

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 10 1986
date entered

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

MAR 3 1986

1. Name

historic Wrenn's Nest

and/or common Handly's Point of View

2. Location

street & number Eagle Cliff Road N/A not for publication

city, town Monteagle N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Grundy code 061

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 type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Opie Craig Handly

street & number 2112 Golf Club Lane

city, town Nashville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37215

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grundy County Courthouse

street & number State Route 56

city, town Altamont state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Grundy County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on Seales Point Bluff, one mile from the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly (NR 1982) in Monteagle (pop. 1,126), Grundy County, Tennessee, Wrenn's Nest is an imposing weatherboard residence which is a fine vernacular interpretation of the late Queen Anne Style. Built by a local contractor early in the twentieth century, the eleven room, two story structure is of irregular plan and rests on a cut sandstone foundation. A one story wraparound porch is located on the north and east elevations, while a two story bay capped by an octagonal turret with a bell cast conical roof and finial is situated at the northwest corner of the house. Wrenn's Nest is surmounted by a slate hip roof pierced by three chimneys, three gable roof dormers and one shed roof dormer. A one story hip roof extension projects from the south elevation, as does a circa 1938 shed roof addition. The interior of Wrenn's Nest has undergone little alteration and retains original pine staircase, doors, window and door surrounds, flooring, pine paneling and two original carved sandstone mantels. In addition to the main residence, a sandstone outbuilding is located within the boundaries of the nominated property. Recent renovation of Wrenn's Nest has included removing asbestos siding to expose the original weatherboard siding, returning the residence to the original paint colors, removing two rooms on the second level which were added circa 1938, and replacing missing roof coping. These changes have returned Wrenn's Nest to its original configuration and restored its outstanding architectural character.

The one story wraparound porch extends across the north facade and east elevation. It is supported by fluted Doric columns (added circa 1970, to replace similar ones) and has a simple wood balustrade. Fenestration on the facade is comprised of 25/1 double hung sash windows on the second story and 30/1 double hung sash windows on the first story. A fifteen light casement window is situated on the first story of the tower. A large 182-light window and the original glass and frame door capped by a transom window complete the ornamentation of the facade.

The east elevation contains 25/1 double hung sash windows on the upper level and 30/1 double hung sash on the lower level. A one story bay was added circa 1970 and the 182-light fixed glass window duplicates the window on the north facade. An original glass and frame door with single light transom identical to that found on the north facade marks the entrance.

The south elevation contains 25/1 double hung sash windows on the upper level and 30/1 double hung sash windows on the lower level, except on a shed roof addition where 6/6 double hung sash windows are found. This addition was made circa 1938 when the house was used as a nursing home.

The west elevation contains the same 25/1 double hung sash windows on the upper level and 30/1 double hung sash windows on the lower level with two twelve light fixed glass windows also on the first level. A fire escape and doorway from the second level were added circa 1938.

Pine has been used extensively throughout the interior of the house, including for the staircase, door and window surrounds, flooring, and paneling. A pine railing accentuates the balcony in the octagonal tower room, the most unique and outstanding space in the interior. This room originally housed books and a large collection of birds' nests and affords a spectacular view of the valley below. The front parlor and original master bedroom on the

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northeast side of the residence contain original carved sandstone mantels. The main stair is a single run with a turned balustrade and chamfered newel post. Original tongue and groove pine paneling exists in bedrooms on the upper level of the home.

A square one story sandstone outbuilding with a pressed tin gable roof sits approximately thirty yards south of the main residence. The original caretaker's residence, a one story weatherboard cottage, is located on adjacent property and is not included in the nomination.

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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1908 **Builder/Architect** Fred Blackman and Tom Tucker

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Wrenn's Nest is being nominated under National Register criterion C for its local architectural significance in Monteagle, Tennessee. Built in 1908 as a summer residence, the large house is an excellent example of vernacular Queen Anne style. The distinguishing features of the finely crafted residence are the extended two story bay with octagonal tower, multi-pane windows, and paneled doors. The interior boasts finely crafted details including the original staircase, doors, flooring, and mantels. The house is set on a bluff which affords a spectacular view of the valley below. The nominated property also includes one outbuilding. The main house and outbuilding have undergone few alterations and retain their historical and architectural significance.

