

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 Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Church and Cemetery

and or common

2. Location

street & number In the southwest corner of the junction of NC 87
and SR 1712

___ not for publication

city, town ___ vicinity of Elizabethtown

state North Carolina code 037 county Bladen code 017

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

The Session of Mt. Horeb Church
name Mr. James Cromartie Monroe, Clerk (former) Mr. Radford R. Allen (present)

street & number Route 1, Box 197

city, town Council ___ vicinity of state North Carolina 28434

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bladen County Court House

street & number

city, town Elizabethtown state North Carolina 28337

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Bladen County Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1974 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Survey Branch, State Historic Preservation Office

city, town 109 E. Jones St., Raleigh state NC 27611

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Church, a weatherboarded frame sanctuary, and its cemetery, located on a gentle rise on the southwest side of NC 87 at its junction with SR 1712, sit on grass-covered sandy soil shaded by native post oaks, blackjack oaks, sycamores, pines, and dogwood trees. These mature trees rise up and above the church allowing it to visually dominate the site. In the cemetery to the west and southwest of the church there are native sycamores and cedars together with plantings of *Camellia japonica*, *Magnolia grandiflora*, long-leaf pines and conifers. These serve to ornament the burying ground which includes some 425 stones of modest size yet solid appearance.

The overall form and finish of Mt. Horeb Church is plain yet impressive. The simple three bay by four bay structure, twenty-seven feet wide and forty feet deep, is dominated by the full-facade portico added to its southeast, front elevation in 1932. Its gable roof is consistent with the older gable roof over the sanctuary and the weatherboarded gable end is marked by shallow returns at each corner. It is supported by four simple Tuscan columns, paired near the edges of the porch, which rise from shallow bases to simply-turned capitals. The portico's poured cement floor, added in 1952, rests on a common brick foundation like the 1951 infill of the earlier brick piers on which the church sits. The portico shelters the central entrance and its flanking bays. The main entrance is comprised of a pair of six horizontal panel doors below a four-pane transom. It and the windows to its sides, which contain nine-over-nine sash, are enframed by simple original board surrounds embellished with a diagonally molded outer band. The sash are fitted with crinkle glass panes which replaced the original/replacement panes in 1932.

The northeast and southwest side elevations of the sanctuary are symmetrically arranged with four window openings on each elevation. These repeat the form and finish of those under the portico and, like them, they have shallow sills. The window openings are now fitted with aluminum storm windows; however, the marks for the old (original?) blind pintels survive. The rear elevation of the church has a two-bay, symmetrically disposed, elevation. There is a ventilating window high in the gable end shaded by an inobtrusive metal awning.

The Sunday School addition, set at the north corner of the sanctuary and occupying portions of both the northwest and northeast elevations, was designed by Leslie Boney of Wilmington and erected in 1952 by contractors/builders Howard Johnson, Glenn Parker, and Kadell Peterson. It is a simply finished, weatherboarded, frame addition resting on a common bond brick foundation and covered by a gable roof, set perpendicular to the sanctuary's roof. It has two symmetrically arranged windows on both its northwest and northeast elevations. On the southeast elevation there is a shallow, centrally placed, stoop covered by a braced gable roof frame awning. A flight of three brick steps leads up to the poured cement floor of the stoop. The six panel door, flanked by windows, is simply framed, as are the window openings which contain six-over-six sash. They too have crinkle glass panes.

