

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

15765  
-9981

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Ragsdale, William A., House**

other names/site number **Pine Hall**

2. Location

street & number **607 Tunnelton Road** N/A not for publication

city or town **Bedford** N/A vicinity

state **Indiana** code **IN** county **Lawrence** code **093** zip code **47421**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title  
**Indiana Department of Natural Resources**  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date  
**10-25-02**

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

determined eligible for the National Register  
See continuation sheet.

**Edson R. Beall** **12/20/02**

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register  
other, (explain:)

Ragsdale, William A., House  
Name of Property

Lawrence IN  
County and State

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

#### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

#### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

RECREATION/CULTURE

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC:

RECREATION/CULTURE:

SOCIAL: Clubhouse

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate  
LATE VICTORIAN: Second Empire

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Limestone  
walls BRICK  
roof ASPHALT  
other WOOD

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- 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.
- 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.

**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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1865

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Pearson, Matthew A.

Cochran, Jimmy (artist)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**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:

City of Bedford

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	546850	4301050
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Brenda England (1127 M. St., Bedford, IN 47421 812/279-9254); Amy Walker, Registration & Survey Assistant  
 organization Historic Preservation Committee of Bedford Revitalization, Inc.: DHPA date 02-10-2001  
 street & number P.O. Box 221 telephone (812) 275-8047  
 city or town Bedford state IN zip code 47421

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Bedford  
 street & number telephone  
 city or town state zip code

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Section 7-Description**

William A. Ragsdale House is a two story common bond red brick Italianate/Second Empire building that was constructed in 1865 for William A. Ragsdale and his family. It is located within Otis Park on the southwest side of Bedford, IN in Lawrence County on rolling terrain. It was identified as outstanding in the Lawrence County survey. Originally a mansion and grounds, the Ragsdale House and Otis Park are now owned by the City of Bedford and function as a golf course/park and community center/clubhouse. The Ragsdale House is being nominated to the National Register separately from Otis Park because of different periods of significance. The house sits on less than half of an acre of land with magnificent tall pine trees throughout the front lawn.

In 1865 William A. Ragsdale hired Matthew Pearson to build a ten-room mansion for he and his family. The house features a limestone block foundation and is constructed of bricks that were made on the site. Jimmy Cochran, an Irish artist, spent three months graining the woodwork and marbleizing the fireplaces. Some windows are original, although the majority have been replaced and now consist of double-hung replacement windows with transoms.

**Exterior**

The front façade faces west and has three projecting sections. The northern portion projects out past the 3½-story entry tower, which in turn projects past the southern portion of this façade. The northern section contains a set of double-hung replacement windows with transoms on both the first and second floors. These windows, like most of the windows in the house, have shouldered limestone hoods and sills. There is a rosette window located in the front-facing gable that is off set by the deep overhanging eaves, cornice returns, and scrolled brackets.

The entryway anchors the first floor of the centralized tower. The tower is three full stories topped with a wood shingle (originally slate) mansard roof at the attic level. The wood door has two recessed diamond-patterned glass panels over four smaller recessed wood panels. There is an arched stained glass window crowning the entry door. A limestone hood with a keystone mimics the arched form of the stained glass window. The second floor of the tower has a single one over one double-hung replacement window that has the same limestone shoulder hood and sill as the northern windows. On the third floor is an arched double-hung four over four window with an arched limestone window hood. Between the third floor and the attic level is a deep overhanging eave on all four sides of the tower. The same scrolled brackets found on the northern section of the main façade are utilized here. The attic story has a projecting arched double-hung four over four window. It is identical to the third floor window only it is smaller and does not have the hood. The different styles of windows described above are used on each distinct level of the tower. There is molded cornice on the higher slope of the wood shake mansard roof. A modern rail surmounts the mansard roof.