Monteagle was a favorite summer resort for Southerners in the late nineteenth century. Hundreds traveled to the Monteagle Sunday School Assembly, the South's first Chautauqua, a cluster of approximately two hundred Victorian cottages which today is listed as a National Register Historic District. The Assembly, located a mile from Wrenn's Nest, was home for Colonel and Mrs. George Leonidus Wrenn in the summer of 1906 when they searched for a site for their future home.

Situated atop Monteagle mountain in Grundy County, Tennessee, Wrenn's Nest was originally the summer home of Colonel and Mrs. Wrenn. Colonel Wrenn, who had fought in the Confederate Army, hailed from Gunnison, Mississippi, where he owned a large plantation. He and his wife, Nora Cousar Wrenn came to Monteagle to seek a homesite which would provide them a retreat from the hot Mississippi summers and from the yellow fever epidemics which were common in the South at that time.

Wrenn chose the original thirty acre tract of land, which he purchased from Dr. Lessie Sayles on September 10, 1906, because of the spectacular view it commanded of the valley below which includes Pelham and Hillsboro, Tennessee, as well as offering a glimpse of the old road up the mountain which was used by Federal troops during the Civil War.

Wrenn's Nest, designed by local contractors Fred Blackman and Tom Tucker, was completed in 1908 and was used as a summer home until Colonel Wrenn's death in 1912. A combination of late Queen Anne style with Colonial Revival touches, its fanciful octagonal tower is a prominent exterior feature. Inside, the home boasts a fine carved pine staircase, handsome woodwork, and carved sandstone mantels. The structure serves as a testament to the abilities of mountain craftsmen and as an example of the lifestyles of an earlier day.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Wrenn made Wrenn's Nest her permanent residence, winterized the home and added two bedrooms to the eight bedroom, three bath house. Known as a very industrious woman, Nora Wrenn made and fired pottery at Wrenn's Nest. She also canned fruits and vegetables which came from the grounds which were at one time filled with fruit trees, a grape arbor, flower and vegetable gardens, and grazing cattle and sheep. Mrs.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Howarth, Judge Lucy. Cleveland, Mississippi. Interview. Sumner, 1985.
 Nivesen, Lois. Monteagle, Tennessee. Interview. Sumner, 1985.
 Taylor, Franklin. Monteagle, Tennessee. Interview. Sumner, 1985.
 Thomas, Glenn Y. Monteagle, Tennessee. Interview. Sumner, 1985.
 Thomason and Associates. "Grundy County, Tennessee, Architectural and Historical Survey Report. October, 1985.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately two acres
 Quadrangle name Monteagle, Tennessee Quadrangle scale 1:24,000
 UTM References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>604800</u>	<u>3901080</u>	B	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
E	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	F	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
G	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	H	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is approximately two acres in size and rectangular in shape. It is bounded on the north, south, east and west by adjacent property lines. This includes sufficient land to protect the historic setting and architectural integrity of Wrenn's Nest. (See tax map; map 100P, parcel 2.01 and 2.03)

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

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Opie Craig Handly
 organization N/A date August 6, 1985
 street & number 2112 Golf Club Lane telephone (615) 292-3684
 city or town Nashville state Tennessee

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.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Stange

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 1/31/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Allene Byer Entered in the National Register date 3-13-86
 Keeper of the National Register

