

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Murphy, Dennis J., House at Ogden Farm

other names/site number Ogden Farm, Mill Farm

2. Location

street & number 641 Mitchell's Lane

not for publication

city or town Middletown

vicinity

state Rhode Island

code RI

county Newport

code 005

zip code 02842

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Edward Henderson 10/23/2007
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

| Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Murphy House at Ogden Farm
Name of Property

Newport County, Rhode Island
County and State

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.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2 | 0 | buildings |
| | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| | 0 | objects |
| 2 | 0 | total |

Name of related multiple property listings

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation STONE: rubble

walls WOOD: clapboard

WOOD: shingle

roof ASPHALT: shingle

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Agriculture

Period of Significance

c 1900

Significant Dates

c 1900

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Zone | Easting | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | Easting | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joan and Richard Youngken

organization Youngken Associates date August 28, 2007

street & number 38 Sea View Avenue telephone 401-789-5805

city or town Wakefield state Rhode Island zip code 02879

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert Roklan

street & number 5 Marin Street telephone 401-338-4804

city or town Newport state Rhode Island zip code 02840

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend 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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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DESCRIPTION

The Murphy House at Ogden Farm is a vernacular Queen Anne-style house, set in farmland on Mitchell's Lane in a rural section of Middletown, Rhode Island. The house sits on a rise back from and east of the public road, shaded by large beech trees and surrounded by open fields. The access drive for the house runs from the road between stone piers in a low stone wall and is bordered by shade trees which form an informal avenue. Nearby mid-to-late 20th century barns and other outbuildings in various states of deterioration to the west of the farmhouse are not on the farmhouse property and are not included in this nomination.

Built on a rubble foundation, the Murphy House is a two-by-four bay, wood-framed, shingle and clapboard-clad, 2½-story house with an ell on the west elevation. The cross-gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has a central brick chimney. A second chimney is located on the end of the kitchen ell. The east-facing exterior façade has an end gable and a porch spanning its width under a hip roof supported by turned posts and with spool work screens and brackets. The porch originally wrapped around the house to the south and north elevations, but these portions were removed following hurricane damage in 1938. Simple decorative barge boards, which include peak grillwork, are set at each of the gable ends.

The exterior sheathing of the building is clapboard on the first floor with decorative shingle work above, including saw tooth and staggered shingle work in bands. The shingle work is flared at the second floor level above the clapboards. A two-story, flat-roofed bay with large tripartite windows on each level accents the south elevation. An oriel, marking the stair landing, is set on the north side. Windows are primarily two-over-one sash. Exterior doors are paneled, some in vertical four-panel configurations, others in horizontal panel configurations typical of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A French door once provided access from the front parlor to the porch. This feature was replaced with a tall window, presumably after the 1938 hurricane damaged the porch.

The Murphy House has a side-hall plan; on the first floor are double parlors, with a dining room set behind the stair hall; the kitchen is located at the rear of the house.

The primary entrance, with a painted wood and glass paneled door, is set under the front porch; it leads into the stairhall, with the staircase on the right and double parlors on the left. The staircase has varnished turned balusters and newel posts. A multi-paned, stained glass window is located at the mid-flight landing in the oriel on the north wall. On the left side of the stairhall are doors to the two parlors. These are connected by a varnished and paneled, double-leaf pocket door in a wide opening. The westernmost of the two parlors has a varnished wood fireplace surround with mirror overmantel on the north wall, and a semi-octagonal projecting bay on the south wall. A door at the west end of the stairhall leads into the dining room. Doors from this room

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lead into the west parlor and into the kitchen, at the west end of the house. Along the north side of the kitchen are (from east to west) a pantry, bathroom, and back staircase. An enclosed porch is located at the west end of the south elevation.

The second floor has two bedrooms off the south side of the stairhall, and a hall down the center of the house to the west end. Three more bedrooms (one on the south and two on the north side of the hall) are located off this hall. At the end of the hall there is a bathroom on the south wall and a back stair on the north wall. The third floor, accessible only by the back stair, has a staff hall at the west end, over the kitchen, and four bedrooms to the east, over the parlors, dining room, and stairhall.

