

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories on the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

I. Name of Property

Historic name Pugh House
Other names/site number

II. Location

Street & number 10018 Chapel Hill Road N/A not for publication
City or town Morrisville N/A vicinity
State North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27560

III. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property XX meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally XX statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Crow SHPO

7/11/03

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

IV. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register.	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
___ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
___ determined eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
___ See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
___ removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
___ other (explain): _____	_____	_____

Pugh House
Name of Property

Wake County, N.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing
2 _____	0 buildings
0 _____	0 sites
0 _____	0 structures
0 _____	0 objects
2 _____	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic & Architectural Resources of Wake Co., N.C. (ca. 1770-1941) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>
DOMESTIC	single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary structure

<i>Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>
DOMESTIC	single dwelling
DOMESTIC	secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

- foundation Brick
- walls Wood
- Aluminum
- roof Metal
- other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past fifty years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
ART

Period of Significance

Ca. 1870, ca. 1880s, 1923-1953

Significant Dates

Ca. 1870, ca. 1880s

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Pugh, Sarah Mabel

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Pugh House

Name of Property

Wake Co., N.C.

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property approximately 0.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	17	696490	3	17
2	17		4	17

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni</u>		
organization	<u>Landmark Preservation Associates</u>	date	<u>July 31, 2002</u>
street & number	<u>6 Houston St.</u>	telephone	<u>(540) 464-5315</u>
city or town	<u>Lexington</u>	state	<u>VA</u>
		zip code	<u>24450</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name	<u>Billy K. and Dorothy H. Hartness</u>		
street & number	<u>10018 Chapel Hill Road (mail address: PO Box 153)</u>	telephone	<u>(919) 467-8216</u>
city or town	<u>Morrisville</u>	state	<u>NC</u>
		zip code	<u>27560-0153</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary

The ca. 1870 Pugh House is located at 10018 Chapel Hill Road (US Route 54) in the Town of Morrisville in western Wake County, North Carolina. The two-story frame house is notable for its vernacular Italianate detail, specifically a bracketed cornice and a front porch with intricate sawn detail. The west-facing house has aluminum siding, a metal-sheathed gable roof, exterior brick end chimneys, and a foundation of brick piers with mid-twentieth-century brick infill. To the rear is an original one-story ell with a late-nineteenth-century extension and a side porch. The center-passage-plan interior features Greek/Gothic Revival mantels and a two-run stair with turned newel and balusters. Minor alterations were made to the exterior and interior in the early 1970s. Next to the house stands a late-nineteenth-century frame smokehouse with sawn gable ornament (probably Queen Anne Style in inspiration) and quatrefoil vents. The yard surrounding the house has several mature trees including specimens of pine, walnut, ginkgo, holly, and cedar, and sections of modern picket fencing. Located on the same tax parcel as the house and smokehouse but excluded from the nominated parcel are a 1970s one-story frame garage and workshop and a contemporaneous frame and metal shed. The house stands at one of Morrisville's principal intersections--US 54 and Aviation Parkway--and it is located across US 54 from the bed of the Southern Railway (originally the antebellum North Carolina Railroad). Historic and modern buildings stand on surrounding parcels.

Inventory

1. House. Ca. 1870; early 1970s. Contributing building.
2. Smokehouse. Ca. 1880s Contributing building.

House exterior

The defining feature of the Pugh House is its decorative front porch. The hip-roofed one-story porch stands on slender square-section wood posts grouped in threes at the corners, in twos down the front, and singly as pilasters against the house wall. The posts are yoked together near their tops by molded caps from which spring round-arched spans linking the groups of posts. Sawn ornament fills the spandrels of the arches and the narrow spaces between the posts above the molded caps. Below runs a sawn balustrade with vasiform repeat. Other features of the porch include a molded cornice, a beaded matchboard ceiling, treated lumber floor boards, a brick foundation, and concrete

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Description (continued)

are narrow bargeboards with a fleur-de-lis repeat (sections of which are missing).

The chimneys are constructed in American bond with stepped shoulders and bases, traces of white penciling, and twisted metal lightning rods with glass insulators at their connections to the faces of the chimneys. The front entry has three-light sidelights, a five-light transom, and an original door with round-arched and shouldered glass upper panels and solid lower panels defined by moldings with turned corner blocks. The glass panels have a translucent diapered stencil pattern. The front and rear elevations have six-over-six windows and the gable ends have narrower four-over-four windows except in the second story of the north gable end, which has replacement one-over-one sash. Some original brick foundation piers (which are stretcher bond) retain historic parging.

