

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED
JUN 24 1992

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: Sears House

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Southeast of intersection of State Routes 38 and 319.

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Austin

vicinity: X

state: AR county: Lonoke code: AR 085 zip code: 72007

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

=====
4. State/Federal Agency Certification
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.

Cathryn L. Byrd
Signature of certifying official

6-18-92
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. _____ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
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): _____

Marj M. Wynn 8/5/92

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic: Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

Current : Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

Greek Revival

Italianate

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Asphalt

walls Weatherboard other Brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance

=====

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: c. 1860

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

The Sears House, constructed c. 1860, is a single story, gable roof Greek Revival house with Italianate details, and features the single pile plan and a central hall common to such residences of this era.

Elaboration

The Sears House is a single story, gable roof Greek Revival residence with one brick exterior gable end chimney rising through the center of the north ridge and a central, pedimented front porch. It is covered with a composition shingle roof, and rests upon a foundation of wood blocks faced with wet-laid concrete blocks.

The western or front elevation is three bays across, presenting two six-over-six wood sash windows which symmetrically flank the projecting pedimented porch. The gable roof of the porch that projects out from the slope of the main roof features a molded pediment with recessed weatherboarded tympanum, and rests upon four symmetrically paired octagonal columns in front and one boxed pilaster on each side at the rear. One exterior gable-end brick chimney rising above the north ridge completes the elevation.

The northern elevation features the stepped brick chimney rising through the center of the gable of the original house. Immediately to the east of it a single four-over-four wood sash window with a simple broad wood trim lights the corner of the room behind. The gable end is punctuated by molded returns. This elevation also includes the more recent shed addition and a small enclosed hip-roof porch which projects out from the shed.

The shed and enclosed porch additions comprise the eastern elevation. The southern elevation includes a six-over-six window centered directly under the gable, with a ventilation grille placed just below the peak. The window trim matches the simple broad wood trim found on the northern elevation. The gable end is also punctuated by molded returns. The elevation is completed by the shed and hip-roof porch additions.

Exterior details include the octagonal Doric columns on the front porch decorated with octagonal capitals and simple bases. A jig-sawn balustrade is set between the paired columns and corresponding pilasters. A simply-panelled frieze and molded pediment are supported above. Behind this porch the Greek Revival entry with its three-pane half-sidelights is accessed through a single hinged two-panel louvered wood door. The door and glazed surround are encased in a larger, pedimented enframingent of wood. The design of the pedimented

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

enframement is echoed in the hood ornament of each flanking window. A blank frieze board extends down the exterior wall from the boxed cornice upon which a series of Italianate brackets are placed at the cornice line. These brackets continue around to the northwest and southwest molded return of each end gable. The north and west walls are sheathed in the original weatherboard and simple trim. All walls are finished with a plain wide skirtboard placed just above the foundation. The front porch is raised with a single wooden step.

The interior is dominated by a central hall with rooms to the north and south. The walls and ceilings of the central hall and flanking rooms are sheathed with the original wood planking but now exist under a sheetrock covering. The central hall is lined with an historic, though not original beaded wainscot. The interior doors are of the four-panel, hand-planed type and are enframed with Greek Revival dog-ear molding. The main western entry remains intact with decorative Italianate shelf brackets placed above the door that echo the design of the brackets on the exterior. The original Greek Revival fireplace mantel survives in the room to the north.

The 1960's additions to the east replaced an ell with a coinciding screened porch that were located on the northeast end. The shed which spans the length from north to south, and the enclosed raised porch which projects out from the center of the span are fenestrated with aluminum-framed windows. Modern storm windows have been installed over the original wood sash. A chimney was probably removed from the southern end and replaced with a six-over-six window, though no one remembers a chimney in this location. The original wood sheathing on the southern end was removed in the late 1970's due to deterioration and covered with masonite siding. The roof was rebuilt in 1990 because of damage from a hailstorm. These additions have been sensitively executed and are sited predominately away from the principal elevation. The historical interior retains much of the original simple detailing and has not been affected by the additions. The taste of those who built this residence in the middle nineteenth century is still evident.

The ancillary structures included on the property are non-contributing as they were built in the non-historic period.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary

The Sears House is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as an outstanding example of a post-1850 single story, vernacular Greek Revival house which has also retained its original Italianate detailing.

Elaboration

The community of Old Austin was established as Oakland Grove by James Ervin who moved from Alabama to the area in 1828. In 1857, Major I.C.A. Skillern, Peter St. Clair and Dr. Thomas Harbert purchased 800 acres around Oakland Grove and established the community of Sandersville which later became Austin. Skillern and a partner began a profitable store in 1858 that continued until the Civil War.

