

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: May-Kraus Farm

other name/site number: La Paix Herb Farm

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2. Location

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street & number: 3052 Crooked Run Road not for publication: N/A
city/town: Alum Bridge vicinity: X
state: West Virginia code: WV county: Lewis code: 041 zip code: 26321

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Susan M. Pierce, Deputy SHPO Date

West Virginia Division of Culture and History
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

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of Keeper Date of Action

_____ entered in the National Register _____ _____
_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined eligible for the _____ _____
National Register
_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined not eligible for the _____ _____
National Register

_____ removed from the National Register _____ _____

_____ other (explain): _____

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5. Classification

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Ownership of Property:
(Check as many boxes as apply)

☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property:
(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	TOTAL

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions

Domestic: Single Dwelling
Agriculture/Subsistence: Storage
Agriculture/Subsistence: Animal Facility

Current Functions

Domestic: Single Dwelling
Domestic: Single Dwelling
Agriculture/Subsistence: Storage

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification

OTHER: I-House

Materials

Foundation: Sandstone
Walls: Log, weatherboard
Roof: Metal
Other: Sandstone, concrete

Narrative Description

(See continuation sheets)

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

X 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.

X 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.

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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.

Areas of Significance:

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance:

1850 - 1950

Significant Dates:

1850

1874

1890

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

May, Lawrence (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(See continuation sheets)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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 67) 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☒ Local government
☐ University
☒ Other

Name of Repository: Court House, Lewis County and Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants, Lewis County.

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 110 acres

UTM References

Quad Map Name: Vadis

A	<u>17</u>	<u>531811</u>	<u>4319559</u>	B	<u>17</u>	<u>532441</u>	<u>4319475</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>17</u>	<u>532441</u>	<u>4319010</u>	D	<u>17</u>	<u>532250</u>	<u>4318769</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

☒ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(See continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Myra Bonhage-Hale, Steward, La Paix Herb Farm

Organization: La Paix Herb Farm Date: Nov. 24, 2004

Street & Number: 3052 Crooked Run Road Telephone: (304) 269-7681

City or Town: Alum Bridge State: WV ZIP: 26321

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Property Owner

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Name: Myra Bonhage-Hale

Street & Number: 3052 Crooked Run Road Telephone: (304) 269-7681

City or Town: Alum Bridge State: West Virginia Zip: 26321

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Introduction:

The May-Kraus Farm, also known as La Paix Herb Farm, is located between the tops of two ridges on the north and south boundaries, to the top of the ridge on the east boundary; with the western boundary being almost a straight line between the north and south boundaries. Except for the configuration of the tops of the ridges on the south, north and eastern boundaries, the property is almost square in shape. It is situated at the head of the hollow on Crooked Run Road in Lewis County, West Virginia.

The farmhouse is also aligned to the Magnetic Poles, with the front door on the west, the sides on the north and south and the back on the east. The root cellar and the chicken/hog shed are also aligned in the same way. The buildings are located about 1000 feet from the western boundary, with the farmhouse being the first of the buildings, at the end of the private road leading to the farm. They are situated in the middle of the hollow framed by the ridges north and south. The original farmstead of 110 acres was divided into four tracts in the 1890's and now is again, all one tract of land. The entire 110 acres comprises the May-Kraus Farm for the nomination.

This is a rural setting in a valley with a small creek (sometimes dry in the summer) running by the south side of the home. This creek, located within 20 feet of the home on the south side, is fed by innumerable smaller creeks coming from the sides and back of the property. It is a credit to the original homesteaders that the placement of the home is such that there has never been flooding in it or in any of the outbuildings. The land on either side of the home site rises up in hills covered with trees. Caves, stone formations, and man made stone walls and woods surround the home and farm place now. The walls were made many years ago when pasture land was cleared of rocks. The rocks were used to construct walls some of which are over six feet high.

The woods were timbered over about seventy-five years ago – prior to that sheep and cattle had kept the place “clean” as the old timers call no trees, shrubs or plants. Now there are raked pathways, benches and bridges through the woods for walks identifying medicinal plants and trees and edible mushrooms. The farm has used organic methods of growing since 1981 when the present steward bought the farm from Lawrence Kraus and his wife, Lillian. His son, Charles Kraus, lives on 30 acres directly west of La Paix and he has annual Family Reunions of the Kraus's who come to La Paix for a tour of their homestead during that time. Many of their memories of visiting and living here have become part of this application.

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Following is a description of the historic resources associated with the farm. These correspond to the site map.

Farmhouse ca. 1850, 1890 Contributing Building

The west half of the farmhouse is a wood-frame I-house of two stories with wood lap siding and hand cut stone foundations, chimneys, and front steps. There are two windows on each side of the front doors on the first and second stories. All of the windows in the house are original 2/2 double-hung wooden sash. A porch is on both floors of the front of the house. Decorative trim with scrollwork and cutout designs adorn the porches while ornate wooden posts carry the weight of the roof on both porches. The first floor porch is resting on hand cut stone pillars. The second floor porch has low railings around the three sides supported by decorative balusters. The roof is of seamed metal. Both porches are approximately 3/4ths the width of the home.

