Form No. 10-300 (Rev 10-74)

THEME: Americans at Work
SUBTHEME: "Science and Invention"

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Albert Einstein House

AND/OR COMMON: 112 Mercer Street

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 112 Mercer Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Princeton __ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 5th

STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34 COUNTY: Mercer CODE: 021

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES. RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES. UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		X NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Margot Einstein

STREET & NUMBER: 112 Mercer Street

CITY, TOWN: Princeton __ VICINITY OF

STATE: New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Mercer County Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER: 640 South Broad Street

CITY, TOWN: Trenton

STATE: New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: None

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
GOOD	RUINS	ALTERED	MOVED DATE
FAIR (unretored)	UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Albert Einstein House in Princeton, New Jersey, is a simple two story, "L" shaped, frame building with a gabled roof over the front block and a flat roof on the "L." The house has both front and rear entrances. The front elevation is characterized by a cornice with small guttae blocks; a frieze with small dentils; five windows; a columned full length porch, which may be a later addition; and fluted moulding around the front entrance. A small bay on the right side provides light to the staircase. The "L" contains four bays on the front and eight on the right side. At the back of the house is a screened porch.

The date of construction and the builder of the Albert Einstein House are unknown. The structure was probably built in the 1870's or 1880's. The house is a simple pattern-book cottage and in itself is of no particular architectural significance.

When Albert Einstein first came to Princeton in 1933, he lived at 2 Library Place. In 1936 he purchased 112 Mercer Street. The house remained his home until his death in 1955. 112 Mercer Street was an integral part of Einstein's work in the United States. One biographer reports, "...his room at the Institute (for Advanced Studies) or his study in Mercer Street was his natural habitat. It was here that he could best carry on his main work and continue his stubborn rearguard battle against the new movements in physics which he had started nearly a third of a century before."[1] Since 1955 Einstein's step-daughter Margot has owned the house. Today she and Einstein's secretary of 25 years, Helen Dukas, live in the house. The Albert Einstein House underwent no interior or exterior alterations or changes since Einstein lived there.

In April 1955 as Einstein lay in the hospital shortly before he died, he is reported to have said to his daughter, "Do not let the house become a museum."[2] According to Helen Dukas the family respects this wish and is not interested in official recognition of the property as the house of Albert Einstein.

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[1] Ronald Clark, Albert Einstein, (New York, 1971), p. 533.
[2] Ibid., p. 629.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	X SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Albert Einstein was born March 14, 1879, at Ulm, Germany. In 1880 his father, the owner of a small electrical appliance factory, moved the family to Munich. The Einsteins lived in Munich until 1894, when financial problems induced the family to move to Genoa. A year later young Albert left home to attend the Federal Polytechnic School in Zurich, Switzerland. In 1900 he graduated from the school. Between 1900 and 1909 Einstein worked in the Zurich patent office. At the same time he worked on his Ph.D., which he received in 1905, and pursued his interest in physics. In 1909 he left the patent office to teach at the Federal Polytechnic School. A year later he accepted a call to teach physics at the German University in Prague. Einstein remained in Prague for two years and then returned to Zurich, this time as a fullprofessor. By 1914 he had acquired an international reputation and was offered the position of director of Germany's prestigious center of physical science research, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of the University of Berlin. Reassuming his German citizenship Einstein spent the next 19 years living and working in Berlin. Although he shunned publicity, his contributions to physics made him a celebrated public figure constantly in demand at international conferences and meetings. When in 1933 Hitler's German National Socialist Workers Party put an end to Weimar Germany, which had witnessed an outburst of creativity in the arts and sciences, Einstein emigrated to the United States to accept a position at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies. In the quiet New Jersey town, Einstein intended to lead a life of research and reflection, but once again his international fame required that he travel widely attending conferences and giving lectures. As the racial and totalitarian policies of Hitler Germany caused ever more refugees to emigrate to the United States, Einstein became active in organizations that provided help. When war came, he lent his name and energies to the Allied cause. Einstein retired from the Institute for Advanced Studies in 1945 but continued to live and work in Princeton until his death on April 18, 1955.

Albert Einstein was among the most famous 20th century scientists. Typical statements about him refer to a man who fundamentally changed the nature of 20th century science and he is given equal ranking with Newton in the history of physics. He is among the greatest physicists who ever lived and worked in the United States.

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(Continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Berstein, Jeremy, Einstein, (New York, 1973).
Clark, Ronald W., Albert Einstein, The Life and Times, (New York, 1971).
Einstein, Albert, The World As I See It, (New York, 1949).
Frank, Phillip, Einstein, His Life and Times, (New York, 1953).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	18	528340	4465820
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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
James Sheire, Historian

ORGANIZATION
Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE
July 1975

STREET & NUMBER
1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE
202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN
Washington

STATE
D.C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Albert Einstein House, New Jersey

Einstein's influence touches many areas of 20th century physics. He is, however, best and most popularly remembered for his achievements in three theoretical directions: the special theory of relativity, the general theory of relativity, and unified field theory. The special theory of relativity (1905) with its famous $E=MC^2$ formulation foundamentally changed our understanding of the physical universe. It opened a whole new field of research in elementary particles and one of its practical results was, of course, nuclear fission. The general theory of relativity (1916-17) has as its aim the demonstration that both the gravitational field and the electromagnetic field stem from the geometrical properties of space-time. Practically, among other things, the theory predicted the change of frequency of light in gravitational fields and the bending of light in gravitational fields. From approximately 1917 until his death in 1955 Einstein devoted much of his energies to the formulation of unified field theory. This theory had as its goal the explanation of gravitation, electromagnetism, and subatomic phenomena in one set of unifying laws. It was meant to establish the priority of apriori laws of physics which the probability of quantum mechanics questioned and which Einstein felt must govern the universe. In two especially famous, often quoted remarks, Einstein summed up his basic philosophical approach to the theory of physics and to Nature in general. "God does not play with the world with loaded dice," he said on many occasions, and on another he wrote, "God on high is sophisticated, but malicious he is not." Although Einstein's attempts to formulate a unified field theory are said to be of substantial intellectual beauty, the theory is controversial. In his search for it Einstein removed himself from the contemporary mainstream of 20th century physics with its emphasis on particle and subparticle research.

In addition to his contributions to physics, Einstein is also remembered as a philosopher and as an outstanding humanist. He had a deep and lasting interest in social justice and wrote eloquently on the need for reason to govern the affairs of man. He abhored war and was repulsed by the violence of the 20th century and the barbarity of Nazi totalitarianism. The threat of Nazi aggression forced him to make an agonizing decision between his commitment to peace and the necessity to insure that Hitler Germany would not win World War II. In perhaps one of the most famous letters ever written by a scientist to a political leader, Einstein in 1939 warned President Franklin D. Rossevelt of the potential military implications of Otto Hahn and Lise Meitner's discovery of the fission of uranium. Although Einstein himself was never associated with the Manhatten Engineering District, and was profoundly disturbed by what followed, his letter is generally regarded as marking the beginning of the American-British drive to possess nuclear weapons.

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Einstein was the recipient of almost every award and honor that society can bestow upon a scientist including the 1921 Nobel Prize for Physics, "For his contributions to mathematical physics, and especially for his discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect." Throughout his life Einstein enjoyed immense public prestige. When he died, his passing was noted in numerous remembrance services in this country and abroad.