FHR-8-300 (11-78)

VLR - 10/21/80
NHRP - 6/28/82

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Shepherd's Plain

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Route 178, on Nandua Creek ___ not for publication

city, town Pungoteague _X_ vicinity of First congressional district (Paul S. Trible)

state Virginia code 51 county Accomack code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	___ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_x_ building(s)	_x_ private	_x_ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	_x_ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	_x_ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Curtis A. Roos

street & number Shepherd's Plain

city, town Pungoteague ~~xx vicinity of~~ state Virginia Zip Code 23422

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Accomack County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Accomac state Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

(1) title Historic American Buildings Survey (2) has this property been determined elegible? ___ yes ___ no

date 1960, 1962 Inventory 1967 _X_ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington state D.C.

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_X_ original site
_X_ good	___ ruins	_X_ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Shepherd's Plain, an Accomack County residence, is situated on an inlet overlooking Nandua Creek and Kusian Cove off Route 178 near Pungoteague.

The rectangular 39' x 54', double-pile structure was built between 1755-1775 and has a wood-frame core of five bays flanked by brick ends. The ends are executed in Flemish-bond brick and have a Flemish-bond water table. The north end is distinguished by fanciful brickwork: one first-floor window has a rusticated surround of raised quoins and rubbed brick jack arches with raised brick caps. The second-story windows have gauged arches. A two-course belt course, ramped over the rusticated window, runs above the first-story windows. The quoins on the north end follow the rake of the roof. The south end has raised brick quoins and a belt course. Both the north and south chimneys were rebuilt in the 20th century. The wood-frame elevations are covered with late 19th-century weatherboarding.

The water side (west) and land side (east) elevations have double-door entrances that constitute later replacements. The west entrance has a double-light transom. Both the east and west porches and steps have been removed. An early, but not original, gable-roof north bulkhead was removed in recent years exposing a segmental-arched opening. The south bulkhead has a gable-roof entrance with an early door frame that may have been removed from an above opening which now serves as a window.

Fenestration on the east and west elevations consists of replacement 2/2 hung-sash windows. The south elevation has 2/2 replacement hung sash on the first story and 6/6 hung sash on the second story. An attic opening on the north elevation has 2/2 hung sash. A modillioned cornice embellishes the eaves on the east and west elevations.

Shepherd's Plain has a central-hall plan. The central hall contains an open-well, open-string stair to the second floor. The stair has a turned newel, urn-and-column balusters, sawn brackets, and a molded handrail. An original peg board survives under the stair. The passage has a finely molded chair rail and cornice.

The northwest parlor is the most elaborate room in the house. The north wall is fully paneled and has fluted Roman pilasters flanking a three-panel overmantel above a simply executed architrave. A raised-panel wainscot embellishes the remaining walls. A dentil cornice runs the room's perimeter. The original architraves and paneled doors survive, but the original hearth was removed by vandals. The paneling in both the northeast and southeast rooms also has been removed. Molded cornices and door frames survive. The southeast room retains its original paneling. Its south wall is fully paneled and has a three-panel overmantel with the original architrave cut by a Victorian period surround. An original cupboard is positioned to the east of the fireplace. A molded chair rail and cornice embellish the room. Original door and window frames survive as well.

The second-floor rooms are less elaborate than the first. The end walls have fireplaces framed by architraves flanked by cupboards and paneling. The rooms have molded chair rails and molded cornices and also run the perimeter of the hall.

No original outbuildings have survived. The house has retained a relatively unobstructed setting on Nandua Creek and Kusian Cove. Open fields provide the remaining vistas. A later barn sits in a field to the west of the house.

RCC

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	x architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
x 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	x exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
___ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	x politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates third quarter 18th century **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Completed in the third quarter of the 18th century, Shepherd's Plain is a formal, two-story Georgian residence built for Edward Ker, a prominent Accomack County planter and politician. The architectural significance of the house is enhanced by the rare examples of rusticated trim on the brick ends. Also notable is the fine interior woodwork, especially the parlor paneling. These skillfully crafted details of brick and wood illustrate not only the architectural preferences of the Eastern Shore's wealthy class, but the capabilities of the region's craftsmen in executing sophisticated designs taken from 18th-century English builders' guides.

The house stands on land patented in the mid-17th century by William Andrews, an earlier settler of the Eastern Shore. The property remained in the Andrews family until 1693 when it was purchased by John Shepherd. The Shepherd family owned and probably lived on the land until the mid-18th century. In 1740, at the death of John Shepherd (the first John Shepherd's grandson), the property was inherited by his two daughters, with his daughter Margaret buying out her sister in 1755. Margaret married Edward Ker who erected the present dwelling.

