



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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

other names/site number The Lutheran Orphans' Home

### 2. Location

street & number 1 South Home Avenue

city or town Longswamp Township

state Pennsylvania code PA county Berks code 011 zip code 19562

NA	not for publication
NA	vicinity

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Andrea McDonald 12/10/2014  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register    determined eligible for the National Register

   determined not eligible for the National Register    removed from the National Register

   other (explain):   

Patrick Andrus 1/28/2015  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	1	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	<b>Total</b>

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

N/A

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

0

**6. Function or Use**

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

Domestic/Institutional Housing

Funerary: cemetery

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

Other/Nonprofit: Administrative offices

Education/Library

Domestic: Multiple dwellings

**7. Description**

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

Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brownstone

walls: Brick

roof: Slate, standing seam metal

other: \_\_\_\_\_

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

The subject of the nominated property is the iconic Old Main building of the Lutheran Home at Topton, a small town in rural northeastern Berks County. The Lutheran Orphans' Home (hereafter referred to as the Home) began as an orphanage, with the 1899 Classical Revival Old Main building (designed by architect Frederick A. Barrows) serving as the orphanage's administration, classrooms, and dorms. The siting of Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton (Old Main) on the highest portion of the property, overlooking the town of Topton and the surrounding area, along with its prominent white-painted clock tower and a tree-lined allee leading up to the building, ensured that Old Main would become (and remain as) the most noticeable part of the complex. Old Main was enlarged in 1912 with brick wings that complemented the original building's brick construction and Classical Revival style. In the 1960s, the Lutheran Home facility began a conversion that turned the mission of the institution to elder care. Many new buildings were constructed to serve the new residents, and in 1983, Old Main was physically connected to a new residential and dining building via an unobtrusive one-story hyphen that serves as entry foyer to either the Tower Court Apartments or the east end of Old Main. As the Home converted to eldercare, extensive building campaigns undertaken during the 1970s, transformed the campus from that of a traditional orphanage complex into that of a modern eldercare facility. Most of the fabric of the historic Home campus has been removed. Therefore, only Old Main with its additions is the only building being nominated (one contributing building). Therefore, the nominated property boundary must extend beyond the historic Old Main to include the new buildings constructed to the east and north of the building, which are considered additions as they are now all connected to Old Main. These additions are all low-rise construction on the plateau behind Old Main and are not visible from the surrounding landscape. Also included within the boundary is a small cemetery (one non-contributing site) on the lawn west of Old Main, and the tree-lined allee leading to the front entrance of Old Main. The cemetery is non-contributing as it does not add to the architectural significance of Old Main. The allee considered an uncounted landscape feature. The boundary excludes other buildings and the remainder of the campus due to lack of association with the area of significance. The siting of the property and the relationships of the additions through one-story entrance hyphen between Old Main and Tower Court Apartments make it possible to consider the exterior integrity of the historic building intact. There have been some modifications to the interior, but overall the floor plan and important finishes also remain intact. Old Main continues to be the visual focus of the Lutheran Home's campus, and throughout the Topton area.

Old Main is an excellent example of the Classical Revival style in Berks County, Pennsylvania. The architect was Frederick A. Barrows. It is a brick masonry building with a three-storey, central tower and two-storey symmetrical wings. On top of the central tower is a square cupola with clock faces on each face of the painted dome [Photograph 3].

The property is accessed from South Home Avenue through an allee of deciduous trees [Photograph 1].<sup>1</sup> The building sits on a small rise that can be seen for several miles throughout the Topton community [Photographs 29, 30, 52, and 53]. South Home Avenue splits to encircle a knoll that leads up to the base of Old Main. The main façade (north elevation) looks down South Home Avenue. The building is accessed via two runs of concrete steps that start at a driveway, which separates the building from a grassy knoll in front of the building [Photograph 3]. The knoll is covered with ornamental flowering trees that were planted in 1980s. The road wraps around the west and south elevations to a

<sup>1</sup> This is the third set of trees to be planted on Home Avenue. The first set were maples and were overgrown and died c. 1980. A second set of maples were planted and after six or seven years, a blight struck the trees and they died. These trees were replaced with Sunset Maples in 1990.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

parking lot immediately beyond the south elevation. Between the building and the parking lot is a narrow lawn with concrete sidewalks connecting the building to the parking lot.

Old Main was initially constructed between 1897 and 1899 as a symmetrical, three-part plan of two-storey wings on either side of a central three-storey tower [Figure 1]. The building had a front of 115 feet, a depth of 76 feet, and a height of 105 feet to the top of the dome, and cost approximately \$33,000 to construct. The cornerstone was laid on September 18, 1897, and the building was dedicated on September 14, 1899.

Between 1909 and 1913, numerous projects were undertaken at Old Main. A hyphen and a wing were added to both the east and west elevations for additional dormitories, school rooms, and a chapel, and were completed in 1912 at a cost of \$12,500. A dining room addition was added to the south (rear) elevation of the central block sometime between 1899 and 1909, and was a two-and-one-half-storey masonry addition. In 1912, a 25-foot by 30-foot addition was added to the south elevation of the dining room [Figures 4 and 6]. The dining room was removed in ca. 1981, and the rear façade of the central block was resurfaced. In 1910, the clock tower and bell were added and dedicated on August 18, 1910 [Figure 3 and Photographs 4, 25, and 26]. In 1911, a pool was added to the basement, and in 1913, the hallway floors were covered with corticine.<sup>2</sup>

In 1922, the east wing hyphen was infilled with a second addition that included eight additional rooms at a cost of \$20,000 [Photograph 5]. In 1958, improvements were made to the chapel that included replastering the walls, adding acoustical tile to the ceiling, installing light fixtures and carpeting, and adding 10 stained glass windows, all at a cost of \$35,000. This room was dedicated on October 12, 1958. The entire dining room wing was demolished, and the south elevation exterior was resurfaced with new brick ca. 1981.

Built between 1897 and 1899, Old Main was initially constructed as a central block with symmetrical two-storey wings [Figure 1]. The central block is a three bay wide, three-storey, brick masonry building with symmetrical three bay wide, two-storey masonry wings. On the north elevation of the original building, the red brick Flemish bond masonry rests on a brownstone foundation. The main entrance is accessed from two runs of concrete steps with handrails on the outer edge. The stairs focus on the main entrance, which is a pair of single-light, half-panel wood doors. Above the door is a three-light transom, all set within a wood frame. Symmetrical to the door are paired tall, narrow, six over six, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame. Wrapping around the first floor is a hipped roof porch that is supported by paired, painted, round, wood columns with Tuscan capitals. The columns are supported by paneled square bases with a painted, turned balustrade between each base. Beneath each base is a brownstone pier that has white latticework between each pier. The columns support a wide entablature that in turn supports a hipped roof. On top of the roof is the second-floor porch balustrade. There are 20 turned balusters between each post, and a finial tops each post.

On top of the porch on the second floor is a pair of single-light, half-panel wood doors set within a wood frame [Photograph 3]. Above the door is an eight-light transom with a mullion dividing the transom into four lights each, all of which is in a wood frame. Symmetrical to the door are paired, tall and narrow, six over six, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame. The windows are set between a brownstone lintel and sill. The third floor has three round arch openings with seven over six sash set within a wood frame. Between the second-floor lintel and the third-floor sill are brownstone panels with brownstone squares. A brownstone belt course extends the full width of the third floor between brick pilasters. The brick pilasters are topped with Corinthian capitals that in turn support a wide entablature with raised black letters reading "THE LUTHERAN HOME" on the band. Above the entablature is a pedimented gable end with finials near the roof eaves. On the east and west elevations of the central block, the second floor has tall, narrow, six over six, double-hung sash set within a wood frame between brownstone lintels and sills.

<sup>2</sup> Corticine was mainly made of cork dust and solidified linseed oil without a cloth backing, and became popular as it was cheaper than linoleum. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linoleum>, accessed April 4, 2013.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

Centered on top of a painted, standing seam metal roof is a square clock tower cupola [Photograph 4]. On each of the four bases of the cupola are painted fish scale shingles. Each face of the cupola shaft has six one over one, double-hung sash with a round arch transom with a prominent keystone. Each corner on the base has a Corinthian pilaster that supports a wood cornice that in turn supports a painted dome. Each face of the dome has a clock face. On top of the dome is a smaller two bay wide square with a smaller painted dome. On top of the smaller dome is a painted gold cross.

The wings are attached to the east and west elevations of the central block. Each wing is a three bay wide, two-storey masonry building with a slate hip roof with a hip roofed dormer on each face of the hip roof. Each dormer has paired, three over three, double-hung sash set within a wood frame. Each wing has a raised brownstone basement with paired four-light windows in the foundation [Photographs 5 and 6].

The first floor of the east wing is two bays wide with pairs of tall, narrow, six over six, double-hung wood sash, each set within a wood frame set with brownstone lintels and sills. The third bay is where the porch intersects with the wall. The second floor is three bays wide with three pairs of seven over six, double-hung wood sash, all set within a round arch wood frame with brownstone sills and round arch lintels. The hip roof is supported by a wide entablature and cornice. The west wing is an exact replica of the east wing.

As the mission of the Home grew, so did the number of orphans, which in turn required the expansion of Old Main. Between 1909 and 1911, the east and west wings were each expanded with a hyphen and an additional wing so the entire building façade was symmetrical [Figure 3]. The hyphens and wings were each three bays wide, six bays deep, and three storeys tall with a brick water table and brownstone molded edge. The hyphens had gable roofs while the wings were topped with a hipped roof and were all covered with slate. The first-floor hyphen windows are 10 over 10, double-hung wood sash with a fanlight transom all set within a wood frame with brownstone sills. The lintel around all of the first-floor round arch windows has an outside round soldier arch with square brownstone label stops and a brownstone prominent keystone. Inset within this round arch is a second blind, round soldier arch. The second-floor hyphen windows are eight over eight, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brownstone sill that is integral within a brick belt course.

The outer east and west wings have a brick water table with a brownstone molded edge [Photographs 5 and 6]. All of the first-floor windows are 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash with a fanlight transom all set within a wood frame with brownstone sills. The brownstone sills are integral within a brick belt course. The lintels are similar to the first-floor lintel in the hyphen. In the north elevation wing, the center bay window has been converted into a single-light door with a sidelight. The door is accessed from a concrete stair with a metal/poly vinyl chloride (PVC) railing. The second-floor windows are all 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brownstone sill that is integral within a brick belt course. The wing is capped with a wide entablature and a painted wood cornice.

The east hyphen was infilled in 1922 to provide additional rooms for teaching [Photograph 5]. Within the raised basement are two 12-light sash. There are four bays on the first floor, with a one-and-one-half-storey gable roof extended entrance in the first bay. Within this enclosure is a painted metal door with a vertical light. Above the door and within the gable is a nine over six round, arched window with a soldier course round arch lintel. Bays two through four are 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brick sill. The third floor has five bays of six over six, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with brick sills. There is a flat rubber roof over the infilled hyphen.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

The east elevation of the east wing is similar to the west elevation of the west wing, except that the first floor has a fire door added in the far east wall to connect directly to a hyphen that connects to the Tower Court Apartments (1983) [Photograph 28].

The south elevation of Old Main is 22 bays long and has a uniform appearance along the rear façade. Within bays one through three, the only first-floor window is in the center of these three bays and is stained glass. The second-floor windows are 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brick sill. Within bays four through six, the first floor is covered with a hipped roof porch that is supported by square columns and has a PVC railing and a concrete floor. Within the porch are five round arch openings with 10 over 10, double-hung wood sash with a fanlight transom set within a round arch wood frame with a brick sill in the first, second, fourth, and fifth openings. An aluminum door with sidelights and a transom are all beneath a fanlight, which is in the center of these five bays. The second-floor windows are 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brick sill. Within bays seven through nine, the first- and second-floor windows are tall, narrow six over six, double-hung, flat head, wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with a brownstone sill. For bays 10 through 13, the first-floor windows are nine over nine, double-hung, flat head, wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with a brownstone sill. The second- and third-floor windows are six over six, double-hung, flat head, wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with a brownstone sill. For bays 14 through 16, both the first- and second-floor windows are tall, narrow, six over six, double-hung, flat head, wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with a brownstone sill. A brick chimney separates bays 15 and 16. Bays 17 to 19 are exactly like bays four through six. In bays 20 to 22, the first-floor windows are 10 over 10, double-hung wood sash with a fanlight transom all set within a round arch wood frame with a brick sill. The second-floor windows are 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame with a brick sill.

The interior has an irregular floor plan with a different floor plan for each floor, which is due in part to the use of the building after 1976, when it was converted to administrative offices. Organized around the central three buildings, the center building has a cross-shaped plan with wings, hyphens, and outer wings extending out to the east and west. Within the first floor of the center block, the main doors open into a central hall that has a painted, pressed metal ceiling, door trim with corner blocks, and a baseboard. Modern doors access these front rooms. A round arch provides the transition into the central corridor, with a round arch into the east wing, a cased opening into the former dining room hallway, and a wood trim opening into the administration wing, with a pair of double doors and an infilled transom. In this central hallway there is a mixture of modern and historical door trim, though the baseboard appears to be original. The lighting is all contemporary.

On the first floor, the entire west wing is used by the Brandywine Community Library, which is part of the Berks County Library System. Included within the library space is a room for the Christmas Putz.<sup>3</sup> The Putz was started in 1909 by Mrs. Ida Henry after her husband The Rev. Dr. J. O. Henry became Superintendent at the Home. Instead of giving gifts to the children each year, Mrs. Henry added something new and different each year to the Putz, so that it now occupies half of the former chapel [Photograph 12].<sup>4</sup> The Putz was created as a permanent exhibit in the former Chapel in 1983, after the chapel was moved to the Henry Auditorium, which was then used as a chapel/auditorium. At this time the former chapel was subdivided to house the Putz and to use as an additional reading room for the library. The rooms in the west wing have painted walls, acoustical tile ceilings, and carpeted floors. Some of the original door trim may survive above the acoustical tile ceilings. An exterior door was added to this reading room to provide an exit to the outside. The east wing has a double-loaded corridor that includes spaces for the administration offices for the Home. At the end of the corridor is a painted metal fire door that provides access to the Tower Court Apartments. These office spaces have modern wall surfaces, acoustical tile ceilings, and carpeting on the floors.

<sup>3</sup> According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>), a *putz* is a decoration built around a representation of the Nativity scene and traditionally placed under a Christmas tree in Pennsylvania Dutch homes.

<sup>4</sup> David A. Miller, II, *A Gift of Love: The First Hundred Years of The Lutheran Home at Topton, 1886-1996* (Topton, PA: Kutztown Publishing Co., Inc., 1996), pp.67-70.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

The second floor is accessed through a set of scissor stairs located across from the administrative offices. The stairs have an open string wood stair, with a wood newel post, turned balusters, and wainscoting that follows the stair to the second floor. At the landing, the wainscoting forms around a window that was removed c. 1983, and its opening was infilled with concrete masonry units.<sup>5</sup> The underneath side of the stair is also covered with a painted pressed metal ceiling. The stairwell opens into a cross-shaped corridor that connects to a second stair in the west wing. The connection between the second floor of stair #2 and the first floor has been removed. The cross corridor has varnished wood wainscoting, baseboard, and doors; painted plaster walls and ceilings; and a linoleum-type covered floor. A portion of the floor has been covered with plywood. Rooms that open into this corridor have varnished doors, transoms, and molded trim with corner blocks. These center four rooms were used as the Senior Girls Library, Superintendent's Apartment, Matron's Room, and sewing room. The Senior Girls Library has plaster walls, pressed metal ceiling, and synthetic covering on the floor that appears to look like linoleum. The large east wing room is entered through a pair of six horizontal panel, varnished wood doors beneath a three-light transom set within a wood frame with varnished, molded trim and bull's-eye corner blocks. The interior of the room has plaster walls and varnished wood wainscoting. The ceiling has a concealed-spline acoustical tile ceiling that has been glued to the plaster ceiling. The opening into the east hyphen has varnished wood trim and a fanlight window. The hyphen was infilled in 1922 and now has rooms on each side of the corridor. These rooms were used for Assistant Superintendent Bedrooms and Senior Staff rooms. They had plaster walls, recessed entry into the rooms, and molded trim with corner blocks, transoms, and six-panel, varnished wood doors. An intercommunicating stair in the hyphen that was connected to the first floor was removed when the administrative offices were created. The individual rooms have varnished wood baseboard and window trim with corner blocks and an apron. The outer east room was shortened in the past for the Assistant Superintendent's apartment on the north end and girls' showers on the south end.

