

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

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

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only

received JUL 13 1983  
date entered

**1. Name**

historic

HONEYSUCKLE HILL

and/or common "Fair Oaks"

**2. Location**

street & number 712 Beaumont Avenue

not for publication

city, town Harrodsburg vicinity of

state Kentucky code county Mercer code

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
district	public	X occupied	agriculture
X building(s)	X private	unoccupied	museum
structure	both	work in progress	commercial
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	educational
object	na in process	X yes: restricted	entertainment
	na being considered	yes: unrestricted	government
		no	industrial
			military
			other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Dr. & Mrs. C. B. Van Arsdall

street & number 712 Beaumont Avenue

city, town Harrodsburg vicinity of state Kentucky

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mercer County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Harrodsburg state Kentucky

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title KY Historic Resources Inventory MEH-32 has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date December 1981 federal X state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## **7. Description**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Check one</b>		<b>Check one</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Situated on a wooded knoll near the edge of the town of Harrodsburg, Honeysuckle Hill is an important expression of Greek Revival residential architecture. The residence is a symmetrically designed, two story double pile brick structure with two story brick service ell. The front block measures 50' X 37' in plan with open wooden galleries at each flank extending another 9 1/2 feet. A pilastrade ranges across the Flemish bond front elevation, continuing along the side elevations as square wooden columns supporting the galleries. The common bond side elevations rest on rubble limestone while the front foundation is cut and dressed. A standing seam, truncated hip roof covers the four-chimneyed front block.

The seven bayed front elevation is accentuated by an outstanding Greek frontispiece with sidelights and Ionic colonnettes in antis with a triple window above (photo 5). Windows flanking the frontispiece have Greek ears, and the fascia above the openings are decorated with floral designs in relief typical of the Greek Revival style. Similar reliefs are in the parapet over the front entrance and across the frieze of the pilastrade, including the galleries. Windows have six-over-six sashes throughout and jack arch lintels on the side and rear elevations. There are louvered Venetians in the lower front openings of the galleries, panels at the balustrades, and a singularly unique radial floral design, made of wood in the upper opening (photo 7). This later feature has been attributed to ironwork designs in New Orleans. The side elevations are three-bayed, with center doors at both levels.

The interior plan features an 11-foot center transverse hall flanked by two large front rooms and two smaller rear rooms (please see drawing). A small portion of the northwest rear room is an original stairway, as the center hall did not have a staircase until 1949. The fittings generally are unchanged and consist of paneled poplar doors, Greek architraves, and paneled soffits along the hallway (photos 9 & 10). Each room has a fireplace and in most cases the original Doric mantel. Woodwork on the second floor is less stylistic but of the period.

The two story, common bond ell with interior chimney was added to the front block circa 1859. Around 1900 a two story, Colossal order Doric portico was added to the front elevation and new hardwood floors installed on the first floor. In 1958 a Greek Revival porch and car port were attached to the rear elevation.

The common bond brick slave quarters located immediately behind the ell is the only dependency that remains from the original 50 acre farm. North of the house are the remnants of a stone root cellar and well. The barn, carriage house, and poultry house that once accompanied the main residence no longer stand.

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

Specific dates c.1840-1845

Builder/Architect Dr. Guilford Runyon

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Honeysuckle Hill, believed to have been designed in the early 1840s by Dr. Guilford Runyon, is one of several highly sophisticated expressions of Greek Revival architecture built in Harrodsburg during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Along with Diamond Point, Aspen Hall, and Forest Pillars, Honeysuckle Hill vividly exemplifies the antebellum prosperity of this county seat town. The design of Honeysuckle Hill is at once a significant and unique embodiment of the pretentious Greek house, utilizing traits from both the regional model and a reputed New Orleans antecedent. Equally important is the turn-of-the-century colossal portico, which reflects the broad acceptance of the national revival movement.

The inspiration for Honeysuckle Hill has been commonly attributed to its rather eccentric owner-builder, Dr. Guilford Runyon. As an orphan, Runyon had been adopted into the Shaker colony at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, located a few miles northeast of Harrodsburg. During his residency there Runyon became a doctor and was a Shaker in good standing until 1839, when he was expelled after announcing his plans to marry a young lady living in New Orleans.

Following his expulsion from the colony, Runyon moved to Harrodsburg where he purchased 17 acres of land from Beriah Magoffin. According to unpublished sources, Runyon subsequently designed an imposing Greek Revival house with the assistance of his intended bride. Part of Miss Kitty's contribution was the design of the side galleries and rare Battenberry grillwork. Construction began around 1840 but Runyon's fiancée died of cholera before completion of the house. As a result, Runyon lost interest in the project and never constructed a center hall staircase.

After Runyon's death in the 1850s the house passed onto his two Shaker sisters, who then sold it to the McBrayer family. It was during the McBrayer's ownership that the brick ell was added to the house. In 1881 the McBrayers deeded the property to Mrs. Mary E. S. Bonta for \$6,000. Following a sheriff's auction in 1903 the house and property were sold to Bush Allin and renamed "Fair Oaks."

Soon after purchasing the house the Allins commissioned a Cincinnati architect to design the colossal portico. The Allin family continued to reside at Fair Oaks until 1949, when Dr. and Mrs. Condit Van Arsdall acquired the 48 acre estate. Soon thereafter, the Van Arsdalls platted a subdivision on all but the present three acre tract surrounding the house. Alterations to the house included the restoration of the fireplaces, porches, and construction of a center hall stairway and bathrooms.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Mercer County Recorder's Office.

