

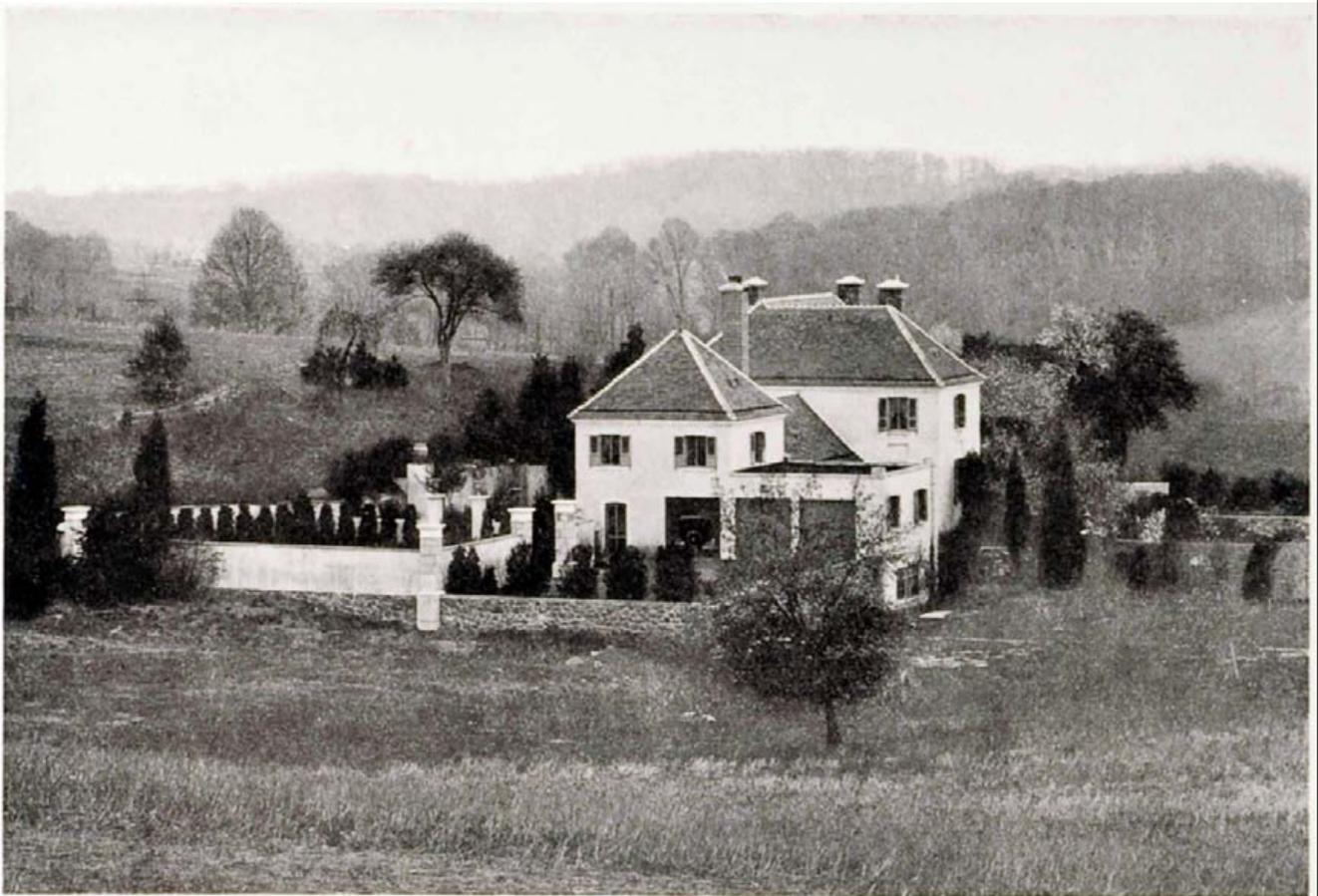
### 4.3 Ives-du Pont Estate, 1303-1307 Snuff Mill Road (CRS #N-1114)

This dwelling complex includes the circa 1928 Ives-du Pont House, a circa 1859 vernacular farmhouse, and a circa 1960 twin gatehouse. The Ives-du Pont House faces north onto Old Kennett Road and is not visible from the public right-of-way. The property owner refused permission to photograph the Ives-du Pont House; therefore, the assessment of that building is limited.