The western portion of the front façade has a single double hung replacement window with a transom on both floors. Each have a limestone shouldered hood and sill. The scrolled brackets found on the other sections of the house have been included here to unify the asymmetrical façade.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

**Description-continued**

The main block of the north façade has four double-hung replacement windows. These are one over one with transoms and limestone shouldered hoods and sills. A large expanse of brick wall separates the two replacement windows per floor. This space accommodates the double fireplaces whose brick chimneys are visible at the attic level. The scrolled brackets under the eaves continue on this facade as well. The smaller block to the rear of the house has a recessed two-story porch supported by three columns on each level and a balustrade of turned posts on the second floor. Inside the porch there is an exterior metal staircase and four additional replacement windows like those of the main block. At the very back of the house is a single story brick addition that was possibly a circa 1900 addition. Today it houses a modern kitchen. There are two one over one replacement windows along this side and it is covered with a flat roof. Unlike the other windows in the house, these windows are topped with a shallow segmental brick arch.

The east façade consists of the kitchen addition on the first floor and the second floor and gable of the original house. The addition consists of common bond red brick that matches the main house. The single window in the kitchen addition is a double-hung one over one window topped with a shallow segmental brick arch. A door replaces what was a second window in the kitchen addition. It is a modern door with a nine light window. There is a transom window under a shallow segmental brick arch. The second floor has a double-hung one over one replacement window with a transom and a shouldered limestone window hood and limestone sill. Like the rest of the house, there are deep overhanging eaves, cornice returns, and scrolled brackets.

The dominant portion of the south façade is the projecting gable of the main section of Ragsdale house. The first floor has a centered doorway flanked on each side by a double-hung one over one window with a transom. The door is the same as the wood front door except that it is topped with a rectangular transom and shouldered limestone hood instead of the arched stained glass window and arched hood. An arched canopy supported by knee braces was added circa 1920. The second floor has three of the double-hung one over one windows that are on the lower level. There is a rosette window located in the attic gable that is off set by the deep overhanging eaves, cornice returns, and scrolled brackets.

The next section of the south façade is recessed slightly. There are four windows along this wall, two on each floor. They are the same windows with a transom, limestone hood, and sill that are found throughout the house. There are scrolled brackets supported the overhanging eave.

The final portion of the south façade is a circa 1900 addition. Like the north façade, it is a single story brick wall. There are two one over one windows along this side and it is covered with a flat roof. These are double-hung one over one windows topped with a shallow segmental brick arch.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Description-continued**

**Interior**

The main door opens into a small entry housed within the confines of the tower that has a dropped acoustical tile ceiling. The floors throughout are a mixture of birdseye maple and yellow poplar. This area segues into a centralized stair hall. The grand staircase is made of cherry and is currently painted white. There is a carved newel post and turned spindles along the balustrade. The open string stair is detailed with a scroll design.

To the left of the hallway are two doorways with transoms that once opened into two separate rooms. However, a wall was removed and it is now a single room. There are two sealed fireplaces and a recessed built-in bookcase along the north wall. Trim around the windows and doors is fairly detailed and projects slightly at both the top and bottom of the opening. All windows have full-length shutters on the interior. Painted wainscoting extends approximately three feet up the walls.

To the right of the hallway there are two doorways that open into another large room. Neither door has transom windows. The same detailed trim and full-length shutters are found in this room. Painted wainscoting extends approximately three feet up the walls. There are two exterior doors in this room, one along the south wall and one on the north wall. In the northeast corner there is a small modern bathroom and a modern kitchen housed in the circa 1900 addition.

The second floor currently functions as an apartment and has since 1923. In the past the golf pro for the adjacent golf course lived there with his family but currently a city employee resides in the apartment. Since the interior staircase from the first floor has been sealed off, the main entry for the second floor is via the recessed exterior staircase in the northeast corner of the house. There are two doorways on the landing. Both are replacement doors with nine light windows and have modern screen doors. Two light transoms crown each door as do wooden shouldered hoods. The door on the south wall functions as the main entry to the apartment while the western door accesses a hallway near the master bedroom.

The main entry opens directly into the dining room. To the left of the dining room and along the east end of the house are the kitchen and utility rooms. To the right of the dining room is the living room. A wide hallway connects the northeast corner of the living room to the master bedroom. Another hallway at the northwest corner of the living room leads to a bathroom and the other two remaining bedrooms. There is a covered entry in the ceiling of the hallway to access the upper levels of the tower.

