

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1196

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word process, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name N/A

other names/site number Downtown Buckhannon Historic District

2. Location

Portions of East & West Main, North & South Florida, Locust, North & South Kanawha,
street & number & Spring Streets not for publication

city or town Buckhannon vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Upshur code 097 zip code 26201

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Susan Pearce 4/12/09
State Historic Preservation Officer Date

West Virginia Division of Culture and History, WV DCH
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency or bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

James G. [Signature]

12/31/2009

Downtown Buckhannon Historic District
Name of Property

Upshur County, WV
County and State

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
57	15	buildings
	4	sites
1		structures
		objects
58	19	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

GOVERNMENT/court house

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

GOVERNMENT/post office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

GOVERNMENT/court house

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

LANDSCAPE/parking lot

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical Revival

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/limestone

walls BRICK; WOOD/Weatherboard; STONE/limestone;
SYNTHETICS/vinyl

roof METAL; ASPHALT; STONE/slate

other BRICK; STONE/limestone; WOOD

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Downtown Buckhannon Historic District
Name of Property

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County and State

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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- designed a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ARCHITECTURE
- POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1879-1959

Significant Dates

1894

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Albright, Harrison, architect
Hughes, Draper, architect

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Upshur County Historical Society, Buckhannon

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 16 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	5 6 6 5 4 0	4 3 1 6 4 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 7	5 6 6 9 2 0	4 3 1 6 2 4 0

3	1 7	5 6 6 1 0 0	4 3 1 6 9 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 7	5 6 6 4 8 0	4 3 1 6 0 6 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Principal

organization Taylor & Taylor Associates, Inc. date March, 2009

street & number 9 Walnut Street telephone 814-849-4900

city or town Brookville state Pennsylvania zip code 15825

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple Owners

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

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. 470 *et. seq.*). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20240.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Continuation Sheet

Downtown Buckhannon Historic District
Upshur County, WV

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7. Description

The Downtown Buckhannon Historic District (Photos 1-17; Figs. 1-9) is a 16-acre historic district consisting of the traditional central business district of the city of Buckhannon, which is the county seat of Upshur County, West Virginia and is the only incorporated city in the county. Buckhannon is located in north-central West Virginia, approximately 90 miles northeast of the state capitol of Charleston. The district encompasses the community's central business district, including the Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32; Photo 1), as well as both sides of Main Street extending generally between Florida Street to the east and Locust Street to the west (Photos 3, 6, 8). In addition to Main Street, portions of several intersecting streets are within the district, typically extending one to two blocks away from Main Street (Photo 13, 17).

The district contains a total of 77 resources, none of which have been previously listed in the National Register. Among these are 72 buildings, 4 non-contributing sites (all surface parking lots), and 1 structure, the district's roadways, which are counted collectively as a contributing resource.

Taken as a whole, the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District retains integrity in the majority of its individual components. With reference to the National Register, integrity is defined as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period."¹ Clearly, the physical characteristics of downtown Buckhannon's historic period have survived, and the district retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Integrity of association is not applicable to this district since it is not nominated under Criterion B and "association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property."²

¹ National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1977; rev. 1997), p. 4.

² National Register Bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1990; rev. 1997), p. 45.

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The topography of the district is essentially flat, with the elevation rising only slightly moving from west to east. Main Street (U. S. Rote 33 and West Virginia Route 4) bisects the district and runs generally in an east-west direction (Figs. 1-3). From the east, intersecting Main Street are Florida Street, followed by Spring (named for the former presence of a spring at the street's northern end, shown on an 1879 map; Fig. 2), Kanawha, and Locust Streets. Rights-of-way vary widely throughout the district. Much of Main Street has a 60' right-of-way, while Locust Street is 35' wide, Florida Street is 50' wide, Spring Street is 30' wide south of Main and 40' wide north of Main, and Kanawha Street is 40' in width. Alleys, most of which are unnamed, range from a scant 8' to 15'. All of the streets and alleys in the district area paved, and sidewalks extend on both sides of all of the streets. Traffic signals are found at the major intersections, and street lighting includes period-appropriate "acorn-top" light standards.

Like most historic downtown areas, this district is characterized by dense development, with most buildings built to the sidewalk and side-by-side without side-lot setback. The rear portions of the building lots vary; some buildings extend completely to alleys behind, while in other cases surface parking exists behind buildings. The majority of the buildings in the district are of masonry construction, with brick predominating. Some are finished in or trimmed in stone (Photo 3; Fig. 6) and one, a 1954 fast-food establishment (58 East Main Street; Resource No. 4; Photo 10), is finished in baked enamel panels. Most buildings are two to three stories in height; the 1916 Post Office at 70 East Main Street (Resource No. 1; Photo 12; Fig. 9) which is now City Hall is one story in height, the Court House (Resource No. 32; Photo 1; Fig. 5) is three stories tall but its dome gives it a far larger appearance, and the 1910 People's Bank Building (Resource No. 15; Photo 5; Fig. 8) at 2 East Main Street towers over the downtown at five stories.

Many of the historic commercial buildings in the district retain the traditional three-part façade consisting of a storefront, an upper façade of one or more stories, and a cornice (Photos 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17; Figs. 4, 6, 7, 8). Conventional storefront design incorporates a substantial window-to-wall ratio, the occasional transom, and a recessed entry. Fenestration in the district employs flat-topped, round-arched, and segmental-arched window forms, typically with tall, narrow window units, extended stone sills, and lintels which include plain stone lintels,

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jack-arch stone lintels, and units of ornamental cast iron and pressed metal. Cornice construction includes masonry, wood, and pressed metal, and most historic cornices are intact.

Modifications to buildings within the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District are typical of those which characterize any older commercial area. Storefronts have been modified from the original, although in the case of this district, many storefronts retain much of their historic form and detail. Some window replacement has occurred, but replacement units typically occupy the original openings. Some cornices have been lost as well, but all of these alterations are scattered throughout the area and fail to detract from the otherwise high integrity of the district as a whole. In one case (Resource No. 9) a "slipcovering" of the façade of a corner building has occurred. Some demolition has occurred, including two instances (Resource Nos. 10 and 33) where buildings have been replaced by modern banking facilities, surface parking lots (Resource Nos. 72, 72, 74, and 75), and a modern architecturally compatible annex to the Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32). Instances of demolition and building replacement are scattered and do not materially affect the overall historic character of the nominated area.

The Downtown Buckhannon Historic District contains a diversity of buildings executed in many of the architectural styles popular throughout the 1879-1960 Period of Significance. Typical of most downtown commercial districts dating from this era, the Italianate style is the most prevalent within this district. Characterized by tall, narrow patterns of fenestration and overhanging cornices of varying complexity, Italianate buildings include 14, 8-10, 5, 9, and 15 East Main Street (Resource Nos. 12, 13, and 17-20, respectively; Photos 3, 8, 9, 17) along with 5, 23-25, 41, and 43-51 West Main (Resource Nos. 17-20, 22, 26, and 27, respectively), and the Pennell & Swisher Building at 57 East Main Street (Resource No. 46; Photo 11).

The Romanesque Revival style depends on the use of round-arched openings, sometimes repeated in blind arches or arcaded corbel tables. In this district, Romanesque Revival-style design is seen in the 1879 Presbyterian Church on Locust Street (Resource No. 29) and in the commercial buildings at 23 West Main Street (Resource No. 21;

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Photo 4) and in the 1908 T. L. Stockert Building with an arcaded corbel table along the parapet on the façade (29-33 East Main Street; Resource No. 43; Photo 7).

The Queen Anne style characteristically employs a variegated finish, an irregular profile, and often a tower or turret. Although it characteristically appears in domestic architecture, occasionally the Queen Anne-style is sometimes employed for commercial design. In Buckhannon, this occurs in the 1910 Peoples Bank Building at 2 East Main Street (Resource No. 15; Photo 5; Fig. 8), with a polychrome brick finish and multi-story corner tower.

The fervor of patriotism in the wake of the American Centennial of 1876 brought a resurgence of interest in pre-Revolutionary American design. The Colonial Revival style drew upon these eighteenth-century antecedents, sometimes with painstaking attention to detail and sometimes emblazoned with only the occasional Colonial-era trim element. At about the same time, with the waning of the nineteenth-century a rekindling of interest occurred in the architecture of classical antiquity. The Neo-Classical Revival style is characteristically reserved for substantial public and quasi-public buildings and in the case of the Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32; Photo 1; Fig. 5), the Colonial Revival style, with its jack-arched stone lintels couples with the monumental Corinthian Neo-Classical Revival-style portico, pedimented frontispiece entrance, and Beaux Arts-influenced dome resting on an octagonal drum with paired Corinthian pilasters.

Other Colonial Revival-style buildings in the district include the 1916 Post Office (70 East Main Street, Resource No. 1; Photo 12; Fig. 9), the White Building (48 East Main Street; Resource No. 6), the Stockert Building (16 East Main Street; Resource No. 11), the building at 406 East Main Street (Resource No. 14), the McVaney Building (3 East Main Street; Resource No. 34).

The advent of the automobile brought about an entirely new type of building type, known generically as roadside architecture. Among the most familiar manifestations of roadside architecture are the service station, the motel, and the fast-food restaurant, examples of which ranged from the simple to the complex and fanciful. Within

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this district is a 1954 example of roadside architecture, a Dairy Queen establishment at 58 East Main Street (Resource No. 4; Photo 10) which appears little altered from its original construction, along with two red brick motels (Resource Nos. 53 and 67), both of which were built in 1958.

While the above properties reflect specific architectural styles, other properties in the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District are vernacular in character, interpreting that description as it is defined in Ward Bucher's **Dictionary of Building Preservation**: "a building built without being designed by an architect or someone with similar formal training; often based on traditional or regional forms."¹ The term, "vernacular," as it is used here, is not a pejorative, since so many buildings built nearly everywhere during the Period of Significance of this district reflect local building traditions and the skill of local builders rather than those of formally-trained architects.

