

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 6 1986
date entered APR 3 1986

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

1. Name

historic Bonnie Oaks Historic District

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number R.R.3 not for publication

city, town Town of Douglas X vicinity of Briggsville

state WI code 055 county Marquette code 077

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> N.A.	<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 William L. and Grace G. Schultz

street & number Bonnie Oaks Estate, R.R. 3, Box 147

city, town Portage vicinity of state WI 53901

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marquette County Courthouse

street & number 77 W. Park Street

city, town Montello state WI

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state WI

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

The Bonnie Oaks Historic District is located amid the rolling hills of Douglas Township in Marquette County east of the Village of Briggsville. The Neenah Creek forms the eastern boundary of the district, Grouse Road the southern edge, and Third Avenue the western boundary. (see district map) The district extends 900 feet north, encompassing twenty-eight acres of the eighty acre Bonnie Oaks Estate. Originally a homestead, Bonnie Oaks was maintained as a summer residence by the Atwood, Ormsby and Green families for most of their 125 years of ownership, and today serves as a year round home. The Bonnie Oaks Historic District comprises fifteen vernacular structures and one archaeological site, all of which contribute to the character of the district. The buildings demonstrate a similarity in scale, materials and use, and form a cohesive complex. Two additional structures stand outside the boundaries of the district on the Bonnie Oaks property, as they are non-contributing. Isolated visually and by a distance of several hundred feet, the excluded structures consist of wood posts supporting a gable roof.

The gravel driveway runs downhill from Third Avenue through a stand of red and white pines for a distance of about one-quarter mile, ending in a rotary. The pines shelter the estate from the traffic on Third Avenue, while a grape arbor along the southern edge of the property provides an effective buffer between the buildings and Grouse Road. At one time Bonnie Oaks boasted fifteen flower gardens, which the current owners, William and Grace Schultz, are recreating. A goldfish pond with a working fountain dating from the 1920's is situated just south of the Main House. (see district map)

The Main House is the westernmost structure south of the driveway. Built during the 1870's or 1880's by John Whitney Ormsby for his wife's parents, former owners of Bonnie Oaks, Joshua and Rosina Atwood, the house shows no stylistic overtones.² The L-shaped frame structure is set on a fieldstone foundation and was built in two stages. The two-story gabled southern section containing living quarters, and a free-standing one-story kitchen with a vented pyramidal roof were constructed first. A one-and-one-half story gabled section joining the living quarters and kitchen was subsequently erected, date c.1930. Narrow wood clapboard sheathes the exterior of the Main House and asphalt shingles cover all roof surfaces. Single entrance doors occur on each of the north, south and west facades. A segmentally-arched portico with trellis-like supports frames the main entrance, on the south facade. A heavy gabled overdoor appears above the west facade entrance. The fenestration pattern is regular; double-hung sash windows predominate, and small frieze windows are found on the south elevation. There are two narrow brick chimneys at the roof ridge on the two story section. A wide brick chimney appears on the northwest corner of the one-and-one-half story section. The wooden deck on the southeast corner of the house was built by the Schultzes following their purchase of Bonnie Oaks in 1982.³ The interior is functional and has suffered alterations over time, but presents a pleasing appearance due to restoration efforts by the current owners.

The Log House lies east of the Main House (see district map) and was erected by John Whitney Ormsby during the 1870's or 1880's.⁴ An earlier log cabin previously stood on the site. The Log House is T-shaped in plan. The two-story gabled southern section is set perpendicular to the one-story gabled rear section. The log walls of these sections have been left exposed. Wood shingles form geometric patterns in the gable ends. A one-story clapboarded kitchen with vented pyramidal roof is attached to the west facade of the one-story section and was probably built concurrently with the log sections. A one-story shed-roofed (screened) porch dating from the early twentieth century appears on the east facade. The Log House's foundation is fieldstone and asphalt shingles cover the roof. A single entrance door occurs on each of the _____, south and east facades. The main entrance, located on the south facade, is sheltered with a gabled portico on round timbers. Narrow double-hung sash windows make up the regular fenestration pattern. The window surrounds are distinctive, the sides of each wooden architrave extending well above the

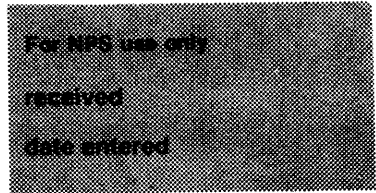
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lintel. The interior is functional and, although it has been altered over the years, the current owners have attempted to restore the original appearance.

