

KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES  
Individual Inventory Form

Resource # 60  
Shelby County

1. Name of Resource:  
Bird Octagonal Mule Barn

2. Original Owner:  
Henry Bird

3. Other Names:  
Birdland Farm

4. Prehistoric Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building	Object
Historic Site	Structure	Other

5. Location:  
w. side KY 43, 3 mi. south of Cropper

6. Owner's Name:  
Mrs. Tate Bird  
[ P ]

7. Owner's Address:  
Rte. 1, Shelbyville, 40065

8. Evaluation: National Register [ N ]

9. Recognition & Date:  
 Nat.Landmark \_\_\_\_\_ Local Landmark \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nat.Register \_\_\_\_\_ HABS/HAER \_\_\_\_\_  
 Highway Marker \_\_\_\_\_ KY Inventory 8-15-80  
 KY Landmark Certificate \_\_\_\_\_

10. N.R.Status & Date:

11. N.R.Group:  
 District Name: [ ]  
 Mult.Resource Area: Shelby County [ ]  
 Thematic Name: [ ]

12. Historical Theme:  
 Primary: Agriculture [010]  
 Secondary: [ ]  
 Other: [ ]

13. Statement of Significance:  
 This property is significant under criterion A as a unique example of one type of specialized stock barns associated with agricultural diversification in the late 19th c. It is the only recorded octagonal barn and one of few mule barns to be identified in the county. [ A ]

14. History:  
 Henry Bird was a son of Philemon Bird, owner of Sh-59 (across KY 43 from this site). Philemon Bird gave each of his children 100 acres, and Henry acquired what is now Sh-60. Present dwelling on this site was constructed in 1896. Mule barn built in ca. 1880, or possibly earlier. He sold mules to the army and "down south". Barn housed forty mules long ago. There was a narrow aisle, and a central round trough so that each mule could be fed at the same time from one place. Their heads came together (Mr. Lois Peake, farm manager). Farm inherited by Tate Bird, youngest of Henry's seven children, who operated a dairy farm and added to the barn. Originally he bottled and sold raw milk until (continued)

15. Source of historical information and/or contact person:  
 Letter from Miss Mary Virginia Bird to Alwyn Miller, December 29, 1971.  
 Interviews with Mrs Tate Bird and Mr. Lois Peake, 2/86 & 3/86

16. Date:  
 Original Building c.1880 [ 5 ]  
 Addition c.1930 [ 3 ]

17. Style:  
 N/A [ N/A ]

18. Architect/Builder:  
 none

19. No. of Stories: 2 [ 2.0 ]

20. Original Floor Plan:  
 central-plan barn [ 00 ]

21. Single Pile Double Pile N.A.

22. Roof Form & Material: Original   
 octagonal, hipped, asphalt Not Original

23. Structural Material:  
 Woodframe, sawn [ W ]

24. Exterior Material:  
 Wood, vertical board. [ W ]

25. Foundation Material:  
 unknown [ ? ]

26. Major Alterations: None  
 Moved/Rebuilt Other  
 Additions

27. Special Features:  
 central plan

28. Outbuildings:  
 N/A [ N/A ]

29. Original Function:  
 Mule barn [ 09F ]

30. Present Use:  
 Dairy barn [ 09F ]

31. Condition:  
 excellent [ E ]

32. Endangered: Yes  
 No

33. Attach Photos:  
 Roll: Photo Nos: No. of Slides:  
 17 8-12 1

34. Prepared by: C. Worsham

35. Organization: Shelby Co. Hist. Society

36. Date: April 1986

37. New Survey \_\_\_\_\_ Resurvey

KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES  
Individual Inventory Form

Resource # 60

38. UTM Point of Primary Building: Quadrant: <u>Eminence</u>	Zone <u>16</u>	Easting <u>6 6 3 8 0 0</u>	Northing <u>4 2 3 9 2 0 0</u>	39. G.I.S. Mod. [ ]	40. Coordi.Accuracy [ ]
---	-------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------

41. UTM Points of Boundary (for N. R. eligible sites only):

A. -----	D. -----
B. -----	E. -----
C. -----	F. -----

42. Total Acreage in Present Property: 334	43. Acreage included in proposed N.R. boundary: 1.58
--	--

44. Site Plan (and boundary description and justification for N.R. sites):

see attached site plan

Beginning at Point A, at the intersection of the eastern edge of the main farm road and the fence defining the northern extent of the barn-associated lot, 300 ft. eastward along fence to intersection with another fence at B; 230 ft. southward to C; 300 ft. westward along a fence and a line corresponding to an extension of the fence to the eastern edge of the main farm drive at D; 230 ft. northward along said edge of said drive to point of origin.

