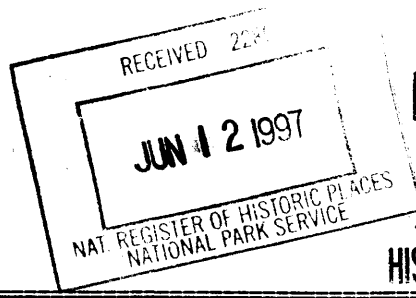


772

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



RECEIVED

JAN 31 1997

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name: The Oaks Historic District  
other names/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 320 W. Maple Ave., 101-201 (odd #s only) Browning Rd., 308-318 (even #s only) Volan St.,  
and 1-3 Oak Terrace  
city or town: Merchantville Borough vicinity: N/A  
state: New Jersey code: 034 county: Camden code: 007 zip code: 08109  
not for publication: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

5/21/97  
Date

Assistant Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

7/9/97

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the

National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the

National Register

removed from the National

Register

other (explain):

**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:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
12	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
-----		
12	2	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: none

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

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic                      Sub: Single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic                      Sub: Single dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

- Italian Renaissance Revival
- Neoclassical
- Colonial Revival
- Tudor Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation:            concrete, stone  
 roof:                    asphalt, slate, ceramic tile  
 walls:                  stucco, brick  
 other:

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.):

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- X 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.
X 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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or a grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
Community Development

Period of Significance: 1909-circa 1937

Significant Dates: 1909

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Moses, Arnold H., Architect
Peddle, Charles R., Architect
Rhodemeyer, George E., Landscape Architect

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

NA

- 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 #

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: Merchantville Historical Society, Merchantville, New Jersey

---

---

**10. Geographical Data**

---

---

Acreage of Property: 8.1 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1: 18.495000.4421940	3: 18.494890.4421800
2: 18.495000.4421810	4:
___ See continuation sheet.	

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

SEE ACCOMPANYING DISTRICT MAP

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

---

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

---

name and title: Carol Benenson Perloff, M.S.	
organization: Carol A. Benenson & Associates	date: 12/96
street & number: 455 Rock Glen Drive	telephone: (610) 649-7774
city or town: Wynnewood state: PA	zip code: 19096

---

---

**2. Additional Documentation**

---

---

**Maps**

USGS quadrangle (7.5 minute series) Camden, NJ

Other maps: see "Plan of 'The Oaks'", September 1909  
Sanborn Map Company. Merchantville, Camden County, New Jersey. NY: August 1921.

Photographs: see the Continuation Sheets labeled Photographs, p. 1.

---

---

**Property Owner**

---

---

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

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7                      Page 1

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

The Oaks Historic District is located in the western end of Merchantville where a primary diagonal thoroughfare into the Borough, Browning Road (formerly called Wellwood Avenue), meets the main east-west street, Maple Avenue. The district is roughly a triangular 8.1-acre area defined by Maple Avenue, Browning Road, Volan Street, and Oak Terrace. The boundaries are based upon the subdivision plan called "The Oaks," which was first filed in 1909, then updated in 1916 to include the south side of Volan Street. The houses line both sides of Oak Terrace (photo #7) and Volan Street (photo #5), the southeasterly side of Browning Road, and one fronts Maple Avenue. The district includes fourteen single-family residences: twelve of these are well-preserved houses from the early twentieth century, counted as contributing resources; two are modern and therefore, non-contributing. Along with the houses are eleven period garages and one modern garage; these secondary buildings are not factored into the resource count for the district.