The large west wing was used as the Young Boys' Bedroom [Figure 7 and Photograph 19] and is similar to the large east wing room, in that it is entered from the hallway through a pair of six horizontal panel, varnished wood doors beneath a three-light transom set within a wood frame with varnished, molded trim and bull's-eye corner blocks. The interior of the room has plaster walls and varnished wood wainscoting. The ceiling has a painted, pressed metal ceiling [Photograph 18]. Adjacent to the west wing is the second stair to the third floor. This stair originally extended to the first floor, but the connection to the first floor was removed. The west hyphen also had a varnished baseboard, a chair rail, and window and door trim with corner blocks. The doors were varnished six-panel, wood doors, with transoms above the doors. The outer west wing was also subdivided with both modern and historical partitions.

Both sets of stairs extend to hallways on either side of the large, central third-floor room, which was used as the Senior Boys' Bedroom [Figure 8 and Photograph 24]. This room is a large, open room that was used as a dormitory. It was unheated and had a single arch that spanned the width of the room. The walls were plastered and had a varnished baseboard and window trim. A single, narrow staircase leads to the cupola on the east wall. In the southeast corner was a beaded board closet that was used as the Anniversary Day Clothing Room. Immediately adjacent to this closet is the entrance to the hallway. On the other side of the hall are attic rooms that are over the east and west wings. These rooms have open joists and plaster walls up to the eave line. The entire building was updated with a sprinkler system in 1994/1995.

Beginning in the 1960s, The Lutheran Home at Topton systematically converted the institutional mission from child care to elder care (See Site Chronology 1 map showing the dates of construction of all current buildings). In 1962, the Luther Haven cottages were constructed on the flatlands at the foot of the hill along the road up to the campus; these single family dwellings were expanded in 1970 and 1976. In 1972, 1984, and 1989 other residential buildings were constructed

<sup>5</sup> This was undertaken at the same time the dining room and kitchen wing was removed in ca. 1981.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Tipton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

on the campus at the foot of the hill or on the far side of the hill. In 1968, the Buehrle Center for Assisted Living was constructed on the far side of the hilltop behind Old Main. This was followed by the Henry Health Care Center (1976 and 1993), and the Tower Court Apartments (1983). The Henry Health Care Center was connected to the Buehrle Center; the Tower Court Apartments were connected to the Henry Health Care Center, and the entire block was then connected to Old Main. The connection is a glass-fronted entry foyer and hallway for the Tower Court Apartments, constructed in the same dark multi-hued brown brick as the Apartments (See Photo 28). A doorway was punched through the east first-floor wall of Old Main to create a connecting door. The ability to access all of the buildings on a single level, on-grade is necessary for senior housing. The connection from Old Main to the Tower Court Apartments provides a continuous link to services located in Old Main from the Henry Auditorium (1938), through the Buehrle Center for Assisted Living (1968), through the Henry Health Care Center (1976 and 1993), to the Tower Court Apartments (1983). The Tower Court Apartments and the other buildings are all subservient to Old Main in design, material, and visibility. They are one- and two-storey, brown brick masonry buildings that are constructed without an architectural style in a subdued color palette. They sit lower on the site and were constructed primarily on concrete slab on grade. They are, for the most part, screened by vegetation so that Old Main is solely visible as the primary building from its entrances, the town below, the approach road and the surrounding countryside. The prominent clock-tower rises above the entire campus. On the rear side of the building there is descending plateau and the later building campaigns occurred on that lowering terrain. Except from the entrance to the hyphen, , all the additions look entirely detached from Old Main, as indeed, they were constructed as separate buildings and later connected to Old Main through the hyphen to Tower Court Apartments. Unless the viewer is standing at the hyphen entrance to the Tower Court Apartments, its connection to Old Main is not apparent and it clearly has minimal connection to the historic building.

The cemetery is located to the southwest of the Tower Court Apartments immediately adjacent to the Tower Drive between two parking lots. The cemetery is enclosed with a painted cast iron fence that has a paired scrolled gate entrance. On axis with the entrance, within the enclosure is a central obelisk that honors Rev. Henry, one of the superintendents at the orphanage. Also within the cemetery enclosure are 21 stone markers dating from twentieth century. The cemetery is edged by two large conifers that shade the entrance. Small shrubs and perennials line the northern edge of the plot. The twenty-one gravestones mark the graves of children who died while in residence at the Home. Although the cemetery doesn't contribute to Old Main's significance under Criterion C, it is still part of the historic setting of the orphanage and conveys the original function of the property.

### Conclusion

Old Main retains its integrity as a Classical Revival building. It retains its original *location*. It retains its original 1922 *design* as a central block and added wings, with its character-defining Classical Revival features, though some of the first-floor interior secondary spaces have been updated. Though the design has been altered by the accumulation of buildings that are connected to Old Main on a secondary elevation via a one-storey hyphen, the building still reads as an independent building. Old Main still remains as the central focus of the campus throughout the valley. It retains its original *materials* that include its exterior masonry walls, porches, windows; and on the interior, its plaster walls and ceilings, and original wood trim and doors. The additions are clearly differentiated in a darker colored brick so that they recede and are less in stature than Old Main so it stands out. Its aspect of *workmanship* is evident in the original surfaces of the porches, windows, pressed metal and plaster ceilings, and original varnished wainscoting and door and window trim. Integrity of *association* is retained due to its continued association with the Lutheran Church and its group-living function. Integrity of *setting* has been compromised by the removal of the historic landscaping and buildings, and the connection of the 1983 Tower Court Apartments via a fire door and a hyphen in the east wing. However, it still retains the allee of trees and is sited on a rise that can be seen from all over the valley. Some of these additions have been screened by vegetation so that only Old Main remains as the focus. Old Main retains its integrity of *feeling* of a substantial Classical Revival institutional building. Based on the evaluation of these seven aspects of integrity, Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Tipton retains its integrity.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

**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**

(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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1898-1922  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Barrows, Frederick A.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins in 1898 with the construction of the core block of Old Main and ends in 1922 with the infill of the east wing hyphen.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Old Main meets Criteria Consideration A as a property owned by a religious institution that derives its significance from its architectural character and quality.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Old Main building at The Lutheran Home at Topton in Berks County, Pennsylvania, is eligible under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent example of the Classical Revival style in an institutional building. It is distinguished by its distinctively classical portico, clock tower, detailing, massing, and scale. Moreover, the prominent siting of the property and its rural setting, quality of the craftsmanship, and the general design and organization of space for use as offices, workrooms, and as a residence for the children and staff of the Home reflect the values and priorities of the founders in creating a respectable, safe, and healthy environment for child care in the early twentieth century. The building is significant at the local level.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Lutheran orphanage at Topton was chartered as The Lutheran Orphans' Home in Berks County, Pennsylvania. The name was changed in 1942 when the institution added eldercare to its mission, and the name became The Lutheran Home at Topton. Old Main was the first and principal building constructed by the newly chartered Lutheran Orphans' Home.<sup>6</sup> Old Main originally incorporated space for all of the primary operations of the orphanage other than farming. It had dorms for the children, residence suites for the superintendent, family, and staff, kitchens, a dining room, libraries and relaxation rooms, work rooms and classrooms, a chapel, and even an indoor swimming pool. As the orphanage grew, specialized facilities were added to the campus to support the Home's growing population and expanding programs; various functions moved from Old Main but the building remained the primary residence, center of social activities, and administrative center of the campus until the 1970s, when eldercare became the focus of its mission and Old Main became the administrative center.

Old Main expresses the character-defining elements of Classical Revival styling. The architect, Frederick A. Barrows, chose a style and scale of building intended to reflect the stability and respectability of the orphanage. The building's location on the hillside above Topton provides the Home's residents with a sweeping view of the rural countryside, and the Borough's residents have an impressive view of the Home.

In the quality of construction and level of stylistic detailing, the builder created an eminently respectable rural charitable institution. Even with considerable donations of materials and supplies from the local congregations, the builder spent upwards of \$33,000 on the building and furnishings. In choosing the Classical Revival Style, the founders of The Lutheran Orphans' Home opted for one that was familiar and offered formality and monumentality without overwhelming ornamentation to distract observers and residents from the seriousness of the Home's mission.

As an institutional building designed for the shelter, education, and care of children, Old Main reflected the social welfare ethic of the late nineteenth century. The late nineteenth century experienced a wave of innovative reform in

<sup>6</sup> The Lutheran Orphans' Home developed into a large complex, with a farm, multiple buildings, and service and recreational areas. Much of the fabric of the Orphans' Home has been removed, with the exception of the Henry Auditorium, which has been heavily altered, two cottages, and Old Main. As the Home converted to eldercare in the 1970s, the extensive building campaigns compromised the historic integrity of the campus. Therefore, only Old Main is being nominated.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Tipton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

education and social welfare programs induced by industrialization and immigration, and shaped by the benevolent drive of the Social Gospel and rational ethics of the emerging professions in engineering and the social sciences. The founders of The Lutheran Orphans' Home and the architect of Old Main created a building intended to support organized communal living while fostering individual health and development. Old Main offered modern conveniences such as bathrooms, steam heat, and a refrigeration plant, plus high ceilings, large windows, and airy, open rooms for multiple sleepers. The interiors were arranged to support organized community living by children with little or no personal property, who needed to acquire a standard education, and who were expected to support the operations of the Home through chores and social events, in a highly gendered and moral social context.<sup>7</sup> The dining room was a moderately formal space, conducive to instilling proper table manners and appropriate conversation. There were no closets in the sleeping rooms, since the children had few personal possessions. Numbered hooks and cupboards in the halls provided storage for the few personal items. The east/west halves of the building mirrored each other on the interior as well as on the exterior, with spaces for girls on one side and boys on the other, with the exception of the large third floor room below the clock tower, which became the cold dorm for the oldest boys. Each side of the building had a girls' library/relaxation room, and a boys' library/relaxation room with long library tables and full-wall bookshelves. (Alumni of the Home referred to the "invisible line" between each half of the Home that the children of the opposite sex never crossed. One gentleman recalled as a teenager having to steal kisses in the larder, where the cooks could not see the youths working there.<sup>8</sup>)

#### Context and Comparisons: Classical Revival

Old Main is one of approximately a dozen strong examples of Classical Revival style in Berks County. Bureau for Historic Preservation files (at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission) have almost 200 records for buildings in Berks County identified as "Classical Revival." Most are modest examples of storefronts, factories, and other buildings whose stylistic features consist almost solely of minor classical details. Almost all of them are in the City of Reading and except for a small handful of residences and a mausoleum, they are commercial, industrial, or institutional buildings. Only Old Main is located in a rural area. Banks, such as the Reading Trust (see comparison image C-5), the American Bank, or the Berks County Trust preferred Beaux Arts expressions in limestone. Some public or quasi-public institutions such as the Reading Post Office (see comparison image C-2) or the Reading Museum (which began life as the Boys' High School) also embraced the Beaux Arts style in limestone. But the builders of most of the important Classical Revival buildings seemed to prefer less domineering brick as a building material, for buildings such as the Wyomissing High School (see comparison image C-1; Wyomissing High school is the only other substantial Classical Revival building in Berks County outside the City of Reading), the Reading Railroad Company YMCA (see comparison image C-3), Foss Elementary School (see comparison image C-4), and Trinity Lutheran Church (see comparison image C-6).

Research did not discover information about the architect Frederick A. Barrows or his work. Only one building designed by him was discovered: the Hanold residence in the Centre Park neighborhood of Reading. Built in 1896 for Reading coal and coke merchant Frank Wildbahn Hanold, this robust Queen Anne residence is characterized by a large porch with an elaborate columned portico and rich interior woodwork (see comparison images C-11 and C-12).

<sup>7</sup> Numerous scholarly studies in the last 20 years focus on the way buildings function as technologies to shape and define personal identity and development. Numerous studies come from the University of Cambridge, Department of Architecture. See <http://www.arct.cam.ac.uk/research/researchgroups/historytheory/modern-public-and-institutional-architecture>. Also see B. Edginton, "Moral Architecture: The Influence of the York Retreat on Asylum Design," *Health and Place* 3, no. 2 (1997): 91-99, and Paul Silver and David Miles Siskind, *Institutional Architecture: The Design of Educational, Municipal, and Justice Facilities* (Glen Cove, NY: Architectural and Design Library, 1993); and Louis G. Redstone, *Institutional Buildings: Architecture of the Controlled Environment*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Miller, *A Gift of Love*, p. 116.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

### Context and Comparisons: Orphanages

When it was created, the Home joined a handful of other orphanages operating under the aegis of the Lutheran Church. According to the 1910 Census report *Benevolent Institutions*, published in 1913, Pennsylvania had 105 institutions for the care of children (most of which were located in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh), with more than 11,000 children in residence.<sup>9</sup>

Lutheran orphanages that were reported in *Benevolent Institutions* (the Tabor Home for Children and the Germantown Children's Home orphanage are not listed) were as follows:

- Lutheran Concordia Home, Marwood, Butler County, established in 1883, was authorized by the Synodical Conference. In 1910, it had 50 boys and 46 girls in residence. (Now providing elder care.)
- The Lutheran Orphans' Home in Berks County, Pennsylvania, Topton, Berks County, established in 1897, was authorized by the General Council of the Lutheran Church. In 1910, it had 62 boys and 43 girls in residence. (Now providing elder care.)
- Tressler Orphans' Home, Loysville, Perry County, was privately established as an academy, converted to a soldiers' orphans' home, and acquired by the General Synod of the Lutheran Council in 1868. In 1910, it had 120 boys and 8 girls in residence. (Now a state maximum security facility.)
- St. John's Lutheran Orphanage, Mars, Butler County, established in 1893, was authorized by the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States. In 1910, it had 17 boys and 11 girls in residence. (Now providing elder care.)

Other Berks County orphanages reported in *Benevolent Institutions* were the privately owned Home for Friendless Children in Reading, with 23 boys and 9 girls; the St. Catherine's Asylum for Female Orphans in Reading, under the auspices of the Sisters of Charity, with 20 girls; Bethany Children's Home in Womelsdorf, under the auspices of the Reformed Church in the United States, with 20 boys and 13 girls in 1910.

In the design of orphanages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, physical facilities reflected the developing ideas about institutional child care. The Census report *Benevolent Institutions* outlined developments in institutional child care at the turn of the century as being driven by "the conviction that the old-time orphanage, with its scores or even hundreds of uniformed children, was not well-adapted to the securing of the best results in individual character."<sup>10</sup> Orphanages of the Progressive Era organized the children into residential "classes" based on age and sex, either in their own wings/sections of the home or in separate cottages, each with their own house parents or chaperones. They had modern sanitation, dedicated classroom spaces, study and relaxation areas, dining, physical recreation facilities, and some form of a vocational training facility. In the case of The Lutheran Orphans' Home at Topton, vocational training was enhanced by attendance at the public high school. The primary vocational training came from the operating Home farm, where the boys learned animal husbandry, agronomy, basic mechanics, carpentry, and the range other assorted skills associated with managing a farm. Vocational training for the girls was largely limited to the domestic arts; they learned gender-appropriate work skills, such as typing, at the public high school.

