

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**  
RECEIVED **NOV 01 1979**  
DATE ENTERED

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

**1 NAME** Aspen Hall

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON Edward Beeson House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
End of Boyd Avenue (405 BOYD AVE)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN  
Martinsburg

VICINITY OF

STATE  
West Virginia

CODE  
54

COUNTY  
Berkeley

CODE  
003

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Louise Shimp and Evelyn S. Oates

STREET & NUMBER  
316 West King Street

CITY, TOWN  
Martinsburg,

VICINITY OF

STATE  
W. Va. 25401

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, Berkeley County  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE N-58, Berkeley County Historical Society & Berkeley County Historical Landmarks  
Commission Survey

DATE  
1973-78

FEDERAL STATE  COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Berkeley County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN  
Martinsburg, WV 25401

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

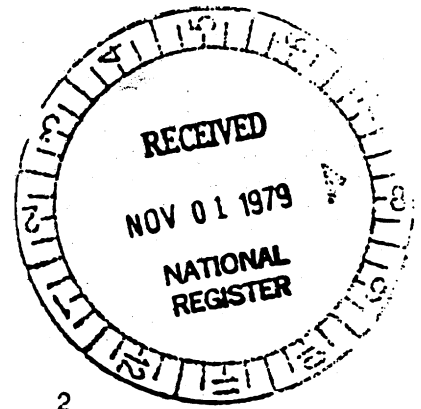
UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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

Aspen Hall was built as the residence of one of Berkeley County's early settlers. Built in three sections, the original house was approximately 40' square. This section remains the finest part of the house and is certainly one of the finest in Berkeley County, particularly as it is one of the county's few Georgian houses. It was originally built, ca. 1776, was a four bay, two and a half story building constructed of 23" walls of coursed rubble limestone. The roof is gabled and very steep, but originally, there were no dormers. Now there are three on the south side which predate the two on the north side which were installed by Charles Shimp. The windows are very tall and have flat arches of stone. All of those in the rear (originally the front) are 4/4 double sash, as are those in the ground floor front (originally the back). On the second story, they are 9/9 double sash which they probably were originally, or 12/12. None of the sashes are the original. A shaped dentil cornice extends across the front and back with a "Wall of Troy" fret band. Although there are gable returns, the decorative elements on these have been replaced to match the barge board on the gable that was changed ca. 1900 or a little before. It has a definite Victorian flavor with finely shaped, heavy scroll brackets. The large stone chimney is inside the east gable. On the ground floor of this gable wall, a window was lengthened to accommodate a French door access to a large porch, built ca. 1900, now removed. The roof line is still evident. When the rear entrance became the main entrance, ca. 1900, a new entrance porch was added. The one story porch extends across all four bays. It has a shed roof supported by large, panelled square columns. The new "Main Entrance" door received a frontispiece treatment of a small triangular pediment. The entrance bay of the four bay porch received the same. It's an attractive arrangement. Above the entrance door is a round-headed window that lights the landing of the main staircase. This unfortunately was shortened because of the new four bay porch roof. Inside, a beaded wooden panel was used to replace the glass sash. That portion of the facade that is under the porch was then stuccoed. Two more changes were made to this section: the end window on the ground floor was lengthened to accommodate a "French" type of casement door for access to the new porch from the main parlor and a small window of diamond panes was installed beside the entrance door to give light to the basement access under the main stairs, and to lighten the way to the then dining room. The original front facade is now the rear. Here also a new porch was built. This is a one story, one bay porch with a concrete base. The roof is slightly peaked and is arched on the soffit. This little Victorian porch is supported by large brackets and plain square posts. The original porch was slightly wider and taller. The window above it on the second story is longer than the other three and may have been a door at an earlier time which would mean that originally the main entrance porch had a deck. The layout of the original house is side hall, two rooms deep. Hardwood floors have been placed over the old pine floors throughout the entire building. The entrance hall was 13' x 36'. All of the rooms are large and well designed but the hall is the outstanding room. The hall doors, both front and rear, are of double thickness construction with board and batten to the interior and six-panel to the exterior, bolted together. These 40" doors are hung with strap hinges on decorative pintles. The two middle panels of the doors have been replaced, the original front door with a glass; this door also has a transom. In the present front door, this section was replaced with a wood panel. The reveals of all fenestration, including doors, are panelled and splayed. This entrance door now leads to a small bedroom, 13' x 12', that has been partitioned off the hall making it 13' x 24'. The original chair rail is a rolled cap mold on a beaded rail. Below this is wainscot of flat panels outlined with a bead. The decorative stiles project slightly and are tapered. Similar wainscot was put on the partition, both sides. Now the rear entrance door is the main entrance to the stair hall, so the rear of the stair is toward this door.



