

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 19 1978
DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Rudolph V. Kuser Estate

AND/OR COMMON

New Jersey School Boards Association

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

315 W. State Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

4th

STATE

New Jersey

CODE

COUNTY

Mercer

CODE

CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

New Jersey School Boards Association

STREET & NUMBER

315 West State Street

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Mercer County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

209 South Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former Kuser Estate, now occupied by the New Jersey School Boards Association, is located at 315 West State Street, approximately two blocks south of the State Capitol. The building is two and one half stories tall, and is one of the few remaining mansions of turn-of-the-century architecture in the State house district. The home was constructed in 1905 and occupied by the Kuser family until 1943. Since that time, the building was occupied by the Medical Society of New Jersey until being purchased last year by the NJSBA.

The home is impressive with the overhanging eaves, porte-cochere and the spacious side entrance with the original ironwork still intact. The main building had an addition constructed approximately ten years ago, but the Medical Society took extreme caution to insure that the addition was not visible from the street, and did not detract from the architectural integrity of the home. The front lawn of the home is graced with two giant trees, a ginkgo and a cooper beech. The rear of the estate has the original carriage house and a magnificent sequoia. The carriage house, although in its original state, is in need of some repair.

The interior of the home is fine turn-of-the-century styling, a trait no longer found along State Street. The interior has a magnificent center hall, grand stairway, functioning dumbwaiter, stained glass windows and many rooms that are still in their original state.

The exterior of the building combines the low pitched hip roof with a pronounced overhang and heavy bracketing prevalent in many local arts and crafts inspired buildings. The main body of the mansion however is Georgian/Federal Revival in style. The central bay of this 3 bay house projects. The doorway is adorned by a full classical corinthian treatment. Above the doorway is a large Palladian window shape cut into the wall surface to make a shallow porch. The porch has ionic columns, and is further adorned by classical swags and applied plaques. Each window has received a classical treatment. The corners of the building have classical quoins. The interior woodwork and plaster work continues of classical idiom. A suburb hall fireplace is flanked by corinthian columns that repeat the treatment of the interior and exterior of the doorway. Of additional note on the interior are two chandeliers in the main hall in an arts and crafts style.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This property represents one of the few remaining turn-of-the-century mansions in the State House area of Trenton. Constructed in 1905, the property extends from State Street to the Fitchway, and includes a carriage house at the rear of the estate. In addition to the architectural design that has been preserved, the history of the Kuser family is of a great significance to the development of the City of Trenton. When the name Kuser is mentioned, it is synonymous with economic development and social prominence.

The Kuser Estate is architecturally significant suburb example in Trenton of the blending of the arts and crafts and the Georgian Revival styles. Its exterior and interior detail depicts a high quality of workmanship that has remained virtually unaltered over the years.

The Kuser family, whose pioneer ancestors came to this country from Switzerland and Austria, have been so closely and prominently identified with the commercial, financial and social interests of the City of Trenton, that a record of their doings is almost a history of the progress of events in the city in recent years.

One of the Kusers, Rudolph V., was prominent and extremely prosperous in the field of business in the Trenton area. One of his first business connections was as Vice President of the People's Brewing Company, and he was also associated with the Trenton Hygeia Ice Company. In addition, he was one of the pioneers in the automobile manufacturing business as Assistant Secretary and Treasurer of the old Walter Automobile Company.

Mr. Kuser was for years President of the Interstate Fair Association, now the New Jersey State Fair. In addition to the business activities that he was associated with, he was socially prominent. Mr. Kuser took a keen interest in clubs, including the Lotus Club of Trenton, and later the Carteret Club and the Trenton Country Club.

1. Mercer County, Vol. 2

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Trenton and Princeton Atlas, 1905 Personal interview, Robert C. Kuser
Mercer County, Vol. 2
Trenton Press, March 23, 1931

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 Block #19C-1 Lot #1

QUADRANGLE NAME Trenton, West QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------------------------|---------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1 8 | 5 1 9 0 1 0 | 4 4 5 2 3 3 0 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | 5 1 9 0 1 0 | | D | | | |
| E | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | H | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block #19C-1 Lot #1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Craig P. Brown, Consultant March 6, 1979

ORGANIZATION Bruno Associates, Inc. DATE

STREET & NUMBER 50 Park Place/Robert Treat Hotel TELEPHONE (201) 623-7733

CITY OR TOWN Newark, New Jersey STATE 07102

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy [Signature]
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

6-5-79

TITLE Deputy Commissioner DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 8-24-79

ATTEST: [Signature]
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE August 24, 1979

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET
DESCRIPTION

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PAGE #2

The property is unique to the history of Trenton, and the New Jersey School Boards Association wishes to continue the maintenance and appearance of the building in its natural state.

One feature that has not been explained is the care that has been extended to the maintenance of the home. Many of the original lighting fixtures are still intact and functioning. In addition, the ornate trimwork throughout the home and the plaster work add to the charm and beauty of this turn-of-the-century mansion.

The carriage house, located at the rear of the property, is in fair condition and in keeping with the style of architecture for turn-of-the-century homes in the area. It originally had three stalls for the horses, later an electric car and quarters for the chauffeur located above the main floor.

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SIGNIFICANCE

During World War I, Mr. Kuser served as a member of the Trenton War Emergency Committee, which provided funds for the care and comfort of Trenton soldiers at home and abroad. His work in that emergency was of the highest order, and was augmented by Mrs. Kuser, whose devotion to supplying creature comforts to the local soldiers will always be remembered as a beautiful service.²

A point to be highlighted is the fact that the Kuser Family was a member of the Trenton 400. This was a social group of the most prosperous and prominent families of the City of Trenton. The Kusers lived in the area where such families as the Roeblings, Strykers and Cooks resided.

The home is of importance to the area as it is the one remaining turn-of-the-century mansion of the many that once lined and graced the area of the State House.

The New Jersey School Boards Association wishes to continue the practice of maintaining this magnificent home in its original state.

2. Trenton Press, March 23, 1931