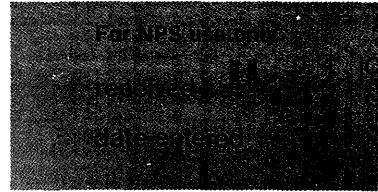


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Agnes Howard Hall

and/or common known unofficially until 1920 as Ladies Hall

2. Location

street & number West Virginia Wesleyan College campus not for publication

city, town Buckhannon vicinity of ~~_____~~

state West Virginia code _____ county Upshur code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational(dorm)
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

winner
8/30/83

4. Owner of Property

name Trustees of West Virginia Wesleyan College

street & number West Virginia Wesleyan College

city, town Buckhannon vicinity of _____ state West Virginia 26201

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Comptroller's Office

street & number West Virginia Wesleyan College

city, town Buckhannon state West Virginia 26201

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE, N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Agnes Howard Hall is a women's residence hall of four main stories on the West Virginia Wesleyan College campus. Constructed in 1895, with an addition completed by 1929, the building has, over the years, been used for some classes, social meetings, and dining in addition to its primary, residence-hall function.

The structure presently contains 77 sleeping rooms, 26 main bathrooms, office areas for residence assistants, a spacious parlor, three lounge areas, kitchen facilities, and maintenance storage rooms. There are two primary entrances (front and Meade Street side); a concrete-and-brick, roofed porch is on the front side.

Overall exterior design is late nineteenth century Victorian eclectic with dominant Italianate features. Three tower caps and the multiple hip roofs recall the late Italian "villa" style. The exterior fabric consists of smooth, shaped native sandstone for trim and basement walls, with exterior walls of red brick, "5" coursing, Flemish, evidently pressed, with the possibility of hand-molded work for the original part of the dorm. A solid stone foundation with a defined water table, masonry of sandstone, smooth concrete for the porch floor, and an asphalt shingle roof (rectangular shingles), shale coated with concealed eave troughs of tin, constitute the primary exterior materials.

Arcaded bays, blind arches in the uppermost story embellished with wrought iron, recessed square and rectilinear brick panels, stone and brick belt courses, expansive eaves with modillion brackets are prominent exterior details. There are two panels of decorative scroll work over the main entrance.

Inside, Agnes Howard Hall appears to have a wood frame structure (original section of the building), while the architect's specifications for the addition indicate a steel skeletal system. The sleeping rooms are functional, though the main staircase and chestnut woodwork in the lounge areas of the main part of the building add elegance. All four main floors are presently in use: The basement under the addition contains about seven rooms and a hallway, formerly used for the student personnel center, now part of the "Chapel House" residence Christian community of students. A fire stair at the rear of the addition, with red-painted steel "ultra rib" panels, and a fire escape on the front left end of the original part are dependencies. There are no outbuildings.

Agnes Howard Hall remains on its original site, offering an excellent view of the trees and lawn of Wesleyan's campus. Exterior repair has not apparently disturbed the original design. Some bricks have been replaced, as has the earlier slate roof. A rear chimney has been shortened. The present porch has succeeded the original wooden one which appears in early photographs. This newer porch was probably constructed about 1920 when the building was officially named. Interior renovation in 1952 provided electrical and plumbing work. The original exterior appearance of the building, however, is essentially unchanged.

West Virginia Wesleyan College has embarked on a renovation of the interior to provide increased safety and comfort for the residents. Thus far, the bathrooms have been refinished with new sewer stacks, water lines, flooring, basins, toilets, and other improvements. Other phases of renovation call for new electrical wiring, an electrical stack, fire-escape improvements, eave repair, new metal screens for all windows, and renovation of the sleeping rooms and public areas. Although these repairs are necessary in large part to satisfy Fire Marshal standards, the College intends to retain the historical character and charm of the building whenever possible. In service to the campus for 87 years, Wesleyan's most historically significant building enjoys the devotion of past and present residents, administrators, and friends of the institution.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1895/1929 **Builder/Architect** M. F. Geisy (old part), Carl Reger (addition)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

AGNES HOWARD HALL

Agnes Howard Hall, the first dormitory constructed at West Virginia Wesleyan College, is believed to be the oldest continuously occupied college residence hall in West Virginia. It is the oldest building on the Wesleyan campus. Constructed by the fall of 1895 and originally known as "Ladies' Hall," the dorm was designed to supply the young women's requirements for learning and development, and their need for tradition, in a "school home" setting. Eighty-seven years later, the building continues in that capacity, even as its institution has expanded from a small church-related seminary to an 80-acre liberal arts, United Methodist-affiliated college. This dormitory has been a visible marker of continuity and tradition at a campus that flourishes on those very qualities.

