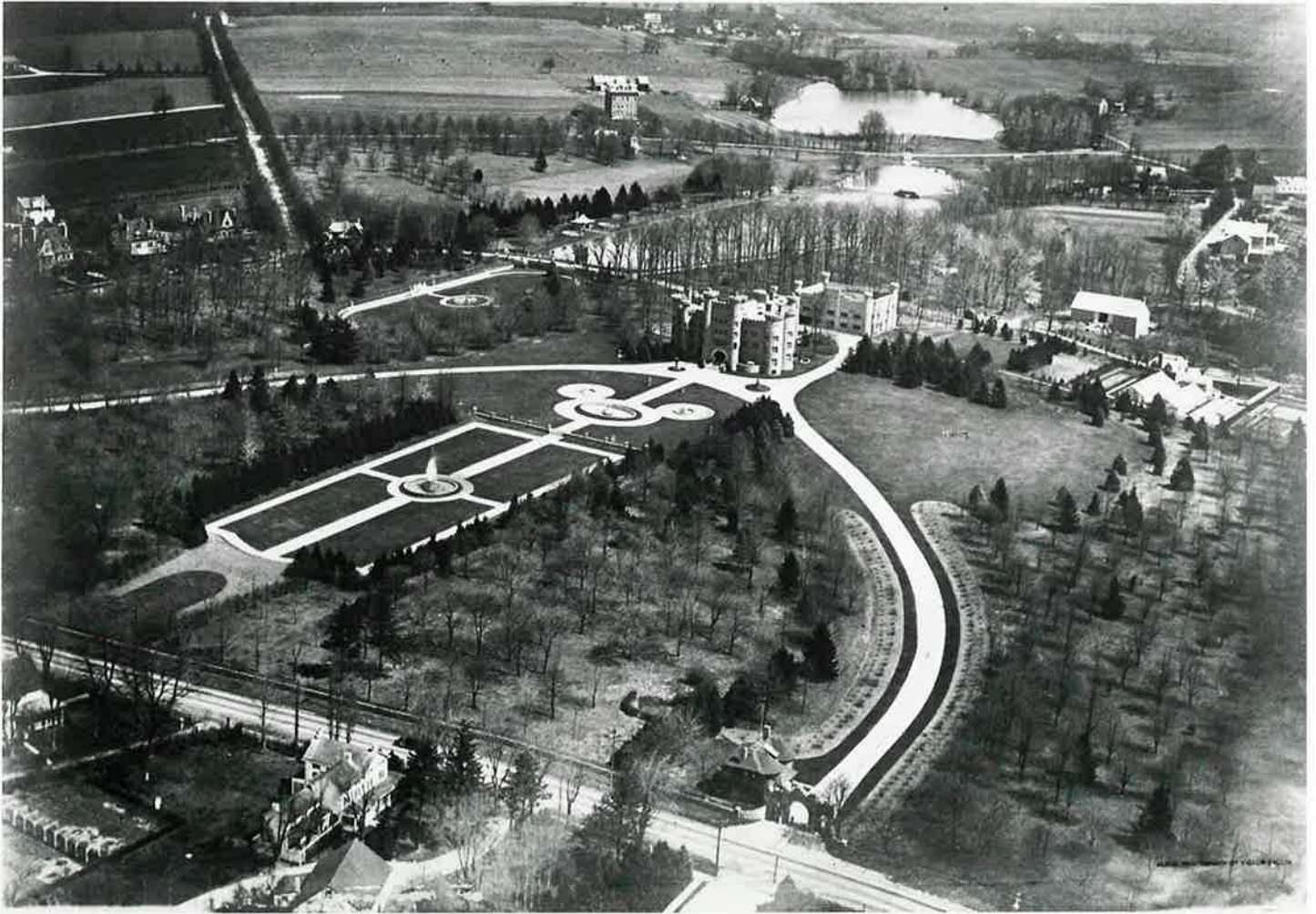


Historic Resources Inventory



**St. Mary's Villa for Children
Formerly Known as "Lindenwold"**

701 S. Bethlehem Pike

Ambler, PA 19002

Submitted to Upper Dublin Township

February, 2014

by

Heritage Conservancy

85 Old Dublin Pike

Doylestown, PA 18901

215-345-7020

www.heritageconservancy.org

**St. Mary’s Villa for Children
Formerly Known as “Lindenwold”
Historic Resources Inventory
February, 2014**

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History and Significance

St. Mary's Villa for Children, was originally known as "Lindenwold", the estate of Dr. Richard Vanselous Mattison (1851-1936). Dr. Mattison was co-owner of Keasbey & Mattison (K&M) Company of Ambler, one of the largest pharmaceutical and later, asbestos manufacturing companies in the world in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He grew up in Solebury, Bucks County and received his degrees from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy (1872) and the University of Pennsylvania Medical School (1879). While he attended school, he worked in the pharmaceutical business with John Wyeth and Brother of Philadelphia (Ruoff). In 1873, he formed Keasbey & Mattison Company, originally located at Juniper and Arch Streets in Philadelphia, with fellow classmate, Henry G. Keasbey. Their main interest initially was to produce pharmaceutical products, in particular, "Bromo Caffeine", a headache remedy. This and many other products became popular throughout the United States and Europe.

By the 1880s, Keasbey & Mattison needed a new source of magnesia and heard that a quarry in the Ambler area was discovered to contain dolomite where magnesium carbonate could be obtained. They moved the company to Ambler in 1882 which provided them with easy access to the Northern Pennsylvania Railroad and its routes to Bethlehem and Philadelphia. They established their business along the rail line and the quarry was less than a mile away near the Lindenwold property. This location also provided them with local labor with the Ambler area having been largely agricultural prior to this point and society was transitioning from an agrarian society to industrialization (Toll).

Aside from the pharmaceutical side of the business, Mattison had been interested in the properties of asbestos since boyhood and began experimenting with it in combination with magnesium based carbonate. He formed it into insulating material for pipes, which he called "85 percent Magnesia" (85% magnesium carbonate and 15% asbestos). In 1896, K&M opened a large plant in Ambler to produce asbestos textiles and by 1905 they were producing asbestos cement roof shingles or what was known commercially as "Century Asbestos Slate". K&M roofing and siding shingles were sold throughout the country for commercial, educational, religious and residential buildings. Along with asbestos textiles, they produced asbestos yarns, carded fibres, theatre curtains, fibre felts, and asbestos papers and millboards (K&M Co ad booklet, 1910). With the advent of World War I in 1914, asbestos products were manufactured by K&M to supply the American troops with gloves, helmet linings, machine gaskets, heat shields and many other products. By 1916, K&M had expanded its operations to include \$2,000,000 in capital, twelve offices throughout the United States and London and an additional manufacturing plant in Canada.

