

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received APR 23 1982

date entered 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic "The Bird's Nest"

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number 526 Broadway at One Mile Corner \_\_\_ not for publicationcity, town Newport \_\_\_ vicinity of #1 Hon. Fernand J. St Germain  
congressional districtstate Rhode Island code 44 county Newport code 005

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> museum</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> park</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> religious</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N.A. in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> scientific</span>
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> transportation</span>
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> other:</span>

## 4. Owner of Property

name Ian C. &amp; Leslie G. Oliver

street &amp; number 526 Broadway at One Mile Corner

city, town Newport \_\_\_ vicinity of state Rhode Island

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Newport City Clerk's Office

street &amp; number City Hall

city, town Newport state Rhode Island

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

The Architectural Heritage of Newport County  
title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  nodate 1946-52  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Newport Historical Society, 82 Touro Street

city, town Newport state Rhode Island

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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		

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The modest dwelling long known as "The Bird's Nest" is an eighteenth-century structure with numerous nineteenth-century additions and alterations. It stands on the west side of Broadway at busy One Mile Corner close to the Newport-Middletown border where the highway becomes West Main Road/Route 114. The area is largely residential but a commercial strip extending north up the highway begins just opposite the house. Originally a farmhouse, "The Bird's Nest" occupies a fairly restricted, irregularly shaped flat lot. The only other structure extant on site is an early twentieth-century two-car garage located behind the residence.

The main body of the frame, clapboard-clad house is a two-and-a-half-story, flank-gable, three-bay-by-two-bay structure of heavy timber construction approximately 27 feet square dated to the mid-eighteenth century. The two-story, gable-roofed rear ell, measuring roughly 18 feet square, may be of even earlier date. The ell has a small nineteenth-century back chimney. The main body of the house contains a large stone and brick chimney stack set well behind the roof ridge. The house has five major nineteenth-century additions: a single-story, 4-by-8-foot vestibule at the northwest juncture of the ell and the main body of the house providing a secondary entrance at the driveway; a 6-by-18-foot, one-story addition on the south side of the ell containing kitchen entrance and bath; two two-story, semi-octagonal bay windows, one on the south and one on the north elevation; and a front porch. (See figures 1 and 2)

The house has the simplest of Greek Revival raking cornices and recessed-panel corner pilasters, and severely plain plank window casings of eighteenth-/early nineteenth-century type. Sash is 6/6, double-hung, save in the south bay window which in the ground story has floor-length windows with triple-hung 6-pane sash. In characteristically eighteenth-century fashion, the heads of the second-story windows intersect the narrow roofline cornice on the entrance front and the ell's lateral elevations. The sidelighted, transitional Federal/Greek Revival entrance frontispiece is a good example of vernacular woodwork. The front porch, too, is transitional in character, with paneled Greek Revival piers; a Gothic Revival cornice fret of pierced-work trefoils; and unique clapboard end walls containing glazed, traceried lancet windows. (See figure 3.)

The house has a mortared fieldstone foundation, and the stone-walled cellar is unfinished. The ell's garret is unfinished but the attic in the main body of the house contains two small, plaster-walled rooms.

The first floor (see plan, figure 4) has a side-hall entrance containing the front stairs. Here and elsewhere the heavy structural posts are visible. There are four major rooms on this floor: front parlor, north parlor or library, dining room, and kitchen. The main chimney stack serves the three front rooms but the dining room fireplace has been eliminated. All extant fireplaces in the house are of the Rumford type. The low-studded interior has plaster finish and boldly scaled, unsophisticated

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input checked="" 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 1871

Builder/Architect N.A.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

"The Bird's Nest" is a good rural vernacular building which in the mid-nineteenth century shed its quotidian use as a farmhouse, becoming a country retreat and a meeting place for Newport's intelligentsia.

According to a note by Antoinette Downing in The Architectural Heritage of Newport County, "The Bird's Nest" is a mid-eighteenth-century dwelling with an older ell. The layout of the main body of the house recalls a small group of unpretentious, mid-eighteenth-century Newport residences of which the most similar published example is the Christopher Townsend House on Bridge Street built between 1725 and 1750. Despite its colonial origins, nineteenth-century modifications obscure the antiquity of "The Bird's Nest" and define its special character. Bumptious, ungrammatical late Federal interior trim, in combination with the complexity generated by numerous appendages and the quaintness of mixed Greek Revival/Gothic Revival external dressings, make this a thoroughly charming habitation. It is precisely the sort of rustic, small-scale, intriguing old house which appealed to Victorians' taste for the picturesque and mignon, and which is now fashionably glossed as "American Country."

