the breakfast room, updating of kitchen cabinets and appliances, replacement of hearth and surround in the living room fireplace, enclosing the breezeway with French doors, removing wall of the passage way from kitchen to the back staircase, the addition of a French door in the kitchen, the addition of a slate patio on the ell of the non-covered back patio and remodeling the attic into a bonus room. The changes and additions were made with the intent to maintain the historic integrity of the house. There was little change to the historic fabric of the house, primarily updating. Condon Bush was the Chairman and CEO of Bush Brothers and Company from 1990 until his death in 2003. Devoted to the preservation of the house and gardens, he returned both to their historic appearance and prominent position on Kingston Pike.

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The gardens may have significance of their own in the area of landscape architecture, but additional research will be needed to confirm this. It is known that Alma Allison, an employee of Charles F. Lester, a noted local landscape architect, designed the gardens. Allison was a graduate of Columbia University and was employed by Lester from 1932 onward. The Morton gardens were included in the 1936 *History of Home and Garden of Tennessee*. Lester was a native of Iowa and he studied landscape architecture at the University of Michigan and the University of London. Until he came to Knoxville in 1921, Lester worked with noted designed Earl S. Draper in Charlotte, North Carolina. In addition to the Morton House Lester is known to have designed the W.M. Fulton estate on Lyons View Pike, the John T. Craig property, and T.O. Couch site



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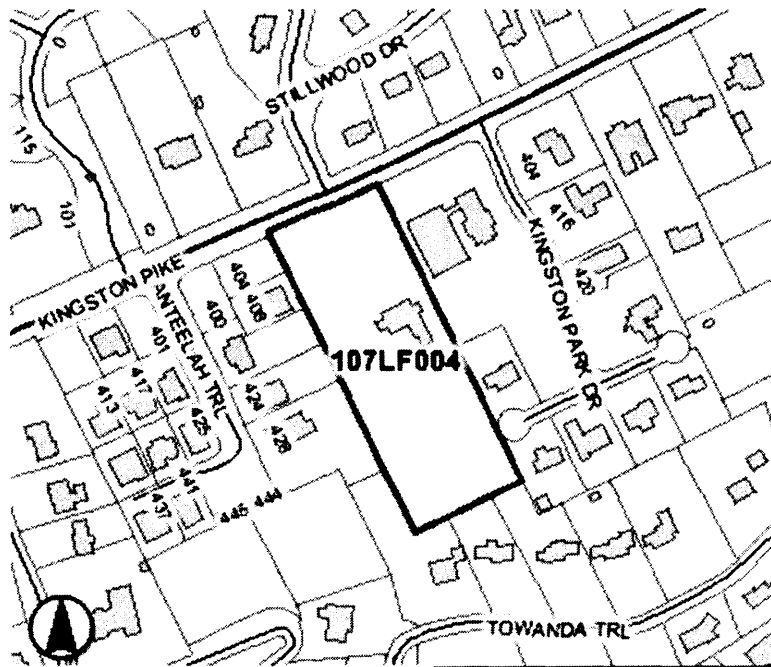
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## Geographical data

### **Boundary description and Justification**

All of CLT parcel, No. 107LF004, being 227' wide and 620' deep. With a front boundary continuum with the right of way of Kingston Pike. Boundaries contain all of the property historically associated with the house.



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Photos by: Hollie Cook (Knox Heritage) and Rebecca Johnson (THC)

Date: August 2003 and October 2003

Negs: Tennessee Historical Commission

North façade, facing south

# 1 of 21

North façade, facing southwest

# 2 of 21

North façade, facing southeast

# 3 of 21

North façade entry, facing south

# 4 of 21

East elevation (ell and main part of house), showing doors to breezeway and laundry/office, facing northwest

# 5 of 21

South and west elevation of ell, facing northeast

# 6 of 21

East elevation of ell, facing west

# 7 of 21

South elevation of main part of house, west elevation of ell, facing northeast

# 8 of 21

South elevation of main part of house, west elevation of ell, facing northeast

# 9 of 21

Patio detail, facing north

# 10 of 21

Main stair, facing south

# 11 of 21

Dining room

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Dining room fireplace  
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Living room/drawing room fireplace  
# 14 of 21

Smoking room, facing north  
# 15 of 21

Breakfast room  
# 16 of 21

Kitchen, facing east  
# 17 of 21

Gardens, facing north  
# 18 of 21

Gardens, facing south  
# 19 of 21

Gardens  
# 20 of 21

North façade of garage, facing south  
# 21 of 21