The following resources, with numbers keyed to the map accompanying the nomination, are found within the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District:

1. 70 East Main Street (Post Office; City Hall); governmental

Description: 1-story former post office, of brick construction, with an angled corner corresponding to its siting, with flat-topped fenestration with altered sash. A Neo-Classical Revival style, portico shields the main entrance which is enframed within a stone frontispiece.

Date: 1916 (James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect U. S. Treasury Department)

1 contributing building

2. East Main Street at North Florida Street, commercial

Description: small 1-story red brick building built at the center of a paved lot, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1970

1 non-contributing building

¹Ward Bucher, **Dictionary of Building Preservation** (New York: John Wiley, 1996), p. 512

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3. 64 East Main Street, commercial

Description: Detached former residence of brick, which appears to have been Queen Anne in style, with a semi-hexagonal tower. A massive modern addition has been constructed along the front of the lot, with a forfeiture of integrity

Date: c. 1900

1 non-contributing building

4. 58 East Main Street (Dairy Queen), commercial

Description: 1-story fast-food restaurant finished in enamel panels, retaining much of its historic character including the neon signage. Façade incorporates service windows.

Date: 1954

1 contributing building

5. 56 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 1-story commercial building, modest in its detail, with 2 storefronts. Finished in red brick without notable ornament.

Date: c. 1950

1 contributing building

6. 48 (?) East Main Street (White Building), commercial

Description: 2-story brick commercial building with altered storefront and retained historic movie house marquee. Exposed side elevation of tile, parged. Upper façade is of 4 bays with corbeled brickwork and flat-topped windows, with some alteration of sash units. Above third-floor windows is a datestone bearing the name WHITE and the date 1924.

Date: 1924

1 contributing building

7. 46 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 1-story commercial building, modest in scale, built of concrete block with a façade finished in red brick. Single storefront with traditional window-to-wall ratio. Modest ornamental brick detailing.

Date: 1950s

1 contributing building

8. 42 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 1-story modern brick building with an angled corner, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1990

1 non-contributing building

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9. 22-24 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story masonry commercial building finished in red brick, with storefronts finished in vertical corrugated metal, a marquee canopy on both the façade and side elevation, and the upper stories punctuated by undersized flat-topped windows; built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1960

1 non-contributing building

10. 32 East Main Street, commercial

Description: modern bank building finished in dryvit, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1990

1 non-contributing building

11. 16 East Main Street (Stockert Building), commercial

Description: 3-story brick commercial building with restored storefront and unaltered upper façade, incorporating a 3-bay arrangement, symmetrically-massed, with flat-topped windows on the second story and round-arched above. Corbeled brick quoins and corbeled brick arcaded table along cornice. Parapet along roofline with datestone bearing the name "STOCKERT" and the date "1904." Roof garden.

Date: 1904

1 contributing building

12. 14 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story brick Italianate-style commercial building with storefront altered. Asymmetrical-massed upper façade of 4 bays, with flat-topped windows set singly and in a pair. Windows are set on extended sills and are capped with pressed metal heads. The cornice is of pressed metal, with brackets and modillions and a centered pediment with cresting.

Date: c. 1880

1 contributing building

13. 8-10 East Main Street (Carpenter Building), commercial

Description: 3-story brick commercial building with the storefront altered but the upper façade appearing to be unchanged from the original. 4-bay upper facade punctuated by segmental-arched openings containing double-hung sash units. Corbeled brick trim, including some with polychrome finishes.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

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14. 4-6 East Main Street (Miller-Young Pharmacy Building), commercial

Description: 3-story commercial building finished in multi-colored brick, with much of the façade finished in orange brick. 2 storefronts flank a centered man-door to the upper floors. One of the storefronts retains its historic Carrara glass finish. Upper façade penetrated by an asymmetrical 7-bay arrangement with flat-topped windows on the second floor and round-arched above. The flat-topped sash are capped with smooth-dressed stone lintels with keystones. Corbeled brick trim.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

15. 2 East Main Street (Peoples Bank Building), commercial

Description: the tallest building in the district, a 5-story Queen Anne-style commercial building finished in red brick trimmed with limestone, with a character-defining 3-story oriel on the corner of the façade opening into the top three floors. Storefronts altered but upper façade generally unaltered. Flat-topped windows and terra cotta trim along roofline.

Date: 1910

1 contributing building

16. 1 West Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story originally Italianate-style brick commercial building with the façade slipcovered in modern material, with loss of integrity; portion of side elevation uncovered, revealing an elaborate corbeled brick cornice and segmental-arched window openings, some blocked-up.

Date: c. 1890

1 non-contributing building

17. 5 West Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story Italianate-style brick commercial building with altered storefront, retaining historic Luxfer glass prism transom. Upper façade appears original and intact, featuring a 5-bay arrangement with an oversized segmental-arched opening with double-hung windows and a datestone set within the arch. Flanking this window unit are paired flat-topped windows. Corbeled brick trim and metal cornice.

Date: 1888

1 contributing building

18. 9 West Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story brick commercial building with altered storefront. Upper façade appears original and intact, featuring a 3-bay arrangement with an oversized segmental-arched opening with 3 double-hung windows and a datestone set within the arch. Flanking this window unit are paired flat-topped windows. Corbeled brick trim.

Date: 1888

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1 contributing building

19. 9 West Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story brick commercial building of brick with an altered storefront and an oversized round-arched opening on the second story. Storefront altered and original brick finishes painted. Upper façade trimmed with corbeled brickwork.

Date: c. 1905

1 contributing building

20. 15 West Main Street, commercial

Description: narrow 2-story brick commercial building with a façade of rock-faced stone, with an altered storefront and original upper façade with an oversized round-arched window, above which is an inset panel. Corbeled brickwork and stonework

Date: c. 1905

1 contributing building

21. 23 West Main Street, commercial

Description: Locally-distinctive 2-story brick commercial building with altered storefronts on the first story and a 2-bay façade on the second, incorporating 2 substantial round-arched loggias, one of which has been in-filled with glass. They are linked with a wood balcony. Between the loggias is an oval window and above the loggias is a group of 4 round-arched single-hung windows, and the uppermost portion of the façade incorporates corbeled brickwork and a stepped parapet.

Date: c. 1898

1 contributing building

22. 23-25 West Main Street (T. J. Farnsworth Building), commercial

Description 3-story brick building with a sandstone façade incorporating altered storefront which nonetheless retain a traditional window-to-wall ratio; some elements of cast iron storefront remain. Upper façade penetrated by 7-bay configuration of flat-topped windows. Stone pinnacles along roofline. Painted "ghost" sign on upper portion of west elevation; name stone bearing the name, "T. J. FARNSWORTH" on upper façade.

Date: c. 1898

1 contributing building

23. 29 West Main Street (Upshur County Historical Society), educational

Description Modest 1-story commercial building finished in red brick with a storefront with centered, recessed entrance on the first story. Brick bulkheads at street level flank the entry. Converted as library/archives for county historical society.

Date: c. 1950

1 contributing building

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24. 33 West Main Street, commercial

Description 2-story commercial building finished in red brick with a storefront on the first story and paired undersized flat-topped windows on the second story; entire façade appears to date from outside the Period of Significance of the district

Date: c. 1970

1 non-contributing building

25. 37 West Main Street, commercial

Description 3-story commercial building finished in red brick with an altered storefront and flat-topped fenestration on the 6-bay upper façade. Corbeled brickwork along cornice.

Date: c. 1898

1 contributing building

26. 41 West Main Street, commercial

Description: 3-story brick commercial building with an altered storefront area. Italianate elements with upper façade intact and featuring a 4-bay arrangement with flat-topped windows on the second floor and round-arched windows on the third. Façade finished in rock-faced sandstone.

Date: c. 1898

1 contributing building

27. 43-51 West Main Street, commercial

Description: Italianate-derived brick commercial building of 2 stories with altered storefronts on the first story which generally retain a traditional window-to-wall ratio. Upper façade features an asymmetrically-arranged 8-bay configuration with 1/1 windows with rock-faced stone sills and lintels. Corbeled brick cornice.

Date: c. 1890

1 contributing building

28. 11 S. Locust Street, governmental

Description: 2-story fire hall finished in brick, with 2-bay first story penetrated by overhead garage doors. On the front right corner is the entrance to the building which also incorporates a hose-drying tower which rises above the roofline. Upper façade penetrated by a series of 9 1/1 windows. Corbeled brickwork on façade; main portion of the building is of concrete block construction.

Date:

1 contributing building

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29. 13 S. Locust Street (Presbyterian Church), religious

Description: Modest Romanesque Revival-style church of wood construction, with a 2-bay façade and a small corner tower with a non-historic pinnacle, with round-arched windows glazed with religious art glass. Gable roof and gable-end-orientation to the street. Simple in its detailing.

Date: 1879

1 contributing building

30. 14 S. Locust Street, residential

Description: American Foursquare double house finished in red brick, with a symmetrical 4-bay façade whose arrangement suggests a side-passage plan on each of the interior units. Fenestration flat-topped, with 1/1 sash set on extended rock-faced stone sills and capped with corresponding lintels. Hipped roof with a gable dormer centered on the façade. Outward-projecting gable-roofed wings

Date: c. 1905

1 contributing building

31. 12 S. Locust Street (Sheriff's Residence & Jail), governmental

Description: 2-1/2-story former Sheriff's residence of brick, presently painted, with a symmetrical 3-bay façade and a centered entry shielded by a 1-bay arcaded brick porch with lancet-arched openings. Steeply-pitched hipped roof penetrated by gable dormers with front-facing stepped parapets. Former jail of rock-faced stone at rear. Fenestration on residential portion is segmental-arched, with single and paired sash set within openings; fenestration on former jail is flat-topped. Voussoirs on residential section area trimmed in rock-faced stone, presently painted.

