

HA-1790

Little House

Architectural Survey File

This is the architectural survey file for this MIHP record. The survey file is organized reverse-chronological (that is, with the latest material on top). It contains all MIHP inventory forms, National Register nomination forms, determinations of eligibility (DOE) forms, and accompanying documentation such as photographs and maps.

Users should be aware that additional undigitized material about this property may be found in on-site architectural reports, copies of HABS/HAER or other documentation, drawings, and the “vertical files” at the MHT Library in Crownsville. The vertical files may include newspaper clippings, field notes, draft versions of forms and architectural reports, photographs, maps, and drawings. Researchers who need a thorough understanding of this property should plan to visit the MHT Library as part of their research project; look at the MHT web site (mht.maryland.gov) for details about how to make an appointment.

All material is property of the Maryland Historical Trust.

Last Updated: 02-18-2004

HA-1790
1931
Bel Air
Private

The Little House, 55 W. Gordon St., faces south on a tree-shaded lot in Richardson's Addition in a block of houses built in the 1930s and 1940s. The L-shaped, white clapboard house with slate gable roof and an exterior stone chimney (east) was the first of its kind to be built in Bel Air. Inside it has a wide center hall, large living and dining rooms, kitchen, family room, 3 bedrooms and 2 baths.

Building began west of Main St. in Richardson's Addition in the 1880s; it and the Hayes Addition begun at the same time are the oldest extensions of the town. It is a mix of styles from Victorian to brick rancher, and a mix of classes as well, with working-man's housing along the north and south edges and middle class homes through the center. Built in 1931 by Dr. Main Little, a Bel Air dentist, this house was the first in the Indian Hill part of Richardson's Addition, a parcel of land surrounding the Richardson home place which was not developed until the heirs sold the old house. Its L-shape was a departure from the four-squares and bungalows built between the world wars, and its pleasing appearance and spacious, airy interior were later much copied.

HA-1790
Little House
Bel Air, Harford Co.

FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

3. Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

☐ 11. Industrial/Urban Dominance 1870-1930

☒ 12. Modern Period 1930 - present

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme:

2. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community
Planning

Resource Type:

Category: Architecture

Historic Environment: Urban

Historic Function and Use: Private Residence

Known Design Source: unknown

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. AI-1720

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Little House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 54 W. Gordon St. n/a not for publication

city, town Bel Air _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 3rd

state MD _____ county Harford

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☐ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
	☒ not applicable	☒ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☒ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Judge and Mrs. Cypert O. Whitfill

street & number 54 W. Gordon St. telephone no.: 893-1694

city, town Bel Air _____ state and zip code MD 21014

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Harford County Courthouse liber 1651

street & number _____ folio 766

city, town Bel Air _____ state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state

7. Description

Survey No. A-1720

Condition
☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one
☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one
☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing resource count: one

The Little House, 55 W. Gordon St., faces south on a tree-shaded lot in a block of houses built in the 1930s and 1940s. The L-shaped, white clapboard house with slate gable roof and an exterior stone chimney (east) was the first of its kind to be built in Bel Air. With its wide center hall, large living and dining rooms, 3 bedrooms and 2 baths, the house is distinctive and comfortable, and its shape would become popular in town.

The shed-roofed front porch crosses the 3 eastern bays of the facade, tucked into the join between the main block and the front gabled ell. Fenestration is idiosyncratic. The facade has 4 bays (including the entrance) on the first floor and 3 on the second. The rear (north) elevation is equally idiosyncratic, with a hipped dormer in the center of the roof, 3 bays in the second story, the middle window set lower than the flankers, and a gabled single story addition projecting from the middle bay of the first story. Most windows are 8/8 double hung sash. The kitchen and west gable have casements. All except the casements are flanked by black shutters. On the first story of the west elevation, a side door placed between the 2 bays leads to the kitchen. While the exterior of the house sounds odd it actually forms a coherent and pleasing whole.

The spacious and airy interior has a southern feeling, probably because of the wide center hall which runs the length of the house to the addition. A bracketed, open-run, dog-leg staircase with turned stock newel and round tapered balusters rises along its east wall. To the right, the living room occupies that whole side of the block. The massive field-stone chimney breast with its stone mantel shelf rises to the ceiling on the east wall. Flanking the north window, a pair of Williamsburg influenced cupboards with paneled doors below and shelves above, end in round arches. The dining room occupies the ell and half of the main block to the west. The recently renovated kitchen lies behind, to the north. Double 3 paneled doors lead from the hall to the living room and dining room; their surrounds have a slight profile at the edge, as does the rest of the woodwork. The family room has mahogany paneling, a 1950s horizontal stone fireplace, slate floor, and a massive, multipaned window taking up most of the north wall. A full bath with shower is tucked in where the hall meets the addition.

On the second floor are 3 bedrooms and 2 baths with original tile and fixtures; those of the hall bath are lavender, surely the first colored fixtures in town. The bath to the master bedroom has the same fixtures in white. The 3rd level is divided into 2 rooms with unfinished floor and doors without hardware. There is a cedar lined closet at the head of the stairs.