Ambler flourished due to Dr. Mattison's influence. Over 400 homes were built for company workers and he developed and managed the electric and water companies. He hired stone masons from Italy to move to Ambler and build the houses designed by his architect, Milton Bean. All homes were rentals paid to Dr. Mattison and one's position in the company indicated where one lived. There were row houses, twins and smaller single family homes for the workers and management lived in larger homes on Highland Avenue and Trinity Place. The most elaborate homes along Lindenwold Terrace were adjacent to the Lindenwold estate, which sits at the highest point in the community. Many street names are linked to Dr. Mattison's Scottish heritage – Argyle, Bannockburn, Loch Alsh and Inverness, to name a few.

In 1888, Dr. Mattison purchased 22 acres of land which contained a messuage (dwelling) but had his architect, Milton Bean, design an elaborate Victorian mansion on the site in 1890 (Montoya). He

called it Lindenwold, “linden” for the linden trees he used in his landscape design and “wold”, meaning an upland area of open country. He added additional parcels to encompass over 400 acres that were used for his Lindenwold Farms operation. In 1912, he had Bean encase the mansion in stone to perhaps resemble Windsor Castle in England. The residential portion of the estate contained approximately 76 acres including the Castle, a carriage house, two gatehouses, a boathouse, a sunken garden, a gazebo and lake called Loch Linden, formal gardens, numerous statuary, decorative wrought iron gates and a stone wall along Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace. The landscape design was equally important to the grandeur of the property. His incorporation of the lake, sunken garden, formal gardens and woodlands throughout the property, as well as fountains and statuary, was typical of estates of this period and served to highlight wealth and stature. Dr. Mattison enjoyed traveling in Germany and Scotland and many of the European features of Lindenwold still exist today.

Dr. Mattison was married twice and had three children by his first wife, Esther, whom he married in 1874. Their second child, Esther Victoria, born in 1883, died at age four from typhoid fever. They also had two sons, Richard, Jr., born in 1879 and Royal, in 1892. Both Richard and Royal worked with their father in the business. In their early adult years, Richard lived on Cedar Lane and Royal at 8 Lindenwold Terrace. Richard never had children, but Royal had one son, Royal Jr.

Dr. Mattison’s business thrived until the Depression years. He was forced to move from the Castle around 1934 to 1 Lindenwold Terrace. Lindenwold eventually sold to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth (the present owners) in January, 1936. Dr. Mattison died in November of that year at the age of 85.

Although Dr. Mattison had a reputation for being a strict businessman who controlled not only Keasbey & Mattison but also the town of Ambler, he was known for his philanthropy. In 1899, he sent a letter to physicians in Philadelphia offering them free spring water from his Lindenwold estate to help combat the risks of typhoid fever (Merck’s Report, 1899), which his own daughter succumbed to at the age of four. In 1900, he and Henry Keasbey established a scholarship for students attending the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy (Journal of Medicine and Science, Oct. 1900). In 1898, in memory of his daughter, he began building Trinity Episcopal Church across Bethlehem Pike from Lindenwold. He continued to be a generous supporter of the church over the years. Dr. Mattison would allow community members to skate on Loch Alsh and Loch Linden each winter, a generous gesture that provided many good memories to residents over the years (Ambler Gazette, January 14, 1897).

Like many of the industrialists of this era, the Mattisons also maintained a residence in Newport, Rhode Island called Bushy Park, purchased in 1899, where they were listed in the Social Directory of Newport.

The property appears to meet National Register Criteria for its association with Dr. Mattison, who was a key figure in the development of Ambler Borough. Under his direction, 400 homes were built for company workers and he developed and managed the electric and water companies which helped the development of the town. Mattison represents a group of wealthy industrialists that created magnificent houses and lavish estates. In this scope, it is similar to Grey Towers Castle at Arcadia University in Glenside and Normandy Farms in Whitpain Township.

The property is also significant for its association with a regionally significant architect, Milton B. Bean. Lansdale architect, Milton B. Bean is chiefly known as the architect of the "Lindenwold Castle" for Dr. Richard V. Mattison of Ambler, PA. Bean also designed Trinity Memorial Church (1898-1901) in Ambler for Dr. Mattison, who commissioned the church in honor of his daughter, who

had died in 1887 of typhoid fever. A third building attributed to Bean in Ambler was the Ambler Gazette Building (which had been destroyed by fire in 1896 but for which Bean designed a new building, open in 1897). Bean's prolific career is reflected in numerous references from the Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builders Guide. (Biography from the American Architects and Buildings database). Bean, originally from nearby Lansdale, also designed the Hotel Tremont and the Music Hall theater in Lansdale; Norristown's Garrick Theater; many stately lawyers' houses in the county seats of Norristown and Doylestown; the Univest headquarters building in Souderton; a series of houses in Oak Park, Lansdale, summer hotels in central Pennsylvania, and scores of churches throughout Montgomery and Bucks counties.

He is chronicled in the National Register nomination for Quakertown, where he played an important role in the development of that town. The nomination states, "Milton Bean, a native of Lansdale, was active 1888-1914, and is most noted for his work in Ambler, with the grand Gothic Revival Mattison mansion "Lindenwold" and Trinity Memorial Church. He also designed important buildings in many suburban towns, such as Doylestown with the ca. 1893 High School (burned), Souderton with the distinctive 1893 J. M. Landis & Co. building (commercial block), 18 Main St.; as well as churches in Telford and St. Luke's UCC, Dublin, PA (Splain, Shelby W. Souderton Historic District, National Register draft application, January 2009). His Quakertown works include the 1894, 1st Reformed Church, W. Broad near 5th, a Victorian Romanesque and Queen Anne blend with characteristic stone base and 1st level, continued above the eave with brick and fanciful frame and slate cross gables and steeple. The blend of stone and brick was similar to the Dublin church above and the United Evangelical Church ca. 1897 that stood further east on West Broad, destroyed by fire in 1947. Bean also designed several residences in Quakertown, the ca. 1888 brick J. J. Clark Residence on 217 Juniper east of 3rd, a brick Queen Anne that features a tower, and the Dutch Colonial Seth Fisher Residence, designed ca. 1888 but not built until 1901 (205 E. Broad) (Philadelphia Record, PAB website). In 1911, with Franklin H. Bean, Milton applied to the borough to "erect a brick dwelling on north side W. Broad, east of J. S. Harley's." (Cassel, Pauline, Richland, the Manor, the Township and Quakertown, 1977, p.130) It was as much a matter of pride for the maturing town as the building owner for an architect to design its buildings."