Date: c. 1900

1 contributing building

32. 40 West Main Street (Upshur County Court House), governmental

Description: Substantial Colonial Revival/Neo-Classical Revival-style court house finished in red brick with a monumental Corinthian portico with paired columns. Behind and above the portico's pediment is a substantial cupola with an octagonal drum. Fenestration is generally flat-topped with window units set singly and in pairs. The principal entrance is centered on the façade, within a Classically-derived frontispiece. A compatible modern addition finished in red brick is linked to the historic building by a skywalk spanning Chancery Styreet. Several small-scale military commemorative objects, treated as uncounted landscape features

Date: 1899; Harrison Albright, architect

1 contributing building

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33. 2 West Main Street First Community Bank), commercial

Description: 2-story modern bank, finished in brick and dryvit, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1990

1 non-contributing building

34. 3 East Main Street (McVane Building), commercial

Description: Among the district's least-altered buildings. 2-story Colonial Revival-style brick commercial building with a red brick-finished façade with storefront on first story with tile bulkheads and a recessed entry; access to upper floor through a single door to the left of the storefront. Locally distinctive stone trim on upper façade including stone panels embellished with shields. Second floor is 4 bays in width, with flat-topped 1/1 windows and beltcourses of stone or terra cotta. Date and name stone.

Date: 1929

1 contributing building

35. 3 East Main Street, commercial

Description: Modestly-detailed 2-story brick commercial building with a façade finished in brick which has been painted. Storefront area has been altered with the removal of the original and the installation of a recessed storefront which is shielded by a shed-roofed canopy. Upper façade is 2 bays in width, with paired flat-topped 1/1 windows. Shallow stepped parapet along roofline.

Date: c. 1930

1 contributing building

36. 7 East Main Street, commercial

Description: Modestly-detailed 2-story brick commercial building with a façade finished in polychrome brick, with an altered storefront which nonetheless retains the traditional window-to-wall ratio; single door on left side of facade leads to upper story. Asymmetrically-massed 4-bay façade with flat-topped 1/1 windows set singly and in pairs. Shallow stepped parapet along roofline.

Date: c. 1930

1 contributing building

37. 9 East Main Street, commercial

Description: Modest 1-story brick commercial building with a façade of red brick and an altered storefront, including a marquee canopy of metal; storefront nonetheless retains traditional window-to-wall ratio.

Date: c. 1955

1 contributing building

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38. 11 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story red brick commercial building with storefront altered with the installation of a pent roof. Upper façade generally intact, with 2-bay arrangement penetrated by flat-topped window openings with extended stone sills and smooth-dressed stone lintels. Sash has been altered but set within original openings. Corbeled brickwork on upper façade.

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

39. 15 East Main Street (Reger Building), commercial

Description: 3-story Italianate-derived brick commercial building with 2 storefronts, altered, but retaining traditional window-to-wall ratio, paired oriel windows on the second story, and paired double-hung windows on the third, flat-topped, 1/1, with articulated window heads. Capped with a pressed metal cornice ornamented with brackets and dentils and with a centered pediment bearing the name "REGER." It appears that the upper façade is clad in stamped sheet metal, simulating brick.

Date: c. 1900

1 contributing building

40. 19 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 1-story brick building serving as professional offices; may represent a major remodeling of an earlier building. Rock-faced stone pilasters on outside corner of façade, with stone storefront and recessed entry. Loss of integrity due to alterations.

Date: c. 1970

1 non-contributing building

41. 23 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 2-story brick corner building finished in red brick with some polychrome brick ornament on the upper façade. Angled corner addresses its siting. Storefronts on both the East Main Street and Spring Street elevations, with some alterations but generally retaining their traditional window-to-wall ratio. Fenestration on upper façade incorporates flat-topped windows, 1/1, without notable architectural embellishment.

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

42. 23-C East Main Street, commercial

Description: Diminutive 1-story brick commercial building seemingly tucked into a small parcel between two considerably larger neighboring buildings. Single storefront, somewhat altered, but retaining traditional window-to-wall ratio.

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c. 1910

1 contributing building

43. 29-33 East Main Street (T. L. Stockert Building), commercial

Description: Substantial 2-story brick commercial building with 4 storefronts on the first story, little altered from the original. Upper façade penetrated by 1/1 flat-topped sash and further articulated with corbeled brick and stonework, including stone and brick arcaded corbel table. Symmetrical stepped parapet with name/datestone centered thereon.

Date: 1908; Draper Hughes, architect

1 contributing building

44. 43 East Main Street (A. C. Shannon Building), commercial

Description: 1-story red brick-finished commercial building with a nearly flat roof. 3-storefronts with some alterations but retaining traditional window-to-wall ratio, with recessed entry doors and large display windows. Datestone and name in panel centered on upper façade.

Date: 1956

1 contributing building

45. 45 East Main Street, commercial

Description: 3-story brick commercial building with synthetic stone cladding on the main building, which is 4 bays in width and 3 stories in height, with an altered storefront. Appended to the east side at the rear of the lot is a 1-story ell finished in a "frontier" finish. Parking lot in front. Loss of integrity due to alterations.

Date: c. 1910

1 non-contributing building

46. 57 East Main Street (Pennell & Swisher Building), commercial

Description: 3-story Italianate corner commercial building of brick construction with storefront area altered. Upper stories incorporate a 4-bay arrangement on the façade and 5 bays on the S. Florida Street elevation. Windows flat-topped, with some original sash retained, 9/1. Second-floor sash altered. Metal cornice with centered pediment on the façade and one bay of side elevation. Cornice features brackets and foliated trim. Datestone between second and third floor on façade. Historic fire insurance maps indicate the former presence of a lodge hall on the third floor.

Date: 1892

1 contributing building

47. 4-6 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: Vernacular commercial building of 2 stories, finished in painted brick, with a somewhat modified storefront and some alteration to the windows on the second story. Cornice is of brick, laid in an arcaded corbel table. Historic fire insurance maps indicate that this was the community's post office, prior to the 1916 construction of a new facility (Resource No. 1).

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Date: 1909

1 contributing building

48. 10-10½ North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 2-story Romanesque revival-style commercial building finished in red brick with yellow brick trim in an arcaded corbel table at cornice height. Storefront altered with some modification to window-to-wall ratio; traditional recessed entry retained. 4-bay upper façade with flat-topped windows with 1/1 sash. In addition to the arcaded corbel table along the cornice, other corbeled brickwork is noted as well.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

49. 12 North Kanawha Street (T. L. Stockert Building), commercial

Description: 2-story commercial building, which appears little altered from the original. Finished in buff-colored brick with a centered single door accessing the upper story, flanked by 2 storefronts on each side, each with display window and single entry door. Storefronts and door to second floor retain original glass block transoms. Symmetrically-massed upper façade with 4 flat-topped windows with original steel frame sash. Centered above the second-story windows is a date/name stone with the inscription, T L STOCKERT 1940.

Date: 1940

1 contributing building

50. 14-18-18 North Kanawha Street (Shaw Bros. Building), commercial

Description: 2-story Colonial Revival-style commercial building built of common brick with a pressed brick façade. 3 storefronts on the first story with nearly original configuration, including bulkheads of brick, recessed entry doors and Luxfer prism glass transoms. Single door accesses upper story. Upper façade is 6 bays in width, with flat-topped window openings set on a continuous stone beltcourse and capped with flared stone lintels with keystones; original sash replaced and windows shortened somewhat with infill material. Above second-story windows is a date/name stone with the legend SHAW BROS 1910. Arcaded corbel table brick cornice.

Date: 1910

1 contributing building

51. 20 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 2-story commercial building with an entirely new façade of modern brick and an apparent major modification to rhythm of fenestration and loss of historic detail, but for a datestone centered in the upper façade.

Date: 1910

1 non-contributing building

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52. 22 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: Early 20th-century commercial building of red brick with a façade of yellow brick which can barely be seen behind a non-historic veneer of baked enamel panels. Apparent modifications to fenestration and storefront. Loss of integrity due to alterations to façade.

Date: c. 1910

1 non-contributing building

53. 24 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: Built as the Colonial Motel, this is a mid-twentieth-century motel finished in red brick, L-shaped in plan and 1 story in height, with gable-end wings intersecting each other.

Date: 1958

1 contributing building

54. 26 North Kanawha Street, residential

Description: Substantial 2½-story Mission-style former residence of masonry construction, converted for office use. Finished in brown brick, with a hipped roof and broadly projecting eaves. Hipped dormer finished in imbricated shingles is centered on façade. Extending across the façade is an arcaded open brick porch, 3 bays in width and symmetrically massed, with an original turned spindle wood balustrade. Fenestration flat-topped, without notable ornament.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

55. 28 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: Former residence of brick with large non-historic institutional addition on the façade, with resulting loss of integrity.

Date: c. 1900

1 non-contributing building

56. 40 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 1-story commercial building with a single storefront, recessed centered entrance flanked by display windows. Built of concrete block with a red brick façade.

Date: c. 1960

1 contributing building

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57. 42-44 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 2-story brick commercial building with a body of red common brick and a façade finished in yellow brick. Façade incorporates large display windows flanking a centered entry (altered) and a single door on the left side accessing the upper story. Upper façade is 5 bays in width, with flat-topped openings, all but one of which retain the original 1/1 window unit; the remaining window opening has been in-filled. Brick corbelling along cornice area and tile coping along parapet.