#### Description

The earliest building on the property is the Michael Kane House, a vernacular dwelling erected at the southwest corner of Snuff Mill Road and Old Kennett Road circa 1859. The extant two-story frame building has a side gable roof, clapboard siding with corner boards, and a parged stone foundation (see Plates 4.11-4.14). The north-facing front façade is two bays wide and has a wood panel door; all windows are 2/2 double-hung sash with plain board surrounds and have been covered with plywood. The east elevation is two bays wide, and the rear (south) elevation only has windows on the east end. The west elevation has smaller window openings. The ruins of the two-story original parged stone dwelling are extant at the building's west end; the north wall of the dwelling is largely intact and contains a brick fireplace and chimney (see Plate 4.13). The other walls have been removed except for the stone foundation. The frame wing was substantially reconstructed sometime after the stone section collapsed, circa 1985; it is maintained but vacant. A random coursed fieldstone wall with roughly crenellated top extends along the roadway at the corner of the property (see Plate 4.11). The wall's similarity to the one at the neighboring Kane-Chandler House suggests a late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century date of construction.

Built in 1928, the Ives-du Pont House is a two-story, French Eclectic-style residence with multiple additions. The building has a stucco exterior and a hipped slate roof. A photograph of the building circa 1931, included as Figure 4.3, indicates that, as built, the house had an L-shape plan, with the front façade facing north and the ell extending to the rear (south). A one-story gabled kitchen wing on the north elevation of the ell is connected to a two-story hipped garage with second floor living space. Attached to this wing's west elevation is a one-story, two-bay garage with flat roof. The one-story garage had a full basement with basement-level windows on its west elevation. A comparison of the historic photograph with a current aerial view from a similar vantage point (see Figure 4.4) indicates that a large two-story addition has been erected at the south end of the main section; this addition projects east from the plane of the original section, forming another ell. A modern semi-circular glass stair tower with metal framing is located within the ell. The two-story hipped garage has been altered on its north elevation by the enclosure of the original garage door, which has been



*Residence*—ALBERT ELY IVES, Architect  
Wilmington, Delaware



**Figure 4.3:**

Residence - Albert Ely Ives, Architect.

From Allen L. Lauritsen Co., *Brochure of Photographs*, 1930[?].



**Plate:**  
4.11

**Photo View:**  
West

**Photographer:**  
Jennifer Leynes

**Date:**  
November 19,  
2009

Michael Kane House (1303 Snuff Mill Road). The ruin of the stone wing is visible at right in photo. Note the low stone wall in the foreground, which extends along Old Kennett and Snuff Mill roads.



**Plate:**  
4.12

**Photo View:**  
Northeast

**Photographer:**  
Jennifer Leynes

**Date:**  
November 19,  
2009

Rear elevation of the Michael Kane House.



**Plate:**  
4.13

**Photo View:**  
Northeast

**Photographer:**  
Glenn Modica

**Date:**  
May 6, 2008

Ruin of stone wing, Michael Kane House. A brick chimney is centered in the standing north wall.



**Plate:**  
4.14

**Photo View:**  
Northeast

**Photographer:**  
Glenn Modica

**Date:**  
May 6, 2008

West elevation of the Michael Kane House.

replaced by a standard door. A greenhouse has been erected at the basement level of the one-story garage, and a secondary storage building has been erected north of the garage.

The entry drive curves uphill from Snuff Mill Road toward the Ives-du Pont House, ending in a circular driveway surrounded by tall stuccoed walls in front of the residence. An opening in the curved walls provides access to the garage area. Stone walls enclose the garage area and are located in the gardens at the rear of the house. Both the historic view and current aerial views (see Figure 4.5) indicate that the property contains elaborate formal gardens and water features; however, access to the grounds was not granted during the survey.