<sup>9</sup> Of the 105 orphanages extant in Pennsylvania in 1910, 19 predated the Civil War, 61 were created after 1880, and 21 after 1890. See Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Benevolent Institutions*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), Table 1: Institutions for the Care of Children, Pennsylvania, pp. 140-47.

<sup>10</sup> *Benevolent Institutions*, 26. A White House conference on Dependent Children in 1909 resulted in a consensus among professions regarding the care of parentless, homeless, or destitute children: foster care of children in private homes should be the first option, but failing that institutions were encouraged to adopt the "cottage system" housing children by age and sex in small groups. Foster care did not become a primary practice until after World War II. See Timothy A. Hasci, *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), and Howard W. Hopkirk, *Institutions Serving Children* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1944).

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

The physical arrangements at any orphanage depended on the location and resources of the organization. Like The Lutheran Orphans' Home, many began with a single, multipurpose building and grew into multifunctional complexes. The St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys in Philadelphia (National Register of Historic Places [NR] listed 1996) began in 1888, occupying a series of row houses; in 1929 the institution built a four-storey building with two gymnasias, offices, infirmary, classrooms, science lab, office, dining hall, chapel, and dorm rooms. It later expanded to include a separate gymnasium/auditorium building, and expanded its academic program to include vocational skills with a printing shop and auto shop (see comparison image C-7).<sup>11</sup>

The St. Stanislaus Institute in Nanticoke, Luzerne County (NR listed 2008) began with a single building that housed all its facilities—dorms, classrooms, administrative offices, dining, etc.—and grew to a complex of buildings with separate boys' and girls' dormitories, chapel, rectory, classroom/gymnasium/auditorium, and laundry (see comparison image C-8).<sup>12</sup>

Founded in Philadelphia in 1903, the Christ's Home for Children moved to a Warminster Township, Bucks County farm in 1907 (see comparison image C-9). The orphanage immediately began a building campaign that by 1928 included age-separated boys and girls cottages, administration building, kitchens, dining hall, school, industrial building, print shop, bake shop, machine shop, toy shop, and barber shop. Christ's Home for Children still functions as a child welfare institution. In 2003, the campus consisted of approximately 30 historic buildings along with a number of buildings reflecting changing programming.<sup>13</sup>

The Bethany Children's Home moved from Philadelphia to a summer resort at Manderbach Springs at the foot of South Mountain near Womelsdorf in Berks County. The orphanage relocated in 1867; no information is available regarding the physical components of the property at the time, but by the 1890s the orphanage had a campus building campaign that brought it into conformity with the current practices. Through the 1930s, it added dormitory cottages, farm buildings, workshops, modern amenities such as electricity and steam heat, classroom/gymnasium/auditorium buildings, along with numerous ornamental and commemorative objects.<sup>14</sup>

The Tabor Children's Home was established in Cheltenham in 1907, when a property owner offered her home to the Cheltenham Evangelical Lutheran Church as a short-term shelter for needy dependent children. In 1913, the Philip Fretz mansion in rural Bucks County was purchased and became the Tabor Home for Children (see comparison image C-10). The Tabor Home initially differed from other Progressive Era orphanages in that it tried to keep children together in family groups rather than separating them by age group and sex. From 1913 to 1973 the Tabor Home was operated by the Lutheran Church and the care of children was provided by trained deaconesses of the Philadelphia Motherhouse. Until the 1940s, the Tabor Home operated a farming and construction trades program. It had a resident population of between 60 and 70 children. The institution became a Berks County secular facility in 1979. Only three buildings remain—the Fretz mansion and two cottage dormitories.<sup>15</sup>

---

#### Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The creation of the Home reflected its Lutheran heritage; its origins were rooted in a strong sense of local community and Lutheran social charity as shaped by the impulses of the Social Gospel of the late nineteenth century. While the

<sup>11</sup> "St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys," National Register of Historic Places nomination, prepared by Carol A. Benenson, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> "St. Stanislaus Institute," National Register of Historic Places nomination, prepared by Shelby Weaver Splain, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> "Christ's Home for Children," Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form, prepared by Laura S. Black, CHRS, Inc., 2003.

<sup>14</sup> See <http://bethanyhome.org/>, accessed July 29, 2013. Bethany Home is now a *Sanctuary*-accredited institution. Historic postcards of the main building can be found at [www.cardcow.com](http://www.cardcow.com).

<sup>15</sup> "The Tabor Home for Children," National Register of Historic Places nomination, prepared by Jeffrey C. Marshall and Judith H. Moore, 1987.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

late Industrial Revolution did not bring the disruptions and severe challenges that the industrial cities faced, population growth and economic change nonetheless brought challenges to the rural communities of Berks County.<sup>16</sup> At the 1894 Lutheran Conference Sunday School Convention in Boyertown, an attendee raised the issue of caring for orphan children of the local congregations and Sunday schools, which resulted in a petition from the Reading Conference to the Synod to establish "in this strongly Lutheran section, a home for orphans; friendless, homeless and neglected children."<sup>17</sup>

The petition to the Synod pointed out that other denominations and private charities were establishing homes for the welfare of children. The argument for a local orphanage was based solidly in Lutheran sensibilities. The petition stressed the lack of viable alternatives: the only other Lutheran orphanage was Germantown Children's Home and not only was it located at a distance in the city of Philadelphia, it only accepted children whose fathers had died. The petition reminded the synod that Berks County was the heart of Lutheranism in the eastern United States, and stressed that the economic stability of the Berks County congregations was more than able to support a local institution. As summarized in the first issue of *The Orphans' Home Paper* (the newspaper of the new Home), the area was a Lutheran stronghold, and a financially comfortably one at that:

- \*The Lutherans are particularly strong and numerous in the Counties of Berks and Lehigh.
- \*No county in our whole Synod has as many Lutherans in it as does Berks County.
- \* There is no district in the whole eastern United States in which the Lutherans are as strong as between Reading and Allentown.
- \*The property in Berks County is valued at over \$80,000,000. Since half the people in Berks Co., are Lutherans, it is safe to say at least \$30,000,000 of this property is owned by Lutherans. The people of Berks County are also reported to have over \$17,000,000 on interest.<sup>18</sup>

The Lutheran Orphans' Home began in 1897 on the farm of Peter Diener, using the farmhouse (Building #11, Figure 14) as the first residence for children and staff. The barn, outbuildings, and fields were all used as part of the work and educational program of the facility. Additional buildings and facilities were added as the Home developed, including Old Main, an infirmary, several special-purpose cottages, a school house, and an auditorium. The building program included the following:

c. 1895 Diener farm

House had various uses over time as residence and offices

Barn and outbuildings demolished in 1970s

Diener/Home farm fields and orchards removed in 1970s

1897-1899 Old Main

1910-1911 – Clock and bell tower, wings and hyphens added

1911 – Pool

c. 1909 – Dining room addition, 1912 – extension, both demolished – 1983

1922 – Infill east wing hyphen

1958 – Chapel – stained glass windows added

1983 – Chapel with some stained glass windows moved to the Henry Auditorium

1983 – Fire door in east wing connector to Tower Court Apartments

Home Campus

Ice skating pond infilled after 1958

1902 – Reservoir

1911 – Annie E. Lowry Infirmary converted to an eldercare residence in 1941

<sup>16</sup> Berks County population grew from 106,702 in 1870 to 183,222 in 1910 (13th Census 1910, Table 1: Composition and Characteristics of the Population, p. 572).

<sup>17</sup> Miller, *A Gift of Love*, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Miller, *A Gift of Love*, p. xi.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

- 1912 – Pavilion, demolished in 1965
- 1916 – Wading pool demolished
- 1916 – George E. Holton Memorial Cottage for Babies, demolished in 1983
- 1917 – School House converted in 1954 to Memorial Cottage for Boys, demolished in 1983
- 1925 – Allentown Conference Cottage
- 1929 – Refrigeration Plant, demolished in 1970s
- 1930 – Junior Girls' Cottage, demolished in 1970s
- 1930 – Kehl Charles Memorial Cottage for Girls, demolished in 1983
- 1939 – Henry Auditorium (originally housed classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, and an auditorium that could convert to a gym, seven classrooms, a library, and a dental clinic, with a kitchen and dining room in the basement)
- 1949 – Krum Memorial Cottage (senior residence)

By 1905, there were 68 orphans in the Home. Until 1914, infants and young children under three were not admitted; the infants' cottage was built in 1916, furnished with scaled-down, child-sized furniture. As of January 1909, there were 85 children, three teachers (two for the main school and one for kindergarten), one boys' overseer, one girls' overseer, an assistant matron, janitor, cook, and seamstress. The population rose to 165 children in 1920 and remained relatively stable thereafter. In 1941, there were 180 children. After the war, the population dropped—in 1946, there were 175 children in residence, 71 in 1964, and only 36 in 1968. The last child was transferred from the facility in 1976.

Throughout its history, the Home sustained an active outreach and fund-raising program and constantly reinforced its importance as a community institution. Its purpose, in effect, was to remind the supporting congregations and members that the Home was a local institution taking care of their own. *The Orphans' Home Paper* provided chatty news, encouragement for action, and alerts for assistance needed. The first edition included a list of items and help needed, from farm tools to sewing supplies, new or used. The list completed by stating, "We also take money that was used before." Congregations, businesses, and individuals "adopted" buildings, rooms, wings, and programs at the Home, or undertook to provide key supplies, such as coal. Once a year women from the congregations would spend a few days at the campus sewing clothes for the children. The Home farm provided a great deal of fresh food, supplemented by donations from local farmers. Surplus produce was sold locally. Until the refrigeration plant was built, every year the Home sold ice harvested from the pond. Special events, particularly Anniversary Day, attracted thousands of visitors, and the students staged pageants and other performances for the entertainment of the visitors. Anniversary Day was also the day families of the children would be sure to visit if possible. The staff often took students to visit other congregations and perform recitals, skits, and so forth as a way of promoting the interests and welfare of the Home. Congregations would have special collection Sundays when the proceeds from the collections would go to the Home.

William (Bill) Swanger, senior vice president for communications with Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries,<sup>19</sup> summarized the difference between the Topton Home and other Lutheran children's homes, such as Tressler: "Topton was more contained and church focused—the concern was about the children in the Berks County congregations. Children were accepted by church or community referrals and there were enough congregations to support the Home."<sup>20</sup>

Both "half" and "whole" orphans were accepted. Residence at the Home did not necessarily mean the child had no interested family members. Virginia (Ginny) Ebersole came to Topton in 1933 at the age of three when her mother died

<sup>19</sup> Mr. Swanger began his career in the Tressler Lutheran Services "root" of Diakon, which was established in 1868 as the Tressler Orphans Home in Perry County, and was later acquired by the Lutheran church.

<sup>20</sup> Conversation with William E. Swanger, III, March 6, 2013; discussion notes in the possession of the preparer.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Berks County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

and her father was unable to care for her and her brother. Her grandmother visited every month and her father made the journey to Topton several times a year. Ginny stayed until she was 18 and then went to live with her grandmother. Sometimes children stayed until a parent was able to resume custody, as in the case of Luther and Martin, twins who came to the Home as infants after the death of their mother; when they were 10, their father remarried and they returned to live with him. Students were "indentured" upon their acceptance at the Home. The terms of the contract ran to the age of 16 for the child, but as indicated by the case of Ginny Ebersole, the children often stayed until they were 18.<sup>21</sup>

The managers of the Home tried to implement a program as close to what would be considered an appropriate, nurturing Christian family upbringing as possible. Ginny Ebersole recalled the program of schooling and work at the Home. She said the most important things she learned were self-discipline and responsibility. Every child had chores, divided by gender—the boys worked the farm and performed maintenance chores, and the girls helped with the housekeeping and cooking. Each child had a garden plot to grow vegetables; they bought the seeds from the Home in the spring and sold the produce to the Home at harvest. The daily routine was to rise at 6 a.m., dress and go to service, conducted in German (at least until World War I) at 6:30 a.m., then return for morning chores and breakfast, followed by school from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with a midday lunch break and several play breaks. All but the small children had chores until supper at 6:00 p.m., then homework and personal time. The younger children were in bed by 8:00 p.m.; the older ones went to bed later, but everyone was in bed by 10:00 p.m. The school followed a basic "3Rs" curriculum, plus religion (Lutheran catechism, Bible, and hymns), with considerable attention to singing. Students stayed in the Home school until eighth grade, then they went to the local high school. When the local public schools established middle and junior high schools, the children attended the public schools at the proper age.

While Ginny Ebersole remembered the stable routine of life at the Home, others had memories of more freewheeling times at the Home. David Miller's book, *A Gift of Love*, includes memories from other alumni, who recalled sneaking canned fruit from the cellars, tormenting the night chaperone in the boys' dorm, and waylaying the local baker on his rounds to get treats. All alumni particularly remembered Anniversary Day with thousands of visitors, huge amounts of food, and the pageants with elaborate costumes.

At mid-century, the direction and operations of the Home shifted. Until the 1940s, the Home cared for orphan children, but in the 1940s began to accept the elderly as residents as well, and some of the cottages were converted for eldercare residency.<sup>22</sup> As eldercare was added to the program mission, in 1942 the institution changed its name from "The Lutheran Orphans' Home" to "The Lutheran Home at Topton." After World War II, changes in ideas about institutional child welfare that dramatically altered state, federal, and professional practices effectively eliminated the traditional orphanage from the social landscape.<sup>23</sup> The Home reconfigured its programs completely toward eldercare in the 1970s and similarly reconfigured the campus, removing or adapting older buildings and features associated with the orphanage and adding new facilities.

<sup>21</sup> Conversation with Virginia Ebersole, March 11, 2013; discussion notes in the possession of the preparer.

<sup>22</sup> In 1946, the Home had 175 orphans and 12 elderly residents; 1964: 71 children and 123 elderly; 1968: 36 children and 159 elderly.

<sup>23</sup> Orphanages went into eclipse after WW II; between 1909 and 1933, the number of children in American orphanages increased by almost 30 percent; population numbers remained stable from 1933 to 1946, then decreased by half from 1945 to 1960. The preferred practices after World War II tried to keep children with existing families and in the main-stream school system; at-risk children would be placed in foster homes, and only in cases of the child's extreme physical or emotional health needs was institutionalization to be considered. See Marshall B. Jones, "Decline of the American Orphanage, 1941-1980," *Social Service Review* 67 (September 1993): p. 461, and Marvin Olasky, "The Rise and Fall of American Orphanages," in *Rethinking Orphanages for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, edited by Richard B. McKenzie (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1999).

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

Conversion to eldercare beginning after the war involved the construction of a number of additional buildings on the campus:

- 1962, 1970, 1976 – Luther Haven Cottages
- 1968 – Buehrle Center for Assisted Living
- 1974 – Koch Knauss Apartments
- 1976, 1993 - Henry Health Care Center
- 1982 - Luther Meadows Apartments
- 1983 - Tower Court Apartments
- 1989 – Heilman House Apartments

Only the Old Main building, two cottages, the Lowry Infirmary, the Diener Farmhouse, and the altered Henry Auditorium remain from the orphanage-era campus. Old Main remains as the administrative center of the campus, its location on the top of the hill, is seen as an icon throughout the valley for which it served.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Conversation with Virginia Ebersole, March 11, 2013. Discussion notes in the possession of the preparer.

