

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Nixon, Senator P. E., House

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 40 Winchester Street

City or town: Paw Paw State: WV County: Morgan

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  A X B   C   D

 Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	<u>10/1/24</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	
West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Arts, Culture and History	
In my opinion, the property <u>  </u> meets <u>  </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   N/A  

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Queen Anne \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: concrete; Walls: brick; Roof: asphalt shingle

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Located in Paw Paw, Morgan County, WV at the corner of Winchester and Lee Streets the WV State Senator P. E. Nixon house is a Queen Anne style residence. The house is a 2-story, red brick home of about 3,000 SF constructed on a concrete foundation. The two street facing elevations have a wraparound covered porch. Each street facing façade has a 2-story three-sided bay capped with a gable finished in white fish scale wooden shakes. Entries are located on both Winchester and Lee Streets. While currently a residence the building has also been a funeral home, bed and breakfast, and a restaurant. The building is located approximately 50 yards south of the intersection of Winchester Street and Henry Miller Highway (West Virginia Route 9). While the building has replacement windows, a small addition (that expanded on an original covered kitchen porch), and exterior stairs on a side elevation it maintains the majority of its distinctive and defining characteristics and as such retains its historic integrity.

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## Narrative Description

Paw Paw, in Morgan County, is located along the Potomac River in an area known as the Paw Paw Bends. The Paw Paw Valley is surrounded by the ridges of Sideling Hill, Green Ridge, Purslane Mountain, and Town Hill.

The building is situated on a prominent 0.18-acre flat trapezoidal shaped lot in the oldest part of Paw Paw. On the lot adjacent to the west of the property on Lee Street is the Paw Paw United Methodist Church and parsonage. The church was constructed in 1875 to replace the original church located at Camp Chase (today Camp Hill cemetery). That church had been dismantled by Union Troops early in the Civil War to construct rudimentary shelters. The parsonage is a typical "I-House" likely constructed in the late 1890's.

When P. E. Nixon, and business partner J. A. Hinkle purchased the property at the corner of Winchester and Lee Street in 1908 they also purchased a large general store across Lee street that dated back to 1882. At the time of their purchase the property was owned by the heirs of William M. McKaig, a major landowner and prominent businessman from Cumberland, MD. Today that lot is the location of a Liberty gas station doing business as the Paw Paw Country Store. The property directly to the south of the P. E. Nixon house, while today a vacant lot, was originally the site of the Paw Paw Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Across Winchester St is Paw Paw's "Monument Park". An article in the 9 December 1909 issue of the *Morgan Messenger* noted P. E. Nixon's new brick house on the corner opposite his store was nearing completion with plasterers working in the interior and a steam heating system being installed. The article went on to note that it will be a "fine dwelling".<sup>1</sup> In April 1910 Nixon was having a well dug for his new home, and in May was putting in a concrete sidewalk.<sup>2</sup>

The Senator P. E. Nixon House is located several blocks from the Potomac River and the immediate area is a mix of older wood-framed single-family homes, more recent commercial type buildings, and vacant lots with some recent residential infill. Following the death of Nixon's widow, Eva in 1954 the property was sold by her estate and eventually became known for being the Park/Johnson Funeral Home (1961-1983). While currently again a residence it also has been a bed and breakfast, and restaurant.

### *Exterior*

The former Senator P. E. Nixon House is a two-story Queen Ann style residence of red brick in a running bond on a slightly raised concrete foundation with a basement. The two street facing elevations have a deep wraparound covered porch supported by square brick columns resting on a low brick wall with a rustic edge stone cap. The pitched roof is covered in asphalt shingles. The Winchester Street facade (photo 1) faces east with the entry door on the south side of a large three-sided 2-story bay. The Lee Street façade (photo 3) faces north. This elevation has a

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<sup>1</sup> *The Morgan Messenger*. December 9, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> *The Morgan Messenger*. April 21, 1910; May 26, 1910.

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similar large three-sided 2-story bay centered on the façade with an entry door in one of the sides of the bay. The west side of the central bay is where the small shed roofed addition sided in fish scale wooden shakes is located. The west elevation (photo 4) is more utilitarian with a single window centered on the first floor and two windows equally spaced on the second floor. The south elevation (photo 5), like the west elevation, is also more utilitarian than the two street facing elevations. This elevation has the exterior stairs on the back third of the elevation. Overall ornamentation is minimal with fish scale shakes and a lunette recess in each gable end (photo 6). It is likely that the lunette recesses at one time contained “half-moon” attic windows.

### ***Interior***

While the first floor was altered over the years no main walls were completely removed, or new ones added, as the building went through a variety of uses. The building still retains a commercial kitchen. The opening between the two main spaces (photo 7) - double parlor, or living room and dining room (photo 8) - on the first floor was expanded to increase seating area when the building served as a funeral home. The walls on the first floor were covered in 4x8 sheet paneling in a brown wooden tone. An acoustical tile drop ceiling was installed throughout the first floor, except for the entry hall with the main stairway. Most of the trimwork appears to remain original, although much of it has been painted. Flooring on the first floor, other than the kitchen (which is 12/12 ceramic tiles), is a more modern wood laminate. The main stair balustrade and associated trimwork is original and unpainted (photos 9 and 10). The second floor (photo 11), with four bedrooms and four bathrooms retains its overall original footprint with bathrooms being added inside the bedroom spaces when the house was used as a bed and breakfast. The upstairs has wall-to-wall carpeting and sheetrock ceilings. The second floor is also accessible by a back stairwell that connects to the kitchen. The basement (photo 12), accessed from a stairway in the kitchen, is approximately under  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the footprint of the house and is divided into two rooms. The boiler and all equipment related to the original steam heat system was removed. Today the house is heated with electric baseboard.

### ***Integrity***

The former Senator P. E. Nixon House retains its historic integrity as it relates to Criterion B in the areas of Commerce and Politics/Government. It was constructed in 1909 by local builder Fowler Hott on property purchased by P.E. Nixon and business partner J. A. Hinkle, who was the brother of Nixon’s wife, Eva. The only alterations to the exterior are: (1) replacement of the original fenestration; however, the original openings remain intact and custom sized one-over-one vinyl windows approximate the look and style of the original double hung windows<sup>3</sup>; (2) a small one-story shed-roofed addition sided in white fish-scale shakes similar to the fish-scale shakes in the gable ends; and (3) an exterior stair on the south elevation. The building retains its original redbrick exterior and gable end fish-scale shakes and lunettes. The building’s exterior

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<sup>3</sup> A similar brick home in Paw Paw, built in 1914 for former Mountaindale Orchard owner and prominent businessman Samuel Moser, and likely also built by Fowler Hott, retains its original one-over-one double hung windows with the same arched top with a similar wooden panel above each opening.

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has largely kept its historic integrity in terms of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling and readily conveys a sense of history.

The building is in its original location on 0.18 acres of land in the oldest and most prominent section of the Town of Paw Paw in the area that locals refer to as “downtown”. Although many of the original buildings and structures in town from the period of significance have been demolished or heavily altered, enough of the historic fabric remains to serve as indicators of this town’s history.

The house is the only surviving resource strongly associated with P. E. Nixon’s career (the general store having been demolished in the 1980’s).

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## 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Politics/Government

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1909-1942

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

WV State Senator P. E. Nixon

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Fowler Hott and sons<sup>4</sup> (Builder)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> Fowler Hott and his sons Atlee and Oscar were prolific builders in Paw Paw beginning in the late 1800s, and the Hotts continued building homes into the 1950s. The Hotts constructed so many homes in the area that the term "Hott Houses" was coined to describe their residential buildings.

