

## Virginia Department of Historic Resources PIF Resource Information Sheet

This information sheet is designed to provide the Virginia Department of Historic Resources with the necessary data to be able to evaluate the significance of the property for possible listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. This is not a formal nomination, but a necessary step in determining whether or not the property could be considered eligible for listing. Please take the time to fill in as many fields as possible. A greater number of completed fields will result in a more timely and accurate assessment. Staff assistance is available to answer any questions you have in regards to this form.

<b>General Property Information</b>	For Staff Use Only DHR ID #:
Property Name(s): <u>May-Litz House</u>	
Property Date(s): <u>1857</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Circa <input type="checkbox"/> Pre <input type="checkbox"/> Post                      Open to Public? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Property Address: <u>300 Marion Avenue</u> City: <u>Tazewell</u> Zip: <u>24651</u>	
County or Ind. City: <u>Tazewell County</u> USGS Quad(s): <u>Tazewell South</u>	

### Physical Character of General Surroundings

Acreeage: 3.167    Setting (choose one):    Urban    Town    Village    Suburban    Rural    Transportation Corridor

Site Description Notes/Notable Landscape Features: The house overlooks a triangular shaped lot pointing toward Marion Avenue less than a mile south of downtown Tazewell. Marion Avenue is a narrow, windy residential street off of Main Street. Along the property's western boundary is the one-lane Thompson Street (originally Holley Road) that leads south along the spring 'Town Branch' to a historic African American enclave known as Holleytown. The sweeping front lawn of the May-Litz House features liner-shaped earthen mounds; their purpose is unknown but may be associated with a reservoir described in an 1897 deed. Terraced concrete steps lead up to the house from the front yard, and a long, hard-packed gravel driveway leads along the property's western edge and circles around off the rear northwest corner of the house. A ca. 1920 garage and a ca. 1910 apple house are located off the driveway. A 1995 basketball court is to the west of the house and a 1995 barbecue shelter is to the east. The property is situated among hilly topography with similar sized parcels and historic houses dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Secondary Resource Description (Briefly describe any other structures (or archaeological sites) that may contribute to the significance of the property: **Contributing ca. 1920 Garage:** A two-bay, two-story, running-bond brick garage with a hip-roof covered in corrugated metal with extended eaves. The garage door bays have elliptically arched openings that have been infilled with replacement overhead doors. The upper story may have served as housing for a servant with a rear side entrance and 6/6 wood windows.

**Contributing ca. 1910 Apple House:** A 1947 deed and the current plat map for the house label this building as an Apple House. The rectangular-shaped, one-story, one-bay, running-bond brick building has a front-gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The façade has a five-paneled wood door and the north elevation has one 6/6 wood window. The building rests on a parged poured concrete foundation that was built into the side of a slope.

**Non-Contributing 1995 Basketball Court:** A concrete basketball court with a black, vinyl-coated chain-link fence is located between the west side of the house and the driveway.

**Non-Contributing 1995 Barbecue Shelter:** A three-sided wooden shelter built of corner columns and wood lattice with a shed-roof was built off the east side of the house closer to Marion Avenue.

Ownership Category:    Private    Public-Local    Public-State    Public-Federal

<b>Individual Resource Information</b>	
What was the historical use of this resource? Examples include: Dwelling, Grist Mill, Bridge, Store, Tobacco Barn, etc...	
Dwelling	
What is the current use? (if other than the historical use) <u>Dwelling</u>	
Architectural style or elements of styles: <u>Greek Revival</u>	
Architect, builder, or original owner: <u>John W. Johnston</u>	
# of stories <u>2</u> Condition: <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Rebuilt <input type="checkbox"/> Renovated	
Are there any known threats to this property? <u>No</u>	