Finally, Lindenwold is significant as an outstanding example of architecture and landscape architecture.

Physical Description & Integrity

Lindenwold is a 45 acre property located at 701 S. Bethlehem Pike, Ambler, PA, situated at the western edge of Upper Dublin Township. Originally 400 acres, it was acquired by Dr. Richard V. Mattison, owner of the Keasbey & Mattison Company in Ambler, PA in 1888. The original main residential section of the property, built between 1888 and 1912, remains virtually intact and contains the main house, referred to as The Castle, a garage/carriage house, two gatehouses, a boathouse flanked by fountains, a sunken garden, a formal lake called Loch Linden, a former barn, the original main entranceway, two secondary entranceways and the original stone wall which runs the length of Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace.

It also contains significant open spaces located on the north, west and east areas of the property, including scenic view corridors** along all three entranceways and at Loch Linden & the sunken garden area. Woodland areas remain along Bethlehem Pike, Lindenwold Terrace and the southern section of Loch Linden. Numerous pieces of statuary, fountains and traces of the front garden facing Bethlehem Pike remain on the grounds.

The property was owned by Dr. Mattison until 1936 when it was sold to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the present owners, to be used as an orphanage. During their ownership, numerous buildings were added to the property to provide for the care and education of the children. They include a chapel, convent, gymnasium, dormitories, administration and classroom facilities. The property is bordered by residential developments to the north, south and east and Bethlehem Pike to the west.

***A view corridor is defined as a line of sight (identified as to height, width and distance) of an observer looking toward an object of significance to the community (ie. ridgeline, river, historic building, etc.) or, the route that directs the viewer's attention.*

Criteria for Evaluation

In the determination of existing historic resources on the St. Mary's Villa property, we used the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the National Register of Historic Places. They include the following criteria:

Historic Significance

- the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, State, or the nation. It is achieved in several ways:
 - Association with events, activities, or patterns
 - Association with important persons
 - Distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form
 - Potential to yield important information.

Historic Context

- information about historic trends and properties grouped by an important theme in the history of a community, State, or the nation during a particular period of time (ie. Lindenwold connected to Ambler as a company town)

Historic Integrity

- the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period. Historic integrity is the composite of seven qualities: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.
- Not only must a property resemble its historic appearance, but it must also retain physical materials, design features, and aspects of construction dating from the period when it attained its significance. All seven qualities do not need to be present as long as the overall sense of past time & place is evident.

Historic resources are not limited to buildings but can include structures such as gazebos & fountains, sites such as open spaces, gardens and view corridors, and objects such as statuary, walls, sidewalks, lighting fixtures, etc.

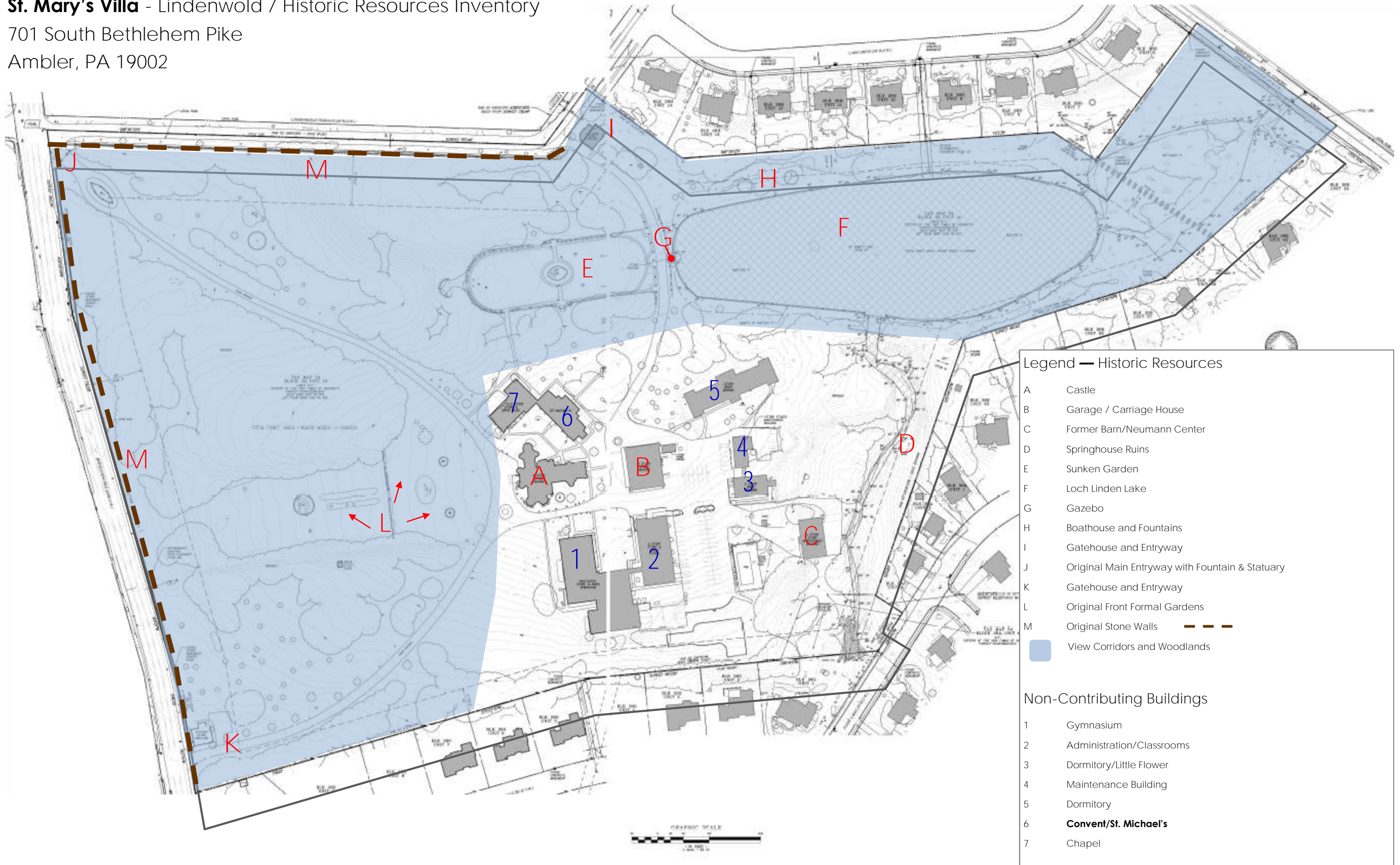
Historic Resources Photos

Keyed to Map

St. Mary's Villa - Lindenwold / Historic Resources Inventory

701 South Bethlehem Pike

Ambler, PA 19002



Legend — Historic Resources

- A Castle
- B Garage / Carriage House
- C Former Barn/Neumann Center
- D Springhouse Ruins
- E Sunken Garden
- F Loch Linden Lake
- G Gazebo
- H Boathouse and Fountains
- I Gatehouse and Entryway
- J Original Main Entryway with Fountain & Statuary
- K Gatehouse and Entryway
- L Original Front Formal Gardens
- M Original Stone Walls
- View Corridors and Woodlands