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Senator P. E. Nixon House is locally significant under *Criterion B: Commerce, and Politics/Government*; for its association with prominent businessman and WV State Senator P. E. Nixon (b. 1873 - d. 1942). In both business and public service, P. E. Nixon had a major impact on shaping Paw Paw, during a substantial period of its growth, and on the western portion of the Eastern Panhandle as a whole. P. E. Nixon represents a significant Democratic leader in the Eastern Panhandle who was prominent despite Morgan County being overwhelmingly Republican. The period of significance is from 1909, when the house was constructed, until 1942 when P. E. Nixon unexpectedly passed away while residing in the house. Only three substantial brick homes were built in Paw Paw - all in a very similar “grand” style - and all for prominent and successful businessmen: P. E. Nixon, 1909; Samuel Moser, c. 1914; and D. G. Bevans, c. 1914. The Nixon House was the first of the three and shows an evolution from the more simple and plain wood frame/wood sided I-houses that dominated the town. These more prominent brick homes likely reflected a growing prosperity in Paw Paw, at least for business owners in the early years of the 20th century. Of the three brick homes, two are still standing. The third, the Bevans home, after sitting empty for many years and suffering a fire, was demolished and the property purchased for the construction of a new EMS station around 2020. Overall, the Senator P. E. Nixon House has retained a high level of historic integrity.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **General History**

With the beginning of commercial navigation of the Potomac River in 1749 by fur traders of the Ohio Company, who traveled as far west as Cumberland, MD, land in the area of present-day Paw Paw was settled by farmers and rivermen.<sup>5</sup> As additional settlers began arriving around 1800 in the immediate area of present-day Paw Paw, a town began to emerge. The growth accelerated in 1836 as the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company began work on the Paw Paw Tunnel directly across the Potomac River in Maryland.<sup>6</sup> Then two years later, in 1838, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad - constructing a rail line from Harpers Ferry to Cumberland, MD - reached the settlement that is now Paw Paw, WV. Shortly thereafter two general merchandise stores and a train depot (1845) were constructed.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Morgan County Historical & Genealogical Society, Berkeley Springs, WV, *Morgan County, WV and its People*, (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co, 1981), p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Lewis Largent, “Historical Sketch of Paw Paw,” in *Once Upon a Time in Paw Paw*, ed. Janet Galliher and Vicki Sirbaugh (1997) n.p.

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In 1846 the first Post Office was established with Isaac Baker as the postmaster and the settlement was officially referred to as “Isaac Baker’s Store” or “Isaac Baker’s Depot”.<sup>8</sup> Later the settlement was identified as “Paw Paw Tunnel”, eventually “Tunnel” was dropped and the area became simply known as “Paw Paw”.<sup>9</sup> [The name “Paw Paw Tunnel” came from the town’s close proximity to a B&O railroad tunnel located a short distance east of town, and not the C&O Canal Paw Paw Tunnel located across the river in Maryland.]<sup>10</sup>

In 1868, JB Hoyt and Company of New York constructed a tannery (leather factory) in the settlement of Paw Paw because of the ready access to oak bark for the tanning process, good transportation, and ample water from the Potomac.<sup>11</sup> Due to the plentiful work at the tannery, Paw Paw’s population at the time of incorporation in 1891 had grown to 772 and peaked in 1940 at 990.<sup>12</sup> The establishment of the tannery served as the primary employer for those in and around Paw Paw until its sudden closing in December 1951.<sup>13</sup>

During the 83 years the tannery was in operation, Paw Paw essentially operated as if it were a company town; however, additional job opportunities became available in 1894 following the arrival of three of the eight Miller brothers from nearby Berkeley County, WV. The brothers established and ran individual orchards (primarily apple) in and around Paw Paw until 1912 when they merged the management of their individual orchard businesses into the Consolidated Orchard Company. The numerous orchards provided both full time employment and seasonal work in the fall during picking and packing.<sup>14</sup>

#### A brief summary of the lineage of the P. E. Nixon and Company General Store

The history of the P. E. Nixon and Company’s General Store dates back to the first general store opened by Isaac Baker in 1846 along the B&O rail line, near where the Potomac River could be forded or crossed by ferry. Isaac Baker served as the settlement’s first postmaster and operated his general store in conjunction with a B&O train depot. In 1855 Baker sold the property to William Sprigg, who four years later entered into an Assumption Agreement with William and Joseph Heironimus. Jacob Ziler took over the business after running the Heironimus family out of town for owning slaves. It is likely this occurred around 1862 when Ziler replaced William Heironimus as the postmaster of Paw Paw. Jacob Ziler died in 1884 several years after serving a prison sentence for being found guilty of manslaughter in the killing of Newton Largent in July of 1880. It is unclear when Ziler vacated the business, but sometime before July 1881 Perry Williamson was operating the store as it was reported his business was robbed by men who blew

<sup>8</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Brown and Barbara Norton, interview by David Abruzzi, Paw Paw, WV, August 13, 2024.

<sup>11</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. CENSUS, 1890, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/volume-3/volume-3-p8.pdf>. Accessed April 25, 2024; US Census 1940, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1940/population-volume-1/33973538v1ch09.pdf>. Accessed 21 August 2024.

<sup>13</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Morgan County Historical, *Morgan County*, p. 253.

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open his safe. Williamson was leasing the building from Dr R. S. McKaig (who had become the property owner after Jacob Ziler), when a fire broke out on January 24, 1882 and destroyed the building. It is after this date that a new building would have been erected on the corner of Lee and Winchester Streets. In 1891 the firm of Kuykendall & Guthrie bought out Williamson and took over operation of the store, but did not purchase the building or property. The Nixon and Hinkle Company purchased the stocks of Kuykendall & Guthrie in 1904, and in 1908 purchased the building and property from the heirs of William M. McKaig (son of Dr. R S McKaig). Nixon and Hinkle jointly operated the business until 1920 when Nixon formed the P. E. Nixon and Company and bought out Hinkle's share of the business. The store operated under the ownership of the P. E. Nixon Company until 1947, five years after Nixon's death, when his widow Eva Nixon sold the store to J. H. Norton. The Norton family owned and operated the general store as J. H. Norton and Sons until 1980 when the family sold the property to Gretchen L Wurzburg. Shortly after completion of the sale the building was demolished and a modern convenience store constructed. This store was, in turn, replaced with a Liberty Gas Station, currently operating under the name of the Paw Paw Country Store following the election day flood of 1985.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Sources for this information came from material footnoted in the section of "Commerce" under Criterion B.

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### **Criterion B**

P. E. Nixon's story is one of a prominent businessman and politician who had a very successful career and lasting impact on Paw Paw despite being a Democrat in a town and county that was overwhelmingly Republican. He represents a businessman and Democratic leader who came to prominence despite being a member of the "wrong" political party.