The Tower is the westernmost structure north of the driveway. (see district map) This three-story square frame building was erected circa 1890 as a two-story guesthouse with a water tank on the third floor providing irrigation to the lawns.⁵ Circa 1930 the tank was removed and the 3rd floor opened, reached by an exterior wood stair.⁶ Wood shingles appear at the first and second stories, narrow wood clapboard appears above. The walls slope inward as they rise to the third floor. There is a wooden balustrade at the third story. The foundation is brick, and asphalt shingles cover the pyramidal roof. The main entrance is located on the east facade and a single entrance door occurs at the third floor on the north facade. A wide brick chimney rises on the north facade. On the interior there is a single room on each floor. The first and third floor spaces were designed as studios, the second as sleeping quarters. Alterations to the Tower appear to have been minimal, although the building has fallen into disrepair.

The Carpenter's Shop is located near the northern edge of the historic district. (see district map) This one-story L-shaped frame house was built in two sections. The northern end of the building was erected circa 1890 to serve as a carpenter's shop with the shop in the eastern half, and living quarters in the western half.⁷ During the 1920's the Carpenter's Shop was expanded southward with the addition of kitchen and bath facilities.⁸ The 1885 section is set on a fieldstone foundation and clad in vinyl siding. The later section has shiplap wood clapboarding and a concrete foundation. Asphalt shingles appear on the multi-gable roof. A wide single entrance door framed in a simple gabled portico, and a second single door, occur on the east facade. The fenestration pattern is regular and consists of double-hung sash windows. The interior is functional and has been altered over time. The kitchen and bath have been remodeled recently.

The Original Barn lies north of the Log House. (see district map) Excavated into a hill, the one-story gabled structure has a foundation and end walls of fieldstone. Built as a barn (post-1855 and pre-1880s), John Whitney Ormsby removed those portions of the building above the fieldstone during the late nineteenth century, erecting them on a new foundation nw of the original. The foundation was converted by Green.⁹ Narrow wood clapboard appears in the gable ends and frames four paneled barn-type doors on the north facade.

The Ormsby Barn is located north of the driveway. (see district map) Built by John Whitney Ormsby during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the rectangular structure is two stories in height with a fieldstone foundation.¹⁰ Regularly coursed cast stone with a raised pattern, probably obtained from Ormsby's lime and cement company in Milwaukee, forms the first story. The upper story is frame with wood clapboard, flaring to form a shingled skirt just above the first floor. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Decorative wood shingles appear in the gable ends. A narrow double door occurs on the east facade, a wide dutch door on the west facade. The fenestration pattern is regular. Single windows appear on the first floor, double-hung sash on the second. On the interior the first floor contains stalls for farm animals. An open newel stair rises to the second floor giving access to a large open space, dubbed "the ballroom" by Ormsby and Green family members. Exposed wooden beams, held in place with wooden pegs, support the roof.

The Bonnie Oaks Historic District contains three simple vertical log buildings of similar construction dating from the mid-to-late-nineteenth century.¹¹ The Woodshed is a one-story rectangular gabled structure set on a fieldstone foundation. A window appears in each of the gable ends, asphalt shingles cover the roof. A single door is

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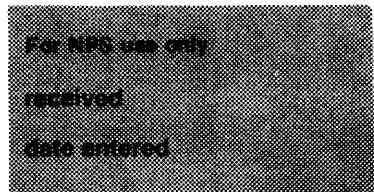
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located on the south facade. Situated northeast of the Main House and south of the driveway (see district map), the original function of the Woodshed was utilitarian. The Machine Shed lies southeast of the Carpenter's Shop on the north side of the driveway. (see district map) The one-story rectangular building is set on a fieldstone foundation. The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A wide sliding wood door occurs on the south facade. Vertical wood clapboard appears in the gable ends. The interior is functional, a single space with exposed log walls. The Boat House lies just east of the Ormsby Barn. (see district map) Originally situated on the banks of the Neenah Creek, the Boat House was moved back and set on a concrete foundation when Ormsby erected a new boat house on the Neenah in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The Boat House is a diminutive rectangular one room structure. Asphalt shingles appear on the gabled roof. There is a window in the gable end above the single wide door on the east facade.