The south façade of the farmhouse has one chimney in the middle with a small decorative window at the top of the eave. This is duplicated on the north façade. The east façade of the I-house has one window on the south side and a door on the north side. The middle of the east façade has a door on each floor to the attached ell which is a two story log house. The door on the first floor south room, east side, leads to the side porch off the log house. A door centered on the second floor front leads to the porch there.

The interior of the front of the house confirms the I-house plan with a center hall, and room to each side. Fireplaces (four in all) are in each room, first and second floor. Each room has a twelve foot ceiling. The walls too, are made of oak, poplar and chestnut paneling, uneven as it was cut on site (according to oral history). Wide surrounds, long windows and wide floorboards enhance the interior. The ceilings are also made of tongue in groove wood – some painted when I moved here. Those which were already painted have been repainted white. The floors are made of tongue in groove oak, and blackened with age.

The fireplaces are located in the center of the exterior walls (north and south) underneath the wood lap siding. Each fireplace has a different mantle. In the first floor south room, the mantle is of crotch oak veneer and has a mottled green tile surround. There is a beveled mirror above the mantle shelf and the mantle rises to another shelf above the mirror. The mantle in the first

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floor north room is wooden, decorated with incised carving and painted white. The mantle in the second floor south room is also of oak, as is the mantle in the second floor north room, which has carved pillars on each side and a distinctive wooden panel under the mantle. All fireplaces are inset with metal and were probably used for burning coal, as they are shallow in depth. A hand dug coal mine was located east of the root cellar (according to oral history).

A long staircase in the entry turns on the second floor landing at the entrance to the log house and goes up to the two rooms on either side of the hallway. The railings of the staircase appear to have been carved from one long tree and there is a slight crook in the railing. On the first floor, the hallway on the left of the staircase opens to the room on either side and heading east, leads to the first floor of the log house.

The log rear ell was the first home for the settlers and was built prior to 1874, probably around 1850. It is in the rear of the I-house and is attached to it on the east side. This is a two story log house and the logs reveal the German method of log house construction. Tools for planing the logs and lifting them have been found on the property. The bottom log on the south side of the house is about three feet wide. The marks of hand hewing are seen on all the logs which are observable. On the north side, first floor, the logs have been covered with lap wood siding. The foundation is of hand cut stone, but is not continuous.

The log house is composed of four rooms, two rooms on each floor, one leading into the other going east on each floor. Attached to the east exterior wall is a bathroom made of wood lap siding (which was a kitchen) and a laundry room I added (which was part of the back porch). The porch to the log house, which runs along the entire first floor's northern perimeter, has a metal seamed roof like the log house. It is held up by plain wooden pillars. The oak flooring of the porch was deteriorated in 1981 and replaced by a concrete floor. Each room in the log house has a window facing both north and south. In the first floor front room, there is also a door leading to the porch. In the first floor back room, there is a door leading to outside, by way of hand cut stone steps. All windows (most of which still have the bubbly glass), are six up/one down and are not fitted with ropes.

The interior walls are again paneled with tongue and groove wood, mostly oak. The walls in both the I house and the log house were covered with up to thirteen layers of wallpaper, with cotton ticking on the first layer tacked to the walls. These have been removed and walls on the north, east and west of the log house are now revealed as originally built. Remnants of wallpaper

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removed have been kept and some left on the walls for historic importance. The north wall of the second floor of the log house was covered with wallboard for insulation in 1982.

The flooring of the log house is more rustic than the tongue and groove flooring in the I-house. One plank on the floor is fully two feet wide and is directly under one of the holes in the ceiling covered with wall board. The four fireplaces, two back to back on each floor, are also simpler in design, being hand cut stone with simple wooden mantles. A mantle now resting on the 2nd floor back room fireplace was from Baltimore, circa 1840 (which I brought with me when I came). No mantles were apparent on the 2nd floor fireplaces when I moved in, but one simple wooden one was found in an outbuilding and placed on the 2nd floor front fireplace.

The ceilings are of tongue in groove wood painted white. There are two places in the ceiling between the second floor rooms which has been covered with wallboard – both lead to the attic which is not floored and going west leads to the attic above the I-house front.

A back staircase leads from the first floor back room up to the second floor of the log house. This staircase was added by the present owner, as there was none present (except for a hole in the floor where one had been) upon occupying the property. A very steep small staircase was found in an outbuilding and as it's upper side rail matches an upside down V pattern still slightly observable on the second floor, it was probably the original staircase. Some of the very wide boards (over 20 inches wide) which were recovered from the barn floor have been used as paneling on the south wall of this room. As related by Andrew Shearer, who did the work, "those boards were as good as when they were first put down". The boards are all chestnut from chestnut trees on the farm.

It should be noted that hand carved stone pavers are laid to the side door of the log house and from the back of the log house. They were discovered when weeding and unearthed in 1982.

I have great respect for the founders of this farm – and have left all the Catholic medals which hung over the door or mantle in each room and outbuilding.

Root Cellar 1880 Contributing Building

The Mays built their own root cellar of hand cut stone here, adding a board siding top floor which they used for carpentry and storage.

