

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Prairie County Courthouse

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Magnolia and Prairie Streets

not for publication: N/A

city/town: DeValls Bluff

vicinity: N/A

state: AR county: Prairie

code: AR117

zip code: 72041

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public - County

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

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

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

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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#### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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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.

Carlynn A. Slater  
Signature of certifying official

2-24-95  
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

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I, hereby certify that this 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson A. Beall 4/20/95

Entered in the  
National Register

for

Signature of Keeper

Date  
of Action

=====

#### 6. Function or Use

=====

Historic: COURTHOUSE

Sub: County Courthouse

Current : COURTHOUSE

Sub: County Courthouse

=====  
**7. Description**  
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Architectural Classification:

20th Century

Other: Plain/Traditional  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: N/A

Materials: foundation Concrete  
walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other N/A

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

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**8. Statement of Significance**  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: Social History  
Government  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1939 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates: 1939

Significant Person(s): N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

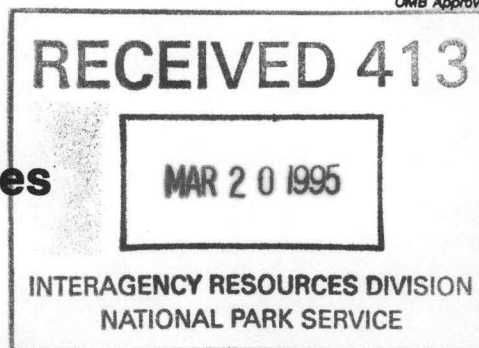
Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Works Progress Administration (WPA)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**



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**Summary**

Located on Magnolia and Pine streets in DeValls Bluff, the Prairie County Courthouse is a two-storey, brick masonry public building built by the WPA in a plain functional style using materials salvaged from an earlier courthouse built in 1910.

**Elaboration**

The Prairie County Courthouse in DeValls Bluff is a two-storey, brick masonry public building designed in the Plain/Traditional style common for WPA projects throughout the state. This rectangular building rests on a continuous cast concrete foundation and is capped by a low hipped metal roof. The building is simply decorated by a concrete string course that separates the first and second stories. The second story windows have wooden lintels and sills, while the first floor windows have wood sills with the tops being formed by the string course. On the second level the four corners are accentuated by brick pilasters. On the lower level the brick masonry walls were constructed in an unusual receding pattern that creates four layers with the highest layer extended slightly over the third layer, the third slightly over the second, and so on.

The western or front elevation is composed of a central double-leaf entrance with wide sidelights and light transom. It is flanked on the sides by two symmetrically placed nine-over-one pane double-hung windows. The southern elevation is composed of three nine-over-one double-hung windows on the western side, a pair of stationary four pane windows divided by a wide wood mullion in the middle, and three more double-hung windows on the eastern end. The cornerstones of the 1910 courthouse are located on the eastern corner of the southern elevation and the southern corner of the eastern elevation. The eastern elevation is identical to the western elevation. A bronze WPA plaque from 1939 is located on the northern side of the eastern double-leaf entrance. Three nine-over-one double-hung windows are found on the eastern end of the northern elevation, and three are located on the western end. A projection extends from the center of this elevation. Boarded window openings are found on the eastern and western sides of the projection.

The interior contains a long central hallway that runs the full length of the lower floor which is occupied by offices. A staircase in the center on the northern side of the hallway leads to the second floor where the courtroom is located.

Wood frame double-leaf doors with decorative multi-pane light transoms and sidelights originally

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## **Continuation Sheet**

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found on the eastern and western elevations have been replaced by aluminum frame double doors. Otherwise, this structure is unaltered and in good condition.



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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**Summary**

Criterion A, local significance

The Prairie County Courthouse in DeValls Bluff was designed and constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1939. It is the only known WPA structure in the community and its design represents the functional emphasis of such depression-era public works projects.