Journals of Shakers at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, 1830. Harrodsburg Historical Society,  
Harrodsburg, Kentucky

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.8

Quadrangle name Harrodsburg

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	1   6	6   9   0   4   5   0	4   1   8   0   1   0   0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
E	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
G	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

B	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
F	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
H	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point on the west side of Beaumont Avenue and 80' south of Runyon Road, proceed southwest 350' to a point along the fenceline, then proceed southeast 225' to a point in a shallow ravine. Then proceed northeast 350', crossing front driveway, to the

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

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

name/title Clay Lancaster and Stephen Gordon

organization Kentucky Heritage Council date May, 1983

street & number 9th Fl., Capital Plaza Tower telephone 564-7005

city or town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Mary Lancaster*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 6, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date

*8/11/83*

*Melores Byers*  
keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received \_\_\_\_\_  
date entered \_\_\_\_\_

Continuation sheet

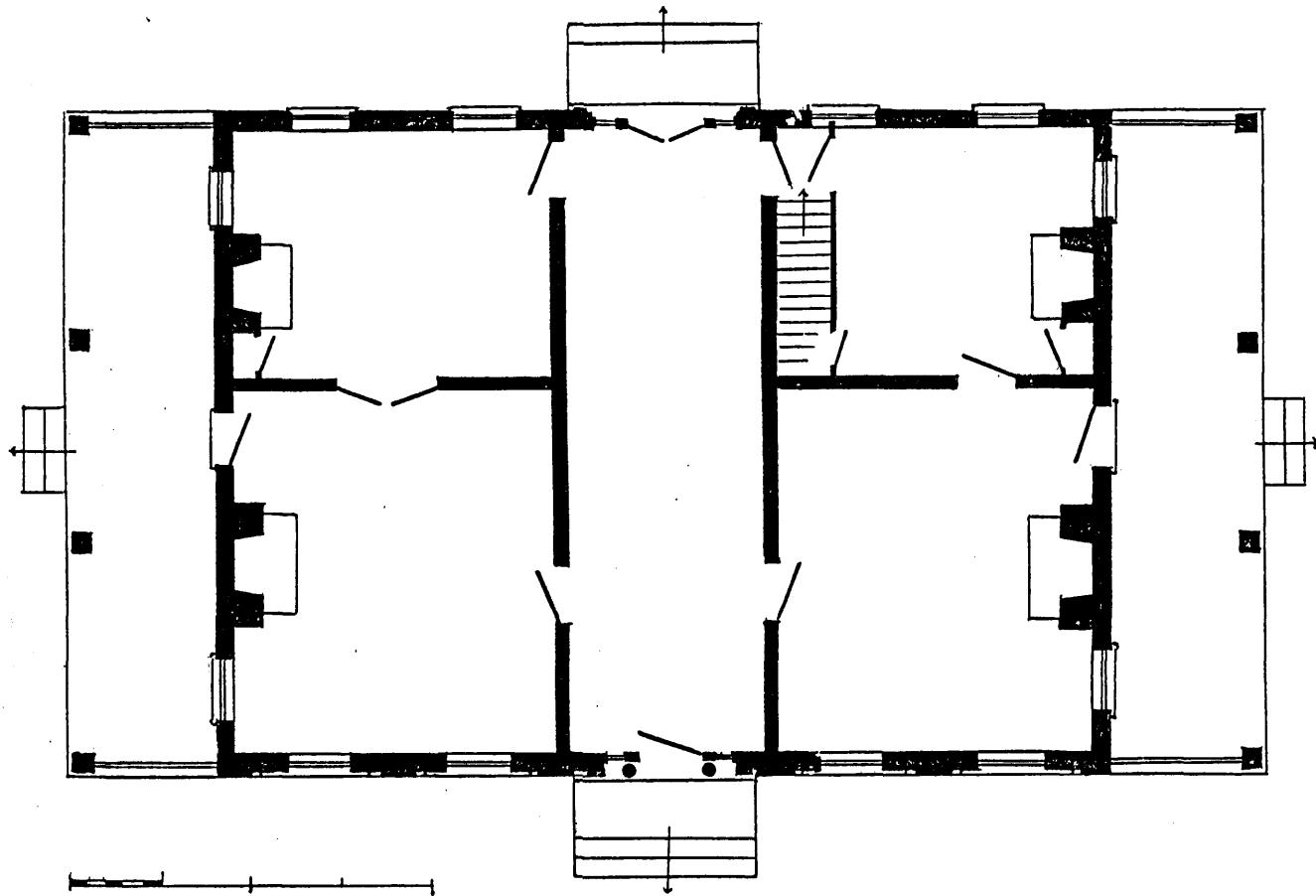
HONEYSUCKLE HILL

Item number

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Honeysuckle Hill, First Floor Plan.

*(Drawing Courtesy Clay Lancaster)*

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**National Park Service**

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Honeysuckle Hill  
Continuation sheet    Mercer County, Kentucky

Item number

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west side of Beaumont Avenue. Then proceed northwest 225' along Beaumont Avenue to the point of origin. The nominated area includes the main house, slave quarters, and grounds. Post-World War II residential homes are excluded from the nominated property.

HONEYSUCKLE HILL  
712 Beaumont Avenue  
Harrodsburg, Mercer Co., KY.

SITE PLAN

