

Fairview Farm

3301 Burgundy Road, Alexandria (Fairfax County)

Prepared by History Matters, LLC
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Summary

On behalf of JCE, Inc., History Matters conducted research to determine the age of the standing structures at 3301 Burgundy Road in Alexandria, Virginia, and to investigate the history of the property and its occupants. On January 26, 2005, History Matters conducted a site visit at the property to examine the architectural evidence. Documentary sources used to compile the history included census records, historic maps, land and tax records, newspapers, city directories, and local histories.

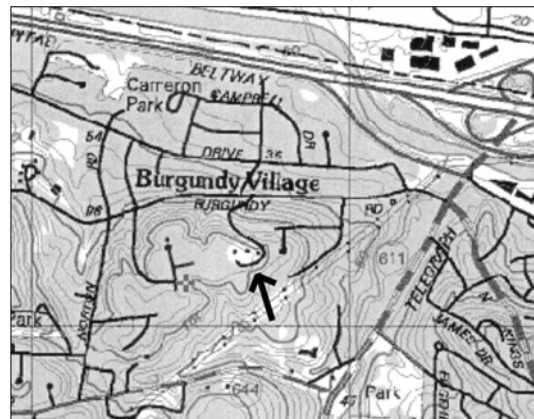
The house at 3301 Burgundy Road, historically called Fairview, encompasses an early 19th-century cellar and foundation, a mid-19th century addition, and several additions that date to the 1890s or early 1900s. The current appearance of the house primarily reflects its appearance in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The other standing structures on the property were built circa 1980.

In the early 19th century, the ten acres of land on which the house stands were part of Burgundy plantation, but the main house at Burgundy (now destroyed) was located outside the current boundaries of 3301 Burgundy Road. In the 1850s, John Fairfax established a plantation that he named Fairview on the property. He improved and likely expanded an existing dwelling that was constructed between 1800 and 1830. During the Civil War, Union troops camped at Fairview, which at that time encompassed approximately 100 acres of land. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the owners significantly altered the exterior and interior of the existing house. In 1920, St. Mary's Academy in Alexandria purchased the property to house boarding students. Since 1936, the property has been a private residence.

Brief Description

The house at 3301 Burgundy Road stands within a ten-acre parcel on the south side of Burgundy Road in Fairfax County, Virginia. A driveway from Burgundy Road winds its way up a hill to reach the house, which affords expansive views of Alexandria and the surrounding area. Pike Branch, a tributary of Cameron Run to the north, is located east of the ten-acre parcel, but throughout much of the house's history, Pike Branch bordered the property.

Most of the nearby roadways date to the 19th century or earlier. To the east of the property is Telegraph Road



1994 USGS Map showing location of 3301 Burgundy Road.

(Route 611), which appears on maps from the mid-18th century and connected Alexandria to Colchester, a port on the Occoquan River.¹ Land records show that Franconia Road (Route 644), located to the south of the property, was at least partially built in the 1840s; by the early 1850s, it was known as Rolling Road and later as the Old Fairfax Road.² Burgundy Road was laid out in the first half of the 19th century as a driveway leading from Telegraph Road to the main house at Burgundy, a plantation that dated to the early 1800s.

The L-shaped frame house at Fairview Farm stands two stories tall and exhibits several periods of construction. The oldest section of the house is located at the southeast corner and forms the short arm of the “L.” Additions to the house form the long part of the “L,” with the oldest addition occupying the northeast corner of the building. In the mid-19th century, the main entrance to the house was located on the north elevation. In the late 19th or early 20th century, the construction of a small addition on the inside of the “L” re-oriented the house to face the south. A one-story, wrap-around porch covers the north elevation and the south elevation of the oldest section of the house, and a two-story porch extends along the south wall of the additions.

History

Burgundy: 1805-1853

In the early 1800s, the property was part of Burgundy, a plantation built in 1808 by Alexandria merchant James Hewett Hooe and his wife, Elizabeth Thacker Hooe, the daughter of Bernard Hooe, a wealthy Prince William County landowner.³ In 1805, approximately one year after he married Elizabeth Hooe, James Hooe purchased over 200 acres of land located along Pike Branch.⁴



South elevation of 3301 Burgundy Road.