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

58. 62 North Kanawha Street (G. F. Day Building), commercial

Description: Modest concrete block commercial building of one story, with a flat roof and little architectural detail. Random pattern of fenestration, with some window openings in-filled. Datestone with inscription G. F. DAY 1910

Date: 1910

1 contributing building

59. 49-53 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: Modest commercial building of concrete block construction with a "boomtown front" of red brick. 2 storefronts with large display windows and centered entries; one has original transom.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

60. 47 North Kanawha Street (Elks Club), fraternal

Description: modern fraternal building finished in brick and vinyl, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1980

1 non-contributing building

61. rear, 47 N. Kanawha Street, dependency

Description: concrete block outbuilding with standing-seam metal roof which appears to pre-date the non-contributing fraternal building with which it is associated.

Date: c. 1950

1 contributing building

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62. 39 North Kanawha Street (A. P. Russell House), residential

Description: Well-preserved wood frame residential building dating from the first decades of the twentieth century, with an exterior finished in shiplap siding and a 2-story sun porch on the façade, finished in imbricated shingles, with a cantilevered center bay which shields the centered main entrance to the house on the first story; porch is penetrated with bands of double-hung windows. Laterally-oriented gable roof.

Date: c. 1910

1 contributing building

63. rear, 39 North Kanawha Street, dependency

Description: stucco-finished dependency associated with Resource No. 62

Date: c. 1930

1 contributing building

64. rear, 39 North Kanawha Street, dependency

Description: 1-story wood frame dependency with overhead garage door, clad in non-historic siding, associated with Resource No. 62

Date: c. 1950

1 contributing building

65. 25 North Kanawha Street (Moose Club), fraternal

Description: 1-story modern fraternal club building finished in brick and vinyl, built outside the Period of Significance of the district.

Date: c. 1980

1 non-contributing building

66. 21 North Kanawha Street (Virginia House Hotel), commercial

Description: 3-story French Second Empire-style hotel building of wood, finished in asbestos shingles, with a reverse bellcast Mansard roof penetrated by shed dormers. Double-gallery porch on the façade, along with a 2-story bay window on the south side of the façade and a 1-story bay window on the south elevation. Fenestration flat-topped, without notable ornament.

Date: c. 1884

1 contributing building

67. 21 North Kanawha Street (Baxa Inn, motel section), commercial

Description: Built as the Baxa Motel, this is a 1- and 2-story motel finished in red brick, organized around an L-shaped plan with parking in the angle of the ell. No notable architectural detail.

Date: 1958

1 contributing building

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68. 17 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 1-story commercial building of structural tile construction finished in brick and stucco, built as the Poling Funeral Home; lack of notable architectural detail.

Date: c. 1920

1 contributing building

69. 17½ North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 1-story non-historic barber shop built of concrete block with a façade of red brick; gable roof and gable-end orientation to the street. No notable architectural detail; built outside the Period of Significance of the district..

Date: 1963

1 non-contributing building

70. 15 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 2-story commercial building of common brick, with a façade of polychrome press brick. North elevation parged. Storefront somewhat altered but retaining traditional window-to-wall ratio. Single door on the south side of the storefront accesses second floor. Upper façade features distinctive oriel, above which is decorative corbeled brickwork and a datestone bearing the date 1921.

Date: 1921

1 contributing building

71. 5-13 North Kanawha Street, commercial

Description: 3-story former hotel of wood, clad mostly in asbestos shingle siding, with Italianate-style derivation. L-shaped façade with a second-story porch in the angle of the ell. Cornice trimmed with small and large brackets. Fenestration flat-topped with replacement sash and pedimented window heads.

Date: c. 1880

1 contributing building

72. West Main & Locust Street, parking lot

Description: surface parking lot the result of demolition at an indeterminate time

Date: 1970s

1 non-contributing site

73. W. Main & S. Kanawha Street, parking lot

Description: surface parking lot the result of demolition at an indeterminate time

Date: 1970s

1 non-contributing site

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74. West Main & Spring Street, parking lot

Description: surface parking lot the result of demolition at an indeterminate time

Date: 1970s

1 non-contributing site

75. West Main & S. Florida Street, parking lot

Description: surface parking lot the result of demolition at an indeterminate time

Date: 1970s

1 non-contributing site

76. Streets and alleys throughout the historic district, road-related

Description: paved streets and alleys throughout the historic district, asphalt-paved, counted collectively as one resource

Date: 19th century and after

1 contributing structure

77. Colonial Hotel, commercial

Description: 2½-story former hotel of wood, residential in scale and massing, clad in non-historic synthetic stone, with a loss of integrity

Date: c. 1890

1 non-contributing building

Summarizing, the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District consists of the central business district of the Upshur County, West Virginia seat, the Period of Significance of which begins in 1879 and extends to 1960, spanning the greatest era of development of the City of Buckhannon. The district contains historic commercial and institutional properties reflecting the popularity of differing architectural styles throughout the Period of Significance, and while alterations have occurred to buildings in the district, the integrity of the nominated area is strong and for the most part the district reflects its appearance at the end of the Period of Significance.

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8. Significance

Introduction

The Downtown Buckhannon Historic District (Photos 1-17; Figs. 1-9) is locally significant and meets National Register Criteria A and C. With respect to Criterion A, the district is significant for its reflection of the patterns of *commerce* in Upshur County, since it consists of the downtown commercial area of the Upshur County seat, which served as a regional center of commerce throughout the 1879-1959 Period of Significance and continues to do so. The Period of Significance is established by the construction of the district's earliest documented building, the Presbyterian Church at 13 S. Locust St. (Resource No. 29) and ends in 1959, corresponding both to the National Register 50-year guideline and to the approximate date of construction of the district's most recently-constructed historic properties. The district enjoyed an unbroken span of development throughout this 81-year period, with commercial and institutional growth including, near the last years of the Period of Significance, the construction of two downtown motel properties. The date 1894 which appears as a "significant date" elsewhere in this document refers to the date of a major fire on Main Street in the heart of the district, after which nearly a full block of new buildings were erected prior to 1900.

This district's Criterion A significance in the area of *politics/government* is vested in its position as the Upshur County seat; the nominated area is anchored on the west by the 1899 Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32; Photo 1; Fig. 5) and its adjacent c. 1901 Sheriff's Residence and Jail (Resource No. 31; Photo 2) and on the east by the 1916 former Post Office (Resource No. 1; Photo 12; Fig. 9), which has been converted for use as the city hall. With respect to Criterion C, the district is significant for its strong concentration of commercial *architecture* which reflects many of the architectural styles popular throughout the Period of Significance (Photos 1-17).

Abbreviated History of the Area

Buckhannon dates its beginnings to the early decades of the nineteenth century. The first settlement of that portion of western Virginia which would become Buckhannon occurred c. 1816.

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Initially, the area was part of Monongalia County, but with the erection of Harrison County in 1784 it was encompassed within the new county. In 1816 Lewis County was formed and in 1851 portions of Randolph, Lewis, and Barbour counties were combined to form the new county of Upshur. The name selected for the new county honored Abel Parker Upshur (1790-1844), a Virginia judge, Secretary of the Navy, and Secretary of State under President John Tyler. Six magisterial districts are in the county; Buckhannon anchors the district bearing the same name.¹

The naming of the settlement which would become the Upshur County seat is shrouded in mystery and is surrounded by a disparity of opinion. In **The Buildings of West Virginia**, Allen Chambers notes, "Buckhannon and its river were named for a Delaware chieftain who lived in the vicinity."² Other accounts suggest that the river which flows through the community (outside the district) was first named by one John Buchanan, an itinerant Scottish preacher active in the 1780s and that the name of the settlement followed decades later.

The community dates its establishment to 1816 and by the early 1850s a move was afoot to create a new county and with it a county seat. Although an opposing petition asserted that it would be prohibitively costly to finance a new county and a new county seat,³ in 1852 Buckhannon was formally chartered by the Virginia General Assembly. The town remained part of the Commonwealth of Virginia until the new state of West Virginia was formed in 1863. Buckhannon's central location made it a candidate for designation as the new state's capitol and in 1866 legislation was passed to formalize Buckhannon's candidacy. A map of the community in the holdings of the Upshur County Historical Society indicates a tract reserved as the "State Capitol Ground" near the intersection of College Avenue and Florida Street, outside the district. This wishful thinking notwithstanding, a referendum in 1877 settled that question and Charleston was selected as the seat of state government, perhaps because the transportation systems in and out of Charleston were superior and because the Kanawha River was significantly more suitable to river commerce than was the Buckhannon River.

¹ H. H. Hardesty, **Hardesty's West Virginia Counties** (1883; rpt. Richwood, WV: Jim Comstock, 1973).

² Allen Chambers, **The Buildings of West Virginia**, p. 443.

³ Noel W. Tenney, "Historically Speaking," *The Record Delta*, January 12, 2001.

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Whatever the case, Buckhannon grew slowly during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1835, Joseph Martin recorded in his gazetteer that the town, still in Lewis County, "cannot be called a village, but rather a small settlement, having about 330 scattered dwelling houses extending along both sides of the river."⁴ Rugged and unsettled, the 1860 Census, the first after the establishment of the county, recorded a countywide population of 6,948.

Much of the earliest settlement of these western reaches of Virginia occurred in the broad valleys near major waterways. Among the early settlements were at Tygart's Valley and the valleys drained by the Greenbrier, Littler Kanawha, and Hughes Rivers. Overland transportation was nearly non-existent and in 1816, concomitant with the establishment of the settlement that would become Buckhannon, the Virginia General Assembly authorized a Fund for Internal Improvement, followed one year later by a General Turnpike Law which set forth a statewide network of roadways. Progress was slow, and it was not until 1824 that the Legislature appropriated funds for the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike which would access Buckhannon. Even with the state appropriation, construction did not begin until 1838 and the 'Pike was not completed until 1845. The roadway wound its way northwest from Staunton to Elkins, and then westward through Buckhannon and Weston until it reached the Ohio River, at the mouth of the Little Kanawha River at Parkersburg. Buckhannon's earliest growth—slow as it was—was spurred by its location along the Turnpike which linked the Shenandoah Valley to the Ohio River Valley and the new American West.⁵

In 1821, the Farnsworth family came to the area from New York, having traded a portion of Staten Island for most of the real estate that would become Buckhannon. In 1822 the Farnsworths erected a house which survived until it was destroyed by fire in 1919; it stood at an angle to Main Street, indicating that it pre-dated the formal surveying of the Turnpike which passed through Buckhannon along present-day Main Street.⁶ Daniel D. T. Farnsworth would become the second Governor of West

⁴ Joseph Martin, *A New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia and the District of Columbia* (Charlottesville: Author, 1835), 364.