### **Timeline**

1885 Nixon family is residing in the old Williamson place near Forks of the Capon  
1887 Nixon family moves to Paw Paw and shortly thereafter P. E. Nixon goes to work  
1896 Runs for Clerk of the Morgan County Court (Commission) as a Democrat - defeated  
1901 Marries Eva Hinkle  
1904 P. E. Nixon and his brother-in-law J. A. Hinkle form the Nixon & Hinkle Co.  
1905 Nixon is operating a store in Woodrow, WV, several miles south of Paw Paw  
1908 Nixon & Hinkle buy the store on Lee and Winchester, as well as a parcel across Lee St  
1909 Fowler Hott constructs the house for P.E. Nixon on the corner of Lee and Winchester  
1910 Runs to represent Morgan County in the House of Delegates as a Democrat - defeated  
1911-1915 Serves on the Paw Paw Town Council  
1912 P. E. Nixon is one of five investors in the creation of the Upland Orchard Company  
1915 Appointed by President Wilson as the Postmaster at Paw Paw  
1917 Appointed to serve on the Morgan County Draft Board (WWI)  
1920 P. E. Nixon buys out Hinkle's interests in Paw Paw and creates the P. E. Nixon & Co.  
1923-1926 Elected as State Senator to represent District 15 in the WV Senate as a Democrat  
1925 Announces approval and funding for an interstate bridge at Paw Paw  
1927 P. E. Nixon has business interests in Green Spring, WV as part of Flora & Co.  
1927 P. E. Nixon stays engaged as a private citizen in bringing the interstate bridge to fruition  
1927 Appointed to board of newly formed Eastern Panhandle Association  
1930 Contracts with Standard Oil to provide gasoline at his store in Paw Paw  
1930 P. E. Nixon as a private citizen works to construct a municipal waterworks in Paw Paw  
1935 Contracts with Atlantic Refining Co. to provide gasoline at his store south of Paw Paw  
1940 Elected by shareholders of Citizen's National Bank to serve as the bank's vice president  
1942 Appointed to serve on the Morgan County Draft Board (WWII)

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## Commerce

P. E. (Philip Early) Nixon, “a namesake of the hero of Monocacy” [Jubal Early], was born on March 25, 1873 in Hampshire County, WV to Eli B and Alley Bohr Nixon. The family moved from the Williamson place at Forks of Capon to Paw Paw in 1887, and shortly thereafter P. E. Nixon went to work in John Williamson’s General Store.<sup>16</sup> In 1889 the store was operating as [Perry and John] Williamson Brothers Merchants.<sup>17</sup> The firm [Thomas] Kuykendall & [William N.] Guthrie bought it out in 1891 and took over operations.<sup>18</sup> In 1901 Nixon married Eva Hinkle.<sup>19</sup> His best man was J C McKown, who would go on to serve on the Paw Paw Town Council and as a justice of the peace before going on to become the Sheriff of Berkeley County.<sup>20</sup> J C McKown also was Nixon’s business partner in several endeavors.

In 1904 Nixon and his brother-in-law, J. A. Hinkle, formed the Nixon and Hinkle Company and acquired the assets of the firm Kuykendall & Guthrie.<sup>21</sup> Nixon and Hinkle expanded their business in 1908 when they purchased two prominent parcels in Paw Paw across from each other at the intersection of Winchester and Lee Streets.<sup>22</sup> The parcel on the north side of Lee St included a building [store] that was likely constructed in 1882 after a fire destroyed the Williamson dwelling and store on property owned by R S McKaig. The building lost in the fire dated back to its use as Paw Paw’s original train depot.<sup>23</sup> The store remained an ongoing endeavor even after Eva Nixon sold the property to J. H. Norton and Sons in 1947.<sup>24</sup> The Norton family ran the store until selling it in 1980.<sup>25</sup> Shortly thereafter the building [store] dating back to 1882 as the Williamson Store was demolished;<sup>26</sup> however, research shows the business itself

<sup>16</sup> P.E. Nixon Obituary. *The Hampshire Review*, July 29, 1942. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19420729\\_english\\_7&df=1&dt=10](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19420729_english_7&df=1&dt=10). Accessed July 14, 2024; *South Branch Intelligencer*, November 13, 1885.

[https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=nixon&i=f&d=01011880-12311899&e=williamson&m=between&ord=e1,k1&fn=south\\_branch\\_intelligencer\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_18851113\\_english\\_2&df=11&dt=20](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=nixon&i=f&d=01011880-12311899&e=williamson&m=between&ord=e1,k1&fn=south_branch_intelligencer_usa_west_virginia_romney_18851113_english_2&df=11&dt=20). Accessed August 2, 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 16, Page 36.

<sup>18</sup> *The South Branch Intelligencer*, September 14, 1891. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011880-12311915&e=john%20williamson&m=between&ord=e1&fn=south\\_branch\\_intelligencer\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_18910904\\_english\\_3&df=31&dt=40](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011880-12311915&e=john%20williamson&m=between&ord=e1&fn=south_branch_intelligencer_usa_west_virginia_romney_18910904_english_3&df=31&dt=40). Accessed August 2, 2024.

<sup>19</sup> P.E. Nixon Obituary.

<sup>20</sup> As Sheriff of Berkeley County J C. McKown issued a warning declaring “petting parties” had been banned in the leafy lanes of the county. The sheriff’s deputies had interrupted several alleged parties Sunday and the sheriff asked citizens to report license numbers of cars parked at night in secluded spots (28 April 1926).

<sup>21</sup> P. E. Nixon Obituary; Morgan County Deed Book 46, Page 409.

<sup>22</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 28, Page 566.

<sup>23</sup> *The South Branch Intelligencer*, January 27, 1882. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12311900&e=fire,mckaig&m=between&ord=e1,e2&fn=south\\_branch\\_intelligencer\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_18820127\\_english\\_3&df=31&dt=36](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12311900&e=fire,mckaig&m=between&ord=e1,e2&fn=south_branch_intelligencer_usa_west_virginia_romney_18820127_english_3&df=31&dt=36). Accessed August 7, 2024.

<sup>24</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 53, Page 100.

<sup>25</sup> Brown and Barbara Norton, interview.

<sup>26</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 113, Page 773.

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dated back even farther - beginning as Isaac Baker's Store in 1846. Today the property at the corner of Lee and Winchester is the location of a Liberty Gas Station doing business as the Paw Paw Country Store. The other parcel, on the south side of Lee Street, became the home of P.E. Nixon and his wife Eva.

Even early on in his career P. E. Nixon was recognized for his success. The obituary for P. E. Nixon's mother, in the December 29, 1910 edition of *The Morgan Messenger* noted "Mr. P. E. Nixon [is] a promising young merchant in this town [Paw Paw]".<sup>27</sup>

Nixon and Hinkle also had business interests as far away as Stephens City, VA (45 miles) where their firm Nixon & Hinkle purchased the store of Steele & Dinges. Nixon and Hinkle remained partners in their Paw Paw business until 1920 when P.E. Nixon bought out Hinkle's share of the business and property, and established P. E. Nixon and Company.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the large general store in Paw Paw, an article in *The Hampshire Review* mentions Nixon also had a store in Woodrow, WV as early as 1905.<sup>29</sup> This store was located south of Paw Paw in Hampshire County on the Winchester – Paw Paw Road (today Route 29) in the vicinity of Route 29's junction with Route 9 leading to Berkeley Springs. This store was likely the location where in 1935 P. E. Nixon entered into a lease arrangement with the Atlantic Refining Company granting them a lease to operate a gas station at his store south of Paw Paw.<sup>30</sup> This was the second lease and location Nixon had entered into with an oil company to sell gasoline.

P. E. Nixon's business endeavors in the area were not just limited to his firm P. E. Nixon and Company. In May 1912 P.E. Nixon was one of five incorporators, along with J. C. McKown, G. W. McKown, C. G. Grove, and L. P. Miller, who were granted a charter by the WV Secretary of State to plant orchards in Morgan County under the business name of Upland Orchard Company of Paw Paw.<sup>31</sup> This business transaction made Nixon an investor and stakeholder in Paw Paw's second largest industry (the tannery being the first). County records indicate Upland Orchard was eventually purchased outright by L. P. Miller (one of the three Miller brothers from Berkeley County) in 1920.<sup>32</sup>

Nixon also had business interests in WV beyond the general vicinity of Paw Paw. Per a legal filing in the April 9, 1930 edition of *The Hampshire Review*, P. E. Nixon, along with R. W. Bailey, J. A. Hinkle, J. C. McKown, and B. C. Flora were all partners in firm called Flora and

<sup>27</sup> *The Morgan Messenger*. December 29, 1910.