**Elaboration**

Prairie County was formed in 1846 from land originally in Pulaski County. Its name was derived from the common name for the land it encompassed between the lower White and Arkansas Rivers, the Grand Prairie. Originally an area dominated by cotton cultivation, it has become a major center for the production of rice. The county seat was originally established at DeValls Bluff in 1873, but was moved two years later to Des Arc. Eventually, both locations became recognized seats of government.

DeValls Bluff is a small town situated on the western bank of the White River. It was named for C. C. DeVall, the first known settler in the area. The bluffs on which it is located contributed to the area being settled as a primary riverport. It was a busy shipping point for agricultural products such as cotton, hay, and rice. In 1862 the portion of the Memphis to Little Rock railroad line was completed from Little Rock to DeValls Bluff. In 1871, under the leadership of Harry E. Bovay, the White River was bridged and the railroad line was completed all the way through. This was the first interstate railroad in Arkansas.

The first county courthouse located in DeValls Bluff was built in 1910. The design of this structure has not survived. Building materials salvaged from the first structure were used by the WPA for the construction of the current courthouse in 1939. The Prairie County courthouse was one of many buildings built by the WPA in Arkansas. The WPA was involved in many public construction projects throughout Arkansas during the 1930s. This national organization that hired unemployed men and women to work on a variety of public projects throughout the nation was one of many federal programs established by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his administration in response to the dire economic circumstances brought upon the American people by the Great Depression. The WPA as instituted by the Roosevelt Administration was managed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Other federal programs administered by FERA were the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Public Works and Civilian Works Administrations, and regional projects such as the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Rural Colonization Projects in Dyess, Clover Bend, and Plum Bayou, Arkansas were also under the

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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direction of FERA. The WPA constructed or repaired a number of courthouses in Arkansas, and the courthouse at DeValls Bluff was erected as part of this statewide effort.

The Prairie County courthouse in DeValls Bluff is being nominated under Criterion A with local significance as the only known WPA constructed building in DeValls Bluff.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

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 -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>640710</u>	<u>3849880</u>	B	<u>15</u>	_____	_____
C	<u>15</u>	_____	_____	D	<u>15</u>	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Beginning at a point on the western edge of Magnolia Avenue formed by the intersection of that edge with a perpendicular line that runs parallel to the southern elevation of the Prairie County Courthouse and is located twenty feet to the south, proceed west to the intersection with a perpendicular line that runs parallel to the western end of the Courthouse and is located twenty feet to the west. Then proceed north to the intersection with a perpendicular line that runs parallel to the northern elevation of the Courthouse and is located twenty feet to the north. Then proceed east to the intersection with the western edge of Magnolia Avenue. Then proceed south to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with this resource.



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Continuation Sheet**

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**Bibliography**

Deane, Ernie, *Arkansas Place Names*, Branson, Missouri: 1986.

Gill, John Purifoy and Marjem Jackson Gill, *On The Courthouse Square in Arkansas*, 1980.

Workers of the Writers' Program, *The WPA Guide to 1930's Arkansas*, with a new introduction by Elliot West, Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1987 (original copyright 1941).

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Robin L. Baldwin, Survey Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: 02/22/95

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg, 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

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 NAME: Prairie County Courthouse

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Prairie

DATE RECEIVED: 3/20/95 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/04/95  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/20/95 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/04/95  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 95000457

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: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 4/20/95 DATE Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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





1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. DeValls Bluff, Prairie County, Arkansas
3. M. Christ
4. 5/92
5. Negatives on file at AHPP
6. View from South



1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. DeValls Bluff, Prairie County, Arkansas
3. M. christ
4. 5/92
5. Negatives on file at AHPP
6. View from southeast







1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. DeValls Bluff, Prairie County, Arkansas
3. M. Christ
4. 5/92
5. Negatives on file at AHPP
6. View from Southwest



1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. DeValls Bluff, Prairie County, Arkansas
3. M. Christ
4. 5/92
5. Negatives on file at AHPP
6. Detail of second story window