⁵ "Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike," (Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike Alliance, n. d.), 4-5.

⁶ "Historic Upshur County," (Buckhannon: Upshur County Historical Society, 1991), n. p.

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Virginia and the stone-fronted commercial building erected by T. J. Farnsworth (23-25 West Main Street; Resource No. 22; Photo 3; Fig. 6) stands in the heart of the historic district.

Religious institutional growth in Buckhannon mirrored the community's economic growth and was initially slow. The earliest denominations in the county were the Methodists and Baptists, who were followed by the United Brethren, Dunkards, and Roman Catholics. Methodists outnumbered them all, including Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, and African Methodist Episcopal congregations. A Methodist church first occupied the present-day site of the former Post Office at East main and Florida Streets. Within the district, the 1879 Presbyterian Church (Resource No. 29) provides a link between the commercial life of the downtown and the community's spiritual wellbeing.

With the founding of Upshur County in March of 1851, the need immediately arose for a seat of government. In June of the same year a committee selected two lots at the corner of Main and Locust Streets, fronting on the Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike. A 2-story Greek Revival-style building with a pedimented tetrastyle portico and a dome-capped drum along the roof was built from designs by Robert Maxwell. Despite several fires, the 1851 court house served the county until; it was demolished in 1899 to be replaced by the present seat of county government on the same site (Photo 1; Fig. 5).⁷

The location of the Turnpike notwithstanding, Buckhannon's growth was not fast-paced. In 1861, a group of Presbyterians tried to establish the Baxter Institute, to provide secondary education in the community (Baxter Street, outside of the district, commemorates this venture). Unfortunately, the advent of the Civil War put a halt to their efforts, particularly after Union troops which were camped nearby confiscated the building materials intended for the new school.⁸

Buckhannon and Upshur County remained staunchly pro-Union during the conflict. The area was spared any major action during the War, although in July, 1861, Gen. George McClellan and his troops encamped near present-day Park Street (outside the nominated area) en route to the Battle of

⁷ "Upshur County and Its Courthouses," (Buckhannon: Buckhannon: Buckhannon Historic Landmarks Commission, 2008).

⁸ Upshur County Historical Society, *Op. Cit.*

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Rich Mountain in Randolph County. The County's only major encounters were the capture of the Upshur Militia at Centerville and the Battle of Water Tank Hill, in Buckhannon near the intersection of Marion and Kanawha Streets, also outside the district.⁹

Several other early attempts to establish educational institutions in Buckhannon, including the Buckhannon Male and Female Academy (1847) and the aforementioned Baxter Institute met with little success. With the June 20, 1863 birth of the State of West Virginia, the Legislature established a system of free schools. An 1871 map of the town (Fig. 1) shows an early schoolhouse Main Street east of Florida Street; this school was eventually replaced by a 1909 building which presently houses a community youth center (outside the district). Buildings associated with present-day public education are located outside the nominated area.

Post-secondary education does, however, play a significant role in Buckhannon's cultural history. In the 1880s, a considerably more successful educational venture was born here. The West Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church acquired a 43-acre tract of land and established a seminary in Buckhannon. In 1890 the school accepted its first students; it would go on to become West Virginia Wesleyan University, a major cultural and economic anchor in the community with a student population of 1,400. The campus lies along College Street, several blocks east of the historic district. The University's Agnes Howard Hall was listed in the National Register in 1983. While the college is not within the nominated area, its presence clearly contributed to the economic fortunes of the district throughout the district's Period of Significance.

As early homes dating from the first decades of settlement were replaced by more substantial business buildings, Main Street and the area encompassed by the historic district remained the center of Buckhannon's commercial life (Photos 3, 4, 5, 6, 8). Following the War, the arrival of the West Virginia and Pittsburgh Railroad in 1883 spurred Buckhannon's—and Upshur County's—first major industrial growth, in an area immediately north of the historic district.¹⁰ The WV & P had been formed with the

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Alan Clarke, *The West Virginia and Pittsburg Railroad: The B & O's Road to the Hardwoods* (Forest, Virginia: TLC Publishing Co., 2003).

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merger of several smaller lines to connect with the Baltimore & Ohio line at Clarksburg. Historian Ronald Lewis notes, "Local initiatives began immediately to link regional towns and thereby open up the area's timber, coal, and agricultural resources for development." The line was so successful that in 1890 the B & O leased the operation for 999 years, a deal which was soon converted to an outright acquisition. Lewis continues,

In his Golden Anniversary history of the state in 1913, historian and booster James Morton Callahan observed that each branch of the West Virginia and Pittsburgh 'terminated in a region previously unopened but quickly responsive to the touch of capital.' The "touch of capital" quickly left its mark on the countryside, most visibly in the increase of bustle in formerly sleepy towns or in the development of new towns where none had formerly existed.¹¹

The first steam-powered sawmill in the county soon ushered in others, and in the decade between 1880 and 1890 such mills were in operation all over the county. Lumber became a driving force in the community as cut logs were hauled to Buckhannon by wagon to be finished and shipped to markets in the east and Midwest.

Lewis' history of the Appalachian regional railroads continues with specific treatment of Buckhannon:

Buckhannon, the Upshur County seat, was a commercial center for the surrounding countryside before the railroad arrived, but its growth and development as a lumber town was further stimulated by improved transportation. The J. G Griffith Company mills drew timber from the surrounding counties, as did the Buckhannon Boom and Lumber Company. Approximately one-half of Upshur County was still covered in virgin forests in 1893 but after the arrival of the railroad the remainder soon disappeared. In 1884, a reporter for the Wheeling Register wrote that before the arrival of the connecting line, Buckhannon had been a "quite, pleasant, but apathetic little country town." Now, he observed, "the noise of pounding of hammers" was heard from every direction, drays moved constantly through the streets, and new churches, schools and churches were being built. A large woolen mill, a handle factory, a large planing mill,

¹¹ Ronald Lewis, **Transforming the Appalachian Countryside: Railroads, Deforestation, and Social Change in West Virginia, 1880-1920** (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

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two wagon and carriage factories, sawmills, lumber yards, a log boom and two large flouring mills had also been constructed in the village. Given the economic development stimulated by railroads, the reported declared, "It is not surprising that the people further on in the interior are longing for the time to come when capital and enterprise shall reach their borders and unlock their doors."¹²

The railroad continued to play a major role in the economy of the area for the ensuing decades. Passenger service to and from Buckhannon continued only until 1958; the town is presently served by the freight service of CSX.

As noted by Lewis, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industrial development in Buckhannon was located along the B & O Railroad and the Buckhannon River. Included among these enterprises were milling and lumber, including the Star Mills along the Buckhannon River, Parker Bowman & Company's Buckhannon Planing Mill, the A. G. Giffin Saw and Planing Mill, the Alton Lumber and Coal Company, the lumber, carpentry, and planing mill of H. S. Stockert & Co., and William Flaccus' Oak Leather Company. The State Window Glass Company was located in this area as well.¹³ All of these operations were located adjacent to the historic district but their success and that of their owners clearly contributed to the economic wellbeing of the downtown area.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate that much of Main Street's first generation of architecture was of wood construction. As often occurred, a major fire struck the downtown in October, 1894 destroying nearly a full block of West Main Street. By the time of publication of the 1898 Sanborn Map, the "burned block" was nearly one-half rebuilt, this time of masonry; by the time the 1904 Sanborn map was published the burned block had been completely rebuilt.¹⁴ Progress in the arena of public works occurred during this time as well, typified by the brick-paving of Main Street early in the 1890s.¹⁵

¹² **ibid.**

¹³ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Buckhannon, West Virginia.* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1894, 1898, 1904).

¹⁴ **ibid.**

¹⁵ Upshur County Historical Society, **Images of America: Upshur County** (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing Co., 2001), p. 12.

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By the turn of the twentieth century, Buckhannon supported two hotels, two restaurants, three pharmacies, three milliners, four barber shops, three jewelers, three financial institutions, three newspapers, two hospitals, a bakery, two opera houses and no fewer than five grocery stores, most of which were located in the downtown.¹⁶ Buckhannon's fortunes also maintained their strong ties to the natural resource industry, including oil, gas, and lumber, ties which remain to this day.

Throughout the balance of the Period of Significance of the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District, the community retained much of its historic character. Downtown retailing remained a mainstay of the business community, supported by the industrial and wholesale base of the area, including that of the A. P. Russell Company on at 42-44 North Kanawha Street (Resource No. 57; Photo 14). Wholesalers and retailers of farm equipment, building supplies, auto parts, and, as their motto stated, "whatever you have or whatever you want," The Russell business also bought and sold significant amounts of raw wool and in 1932 were written about in the local newspaper when they shipped 12,000 pounds of walnuts to urban markets.¹⁷ Russell lived across the street from his store at 62 North Kanawha Street (Resource No. 62; Photo 15).

In the years following the end of the Period of Significance, the area nominated as the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District has remained a significant regional retail, business, and government center, although, typical of most communities, new development has moved outside the traditional central business district. In Buckhannon, this development includes the construction of modern retail establishments and "big box" retail outlets at the periphery of the downtown as well as the construction of two new bank buildings (Resource Nos. 10 and 33) within the historic district.

¹⁶ Mary Ann Spears, "Historically Speaking 1900-1903," *The Record Delta*, May 11, 2001.

¹⁷ *Buckhannon Register*, February 4, 1932.