The ell has an interior stretcher-bond brick chimney, six-over-six windows, and several modern windows including a dining room picture window (probably early 1970s) and a stained glass over-the-sink kitchen window (post-1978). Variation in the infilled brick-pier foundation and a seam in the eaves boards are exterior indications of a late-nineteenth-century addition made to the end of the ell. The south elevation of this addition has exposed weatherboard siding (attached with cut nails), whereas the weatherboards of the rest of the ell and the main house have been covered with aluminum siding. On the south side of the ell extends a porch with slender square-section wood posts, a section of sawn balustrade identical to that on the front porch, and a 1970s brick-faced foundation that extends to form a low wall along the edge of the porch. At the tops of the porch posts are the ghost impressions of the attachment points of former decorative woodwork that was probably similar in character to that on the front porch. The posts may have been repositioned. The ceiling of the original section of porch is sheathed with flush boards whereas the porch adjoining the addition has a beaded matchboard ceiling. A section of the porch that extends along the back side of the house has been enclosed to serve as a bathroom. When the addition was made the space between it and the original ell was left partly or completely open as a breezeway. This was later infilled.

House interior

Typical interior finishes include wood floors, molded baseboards and door and window trim, and walls and ceilings with sheetrock finishes over original lath. Four-panel doors are standard throughout, with porcelain knobs and cast-iron lock boxes stamped "B.L.W." and "Patd July 21, 1865." In the first-floor center passage rises a two-run stair with a stout vasiform turned newel at its foot, turned balusters, and a molded handrail. The stair rises from the passage floor

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Description (continued)

directly, without a closet or spandrel underneath, and there is a small curved surface of the plaster soffit under the stair where it joins the floor. Small curves also appear at the junctures of the two runs at the landing. Bed moldings that ran under the lips of the treads have been removed.

Opening from the center passage into the north room (the principal parlor) is a late-nineteenth-century wood panel door with a clear glass upper panel bordered by small stained glass panes (a Queen Anne door). The panes alternate between rectangular yellow panes and square blue panes. Mounted on the door trim facing into the room are wrought-iron staples for a former cross bar to secure the door. The staples are thought to be historic features of the house but it is unclear whether the door belonged to the house or was added by a more recent owner (before the present owners acquired the house in 1978). In the parlor is a pilaster-and-frieze mantel with molded pilaster caps and bases, chamfering, and a slight peaked profile to the lower edge of the frieze (a Gothic Revival influence on an otherwise Greek Revival mantel). The mantel shelf has a multiple curved edge, and the entire mantel is set against a chimney breast that projects slightly into the room. The fireplace opening is closed and has a brick hearth.

The mantel in the south first-floor room has been removed but mantels similar to that in the north first-floor room survive in the two upstairs bedrooms. These differ from the first-floor mantel primarily in having plain mantel shelves and painted finishes (the first-floor mantel has been stripped). The south first-floor room and the two upstairs rooms have closets added in the early 1970s. The ell, which originally contained a dining room and kitchen, had the wall between the two rooms removed in the early 1970s and the chimney enlarged with brick fireplaces and raised hearths. The dining room and kitchen (they still function as such) have modern paneled walls and kitchen cabinetry. The late-nineteenth-century addition to the end of the original ell contains a room that may have been used as a second kitchen or servant's quarters. The room has a stove flue in one corner. A bathroom and vestibule occupy the breezeway (now enclosed) between the end of the original ell and the added room.

The house has no basement, but in the crawlspace under the two sections of the ell are visible circular-sawn sills and joists. The sills under the main house are also circular-sawn, and they are reported to be pegged together. In the attics of both ell sections and the main house are circular-sawn common rafters nailed to ridge boards. The roof boards over the main house appear to be too widely spaced and to have too few nails in them (cut and wire) to have supported wood shingles, but wood shingles are reported to have been discovered in the attic, presumably left over from an earlier roof. Visible in the main house attic access is the original board-sheathed

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Description (continued)

ceiling of the second-story center passage.

