UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Brooks Mansion is located near the center of Square 3827, a flat, approximately 1 3/4 acre site bounded by 9th, 10th, Monroe and Newton Streets, N.E. It is composed of the original Greek Revival mansion house, Bellair, built by Ann and Jehiel Brooks circa 1840, and a large eastern addition to this house built by the Marist Society when altering Bellair for use as Marist College in 1894. The immediate grounds of the mansion were originally a thirty acre trapezoidal area fronting to the northwest on Bunker Hill Road. The house was approached from this thoroughfare by a drive which became circular immediately before the house. There was lawn to the north and east and a pear orchard to the west of the drive. A long walled garden containing a greenhouse, well, flower and vegetable garden and grapery with a variety of plum, cherry, apricot, nectarine and fig-bearing trees extended from the west side of the house. A peach orchard was to the east, and an open field and apple orchard were to the south. Today the lot left to the house after the subdivision of the estate is planted in lawn and shrubs. There are many large old trees, some of which may be original. The circular drive still exists and there are some fig trees remaining on the grounds. To the east and south lies the late nineteenth, early twentieth century suburb of Brookland. To the west is the old B&O railroad track. The Brookland Metro station is under construction here now on a site adjacent to Brooks Mansion. To the west and north of this track lies the campus of Catholic University and the buildings of its many affiliated religious organizations.

The original mansion house faces north and is 45' x 45', equare in shape. It is three stories high and three bays wide, solidly constructed of brick over a full basement with bluestone walls and foundation and brick floor. The facades are of brick roughly laid in a running bond. Originally they were rough cast or stuccoed "in imitation of freestone...similar in style and quality to the work done on the outer walls of the City Hall of Washington City." Contrasting dressed granite has been lavishly used in the decorative detail of the house, including entrance portico, low water table, moulded chimney caps and basement window wells. Window and door sills are of freestone. Four rectangular inset panels occur between the second and third stories of the principal facade. These are repeated on the east and west elevations. The roof is hipped and covered with standing seam metal. There is a central cupola with gabled asphalt shingled roof. There are four chimneys, two in each end wall. A cornice of moderate projection is supported by coupled brackets above a broad moulded architrave. The entire entablature is bold yet simple in conception.

The entrance portico occurs in the central bay of the principal facade. Constructed entirely of granite, it is Doric in design with entablature supported by coupled columns resting upon panelled pedestals. A tripartite window of typical Greek Revival design is centered above this portico.

Panels at the base of this window open to allow access to the roof of the portico, which may have been balustraded originally. Double entrance doors with sidelights and transom are recessed, allowing an open exterior vestibule. Windows are 6/6 light double-thung sash on the first and second floors, and 2/2 light double-hung sash on the third floor.



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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Joint Committee on Landmarks has designated Brooks Mansion a Category II Landmark of importance which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty of the District of Columbia. The house and its grounds occupy an entire square in Brookland, one of the oldest and best established neighborhoods in northeast Washington. Its history uniquely reflects the development of that section of the city from Colonial days to the present. Brooks Mansion is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture built in the late 1830's when the enthusiasm for Greek Revival--our first truly national artistic style--was at its height. The purity of its Greek Revival design is unusual in Washington. Here, despite the presence of such extraordinarily fine Greek Revival monumental public buildings as the U.S. Treasury and the U.S. Patent Office, residential architecture remained strongly under the influence of the federal tradition.

