

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Rankin Octagonal Barn

and or common

2. Location

street & number ~~Route 2/Wilding Road~~ COUNTY RT. 3 not for publication

city, town Ravenswood SILVERTON X vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Jackson code 035

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Okey L. Butcher

street & number Route 2, Box 94

city, town Ravenswood X vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jackson County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Ripley state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Round and Polygonal Barns of West Virginia has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date September 1, 1984 federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Unit, West Virginia Department of Culture and History

city, town The Cultural Center, Capitol Complex, Charleston state West Virginia

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date

N/A

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

The Rankin Octagonal Barn is of fairly simple construction, an eight-sided farm structure covered with vertical wide board siding, each side of the octagon measuring 24 feet in length. There is no foundation; the sill beams rest on single stone blocks at the angles of the octagon. The roof is covered with corrugated sheeting, with a matching octagonal cupola with a sectional conical roof covered in the same material. The roof is the most unusual feature of the Rankin barn, and is unlike any other round or polygonal barn roof in the state. Basically a modified sectional design, the roof is built in two sections which seem separate when viewed from the outside, giving it a disjointed appearance, but which can be seen to be attached from the interior, creating a clerestory effect. Since there are no windows or light openings in the siding, this unusual design was probably intended to provide some light inside the barn.

The cupola, which would also have provided a certain amount of light and ventilation, is now boarded over at the base, and has been since before the current owners bought the farm. The cupola is also fully covered with siding around its exterior, but was probably originally open into the barn, with louvered siding or even full windows for the necessary ventilation. The barn itself is in reasonable condition and is being maintained by the owners, who are slowly repairing sections of the floor and the roof. The floor joists have suffered some deterioration, and the sleeper/sill logs on the hillside elevation are in poor condition.

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 1890's

Builder Architect ---- Carmichael

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Rankin Octagonal Barn is one of only two octagonal barns known to have been built in West Virginia, and the only one still standing. Few round and octagonal barns were ever constructed in this state, and the Rankin barn is one of five still in existence.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

The Rankin Octagonal Barn at Wilding, near Ravenswood in Jackson County, was built by the Rankin family, probably George L. Rankin, a Jackson County representative to the West Virginia House of Delegates.

George Rankin was born near Ravenswood and was educated at the West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind at Romney and Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. He was ordained a minister in the Presbyterian Church and lectured publicly until 1918, when he was elected to the House of Delegates. Although the property was passed down through several generations of Rankins, the family left Jackson County during the Depression of the 1930's and the farm was rented out for some years. The present owner, Okey L. Butcher, bought the property from the Wilkinson family in 1958.

The Rankin barn is the only octagonal barn still standing in West Virginia, one of only two known to have been built in the state. Although two possible construction dates have been put forth - c. 1905 and the 1890's - the earlier date is more likely, since the majority of octagonal barns were built before 1900, predating the introduction of the cylindrical silo. Vertical siding, like that used on the Rankin barn, is generally found in earlier barns, as is the typical ground floor arrangement of a central alley with stalls situated on the side. In addition, local tradition states that the barn was built several years before the house on the property was constructed in 1900. Carl Shockey, 82 years old and a lifelong resident of the area, remembers the barn standing when he was a small child. Shockey also remembers working for the Rankins as a boy, threshing hay and loading it in the octagonal barn.

Although the Rankin Octagonal Barn bears some resemblance to the Kuykendall Polygonal Barn at Romney, where George Rankin was educated, no direct relationship between the two barns can be established. However, if Rankin did model his octagonal barn after the Romney structure, it would place a later construction on the Ravenswood barn, since the Kuykendall barn is known to have been built about 1906.

The Butchers and other local residents believe the barn to have been constructed by a carpenter from Pennsylvania by the name of Carmichael, who is said to have built several round and/or polygonal barns in that state. Mr. Carmichael came to the Ravenswood area in the late 1800's, and his granddaughter still lives in the Wilding vicinity.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Oral Interviews with Mrs. Okey L. Butcher by Margo Stafford, Ravenswood, West Virginia, July 24, 1984, and July 26, 1984.

Oral Interview with Carl Shockey by Margo Stafford, Ravenswood, West Virginia, July 26, 1984.

Comstock, Jim, ed., West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, Volume 4, Richwood, West Virginia, 1974.

