

VLR-4/16/74 NRHP-7/30/74

106-4

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: VIRGINIA
 COUNTY: COLONIAL HEIGHTS (City)
 ENTRY DATE: ONLY

1. NAME
 COMMON: OAK HILL
 AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
 STREET AND NUMBER: 151 Carroll Avenue
 CITY OR TOWN: Colonial Heights
 STATE: Virginia
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Fourth (Robert W. Daniel, Jr.)
 COUNTY: (City)
 CODE: 51
 CODE: 570

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
 OWNER'S NAME: John E. Crowder, Jr.
 STREET AND NUMBER: 151 Carroll Avenue
 CITY OR TOWN: Colonial Heights
 STATE: Virginia
 CODE: 51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
 COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Chesterfield County Court House
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: Chesterfield
 STATE: Virginia
 CODE: 51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
 TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey
 DATE OF SURVEY: 1935, 1939 Federal State County Local
 DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 CITY OR TOWN: Washington
 STATE: D.C.
 CODE: 11

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oak Hill is a distinctive one-story ante-bellum plantation house located on the north bank of the Appomattox River, overlooking downtown Petersburg. Nearly all of the surrounding farmlands have been developed for housing, but the house's situation above the wooded river bank and at the end of a street helps preserve a suggestion of the former rural setting.

The house appears to have been erected in 1825 since the Chesterfield County tax records for that year show a doubling of the evaluation of the property as a result of improvements. From a series of Mutual Assurance Society policies it is known that as late as 1821 two separate houses, one of brick and one of stone, stood within a hundred feet of one another in the vicinity of the present house. The two houses were erected several decades earlier and precisely what happened to them is uncertain. The octagonal west wing of the present house probably was built on the site of the brick house since in its basement are sections of brick foundation walls laid in Flemish bond and topped with beveled water table bricks. Except for obvious later additions the present house seems to have been erected at one time with a plan of an irregular H. Other than the early foundations already mentioned, no fabric, interior or exterior, looks as if it might date prior to 1824.

The most distinctive element of the house is the elongated octagonal wing at the west end. This wing forms the main entrance to the house and incorporates a central hall with formal reception rooms on either side. It is connected to the rest of the house by a large single room (probably originally used as a dining room) with narrow passageways through the house at either end. This central room originally had galleries on its north and south sides, but the north gallery has been removed for later additions. Most of the south gallery is intact, and it is composed of slender columns set on tall pedestals supporting a somewhat deep entablature. Between the columns is a simple handrail with square balusters. To the east of the passageway at the east end of the central room is a series of three bedrooms forming the opposite arm of the H. This wing has one interior chimney and one exterior-end chimney. The octagonal wing, on the other hand, has two exterior chimneys on the wall opposite the facade.

The house's several additions compromise the original H plan, but detract little from the building's general character. These additions include a bath and laundry wing on the east wall of the east wing, and a bath room in the southeast corner of the south gallery. A series of additions have been placed on the north side, between the east and west wings. These additions incorporate a modern kitchen, passageways and a deep side porch.

Oak Hill has handsome but restrained detailing both inside and out. The main entrance is emphasized by a frontispiece featuring sidelights and elliptical transom. Accenting the transom is symmetrically molded trim with a bead molding. At the top of the arch are superimposed molded keystones. Elliptical transoms are also employed above the doors at either end of the two cross-passages and above the door at the east end of the front hall. The entrance is sheltered by a plain porch with square columns which probably replaces an earlier one having slender columns similar to those on the south gallery. Beaded siding is used throughout the house except under the south gallery where flush boarding is employed. Triple-hung sash light the octagonal wing. Double-hung sash is used in the rest of the house. The house is covered by shallow hipped roofs sheathed with standing-seam sheet metal. Around the eaves is a simple molded cornice. (See continuation sheet)

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The house's original interior woodwork is largely intact. Symmetrical trim with turned corner blocks frames most of the windows and doors. The trim in the south parlor of the octagonal wing is enriched with bead moldings. The south parlor also features a mid-nineteenth-century white marble mantel with arched opening. The mantel in the corresponding room to the north is a Greek Revival type of gold-veined black marble. The cornices in the two principal rooms and hall are composed of simple Greek Revival moldings. The trim in the central room and bedrooms is similar to that in the octagonal wing, but more simple. The house is well-maintained and in a good state of preservation.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian; 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Oak Hill is an architecturally distinctive H-shaped plantation house erected in the years 1825-26. Of particular interest is its octagonal front wing which shows a sophisticated handling of early-nineteenth-century forms and details, both inside and out. The inspiration for a house of this type apparently came from Violet Bank, a plantation house with a similar one-story octagonal front section, erected a decade earlier about a mile to the east. Together, these two houses form an intriguing architectural anomaly; their ultimate inspiration is yet to be determined. No architect has been associated with Oak Hill, but its careful proportions and handsome detailing probably can be attributed to master carpenters from Petersburg who were building fine townhouses in this period just across the river.