Wesleyan's first president, Bennett W. Hutchinson (1890–98), planned a women's dormitory containing parlors, a dining room and kitchen, a laundry, rooms for several professors, and music rooms. Ladies' Hall, whose design was completed by architect M. F. Geisey of Wheeling, West Virginia, was completed at a cost of \$25,000. Its only campus neighbors until 1902 were the seminary classroom building (1890) and the president's residence. Boardwalks are believed to have connected the two main buildings, and within sight of the dorm was a board fence along Meade Street to keep domestic animals off the campus. Upwards of 70 women lived in the building (the actual number is probably higher) when the West Virginia Conference Seminary was renamed West Virginia Wesleyan College by 1906. Overcrowding necessitated the conversion of a fourth-floor assembly room into more rooms for the girls.

Although the educational mission of the institution was well underway, the facilities of Ladies' Hall were dependent on the technology of the times—and on luck. Kitchen and drinking water came from two wells, unpredictable windmill-power pumped water for bathrooms, and electrical service failed frequently, usually during the evening study hours.

Still, the dormitory served to enhance its residents' social and character development, and inspired a kind of alert affection for the building—a feeling that exists in our own time. Said a college publication of 1913, "No girl is ever the same after having lived in 'The Hall.' Thenceforth, she is a dweller in another world, a world peopled with choice spirits and filled with fragrant memories from which she cannot, and would not, escape... It's the house of dreams: dreams of scholarship, of perfected womanhood, of Christian attainment."

Ladies Hall was officially named Agnes Howard Hall in 1920, in memory of a young coed who had died while a student at Wesleyan, and in recognition of her father, C. D. Howard, a generous financial contributor to the building's erection. An extension, similar in architectural design to the fortitude-enhancing character of the original building, was completed in 1929. Repairs were also made to the existing structure at this time. In 1952, Agnes Howard Hall was extensively renovated with a new electrical system and plumbing repairs. Seven years later, a student personnel center was constructed in the former basement dining room area. (These offices have since moved to other campus locations. The dorm once housed the health center, now relocated.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Agnes Howard Hall brochure, Development Office, West Virginia Wesleyan College
Haight, Thomas W. West Virginia Wesleyan College: First Fifty Years, 1939.
Plummer, Kenneth M. A History of West Virginia Wesleyan College, 1965.
"Things to Do and Things Taboo:" student handbook for Agnes Howard Hall. After 1920.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property one acre

Quadrangle name Buckhannon, W.Va.

Quadrangle scale 1,24;000

UMT References

A

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4	3	1	5	6	8	0
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Verbal boundary description and justification Site is bounded to the southwest by Meade St., to the northwest by College Ave., to the northeast by a sidewalk halfway between Agnes Howard Hall and the Administration Bldg., and to the southeast by a straight line between Agnes Howard Hall and Jenkins Hall connecting Meade St., and the sidewalk.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

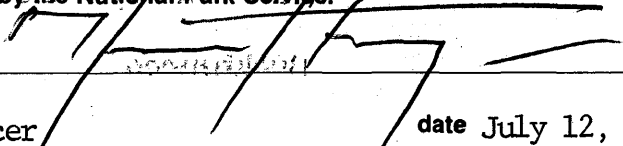
name/title Mort Gamble
organization West Virginia Wesleyan College date May 17, 1983
street & number College Avenue telephone (304) 473-8485
city or town Buckhannon state West Virginia 26201

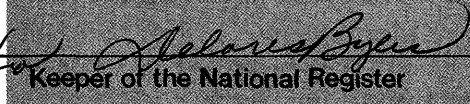
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 
title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 12, 1983

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register
Entered in the National Register
date 8/18/83
Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

**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 8

Page 2

Over the years, "Aggie" has well served its institution and local region. Classes were held in the parlors when the original seminary building burned in 1905. During part of World War II, the dorm was home to the 49th College Training Detachment (aircrew); the regular student residents were vacated and moved to housing elsewhere in town. The Buckhannon College Club meets at the dorm for afternoon programs. This women's organization has provided linens, furniture, drapes, carpeting, and two grand pianos, maintaining an interest in the dorm and its residents since the building's construction in 1895. "Chapel House," a Christian community of Wesleyan students, is located in the basement and first floor, suite side (back part). Discussions, prayer, and house meetings are held as part of this residential religious program.

With its three brick "towers," panelled scrollwork over the main entrance, and chestnut staircase and woodwork, as well as numerous arches surrounding some windows and the front porch, Agnes Howard has a distinctive appearance from that of the newer, more functional-looking residence halls on Wesleyan's campus. Inside the original part of the building, on the first floor, the staircase and what appears to be a stained cherry trophy case (not attached to the woodwork) contribute to the dorm's stately-home atmosphere. Upstairs (in the attic of this older part of the building) gas pipes and at least one lamp fixture from bygone days can still be seen.

Clearly, this "house of dreams" has earned a special degree of honor seldom reserved for a building of its class. Today, many of the residents of Agnes Howard Hall speak affectionately of their home as a "big old house," and they enjoy the building's dignified atmosphere. From a generation not easily impressed by age and endurance, perhaps no higher compliment could be accorded a structure that has served its institution so well.