Developer George E. Rhedemeyer carved The Oaks out of a 38-acre wooded parcel he acquired in 1909. The terrain is flat and retains many mature trees, presumably part of the original woods. A landscape architect by trade, Rhedemeyer laid out the triangular parcel to include a curved road which he called Oak Terrace, as well as Volan Street which parallels Maple Avenue. Given the configuration of the parcel and its streets, the lots are irregularly sized and shaped. As laid out by Rhedemeyer, the lots ranged in size from 65x150 feet to his Maple Avenue property of 156x350 feet. However, several of the smaller lots were consolidated prior to construction of the houses. In the deed restrictions set forth by Rhedemeyer's Oaks Realty Company, requirements were spelled out for setbacks of 40 or 50 feet, although 30-foot setbacks were permissible on Volan Street. These setbacks contribute to the overall upscale ambience of The Oaks within the architectural context of the Borough. Rhedemeyer did not design a formal landscape plan for his development. Rather, grassy lawns and sidewalks, typical of a suburban setting, characterize the landscape along with the mature trees. As to siting, the houses are oriented towards the roads they front, except for 131 Browning Road (photo #5), the 45 degree orientation of which bridges the juncture of the diagonal Browning Road and the grid-oriented Volan Street.

As a suburban development, The Oaks contains a collection of fashionable, large-scale prestigious houses (see individual descriptions below). The majority were built between 1910 and the First World War; a few on the south side of Volan Street, not officially part of the original 1909 subdivision, were erected in the 1920s-30s. The houses are typically 2 1/2 stories in height, constructed all or partially of masonry, and several are stuccoed. Porches -- both front and side -- are a common architectural feature in the district. A variety of revival styles is represented, including Italian Renaissance (320 West Maple Avenue, photo #1, and 129 Browning Road, photo #4), Neoclassical (121 Browning Road, photo #2, and 1 Oak Terrace, photo #9), Tudor (125 Browning Road, photo #3), and Colonial (131 Browning Road, photo #5, 201 Browning Road, 2 Oak Terrace, photo #8, 308 Volan Street, and 310 and 314 Volan Street, photo #6). Architects have been documented for four of the houses. The four confirmed architect-designed houses are: 129 Browning (photo #4), 131 Browning (photo #5), and 310 Volan (photo #6), all by Merchantville architect Arnold H. Moses; and 2 Oak Terrace (photo #8) by architect Charles R. Peddle. Based upon the scale and sophistication of most of the residences in The Oaks, it is likely that several others are architect-designed as well -- very possibly by Arnold H. Moses.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

Overall, the resources in The Oaks retain a high degree of architectural integrity. The most common alterations are window replacements and porches that have been completely or partially infilled to become sun porches. The integrity of materials is very high, the few extensive refacings being the aluminum siding on 2 Oak Terrace (photo #8) and 308 Volan Street, which would have been clapboarded in their original form. Additions are nearly absent from the district, the one exception being 1 Oak Terrace where a 2-story rear addition, compatibly stuccoed, was added in the 1970s. New construction is present at 101 Browning Road, where a 1970s colonial ranch house replaced a circa 1911 gambrel Shingle Style house, and at 318 Volan Street, where a circa 1960 split level house appears to have been the first building erected on the lot.

Nearly all of the houses retain period garages. These are typically 1-story, 1- or 2-bay structures designed with materials and architectural elements such as roof configurations and cornice details that mirror the houses they accompany.

A more detailed building inventory is as follows:

**320 W. Maple Avenue - George H. Rhedemeyer House**  
**Block 24.01/Lot 2**

Built 1910. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, Italian Renaissance Revival-style house constructed of masonry and stuccoed. 1-story, wraparound veranda supported by massive end piers with bracketed overhang at west end of veranda; veranda partially infilled and 1-bay central portico with bracketed cornice and flat roof has been added. Glazed and paneled double door with leaded glass glazing. Aluminum replacement "balustrade" above veranda. Windows are 8/1 double hung in outer bays at the second floor; central bay fenestrated by tripartite composition, outer two openings lit with leaded glass, central opening infilled. Red pantiled hipped roof punctuated by hipped dormers that project from front and sides. Dormers fenestrated by 6/1 double hung windows. Mid-20th-century swimming pool surrounded by concrete walled enclosure connecting to the house was added. 2-story period garage, stucco over masonry, hipped pantile roof with dormer. -- Contributing

