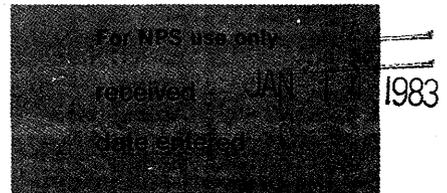


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



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

1. Name

historic Bank of Glen Jean

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Glen Jean N/A vicinity of ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

state West Virginia code 54 county Fayette code 019

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> museum</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> park</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> private residence</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> religious</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> scientific</span>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> transportation</span>
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> other:</span>

4. Owner of Property

name James C. Blankenship, III, William R. Simms, Randall L. Ballard

street & number P.O. Drawer 243

city, town Glen Jean N/A vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number Court Street

city, town Fayetteville state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

Historical photographs of the Bank of Glen Jean from the beginning of the 20th century indicates that the original building appearance has survived since it was constructed in 1909. The inscription of its construction date appears over the main entrance to the bank. An addition was built on to the original structure by William McKell in 1917 on the rear portion of the bank fronting the main street of Glen Jean.

The 1909 bank, and its 1917 addition, were constructed of stone in the style or pattern of random broken ashlar with raised beaded joints. The stone is of lower guyandot sandstone quarried in the immediate Glen Jean area. The guyandot sandstone is the strata of rock exposed above the Sewell seam of coal, which was the richest seam in Fayette County and areas surrounding Glen Jean. The foundation stone was hand cut and also quarried locally. The large hand hewn stone that constitutes the plinth or water table, average four feet in length and were apparently quarried and cut on the site.

The exterior walls of the bank are uniformly 28 inches thick. The thirteen windows on the front of the original bank building and the ones in the 1917 addition are double hung and are two lights with a transom over each. Stone lintels constitute the inside facings of all windows.

The front of the building was cut on 45 degree corners with the unusual angle of the front archway main door being also in 45 degree angles facing main street. Cheek walls surround the archway entrance. A keystone supports the main door archway and the handcut marker-stone that bears the simple description of the structure, "Bank 1909". The intrados in the arch are regular, the extrados being irregular and being tied to the random ashlar pattern. The roof can be characterized as a top over roof. The overhang is galvanized iron with string course cornice.

The interior floors of the bank are ceramic mosaic tile, 1" trimmed hexagon shaped along the outside edges in the lobby and front office. ½" black and white ceramic mosaic tile with a 10" marble base accompanies the tile in the same area. The 12 foot ceilings are plaster on masonry with 42" oak wains-coating bordering the walls in the lobby.

The vaults in the bank are largely intact. Access to five vaults is gained through an ornate double door opening on a walk through vault.

The structural system in the 1909 section is of steel; in the 1917 section, wood.

The construction of the bank and its addition is an example of the type of construction popular at the turn of the century with Italian stone masons who were originally lured to Fayette County for railroad bridge construction and the retaining walls necessitated by the steep slopes of the New River Gorge and the hollows the railroads traversed.

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The interior of the building deteriorated greatly from the bank's closing in the 1930's until acquired by the present owners. Remodeling in the upstairs of the bank for offices has not harmed the integrity or appearance of the building. The structure is sound, there being no evidence of settling or or structural deterioration. Sited on approximately one-half acre itself and surrounded by six acres the present owners have acquired, the Bank of Glen Jean is an architectural reminder of the "glory days" of Glen Jean.

# 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Local history
<b>Specific dates</b>	1909 ; 1917	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Not Known	

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Bank of Glen Jean, at Glen Jean, Fayette County, West Virginia is significant as the most prominent work of architecture in its community and for its association with William McKell, one of the most outstanding of that group of now legendary men, the West Virginia "coal barons".

Explanatory Notes

1. The small community of Glen Jean, nestled in the rugged hills of the southern West Virginia coal fields, was founded in the early 1870's. Beginning in the late 1880's and continuing until the advent of the Great Depression, Glen Jean prospered as a "boom town", being the heart and center of the McKell coal "empire". Constructed during the midst of this "boom", the Bank of Glen Jean became the symbol of Glen Jean's prosperity and, with its massive stone facade, was easily the most architecturally imposing building in the town. As the "boom" years faded and Glen Jean settled back into a rather sleepy village in the mountain country of Fayette County, the imposing structure of the Bank of Glen Jean has taken on even greater significance as the one remaining symbol of a past era of prosperity and as the foremost architectural landmark of the community.