<b>Resource Component Information</b>
Please answer the following questions regarding the individual components of the resource. If the component does not exist, answer "n/a." If you feel uncomfortable in answering the question, please leave the space blank. Photographs of the features can also help our staff identify specific feature components. Usually, priority is given to describing features on the primary (front) facade of the structure.
<b>Foundation:</b> Describe the foundation that supports the structure. Examples include piers, continuous brick, poured concrete. Coursed limestone foundation
<b>Structure:</b> Describe the primary structural component of the resource. Include primary material used. Examples include log, frame (sawn lumber), and brick. Also include the treatment, such as a particular brick bond or type of framing, if known. Solid brick walls, 18" thick.
<b>Walls:</b> Describe the exterior wall covering such as beaded weatherboard or asbestos shingles. Running bond brick pattern, painted white.
<b>Windows:</b> Describe the number, material, and form of the primary windows. This includes the number of panes per sash, what the sashes are made of, and how the sashes operate (are they hinged or do they slide vertically) Have the windows been replaced? 1/1 wood windows, possibly replaced but also repaired and are in good condition.
<b>Porch:</b> Briefly describe the primary (front) porch. List the primary material, shape of the porch roof, and other defining details. The porch has been modified from a one-story wooden porch with a second-story portico to a two-story porch with full-height, plastered Ionic columns.
<b>Roof:</b> Describe the roof, listing the shape and the covering material. The roof is a low-pitched side-gabled roof covered with corrugated steel (1995).
<b>Chimney(s):</b> List the number of chimneys and the materials used. Include the brick bond pattern if possible. The main house has two interior-end brick chimneys with metal caps on both side elevations; the rear addition has one interior-end brick chimney with a metal cap on both side elevations. All chimneys have been painted white.

**Architectural Description of Individual Resource:** *(Please describe architectural patterns, types, features, additions, remodelings, or other alterations. A sketch of the current floor plan would be appreciated.)*

Primary research and physical evidence supports an 1857 construction date for the double-pile house and rear kitchen, a ca. 1913 two-story, full-width front porch, and a ca. 1920 east side sun room. The two-story, five-bay, brick house rests on a coursed, limestone foundation. The low-pitched, front-gabled roof is covered with corrugated steel panels (1995). The original full-width wooden porch with a centered portico in the Greek Revival-style (based on the owners' historic photograph) was changed around 1913 to the current two-story porch with full height Ionic

columns built of plastered wood; the porch is 14' deep. The frieze of the porch has a modillioned cornice as well as the front gable of the roof. Oral tradition states that the columns came from the Tazewell County Courthouse when it was remodeled in 1913.

The windows are 1/1 wood with metal storm windows that make them appear to be 2/2 windows. The first floor façade windows have bottom 1/3 wood shutters that open to the outside for ventilation. The main block of the house is double-pile with a lower height two-bay rear section. The building's entire depth is 70' and its width is 50'. The house was constructed with handmade brick and was painted white in 1995. The front and rear sections of the house each have separate basements; only the basement on the rear section was accessible during field work. The basement is full-height with a dirt floor and used for storage. The attic is not accessible. A small rear section that includes an entrance and an interior dairy was built ca. 1900.

The center passage plan main house has four rooms down and four rooms up. The first floor has narrow-width tongue-and-groove floorboards with 13 1/2" base boards 1 1/2" thick. The rooms are 14' tall with no crown molding. The 8" wide door trim is mostly fluted trim with corner blocks. Each room has a fireplace with varying designs, but with predominately Greek Revival surrounds (all painted white), except for the east side front parlor (Music Room) that has tall polished columns flanking a mirror and high-fired ceramic tile surround. The first and second floor entrances consist of matching double-leaf wood and glass doors with a full-width transom and side lights. The ca. 1920 west side sun room features terra-cotta floors, three bays of triple, 6/1 wood windows, and a brick fireplace.

*Site Plan and Floor Plans with keyed photographs are included.*

**Significance Statement:** Briefly note any significant events, personages, and/or families associated with the property. (Detailed family genealogies are not necessary.) Please list all sources of information. It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or genealogies to this form. Normally, only information contained on this form will be posted for consideration by the State Review Board.

The house is historically linked to two primary families, the Mays' and the Litzs' with a ca. 1857 construction date. Two references state that the house was built in 1859 by John Warfield Johnston (Leslie, 1982 and 2006). Johnston is listed in the 1855 through 1861 Tazewell County Land Tax books with 116 acres 1/2 mile south of the courthouse. In 1855, this property had a \$300 value for buildings, which dropped to \$0 in 1856, but soared to \$3,000 in 1857—which would indicate the construction of the house. (Tazewell County Real Estate records provide an 1867 construction date).