There are six additional structures on the property which contribute to the Bonnie Oaks Historic District. These are the Chicken Coop, the Milking Shed, the Pump House, the Bath House, and the Outhouse. The Chicken Coop is a one-story rectangular building sheathed in wood clapboard and set on a wood foundation. The gable roof is asphalt shingled, the date of construction unknown. A red brick chimney rises on the north end and a single paneled wood door appears on the south facade. Windows occur on all but the west facade. The Chicken Coop is located just east of the Machine Shed. (see district map) The Milking Shed was built by Ormsby in the late nineteenth century so that each cow could be milked without the irritating presence of flies.¹² Not located adjacent to the barn, the Milking Shed is situated near the banks of the Neenah Creek. (see district map) The small square shed is one story tall with wood clapboarding and is screened on all sides. Wood timbers form the foundation. Asphalt shingles appear on the pyramidal roof. A single door occurs on the east facade. The Pump House lies east of the Ormsby Barn and south of the Boat House. (see district map) The Pump House is a small square one-story structure with wood clapboard set on a concrete foundation. It was probably built circa 1930 to house the Myers electric piston pump which remains in place. Asphalt shingles appear on the pyramidal roof. A narrow doorway occurs on the east facade. A window on the south facade allows light into the interior. The Bath House lies northwest of the Tower. (see district map) The small rectangular one-story building, construction date c.1933 is sheathed in wood clapboard, and asphalt shingles appear on the gable roof. A narrow door occurs on the north facade, and there is a small square window on each of the north and south facades. The interior has wood wainscotting and a bucket fixture with an attached showerhead. The Outhouse is situated adjacent to the north facade of the Wood Shed. (see district map) Probably built in the late nineteenth century, the small square Outhouse has a wood clapboard exterior. The vented pyramidal roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The single paneled door occurs on the south facade. There is a window on each of the east and west facades.

One archaeological site has been identified in the Bonnie Oaks Historic District, consisting of two effigy mounds and a possible oval mound. A well-defined Bird Effigy Mound is located sixteen-and-one-half feet west of the bank of the Neenah Creek. (see district map) The bird measures seventy feet from wingtip to wingtip, and forty-three feet from the top of the head to the tip of the tail. The bird is two-and-one-half feet in height and appears to be in excellent condition. Northwest of the bird is the second effigy mound on the property, a low mound formed in the shape of a bear. (see district map) The Bear Effigy Mound is not well-defined, either by design or as a result of erosion. The fence surrounding the Chicken Coop encroaches on the western edge of the bear. These two

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mounds were first brought to the attention of state archaeologists in 1927, but were apparently not investigated at the time.¹³ An archaeologist was permitted to excavate a portion of one of the effigy mounds during the early twentieth century.¹⁴ Recently two other possible archaeological features were identified.¹⁵ South of the Bear Effigy Mound is an Oval Mound measuring eight feet by eleven-and-one-half feet, rising one-and-one-half feet in height. This is smaller than most prehistoric mounds and may not be an aboriginal feature. North of the Carpenter's Shop is a Linear Rock Formation consisting of stacked stones of various shapes, colors, and types; this too has uncertain cultural affiliation.

Preservation Activities

The current owners, William and Grace Schultz, are in the process of rehabilitating many of the buildings on the Bonnie Oaks Estate. Thus far they have restored the Main House, the Log House, and the Carpenter's Shop, and plan to rehabilitate the Tower in the near future.

¹Information provided by former owner Eleanor Green Piel. All dates pertaining to the construction of buildings on the property were obtained from Mrs. Piel. Unfortunately, no supporting documentation was uncovered during the course of the investigation.

²Ibid.

³Information provided by current owner William L. Schultz.

⁴Information provided by former owner Eleanor Green Piel.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid. (The northern portion of the building was not utilized as living quarters until the 1920s or 30s. Prior to that the area was used solely for shop purposes.)

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid. (The "original Barn" was moved because of its location near the main residences. The remaining foundation walls were converted into a garage by Mildred Ormsby

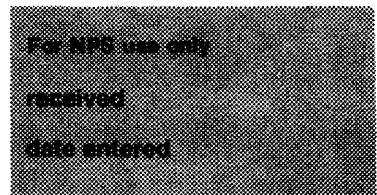
¹⁰Ibid. Green sometime in the late 1920s. The "Ormsby Barn" superstructure is the Old Barn.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

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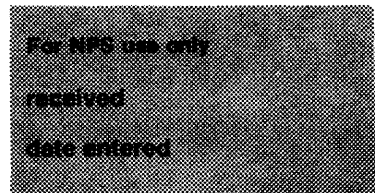
¹³Marquette County file, Charles E. Brown Archaeology Papers, State Historical Society.

¹⁴Information provided by former owner Eleanor Green Piel.