Conversation with William E. Swanger, III, March 6, 2013. Discussion notes in the possession of the preparer.

Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Benevolent Institutions*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913 (Report with tables, 411 pages; state library call #C3.2:B43/2nd edition).

Edginton, B. "Moral Architecture: The Influence of the York Retreat on Asylum Design," *Health and Place* 3, no. 2 (1997): 91-99.

Gates, David. "History of the Orphanage," *Newsweek* 124 (December 12, 1994): 33.

Hale, Rev. Dr. J. Russell. *Touching Lives Through Service: The History of Tressler Lutheran Services*. Camp Hill, PA: Plank's Suburban Press, 1996.

Hasci, Timothy A. *Second Home: Orphan Asylums and Poor Families in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Hopkirk, Howard W. *Institutions Serving Children*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1944.

Jones, Marshall B. "Decline of the American Orphanage, 1941 -1980," *Social Service Review* 67 (September 1993): 460-67.

*Lutheran Orphans Home, 1897-1937*. Fortieth anniversary pamphlet, no author, no publisher, no date.

Miller, II, David A. *A Gift of Love: The First Hundred Years of The Lutheran Home at Topton, 1886-1996*. Topton, PA: Kutztown Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

National Register of Historic Places nominations:

"St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys." Prepared by Carol A. Benenson, 1996.

"St. Stanislaus Institute." Prepared by Shelby Weaver Splain, 2008.

"Tabor Home for Needy and Destitute Children." Prepared by Jeffrey L. Marshall and Judith H. Moore, 1987.

Olasky, Marvin. "The Rise and Fall of American Orphanages," in *Rethinking Orphanages for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Edited by Richard B. McKenzie. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1999.

Penn Pilot Website. [www.pennpilot.psu.edu](http://www.pennpilot.psu.edu). Accessed July 31, 2013.

Image taken 9-20-1937 – ahj\_48\_40

Image taken 7-18-1971 – ahj\_6mm\_161

Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Forms:

"Christ's Home for Children." Prepared by Laura S. Black, CHRS, Inc., 2003.

"Topton Lutheran Home." Prepared by Brad Bauman, 2008.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

*Providing for Them: A History of the Lutheran Home of Topton, Pennsylvania.* No author, no date, no publisher. Reprint of articles from *The Herald*, Topton, Pennsylvania.

Redstone, Louis G. *Institutional Buildings: Architecture of the Controlled Environment.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980.

Silver, Paul, and David Miles Siskind. *Institutional Architecture: The Design of Educational, Municipal, and Justice Facilities.* Glen Cove, NY: Architectural and Design Library, 1993.

**Previous documentation on file (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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: The Lutheran Home at Topton

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

NA

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 29.9 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Latitude: 40.498543  
Longitude: -75.699605

B. Latitude: 40.498589  
Longitude: -75.6993

C. Latitude: 40.496056  
Longitude: -75.696423

D. Latitude: 40.494000  
Longitude: -75.695554

E. Latitude: 40.493764  
Longitude: -75.698279

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton is shown on the solid line on the accompanying scaled map entitled "Site Plan," drawn at a scale of 1 inch equaling 250 feet.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated building includes the building known as Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton and includes the building itself, the sequential additions of the Buehrle Center for Assisted Living, Henry Health Care Center, and the Tower Court Apartments that are connected to Old Main via a one-storey hyphen. It also includes the front entrance steps, rear sidewalks, the forecourt, the approaching allee of maple trees, which are important to the historic setting of the building, and the cemetery, which is also part of the setting and conveys the original function of the property even though it doesn't contribute to the Old Main's significance under Criterion C. The remaining surrounding roads and parking lots owned by The Lutheran Home at Topton are excluded from the selected boundaries.

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
Name of Property

Berks County, PA  
County and State

The Lutheran Orphans' Home developed into a large complex, with a farm, multiple buildings, and service and recreational areas. Much of the fabric of The Lutheran Orphans' Home has been removed. As the Home converted to eldercare in the 1970s, the extensive building campaigns transformed the campus from that of a traditional orphanage complex to that of a modern eldercare facility. Only the Old Main building, two cottages, the Lowry Infirmary, the Diener farmhouse, and Henry Auditorium remain from the orphanage-era campus. The farmhouse is located on the opposite edge of the campus along Township Road 869. The Henry Auditorium has been heavily altered and the setting between the Henry Auditorium and Old Main has been removed for a large parking lot. The infirmary and two cottages lack architectural distinction. Therefore, only Old Main is being nominated.

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Bonnie Wilkinson Mark  
organization Delta Development Group, Inc. date October 2014  
street & number 2000 Technology Parkway telephone (717) 441-9030  
city or town Mechanicsburg state PA zip code 17050-9407  
e-mail bmark@deltaone.com

---

### Additional Documentation

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton  
City or Vicinity: Topton  
County: Berks County State: Pennsylvania  
Photographer: Bonnie Wilkinson Mark  
Date Photographed: March 2013

1. Looking south on South Home Avenue to north elevation of Old Main
2. North elevation
3. Perspective of north elevation
4. Detail of cupola
5. North elevation looking southwest

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Tipton

Name of Property

Berks County, PA

County and State

6. North and east elevations looking northeast
7. South elevation looking northeast
8. First-floor interior looking south
9. First-floor interior detail looking south
10. First-floor interior looking west
11. First-floor interior looking west inside of Brandywine Community Library
12. First-floor interior of Putz looking east
13. Looking up stair #1 from landing to second floor
14. Second-floor interior looking north into staff room
15. Second-floor interior looking west in main corridor
16. Second-floor interior looking east in main corridor
17. Second-floor interior looking north into staff room
18. Second-floor interior in Senior Girls' Library
19. Second-floor interior in Young Boys' Bedroom
20. Second-floor interior looking west in hyphen corridor
21. Second-floor interior looking north into staff rooms
22. Stair #2 looking from second floor to upper landing
23. Stair #2 looking from landing up to third floor
24. Third-floor interior Boys' Dormitory
25. Cupola bell support
26. Cupola clock face
27. First-floor interior, East Wing, showing single connection to Tower Court Apartments
28. Exterior connection to Tower Court Apartments
29. Looking southwest to Old Main from the Lehigh –Berks County line. Notice the prominence of the cupola.
30. Home Avenue looking south. Home Avenue is on axis with the cupola.
31. Home Avenue looking south through allee of trees.
32. Home Avenue looking south mid-way through allee of trees
33. Looking northeast to hyphen and Tower Court Apartments (1983); notice scale of the Old Main versus Tower Court Apartments.
34. Looking east to Tower Court Apartments
35. Looking southeast to Tower Court Apartments
36. Looking east to Henry Health Care
37. Looking north to Old Main and Tower Court Apartments; trees focus view on Old Main
38. Looking south at entrance to Henry Health Care
39. Looking northwest at Henry Auditorium
40. Looking southwest at Henry Auditorium
41. Looking south at north elevation of hyphen
42. Northeast elevation of Tower Court Apartments; notice prominence of Old Main cupola
43. Tower Drive looking west
44. Cemetery looking southeast
45. Central axis of cemetery looking south

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Tipton  
Name of Property

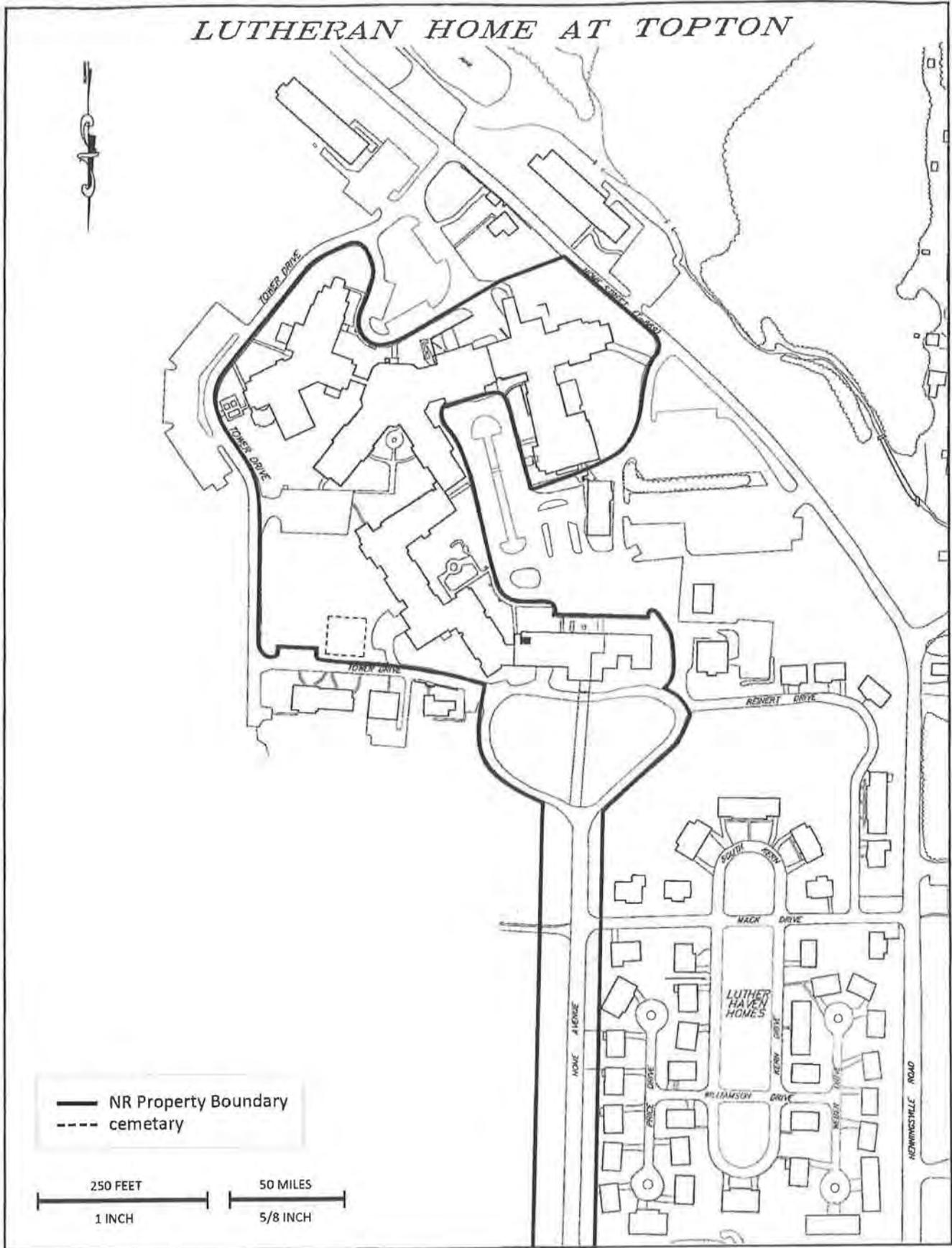
Berks County, PA  
County and State

46. Parking lot on Tower Drive looking west
47. Tower Drive looking west
48. Buehrle Center for Assisted Living looking southeast
49. Looking east between Henry Auditorium and Gilbert Building
50. Looking southwest at north elevation of Old Main; notice the prominence of the cupola through the trees
51. Looking south at campus with north elevation of Old Main at the far right
52. Looking south on Main Street at prominent central cupola of Old Main
53. Looking southeast on Long Lane Road at cupola of Old Main

**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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

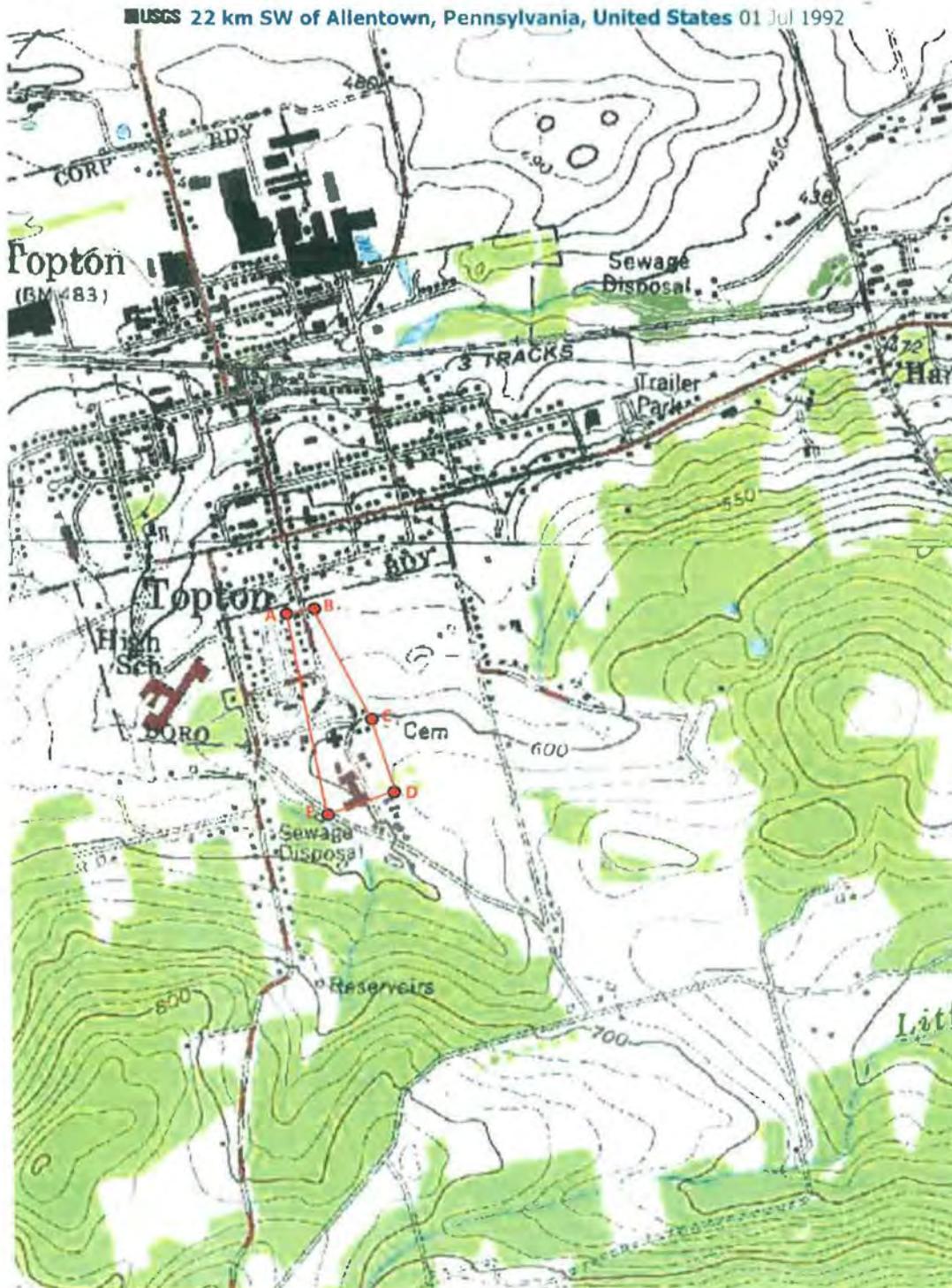
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

The Lutheran Home at Topton  
One South Home Avenue  
Longswamp Township  
Berks County, Pennsylvania



The Lutheran Home at Topton  
One South Home Avenue  
Longswamp Township  
Berks County, Pennsylvania

USGS Map



- Site:**
- A** - Lat: 40.498543  
Long: -75.699605
  - B** - Lat: 40.498589  
Long: -75.6993
  - C** - Lat: 40.496056  
Long: -75.696423
  - D** - Lat: 40.494000  
Long: -75.695554
  - E** - Lat: 40.493764  
Long: -75.698279