Entries in his account book indicate that he began building at Burgundy in 1808. The primary dwelling at Burgundy, which stood approximately one-half mile to the west of 3301 Burgundy Road, is no longer standing.⁵

The cellar of the oldest section of the house at 3301 Burgundy Road was likely constructed between 1800 and 1830 and *may* represent the remnants of one of the early buildings of Hooe's plantation. The cellar beneath the study at the southeast corner of the house reveals construction materials and techniques typical of the early 19th century (see attached floor plan). The wooden sills are hewn, and the log joists feature roughly hewn tenons that rest in notches in the sills. The joists and the undersides of the tongue-and-groove floorboards are coated in whitewash, which was a common finish in early 19th-century cellars.



Hewn sills in cellar.

Extensive alterations to the interior and exterior of the upper stories have hidden or destroyed the house's early 19th-century appearance. A portion of the original shiplap siding may remain at the southeast corner, but most of the exterior siding dates to the mid-19th century or later. The doors, windows, and interior trim also date to later periods. On the first floor, wooden floorboards dating to the late 19th or early 20th centuries cover the original tongue-and-groove floorboards. Originally, the house probably stood one-and-a-half stories tall. The roof slope and overall proportions are not consistent with early 19th-century styles, indicating that the second story is a later addition. Moreover, one-and-a-half-story frame dwellings were common building types in this area in the early 19th century.



Shiplap siding on southeast corner.

James Hooe died at Burgundy in 1825, and his widow, Elizabeth Thacker Hooe, inherited the plantation.⁶ Hooe is known locally for her connection to the Lloyd House, an Alexandria landmark located at the corner of Queen and Washington Streets. In 1825, she purchased the imposing Georgian-style residence, and the following year, she invited Quaker educator Benjamin Hallowell to establish a school in the building.⁷

In 1831, Elizabeth Hooe died at her family's plantation in Prince William County, Virginia. Shortly before her death, Elizabeth Hooe sold Burgundy to Thomas Buckner of Loudoun County in exchange for a Fauquier County estate that Buckner owned. In 1839, Buckner sold approximately 400 acres of the plantation, including the main house and the site of 3301 Burgundy Road, to Ezra Lunt of Alexandria.⁸ Roughly fifty years old when he purchased Burgundy, Ezra Lunt died at the plantation in 1841. According to his obituary, he was a merchant and at the time of his death, was preparing to leave his mercantile business so "that he might live a more retired life."⁹

In the 1840s, Ezra Lunt's heirs sub-divided Burgundy. In 1842, they sold the main house and about 200 acres to Tobias Stoutenburgh.¹⁰ In 1847, they sold the remaining 200 acres, including 3301

Burgundy Road, to Bushrod Frobel, whose family lived nearby on the south side of what is now Franconia Road. Within a year, Frobel sold the property to Archibald McFarlan, a lawyer who lived in Alexandria.¹¹ McFarlan likely made few improvements to the farm, since records show that between 1848 and 1854, the assessed value of the buildings rose only \$50, from \$250 to \$300.¹²



East elevation of house. The early 19th-century cellar is beneath the section to the left of the chimney.

Fairview: 1854-1869

In 1854, McFarlan sold the property to John A. Fairfax, who substantially improved the property and named it Fairview.¹³ By 1860, John Fairfax, his wife Margaret, his four children, and his brother Luther were living at Fairview. In addition, at least sixteen slaves, ranging in age from two to fifty, lived and worked at Fairview, and John Fairfax may have owned as many as twenty-seven slaves.¹⁴

Between 1854 and 1861, the assessed value of the buildings on the property doubled, rising from \$300 to \$600.¹⁵ John Fairfax probably enlarged the house at this time, building one or both of the first-floor rooms that lie to the north of the early 19th-century section (see floor plan). The wooden shiplap siding on the first story on the east elevation is consistent with mid-19th-century construction. Likewise, the joists beneath the floor of the sitting room display milling techniques common in the mid-1800s. Fairfax may have raised the house to a full two stories, but evidence that would date the addition of the second story was inaccessible at the time of History Matters' site visit.¹⁶

With the exception of the stairway that is located in the stair hall in the southeast corner of the house, little remains of the mid-19th-century interior. The balustrade and newel post are typical of the Greek Revival style, which was popular circa 1840-1860.



Balustrade and newel post in stair hall #1 in southeast corner of house.