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The root cellar, approximately fifteen by twelve feet (15 x 12') nestles into the hillside on the east north of the farmhouse. It is made of hand cut stone quarried from the hillside and each square stone precisely chiseled to fit by the Mays (oral history). The top floor, of board siding, had two long windows, one on the east and one on the west side. The floor was of rough sawn lumber. An attractive, non-functional architectural attraction is the upside down V shape made of hand cut stone which rises above the first floor of the root cellar (beginning at each east/west corner) in the front of the building. Two small windows were cut into the stone on the east and west side of the first floor. Another interesting architectural element is that of the small opening on the left side of the root cellar, which is enhanced by a curved ledge, presumably for holding milk cans or produce while opening the door. The bottom of the root cellar is now used for storage of garden equipment and a small room with a toilet has been added in the left front part of the building. The second floor has been renovated as a small efficiency apartment for apprentices. When renovating the outside, the board siding was kept and all renovation was done from the inside to preserve the character of the building. Wallboard was put up in the second floor and two windows were added on the south side. In 1981, when I purchased the property, the top part of the root cellar was falling off the foundation. This was restored two years later and stairs to the top floor were added at that time. The outside doorway (there was no door) remained in the same place, facing west.

Chicken/Pig Shed 1880 Contributing Building

This shed, the outbuilding at the greatest distance from the home, was used to house pigs and chickens. Pigs were kept in the main part of the building (which is left) and chickens kept in an attached shed with a sloping roof on the west side of the building. The chicken shed is now gone. It was constructed of hand sawn oak siding, with a metal roof and foundation of rocks piled up on each other supporting each of the four corners of the building. It is now in a sad state of decline (literally and figuratively) and difficult to restore because the oak has become so hard it is almost impossible to put a nail in it and no one wants to deal with it! Oral history states that from the back door (east) of the shed there was a long pen encircling the large vegetable garden located to the south of this building and pigs roamed freely in the pen. Around the pen were Concord grape vines which also encircled the gardens. Some are still here. Another door on the south allowed entrance to the pig pen which was divided by a wood wall on the north south. This might have been to keep the pigs from the feed stored there. The wall is still there. The shed is now used to store farm equipment (mowers, weed eaters etc.).

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Greenhouse about 1998 Non-Contributing Building

The glass greenhouse on a concrete foundation was built about 1998. It is located east of the house and has a potting bench beside it. This is in the location of the former Coal Shed.

Shop about 2001 Non-Contributing Building

The La Paix Herb Farm Shop is located east of the Root Cellar and was built to appear similar to existing outbuildings. Rough framed lumber was used for the walls, but the concrete block foundation gives away its provenance. A patio for the distillery is attached on the east side of the shop.

Japanese Pavilion 2003 Non-Contributing Building

Constructed of a recycled satellite dish for the roof and rough hewn oak supports on four sides, this outdoors building was made for my Japanese apprentice in the form of a "West Virginian" Japanese Tea House. Bamboo blinds cover three sides, while the entrance is open. The floor is of rough hewn lumber ascended by two wide wooden steps. A precise number of stone steps were laid by my apprentice conforming to the requirements of a Japanese Tea House entry. They lead from the back entrance of the Feng Shui Garden. Other pavilions (about eleven) of a simpler design (no floor) dot the Big Fragrant Garden and grounds.

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Statement of Significance:

The May-Kraus Farm, aka La Paix Herb Farm, is significant under Criterion A for Agriculture and Criterion C for Architecture. The period of significance begins in 1850 and ends in 1950. The May-Kraus Farm, like the others settled in this hollow, relied on subsistence farming for its needs, while sometimes leaving the hollow for work in nearby Weston. Subsistence farming, according to oral history from the Kraus, Starks and Shearer families consisted of having a milk cow, a few cattle to fatten and sell, haying for the cattle and cow and sometimes a mule, growing grapes, hops, and vegetables for the table. Architecturally, the I-house with attached log house, the root cellar and pig/chicken shed are all indicative of the buildings erected in this Hollow on Crooked Run Road in Alum Bridge, West Virginia. Oral history from descendants living on Crooked Run still indicate that the first homes built by the original settlers were log houses, often two stories high.

The May-Kraus Farm was one of the farms on Crooked Run Road in Alum Bridge, West Virginia which was formed by a group of German and Irish Catholics. They bought land on Crooked Run and each family's farm was developed for the family's food and shelter needs. Each member had a particular skill to add to the community. For instance, the May family were stone masons originally from Baden Germany, the Shearer's were sheep herders, the Starks were surveyors and teachers and the Kraus family were carpenters.

The group moved to Crooked Run with the mission of building a Catholic community in the hollow. Land for St. Boniface's Catholic Church on Route 33 in nearby Camden was donated by Kasper Kraus. The church was built and could be reached by horse and wagon on a road which began over the hill in back of the Shearer/Dempsey property.(just west of May-Kraus Farm). The road is still evident today. Oral history states that as late as the 1950s prayer evenings were held in each other's parlors, and in fair weather, on the front porch. In 1950, St. Boniface's Church was made the primary place of worship (replacing the church at St. Clara about 15 miles away). Prior to that, the church was a dependent mission and the Priest only said Mass there once or twice a month. This is why the little community held their own Rosary sayings and prayer meetings in each other's homes when the church was not open (testimony of Father John Finnell, St. Boniface Church).