Non-Contributing Buildings

- 1 Gymnasium
- 2 Administration/Classrooms
- 3 Dormitory/Little Flower
- 4 Maintenance Building
- 5 Dormitory
- 6 **Convent/St. Michael's**
- 7 Chapel

A

Front View of Castle Facing East



A

View of Castle Facing Northeast



A
Front View of Castle
Facing Southeast



A
Front View of Castle
from Main Drive
Facing Southeast



B

Former Garage/Carriage House



C

Former Barn



D

Spring House Ruins



E
Sunken Garden
East End



E

Sunken Garden

Facing East Toward Loch Linden



E

**Sunken Garden
Facing Southwest**



E
Sunken Garden
Facing West



F

Loch Linden

Facing East From Gazebo



F
Loch Linden
Facing Southeast



F
Loch Linden
Facing Southeast
From Lindenwold Terrace Entrance



G

Gazebo/Detail of Gate

Loch Linden

Dr. R. V. M. 1896



G
Gazebo
Facing Southeast



G
Gazebo
from Lindenwold Terrace Entrance



H Boathouse with Fountains



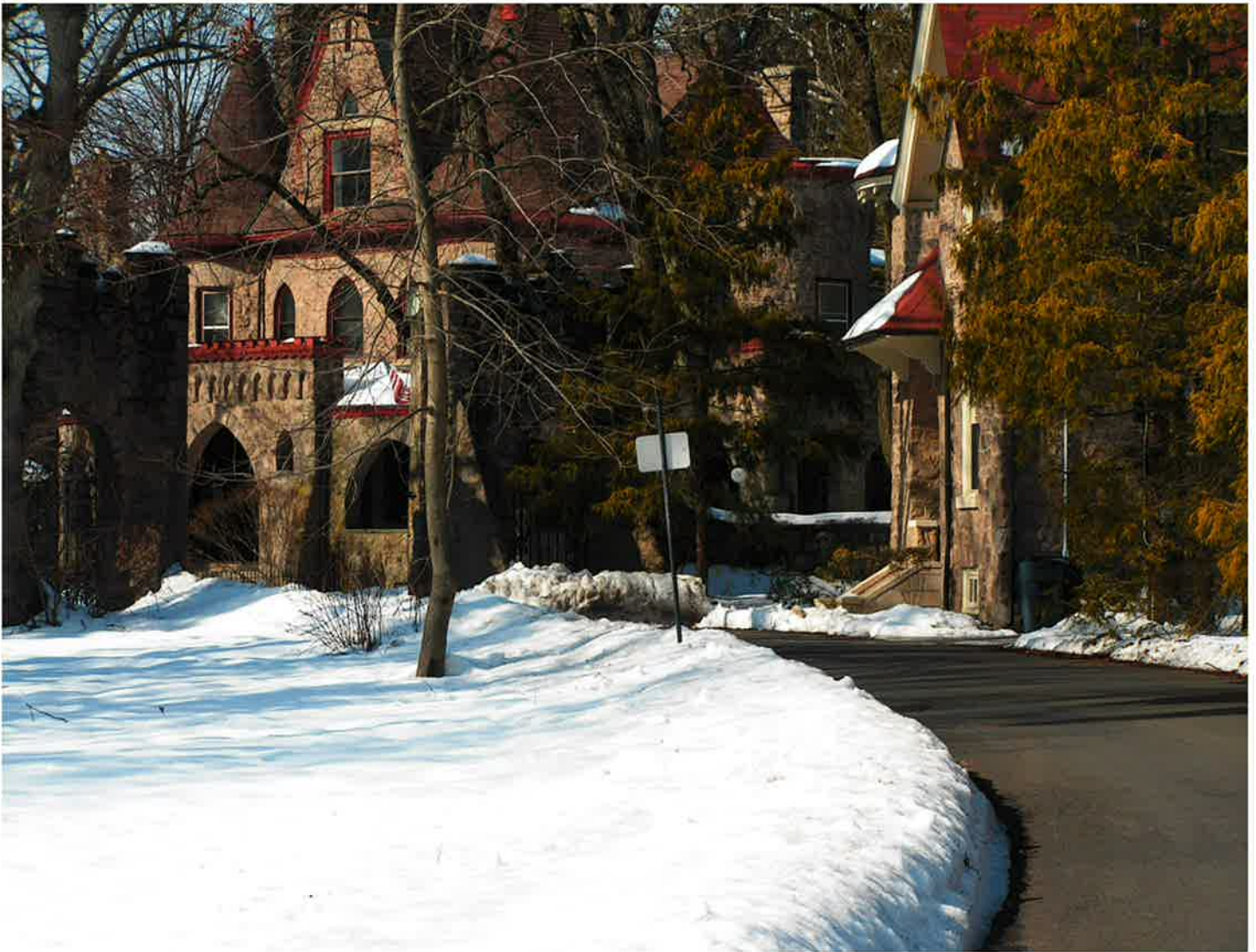
I
Gatehouse & Entryway
Facing North toward Lindenwold Terrace



I

Gatehouse & Entryway

Facing North toward Lindenwold Terrace



I
Gatehouse & Entryway
from Lindenwold Terrace



J

Original Main Entrance at Bethlehem Pike & Lindenwold Terrace



J

Main Entryway with Fountain & Statuary



J

Main Entryway with Fountain & Statuary



J

Main Entryway with Statuary



K

Gatehouse & Entryway

Bethlehem Pike

(wrought iron gates are in storage)



K
Gatehouse
Bethlehem Pike Entryway



L

**Original Front Gardens
facing Bethehem Pike**



L

**Original Front Gardens
Facing West toward Bethlehem Pike**



L
Original Front Gardens
From Front of Castle



M Walls



Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking northeast from Mattison Avenue

