

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 8 1981
DATE ENTERED AUG - 6 1981

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Oakes Estate
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
240 Belleville Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Bloomfield
STATE
New Jersey

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
11th

___ VICINITY OF

CODE
34

COUNTY
Essex

CODE
013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: cultural center

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Town of Bloomfield
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Bloomfield
STATE
New Jersey

___ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Town Clerk, Town of Bloomfield
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Bloomfield
STATE
New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory - #450.36

DATE
1974
___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Office of Cultural & Environmental Services

CITY, TOWN
Trenton
STATE
New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located at the corner of Walnut Street and Belleville Avenue, the Oakes House is a late 19th century three-story 23-room somewhat rambling house on a two-acre site surrounded and shaded by various evergreens, maples, oaks, and enormous rhododendrons. The extensive formal gardens in the rear are now overgrown; ivy forms a profuse and cool ground cover.

Featuring Colonial Revival and Queen Anne details, the house is a hip-roofed, 2-1/2 story, three bay, center hall, stone and frame building with a long front porch and solarium. The first story of the house is constructed of rough hewn brownstone quarried in nearby Belleville. The solarium, which was added in 1928, is constructed of concrete, but local masons duplicated the texture, color, and pattern of the original material to a strikingly effective degree. The second and third stories are wood frame. The dormer windows, many of which are arched and ornamented with sunburst patterns on their pediments, punctuate the roofline, two each on the northern, eastern, and western sides of the building. The roof is shingle, except on the solarium which has a copper roof.

A veranda runs along the front of the building and extends back approximately 24 feet along both the east and west sides of the house. The veranda roof is supported by double and triple clusters of wood columns painted white, carved in a neo-classical style. They support cornices ornamented with dentils and brackets. The construction of the solarium shortened the eastern wing, but the roof ornamentation was preserved and reused on the addition to integrate it to the original structure. The western extension was modified prior to this to form a porte-cochere, constructed in the same style as the original veranda.

The main entrance is one of the most impressive features of the exterior. The dark oak paneled main door and oak screen door are set in a semi-circular archway. The theme of the arch is repeated over the door where there is a semi-circular pane of glass leaded in a scallop/sunburst pattern. Oak panels flank the doorway and have bullet-shaped panes of leaded glass.

Certain elements of the doorway design establish motifs which occur throughout the house. First and foremost is the extensive use of oak at every level of design from the floor to the ornamental use of the sunburst ornament, which occurs on fireplace mantels, over windows, and in other places where it achieves an advantageous effect.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1895

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Charles Granville Jones

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Associated with the Oakes Family, prominent New Jersey cloth manufacturers from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century, the Oakes Estate, constructed for Thomas Oakes in 1895 by New York architect Charles Granville Jones, is a well-preserved example of turn-of-the-century architecture with fine craftsmanship on the interior. Virtually untouched since the addition of a solarium in 1928, the property also has the overgrown but still definable lines of early 20th century suburban formal gardens. The Oakes Estate is the last remaining residence in Bloomfield of one of the town's oldest, most prestigious, and influential families.

The family operated the Oakes Woolen Mill Company, one of New Jersey's most important producers of woolen goods, during its long history (fl. 1830-1945). Locally, it is still common to hear older Essex County residents referring proudly to "Oakes Blue" - a reflection of the respect and prominence the dark blue colored wool product had established. The mill was, for many years, the economic mainstay of the town, employing successive waves of English, Scottish, Irish, German, Polish, and Italian immigrants, groups who today make up much of the population of Bloomfield.

The Oakes Mills were established in 1830 by David Oakes (1809-1878). When a disastrous fire in 1836 necessitated rebuilding the plant, Oakes developed the mills to exclusively manufacture flannels and yarns. In 1842 the company specialized in tweeds. During the Civil War the Oakes Mills were contracted to supply large quantities of indigo and dark blue woolen cloth for uniforms, and soon after evolved into a major uniform cloth manufacturer. Thomas Oakes took over the industry following his father's death in 1878 and was responsible for continued growth of the company. Under his ownership the number of employees eventually exceeded five hundred. Upon Thomas' death in 1924, his son, David Oakes, took over although he had been a major executive in the company for many years (he began work there around 1888). The introduction of cheap synthetic fabrics in the 1930's and the Oakes' decision to continue producing only woolens sealed the fate of the firm, and by 1945 the Oakes Woolen Mills had closed, after one hundred years of continuous operation.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheets

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.65

QUADRANGLE NAME Orange

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 568260 4516550

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 290, Lots 17 and 25. An area bounded on the east by the Garden State Parkway, on the south and west by John F. Kennedy Drive, and on the north by Belleville Avenue.