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Statement of Significance: Agriculture

Farming at the May-Kraus Farm was very similar to the farming by the other inhabitants of Crooked Run. Often, neighbors helped other neighbors, borrowed equipment or loaned equipment, came with their equipment to help “widow ladies” like Nora and Catherine Kraus. The usual equipment used on the farm included: a horse drawn mowing machine, buck rake, sled, plow and disker. The farm animals often on the farm were: chickens, hogs, milk cow, cattle, horses, draft horse, mules. The buck rake the Kraus’s used is still in the backyard at La Paix, used as a bucolic sculpture. Hay was put up in the barn at the May-Kraus Farm. It was pitched to the second floor of the barn where the wide boards of the floor were not nailed down. The hay was thrown down to the horses, mules and cattle who were housed in individual stalls in the winter months. Extra hay was left in the fields in shocks. Andrew Shearer, who remains on Crooked Run, relates that he started working in the hay fields when he was 7 or 8 years old. He says that hay was made this way: “first, the hay was raked in windrows, then pitchforked into a hay mound around a long pole put into the ground vertically. Then another pole, 20 feet long (I believe there is still one in the old hog shed), with a rope attached to it with a ring. This pole was put flat on the ground under the hay. Then the rope with the ring on it was thrown right across the hay shock. The ring served as a slip knot and the whole hay shock was tightened up when the horse started walking away.” Mrs. Garton, whose maiden name was Stark, elaborated on this use of the pole and ring to stack hay in tent like shapes. She said once when her sister was out in the hayfield, the ring came back and hit her front tooth out. Years later, her sister said on a visit to the farm, “I want one of those rings you have in the barn for a souvenir”.

Mrs. Garton (*nee* Stark) states, “I remember the mulberry tree that was on the Kraus farm. It was huge and it was there, as on everyone’s farm on Crooked Run, to feed the chickens, who ran free. I remember we would go up there (her farm is on the southern boundary of May-Kraus) and pick and eat lots of mulberries. She adds, “Even though it was supposed to be for the chickens.” (see photo with milk cow – in the background is the mulberry tree). She added that there had been a small barn in the upper meadow that was hayed. Some remnants of it remain hidden in the tall grass. A natural spring is located in this meadow nearby the upper meadow barn.

An Appraisement Bill of the Personal Property of Lawrence May, deceased made on the 23rd day of October 1894 reveals the following property: two Bay Mares, three milch cows, two hogs,

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one spring wagon, one buggy harness, two pairs of wagons, one plow, one harrow, two grindstones, one iron kettle, one cross cut saw, one buck saw, one half cut saw, one sausage mill, one maul and two iron wedges, five – 5 gal. kegs, four tin cans, one set crockery, one chair, one clock, one set cane chairs, one set common chairs, two stands, one falling leaf table, one lounge, three bedsteads with springs, kitchen furniture and fixtures. The total worth was \$184.70. A subsequent sale of the articles show that many of the people buying had names familiar today on Crooked Run Road, and in Lewis County.

Among those buying articles from the May farm in 1894 were: one grindstone (H.J. Will), two wine kegs (Kasper Kraus), One wine keg (Joe Mertz), One market basket, (Mrs. John Dempsey), two cider buckets, (Mrs. Martin Kenney), one dinner horn (Thomas Shearer), two pairs sheep shears (Jacob Gissy), 20 gal. jar (A.S. Bonnett), hat rack (John Aman), one lot jars (Mrs. Rough), butcher knife (Chris Butcher), Tea spoons (G.D. Alfred), rifle gun (James Hamrick), four padlocks, (W.A. Moneypenny), one spirit level (Andrew Mertz), three tablecloths, (Henry Stark), one bed sheet (George Grady), one red cow, (G.D. Alfred), one speckled cow (Hannah Curtis), one brindle cow, (John Mertz). Halter (John Lohan), Bridle (John Dempsey), Halter (Wm. Plunkett).

The usual crops on the farm, in addition to the all-important hay, were: vegetables of all kinds, including tomatoes, beans, corns, greens, potatoes. An apple orchard was where the Silver Labyrinth is now located. Figs and grapes grew in abundance in addition to peaches and stone pears. Hops were also grown. The disk and harrow were used to develop the gardens, and hand weeding, cultivating and harvesting were the common means of tending and keeping the harvest.

The Kraus “widow ladies” – Norah and Catherine (see historic photo) were known for their hospitality and I was told that no one ever came to visit “without sitting down to a wonderful home cooked meal.”

The homestead was originally owned by Thomas Moneypenny who sold it to Lawrence May in 1874. Lawrence May died in 1894 and on March 26th, 1898, Kasper Kraus, who had married Lawrence May’s daughter, Lucinda, bought 3/5th of the 110 acres from Henry May, who had inherited one/fifth of the 110 acres from his father Lawrence, and had bought the other two/fifths from his brothers. From that time on, the Kraus family owned the property and continued to farm the land in a conservative manner. Oral history from John Shearer, brother of Andrew and neighbor, indicated to this author that there had never been any herbicides or pesticides used in the farming of the May-Kraus Farm. In 1990, La Paix Herb Farm was the first farm solely

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owned by a woman in West Virginia to be certified organic. Although not certified in recent years, the organic techniques and practices used when it was certified continue today.