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Applicable National Register Criteria

This historic district meets National Register Criteria A and C on a local basis. Its Criterion A significance for *commerce* derives from its irrefutable position as the commercial hub of Upshur County throughout the 1879-1959 Period of Significance. Buckhannon has always been the largest municipality in the county and remains the county's only incorporated city. Downtown Buckhannon and the area encompassed within the historic district, lined with commercial buildings and business blocks from the late decades of the nineteenth century and the first five of the twentieth, has served the retail and business needs of the county and the area for decades.

With further respect to Criterion A, this district is significant in the area of *politics/government*, since it is the county seat of Upshur County and contains within the district the 1899 Upshur County Court House. The business of the county has been transacted within this historic district since the time Upshur County was formed and throughout the entirety of the Period of Significance. As with all county seats, the Court House being located here contributes significantly to the commercial prosperity of the community as well. Supporting the countywide governmental are two historic properties which have served as the community's post office. The commercial building at 4-6 North Kanawha Street (Resource No. 47) appears on historic fire insurance maps as the post office early in the twentieth century, immediately before the construction of the 1916 post office (Resource No. 1) at 70 East Main Street.

The district's Criterion C significance for *architecture* is supported by the presence in the district of a strong concentration of commercial and public-sector institutional buildings whose construction dates span the Period of Significance. The styles represented include the Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, and one example of 1950s roadside architecture, as well as a variety of buildings representing vernacular building traditions in Buckhannon and Upshur County. Specific examples of buildings representing these particular styles and substantiating the Criterion C area of significance are discussed in Section 7.

The Criterion C significance is firmly established by the existence of these various styles in the district, and is strengthened by the fact that several of these buildings represent the work of locally and

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nationally-reputed architects. Harrison Albright (1866-1933) was a Philadelphian who entered the practice of architecture in his home town at the age of twenty. He relocated to Charleston, West Virginia in 1891 and served as the State Architect, designing an annex to the State Capitol along with institutional buildings in Huntington, Fairmont, Keyser, and Shepherdstown. He is best known for his 1901 design of the West Baden Springs Hotel in Indiana, which when first constructed had the largest clear-span dome in the world. Within the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District he designed the 1899 Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32; Photo 1) when he was but thirty years of age. In 1905 he moved to California where he remained for the rest of his life.

The role of James A. Wetmore in the design of federal institutional buildings across the nation cannot be overemphasized. A New York native, Wetmore (1863-1940) came to work at the Treasury Department—which oversaw all federal construction projects—first as a stenographer, rising through the ranks until the departure of Supervising Architect Oscar Wenderoth in 1915 when he was named Acting Supervising Architect. A 1934 *Time* magazine article published at the time of his retirement at the age of 71 called him “Cornerstone Man” and stated that “through his offices, which occupy nearly the entire top floor of the Treasury Building, have passed all the plans for all the buildings in the greatest building program in which the U. S. Government has ever indulged.”¹⁸ The cornerstones of more than 2,000 federal buildings built under the administrations of Presidents Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, Hoover and FDR, bear his name. The 1916 Buckhannon Post Office (Resource No. 1), dating from the Wilson Administration, is one of them.

Draper Hughes practiced architecture in Buckhannon during the early years of the Period of Significance of the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District. Little is known of him, but he apparently was well-versed in his field since some of the community’s finest landmarks buildings represent his work. Among these are the homes of U. G. Young, Judge J. C. McWorter, J. W. Stewart, a major remodeling of the William Post Mansion, and the Baptist

¹⁸ *Time*, December 10, 1934.

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Church—all outside the historic district. Within the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District Hughes is known to have designed the 1904 T. L. Stockard Building, a 2-story commercial block at 16 East Main Street (Resource No. 43; Photo 7) which for decades contained the Home Hardware Co.

The Downtown Buckhannon Historic District and Other Comparable Resources

Within the local context of the region, no other historic districts in Upshur County are listed in the National Register. Other Buckhannon listings (all outside this district) include Agnes Howard Hall on the Campus of West Virginia Wesleyan College (NR 1983), the Southern Methodist Church (NR 1992; now the local history museum of the Upshur County Historical Society), and the William Post Mansion (NR 1993). At the time of preparation of this nomination, only two other properties in the county were listed, a mill in Arlington and a church in French Creek.

In neighboring Randolph County, the Beverly Historic District (NR 1980) dates to the earliest years of the nineteenth century and consists of a village-scale historic district typified by homes, churches, and commercial buildings of a considerably smaller scale than those found in downtown Buckhannon. The Downtown Elkins Historic District (NR 1995) contains resources of a scale and character similar to Buckhannon, but many of its buildings have undergone more sweeping modifications than those in the Buckhannon district. The other two Elkins districts are completely different from downtown Buckhannon: the Davis & Elkins College district incorporates a college campus and the Wees Historic District (NR 2006) includes a significantly-altered commercial corridor and a substantial residential neighborhood.

Weston is the county seat of Lewis County, immediately west of Upshur County. Two in-town historic districts are in Weston, one residential (NR 2005) and the other a downtown district. The Weston Downtown Historic District (NR 1985) includes the county court house and nearby commercial buildings. The fortunes of the Weston downtown district have been directly impacted by the closing of

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the historic and mammoth Weston State Hospital (NR 1999) which is located at the edge of the district and provided a significant economic base to the community during its decades of operation.

One other comparable district which also depended on the fortunes of the lumber industry is the Ronceverte Historic District (NR 2005), located approximately 100 miles to the south in Greenbrier County. Like Buckhannon, Ronceverte lies along a river, the Greenbrier, and matured with the burgeoning of the lumber industry. Ronceverte, however, is not a county seat and its built environment is somewhat eclipsed by the grandeur of Lewisburg (Lewisburg Historic District, NR 1978), the nearby Greenbrier County seat. Further, Ronceverte's architecture is of a significantly smaller scale than that found in downtown Buckhannon and a significant portion of downtown Ronceverte was wiped out by a fire and the 1920s post-fire buildings are of an entirely different character than the late 1890s post-fire buildings found in the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District.

Summary

Summarizing, the Downtown Buckhannon Historic District retains integrity and meets National Register Criterion A for its local association with the patterns of *politics/government* and *commerce*, as the Upshur County seat and the long-time hub of commerce in the county, and Criterion C for *architecture*, containing examples of many of the architectural styles popular during the 1879-1959 Period of Significance, among which are the Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Neo-Classical Revival, and Colonial Revival styles.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northeast corner of the property containing Resource No. 1, then westerly along the rear property line of the properties facing Main Street c. 460' to the northwest corner of the property containing Resource No. 9; then northerly along the rear property lines of the properties facing North Kanawha Street c. 385' to the northwest corner of the property containing Resource No. 61; then westerly along the north property line of the property containing Resource Nos. 61 and 59 c. 275' to the western curblines of North Kanawha Street; then northerly along the western curblines of North Kanawha Street c. 150' to the northeast corner of the property containing Resource No. 56; then westerly c. 100' to the northwest corner of the property containing Resource No. 58; then southerly along the rear property lines of the properties facing North Kanawha Street c. 500' to the south curblines of an unnamed alley; then westerly along the south curblines of said unnamed alley c. 90' to the northwest corner of the property containing Resource No. 27; then southerly along the western property line of the property containing Resource No. 27 to the north lot lines of the properties containing Resource Nos. 72 and 27; then westerly along the northern property line of the properties containing Resource Nos. 72 and 27 c. 70' to the eastern curblines of Locust Street; then southerly along the eastern curblines of Locust Street c. 165' to a point opposite the northeast corner of Resource No. 28; then westerly along the northerly property line of Resource No. 28 c. 110' to the northwest corner of the property containing Resource No. 28; then southerly along the rear property lines of the properties facing Locust Street c. 90' to the southwest corner of Resource No. 29; then easterly along the south property lines of Resource No. 29 and 30 to the west curblines of Chancery Street; then northerly along the west curblines of Chancery Street c. 70' to the southern property line of the Upshur County Court House and Annex (Resource No. 32); then westerly along the rear property lines of the properties facing Main Street c. 600' to the southeast corner of the property containing Resource No. 46; then northerly along the east property line of Resource No. 46 c. 120' to the north curblines of East Main Street; then easterly along the north curblines of East Main Street c. 80' to the southeast corner of the property containing Resource No. 1; then northerly along the east property line of Resource No. 1 c. 150' to the place of beginning.

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Boundary Justification

These boundaries are based the character of the resources both within and outside of the nominated area and were drawn to encompass the historic central business district of downtown Buckhannon, consisting primarily of a densely-developed downtown area containing commercial buildings, several institutional properties, and only a small number of immediately adjacent residential properties. The areas outside the boundaries contain a nearly exclusive residential area to the east, modern commercial development to the south and west, and the former rail yards to the north, lacking in historic resources.

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

All Photos:

Buckhannon Historic District

Upshur County, WV

David L. Taylor, 2008

Images filed with SHPO and NPS

1. Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32), façade, looking southeast and showing massing, pedimented portico, dome, etc.
2. Sherriff's Residence and Jail (Resource No. 31), looking northeast and showing overall form, finishes, and fenestration of former Sheriff's Residence, the stone jail behind, and the rear of the Court House
3. Streetscape, West Main Street, north side, looking northeast, with 43-51 West Main (Resource No. 27) in the foreground
4. 23 West Main Street (Resource No. 21), façade, looking northwest and showing dense development of Main Street and the Romanesque Revival-style detailing of the subject property, second-story loggia, corbeled brickwork, etc.
5. Peoples Bank Building (Resource No. 15), southwest perspective looking northeast and showing 5-story character, Queen Anne-style tower, polychrome brick finishes, etc.
6. Streetscape, Main Street, south side, looking southwest, with the T. L. Stockert Building, 29-33 West Main Street (Resource No. 33) in the foreground and the dome of the Upshur County Court House (Resource No. 32) in the background; also showing period-appropriate decorative streetlights.