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

Revisions by T. Karschner, Office of Cultural and Environmental Services

NAME/TITLE Barbara Sandrisser, Program Director
Robert Gehorsam, Staff Writer

ORGANIZATION

Peter D. Paul, Architect

DATE

July 29, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

50 Galesi Drive

TELEPHONE

(201) 785-0660

CITY OR TOWN

Wayne

STATE

New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

Deputy

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Ramon Schultz

TITLE

DATE

June 17, 1981

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the
National Register

DATE

8/6/81

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 7

Page 1

Description (continued)

Passing through the entrance brings one into the foyer, a sizeable chamber highlighted by an oak elliptical archway which separates the stairway from the entrance. This arch is supported by oak columns and features a simple pattern of oak lattice. The second dominant feature of the foyer is the large hanging alabaster lamp, with its hand carved oak leaf pattern.

To the right of the foyer, a set of massive oak and mahogany sliding doors lead into the living room - a large space with polished oak veneer ceiling beams, a large fireplace whose wood mantel ornamented with sunbursts is painted cream enamel. A built-in oak bookcase features leaded glass panes. French windows open onto the veranda and portecochere. To the left of the foyer, identical sliding doors lead into the parlor, a bright, oak trimmed space whose three large bay windows provide a view out to the veranda. An alabaster lamp identical to the foyer's hangs in the room, and a fireplace with a glazed tile face stands in one corner.

Sliding doors open into the dining room, a simple, rectangular space whose floors of white oak are accented in the corners by decorative stained oak lattice like patterns. As with all the rooms in the house, large windows let in a great amount of natural daylight and provide ventilation throughout the space, rendering mechanical cooling virtually unnecessary.

French windows open into the solarium, a room which was designed by Mrs. Jean D. Oakes in 1928. The solarium is a particularly light and attractive room. Supported on a concrete slab floor overlaid with wide oak planks, the room is suffused with sunlight from the rows of arched windows and the pitched skylight. At one time it was practically a forest, with philodendron climbing a trellis along the eastern wall; today few plants remain.

Behind the dining room is the butler's pantry, which in turn leads to a spacious kitchen, equipped with what appears to be the original fixtures. One flight of stairs lead up to the second floor, and another flight leads down to the basement.

**United States Department of the Interior
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Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 7

Page 2

Description (continued)

The main stairway, located just behind the foyer, is of oak construction. The space below the stairway has a wall of oak panels, some of which are actually large drawers for storage. The soffit under the second floor is also oak paneled. The balusters leading up to the first landing are alternately turned and carved but from the first landing up to the third floor they are only turned. The landing between the second and third floors also possesses an unusual feature - semi-circular arches supported by balusters rising from the floor of the landing to the second story ceiling, allowing for a type of interpenetration of light and space. The presence of light in the stairwell is further enhanced by the leaded glass windows at each landing. The overall design of the stair is well executed.

The second and third floors are devoted to bedrooms and guest rooms. The basement consists of approximately eight rooms separated by open brick archways and separate strongroom and wine cellar below the solarium. Except for some dampness, the basement is in good condition and the rooms are divided into laundry, shop, canning, and storage areas.

In addition to the house, three outbuildings survive. The garage is a large two story simple wood structure in good condition. A small late 19th-early 20th century chicken coop is attached to the garage at the rear. A children's playhouse, circa 1920, is overgrown and somewhat deteriorated, but still in fair condition overall.

The formal gardens of the Oakes Estate, although overgrown and neglected, are extensive. Around 1920 there was an immaculately pruned shrub arrangement in a grid pattern directly behind the building. While many of the plantings are gone, numerous concrete walks and landscape patterns are clearly discernable. The area to the southwest of the house also had a large formal garden and still has two crossing gravel walkways. This section is quite overgrown after many years of neglect.

The building is on its original site, but the surroundings have been much altered. Originally the house was part of a larger property which included Oakeside, the original mansion built by Thomas Oakes, several other residences, and the mill, with a large pond behind it for power and for skating in the winter. After the mill was extensively altered, the Garden State Parkway was constructed immediately adjacent to the estate, literally cutting the property in half. Oakeside itself was demolished in 1948, and garden apartments were constructed on the site, across the street from the surviving house. The remaining two acres represent the tangible aspect of the Oakes legacy to Bloomfield.

**United States Department of the Interior
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Oakes Estate, Bloomfield

Continuation sheet Essex County, New Jersey Item number 7

Page 3

A number of landscape features of the Oakes Estate are especially noteworthy. The entire property is enclosed by a wrought iron fence with stone bases. Behind the main house is a terraced rectangular formal rose and shrub garden. Parallel to this garden is a terraced arbor. Abutting the solarium at the southeast corner of the house is a raised stone patio and fish pond. At the western section of the nominated property is a large floral garden divided into four squares by gravel walkways; wooden fencing surrounds this garden.

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Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 8

Page 1

Significance (continued)

Thomas Oakes had 240 Belleville Avenue constructed in 1895, directly opposite his Italianate mansion, Oakeside (demolished 1948). A younger son, George Oakes, apparently was the first resident, but his oldest son, David, occupied the building shortly after his marriage in 1906.