Statement of Significance: Architecture

The first owner of the May-Kraus Farm, Lawrence May, was an experienced stone cutter from Baden, Germany. He worked on the construction of the Trans-Allegheny Asylum for the Insane (later Weston State Hospital). Now registered a National Historic Landmark, Weston State Hospital is purportedly the largest hand cut stone building in North America. The building of the hospital was begun in 1858 and completed in 1880. Lawrence May was a stone mason and his sons, John and Henry, were both stone cutters. They lived at the May-Kraus Farm during the time they participated in the building of the Hospital.

Oral history reports that the second floor of the log house at the May-Kraus Farm was used in the underground railroad. Relatives visiting stated that the back stairs to the log house contained a fool-the-eye effect in that it appeared that there was only one room when mounting the stairs. It was said that the steps were used as a sort of "fool-the-eye" in that people kept going west after going up the steps, not aware that there was a small room east of the steps. That small room is now the library at La Paix. On one of the tours of the farm, a visitor from Webster County in West Virginia told me that a similar log house was located there which had the same "fool-the-eye" stairs and was also used as part of the Underground Railroad. Thus, the back room (east) of the second floor of the log house was used to hide run-away slaves. Otis Reed, a local historian, who is now engaged in writing a book on the "Slaves of Lewis County", visited La Paix and noting the odd size of the large board in the floor below one of the cut out ceilings (covered with wallboard) thought that this architectural anomaly gave credence to the story of hiding slaves. In addition, the Mays, who according to St. Boniface's Priest, Father Finnell, were buried in the churchyard as Union Army veterans, were working at the hospital at the time that all the negro slaves working on the hospital ran away in the middle of the night and were never seen again. As the May-Kraus Farm is not far off present day US 33 and far enough back to hide escaping slaves who would follow the ridges, Mr. Reed thinks this could have happened easily. However, due to the mixed feelings of people during that time, allowing your house to be used as an underground railroad stop, would not be spoken of. Serious house and barn burning might ensue. According to Joy Gilchrist-Stalnaker, historian, and former head of the Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendents, Inc., Lawrence May was a Union soldier. There is also a record of

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his burial at St. Boniface's Graveyard as a veteran on the Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants website. The building of the Weston State Hospital was interrupted for many years due to the Civil War raging in West Virginia (then Virginia). It is a use of this home which is certainly worthy of conjecture.

The May-Kraus Farm was a working farm for many years and the buildings, both domestic and for agricultural uses, were made by the owners. Using stone mined from the hills and carried down by horse and wagon, and wood timbered from the woods surrounding the farm and planed and hewn for both the log house and the later lap-sided I-house, this farm and these occupants are truly worthy of a part in the history of the development of West Virginia. As the family grew and progressed, an I-house was added in 1890 to the front of the log house and various outbuildings were erected, including a root cellar of hand cut stone, a barn with hand cut stone foundation, a chicken/pig shed, a log hog pen, and a coal shed.

These buildings are unique in that they were typical of German construction. The way the logs were joined (which can be seen in the photo showing the back of the log house) is typical German joinery with square cut logs. The I-house is typical of many farm houses in West Virginia. However, it is unique in that the stone fireplaces (eight of them) were constructed of stone from the property by the Mays who worked as stone cutters on the historic Weston State Hospital. Many of the stones which were the foundation of the barn (now gone) have been used as benches on the property. The walls of the I-house are unique in that they are of tongue and groove poplar, chestnut and oak grown on the property. The hand cut stone steps in front of the I-house porch are also unique, as are the chimney lintels and the hand cut stone sidewalks on the side of the log house and going to the backyard towards the old coal shed.

When I bought the farm in 1981, on each mantle and over each door ledge were found Catholic medals. They are still there in respect for the Mays and Kraus's who put them there to protect their home.

Oral history also relates that when not building the hospital, the Mays would live at local farms in the winter while building a root cellar there, finishing the work by Spring when they would be paid \$35.00 for their work. They then returned to the May Farm on Crooked Run Road and planted their spring crops. They are credited with building many of the root cellars in Lewis County. There are four other hand cut stone root cellars still on Crooked Run Road.

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Andrew Shearer, whose father Joseph Shearer, owned the farm just west of the May-Kraus Farm, tells this story of building the root cellar: “my father, Joseph Shearer, was bringing the horse and wagon down from the hill where Mr. May was cutting the stones for the root cellar. Coming down the steep hill, one of the cut stones rolled off the wagon into a deep ravine. My father thought that Mr. May would never know that one of the many stones was missing, so when he got to the root cellar site, he didn’t say anything. Mr. May looked at the wagon of stones, then at my father, and asked, ‘Where is Stone #33?’ So, my father had to go into the ravine and fetch #33 out!”

An article from the Weston Democrat of about 1872 states: “We had a pleasant call from John May, Esq., Superintendent of Construction of the Asylum. Mr. May, as is well known, stands at the head of his profession as a practical builder, and no better proof of this is needed than a glance at the work formerly done on the Asylum under his superintendence.” I am uncertain as to whether John May is related to Lawrence May. They were both stone masons, but John is from England (b. 1814) and Lawrence is from Germany (b. 1829).