In December 1860, after years of escalating tensions between the northern and southern states, South Carolina seceded from the United States. By February 1861, six more states had left the Union and joined the Confederate States of America. In May 1861, following President Abraham Lincoln's call for troops to defend the United States after the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter, South Carolina, Virginians voted to secede from the Union. Soon after Virginia seceded, Union troops occupied northern Virginia, including Alexandria and Fairfax County, and established a series of earthwork forts to defend the nation's capital.¹⁷ One of these forts, Fort Lyon, stood less than one mile from Fairview Farm, on the east side of Telegraph Road. The area remained under Union occupation until the end of the war in 1865.

Although Fairview witnessed no major battles, it felt the effects of Civil War. The farm's proximity to Washington, D.C. and its commanding view of the surrounding countryside and of major roadways made it an attractive location for Union troop encampments. Two large encampments – Camp Howard and Camp Knox – were set up on neighboring farms. A wartime photograph of Camp Knox may show Fairview, but the vantage point of the photographer is unclear and the image of the house is fuzzy.¹⁸ Several regiments, including



Map of N. Eastern Virginia and Vicinity of Washington, 1862 (Library of Congress).

Zouaves and the 2nd Michigan camped on Fairview itself. A neighbor later described Fairview as “a general camping and drilling ground during nearly the whole war...” In June 1861, a skirmish took place at Pike Branch near Fairview, when Confederate troops attacked Federal pickets. In July 1861, Union troops under the command of General Samuel Heintzelman marched along Franconia Road on their journey to the Battle of First Manassas.¹⁹

In the early 1900s, John Fairfax filed a claim with the federal government for damages caused by Union troops during the war. He claimed that throughout the war, he had housed sick and wounded soldiers in house. According to Fairfax and other witnesses, soldiers took sod from Fairview to build Fort Lyon, pastured cattle on the farm, cut down most of the timber on the property. Fairfax also lost about 15 of the hundreds of hogs that he kept at the distillery to the north on Cameron Run. The hogs generally ate the un-distilled mash that was left over from the whiskey-making process. When Union troops captured the distillery, they dumped distilled whiskey and mash into the hog feed, intoxicating most of the hogs and killing some.²⁰

1869-1920

In 1869, John Fairfax’s creditors sold Fairview to pay his debts, and Fairfax and his family moved to the District of Columbia. Richard Windsor, who already owned a distillery to the north of Fairview along Cameron Run, bought the property. Windsor was a wealthy landowner; in 1870, he possessed real estate valued at \$30,000.²¹ After Windsor’s death in 1876, his son David took possession of Fairview. A brick manufacturer, David Windsor lived in Alexandria until his death in 1892.²²



North and east elevations of house showing bay windows that were added circa 1890-1920.

In 1897, David Windsor’s heirs sold Fairview Farm to dairy farmer Samuel B. Davis, who lived at the farm with his wife Anna until 1905, when they sold it to William F. Downey.²³ Downey immigrated to the United States from Ireland when he was a young boy, and by 1870, he lived in Washington, D.C. and worked as a hack driver. In 1900, he owned a livery stable in the city.²⁴ The Downey and his wife Mary may have occupied Fairview as a summer residence.

Historical as well as architectural evidence indicates that several alterations and additions were made to the house in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although there is no documentary evidence that either the Windsors or the Downeys used Fairview as their primary residence, tax records indicate both families improved the buildings. In the early 1890s, when David Windsor and his family owned the property, the value of the buildings rose from \$400 to \$1008. Between 1904 and 1911, William Downey increased the buildings’ value to \$1,792.²⁵ The house displays many interior and exterior features that are characteristic of late 19th- and early 20th-century styles, reflecting the alterations made in this time period. However, given the short time period between the two renovations and the similarity of styles during this period, it is difficult to attribute most of the changes to a particular owner.

Several additions to the house were constructed in the 1890s or early 1900s. In the sitting room and dining room, differences in the floorboards indicate that the two bay windows on the north wall were built after the main rooms. Bay windows were a common and stylish addition to residences during this time period. The construction of a second stair hall to the south of the dining room re-oriented the house to face the south and likely coincided with the extension of the driveway around the south side of the house. The second stair hall features a pressed metal ceiling, a popular ornament in the early 1900s. The present-day kitchen and family room wing also probably dates to this period.

Between 1890 and 1920, the owners also updated the style of the house by replacing windows and trim. They installed wooden, two-over-two, double-hung, sash windows throughout the first and second stories of the house and replaced most of the interior trim, making it uniform throughout the first floor. In addition, the two porches were probably built or re-built at this time.

