

4547

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Holy City of the Wichita Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 262 Holy City Road

City or town: Medicine Park (vicinity) State: OK County: Comanche

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      X statewide      \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A      \_\_\_ B      X C      \_\_\_ D

 _____ <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	 _____ <b>Date</b>
_____ <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	_____ <b>Date</b>
_____ <b>Title :</b>	_____ <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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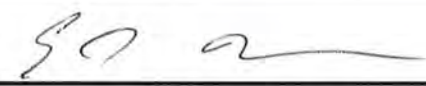
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\_\_\_ national X statewide \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

 <hr/> <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<p style="text-align: right;">10-29-19</p> <hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<hr/> <b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<hr/> <b>Date</b>
<hr/> <b>Title :</b>	<hr/> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

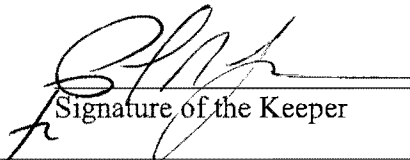
Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District  
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

  
Signature of the Keeper

11/21/2019  
Date of Action

**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(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	objects
<u>32</u>	<u>12</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: CEREMONIAL SITE  
RECREATION: OUTDOOR RECREATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION: CEREMONIAL SITE  
RECREATION: OUTDOOR RECREATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: National Park Service Rustic

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: walls: STONE: Granite

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District is approximately 14.3 acres. It is located about seven miles west of Medicine Park on S.H. 49 in the eastern portion of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Comanche County, Oklahoma. The Holy City site forms a natural amphitheater that slopes gently up from south to north, with the mountains to the north as a backdrop. An audience viewing area approximately 150 feet south of the site slopes up from north to south for unobstructed views. Apart from the mostly gravel and stone paths that connect the buildings, objects, and structures within The Holy City, the site is rugged, rocky, and sparsely vegetated, which blends with the natural character of the surrounding undeveloped parts of the refuge.

The Holy City of the Wichitas is the site of the longest continuously running Passion Play in Oklahoma. Its features include numerous permanent stage sets, monuments, and buildings constructed by the WPA between 1934 and 1936 in the NPS Rustic style out of uncut native granite boulders and stones. Later additions include stone buildings that blend with the older buildings, metal and concrete masonry unit work and storage buildings, a concrete masonry unit restroom building, and a large devotional sculpture erected in 1975.

The extant WPA-era construction includes a chapel, lodge, the original control building, and a memorial room; eleven permanent stone sets, some quite large and elaborate, and an exterior stone pulpit; a stone entry set in stone perimeter walls, and many stone monuments. Most of the historic resources are in very good to excellent condition and the district possesses a great deal of integrity. There are forty-four resources within the district: thirty-two contributing resources and twelve noncontributing resources.

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## Narrative Description

The Holy City of the Wichitas is in the eastern portion of the 59,020-acre Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Area, located west of Medicine Park, in Comanche County, Oklahoma. The site is approximately 14.3 acres in a four-sided area accessed by a loop road that runs north and west near the intersection of State Highways 115 and 49. The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District boundary is defined by the site's topography and its relationship to the surrounding mountains and rock formations.

**Construction:** The Holy City of the Wichitas was constructed in the National Park Service Rustic style by the WPA, with the native stone construction and naturalistic settings favored by the Department of Interior, with walls constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones of various sizes. A distinctive feature of the stone work is that it appears to be dry stacked because there is little to no visible mortar in the exterior joints. This was accomplished by constructing wood forms as backups, mortaring the face of the wood forms, setting the stones so that the mortar is only visible from the back side of the wall, and removing the wood forms once the mortar had set up sufficiently.

**Contributing Resources:** The site was designed so that the pageant performance area, composed of the stone pageant sets and monuments in the western portion, are accessible by gently sloping gravel paths that loop and intersect with each other. The chapel is the most impressive building on the site, and is located east of the pageant area at the terminus of a broad straight walk running north and slightly east from the entry gate on the north side of the parking lot to the chapel's main entry. The lodge is located east of the chapel, towards the chapel's north end. The site design enhances The Holy City as the location for an Easter Pageant. The stage sets that serve the pageant are arranged roughly in a crescent shape with the Mount Calvary stage set on the west side and the Tomb of the Resurrection on the east. The Memorial Room and the chapel are east of the Tomb of the Resurrection and terminate the arc on the east. Thus, a large, natural, amphitheater stage that is approximately 700 feet long from east to west is formed. The pageant viewing area is south of the west low stone wall and west of the north/south drive to the parking area on the loop drive to The Holy City. About 150 feet south of the low stone wall, the viewing area slopes up to the south to afford unobstructed panoramic views of the pageant's grand, natural setting.

**Non-Contributing Resources:** There are contemporary memorials clustered north of the entry gate and along the low stone walls east and west of the entry gate. Resources that post date the period of significance for The Holy City are mostly clustered in the east portion of the site. Exceptions include the new control room and the Sea of Galilee boat on the southwest part of the site. Some of the later buildings, including the Moses House, a small storage building, and a residence, are constructed of stone that blends well with the WPA architecture, but the stonework is done with mortar that is visible on the joint surfaces rather than the appearance of dry stack stone that is characteristic of the WPA buildings. Other later buildings are constructed of metal or concrete masonry units, however, the visual impact of the non-historic resources is limited because they are mainly clustered on the east side of the site. The parking area is a long loop oriented northeast to southwest, and the parking lot follows the orientation of the low stone wall west of the entry gate. This placement focuses visitors on the western portion of the site, which forms the stage set for the pageant, rather than the non-contributing resources that are clustered on the eastern portion of the site.

The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District retains its historic integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, materials, workmanship and design. The site, buildings, structures and objects that give the district its form and contribute to its function are all fine examples of the work achieved by the WPA in Oklahoma. A listing of resources follows.

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Resource descriptions begin at the Entry Gate at the middle south edge of the district and work their way around the site in a clockwise direction. Contributing resources are in **bold**; non-contributing are in regular type face:

1. **District Site:** photos 0001-0003  
The overall setting of the original district remains intact and the strong relationship of the district's buildings, structures, and objects to the adjacent mountains and terrain is pronounced. Intrusions into the site do not detract or obscure the original design. A combination of minimal changes and sensitivity to the NPS Rustic aesthetic have kept the site functioning as intended and allowed it to retain its historic integrity.
2. **Entry Gate:** 1934-1935, structure, photo 0004  
Irregular, uncut, red granite, vertically stacked boulders and large stones forming supports for the metal entry gate. The stone gate supports terminate low red granite perimeter walls on the south side of The Holy City district. The stone supports are in excellent condition.
3. **Low Stone Perimeter Walls:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0005 & 0006  
Irregular, uncut, red granite, vertically stacked large stones forming low perimeter walls on the east and west sides of the entry gate. The low stone walls are in excellent condition.
4. **Memorials:** contemporary, objects, photo 0007  
Four memorials on the west side of the north/south walk from the entry gate to the chapel. The memorials have various honorees, including the Reverend A.M. Wallock, the founder of The Holy City, and the victims of the Oklahoma City bombing.
5. **West Paver Path:** contemporary, object, photo 0008  
A partial concrete path that was partly overlaid with commemorative red brick pavers.
6. **Low Stone Wall, north side of walk:** 1934-1935, structure, photo 0008  
Irregular, uncut, red granite, small boulders and uncut stones forming a low border wall on the north side of the path going west from the entry gate. This structure is in excellent condition.
7. **Inn:** 1934-1935, building, photos 0009 & 0010  
A small, one-story, shed-roofed set piece structure with walls constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The walls have smaller stones towards the top, with large boulders distributed irregularly on each elevation. The structure has a single, one-over-one, small steel hung window with frosted or wired glass centered on the east and west elevations and wood plank Dutch doors centered on the north façade and south elevation. The shed roof projects out from the exterior wall on the north façade and has a deep wood fascia with metal coping. The roofline is not visible on the east, west, and south. The southeast and southwest stone corners are articulated with low stone projections above the roof line. The building is in excellent condition.
8. **Manger:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0011 & 0012  
A small, one-story, shed-roofed set piece structure with walls on the east, west, and north elevations constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The south façade is open. The walls are articulated at each corner with buttresses that project forty-five degrees from the corners. The buttresses have irregular profiles. It appears that some of the stone joints have been repaired with mortar infill. The manger interior walls are primarily finished with stucco along with areas of exposed stone. The roof is standing seam metal over a wood structure, with wood fascia boards on the east, west, and north elevations. The fascia over the open wall of the south "façade" is a roughhewn log. A similar buttress projects off the middle of the rear of the structure and leads to a utility pole with loud speaker attached to it. The structure is in excellent condition.

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9. **Control Building:** date unknown, building, photos 0013 & 0014  
A one-story building with a low-sloped shed roof and an irregular plan. The west and south elevations are faced with irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones that blend well with the older construction. The east and north elevations are concrete masonry units. There are large, metal-framed display windows on the north elevation that wrap around about five feet on the east and west elevations. There is a pair of steel doors on the east elevation and a single steel door on the west elevation. The building is in excellent condition.
10. **Children's House (original Control Building):** 1935-1936, building, photos 0015 & 0016  
A one-story, shallow saltbox-roofed building with walls constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. There is a wood screen that was added to the east elevation of the building, on the north end. The east elevation has small boarded up window openings near the south end and in the center. The north elevation has a stone base with large windows that wrap around the west wall about a third of the way. The remaining south end of the west wall has a stone arched window opening and a door opening with a slab door. All the visible window openings have been boarded up. The building is in very good condition.
11. **Mary and Martha's House:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0017 & 0018  
A small, one-story set piece structure consisting of just an east-west running "façade" wall with buttresses on the north side constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The wall has an arched opening on the east and west ends; a small rectangular fenestration near the center of the wall, close to the top; and a tall narrow niche between the small rectangular fenestration and the west arched opening. There are additional buttresses off the back of the structure. The structure has had some mortar repairs but is overall in good condition.
12. **Stone Pulpit:** 1935-1936, structure, photos 0017, 0018 & 0019  
An elevated set piece pulpit crafted with expressive stone work. The south side of the pulpit is constructed with large, vertically oriented boulders at the base. Above and a continuation of the middle of the base is a cross created from small, irregular stones set in a coursed random rubble pattern. Above the horizontal arms of the cross are small boulders that look like they were set in a low pile on either side of the vertical leg of the cross. The top of the cross projects above the small boulders. The east, west, and north sides of the pulpit are constructed of irregular, large stones in a coursed random rubble pattern. On the north there is a stair to elevate the speaker. It is constructed with four large, flat, stone stair treads on a stone foundation. This structure is in excellent condition.
13. **The Tomb of Lazarus:** 1934-1935, structure, photo 0020  
A semi-circular set piece structure constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones and a wood, flat roof structure. There is a central opening in the southernmost curve of the wall surmounted by a large stone lintel. The stones on either side of the opening are very irregular and graduate in size from very large at the base of the opening to relatively small where they meet under each side of the stone lintel. The top of the "façade" wall gently slopes up to a peak above the door opening from the east and west sides. Behind the wall, in the center of the semi-circle, there is a short stack of the same stones with a wood pole sticking out of the top to support the flat roof structure. A concrete path leads up to the central opening. The structure has had some mortar repairs but is in excellent condition.
14. **Sea of Galilee Boat:** date unknown, structure, photo 0021  
A contemporary, re-built wood representation of a boat. It has three blue painted wood steps leading up to the side of the boat and painted plywood cutouts of waves on either side of the steps. The boat is first mentioned on the site in 1948. The Holy City Sea of Galilee Boat is a part of the pageant as boats are mentioned 50 times in the Gospels and many of the disciples were fishermen. This structure is in very good condition.



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15. **Mount Calvary (Three Crosses):** 1934-1935, objects, photo 0022  
A set piece comprised of three large crosses that represent Mount Calvary is fashioned from wood telephone-pole-sized logs set in bases constructed of piles of boulders and uncut stones. These objects are in excellent condition.
- 16-17. **Stone Monuments:** 1934-1935, objects, photo 0022 & 0023  
There are two stone monuments; one just south-southwest of Mount Calvary and one just northeast, between Mount Calvary and Pilate's Court. The stone monuments have very large, vertically oriented boulders on the south sides and stacked rubble stones on the east, west and north sides of the tall bases. Above the bases are stacked rubble stones with a built in center niche. These objects are in very good condition.
18. **Stone Stack:** 1934-1935, object, photo 0022 & 0023  
The short stone stack is to the east and across the path from the southwestern stone monument (see description above) and is constructed of random rubble stone. This object is in good condition.
19. **Pilate's Court:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0023, 0024 & 0025  
An imposing, one-and-a-half-story, southeast-facing set piece structure with large, two-story, articulated towers on both ends and a raised concrete platform centered on the northwest side of the "façade" wall. Curved stairs lead up to the platform from the northeast and southwest, behind the "façade". The "façade" is about 100 feet long with walls that are constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The central portion of the structure has a monumental arched opening set in a thickened section of the wall that projects out from the adjacent northeast and southwest wall segments. Above this central section are two short rectangular stone piles that suggest a battlement along with taller rectangular stacked stone piles on each end of the projecting central portion. The wall segments northeast and southwest of the central portion are constructed of smaller boulders and stones than the central portion. These wall segments are not as tall as the central wall segment, have a centered monumental arched opening that is correspondingly shorter than the central opening, and they each have a battlement composed of seven stacked rectangular stone piles. The northeast and southwest towers are four-sided structures with doors on the northwest side at ground level and rectangular fenestrations on the southwest, northeast, and southeast elevations at the second story level. The towers have stone piles at their southeast roof corners and at the approximate center of their northeast and southwest rooflines. The raised platform has a crenellated stone backdrop at the second level on its northwest side. Photo 0025 shows a detail of the typical wall construction, with a mortar bed on the back face of the wall with the stone set into it. The structure is in excellent condition.
20. **Stone Cross:** 1934-1935, object, photo 0026  
Sitting between Pilate's Court to the southwest and the Temple to the northeast, is a large stone cross set piece faced with small, irregular, rubble stone set on a base constructed with larger boulders and uncut stones. The horizontal arms of the cross are supported by a steel plate. This object is in excellent condition.
21. **Temple:** 1934-1935, building, photos 0026 & 0027  
As one of the largest set pieces, if not the largest set piece, this one-and-a-half-story, south facing, shed-roofed set piece building has two large, two-story, articulated stone towers, one on either end. Between the towers, there is a tall, stucco arcade about fifty feet wide with three arches supported by two slender round columns at the low points of the arches and rectangular pilasters finished with stucco where the east and west arches meet the stone towers. The arcade is the south "façade" of a covered, raised, concrete stage area. The stage extends to the south about twenty-four feet as an uncovered raised platform on a base faced with boulders and uncut stone. A central stone stair leads up to the south edge of the platform and a metal guardrail runs around the perimeter of the platform and handrails are on either side of the stair. The stone towers have narrow rectangular fenestrations

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at the second story level, and the east tower has an arched fenestration on the south façade at the first level. The towers have stone piles at their south façade roof corners and at the approximate center of the east and west elevation rooflines. One of these features is missing from the southwest corner of the west tower. There is a metal roof that slopes down to the north over the stage and an enclosed area north of the stage. The walls are constructed with the irregular boulders and uncut granite stone work typical of the district. The east and west elevation walls have low parapets and the north elevation wall terminates with a fascia board at the roof edge. The east elevation wall at the enclosed area behind the stage has a door with stone steps leading up to it. The building is in very good condition.

