

CH-747

## John Farr Farmhouse

### **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](http://mht.maryland.gov)) for details about how to make an appointment.

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***Last Updated: 11-21-2003***

**John Farr Farmhouse**

**circa 1920**

**CH-747**

**Newburg vic.**

**Private**

Erected around 1920, the John Farr Farmhouse is a two-story, single-pile, side-gable frame dwelling with a decorative center gable and wrap-around porch. A rear service wing forms an overall L-plan. The farm includes a c. 1950 concrete block garage, a circa 1920 tobacco barn, a circa 1950 tobacco barn, and a late 19th - early 20th century pyramidal roof smokehouse all standing on an 81 acre parcel of predominantly flat cultivated fields. The John Farr Farmhouse and its associated outbuildings form a representative example of an average early 20th century farmstead in Charles County. In 1913, John G. Farr purchased from John and Ida Jackson eighty acres including existing buildings and improvements. The Jackson's had purchased the property the Perry family of nearby Locust Grove (CH-353) in 1892.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CH-747

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic John Farr Farmhouse  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street and number 14200 Banks O'Dee Road \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication  
 city, town Newburg X vicinity  
 county Charles

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

name John F. Farr farmhouse  
 street and number 711 Ridge Trail Road telephone Unknown  
 city, town Kingston state TN zip code 37763-7029

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Charles County Courthouse tax map and parcel: 86 p.3  
 city, town La Plata, MD liber 1489 folio 271

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District  
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
 Recorded by HABS/HAER  
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
			Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense		<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<u>4</u>	<u>      </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education		<u>      </u> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry		
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture		
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
		<input type="checkbox"/> social		
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress		
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>	
			<u>0</u>	

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. CH-747

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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

Erected around 1920, the John Farr Farmhouse is a two-story, single-pile, side-gable frame dwelling with a decorative center gable and wrap-around porch. A rear service wing forms an overall L-plan. The farm includes a c. 1950 concrete block garage, a circa 1920 tobacco barn, a circa 1950 tobacco barn, and a late 19th - early 20th century pyramidal roof smokehouse all standing on an 81 acre parcel of predominantly flat cultivated fields.

The roof is asphalt and is pierced by three interior corbel capped chimneys. Windows are finished with square edged wood surrounds. The cornice is boxed. The principal elevation faces west and includes three bays with a centered doorway that includes a transom and sidelights. The decorative gable is adorned with a lunette window. The rear wing is augmented with a two-story shed addition in the interior L of the south elevation and a one-story shed on the remaining south wall. The dwelling has been re-clad in vinyl siding and new windows have been added. The interior was not available at the time of the survey.

The frame smokehouse likely predates the remaining structures found on the property and includes a 4-panel Victorian door. The tobacco barns stand in an open field behind the dwelling. The first, likely erected around 1920, stands near the property and consists of a center-isle structure and has a roof ridge running from north to south. It has a metal roof and vertical board siding. The second has a shallow roof pitch, double isles on the gable end, vertical board siding and a metal roof. Believed to have been constructed around 1950, the roof ridge runs in a east west axis.

A concrete block garage/ workshop also stands on the site.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-747

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

<b>Specific dates</b>	1920	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	Unknown
<b>Construction dates</b>	1920		

Evaluation for:

National Register                       Maryland Register                       not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

The John Farr Farmhouse and its associated outbuildings form a representative example of an average early 20th century farmstead in Charles County. In 1913, John G. Farr purchased from John and Ida Jackson eighty acres including existing buildings and improvements. In 1892 the Jackson's had purchased the property previously owned by the Perry family of nearby Locust Grove (CH-353).(1)

Since its formal establishment in 1658, Charles County has relied on agriculture as its principal economy. Before the Civil War, farms were relatively large with some containing over 1000 acres. Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. While planters continued to rely heavily on tobacco cultivation, slave labor was replaced with various systems of tenancy or wage labor. Due to dwindling profits, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition, Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. This lack of capital made it difficult for farmers to branch out into other agricultural and commercial pursuits. Adding to the economic stagnation following the war, was the unpredictability of tobacco prices. Through the latter part of the 19th century, tobacco values remained depressed, insuring that the small tenant farmers and share-croppers struggled. tobacco production fell precipitously following the Civil War. In 1870, Charles County's crop fell in volume to less than half of what it was ten years earlier, and in price from 8 cents per pound in 1869 to just five cents per pound in 1889. By 1909 prices had still not recovered, rising only to 7 cents.

The post-war period also marked the end of large farms. In 1870 there were 545 farms in Charles County. By 1900 that number had more than tripled at 1900 farms. Farm size continually decreased as large farms, containing over 500 acres, were divided. The most dramatic increase was seen in the number of farms under fifty acres, which more than doubled between 361 farms in 1880 and 728 farms in 1920. The turmoil of the Reconstruction era continued in Charles County well into the 20th century. Because of these economic difficulties, population growth in the county stagnated between 1860 and 1920. The general economic decline, and later, stagnation that followed the Civil War is evident in the census figures between 1860 and 1890. By 1890, the number of county residents was nearly 1,400 less than in 1860. With little industry or profitable agriculture drawing new residents to the county during the post-Civil War era, many young Charles County residents moved away as they reached maturity. This economic recess led to the relatively modest building traditions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The John Farr Farmhouse is typical of the types of simple architecture that dominated local building practices during the era.

(1) Charles County Deeds JST 5/25; BGS 4/697

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. ~~CH~~-747

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 81

Acreage of historical setting 81

Quadrangle name Colonial Beach North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is associated with Charles County Property Tax Map 86, Parcel 3.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Cathy Hardy/Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning

date 7/18/2002

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville MD 21032  
410-514-7600

CH- 747 Charles County, MD  
Name: JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE  
Location: NEWBURGA VIC.  
Quad: 1977 AERIAL

CH-153  
LOCUST GROVE

CH-747

GARAGE

TOBACCO BARN

TOBACCO BARN

SMITHS

DWELLING





CH- 747 Charles County, MD  
Name: JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE  
Location: BANKS O'DEE  
Quad: COLONIAL BEACH NORTH



CH-747

JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE

CHARLES CO. MD

C. HARDY

4/2002

MD SHPO

WEST ELEVATION

10F4



CH-747  
JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE  
CHARLES CO, MD  
C. HARDY  
4/2002  
MD SHPO  
LOOKING NW  
2014



CH-747

JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE

CHARLES CO. MD

C. HARDY

4/2002

MD SHPO

TOBACCO BARN, LOOKING E

3 OF 4



CH-747

JOHN FARR FARMHOUSE

CHARLES CO. MD

C. HARDY

4/2002

MD SHPO

LOOKHOUSE

4044