The pre-Revolutionary portion of "The Bird's Nest" was probably erected by William Tripp. The property later came into the ownership of Charles Collins. Collins' daughter married a prominent Newport physician and apothecary, Dr. Rowland Robinson Hazard; in 1845, Dr. Hazard bought the farm, started making improvements, and gave the name the house still bears. Dr. Hazard maintained the farm at One Mile Corner as a country seat convenient to his home and office in downtown Newport. In the late 1860s, the house was occupied by Col. George C. Waring, a widely known scientific agriculturalist who after the Civil War was engaged by H.A.C. Taylor to manage Taylor's experimental farm in Middletown.

Waring was born into a farm family in Poundridge, New York, in 1833. He studied agricultural chemistry with James Mapes and was subsequently chosen to run Horace Greeley's model farm at Chappaqua. In 1857, he was engaged as drainage engineer for the construction of Central Park in New York City. During the war he served in the army, then ran H.A.C. Taylor's Middletown farm for ten years, and later gained distinction as a sanitarian; among other achievements, Waring reformed the Sanitation Department of New York City which was under his management for three years. In 1898, Waring contracted yellow fever while studying

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Downing, Antoinette and Scully, Vincent J. The Architectural Heritage of Newport County. 1952, pp. 75 and 498; plates 95 and 125.

Robinson, Caroline E. The Hazard Family of Rhode Island. 1895, pp. 127-128. (See Continuation Sheet #3)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre.

Quadrangle name Prudence Island

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

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

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Newport assessor's plat 7, lot 1 -- the entirety of the property occupied by "The Bird's Nest." Surrounding parcels do not enhance the character or significance of the nominated property.

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Chase, Consultant

organization Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission date November, 1981

street & number 150 Benefit Street telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence state Rhode Island

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Frederick C. Williamson*

title

date April 19, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

Entered in the National Register date 6/9/82

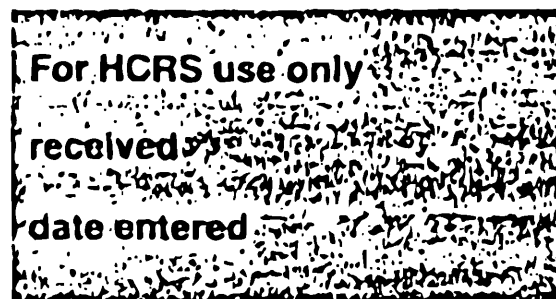
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet 3

Item number 9

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Dictionary of American Biography. vol. 19, 1933, pp. 456-457.

Elliott, Maude Howe. This Was My Newport. 1944, pp. 103-114.

"Marjorie Dean," Letters from Newport to the Boston Transcript, 1 June, 10 and 24 August 1871.

Stone, May N. "The Plumbing Paradox...", Winterthur Portfolio, vol. 19, No. 3, 1979, p. 289.

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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

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late Federal detail. The doors in the main body of the house are of an unusual five-panel design; they are equipped with brass thumb latches. The ell has two-panel doors with similar hardware. The four principal rooms of the second floor repeat the first-floor layout. The parlor chamber has a plank dado and a noteworthy fireplace with paired colonnettes supporting the mantel shelf. (See figures 5, 6, and 7.)

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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 8

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health problems in Havana for the United States government. He died soon thereafter, and a \$100,000 trust fund was raised to assist his widow and endow studies in municipal affairs at Columbia University.

While in Newport, Col. Waring was lionized by the intellectual set which decamped from New York and Boston each summer. Many of the nation's leading writers, scientists, painters, collectors, and architects formed a congenial seasonal coterie led by the redoubtable Julia Ward Howe. It is said to occasionally have held its soirées at "The Bird's Nest," thereby gaining for this pleasant old dwelling a footnote in the annals of American social history..

In August, 1871, Mrs. Howe moved to structure this informal association by establishing a select club of fifty members meeting regularly for lectures, scientific discussions, theatricals, and readings. Col. Waring was an organizing member of the group and, according to Mrs. Howe's daughter and biographer, Maude Howe Elliott, the Town & Country Club, as it was titled, was formed and first met at "The Bird's Nest." Presently it is unknown if this assertion is correct. It is quite possible that this event actually took place at "The Hypothenuse," a cottage orné on Catherine Street in Newport designed and owned by architect Richard Morris Hunt (a fellow Town & Country Club member) which was occupied by the Warings in June of 1871, three months before the first club meeting took place.

Whatever the particulars of this event, "The Bird's Nest" remains significant as a fine example of rural vernacular architecture and for its associations with George E. Waring and Newport's most gifted society.