Several deeds transact between Johnson, John Hopkins, James McBroom, and James McBride before Col. Andrew Jackson May purchased the property in 1873 [TCDB 12:480, 12:476, 15:221]. Born in Kentucky in 1829, A. J. May moved to Jeffersonville (the original name of Tazewell) by 1865, owned property north of the courthouse, and worked as a Lawyer [TCDB 15:194 and TCLB 1871-74]. In 1855, May married Mary Matilda May (1831-1900) and had four children. By 1880, May had a law office opposite the courthouse on Main Street where he worked as an Attorney-At-Law. His eldest child, 24 year old Samuel May, also worked as a Lawyer, and perhaps joined his Father's practice (AncestryHeritageQuest.com 2016; *Another Album of Tazewell County, VA Part II*, p. 106, 1991).

An 1887 deed that referred to the property supplying water to the town gave a glimpse to the May property at this time. The deed stated "To furnish at the property now occupied by May as a residence a one inch water pipe and hydrant, plus at his office... That the said town is not to lay its pipes through the garden or vineyard on said property, nor within one hundred feet of the mansion house on said property occupied by A.J. May as a residence nor destroy or injure the fruit trees on said property... Spring and reservoir used for the purpose of water for the said

town..." [TCDB 22:138]. The "spring," Town Branch, flows alongside Holley Road on the western border of the current property, but with the acreage of the property in 1887, the spring would have also run behind the house.

The 1895 Land Taxes placed A. J. May 1 mile south of the courthouse on 270 acres with a \$2,110 value for land and \$50 for buildings. The house is located .8 of a mile south of the courthouse. In 1900, A. J. and Mary (71 and 68) lived in the house along with their 49 year old son Samuel (S. D. May) and five grandchildren. But also in 1900, May's wife Mary died, and both Col. Andrew Jackson May and Mary Matilda May are buried in the Jeffersonville Cemetery (on Fincastle Turnpike just east of downtown Main Street) (Ancestry). However, less than two years later, a deed revealed that A. J. May was engaged to marry Nellie Bly Davidson on July 1, 1902. This June 16, 1902 deed provided her "one undivided half of tract of land where May now resides on 350 acres and one half of all silverware, furniture, and household effects of every kind of appuntinaut (sp) to said mansion" [TCDB 48:249]. Less than a year later, on May 6, 1903, May prepared his Will leaving his "estate" to his "wife N. B. D. May," and died May 23 [TCWB 8:180]. His widow continued to live there, and according to oral tradition, operated a girl's boarding school to defray expenses, but eventually sold the house to the Litz family.

In December, 1911 Nellie May sold two parcels to A. Z. Litz (41) from Welch, West Virginia [TCDB 72:30] (Ancestry). Nellie May must have sold most of the land as when in September, 1918 Litz granted to his wife Etta V. Litz the two tracts of land, which only contained 6.86 acres and 45.67 acres [TCDB 84/585]. Originally a Real Estate Dealer, Litz moved to Tazewell in 1911 to work as a Miner Operator (Ancestry). Oral and written family histories state that A. Z. Litz (Alma/Al) replaced the original Greek Revival-style front porch with the current full-height stuccoed columns (Weinacker; *Tazewell County Heritage Vol 1*, 1995). Additional oral and written family histories state that Litz re-used the columns from the 1873 Tazewell County Courthouse when it was remodeled in 1913. Although courthouse history confirms that the columns were replaced in 1913, no physical evidence supports that they were re-located to the May-Litz House (*Hidden Stories of Tazewell County, Virginia*, p. 304, 2010).

By 1930, A.Z. Litz worked as a Coal Operator, and his house was valued at \$25,000 (Ancestry). Litz died in 1940, and a deed of exchange the same year between his widow Etta V. Litz and her son Conrad B. Litz (38) divided the property to allow Conrad to build a house north of the adjoining "10,299 square foot residence." This quote refers to the May-Litz House, and the square footage includes the basement [TCDB144:445]. Conrad lived there his entire life; the properties are separated by a chain link fence, and the driveway to this house extends off the May-Litz driveway.

