

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB

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 any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/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 (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Butler House
other names PG:76A-14

2. Location

street & number 6403 Oxon Hill Road not for publication
city or town Oxon Hill vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Prince George's code 033 zip code 20745

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth 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).

[Signature] 2-1-05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
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 this 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): _____

[Signature] 3/14/05
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall

Butler House (PG:76A-14)
Name of Property

Prince George's County, Maryland
County and State

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 the count)

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

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

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

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

African American Historic Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

No style

foundation
walls WOOD: log; OTHER: cast stone;
WOOD: weatherboard
roof WOOD: shake
METAL
other

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 pattern of our history.
- B** Property 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

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- 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)

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 files (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1853-1873

Significant Dates

1853: Henry Alexander Butler settles on site and completes house
1873: Henry Alexander Butler becomes legal owner of house and associated land

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

African American

Architect/Builder

Henry Alexander Butler (builder)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Prince George's County Planning Department

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.44 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

UTM grid with Zone, Easting, and Northing columns for rows 1, 2, 3, and 4.

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

Form fields for name/title, Organization, date, street & number, telephone, city or town, state, and zip code.

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

Form fields for name, street & number, telephone, city or town, state, and zip code.

Paperwork Reduction 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 listings.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Butler House
Name of Property

Section 7 Page 1

Prince George's County, Maryland
County and State

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The Butler House occupies a triangular plot of land wedged between Forest Heights on the north, the Capital Beltway on the southeast, and Oxon Hill Children's Farm on the southwest in Oxon Hill, Prince George's County, Maryland. Constructed in 1853, the Butler House is a 3-bay, 2½-story, wood-frame and log residence with a steeply-pitched side-gable roof and a large shed addition on its north. A small, ca. 1940s Cape Cod-style house also stands on the property. Both houses are in deteriorated condition.

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Butler House

Name of Property

Prince George's County, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Butler House occupies a triangular plot of land wedged between the Town of Forest Heights on the north, the Capital Beltway on the southeast, and Oxon Hill Children's Farm on the southwest in Oxon Hill, Prince George's County, Maryland. Despite its proximity to a major interstate highway and a residential development, the Butler House remains relatively secluded. It stands in a wooded area next to a field and an abandoned road that once led from Washington, D.C., through Prince George's County. The area immediately around the house is cleared. None of the outbuildings associated with this once prosperous farm remains, although a ca. 1940s Cape Cod-style house stands south of the Butler House.

The Butler House is a 3-bay, 2½-story, 1 room deep, wood-frame and log residence.¹ It is currently covered in cast stone, although wood lap siding is visible on the gable ends. The steeply-pitched side-gable roof is covered in metal panels and wood shake. The main entry is located in the south bay of the west (front) elevation and has a mid-20th century half-glass door. The window openings contain mid-20th century metal sash. A large, 1½-story shed addition containing a kitchen extends from the north gable end. A parged brick chimney rises between the north gable end and the shed addition. A 1-story screen porch has been added to the east elevation.

The interior of the Butler House consists of one room on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor of the main block. A winder stair is located in the southeast corner of the main block. The kitchen addition has a large room on the first floor and a small room on the second. Most original interior finishes have been covered; however, there is a simple mantel and wood paneling on the first floor of the main block, and wide beadboard paneling and riven lath on the second floor of the main block.

The Butler House retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling and association. The house stands along an abandoned main road that once made it a prime location. It retains a quiet, rural setting and feeling in part because it is in a secluded, forested area and in part because it is adjacent to the Oxon Hill Children's Farm agricultural museum. The house has been continuously associated with the Butler family since 1853. Investigation of the physical fabric underneath the cast stone is likely to reveal that the building also retains its integrity of materials and workmanship.

¹ This description is based on information gathered by Susan G. Pearl of the Prince George's County Planning Department in 1993 and 1997 and George McDaniel of the Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture in 1977. (McDaniel is now Director of Drayton Hall in Charleston, South Carolina.) The house was not accessible at the time of this writing.

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Butler House
Name of Property

Section 8 Page 1

Prince George's County, Maryland
County and State

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Butler House, constructed ca. 1853, is significant for its association with the themes "African American experience in Prince George's County prior to Emancipation, ca. 1660-1865" and "The Freedmen's Bureau and Prince George's County, 1865-1872." These themes are set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation for African American Historic Resources in Prince George's County. Henry Alexander Butler, a free African American man from Charles County, moved with his family to the property in 1853. Since then, the property has been continuously associated with the Butler family. The Butler House is a rare surviving example of a documented pre-Civil War house inhabited by a free African American family.

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Butler House

Name of Property

Section 8 Page 2

Prince George's County, Maryland

County and State

RESOURCE HISTORY AND HISTORIC CONTEXT:

According to Butler family oral history, the Butler house was begun in 1851 as a post office.² Henry Alexander Butler, a free African American man from Charles County, moved with his family to the property in 1853 and completed construction of the house.³ The Butler family possesses receipts for taxes paid on the property by Henry Butler in 1859 and 1860.⁴ However, the property was not legally deeded to Butler until 1873.⁵

The Butlers turned their property into a small farm that included a chicken house, meat house, barns, and other agricultural buildings.⁶ The Butler House faced the main road from Washington, D.C., through Prince George's County.⁷ During the Civil War, Union officers are said to have stopped at the house when traveling through the area.⁸

Family photographs indicate that the Butlers lived a comfortable, middle class life. They also enjoyed high status in the African American community. Henry Butler became a Reconstruction-era community leader, serving as trustee of the Freedmen's Bureau school near Oxon Hill.⁹ The Butlers associated with prominent African American Washingtonians including the first African American priest and a Mr. Lewis, master barber at the U.S. Capitol.¹⁰ The Butler House is currently vacant but is still owned by the Butler family.

² George McDaniel, Survey of 19th Century Houses of Black Families in Southern Maryland, Phase II.

³ Susan G. Pearl, *African-American Heritage Survey, 1996*, 130. The original family name was Boteler.

⁴ George McDaniel, Survey of 19th Century Houses of Black Families in Southern Maryland, Phase II.

⁵ Susan G. Pearl, *African-American Heritage Survey, 1996*, 130.

⁶ Susan G. Pearl, *African-American Heritage Survey, 1996*, 130.

⁷ Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form for the Butler House.

⁸ Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties form for the Butler House.

⁹ Bianca Floyd, *Records and Recollections: Early History in Prince George's County Maryland*, 40.

¹⁰ George McDaniel, Survey of 19th Century Houses of Black Families in Southern Maryland, Phase II.

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Name of Property

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

- Floyd, Bianca. *Records and Recollections: Early Black History in Prince George's County, Maryland*. Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1989.
- McDaniel, George. Survey of 19th Century Houses of Black Families in Southern Maryland, Phase II. Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, 1977. [Maryland Historical Trust]
- Maryland Commission on Afro-American History and Culture. The Butler House, Oxon Hill, Maryland. Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form. Maryland Historical Trust. n.d. [Prince George's County Planning Department]
- Pearl, Susan G. *African-American Heritage Survey, 1996*. Upper Marlboro, MD: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1996.

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Butler House
Name of Property

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Prince George's County, Maryland
County and State

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The National Register boundary for the Butler House consists of Prince George's County Tax Map 95, Parcels 26, 32, 33, 35, 37, and 38. The boundary encompasses 9.44 acres.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The National Register boundary encompasses all land historically associated with the Butler House that is still owned by members of the Butler family.