¹⁵Identified by Professor James P. Scherz, Dept of Civil Engineering, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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INVENTORY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	
Main House	c. 1870s-1880s	contributing	
Log House	c. 1870s-1880s	contributing	
The Tower	c. 1890	contributing	
Carpenter's Shop	c. 1885	contributing	
Original Barn	post-1855, pre-1880s	contributing	
Ormsby Barn	c. 1875-1900	contributing	
Wood Shed	c. post-1855, pre-1900	contributing	
Machine Shed	c. post-1855, pre-1900	contributing	
Boat House	c. post-1855, pre-1900	contributing	
Chicken Coop	c. post-1855, pre-1900	contributing	
Milking Shed	c. 1875-1900	contributing	
Pump House	c. 1930	contributing	
Outhouse	c. 1875-1900	contributing	
** Effigy Mounds	c. 200 B.C.-1200 A.D.	contributing	
Bath House	c. 1933	contributing	**
Corn Crib	c. 1930	contributing	

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 See Significance statement _____ **Builder/Architect** See significance statement _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Period of Significance: Literature and Music: 1920-1936 *
Archaeology-Prehistoric: Circa 200 B.C.-1200 A.D.

Introduction

The Bonnie Oaks Historic District has significance at the state level in the fields of literature and music for the role it played as an ^{INFORMAL} artists' retreat during the early twentieth century. An archaeological site on the property lends the Bonnie Oaks Historic District statewide archaeological significance.

Literature and Music

The original owner of the Bonnie Oaks property was Cyrus Woodman, who obtained it in 1853 as a military land warrant from the federal government.¹ In 1854 Woodman sold the site to John Breatcliffe.² Joshua Atwood and Edward R. Cudworth subsequently took title in 1857.³ Joshua Atwood, a Yankee from Vermont, occupied the homestead with his wife Rosina and daughter Alma. It was Alma who gave Bonnie Oaks its name. Alma (1842-1893) married John Whitney Ormsby in 1866 and in 1869 Bonnie Oaks was conveyed to Alma Atwood Ormsby.⁴ The Ormsbys lived in Milwaukee where Mr. Ormsby operated a lime and cement company, maintaining Bonnie Oaks as a summer residence. John Whitney Ormsby, an inventive craftsman in his spare time, designed and built most of the structures now standing on the Bonnie Oaks property including the Main House, the Log House, the Tower, and the Ormsby Barn.⁵ The Ormsbys' daughter Mildred (1872-1964), born at Bonnie Oaks, married Milwaukee lawyer Harrison S. Green in 1897, and following her father's death in 1916, the Greens became the owners of Bonnie Oaks. The Greens also maintained Bonnie Oaks primarily as a summer place, and it was during their tenure that Bonnie Oaks achieved significance in literature and music. Bonnie Oaks remained in the Atwood, Ormsby and Green families until the property was sold to William and Grace Schultz in 1982.

Bonnie Oaks became a retreat for young authors during the twenties and thirties, often as a result of Mildred Ormsby Green's close friendship with Zona Gale. Gale (1874-1938) was one of the most intensely American writers of her time. Born in Portage, her best work portrayed regional realism and included Birth (1918) and Miss Lulu Bett (1920). The latter, in play form, won a Pulitzer prize.⁶ Zona Gale devoted a great deal of energy to encouraging young authors, bringing several of them to spend summers in Portage and at Bonnie Oaks.¹⁶ Among her most well-known proteges were William Maxwell and Margery Latimer. Maxwell (1908-), a native of Illinois, spent several summers at Bonnie Oaks, and wrote his first novel Bright Center of Heaven (1934) in the Tower's third floor studio, apparently inspired by the lifestyle at Bonnie Oaks. Besides the aforementioned novel, Maxwell's principal works include They Came Like Swallows (1937), The Folded Leaf (1945), and Time Will Darken It (1948). Maxwell, a graduate of the University of Illinois and ten years editor of the New Yorker, was profoundly influenced by Gale.⁷ Margery Latimer (1899-1932), like Gale a native of Portage, had a very close but turbulent relationship with her mentor. Latimer's literary efforts were highly acclaimed in her time, marking her as a rising star in the literary world. Latimer's works included We Are Incredible (1928), and Nellie Bloom and Other Stories (1929). Highly regarded as an author of short stories, Latimer's promising career was cut short by her untimely death in 1932.³

9. Major Bibliographical References

Victoria Brown. Uncommon Lives of Common Women: The Missing Half of Wisconsin History.
Madison, WI: Feminists Project Fund, Inc., 1976.