Another article entitled: Unique Artifacts Donated to Lewis County Agencies from the Weston Democrat of October 7, 1992 states:

A piece of Lewis County history has surfaced as three different artifacts have been donated to the Lewis County Convention and Visitors Bureau. CVB Director Suzie Frederick has announced that Mrs. Louisa Galbraths May has donated stonecutter chisels, a small slate desk, and a wooden plane in memory of her late husband, Joseph Leffler May. Mrs. Frederick announced that the three items will be donated to three local agencies for display. “We would like to thank Mrs. May and her family for donating these historical articles for the resident of Lewis County and West Virginia to enjoy,” Mrs. Fredericks said. Joseph Leffer May was born November 14, 1901 and died June 6, 1992. He married Louisa Galbraths, and the couple later resided in Mesa, Arizona. The chisels were apparently used by Lawrence May, an experienced stonecutter, when he worked on construction of the existing Weston State Hospital. The chisels are engraved with “L. May”. Each of the chisels will be donated to Weston State Hospital to be placed with other artifacts.

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May was born July 2, 1824, in Baden Germany, and died August 20, 1894 at Alum Bridge. He was married to Matilda Boyles May, who was born October 17, 1829, and died April 12, 1894. The Mays' daughter, Ella May, who was born January 3, 1851, had a son, Charles Demsey, (sp. Dempsey?) who was the owner of the small slate desk. Demsey used the desk when he attended school at Alum Bridge. The slate desk will be donated to the Central West Virginia Genealogical and Historical Library and Museum to be displayed at the Center Avenue site. The wooden plane was also owned by the Lawrence May family of Alum Bridge and will be donated to the Jackson's Mill State 4-H Conference Center Museum.

Conservation of the land has continued, although some parts of it were timbered about seventy-five years ago. It is now the only land in the hollow of any appreciable acreage which has not been timbered over in the last twenty years. As it is at the headwaters of Crooked Run, this conservative stewardship of the land has served to keep the neighbor's property from flooding due to excessive timbering along the creeks.

Summary

In summary, the May-Kraus Farm epitomizes the perseverance, skills and energy of the early pioneers and developers of West Virginia. Their hand-made homesteads of log houses and I-houses utilized their many talents in stone cutting and carpentry brought from England, Germany, Ireland and other European countries. The property meets Criterion A for agriculture and Criterion C for architecture, between the years ca. 1850 and 1950 as a fine example of an upland farmstead. Their skills in sculpting hand cut stone to make root cellars, foundations, steps, lintels and paths were considerable in both function and form. Their contributions to both their own needs on the land as farmers and builders and to the wider community were many. I have honored and respected their leadership and their perseverance as I, too, have continued to preserve the best of what they gave the land which gave so much to them.

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Bibliography

1. Appraisement Bill of the Personal Property of Lawrence May Alum Bridge, West Virginia October 20, 1884. (Lewis County Court House Records) Book 10 – 196
2. U.S. Census of Lewis County WV for 1850, 1860 and 1870 (Lewis County – Hacker's Creek Pioneer Descendants Inc.)
3. Oral History: Angela Kraus, Marjorie Kraus
4. Deed: April 6, 1897: Between Henry May and Kasper Kraus – three undivided fifths of the tract of 110 acres. Lying on headwaters of Crooked Run of Leading Creek. Deed Book #7., page 143 Lewis County Court House – Clerk.
5. Deed: Dec. 14, 1979: Between Joseph E. Kraus and Susan D. Kraus and Lawrence G. Kraus and Mary Lillian Kraus. 86-1/2 acres situate at the headwaters of Crooked Run of Leading Creek. Deed Book # 373, page 326. Lewis County Court House, Clerk
6. Deed: September 26, 1974. Between Lawrence G. Kraus and Mary Lillian Kraus, his wife and Irene D. Cawthon and John Cawthon, Harry L. Bailey, Bernice M. Dedlow, Wilma A. Bailey, Catharine L. Paul and Charles B. Bailey. 23.3 acres (Lot #5) Book #343, page 694, Lewis County Court House – Clerk.
7. Deed: July 19, 1976: Between Harry L. Bailey and Charles B. Bailey, his part of undivided 5 tracts of 23.3 acres. Deed Book #359, page 150. Lewis County Court House – Clerk.
8. Weston Democrat, Oct. 7, 1992:, p. 2A “Unique Artifacts Donated to Lewis County Agencies”
9. St. Boniface Church, Camden, U.S. Rt. 33 Camden, West Virginia
10. Oral History, Interviews with Pat Meyer (ancestor May-Kraus), Andrew Shearer (neighbor) and Marjory Kraus (neighbor and relative of Edward Kraus).

(NPS Form 10-900)

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UTM References, cont.

E	<u>17</u>	<u>531633</u>	<u>4318886</u>	F	<u>17</u>	<u>531813</u>	<u>4319374</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description:

From Deed dated April 6, 1897: "Said whole tract is bounded as follows: Beginning at a chestnut oak, a corner to James Dempsey's land, thence D.85E.33 poles to a chestnut oak; D.55.E. 30 poles to a C.D; D.70 E. 15 poles to a hickory; S.82 E. 16 poles to a chestnut oak; S.70 E. 28 poles to a C.O. corner to B. Krause thence with reverse of one of his lines, S. 28 E. 48 poles to pointers; thence leaving said Krause's lot, S. 20 W. 41 poles to a Black Oak; S.40 W. 59 poles to a hickory D. 86 W 26-1/2 poles to a double hickory; S. 80 W. 29 poles to a C.D. N. 53, W. 20 poles to a red oak. Corner to Lawrence; thence with two of his lines, N. 49 W. 36 poles to a chestnut, S. 72 W. 24 poles to three white oaks, corner to said Dempsey lot, thence with two of his lines, N. 21 E. 104 poles crossing said branch of Crooked Run to N.O. N. 36 poles to the beginning, containing One Hundred and Ten Acres.