## Aspen Hall

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Behind the staircase is a two-panel door that opens to a steep stairs to the basement. Examination of these stairs reveals that this was the location of the original basement stairs but the present stair is much steeper and straight, whereas the former stair had a lesser slope and was in two flights. The original stair was removed when the brick wing was built as it became redundant since a basement access was excavated under the brick wing. The present stair and two door closet was installed by Charles Shimp. The basement under the original house is divided into four rooms. The two on the east side contain huge fireplaces and of course the support bases for the other four fireplaces on this wall. The SE firebox with straight jambs remains unchanged except for a later mantel that was added. The NE firebox was bricked to contain the furnace flue but the wide stone arch is still visible. Only two original doors are in the basement. These are board and batten on long strap hinges. The 15" battens are beveled and impressive for size. The huge support logs show the mark of the adze. These logs are large and closely placed. The windows have square spokes set at an angle to be a diamond in section. This is a very early method, one associated with the earliest colonial building. The staircase is paneled, unlike the wainscot, with raised panelling, which would be period for this house. The 48" open string stairs have a seven inch riser and twelve inch tread, an easy ascent. The stair reaches the third floor in four flights. For the first two flights, three balusters, rectangular in section, are on each step. Two tapered round balusters are on each step of the two flights to the third floor. This appears to be the original arrangement. All newels are round, plain, and tapered. The symmetrically molded handrail is carried over the newels in steep easements. The step-end decorative is a modified wave scroll and is not carried across the landings. Landings are spacious, nearly five feet deep. The first landing receives light from a round headed window. The placement of such a window on this landing is a Georgian feature of long standing. The wainscoting and chair-rail are carried up the stairs to the third floor. This stairway is over a foot wider than most and the open well is 4'6" x 7'6". The impression is one of beauty and size. On the second floor, four doors open off the hall to the bedrooms. But on the third floor, the plan is a little different. Only one room is off the landing as the hall turns and continues through the width of the house to two rooms, each side. Only the chair-rail extends down this hall as the wainscoting stops at the landing. Three of these five rooms have old six-panel doors, two of these have HL hinges. The modern tile ceiling follows the dollar beams. At the east end of the hall, the two large chimneys met to break the roof as one chimney. The two main rooms off the entrance hall are arranged as a double parlor with a pair of two tall forty inch wide six-panel doors connecting the two rooms. These rooms are 17 1/2' x 18 1/2' and 18 1/2' x 22 1/2'. Ceilings exceed 11 1/2'. All the old pine flooring was covered, ca 1900. The wide double door has a different facing from the others, being symmetrically molded of peaked and squared fillets. It matches other facings in the stone addition that was constructed ca. 1815 at which time this wide double door was probably installed. The two identical mantels in these two rooms are also from the Federal period and are of an unusual design. The narrow mantel shelf bows outward from squared-off corner sections with a molded edge. Bed moldings are under the shelf with a notched fret band. The frieze is plain as are the end blocks. Small tapered round columnettes with neck moldings support the mantel shelf. The bottom third of these columnettes is square in section with fillet moldings on each side. A notched fret band also decorates the small pedestal bases. The firebox



## Aspen Hall

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and surround is lined with ceramic tile. The furnace is flued through the NE chimney so this firebox is closed and a radiator is recessed within. The windows are tall and the panelled reveals are splayed. Presently, these two rooms, in conjunction with the room formed by partitioning off the hall, comprise a three room apartment. In the NE room are the kitchen and bath. The latter was formed by partitions but the kitchen area is separated by a peninsula counter. The layout on the second floor is the same except that the room that is at the end of the hall was originally there. Each of the three rooms opens off the hall. The SE room has been restored to its original dimensions. Previously, it had been partitioned off as an apartment, an arrangement still found in the NE room. The NE room is now composed of a foyer, a bath, and two additional rooms. Originally, this was simply one large room. Since one of the partitions meets the chimney where the firebox was, the fireplace has been completely closed. On one side, the bath tub rests against what was once a fireplace jamb. The mantel remains in the SE bedroom. It is of the Federal period and is of a similar design as that found in the SW bedroom of the stone addition. These are composed of a molded straight shelf with a plain frieze with plain end blocks. The pilasters are symmetrically molded of peaked and squared fillet moldings. The stone addition is built on the west side of the house extending the facade two bays and a distance of 20' but is of the same depth, 40', as the main section. This area was simply two rooms on both the ground and second stories. It is gabled but of a reduced height. The second floor access is through a door cut into the second story wall of the main house. Steps then lead downward to the addition because the floor level is much lower. There are only two fireplaces here, the one of the second story has already been described. The SW ground floor room was used as a dining room for many years. The mantel on the large fireplace is of the "lacy" Federal era. The serpentine mantel shelf is a replacement. It is supported by bed moldings and a "Wall of Troy" fret band. The frieze has a tapering central tablet and end blocks on fluted pilasters. The corner china cabinet with reeded stiles and round-headed door is a later addition of the Georgian Revival period ca. 1900. At this time also, the round-headed door (only one of this type in the building) was installed connecting this room to the back of the main hall. This door was needed to give the family of the owner an access to the main dining room, which was in the SW room of the stone addition. This necessitated changing the basement steps as described earlier. The SW room of the addition became the kitchen. The two story brick addition, 20' x 26', was constructed ca. 1900 as maid's quarters. Unfortunately, it was added as an ell to the front in such a manner that the stone wall of the stone wing was removed in the area equal to the span of the brick ell. Since the house is located near a drop-off bank, another effect of the brick ell was the closing off of reasonable access to the original front of the stone house so it became necessary to reverse the plan: the back became the front. Two stone outbuildings remain. These are located close to the house on the west side. The carriage house is of stone and contained three bays. It was remodeled by the Shimps. The roof received two dormers to light the two rooms on the second floor. The ground floor was partitioned into four rooms. The bays were closed using cement block. A porch with block foundation was added on the north side (rear), and a front entrance porch shelters the three bay front. This building is in good condition. The small smokehouse was also remodeled as a rental unit. A four-section ladder dormer was installed in each side of the roof. The second floor contained a room with bath. A one room addition was built to the north side of this little building so that the ground floor has two rooms. This addition has since been demolished and the building fallen into disrepair.

