



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 065-0069

1. General Property Information

Property name: Happy Union

Property address: 8056 Happy Union Drive

City or Town: Exmore

Zip code: 23350

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Northampton County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site _____ Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: Approx. 241 acres

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town _____ Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural X

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

Happy Union sits on approximately 241 acres in rural Northampton County in the Exmore vicinity. The dwelling and outbuildings sit on a partially cleared parcel surrounded by wooded buffer zones and agricultural farmland. Situated .2-mile northwest of west end of State Route 692, and 1.4 miles west of intersection with State Route 606. A long driveway (Happy Union Drive) is lined with trees and provides access to the property from Wardtown Road. The peninsula on which the dwelling is located is adjacent to Nassawadox Creek, Holly Grove Cove, and Stewarts Landing. In addition to the main house, there are two agricultural outbuildings, a boathouse, and a small shed.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Federal

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: 1965 remodeling – E.S. Adkins & Co., Salisbury, MD

If the builder is known, please list here: Hiawatha Wyatt

Date of construction (can be approximate): c. 1790

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):

Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

Three-part Flemish bond brick dwelling constructed in multiple phases. The main block (west section) is attributed to John Milby with a construction date prior to 1798, when it was purchased by Maj. Pettit. The rectangular, 3-bay, 2-story, side-hall main block retains its original form and floor plan with wide stair hall adjoined by a parlor and dining room on the first floor, two chambers on the second, and one large room on the attic level. There are two additional sections extending from the main block. The central 2-bay, 2-story section was originally a 1-story connector wing but has since had a second story added. The furthest east section is 2-bay, 1-story with two dormers. The furthest east section was originally a separate dependency. The interior retains its original hardwood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, staircase, wood trim and mantels, windows, and floorplan throughout the main block. The connector had a room added on the first floor, as well as an entire second story in the 1960s, but retains its hardwood floors, trim, and windows throughout. The furthest east dependency retains most of its original west end wall (now incorporated into the interior of the connector wing) and was remodeled in the 1960s with exposed beams, built-in bookcases, and firebox.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

- Outbuilding 1 – frame outbuilding with circular saw marks, cut and wrought nails. Currently being rehabilitated due to widespread rotting of framing members and lack of a foundation. Lifted and new brick foundation constructed. (no date)
- Outbuilding 2 – agricultural outbuilding with shed roof (no date)
- Outbuilding 3 – frame boathouse with vertical wood sheathing (appears to be early- to mid-twentieth century)
- Outbuilding 4 – 20th/21st century shed

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The original dwelling is thought to have been constructed in the late 18th century, prior to 1798, by John Milby, property owner. John inherited the property of 350 acres in 1775. The dwelling and 250 acres were sold in 1798 to a Major Pettit, and the next year, the balance of 112 acres to William Fisher. In 1816, Major Pettit left the Happy Union parcel to his son, William Pettit, and in 1828, William and his wife, Ann, sold the property to Elijah Floyd. In 1837, Floyd left the property with the dwelling thereon to a son, Richard, and the remainder of the land to a daughter, Mary Ann Floyd. In 1917, in the final division of the Floyd estate, commissioners sold the house and 65 acres to J.A. Shelton, who had married Fanny Floyd.

The origin of the name "Happy Union" is unknown, but as a possible explanation: when Gilbert Milby left the property to his son Adial (father of John), the latter owned the neck part of an adjacent property - across the creek and branch – so when his son inherited both, he may have felt that Happy Union was an appropriate name with which to commemorate the union of the two properties. In his sale to Major Pettit, Milby received a substantial price for the property, so the house's construction may be attributed to him. (Whitelaw)

The house, connector, and what was the kitchen are all constructed of brick. The door and window lintels are of wood with a simulated keystone in the center of each. The house is of a side-hall plan with an entrance at north and south ends, as well as the west side, the door of which has an arched lintel and sunburst fanlight over the double doors. In the parlor, the windows are deeply set into the walls and there is unpaneled wainscoting; the bottom of the chair rail above it is decorated with a row of vertical gouging. The mantel appears to be a later addition, possibly installed during Major Pettit's ownership, with hand-carved and plaster designs. The house was expanded and remodeled in the 1960s by E.S. Adkins & Co., a Maryland architect. The house is an excellent example of an evolved Federal dwelling on the Eastern Shore.

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

- Whitelaw, Ralph T. *Virginia's Eastern Shore, A History of Northampton and Accomack Counties*. Virginia Historical Society, 1951.
- Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local Public\State Public\Federal

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Hunter & Jennifer Burger

organization: Happy Union Holdings, LLC

street & number: 7257 Cedar Cottage Rd.

city or town: Franktown state: VA zip code: 23354

e-mail: jennburgercpa@gmail.com telephone: 757-999-0500

Legal Owner's Signature: Hunter Burger

Date: 11/7/25

• • *Signature required for processing all applications.* • •

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: _____

organization: _____

street & number: _____

city or town: _____ state: _____ zip code: _____


e-mail: _____ telephone: _____

Date: _____

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

PIF BOUNDARY MAP

Happy Union
Northampton County, VA
DHR ID# 065-0069


 Proposed Boundary

0 1,000
 Feet



PIF AERIAL-VICINITY MAP

Happy Union
Northampton County, VA
DHR ID# 065-0069

 Proposed Boundary

0 5,000
 Feet