Smokehouse

The smokehouse is a one-story frame building measuring approximately twelve feet square that stands off the south gable end of the house. The smokehouse has weatherboard siding attached with cut nails and painted white, quarter-round corner boards (this and other trim bears traces of red paint), a metal-sheathed gable roof, and a foundation of brick footers. The gables have decorative trusswork with chamfered stanchions and cross members that appear Queen Anne-style in derivation. Both gables have lost the finials that once capped the stanchions but the west gable retains a turned finial at the bottom end of the stanchion. Behind the trusswork are quatrefoil louvered vents, and there are narrow sawtooth bargeboards. There is a diagonal beaded board door on the north elevation and a rectangular louvered vent on the west side. The interior was remodeled in the early 1970s with a concrete floor, modern paneling on the walls, a plywood ceiling, and kitchen-type cabinets with a white, yellow and orange paint scheme. Originally meat was smoke-cured in the building. In the early 1970s the smokehouse was made into a utility room with a washer and dryer, and it now serves for storage.

Integrity Statement

The Pugh House retains sufficient architectural integrity for listing in the National Register. The house retains its overall form and character-defining features such as its decorative front porch, bracketed cornices, window surrounds, floor plan, stair, and mantels. The house has been sheathed with aluminum siding over the original weatherboards; however, this modern (1970s) alteration is visually similar to the original weatherboards and in and of itself does not so compromise the integrity of the house to render it ineligible. Enhancing the integrity of the house is the survival of its principal domestic outbuilding, the ornamented smokehouse. The nominated area--essentially the yard surrounding the house--is planted with trees and shrubs as it was historically. Surrounding the house are historic and modern buildings, a historic rail bed, and historic roads that are now heavily traveled by commuter traffic.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The ca. 1870 Pugh House ranks among Morrisville, North Carolina's oldest and most architecturally significant houses. The two-story Italianate frame house was built for merchant and postmaster James M. Pugh and his wife Mary Ellen Pugh. The principal architectural feature is the front porch, which features arched spans, delicate supports, and intricate sawn ornament. In the twentieth century the house was associated with Mabel Pugh, a daughter of James and Mary, who pursued a successful career as a graphic artist in New York in the 1920s and '30s and from 1936 to 1960 headed the art department of Peace College in Raleigh. Pugh maintained a studio at her Morrisville property from the early 1920s on. Her homeplace and home town figured in her art, in particular her illustrated children's book *Little Carolina Blue Bonnet* (1933), set in a fictionalized Morrisville. Mabel Pugh is regarded as one of North Carolina's most prominent women artists of the first half of the twentieth century.

The Pugh House meets Criterion C and is eligible in the architecture area of significance for the quality and inspiration of its Italianate detail. A secondary resource, a smokehouse that shares a similar level of detail, contributes to the architectural significance of the property, as do interior features of the house. The property is also eligible under Criterion B for its association with artist Mabel Pugh, who pioneered her profession for women in North Carolina. The period of significance encompasses the date ca. 1870, the approximate date of construction for the house, and the period 1923 through 1953, embracing the association with the mature Mabel Pugh as an important artist and art educator during the period when she maintained a studio at the property. The post-1953 period is not of exceptional significance and therefore the fifty-year cut-off date is appropriate for the end of the period of significance. The Pugh House is eligible at the state level of significance for its association with Mabel Pugh and at the local level of significance for its architectural characteristics.

The significance of the Pugh House relates to the Multiple Property Documentation form "Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina (ca. 1770-1941)" context 2 (pages E30-46) and property type "Post-Bellum and Turn of the Century Houses (1865-1920s)" (pages F131-137). It meets Registration Requirements outlined on pages F141-142. The Pugh House and smokehouse were classified as contributing resources in the Morrisville Historic

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

District, which was determined eligible for the National Register in the early 1990s.¹

Historic Overview and Art Context

The Pugh House stands at the center of the Town of Morrisville, which grew up around a station on the North Carolina Railroad, constructed through the area in 1852. By 1872 six general stores listed Morrisville as their address. One of these was the store of James M. Pugh (ca. 1826-1892), who in 1867 had purchased a one-acre lot at the intersection of the Raleigh-Chapel Hill Road and the Mt. Herman Road (the latter abandoned by the 1950s). The purchase coincided with passage of a crop lien law that allowed merchants to sell to farmers on credit and collect on accounts when agricultural products were sold in the fall. The system involved some risk but also enabled merchants to charge higher interest. J. M. Pugh was one of the first storekeepers in Wake County to take advantage of the law.²