The boundaries were drawn to include the barn and its setting of adjacent feed lots as defined by fences. The area also includes a concrete block milking parlor, a corrugated metal shed, and a frame board-and-batten building, all of which, though modern, relate directly to the current operation of the barn. Although they are non-contributing, these buildings could not be excluded from the boundaries without disrupting the relationship of the barn to the barn lot.

45. Description and House Plan:

see attached mule barn plan

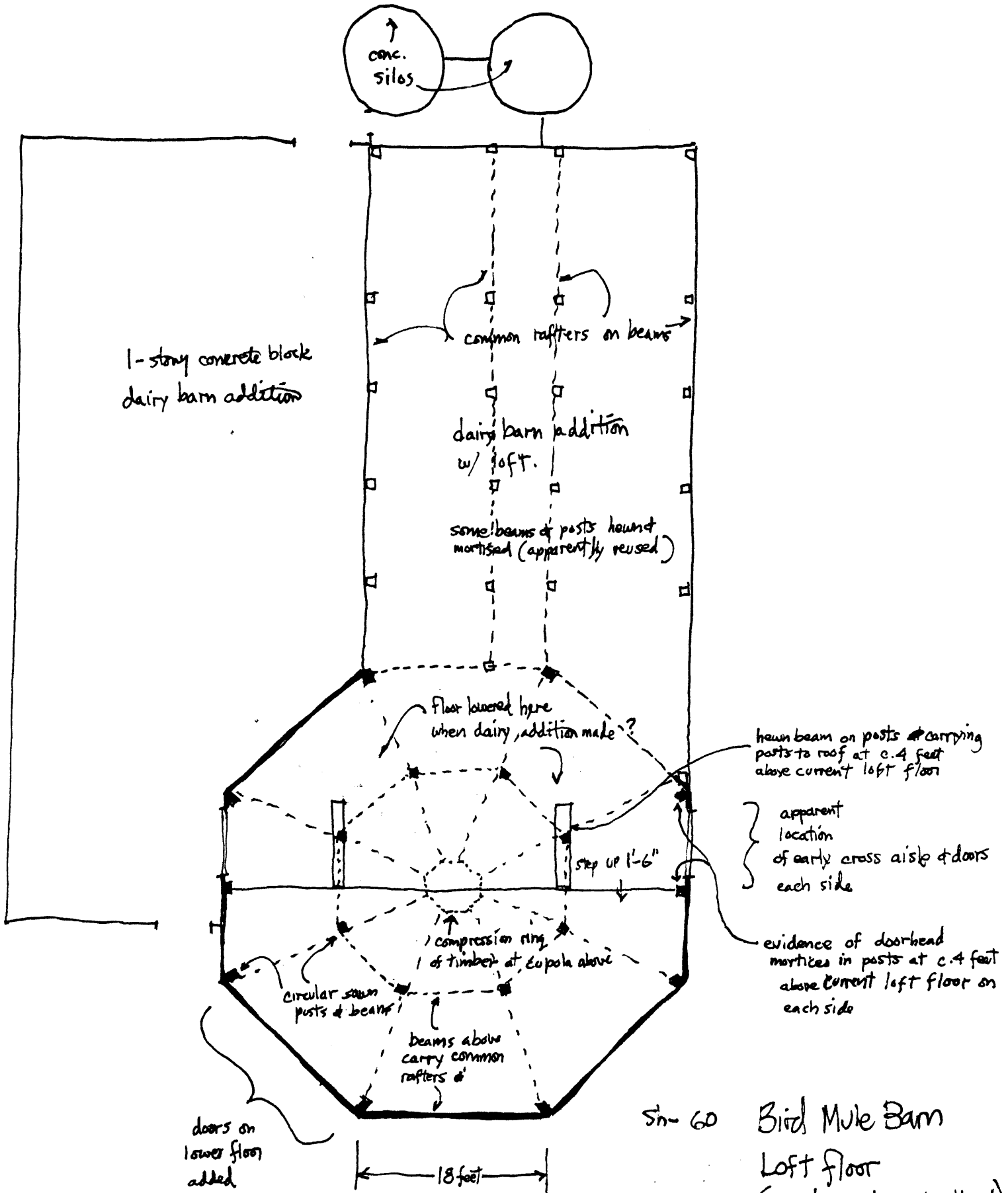
Octagonal frame barn. Ground floor now altered beyond interpretation. Loft area well preserved. Inner octagon of posts provides intermediate support for a common-rafter roof. Cupola in center carried on a compression ring. Evidence of ca. 9 foot-wide aisle includes change in loft floor level and beams spanning its location to carry posts above which would have impeded movement through it (see plan). Similar in several respects to dairy barns reported in New York State, showing influence of late nineteenth-century publications of agricultural societies and promoters of octagonal barns as economical and efficient forms to build and operate.\* It may have had a combination of a central plan with a transverse aisle. Scalloped vergeboards around barn above vertical-board siding on barn and central cupola. Asphalt shingle roof. Rectangular frame dairy barn addition to north with connected silos. Concrete block dairy barn extension to west.

