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Case No. 1024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

DIVISION OF NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAMS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name John O'Byrne, John, House other names/site number He-H-168

2. Location

street & number 317 North Main Street city, town Henderson state Kentucky code KY county Henderson code 101 zip code 42420

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [X] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal. Category of Property: [X] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1. Name of related multiple property listing: NA. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: David L. Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer, Kentucky Heritage Council. Date: 2-12-90.

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: State or Federal agency and bureau: Date:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: [X] entered in the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined eligible for the National Register. [] See continuation sheet. [] determined not eligible for the National Register. [] removed from the National Register. [] other, (explain:). Entered in the National Register: 3/22/90. Signature of the Keeper: Date of Action:

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN Victorian Eclectic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof asphalt shingle

other wood, glass; leaded and stained

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The John O'Byrne House (HE-H-168) is located at 317 North Main Street, in a transitional neighborhood one block north of the Henderson, Kentucky Historic Commercial District (submitted to the NPS on 10-09-89 for listing on the National Register of Historic Places), and one-half block south of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad tracks which paralleled Fourth Street. The nominated property measures 50' by 208' and contains less than one acre. The residence is the only building contained in the nominated property.

Built in 1891 for prominent Henderson businessman John O'Byrne, the property is a two-story, brick, asymmetrically composed, hip-roofed residence with a high degree of overall integrity. The residence borrows material and design elements from several Victorian styles with a resulting eclectic solution. From the Italianate comes asymmetrical massing, an almost-flat, hip roof; deep, bracketed cornice with elaborate corner wall brackets; and narrow sash windows. Borrowings from the Stick Style appear in the finely-detailed diagonal bracing of the front half-porch. Queen Anne vestiges appear in double, projecting, polygonal bays on each of the three main facades, and in the elaborate glass, door and trim work found on both interior and exterior elevations.

O'Byrne undoubtedly oversaw the building of his residence, built of high-quality brick with fine mortar joints with American common bond on rear elevations and veneered front; double header segmental arches over basement windows, brick water table, doubled frieze belts, and chimneys of molded brick. Single light sash windows predominate with rusticated limestone lintels and dressed sills. Highly decorative beveled and stained glass windows are located as transoms above plate windows in both floors of the central front polygonal bay, and as two fan-shaped, leaded and stained windows on the south wall along the staircase. The double leaf, carved oak entry doors have deeply beveled, leaded glass lights.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G NA

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

architecture
commerce

Period of Significance

ca. 1891-1892
ca. 1891-1900

Significant Dates

1891-92
1891

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

O'Byrne, John

Architect/Builder

O'Byrne, John

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The John O'Byrne House (HE-H-168) is significant for its outstanding architectural qualities as a well preserved example of late-Victorian residential building in Henderson and for its historic associations with John O'Byrne, a prominent businessman in Henderson during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The property meets National Register criteria B and C for its association with important themes of commerce and architecture in Henderson.

The Ohio River town of Henderson rebounded from the economic stagnation of the Civil War by the Mid 1870's.* The Evansville, Henderson and Nashville Railroad, completed in 1867 and purchased by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad in 1879 gave easy access of national north and south markets to Henderson's manufactured goods. Construction of the L&N's Ohio River bridge in 1881 revived a healthy commercial and manufacturing economy all the more. Industries established prior to the Civil War had included tobacco packing warehouses, chewing tobacco and cigar manufactories, breweries and whiskey distilleries, planing and sawmills, brickyards, carriage manufactories, and large textile industries. A vivid reflection of the town's vitality is indicated by a rapid increase in commercial, residential and municipal building from the 1870's through the 1890's. A variety of locally available building materials included bricks from the Kleymerer and Klutey yards, stock millwork and sash from Joseph Clore and Sons saw and planing mills and elaborate Victorian components from neighboring Evansville, Indiana. From 1893, City Directories reveal three architects, ten contractors, and six carpenters and builders advertising in Henderson.

* For background information on Henderson's antebellum history and architecture see (Amos;1989) and (Brown;1989).