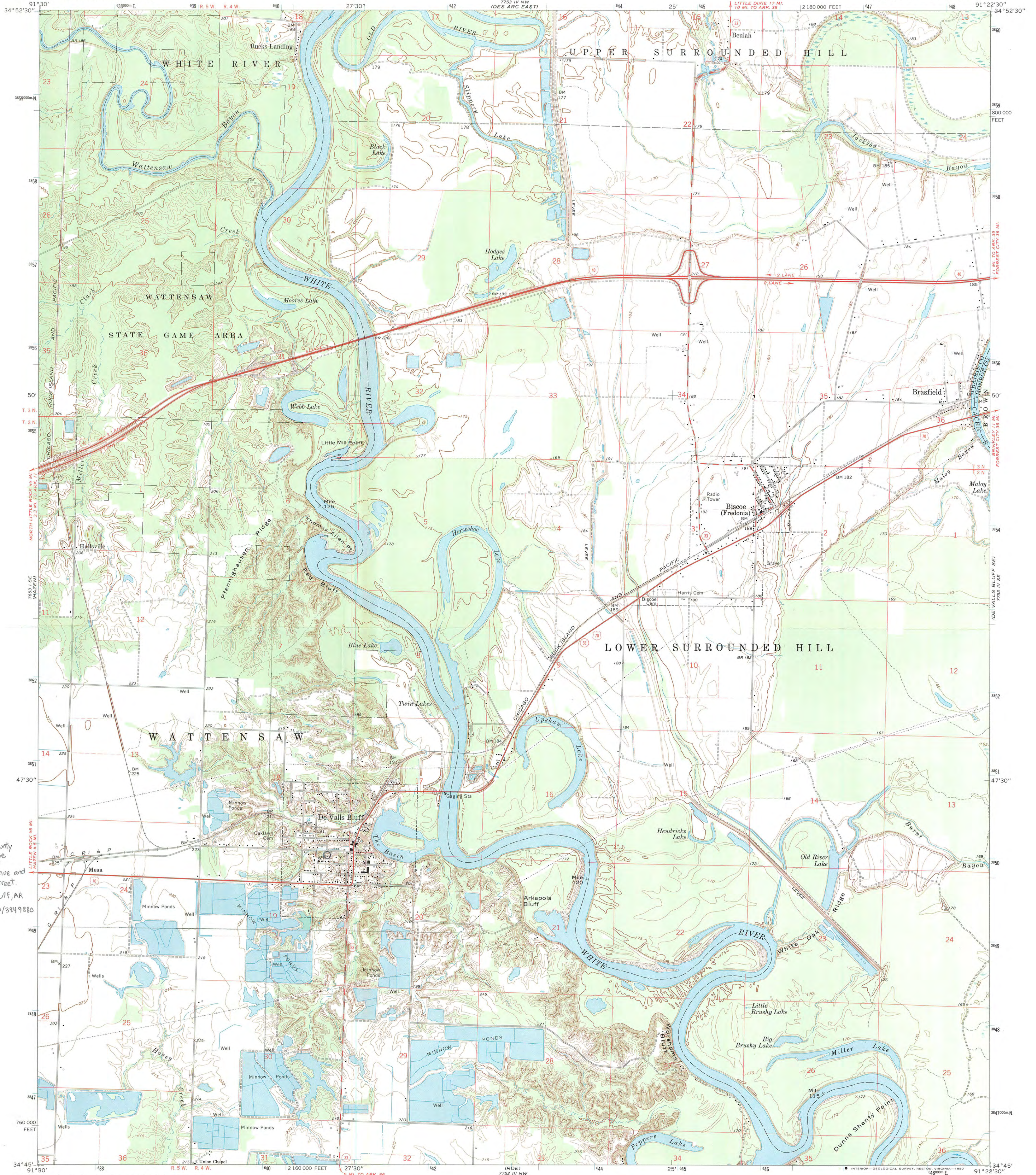


1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. DeValls Bluff, Prairie County, Arkansas
3. M. Christ
4. 5/92
5. Negatives on file at AHPP
6. Detail of WPA marker