Brooks Mansion is built on part of a 1040 acre tract of land which was patented in 1688 by Lord Baltimore to Col. Ninian Beall. This tract, known as "Beall's Inclosure," was sold to a Richard Marsham and bequeathed by him in 1713 to his grandchildren--Samuel, William, Marsham, Catherine and Margaret Queen. The Queens built a manor house at the site now known as Queen's Chapel. They were wealthy planters who figured prominently in the affairs of Prince George's County, Maryland, and are remembered today in such N.E. Washington place names as Queen's Chapel Road, Queensborough and Queenstown, as well as Oueen's Chapel. Ninth Street--the northern boundary of the present Brooks Mansion property--was originally known as Queen Street. The Queens were descendants of Leonard Calvert, Maragret Brent's brother Giles Brent, and Piscataway Emperor Kittamagund. It has been said that their history is the history of Catholic Maryland. In 1830 Ann Margaret Queen married Col. Jehiel Brooks, a Jacksonian Democrat from Ohio. Brooks was appointed Agent for the Red River Indian Agency by President Andrew Jackson and the young couple went to live in Natchitochez, Louisiana, on the Texas-Louisiana frontier. In 1835, after successfully negotiating a treaty with the Caddo Indians, Brooks and his wife returned to Washington. They built Brooks Mansion--which they called "Bellair"--sometime between 1836 and 1840 on a 246 acre parcel of Beall's Inclosure belonging to Ann Brooks and her brother and sisters. The Greek Revival design is perhaps attributable to their experiences in Louisiana and Ohio and to their Jacksonian connections. Here Brooks, a lawyer by profession, engaged in argicultural pursuits and indulged a taste for political writing. An admirer of landscape gardener Andrew Jackson Downing, he developed Bellair into a model country estate, and was a staunch advocate of the improvement of the public squares in Washington and of the grounds at Mt. Vernon. Ann Brooks died in 1876; Jehiel Brooks, in 1886.

(Continued on Form 10-300a)

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10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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Form 10-300a (July 1969)	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	STATE
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7. Description (Continued)

On the principal facade the sills of these windows project into the decorative inset panels. The windows were originally shuttered. The third story of the house appears to have been raised somewhat to provide expanded bedroom space. The chimneys on the west side barely extend above the present roof line. Brick bonding is not continuous at the corners, suggesting posts which may Though the roof may have been lower, it was almost have been balustraded. certainly hipped and probably covered with slate. The cupola is original, and its roof was also probably hipped. The earliest known view of Brooks Mansion, a drawing published in 1891, shows the house as it is today. The Boschke Map of 1856-59 shows a substantial rear ell. This wing, probably containing kitchen and dining room, opened onto the west garden and, as was common with Greek Revival residences, may have been original to the house. It no longer exists, but the rear windows leading to it are spanned with relieving arches and wooden lintels rather than flat arches as are all the The wing appears in the Baist real estate atlas other windows of the house. as late as 1903 and was brick masonry construction.

The interior of the house is laid out with a spaciously proportioned center stairhall reaching from front to rear of the house. The stair itself is particularly fine, with broad, easy treads, scrolled stringers and notable urn-like turned newel. To the right are double drawing rooms while to the left are a reception room and small rear room which were probably separated by a minor longitudinal hall leading to a service entrance in the east side. A large arched opening at the first story landing has been filled in, the rear room divided into two, fire walls added and the longitudinal hall enlarged at the expense reception room. On the second floor there are essentially five rooms opening onto a longitudinal hall. One of these has been divided into two like that below and fire walls have been erected. The third floor also contains essentially five rooms. Woodwork and decorative plaster on all three floors is relatively intact and of the period.

The wing built by the Marists in 1894 more than doubled the space of Brooks Mansion. It is approximately rectangular in shape, 55' x 35'. Of brick masonry construction, it is six bays wide and three stories high. There is a full basement. The hipped roof is covered in tin. There is a simple bracketed cornice. Windows are 6/6 light double-hung sash. A wide hall connects this wing with the halls of the mansion house on all three floors. Originally there were a refectory and store room on the first floor, a study first floor, a study hall and classrooms on the second, and living rooms on the third. As the use of the building changed over the years its interiors were extensively altered. Today there is an entrance with three-story utility core at the east end. Broad, well-lit halls run along the front of the building from this entrance to the mansion house on the first and second floors. Large classrooms with both interior and exterior fenestration open off these halls. The third floor contains many small rooms which must have been used as bedrooms by the Bendictine Sisters.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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8. Significance - Continued