<sup>28</sup> *History of Virginia*; Vol V, The American Historical Society, Chicago and New York, 1924. Page 79.

<sup>29</sup> *The Hampshire Review*, April 19, 1905. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19251223\\_english\\_6&df=411&dt=420](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19251223_english_6&df=411&dt=420). Accessed July 19, 2024.

<sup>30</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 42, Page 270.

<sup>31</sup> *Keyser Tribune*, June 7, 1912. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011912-12311913&e=upland%20orchard&m=between&ord=e1&fn=keyser\\_tribune\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_keyser\\_19120607\\_english\\_5&df=1&dt=2](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011912-12311913&e=upland%20orchard&m=between&ord=e1&fn=keyser_tribune_usa_west_virginia_keyser_19120607_english_5&df=1&dt=2). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>32</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 37, Page 209.

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Company, and a financial statement in *The Hampshire Review* lists the company in September 1927. The company operated a General Store in Green Spring, WV that remained in business until January 1947.<sup>33</sup>

When businessmen in the four counties that comprise the Eastern Panhandle decided to create The Eastern Panhandle Association in 1927 P. E. Nixon was selected to serve as one of the inaugural board members. According to an article in the *Mineral Daily News* the goal was to gather 5,000 dues paying members and have the association speak for the business interests in the panhandle.<sup>34</sup> P. E. Nixon's selection to serve on the board speaks to his business prowess and interest in furthering commerce in the Eastern Panhandle.

In October 1930, the P. E. Nixon and Company entered into a contract with the Standard Oil Company to provide gasoline in Paw Paw at the P. E. Nixon and Company General Store. Per a review of business leases at the Morgan County Courthouse, this was the first gas station in Paw Paw, and likely one of the earliest - if not earliest - in all of Morgan County.<sup>35</sup>

Locally, Nixon was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a 32nd Degree Mason, a Knight of Pythias, and belonged to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. In January 1940, when the Citizens National Bank of Berkeley Springs was organized, the shareholders elected Nixon as a director and the bank's vice president. During both World War I and World War II he served on the Morgan County Draft Board.<sup>36</sup>

A review of Morgan County Deeds shows P. E. Nixon was involved in more than 70 real estate transactions in Paw Paw between the years 1897 and 1942. A number of the transactions dealt with the sale of lots in the McCooles Addition of Paw Paw. As the McCooles Addition was developed, it nearly doubled the size and population of the town. While a search of Morgan County Deeds showed no record of P. E. Nixon owning property in the area of the McCooles Addition, he had entered into a Deed of Trust (as creditor) with O D and Mollie McCooles (as debtors) in May 1932. Later that year the first sale/deed of a property in the McCooles Addition in which, along with the McCooles, Nixon was listed as a grantor (owner) was entered in the Morgan County Records.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *The Hampshire Review*, April 9, 1930, Romney, WV. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19300409\\_english\\_4&df=471&dt=480](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19300409_english_4&df=471&dt=480). Accessed July 14, 2024; Page 8 *Hampshire Review*, January 22, 1947.

[https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12312024&e=flora%20company&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19470122\\_english\\_8&df=1&dt=9](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12312024&e=flora%20company&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19470122_english_8&df=1&dt=9). Accessed July 20, 2024.

<sup>34</sup> *Mineral Daily News*, January 24, 1927. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011900-12311940&e=p%20e%20nixon,senate&m=between&ord=e1,e2&fn=mineral\\_daily\\_news\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_keyser\\_19270124\\_english\\_1&df=21&dt=28](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011900-12311940&e=p%20e%20nixon,senate&m=between&ord=e1,e2&fn=mineral_daily_news_usa_west_virginia_keyser_19270124_english_1&df=21&dt=28). Accessed August 2, 2024.

<sup>35</sup> Morgan County Deed Book 42, Page 401; Morgan County Deed Book 44, Page 159.

<sup>36</sup> P. E. Nixon Obituary.

<sup>37</sup> Morgan County Deed of Trust Book 10, Page 557; Morgan County Deed Book 44, Page 8.



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In conclusion, while the P. E. Nixon and Company General Store was not the only store in Paw Paw, it was the largest with the biggest and most diverse inventory. Other stores, such as those owned and operated by the Bevans family and the Wentling family, were more in line with “five and dimes” that carried a limited amount of stock compared to that at Nixon’s General Store. Nixon owned and operated the store during a period of significant growth in the town of Paw Paw, which grew in population from 698 in 1920 to its peak of 990 in 1940.<sup>38</sup> The population growth can at least be partially attributed to the expansion of the tannery’s leather product line. Because of the size and scope of his business, and subsequent buying power, the Paw Paw Town Council Meeting Minutes noted P. E. Nixon was appointed, and served for many years, as the Town’s Purchasing Agent. In that role he was responsible for negotiating and contracting with suppliers for important projects such, as the construction of the town’s first sewer system.<sup>39</sup>

In his obituary *The Hampshire Review* stated Nixon grew his company to be the largest general mercantile firm in the region.<sup>40</sup>

### Politics/Government

P. E. Nixon made his initial foray into politics in 1896 at the age of 23, running as a Democrat for the position of clerk of the Morgan County Court (Commission). While he lost by 323 votes it was noted in his official Senate biography that the normal Republican victory was 750 votes.<sup>41</sup>

In 1910 P. E. Nixon made his first run for state office as the Democratic candidate for the WV House of Delegates. Despite running in a majorly Republican district, he came within 68 votes of defeating the Republican candidate in the general election. Nixon carried his home precinct of Paw Paw 176 to 16. *The Hampshire Review* reported that despite the loss the results were such that any man could be proud.<sup>42</sup> While no *WV Blue Book* is available online prior to 1916, the 1916 edition shows of the 30 elected positions filled in Morgan County 21 positions (70%) were filled by Republicans and 9 by Democrats.<sup>43</sup> By 1922 when P.E. Nixon ran for the WV State Senate the number of elected positions filled by Republicans in Morgan County had grown to more than 86%.<sup>44</sup>

From 1911 through 1915 P. E. Nixon was elected to multiple one-year terms on the Paw Paw Town Council, including a term as the town’s recorder. During his tenure he was integral in Paw

<sup>38</sup> Brown and Barbara Norton, interview.; US Census, 1940.

<sup>39</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes.

<sup>40</sup> P.E. Nixon Obituary.

<sup>41</sup> *The WV Legislative and Hand Book and Manual and Official Register, 1924*. Jarrett Printing Company. [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS\\_Bluebook\\_1924.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS_Bluebook_1924.pdf). Accessed July 30, 2024

<sup>42</sup> *The Hampshire Review*, November 16, 1910. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011901-12311911&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19101116\\_english\\_4&df=111&dt=120](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011901-12311911&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19101116_english_4&df=111&dt=120). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>43</sup> *The WV Legislative and Hand Book and Manual and Official Register, 1916*. Tribune Printing Company. [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS\\_Bluebook\\_1916.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS_Bluebook_1916.pdf). Accessed July 30, 2024.

<sup>44</sup> *The WV Legislative and Hand Book and Manual and Official Register, 1922*. Tribune Printing Company. [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS\\_Bluebook\\_1922.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS_Bluebook_1922.pdf). Accessed July 30, 2024.