## Aspen Hall

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The architecture of Aspen Hall is outstanding. The large and impressive staircase has no peer in this area and few in any area. The house is in good repair and has many fine features of the Georgian and Federal periods, The period in which it was large built. It is used at present as a rental property. The size of the building makes it very adaptable to this. The owners are careful to safeguard the historic architectural features. This building more than qualifies for placement on the National Register. It is one of the finest buildings ever.

# SIGNIFICANCE

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		
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 1771-76

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Aspen Hall is very significant for its Georgian architecture. It is the largest, most elegant, and one of the oldest, if not the oldest, house in Martinsburg, built high on a hill above the Tuscarora Creek. Its 300 acres borders the land that Adam Stephen laid out for the town of Martinsburg. Its builder, Edward Beeson II was a wealthy, prominent and influential Quaker. It was Edward Beeson who owned the "Red House" where the first Berkeley Court met in 1772, where he was residing, while he was building his fine mansion. While other Quakers were dismissed from the Quaker church for furnishing supplies during the Revolutionary War Edward Beeson was paid for furnishing supplies and still remained prominent, active member. Edward Beeson II's grandfather, Richard Beeson, Sr., was among the early prominent Quaker settlers of the State of West Virginia, settling here along the Tuscarora Creek in 1735 from Lancaster Township, Chester Co., Pa. He purchased a large tract of land of 1,650 acres (actually closer to 3,000 acres when surveyed) taking about 1/2 of Tuscarora Creek. Edward Beeson II acted as one of the early trustees of Martinsburg. He operated a grist mill on his Aspen Hall plantation and acquiring 631 acres in the plantation and other lands in Berkeley County. In 1813 he paid tax on 954 acres in Berkeley County. He died May 1817. He bequeathed over \$71,000 to his heirs.

Aspen Hall was sold by his executors in 1821 to Mathew Ranson of Jefferson County. It then passed to other prominent, influential Berkeley Countian John W. Stewart who was prosperous and owned much property in both Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. At his death Aspen Hall went to son William T. Stewart who resided there. It was sold out of the Stewart family in 1926. The Charles Shimp family have owned Aspen Hall since 1929. It is now rented as apartments. The 1798 house tax for Berkeley County, Va., which included all of present Berkeley and Jefferson Cos. and 3/4 of present Morgan Co., lists Aspen Hall as the second most valuable house in Berkeley County, valued at \$2,362.50.

Aspen Hall is one of the finest buildings of its period that can be found anywhere in the United States. Built by a very wealthy family, its classic architecture is magnificent. The entrance hall is 40 feet long.

Architectural Significance of "Aspen Hall". The architecture of Aspen Hall is comparable to that of the great period houses and in this early period is the only representative of such fully developed design in Berkeley County such as to have for example. The tall, round-headed landing window, a feature found in only the finest of early homes (i.e. "Rosewell"). The house is large. The entrance hall measures 40'. The ceilings are high and so the grand staircase which is excellent in workmanship is also impressive in its size. The panelling is very fine as are the mantels throughout the house. The original stone house had finished rooms in the basement and attic and altogether had at least 12 finished rooms on 4 floors. The stone wing added 4 more good sized rooms. It is a magnificent house and exemplifies truly good American classical architecture.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Berkeley Journal, Issue 4, 1975, Page 10-20

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 A.

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	8	2	4	5	9	9	0	4	3	7	2	3	5	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

100 ft. on each side of the house.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Don C. Wood, Genealogist, Historian, Historic Archeologist

ORGANIZATION President, Berkeley County Historical Society & Chairman, Berkeley County Historical Landmarks Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER Route 3, Box 79

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN Martinsburg, WV 25401

STATE

## 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

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



ASPEN HALL

HEDGESVILLE

MARTINSBURG

4375  
4374  
4373  
4372  
27°30"  
4371

12 / JUN 1:62 5000  
GENWA-CASTLE TOWN 7.9 MI  
ARKEN 1.1 MI