In 1887 the house and land-now 134 acres-were sold to an Ida U. Marshall, then immediately resold at a substantial profit to Benjamin F. Leighton and Richard E. Pairo. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had built its Metropolitan Branch through the property in 1873. Leighton and Pairo subdivided Bellair, establishing the early railroad commuter suburb of "Brookland", named after the Brooks family. The mansion house and its immediate grounds, occupying an approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ acre square in the subdivision, were sold the following year to an Elizabeth Varney who, with her sister reputedly operated the premises as a boarding house. In 1891 the Marist Society, an order of missionary priests, purchased Brooks Mansion. The Marists hoped to establish there an administrative center and house of studies which would utilize the special facilities of the nearby nascent Catholic University of America. After minor alterations, Marist College opened in the fall of 1892, the second Catholic University-affiliated house of study and the first in Brook-Though greatly enlarged in 1894, the college soon outgrew Brooks land. In 1900 it was moved to a new building nearer to the University. Mansion. Brooks Mansion was used by the Marists as an apostolic school until 1903, then stood vacant until purchased on behalf of the Order of Benedictine Sisters of Elizabeth City, New Jersey, in 1905.

The Benedictine Sisters, a community-oriented teaching order of nuns, founded St. Benedict's Academy there that same year. Among their students were grandchildren of Ann and Jehiel Brooks. From 1911-1915 the house also served as the Order's house of studies. Here the present Sister's College of Catholic University had its beginning. In 1992'the Benedictines gave up their grammar school and operated in its place North East Catholic High School. This school continued until 1928. From 1928 until 1970 Brooks Mansion was used as a convent for Benedictine Sisters teaching in the schools of St. Anthony's Parish. The house was sold to the Parish in 1958. In 1970 it was sold to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. It was to be demolished to provide a parking lot for the nearby Brookland Metro stop. The parking lot is no longer needed and alternate uses for the property are now being considered.



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9. Bibliography (Continued)

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

APR 24

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

BROOKS MANSION WASHINGTON, D.C.

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The original Brooks Mansion sturcture was a 45 foot square, which had additions to the south and a later addition to the east. The southern addition, shown on the earliest 1861 and 1863 maps, was demolished by 1900, while the eastern addition was built in 1894. The 19th century maps also show a number of outbuildings in the vicinity of the mansion; these were demolished prior to or just after the platting of Brookland.

Field testing of square 3827 was conducted primarily in the areas south and east of Brooks Mansion to determine whether there remained any preserved features or artifact distributions which had not been destroyed or disturbed by the extensive activity associated with the renovation of the mansion. About one-third of the test units excavated in the area of the southern addition to the main house revealed either artifact densities and/or distributions consistent with that predicted to be found at the rear of a 19th century farm/plantation house. For example, the frequency and distribution of faunal remains by test unit is not considered random. High frequencies of faunal remains are not only centered on the area of the southern addition to the mansion but localized within it. This probable food refuse discard area is not believed to be an artifact of subsequent disturbance to the site, but rather to reflect the behavior of the 19th century occupants. Furthermore, although significantly fewer buttons were found than bone, the distribution of this artifact class compliments that of faunal remains in its close association with archaeological features of the southern addition building.

The only definable feature discovered during testing of the Brooks Mansion site and directly associated with areas of high density of recovered bone and buttons was located in four test units south of the rear of the mansion and is interpreted as the remains of a portion of the foundation of the southern addition building or buildings. The brick top of this foundation appears to have been deliberately broken and therefore is found in upper startigraphic levels as rubble only. For example, in one test unit this brick rubble is encountered at about 1.1 feet below surface trending north to south in about the middle of the test unit. The rubble continued to a depth of about 2 feet below surface when an in

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situ brick foundation was encountered with narrow builders trench stains on the east and west. The foundation consisted of three courses of bricks, three layers thick, to a depth of 2.5 feet below surface. The possible builder's trench east of the bricks included a sherd of "cream" appearing white bodied earthenware. This sherd is too small to unequivocally type, but if it is creamware, it is the oldest ceramic fragment found, pre-dating 1820. The large number of animal bone fragments from this unit points to the discard of food waste in this vicinity, possibly related to the use of one of these southern outbuildings as a kitchen.