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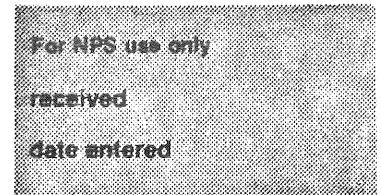
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The interior of the church is a single chamber sanctuary and retains much of its original character and finish. The tongue and groove flooring is now covered with carpet. Narrow baseboards carry along the bottoms of the plaster walls. The ceiling is sheathed with tongue and groove ceiling which probably dates from the early-20th century. The window openings have simple molded surrounds almost identical to those on the exterior; however, the apron below the openings is completely enframed by applied moldings, giving an added flourish to the appearance of the windows. The church follows a center aisle plan with ranks of original hand-planed pews to either side. The aisle focuses on the north-west end of the room where the raised chancel occupies the space in front of and between the two windows there. Steps are cut into the platform at its front corners. The pulpit furniture is original to the church but dates from several periods. The most recent additions are a pair of large chairs, behind and to either side of the pulpit. Their broken pediment cresting served as the model for a carved pediment, installed in 1952, over and connecting the windows. The space below the pediment and between the windows was then hung with a red velvet dossal. There are two pews for the choir in the west corner of the sanctuary and a piano in the north corner. Here a door opens into the Sunday School addition. It contains a men's and women's lavatory and three classrooms. The two larger of the three rooms, themselves of equal size and situated along the north-east side of the addition, are fitted with folding doors in their common partition wall which can be opened for larger gatherings. The finish here consists of tongue and groove flooring, painted sheetrock walls, simple baseboards and surrounds, two panel doors, and celotex on the ceilings.

The stones in the cemetery are a traditional group, ranging in date from the antebellum period to the present. The styles of monuments are, for the most part, rather typical and most appear to be the standard lot of the stonemason. However, there are exceptions of note. The marker for Charles H. Stevens (1879-1898) is signed "Cooper" and was made in Raleigh. The gravestone of Edwin A. Pate (1832-1898) is inscribed "Tucker Bros(s), Wil(,) N.C." The gravestones of Angus McFadyen (1821-1896) and his wife Sarah E. (1825-1887) have inscribed, recessed circles in their upper plane in which an open book is carved. A handsomely carved hand, set in a shaped, molded, recessed panel adorns the stone marking the grave of Daniel N. Collum (1881-1909). The gravestone of James A. Meshaw (1882-1909), carries the insignia of the Woodmen of the World. Its surface is rusticated to simulate the bark of trees and it is further embellished with carved cala lilies, ively, ferns, and other leaves. The gravestone of Alexander Barber (1900-1960), who operated a sawmill, was, no doubt, a private commission and features a rich use of bark-like rustication on its base, plinth, to enframe panels on each of its four sides, and to form the rounded top of the stone.

Standing separate and above all of these is a stone of unusual beauty and distinction and an anomaly in the region. Standing inside a handsome contemporary cast iron fence, it marks the grave of John Henry Wehmann (1821-1849). The inscription on the stone reads:

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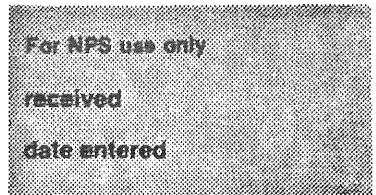
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John Henry Wehmann
Was Born
at Lesum, Kingdom of Hanover,
Germany
on the 8th of December 1821
died November 26th 1849
aged 27 years 11 months &
18 days

By strangers hands his dying eyes were closed
Peace to his ashes

Like a flower he passed away
Destroyed in all his bloom
He left this world and all his friends
To moulder in the tomb

There are varying accounts as to the identity of Wehmann. One tradition holds that he was a German soldier who died in the area. Another suggests that he was a sailor who drowned in the nearby Cape Fear River. And yet another offers the possibility that he was a traveler who was set upon by thieves and killed. Whatever the cause of his death, the erection of this gravestone, marking the first burial in the cemetery, assured him of a lasting memory. The field upon which the inscription appears is enframed by a series of Baroque style scrolls, ornamented with floral and natural motives, which swell at the top of the stone to support a coat of arms. The maker of the stone, who also supplied a complementing foot stone, remains unestablished.