All of the rooms on the second floor have dropped ceilings and either carpet or vinyl flooring over the wood floors. The woodwork is intact and painted white. Trim around the windows and doors is fairly detailed and projects slightly at both the top and bottom of the opening. Many of

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Description-continued**

the windows have full-length shutters on the interior. Several of the doors have two light transoms.

Irishman Jimmy Cochrane was hired to work on the interior finishes of Ragsdale house. It took him over a year to hand grain all of the wood. This was due to the variety of woods used. Each room has its own distinctive woodwork made of cherry, dark walnut, birdseye maple, or yellow poplar.

**Contributing Resources**

There is a random ashlar limestone wall and iron entry gate running along the front of the property. The wall has two piers on either side of the iron gate. As it runs its course across the property, the height of the wall changes. The entire length, including piers, is topped by rough cut limestone coping. The Greek key pattern runs through the center of the iron gate and there are a series of curling decorative motifs across the top.



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Statement of Significance**

William A. Ragsdale house was given an outstanding rating in the Lawrence County Interim Report as part of the Otis Park Historic District. The decision was made to write separate nominations for the Ragsdale house and Otis Park because of their different periods of significance. The Ragsdale house dates from 1865 whereas Otis Park was designed by the Works Progress Administration and came into its own between 1923-1952. The Ragsdale house is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an outstanding example of Italianate and Second Empire architecture in Lawrence County.

The land on which the Ragsdale house sits is in Shawswick Township, one of five townships created when Lawrence County was organized in 1818. At that time Shawswick Township was considered the most important township because of its location in the central part of the county—between the East Fork of the White River to the south and the second most important county creek, Salt Creek, to the west. Flowing from northeast to southwest through the township was Leatherwood Creek, along which lay prime farmland. This was known as Leatherwood District and famous for abundant harvests and prosperous farmers. Between 1816, before Lawrence County was organized, and 1820, numerous land entries were made in this area.

The name of William Ragsdale appeared in agricultural circles by the early 1850s. However it was not until 1865 that Mr. Ragsdale, then one of the wealthiest farmers and largest landowners in the county, and his wife selected a site overlooking Leatherwood Creek at the west edge of their 750 acres in Shawswick Township for a 10-room, two-story Italianate-style mansion. The estate served as a dairy farm until 1875 when, due to financial difficulties, 197 acres including the house were sold to Nathan Hall for \$7600 at a sheriff's sale. It is unknown what happened to the remainder of the land.

Hall lived there until 1910 when Alvin Tobias Hert purchased the property. Hert is the one who changed the name to Pine Hall after the many pine trees a surrounding the house. The former Ragsdale house sat vacant for two years until the Bedford Country Club was organized and turned the house and adjacent land into a country club and golf course in 1923. Renovations were completed at this time in order to transform the residence into a clubhouse. These included the removal of walls on the main floor, sealing off the fireplaces, installation of dropped ceiling, and replacement of windows. The second floor apartment was also created at this time. The Bedford County Club was a popular place in the community but the Great Depression brought its reign to an end.

In 1935 Fred Otis, the owner of the local newspaper, bought the former Ragsdale house and its surrounding acreage for \$18,500 with the intention of donating it to the city for use as a park, golf course, and community center/clubhouse. With his donation of the property, Otis made specific stipulations, two of which directly pertained to the Ragsdale house. He directed that the house be maintained as a museum and community hall and that an apartment for the park superintendent

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Statement of Significance-Continued**

and his family be arranged in the building. These conditions are still maintained today. While serving primarily as a clubhouse/community center, the house currently exhibits some local memorabilia and the second floor serves as a residence, although it is now for a city employee.

The Italianate style was not a particularly popular style in Lawrence County either commercially or residentially. Some rather notable examples of the commercial variety can be found in Bedford and the surrounding communities but there are only four outstanding rated Italianate houses in Lawrence County. The Jesse Johnson Farm, the Thomas Stevens House, and the Alfred H. Guthrie Mansion all contain standard features of the Italianate style: stone quoins, decorative window hoods, and elaborate wood porches. William A. Ragsdale house has decorative window hoods and a wood porch. However, the reason that this house stands out is that it is the only example in the county of a variation of the Italianate style referred to as the Italian Villa style. A heavy bracketed roof, asymmetrical massing, central tower, and round-arched windows are defining features of this style that William A. Ragsdale house possesses.