**101 Browning Road (formally site of the 1910 A.W. MacCullum House)**  
**Block 24.01/Lot 1**

c. 1970, 1-story, brick-faced, hip-roofed colonial ranch house. Brick-faced, single-bay, hip-roofed garage, also circa 1970. -- Non-contributing

**121 Browning Road - Emeline G. Bender House**  
**Block 16/Lot 4**

Built 1910. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, symmetrical, Neoclassical-style house, stucco over masonry. Porticoed entry supported on square and fluted round columns, dentiled cornice. Glazed multi-light door with sidelights and dentiled lintel. First floor rectangular 8/1 double hung windows set in blind arches with keystones. Second floor outer bays 8/1 double hung, stone jack-arch lintels and sills, louvered shutters. Central arched window with Gothick sash. 1-story sun porch on northerly side.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 3

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

Asphalt hipped roof with asphalt hipped dormers. Deep overhang with modillioned cornice. Brick-capped concrete wall surrounds back yard. Period 1-story, stuccoed masonry garage. -- Contributing

**125 Browning Road - Harvey K. Partridge House  
Block 16/Lot 3**

Circa 1916, symmetrically composed, 2 1/2-story, Tudor Revival-style house. Constructed of masonry and faced with brick at the first floor, stucco and decorative half-timbering above. Central, sidelighted entrance marked by a gabled pent supported by deep brackets; original glazed and paneled door. On either side of entrance are grouped windows, one bay of which has original 9/1 double hung sash, the other replacement sash. Soldier course lintels and header sills. Second floor double 4/4 double hung windows and triple 9/1 double hung; also single windows on side elevations. Slate shingled, gabled roof punctuated by half-timbered wall dormers and central gabled dormer; windows 3/3 and 2/2 double hung. Sun porch located along the southerly elevation. Period garage, 1-story, 2-bay, brick walls, slate gabled roof. -- Contributing

**129 Browning Road - Harold S. Bottomly House  
Block 16/Lot 2**

Built 1912 by architect Arnold H. Moses. 2 1/2-story, 4-bay, Italian Renaissance Revival-style house. Constructed of masonry and stuccoed. 1-bay entrance porch supported by Tuscan columns and topped by balustrade; paneled door, leaded glass fanlight and sidelights. Flanking bays fenestrated by triple windows united beneath blind arch. Windows throughout are 6/1 and 4/1 double hung, concrete sills. Belt courses wrap around the building at the first and second floors. Deep bracketed cornice sets off the red pantiled hipped roof which is punctuated by segmental-arched dormers with pilastered surrounds. Period garage, 1-story, stuccoed, bracketed hipped roof. -- Contributing

**131 Browning Road - Harry Humphreys House  
Block 16/Lot 1**

Built circa 1914 by architect Arnold H. Moses. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, masonry Colonial Revival-style house. Coursed stone basement and first floor, stuccoed above first floor pent. Central pedimented entrance, Tuscan columns and pilasters, leaded glass transom and sidelights. Tripartite first floor windows, stone splayed lintels, wood sills, 4/4 and 6/6 double hung sash. Second floor 6/6 and 8/8 double hung single windows, louvered shutters. Molded cornice sets off slate shingled roof punctuated by three pedimented dormers with pilastered surrounds and 6/6 double hung sash. Exterior end stone chimneys. 1-story sun porch to north; rear deck/porch at second floor. Period 2-bay, stuccoed masonry garage with hinged doors and hipped roof. -- Contributing

**201 Browning Road  
Block 17/Lot 14**

Circa 1937. 2-story, 5-bay, Colonial Revival, red brick-faced house. Central entrance, paneled door, 4-light sidelights, pilastered surround. Windows 6/6 double hung, paneled shutters at first floor.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

Page 4

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

Steep, slate shingled roof encompasses entire second floor which is fenestrated by two pedimented dormers. Side sun porch to north. Attached 2-story, 2-bay garage to south. -- Contributing