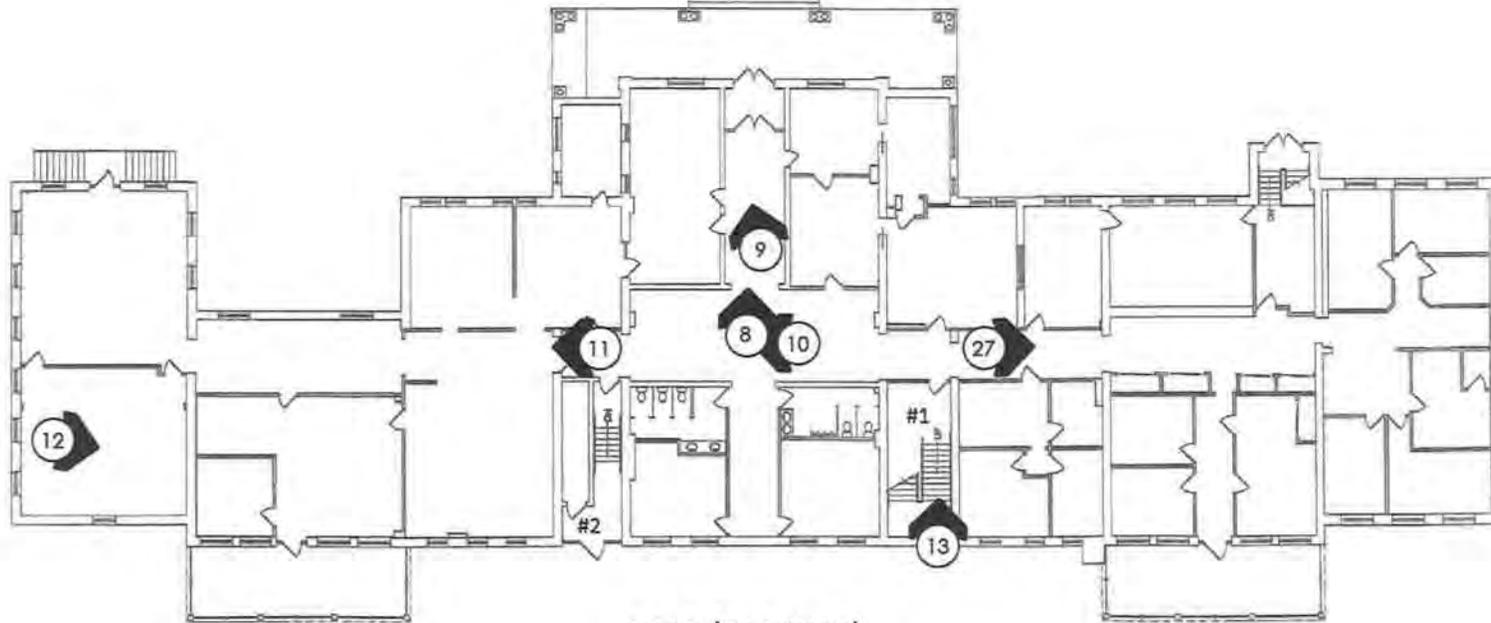
Image courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA

PHOTOGRAPH KEY- 1



FRONT



REAR (PARKING)

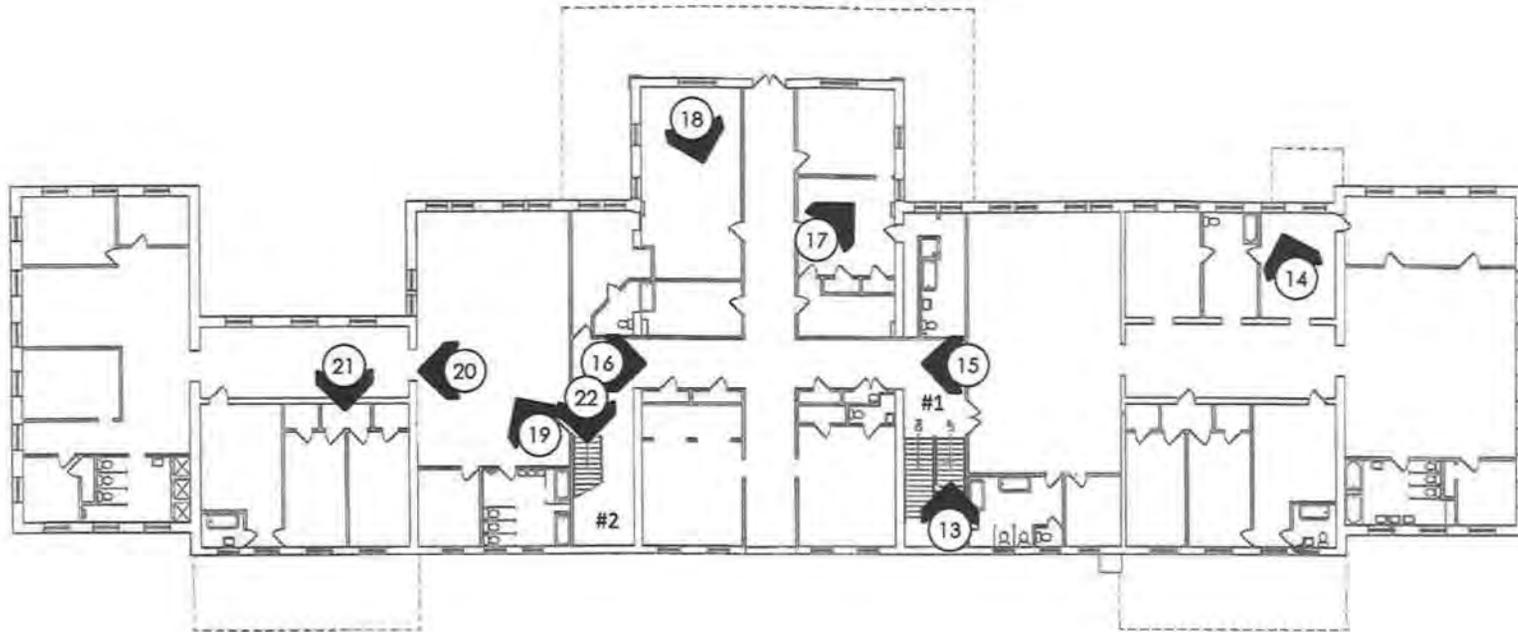


FIRST FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA

PHOTOGRAPH KEY- 2

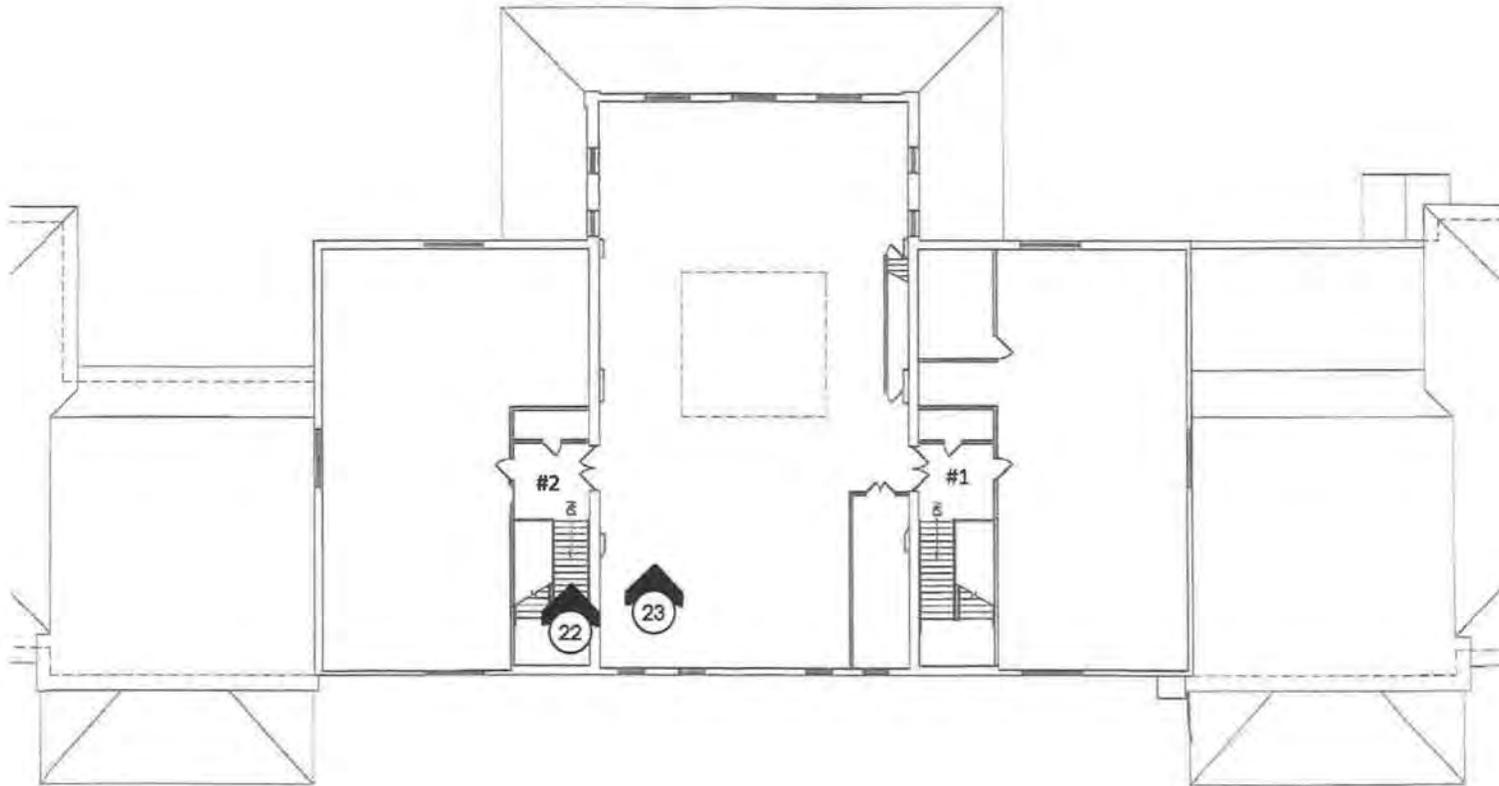


SECOND FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA

PHOTOGRAPH KEY- 3



THIRD FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



The Lutheran Home at Topton  
One South Home Avenue  
Longswamp Township  
Berks County, Pennsylvania

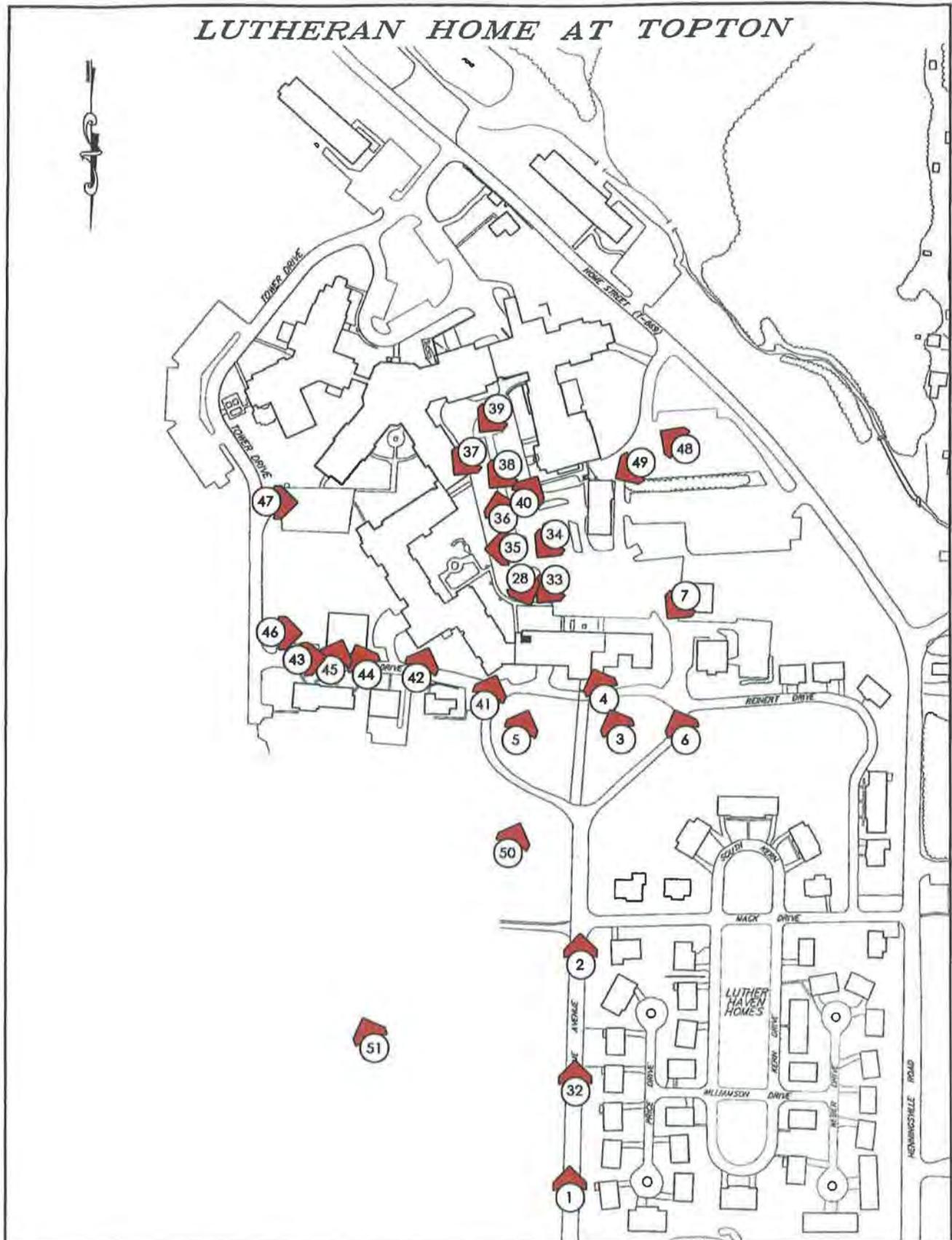
Photograph Key 4



— NR Property Boundary

The Lutheran Home at Topton  
One South Home Avenue  
Longswamp Township  
Berks County, Pennsylvania