In 1945, Etta V. Litz, widow of A. Z. Litz, willed to her daughter Ethel Litz Royall (formerly E. Margaret Litz) the house and 45.67 acres [TCWB 14:179]. Two years later, Ethel Litz Royal sold a 3.566 acre tract with the house to her brother A. Z. Litz Jr. (40), for \$15,000. This northwest part of the previous 45.67 acre tract included the extant "large brick mansion, brick garage, and small brick apple house...between Marion Avenue and the road known as the 'Holly Road' leading up Town Branch..." [TCDB 177:280]. At the end of Holley Road, now named Thompson Street, lies the historic African American enclave Holleytown where the original residents served the affluent families of this neighborhood.

A. Z. Litz, Jr. and his wife Sarah Thompson lived in the house until their deaths, with Sarah outliving her husband and inheriting the house in 1984 [TCWB 43/750]. After her death, the property went through a quick succession of owners. The current 3.167 acre tract and house was sold to Ellyson and Linda Robinson who sold it to Thomas and Pat Clemenston (as Tenants) in 1994 who quickly sold it to the current owners Robert M. and Lisa B. Weinacker in 1995 [TCDB 331:424, 678:438, and 694:669]. The Weinackers plan to market the house for a Bed and Breakfast, an ideal opportunity for the property's pristine setting along a wooded hillside and flowing creek, with other historic properties on a narrow, meandering road in natural terrain close to downtown Tazewell.

<b>Legal Owner(s) of the Property</b> (For more than one owner, please use a separate sheet.)			
Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	Robert M. and Lisa B. Weinacker
300 Marion Avenue		Tazewell	VA 24651
<small>(Address)</small>		<small>(City)</small>	<small>(State) (Zip Code)</small>
		276-970-3889	
<small>(Email Address)</small>		<small>(Daytime telephone including area code)</small>	
Owner's Signature: _____		Date: May 16, 2016	
<b>•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••</b>			
In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.			
Contact person: _____			
Daytime Telephone: (      )			

<b>Applicant Information</b> (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)			
Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	Anne Stuart Beckett
1024 Hamilton Avenue		Roanoke	VA 24513
<small>(Address)</small>		<small>(City)</small>	<small>(State) (Zip Code)</small>
asbeckett@cox.net		540-354-7827	
<small>(Email Address)</small>		<small>(Daytime telephone including area code)</small>	
Applicant's Signature: _____		Date: May 16, 2016	

<b>Notification</b>			
In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.			
Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Miss <input type="checkbox"/>	Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. <input type="checkbox"/>	Todd Day
Town of Tazewell		PO Box 608	Town Manager
<small>(Locality)</small>		<small>(Address)</small>	<small>(Position)</small>
Tazewell	VA	24651	276-988-2501
<small>(City)</small>	<small>(State)</small>	<small>(Zip Code)</small>	<small>(Daytime telephone including area code)</small>

Please use the following space to explain why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.  
 The owners plan to market the property for an income-producing Bed-and-Breakfast.

Would you be interested in the State and/or the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes  No   
 Would you be interested in the easement program? Yes  No

## **Bibliography:**

Leslie, Louise. *Tazewell County, Virginia*. The Overmountain Press, Johnson City, TN. 1982.

Leslie, Louise B. and Dr. Terry W. Mullins. *Images of America: Tazewell*. Arcadia Publishing, 2006.

Dr. Mullins, Terry. Historian, personal communication, March, 2016

Dr. Mullins, Terry W, editor. *Hidden Histories of Tazewell County, Virginia*. Tazewell County Historical Society, 2010.

Tazewell County Deed, Will, and Land Books, Circuit Clerk's Office, Tazewell, Virginia, January, 2016.

Tazewell County Historical Society. *Another Album of Tazewell County, Virginia*. Bluefield, West Virginia: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1991.

Tazewell County Historical Society. *Tazewell County Heritage Volume 1, Tazewell County, Virginia 1799-1995*. Charleston, West Virginia: Henderson Publishing Company, 1995.

Tazewell County GIS, March, 2016.

U.S. Federal Census. AncestryHeritageQuest.com, March, 2016.

Weinacker, Lisa. Owner, personal communication, March, 2016.

## **List of Photographs:**

All photos taken by the author, January, 2016

1/20: View southeast.

2/20: View north.

3/20: View east, northeast.

4/20: West elevation.

5/20: East elevation.

6/20: Front entrance.

7/20: View north from front entrance.

