

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sweeton, Charles, House
other names/site number Mount Pleasant School 163-195-15028

2. Location

street & number 8700 Old State Road N/A not for publication
city or town Evansville N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Vanderburgh code 163 zip code 47711

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

2-3-05
Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____
Date of Action _____

Sweeton, Charles, House
Name of Property

Vanderburgh IN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
1		sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other CONCRETE

WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1926-1935

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Sweeton, Charles

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Jamison, Walter

Meier, Jacob & Walter

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Sweeton, Charles, House
Name of Property

Vanderburgh IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.24 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6	4	5	0	7	1	0	4	2	1	2	2	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

3

Zone	Easting				Northing									

2

Zone	Easting				Northing									

4

Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Harold & Joyce Gourley
organization _____ date 11-28-2003
street & number 8700 Old State Road telephone 812/ 867-3322
city or town Evansville state IN zip code 47711

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Harold Gourley
street & number 8700 Old State Road telephone 812/ 867-3322
city or town Evansville state IN zip code 47711

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

Section 7 Description

The Sweeton House occupies the northwest corner of the intersection of Mt. Pleasant and Old State Roads just north of the Evansville city limits in Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Located on a slope, the building is set slightly higher than the other homes in the area. The original one (1) acre of land is still whole and consists of: the schoolhouse, converted in 1926 into a private residence; contributing 1920's landscape; and a contributing former carriage house, which is now a contemporary garage, is also located on the property. A brick oven on the site (for brick making) is counted as a site feature of the historic landscape.

Former Schoolhouse/Craftsman Bungalow

Charles Sweeton and his contractors utilized the 1888 former Mt. Pleasant School to create the current 1926 expanded Craftsman Bungalow; the foundation, exterior walls and the first floor joists and planks were all retained. The original one-story schoolhouse was a large two-room brick building with a center hallway. When the schoolhouse was transformed it became a two-story private residence with a side gabled roof, the original building and the addition were covered with stucco and trimmed with wood.

The front (south) of the current home consists of a raised front porch extended the width of the main portion of the home (photos 1 and 2). The porch has its original (all further references to the term "original" will refer to the 1926 incarnation of the building) four primitive Doric columns that support a simple continuous beam. A radiating sunburst design with eyebrow arch is located at the center of the shallow hip porch roof, marking the porch steps. The schoolhouse walls were articulated with brick pilaster strips; the contractor retained these as an exterior design element, with the stucco likely being a convenient Arts and Crafts style treatment that would uniformly mask the necessary window dimension alterations. The two corner and four intermediate pilasters divide the wall into five even bays. The wooden, multi-paneled front door is centered. Two sets of the original (all windows are original and also have their original storm windows) eight-over-one wooden windows symmetrically flank the door. On the second floor of the main portion there are three sets of paired six-over-one wooden windows, all located on gabled through-the-cornice wall dormers with a shouldered facing. Builders appear to have maintained the pitch of the old schoolhouse roof, but rebuilt the roof with broad, bungalow-style open eaves. The rafters and deck are exposed on the long flanks of the house, and a gutter board is nailed to the rafter ends to handle the guttering. Where the dormers cut through the extended eaves, scalloped bargeboards mask the shed roof extensions. The roofing was slate but now is asphalt shingle.

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

The east side of the house is the gable end (photos 3 and 4). The first level of the east side consists of a raised and screened-in porch with pergola-styled beams on the nearly flat roof. The two corner porch columns are similar to the front ones. Under the porch, two symmetrically placed multi-paneled wooden doors mark the first story. The gable-end on the second level frames two nine-over-one wooden windows. The corner pilaster strips become a raised raking frieze with corbel edge in the gable end. Two intermediate pilaster strips terminate at window sill level. The gable apex is filled by a triangular louvered vent. The open eaves have exposed purlins on this side, and a scallop or scroll-tailed bargeboard. There is a stuccoed double flue chimney centered on the roof ridge at this gable end.

On the west side of the main portion of the house, the contractors built a stuccoed addition in 1926 (photos 7, 8 and 9). Though two stories in height, the addition is lower than the main roof line. It has a side gable roof, split by a scant second level side-gabled clerestory. The south face of the first level is another porch, which has been converted into a breakfast room and has 3 side-by-side eight-over-one wooden windows facing south. The west elevation of the addition has paired French doors sheltered by a shed-roof hood on knee braces and a single eight-over-one sash beside it (photo 9). The second level of the west addition was a sleeping porch; it has paired eight-over-one windows north and south and a triple window set facing west. Enough of the old school's brick walls remain for two small six-over-six windows flanking either side of the west addition. The center pilaster strip and brick frieze of the other gable end are partly obscured by the addition. The main roof ridge has old lightning rods toward either gable end and in the center.