The land on which Oak Hill was built has a complicated history of changing names, ownership, and structures. The north side of the Appomattox in this stretch was originally called Archer's Hill after George Archer I who in the late-seventeenth century owned most of the land across from what was to be Petersburg. Archer's holdings also included what later was to be Violet Bank. In 1777 a 280 acre section of Archer's Hill was sold by a John Martin to Jerman Baker, a noted lawyer and orator of his day. Another section previously had been sold by Martin to Thomas Shore who established it as Violet Bank plantation. In 1799 the Baker section was acquired by Robert Watkins who in 1803 sold it and an additional several hundred acres to Hector McNeill of Dinwiddie County. An 1803 policy of the Mutual Assurance Society shows two houses owned by Hector McNeill at Archer's Hill standing 100 feet apart. The houses were similar in size and proportion, although one was brick and the other frame. It is not known when and by whom they were erected, nor why they should have been so close together. Earlier references to houses at Archer's Hill exist, but the 1803 policies are the earliest with any kind of detailed description. Neither of the two houses bear any resemblance to the existing house.

In 1824, 21 acres of Hector McNeill's estate (including the two houses) were acquired by Thomas Dunn, and it was during his ownership that that section of the riverbank came to be called Dunn's Hill. The several Mutual Assurance Policies taken out by Hector McNeill between 1803 and 1821 all refer to his land as Archer's Hill, although it has sometimes been called Hector's Hill. The Chesterfield County land tax books show that in 1826 Dunn's tract doubled in assessed improvement from \$3,000.00 to \$6,000.00, which indicates the erection of a new house. This date is consistent with the architectural style and detailing of the present house. What happened

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to the two earlier houses is not known, but Dunn apparently had his new house built on the site of the brick house since in the basement are foundation walls for an eighteenth or early-nineteenth-century brick structure.

Thomas Dunn died in 1826, and the property was left to his wife, Martha and later to his brother Robert. Robert Dunn's son, Thomas II, inherited title to the property under the provisions of his uncle's will and gained the use of it when he reached twenty-one. In his will Robert Dunn referred to the property as Oak Hill; the name has persisted to the present.

Although the present Oak Hill house was not standing at the time, its location has Revolutionary War associations. In 1781, Lafayette and his Colonial troops, retreating from Petersburg, occupied the heights overlooking Petersburg. This incident provided the source of the name "Colonial Heights" for the neighborhood that grew up when the Oak Hill tract was subdivided in 1906. Tradition has it that Lafayette's gun emplacements are marked by an ancient row of boxwood in the yard of Oak Hill.

CCL

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	37° 14' 15"	77° 24' 37"		0	0	
NE	37° 14' 15"	77° 24' 27"				
SE	37° 14' 07"	77° 24' 27"				
SW	37° 14' 07"	77° 24' 37"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **10 acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff**

ORGANIZATION: **Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission** DATE: **April, 1974**

STREET AND NUMBER: **221 Governor Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Richmond** STATE: **Virginia 23219** CODE: **51**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____
Junius R. Fishburne, Jr.
 Title **Executive Director**
 Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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9.

County Records, Chesterfield County

Deed Book 8, p.337

Will Book 11, pp. 73 ff

Will Book 13, p.356

Deed Book 16, p.248

Deed Book 25, p.538, 584, 586

Deed Book 33, p.307

Deed Book 41, p.95

Deed Book 43, p.130

Chesterfield County Land Tax Books, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827-1836,
1837-1850

Virginia Historical Register, Vol. IV, pp.200-201

Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. 9, p.86, Vol. 23,
pp. 364-368

Mutual Assurance Society Policies

#2082 (1803) Reel 2 Vol. 24

#6 (1805) Reel 3 Vol. 31

#7 (1805) Reel 3 Vol. 31

#103 (1805) Reevaluation Reel 4 Vol. 35

#104 (1805) Reevaluation Reel 4 Vol. 35

#1334 (1815) Reel 4 Vol. 42

#2842 (1821) Reevaluation Reel 10 Vol. 75

OAK HILL

LATITUDE
NW37°14'15"
NE37°14'15"
SE37°14'07"
SW37°14'07"

LONGITUDE
77°24'37"
77°24'27"
77°24'27"
77°24'37"

PETERSBURG QUADRANGLE
VIRGINIA

MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NW1/4 PETERSBURG 15' QUADRANGLE
MOND 21 MI.
MI. TO INTERCHANGE 4

77°22'

ARMY
S