The Oakes Estate was the home of David Oakes and his wife Jean Wortham Doswell Oakes from 1910 until 1947 when David died and July, 1980 when Jean Oakes died. As was common with most prominent industrial families, the David Oakes' were extremely active in most social, economic, and municipal affairs of the town. David Oakes was a director of the Bloomfield Bank and Trust Company, a partner in the brokerage firm of Schuyler, Chadwick and Burnham; on the board of directors of the National Association of Woolen Manufacturers; and a member of many regional recreational clubs. Jean Oakes was involved in service with local hospitals and various charitable activities. Following her husband's death, Jean Oakes gradually became a recluse, but before her death an agreement was negotiated with the City of Bloomfield to acquire the house and develop a cultural center dedicated to the Oakes Family. The City of Bloomfield now owns the Oakes Estate.

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Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 9

Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Interviews: Thomas Oakes, Oakes Family Spokesperson
Russell Roemmele, Bloomfield Cultural Commission
Aaron Lewis, Caretaker
Lucy Galioto
(All interviews conducted July 2, 1980)

Oakes family albums and photographs
Original architectural drawings

Attractive Homes of New Jersey, F. Heath Coggins & Co., Baltimore,
1905, pp. 156-157.

The Turn of the Century, American Historical Society, p. 193. (A
private printing for Thomas Oakes & Co., commemorating a century of
the firm's operations.)

Articles from The Independent Press, Bloomfield, New Jersey:

"Remembrance of Things: A Tribute to Mrs. Oakes", September 22,
1977, p. 2.

"Town Will Acquire Oakes Estate", January 11, 1979, p. 1.

"Our Town", January 11, 1979, p. 4.

"A Visit to the Oakes Estate", January 11, 1979, p. 6.

"Oakes Family and Mill Had Prominent Role in Bloomfield History",
January 11, 1979, p. 7.

Letters to the Editor, January 18, 1979, p. 10.

Photograph, February 1, 1979, p. 10.

Photograph, February 8, 1979, p. 8.

The Municipalities of Essex County, New Jersey 1666-1924, Joseph Fulford
Folsom, editor. Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., New
York, 1925 (pp. 136-139).

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Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 9

Page 2

BIBLIOGRAPHY (continued)

Bloomfield Old and New. Joseph Fulford Folsom, editor. Centennial Historical Committee, Bloomfield, 1912 (pp. 91-92, 144).

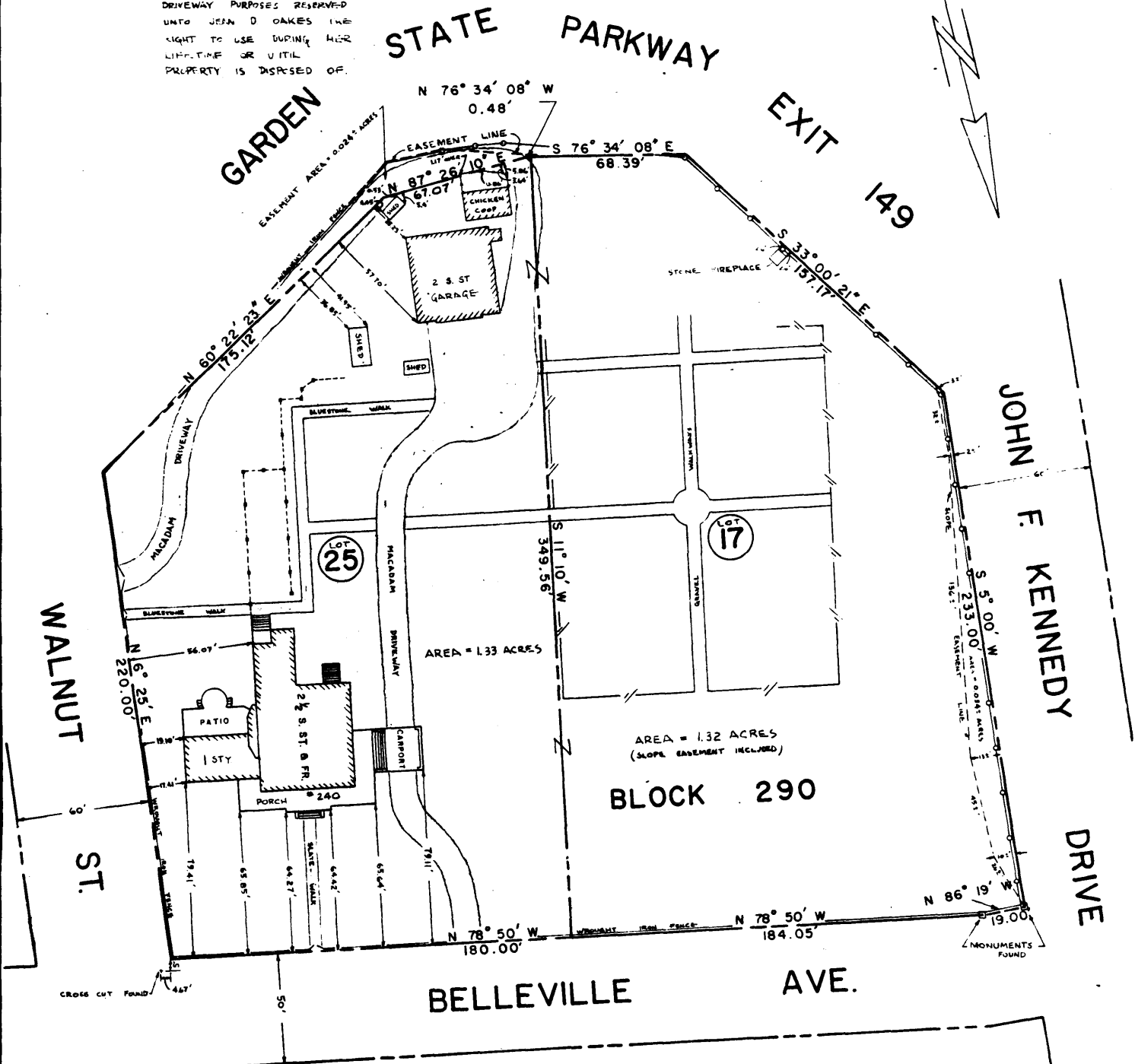
Bloomfield: Real and Ideal. Stephen Morris Hulin. Press of Groebee-McGovern Company, Newark, 1902 (pp. 57, 59, illus.).