22. **Stone Monument:** 1934-1935, object, photos 0028 & 0029  
A tall, columnar stone monument set piece faced with small boulders and irregular, uncut granite rubble stone. The diameter of the monument and the size of the stones gradually gets smaller from the base to the top of the monument. There are four narrow, tall stacks of small stones at four points around the top of the monument. This object is in excellent condition.
23. **Gateway into Jerusalem:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0028 & 0029  
An imposing one-story south-facing set piece structure with large, one-and-a-half-story, articulated towers on either end. The structure is about fifty-four feet long with walls that are constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The central portion of the structure has a monumental arched opening set in a thickened section of the wall that projects out from the east and west wall segments. Above this central section are three short rectangular stone piles that suggest a battlement. The small wall segments east and west of the central portion are slightly lower and have a centered short rectangular stone pile that continues the rhythm of the crenellated, battlement pattern. The west and east towers are four-sided structures with rectangular fenestrations on the west, east, and south elevations at the same level as the top of the adjoining wall segments. The east tower has a slab door on the north elevation at ground level. The towers have stone piles at their south roof corners and at the approximate center of their east and west elevation rooflines. The structure is in excellent condition.
24. **Stone Monument:** 1934-1935, object, photo 0028  
There is also a short, stone monument constructed as a round, rubble stone stack south of the west wall section of the Gateway into Jerusalem (see description above). This object is in excellent condition.
25. **Angel House Façade and Storage Building:** 1934-1935, building, photos 0030 & 0031  
A one-story, south-facing set piece structure with a storage area on the north side that was added later. The storage area is not visible from the audience hill. The south facing façade is about 78 feet long with short, articulated, flat-topped towers on each end. There is a slab door on the north elevation of the east tower. Between the towers is a wall constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The wall has no openings, but there is an arched stone niche near the west end that now has infill of small stones that match the rest of the stone. The wall has a gently curving roofline that is highest in the center, and there is a raised wood platform with metal stairs near the top on the north side of this center curve. The platform supports sit on top of the storage area and the platform has metal guardrails that are visible from the south side of the structure. The west and east flat-topped towers are four-sided structures that terminate the wall and are also constructed out of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The storage area has a metal shed roof that slopes down to the north. The building is in excellent condition.
26. **Watch Tower:** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0032 & 0033  
South-southeast of the Angel House, is the Watch Tower which is a tapered, four-sided set piece structure with a slab door on the north elevation at ground level and fenestrations in the shape of an irregular, narrow arch on the west, east, and south elevations at the second story level. The tower

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has stone piles at its south roof corners and at the approximate center of its east and west elevation rooflines. The structure is in excellent condition.

27. **Herod's Court:** 1935-1936, structure, photos 0034 & 0035  
A semi-circular, one-story, south-facing arcade set piece structure with five arches sits southwest of the Watch Tower and just southeast of the Gateway into Jerusalem. The arcade appears to be composed of true stone arches with larger stones incorporated at the bases and uncut, rubble stone set in a radial pattern around the arches. The arched doorway at the center of the semi-circle is the widest, and has five vertical metal bars. The two adjacent flanking arched fenestrations are the narrowest, and have three vertical metal bars each. The two arched doorways on each end are an intermediate width and have no metal bars. The top of the arcade has evenly spaced short rectangular stone piles that suggest a battlement. A stone courtyard is south of the arcade with a straight, low, stone wall on the south side. The low stone wall has square stone piles at the east and west ends and a central opening flanked by large boulders that leads to a stone throne located south of the central arch. A rectangular stone obelisk is just southwest of the throne. All features of this resource are comprised of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. The structure is in excellent condition.
28. **Mary's Garden (Garden of Gethsemane):** 1934-1935, structure, photos 0034 and 0057  
Just to the east of the courtyard of Herod's Court, there is a one-story, south-facing set piece structure that tapers up from the ground at the ends to form an irregular, curved shape. It is constructed with irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones. There is a rectangular area with a low uncoursed rubble stone border on the west end of the south "façade". Additionally, there are two low, uncoursed, rubble stone walls that are approximately centered on the "façade" and run perpendicular to it. A steel tube railing on the north side of the west end of the south "façade" is not visible from the south. There is low wood platform on the west that leads up to a short, rounded metal rail that is facing southeast and this railing is visible from the south "façade". The structure is in excellent condition.
29. **Tomb of the Resurrection:** ca. 1934-1936, structure, photos 0036, 0037 & 0038  
Due east of the Watch Tower is a one-story south-southwest facing façade wall set piece that is comprised of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones laid a curved shape that tapers up from the ground at the ends. There is a central small arched door opening in the center that leads to a small stone enclosure, or "tomb", centered on the north side of the façade wall. There is a slab door on the north elevation of the enclosure and a set of stairs that wraps around the enclosure and leads up to a wood platform that sits just below the highest part of the curved south façade, in the center. A metal pipe guardrail set behind the wall is visible from the front of the structure. A monumental stair curves around the east side of the structure and has a tall stone wall as a backdrop. A set of deep, low, stone steps leads from the walking path to the door opening. The structure is in excellent condition.
30. **Stone Monument with Niche:** 1934-1935, object, photo 0038  
A stone monument set piece with very large, vertically oriented boulders at the base and stacked rubble stones above that incorporates a built in center niche, sits just southeast of the Tomb of the Resurrection. The lintel that caps the niche supports a stone pile that tapers up to a point from the base to the top. This object is in very good condition.
31. **Stone Monument with Wood Cross:** ca. 1934-1936, structure, photo 0039  
Positioned to the southwest of the Memorial Room, along the walking path, sits a moderately sized set piece consisting of a cross of weathered wood two-bys set in a base constructed of a pyramidal pile of uncut stone in an irregular vertical, stacked pattern. This object is in very good condition.

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32. **Stone Monument with Niche:** ca. 1934-1936, structure, photo 0039  
A modest sized stone monument set piece, constructed with a large horizontal boulder as a base, two courses of rubble stone stones, another large horizontally set boulder, and stacked uncut rubble stone stones that incorporate a center niche sits to the northeast of the Stone Monument with Cross and slightly northwest of the Memorial Room. This object is in very good condition.
33. **Memorial Room:** 1934-1936, building, photos 0039 & 0040  
A rectangular, one-story, south-southwest facing set piece building, with a one-and-a-half-story extension centered in the north-northeast elevation. The "south" façade wall has two arched window openings with multi-light steel fixed and casement windows that flank a central arched stone niche. A stair on the "east" side with a stone pony wall goes up to the roof. The roof is flat with a metal railing set back from the "battlement" parapet. The walls have evenly spaced short rectangular stone piles that suggest battlements. The taller central portion of the "north" wall has a proportionately taller "battlement" and three evenly spaced arched openings with the sill of the openings even with the roofline of the one-story walls. The "north" elevation has a central wood plank door flanked by small, rectangular, multi-light steel windows. All the window and door openings are very deeply set. The building is located to the northeast of the Stone Monument with Cross and is in excellent condition.
34. **Moses' House:** ca. 1965, building, photos 0041 & 0042  
Just to the north-northeast of the Memorial Room is a long, narrow, one-story, stone building with a low-slope metal roof. The lower portion of the south facing façade wall is finished with stone work similar to that of the historic resources in the district with the rest of the south facing façade wall and remaining exterior walls are finished with the cobble stones that are typical of other historic buildings in the Wichita Wildlife Refuge. The south façade has a central slab door that is flanked by small, rectangular stained glass windows. The north elevation has a boarded up window opening on the east side, near the top. The building is non-contributing due to its date of construction being later than the period of significance. The building is in very good condition.
35. **Modern Storage Building:** date unknown, building, photos 0041 & 0042  
A long, narrow, prefab metal building with a front gabled roof, metal walls, and metal roof panels runs parallel to the Moses House, which sits immediately to the west and at the bottom of the steep grade change. On the south facing façade, it has a centrally located metal slab door accessed by a set of concrete stairs with metal pipe handrails. On the north elevation, it has a centrally located door at grade. The building is non-contributing due to its materials, workmanship, and design; and it is likely that the date of construction is later than the period of significance. The building is in excellent condition.
36. **Chapel:** 1935-1936, building, photos 0043, 0044 & 0045  
A two-and-a-half-story, south-southwest facing, side parapet-gabled roof building with massive three-story stone towers that project from the east-northeast and west-southwest gable ends, centered on the gable ridge. The gable roof has a high pitch and the roofing material between the parapets appears to be slate. The exterior walls are constructed of irregular, uncut, red granite boulders and stones in a coursed rubble pattern, and there are low, closely spaced stone buttresses at regular intervals along the walls.  
  
A semi-circular main entrance is centered on the south-southwest facing façade and is shorter than the primary "south" facing façade wall it projects from. A broad, limestone stair leads up to the main entrance with metal handrails running up the center and along the "east" and "west" sides of the stairs. The pale limestone color of the central entry stair contrasts with the red granite building stone. There are heavy wood double doors at the entry that are deeply recessed. Metal and glass wall sconces flank the doors towards the outside face of the recessed door opening. There are three low stone buttresses on each side of the curved entry. A single, rectangular, steel, multi-light window with horizontal rectangular panes of colored glass is set into the curved walls on each side of the

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entry. The windows line up with the "east" and "west" ends of the limestone stairs and are centered above and in between the low stone buttresses that flank the stairs and the center buttresses. A sheet metal scupper and downspout are on the east and west sides of the circular entrance, extending from the roofline below the "battlement" parapet to the ground, and located in between the center and northernmost buttresses. The circular entry wall crenellations have tops that slope down from the inside face to the outside face of the wall.

The primary south-southwest facing façade wall is taller than the centrally located circular entry. The majority of the wall is visible to the "east" and "west" of the entrance and has three low stone buttresses on either side. A pair of, tall, narrow, steel multi-light casement windows with horizontal rectangular panes of colored glass is deeply recessed in the stone walls on each side of the entry. These windows are centered on the innermost and center buttresses. A sheet metal scupper and downspout are also on the east and west south-facing walls, extending from the roof edge below a "battlement" parapet to the ground, and located in between the center and outermost buttresses. The south façade wall has a continuous "battlement" parapet.

The "east" and "west" elevations are dominated by large, square towers that are centered on the ridge of the Chapel's side parapet-gabled roof. The towers are slightly battered, and they have one low buttress each on the "south" façade, two on the "east" and "west" elevations, and one each on the "north" elevation. There are single, tall, narrow, steel multi-light windows, with horizontal rectangular panes of colored glass, recessed deeply and centered in the tower walls at each of the three levels on the "south" façade and in the "east" and "west" elevations, with the exception of a stained glass angel in the window of the "south" façade first level window of the west tower. The window sills at the first level are slightly above the tops of the low buttresses and the second and third level windows are evenly spaced above. There is a matching window at the third level on the north elevation of the east tower, and a wood framed opening with a wood grille with horizontal slats at the third level on the north elevation of the west tower. A scupper and downspout are on the north elevation of the east tower, east of the window; and on the north elevation of the west tower, west of the wood grille. The towers terminate with a "battlement" roofline. The portions of the east and west gable endwalls that are north and south of the towers terminate in smooth-topped parapets that follow the roof slope. On the south façade, the endwall parapets flare where they meet the south "battlement" parapet. On the north elevation, the endwall parapets are covered at the lower end with a new roof that covers a newer addition for "The Wallock Memorial Museum." The entry to the museum is on the east elevation of the addition.

The original north (rear) elevation of the Chapel is obscured by a later addition that houses "The Wallock Memorial Museum". The museum addition walls are constructed with uncoursed rubble stone masonry that is similar to the cobbles used on the more recently constructed Moses House. The portion of the addition that abuts the north elevation of the Chapel is the same width. The roof over this portion is a shed at a shallower slope than the Chapel roof. This shed roof extends from the lower edge of the Chapel roof, laps over the east and west gable endwalls, and wraps partially around the east side of the chapel to cover a projecting wing on the east side. There is a rectangular brick masonry chimney slightly east of the center of the addition roof. The addition roof is a light colored membrane and there is a wide gutter along the north side and large downspouts on the east and west ends of the gutter. The museum is not visible from the south facade.

The Chapel interior derives strength from its simplicity. The ceiling follows the gabled roofline about a quarter of the distance into the room on the north and south and the ceiling is flat between those points. Five exposed beams that follow the ceiling line are located at equal distances from each other with two at the endwalls and the remaining three spaced evenly to divide the sanctuary into four bays. The beam ends come down to a continuous wood light cove that is supported by wood brackets spaced to be under and in between each exposed beam. The interior finish is white plaster that is a backdrop for folk art by the Oklahoma artist Irene Malcolm that was executed between 1945 and

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1952. Malcolm's paintings include representations of the twelve disciples in arched niches along the north and south walls, paintings of the Ascension and the Crucifixion in arched niches in the east wall, and depictions of angels and applied ornament on the ceiling and walls. The building is in excellent condition.

37. **Stone Pulpit:** ca. 1934-1936, structure, photo 0052  
Just south of the east-southeast tower of the Chapel stands a massive, round, stone pulpit set piece with two rows of very large, irregular, vertically oriented granite boulders separated by a ring of small boulders at the floor line of the raised platform. The upper vertical ring of boulders is set in slightly from the ring of small boulders and the lower vertical boulder base. A WPA bronze placard with a 1936 date is set into one of the upper west-facing boulders. Stone stairs with a metal railing allow access to the raised platform of the pulpit. This object is in excellent condition.
38. **Lodge:** 1935-1936, building, photos 0046 & 0047  
Due east of the museum addition of the Chapel, there is a small, rectangular, one-story, stone building with a side gabled metal roof. The roof has a slight flare at the overhangs on the north elevation and south façade. The wall finish is the same irregular, uncoursed, rubble stone that is typical of other buildings in the district. There is a small stone enclosure on the west elevation, just south of an accessible entry. The west two-thirds of the south façade is constructed with uncoursed rubble stone and the east third has a composition shingle wall finish. In the stone portion of the south façade, there are three evenly spaced rectangular windows with cast stone subsills and headers and a door on the east end of the stone wall. It appears that the east portion of the elevation may have been a porch that was enclosed. The walls are clad with red-brown asphalt roofing shingles, and there is a window on the south that does not match the other windows. However, the roofline is continuous over this part of the building and it sits on a stone base that matches the stone exterior wall finish. The building has two stone chimneys near the middle of the roof, one on each side of the roof ridge. The building was a caretaker's house and is now a gift shop. The building is in very good condition.
39. **Storage Shed:** date unknown, building, photos 0048 & 0049  
A small, rectangular, one-story stone building with a metal shed roof sloping down to the east and wood fascias sits slightly east-northeast of the Lodge. The stone wall finish is similar to other stone work in the district, but mortar joints are much more visible. The south façade has a set of vertically oriented wood slatted double doors on the west side. The west elevation has a two-over-two aluminum hung window on the north end. The building is non-contributing due to its workmanship and design; and it is likely that the date of construction is later than the period of significance. The building is in fair condition.
40. **Work Shed:** date unknown, building, photos 0048 & 0049  
Immediately southeast of the Storage Shed sits a small, rectangular, one-story concrete masonry unit building with a metal shed roof sloping down to the north and wood fascias. The south elevation has two small, rectangular windows and there is a single slab door on the south end of the west façade. The building is non-contributing due to its materials, workmanship, and design; and it is likely that the date of construction is later than the period of significance. The building is in fair condition.
41. **A.M. Wallock Residence:** pre-1948, building, photos 0050, 0051 & 0053  
South of the Lodge and sheds is a small, rectangular, one-story, Minimal Traditional style stone house with a side-gabled composition shingle roof that has shallow overhangs and exposed rafter tails. The gable ridge runs east and west. The main entry is on the north façade and slightly off-center. The roof extends off the main gable and over the entry to form a covered rectangular porch accessed by stone steps. The stone wall finish is similar to other stone work in the district, but mortar joints are much more visible. There are two rectangular hung windows on the north façade, spaced towards the center of the walls on either side of the door. A small shed is on the north end of the east elevation. The west elevation has a concrete patio leading to a door on the north end and a large

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fixed picture window on the south end. The south elevation has three sets of paired hung windows spaced almost equally across the elevation. The building is non-contributing due to its style and date of construction. The building is in good condition.