**308 Volan Street  
Block 17/ Lot 6A**

Circa 1930. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, aluminum sided, Colonial Revival-style house with flanking 1-story end bays. Central pedimented entrance supported by Tuscan columns, paneled door, 4-light sidelights, and pilastered surround. Asphalt shingled pent separates first and second floors. First floor windows grouped in threes, second floor paired, 6/1 and 4/1 double hung. Gambreled end walls set within overall gabled roof form; aluminum cornices, asphalt roofing, exterior brick chimney. Period 1-story garage, aluminum sided, pedimented roof. -- Contributing

**310 Volan Street - Marcus E. and Florence Zane House  
Block 17/Lot 5**

Built 1911 by architect Arnold H. Moses. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, symmetrical, Colonial Revival-style house. Stone first floor, butt shingles above. Tuscan columns support wraparound porch. Central, sidelighted, glazed entrance is flanked by 8/1 double hung windows with paneled shutters; splayed stone lintels and wood sills. Three front windows of second floor also 8/1 double hung, louvered shutters. Hipped roof with modillioned cornice, pedimented dormers fenestrated by 6/1 double hung windows. Rear sun porch. Period clapboarded garage with asphalt hipped roof. -- Contributing

**314 Volan Street - Charles S. and Susan M. Evans House  
Block 17/Lot 4**

Circa 1922. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, Colonial Revival house with 2-story single-bay increment. Red tapestry brick, central pedimented entry, Tuscan columns. Paneled door, 5-light sidelights. First and second floor windows 8/1 double hung, soldier course lintels, header sills. Paneled shutters at first floor, louvered above. Three pedimented dormers, slate shingled cheeks and tympanums, louvered windows. End bays grouped 4/1 double hung windows at first floor, 6/1 double hung at second floor. French door to porch in westerly bay. Slate gabled roof, end chimney. Period, asbestos shingled, gabled garage with partial cornice returns and shed overhang extension. -- Contributing

**318 Volan Street  
Block 17/Lot 3**

Circa 1960. 2-story, 3-bay, colonial tract house. Brick veneer at first floor, aluminum siding above. -- Non-contributing



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7

Page 5

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

**1 Oak Terrace - F. Cooper and Martha W.S. Rogers House  
Block 24.01/Lot 6**

Circa 1917. 2-story, 3-bay, stucco over masonry Neoclassical-style house. Central projecting bay with entrance set in recess framed by Tuscan columns. Wood paneled door, 5-light sidelights. (Early photographs indicate original door was glazed with glazed transom.) Flanking bays fenestrated by French doors at first floor, 6/1 double hung at second floor except for central tripartite window with 4/1 and 6/1 double hung sash. Raised concrete belt course between first and second floor. Corbelled belt course sets off low attic lit by friezeband windows. Flanking 1-story sun porches on either side of main composition, dog's ear surrounds: southerly one original, northerly was enclosed with glazing at later date. Mid-1970s, 2-story stuccoed masonry addition to rear. Period 2-story, clapboarded garage. Gambrel roof, upstairs living quarters, 1/1 double hung window and shed-roofed dormer. -- Contributing

**2 Oak Terrace - Charles Floyd and Helen Long Dickinson House  
Block 16/Lot 5**

Circa 1916 by architect Charles R. Peddle. 2 1/2-story, 5-bay, aluminum-sided, Colonial Revival-style, frame house. Central pedimented entry supported by two Tuscan columns and two pilasters. Fanlight, 10-light sidelights, paneled door, built-in porch seats. First floor pent, windows throughout 6/6 double hung. Cornices panned with aluminum. Three pedimented dormers. Side porches: one glazed, one open. Period, hip-roofed, aluminum sided garage. -- Contributing