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7. T. L. Stockert Building (29-33 West Main Street; Resource No. 43), façade, looking southeast and showing the unaltered character of this property, the work of local architect Draper Hughes.
8. Streetscape, Main Street, looking northwest and showing a non-contributing bank building at 32 east Main Street (Resource No.10) , followed by the 1904 Stockert Building (Resource No. 11).
9. Italianate-style commercial building at 14 East Main Street (Resource No. 12), looking northwest and showing metal cornice, upper façade with metal lintels, flanked by late-nineteenth-century commercial architecture on both sides.
10. Dairy Queen, 58 East Main Street (1954; Resource No. 4), looking northwest.
11. Pennell & Swisher Building, 57 East Main Street (Resource No. 46), northwest perspective, looking southeast and showing altered storefronts, some replacement windows and intact third story and cornice.
12. U. S. Post Office, 70 West Main Street (1916; Resource No. 1), façade, looking northeast and showing angled corner.
13. Streetscape, N. Kanawha Street, looking northwest, with 4-6 N. Kanawha (Resource No. 47) in the foreground and showing less ornamental design of this secondary commercial streetscape.
14. A. P. Russell store building, 42-44 N. Kanawha Street (Resource No. 57), façade, looking southwest
15. A. P. Russell House, 39 N. Kanawha Street (Resource No. 62), northwest perspective, looking southeast and showing shingles finish of façade, double porch, fenestration, etc.
16. Virginia House Hotel, 21 N. Kanawha Street (Resource No. 66), southwest perspective looking northeast and showing overall French Second Empire-style form and roof with dormers, double-gallery porch asbestos shingle finish, addition on rear, etc.

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17. Streetscape, N. Kanawha Street, looking southeast (left to right, 15 and 5-13 N. Kanawha Street; Resource Nos. 70 and 71) and showing dense development of this part of the street, with the rear of the Peoples Bank Building (Resource No. 15) at right.

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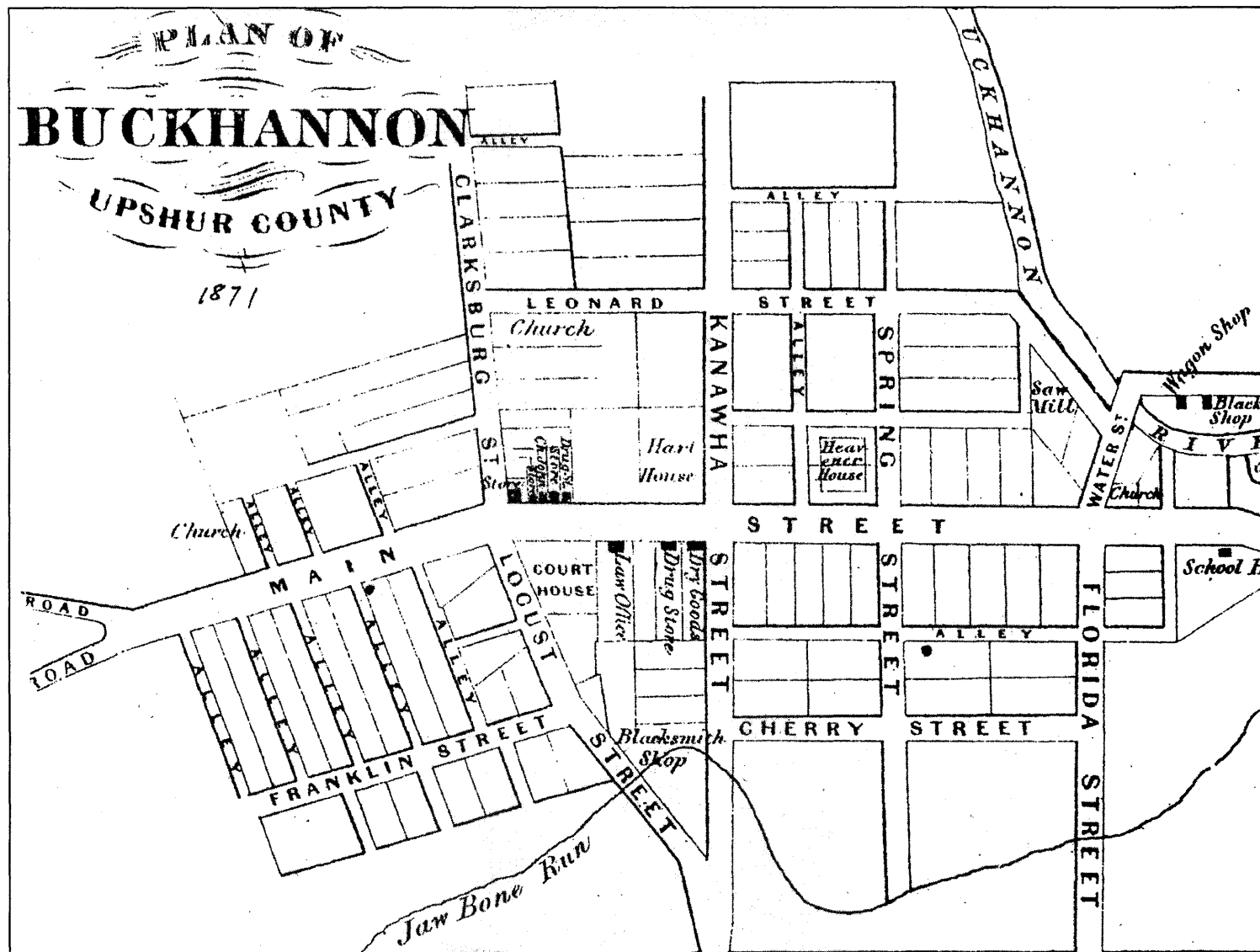


Figure 1 This 1871 plan of the community shows the Upshur County Court House at the intersection of Main and Locust Streets and the Methodist Church on the present site of the City Hall, formerly the Post Office. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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Figure 2 This segment from civil engineer Jacob Chase's 1879 map of the community shows the existence of a variety of homes and commercial buildings. Many of the buildings on the north side of Main Street between Locust and Kanawha Streets would be lost in the Great Fire of 1894. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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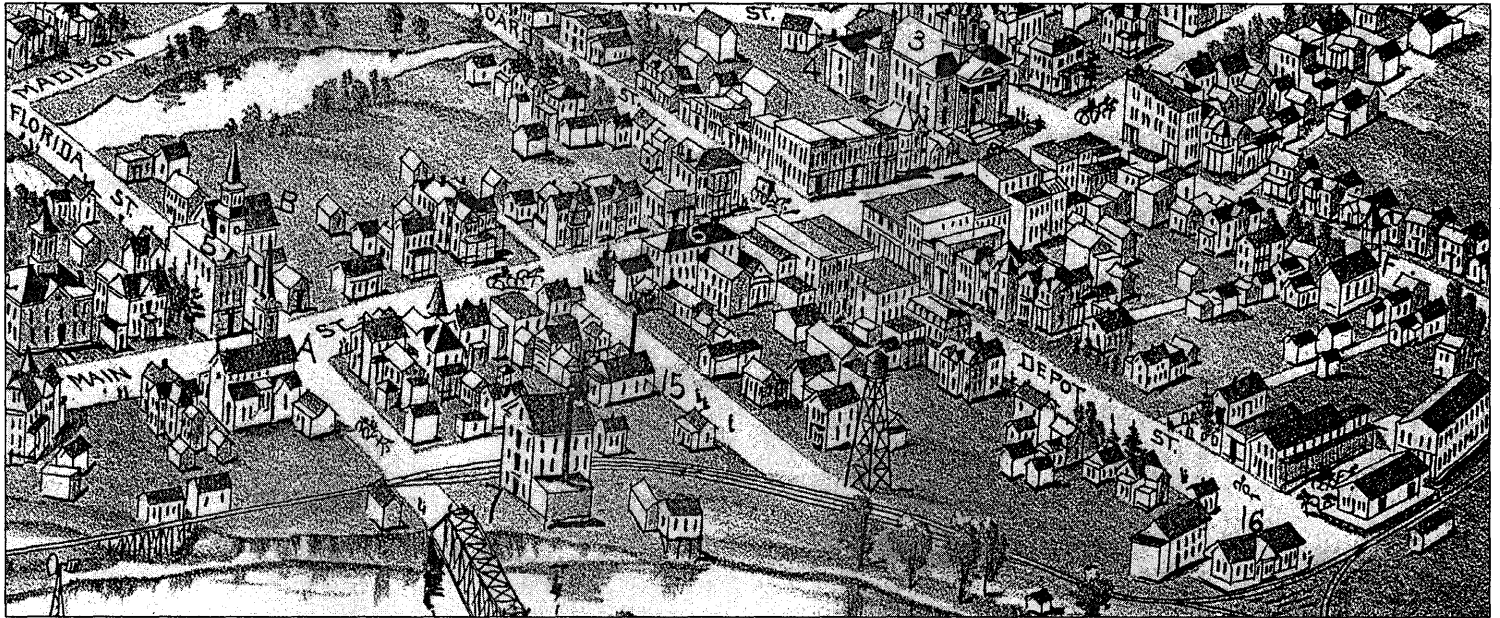


Figure 3 This segment from lithographer T. M. Fower's 1900 bird's-eye view of the community shows the built-up character of the downtown at that time. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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Figure 4 This 1908 postcard view of the north side of Main Street west of Locust Street shows many of the buildings as they remain today. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]