The nominated area includes one contributing building and three non-contributing buildings.

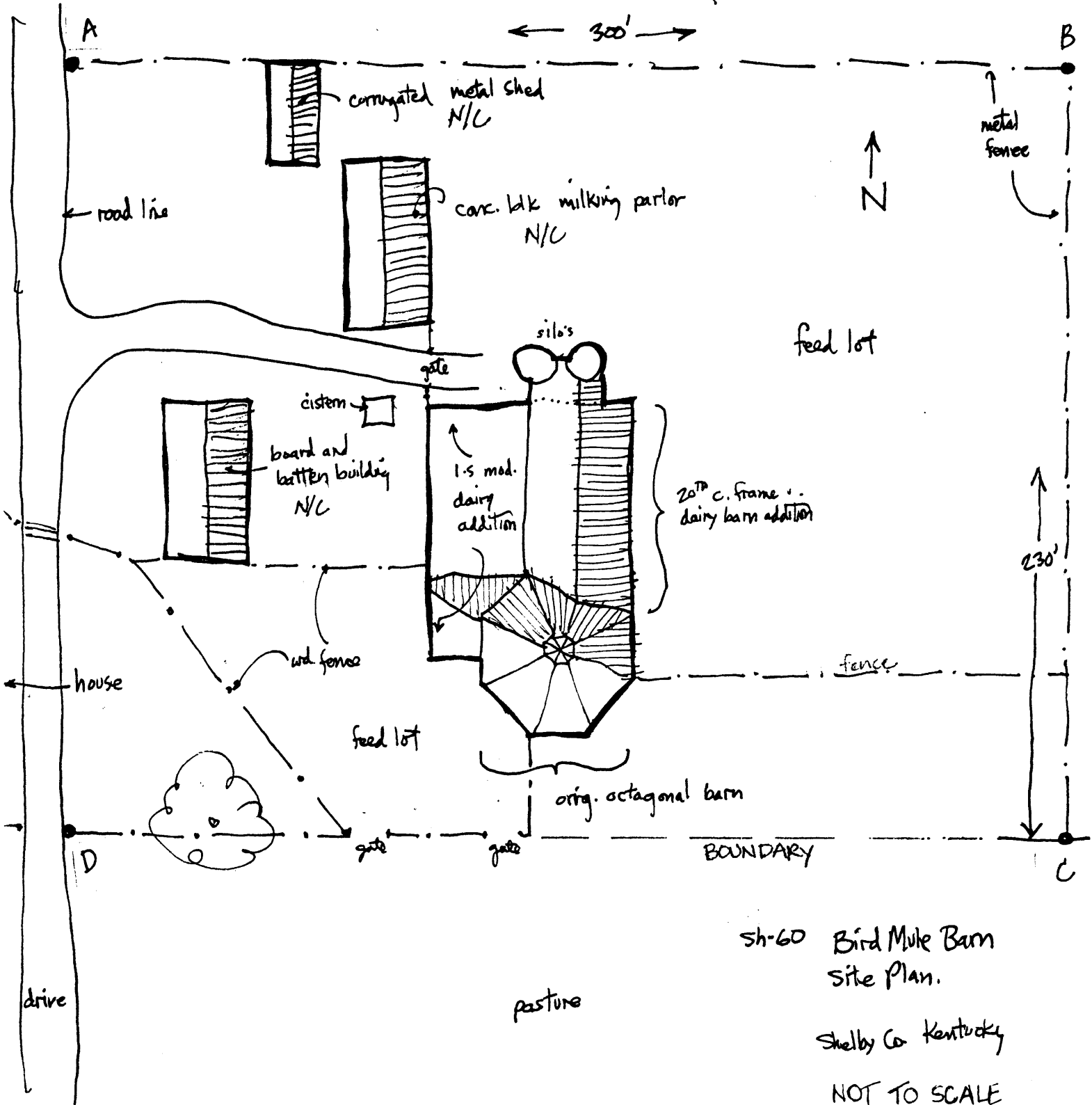
\*Central Plan Dairy Barns of New York State Thematic Resources," National Register Nomination. 1984.

14. History : (continued)

regulations required homogenization. Tate Bird operated a retail milk business from ca. 1935 to ca. 1965, selling homogenized milk. He had three delivery trucks, and sold milk throughout Shelby County and as far as St. Matthews in eastern Jefferson County. Eventually expanded to sell chocolate milk and Byerly's orangeade. Farm still sells wholesale milk with a herd of 81.



Sh- 60 Bird Mule Barn  
Loft floor  
(ground level much altered)  
Shelby County, Kentucky  
NOT TO SCALE



Sh-60 Bird Mule Barn  
Site Plan.

Shelby Co Kentucky

NOT TO SCALE