Biographical and Genealogical History of the City of Newark and Essex County, New Jersey. Lewis Publishing Company, New York, 1898 (pp. 298-299).

"Painting of the Oakes Estate Garden" by Dr. William H, Pierson, ca. 1935. Presently owned by Mrs. Estelle Buckler Pierson, Thomas Street, Bloomfield.

"David Oakes Obituary". Newark Herald Tribune. July 9, 1947.

* NOTE: EASEMENT GRANTED FOR DRIVEWAY PURPOSES RESERVED UNTO JEAN D OAKES THE RIGHT TO USE DURING HER LIFETIME OR UNTIL PROPERTY IS DISPOSED OF.



BLOCK 541

60

SURVEY OF 240 BELLEVILLE AVENUE
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD ESSEX COUNTY, N.J.

CERTIFIED TO
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
LAWYERS TITLE INSURANCE CO.

SURVEYED BY *Sam Deneke* 4/5/79 **JUL 2 1981**
AUG - 6 1981

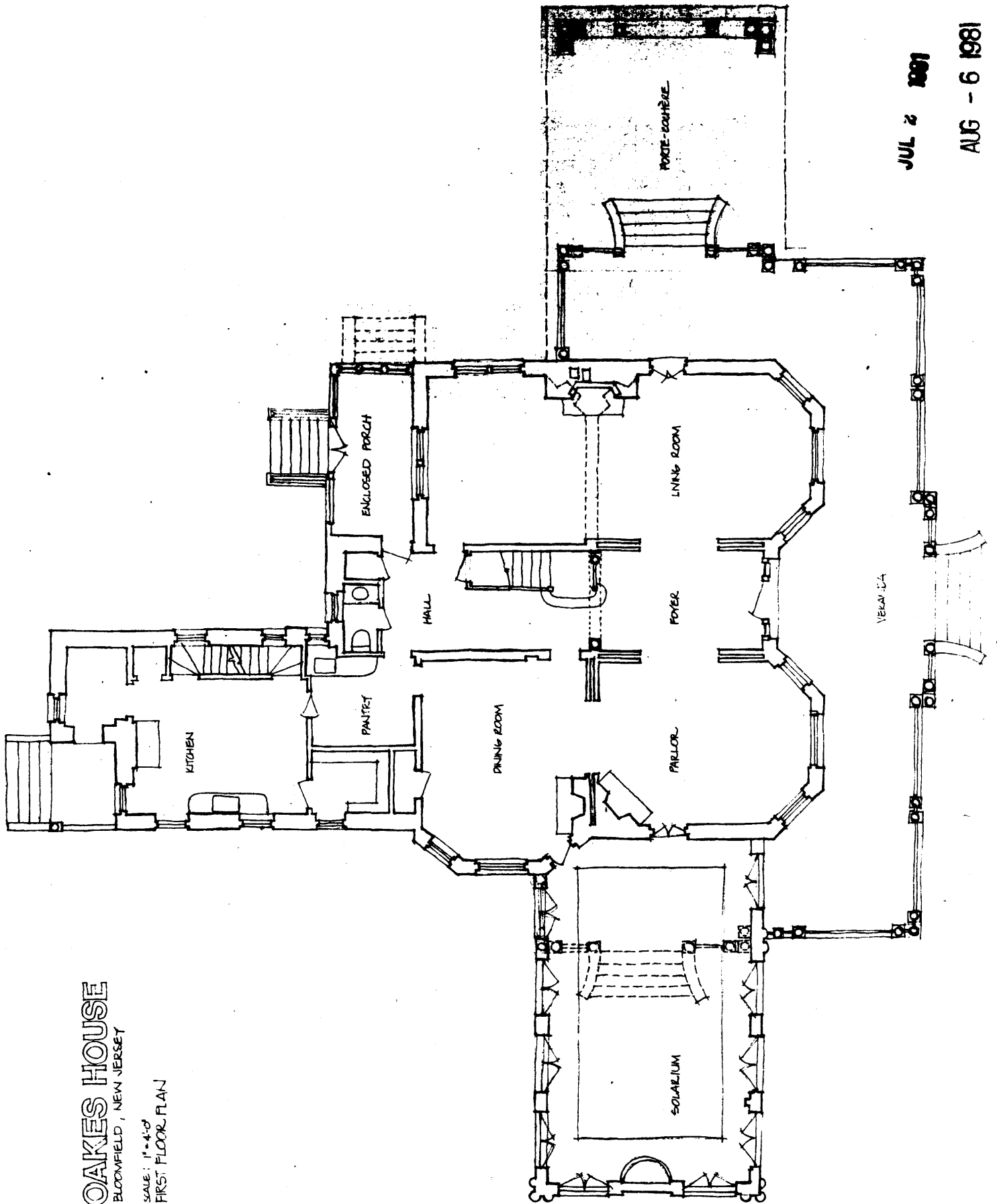
SAM DENEKA P.E. L.S. 12659.