Interior features include varnished hardwood floors; paneled doors; window and door moldings (some stained and varnished, some painted) with bull's eye corner blocks; turn-of-the-century brass door and window hardware; and window seats in the west parlor and bedroom above. All of the interior walls and ceilings are plastered. The kitchen has a beaded board wainscoting.

The interior, particularly the first floor parlors, dining room, and stair hall, has been little changed since the house was constructed. A wood fireplace surround with mirror overmantel, recently removed from the second parlor, will be replaced in the current restoration of the farmhouse. The kitchen was updated with a bathroom enclosure in the mid-20th century, filling in a back stair hall in the northwest portion of the rear ell. This likely occurred with the conversion of the second floor to apartment use. The upper floors were converted to separate apartment use in 1929 with the addition of a kitchen and the partitioning of some rooms. With the exception of the removal of part of the front porch on the south and north sides of the farmhouse and the enclosure of a rear porch off the kitchen, the building is intact.

There is one outbuilding on the property. Just north of the farmhouse is a wood-framed, two-bay, single-story, hip-roofed, early 20th century garage.

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Index to Photographs

The information in numbers 1 through 5 is the same for all photographs.

1. Murphy House at Ogden Farm
2. Newport County, Rhode Island
3. Richard Youngken, photographer
4. May 2007
5. Negatives on file at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903

The information in numbers 6 and 7 for each photograph follows:

6. House: east (façade) and south elevations, view looking northwest
7. Photograph 1

6. House: south and west elevations, view looking northeast
7. Photograph 2

6. House: north and east (façade) elevations, view looking southwest
7. Photograph 3

6. House interior: view of stair hall, looking northeast
7. Photograph 4

6. House interior: second floor parlor/bedroom window bay, looking south
7. Photograph 5

6. House interior: pocket doors between the first floor parlors, looking northeast.
7. Photograph 6

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Murphy House (c.1900) is a good example of a large vernacular Queen Anne farmhouse, embodying the taste and aspirations of its prosperous farmer-owner. Through its location at Ogden Farm, the Murphy House is associated with a historically important agricultural property.

The farmhouse was constructed for Dennis Joseph Murphy, a second-generation farmer in Middletown, who purchased the Ogden Farm in 1895 and added to and enlarged an existing farm complex and its dairy operation. The architect of the house has not been identified (though the house resembles in some respects houses in Middletown and nearby Newport designed by J. D. Johnston, a Newport builder-architect). In its form and details, the Murphy House is a useful example of the late vernacular Queen Anne. It is well preserved and retains the hallmarks of simplified Queen Anne--its simple side-hall/double parlor floor plan, two-story cross-gable massing, shingled and clapboarded exterior, decorative bargeboards, bracketed porch with turned columns, oriel and colored glass. With its five second-floor bedrooms and additional garret space, the Murphy House is a substantial rural dwelling, a working element in the operation of a farm, likely providing housing both for the Murphy family and some farm workers.

Further, the Murphy House is associated with a historically significant farm. The adjoining farm acreage and the ruins and remnants of several farm buildings have been separated in ownership from the Murphy House and are not here nominated. However, they are well preserved and are substantially protected by open space easements, and together with the Murphy House, they form an open agricultural landscape, a rare survivor in heavily suburbanized Middletown.

The Ogden Farm:

The land surrounding the Murphy House is a well preserved agricultural landscape, one of the last in Middletown. Known as the Ogden Farm, this land (while not nominated) is an important component of the significance of the Murphy House, as it provides an historic setting and helps to document the house as the center of a working farm.