The gatehouse is located southwest of the Kane House, on the north side of the driveway (Plates 4.15-4.16). Erected circa 1960, the duplex is comprised of two gable front dwellings connected by a central three-bay garage. The one-and-one-half-story dwellings have stucco exteriors and an interior end chimney with terra cotta pots in the gable end; the side elevations have gabled dormers, and shed dormers extend along the roofline above the garage. All dormers are clad in clapboard siding. The garage bays have a side gable roof with gabled dormers containing 6/6 double-hung sash windows.

#### Applicable Historic Context

Piedmont Zone; Industrialization and Early Urbanization, 1830-1880 ±; Urbanization and Early Suburbanization, 1880-1940 ±; Settlement Patterns and Demographic Change; Architecture, Engineering and Decorative Arts.

#### Evaluation

In 1859, Michael Kane acquired a 1.19-acre parcel on Old Kennett Road from David W. Taylor and built the existing farmhouse (NCCRD 1859). Snuff Mill Road, which was laid out in the 1850s, apparently divided the parcel. According to the 1860 census, Kane was a 45-year-old laborer who lived on the property with his wife Mary and their two children, Alice and James (U.S. Census 1860). Kane subsequently acquired an adjacent 11.5-acre parcel on the east side of Snuff Mill Road from David W. Taylor in 1864, and by 1870 Kane reported his occupation as a farmer with real estate valued at \$3,000, up from \$250 in 1860 (NCCRD 1864; U.S. Census 1860, 1870). Kane sold both properties in 1874 to Connor Cooney, who built a second residence on the parcel east of Snuff Mill Road (NCCRD 1874; Hopkins 1881).

In 1880, Cooney acquired an adjacent 30-acre parcel on Old Kennett Road, extending west to the Center Mill Road intersection and subsequently subdivided and sold a 17-acre tract from his holdings in 1884 to Daniel Lynch. The tract sold to Lynch contained property on both sides of the



**Plate:**  
4.15

**Photo View:**  
Northwest

**Photographer:**  
Jennifer Leynes

**Date:**  
November 19,  
2009

Gatehouse, Ives-du Pont House Complex. Dense vegetation nearly obscures the twin residences, which are connected by the central three-car garage.



**Plate:**  
4.16

**Photo View:**  
Southwest

**Photographer:**  
Jennifer Leynes

**Date:**  
November 19,  
2009

Gatehouse. The north residence is at center in this view.

southern segment of Snuff Mill Road, including both the Kane and Cooney houses (NCCRD 1880, 1884). The Kane House is depicted on an 1893 map of Christiana Hundred but does not have a name associated with it (Baist 1893). The property changed hands several more times during the early twentieth century before being assimilated into the neighboring Ives-du Pont estate, as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4:** Title History, 1303 Snuff Mill Road (Tax Parcel # 0700500015).