1920-present

In 1920, St. Mary's Academy purchased Fairview from William Downey's estate.²⁶ Founded in 1870 by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, St. Mary's Academy was a Catholic girls' school in Alexandria. The school's main building stood on Prince Street in Alexandria, and the Sisters planned to use Fairview as a boarding school. St. Mary's Academy did offer boarding in the 1920s and early 1930s, but no evidence has emerged to confirm that the Sisters of the Holy Cross used Fairview to house boarding students. In 1936, they sold the property.²⁷

Fairview Farm changed hands several times between 1936 and 1981. Chandler and Katrina Pease Morse owned the property from 1937 to 1948, and Edward A. and Katharine B. Mayer purchased Fairview from the Morses and sold it in 1971. Gilbert and Maeona Mendelson owned the house from 1971 until 1979, when they sold to a Massachusetts company named Claw One, Inc.²⁸ The swimming pool, garage, and gazebo that stand west of the house were likely constructed circa 1980. In 1981, the federal government seized the property, alleging that the owner bought the house with money he made from selling marijuana.²⁹

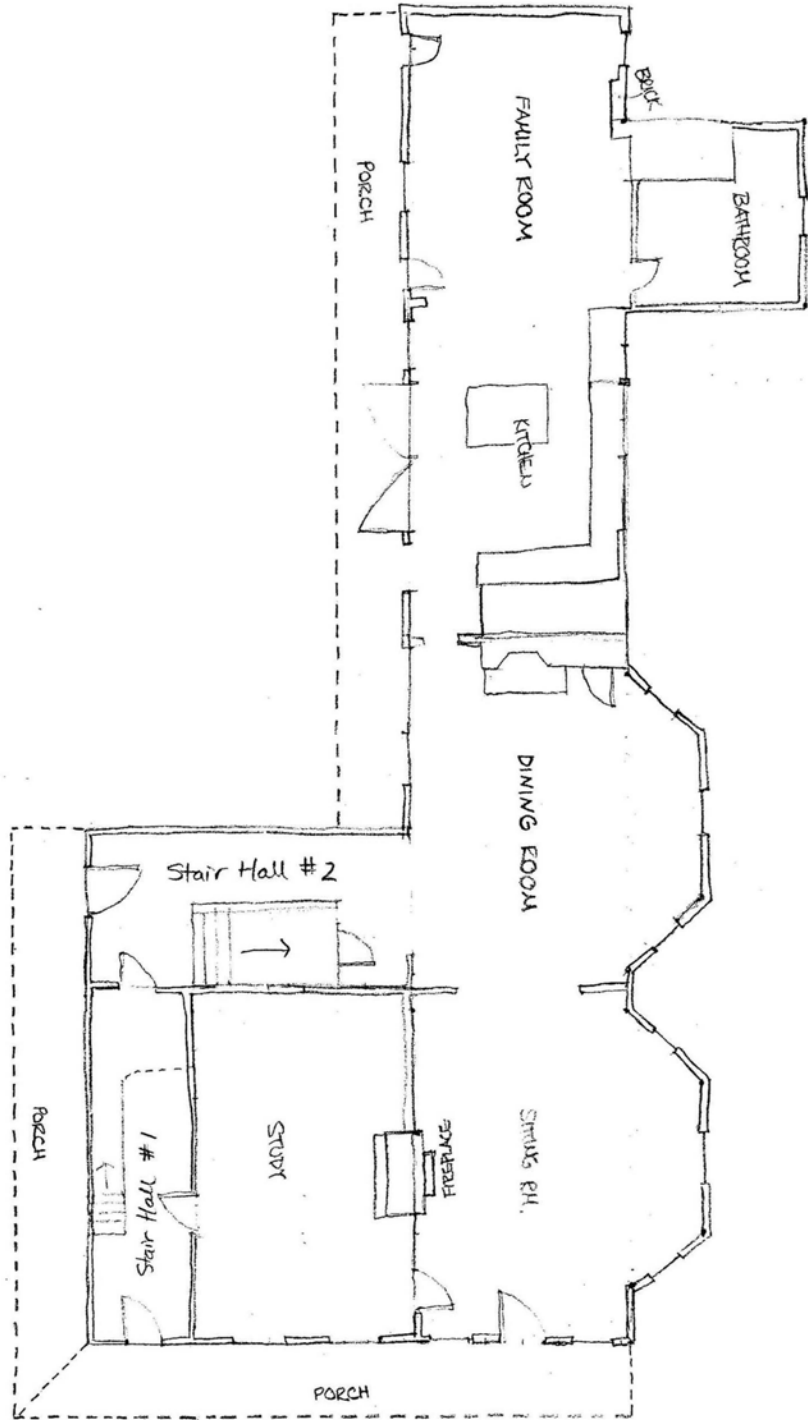
In 1982, James Lowe and Sandi Nowland bought the property. In the 1990s, the Lowes remodeled the interior of the kitchen and family room and constructed a bathroom addition to the north of the family room. James Lowe died in 2003, and his widow Sandi Nowland Lowe still owned the property in 2004.³⁰