Comstock, Jim, ed., West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, Volume 18, Richwood, West Virginia, 1976.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property One Acre

Quadrangle name Sandyville

Quadrangle scale 1:20,000

UTM References

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4	3	9	7	2	0
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point on County Route 3 (Walding Road) opposite the Rankin Octagonal Barn and approximately 100 ft. due north of the barn's north elev., the boundary proceeds 100 ft. in a straight line along the south edge of Route 3, 200 ft. in a straight line south, thence

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ralph Pedersen, A.I.A. Architect / Margo Stafford

organization Preservation Alliance of West Virginia, Inc.

date September 1, 1984

street & number P. O. Box 1135

telephone 624-9298

city or town Clarksburg

state West Virginia 26302

## 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

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 2, 1985

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

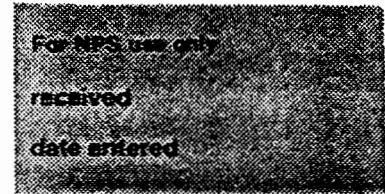
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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

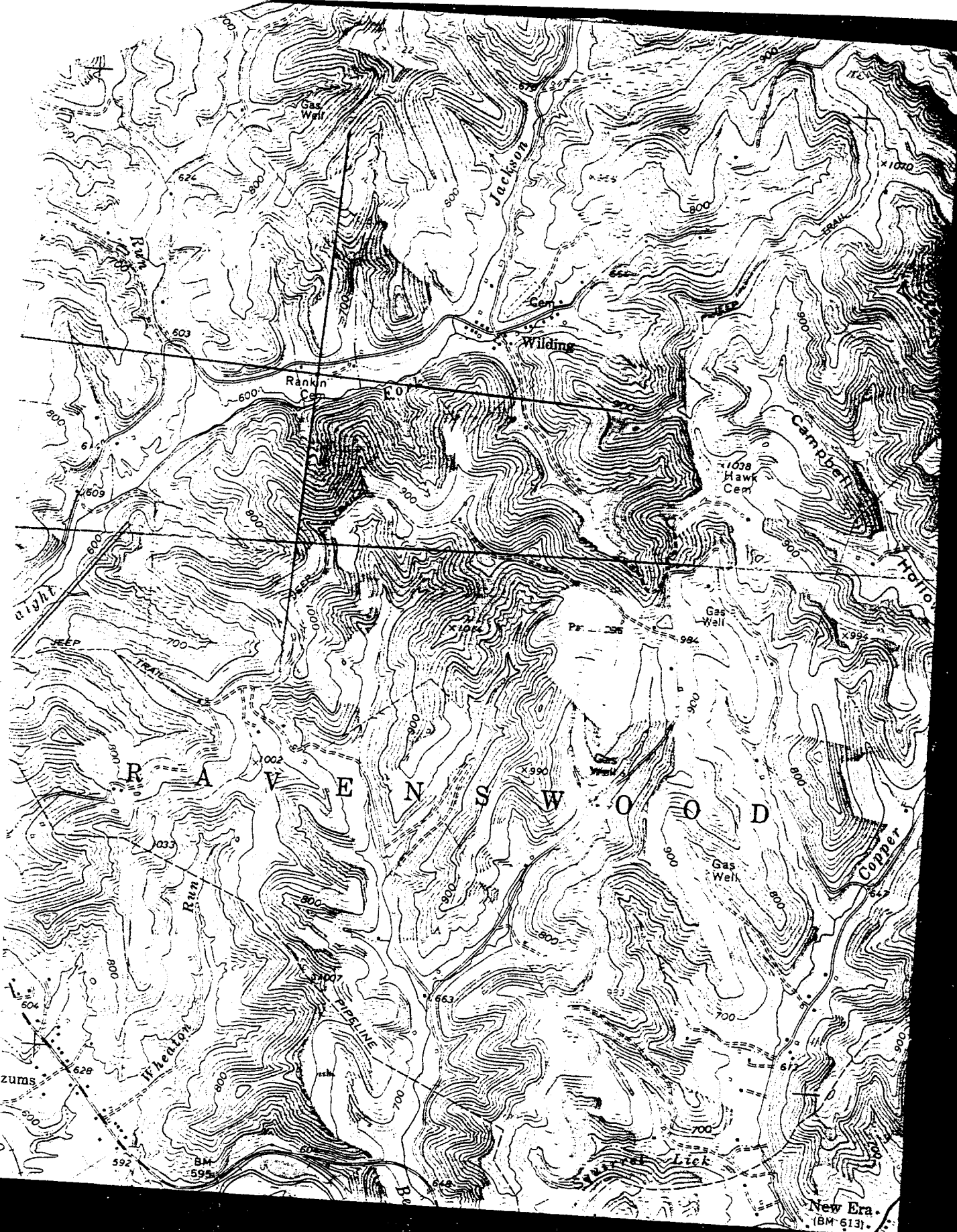


Continuation sheet Rankin Octagonal Barn Item number 10

Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description

200 ft. in a straight line east, thence 200 feet in a straight line northward to a point of convergence with Route 3, thence 100 ft. along the south edge of Route 3 to the point of beginning; inclusive of a square centered with the barn. There are no contributing dependent structures on the nominated site.



RAVENSWOOD

New Era  
(BM 613)