On his town lot Pugh built his residence and a post office in addition to the store, and he served as Morrisville's postmaster. (The store and post offices buildings, now gone, stood to the south of the house.) Also, in 1872, Pugh purchased a 122-acre farm near town that he farmed with the aid of black laborers. Pugh and his wife Mary Ellen (Collier) Pugh (1848-1926) had eight children, and they were assisted in 1880 by an elderly black resident housekeeper named Celia Thompson. After J. M. Pugh's death in 1892 the property passed to Mary, who in 1900 lived there with three young daughters, Lessie (or Lesse), Nora, and Mabel, and a son Cornelius. The 1900 federal census lists Mary Pugh's occupation as "cook," but the 1910 census describes her

¹ Little, "Morrisville Historic District." A number of individuals and organizations assisted in the preparation of this report. Foremost among these were the owners of the property and the nomination's sponsors, Billy and Dorothy Hartness. Others who provided assistance included Paul King, Director of Library Services, Peace College, Raleigh, N.C.; Michael Klauke, Cataloguer, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, N.C.; art historian Pamela H. Simpson; and M. Ruth Little and National Register Coordinator Ann V. Swallow of the N.C. State Historic Preservation Office.

² Little, "Morrisville Historic District," 8.1-8.2; Lally, "Pugh House;" Wake County Deed Book 25, p. 465; and Wake County Book of Maps 1959, p. 83.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

as living off of income, presumably from the store and farm.³

Mary and James Pugh's youngest child was Sarah Mabel Pugh (1891-1986), who was one year old when her father died. Mabel entered Peace College in Raleigh in 1907 and took three diplomas there before graduating in 1913. The 1913 college yearbook, the *Lotus*, identified Pugh as the only art major in her class. Peace College was one of a handful of women's institutions in the state that offered professional under-graduate instruction in art during the period. Pugh's mentor at Peace, Ruth Huntington Moore, encouraged Pugh to continue her studies. She took classes at the Art Students' League in New York City and in 1916 she won a four-year scholarship at the Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia, which culminated in study abroad. Pugh taught freehand drawing in the Philadelphia Public Schools for a couple of years before moving her studio to Morrisville in 1923 so that she could nurse her elderly mother. While in Morrisville Pugh also worked as an artist for the Edwards & Broughton Printing Company in Raleigh. This experience helped her secure illustrating jobs when she moved to New York City after her mother's death in 1926.⁴

In New York, Pugh made her first sale to McCall's and soon sold the magazine \$1,000 of her artwork. During her ten-year residence in New York City, Pugh built a successful career in book illustration, providing Century Co., E. P. Dutton, Doubleday, Thos. Crowell and other publishers with illustrations and dust jacket designs for over a dozen books. Most of the books had historical or adventure themes, and Pugh later observed, "At first the publishers must have thought I was a 'tough woman' for my first assignments were to illustrate books on Black Beard and Paul Bunyan and right after that followed 'The Twelve Bad Men' and 'Wild Men of the West.'" In 1933 Pugh illustrated and wrote a children's book entitled *Little Carolina Blue Bonnet*. The book tells the story of a girl growing up in a fictionalized Morrisville at the turn of the century. A block print on page 4 depicts the Pugh House with its arched porch spans and accompanying smokehouse, and the color frontispiece illustration of the book's protagonist is set

³ Lally, "Pugh House;" Wake County Will Book C, p. 115; and U.S. census.

⁴ Hickman, "Women and the transformation of art in early 20th century North Carolina," 13, 15; *Who's Who of American Women*, 1041; and Marsh, "Legend at Peace."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

on the front porch.⁵

Illustration work proved artistically fulfilling for Pugh, but she also painted for exhibition and sale. Some of her earliest awards were garnered at the North Carolina State Fair. Her move to New York gained her a wider audience. In 1930 the Southern States Art League awarded her its block print prize, and the Plastic Club of Philadelphia, one of the nation's leading woman's art organizations, awarded her its Gold Medal. Pugh exhibited in Philadelphia, New York City (the 1940 World's Fair and other venues), Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles, and at numerous North Carolina shows, galleries, and public places. A lithograph and block print of Pugh's were acquired by the Library of Congress for its Collection of Contemporary American Prints prior to 1944. Pugh also composed choral music.⁶