<b>CHAIN OF TITLE FOR PARCEL # 0700500015</b>				
<b>DATE</b>	<b>GRANTOR</b>	<b>GRANTEE</b>	<b>INSTRUMENT LIBER/PAGE</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
3/24/1852	Estate of Nathaniel Armstrong	David Taylor	I6/378	132-ac. tract inherited by Armstrong from father, who acquired land in 1792
9/24/1859	David Taylor	Michael Kane	G7/198	1 ac. 30 perches (\$75)
12/3/1864	Michael Kane acquires neighboring 11.5-ac. tract on east side of Snuff Mill Road from David Taylor (Z7/439)			
3/25/1874	Michael Kane	Conner Cooney	E10/175	Two tracts, Lot #1 containing 1 ac. 30 per. & Lot #2 containing 11.5 ac.
7/7/1880	Conner Cooney acquires neighboring 30-ac. property "with a stone house and frame barn," formerly the estate of Jethro Bugles (U11/16)			
2/8/1884	Conner Cooney	Daniel Lynch	X12/266	17 ac. tract, including Lots #1 & #2 and part of former Bugles estate
10/7/1916	Daniel Lynch	Clarence McCaulley	K26/392	17 ac.
3/2/1923	Clarence McCaulley	Patrick A. & Catharine A. Murphy	S31/378	17 ac. farm with buildings
2/28/1924	Patrick A. & Catharine A. Murphy	Charles F. & Rosa M. Combs	S32/29	17 ac. farm with buildings
2/24/1927	Charles F. & Rosa M. Combs	John M. & Emily T. Buffington	V34/138	17 ac. with building
3/17/1932	John M. & Emily T. Buffington subdivide the tract, selling the 12.62-ac. lot east of Snuff Mill Road to Frederika N. Springer (B38/379)			
1/16/1940	John M. & Emily T. Buffington	Alfred V. & Marcella M. du Pont	R41/439	2 ac. corner lot
3/11/1948	Alfred V. & Marcella M. du Pont	Equitable Trust Company	M48/544	Combines 8.35-ac. Lot #1 (Ives-du Pont House lot) with 2-ac. Lot #2 (corner lot)
10/15/1948	Equitable Trust Co.	Marcella M. du Pont	F48/494	Lots #1 & #2 "with the buildings thereon erected"
7/27/1949	Marcella M. du Pont	Philip B. Stull	G49/254	8.29 ac. "with buildings thereon erected"
5/31/1957	Philip B. Stull	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross	F60/5833	8.29 ac.
5/1/1969	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross	Richard S. & Emily T. du Pont	H82/239	10.066 ac.
11/15/1974	Richard S. & Emily T. du Pont	Lisa D. MacGuigan	X89/574	10.066 ac.

The property on which the Ives-du Pont House sits was acquired in 1928 by Albert Ely Ives and Allen L. Lauritsen, who purchased a 26.5-acre parcel between Center Mill and Snuff Mill roads (NCCRD 1928). The eastern section of the property was formerly the location of the Vandever-Bugles house; the documentary record is unclear as to whether the house was still extant when Ives and Lauritsen purchased the property. The two men divided the property and constructed their own homes on the land.

The development of the property into estates was part of a larger movement in the area outside Wilmington, where many of Delaware's wealthiest residents built country houses during the early twentieth century (Chase et al. 1992: 22). Led by the du Pont family, the construction of country estates occurred over several decades and included houses in a variety of architectural styles designed by architects of local and national repute. These show places were used to display the wealth and gentility of their owners and emphasized convenience in their designs. They typically incorporated leisure elements like tennis courts, swimming pools, and stables for horseback riding and hunting (Kise Franks and Straw 1992: 17).

The number of country houses in the Christiana Hundred increased dramatically after World War I, when wartime profits made millionaires of many du Pont family members, and continued into the 1920s and 1930s, as the company's diversification and reorganization made fortunes for the family and many of their executives and business associates (Maynard 2008: 19-20; Kise Franks & Straw 1992: 19). These businessmen often selected architectural styles for their estates that created a connection with their ancestors; in the case of the du Ponts, designs reflecting the family's French heritage were most popular. The names selected for the family's estates (e.g., Nemours, Chevannes, Granogue) also suggested the family's identification with its past (Maynard 2008: 62).

Notable architects designed the country houses of the du Ponts and their business associates in the Christiana Hundred and elsewhere in New Castle County. Alfred I. du Pont commissioned nationally prominent firm Carrere and Hastings to design Nemours and its gardens in 1909-1910; other notable architects who designed country houses in the area included Mellor, Meigs and Howe (Bramshott); Albert Spahr (Granogue); Albert Ely Ives (Chevannes, Lauritsen House); Clay McClure and Alexander James Harper (Archmere); and Laussat Richter Rogers (Walnut Hill) (Kise Franks & Straw 1992: 18; Lidz 2006: 4-5). Of these, Ives, McClure and Harper, and Rogers were all based in Delaware (Hewitt 1990: 199).