42. Storage Building: date unknown, building, photos 0053 & 0054  
A rectangular, one-story, concrete masonry unit building with a low slope roof and metal panel rooftop equipment screen on the west façade sits to the southeast of the A.M. Wallock Residence. The west façade has two large multi-light metal windows with cast stone subsills. There are rectangular, unroofed projections at the northwest and southwest corners that are for outdoor storage. The building is non-contributing due to its materials, workmanship, and design; and it is likely that the date of construction is later than the period of significance. The building is in fair condition.
43. Restroom Building: date unknown, building, photos 0053 & 0055  
To the southwest of the Storage Building and directly off the parking lot is a rectangular, one-story concrete masonry unit building with a front-gable metal panel roof with the ridge running east and west. The building entry is centered on the west façade and is defined by a lower, smaller front-gable to form a covered porch with corner columns. There is also a lower, smaller front-gable on the east (rear) elevation. The gable ends are finished with horizontal siding. The building is non-contributing due to its materials, workmanship, and design; and it is likely that the date of construction is later than the period of significance. The building is in good condition.
44. "Christ of the Wichitas" Sculpture: 1975, object, photo 0056  
A distance south-southeast of the Restroom Building, at the end of a walking path stands a twelve-foot-tall, white marble statue sculpted in Italy, depicting Jesus. The sculpture is set on a square, tapered, fourteen-foot-tall, irregular, red granite stone base. A dedication plaque on the west, front side of the base reads:

Christ of the Wichitas  
in Memory of  
Mark Wallock  
Dedicated to the Children  
of the Lord  
Nov. 9 1975

The statue is non-contributing due to its date of construction being later than the period of significance.

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## 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.

### Criteria Considerations

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

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

RELIGION

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1934-1936

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1935

1936

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Designer: Myron Groseclose

Designer: Rev. A. Mark Wallock

Builder: Works Progress Administration

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the work relief and public works programs of the New Deal and its importance as a public recreational area. The district is also eligible under Criterion C as an outstanding example of National Park Service Rustic architecture and landscape design as applied to a federal wildlife refuge in Comanche County, Oklahoma. The Holy City has been in continuous use in its present Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge site since the first phase of WPA construction was completed in 1935. Criteria Consideration A is also applicable as it is a site used for a religious event.

The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District is significant on a state level due to the great impact that New Deal public works programs had in Oklahoma, the importance of The Holy City as a state-wide attraction within a public recreation area, and its individualistic expression of National Park Service Rustic architecture and landscape design. The period of significance for The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District span the years of its construction, from 1934 to 1936.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Association with the New Deal

The Great Depression affected the entire country, but Oklahoma's economy was especially fragile even prior to the Depression due, in part, to the high rate of farm tenancy and the large surpluses of agricultural commodities driving prices down following World War I. Compared to other states, Oklahoma suffered the third-greatest decline in income between 1929 and 1932.<sup>1</sup>

In 1930, the rural vote helped elect William H. "Alfalfa Bill" Murray as governor. Murray's strategies for fighting the Depression included sending the National Guard into the oil fields to try to prevent illegal oil production and allowing the homeless to plant gardens on the Governor's Mansion lawn. Murray's antics also included launching attacks on President Roosevelt, misappropriating PWA funds, failing to obtain state matching funds for Civil Works Administration projects, and general obstructionism towards federal relief programs. As a result, most federal programs were removed from the Governor's control and Oklahoma received few federal relief dollars.<sup>2</sup> Compounding the state's problems, severe drought hit the Midwestern and Southern Plains in 1931 and in 1932 the National Weather Bureau reported fourteen dust storms.<sup>3</sup>

President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Works Progress Administration, later named the Works Project Administration, in May, 1935. One of Roosevelt's New Deal relief programs, the WPA was to give work to employable but unskilled persons made destitute by the economic depression then gripping the United States as a whole and Oklahoma in particular. By the end of 1940, the "useful" projects of the agency produced a host of public structures and improvements noted for their architectural type, style, materials, and workmanship.<sup>4</sup> The WPA projects consisted mostly of public works construction, such as roads,

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<sup>1</sup> Keith L. Bryant, Jr., "New Deal," *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, [www.okhistory.org](http://www.okhistory.org) (accessed March 05, 2015), 2009. <http://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=NE007>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> PBS, WGBH Educational Foundation, "Timeline: Surviving the Dust Bowl, 1931-1939," accessed May 29, 2015, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/dustbowl/>

<sup>4</sup> W. David Baird, "WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)" (Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1987), 3.

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reservoirs, and schools, but there were also special projects, including "extensive assistance to the Wichita Mountains Easter Pageant."<sup>5</sup>

The "WPA Structures Thematic Survey" covers Comanche County, where The Holy City is located, and surrounding counties in the southwestern portion of the state in its "management region #7." This survey summarized the bleak conditions in the state, in general, and in management region #7, in particular. During the 1930s, the state as a whole registered a population decline of some 2.6 percent, but in the southwestern portion of the state the population decreased by 6.8 percent. "By 1930, 61 percent of all farms in Management Region #7 were tenant operated...which was up 13 percent...since 1920." "During the same decade farm income fell 51 percent in region seven..." The effects of the Depression deepened and "[B]y November, 1934, 27 percent of all families in regions 6 and 7 were on relief rolls."<sup>6</sup>

In this same impoverished area, what was to become the oldest managed wildlife facility in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife system was set aside by President McKinley as a Forest Preserve in 1901 and made a Forest and Game Preserve by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907. In 1935 the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge was added to the National Wildlife Refuge System. The preserve was renamed the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in 1936. The refuge, with its rugged beauty, and its protected mountains, lakes, flora, and fauna, offered a haven not only to wildlife, but also to people in a part of the state that had very few unspoiled public recreation areas.

In the meantime, the Reverend A.M. Wallock established his Easter Pageant outside of the nearby town of Medicine Park in 1926, but it outgrew that location by the early 1930s. Reverend Wallock told the *The Lawton Constitution* that, "It was decided last year to move the location further over in the mountains after we saw that we could not accommodate all who wanted to witness the event."<sup>7</sup> The pageant increased in size every year and, "in 1933...it was brought to the attention of the United States government. Business people and politicians lobbied for federal assistance for the growing production. One factor in securing the monies for the project, was that it would create a project for the WPA that more than 200 men from a depressed area would be given employment. The lobbyists succeeded in getting the Department of Agriculture to set aside 160 acres at the base of Mt. Roosevelt in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. President Franklin D. Roosevelt helped establish a \$94,000 grant for the building of the set by the WPA and a \$15,000 Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) grant was given to make the site ready and move the property of the pageant to the new location. FERA grants were managed by a single agency and awarded on an emergency basis, creating direct relief and creation of jobs."<sup>8</sup> In 1935 the pageant moved to its present location in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.

Work on the pageant site was done in two phases, as funds became available and sources of government funding shifted. From 1934 to 1935, "[w]ork commenced first on the boundary walls, followed by construction of Calvary's Mount, temple court, Pilate's judgment hall, watchtowers, garden of Gethsemane, grotto, dressing rooms, and shrines."<sup>9</sup> Other structures built during the first phase include the Gateway to Jerusalem, the House of Martha and Mary, the Manger, the Inn, the Tomb of Lazarus, the Tomb of the

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<sup>5</sup> William H. Mullins, "Works Progress Administration," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, [www.okhistory.org](http://www.okhistory.org) (accessed August 09, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> W. David Baird, "WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)," (Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1987), 5.

<sup>7</sup> "Lawton Pastor Begins Medicine Park Easter Pageant Nine Years Ago," *The Lawton Constitution*, April 21, 1935, in *The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains*, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 144.

<sup>9</sup> C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 144-145.

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Resurrection, and the first phase of the Memorial Room.<sup>10</sup> "The buildings were designed by WPA foreman Myron Groseclose. Groseclose was a graduate of the University of Oklahoma and was a natural choice since he had been in attendance at the pageant since 1930. The buildings were completed and dedicated March 31, 1935, just in time for that year's performance, which brought in 82,000 spectators."<sup>11</sup> From 1935 to 1936, "WPA funds provided: ...Herod's Court, ... power lines from Medicine Park five miles east of the Holy City, a permanent public address system, the beautiful chapel, a lodge for the custodian, a telephone system connecting each set with the control room, and more parking."<sup>12</sup> In addition, the Memorial Room was completed, and the first control room, now the Children's House, for sound and lighting was constructed.<sup>13</sup>

The most meaningful proof of Franklin Roosevelt's support took place at the Easter Pageant of 1936, after the last major improvements were completed. On April 13, 1936 *The Daily Oklahoman* reported "Sunrise Rites in Mountains Draw 100,000." In addition to the huge number of spectators from seventeen states, pageant highlights included 2,500 actors presenting twenty-four "tableaux", or a group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story or from history, and an aviator skywriting "Peace on Earth" with a choir composed of the 2500 actors singing for the pageant finale. Even with all the pageantry, certainly the greatest thrill for the crowd was the Reverend Wallock reading a telegram from President Roosevelt over a live radio broadcast of the production.

On December 20, 1936, the pageant site was formally dedicated by WPA state officials to mark the completion of the second and final phase of this \$78,000 WPA project.

#### Architectural Significance / Landscape Design

The antecedents of the rustic and naturalistic design style that is identified with WPA construction for the National Park Service were popularized in the nineteenth century, notably in the work of Andrew Jackson Downing. For example, "Downing offered detailed instructions for developing rockwork that were used by generations of landscape architects and, in the twentieth century, by designers of national and state parks...[to] unite and harmonize manmade elements with a park's natural setting."<sup>14</sup> Downing influenced eminent landscape architects, architects, and planners, including Henry Hubbard, H.H. Richardson, and Frederick Law Olmsted, whose work "forged a design ethic for natural parks that was adapted by National Park Service designers in the twentieth century and flourished in the development of national and state parks in the 1930s."<sup>15</sup> Henry Hubbard championed stewardship of the landscape through his Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design. "The publication of the book [in 1917], one year after Congress had established the National Park Service, was propitious. Many of Hubbard's ideas would be translated directly into the National Park Service's principles for park design."<sup>16</sup>

Stewardship of public lands and rustic design that is sympathetic to nature were combined with the idea that parks should be accessible to and enjoyable for the public and, in 1918, fundamental principles were set forth by the Secretary of the Interior to provide a policy to guide Park Service administration:

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<sup>10</sup> Bill E. Peavler and Kent Ruth, "Holy City" National Register Nomination draft, (Oklahoma Historical Society, 1980), Section 7.

<sup>11</sup> C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 144-145.

<sup>12</sup> Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry, "The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains," *Of Interest 12/20/36*, (np, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Bill E. Peavler and Kent Ruth, "Holy City" National Register Nomination draft, (Oklahoma Historical Society, 1980), Section 7.

<sup>14</sup> Linda Flint McClelland, "The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service," (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1995), 6.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*, 11.

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*, 19.

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"First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our own time; second, that they are set apart for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks."<sup>17</sup>

With its emphasis on preservation of the natural environment for the public's benefit, this policy statement helped guide the evolution of a cohesive style of rustic park design for the Park Service. This style was tested and refined in the years between 1918, when the policy was declared, and 1933, when the CCC was started and a "massive expansion" of park development began. "This style - translated into a set of principles and practices - would have lasting influence on the character of national, state, and metropolitan parks...across the nation."<sup>18</sup>

Oklahoma lagged behind other states in its park planning at the state and local level and was not prepared to execute park projects when the CCC was started in 1933. However, once a State Parks Commission was created in 1935, support for construction of recreational areas grew quickly.<sup>19</sup> The delay in park construction actually brought an advantage to Oklahoma. "The first two years of the rapidly thrown-together CCC program had produced many parks, but not all were of exceptional quality. By 1935 some hard lessons had been learned."<sup>20</sup> The two years that passed between the inception of the CCC in 1933 and the later park building that commenced in Oklahoma in 1935 allowed designers to refine the NPS Rustic aesthetic and the functionality of their designs and material choices. These mature designs resulted in Oklahoma having well-designed WPA projects in recreational areas that were a welcome addition to its struggling communities. One of those significant WPA projects was the construction of the rustic stone buildings, structures and objects at The Holy City of the Wichitas.

The recognition that undisturbed nature is an important amenity is a guiding principle that ties together the components of NPS Rustic recreational areas. Park design and construction - the placement and design of buildings, structures, objects and plantings - was designed to blend harmoniously with the environment to provide a setting that felt uncontrived and natural, even while providing public amenities. The design philosophy of these "natural parks" was the guiding influence behind WPA design in recreational areas.

As an architectural expression, The Holy City is singular and somewhat difficult to compare with other examples of NPS Rustic architecture and landscape design districts in Oklahoma. However, it does share a use of indigenous materials and a design aesthetic that blends into the rugged Wichita Mountains landscape with its massing and scale. The buildings at The Holy City were designed by Myron Groseclose, a regular pageant attendee who was a district engineer for the WPA and was also involved in the construction of the Mount Scott scenic overlook road in the refuge. Groseclose noted that The Holy City was "the only project of its kind in the United States being completed with relief funds."<sup>21</sup>

There are other buildings within the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge that were constructed with a granite cobble stone exterior wall finish. They include the 1912 Boulder Cabin (NR #81000456, 1981), the 1913 Buffalo Lodge (NR #81000457, 1981), the 1927 Ferguson House (NR #81000458, 1981), and the 1928 Ingram House (NR #81000459, 1981). Earlier examples in the vicinity also include the 1908-1909 Medicine Park Hotel (NR #79001991, 1979) and the 1909 Geronimo's Grave in the Indian Cemeteries at Fort Sill Military Reservation (NR #77001510, 1977). However, the cobble stone treatment on these buildings uses stones of similar sizes that have remarkably consistent spherical shapes set in regular courses. There are also excellent examples of NPS Rustic parks in Oklahoma, however, the stone work is much different

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<sup>17</sup> Id., 49.

<sup>18</sup> Id., 50.

<sup>19</sup> Smith, "Democratizing Nature Through State Park Development," 36.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, "Democratizing Nature Through State Park Development," 214.

<sup>21</sup> "Wichita Mountain Easter Service May Attract 100,000 Visitors Next Sunday," The Daily Oklahoman, April 5, 1936, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

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because it tends to be coursed in a more naturalistic pattern. Generally speaking, the irregular sizes and shapes of mixed boulders and uncut stone in an uncoursed pattern without visible grout joints used in The Holy City is distinctly different from these other examples of NPS Rustic Architecture.

The use of boulders and uncut stone presented technical and aesthetic challenges. The construction technique was to provide a wood form at the back or interior side of the wall, apply concrete to the form, and stack the stone by pressing it into the concrete. After the concrete was set, the form was removed, leaving a concrete surface with some stone showing through, while the opposite side appeared to be a dry stack stone in an irregular pattern.<sup>22</sup> A similar construction method utilizing very large boulders was described for the buildings at Crater Lake National Park.<sup>23</sup>

The Holy City was constructed in two phases. Phase I was from 1934 to 1935 and marked the relocation of The Holy City pageant site from "private land on a mountain directly south of the east entrance to Medicine Park"<sup>24</sup> to a 160 acre leased area within the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. The site lease and federal funding through the WPA and FERA were pursued and attained at about the same time, allowing for the closest thing to a permanent home for the pageant and the construction of the pageant set and site amenities, such as road access and parking.