While predominantly of the Italian Villa style, the house also exhibits some Second Empire influences. Because of its relatively short duration (1860-1880) and the more popular Italianate and Gothic Revival styles of the time, the Second Empire style is rather scarce on a national scale and this is also the case in Lawrence County. The Gaussin house was the only outstanding Second Empire residence in the county. It has the characteristic mansard roof, decorative brackets beneath the eaves, windows with embellished surrounds, and molded cornices. The Ragsdale house has all of these features on the tower, which can also be an identifying element by itself. Also on the tower are dormer windows, another trait of the Second Empire style. Therefore, the William A. Ragsdale house is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because it is an excellent example of a unique blend of architecture in Lawrence County, Indiana.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photographs Page 8

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Photograph Descriptions**

All photographs taken by Brenda England on May 5, 2002 unless otherwise noted.

Negatives are located at the Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology  
402 W. Washington St., W274  
Indianapolis, IN 46208-2739

Photo #1: West façade; camera facing east

Photo #2: North façade; camera facing south

Photo #3: South façade; camera facing north

Photo #4: East façade; camera facing west

Photo #5: Attic access from apartment landing; camera facing southwest

Photo #6: Interior of front door; camera facing west; taken January 10, 2002 by Brenda England

Photo #7: View of entry hall; camera facing west

Photo #8: View of south banquet room and kitchen entry; camera facing east

Photo #9: View of window with closed shutters; camera facing west

Photo #10: View of fireplaces and bookcase in north banquet room; camera facing northwest

Photo #11: View of double windows in north banquet room; camera facing west

Photo #12: View of north banquet room and doorways into entry hall; camera facing southwest

Photo #13: View of entry hall from second floor landing; camera facing west; taken January 10,  
2002 by Brenda England

Photo #14: View of living room from dining room in apartment; camera facing southwest

Photo #15: View of dining room from living room in apartment; camera facing east

Photo #16: View down hallway in apartment; camera facing north

Photo #17: View of iron entry gate; camera facing east

Photo #18: View of random ashlar limestone wall and iron entry gate; camera facing east

Photo #19: View of front yard, wall, and gate from house; camera facing west

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 & 10 Page 7

William A. Ragsdale House  
Bedford, Lawrence County, Indiana

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**Bibliography**

Guthrie, James M. *Thirty Three Years in Lawrence County, Indiana*. Bedford, IN: James M. Guthrie, 1958.

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*History of Lawrence County*. Chicago: Goodspeed Bros. & Co., 1884.

Kerr, Judge Charles. *History of Kentucky*. Volume 4, Chicago: American Historical Society, 1922.

*Lawrence County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites & Structures*. Indianapolis, IN: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1992.

McAlester, Virginia & Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.

Stipe, Mary Margaret. Otis Park National Register Nomination. May 2002.

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Turner, Perc. "Historic Old Ragsdale Mansion Beauty Spot of Southern Indiana", *The Courier-Journal* Louisville, KY: 26 February, 1939.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The south boundary is a line parallel to and 42 feet from the south wall of the house. The east boundary is a line parallel to and 20 feet from the east wall of the house. The north boundary is a line parallel to and 20 feet from the north wall of the house. The west boundary is the right-of-way for Tunnelton Road and includes a portion of random ashlar wall to the south of the entrance to Otis Park. However at the point where the random ashlar wall meets the dry-laid rock wall, Pine Hall ends and Otis Park begins.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

This portion of land contains the elements of the site that are associated with 1865, the original date of construction for the William A. Ragsdale house. The surrounding property in Otis Park dates from 1936 for its link to the Works Progress Administration. The boundary includes the land that was traditionally linked to the house.

← CITY OF  
BEDFORD

U.S. 50

LEATHERWOOD CREEK

TUNNELTON ROAD



KEY



Contributing



Random Ashlar Stone Wall (Contributing)



Trees

--- Boundary

Map Not To Scale

# WILLIAM A RAGSDALE HOUSE BEDFORD, LAWRENCE COUNTY, INDIANA