

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

N-5179

Property Name: Misty Vale (G.W. Karsner House, 1868)

Location and Verbal Boundary Description:

Misty Vale is located on the south side of route 423 (Bay View-McDonough Road) approximately .6 miles east of route 13. The house and its associated outbuildings stand in open pasture and cultivated farmland. The nominated parcel contains seven acres including the house, carriage barn, bank barn, and granary. On the nominated property but listed as noncontributing elements are a stable, silo, gambrel roof barn, and numerous smaller buildings associated with modern dairying activity.

Owner: David Reed

R.D. 2, Box 360

Middletown, Delaware

19709

Description:

Misty Vale is a two-and-one-half story, five bay frame, cross-gable house built in the vernacular Victorian style. A frame, three bay, gable roofed wing sits parallel to the main block functioning with it as one consolidated unit. The exterior walls of both sections are white, aluminum siding, and both structures are built on stone foundations. There is also a hipped roof, frame addition to the east and an enclosed porch on the south facade of the rear wing.

There are two interior chimneys with corbelled caps in the main block of the house, and one in the southern wing. Both gable roofs are covered with composition shingle and in both cases, the cornices are boxed. There are two pedimented, two over four sash dormers on the southern facade of the rear wing bearing decorative pillasters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

N-5179

Item number

Page

The windows in the north section of the house are two over two sash and the attic is lit by three, two over two sash, segmental arch, gable end windows. The south wing windows are six over six sash with wood trim, and the attic is lit by two over four sash, gable end windows.

The center front passage is a double leaf wood door with a single pane transom. The side entrances on the east facade are single leaf, wood, panelled doors with transoms. The south wing has a central, single leaf door, four panes of glass over the two wooden panels.

A one story, six by four bay, wraparound porch is built on the north and east facades with four by four posts. The porch on the south facade has been partially enclosed and is supported by both wood and steel posts.

The outbuildings on this property include a square, one-and-one-half story, hipped roof, drive-through granary with a cupola on top and two barns. The largest of the barns is a gable roofed, frame barn with shed addition on a stone foundation. This barn is connected by a series of low buildings to a gambrel roofed frame barn and silo. A more modern dairy barn built of concrete block connects to this. Located near the barn complex is a one story frame equipment shed. Closer to the south facade of the house is a one story frame structure currently used for a garage.

Historical Background and Significance:

Misty Vale is a clear example of the rebuilding period in southern New Castle County during the late nineteenth century.

The farmstead appears in the 1850 agriculture census belonging to George W. Karsner who owned it until sometime before 1880 when Z. A. Poole acquired it.

The agricultural censuses of these forty years record a rather unusual series of land transactions.

Karsner started out with 300 acres, added 150 acres more in 1860, apparently sold or rented over 300 by 1870 before selling to Z. A. Poole who is listed with 304 acres, apparently the original homestead. Notwithstanding

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

N-5179

Item number

Page

this [redacted] transaction, Misty Vale represents the standard farm of this area and time being based on grain and livestock production. The principle income producers were Indian corn, oats, wheat, and butter with a substantial amount of Irish potatoes, hay, cattle, and swine being produced as well. In 1870, the 30 acres listed for George Karsner is an extremely small farm although it may have been his retirement home. His income appears to have been derived from the sale of wool, butter, mutton, and beef, Irish potatoes and orchard products. By 1880, the original acreage was again producing substantial amounts of grain similar to surrounding farmers.

The agricultural history and social history are well documented in the appearance of the dwelling and farm complex. They reflect the prosperous years of the late nineteenth century is evident in the extensive rebuilding period in southern New Castle County during this time. Despite the post-war recession of devaluation of land, Misty Vale appears to have prospered as well.

Nomination by Bert Jicha, Trish Bensinger, William Macintire