Phase I construction, from 1934-1935, included the perimeter boundary walls and entry gate, and the set pieces of the Inn, Manger, House of Mary and Martha, the Tomb of the Resurrection, the Gardens of Gethsemane, the Temple, Pilate's Court, the Gateway into Jerusalem, the Angel House façade, the Watchtower, the Tomb of Lazarus, Mount Calvary, dressing rooms, shrines, the first phase of the Memorial Room, and a parking area.

Phase II was from 1935 to 1936. It included the Children's House (first control building), the Lodge, the Chapel, Herod's Court and the completion of the Memorial Room. It also included the installation of power lines from Medicine Park, a permanent public address system, a telephone system connecting each set with the control room, and additional parking.

The Holy City of the Wichitas' site and landscape design consciously respect the topography and natural stone formations in the Refuge. The access road to The Holy City comes in from the south and gently curves with the topography. It provides easy access to the site, but does not infringe upon it. The road loops around a long, narrow parking area oriented on a southwest to northeast axis that is located in the southeast part of the site, south of the low stone perimeter walls that border the area containing The Holy City's historic resources. The access road and parking area are south of the portion of the site where the historic resources are located and northeast of the "Audience Hill," and they are at a lower elevation. Thus, spectators on the "Audience Hill" have an unobstructed panoramic view of the entire portion of the site containing The Holy City's historic resources with a dramatic backdrop of the Wichita Mountains to the north.

The architectural historian George Baumiller observed that Oklahoma's CCC and WPA buildings are "...the products of a specific time and for me clearly demonstrate socio-political, economic, and artistic conditions in Oklahoma during and immediately after the Great Depression. These structures are important documents which describe the aspirations of the people who built them."<sup>25</sup> He goes on to say that "...particularly in the examples of stone masonry, a level of craftsmanship which shows delight in the

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<sup>22</sup> Ron Jarvis, interview by Jocelyn Lupkin, March 17, 2018, Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, OK.

<sup>23</sup> William C. Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere and Henry G. Law, "National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942" (National Park Service, 1977), 66.

<sup>24</sup> C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 144.

<sup>25</sup> W. David Baird, "WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)," (Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1987), 21.

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handling of the material and a commitment to create the highest level of quality of which the craftsman was capable...The decoration and architectural detailing on these structures, though sometimes crude, is very often imaginative, original and thoroughly delightful. This shows that the people who designed, built and used these buildings obviously enjoyed them."<sup>26</sup>

The WPA Structures survey assessed 1,046 WPA sites and recommended 357 as warranting further study for possible nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Out of all of those sites, The Holy City was singled out in their final recommendations for a special nomination to the National Register.<sup>27</sup>

The Holy City of the Wichitas' site, buildings, structures, and objects from the period of significance are still in use today and are virtually unchanged. They are constructed mainly of uncut red granite rocks and boulders and have a solid, organic, and monumental quality. Newer additions to the park include a control building, a cobble stone storage building, a stone residence, various memorials clustered to the east and west of the entry gate, a metal storage building, and wood picnic tables and benches. A religious sculpture added in 1975, and a concrete masonry unit (CMU) storage building and relatively new CMU restroom building lie outside the perimeter stone walls. The scale and placement of these additions do not detract from the district as a whole, and The Holy City of the Wichitas retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, materials, workmanship, and design.

#### Association with Religion

The inspiration behind The Holy City of the Wichitas was the Reverend A.M. Wallock. Wallock's family immigrated to the United States when he was two, and he grew up and was educated in Chicago. He graduated from the Garrett Biblical Institute in Evansville, Indiana, the first Methodist seminary in the Midwest. After a four year assignment in a church in Illinois, Wallock came to Oklahoma in 1915. He served two more churches, each for four years. In 1924, he felt a need to put roots down in a community and accepted a long term position at the First Congregational Church in Lawton. St. Francis of Assisi and his love of the natural world was an important influence on Wallock, and the Wichita Mountains had a profound effect on him. "During my first years in Lawton I visited the Wichita Mountains, climbing over its peaks and wondering how it would be possible to bring the beauty of their grandeur closer into the lives of the people around them."<sup>28</sup>

In short order, Wallock's dream began to take shape:

"Soon after accepting the pastorate of the Lawton church he was called to a ministerial conference in Oklahoma City where he was the recipient of instructions to correct alleged evil conditions which existed in Medicine Park. Medicine Park was in Wallock's district."

"Not knowing another way to solve the problem he faced in the park, Wallock, when he could get away from the Lawton church, preached there. He became acquainted with the people and liked them, he said."

"When Easter came, Wallock said members of the park congregation were eager to participate in some kind of outdoor service, so 'we planned to do the best we could.'"<sup>29</sup>

Wallock synthesized his calling with the beauty of the environment and, in 1927, the first annual Easter Pageant took place in Medicine Park, where all who wished could participate either as actors, support

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<sup>26</sup> Id., 22-23.

<sup>27</sup> Id., 125-126.

<sup>28</sup> Rev. A.M. Wallock, Introduction to The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>29</sup> "Lawton Pastor Begins Medicine Park Easter Pageant Nine Years Ago," The Lawton Constitution, April 21, 1935, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

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workers, or as an appreciative audience. It was "staged by the non-denominational Medicine Park Sunday school at sunrise Easter morning on top of the high granite hill on the left of the entrance to the park."<sup>30</sup> The presentation was a Passion Play that included stage sets, Easter music with a "five or six piece brass band," and scriptural readings, and it was timed so that the finale would be "flooded with the rays of the rising sun."<sup>31</sup>

The pageant grew quickly. In 1930, 6,000 people attended. It was reported that there were cars from six states and the musical accompaniment was the Cameron College band. The pageant consisted of six different "tableau" accompanied by hymns. In 1931, 10,000 people attended and attendance doubled to 20,000 by 1933. At that point, it was apparent that the pageant was outgrowing its Medicine Park location, and the Secretary of Agriculture granted permission to set aside 160 acres of Federal land in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge for the pageant's use. 1934 was the final year at the Medicine Park location. 40,000 persons attended the pageant and thousands were turned away. The state WPA administrator secured \$15,000 in FERA funds to move the pageant from Medicine Park to 160 acres in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, and an additional OERA grant of \$94,000 was established by President Roosevelt to build the set.

1935 was the first year for the pageant in its present location in the Refuge. Twenty-four "tableaux" were presented, the pageant was concluded with a skywriter,<sup>32</sup> and eighty thousand spectators attended.<sup>33</sup>

The 1936 pageant was much the same, but bigger, with planning for 25,000 parking spaces and standing room for 100,000 people. "A cast of 2,500 from 65 cities and towns of Oklahoma and Texas" participated in the pageant, and Ron Stephens, the district WPA director, reported that one hundred and fifty WPA workers were employed at the site for several weeks to complete the structures for the production.<sup>34</sup>

The National Broadcasting Company transmitted the final hour of the pageant over its nationwide chain, broadcasting the high point of the pageant finale, when Reverend Wallock read a telegram to the gathering sent to him by President Roosevelt:

#### "Roosevelt Sends Message"

"To all of sincere faith," said Mr. Roosevelt, "the dawn of this Easter day in the Wichita mountains will bring the same message of hope that the angel of the resurrection brought to the holy women at the tomb of the Master in the hills of Judea."

"The message of that first Easter day, 'He is risen,' has ever since symbolized faith and hope and newness of life and still has power to strengthen and sustain."

"In gratitude for all the rich gifts which Easter brings, I join my humble prayers to those of my countrymen wherever they are gathered this morning."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>30</sup> "Elaborate Service on Mountain Top is Planned for Easter Sunday," The Lawton Constitution, April 15, 1927, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> "Lawton Pastor Begins Medicine Park Easter Pageant Nine Years Ago," The Lawton Constitution, April 21, 1935, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>33</sup> "Wichita Mountain Easter Service May Attract 100,000 Visitors Next Sunday," The Daily Oklahoman, April 5, 1936, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> "Sunrise Rites in Mountains Draw 100,000," The Daily Oklahoman, April 13, 1936, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).



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On December 20, 1936 the completed pageant site was formally dedicated. The project spanned several years and was officially handed over to the "Easter Sunrise Association board of directors." In addition to supporters and well-wishers, attendees included officials from the Lawton Chamber of Commerce, WPA district and state officials, the project designer Myron Groseclose, and the district's Congressman. The dedication ceremony was topped off with Colonel Arthur Goebel, "skywriter and noted aviator," who flew to Lawton from New York in order to write on the sky above the site, "World Faith."<sup>36</sup>

Pageant attendance continued to be impressive. It was reported that attendance in 1938 was 125,000. In 1939 it was 100,000 and later in that year Reverend Wallock was nominated to the first Oklahoma Hall of Fame for his "outstanding service and achievements."<sup>37</sup> In 1943, the pageant moved to Fort Sill.<sup>38</sup> The move and war time gas rationing probably contributed to a steep fall off in attendance, down to 5,000 people.<sup>39</sup> However, the pageant was moved back to its site in the Refuge and attendance in 1946 was estimated at 200,000 people, "the most successful presentation in the 21-year history of the outdoor religious service."<sup>40</sup> The huge number of spectators may have been in response to the ending of World War II because, in subsequent years, attendance dropped. In 1948, Reverend Wallock's last pageant, 60,000 people attended. The play was ambitious, with 75 episodes, but bad weather left the director with half the expected cast members - down from more than 1600 to 800 people.<sup>41</sup>

One reason that the pageant may have attracted large audiences was that Reverend Wallock strove to make all feel welcome to participate and to watch. Native Americans, African Americans and Whites all participated in the pageant and he expressed the wish that "Someday I hope to have all five races participating."<sup>42</sup> Wallock's credo of acceptance also included welcoming other religions. "From the beginning the pageant sought to be inclusive of other religions. The focus may be a Christian Easter passion play, but Rev. Wallock sought out ways to be inclusive. The 1937 pageant had a world faith theme including statements of faith from Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, Confucian, Hindu, Jain, Shinto, Sikh, Tao, and Zoroastrian faiths. The message of the 1939 pageant was world unity and contained characters from world religions. Ron Stephens, district WPA director stated, "The public service has been as it should be in Government aid. The Wichita Mountain Easter Pageant has served the entire nation.

The poorest come and are welcome; the middle class come and are welcome; the wealthy come and are welcome. There in this outdoor service, there is no distinction."<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps the open-minded nature of the pageant's originator helped avoid controversy well into its run. "The pageant avoided any protests regarding the separation of church and state for nearly 50 years. In 1981,

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<sup>36</sup> "Easter Service Pageant Site to be Dedicated at 2 O'Clock Sunday Afternoon," The Lawton Constitution, December 20, 1936, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>37</sup> Letter from Scott P. Squyres, August 8, 1939, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>38</sup> "Ageless Story of Christ to be Portrayed at New Site," The Lawton Constitution, April 23, 1943, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>39</sup> "Traffic Comparatively Light to Pageant Site at Fort Sill," The Lawton Constitution, April 25, 1943, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>40</sup> "Grateful Pageant Sponsors Express Appreciation to All for Record Breaking Event," The Lawton Constitution, April 22, 1946, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>41</sup> Perry Davis, "60,000 Brave Cold to Watch Pageant," The Daily Oklahoman, March 29, 1948, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>42</sup> "Lawton Pastor Begins Medicine Park Easter Pageant Nine Years Ago," The Lawton Constitution, April 21, 1935, in The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

<sup>43</sup> C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 144-145.

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suit was brought to remove religious symbols and iconography from The Holy City in order to make the site neutral to all visitors. The legal argument was that the area should be made available to all persons who sought to practice their First Amendment rights (Swomley vs. Watt 1981). The case was dismissed, with the judge stating that the plaintiffs were not affected any more than any other citizens.<sup>44</sup>

The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The district has strong associations with New Deal programs and is an outstanding example of National Park Service Rustic architecture and landscape design as applied to a wildlife refuge. It is also eligible under Criteria Consideration A as it is the site of one of the oldest continuously performed Passion plays in the United States. The site, buildings, structures, and objects that give the district its form and contribute to its function are all fine examples of the work achieved by the WPA. The design and construction is especially noteworthy for the individualistic use of native granite throughout the district, with the most outstanding examples being the chapel building, the larger stage sets including Pilate's Court, the Temple, the Gate to Jerusalem, and Herod's Court; and striking objects including the pulpits and some of the stone monuments that punctuate the site. Most of the later construction consists of small memorials within the low stone boundary walls or utility buildings that are outside the low stone boundary walls that, for the most part, do not have a significant visual impact on the district. Alterations to resources have been limited and great efforts have been made to replace materials in kind wherever possible. The Holy City has been in continuous use in its present location as a venue for an Easter Pageant and as a tourist attraction in the refuge since the first phase of WPA construction was completed in 1935. The pageant has evolved from a single display into as many as seventy-five scenes and still attracts a large number of participants and spectators every Easter, and The Holy City attracts a large number of visitors year-round.

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<sup>44</sup>C. Tod Bevitt and Wendi M. Bevitt, "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge," (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016), 146.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Baird, W. David. "WPA Structures Thematic Survey (Phase III)." Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, 1987.
- Bevitt, C. Tod and Wendi M. "Cultural Resources Overview and Assessment of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge." United States Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016.
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- Tweed, William C., Laura E. Soulliere and Henry G. Law, "National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1977.

#### Websites:

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- Smith, Langdon. "Democratizing Nature Through State Park Development." *Historical Geography* vol. 41 (2013). [https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/historicalgeography/article/view/304/html\\_13](https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/historicalgeography/article/view/304/html_13).

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### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 14.3

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.743533° Longitude: -98.592917°

2. Latitude: 34.743239° Longitude: -98.590089°

3. Latitude: 34.741300° Longitude: -98.590562°

4. Latitude: 34.741733° Longitude: -98.593604°

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

From a point 52 feet north of the northwest corner of the Angel House and 271 feet to the west, at a latitude of 34.743533° and a longitude of -98.592917°, continue east and slightly south for a distance of 857 feet to a point at latitude 34.743239° and longitude of -98.590089°. From that point, continue south and slightly west 720 feet, to a point at latitude 34.741300° and longitude -98.590562°. From that point, continue west and slightly north for a distance of 927 feet to a point at latitude 34.741733° and longitude -98.593604°. From that point, continue north and slightly east for a distance of 694 feet to the point of beginning of the district area.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary comprises the land originally used for The Holy City Easter Pageant stage sets, site features, support facilities and viewing areas.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Jocelyn Lupkin  
organization: Robison & Associates  
street & number: 2927 Paseo  
city or town: Oklahoma City state: OK zip code: 73103  
e-mail robisonandassociates@gmail.com  
telephone: (405) 524-4544  
date: 8/27/18

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

Name of Property: Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District

City or Vicinity: Medicine Park, vicinity

County: Comanche County

State: OK

Photographer: Jocelyn Lupkin

Date Photographed: August 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo #1 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0001)  
West end of site, camera facing NW.

Photo #2 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0002)  
Center of site, camera facing N.

Photo #3 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0003)  
East end of site, camera facing NE.

Photo #4 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0004)  
Entry gate, south elevation, camera facing N.

Photo #5 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0005)  
Low south stone perimeter wall, camera facing W.

Photo #6 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0006)  
Low south stone perimeter wall, camera facing E.

Photo #7 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0007)  
Memorials, camera facing NW.

Photo #8 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0008)  
Westward path flanked by low stone walls, camera facing W.

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Photo #9 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0009)  
Inn, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #10 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0010)  
Inn, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #11 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0011)  
Manger, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #12 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0012)  
Manger, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing NW.