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 checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 1845

Builder/Architect

George Cromartie

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Mount Horeb Church, located on the southwest side of the Elizabethtown-Wilmington Road (NC 87) in rural Bladen County, is a site of architectural and historical significance in the county. The Presbyterian faith came to the upper Cape Fear Valley with the Highland Scots with their first settlements in the 1730s and, after Brown Marsh Church (NR), Mt. Horeb Church is the second oldest extant Presbyterian Church in the county. It also has the distinction of being the first and only building erected for and by its congregation which was organized by the Rev. H. A. Monroe in 1843-1845. The simple white frame sanctuary with its modest Greek Revival style finish remained unaltered until the 1930s when the porch was added and some other improvements were made. These efforts and those of some twenty years later, including the compatible addition of a small Sunday School wing, have not essentially altered the architectural significance of the building but rather made it more commodious for the services of the congregation who have worshipped within its walls for 141 years. Many from these successive generations of members are buried in the adjacent cemetery which functioned in its early years as a community burying ground.

Criteria Assessment

- A. Mt. Horeb Church and its cemetery are associated with the spread of Presbyterianism in the upper Cape Fear Valley, settled first by Highland Scots in the 1730s. The congregation of this church was organized as a missionary effort by the Rev. H. A. Monroe in 1843-1845 from an immediate community largely Methodist in their disposition.
- C. Mt. Horeb Church, a white frame sanctuary erected in 1845 and altered and expanded in 1932 and the 1950s, retains the significant elements of its original Greek Revival finish, and represents the modest form and appearance of rural mid-19th century church buildings in North Carolina. Mt. Horeb is architecturally significant as one of a distinguished group of frame, Greek Revival style, Presbyterian churches built by Highland Scot descendants in the Upper Cape Fear Valley of North Carolina in the mid-nineteenth century.

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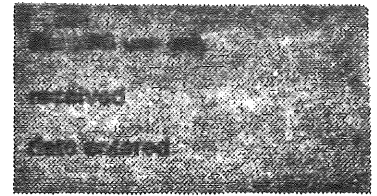
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Historical Significance

Presbyterianism came to the upper Cape Fear Valley with the first settlements of the Highland Scots in the 1730s. Political and economic conditions in Europe forced several more mass migrations before the American Revolution. Many came directly to North Carolina where they spread out over what today is a twelve-county area ranging from the upper Cape Fear River to the South Carolina line and westward just beyond the Yadkin/Pee Dee River. By 1775 estimates placed the Scottish population in the neighborhood of 20,000.¹ While they brought their Presbyterian religion with them, they were not accompanied by ministers; consequently, congregations were slow to organize. The rigid discipline, devout Calvinism, emphasis on an educated ministry, and indifference to missionary work proved unattractive to outsiders, thus limiting growth to the natural increase of those who had brought the faith with them.² By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, new generations had grown up in the American experience, and along with increasing competition from other religions in the region, forced the Scottish Presbyterians to relax the discipline, modify the Calvinism, and take a more active role in an evangelical program. On the eve of the Civil War, Presbyterianism had grown to be the third largest denomination in North Carolina; it was during that expansion that Mount Horeb Church was born.³

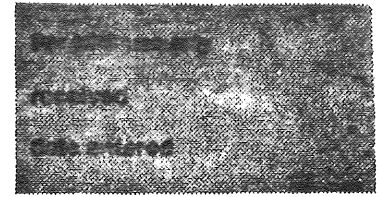
The church grew out of the missionary work of the Reverend H. A. Munroe who was commissioned by the Fayetteville Presbytery in 1843 to serve a large region that included Bladen County.⁴ He resigned his charge later that year but continued to preach at open air stands in Bladen, one of which was located near White Hall, a thriving community on the upper Cape Fear River.⁵ His sermons appealed to a small number of people in the area who decided to establish a Presbyterian church of their own. On February 1, 1845, Reverend Munroe wrote to the Fayetteville Presbytery concerning the prospects: "In this vicinity there are ten or eleven individuals, who are in connection with neighboring churches, that wish to be organized into a church with a view of worshiping in our new building, when completed, with such other persons, as God, by his Grace, may dispose. We are anxious to have a Presbyterian Church organized in our midst."⁶