Second stair hall.



Interior, looking from dining room to sitting room.



Sketch Floor Plan (not to scale)
January 26, 2005

¹ Richard W. Stephenson, *The Cartography of Northern Virginia: Facsimile Reproductions of Maps Dating From 1608 to 1915* (Fairfax County, Va.: History and Archeology Section, Office of Comprehensive Planning, 1983), p. 25; Donald C. Hakenson, *This Forgotten Land: A Tour of Civil War Sites and Other Historical Landmarks South of Alexandria, Virginia* (Alexandria, Va.: Donald C. Hakenson, 2002), p. 16. Telegraph Road has had several names, including the Colchester Road, the Stage Road, and the Post Road.

² Samuel and Martha Lunt and Lawrence B. Taylor to Bushrod W. Frobel, Deed Book L3, p. 68 (13 February 1847); *A Map of Fairfax County and Parts of Loudoun and Prince William Counties, Va., and the District of Columbia* (Army of Northern Virginia, 1864), Geography & Maps Division, Library of Congress.

³ *Alexandria Gazette*, 1 October 1804.

⁴ Presley Sandford and Mary Sandford to James Hewett Hooe, Deed Book, G2, p. 321 (8 April 1805), Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives, Fairfax, Virginia. All of the deeds cited in this document are Fairfax County deeds and are located in the Fairfax County Circuit Court archives.

⁵ Scott Evon Lewis, "Burgundy: Historic Structure and Site Report, 1989," unpublished paper, 13 December 1989, available at Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives, Fairfax, Virginia. James Hewett Hooe's ledger book is available at the Fairfax County Court House Archives.

⁶ Will of James H. Hooe, Will Book N, p. 339 (1825), Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives; *Alexandria Gazette*, 1 February 1825.

⁷ Tim Dennée, "A History of Lloyd House, Part I: The Early Years: 1796-1832," *Historic Alexandria Quarterly* (Fall 2003/Winter 2004): pp. 7, 9.

⁸ The transaction between Hooe and Buckner was not legally documented before Elizabeth's death, and Buckner filed suit against her administrators in order to force them to recognize the exchange. Buckner sold Burgundy just one day after securing legal title to the property. Robert J. Taylor and Bernard Hooe to Thomas Buckner, Deed Book E3, p. 381 (20 June 1839); Thomas H. Buckner to Ezra Luntt, Deed Book E3, p. 366 (21 June 1839).

⁹ *Alexandria Gazette*, 21 December 1841.

¹⁰ Samuel and Martha Lunt and Sarah Lunt to Tobias Stoutenburgh, Deed Book J3, p. 302 (11 March 1842). The driveway that led from Telegraph Road to the main house at Burgundy passed through the eastern portion of the old Hooe plantation. In order to ensure that the owners of the eastern tract could not cut off the main dwelling from access to Telegraph Road, the Lunt heirs guaranteed Stoutenburgh the right to use what is now Burgundy Road. Later deeds to the eastern portion of the old Hooe plantation continued to protect the right of Burgundy's owners to use the road.

¹¹ Samuel and Martha Lunt and Lawrence B. Taylor to Bushrod W. Frobel, Deed Book L3, p. 168 (13 February 1847); Bushrod W. Frobel to Archibald McFarlin [sic], Deed Book M3, p. 184 (27 December 1847); Archibald McFarlan, Fairfax County, Virginia, p. 166, U.S. Population Census, 1850.

¹² Fairfax County Land Tax Assessments, 1848, 1851, 1854, Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives.