CHG.	REVISION	DATE
A	SLOPE EASEMENT AND AREAS ADDED	5/1/79

DWG. No. C 41-1

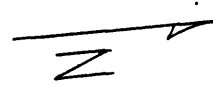
OAKES HOUSE
BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY

SCALE: 1" = 4'-0"
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



JUL 2 1981

AUG - 6 1981



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VICINITY OF
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REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
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Associated with the Oakes Family, prominent New Jersey cloth manufacturers from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century, the Oakes Estate, constructed for Thomas Oakes in 1895 by New York architect Charles Granville Jones, is a well-preserved example of turn-of-the-century architecture with fine craftsmanship on the interior. Virtually untouched since the addition of a solarium in 1928, the property also has the overgrown but still definable lines of early 20th century suburban formal gardens. The Oakes Estate is the last remaining residence in Bloomfield of one of the town's oldest, most prestigious, and influential families.

The family operated the Oakes Woolen Mill Company, one of New Jersey's most important producers of woolen goods, during its long history (fl. 1830-1945). Locally, it is still common to hear older Essex County residents referring proudly to "Oakes Blue" - a reflection of the respect and prominence the dark blue colored wool product had established. The mill was, for many years, the economic mainstay of the town, employing successive waves of English, Scottish, Irish, German, Polish, and Italian immigrants, groups who today make up much of the population of Bloomfield.

The Oakes Mills were established in 1830 by David Oakes (1809-1878). When a disastrous fire in 1836 necessitated rebuilding the plant, Oakes developed the mills to exclusively manufacture flannels and yarns. In 1842 the company specialized in tweeds. During the Civil War the Oakes Mills were contracted to supply large quantities of indigo and dark blue woolen cloth for uniforms, and soon after evolved into a major uniform cloth manufacturer. Thomas Oakes took over the industry following his father's death in 1878 and was responsible for continued growth of the company. Under his ownership the number of employees eventually exceeded five hundred. Upon Thomas' death in 1924, his son, David Oakes, took over although he had been a major executive in the company for many years (he began work there around 1888). The introduction of cheap synthetic fabrics in the 1930's and the Oakes' decision to continue producing only woolens sealed the fate of the firm, and by 1945 the Oakes Woolen Mills had closed, after one hundred years of continuous operation.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheets

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.65

QUADRANGLE NAME Orange

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 568260 4516550

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 290, Lots 17 and 25. An area bounded on the east by the Garden State Parkway, on the south and west by John F. Kennedy Drive, and on the north by Belleville Avenue.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Revisions by T. Karschner, Office of Cultural and Environmental Services

NAME/TITLE Barbara Sandrisser, Program Director
Robert Gehorsam, Staff Writer

ORGANIZATION Peter D. Paul, Architect

DATE July 29, 1980

STREET & NUMBER 50 Galesi Drive

TELEPHONE (201) 785-0660

CITY OR TOWN Wayne

STATE New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

Deputy
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Ramon Schultz

TITLE

DATE June 17, 1981

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the
National Register

DATE 8/6/81

Albion Byers
ATTENDING OFFICER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 7

Page 1

Description (continued)

Passing through the entrance brings one into the foyer, a sizeable chamber highlighted by an oak elliptical archway which separates the stairway from the entrance. This arch is supported by oak columns and features a simple pattern of oak lattice. The second dominant feature of the foyer is the large hanging alabaster lamp, with its hand carved oak leaf pattern.