Munroe's letter indicates that the "neighboring churches" mentioned above were not Presbyterian and that no institution of that faith then existed in that part of Bladen County. The letter, or petition, was signed by thirty-one individuals, mostly with Scottish surnames, who formed the core of a new congregation.⁷ The building to which Munroe referred indicated the plans of the congregation and not construction already underway. It was not until the summer of 1845, after the Fayetteville Presbytery accepted the petition, that the newly formed Building Committee contracted George Cromartie "to erect a house for worship West of White Hall . . . on a tract of land obtained of Shadrack Wooten, Sr. for the use of the Presbyterian Church at that place."⁸ The church was named Mount Horeb and the congregation met in its new home for the first time on December 6, 1845. The Reverend H. A. Munroe was the first minister of Mount Horeb.⁹

Shadrack Wilson, Sr. apparently issued to the church a contract of permission rather than a fee simple deed. The Bladen County Courthouse burned in 1893 destroying many of the early records. On February 15, 1911, James A. Wooten, who seems to have inherited the land, and his wife Julia B. Wooten reissued a warranty deed that gave use of the five and one-tenth acres of land with the following restriction:

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The Condition of this deed is Such That the ground to be occupied in the above described Survey for the Presbyterian denomination in any Event Said Denomination Ever Susspend Worship on Said place Then the lands is to revert to parties of the first part their heirs and assigns together with all property on the Land.¹⁰

A second part of the warranty deed pertained to the cemetery:

That the ground to [be] occupied in the Said Survey for Cemetary is by this Indenture Conveyed to the Diferent Denominations of the White Race only [emphasis original] In Fee Simple forever.¹¹

In antebellum times, Mount Horeb offered services to blacks as well as whites, but black congregations met outside in the grove near the church building.¹² The 1911 deed, presumably a replica of the original, made it clear that blacks were not considered part of the community at large even though white non-church members could be interred in the cemetery. Ironically, the first person buried in the cemetery was not even an American but a young German who died in the area on November 26, 1849. The grave of John Henry Wehman, a native of Hanover, Germany, was enclosed with a cast iron fence.¹³ A list of those buried in the cemetery shows names of many who were not members of the church, testifying to its function as a community burying ground. The burial plots are free of charge, but family contributions help maintain the cemetery.¹⁴

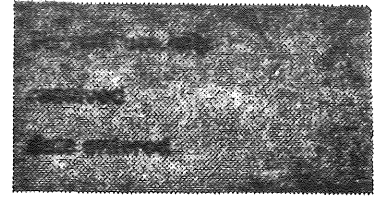
Though there was a natural fluctuation in membership common to all churches, the Mount Horeb congregation continued to increase until 1887 when it reached a peak of sixty-nine. Outpost work that eventually led to the founding of Ashwood Church and the organization of White Plains Church began to drain membership at Mount Horeb.¹⁵ In more recent years, younger members moved away upon reaching maturity to seek better employment opportunities, leaving only thirty-seven members by 1984.¹⁶ The congregation today is virtually the same size as when the church was formally organized in 1845.

Until the 1930s Mount Horeb remained unaltered from the time of construction. In 1932 both the interior and exterior were repainted; a new floor was laid; crinkle glass was installed in the sanctuary windows; and the roof was extended to cover a large entrance porch and was supported by square posts.¹² In 1951 the church was underpinned, and a year later the porch floor was replaced with cement and a brick foundation added; columns replaced the square posts; a wing with Sunday school rooms was appended; and a pediment over the windows and dorsal was installed. Within the last ten years, new carpeting, heating, and air-conditioning have been installed and a new roof put on.¹⁸

The alterations have slightly modified the simplicity of the original construction (built for only \$400) but have not seriously damaged the historical integrity of the structure. Early Presbyterianism in the upper Cape Fear Valley had its origins in small, rural communities where a few individual citizens formally organized themselves and built houses of worship. Many such structures have disappeared, being consolidated into larger churches often moving into the towns and cities. With its original building, small congregation, and rural atmosphere, Mount Horeb stands as a reminder of the era when the Presbyterian church in that region was still in its youth. Mt. Horeb is architecturally significant as one of a distinguished group of frame, Greek Revival style, Presbyterian churches built by Highland Scot descendants in the Upper Cape Fear Valley of North Carolina in the mid-nineteenth century.