Before the Civil War Old Austin was a thriving community with six dry goods stores, a large grocery store, a school house, a Methodist Church, three saddler shops, one tailor shop, three saloons, two blacksmiths, one hotel, one livery stable, one steam saw mill, a wool-carding factory, a cotton gin, and a flour mill. During the later part of the war the town was partially destroyed to build winter quarters for the federal soldiers that occupied the area. The one-time city square is now a field which lies west of the Sears House.

The routing of the Iron Mountain Railroad to nearby Austin Station (current-day Austin) dealt the final blow to the community. Many of the remaining businesses dismantled buildings and moved them near the rails at Austin Station. After this, Old Austin ceased to fight for existence.

Little is known about the history of the construction of the Sears House itself, as the names of neither the builder nor the architect (if any) are known at present. It was one of several Greek Revival houses that once stood nearby, though it was probably the most elaborate. Thought to be the oldest home in the area, it still remains in the hands of Joe Gibson, whose grandmother is said to have played on the foundations as a child before the Civil War.

The Sears House remains both the most tangible link to the pre-Civil War history of Old Austin and the best and only surviving example of an ante-bellum Greek Revival residence with Italianate details in the community. As such, it is being nominated under Criterion C with local significance.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

Gibson, Joe. Interview. North Little Rock, Arkansas. October 21, 1991.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990.

Stallcup, Helene. "Town Struggles Against Time, Extinction." Arkansas Democrat. Monday, April 9, 1979. p. 1B.

11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Cynthia Haas, Main Street Design Consultant
Ken Story, National Register Coordinator

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 06/18/92

Street & Number: 225 E. Markham, Suite 300 Telephone: (501) 324-9346

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Sears House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Lonoke

DATE RECEIVED: 6/24/92 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/07/92
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/23/92 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/08/92
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 92000952

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 8/5/92 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Good example of Greek Revival/Italianate
vernacular architecture.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept / C
REVIEWER Harper
DISCIPLINE Historian
DATE 8/5/92

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___summary paragraph
___completeness
___clarity
___applicable criteria
___justification of areas checked
___relating significance to the resource
___context
___relationship of integrity to significance
___justification of exception
___other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Signed _____ Phone _____

Date _____



Sears House
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
Photographed by Ken Story
November 1991
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the west



Sears House
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
Photographed by Ken Story
November 1991
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the southwest



Sears House
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
Photographed by Ken Story
November 1991
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the northeast



Sears House

Lonoke Co., Arkansas

Photographed by Ken Story

November 1991

Negative on file at AHPP

View of entrance from the west



Sears House

Lonoke Co., Arkansas

Photographed by Ken Story

November 1991

Negative on file at AHPP

View from the north



Sears House
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
Photographed by Ken Story
November 1991
Negative on file at AHPP
View from the southeast.