To the right of the foyer, a set of massive oak and mahogany sliding doors lead into the living room - a large space with polished oak veneer ceiling beams, a large fireplace whose wood mantel ornamented with sunbursts is painted cream enamel. A built-in oak bookcase features leaded glass panes. French windows open onto the veranda and portecochere. To the left of the foyer, identical sliding doors lead into the parlor, a bright, oak trimmed space whose three large bay windows provide a view out to the veranda. An alabaster lamp identical to the foyer's hangs in the room, and a fireplace with a glazed tile face stands in one corner.

Sliding doors open into the dining room, a simple, rectangular space whose floors of white oak are accented in the corners by decorative stained oak lattice like patterns. As with all the rooms in the house, large windows let in a great amount of natural daylight and provide ventilation throughout the space, rendering mechanical cooling virtually unnecessary.

French windows open into the solarium, a room which was designed by Mrs. Jean D. Oakes in 1928. The solarium is a particularly light and attractive room. Supported on a concrete slab floor overlaid with wide oak planks, the room is suffused with sunlight from the rows of arched windows and the pitched skylight. At one time it was practically a forest, with philodendron climbing a trellis along the eastern wall; today few plants remain.

Behind the dining room is the butler's pantry, which in turn leads to a spacious kitchen, equipped with what appears to be the original fixtures. One flight of stairs lead up to the second floor, and another flight leads down to the basement.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 7

Page 2

Description (continued)

The main stairway, located just behind the foyer, is of oak construction. The space below the stairway has a wall of oak panels, some of which are actually large drawers for storage. The soffit under the second floor is also oak paneled. The balusters leading up to the first landing are alternately turned and carved but from the first landing up to the third floor they are only turned. The landing between the second and third floors also possesses an unusual feature - semi-circular arches supported by balusters rising from the floor of the landing to the second story ceiling, allowing for a type of interpenetration of light and space. The presence of light in the stairwell is further enhanced by the leaded glass windows at each landing. The overall design of the stair is well executed.

The second and third floors are devoted to bedrooms and guest rooms. The basement consists of approximately eight rooms separated by open brick archways and separate strongroom and wine cellar below the solarium. Except for some dampness, the basement is in good condition and the rooms are divided into laundry, shop, canning, and storage areas.

In addition to the house, three outbuildings survive. The garage is a large two story simple wood structure in good condition. A small late 19th-early 20th century chicken coop is attached to the garage at the rear. A children's playhouse, circa 1920, is overgrown and somewhat deteriorated, but still in fair condition overall.

The formal gardens of the Oakes Estate, although overgrown and neglected, are extensive. Around 1920 there was an immaculately pruned shrub arrangement in a grid pattern directly behind the building. While many of the plantings are gone, numerous concrete walks and landscape patterns are clearly discernable. The area to the southwest of the house also had a large formal garden and still has two crossing gravel walkways. This section is quite overgrown after many years of neglect.

The building is on its original site, but the surroundings have been much altered. Originally the house was part of a larger property which included Oakeside, the original mansion built by Thomas Oakes, several other residences, and the mill, with a large pond behind it for power and for skating in the winter. After the mill was extensively altered, the Garden State Parkway was constructed immediately adjacent to the estate, literally cutting the property in half. Oakeside itself was demolished in 1948, and garden apartments were constructed on the site, across the street from the surviving house. The remaining two acres represent the tangible aspect of the Oakes legacy to Bloomfield.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate, Bloomfield

Continuation sheet Essex County, New Jersey Item number 7

Page 3

A number of landscape features of the Oakes Estate are especially noteworthy. The entire property is enclosed by a wrought iron fence with stone bases. Behind the main house is a terraced rectangular formal rose and shrub garden. Parallel to this garden is a terraced arbor. Abutting the solarium at the southeast corner of the house is a raised stone patio and fish pond. At the western section of the nominated property is a large floral garden divided into four squares by gravel walkways; wooden fencing surrounds this garden.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 8

Page 1

Significance (continued)

Thomas Oakes had 240 Belleville Avenue constructed in 1895, directly opposite his Italianate mansion, Oakeside (demolished 1948). A younger son, George Oakes, apparently was the first resident, but his oldest son, David, occupied the building shortly after his marriage in 1906.

