

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

32

 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

 SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS
**1** NAME

HISTORIC

BRYN MAWR HOTEL

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Morris and Montgomery Avenues

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bryn Mawr

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

13

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

COUNTY

Montgomery

CODE

091

**3** CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER:
**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Baldwin School (a private corporation) c/o Mrs. Reed Shoemaker

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Morris &amp; Montgomery Avenues

CITY, TOWN

Bryn Mawr

STATE

— VICINITY OF

Pennsylvania 19010

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Airy &amp; Swede Streets

CITY, TOWN

Norristown

STATE

Pennsylvania

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Inventory of Historic &amp; Cultural Resources

DATE

1975

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Montgomery County Planning Commission

CITY, TOWN

Norristown

STATE

Pennsylvania

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION  
 EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR  
 DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE  
 UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE  
 ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original building on this site was the Bryn Mawr Hotel (c. 1871). It was designed by the Wilson Brothers, Architects and Engineers for the Pennsylvania Railroad to serve as a summer resort hotel. It was built of stone and wood in the "stick style" with a mansard roof and dormers and a square tower at the main facade. The hotel burned in the winter of 1889-90.

The replacement hotel building was designed by Furness, Evans, & Co., Architects, for the Bryn Mawr Hotel Company of the Pennsylvania Railroad, as a summer resort hotel. The new hotel opened for business in the summer of 1890. During the winters, the building was used by the Baldwin School. With the interest of vacationers turning more and more toward the sea shore resorts, and the suburban spread to the Bryn Mawr area, the building leased to the Baldwin School in 1896. The Baldwin School continues to occupy the structure as its main building housing: dining facilities, administration offices, classrooms, applied arts shops, and residential facilities.

The building is designed in an interpretation of the French Chateau architecture style of the 16th century. It is five stories high including a raised basement, at grade level, a main floor, one level above grade, and three floors of sleeping rooms (the top floor within the steeply pitched roof). The plan of the building is in an "L" form with a low two story structure (boiler house and stack) tacked on at the northern end. The main entrance is identified by a large semi-circular structure protruding from the long "arm" of the "L" which, after several setbacks and various roof lines, is crowned by a conical roof form topped with a delicate finial. This semi-circular building element is surrounded by an open porch raised one story above grade which is reached by two wide stairways from the entrance driveway. It housed the main entrance and lobbies of the old hotel, and now is the main entrance, reception rooms, and common rooms for the School. Several other tower elements protrude from the arms of the "L" clearly indicating their function as stair towers by their ascending window treatment. The portions of the building facing south, and a portion facing west, are surrounded at the first floor level by large, covered, wooden porches. A "porte cochere" entrance with accommodations for baggage handling is adjacent to the elevators just north of the main entrance. It is tucked under the building, and once carriages, and now trucks and cars unload at this point.

The building is of wall bearing construction with wood framing for floors and roof. An ornamental, exposed steel, grand stairway with carved wood balusters and railings ascends four floors from the main lobby. The long porches, once filled with rocking chairs, are wood framed, carried on heavy wooden columns and beams to stone and concrete foundations. They form a deep, protective arcade at grade level and are almost classical, even somber, in appearance, sitting squarely under their tin, standing seam roofs.

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BRYN MAWR HOTEL, Montgomery County

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The building is sheathed with rough cut granite, punctured by large arched headed windows (trimmed in brick), and topped with an airy brick "cornice" treatment at the height of the fourth story window heads. The whole is crowned by a steeply pitched roof which is peppered by a variety of dormers, chimneys, towers, finials, and skylights. The entire building has a ruddy coloration due to the use of the brick in the towers and "cornice," and due to the dominant red roof which caps the huge structure.

On the interior, the one and a half story entrance lobby, with its central ashlar stone fireplace, gives way, by a pair of sweeping stairs, to the upper lobby and grand stairhall at the first floor level. From here, one gains entrance to the principal public rooms - to the left, the large, long dining room, to the right, the large public sitting rooms and porches. On the second, third, and fourth stories are the sleeping rooms laid out along a double loaded corridor. On each sleeping floor, directly opposite the main stair, there is a "common" or public lobby space. This area, once reserved for that floor's residents, helps to designate this important circulation nodal point where each corridor and the main vertical circulation of the building meet. These common rooms stack vertically to form the main entrance tower, with windows and a large veranda facing onto the front lawns and entrance driveway.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1890

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Furness, Evans and Company  
Frank Furness, Architect