The foundation is poured concrete, which was unusual in town then.

8. Significance

Survey No. HA-1790

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☒ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☐ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1931 Builder/Architect unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Building began west of Main St. in Richardson's Addition in the 1880s; it and the Hayes Addition, begun at the same time, are the oldest extensions of the town. It is a mix of styles from Victorian to brick rancher, and a mix of classes as well, with working-man's housing along the north and south edges and middle class homes through the center. Built in 1931 by Dr. Main Little, a Bel Air dentist, this house was the first in the Indian Hill part of Richardson's Addition, a parcel of land surrounding the Richardson home place which was not developed until the heirs sold the old house. Its L-shape was a departure from the four-squares and bungalows built between the world wars, and its pleasing appearance and spacious, airy interior were later much copied.

The bottom basement step bears the date 10-14-31, which may be the date the staircase was completed.

The house remained in the Little family until 1990, when Cybert O. Whitfill and his wife Marsha bought it. Whitfill is a Harford County Circuit Court Judge.

Alterations to the house by the Littles include the bath and family room addition and the Williamsburg influenced living room cupboards. Judging from the shape of the cupboards and the family room fireplace, as well as the bath fixtures, the changes were made sometime in the 1950s, along with renovations to the kitchen. The kitchen cupboards and the tile that was on the floor suggest that period. Before they moved in, the Whitfills renovated the kitchen, taking out a breakfast nook between the dining room and taking up the tile and refinishing the hardwood floors. Flagstones on the family room floor and on a small patio to the west by the kitchen door are said to have been part of the Bel Air sidewalks which were replaced by cement.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PA-1790

Harford County Land Records
Site visit, 27 April 1993

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Bel AirQuadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

Parcel 490 in the Town of Bel Air, 87' (West Gordon) x 277'.

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	<u>Dr. Marilyn M. Larew</u>		
organization		date	<u>6-2-93</u>
street & number	<u>RD 1 Box 219 New Park Rd.</u>	telephone	<u>717-993-3557</u>
city or town	<u>New Park</u>	state	<u>PA 17352</u>

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCL
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2021
(410) 514-7600

HA-1790
Little House
55 W. Gordon St.
Bel Air, MD 21014

owner: Cybert O. Whitfill

1608/321 5 Feb 1990
Lyda S. Little by Anne L. Schnell, her attorney
to
Cybert O. Whitfill and Marsha George Whitfill (formerly
Marsha J. George)
\$182,000

1274/1027 17 June 1985
Lyda S. Little, widow
to
Anne L. Schnell, her daughter
retains a life interest
3 parcels which, with purchases from Joseph T. Foster
and a sale to him, makes this property the NW half of
lots 1-11 of Indian Hill, plat in plat book 2/27, 4 Mar
1931. Originally part of the Richardson family estate.

title to parcel 1

218/507 16 June 1931
Joseph T. Foster and Sophia B.
to
Main Little and Lyda S.
NW half of lots 1-6.

218/506 4 June 1931
Germantown Permanent Building Assoc. #2 of Baltimore
County
to
Joseph T. Foster and Sophia B.
lots 1-6 in Indian Hill

203/135 7 Apr 1927
Frederick J. Schlosstein, attorney, of Baltimore City
to
Germantown Permanent Building Assoc.
defaulted mortgage

182/84 16 Mar 1923
Joseph A. Kraft and Elsie W.
mortgage to
Germantown
\$16,000
the whole half block facing on the west side Bond St.,
the north side of Gordon, the east side of William
St., and thence to Cedar Alley, returning to Bond St.

181/304 16 Mar 1923
 Harvey K. Miller and Sallie E.
 to
 Joseph A. Kraft and Elsie M.
 land as above

181/306 27 Feb 1923
 William E. Robinson and Minnie
 John L.G. Lee and Caroline H.
 to
 Harvey K. Miller

176/143 15 Oct 1921
 Robert Archer, trustee
 Frank Jacobs and wife
 to
 William E. Robinson and John L.G. Lee
 defaulted mortgage 148/217, C. Chapman Rouse et al to
 William S. Archer, 1 Mar 1915. James J. Archer, assignee
 of mortgage sold it to Frank Jacobs, sale ratified by
 the court. Archer died before conveying deed. Robert
 Archer was appointed trustee to convey land. Meanwhile,
 Jacobs sold it to Robinson and Lee. The Rouses and Mary
 Richardson owned the land originally, Mrs. Rouse being
 Henrietta Richardson Rouse.

 title to parcel 2

296/381 15 June 1946
 the Fosters
 to
 the Littles
 NW half of lot 7

239/131 25 Nov 1935
 Germantown
 to
 the Fosters
 lot 7
 the rest of the title as in 203/135 et seq in parcel 1

 title to parcel 3

296/380 15 May 1946
 the Littles
 to
 the Fosters
 NE half of lots 8-11, leaving the Littles the NE half