The Oakes Estate was the home of David Oakes and his wife Jean Wortham Doswell Oakes from 1910 until 1947 when David died and July, 1980 when Jean Oakes died. As was common with most prominent industrial families, the David Oakes' were extremely active in most social, economic, and municipal affairs of the town. David Oakes was a director of the Bloomfield Bank and Trust Company, a partner in the brokerage firm of Schuyler, Chadwick and Burnham; on the board of directors of the National Association of Woolen Manufacturers; and a member of many regional recreational clubs. Jean Oakes was involved in service with local hospitals and various charitable activities. Following her husband's death, Jean Oakes gradually became a recluse, but before her death an agreement was negotiated with the City of Bloomfield to acquire the house and develop a cultural center dedicated to the Oakes Family. The City of Bloomfield now owns the Oakes Estate.

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 9

Page 1

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**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Oakes Estate

Continuation sheet Bloomfield, Essex Co., NJ Item number 9

Page 2

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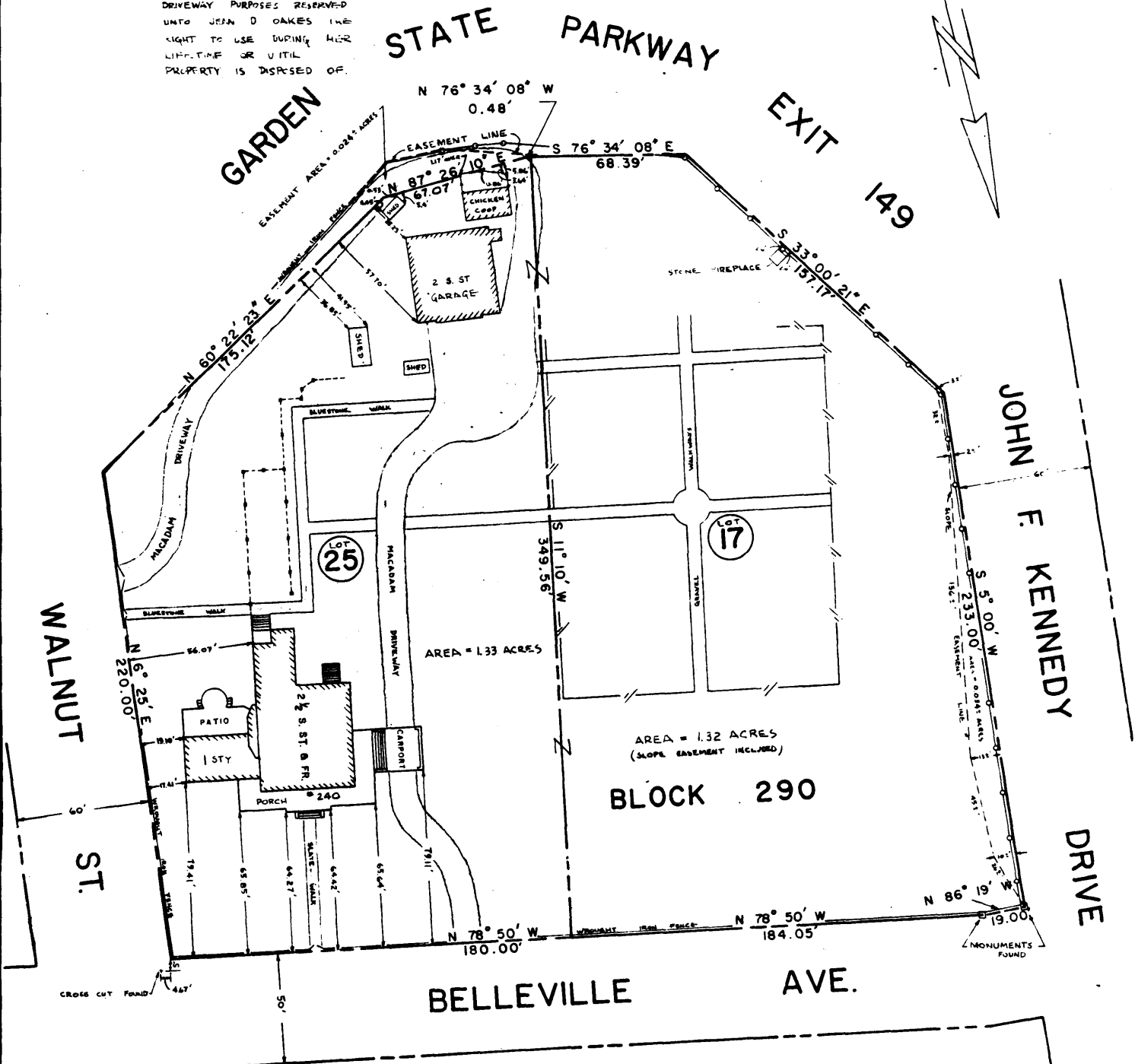
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* NOTE: EASEMENT GRANTED FOR DRIVEWAY PURPOSES RESERVED UNTO JEAN D OAKES THE RIGHT TO USE DURING HER LIFETIME OR UNTIL PROPERTY IS DISPOSED OF.