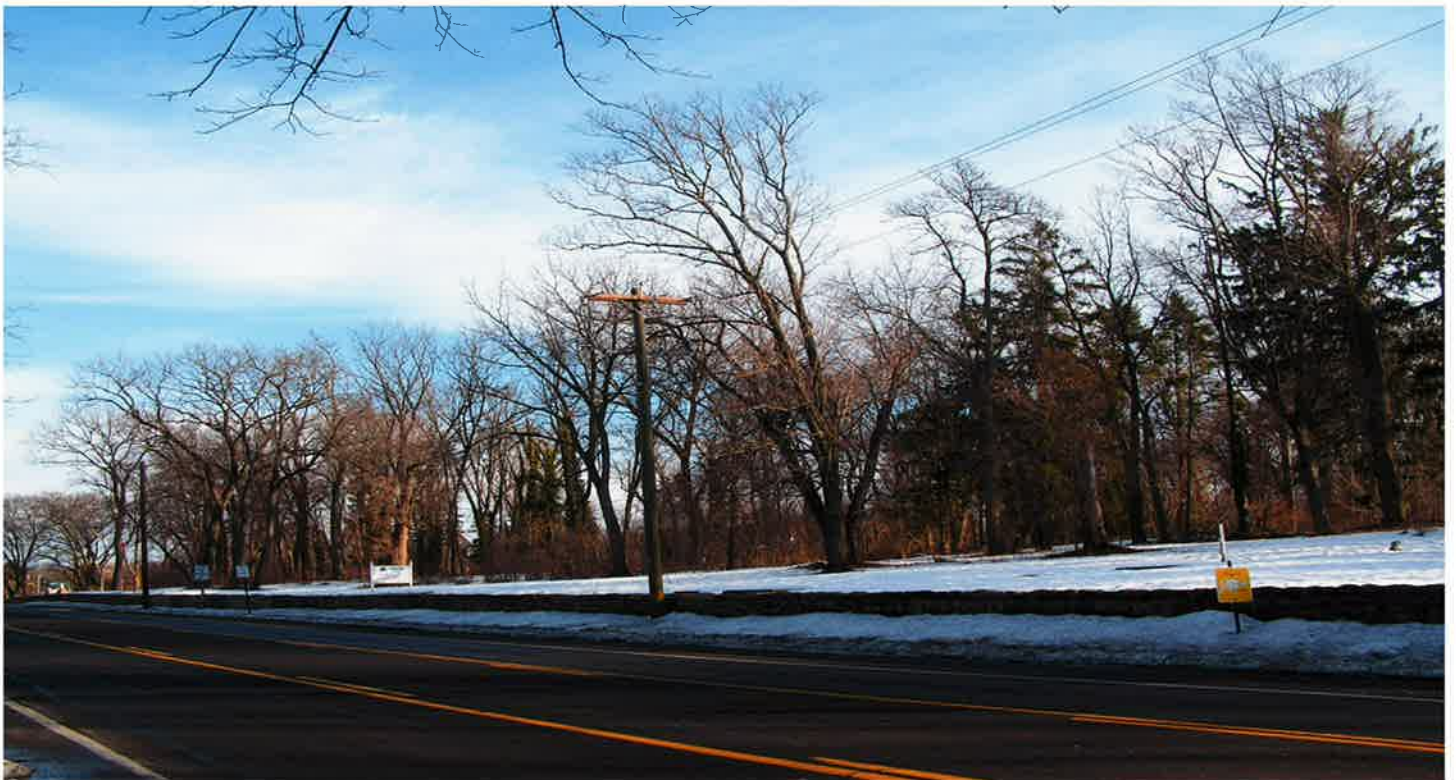


Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking southeast from Lindenwold Avenue

M Walls



Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking northeast from Church Street



Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking northeast

M Walls



Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking southeast



Wall along Bethlehem Pike looking southeast near Mattison Avenue

M Walls



Wall along Lindenwold Terrace looking east



Wall along Lindenwold Terrace looking southeast

M Walls



Wall along Lindenwold Terrace looking west



Wall along Lindenwold Terrace looking southwest

View Corridors



Castle and Original Front Gardens and Woodlands from Mattison Avenue

View Corridors



Front of Castle westward toward Bethlehem Pike



Main Driveway from Castle toward Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace

View Corridors



Secondary Entrance looking from Castle toward Bethlehem Pike



Main Driveway toward Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace

View Corridors



Main Entryway from Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace with Woodlands