The rear northern portion of the building consists of three eight-over-one windows on the eastern portion and two four-over-one windows on the western portion of the first story of the main section of the building (photos 6 and 7). Pilaster strips divide the façade as on the south front. On the second story of the main portion of the north side are three sets of two six-over-one dormered windows, mirroring the placement on the front south side of the building. There is a single-flue stuccoed chimney roughly in the center of the north roof slope.

The interior of the home has a center-hall design, original to both its 1888 schoolhouse origins, as well as the 1926 conversion and consists of plaster walls and original (to both the 1888 and 1926 sections on the first level and 1926 on the second level) wooden floors. Most rooms have simple painted baseboards with molded top edge and quarter-round shoe molding and a painted wood cornice molding. Door and window moldings

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

are simple boards with backbanding, some are painted, some are stained wood. The simplicity is in keeping with the Arts and Crafts exterior, however, the use of arched openings and modest use of painted moldings recalls the period revival designs of the 1920s.

The center hall, and the two rooms flanking it, are part of the original design (the western room was divided into a dining and kitchen). The front entrance on the south side brings one into a small hallway with a winding staircase (photo 13). The staircase is Colonial Revival, with stained wood handrail, slender balusters with turned and squared bases. The handrail and balusters encircle a more stout turned newel post at the base of the stairs, with a circular ended trend extending to support them. The treads form winders as the stairs ascend to the second floor.

To both the east and west sides there are triangular arch openings leading to the living room and dining room, respectively. The larger and peaked (a theme reoccurring throughout the house) archway leads to the living room that takes one to full eastern side of the main part of the house. The focal point of the room is a painted fireplace mantel, with multi-paneled doors leading to the screen-in porch flanking it (photo 10). The mantel has floral-carved panels and spandrel panels surrounding a triangular arched opening, topped by a frieze with water leaf enriched cornice and plain shelf.

The dining room on the west side of the hall has a set of original French doors leading to the former sun porch (photo 12). North of the hall is a bathroom with its original Art Deco tile work and the reoccurring peaked archway over the bathtub area (photo 14). To the west of the bathroom is a kitchen with its original Art Deco tile work. Just off the dining room is the former screened-in porch that, while it was converted into a breakfast room in the 1970s, still has its original windows.

The second level of the house consists of three bedrooms. The original bathroom still has similar tile and archway work to that on the first story. One small modern bathroom has been added into a former closet area and does not distract from the interior layout. Off the larger bedroom on the west side is the former sleeping porch, which has been closed in, but still has its original windows and woodwork (photos # 15 & 16).

Brick Oven

Located on the southern portion of the property, the red brick oven was constructed some time in the 1880s, most likely before the schoolhouse was built and used to fire the bricks for the schoolhouse. It is in slightly deteriorated condition, but still in very stable shape.

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

Garage

While the garage has been converted into a modern three-car garage and changed from its original use as a one-story garage and living area, it still retains its original shape and is therefore contributing (photo #17). The garage was built just after the conversion of the schoolhouse into a residence in the late 1920s. The building is forty (40) feet in length and twenty-four (24) feet in width and is wood-framed with clapboard siding, which is now covered with aluminum siding. In the back portion (west side) of the garage retains its original wooden windows, lending more to its authenticity (photo #18). The windows on the north and south sides are also the original wooden windows. The chimney is also original, and reflects the shape and style of the chimney of the house. While the size of the garage door opening remains the same, there are now automatic overhead doors in place of the original doors.

In the interior, the placement and dimensions of the original caretaker's apartment, used at the time of the Sweeton residency, still remain intact. The apartment, which runs the twenty-four (24) feet in length and eight (8) feet in width, has a solid wood partition separating it from the garage area.

Landscape

The landscaping of the property still has the same structure of the original 1926 landscaping design and is therefore a contributing element of the property (photos #1-4). The southern front and eastern portions of the one-acre property are lined with majestic oaks. Surrounding the home are original azalea and rhododendron plantings and other historic shrubs. Flanking the front entrance are holly trees, one original to the 1926 planting, the other a replacement, but of the same variety and placement. There are no horticultural intrusions (such as modern plantings or inappropriate mulches, such as wood chips) making the landscape particularly historically valuable and integral to the historic authenticity to the total property. The layout of the hard (trees and shrubs) landscape is the same to that of the photo of the property in a 1930 newspaper article (photocopy #1).