AREA = 1.33 ACRES

AREA = 1.32 ACRES (SLOPE EASEMENT INCLUDED)

BLOCK 290

SCALE: 1" = 30'

BLOCK 541

SURVEY OF 240 BELLEVILLE AVENUE
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD ESSEX COUNTY, N.J.

CERTIFIED TO
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
LAWYERS TITLE INSURANCE CO.

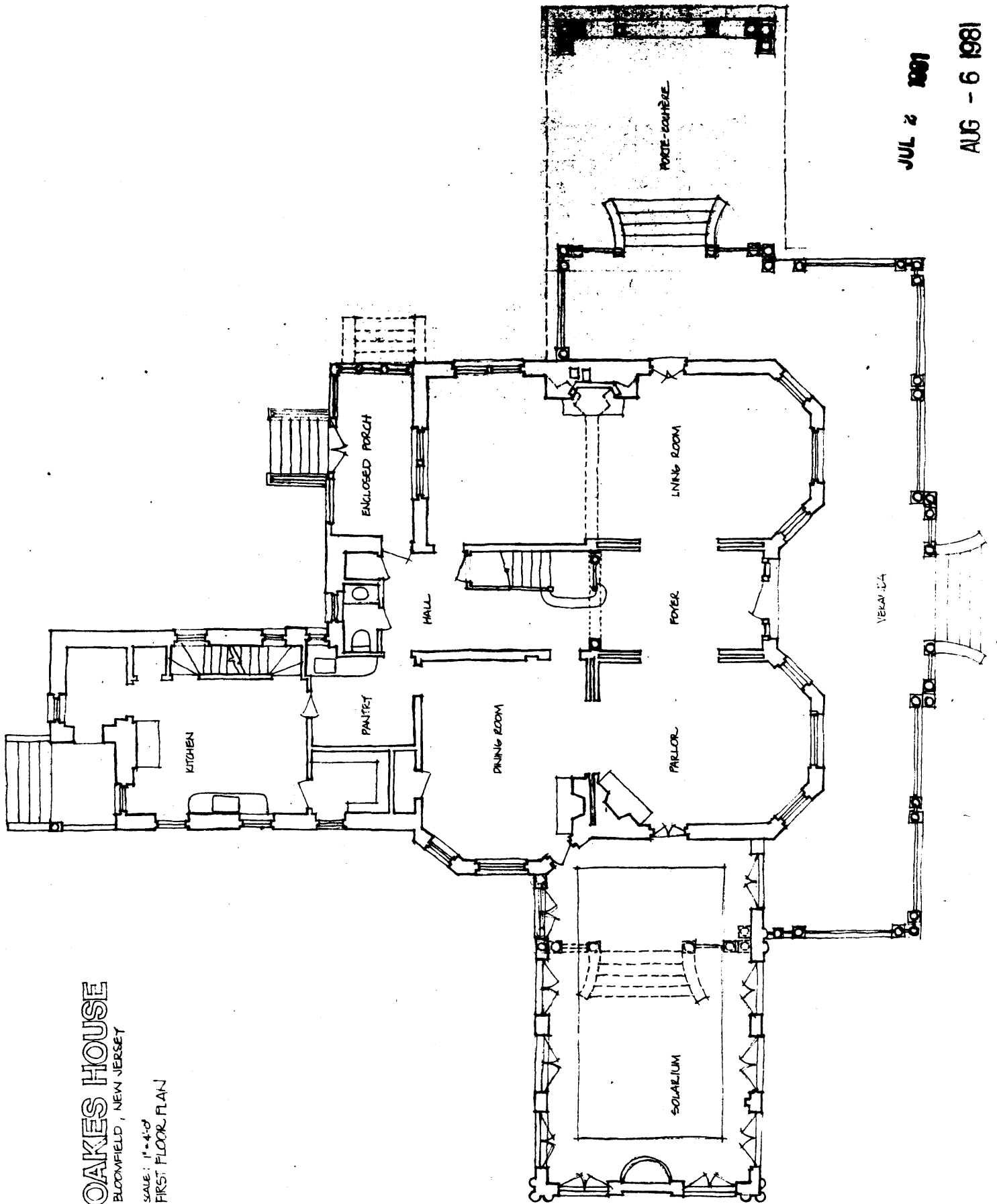
SURVEYED BY *Sam Deneke* 4/5/79 **JUL 2 1981**
AUG - 6 1981

SAM DENEKA P.E. L.S. 12659.

CHG.	REVISION	DATE
A	SLOPE EASEMENT AND AREAS ADDED	5/1/79

OAKES HOUSE
BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY

SCALE: 1" = 4'-0"
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



JUL 2 1981

AUG - 6 1981

VEBA I-4