**3 Oak Terrace - John and Florence D. McFeeley House  
Block 24.01/Lot 7**

Circa 1915. 2 1/2-story, 3-bay, stucco over masonry, a-symmetrical Colonial Revival-style house, brick basement. Central pedimented entrance supported by paired Tuscan columns, paired pilasters; glazed and paneled door; dentiled pediment. Flanking 2-story pedimented bay with partial cornice returns, paired 8-light casement sash. Other windows 8/1 double hung, paneled shutters. Central pedimented gable with Gothick sash. Slate gabled roof, modillioned cornice. Side screened-in porch supported by massive Ionic columns, exposed rafters. Period, 1-story, stuccoed masonry garage, hinged doors, slate gabled roof with cornice returns. -- Contributing

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 1

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

"The Oaks," located in Merchantville, New Jersey, is a planned neighborhood of upscale, early-twentieth-century suburban houses envisioned by landscape architect George E. Rhedemeyer and developed by the Oaks Realty Company which he formed in 1910. Designed during the early years of the automobile age and for the most part, before the First World War, The Oaks became Merchantville's twentieth-century showcase and its gateway for vehicular traffic entering the Borough from Wellwood Avenue, later renamed Browning Road. The district contains an assemblage of the period's revival styles, several representatives of which were designed by Arnold H. Moses, long-time Merchantville resident and the Borough's most prolific architect during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Because The Oaks contains a concentrated group of Merchantville's most fashionable residences associated with the automobile age of the Borough's developmental history, the district appears eligible under Criterion A. And, because the resources reflect the discrete plan laid out by Rhedemeyer and the architectural work of Moses, the district appears eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. The period of significance begins with Rhedemeyer's acquisition of the land in 1909 and terminates around 1937 when the last of the initial homes in The Oaks was built.

Merchantville is a small borough of 395.8 acres inhabited by approximately 4,000 residents. Its history is a history of suburbanization, a phenomenon which began in nineteenth-century America just as soon as new forms of transportation created the opportunity to distance workplace from residence. At first, this opportunity largely was restricted to the more affluent class who may have used their suburban home as a summer residence. But starting in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the ambitions of railroads, real estate speculators, developers, builders, and financial institutions made year-round suburban homes accessible to the middle class, while the values instilled by Victorian popular culture made them desirable. This was clearly the case in Merchantville.

The railroad put Merchantville on the map in the 1860s and '70s. Beginning in the late 1870s and continuing to the turn of the century, the first significant residential development took place just north of the railroad tracks that linked Merchantville to Camden and Philadelphia. This was the National Register-listed Cattell Tract, which attracted many of Camden and Philadelphia's new industrial entrepreneurs. However, it was the automobile that triggered the largest residential and commercial development of the Borough. Roughly 50% of Merchantville's extant buildings were constructed between 1910 and the Second World War. Even before plans for the Delaware River Bridge in 1914 would accelerate real estate speculation and development in Camden County, Merchantville's west end -- accessed by roadways -- started to undergo subdivision and construction. One of the visionaries and investors behind this new chapter in Merchantville's history was George E. Rhedemeyer.

George E. Rhedemeyer (1860-1917) may be best known in Merchantville for The Oaks, but in Camden, he is most famous for shaping the landscape of Harleigh Cemetery. Educated in Orange, New Jersey, Rhedemeyer learned about landscape gardening from a family friend in Brooklyn. Much of his early experience was acquired in Ohio, where he was in charge of the grounds at the state insane asylum at Athens. Rhedemeyer moved to Camden around 1892 and became Harleigh Cemetery's second superintendent. In this position he was credited with establishing the cemetery's conservatory and significantly improving the landscape. During the early 1900s, he and three partners acquired

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 2

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

ownership of the Meadow Land and Improvement Company which held an extension of land to Harleigh Cemetery. In exchange for the land, the owners received half the income from the sale of burial lots. Presumably, the proceeds from his stock shares enabled Rhedemeyer to purchase 38 acres in Merchantville near Wellwood (Browning Road) and Maple Avenues in July, 1909 for \$12,250.