Ives made his fortune designing homes for the du Pont family and acquired the subject property for construction of his own house and that of his frequent collaborator, contractor Allen J. Lauritsen, in 1928. Born in Newburgh, New York in 1898, Ives attended the New York School of Fine and

Applied Arts. After serving in the army during World War I, Ives enrolled in the New York School of Fine Arts in Paris in 1921. He returned to the United States in 1922, working in New York for Theodate Pope and Delano & Aldrich and in Florida for Trainor & Fateo and Addison Mizner (Tatman 2006a; Lidz 2006: 1). In 1927, Ives left Florida and settled in Wilmington, where he started his own firm and began a productive association with the du Pont family. He designed Chevannes, the Bessie G. du Pont residence in Montchanin; the Crawford and Margaretta du Pont Greenewalt Residence in Wilmington; and Meown Farm, the Isabella du Pont Sharp home in Centerville, among others. Ives also worked at Winterthur, where he designed a nine-story addition and other alterations to the existing nineteenth-century residence to accommodate the decorative arts collections of Henry du Pont (Lidz 2006: 2-4).

Ives collaborated with Lauritsen on many of his projects. Both men maintained offices in the Du Pont Building in Wilmington, and a catalog of Lauritsen's construction projects published ca. 1930 contains numerous estate houses erected in the area (Allen L. Lauritsen Co. 1930 [?]; Wilmington Chamber of Commerce 1931: 20). These included both Ives' and Lauritsen's houses on neighboring lots on the south side of Old Kennett Road; the photograph of Ives' house is included as Figure 4.3.

The Ives-du Pont House was likely constructed shortly after Ives acquired the property in 1928. Ives was living in the house in 1930 and maintained an active architectural practice in Wilmington until 1935, when he retired to Hawaii (U.S. Census 1930; Lidz 2006: 1). He opened an architectural practice in Honolulu in 1937 and was highly influential, "considered... along with Claude Stiehl and Dahl & Conrad to be responsible for introducing modernism to Hawaiian residential design in the 1930s and 40s" (Lidz 2006: 1). Two of his most notable works were the Education Wing of the Honolulu Academy of Arts and the Kanehoe Ranch Building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ives died in Honolulu in 1966 (Lidz 2006: 1).

Although Ives moved to Hawaii in 1935, he did not sell his house on Old Kennett Road until 1938. In that year, Alfred Victor and Marcella Miller du Pont acquired the property, which they named Calmar (NCCRD 1938a, 1938b; Social Register Association 1940: 90). The only son of Alfred I. du Pont, Alfred V. du Pont was an architect who trained at the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris. His notable works included the gardens and Carillon Tower at Nemours with his partner Gabriel Massena. Du Pont's wife Marcella, a native of Denver, Colorado, was a poet and socialite who maintained close correspondence with H.L. Mencken and other contemporary literary figures (Ernst 1996).

After acquiring the property, the couple immediately set about altering the house to suit their tastes, as described in a 1939 letter written by Henry F. du Pont:

The Alfred Victor du Ponts bought Bert Ives house and are making some quite extensive changes. They have added a library on the level of the second story and have done away with the bathroom at the head of the stairs (quoted in Lidz 2006: 4).

The original driveway to the Ives-du Pont House extended up a steep incline from Old Kennett Road. The du Ponts acquired the two-acre parcel at the corner of Snuff Mill Road containing the Kane House in 1940 (NCCRD 1940).

The du Ponts divorced in 1948, with Mrs. du Pont retaining ownership of the subject property (Ernst 1996; NCCRD 1948). The following year she sold the Ives-du Pont House, and the property changed hands several times in the years that followed among Du Pont company executives and family members, as summarized in Table 4.5. Minor changes occurred to the property during the mid-twentieth century, including erection of the twin gatehouse prior to 1960 and relocation of the driveway from Old Kennett Road to Snuff Mill Road. In 1969 the property was acquired by Richard S. du Pont, who was responsible for adding the existing glass-encased semi-circular stair tower on the front façade of the Ives-du Pont House<sup>4</sup> (NCCRD 1969; Eldon Homsey, personal communication, 24 April 2009). In 1974, the property was acquired by Lisa Dean MacGuigan Moseley, a du Pont heiress who remains in possession of the house today (NCCRD 1974). Moseley renamed the house “Serendip.”