During the 18th century, Newport's wealthy merchants developed large farms in the outlying towns of Middletown and Portsmouth to provide food and other staples for city life. Several of these became substantial country houses and farms for Newport's urban elite. In the 19th century, particularly following the Civil War, with the romanticizing of rural and farm life by Andrew Jackson Downing and others, such as Robert Morris Copeland, farms for the Newport summer colony became more numerous. Some of these Middletown and Portsmouth estates were "model" farms based upon the latest agricultural practice, engineering and technology,

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such as those owned by Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt (Oakland Farm) and H.A.C. Taylor (Glen Farm). Ogden Farm was a modest version of this phenomenon.

The farm is named for its first developer, Edward Ogden (1808-1872) of New York, whose Newport summer house was on Narragansett Avenue. Known at the time of Ogden's ownership as Mill Farm, the property was managed by Alanson Peckham and his wife and provided Ogden's Newport house with some dairy products, eggs, and poultry, as well as income to supplement the farm's expenses. According to its account books, Mill Farm produced garden vegetables and staples, such as oats, straw, hay, and corn for sale. It was a working farm, managed by a farm hobbyist, in the tradition of Downing and Copeland. After Edward Ogden's death, the property became known as the Ogden Farm.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Col. George Waring was closely associated with Ogden Farm, although whether as owner, manager, or lessee is not clear. According to various accounts, Waring moved to Newport in the late 1860s with the intention of becoming a "market-gardener," an endeavor centered at Ogden Farm while he lived in nearby Newport. Here he became interested in dairy cattle, and was a founding member and first secretary of the American Jersey Cattle Club. During his tenure at Ogden Farm, Waring wrote "The Handy-Book of Husbandry: A Guide for Farmers Young and Old," ("by George E. Waring, Jr. of Ogden Farm") and "A Farmer's Vacation." *Scribner's Magazine* published "Wedding at Ogden Farm" in 1876, the year before Waring left Ogden Farm. Waring is known to have laid clay drainage pipe for field improvements, some of which is still extant. Waring's involvement also marks the development of a dairy herd at the farm. Waring's writing gave the farm a minor celebrity status within local agricultural circles of the period.

The Murphy Family:

In 1895, Dennis J. Murphy (1861-1915) purchased Ogden Farm. Murphy was a prosperous and progressive dairy farmer. He built his new farmhouse across the drive from the site of the original farmhouse during his first years of ownership, and by 1907 he had completed several barns, dairy barns, sheds, stables and other outbuildings as well. Under Murphy's ownership the farm expanded from 74 acres to 114 acres on Mitchell's Lane. (With his brother Patrick, Dennis Murphy owned another 200 acres elsewhere in Middletown.)

By 1920, when Murphy's son was farming the land, the complex included five wood-frame barns and a garage to the north of the farmhouse. A late-19th-century wood frame tack room and a later steel framed barn and the ruins of several other outbuildings remain at Ogden Farm (on land adjacent to the Murphy House).

Like other Middletown farmers, the Murphy family specialized in dairy products and fresh produce for the markets of nearby Newport, which had developed into a substantial summer colony. The Murphys stabled

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horses for some Newport summer visitors and operated a livery service to the steamship terminal in Newport. In the mid-20th century, the farm included a roadside farm stand, no longer extant.

Three generations of Murphys continued to operate the farm into the mid-20th century. Dennis J. Murphy (1933–2003), the grandson of the house's builder operated the dairy farm and also served on the Middletown Town Council. He later became the first director of Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management and was responsible for the state's major land acquisitions for parks and open space.

In the late 20th century (a few nurseries notwithstanding), most of Middletown's historic farms have been converted into house lots. The Ogden Farm acreage has been protected by easements and still provides an appropriate landscaped setting for the Murphy House.

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Mill Farm Account Book, 1863-1869. In the collection of the Baker Library, Harvard University, Mss:1, 1863-1869, M645, Cambridge, MA.

"Murphy, Dennis Joseph," in *Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island*, Volume III, p. 1840-41. J.H. Beers & Co., Chicago, 1908.

"Murphy, Dennis J," obituary in *Providence Journal*, November 26, 2003.