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

Section 8 Statement of Significance

The Sweeton House meets National Register criteria B and C under the categories of Architecture and the Performing Arts. The building was originally constructed as a one-story red brick two-room center hall schoolhouse in 1888. It achieved its present form during a conversion in 1926 into two-story stucco Craftsman Bungalow. Significant to the property is also the landscape architecture, which has been authentically maintained. While there are several homes in the City of Evansville of this style and/or consisting of similar detailing, the Sweeton Home is unique to the area and represents the national trend of the well-to-do having country residences for entertaining and relaxation, while maintaining city residences. In the case of the Sweetons', they also conducted a good deal of business at their Mt. Pleasant residence. Sweeton, a local leader in the entertainment business, lived in the house from 1926 to 1936. The family's primary residence was demolished decades ago, as have been most of the theaters and amusements Sweeton managed or owned. Only the Alhambra Theater and the Coliseum remain, but the Sweeton's country house has the closest person association to his contributions to Evansville.

Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse

Center Township and its development from a rural to a largely exurban landscape had the beginnings of its development in the early part of the 1800s. Ira Fairchild, a member of the original land grant family (1831) came to Center Township in 1829 to open a blacksmith shop and livery stable. The Mt. Pleasant area, during this period, was known as "Little Switzerland" because of a group of hardy settlers of Swiss and German descent who has formed the Salem Methodist Episcopal Church in the area.

J. Kilblock developed the first school in then rural Center Township on the south slope what is now the Locust Hill Cemetery, approximately around 1835. During the next few decades school trustees and citizens built several one to two-room schoolhouses in the area, usually no more than a few miles from the various farming settlements that sprinkled the county.

The site of the current Mt. Pleasant schoolhouse was first used for educational purposes in 1856 when a log schoolhouse was built on the site. The site was part of a United States land grant in 1831, a portion of which was obtained by the Trustees of Center Township on April 13th, 1856 for the purpose of constructing a schoolhouse. Griffin's 1880 plat map of Center Township points to the existence of School #2 on this site. In 1888 (there is a cornerstone to document this date) a brick schoolhouse was constructed on this site and provided primary education until 1922. Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse #2

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Sweeton House
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served the community until it, along with three other area schoolhouses; Kratzville#10, Union #6, and Highland # 5, were merged into the new Highland School on Darmstadt Road.

The Mt. Pleasant schoolhouse fell victim to an early form of school mergers, but while most of the unused schoolhouses in the county were demolished or withered through neglect, schoolhouse #2 survived, though in another incarnation.

Suburban Evansville and Its Historic Architecture

Evansville had its origins with Hugh McGary's purchase of the horseshoe-shaped site in 1812. Through machinations, his friend Robert Evans eventually replatted the site and obtained county seat status for the town. River trade slowly helped build the economy, and the planners of the Wabash and Erie Canal had selected the town as the terminus of the waterway. Though begun in the 1830s, the final leg of the canal to Evansville did not open until 1853, the same year railroads reached town. Rail access, river trade, coal, and timber fueled the local economy in the mid to late 19th century. Breweries, furniture makers, iron works (including Mesker Company, makers of cast iron facades) and grain mills were making the city an industrial center. Some 21,830 people, mostly crowded into urban core of the city, call Evansville home by 1870. Evansville Street Railway Company opened electric car lines in 1892, opening up suburban areas to development. Interurban lines came in 1903 – and with stops in the countryside, they opened more potential sites to development. More people were building or staying in the smaller towns and farms of Vanderburgh County; its total population was 59,809 in 1890, about 10 to 11 thousand living outside of Evansville. By the 'teens, Evansville's population was upwards of 70,000, and many of the city's leading families were leaving the old core for the newer suburbs, neighborhoods like Alvord Avenue and Lincolnshire.

Charles Sweeton was among those who sought not simply suburban living, but a country place to spend summer months. The Mount Pleasant schoolhouse stood vacant for two years until it was bought by Sweeton, a local theater manager, owner, and promoter. In 1926, Sweeton converted the one-story brick schoolhouse into a two-story stucco Craftsman Bungalow with Art Deco and Eclectic elements. The plans were design by architect Walter Jamison, who worked for the Theodore Rehtin Lumber Company. The 1920s was a time of a building boom in the Evansville area, with Evansville often leading the state in building permits for residences. It was quite typical in that day, and very much the case in the Evansville area, for lumber companies to have architects on staff to compliment their offerings. The project has constructed by Darmstadt contractors Jacob and Walter Meier.

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

becoming widely popular, these and other features of the interior could also have been a response to the many steep gables of the house (necessitated by its schoolhouse origins).

