

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

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

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received AUG 7 1985  
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Property Name: Misty Vale (G. W. Karsner House, 1868, built mid nineteenth century.

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

Misty Vale is located on the south side of Rt. 423 (Bay View-McDonough Road) approximately .6 miles east of Rt. 13. The house and its associated outbuildings stand in open pasture and cultivated farmland. The nominated parcel contains seven acres including the house, carriage barn, bank barn, and granary. On the nominated property but listed as noncontributing elements are a stable, silo, gambrel roof barn, and numerous smaller buildings associated with modern dairying activity.

The nominated parcel begins at a point 100 feet east of the intersection of the present farm lane and Rt. 423 and proceeds southwest 1200 feet. At this point the line turns east 90° and runs 500 feet to a point where it turns 90° southwest and continues for 1000 feet. At this point the line turns 90° northeast and runs parallel to the first line back to Rt. 423 where the two points on the south side of Rt. 423 are joined.

The nominated parcel includes sufficient acreage to provide for the preservation of the house, outbuildings, agricultural complex, grounds and setting.

UTM 18.44980.70940 Tax parcel 13-014.00-012

Owner: David Reed

R. D. 2, Box 360

Middletown, Delaware

19709

Description:

Misty Vale is a two-and-one-half story, five-bay frame, cross-gable roof house built in a vernacular Victorian style. A frame, three-bay, gable-roofed wing sits parallel to the main block functioning with it as one consolidated unit. The exterior walls of both sections are clad with white, aluminum siding, and both structures are built on stone foundations. There is also a hipped-roof, frame addition to the east and an enclosed porch on the south facade of the rear wing.

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There are two interior chimneys with corbelled caps in the main block of the house, and one in the southern wing. Both gable roofs are covered with composition shingle and, in both cases, the cornices are boxed. There are two pedimented, two-over-four sash dormers on the southern facade of the rear wing bearing decorative pillasters.

The windows in the north section of the house are two-over-two sash and the attic is lit by three, two-over-two light sash, segmental-arched, gable end windows. The south wing windows are six-over-six light sash with wood trim, and the attic is lit by two-over four sash, gable end windows.

The center front passage is a double leaf wood door with a single pane transom. The side entrances on the east facade are single leaf, wood panelled doors with transoms. The south wing has a central, single leaf door, and four panes of glass over the two wooden panels.

A one-story, six-by-four bay, wraparound porch is built on the north and east facades with four-by-four inch posts. The porch on the south facade has been partially enclosed and is supported by both wood and steel posts.

The outbuildings on this property include a square, one-and-one half story, hipped-roof, drive-through granary with a cupola on top and two barns. The largest of the barns is a gable roofed, frame structure with shed addition on a stone foundation. This barn is connected by a series of low buildings to a gambrel roof frame barn and silo. A more modern daily barn built of concrete block adjoins the earlier barn. Located near the barn complex is a one-story frame equipment shed. Closer to the south facade of the house is a one-story frame structure currently used for a garage.

Historical Background and Significance:

Misty Vale is a clear example of the rebuilding period in southern New Castle County during the late nineteenth century. The farmstead appears in the 1850 agriculture census belonging to George W. Karsner who owned it until sometime before 1880 when Z. A. Poole acquired it. The agricultural censuses for the forty year period record a rather unusual series of land transactions. Karsner started out with 300 acres, added 150 acres more in 1860, apparently sold or rented over 300 by 1870 before selling to Z. A. Poole who is listed with 304 acres, apparently the original homestead. Notwithstanding this transaction, Misty Vale represents the average farm of the area and time based on grain and livestock production. The major income producers were Indian corn, oats, wheat, and butter--with a substantial amount of Irish potatoes, hay, cattle and swine being produced as well. In 1870, the 30 acres listed for George Karsner

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although it may have been his retirement home, was an extremely small farm. His income appears to have been derived from the sale of wool, butter, mutton, beef, Irish potatoes and orchard products. By 1880, the original acreage was again yielding substantial amounts of grain similar to surrounding farmers.

Agricultural history and social history are well documented in the appearance of the dwelling and farm complex. They reflect the prosperous years of the late nineteenth century which was evident in the extensive rebuilding period in southern New Castle County during this time. Despite the post-war recession and devaluation of land, Misty Vale appears to have prospered.

Nominated by Bert Jicha, Trish Bensinger, William Macintire