Main Driveway toward Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace

View Corridors



Main Entryway from Bethlehem Pike and Lindenwold Terrace with Woodlands



Open Space and Woodlands along Main Entryway facing northeast

View Corridors



Woodlands along Main Entryway



Secondary Drive looking northeast toward Loch Linden

View Corridors



View toward Loch Linden and Gazebo facing northeast



View toward Loch Linden and Gazebo facing southeast

View Corridors



View westward at Sunken Garden and Woodlands along Lindenwold Terrace



View toward Loch Linden and Gazebo facing south

View Corridors



Secondary Drive from Bethlehem Pike looking east toward Castle



Secondary Drive from Bethlehem Pike northeast toward Front Gardens

View Corridors



Secondary Drive from Bethlehem Pike looking east toward Castle



Secondary Drive from Bethlehem Pike northeast toward Castle

View Corridors



View of Front Gardens and Woodlands facing northwest



Woodlands near Front Gardens facing northwest

View Corridors



View of Front Gardens and Woodlands southeast toward Bethlehem Pike



Woodlands at west end of Sunken Garden facing northeast from Main Drive

Statuary & Fountains Throughout Grounds



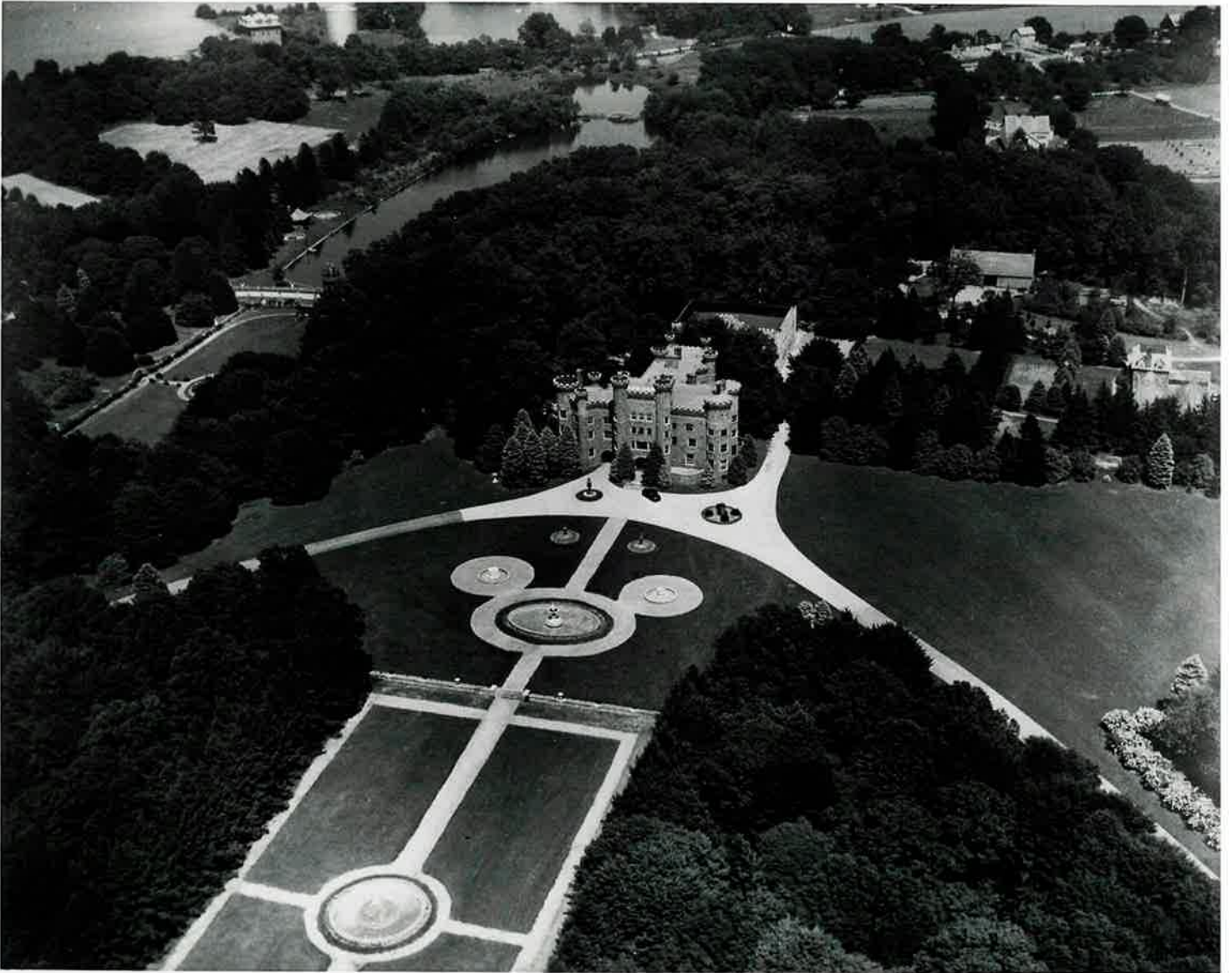
Statuary & Fountains Throughout Grounds



Statuary & Fountains Throughout Grounds



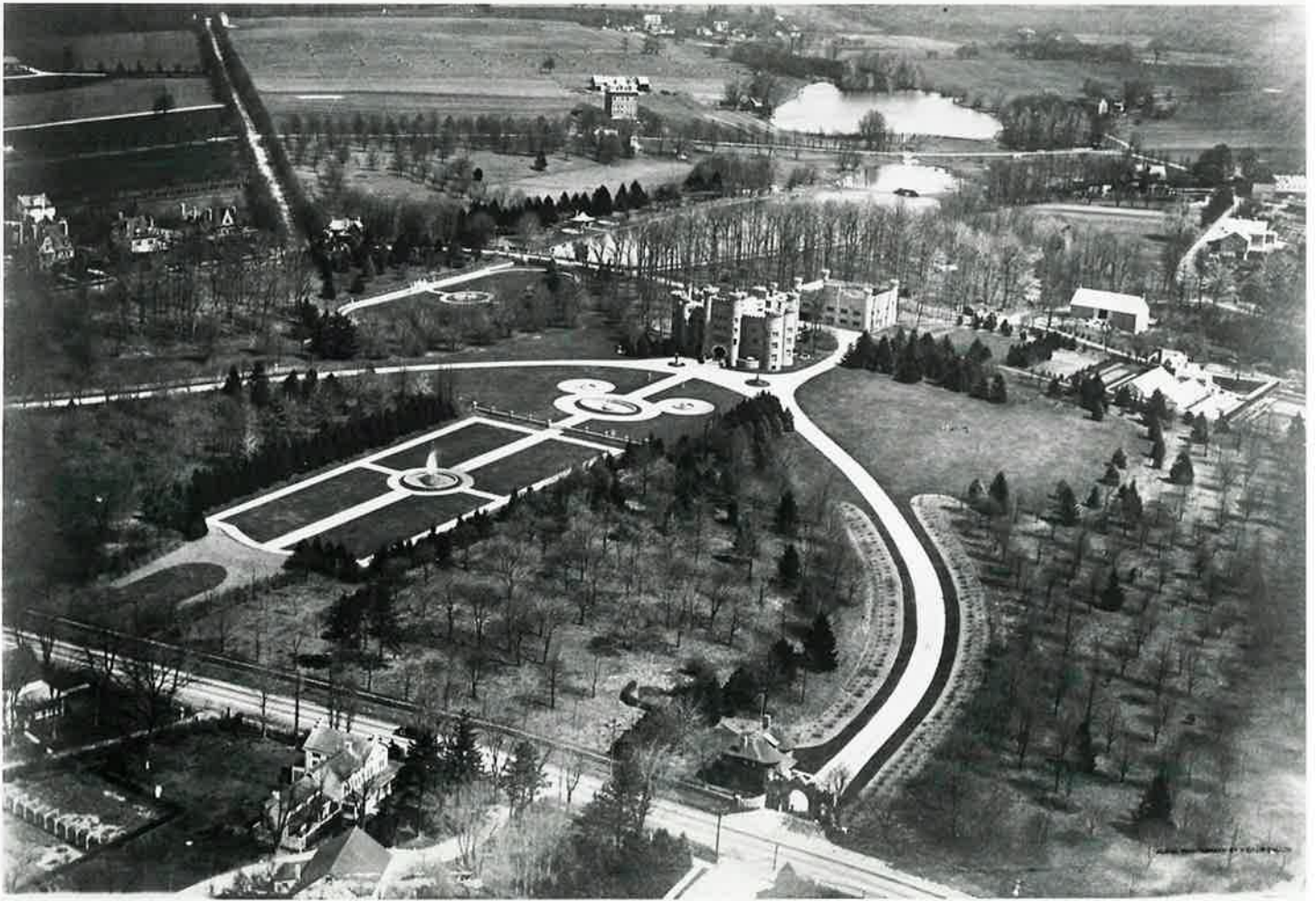
Historic Photographs
of
Lindenwold
c. 1915