Photograph Key 5



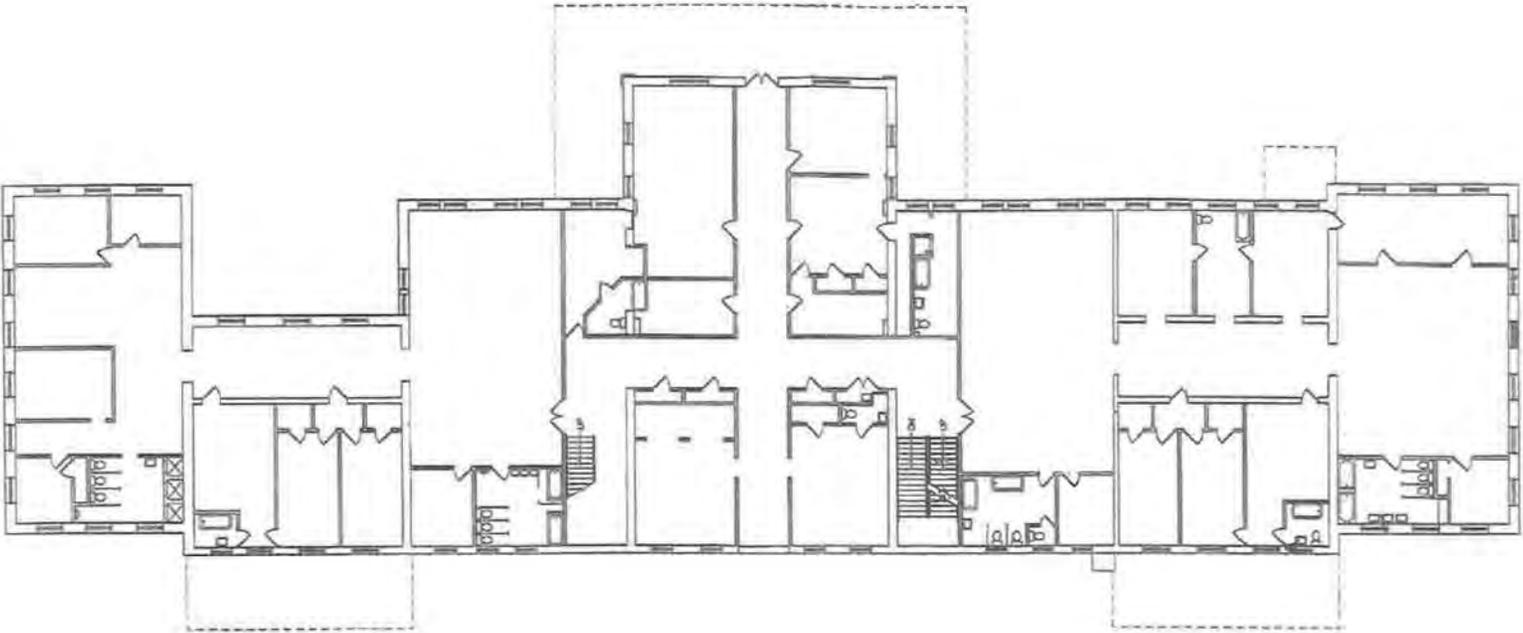
OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA



FIRST FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



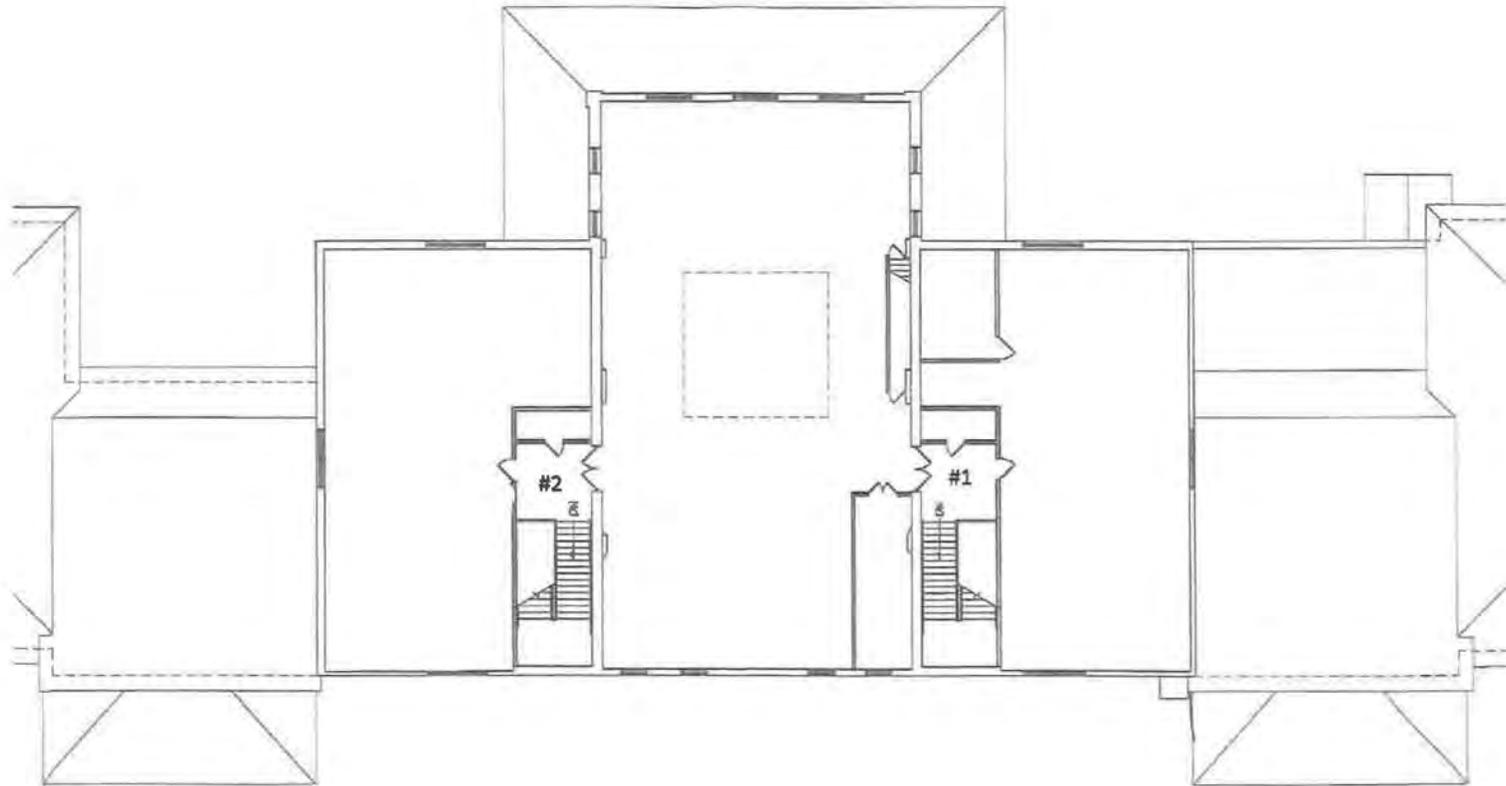
OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA



SECOND FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



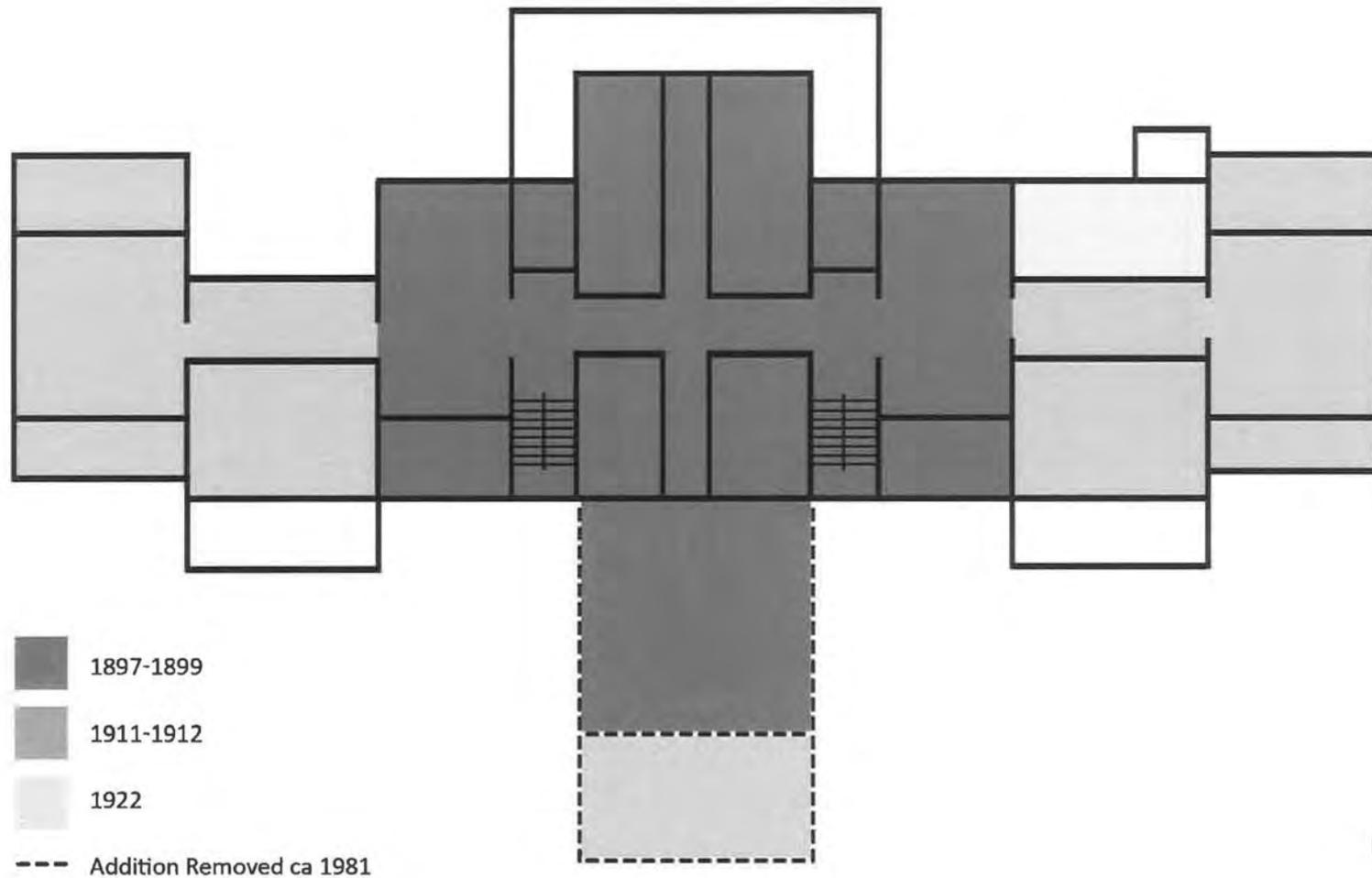
OLD MAIN AT THE LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON  
LONGSWAMP TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PA

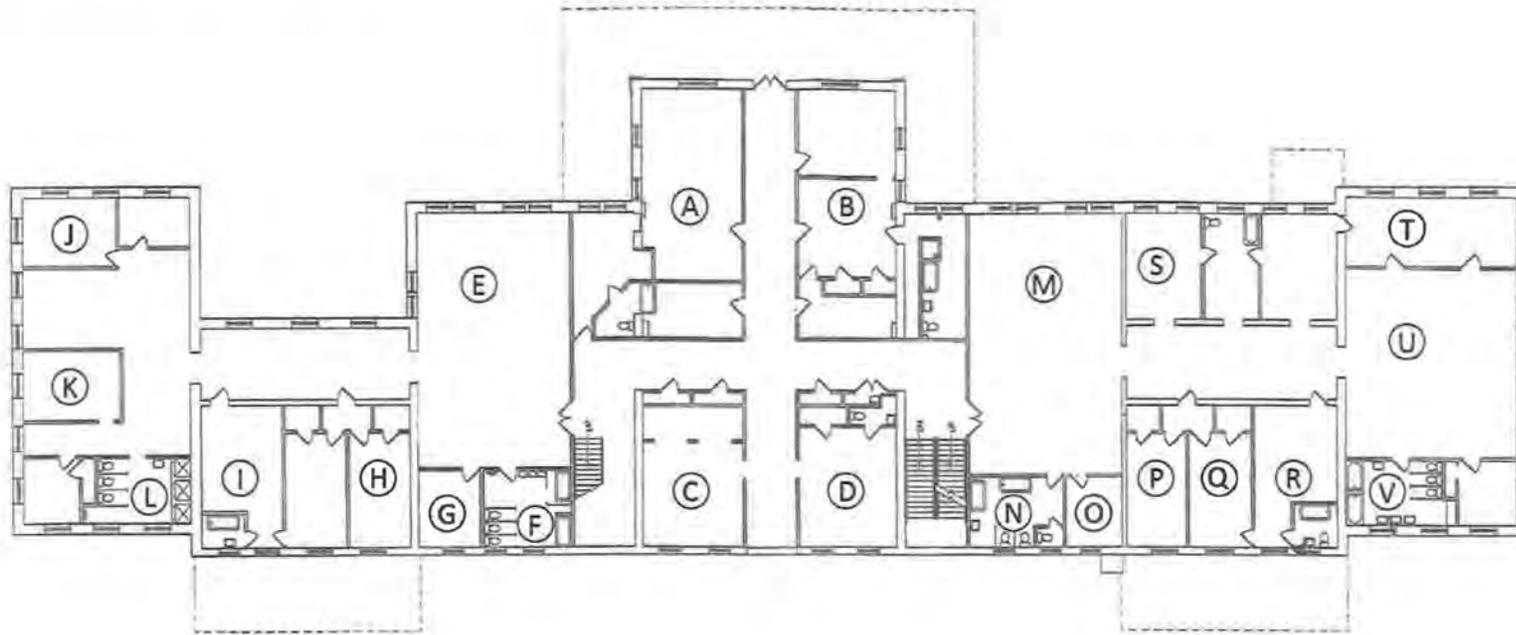


THIRD FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"







- |                                       |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A. Senior Girls' Library              | H. Male Staff Room                    | O. Girls' (Fancy) Bathroom       |
| B. Superintents Apt.                  | I. Male Staff Room                    | P. Senior Staff Room             |
| C. Matron's Room                      | J. Boys' Bedrooms                     | Q. Senior Staff Room             |
| D. Sewing Room                        | K. Boys' Bedrooms                     | R. Senior Staff Room             |
| E. Young Men's Bedroom<br>(Age 10-12) | L. Boys' Bedrooms                     | S. Asst. Superintendent Bedrooms |
| F. Male Staff Room                    | M. Young Girls Bedroom<br>(Age 10-12) | T. Asst. Superintendent Study    |
| G. Male Staff Room                    | N. Matron's Room                      | U. Girls' Bedrooms (Age 12-16)   |
|                                       |                                       | V. Girls' Showers                |

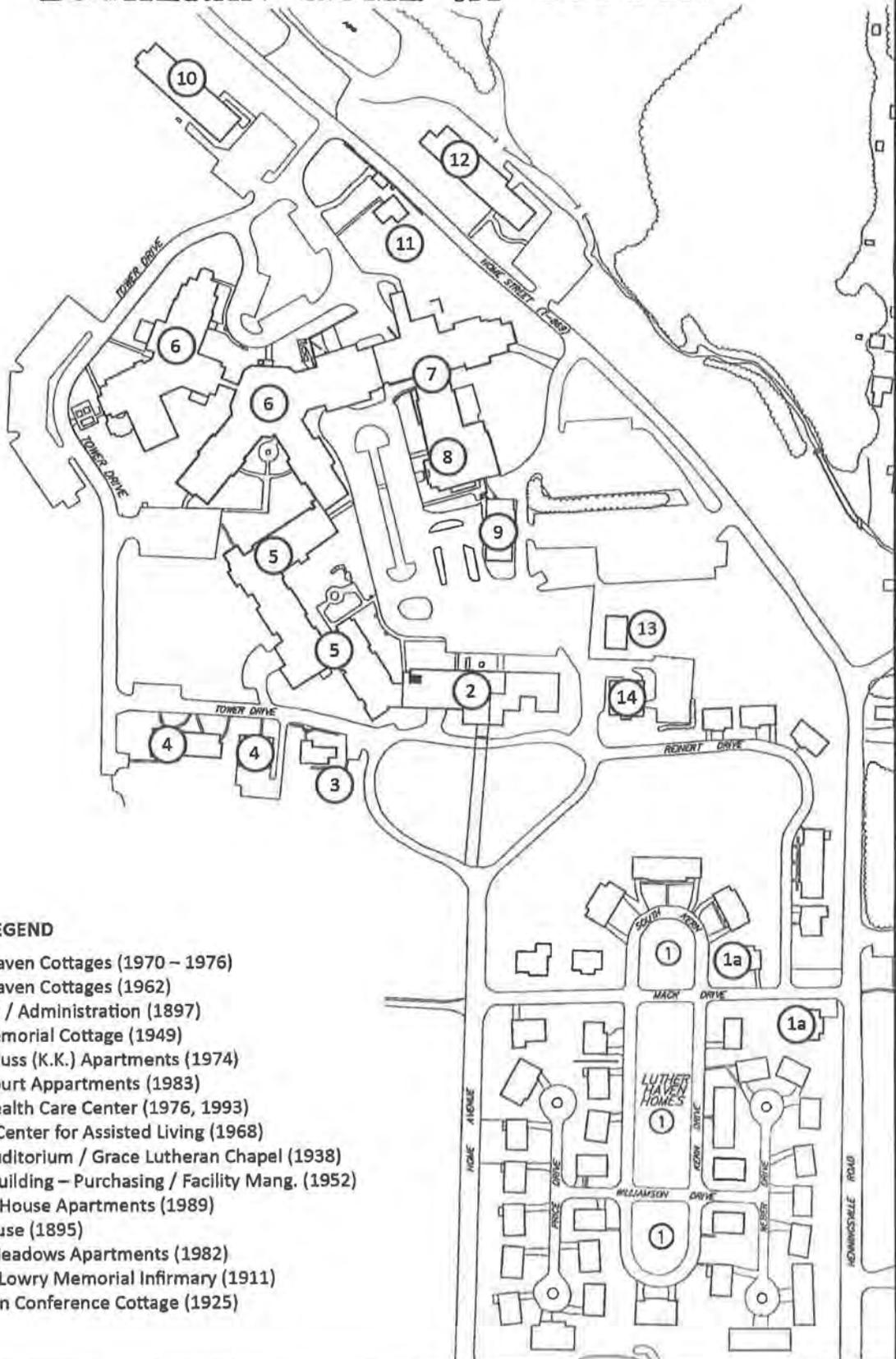
SECOND FLOOR EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