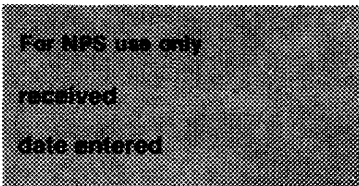
Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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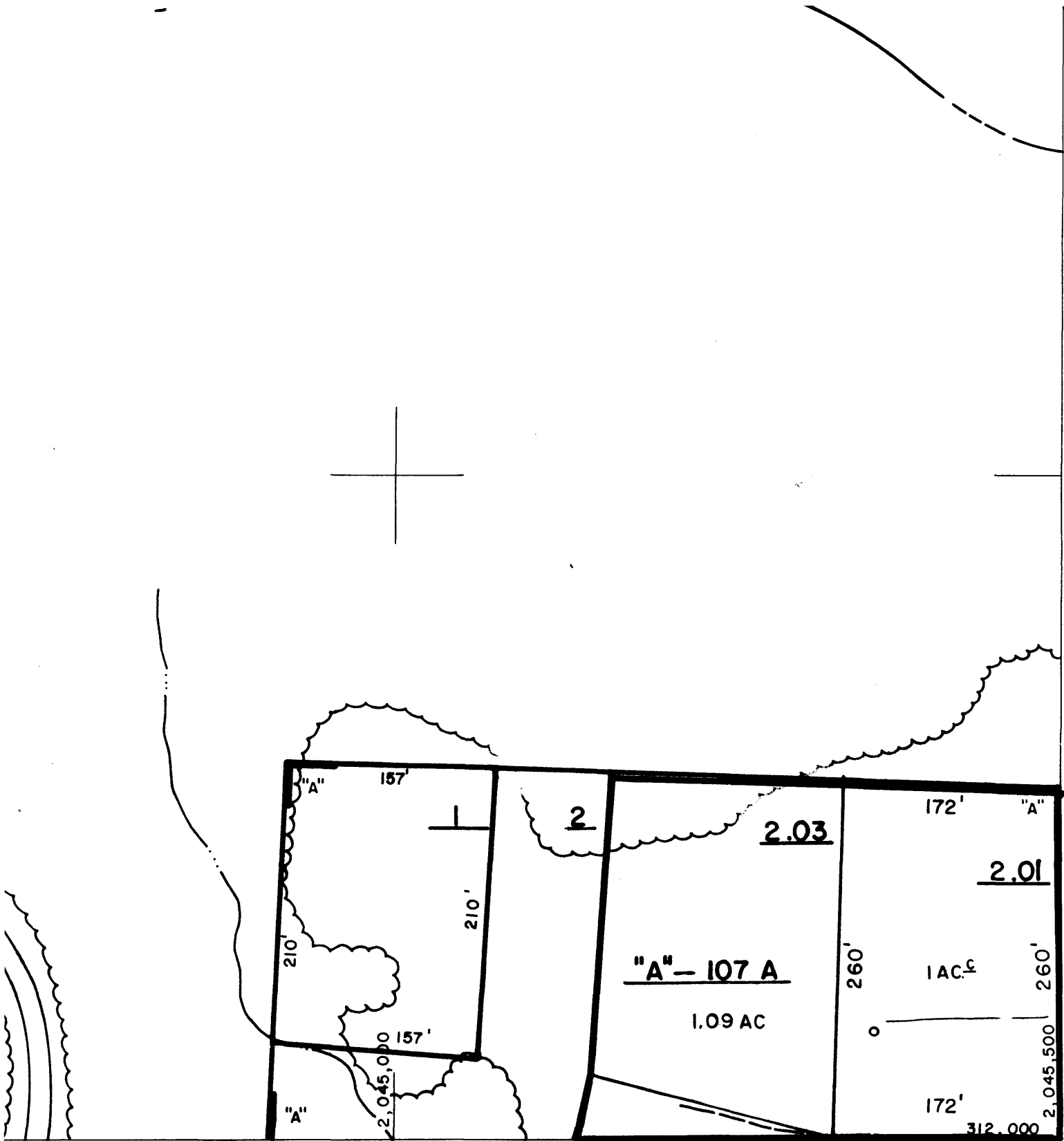
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Wrenn was known for her generosity and is said to have shared her considerable talents with the mountain people who learned pottery making, canning, and preserving techniques in the Wrenn basement (which consists of eight rooms). Very active in Morton Memorial Methodist Church in Monteagle, Nora Wrenn bequeathed Wrenn's Nest to the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, South to be used as a rest home after her death in 1936.

By 1941, the Board could no longer afford the upkeep of Wrenn's Nest and sold it. After a brief period as a private residence, the structure became a highly respected nursing home which housed a number of Nashville's prominent elderly citizens.

Ownership changed hands many times through the years and gradually the bulk of the thirty acre tract was sold off. The present owner bought Wrenn's Nest in 1974.

Wrenn's Nest exists in perfect condition due to the careful rehabilitation done by the Handly family. Asbestos siding was removed to expose the original clapboard and bedrooms added to the home on the north facade were removed to return the house to its original configuration. Paint analysis was undertaken to determine the original color scheme. Roof coping copied from early photographs now accents the structure. The house has been restored to its original grandeur. Wrenn's Nest was identified in a 1985 Grundy County survey as one of seven properties in the county, and the only one in Monteagle, potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



**Monteagle
Grundy Co. Tenn.**

SECTIONS —	
81	11
84	12
5	13
	14
	15

MIDDLE
SCALE: 1" = 100'
DATE OF FLYING: APRIL
DATE COMPILED: JULY,

Wrenn's Nest
Eagle Cliff Road
Monteagle, Grundy County, Tennessee

TAX MAP 1" = 100'