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<sup>4</sup> Homsey Architects of Wilmington designed the staircase for Richard S. du Pont circa 1970. Eldon Homsey recalled the addition of the semi-circular stair as part of the project but did not recall if other changes were made to the building at the time (Eldon Homsey, personal communication, 24 April 2009).

**Table 4.5:** Title History, 1307 Snuff Mill Road (Tax Parcel # 0700500012).

<b>CHAIN OF TITLE FOR PARCEL # 0700500012</b>				
<b>DATE</b>	<b>GRANTOR</b>	<b>GRANTEE</b>	<b>INSTRUMENT LIBER/PAGE</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
4/3/1928	Edward G. & Irene May Cox	Allen L. Lauritsen & Albert E. Ives	N35/192	26.5-ac. parcel
5/31/1928	Allen L. Lauritsen & Albert E. Ives	John P. Cann	R35/280	26.5-ac. parcel
5/31/1928	John P. & Ola W. Cann	Albert E. Ives	R35/278	8.35 ac.
12/7/1938	Albert E. Ives	David F. Anderson	D41/444	8.35 ac.
12/15/1938	David F. Anderson	Alfred V. & Marcella M. du Pont	D41/446	8.35 ac.
3/11/1948	Afred V. & Marcella M. du Pont	Equitable Trust Company	M48/544	Combines 8.35-ac. Lot 1 (house lot) with 2-ac. Lot 2 (corner lot)
10/15/1948	Equitable Trust Co.	Marcella M. du Pont	F48/494	Lots 1 & 2 "with the buildings thereon erected"
7/27/1949	Marcella M. du Pont	Philip B. Stull	G49/254	8.29 ac. parcel
5/31/1957	Philip B. Stull	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross	F60/583	8.29 ac. parcel containing house
6/17/1958	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross acquire an adjacent 0.753 ac. parcel from Mary Boyd Evans and add to estate property (C62/519)			
10/17/1960	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross acquire 1.04-ac. lot fronting on Snuff Mill Road from Otto J. & Ruth A. Levenger (Y66/474); deed contains reference to "twin houses erected on the tract hereby conveyed"			
5/1/1969	Donald P. & Milbrey D. Ross	Richard S. & Emily T. du Pont	H82/239	10.066 ac.
11/15/1974	Richard S. & Emily T. du Pont	Lisa D. MacGuigan	X89/574	10.066 ac.

Insufficient information is available to complete an evaluation of the property's National Register eligibility. The house is associated with the historic context of the American country house movement in Christiana Hundred and was designed by an important architect, Albert E. Ives; however, alterations to the building were not documented in the current survey due to restricted access, which severely limited an adequate assessment of integrity. Furthermore, the property is famous for its gardens, which were not accessible during the survey. A complete evaluation of the property is not possible without a complete understanding of the design and evolution of the gardens. Despite these limitations, the Ives-du Pont House is recommended as potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its associations with the American country house movement and under Criterion C as the work of architect Ives. It may also possess significance

under Criterion C for its landscape design. It is not recommended as significant under Criterion D because it employs commonly used construction methods.

Neither the circa 1859 Michael Kane House nor the Ives-du Pont Gatehouse are recommended individually eligible for the National Register. The Michael Kane House is a vernacular farmhouse that lacks significant historical associations and architectural distinction. The property does not possess integrity of feeling or association because it does not have outbuildings or an associated agricultural landscape, and the house has diminished integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as a result of the loss of the original stone dwelling and substantial reconstruction of the frame wing. The gatehouse is also not recommended individually eligible for the National Register because it lacks significant historical associations independent of its association with the Ives-du Pont House. It also lacks sufficient architectural distinction for listing under Criterion C. Neither building appears to have potential as an important source of information under Criterion D. Although the Michael Kane House and the gatehouse are not recommended individually eligible for the National Register, both may contribute to the significance of the Ives-du Pont Estate.