Photo #13 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0013)  
Control building, south elevation (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing NW.

Photo #14 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0014)  
Control building, north elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing SE.

Photo #15 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0015)  
Children's House (old control building), south elevation (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing NW.

Photo #16 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0016)  
Children's House (old control building), north elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing SE.

Photo #17 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0017)  
Mary and Martha's House (left), stone pulpit (right), north elevations, camera facing S.

Photo #18 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0018)  
Mary and Martha's House (right), stone pulpit (left), southeast elevations, camera facing NW.

Photo #19 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0019)  
Stone pulpit detail, southeast elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #20 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0020)  
The Tomb of Lazarus, southeast elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #21 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0021)  
Sea of Galilee Boat, northeast elevation, camera facing SW.

Photo #22 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0022)  
Stone monument and three crosses, southeast elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #23 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0023)  
Pilate's Court, southeast elevation (left) and Temple south elevation (right), camera facing N.

Photo #24 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0024)  
Pilate's Court, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing S.

Photo #25 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0025)  
Pilate's Court, north elevation showing wall construction, camera facing S.

Photo #26 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0026)  
Temple, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing NE.

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Photo #27 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0027)  
Temple, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #28 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0028)  
Gateway into Jerusalem, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #29 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0029)  
Stone monument and Gateway into Jerusalem, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #30 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0030)  
Angel House, south elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #31 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0031)  
Angel House, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #32 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0032)  
Watch Tower, west elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing N.

Photo #33 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0033)  
Watch Tower, south elevation, camera facing N.

Photo #34 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0034)  
Herod's Court, southeast elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #35 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0035)  
Herod's Court, south elevation (left), camera facing N.

Photo #36 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0036)  
Tomb of the Resurrection, south elevation, camera facing N.

Photo #37 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0037)  
Tomb of the Resurrection, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SE.

Photo #38 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0038)  
Tomb of the Resurrection and stone monument, south elevation (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing NW.

Photo #39 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0039)  
Two stone monuments and Memorial Room, southwest elevation, camera facing NW.

Photo #40 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0040)  
Memorial Room, northeast elevation, camera facing SW.

Photo #41 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0041)  
Moses' House, south elevation (left), and storage building, south elevation (right), camera facing NW.

Photo #42 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0042)  
Storage building, north elevation (left), and Moses' House, north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #43 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0043)  
Chapel, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing SW.



Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District

Name of Property

Comanche, OK

County and State

Photo #44 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0044)  
Chapel, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #45 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0045)  
Chapel interior, camera facing SE.

Photo #46 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0046)  
Lodge, east elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing south NE.

Photo #47 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0047)  
Lodge, south elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing south NW.

Photo #48 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0048)  
Storage shed, west and south elevations (left); and work shed, west and south elevations (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #49 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0049)  
Work shed, north elevation (left); and storage shed, east elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #50 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0050)  
Residence, east elevation (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing SW.

Photo #51 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0051)  
Residence, west elevation (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing NE.

Photo #52 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0052)  
Stone pulpit, camera facing NE.

Photo #53 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0053)  
Storage building (left) and restroom building (right), camera facing SE.

Photo #54 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0054)  
Storage building, west elevation, camera facing E.

Photo #55 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0055)  
Restroom building, north elevation (left) and east elevation (right), camera facing SE.

Photo #56 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0056)  
"Christ of the Wichitas" sculpture, northwest view, camera facing SE.

Photo #57 (OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0057)  
Mary's Garden, south elevation, camera facing N.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Google Earth 2018: Vicinity Map

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



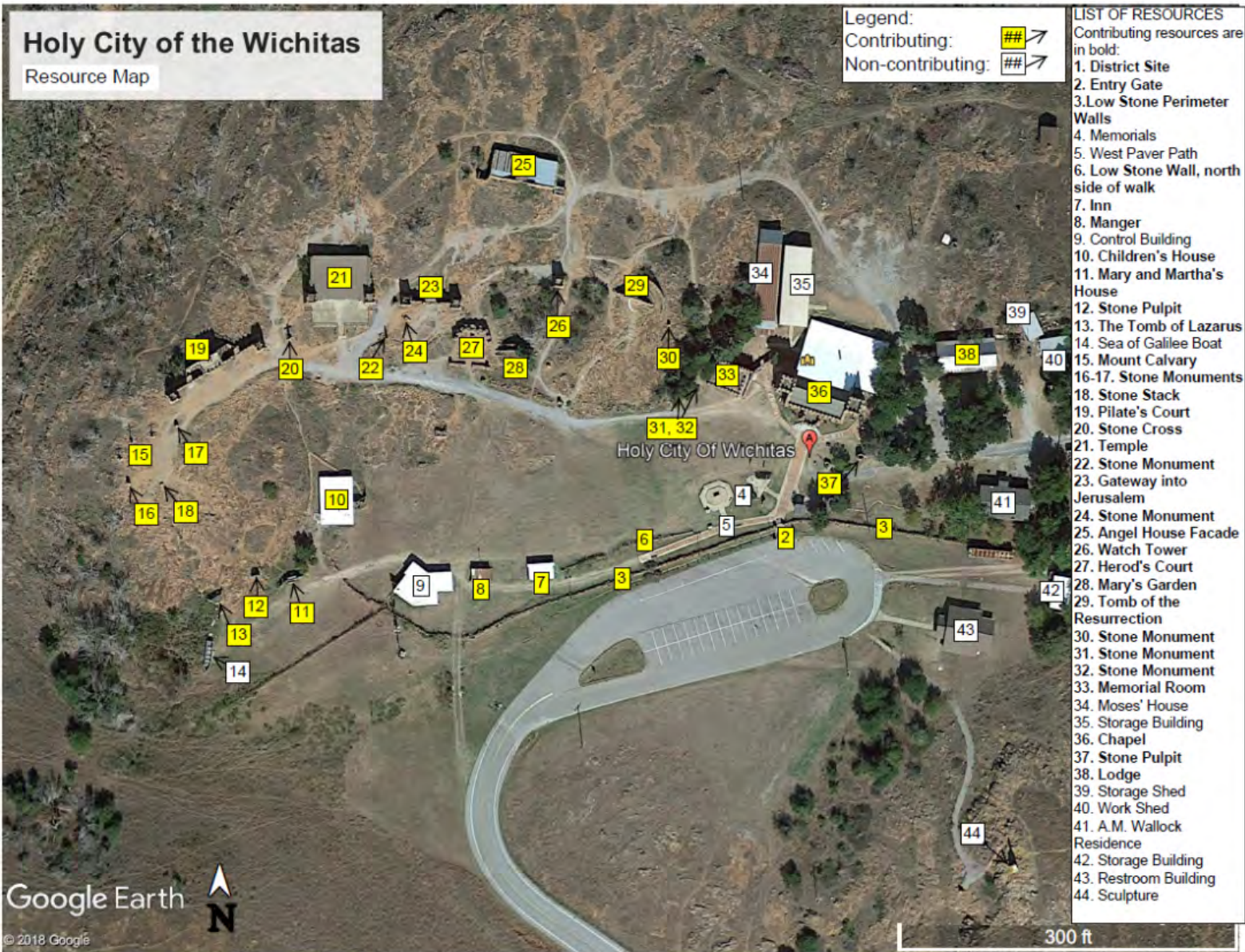
Google Earth 2018: Location Map

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

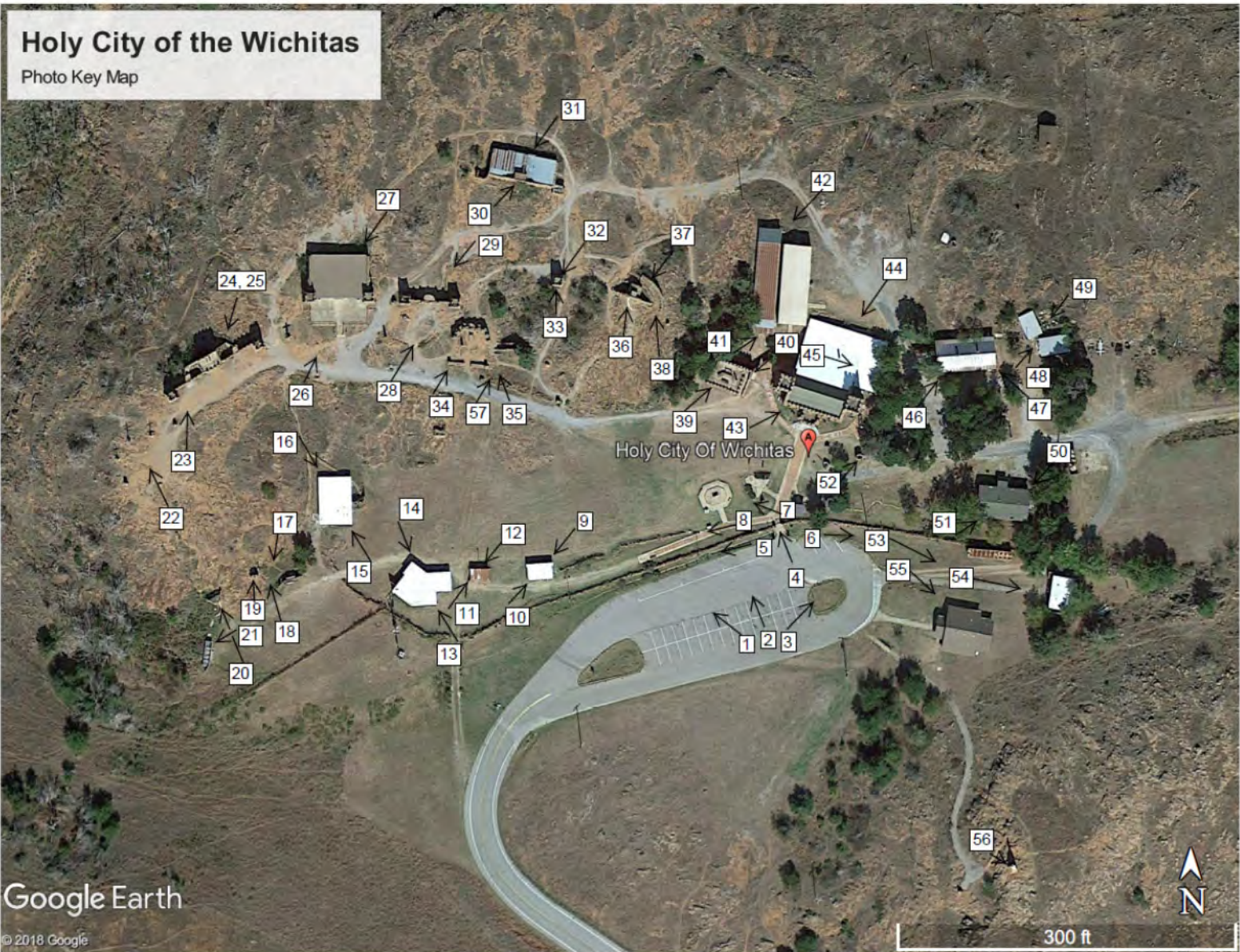


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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N/A
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0001

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0002

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Harris Palace Store
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County and State
N/A
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0003



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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store

Name of Property

McClain, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store

Name of Property

McClain, Oklahoma

County and State

N/A

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Harris Palace Store
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McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
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County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0024

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
-----
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0040

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Harris Palace Store
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McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0041

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0042

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0043



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Harris Palace Store
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McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0047

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0048

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
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**United States Department of the Interior**  
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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
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County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
-----
County and State
N/A
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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Harris Palace Store
Name of Property
McClain, Oklahoma
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

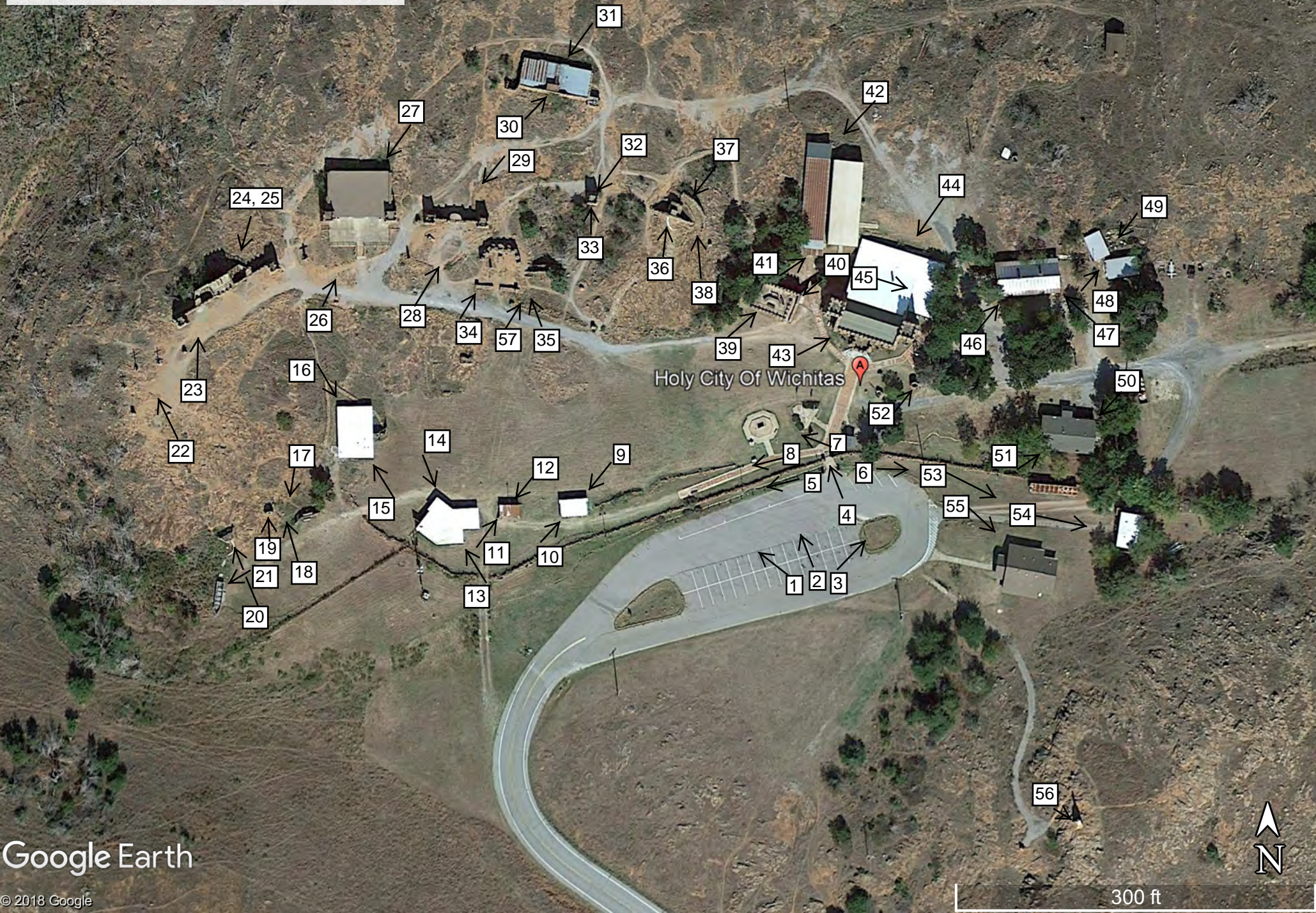
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OK\_ComancheCounty\_HolyCityoftheWichitasHistoricDistrict\_0057

# Holy City of the Wichitas

Photo Key Map



Holy City Of Wichitas



# Holy City of the Wichitas

## Resource Map

Legend:

Contributing: ## →

Non-contributing: ## →

### LIST OF RESOURCES

Contributing resources are in bold:

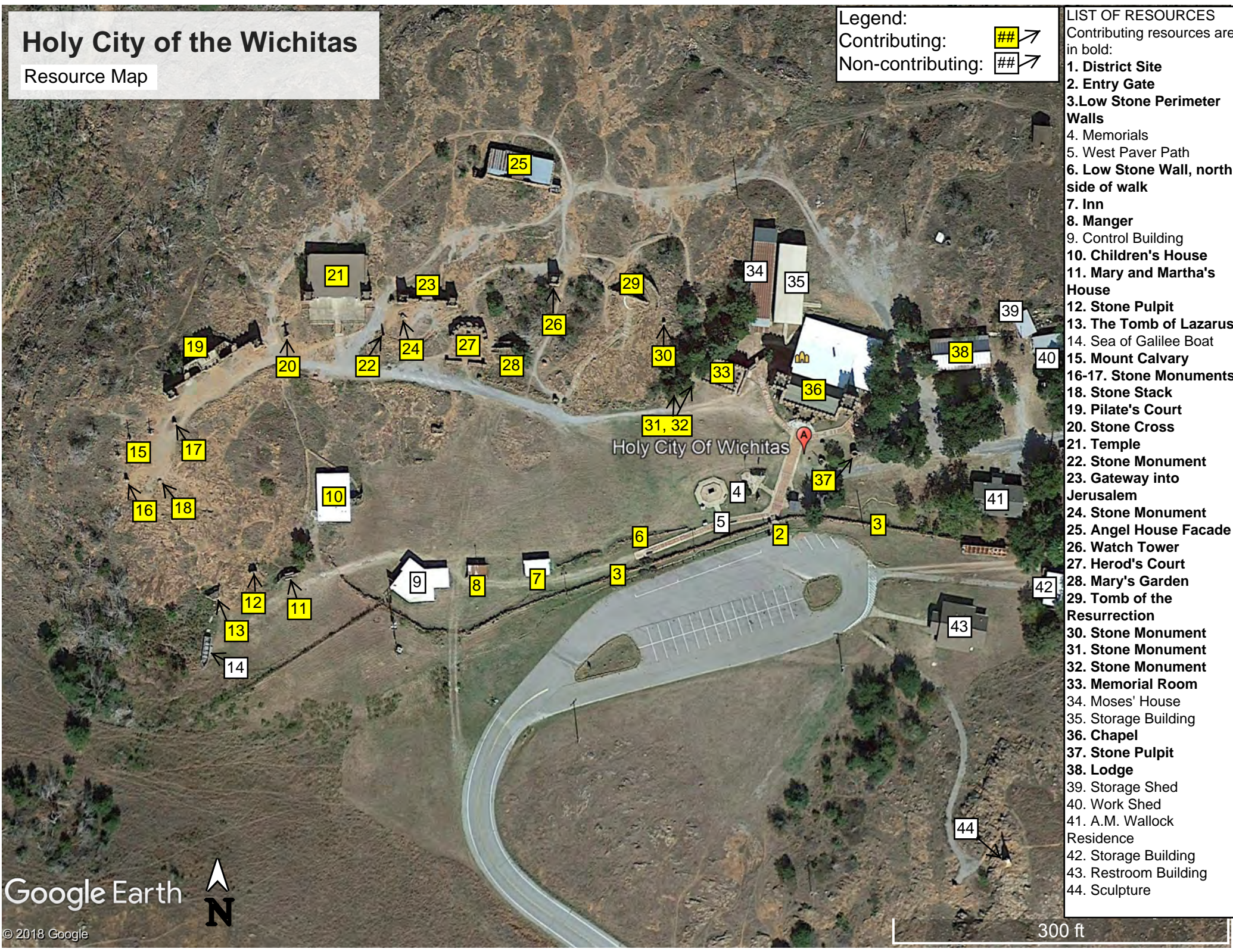
1. **District Site**
2. **Entry Gate**
3. **Low Stone Perimeter Walls**
4. Memorials
5. West Paver Path
6. **Low Stone Wall, north side of walk**
7. **Inn**
8. **Manger**
9. Control Building
10. **Children's House**
11. **Mary and Martha's House**
12. **Stone Pulpit**
13. **The Tomb of Lazarus**
14. Sea of Galilee Boat
15. **Mount Calvary**
- 16-17. **Stone Monuments**
18. **Stone Stack**
19. **Pilate's Court**
20. **Stone Cross**
21. **Temple**
22. **Stone Monument**
23. **Gateway into Jerusalem**
24. **Stone Monument**
25. **Angel House Facade**
26. **Watch Tower**
27. **Herod's Court**
28. **Mary's Garden**
29. **Tomb of the Resurrection**
30. **Stone Monument**
31. **Stone Monument**
32. **Stone Monument**
33. **Memorial Room**
34. **Moses' House**
35. **Storage Building**
36. **Chapel**
37. **Stone Pulpit**
38. **Lodge**
39. Storage Shed
40. Work Shed
41. A.M. Wallock Residence
42. Storage Building
43. Restroom Building
44. Sculpture

Google Earth



© 2018 Google

300 ft







# Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District

Historic District boundaries and coordinates  
Area: 14.3 acres

**Legend**

-  Holy City Of Wichitas
-  latitude

latitude 34.743544°, longitude -98.592917°

latitude 34.743239°, longitude -98.590089°

Holy City Of Wichitas

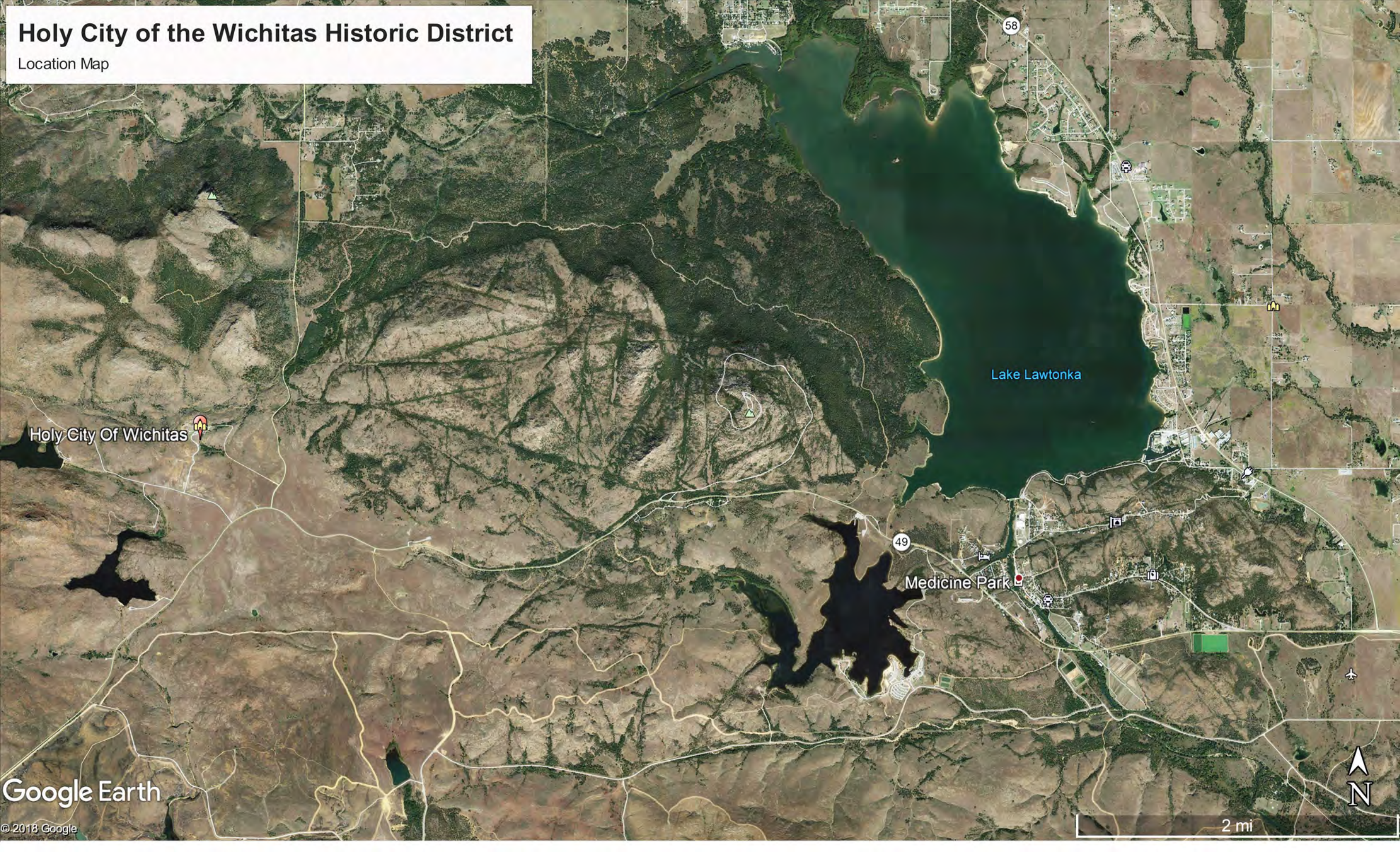
latitude 34.741733°, longitude -98.593604°

latitude 34.741300°, longitude -98.590562°



# Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District

Location Map



Lake Lawtonka

Holy City Of Wichitas

Medicine Park

Google Earth

© 2018 Google

2 mi











OPEN

GIFT SHOP  
DRINKS  
SNACKS

CLIMB  
BUILDING  
HOLY  
RESPOND

No  
Pe



Placido State Gate

GIFT  
- DRINK  
- SNACK

GIFT SHOP  
-DRINKS  
-SNACKS

NOTICE  
CLIMBING ON ROCK WALLS OR  
BUILDINGS IS PROHIBITED.  
HOLY CITY OFFICIALS ARE NOT  
RESPONSIBLE FOR INJURIES.

No Pets  
Permitted

PLEASE CLOSE THE GATE



God Was Here  
First  
The Spirit Is  
In These Old  
Wichita Mountains  
A Place Of Refuge  
For Nature And  
Man's Spirit  
The Terrain  
And Horizon  
So Similar  
To The Land  
Where Christ  
Lived, Walked,  
Was Crucified  
And Arose  
Here In The Burst  
Of Dawn Began  
The Easter  
Sunrise Services  
Now Named  
The Holy City  
Of The Wichitas  
The Infinite Variety Of  
Nature's Moods  
Seems Close.  
A Pilgrimage  
May Bless You  
Seek It

In Memory of  
Rev. A. M. Wallock





















CHILDREN'S  
HOUSE







MARY MARTHA'S  
HOUSE





THE TOMB  
OF LAZERUS

































HEROD'S COURT



HEROD'S COURT



THE TOP OF THE  
RESURRECTION





THE TIME OF THE  
RESURRECTION







WOODEN POST WITH INSCRIBED TEXT

STONE PLaque or Marker



MOSES  
WAS  
GIVEN  
THE  
LAW











GIFT SHOP

INFORMATION









ONE WAY

VISIT THE HOLY  
SION















**REST ROOMS**  
These Facilities Made Possible By The Community of St. Michaels Hospital

MEN

WOMEN





MARY'S  
GARDEN

National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Resubmission

Property Name: Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District

Multiple Name:

State & County: OKLAHOMA, Comanche

Date Received: 11/4/2019      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day:      Date of 45th Day: 12/19/2019      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: RS100004547

Nominator: Federal Agency, SHPO

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      11/21/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District is of state level significance and meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Politics/Government, Religion, and Architecture. Constructed under the auspices of the WPA in the Rustic Style using native stone construction, the district's buildings and structures served as the permanent stage set for the performance of the annual Easter Passion Play pageant. The use of granite, rubble stone and boulder construction added a strong aged look to the set pieces and reflects the well-crafted Rustic style design work commonly associated with WPA and CCC program projects. The move of the popular, privately-funded pageant to lands set aside by the federal government, with construction of the religiously associated complex funded by federal relief programs represented a rather unique example of Depression-era governmental activity. The pageant itself represented a significant activity meant to broaden public access to religious programs and teachings in an atmosphere dominated by the natural setting of the adjacent wildlife refuge; in its first year attracting 80,000 visitors, national media coverage, and presidential messaging. The revised nomination was signed by Eugene Marino USFWS Federal Preservation Officer.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan

Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229

Date: 11/21/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

Memorandum

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places

From: Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System

Subject: Nomination of the Holy City of the Wichitas on the Wichita Mountain National Wildlife Refuge to the National Register of Historic Places



The Fish and Wildlife Service is submitting the attached nomination for listing to the National Register of Historic Places.

The structures of the area represent an important link to the New Deal era and are unique examples of federally sponsored construction. Likewise, the site is the location of the longest continually run passion play (since 1926) in the country and a very important social component of the local community.

The nomination package meets the National Register criteria defined in 36 CFR 60.4 and was prepared with the concurrence of the Oklahoma Historic Society and State Historic Preservation Officer.

Please direct any questions on this request to Eugene Marino, Service Archaeologist, at (703) 358-2173.

Attachment



**Oklahoma Historical Society**  
**State Historic Preservation Office**

Founded May 27, 1893

Oklahoma History Center • 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive • Oklahoma City, OK 73105-7917  
(405) 521-6249 • Fax (405) 522-0816 • [www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm](http://www.okhistory.org/shpo/shpom.htm)

VSC - Eugene  
I understand the  
Region is drafting  
a BP

August 5, 2019

Cynthia Martinez  
Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street NW, Room 3331  
Washington D.C. 20240-0001

Dear Ms. Martinez:

We are pleased to transmit one National Register of Historic Places nomination for an Oklahoma property. The nomination is for the following property:

Holy City of the Wichitas Historic District, Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge, Medicine Park  
Vicinity, Comanche County

All members of the Historic Preservation Review Committee (state review board) were present for the public meeting at which each of these nominations was considered and the recommendation to the State Historic Preservation Officer was formulated. Therefore, the member possessing the requisite professional qualifications for evaluation of each nominated property participated in the recommendation's formulation.

We look forward to the results of your review. If there any further questions regarding the nominations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lynda Ozan  
Deputy State Historic  
Preservation Officer

\*Enclosures



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
WICHITA MOUNTAINS WILDLIFE REFUGE

32 Refuge Headquarters  
Indiahoma, Oklahoma 73552  
580-429-3222



March 26, 2018

**Ms. Lynda Ozan**  
Oklahoma Historical Society  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Oklahoma History Center  
800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive  
Oklahoma City, Ok 73105-7917

Dear Ms. Ozan:

The Holy City of the Wichitas is located within the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), near Lawton, Oklahoma. As the Federal agency responsible for management of the Refuge lands occupied by the Holy City, the Refuge authorizes the Wallock Foundation, Inc. to operate the Holy City and conduct its annual Easter Pageants on Refuge lands under provisions of a special use permit. The Holy City permit allows for the maintenance, restoration, and preservation of the existing buildings, grounds, roads, and structures located within the bounds of the permit area.

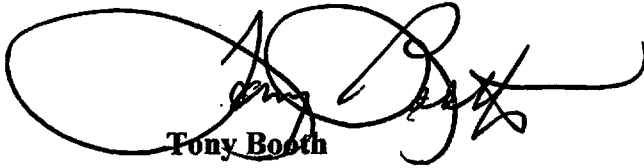
The Wallock Foundation, Inc. is seeking designation of the Holy City as a National Historical Site. The Refuge concurs with the request. Mr. Ron Jarvis, dba Jarvis Consulting, and representative of the Wallock Foundation, will be facilitating the request for the Historic Site designation. Since we concur with that designation, I have agreed for Mr. Jarvis to also represent the Refuge in the application process, to the degree he can. He will coordinate with the Refuge and work directly with the Oklahoma Historical Society, basically doing the legwork for the request. For correspondence or documents that require Refuge signature, please contact me at the address above, or at [tony\\_booth@fws.gov](mailto:tony_booth@fws.gov), 580-429-2112, and copy Mr. Jarvis.