Boundary Justification: This area as described is the total farm area and buildings owned by Lawrence May and his heirs at the time of his work as a stone mason/Superintendent of the building of the historic Weston State Hospital (Western Allegheny Hospital for the Insane). This area later comprised the Kraus Farm which was operated as a working farm from 1897 to the 1950s.

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Name of Property: May-Kraus Farm
Address: 3052 Crooked Run Road
Town: Alum Bridge
County: Lewis
Photographer: Myra Bonhage-Hale
Date: 2003 and 2004
Negatives: WV SHPO, Charleston

Photo 1 of 26	Road to farm coming from farm house. Camera facing West
Photo 2 of 26	Road on neighbor's land west of May-Kraus Farm. Camera facing SW
Photo 3 of 26	View from second floor porch of I-house. Camera facing west
Photo 4 of 26	Close up of I-house West façade. Camera facing east
Photo 5 of 26	Front door of I-house with Torma dog showing hand cut stone front steps. Camera facing east
Photo 6 of 26	North east façade of I-house with rear ell log house. Camera facing SW.
Photo 7 of 26	Close up of north side of log house rear ell and Northeast side of I-house. Camera facing SW.
Photo 8 of 26	Close up of south side of log house and partial view of SE side of I-house. Camera facing NW.

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Photo 9 of 26	Front hall of I-house and stairs to second floor (on right) Camera looking East.
Photo 10 of 26	Interior of I-house first floor, south room. Camera looking West.
Photo 11 of 26	Interior of rear ell log house, first floor (now kitchen). Camera looking SW.
Photo 12 of 26	First room from first floor of I-house, rear ell log cabin (now kitchen). Camera looking East.
Photo 13 of 26	First room, second floor, log house. Camera looking East.
Photo 14 of 26	Doorway to rear ell from second floor of I-house. Camera looking East.
Photo 15 of 26	Second floor, south room, I-house. Camera looking South.
Photo 16 of 26	Close up of door knob, first floor I-house, north room. Camera looking North.
Photo 17 of 26	Close up of fireplace surround and mantle, second floor, I-house north room. Camera facing North.
Photo 18 of 26	Front of root cellar. Camera facing North.
Photo 19 of 26	Close up of door handle on root cellar door. Camera facing North.
Photo 20 of 26	Interior first floor root cellar. Camera facing NW.

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Photo 21 of 26 Non-contributing building now used as La Paix Herb Farm shop. Camera facing NE.

Photo 22 of 26 Pig shed. Camera facing North.

Photo 23 of 26 Non-contributing building – greenhouse. Camera facing East.

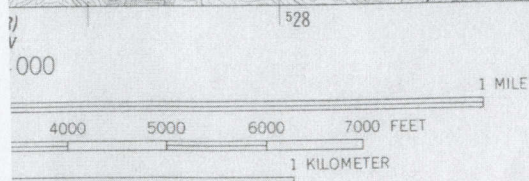
Photo 24 of 26 View from across creek of back of I-house and ell, root cellar and greenhouse. Camera facing NE.

Photo 25 of 26 View of Big Fragrant Garden (formerly vegetable garden) showing herbs grown. Camera facing East.

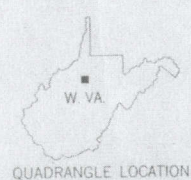
Photo 26 of 26 View of shop (on left) and Feng Shui gate entrance/potting bench. Camera facing East.



MAY-KRAUS
FARM
ALUM
BRIDGE VIC.
LEWIS CO.
WV
UTM REF:
A: 17/531811/431955
B: 17/532441/431947
C: 17/532441/431901
D: 17/532250/431876
E: 17/531633/431886
F: 17/531813/4319374



AL 20 FEET
AL DATUM OF 1929



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

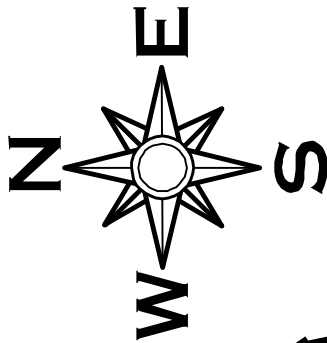
Heavy-duty	—————	Light-duty	—————
Medium-duty	—————	Unimproved dirt	—————
U. S. Route		State Route	