Concise Dictionary of American Biography. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 28

Quadrangle name Briggsville, WI

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	2	9	3	2	8	0	4	8	3	6	0	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

1	6	2	9	3	7	0	0	4	8	3	5	9	9	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

1	6	2	9	3	7	0	0	4	8	3	6	2	9	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

1	6	2	9	3	2	8	0	4	8	3	6	2	9	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification Part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 33, T14N, R8E, beginning at a point at the northeast corner of the intersection of Third Avenue and Grouse Road, then N 900 feet, then E 1300 feet, then S along the Neenah Creek to the northern edge of Grouse Road, then W 1300 feet to point of origin. (see district map) (cont')

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth L. Miller, Preservation Consultant

Preservation Services, an

organization Alexander Company

date 24 November 1985

street & number 802 Regent Street

telephone 257-7506

city or town Madison

state WI

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 *Jeff Dean*

title

date 2/25/86

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

Joseph M. McChesman
Keeper of the National Register

date 4/3/86

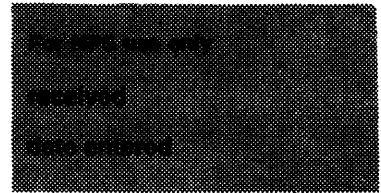
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Latimer, a frequent guest at Bonnie Oaks, was a follower of the Gurdjieff philosophy. Formulated by George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (1877-1949) and launched in Russia in 1912, the philosophy dictated the practice of an elaborate system of mental and physical exercises intended to develop the individual's emotional and mental powers, integrate them with the body and bring them under self-control and self-direction.⁹ Many intellectuals, artists and writers of the early 20th century were strongly influenced by the Gurdjieff philosophy, H.G. Wells, Rudyard Kipling, and A.R. Orage (editor of the New Age) among them.

In 1930 Latimer involved Zona Gale in Gurdjieff's philosophy, and through the "Portage Experiment", conducted at nearby Big Slough in the summer of 1931, Portage and the surrounding area became a center for the teaching of the practice of the Gurdjieff philosophy.¹⁰ Jean Toomer (1894-1967), leader of the Gurdjieff philosophy in the midwest and a noted author in his own right, brought his "students", who included the Green's daughter Katherine, to Bonnie Oaks several times. At Bonnie Oaks, the participants were able to take advantage of the natural beauty of the area and its secluded, private atmosphere to engage in the study of the philosophy. Lectures on the philosophy held during the period brought a number of interested individuals to the area. Toomer, author of the well-received novel Cane (1923) married Latimer in Portage following the conclusion of the "Portage Experiment".¹¹ Several months later Portage erupted in scandal as the Portage Experiment was declared by the press a "free-love" cult, and charges of miscegenation were made upon the disclosure that Toomer was one-sixteenth Black.¹² The Portage Experiment and its associated study was, despite its scandal-causing overtones, a unique cultural and philosophical episode in Wisconsin history, which found a welcome atmosphere in the Portage area.

In 1922 Mildred Ormsby Green invited pianist Josef Lhevinne (1874-1944) to Bonnie Oaks. For the next twenty-two years until the time of his death Lhevinne spent a part of each summer in the Tower at Bonnie Oaks. Lhevinne and his wife Rosina were faculty members at the Juilliard School. Lhevinne, who was dedicated to developing young musicians, frequently brought a student with him to Bonnie Oaks for intensive study. Russian by birth, Lhevinne settled in New York city in 1919 and was ranked with the greatest virtuosos of his day, famed for his performances of Chopin and Tchaikovsky.¹³ Bonnie Oaks was a favorite retreat for Lhevinne where as an avid fisherman, he could get away from his endless work schedule and hectic New York City lifestyle. With the encouragement and favor of Mrs. Green, he encouraged many of his associates to visit Bonnie Oaks, among them Franz Proschowski, a fine voice teacher who had coached Galli Curci and Paul Robeson; and the Dutch pianist Jan Chiapusso. Many of these artists paid numerous return visits to the Bonnie Oaks area and the hospitality of Mrs. Green.

Bonnie Oaks represented a unique "experiment" in Wisconsin, where young and established writers and musicians could gather to exchange ideas, discuss their work and their philosophies and expand their creative thinking in a relaxed and inviting atmosphere. The property also served as an informal "retreat" where the artist could be introspective and concentrate on his creative efforts. The progressive and at times scandal-tainted nature of the activities which took place at Bonnie Oaks played an important role in the growth of the arts in Wisconsin during the post World War I era.

ARCHEOLOGY - PREHISTORIC

The Bonnie Oaks Historic District is of statewide archeological significance for the

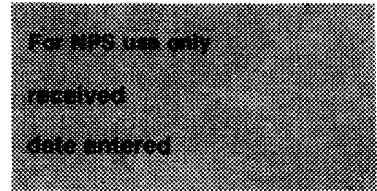
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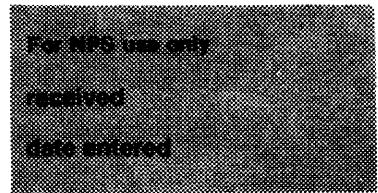


ARCHEOLOGY (cont.)

information that the two effigy mounds may contain, shedding light on Woodland prehistory, particularly on social relations and mortuary customs. The mounds within the district, virtually undisturbed, are among the better preserved in the state. Analysis of the Effigy Mound and Middle Woodland study units have not been completed for Marquette County, but statewide summaries suggest that a great deal of information on prehistoric social relations is contained within sites such as those in the district.¹⁵ There are currently no effigy mound groups in Marquette County listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The oval mound and rock formation are of unknown age and significance.