The Lutheran Home at Topton  
 One South Home Avenue  
 Longswamp Township  
 Berks County, Pennsylvania

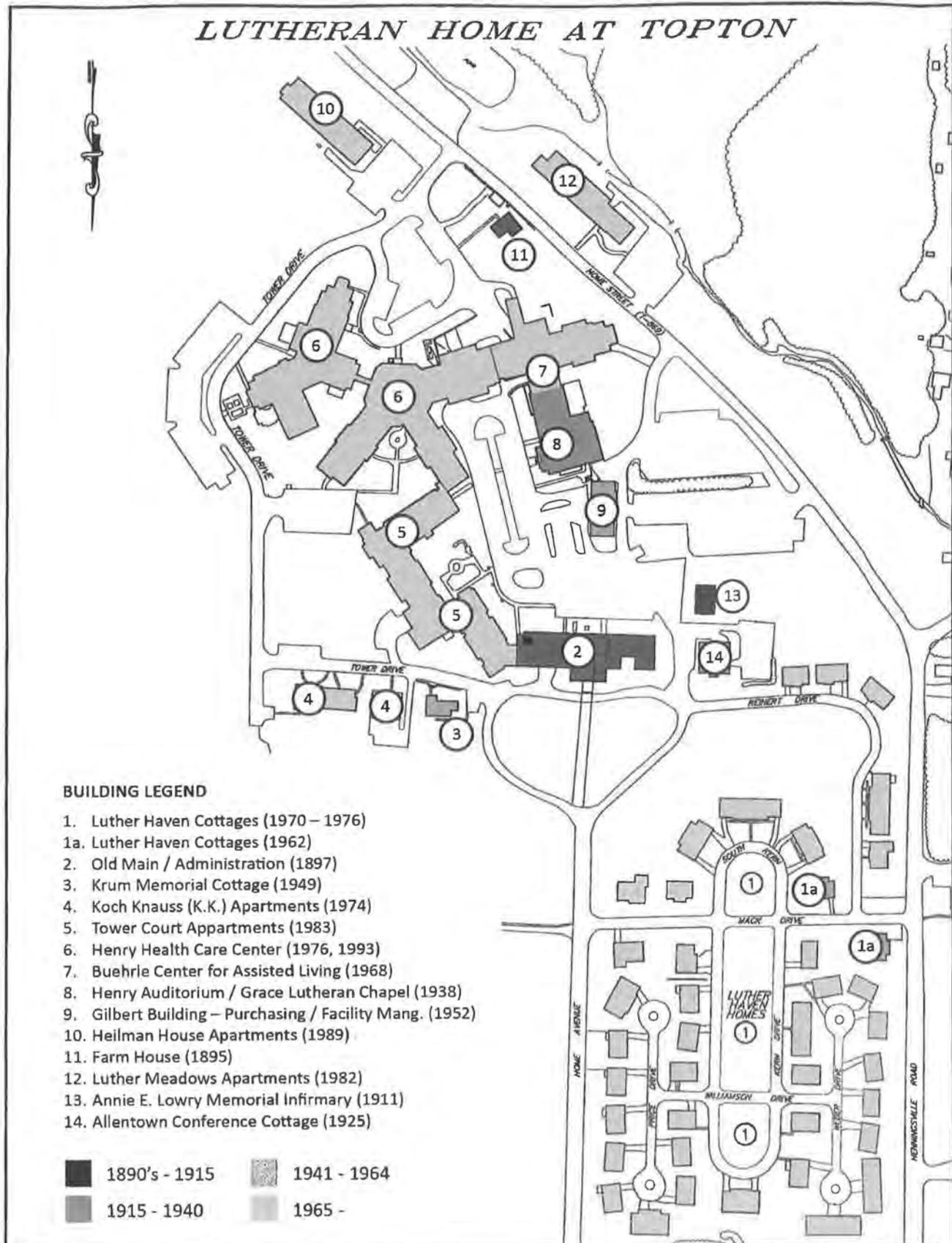
Site Legend

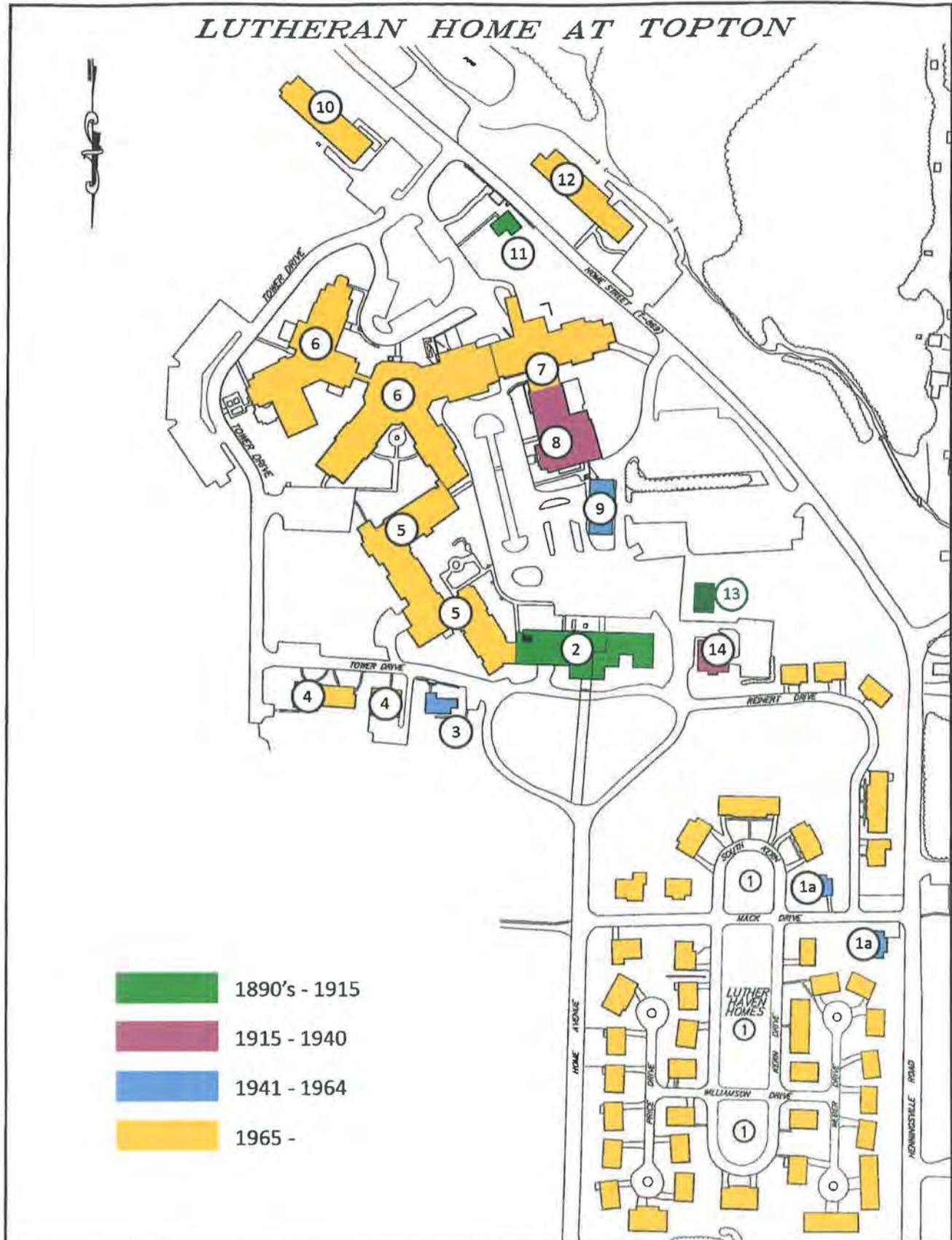
**LUTHERAN HOME AT TOPTON**



**BUILDING LEGEND**

- 1. Luther Haven Cottages (1970 – 1976)
- 1a. Luther Haven Cottages (1962)
- 2. Old Main / Administration (1897)
- 3. Krum Memorial Cottage (1949)
- 4. Koch Knauss (K.K.) Apartments (1974)
- 5. Tower Court Apartments (1983)
- 6. Henry Health Care Center (1976, 1993)
- 7. Buehle Center for Assisted Living (1968)
- 8. Henry Auditorium / Grace Lutheran Chapel (1938)
- 9. Gilbert Building – Purchasing / Facility Mang. (1952)
- 10. Heilman House Apartments (1989)
- 11. Farm House (1895)
- 12. Luther Meadows Apartments (1982)
- 13. Annie E. Lowry Memorial Infirmary (1911)
- 14. Allentown Conference Cottage (1925)





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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation Page 1

Comparisons: Classical Revival style in Berks County



C-1: Wyomissing High School



C-2: Reading Post Office



C-3: Reading Railroad Company YMCA



C-4: Foos Elementary School



C-5: Reading Trust Company



C-6: Trinity Lutheran Church

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 2

Comparisons: Orphanages



C-7: St. Joseph's House for Homeless Industrious Boys, Philadelphia, NR listed 1996



C-8: St. Stanislaus Institute, Luzerne county, NR listed 2008

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 3



C-9: Administration Building, Christ's Home for Children, Bucks County (not NR listed)



C-10: Fretz Mansion, Tabor Home for Children, Bucks County, NR listed 1987

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 4

Comparisons: architect



C-11 Frank Wildbahn Hanold Residence, Centre Park, Reading, 1896. Designed by Frederick Barrows.



C-12 Hanold residence interior

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 5



Figure 1: Original Building, c. 1900, *Lutheran Orphans' Home 1897-1937*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 6

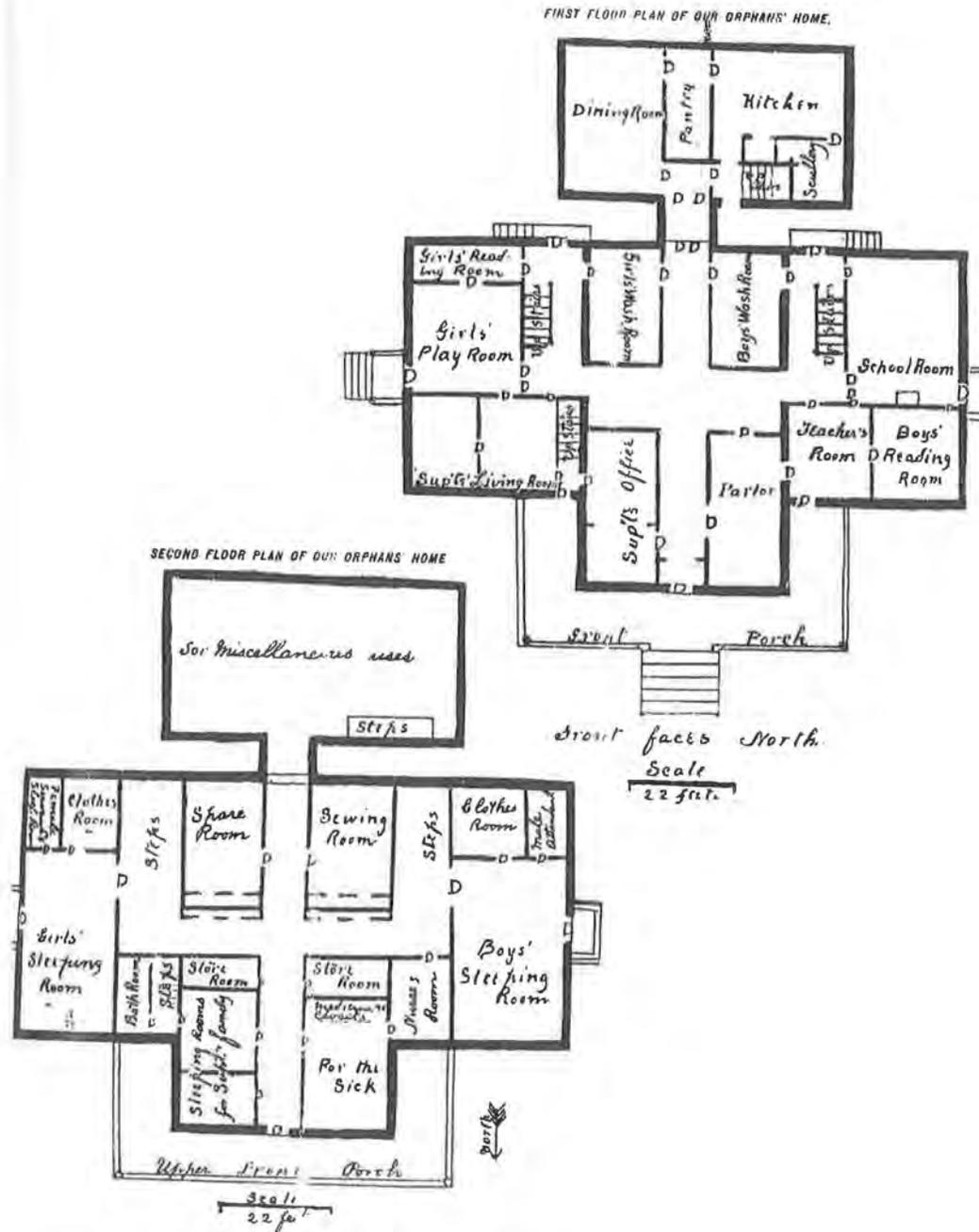


Figure 2: Original Floor Plan 1897-1908, A Gift of Love

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 7



Figure 3: Old Main c. 1911, *Lutheran Orphans' Home 1897-1937*

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 8



Figure 4: South (Rear) Elevation with Dining Room, c. 1978 – Kitchen Addition, *A Gift of Love*

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 9



Figure 5: First Floor - Chapel c. 1937, Topton Alumni Archives

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 10



Figure 6: Dining Room with Dr. Henry, Superintendent from 1909 to 1945, 1938, *Topton Alumni Archives*