VADIS, W. VA.
SW/4 VADIS 15' QUADRANGLE
N3900—W8037.5/7.5

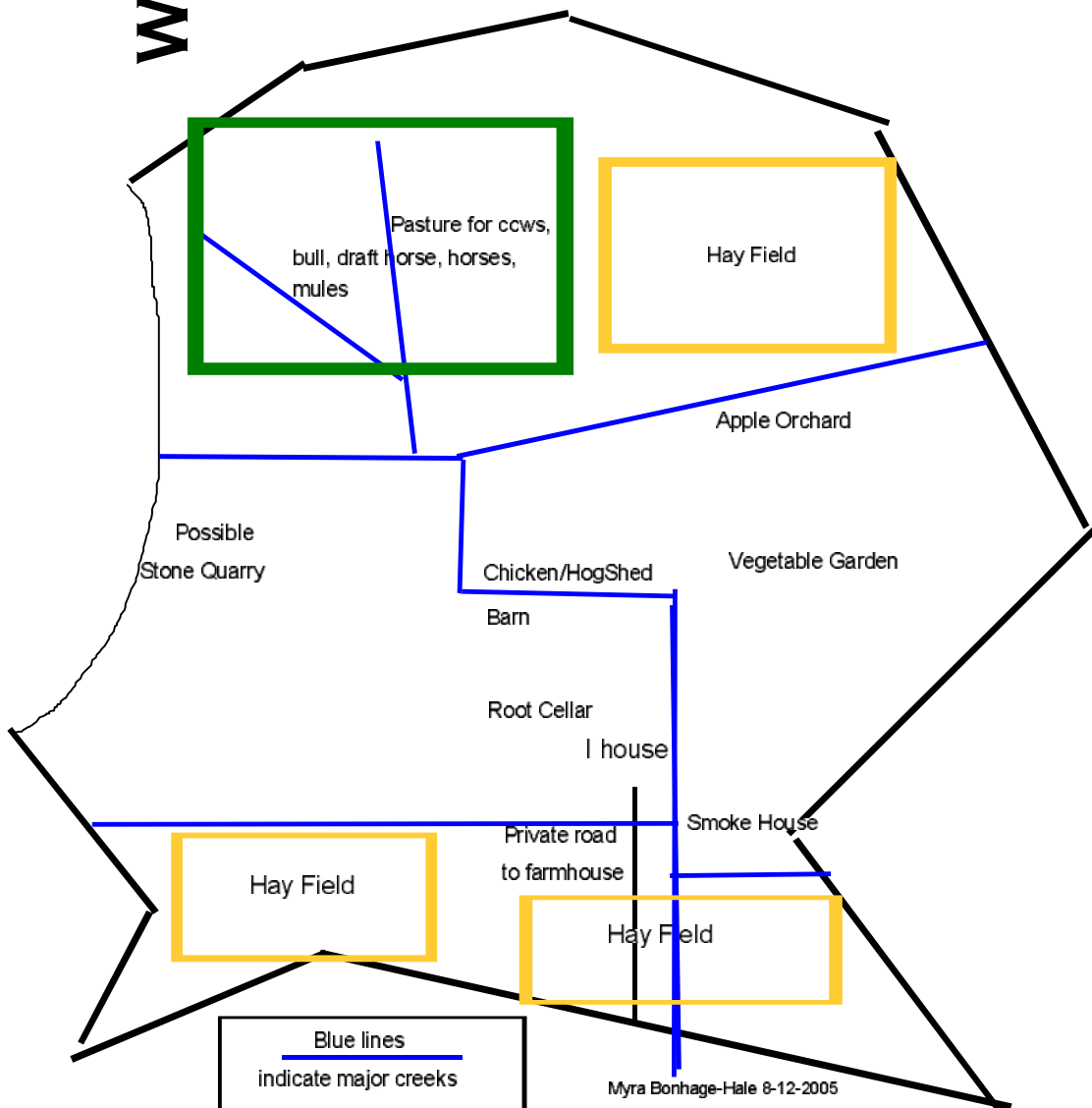
1964
PHOTOREVISED 1976

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
VEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

May/Kraus Historical Farm aka La Paix Herb Farm



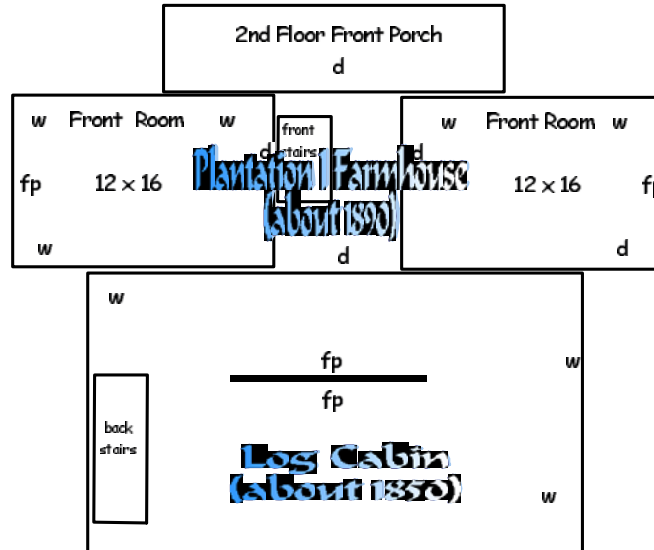
Not to Scale



May/Kraus Farm aka La Paix Herb Farm
Homestead Lewis County, West Virginia
Second Floor

Key
w=window
fp=fireplace
d=door

S
W
N
E



Not to Scale

Key
w=window
fp=fireplace
d=door

Hand Cut
Stone Steps

May/Kraus Farm aka La Paix Herb Farm
Homestead Lewis County, West Virginia

North Scale

W
S N
E