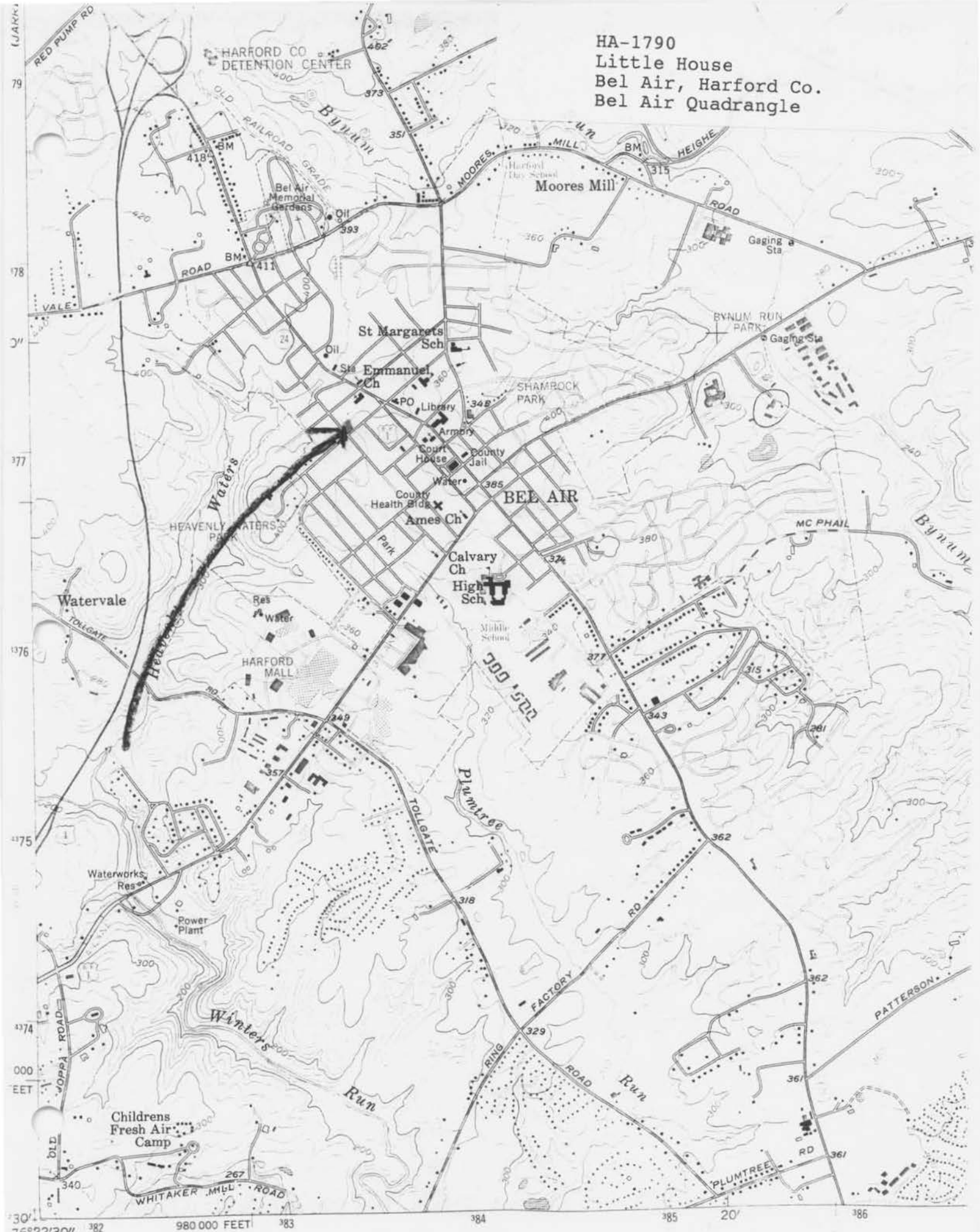
284/374 7 Aug 1944
D. Paul McNabb, unmarried
to
Main Little and Lyda S.
lots 8-11 and 25-27

284/373 7 Aug 1944
Main E. Little and Lyda S.
Elva Irene Little, unmarried
to
D. Paul McNabb
lots 8-11 and 25-27

242/398 30 Mar 1936
Germantown Permanent Bldg. Assoc.
to
Main E. Little and Elva Irene Little
lots 8-11 and 27-27

the rest of the title goes back to 203/135 et seq as
in parcels 1 and 2.

HA-1790
Little House
Bel Air, Harford Co.
Bel Air Quadrangle





HA-100
100-100
KANTON CO, MD
ALBANY
ST. 100
ST. 100
ST. 100
ST. 100

55 W. GORDON ST.
BEL AIR



55 W. GORDON ST.
BEL AIR



LA = 100%

21

LA = 100%

21

21

21

21

21

55 W. GORDON ST.
BEL AIR