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA
- 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 16 448020 4188310
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____ _____ _____
 Zone Easting Northing

B _____ _____ _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____ _____ _____
 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated property correspond to the legal boundaries of the property as recorded in Deed Book 274 page 249, Henderson County Clerk and Recorder's Office, Henderson, Kentucky.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property is appropriate given the historical/architectural basis for significance of the John O'Byrne house. The nominated property includes only that parcel that historically belonged to O'Byrne and was associated with his residence.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christine Amos, Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date November 30, 1989

street & number Route 5 Box 365 telephone 502-633-5530

city or town Shelbyville, Kentucky state Kentucky zip code 40065

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The interior features oak woodwork including an elaborate stair with carved newel, turned spindles and paneled wainscott. Three oak mantles have mirrored breakfronts and elaborately carved Queen Anne motifs. Windows and doors are trimmed with molded casings with bullseye corner blocks. Decorative wrought iron porch posts, railing and stair railing on the rear porch are the only changes to the original exterior.

When the residence was built, the neighborhood use was mixed with a tobacco stemmery, boarding house, and commercial building at the intersection of Main and Third Streets to the south. Between this property and the L&N Railroad paralleling Fourth Street, were one- and two-story brick and frame residences. By 1913, the complexion of the neighborhood had improved with earlier mentioned businesses replaced by a new Post Office, the three-story, stone Elks Club, and YMCA. New, two-story brick residences replaced older buildings and infilled previously vacant lots.* Since World War II, the loss of the Post Office, Elks Club and YMCA buildings, and several area residences has affected the historic neighborhood character. The John O'Byrne House, however, has maintained excellent physical integrity and remains a good example of the type of residence a prominent Henderson businessman/builder would choose for his own dwelling at the end of the nineteenth century.

*Sanborn Map Company. Henderson, Kentucky 1892, 1913.

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John O'Byrne, the builder and original owner/occupant of this residence, formed with partner Joseph Hicks, the building firm of O'Byrne and Hicks in 1875. O'Byrne had learned the brick masonry trade from his father, an Irish immigrant. During the late nineteenth century, O'Byrne expanded his business interests in Henderson to include banking and real estate development enterprises. His business listing in the Bennet & Co.'s City Directory of 1893-1894 indicate efforts as a real estate agent who "Will buy and sell local stocks, bonds, securities, houses, lots, farms and lands; will attend Commissioner's and other Public Sales of property; also General Agent for the Henderson Land Company." At the time of this listing, the O'Byrne household at 317 North Main contained eight individuals: O'Byrne, his wife Hannah, two daughters, one son, one nephew, a son-in-law, and a servant.

At his death in 1925 at the age of ninety-one, O'Byrne was recognized as having been instrumental in the organization of the Henderson Building and Loan Association (the town's first building and loan); director of the Planter's Bank; president of the People's Homestead and Saving Association; president of the Henderson Mining and Manufacturing Company; a member of city council and the tax board; and a builder of many brick homes and commercial buildings in Henderson. One of the most notable of residences attributed to O'Byrne is the 1885 Barret-Stites House in the Alves Historic District. The district nomination identifies that property as "Henderson's most distinctive Romanesque Revival style house...the most complex and visually exciting building in the district..."

John O'Byrne ranks as an important business leader of post-Civil War Henderson. His accomplishments in building construction, residential and commercial development, banking and manufacturing contributed greatly to the development and appearance of Henderson from the mid-1870's through the turn-of-the-century.

The John O'Byrne House is one of the most sophisticated and well preserved 1890's brick residences in Henderson. The majority of Henderson's circa 1890 Victorian residences are folk manifestations that "reflect the influences of the prevailing high-style architecture of the day" (Brown;1989). While these properties incorporate "certain elements such as

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decorative millwork porches and other applied ornament, bracketed eaves, and three-sided window bays...neither their ornament nor configurations are complex." (ibid). O'Byrne's residence exhibits a much more complex palette of Victorian fabric and design than the majority of its contemporaries. The O'Byrne House is significant as an exceptional example of "high style" architecture in late-nineteenth century Henderson.

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Amos, Christine. "Henderson Commercial District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form". July 20, 1989. Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Brown, Claudia R. "Alves Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form". April, 1989. Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Harmon, Jonel Sharp. Interview, November, 1989.

Henderson City Directories. 1893-4; 1899-1900. Henderson Public Library.

Henderson Morning Gleaner. March 26, 1925. Henderson, Kentucky Vol. No. XXXVII.,

Merrill, Boynton Jr., ed. Old Henderson Homes and Buildings. Henderson: Historic Henderson Publishing Commission, 1985.

Sanborn Map Company. Henderson, Kentucky. May 1885, March 1892. Documents Department, Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

Starling, Edmund L. History of Henderson County, Kentucky. Henderson, Ky.: 1887.

United States Census for 1900. City of Henderson, Kentucky. Superv. District 2, Sheet 5. On microfilm at the Henderson Public Library.