Rhedemeyer acquired his undeveloped wooded land from Arthur Dorrance. Previously, the land had belonged to the Estate of Dan Cooper and before that, the Estate of Sarah Fisher. Rhedemeyer filed his initial subdivision plan for The Oaks in September 1909. He carved out Volan Street and Oak Terrace, and laid out thirteen irregularly sized and shaped lots, some of which subsequently were merged or reconfigured. He held the large Maple Avenue parcel for himself and sold the others under the rubric of the Oaks Realty Company, which he incorporated with Camden attorney William Clayton Jones on November 19, 1910. The lots, of various sizes, sold from approximately \$1,500 to \$3,500. Deed restrictions abounded, including minimum dwelling costs ranging from \$4,000 to \$6,500, depending upon location, and setback requirements for the houses and outbuildings. The deed also prohibited a long list of uses including a hotel, drinking saloon, blacksmith, carpenter, wheelwright, steam mill, tannery, slaughter house, skin dressing establishment, livery, stable, and glue, soap or starch manufactory, and reserved the Oaks Realty Company the right to tear down any buildings in violation of the deed. In 1916 Rhedemeyer amended his subdivision to include the south side of Volan Street -- forming the 8.1 acres of The Oaks Historic District -- although the Oaks Realty Company had already begun to sell off those parcels in 1911. Beginning in 1916, Rhedemeyer sold off the balance of his initial 38-acre purchase, which ultimately was subdivided into smaller lots.

Most of the properties were sold during the 1910s to residents of Merchantville, West Collingswood, Camden, and Philadelphia. Just as Maple Avenue and the Cattell Tract had been the Victorian enclave for the upper middle class -- primarily industrialists -- so, too, did The Oaks become the fashionable address for Merchantville's automobile age denizens. In addition to Rhedemeyer, the first generation of Oaks residents included the secretary of the Oaks Realty Company, a civil engineer, a worsted yarn manufacturer, a wholesale grocery merchant, a produce broker, and a bookkeeper. By 1920 a lumber merchant, a soap manufacturer, and the President of the Stove and Range Company resided in The Oaks.

The first house to be built in The Oaks was Rhedemeyer's Italian Renaissance Revival-style mansion on Maple Avenue, completed in 1910. Two others built by 1911 were 111 Browning (since demolished and rebuilt as 101 Browning), a gambreled sub-type of the Shingle Style, and 121 Browning, a Neoclassical residence. Others were soon to follow, introducing the Tudor and Colonial Revivals to the neighborhood. As a group, they form a nucleus of fashionable upper middle class architecture, the only such twentieth-century concentration in the Borough. By their size, scale, and level of architectural sophistication, they stand apart from the other period housing in Merchantville, which is primarily comprised of 1910s and '20s modestly-scaled, builder-designed or patternbook Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Dutch Colonial Revival homes.

Of the twelve contributing resources in The Oaks Historic District, three (129 and 131 Browning Road and 310 Volan Street) are documented to have been the designs of the English-born architect Arnold H. Moses (1862-1934), who resided in Merchantville throughout his career. Moses received his

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

Page 3

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

architectural training in the office of T. P. Chandler and subsequently opened an office in Philadelphia with partner Guy King. One of Moses' first important commissions was the addition of a Senate Wing to the New Jersey State Capitol at Trenton, completed in 1904. While Moses was to develop a substantial statewide and Philadelphia-area clientele, it was in his hometown that he most clearly shaped the architectural streetscape. Moses executed more commissions in Merchantville than any other architect. This role is understandable considering his prominent role in community affairs. Not only was he the son of Reverend Richard George Moses, Rector of Merchantville's Episcopal Church, but also, he was a leader in church activities himself. This association likely introduced him to several clients as did the positions he held early on in his career as Councilman, Plumbing Inspector, and a Director of the Merchantville Building and Loan Association. During the late 1880s, Moses and King were designing frame cottages in the National Register-listed Cattell Tract, the initial Victorian residential enclave in Merchantville. The partnership between Moses and King was dissolved in 1890 for a partnership among Moses, King, and engineer George F. Ferris that lasted until 1892. Moses had well-established his independent practice by the time he executed his first of several documented commissions for The Oaks in 1912. In addition to his prolific career as a residential designer in Merchantville, Moses was also responsible for most of the Borough's major civic and commercial architecture. These works included an electric light plant (1889), a clubhouse for the Merchantville Country Club (1917), First National Bank (1921), Merchantville High School (1926), and Borough Hall (1928).