8/20: Garage, view southwest. Contributing ca. 1920.

9/20: Apple house, north elevation. Contributing ca. 1910.

10/20: Barbecue shelter, view south. Non-contributing, 1995.

11/20: First floor entrance hall, view towards rear.

12/20: Entrance hall, view towards front.

13/20: East Parlor—Music Room.

14/20: Window shutters in West Parlor—Living Room.

15/20: Living Room mantle.

16/20: Bedroom Mantle

17/20: View into kitchen from rear section addition.

18/20: Sun room.

19/20: Second floor Bedroom no.2.

20/20: Second floor Bedroom no.4.

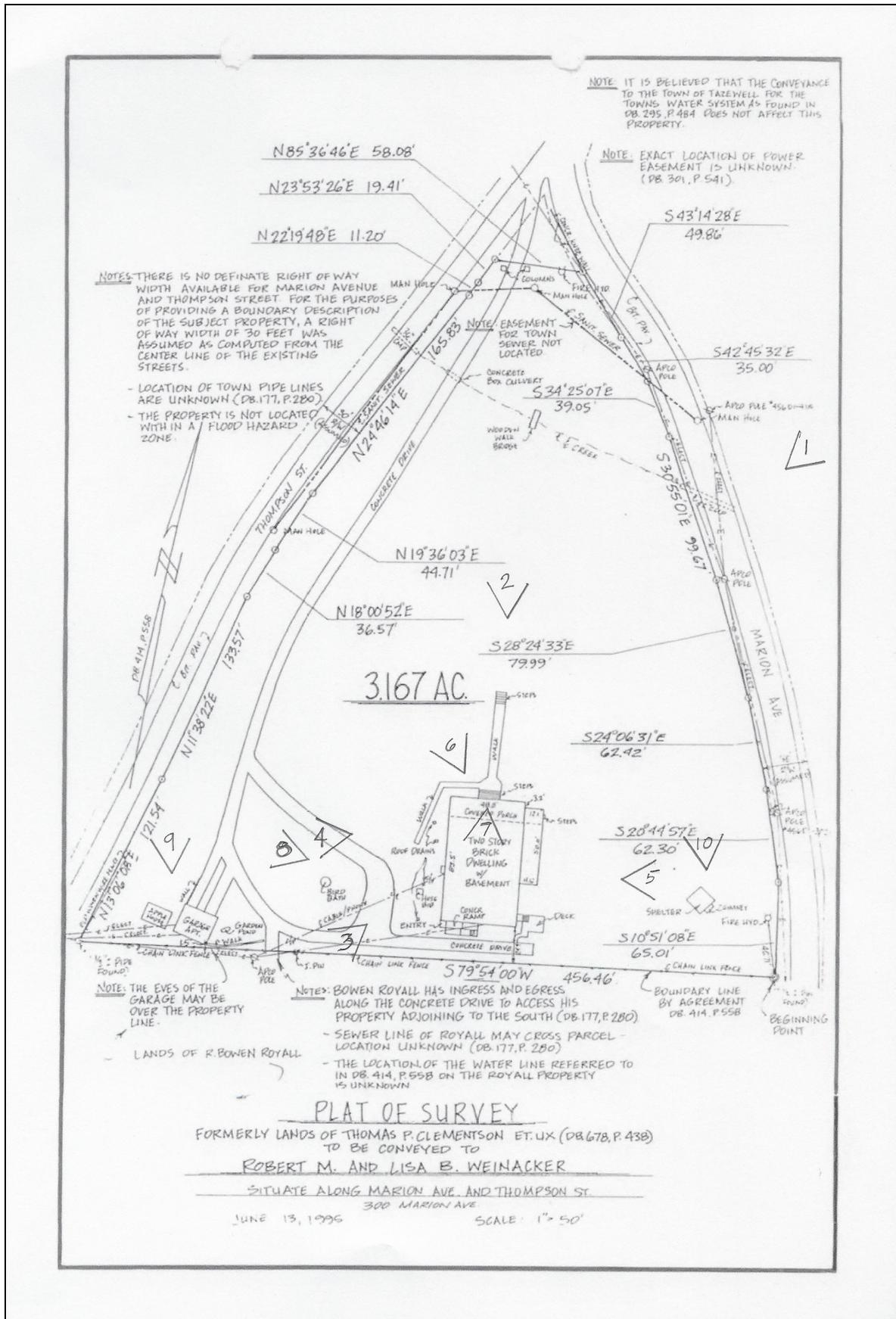


Figure 1: Keyed Site Plan.