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 11

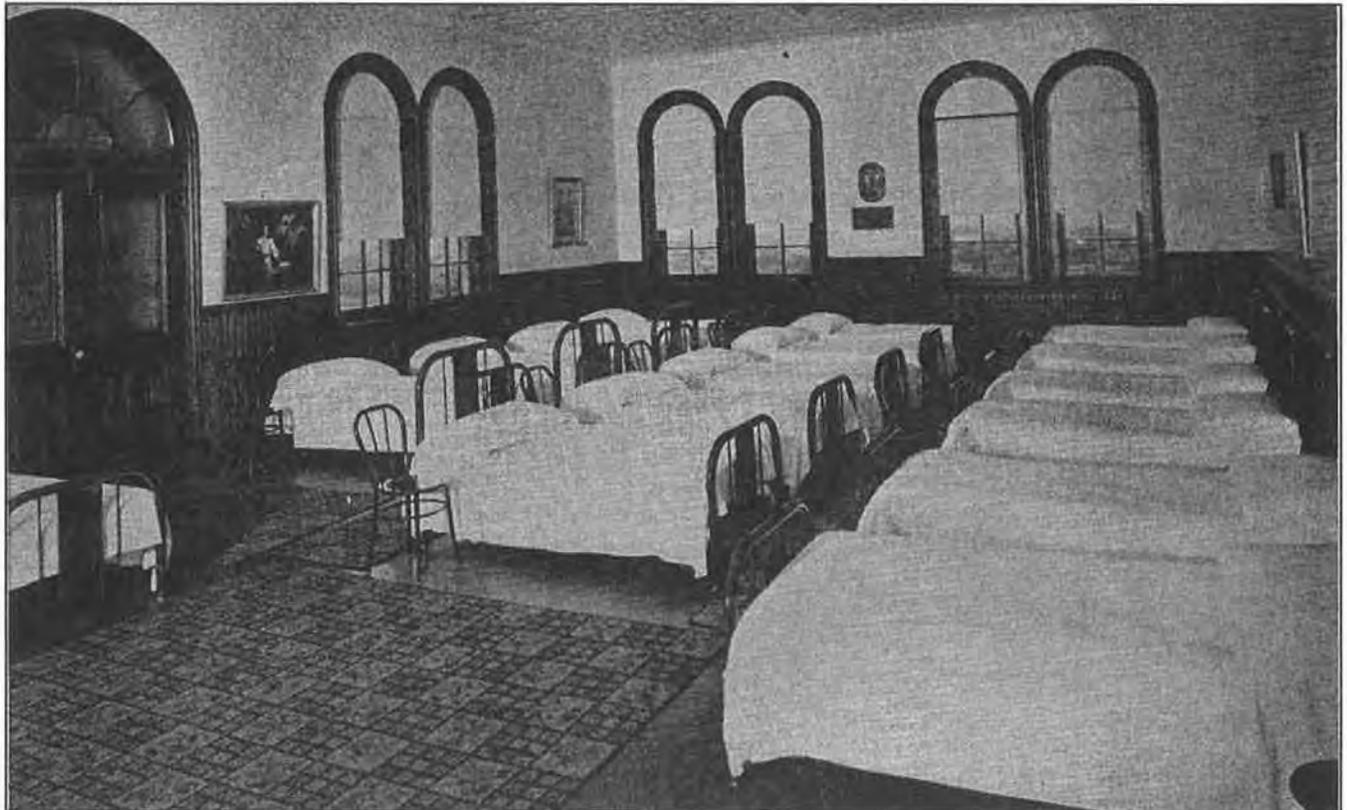


Figure 7: Second-Floor Young Boys' Bedroom, c. 1937, *Topton Alumni Archives*

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 12



Figure 8: Third-Floor Senior Boys' (Cold) Dormitory, c. 1938, *Topton Alumni Archives*

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 13



Figure 9: Topton Campus, pre-1970, *Gift of Love*, p. 142.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 14



Figure 10: 1937 aerial, [www.pennpilot.psu.edu](http://www.pennpilot.psu.edu)

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 15



Figure 11: 1971 Aerial, [www.pennpilot.psu.edu](http://www.pennpilot.psu.edu)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 16



Figure 12: 2013 Aerial, [www.bing/maps.com](http://www.bing/maps.com)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 17



Figure 13: Detail of 2013 Aerial, [www.bing/maps.com](http://www.bing/maps.com)

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 18

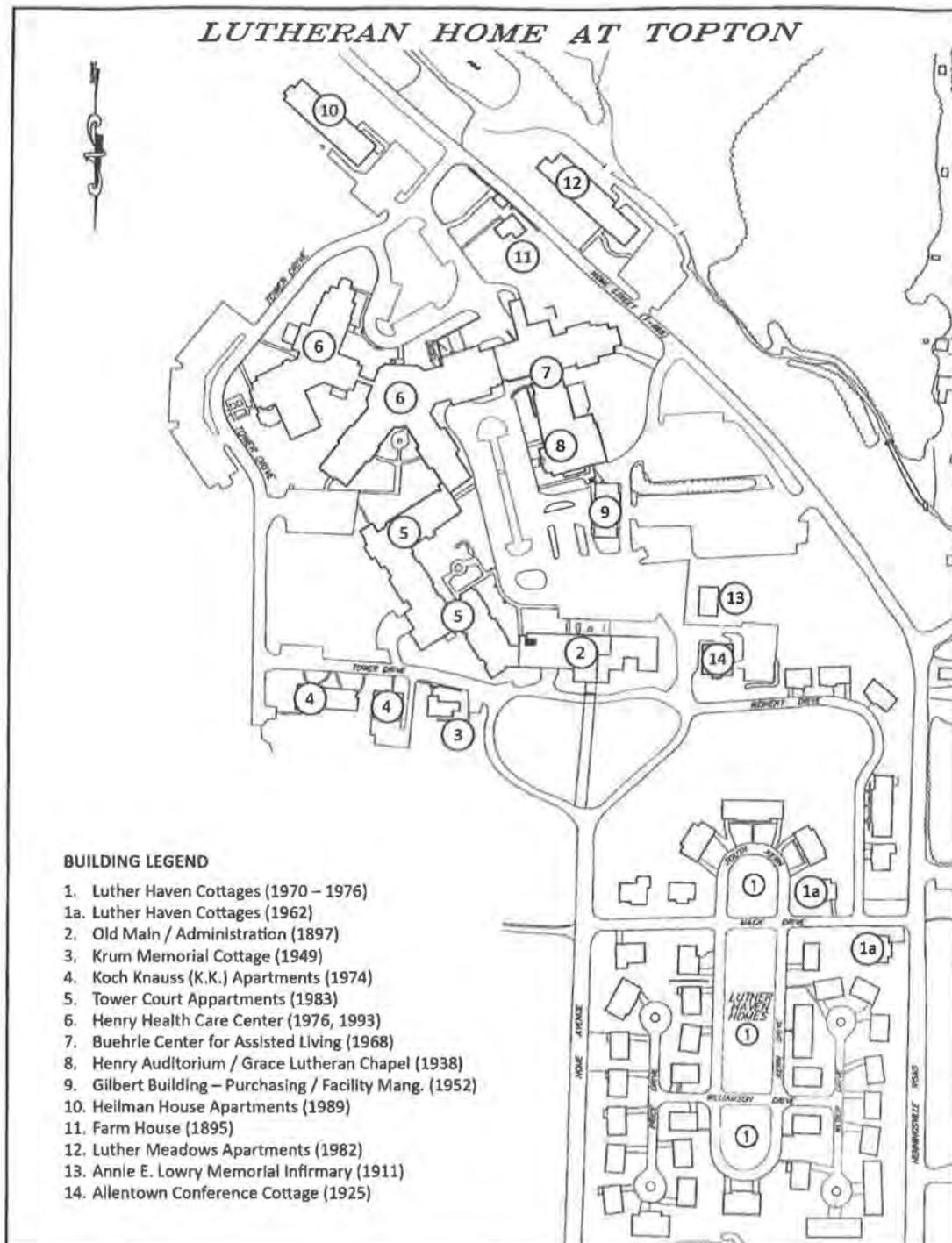


Figure 14: Existing Site plan with Building Legend

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Old Main at The Lutheran Home at Topton
Name of Property
Berks County, PA
County and State

Section Number Additional Documentation

Page 19

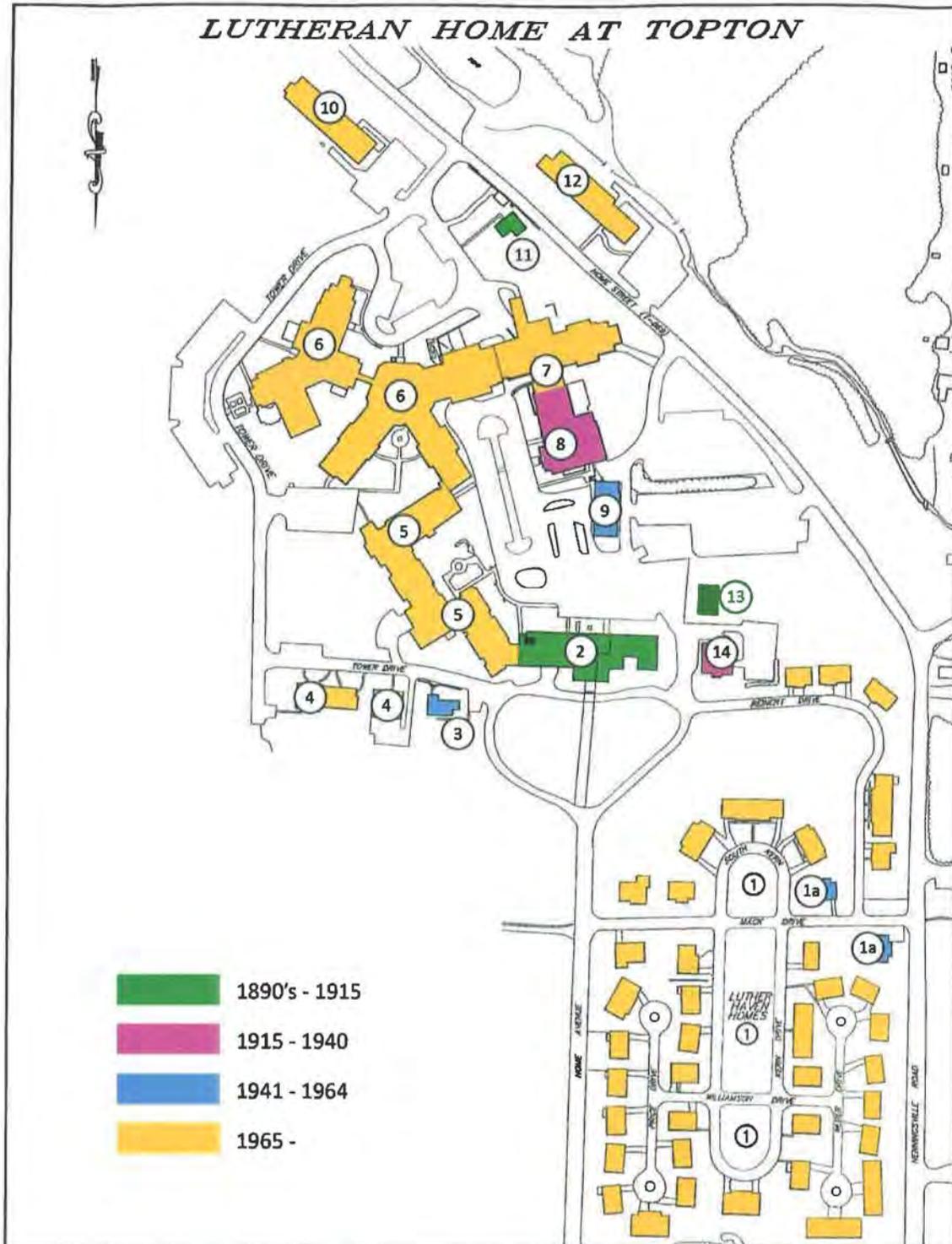


Figure 15: Existing Site Plan with Building Campaigns





THE LUTHERAN HOME

Luther Haven Cottages



THE LUTHERAN HOME





THE LUTHERAN HOME

EXIT











EXIT

Brandywine  
Community  
Library

RETURNS

CHILDREN'S  
ROOM







Lithium Storage Room

CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION

WET FLOOR













EXIT



CAUTION

CAUTION





EXIT





CAUTION CAUTION CAUTION













Tower Court

Tower Court  
Main Entrance  
Sales Center  
Walk Ups





THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome To  
**Topton**  
Est. 1876

E-SMITH ST W



THE LUTHERAN HOME

E KELLER ST W



THE LUTHERAN HOME



TOWER COURT

Tower Court  
Main Entrance  
Walk Here





WALKWAY  
TO  
SCHOOL









BUCKHOLE CENTER



















EXIT





ENTER  
HERE





THE LUTHERAN HOME



THE LUTHERAN HOME



THE LEVY HALL

RAILROAD  
CROSSING  
AHEAD

RAILROAD  
CROSSING  
AHEAD

DO NOT  
PASS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Berks

DATE RECEIVED: 3/13/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/07/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/22/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/29/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000183

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 4/28/2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*See attached for detailed comment regarding this Return*

RECOM./CRITERIA Return  
REVIEWER Patrick Anderson DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 4/28/2014

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Berks

DATE RECEIVED: 12/12/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY:      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/28/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000183

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    1/28/2015 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*On resubmission the boundary has been expanded to include all additions and an expanded integrity evaluation has been provided.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept c

REVIEWER Patrick Andrus

DISCIPLINE Historian

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 1/28/2015

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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

### National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton  
State and County: PENNSYLVANIA, Berks  
Reference Number: 14000183

Reason for Return:

The nomination is being returned because it does not follow National Register policy and guidance on defining boundaries. The National Register requires that entire buildings be nominated and that parts of buildings are not eligible independent of the rest of the existing building (see National Register of Historic Places Bulletins, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, page 4, and *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, p. 56, for guidance on this issue).

As shown on the site plans and in photographs, The Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton includes large, sprawling additions which have not been included within the boundary of the nominated property. Drawing a boundary line through a building to exclude additions contravenes National Register policy. If the Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton is to be nominated to the National Register, the entire building, including all additions, must be included within the boundary and the impact of these additions on the building's historic integrity must be evaluated.

*Patrick Andrus*

Patrick Andrus, Historian  
National Register of Historic Places  
[patrick\\_andrus@nps.gov](mailto:patrick_andrus@nps.gov)  
4/28/2014



Pennsylvania  
Historical & Museum  
Commission



December 10, 2014

Carol Shull, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, US Department of Interior  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th Floor  
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nomination Reference Number 14000183

Dear Ms Shull:

The Old Main at the Lutheran Home at Topton, Berks County, National Register nomination is being re-submitted for your review. Enclosed please find a paper version of the nomination with a signed cover sheet, and three CDs with photographs.

The proposed action for this nomination is listing in the National Register. The nomination was previously submitted to your office but returned (Reference Number 14000183). Our staff and Preservation Board continue to support the nomination. The preparer has provided additional documentation and revised narrative statements to adjust the boundary, clarify integrity, and reflect the physical prominence of Old Main within the community.

If you have any questions regarding the nomination please contact me at 717-783-9922 or [afrantz@pa.gov](mailto:afrantz@pa.gov). Thank you for your consideration of this property for listing in the National Register.

Sincerely,

April E. Frantz  
National Register Reviewer/Eastern Region

enc.

Historic Preservation Services  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093  
[www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us)  
*The Commonwealth's Official History Agency*