Another architect credited with a commission in The Oaks is Charles R. Peddle, who designed the Colonial Revival-style residence at 2 Oak Terrace. Educated at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, Peddle opened a practice in his residence in Woodbury, New Jersey, in 1897, and subsequently a second office in Philadelphia. Nearly all his work was executed for South Jersey clients and consisted of residential, commercial, and civic buildings.

In summary, The Oaks stands out as a well-preserved, stylish residential enclave within a suburban landscape laid out by developer and landscape architect George E. Rhedemeyer. As a group, the houses reflect a distinct era in Merchantville's history of suburbanization and document a range of early-20th-century domestic architecture, while individually, several of the resources illustrate the work of Arnold H. Moses, the Borough's singularly most influential architect.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

Bibliography

Benenson, Carol A. "Merchantville, New Jersey: The Development, Architecture, and Preservation of a Victorian Commuter Suburb." Masters Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, Graduate Group in Historic Preservation, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Merchantville, New Jersey: Historic Architectural Resource Survey." October 1992.

County Clerk, Camden County. Hall of Justice, Camden, New Jersey.

Freeman, Herbert F. 1911 Directory of Merchantville, North Merchantville, and Pensaukin. Camden: R.H. Freeman & Co., 1911.

"Geo. Rhedemeyer Borne to Grave." Camden Daily Courier, October 12, 1917.

Greenberg, Gail. "The Harleigh Cemetery." Camden County Historical Society Bulletin No. 36, Fall-Winter 1983-84.

\_\_\_\_\_. Telephone interviews with author, August 27, 1992; October 1996.

Howe's Camden City Directory. Phila: C. E. Howe Company.

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide. The Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Register of Deeds, Camden County. Camden City Hall, Camden, New Jersey.

Sanborn Map Company. Merchantville, Camden County, New Jersey. New York: March 1915, August 1921, July 1925, February 1930, and February 30 corrected to 1942.

Tatman, Sandra L. and Roger W. Moss. Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1984.

U.S. Census Reports. 1920. National Archives, Philadelphia, PA

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10                      Page 1

*The Oaks Historic District  
Camden County, NJ*

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See accompanying district map.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary coincides with the subdivision of The Oaks laid out by George E. Rhedemeyer in 1909 and amended in 1916.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: Photographs Page 1

The information listed below is the same for all the photographs included herein.

1. Name of property: The Oaks Historic District
2. City, County & State: Merchantville, Camden County, New Jersey
3. Photographer: Carol Benenson Perloff
4. Date of photograph: November, 1996
5. Location of original negatives:  
Carol A. Benenson & Associates  
455 Rock Glen Drive  
Wynnewood, PA 19096

THE OAKS HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Camden County, New Jersey

 Contributing

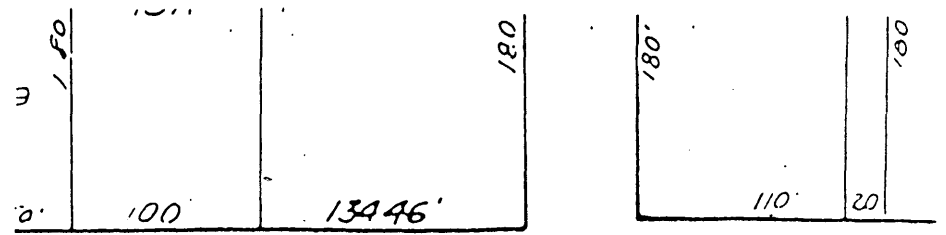
 Key

 Non-Contributing

 Photo view

Scale 1" = approx. 100'

0 50 100 150 200 250



MAPLE AVENUE