Edward Ker is first recorded as a tobacco farmer in 1757, when he was reimbursed for tobacco stored in Pitts warehouse which had accidentally burned. In 1770 Ker signed the non-importation act as a representative from the Eastern Shore and subsequently served on a committee of the House of Burgesses to study the general state of trade in the colony. He was appointed a justice of Accomack County in 1773. Although Ker generously contributed to the cost of defending the Eastern Shore during the Revolution, questions were raised about his loyalty to the American cause near the close of the war. However, Ker was exonerated by Colonel George Corbin in a letter to the Governor in 1782. After the Revolution he became interested in establishing a school on the Eastern Shore while he remained an active member of St. George's Parish. Ker is listed among the trustees for the proposed "Margaret Academy" in 1786 and as an overseer of the poor of his parish from 1789-90.

When Ker built Shepherd's Plain, he adapted what had become the conventional 1½-story, brick-ended Eastern Shore house into a larger two-story, double-pile Georgian residence. Ker's architectural ambitions particularly are evident on the north wall which contains a rusticated window surround, raised drip caps, corner quoins, and quoins that follow the rake of the roof. This rather fanciful treatment of the brick end presumably was inspired by details in English builders' guides such as those illustrated in Batty Langley's, The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs, plates XXIX and XLI, which was published in London in 1750. The treatment of the interior is distinguished by fine woodwork. In addition to its paneling, the north parlor has fluted Roman Doric pilasters which probably were inspired also by a mid-century builders' guide.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Accomack County Land Tax Books, 1809-40.
Foreman, H.C. Virginia Eastern Shore and Its British Origins. Easton, Maryland, 1975.
Langley, Batty. The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs. London, 1967
Nugent, Nell. Cavaliers and Pioneers. Baltimore, 1963.
Whitelaw, Ralph T. Virginia's Eastern Shore. Gloucester, Mass., 1968.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property 46 acres

Quadrangle name Pungoteague, Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	426000	4165060
B	18	426250	4164740
C	18	425900	4164500
D	18	425550	4164700
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at a point 800' S of Nandua Creek, at intersection of private drives; thence extending 1300' SSE along W side of private drive; thence extending 1000' SSW; thence extending 700' W to Kusian Cove; thence extending 800' NW along shoreline; thence extending 1800' NNE to point of origin.

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code
state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff		
organization	Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission	date	September 1980
street & number	221 Governor Street	telephone	(804) 786-3144
city or town	Richmond	state	Virginia 23219

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Resubmitted 5/10/82: H. Bryan Mitchell, Exec. Director Va. Historic Landmarks Commission

Tucker Hill, Executive Director

title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

date OCT 21 1980

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

9. Major Bibliographical References

Accomack County Land Tax Books, 1809-40.
Foreman, H.C. Virginia Eastern Shore and Its British Origins. Easton, Maryland, 1975.
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A	18	426000	4165060
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C	18	424900	4164500
D	18	424550	4164700
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Keeper of the National Register

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (cont.)

(2) Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey
1968, 1973, 1977, 1980 State
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission
221 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