Ruth Huntington Moore, Pugh's instructor at Peace College, died in 1936 and Mabel Pugh was invited to take her place as head of the art department. Pugh taught art and art history at her alma mater, and her popularity with her students prompted the dedication of the college yearbook to her in 1940. In 1938 Pugh received special instruction in portrait painting, and from 1945 through 1960 she produced over fifty portraits on commission, including two of North Carolina congressmen. Another distinguishing quality of Pugh's art was her focus on regional topics, an interest that was already strong in the early 1920s and that coincided with the early phase of the Southern regionalist movement which reached a head during the public art initiatives of the New Deal. At Peace College, Pugh lived on campus during the school year--there is an account of her living in her studio at one point--and she spent summers at her Morrisville home. Pugh purchased a house at 304 Polk Street after 1953, possibly at the time of her retirement in 1960. The Morrisville property was acquired by David and Joanne Quate in the early 1970s. David Quate rewired the house, added drywall and aluminum siding, and built a welding shop (excluded from the nominated area). In 1978 the property was acquired by the present owners,

⁵ Hickman, "Women and the transformation of art in early 20th century North Carolina," 15; Marsh, "Legend at Peace;" "Women We Know;" Pugh, *Little Carolina Blue Bonnet*, frontispiece, 4; and *News and Observer*, November 5, 1933.

⁶ Falk, *Who was Who in American Art*, 2675; Prieto, *At Home in the Studio*, 10; "Directory of North Carolina Artists (1944);" "Raleigh W.P.A. Art Center Directory of North Carolina Artists;" "Wake County Artist Has Notable Exhibit of Work Here," *News and Observer*, April 6, 1941; and Brevard Fortnightly Club, "Exhibition of paintings and prints by Mabel Pugh."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

Billy K. and Dorothy H. Hartness.⁷

In her article "Women and the Transformation of Art in Early 20th Century North Carolina" (1989), art historian Caroline Mesrobian Hickman ranks Mabel Pugh among the four most prominent North Carolina women artists of the first half of the twentieth century, a group that also included Clare Veronica Hope Leighton (b. 1901), Mary Harvey Tannahill (1863-1951), and Mary Bayard Morgan Wooten (1876-1959). Pugh and her North Carolina contemporaries began their careers at a time when American women artists had recently come into their own as professionals. The process of professionalization had begun in the nineteenth century and by the end of the century had led to expanded opportunities for women in academia and the creation of professional institutions formed by women artists. In the 1890s and early twentieth century, women artists "asserted their professional identities more publicly and self-consciously than ever," according to historian Laura R. Prieto, who adds that "suffrage removed the last major formal barrier to women's acceptance in the public sphere."⁸

These developments occurred primarily in Philadelphia, New York, and other Northeastern centers of culture; in the more rural and less affluent South, the professionalization of women artists took longer to achieve. Artists of Mabel Pugh's generation were obliged to seek post-graduate training outside the state, since graduate programs in art were not offered at North Carolina's public and private institutions of higher education until the 1940s. Like Pugh, her contemporaries built their careers in part outside North Carolina. The wealthy Mary Tannahill (her father was founder and president of the New York Cotton Exchange) "preferred the cosmopolitan life and stimuli of New York City and summered in Provincetown, [but also] maintained strong ties with North Carolina." Bayard Wooten taught art at the college level in Arkansas and Georgia before returning to her native New Bern shortly after 1900, where she gradually gained a reputation as the state's foremost woman photographer. As a woman artist working in North Carolina from the 1920s on, as an art educator at Peace College from 1936

⁷ Billy and Dorothy Hartness personal communication; North Carolina Index of Art entry for Mabel Pugh; Hill directories; Marsh, "Legend at Peace;" "Directory of North Carolina Artists (1944);" Stewart, "Painting and Painters, 1920-1960," 89-93; and Wake County Deed Book 2623, p. 338.