The fact that Sweeton reused an existing building makes the Sweeton House a nearly unique Arts and Crafts house in Vanderburgh County. There is one other existing schoolhouse, the Smythe School (site 51075, rated contributing) that was converted into a house in about 1935, but without the attention to detail of the Sweeton House. Most advocates of the Arts and Crafts movement thought in terms of new housing. But even Stickley, for example, was not without nostalgia in his publications. He provided plans for log buildings, and called for old-fashioned hand finishes for his furniture. Stickley even published an article about changing a barn into a seaside bungalow (*Craftsman Bungalows*, p. 74). Local papers in Indianapolis featured many home improvement articles on updating older houses, by altering rooflines and adding Arts and Crafts porches; certainly owners all across Indiana were "bungalowizing" their existing homes in the 'teens and 'twenties. The idea of adapting a schoolhouse to a high-style bungalow, unusual as it is, is within the concept of the movement.

The site must have had a great deal of appeal to Sweeton. With its surge in population and well-established industrial base, Evansville's wealthy began to seek housing outside the city limits. Located on the Ohio River and at the southern tip of Indiana, temperatures and humidity, all the more elevated by heavy industry of the era, were (and often still are) oppressive in the heart of the community. As soon as trolleys, affordable autos and decent roads allowed, middle and upper middle class families sought permanent or temporary housing in the elevated areas north of town. Developers often promoted outlying areas like the Alvord Boulevard area as being several degrees cooler than downtown. Mount Auburn, near Mesker Park, was a favorite choice for summer homes, two belonging to the Orr family and one summer house for the Rosecrantz family still exist there.

A photo spread article published in the Evansville Courier Journal in 1930 highlighted suburban homes of the middle and upper middle class, and reflects the popular taste in suburban living. Bernardin (real estate); Johnson (pharmaceuticals); Boyle (architect); Yeck (surgeon) are among the family homes shown in the article, along with Sweeton's country home. Architecture ranges from modest bungalows to palatial Tudor Revival mansions, yet, all share the suburban or country appeal of large lots with extensive landscaping, and mature trees. The article actually depicts both homes which were miles out of town and homes in the more exclusive outlying suburban neighborhoods of Evansville. Lincoln Avenue and Alvord Avenue are the suburban neighborhood addresses most often shown, with country addresses being on Stringtown Road and Old State Road, all within a short distance from the Sweeton's. The Sweetons not only chose

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

to live what was then considered to be far out of town, but they also retained two residences, a city one and a country one, something mostly unheard of in the Evansville area. The Sweeton House maintains its country setting, something that Arts and Crafts proponents urged homeowners to do. Its architectural significance is found in its design, materials, and authentic setting.

The original 1920s landscape is still intact and enhances the authenticity and feeling of the property greatly. There are no modern landscape intrusions on the property. The landscaping of the property still has the same structure of the original 1926 landscaping design and is therefore a contributing element of the property (photos #1-4). The southern front and eastern portions of the one-acre property are lined with majestic oaks. Surrounding the home are original azalea and rhododendron plantings and other historic shrubs. Flanking the front entrance are holly trees, one original to the 1926 planting, the other a replacement, but of the same variety and placement. There are no horticultural intrusions (such as modern plantings or inappropriate mulches, such as wood chips) making the landscape particularly historically valuable and integral to the historic authenticity to the total property. The layout of the hard (trees and shrubs) landscape is the same to that of the photo of the property in a 1930 newspaper article (photocopy #1).

Charles Sweeton

Under criteria B, the Sweeton Home is associated with the important role the owner played in the American, Midwestern, and Evansville entertainment scene. Charles Sweeton (1880-1955) was active in promoting both motion picture and live entertainment in Evansville. In 1905, officials of the Evansville street car company named him treasurer of the Oak Summit Amusement Park. He also managed the first bookings of the historic Coliseum (opened in 1918, National Register, 1979). Sweeton brought prize fights, movies, and vaudeville acts to the Coliseum building for the amusement of the city. He married Alice Kennedy of Evansville in 1909.

Later, Sweeton concentrated on motion pictures. He was said to be the "Dean of theater operators" in the Midwest. He was active in theater ownership and operation for thirty-nine years, beginning in 1898 as a doorman. Charles also served as President of the Indiana section of the National Association of Motion Pictures. From 1905 through 1937 Sweeton was involved with most theater operations in Evansville. He managed around a dozen theaters, including; the Strand, the Majestic, the Royal, the old Orpheum, the Alhambra, the Northside, and the Ohio Theaters.