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The designer of the Baldwin School, Frank Furness, of Furness, Evans, and Company, was one of America's most notable and creative 19th century architects. A rebellious Victorian architect, he was nicknamed "Fearless Frank" as a tribute to his fiery personality and the courage of his architectural convictions. He designed almost every type of building in and around the Philadelphia area: banks, hospitals, university buildings, art academies, libraries, railroad stations, factories, hotels, clubs, churches, as well as the city and country residences of Philadelphia's most notable citizens. Furness' designs clearly acknowledge all of the influences of historic architectural styles with his intensive mixtures of these styles, their scales, colors, forms, materials, and textures. Yet, in spite of strong historical references and clear design influences, Furness' work was always inventive, fresh, and recognizably his own. He was never a mere copyist. Furness was original when others were only up to date in fashion. He said that he "held lack of originality in contempt" and maintained that any building should proclaim its use and serve to the maximum degree the use to which it was to be put." Thus, Furness was regarded as a developer of an American nineteenth century style and his organic designs, which developed from the functional arrangement of activities, were an honest expression of the function and the structure of the materials he used.

Baldwin School

The Baldwin School is Furness' only extant hotel building. He designed several: one in northern New Jersey on Lake Hoptacong, one in Baltimore, one in Atlantic City, and probably one in Philadelphia. The Baldwin School is in good condition, with much of the original fabric intact in spite of the early change in use from hotel to school (c. 1896). The interpretative use of the chateau style is unique in Furness' oeuvre, but was a feature used by various American architects in the 1880's, best represented in the Hotel del Coronado in California.

Furness' artful handling of materials, massing and form are clearly evident at Baldwin: the beautiful combination of rough cut granite and precise brick work, especially the use of brick to "top-out" the walls, leaving the granite as the base material; the design of the window openings with structural brick arches clearly expressing the structural characteristics

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of the stone bearing wall punctured by openings; the inclusion of large openings not practical in bearing walls, made by attaching to the building mass a wood construction in the form of wide, long, covered porches; and the skillful massing of a variety of solid roof forms, giving the building a picturesque quality.

Functionally the building tells its story in its design. The entrance is clearly defined and readily visible, open and receptive to guests with the traditional fireplace as a symbol of welcome. The size and scale of the public rooms are grand, yet intimate enough to foster social contacts. The steel stairway provides the grand gesture of leading guests to their rooms, and, at the same time, expresses in the use of this latest construction technology, the safety and convenience of emergency exiting in case of fire. The economic and straightforward double loaded corridor scheme is only modified at the important nodal point where horizontal (corridor) and vertical (grand stairway) circulation meet. Rooms are laid-out and connected so that they can be easily combined into suites, providing a more flexible arrangement. Some rooms were provided with fireplaces, while all had louvred doors, using the wide interior corridors for cross ventilation. The hotel was designed as the guests' home away from home, and, in spite of its huge size, the style and detailing are domestic residential in scale. The dominant ruddy coloration in combination with the grey stone fits well into the Main Line residential area and has aged well in the almost ninety years since it was built.

Most significantly, this fine old building was designed with enough flexibility built in so that a new function (that of a school) could be accommodated without losing or obscuring the original fabric. This accommodation has given this structure a new "lease on life" which has lasted since the change over in 1896. Recent (1976) changes in function have again been accommodated within the original design, without major modifications to the structure, renewing and extending again its "lease on life".

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.54

QUADRANGLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 473300 4430140

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Hyman Myers, AIA, Consulting Restoration Architect

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

720 South Highland Avenue

TELEPHONE

215/664/6924 or 299/8372

CITY OR TOWN

Merion Station

STATE

Pennsylvania 19066

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE ED WINTRAUB, Director  
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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BRYN MAWR COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT, Montgomery County

