

**BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
NEW YORK STATE PARKS AND RECREATION  
ALBANY, NEW YORK (518) 474-0479

UNIQUE SITE NO. 10305.000738  
QUAD \_\_\_\_\_  
SERIES \_\_\_\_\_  
NEG. NO. \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR NAME: Town of Islip/SPLIA DATE: February 1990  
Town Hall, 655 Main St.  
YOUR ADDRESS: Islip, LI, NY 11751 TELEPHONE: 516.224.5450  
Dept. of Planning, Housing, and Development  
ORGANIZATION (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

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**IDENTIFICATION**

Housman/McCurdy Cottage

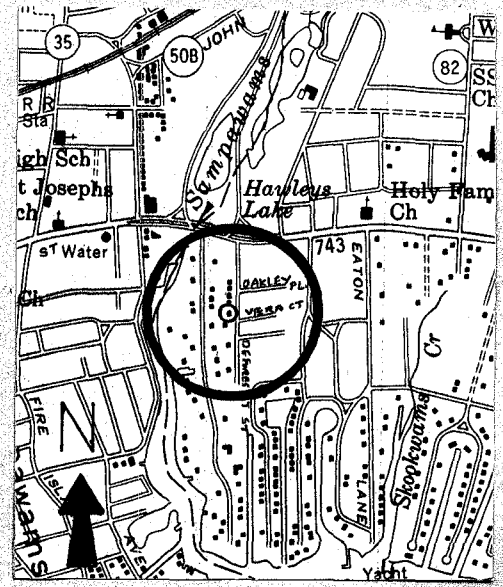
- 1. BUILDING NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. COUNTY: Suffolk TOWN/CITY: Islip VILLAGE: West Islip
- 3. STREET LOCATION: 46 DeForest St.
- 4. OWNERSHIP: a. public  b. private
- 5. PRESENT OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. USE: Original: residence Present: residence
- 7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes  No   
Interior accessible: Explain private residence

**DESCRIPTION**

- 8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard  b. stone  c. brick  d. board and batten   
e. cobblestone  f. shingles  g. stucco  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints   
(if known) b. wood frame with light members   
c. masonry load bearing walls   
d. metal (explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
e. other \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. CONDITION: a. excellent  b. good  c. fair  d. deteriorated
- 11. INTEGRITY: a. original site  b. moved  if so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
c. list major alterations and dates (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

12. PHOTO: Neg. KK XI-14, fm. NE

13. MAP: NYS DOT Bay Shore West Quad



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known  b. zoning  c. roads   
 d. developers  e. deterioration   
 f. other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:  
 a. barn  b. carriage house  c. garage   
 d. privy  e. shed  f. greenhouse   
 g. shop  h. gardens   
 i. landscape features: \_\_\_\_\_  
 j. other: \_\_\_\_\_
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):  
 a. open land  b. woodland   
 c. scattered buildings   
 d. densely built-up  e. commercial   
 f. industrial  g. residential   
 h. other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:  
 (Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

46 DeForest St. is located on a residential road lined with predominantly large houses on moderately sized parcels. The house is set perpendicular to the street and faces north. A new house has been constructed directly south.

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):  
 46 DeForest St. is a 2½ story, 3 bay, side entrance plan, gable roof house fronted by a porch. Floor length windows are featured on the ground story. A facade gable is centered on the principle (north) facade. A smaller, 1½ story, gable roof wing is attached to the east and features a facade gable with round arch window.

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: \_\_\_\_\_ c. 1879

ARCHITECT: \_\_\_\_\_

BUILDER: \_\_\_\_\_

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

This cottage is all that remains from the once-great Housman estate that by 1915 was owned by McCurdy. In 1907 the Housman mansion and gardens were described in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle. Not mentioned in the article was the race track on the property which is clearly shown on the 1902 and 1915 maps. Present DeForest St. follows one leg of that race track.

In 1924 the McCurdy family sold ten acres with the mansion, the large stables, and the two cottages to the NY Assoc. for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) for \$50,000. It was renamed "Nurses Home" to be a country place where nurses could obtain needed rest. During the first year, 321 guests were accommodated. The gardener and groundskeeper lived in the cottages. Nurses Home continued to function into the 1950's. A large

21. SOURCES: shopping center is now on the site and this cottage is all that remains.

E. Belcher Hyde. Atlas of the Ocean Shore of Suffolk County, N.Y. (western section), 1915.

22. Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 8/3/1907.

Wilcox, Gerald and Judith. First History of West Islip, 1976, pp. 40 & 53.

Research by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities - KEK

## NURSES HOUSE

Early in April of 1922, the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP), was surprised to receive from the attorneys for the estate of Emily Howland Bourne a copy of her will in which she had left to the association the sum of \$300,000 to establish and maintain a country place "where nurses could obtain needed rest." The AICP received the \$300,000 in July of 1924.

In August of 1924, the McCurdy estate on Merrick Road (Montauk Highway) in the hamlet of West Islip was found to be most ideal. The house, screened by trees and shrubs, was set back about 250 feet from the road. On the property was a large stable with an apartment above and two cottages of six and seven rooms.

The estate, originally consisting of 250 acres, had belonged to the Higbie family. Later the property was sold to the Eatons. Fifty acres were later sold to John B. Ireland, who had built the house in 1879 after the original house had been destroyed by fire. Finally the property was bought by the McCurdy family, who sold the buildings and ten acres to the AICP, on December 9, 1924, at a cost of \$50,000.

Nurses House received its name on May 26th 1924, at the first recorded meeting of the planning committee of the AICP. During its first year, 321 guests were accommodated and Nurses House became well established. In the cottages lived the gardener and grounds-keeper, Thomas Minogue and William Wilcox.

Nurses House served nurses from every state in the Union and from many foreign countries. It was still functioning in 1953. Not too many years later Nurses House was gone. In its place a large shopping center was built. Gristede's is now located where the Nurses House once stood.

Wilcox, 1976. First History of West Islip