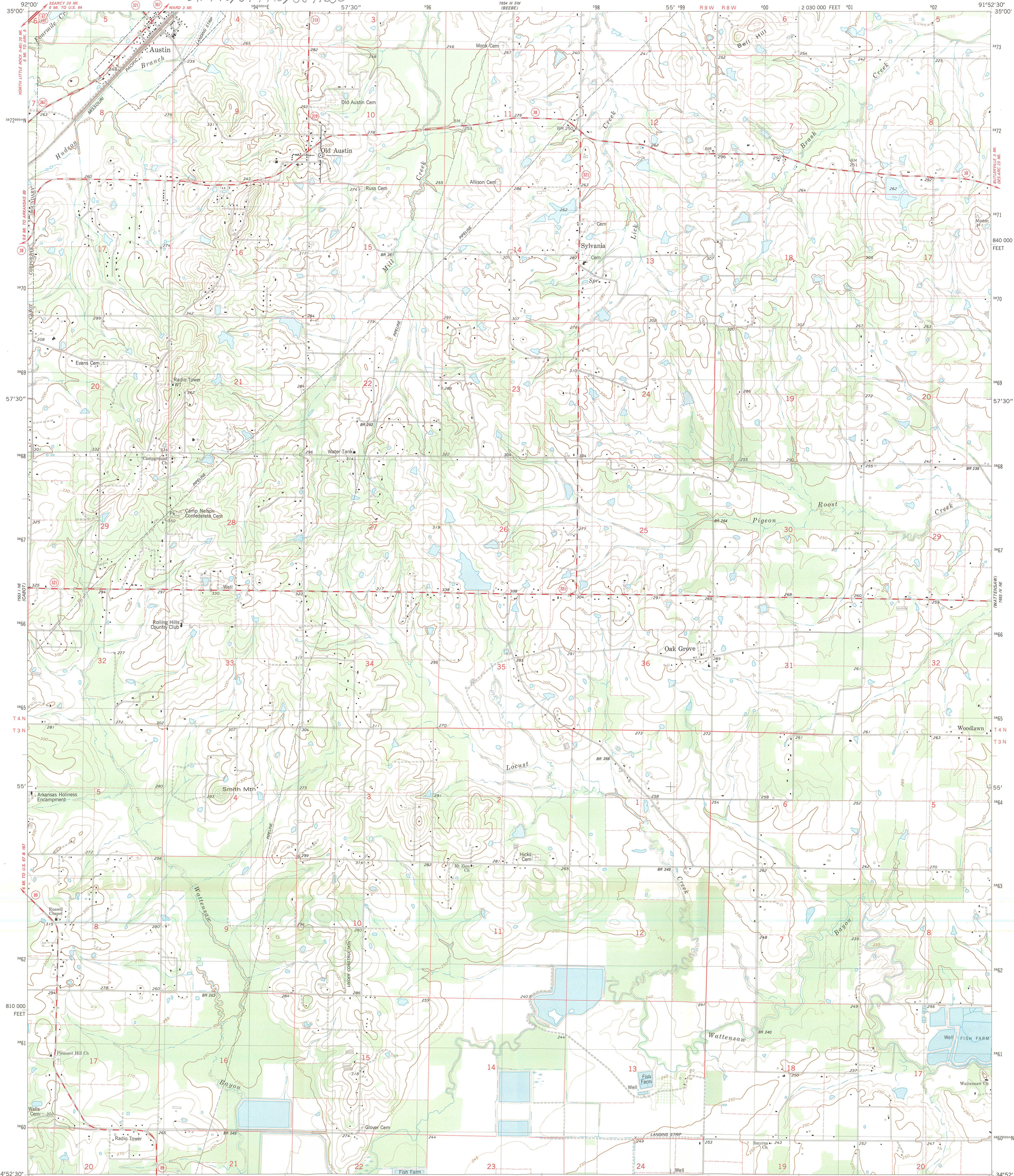


Sears House
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
Photographed by Ken Story
November 1991
Negative on file at AHPP
View of interior (northern room)

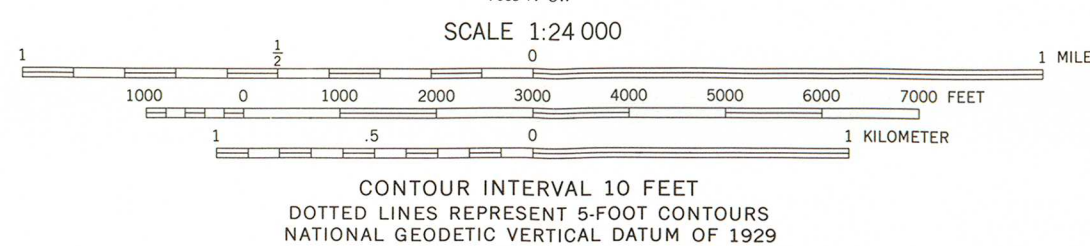
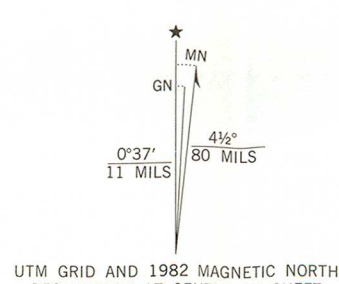
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Sears House
Austin vicinity (Old Austin Community)
Lonoke Co., Arkansas
UTM 15/594740/3871630

OAK GROVE QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS-LONOKE CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NW/4 LONOKE 15' QUADRANGLE



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1975. Field checked 1977. Map edited 1982
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate
system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 7 meters south and
13 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

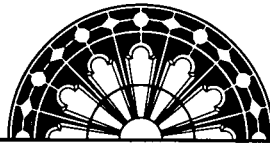


ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road



OAK GROVE, ARK.
NW/4 LONOKE 15' QUADRANGLE
N3452.5-W9152.5/7.5
1982

DMA 7653 IV NW-SERIES V884



ARKANSAS
HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
PROGRAM

RECEIVED
JUN 24 1992

NATIONAL
REGISTER

June 19, 1992

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1100 "L" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Sears House
Lonoke County, Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford
State Historic Preservation Officer

CB:kg

Enclosures