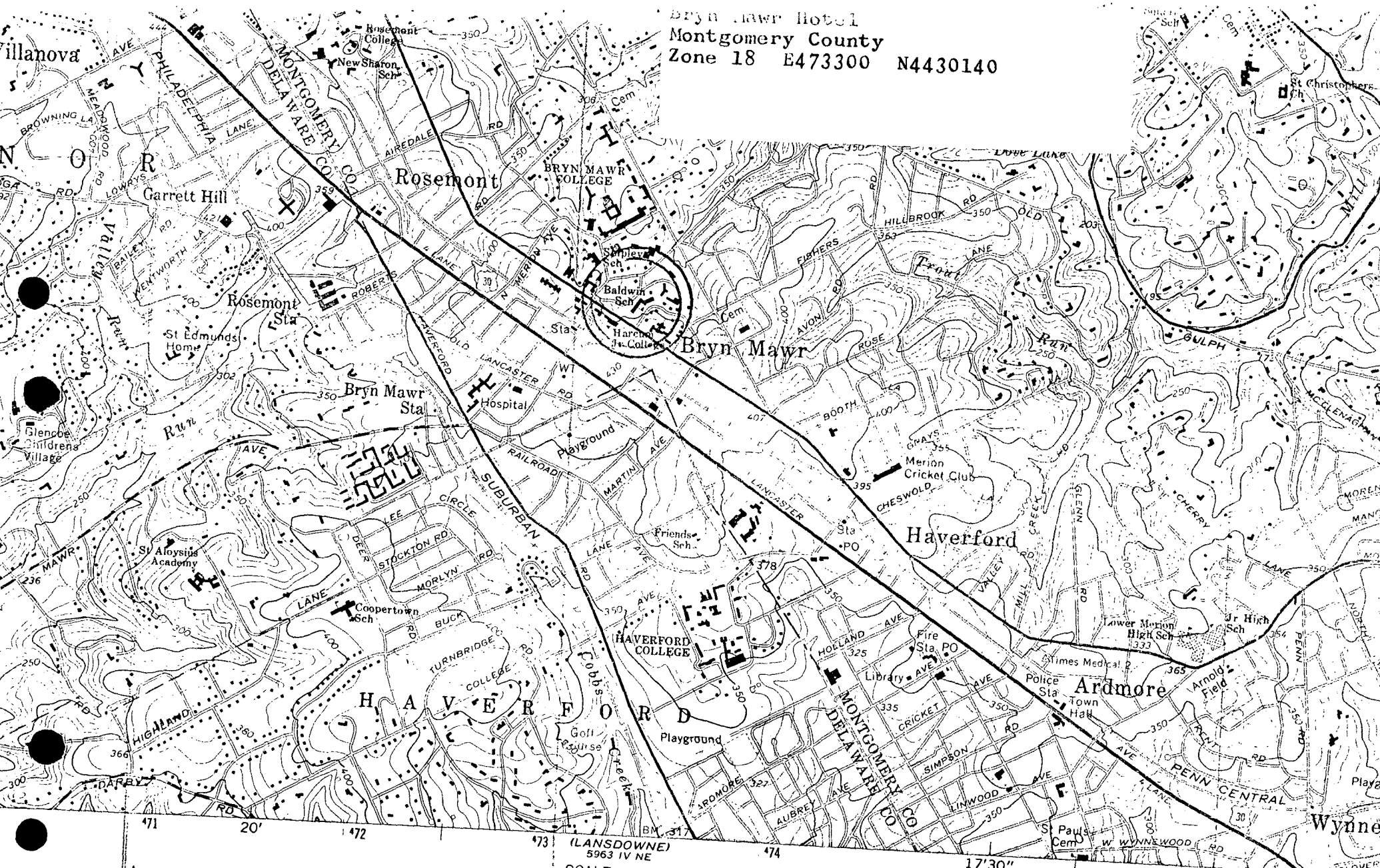
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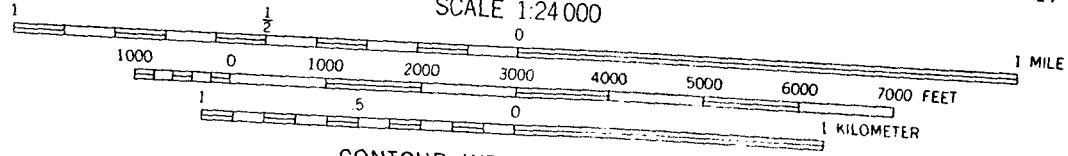
Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at a point on the southwest side of New Gulph Road moving southeast along southside of road for 2000 feet then southwest along north side of Morris Avenue for 1500 feet then northwest along north side of Yarrow Street for 500 feet to Merion Avenue then Northwest along Northside of Wyndon Avenue for 1000 feet then northeast cutting across campus for 1500 feet to starting point.

Bryn Mawr Hotel  
Montgomery County  
Zone 18 E473300 N4430140



(LANSDOWNE)  
5963 IV NE  
SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

NORRISTOWN QUADRANGLE (N4000-W7515/7.5)  
PENNSYLVANIA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

1966 (REV. 1977)