¹³ Archibald and Jane Ann McFarlan to John A. Fairfax, Deed Book U3, p. 344 (16 June 1854).

¹⁴ John A. Fairfax, Fairfax County, Virginia, p. 813, U.S. Population Census, 1860; John A. Fairfax, Fairfax County, Virginia, p. 8, U.S. Slave Population Census, 1860; Claim of John A. Fairfax, Southern Claims Commission Files, Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives. The 1860 slave census listed sixteen slaves belonging to John Fairfax and living at Fairview, but in the claim that he filed with the Southern Claims Commission, Fairfax stated that he had 27 slaves.

¹⁵ Fairfax County Land Tax Assessments, 1854, 1861, 1867, Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives.

¹⁶ Evelyn Causey, Kathryn Gettings Smith, and Megan Glynn of History Matters, LLC conducted the site visit on January 26, 2005.

¹⁷ Nan Netherton, et al, *Fairfax County, Virginia: A History* (Fairfax, Va.: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1978), pp. 315-321.

¹⁸ The photograph is in private collections, and is also reproduced in Hakenson, p. 139.

¹⁹ Claim of John A. Fairfax (quotation), Southern Claims Commission Files, Fairfax County Circuit Court Archives; Hakenson, pp. 11-18, 139-140.

²⁰ Claim of John A. Fairfax (quotation), Southern Claims Commission Files.

²¹ Caleb L. Richards to Richard Windsor, Deed Book J4, p. 390 (18 March 1869); John A. Fairfax, 7th Ward, Washington, D.C., p. 492, U.S. Population Census, 1870; Richard Windsor, Mount Vernon Township, Fairfax County, Virginia, p. 339, U.S. Population Census, 1870.

- ²² Richard N. Windsor and Frederick R. Windsor to David A. Windsor, Deed Book U4, p. 503 (14 October 1876); David Windsor, 3rd Ward, Alexandria, Virginia, p. 324, U.S. Population Census, 1880; Will of David A. Windsor, Fairfax County Will Book I2, p. 317 (24 March 1892). The will was originally presented at Alexandria Circuit Court.
- ²³ Worth Hulfish to Alonso B. Davis and Samuel B. Davis, Deed Book Z5, p. 502 (6 October 1897); Samuel B. Davis, Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County, Virginia, p. 126, U.S. Population Census, 1900; A.B. Davis to Samuel Davis, Deed Book C6, p. 264 (25 February 1899); Samuel B. and Anna M. Davis to William F. Downey, Deed Book S6, p. 236 (9 September 1905).
- ²⁴ William Downey, 1st Ward, Washington, D.C., p. 2, U.S. Population Census, 1870; William F. Downey, Washington, D.C., p. 121, U.S. Population Census, 1900.
- ²⁵ Fairfax County Land Tax Assessments, 1881, 1890, 1895, 1904, 1911.
- ²⁶ James R. Caton to St. Mary's Academy, Deed Book T8, p. 28 (1 October 1920).
- ²⁷ *Fairfax Herald*, 29 January 1921; "Buys Fairview Farm," *The Washington Post*, 23 January 1921; "St. Mary's Offers Varied Courses," *The Washington Post*, 10 September 1933; *Hill's Alexandria (Virginia) Directory, 1924*, (Richmond, Va.: Hill's Directory Company, 1924); St. Mary's Academy to Vernon M. Lynch, Deed Book G12, p. 457 (8 September 1936).
- ²⁸ Elmer and Lucille Hunt Pendell to Chandler and Katrina Pease Morse, Deed Book R12, p. 539 (17 August 1937); Chandler and Katrina Pease Morse to Edward A. and Katharine B. Mayer, Deed Book 660, p. 365 (2 October 1948); Edward A & Katharine B. Mayer to Gilbert and Maeona Mendelson, Deed Book 3487, p.693 (29 July 1971); Gilbert and Maeona Mendelson to Claw One, Inc., Deed Book 5247, p. 27 (6 July 1979).
- ²⁹ "Estate Allegedly Bought With Drug Money Is Seized," *Washington Post*, 17 November 1981. The swimming pool was in place by 1981.
- ³⁰ Realcon Investments, Inc. to James M. Lowe and Sandi M. Nowland, Deed Book 5660, p. 687 (10 June 1982); Will of James M. Lowe, Will Book 706, p. 1823 (13 February 2003).