Lindenwold Estate c. 1915

Bethlehem Pike

Ambler, PA



Lindenwold Estate c. 1915

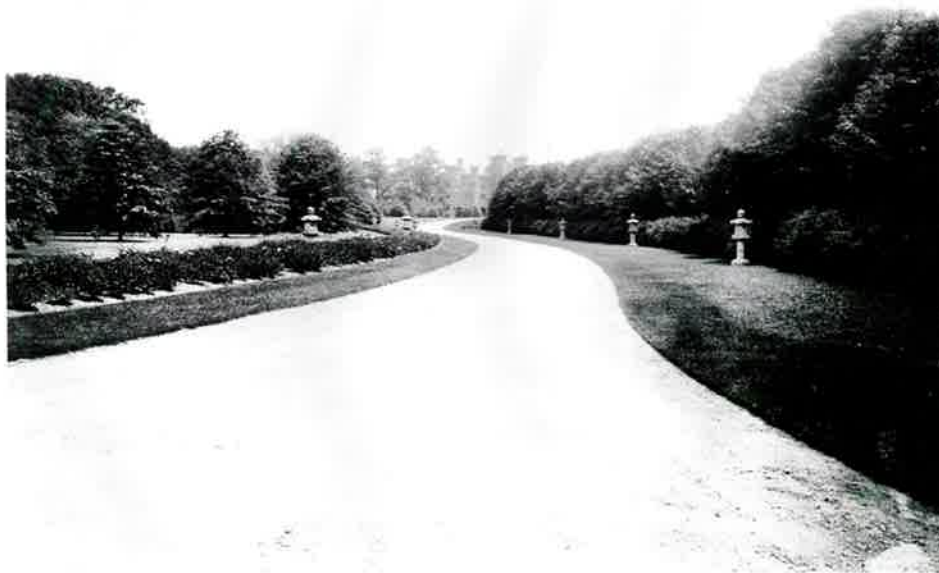
Bethlehem Pike

Ambler, PA



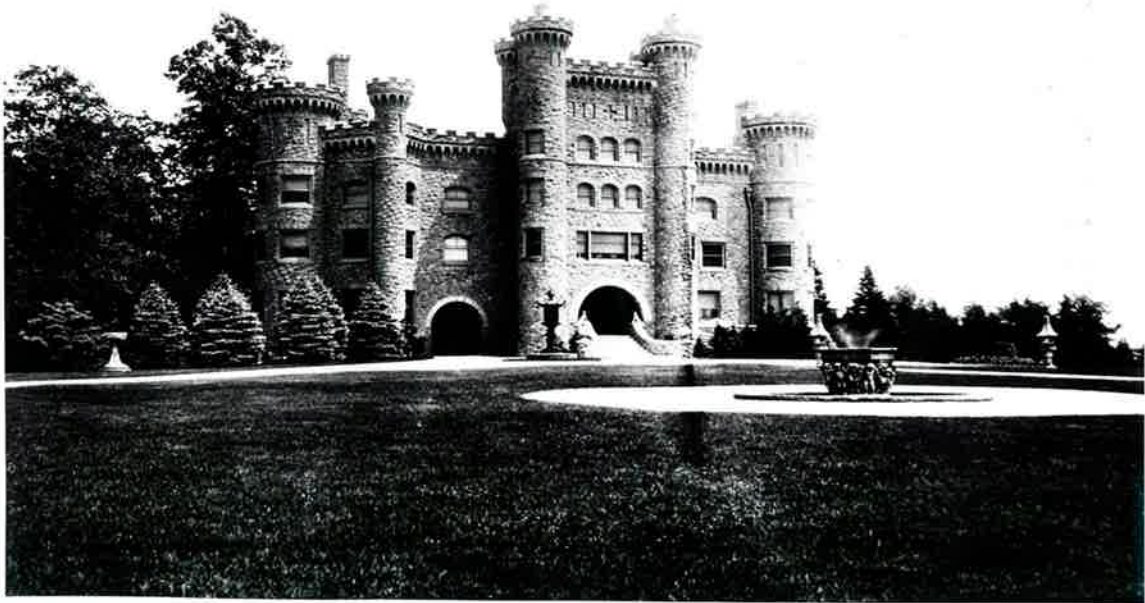
Main Entranceway at
Bethlehem Pike & Lindenwold Terrace