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Paw installing its first sewer lines having been tasked with coordinating with the contractors and procuring materials.<sup>45</sup> The addition of a sewer system greatly improved sanitation by eliminating the outhouses and privies that were in the backyards of every residence. Nixon's time on the Town Council was also one of growth and challenges for the town as the B&O Railroad created the highline cut through Paw Paw in 1913-1914. This literal cut through the town was part of the B&O's ambitious Magnolia cut-off project. The 12-mile cutoff lessened grades and reduced the length of the route by almost six miles. While this project, unfortunately, displaced a number of residents the town council made the best of the situation by increasing the corporate limits. This added to the town's tax base by including both the new railroad property as well as areas south of the highline cut which became the McCoole Addition. Nixon was also appointed to be the Town's Purchasing Agent, a position he held for many years given his business contacts as the owner of the largest store in Paw Paw.<sup>46</sup>

In 1915 WV Congressman W. G. Brown recommended to President Woodrow Wilson that P. E. Nixon be nominated as the next Postmaster of Paw Paw. This round of appointments was the first in the country that required the President to nominate and the Senate to approve each new Postmaster.<sup>47</sup> Nixon's term as the Paw Paw Postmaster was relatively short because, on March 1, 1922, the Democratic Executive Committee of Morgan County met to discuss who they would put forward as the Democratic candidate for District 15 of the WV State Senate. A week before the meeting *The Hampshire Review*, in its February 22, 1922 edition, specifically mentioned P. E. Nixon as the likely Democratic candidate for the August general election.<sup>48</sup>

In the November 1922 general election, P. E. Nixon ran unopposed, with the Republican party in the 15<sup>th</sup> District having not put forward a candidate. *The Shepherdstown Register*, in their November 2, 1922 edition, wrote:

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<sup>45</sup> The Town of Paw Paw Town Council Meeting Minutes, 3 February 1906 – 10 June 1918.

<sup>46</sup> Town Council Meeting Minutes.

<sup>47</sup> *Keyser Tribune*, January 29, 1915. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=33538,33545,33546,33549,33550,38129,35654,37737,37738&i=t&d=01011900-12311942&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=keyser\\_tribune\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_keyser\\_19150129\\_english\\_1&df=81&dt=90](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=33538,33545,33546,33549,33550,38129,35654,37737,37738&i=t&d=01011900-12311942&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=keyser_tribune_usa_west_virginia_keyser_19150129_english_1&df=81&dt=90). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>48</sup> *The Hampshire Review*, February 22, 1922. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19220222\\_english\\_5&df=641&dt=650](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19220222_english_5&df=641&dt=650). Accessed July 14, 2024.

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The Democratic candidate for the State Senate from this district Mr. P. E. Nixon, will also certainly be elected-the Republicans, indeed, have put up no candidate against him. Where he is best known Mr. Nixon is most highly regarded, and if our Republican friends do the graceful thing and elect him unanimously [sic] they will not regret it.<sup>49</sup>

Selecting a Democratic candidate from Paw Paw was not the norm. With the county seat and center of political power being in Berkeley Springs, 30 miles away, the Morgan County Democratic Party expended considerable political capital in selecting P. E. Nixon to be their man in Charleston. Morgan County would not be given the opportunity of nominating a Democratic candidate again until 1930. This was due to the Democratic Party's practice in the 15<sup>th</sup> District of having their nominee - should they win - serve just a single term and rotating the nomination between the four counties that made up the district (Berkeley, Hampshire, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties). Per *The Hampshire Review*, protocol dictated that Hampshire County was entitled to put forth the party's candidate when Nixon's term was over.<sup>50</sup>

As per the party rule Senator Nixon served one term (1923-1926) in the WV Senate. During his term Senator Nixon held numerous committee assignments. For the 1923 legislature sessions his assignments included: Privileges and Elections, Roads and Navigation, Banks and Corporations. Mines and Mining, Claims and Grievances, Public Printing, Prohibition and Temperance. He was also tasked to Examine the Clerk's Office. In the 1925 sessions Nixon served on the following standing committees: Finance, Roads and Navigation, Insurance, Immigration and Agriculture, Labor, Prohibition and Temperance, and Re-Districting.<sup>51</sup> The WV Senate in 1923 was comprised of 19 Republicans and 11 Democrats.<sup>52</sup> Two Republicans served as governor during P. E. Nixon's time as a WV State Senator.

In its December 9, 1925 issue *The Hampshire Review* reported State Senator P. E. Nixon had publicly announced he had received assurances from the WV State Road Commission that a bridge over the Potomac River at Paw Paw, WV would be built and the plans had been approved. The bridge would reduce the distance traveled from Eastern cities to points west through Cumberland by 15 miles, and eliminate the need to cross five mountains when traveling on the

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<sup>49</sup> *The Shepherdstown Register*, November 2, 1922. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84026824/1922-11-02/ed-1/seq-4/#date1=10%2F07%2F1922&index=1&date2=11%2F07%2F1922&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&words=elect+elected+election+Nixon&proxdistance=5&state=West+Virginia&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=&andtext=nixon+election&dateFilterType=range&page=1>. Accessed August 21, 2024.

<sup>50</sup> "Primary Election to be held August 3<sup>rd</sup>", *The Hampshire Review*, January 26, 1926, Romney, WV. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19260127\\_englsh\\_1&df=411&dt=420](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19260127_englsh_1&df=411&dt=420). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> *The West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia*, Vol 16. Edited and Published by Jim Comstock, Richmond, VA, 1976.

<sup>52</sup> *The WV Legislative and Hand Book and Manual and Official Register, 1923*. Tribune Printing Company. [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS\\_Bluebook\\_1923.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/publications/bluebook/WVS_Bluebook_1923.pdf). Accessed July 14, 2024.

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National Road between Cumberland and Hancock. The new route for tourists would take them from Cumberland through Paw Paw (and Morgan County), and on to Washington versus through Hagerstown and Frederick.<sup>53</sup> The bridge would also negate the use of a ferry to cross the Potomac River at Paw Paw.

Senator Nixon continued to stay engaged through December 1925 as he and Paw Paw Mayor John Kessler attended a meeting in mid-December to discuss the proposed location for the interstate bridge connecting Paw Paw and Kifer, MD.<sup>54</sup> While Senator Nixon received assurances the bridge project would proceed it still took until 1928 before the bridge was completed. This lengthy delay was partially the result of controversy in the 15<sup>th</sup> District over the location of the bridge with residents in Hampshire County, WV pushing for the bridge to be constructed in their county.

An article published in *The Hampshire Review* on June 29, 1927 articulated the frustration of those in Hampshire County who were upset over losing out on a bridge over the north branch of the Potomac for one over the river at Paw Paw. The author went so far as to imply Hampshire County lost out because their State Senator (P. E. Nixon) for the 1923-1926 term came from Morgan County. The article's author wrote [the bridge] "will stand throughout the years with its eastern end sticking into the yellow clay of Maryland, traveled by an occasional bootlegger".<sup>55</sup> At the time this characterization of a bridge to nowhere was fitting since Maryland had yet to agree to build the road necessary to connect Cumberland to Kifer and the bridge. WV also needed to closely coordinate the work with the state of Maryland and Alleghany county since Maryland "owned" the river to the low water mark on the WV side.

As a private citizen P. E. Nixon stayed involved in the coordination process being part of a delegation of Morgan County citizens and government representatives who met with Maryland Road Directors in early 1927 to request their assistance in bringing the bridge to fruition.<sup>56</sup> Nixon's determined efforts in procuring a bridge at Paw Paw likely kept the town viable in the long-term since an interstate bridge at Green Spring, WV (in Hampshire County vice Morgan County) to Oldtown, MD would have made more sense. A bridge at that location would have

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<sup>53</sup> "Bridge Plans are approved", *The Hampshire Review*, 9 December 1925, Romney, WV. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19251209\\_english\\_9&df=411&dt=420](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19251209_english_9&df=411&dt=420). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>54</sup> "WV Ready to Build Bridge", *The Hampshire Review*, 23 December 1925. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19251223\\_english\\_6&df=411&dt=420](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19251223_english_6&df=411&dt=420). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>55</sup> "That Paw Paw Bridge", *The Hampshire Review*, June 29, 1927. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12311928&e=paw%20paw%20bridge&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19270629\\_english\\_4&df=1&dt=10](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011837-12311928&e=paw%20paw%20bridge&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19270629_english_4&df=1&dt=10). Accessed July 20, 2024.

