UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME
   COMMON: The Wells Inn
   AND/OR HISTORIC: The Wells Hotel

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: 316 Charles Street
   CITY OR TOWN: Sistersville
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE (COUNTY): 26175
   STATE: West Virginia

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (Check One): Building
  OWNERSHIP: Public
   STATUS: In Process
   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC: Yes

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME: John W. Keeney Jr.
   STREET AND NUMBER: 500 S. Wells Street
   CITY OR TOWN: Sistersville
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 26175

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURT HOUSE, Registry of Deeds, etc.: Tyler County Court House
   CITY OR TOWN: Middlebourne
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 26149

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY: An Historic Preservation - Economic Development Study for Sistersville, West Virginia
   DATE OF SURVEY: January 1971
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Sistersville Planning Commission
   CITY OR TOWN: Sistersville City Hall
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 26175

STATE: West Virginia
COUNTY: Tyler
ENTRY NUMBER: 095
"Hotel Wells Opened Last Night."

"Front of pressed brick and it has for relief two fine verandas, one on the first story and one on the story above the latter supported by columns of the colonial period. The prevailing color of the woodwork is light, quartered sawn oak being the wood used almost exclusively. The walls are pure white, giving the room a cheerful appearance. On going through the main entrance an artistic piece of Mosaic floor tiling strikes the eye. In the center are the words 'Hotel Wells'. Going through the inner doors one comes into the huge and roomy office proper. The counter is to the right. Beyond this is the private office, a room nicely furnished with desk and a library bookcase. Off from these rooms is a cloak room, barber shop and laundry. The latter is complete in every detail even to an elegant bath...In the rear are the rooms devoted to the culinary departments and they are models of...with a serving and store room adjoining...The dining room is large, airy, and light. Chairs and tables are of antique oak. My 'Grandfather's Clock' gives a delightful 'tick tick tick' in one corner and not far away is a handsome modern sideboard. The room will seat fifty guests. To the left of the main entrance is the ladies entrance. Guests as they enter will find...The foot sinks into the finest velvet carpet. The furniture is of various woods covered with raw silk of the latest and most fashionable shades. The windows are curtained with creamy lace of handsome design. A fine piano, the gift of M.F.R. Wells completes the furnishings. Of sleeping rooms, there are 28 for guests. All are furnished in first class style, with gas and steam heat from registers. Six are furnished with mantels tiled and some richer than the others for state guests. On the second floor is a ladies bathroom that cannot be well approved upon. The house throughout is furnished with hot and cold water; steam and gas; and connecters are made with convertors for incandescent Electric lights. In the basement is a Trimble and Luts automatic feeding furnace for furnishing heat and in the rear is a fully equipped laundry. The cost of the building as it stands with furnishings was $30,000...The brick and carpenter and wood-work was done by Contractor Black of Parkersburg, the plumbing by Bear & Son of Hannibal, Ohio, painting and hardwood finishing, furnace and furnishings were supplied by Horse & Herman of Wheeling; the china, queensware by Hall & Hall of Sistersville and the silverware of N.L. Marsh our well known jeweler, while the handsome office clock was the gift of the Misses Temp and Martha Wells."
The Hotel was built by Ephraim Wells, grandson of the first significant settler, Charles Wells. During the 'Oil Excitement' it was the meeting place of many of the prominent oil dealers. Many great 'business deals' were transacted here. It was started April 1894, and opened January 15, 1895. The building was designed by W. H. O'Neil. John Rea and Mr. O'Neil, both from Hannibal Ohio, shared the construction. Two years later, Mr. Wells had the annex built by these same gentlemen, and moved into it with his family to use it as a private residence. The Hotel continued with varying success under many different managers until the 1920's when it was sold to Pittsburgh interests. In 1929, a local corporation of the town's businessmen, who felt it was necessary to have a good hotel in the town, formed and bought the Hotel, remodeled it and operated it until the 1940's. It was purchased in 1948 by Everett Doak. J. Wells Kinkaid, grandson of the builder, purchased the Hotel in 1965 and extensively remodeled it with the decor of the 1890's. His son Jack, is the present manager.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

DAILY OIL REVIEW, January 16, 1895. "Hotel Wells Opening Last Night".
SISTERSVILLE DAILY REVIEW, April 2, 1930.
TYLER STAR NEWS, June 28, 1967. "Remembers Wells Opening".
DAILY OIL REVIEW, INDUSTRIAL EDITION, February 1896, "The Hotel Wells."

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPARENT PERIMETER OF NOMINATED PROPERTY.

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Mrs. Laura A. Bryant, Field Research Agent, for
ORGANIZATION:
West Virginia Antiquities Commission
STREET AND NUMBER:
Old Mountaintair, West Virginia University
CITY OR TOWN:
Norfolk

13. STATE-LIASON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [x] Local [ ]

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

ATTEST:

Keeper of the National Register