

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

53-85-1	Boston North	BC	BLM.835
---------	--------------	----	---------

Town/City: Belmont

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
Belmont Hill Village

Address: 43 Village Hill Road

Historic Name: Frank M. Barnard House

Uses: Present: single family dwelling

Original: single family dwelling

Date of Construction: 1936

Source: building permit

Style/Form: English Revival

Architect/Builder: Royal Barry Wills

Exterior Material:

Foundation: concrete

Wall/Trim: stone, wood, stucco

Roof: slate

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
none

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
date? – enclosure of former sunporch

Condition: good

Moved: no yes **Date:**

Acreage: 11,016 SF

Setting: early 20th century residential neighborhood

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lisa Mausolf

Organization: Belmont Historic District Commission

Date (*month / year*): November 2014

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

43 VILLAGE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

BC

BLM.835

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Constructed in 1936 the house at 43 Village Hill Road is of interest as an example of the work of architect Royal Barry Wills, master of the Cape Cod/Colonial Revival, in the English Revival mode. Displaying a stone exterior reminiscent of an English cottage, the dwelling incorporates stuccoed dormers, areas of applied half timbering, live edge wood weatherboards, diamond-paned casement windows, a slate roof and stone chimneys. Colonial Revival elements include the double-hung 6/6 windows while the two-car garage under the house and the sunporch (later enclosed) are concessions to modern suburban living.

The house occupies a corner lot containing about a ¼ of an acre with a low stone retaining wall along the road. A curving set of stairs with wrought iron rail and gate at the street connect to a flagstone walk that leads to the canopied front door. The informally landscaped lot includes rhododendrons and other plantings.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

This house was developed as part of the "Belmont Hill Village" subdivided by Charles E. Trenholm in 1934 after the Concord Turnpike was built. This was the fourth of nine areas developed by the Belmont Hill Company. All 36 residences were built within four years between 1935 and 1939. The lots were smaller than the first developed area but were well landscaped (Flynn). Charles Trenholm was an active local real estate broker with an office in Belmont Center; he lived in Waltham. He partnered with local builder August Johnson. This property (Lot 37A) was sold by August Johnson and Charles Trenholm, trustees, to Frank M. Barnard in 1936 (Book 6038, Page 251). In 1940 the U.S. Census lists the owner/occupants as Frank Barnard, age 62, and his wife Frances, age 61. Previously the Barnards had lived in Somerville. Frank M. Barnard (1878-1969) was a master bookbinder who was president for many years of F.J. Barnard & Co., bookbinders of Medford, one of the oldest such companies in the country, founded in 1821. Mr. Barnard was instrumental in developing the library binding industry. He worked with the American Library Association as the chief architect of the first standards for library work and was also involved in developing modern equipment for the library binding industry.

The house was sold by Frank Barnard's estate to Martin and Elizabeth Klein in 1969. Martin Klein (1932-2009) attended Harvard University and Harvard Business School and was a Fulbright Scholar. He was a health care strategist, worked for a number of years in Pakistan and served as a director or trustee of Mount Auburn Hospital, Harvard Community Health Plan, Massachusetts Hospital Association, the Fernald School and the Visiting Nurse Association. He died in 2009; his wife Betty predeceased him in 1994. The house was purchased by Barbara Watson in 2010 (Book 1380, Page 51).

The house was designed for Johnson and Trenholm by Royal Barry Wills (1895-1962). Royal Barry Wills grew up in Melrose and graduated from MIT in 1918. After working as a design engineer with the Turner Construction Company from 1919 to 1925, Wills opened an architectural office in Boston in 1925 which he maintained until his death in 1962. His office specialized in small house design including traditional two-story, central hall houses and two-story, garrison houses but became especially well known for their Cape Cod cottages. As seen here, Wills also designed a lesser number of Tudor Revival/English Revival homes. Of the 130+ properties currently listed in the Massachusetts Historical Commission MACRIS database, about a dozen appear to be variations on the English Revival. These include 55 Blake Road in Brookline (1930), the Fitzpatrick Estate at 159 Saddle Hill in Hopkinton (1922); and a number of homes in Newton: 60 Beacon Street (1930); 199 Dorset Road (1929); 33 Gate House Road (1927); 11 Sagamore Road (1929); 24 Sagamore Road (1928); and 62 Sheffield Road (1931) and 197 South Street in Reading (1931) (Mausolf 2009). In Belmont other English Revival designs by Wills include 27 Dorset Road (1937; BLM.764) and 35 Ross Road (1938; BLM.813).

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

BELMONT

43 VILLAGE HILL ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

BC

BLM.835

Wills's simple designs met with considerable success. Between 1935 and 1942 he won awards in more than two dozen design competitions including those sponsored by *Pencil Points*, *House Beautiful*, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Ladies' Home Journal*. In 1938 *Life* magazine selected him as one of eight architects (four modern and four traditional) to prepare home designs for families in four income categories. In the category for families with \$5,000 to \$6,000 income, Wills's traditional design competed against a modern design by Frank Lloyd Wright. The selected family in the article chose the Wills house over the Wright design and subsequently the home was built in Edina, Minnesota. In the 1940s Royal Barry Wills wrote three books on architecture that were widely read and publicized in both the popular and professional architectural press. By 1946 over a half million copies of his books had been sold and *Life* Magazine declared him the nation's most popular architectural author. Royal Barry Wills went on to win a number of national contests and was also featured in the *Saturday Evening Post*. He received a Certificate of Honor from the Massachusetts State Association of Architects in 1949 and a fellowship in the American Institute of Architects in 1954 (Ibid).

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Belmont Citizen, Aug. 21, 1969 [obituary of Frank Barnard].

Betts, Richard B. *The Streets of Belmont and How they Were Named (2nd edition)*. Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 2012.

Flynn, Kay. Area form for Belmont Hill Village, Belmont, (BLM.BC), 1982.

Massachusetts Historical Commission. MACRIS database.

Mausolf, Lisa. Inventory form for 197 South Street, Reading, Mass. (REA.439), 2009.

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Cambridge, MA

Robbins, Samuel Dowse, ed. *Who's Who in Belmont*. Belmont: Belmont Historical Society, 1972.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1915, 1922, 1931, 1949.

Town of Belmont, Building Department Records.

http://www.brownandhickey.com/_mgxroot/obits/print.php?id=668516&obit_text=1& (obituary of Martin Klein)