Contact information for Mr. Jarvis is as follows:

Ron Jarvis  
3605 NW Julie Drive  
Lawton, Oklahoma  
580-512-5452  
[Rgjarvis@aol.com](mailto:Rgjarvis@aol.com)



**Thank you, I appreciate your assistance. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me.**



**Tony Booth**  
**Refuge Manager**

**cc: Ron Jarvis**

**Date:** February 7, 2019

**To:** State Historic Preservation Office  
Oklahoma Historical Society  
800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

**Re:** The Holy City of the Wichitas National Register Nomination: Continuation Sheets

**Comments:**

Continuation sheets provide text from newspaper articles included in the unpublished manuscript *The Holy City of the Wichita Mountains*, ed. Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry (np, 1999).

disciples will be seen to approach the tomb. Later two angels will appear. Realism of the scene will be transformed by the great distance between the two hills, according to Rev. Wallock.

The service will be entirely non-denominational, and will have no connection with the First Congregational church of Lawton, Rev. Wallock emphasized. All persons in Lawton and in Commanche county were cordially invited to attend.

April 15,  
1927

## The Lawton Constitution

### "Elaborate Service on Mountain Top is Planned for Easter Sunday"

The most elaborate Easter services ever held near Lawton will be staged by the non-denominational Medicine Park Sunday school at sunrise Easter morning on top of the high granite hill on the left of the entrance to the park.

The congregation will assemble at 5 o'clock in the morning in the Medicine Park schoolhouse on the south side of Medicine creek. After a moving picture showing scenes of the Resurrection the ascent of the mountain will be made, just at the break of day. Brass instruments will be stationed on the summit of the hill to play sacred music during the climb.

Musical services at sunrise on top of the hill will be illustrated by a silent drama of the scene at Christ's tomb enacted on the granite hillside one-half mile to the northwest. An elaborate system of signals will be necessary to enable the actors to go through their parts at the proper time, since the distance will be too great for the music to carry from one mountain summit to the other.

Stage property on the mountainside will include a large tomb, with an entrance stone fixed to roll away at the proper moment without the aid of visible hands. Mary the mother of Jesus, the two disciples and the two angels will be represented in the resurrection drama. Realism of the scenes will be softened by the great distance between the actors and the spectators.

The scene of the drama will be flooded with the rays of the rising sun.

A giant cross marking the summit of the mountain where the musical services will be held has been standing in view of the countryside for miles in every direction for the past three weeks. On Easter morning the summit will be lighted with green and red flares for hours before sunrise. The flares were expected to be visible in Lawton, a distance of about ten miles as the crow flies.

Rev. A. M. Wallock, minister of the First Congregational church of Lawton, was the originator of the idea of the Easter drama, which will be entirely under the auspices of the Medicine Park Sunday school, a non-denominational organization. Actors of the drama will be members of the Sunday school.

Final rehearsal of the pageant will be Saturday, according to Wallock. Barring rain or other interruptions by the weather, hundreds of Lawton persons are expected to attend the service, which will consist of sacred Easter music and reading from the scripture. No sermon of any kind will be preached.

worship. The structures and characters probably will stand in a semicircle where they may be seen clearly by spectators. In the background will be an elaborate arrangement of stage properties and lights which will present a symbol of the rising sun. In the foreground will be several characters, specimens of physical perfection who will be "pounding swords into plowshares" on a giant anvil. At a given signal, the ring of the anvil will be contrasted with the effect of the formations in front of the five religious shrines. The groups representing five races will break up simultaneously and form a solid formation. The formation of the five races will start the march in a single column toward the rising sun. The entire cast will follow the march of the five races as they disappear into the rays of the rising sun, while the glare of the artificial sun flashes into the eyes of spectators.

Colonel Goebel will then be roaring above the crowd high over the Wichitas, writing "Peace on Earth" across the heavens in white smoke letters.

April 13,  
1936

## The Daily Oklahoman

"SUNRISE RITES  
IN MOUNTAINS  
DRAW 100,000"

"17 States Represented  
At Lawton Pageant"

### MANY SLEEP IN HILLS

"Roosevelt Message Is  
Read to Throng"

LAWTON, April 12. - (AP)

A spectacular Easter pageant, depicting the nativity, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth was witnessed at sunrise Sunday by a giant throng in the great natural amphitheater of the rugged Wichita mountains near here.

Approximately 100,000 persons, from many states saw the unusual services. Many arrived Saturday night and slept on the mountainsides awaiting the dawn. The amphitheater is 22 miles northwest of Lawton.

### "24 Tableaux Presented"

The drama, presented by the Wichita Mountain Easter Service association, had a cast of 2,500 actors, assembled from Oklahoma and Texas. They presented 24 tableaux.

As dawn broke over the mountains, angels stepped from Jesus's tomb, frightening two Roman guards. There followed the resurrection sermon.

Art Goebel, Bartlesville, Okla., aviator, sky-wrote "Peace on Earth" as 2,500 voices sang the finale.

April 2,  
1934

## The Lawton Constitution

### "Annual Easter Passion Services Are Attended By Approximately 40,000 Persons, Officials Estimate"

FORTY THOUSAND persons from nearly every state in the middlewest, were estimated to have visited the Wichita mountains Sunday morning for the eighth annual presentation of the Easter Sunrise passion service near Medicine Park.

The mountain highway leading by the mountain scene, was blocked by automobiles for several miles. Thousands of visitors failed to reach the scene.

The congested traffic was cleared about 10 a.m. Sunday, more than four hours after the service.

Visitors started arriving at the picturesque mountain service site before dark Saturday.

Sheriff Fritz McCarty who was in charge of directing the traffic said that every available parking space in a reasonable distance was occupied.

"An estimate of 40,000 visitors is conservative," he said.

Rev. A. M. Wallock, pastor of the Congregational church, placed the estimate at 40,000 considerably larger than last year's attendance, the largest in history. Others estimated anywhere from 20,000 to 100,000 visitors.

Visitors who were able to witness the performance, climbed a lighted mountain trail to the top.

As the first scene opened, thousands of persons occupied the mountain side. Rocks were used as seats. The weather was comfortably warm at the beginning, but toward dawn a chilling north wind swept the mountain.

Many started returning down the mountain, but thousands remained behind to brave the uncomfortable wind to witness the final scene.

Major Edward L. Branham, Fort Sill chaplain, delivered the Easter sermon, near the close of the service. Fourteen tableaux depicting the life of Jesus Christ were presented. Approximately 500 persons took part in presenting the program.

In his sermon, Chaplain Branham expressed a desire that every person in the vast audience join in helping the passion service accomplish its purpose.

"While yet we linger in this mystic moment between darkness and dawn it is in the power of each one of us to decide the way his soul shall go.

Be of good cheer, the dawn is fast approaching. The final scene of this great drama is not planned to leave us in the darkness. Many thousands like yourselves have made a pilgrimage like this and are even now facing toward the east to greet a new day and refresh themselves at the eternal fountain."

### Of Interest:

Theme: "The Seamless Robe"

Forty thousand attended.

Thousands were turned back for lack of room.

Last Easter at this location, more room was needed.

Ron Stephens, State WPA administrator started the job of securing Federal assistance. He planned to secure Federal Land grant and funds to move. Help from National Department of Agriculture was sought for use of 160 acres of land and grant of \$15,000 in FERA funds. Then, WPA came into existence with sums of money made available for public improvements.

In the March 1934 Masonic Review journal an article was published entitled: "Easter Dawn."

THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION

APRIL 2, 1934

April 21  
1935

## The Lawton Constitution

### "LAWTON PASTOR BEGINS MEDICINE PARK EASTER PAGEANT NINE YEARS AGO"

It would be sacrilegious to call Rev. A. M. Wallock, pastor of the First Congregational church, a showman.

However, theatrical tycoons probably are envious of the power to lead the masses that is wrapped up in the personality of the diminutive and subtle 44-year-old bachelor.

A man under whose direction a religious pageant was staged in 1934 that prompted more than 40,000 people to walk, fly and drive through the chill of a typical Oklahoma Easter dawn to see a service evidently possesses personal charm, executive ability and ingenuity.

In the living room of his modest two-story parsonage, Wallock told the story of the Easter pageant, an annual event which someday may rival Europe's Oberammergau.

For many years, the 212 religious sects in the United States have in various ways celebrated the resurrection of Christ but the Wichita mountain service is a credit to the little minister who has worked diligently to make a dream a reality.

Nine years ago, Wallock came to Oklahoma from a Chicago suburb to begin the work he loves.

Soon after accepting the pastorate of the Lawton church he was called to a ministerial conference in Oklahoma City where he was the recipient of instructions to correct alleged evil conditions which existed in Medicine Park. Medicine Park was in Wallock's district.

Not knowing another way to solve the problem he faced in the park, Wallock, when he could get away from the Lawton church, preached there. He became acquainted with the people and liked them, he said.

When Easter came, Wallock said members of the park congregation were eager to participate in some kind of outdoor service, so "we planned to do the best we could.

"Finding people who were interested," he explained.

"Several years we were faced with inclement weather at the service but we now believe preparations have been completed so that the pageant can be staged even if rains and winds lash the gigantic stage.

"It was decided last year to move the location further over in the mountains after we saw that we could not accommodate all who wanted to witness the event." Wallock modestly shifts the credit for the pageant to shoulders of people from all churches who have worked with him during the nine years the service has been presented.

That Wallock's mind is not divided by a Mason and Dixon line is obvious when he tells of the Indians, negroes, and whites who join in the presentation. "Some day I hope to have all five races participating," he said. Wallock is not prejudiced toward any church and is eager to have all denominations to work with him.

The estimate of six persons to the car was based on an official count made of passengers in cars which arrived before night Saturday, according to Myron Groseclose, local OERA engineer, who was in charge of the check.

### No Serious Accidents

Numerous states were represented by the visitors. One youth told pageant officials that he hitch-hiked from North Carolina "just to witness the service."

No serious accidents were reported. One CCC trainee was said to have been struck by a car and suffered minor injuries. B. C. Griffin, of Oklahoma City received a minor nose injury when his car was struck in the rear by another Oklahoma City car on U.S. highway No. 62, about seven miles west of Lawton. Griffin, who was returning from the pageant, was thrown against the windshield of his automobile.

The religious program was carried out virtually as scheduled, according to Rev. A. M. Wallock, director. Beginning at 3 a.m. the program was finished shortly before sunrise. The climaxing event was the skywriting of "Christ Arose" by Col. Arthur C. Goebel, noted flyer, representative of the Phillips Petroleum company, Tulsa. Maj. Edward L. Branham, Fort Sill chaplain, gave the Easter sermon.

The loud speaking setup furnished by the Marathon Oil company carried the program remarkably well to the thousands of listeners.

### Crowd Orderly

The entire pageant grounds were well lighted by the system erected by Wolverton Brothers Electric company.

Supervisor H. H. French of the forest preserve reported "an orderly crowd."

Among the more prominent visitors were John Eddleman, state OERA administrator, Max Cunningham, assistant, and their wives, from Oklahoma City.

It was estimated 5,000 of the visitors inspected the amphitheater stage following the services. Various structures on the stage were stripped of flowers by the visitors.

### Of Interest:

This was the first year for the pageant's new location, where it remains today.

Twenty-four tableaux were given.

THE LAUREL  
CONSTITUTION  
April 21,  
1935



Members of the cast represent a variety of occupations.

Reverend Wallock, born in Schonberg\*, Austria, was brought to America when very young. He studied at the University of Chicago, at the Garrett Theological seminary, always manifesting an interest in religious dramatics. He held Methodist pastorates at Harvey, Ill. And at Crescent and at Wakita, Oklahoma, before he accepted a call to the Congregational church at Lawton. He is unmarried but has adopted two boys, Lee and Ruel, both of whom have minor parts in the Easter service.

\*Reverend Wallock stated that he was born in Schildberg, Austria.

April 5

1936

## The Daily Oklahoman

### "Wichita Mountain Easter Service May Attract 100,000 Visitors Next Sunday"

"20 Tableaux; 2,000  
Voices in Cast"

Lawton, April 4. - (Special) -

More than 100,000 visitors are expected here Sunday morning to see the tenth annual Wichita mountains Easter service which is being dedicated to "Peace and Brotherhood of Men." Eighty thousand spectators in wagons, on foot, in limousines and rattling conveyances made the pilgrimage to the Holy City for the 1935 Easter service.

The final hour of the service, 6 to 7 a.m., will be broadcast by the National Broadcasting company over a nationwide chain, through station WKY, Oklahoma City.

A cast of 2,500 from 65 cities and towns of Oklahoma and Texas, will present the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ in 20 tableaux. The service is scheduled to begin promptly at 3:30 a.m. A male chorus from Frederick will open the service with a selection entitled, "Gloria Excelsis." Climax of the annual event at this quaint reproduction of Jerusalem, built with \$79,000 in relief funds, will be reached when Col. Arthur Goebel, famous air ace, writes "Peace on Earth" in smoke letters across the sky.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTY WPA workers have been employed here for several weeks, completing structures necessary for presentation of the production. Ron Stephens, district WPA director of Chickasha, reported. When the WPA sewing room project for completion of robes to be used in the pageant was halted, Stephens, a former army engineer and fiery WPA director, solved the problem. With a reputation for "getting the job done" during the works program, he is credited with seeking out Ku Klux Klan members, who resurrected 400 abandoned robes to be used by members of the cast in the Easter service. Buildings at the Holy City were designed by Myron Groseclose, graduate of Oklahoma university, now district WPA engineer under Stephens. Groseclose said the Holy City is the only project of its kind in the United States being completed with relief funds.

I was born in Schildberg, Austria, April 25, 1890. Schildberg is a short distance south of Vienna. My father was an officer of the Austrian Army. Due to certain experience of adversities my mother and father decided to come to America with their four children. My father immediately took out citizenship papers and we became American citizens.

I was two years of age when we arrived in Chicago, Illinois. Was educated in the Chicago grade schools; graduated from Evansville academy; Chicago University and graduated from the Garrett Biblical Institute, of Evansville, Illinois. At the age of eighteen I decided to study for the ministry. My first church was in West Harvey, Illinois. I served this church as student pastor for four years. Leaving Garrett in 1915 I came to Oklahoma where I became pastor of the Methodist Church at Wakita, in Grant County. Having served this Church for four years I was appointed as pastor of the Church at Crescent, Oklahoma.

Searching for a place where I could remain for a definite period of time, and believing the true service to ministry is in remaining in a community rather than being an itinerary I came to Lawton to serve the First Congregational Church in 1924 where I have remained ever since. An old pioneer church stood on the corner of Seventh and C which had to be torn down and a new church is being erected at this time. During my first years in Lawton I visited the Wichita Mountains, climbing over its peaks and wondering how it would be possible to bring the beauty of their grandeur closer into the lives of the people around them. The thought of attracting the people to the mountains by touching them with the life of the greatest Teacher of the world grew within me until 1927 the first small group of people met for mutual service at the break of dawn on Easter morning. At that service we pledged our loyal allegiance to come back each Easter as long as we lived ... so, the years have rolled on and the Life of the Savior has been brought to the attention of thousands of people.

When but a boy I read the life of St. Francis Assisi, his great love for humanity and his love for the beauty of nature made a lasting impression upon me. In my humble home at the parsonage ... near the doorbell ... is a little framed picture which is my philosophy of life:

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road...  
and be a friend to man."