Excavations in the location of the southern addition to the Brooks Mansion showed that at least part of the foundation to this demolished wing still exists and that the higher concentrations of artifacts occurred east of the addition, as predicted, and in direct proximity to the addition. One likely interpretation of this feature and the associated artifact distributions would indicate a kitchen closer to the building, with debris as discarded out the kitchen entrance, and possibly a laundry at the southern end of the addition.

The identification of part of the foundation of the southern wing of Brooks Mansion indicates that at least part of this archaeological site remains intact. Cultural activities including the demolition of this addition, construction of the east wing of the current building, and the most recent renovation of the building (including trenching around the foundation) have all adversely affected the archaeological resources. Typical size of the more fragile artifacts, including glass, ceramic and bone fragments, is extremely small, and several of the depositonal layers identified in the test units were, in fact, artificially created by earth movement in conjunction with at least one of the construction/demolition episodes. The remains of the brick foundation even show the extent of destruction, as the upper portions of these foundations exist only as rubble; intact brick courses were not identified until a depth of almost 2.0 feet below surface.

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Probably no area of this archaeological site has totally escaped the adverse effects of ground disturbing activities. The effects of these activities are reflected in the archaeology of the site and as such form an integral part of the history of the site. Of all areas tested, however, the southern portion of the rear addition to the mansion appears to be the least adversely affected by these ground disturbing cultural activities.

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Locations of Sites B-1, B--2, and B-3 (From 1981 NCPC Map) [] = Predicted Site locations Scale 1:2400



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Brooks Mansion Circa 1863 (From Hodasevich 1863) T N Scale appx. 1:2500



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Locations of Auger Holes and Test Pits at Brooks Mansion Excavations (Scale 1:4800)



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The archaeological remains of a rear addition located to the south of the main Brooks Mansion house should be amended to be part of the National Register Nomination of Brooks Mansion under criterion d)...that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. This land is significant because it contains archaeological resources, features and artifacts that can be associated temporally with the 19th century Brooks family occupation of this building.

These archaeological resources represent the only remains of a rear addition or series of additions to the main Brooks Mansion building which existed in the 19th century. Based on primary archival resources, this rear addition was in place by 1863 and probably all or a portion of it was erected prior to that date. During the Brooks family occupation of this property in the 19th century there were a number of landscape and architectural features that formed an integral part of the Brooks Mansion complex, including the main house; a formal garden to the west of the rear of the main house; an addition or series of outbuildings off the rear of the main house; a large outbuilding immediately to the east; and a cluster of three to four outbuildings to the southeast, but outside of the current bounds of Square 3827. Today the main house remains the only intact, standing, visible remnant of this 19th century complex. The remainder of these components have been destroyed or are represented as buried archaeological resources only.

While much of the archaeological integrity of Square 3827 has been compromised through post-1887 repair, demolition, construction and renovation activities, the south half of the area of the southern addition to the main house does possess sufficient archaeological integrity and potential to warrant preservation and is a crucial component for interpreting the total range of activities and architecture associated with the 19th century Brooks Mansion complex. Portions of the southern addition foundation have been preserved, and the association of this archaeological feature with potentially meaningful artifact densities and distributions suggest that this addition was the locus for domestic maintenance activities associated with the Brooks occupation of the main house. While the brick Brooks Mansion house is standing with its "public face" preserved, its rear or "private" domestic activity area and its architecture are represented only by archaeological resources.

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