<sup>56</sup> *Mineral Daily News*, February 3, 1927. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011924-12311929&e=paw%20paw%20bridge&m=between&ord=e1&fn=mineral\\_daily\\_news\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_keyser\\_19270203\\_english\\_1&df=1&dt=10](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?i=f&d=01011924-12311929&e=paw%20paw%20bridge&m=between&ord=e1&fn=mineral_daily_news_usa_west_virginia_keyser_19270203_english_1&df=1&dt=10). Accessed July 21, 2024.

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shortened the connection of US 50 in Romney to the National Road in Cumberland, and reduced the amount of roadbuilding required by Maryland from 26 miles to less than 15 miles.

While WV completed construction of the bridge at Paw Paw in 1928 it was several more years before Maryland completed a new paved road from Cumberland to the bridge at considerable expense. The cost for Maryland included building bridges at the C&O Canal and Western Maryland Railroad. While WV funded the bridge over the Potomac, which was rightly a Maryland expense, the funds outlaid by Maryland for the new paved road and bridges were roughly eight to ten times greater than the cost of the bridge itself.<sup>57</sup>

A review of an online database of 11 regional newspapers from 1900 through 1928 showed no mention of any effort or engagement by elected officials in the eastern panhandle to construct a bridge at Paw Paw prior to P. E. Nixon's election to the WV Senate in 1922. As such it is likely Nixon's election and efforts while serving in the WV Senate, and on the Roads and Navigation Committee that resulted in the bridge being funded and constructed. The success in procuring both the funding and approval for the bridge came while Republicans were holding both the WV Senate and governorship.

The opening of the bridge was celebrated on July 4, 1928, with governors of both WV and Maryland in attendance, as well as US Senators and House Representatives from the relevant districts in both states. Former State Senator Nixon was appointed treasurer of the celebration committee. The committee membership included representatives from Charles Town, Martinsburg, Paw Paw, Berkeley Springs, Great Cacapon, Oldtown, and Cumberland.<sup>58</sup> The inclusion of representatives from Martinsburg and Charles Town speaks to the far-reaching impact the bridge would have on the Eastern Panhandle.

Had P. E. Nixon not been successful in gaining approval and funding for the bridge during his single term, it is likely the next State Senator from the 15<sup>th</sup> District would not have been nearly as motivated to see a bridge at Paw Paw through to its fruition, likely opting instead to pursue a bridge at Green Spring, to connect US 50 in Romney with the National Road in Cumberland. To date, a "real bridge" has yet to be built between Green Spring, WV, and Old Town, MD. The two communities still "make do" with a load-limited, single lane low-water wooden toll bridge. As a result, these towns have suffered a loss of population and industry driven by the lack of reliable road access. Paw Paw would likely have suffered the same fate if it had not been for the interstate bridge and paved road constructed at Paw Paw.

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<sup>57</sup> "Maryland to Build New Road", *The Hampshire Review*, February 4, 1931. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=kifer&t=37742&i=t&by=1931&bdd=1930&d=01011931-12311931&m=between&ord=k1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19310204\\_english\\_6&df=1&dt=4](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=kifer&t=37742&i=t&by=1931&bdd=1930&d=01011931-12311931&m=between&ord=k1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19310204_english_6&df=1&dt=4). Accessed August 16, 2024.

<sup>58</sup> *The Piedmont Herald*, May 11, 1928. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=oldtown&i=f&d=01011837-12311930&e=bridge&m=between&ord=k1,e1&fn=piedmont\\_herald\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_piedmont\\_19280511\\_english\\_8&df=61&dt=70](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?k=oldtown&i=f&d=01011837-12311930&e=bridge&m=between&ord=k1,e1&fn=piedmont_herald_usa_west_virginia_piedmont_19280511_english_8&df=61&dt=70). Accessed August 15, 2024.

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After leaving office P. E. Nixon continued to stay engaged in local issues. In August 1930, P. E. Nixon (as a private citizen) was part of a delegation from Paw Paw that went to Romney, WV, and other municipalities to look at municipal water systems. The purpose was to assess existing systems since Paw Paw was looking to establish their own water works.<sup>59</sup> Without a municipal water system the growing number of Paw Paw residents were resigned to using public wells or cisterns to collect water. The spillage/contamination from the highly toxic nature of the tanning process had rendered the water quality in Paw Paw questionable driving the need for a safe and reliable municipal water system.

After 115 years since its construction, the Senator P. E. Nixon House continues to convey its historic association with Senator Nixon and the Town of Paw Paw's history as it relates to commerce, politics and government. For nearly 35 years the building served as the residence of prominent citizen P. E. Nixon and his wife Eva.<sup>60</sup> The P. E. Nixon and Company General Store was a fixture in the lives of Paw Paw's citizens, dating back to the business's founding as Isaac Baker's Store in 1846, and was the primary store in Paw Paw during Nixon's ownership between 1920 and his death in 1942. During his adult life P. E. Nixon was instrumental in improving the lives of Paw Paw's citizens and spurring the town's growth through development of the McCoolle Addition, construction of municipal sewer and water systems, and successfully advocating for the construction of the interstate bridge connecting Paw Paw to Cumberland and points west. The bridge was critical in increasing traffic through Morgan County and has kept Paw Paw "on the map" as industries in the area closed and passenger train service terminated. The Senator P.E. Nixon House remains largely unchanged since the Nixons resided in it. The residence reflects the important role P. E. Nixon played in commerce, politics, and government, and - coupled with its historic integrity in terms of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling - makes the building worthy of an individual nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

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<sup>59</sup> *The Hampshire Review*, August 27, 1930. [https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the\\_hampshire\\_review\\_usa\\_west\\_virginia\\_romney\\_19300827\\_english\\_5&df=481&dt=490](https://wvnewspapers.advantage-preservation.com/viewer/?t=37742&i=t&d=01011912-12311945&e=nixon&m=between&ord=e1&fn=the_hampshire_review_usa_west_virginia_romney_19300827_english_5&df=481&dt=490). Accessed July 14, 2024.

<sup>60</sup> Eva Nixon sold the store in Paw Paw to J.H. Norton in 1947 who ran it with his sons until the Norton family sold it in 1980. The house remained with the Nixon family until 1954, being sold two years after Eva Nixon's death.