During the time the Sweetons lived at their Mt. Pleasant home (1926-1936), it served as both their getaway home and a country estate for entertaining and conducting business

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

with dignitaries of the stage and politics. The Sweetons entertained the likes of Sarah Bernhart, John Phillip Sousa, along with President William Howard Taft, and William Jennings Bryan. Rare for the Evansville area was the fact that the Sweetons kept a home in the country and one in downtown Evansville (Unfortunately, their downtown Evansville residence, where Mr. Sweeton later lived on a full-time basis until he passed away in 1955, was replaced by the Evansville Convention Center). During the spring, summer, and fall, the Sweetons used their Mt. Pleasant home as their primary residence, while in the winter they greatly limited their visits to their country home (before the roads were paved, the country roads were impassible in the winter). With the Depression, his fortune and that of the magnificent theaters downtown declined, he lost his last theater in 1937, and the only theater remaining of those he managed, is the Alhambra (National Register, 1979).

Sweeton rented his home out until the mid-1940s, after which it changed hands several times, until 1960 when it was bought by its current owners, Harold and Joyce Gourley. The Gourleys have maintained the home as their private residence and maintained it with a great deal of authenticity. The Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse holds a particularly special meaning to the Gourleys, as Harold Gourley was Principal of Highland School (which the Mt. Pleasant School consolidated into) for over thirty years.

The Sweeton Home has retained the authenticity of its conversion from schoolhouse to private residence in 1926. With unique elements and original materials decorating the eclectic Craftsman Bungalow style, architecturally it embodies the building style of city residences in the rural setting and its 1920s landscape. The building's lineage to the educational history of the area is equally important. Few school buildings of the era, in any incarnation (Only one similar 1930s conversion of a schoolhouse into a residence remains in Vanderburgh County and it is threatened by encroaching development on Green River Road), remain in the area today. The home also offers a unique glimpse into the history of entertainment and a style of country living, both theatrical and private. The Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse, already listed as Notable in the Vanderburgh County Interim Report, combines the elements of educational history, significant architecture, and a slice of Evansville and Midwestern entertainment history into what remains a significant and authentic property.

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

Section 9 Bibliography

Abstract of Title, Mt. Pleasant Schoolhouse/Sweeton House, 8700 Old State Road;
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site (<http://browning.evpl.org>) entry for Charles Sweeton.

Considine, David. “Gourley Home has Rich History,” *Evansville Courier & Press*,
February 13, 1983, p. 2-B.

Gourley, Harold E. *Highland Elementary School and PTA*. Evansville, IN: Highland
PTA, 1994.

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Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1995.

“Local Show Business Veteran Charles H. Sweeton, 75, Dies,” *Evansville Press*, October
17, 1955, p. 25.

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Dover, 1988. (Compilation of reprinted articles from The Craftsman magazine)

Section 10 Verbal Boundary Description

The Property consists of an acre at the corner of Old State and Mt. Pleasant Roads. Both the eastern section, on Old State Road, and the southern section, on Mt. Pleasant Road, run parallel to their respective roads. The property is in a symmetrical square pattern and has no irregular sections. A part of the Northwest quarter of the Section Twenty Nine (29), Township Five (5) South, Range Ten (10) West in Vanderburgh County, Indiana and more particularly described as follows: beginning at a point on the South line of the Northwest quarter of said section a distance of Four hundred sixty four and forth eight hundredths (464.48) feet South Eighty nine (89) degrees Fifty three (53) minutes East of the Southwest corner thereof; thence North Zero (0) degrees Seven (7) minutes East a distance of Two hundred ninety on and forty five hundredths (291.45) feet; thence South Seventy eight (78) degrees Thirty three (33) minutes East a distance of One hundred ninety six and twenty five hundredths (196.25) feet; thence South Eleven (11) degrees

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Sweeton House
Vanderburgh County, Indiana

Thirty seven (37) minutes West a distance of Thirty five and six tenths (35.60) feet; thence South Zero (0) degrees Seven (7) minutes East a distance of Two hundred eighteen and seventy six hundredths (218.76) feet to a point on the South line of the Northwest quarter of the said section; thence North Eighty nine (89) degrees Fifty three (53) minutes West along the South line thereof a distance of One hundred eighty four and eight tenths (184.80) feet to the place of beginning and containing 1.24 acres more or less.

The adjacent parcel of approximately .24 acre at the western side is also owned by the Mt. Pleasant School owners, but is not part of the nomination and was just added in the last few decades.

Boundary Justification

The one-acre of land which the Mt. Pleasant School sits on the original land grant track that was acquired by the Center Township Trustees in 1856. There has been a building on the property since that time, first the log schoolhouse from 1856-1888, then the brick schoolhouse on the same location from 1888, and the converted private residence since 1926. The property still has its original 1920s landscape. Bordered by large oaks on the south and east sides.



SWEETEN
EVANSVILLE
INDIANA
NO 450710 4212.2