Rev. A. M. Wallock

INTRODUCTION to THE HOLY CITY  
OF THE WICHITA MOUNTAINS, ed.  
Jacquelin Vaughn Lowry  
(np, 1999).

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As dawn broke over the mountains, angels stepped from Jesus's tomb, frightening two Roman guards. There followed the resurrection sermon.

Art Goebel, Bartlesville, Okla., aviator, sky-wrote "Peace on Earth" as 2,500 voices sang the finale.

Over the public address system, Rev. Anthony M. Wallock, pageant director, read a message from President Roosevelt.

### "Roosevelt Sends Message"

"To all of sincere faith," said Mr. Roosevelt, "the dawn of this Easter day in the Wichita mountains will bring the same message of hope that the angel of the resurrection brought to the holy women at the tomb of the Master in the hills of Judea.

"The message of that first Easter day, "He is risen," has ever since symbolized faith and hope and newness of life and still has power to strengthen and sustain.

" In gratitude for all the rich gifts which Easter brings, I join my humble prayers to those of my countrymen wherever they are gathered this morning."

From 17 states came spectators to see the pageant. A caravan of four cars came from Florida.

# April 21

## The Lawton Constitution

### "EASTER RITES SITE IS GIVEN TO DIRECTORS"

"Ron Stephens Lauds Aids For  
Southwest From WPA  
Projects"

"1,000 PEOPLE PRESENT"

"Congressman Jed Johnson,  
At Dedication, Praises  
Great Pageant"

Ron Stephens, assistant state WPA administrator, challenged all Oklahoma to show greater improvements from the relief agency than the southwest boasted, in the dedication address Sunday at the Easter sunrise service site.

1936

December 20

1936

The Lawton Constitution

"Easter Service Pageant Site  
To Be Dedicated At 2 o'Clock  
Sunday Afternoon"

"\$78,000 WPA  
PROJECT ENDS;  
RITES PLANNED"

" 'World Fellowship of Faith,'  
Will Be Theme For  
Next Easter' "

"REP. JOHNSON TO TALK"

"Either Ron Stephens Or Gen.  
W. S. Key Will Speak  
At Dedication "

One of the world's greatest religious shrines will be dedicated Sunday afternoon in the Wichita mountains game refuge when the Easter Sunrise service is released to a board of directors by the U. S. government.

"Announces Plans"

With weather report indications for a moderate afternoon, completed arrangements for the expected hundreds who will attend the dedication were being made Saturday in Lawton.

The dedicatory service, in which the government will officially hand the Easter Sunrise service association a completed \$78,000 WPA project, will be held at the pageant site at 2 p.m.

Simultaneously, Rev. A. M. Wallock, founder of the pageant, and its program director now, announced the theme of 31 tableaux in the service next Easter will be "A Fellowship of Faith."

"Johnson To Speak"

Col. Arthur Goebel, skywriter and noted aviator who has participated in the annual service several years, will fly to Lawton from New York the day before the service to write on the sky above the site, "World Faith."

Jed Johnson, sixth district congressman, has accepted an invitation to appear on the dedicatory program. Ron Stephens, assistant state WPA administrator, is scheduled for the principle address.

However, it was reported in Lawton Saturday that Stephens may yield his position on the program to W. S. Key, state administrator, who possibly will arrive here in time for the dedication.

Immediately following the response address by Rev. John Lamb of the First Presbyterian church Lawton, and preceding the benediction hymn by the choir, the chapel doors to the music hall will swing open.

### "To Introduce Officials"

Persons entering the vestibule will be asked to register for the dedication.

Joe Reed, president of the Lawton chamber of commerce, will be master of ceremonies and will introduce project officials and noted guests, included among whom will be W. G. "Billy" Mills, who has been in charge of the work at the pageant site since its induction.

Stephens, who was district supervisor when the project started; Myron Groseclose, original district engineer; and the present offices of the WPA, supervisor, R. W. Johnson; engineer, J. L. Forbess, and others will be among those present.

Johnson's address will follow introductions, and a prayer will be offered by Rev. Wallock. Following musical selections by the choir, Stephens or Key will make the principle address.

### Of Interest:

WPA funds provided: Lord's Supper building, Herod's Court, Pilate's Temple, and power lines from Medicine Park five miles east of the Holy City, a permanent public address system, the beautiful chapel, a lodge for the custodian, a telephone system connecting each set with control room, and more parking.

Walls of chapel are four feet thick.

WKY radio broadcast to more than more 200 stations in NBC hookup.

THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION  
DEC. 20, 1936

April 23,  
1943

## The Lawton Constitution

### "Ageless Story of Christ to Be Portrayed At New Site"

#### "Annual Easter Moved to Fort Sill; Service to Begin Shortly After Midnight"

With an appropriate military background in a nation at war, Lawton's world-famous 17-year-old Easter Pageant, will again portray the ageless story of Christ early Sunday morning at a transplanted "Holy City" at Fort Sill.

Plans were complete today to again handle heavy traffic from neighboring counties, although gasoline restrictions are expected to limit the attendance that normally represents most of the states in the nation.

Army authorities have designated routes over which civilian traffic may pour uninterrupted to the new Holy City, constructed in recent months at the north edge of historic Medicine Bluffs.

#### "Favorable Weather Expected"

Clear weather prevailed today with cooler temperatures tonight, the nearest that wartime restrictions permit of a forecast for weather condition this Easter. Because Easter Sunday is April 25, favorable weather is regarded as more probable.

The state highway patrol headquarters here announced that four additional two-way cars, from Oklahoma City, Perry and Atoka, are being assigned to Lawton to assist in handling traffic. On the military reservation, Army police will be assisted by local police and county officers.

Stickers for the 1,000-person cast will be issued Saturday morning at the office of Reece L. Russell, secretary of the Easter Pageant association.

#### "Final Rehearsal Tonight"

The Rev. A. M. Wallock, founder and director of the service, was at the transplanted Holy City today preparing for tonight's final rehearsal.

While the crowd, which may consist largely of the thousands of men in uniform at Fort Sill and their families, will gather on the grounds Saturday night, the service will not begin until after midnight.

A cast of 65 enlisted men, WAACs, officers and wives will present a cantata preceding the opening of the pageant service at 3 a.m. One hundred Lawton men, under Exall English, will take the usual offering.

#### "Pageant Begins at 4:30"

An hour of worship, consisting of the offering, the Easter prayer and the prologue message, will precede the actual pageantry, "Thy Kingdom Come." This last phase of the service, comprising 50 tableaux, begins at 4:30 a.m. and ends about dawn.

There are 55 "spoken characters" in "Thy Kingdom Come." The reader for every pageant again will be Dr. John H. Lamb, pastor of the First Presbyterian church. There are several solos sung during the progress of the service.

Soloists in the cantata include Pvt. Hubert Valentine, FARTC; tenor. Private Valentine came to the United States from Ireland two years before he was inducted into the Army. He had been featured in Town Hall, Radio City, and Carnegie Hall, and was being coached for singing at the Metropolitan Opera at the time of his induction.

April 23,  
1943

### The Lawton Constitution

#### "COLLECTORS TO GET STICKERS FOR CARS"

Persons volunteering to take the offering at the Easter Pageant Sunday morning were advised today to obtain car stickers at the office of Reece L. Russell, secretary.

Exall English, in charge of the 100 men asked to take the offering, said originally it was not planned to have stickers, but added that this had been changed.

April 25,  
1943

### The Lawton Constitution

#### "Traffic Comparatively Light To Pageant Site at Fort Sill"

#### "Highway Patrol Estimates Crowd of 5,000 at Transplanted 'Holy City' Before Midnight"

Wartime conditions kept civilian traffic comparatively light to the 1943 Easter pageant site at Fort Sill, Saturday night.

The state highway patrol, handling much of the traffic over main routes to this area, estimated that a crowd of 5,000 had gathered at the transplanted "Holy City" about 11 o'clock Saturday night.

1943



March 29,  
1948

## The Daily Oklahoman

### "60,000 Brave Cold To Watch Pageant"

By Perry Davis  
Daily Oklahoman Staff Writer

HOLY CITY, March 28 - The Easter sun rose over the Wichita mountains to cast long shadows of the angels standing before the crypt of Jesus. The scene was the perfectly-timed climax of the twenty-third annual Wichita Mountain Easter pageant.

On the hillside overlooking the huge outdoor stage clung several thousand persons. Wrapped in blankets, huddled behind makeshift windbreaks or sitting in automobiles, they had endured the coldest night in the history of the passion play.

Chill winds had driven many thousands more away since the pageant began with a musical program at midnight. In all, an estimated 60,000 people saw all or part of the Easter spectacle.

Among those who saw only part was Rev. A. M. Wallock, Lawton Congregationalist minister who originated the pageant, and whose dream it is to see the pageant site deep in the Wichita mountain wildlife reserve a national religious shrine for all faiths and denominations.

Rev. Wallock is a sick man. Last summer, after suffering several serious attacks of a heart disease, he said he had directed his last pageant. In all, since he held his first Easter service in the mountains for the small congregation of his own church 23 years ago, he has written and directed 22 pageants.

This year, because of his illness, he permitted the appointment of two co-directors. They did the actual work with casts and properties.

Mr. Wallock wrote the script, out-lined the action and made all important decisions during the weeks of practice.

As the call to worship from the top of the tiny stone chapel in Holy City opened the pageant Sunday morning, Mr. Wallock watched from his home. The stone cottage, built by his friends at the pageant site, has a huge picture window which overlooks the entire area.

With a few members of his family, the pageant's founder watched the opening scenes. As things went smoothly he relaxed - and within an hour the exhausted man slept. The passion play was ended and the amphitheater cleared before he awoke.

This year's play, entitled "The King's Highway of Peace," was made up of 75 episodes from the history of Jesus. The actual story began with Mary's prayer and closed with the Easter angels as they stood at His tomb to tell Mary "Behold, He is arisen."

To the audience on the hill, the pageant ran smoothly and well. With continuity supplied by a commentator and spoken parts, scenes flashed from one to another of the sets built in the "stage."

The stage is actually an area some 1,000 feet long and 200 feet deep along the base of a hill. Many of the sets are permanent structures built of a native stone. Others, such as the ship in which Christ's disciples were storm-tossed in the Sea of Galilee, were built for this pageant.

THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN  
MARCH 29, 1948

In the bright early daylight, as actors shed costumes and makeup to help with the clean-up job, Jimmy Hysaw and George Hutchins "post-mortemed" the production. Hysaw, a Lawton barber, and Hutchins, mayor of Lawton were co-directors this year. Each has been with the pageant 12 years, and are among the seven members of the board of directors.

"The worst part is we never know how many people we're going to have in the cast," Hysaw explained. "This bad weather kept a lot of them away. We only had about 800 tonight - usually we can count on at least twice that number.

"Everybody took their kids home. If it had been a nice night we'd have had children underfoot, but tonight there weren't any.

"Why we were all ready for the healing scene and we didn't have a child.

### "Had To Borrow Boy"

"I had to borrow a little boy out of the audience. He played in the healing scene and the triumphal entry - and as soon as they were over the child who was supposed to be in them showed up. His mother had had him in a little building back of the stage, keeping warm."

The directors explained that the entire passion play is voluntary. All of the actors do it for fun, the props and equipment are donated. Some of the actors have been in more than 15 of the Easter pageants.

"They start out with us children, and just kind of grow up with the pageant," Hutchins put in.

"The cold bothered us all, but most of them wouldn't let on," Hysaw praised the actors.

### "Boys Cold On Crosses"

"Why those Dawson boys were up on the crosses with nothing on but a loin cloth. They were so cold they could hardly hang on."

The Dawson boys, Robert, 16, and Harvey, 18, are "pageant kids." They grew up with it. For the past few years they have acted as the two thieves who flanked Jesus on the cross.

Sunday morning they acted to the hilt. The script called for loin clothes and loin clothes it was.

"I wouldn't have let them do it for the world," Hysaw declared, "but I was busy somewhere else and by the time I saw it it was too late."

Another individual who drew the director's praise, among many, was Mary Jo Bodkins, who played the part of Mary Magdalene on three minutes notice. With only whispered instructions she went on stage. "She did a wonderful job," Hysaw said.

### "Woes Not Apparent"

None of these back-stage woes were apparent to the audience. To them it was a tremendous spectacle of music, color and pageantry. The stories familiar to most school children, acted out on the rocky slope of a mountain, brought "ohs" and "ahs" of delight to the spectators.

The bitter air brought frost to the automobile tops and an informal air to the crowd. Folks from every Oklahoma county and many other states shared windbreaks and blankets.

Family groups huddled tight together for warmth. Coats brought to lie on were set on their sides as windbreaks. Tents and sleeping bags were common sights.

1948

The clergyman said he attended the Oberammergau play in 1922. He decided to attend the Lawton pageant after reading about it in Coronet magazine.

April 22,  
1946

## The Lawton Constitution

### "Grateful Pageant Sponsors Express Appreciation To All For Record Breaking Event"

"Attendance Of  
200,000 Or  
More At Rites"

Easter pageant officials today expressed sincere appreciation to the thousands of persons who had a part in staging the most successful presentation in the 21-year history of the outdoor religious service.

#### "Estimates Reach 200,000"

Recognized as one of the world's outstanding Easter attractions, the program Saturday night and Sunday drew an undisputed record breaking crowd, estimated upwards of 200,000, to see the portrayal of Christ's death, burial and resurrection at the mountain amphitheater.

Rev. A. M. Wallock, director, script writer and founder of the renowned service, Monday termed the pageant, "very well done." He said, "I am very grateful for those who helped and made the presentation possible. All persons who had a part tried hard to present the religious service. All through the rehearsals the characters were faithful and did their best to make the pageant the greatest ever given."

Fred Larrance, president of the Easter Pageant Association termed the pageant "the smoothest and most effective in history." He added, "It was the largest crowd we have ever had. The crowd was one of the finest handled. The persons attending were most sincere and were very quiet while the pageant was being presented. I want to personally thank those who helped me at the concession stand and all others who had a part in the service."

#### "\$3,213 Collected"

Exall English, one of the most faithful of the group of persons making the pageant possible, said, "I personally express my sincere gratitude to the approximately 100 men who helped in collecting the record breaking offering of \$3213.35 from the multitude. It was noticeable that many of the larger offerings were from Fort Sill soldiers.

Of Interest:

Fifty-six scenes were portrayed.

Ten chartered buses came from Tulsa, Oklahoma.

It was broadcast over WKY radio station.

Appeal went out for Boy Scouts to help.

An early morning pre-pageant breakfast was held for those assisting in the offering. The breakfast started at 12:30 a.m. Sunday. About 150 persons were invited.

A special area was roped off for wounded veterans of World War II from Borden General Hospital, Chickasha. Some were in wheelchairs, others with crutches.

THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION

APRIL 22, 1946

Memorandum

To: Keeper, National Register of Historic Places

From: Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System

Subject: Nomination of the Holy City of the Wichitas on the Wichita Mountain National Wildlife Refuge to the National Register of Historic Places

The Fish and Wildlife Service is submitting the attached nomination for listing to the National Register of Historic Places.

The structures of the area represent an important link to the New Deal era and are unique examples of federally sponsored construction. Likewise, the site is the location of the longest continually run passion play (since 1926) in the country and a very important social component of the local community.

The nomination package meets the National Register criteria defined in 36 CFR 60.4 and was prepared with the concurrence of the Oklahoma Historic Society and State Historic Preservation Officer.

Please direct any questions on this request to Eugene Marino, Service Archaeologist, at (703) 358-2173.

Attachment