2. The Bank of Glen Jean was constructed in 1909 to serve as the center of the financial empire of William McKell, opening its doors on August 11, 1909. As that empire grew, so did the bank; a large addition, architecturally compatible with the main 1909 unit, was erected in 1917 and bears the name "McKell" in a lintel over the door.

At the time of his construction of the Bank of Glen Jean in 1909, William McKell (1871-1939) was one of West Virginia's most prosperous coal magnates. In addition to owning the entirety of Glen Jean, McKell owned vast amounts of land, coal properties, and railroads.

Glen Jean had become the center of the great McKell financial empire in the late 1880's with the arrival of Thomas G. McKell, who had acquired a 12,000-acre tract in 1873 at what was then White Oaks, Fayette County. The elder McKell continued to acquire lands and coal mines for over a decade before finally moving to Fayette County. He changed the name of the little village to Glen Jean (in honor of his wife) and quickly proceeded to build a sizable town that included an opera house, hotels, and department stores and played a major role in the development of the nearby town of Thurmond as well. His only son William took

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Donnelly, C. Shirley, "Banking in Fayette County, West Virginia", West Virginia History Quarterly. Vol. XV, No. 4, July, 1954.  
Fayette Journal, "The Town of Glen Jean", Vol. 35, No. 30, Oak Hill, West Virginia, November 2, 1911.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.20 acres

Quadrangle name Oak Hill, West Virginia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000'

UMT References

A 

1	7	4	8	6	3	5	0	4	1	9	7	6	6	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 Bank of Glen Jean sits on one rectangular town lot, measuring 190 feet by 85 feet, consisting of 0.20 of an acre, on the north-west corner of the intersection of Main Street and Beury Mountain Road in the village of Glen Jean, Fayette County, West Virginia.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title James C. Blankenship III and Michael J. Pauley, Historian

Historic Preservation Unit

organization Dept. of Culture and History date December 15, 1982

Cultural Center

street & number Capitol Complex telephone 304/ 348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia

## 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 Commissioner, W.Va. Dept. of Culture and History date December 21, 1982

For NPS use only

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

John Nelson Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 2/10/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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up residence at Glen Jean in 1893 and upon Thomas McKell's death in 1904 became the owner of the vast McKell enterprises, including the newly formed (1900) McKell Coal and Coke Company.

William McKell was an individual about whom, due to his unusual, or eccentric, behavior, many stories abound. Controlling much of Fayette County political life, he was strictly paternalistic toward his workers. He won the first successful legal suit ever brought against the United Mine Workers Union for damages due to a strike. He personally organized sporting events among his workers and even invented a new variation of baseball, called "letemhitit", that became wide-spread in the southern coal fields. Upon his death in 1939, McKell left a fortune of 13 million dollars. It would have been more except that when the Bank of Glen Jean closed on January 10, 1939, McKell paid all the depositors from his own assets. At the time the bank closed McKell, near death, was still the bank president. C.P. Calloway was vice president and Charles Wilburn served as the last cashier. A bachelor, McKell's financial concerns were scattered at his death, much of the Glen Jean property passing to the New River Company.

The Bank of Glen Jean is the single remaining structure that is representative of a once flourishing West Virginia financial domain, and this Fayette County community's most outstanding architectural landmark.

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Morris, Robert, "Town Fading Memory to Some", Charleston Gazette, Charleston, W.Va., July 5, 1978.

Peters, J.T. and H.B. Carden, History of Fayette County, West Virginia, Charleston, W.Va., Jarrett Printing Co., 1926.

Sullivan, Charles Kenneth, "Coal Men and Coal Towns: Development of the Smokeless Coal Fields of Southern West Virginia, 1873-1923", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1979.

Tams, W.P., Jr., The Smokeless Coal Fields of West Virginia, West Virginia University Library, Morgantown, W.Va., 1963.