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 0.18 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.534089 Longitude: -78.457633

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 17N

Easting: 718497

Northing: 4379134

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The building sits on a small 0.18 acre flat trapezoidal shaped lot bordered by Winchester Street to the East, Lee Street to the north, the Paw Paw United Methodist Church and parsonage to the west, and a vacant lot to the south. The boundaries are shown as a solid redline on the attached map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary selected is the current property boundary on which the former Senator P. E. Nixon House is located. The current boundary aligns with the historical boundary

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: David Abruzzi, RA  
organization: Cacapon Preservation Solutions, LLC  
street & number: 18534 Cacapon Rd  
city or town: Great Cacapon state: WV zip code: 25422  
e-mail david@cacaponpreservationsolutions.com  
telephone: 304-947-7465  
date: 19 August 2024

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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### Figure Log

- 1 of 4. USGS Topographical Locational Map
- 2 of 4. Satellite Imagery
- 3 of 4. Exterior Photo Key
- 4 of 4. Interior Photo Keys (First Floor, Second Floor, Basement)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Senator P. E. Nixon House

City or Vicinity: Paw Paw

County: Morgan

State: WV

Photographer: David Abruzzi

Date Photographed: 16 August 2024 (exterior) / 18 August 2024 (interior)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 12. Winchester Street (Main) Elevation, Facing West
- 2 of 12. Oblique Angle, Facing Southwest
- 3 of 12. Lee Street Elevation, Facing South
- 4 of 12. West Elevation, Facing East
- 5 of 12. South Elevation Facing North
- 6 of 12. Detail of Gable End, South Elevation
- 7 of 12. Main Interior Space
- 8 of 12. Dining Room/Second Parlor
- 9 of 12. Main Stair Newel Posts
- 10 of 12. Main Stair Balustrade
- 11 of 12. Second Floor Hallway
- 12 of 12. Basement

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations 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.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
County and State

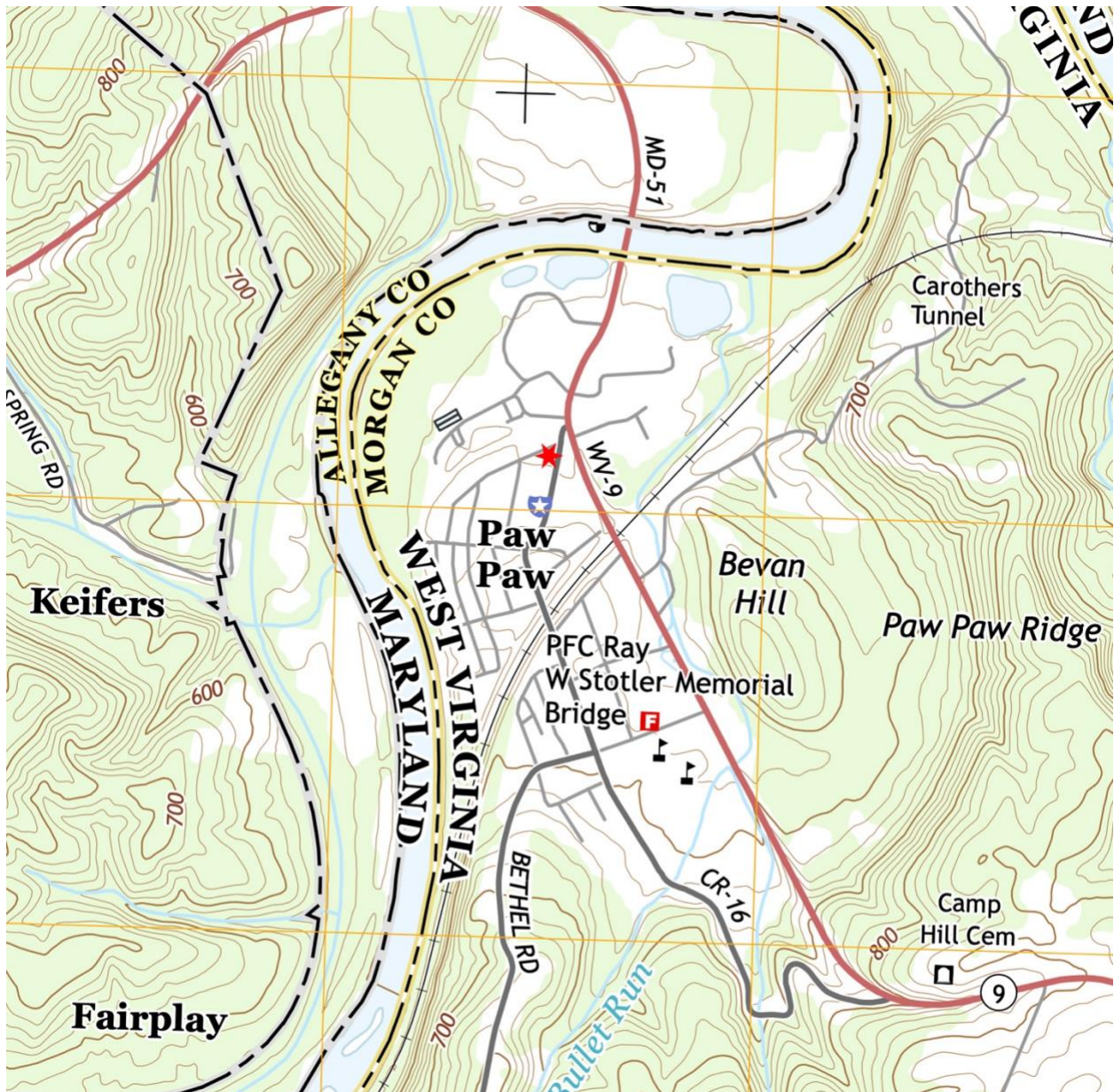


Figure 1: USGS Topographical Locational Map



Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
County and State



Figure 2: Satellite Imagery

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
County and State

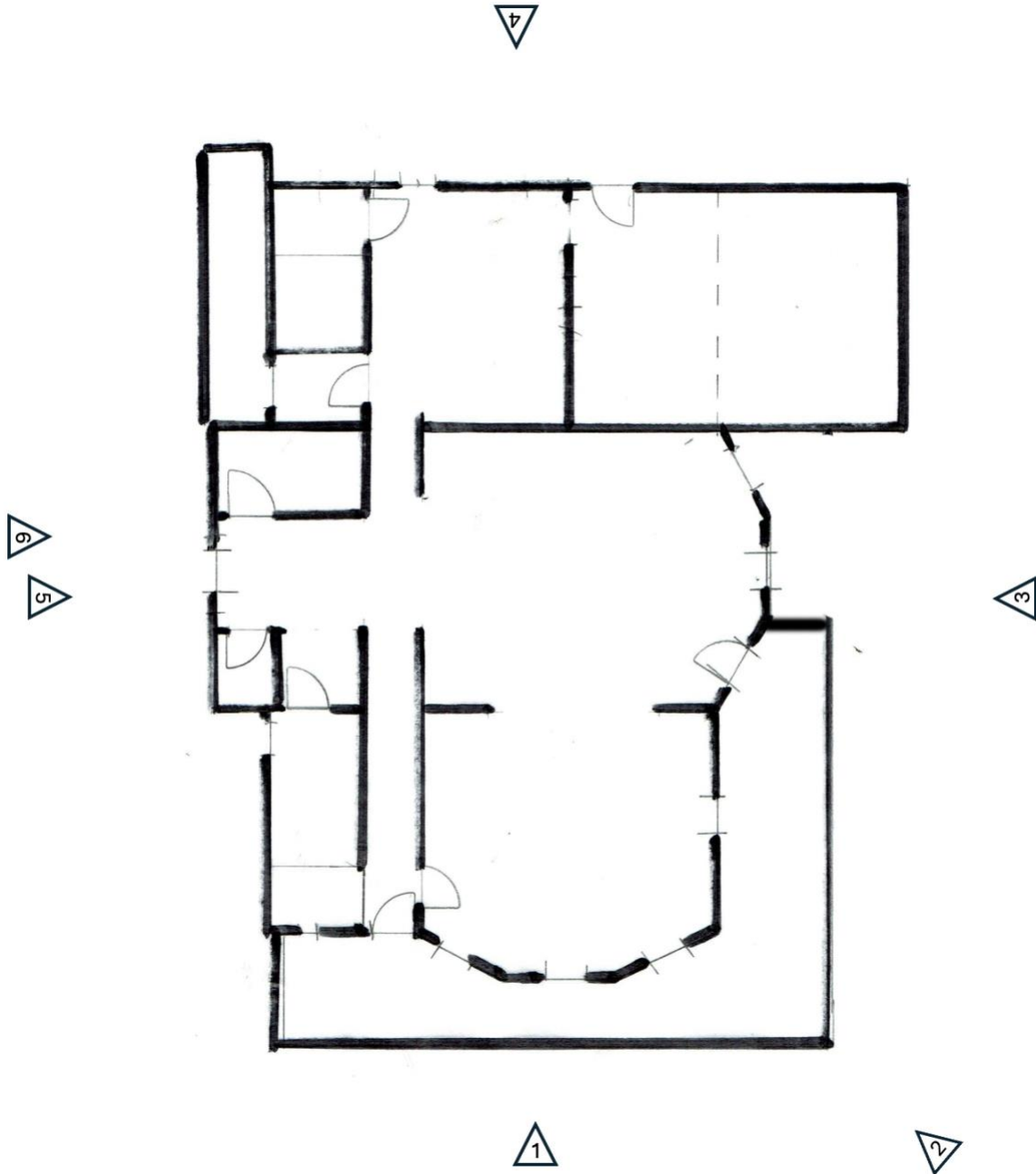
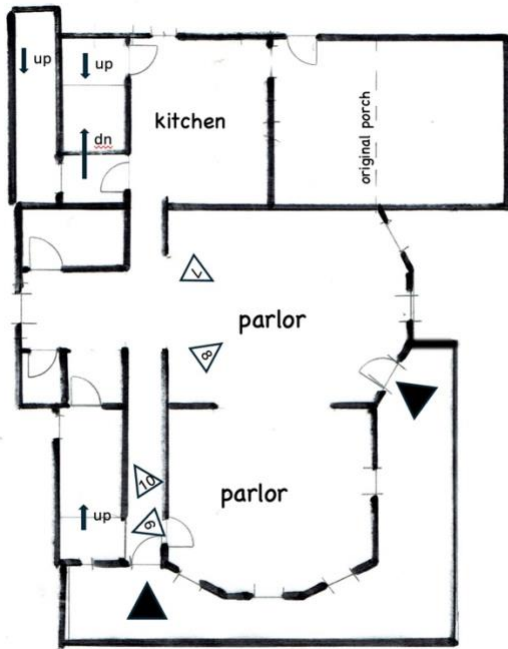