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- ¹Marquette County Deeds, 1:33.
- ²Ibid., 2:372.
- ³Ibid., 3:318.
- ⁴Ibid., 13:141.
- ⁵Information provided by Eleanor Green Piel.
- ⁶Concise Dictionary of American Biography, (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), p. 331.
- ⁷Stanley J. Kunitz, Ed., Twentieth Century Authors: First Supplement, (NY: The H.W. Wilson Co., 1955), p. 656.
- ⁸Victoria Brown, Uncommon Lives of Common Women: The Missing Half of Wisconsin History, (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Feminists Project Fund, Inc., 1976), pp. 71-73.
- ⁹Leslie A. Shepard, Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology, (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1978), pp. 396-397.
- ¹⁰August Derleth, Still Small Voice, (NY: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940), p. 177.
- ¹¹Darwin T. Turner, Ed., The Wayward and the Seeking: A Collection of Writings by Jean Toomer, (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1980), pp. 3-5.
- ¹²Milwaukee Sentinel, 20 March 1932, p.1 col 2.
- ¹³Robert K. Wallace, A Century of Music Making, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 184.
- ¹⁴Information provided by Eleanor Green Piel.
- ¹⁵William M. Hurley, "An Analysis of Effigy Mound Complexes in Wisconsin:", Anthropological Papers, No. 59, Museum of Anthropology, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1975), p. 1.

* The property was maintained and used as an "artist's retreat" into the middle-1940s, but was not considered of sufficient importance to waive the NRHP's general 50 year standard significance cut-off. The peak era of significant use remains c. 1920 to 1936.

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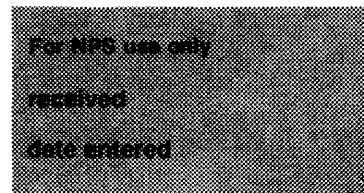
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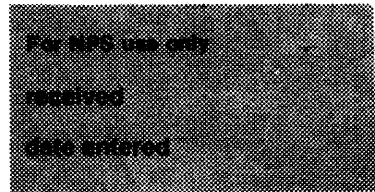


16. It should be noted that while Zona Gale was a great influence on young writers, it was at Mrs. Green's invitation alone, that the young artists came to Bonnie Oaks. Intensely interested in the creative arts and the creative temperment, Mrs. Green opened her estate as an "informal" retreat to many young talents. William Maxwell, for instance, had come to Bonnie Oaks while still in high school, to do odd jobs around the estate. When he went through a period of stress and ill health after college, Mrs. Green took him into the family to help get him back on his feet. It was at the end of this period that he wrote his first novel, and subsequently was introduced to Ms. Gale. (Information provided by Ms. E. Piel.)

Ms. E(leanor) (Green) Piel, daughter of Harrison & Mildred Green, is the author of numerous short stories and four novels including: THE HILL, written in 1936 at Bonnie Oaks. Praised by many literary figures, her work clearly shows the effect of Bonnie Oaks. The influence of the property, where the summers of her formative years were spent, is strongly reflected in the settings and the evocative descriptions of the countryside which appear in her works. As with the many other writers and artists who frequented Bonnie Oaks, her work portrays the importance of this rural Wisconsin site on literary production during the early 20th century.

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August Derleth. Still Small Voice. NY: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940.

William M. Hurley. "An Analysis of Effigy Mound Complexes in Wisconsin!" Anthropological Papers, No. 59, Museum of Anthropology. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1975.

Stanley J. Kunitz, Ed. Twentieth Century Authors: First Supplement. NY: The H.W. Wilson Co., 1955.

Milwaukee Sentinel. 20 March 1932, 30 March 1932.

Portage Register-Democrat. 19 August 1932.

Leslie A. Shepard. Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1978.

Harold P. Simpson. Zona Gale. NY: Wayne Publishers, Inc., 1962.

Darwin T. Turner, Ed. The Wayward and the Seeking: A Collection of Writings by Jean Toomer. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1980.

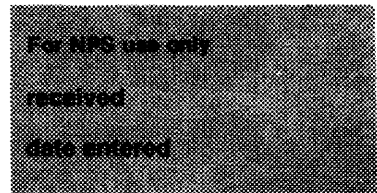
Robert K. Wallace. A Century of Music Making. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1976.