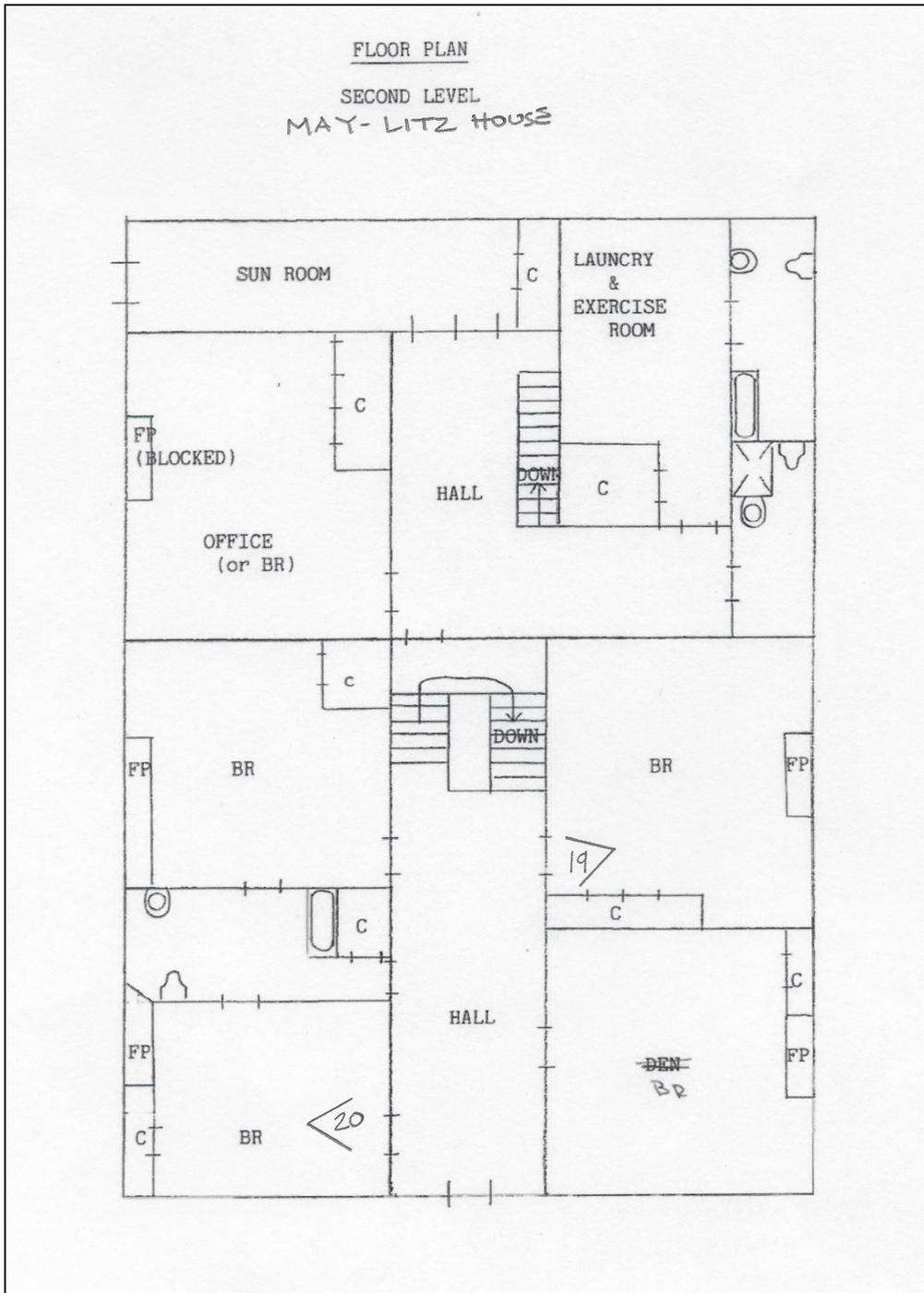


Figure 3: Keyed Second Floor.