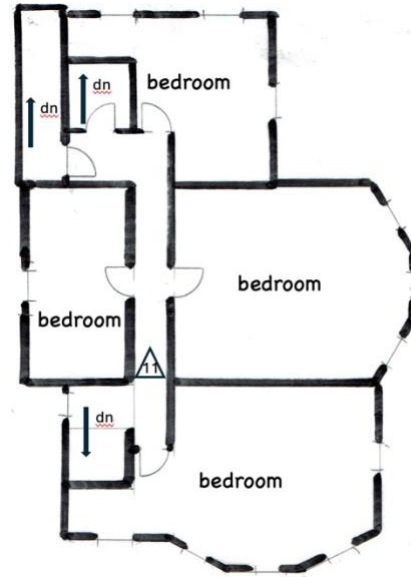
Figure 3. Exterior Photo Key (Not To Scale)

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

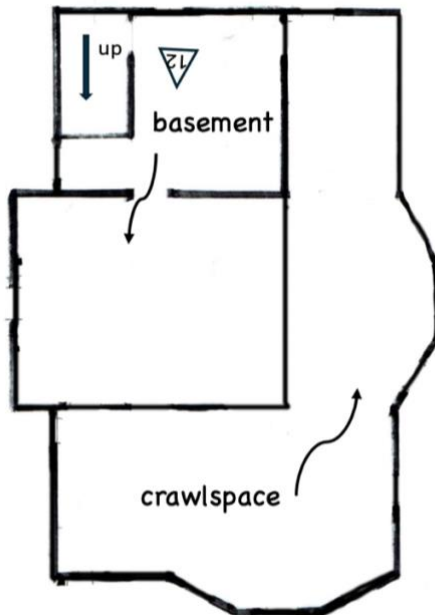
Morgan, WV  
County and State



First Floor



Second Floor



Basement

Figure 4: Interior Photo Keys (Not To Scale)

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
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Photo 1. Winchester Street (Main) Elevation, Facing West

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

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Photo 2. Oblique Angle, Facing Southwest

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Name of Property

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Photo 3. Lee Street Elevation, Facing South

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
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Photo 4. West Elevation, Facing East

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Name of Property

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Photo 5. South Elevation Facing North



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Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
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Photo 6. Detail of Gable End, South Elevation

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Name of Property

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Photo 7. Main Interior Space

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Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
County and State



Photo 8. Dining Room/Second Parlor

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
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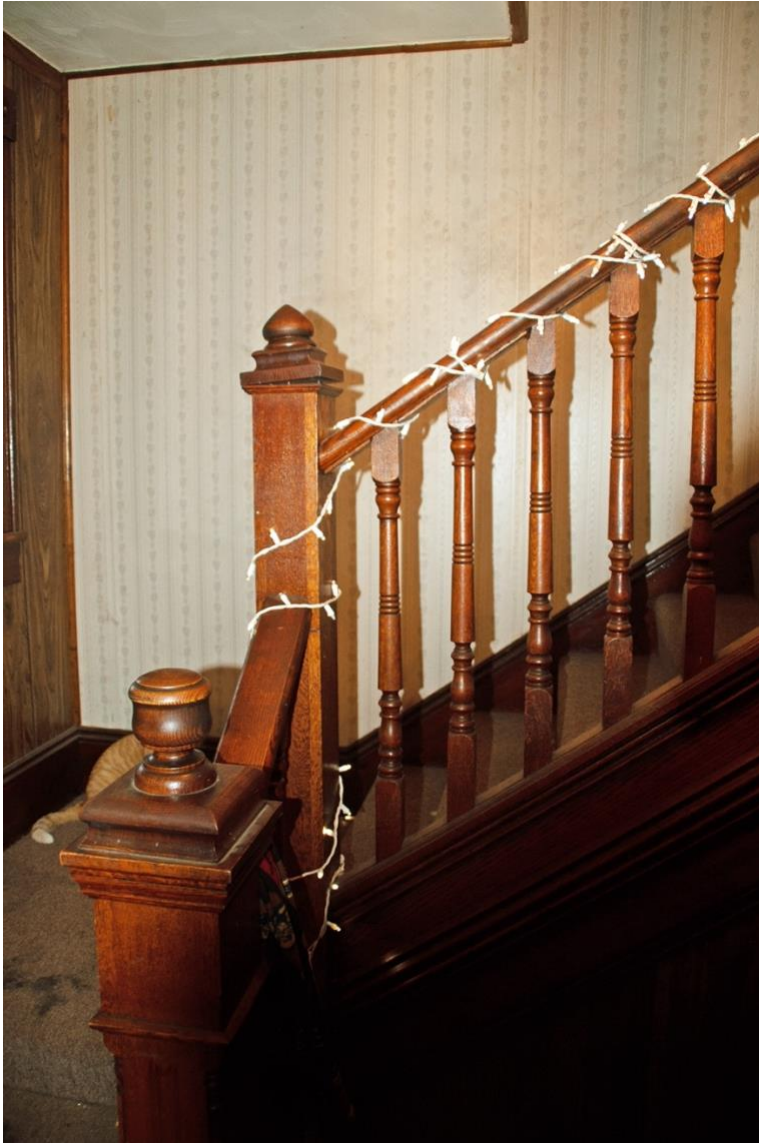


Photo 9. Main Stair Newel Posts

Nixon, Senator P. E., House  
Name of Property

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Photo 10. Main Stair Balustrade

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Name of Property

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Photo 11. Second Floor Hallway

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Name of Property

Morgan, WV  
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Photo 12. Basement