c. 1915



Main Driveway from Bethlehem Pike & Lindenwold Terrace

c. 1915

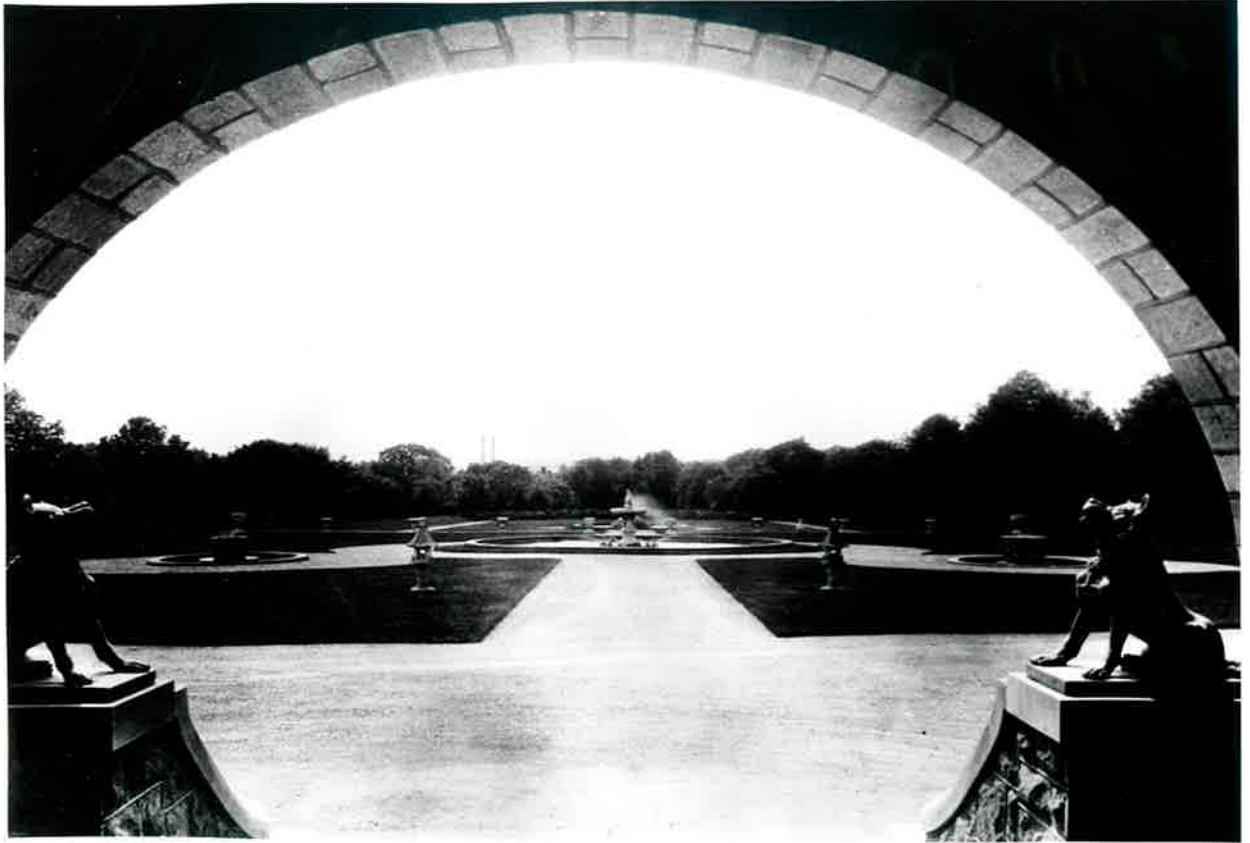


Lindenwold Castle Front View Looking Southeast

C. 1915



Lindenwold Castle Front View Looking Northeast c. 1915



View of Gardens from Front Entrance c. 1915



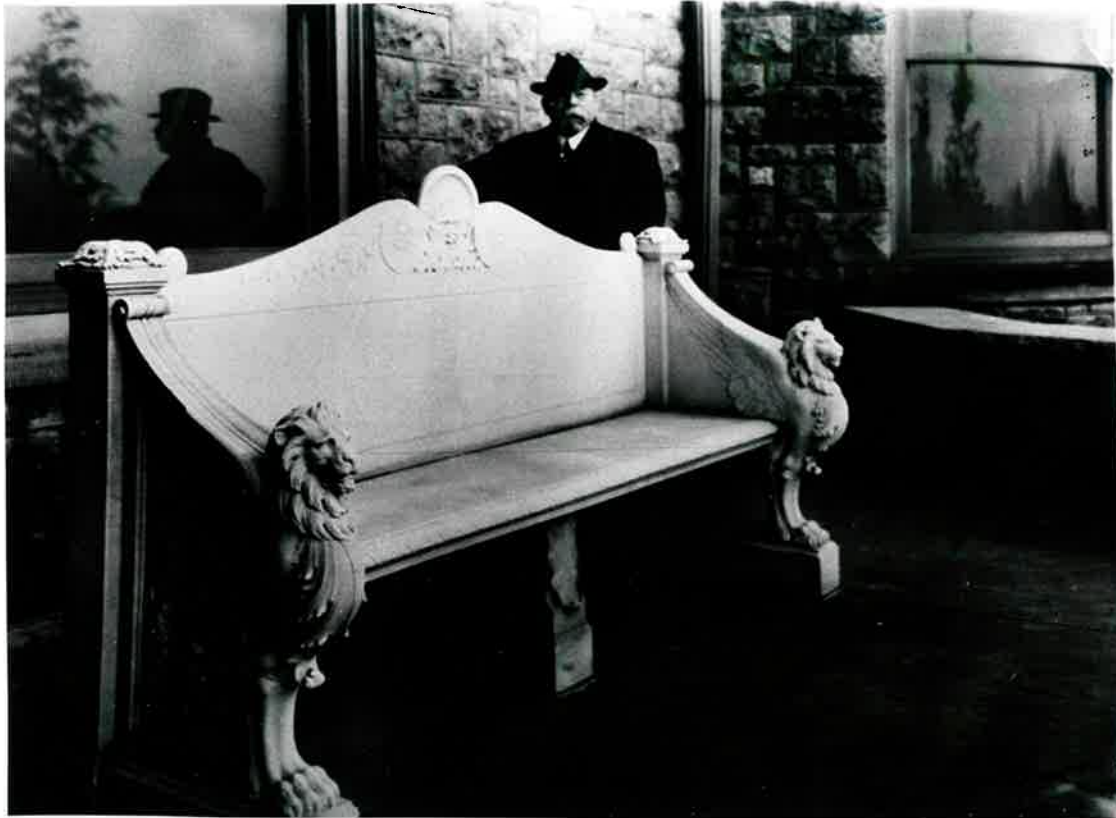
Driveway through Sunken Garden & Loch Linden c. 1915



Main Entrance Hall & Staircase c. 1915



Dining Room c. 1915



Dr. Mattison at Lindenwold Castle c. 1915



Dr. Mattison in his office at Lindenwold Castle c. 1915

Non-Contributing Buildings Photos

Keyed to Map

1

Gymnasium



2

Administration/Classrooms



3

Dormitory/Little Flower



4

Maintenance Building



5

Dormitory



6

Convent/St. Michael's



7

Chapel



Summary of Findings

St. Mary's Villa, historically known as "Lindenwold", is unique in that the original buildings, structures, sites and objects constructed by Dr. Mattison between 1888 and 1912, remain virtually intact. Since the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth purchased the property from Dr. Mattison in 1936, they have maintained the history and historic architecture while incorporating newer structures into their operations over the years. While there are numerous historic areas and features of the property that have become overgrown or in need of repair, the overall integrity of the historic elements is strong and easily identified when compared with historic photographs.

The property also serves as the centerpiece of a potential historic district related to the company town created by the establishment of the Keasbey & Mattison Company in Ambler. Its relationship to the surrounding residential areas in Upper Dublin Township and Ambler Borough and the commercial area in Ambler Borough is significant. The fact that the historic resources have remained virtually intact over the years, especially with the retention of the original statuary and landscape elements, is impressive. Therefore, every effort should be made to retain these features of the property in future development plans. The property warrants nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as an individual property, but also as a critical component of a broader historic district. It also merits a preservation plan at the municipal level for the property to insure that the integrity and significance of the site is not only retained but enhanced. The utilization of conservation and facade easements to protect various resources should be considered as part of a preservation plan. Listing on the National Register may aid future owners economically as preservation of historic resources has proven to be closely connected to the long term sustainability of a community. We encourage Upper Dublin Township to require a preservation plan for this property to attempt to preserve the historic resources outlined in this report.

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