⁸ Hickman, "Women and the Transformation of Art in Early 20th Century North Carolina," 13-21; Prieto, *At Home in the Studio*, 9-10.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

on, and through her participation in statewide art organizations beginning in the late 1930s, Mabel Pugh helped further the professionalization process in her home state.⁹

Architectural Context

According to architectural historian M. Ruth Little, who prepared the National Register nomination for the Morrisville Historic District in 1991, the Pugh House is "Morrisville's most visible landmark because of its prominent corner site and lively 'gingerbread' trim." Little includes the Pugh House with three other early Morrisville dwellings that together form the town's "primary architectural significance." Two of these dwellings--the Williamson Page House and the Page-Hamilton House--have porches with sawn ornament that is very similar to that of the Pugh House. Distinctive features include slender posts grouped in threes at the corners and paired in between with sawnwork in the interstices at the tops of the posts and sawn balustrades below. The Pugh House is fancier than the others, with arched spans (the other houses have sawn fringes) and molded caps at the springing points of the spans (the other houses have no caps).¹⁰

Based on the similarity, Little suggests the involvement of the same craftsman in the ornamentation of the three houses. She notes the existence of the Page & Ellington sash and blind factory and building firm in nearby Cary in the early 1870s, about the time the houses were built (or remodeled in the case of the antebellum Williamson Page House). Morrisville was also home to a steam sawmill during the period, making it a possible candidate for the source of the millwork. A similar millwork tradition developed in Auburn, another Wake County depot village on the North Carolina Railroad. Little observes:

In a county where little building took place during the decade following the Civil War, it is logical that the most stylish construction would have occurred in railroad towns. Not only did the railroad bring prosperity to landowners along the tracks, but it also apparently created a desire for fashionable dwellings and facilitated the transport of up-to-date millwork from sash and blind factories to embellish those houses.

⁹ Hickman, "Women and the transformation of art in early 20th century North Carolina," 13-21; Poesch, "Painting and Painters, 1860-1920," 88-89.

¹⁰ Little, "Morrisville Historic District," 7.16, 8.6

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Statement of Significance (continued)

Little characterizes the millwork as an interpretation in wood of the cast-iron porches that were popular throughout the South during the mid-nineteenth century.¹¹

The Pugh, Williamson Page, and Page-Hamilton houses share other similarities that may relate to their presumed ornamentation by a single builder, but that are also typical of the early post-bellum period. All three houses have front doors with Italianate round-arched glass panels in heavily molded frames and with molded panels underneath, although the Pugh House door is somewhat fancier than the others. The Page-Hamilton House has a mantel like those in the Pugh House, Greek Revival in overall form but with a Gothic-influenced peaked frieze profile, and both houses share with the Pugh House center-passage stairs with bulbous turned newels and turned balusters of segmented vasiform form.¹²

The decorative millwork on the house is echoed by that on the smokehouse, although the detail on the latter appears more Queen Anne in inspiration. The Queen Anne Style did not become commonplace in the United States until about 1880; therefore, it would follow that the smokehouse is not contemporary with the main house. The cut-nailed construction of the smokehouse would imply a date before 1900 and probably before 1890, and this combined with the building's stylistic attributes suggests a date of construction in the 1880s.

¹¹ Ibid., 7.2-7.1, 8.2, 8.6-8.7; Lally, *Historic Architecture of Wake County*, 416, 419.

¹² Little, "Williamson Page House;" Little, "Page-Hamilton House."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 12

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 13

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Wake Co., N.C.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 14

Pugh House
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 15

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area constitutes a portion of Wake County parcel 0755240503 and is depicted on the 1:200-scale map that appears as Exhibit A.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated area are defined so as to include the two surviving historic resources associated with the Pugh House--the house and smokehouse--and so as to exclude two modern noncontributing resources and a section of the tax parcel that does not have historic resources.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Page 16

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. 1. Subject: Pugh House (same for all photos)
2. Location: Wake County, N.C. (same for all photos)
3. Photographer: J. Daniel Pezzoni (same for all photos)
4. Photo date: May 2002 (same for all photos)
5. Original negative archived at the NC Office of Archives and History, Raleigh
(same for all photos)
6. Description of view: West and south elevations of house. View looking north.
7. Photograph number appears at beginning of entry (same for all photos)
2. 6. West (front) elevation of house. View looking southeast.
3. 6. North elevations of house and ell. View looking southwest.
4. 6. South elevation of ell, east elevation of house, and smokehouse. View looking north.
5. 6. West elevation of smokehouse. View looking east.
6. 6. First-floor center passage with stair and front entry.
7. 6. Mantel in second-floor north room.

Pugh House
Wake Co., N.C.
UTM ref. (zone 17)
E696490 N3966520
Cary Quad