7. DESCRIPTION (cont.)

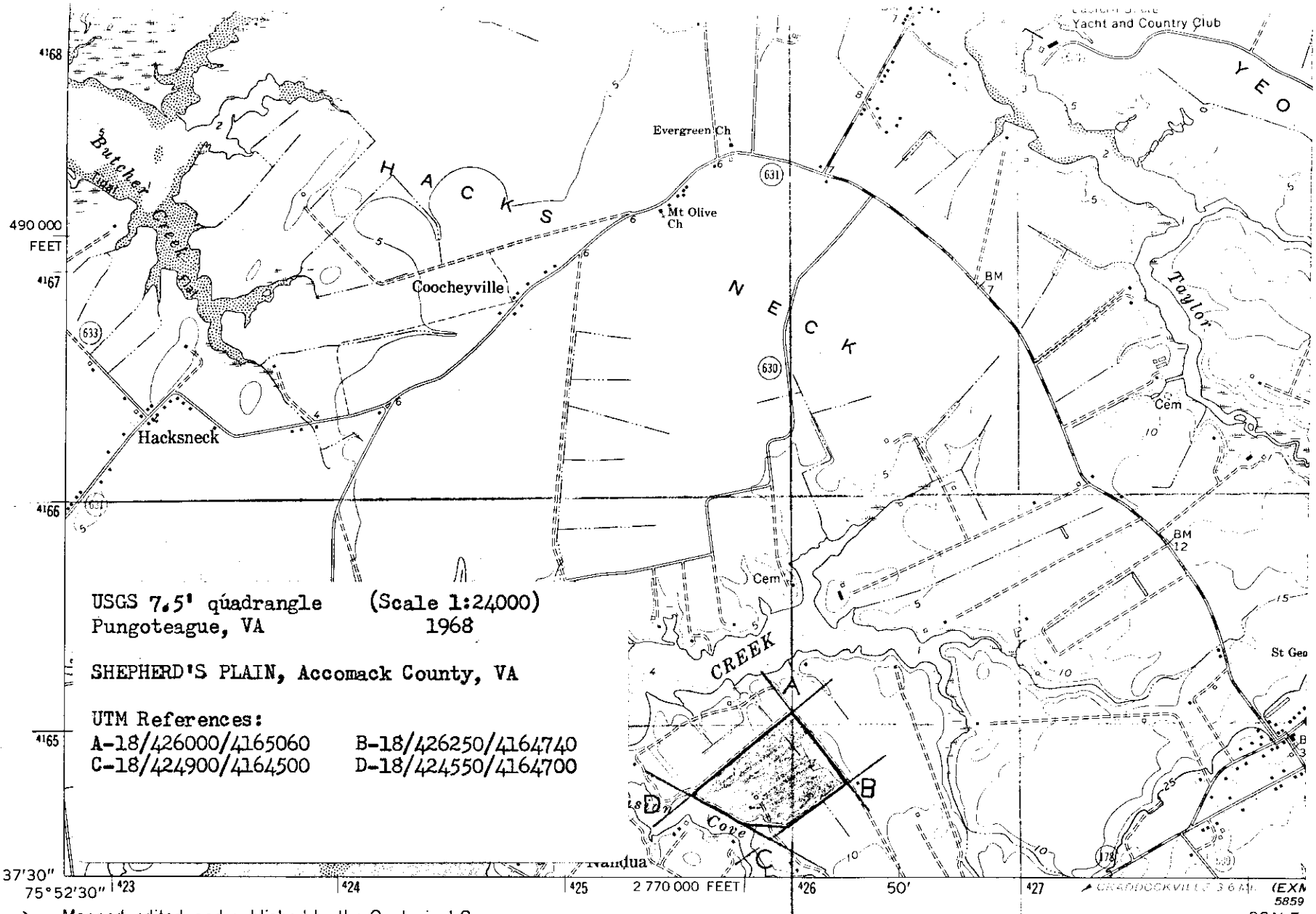
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The nominated property of approximately 46 acres consists of the main house and a small portion of the peninsula on which it sits. The property is situated between Nandua Creek and Kusian Cove and encompasses a small fraction of the original 350 acres owned by Margaret and Edward Ker. Ker was a tobacco farmer and the original "plain" surrounding the dwelling was used for raising this highly lucrative crop. Access to the residence was provided both by land and by Kusian Cove.

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

On Ker's death the property passed to his wife Margaret who died shortly thereafter. By the late 1790s the property was in the hands of his eldest son, The Reverend George Ker, and remained with his widow until her death in 1822. After passing through the hands of a number of owners during the 19th and 20th centuries the house was acquired in 1974 by Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Roos who are in the process of restoring it. In spite of a long succession of owners and a period of abandonment the house has retained its salient architectural features. The grounds that surround the house on Nandua Creek and Kusian Cove have kept an appearance suggestive of an 18th-century setting. The land to the east of the house still is farmed.

MTP/RCC



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (Scale 1:24000)
Pungoteague, VA 1968

SHEPHERD'S PLAIN, Accomack County, VA

UTM References:
A-18/426000/4165060 B-18/426250/4164740
C-18/424900/4164500 D-18/424550/4164700

(JAMESVILLE) 5859 III SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1968

Supersedes Army Map Service map dated 1943

Selected hydrographic data compiled from USC&GS Charts 564 (1970) and 568 (1969). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 18,

MN
GN
7½°
133 MILS
0°30'
9 MILS

UTM GRID AND 1968 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE

1000 0 1000 2000

CONTOUR INT
DATUM IS ME
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE A
THE MEAN RANGE OF TID

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIO
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL
AND VIRGINIA DIVISION OF MINERAL RES