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Footnotes

¹Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, The History of a Southern State: North Carolina (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 79-81, hereinafter cited as Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina.

²Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, 137-138.

³Lefler and Newsome, North Carolina, 417.

⁴"History of Mt. Horeb Church 1843-1944 (as Copied From Sessional Records of the Church, With Additional Information Added by Historian to Bring Record Up to March 31, 1944)." Four-page typescript, 1944, copy in Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, p. 1, hereinafter cited as "History of Mt. Horeb Church."

⁵"History of Mt. Horeb Church," 1-2; and "Mt. Horeb Church Records." Bound typescript compiled by Wanda S. Campbell, 1975, p. 1, hereinafter cited as "Church Records."

⁶"Church Records," 1; "A Condensed History to be Given at the Spring Celebration of Wilmington Presbytery at Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church, Route One, Council, North Carolina." Four-page typescript, 1985, p. 2, hereinafter cited as "Condensed History"; and Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church Historical Sites Committee, Notes on Mount Horeb Church History (1986). Copy forwarded to Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Historical Notes.

⁷"Church Records," 1-2.

⁸"Church Records," 2; and "Condensed History," 3.

⁹"Church Records," 2; and Historical Notes.

¹⁰Bladen County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Bladen County Courthouse, Elizabethtown, Deed Book 61, p. 318, hereinafter cited as Bladen County Deed Book.

¹¹Bladen County Deed Book 61, p. 318.

¹²"Condensed History," 3.

¹³"Church Records," preface; and Historical Notes.

¹⁴"Church Records," 8-23. Compare with membership lists, pp. 3-7. See also Historical Notes.

¹⁵"History of Mt. Horeb Church," 3-4.

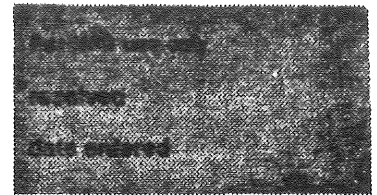
¹⁶Historical Notes; and Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, Inc., Historical Foundation News (Spring, 1984), 4, hereinafter cited as Foundation News.

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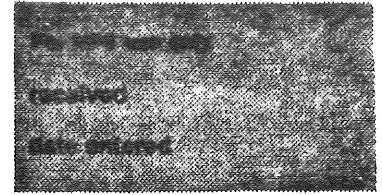
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¹⁷"History of Mt. Horeb Church," 4; and James Cromartie Monroe, Correspondence with Davyd Foard Hood, November 6, 12, 1986, Survey and Planning Branch files, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as Monroe correspondence.

¹⁸Monroe correspondence; and "Condensed History," 3-4. See also Foundation News.

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Selected Bibliography

Bladen County Deeds. Bladen County Courthouse. Elizabethtown.

"A Condensed History to be Given at the Spring Historical Celebration of Wilmington Presbytery at Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church, Route One, Council, North Carolina." Typescript, 1985.

Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, Inc. Historical Foundation News (Spring, 1984), 4.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. The History of a Southern State: North Carolina. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.

Monroe, James Cromartie. Correspondence with Davyd Foard Hood, November 6, 12, 1986. Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

"Mount Horeb Church Records." Compiled by Wanda S. Campbell, 1975. Bound typescript.

Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church Historical Sites Committee. Notes on Mount Horeb Church History, 1985. Copies in Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Powell, William S. The North Carolina Gazetteer. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 6.04 acres

Quadrangle name Singletary Lake, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1: 24000

UTM References

A

1	7	7	3	4	0	3	0	3	8	2	2	1	5	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

The entire parcel owned by the church, outlined in red on the attached Bladen County Tax Map # 1267, is being nominated here.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Statement of significance, criteria assessment, and architectural description by Davyd Foard Hood; historical research by Jerry L. Cross; staff, DAH

organization Division of Archives and History date January, 1987

street & number State Historic Preservation Office 109 E. Jones St. telephone (919) 733 6545

city or town Raleigh state NC 27611

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 William S. Price, Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date March 19, 1987

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