*Organic Living: Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Fellowship and Georgei Gurdjieff's Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man." Wisconsin Magazine of History, 58:2, pp 126-139.

Wisconsin State Journal. 19 March 1932.

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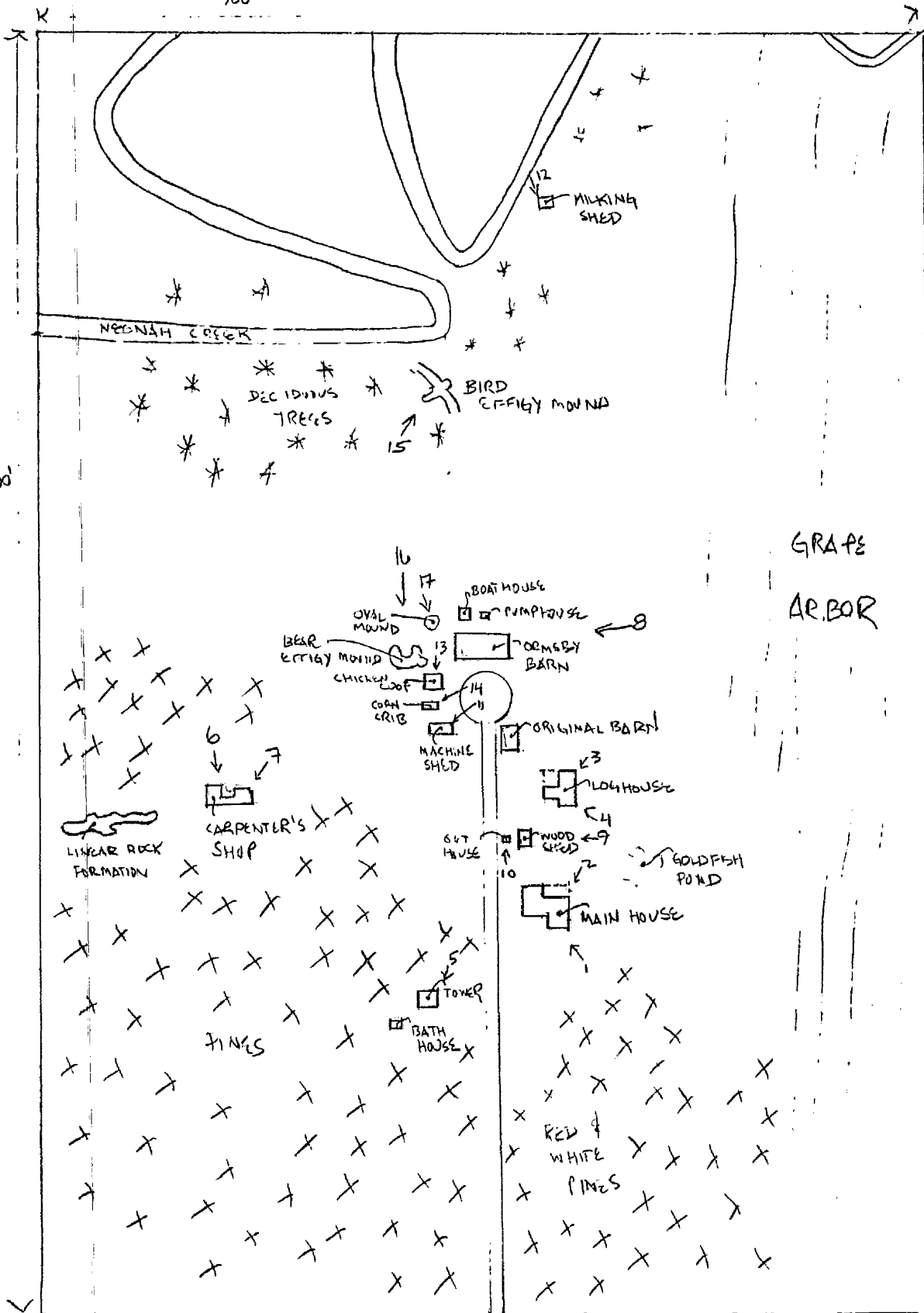
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The rectangular parcel encompasses 28 acres and includes all sites of archaeological significances and all contributing buildings associated with the estate. The boundaries are defined by Third Avenue, Grouse Road, the Neenah Creek, and the northernmost feature contributing to the district. That part of the Bonnie Oaks Estate falling outside the boudaries of the district is vacant with the exception of two non-contributing structures.