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

DE VALLS BLUFF QUADRANGLE  
ARKANSAS  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
SW/4 DE VALLS BLUFF 15' QUADRANGLE



1. Prairie County Courthouse
2. Corner of Prairie Avenue and Magnolia Street, De Valls Bluff, AR
3. 15/640710/3849880

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

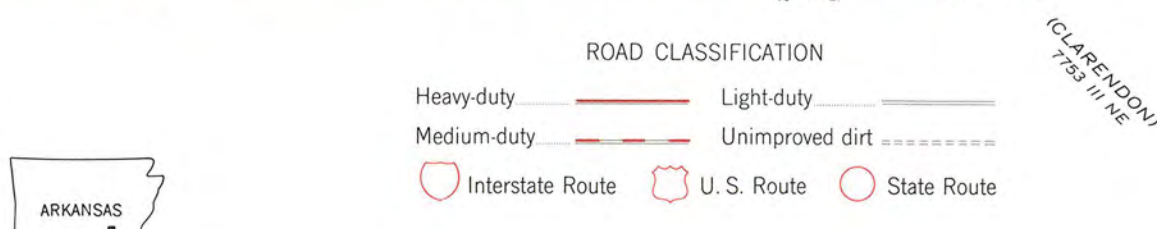
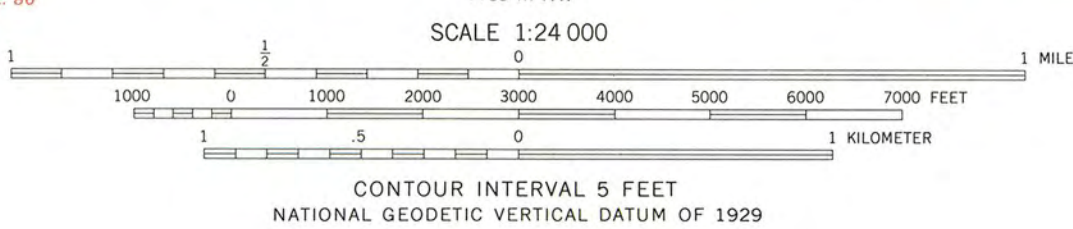
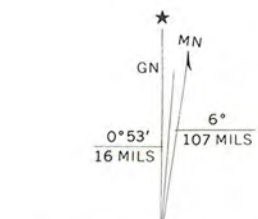
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1968

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 8 meters south and 12 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

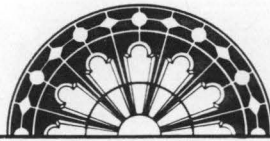


DE VALLS BLUFF, ARK.  
SW/4 DE VALLS BLUFF 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3445—W9122.5/7.5

1968

AMS 7753 IV SW—SERIES V884

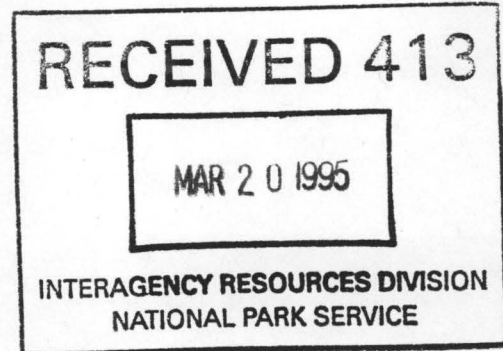




ARKANSAS  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
PROGRAM

February 23, 1995

Carol D. Shull  
Chief of Registration  
United State Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250  
Washington, D.C. 20002



RE: Chi Omega Chapter House  
Fayetteville, Washington County

Cabin #1  
Shorewood Hills, Hot Spring County

✓ Prairie County Courthouse  
DeValls Bluff, Prairie County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above referenced properties. 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 Slater  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CBS:br

Enclosures

1500 Tower Building • 323 Center • Little Rock, Arkansas 72201 • Phone (501) 324-9880  
Fax (501) 324-9154

A Division of the Department of Arkansas Heritage