Nebiker, Walter. *Preliminary Survey Report, Town of Middletown*. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, Providence, 1979.

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Duncan Peterson

Marcia Peterson Blackburn

Rusty and Karen Ferris

Grace Thomas

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Waring, George E., Jr., "A Farmer's Vacation," in *Scribner's Monthly Illustrated Magazine*. Reprinted (with additions) by James R. Osgood & Company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1875.

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New Topographical Atlas of Surveys, Southern Rhode Island, Everts and Richards, Philadelphia, 1895.

Atlas of City of Newport and Towns of Middletown and Portsmouth, Rhode Island, L.J. Richards and Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1907.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes Middletown Assessors Map 124, Lot 108, a 2.31 acre parcel containing the farmhouse and adjoining garage.

Boundary Justification

The land nominated with the Murphy House is the lot on which it sits. The acreage of the Ogden Farm, which the Murphys farmed for much of the 20th century, has been separated from the house. The land is, however, protected by easements and forms a suitable setting for the farmhouse. Though not here nominated, the acreage still provides a visual document of the house's significance as the headquarters of a large farm.

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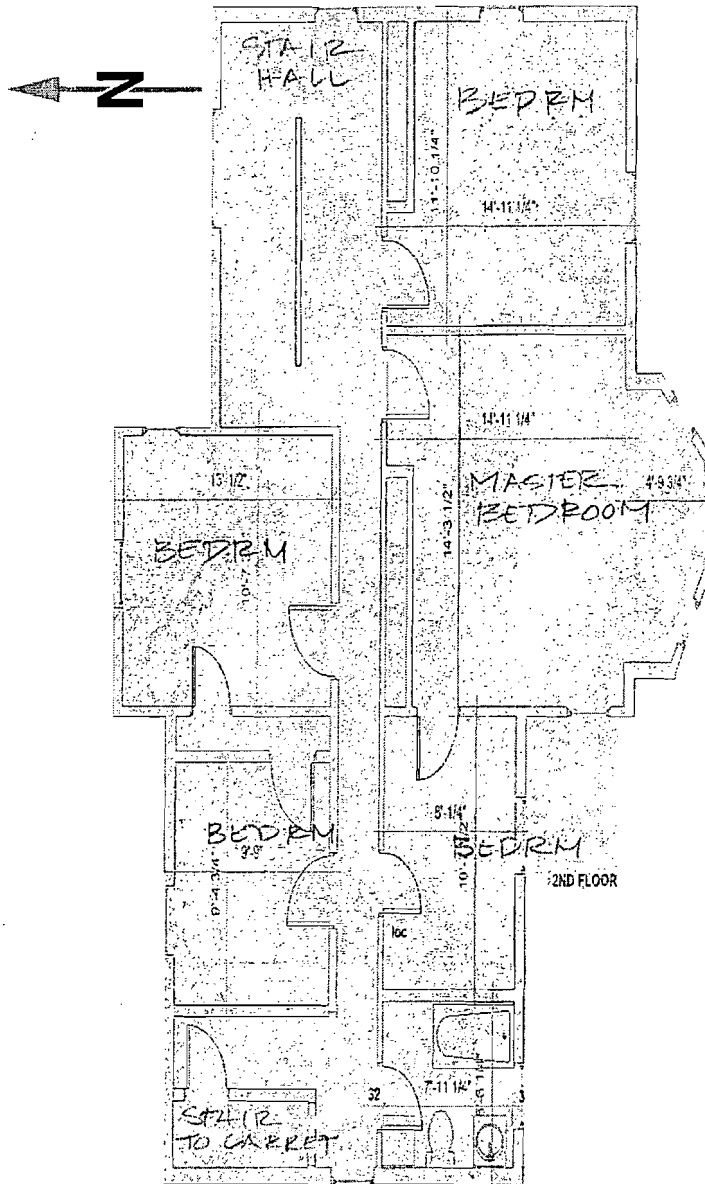
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Second floor plan
Not to scale



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Third floor plan
Not to scale