900'



BONNIE OAKS
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

NEAR BRIGGSVILLE
MARQUETTE COUNTY

SCALE 1" = 150'

NOTE: LOCATIONS
AND DIMENSIONS
OF STRUCTURES
AND MOUNDS.
APPROXIMATED



GRAPE
ARBOR

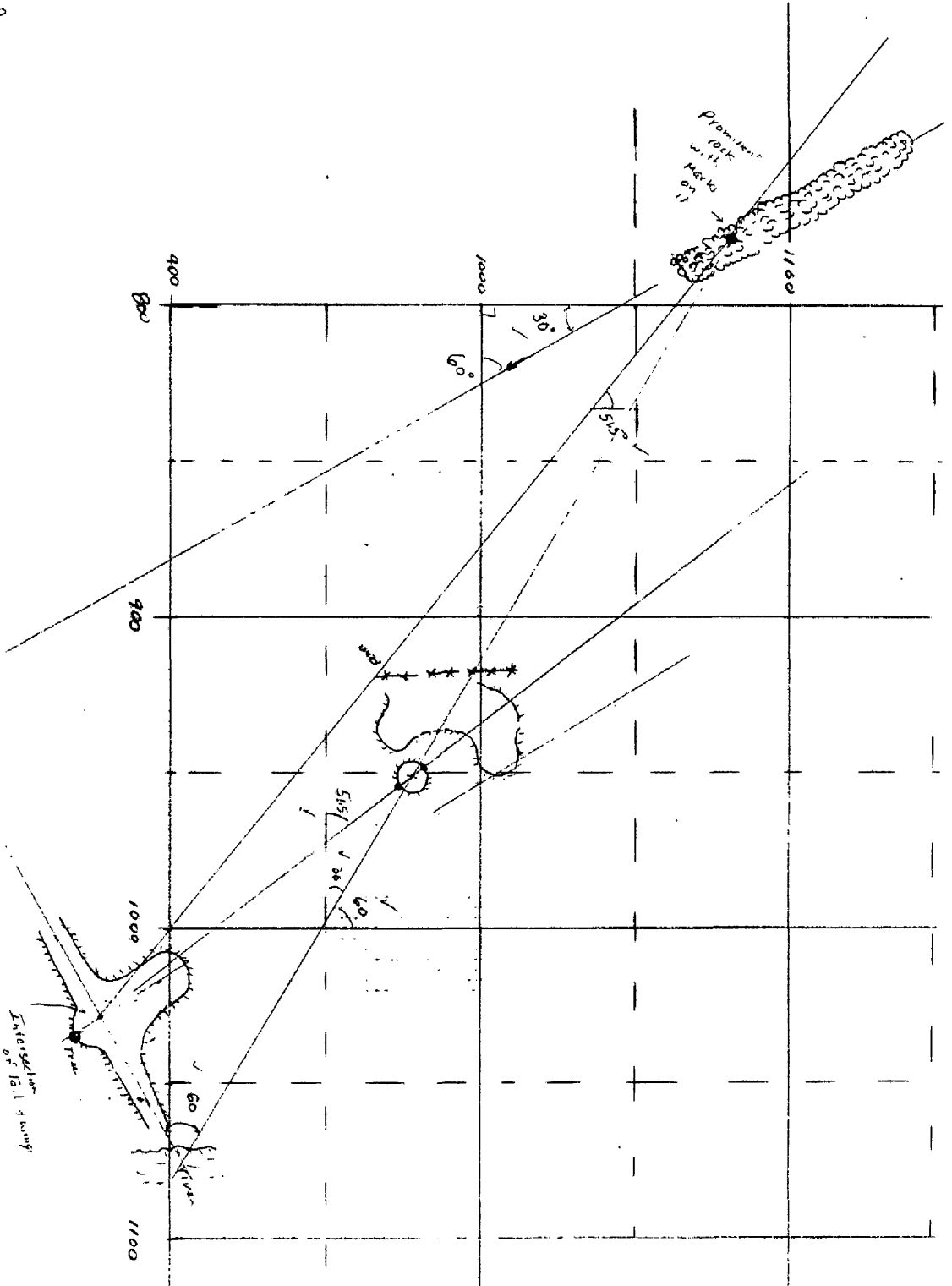
ROAD
GROUSE

THIRD

AVENUE

1300'

50
 40
 30
 20
 10
 0
 $5/15 = \phi$



Astronomical
 True
 North

Bonnie Oaks Site

Surveyed by Terry Kewer
 and Jay Mullins

Dec 2 1984

Reduced to this scale
 By Beth Miller, James Valiga
 and Prof. Siler
 7 Nov 1985

Madison WI