Figure 5 An early 20th-century view of the Court House, shortly after its completion. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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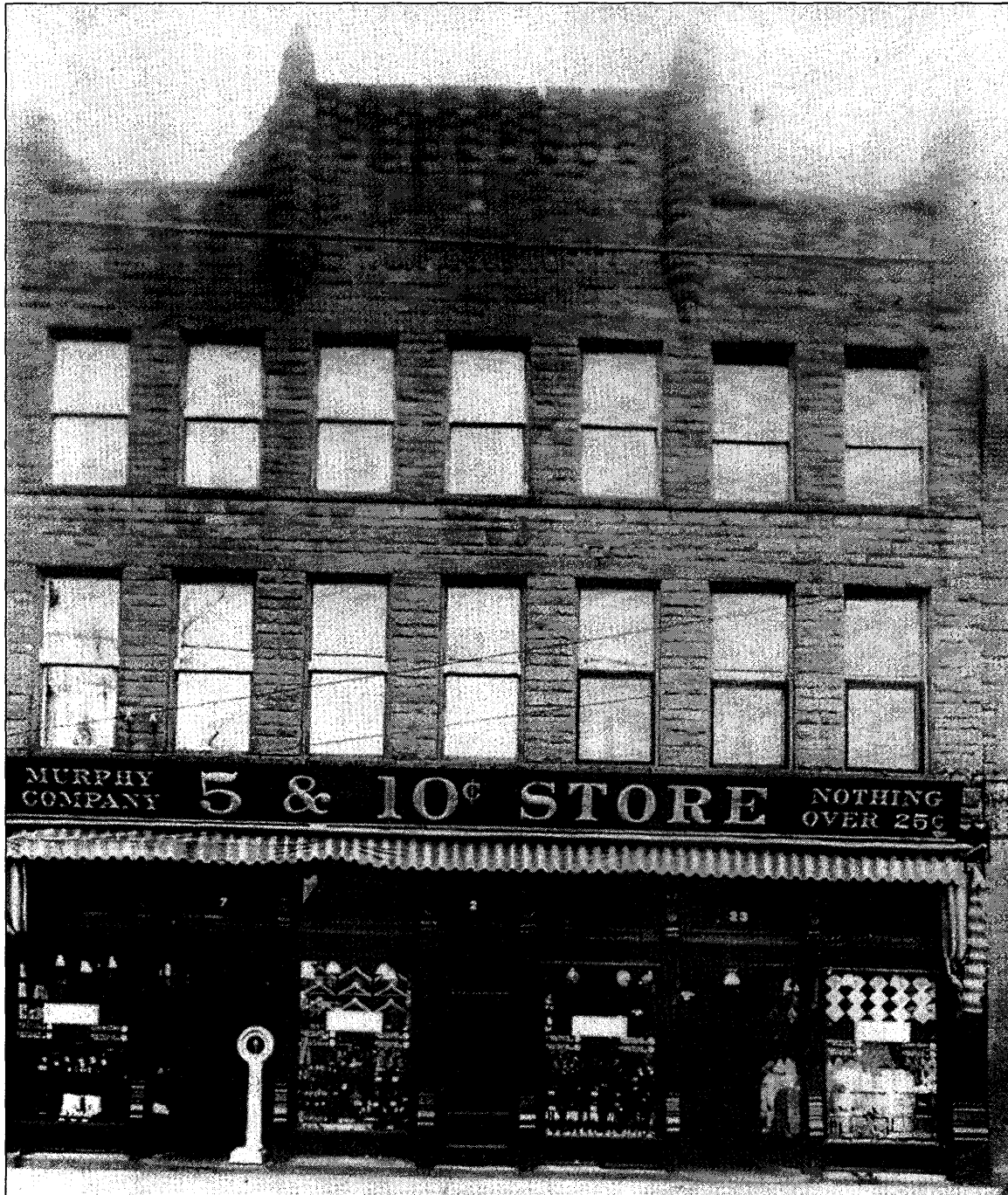


Figure 6 The stone-fronted Farnsworth Building during its occupancy by the G. C. Murphy Company, a Pennsylvania-based 5- and 10-cent store. [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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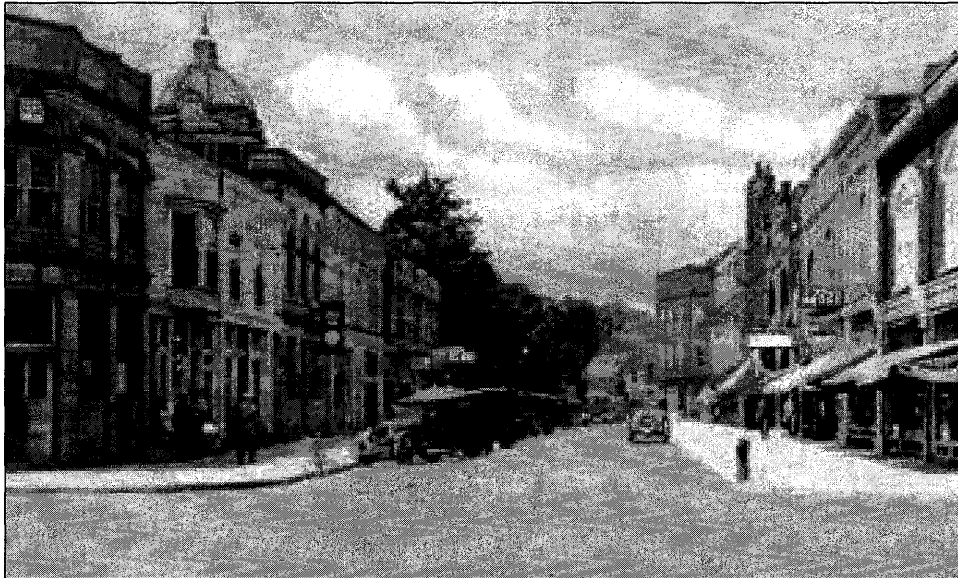


Figure 7 Main Street in a 1927 post card view; the dome of the Court House appears at the left.
[Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

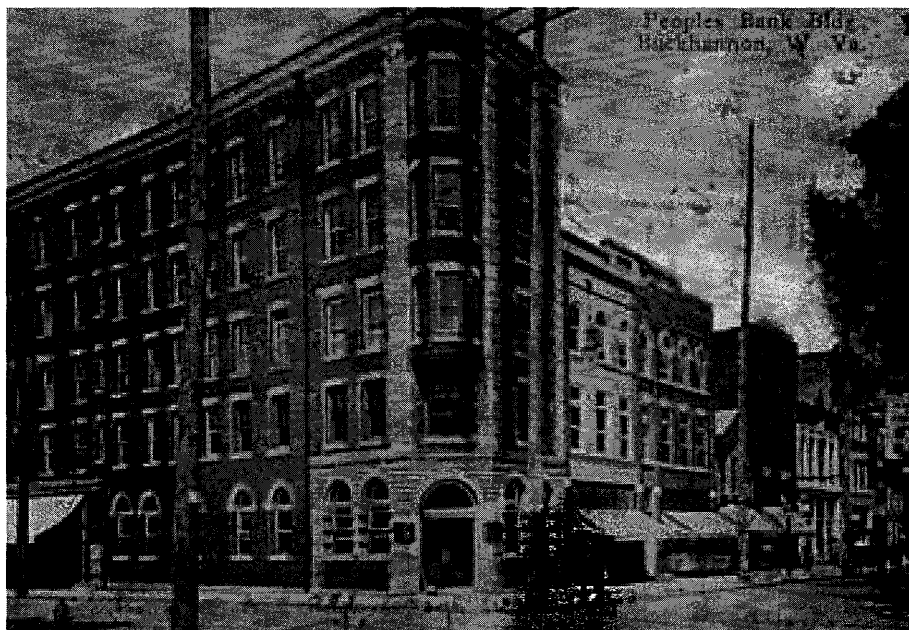


Figure 8 Post card view of the Peoples Bank Building and the adjacent streetscape
[Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

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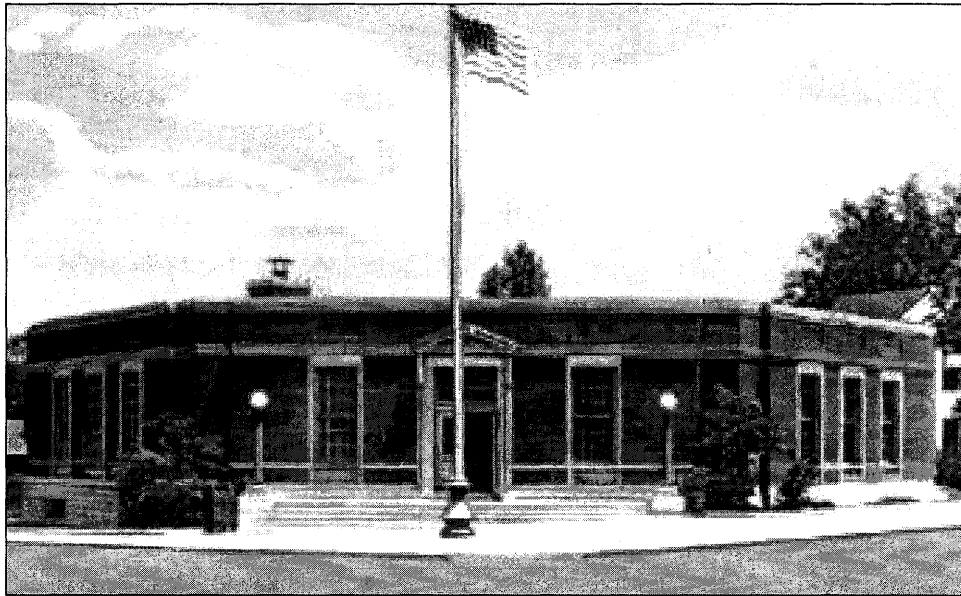


Figure 9 1940s linen post card view of the U. S. Post Office, now used as city hall [Courtesy of the Upshur County Historical Society]

DOWNTOWN BUCKHANNON HISTORIC DISTRICT
Buckhannon, Upshur County, West Virginia

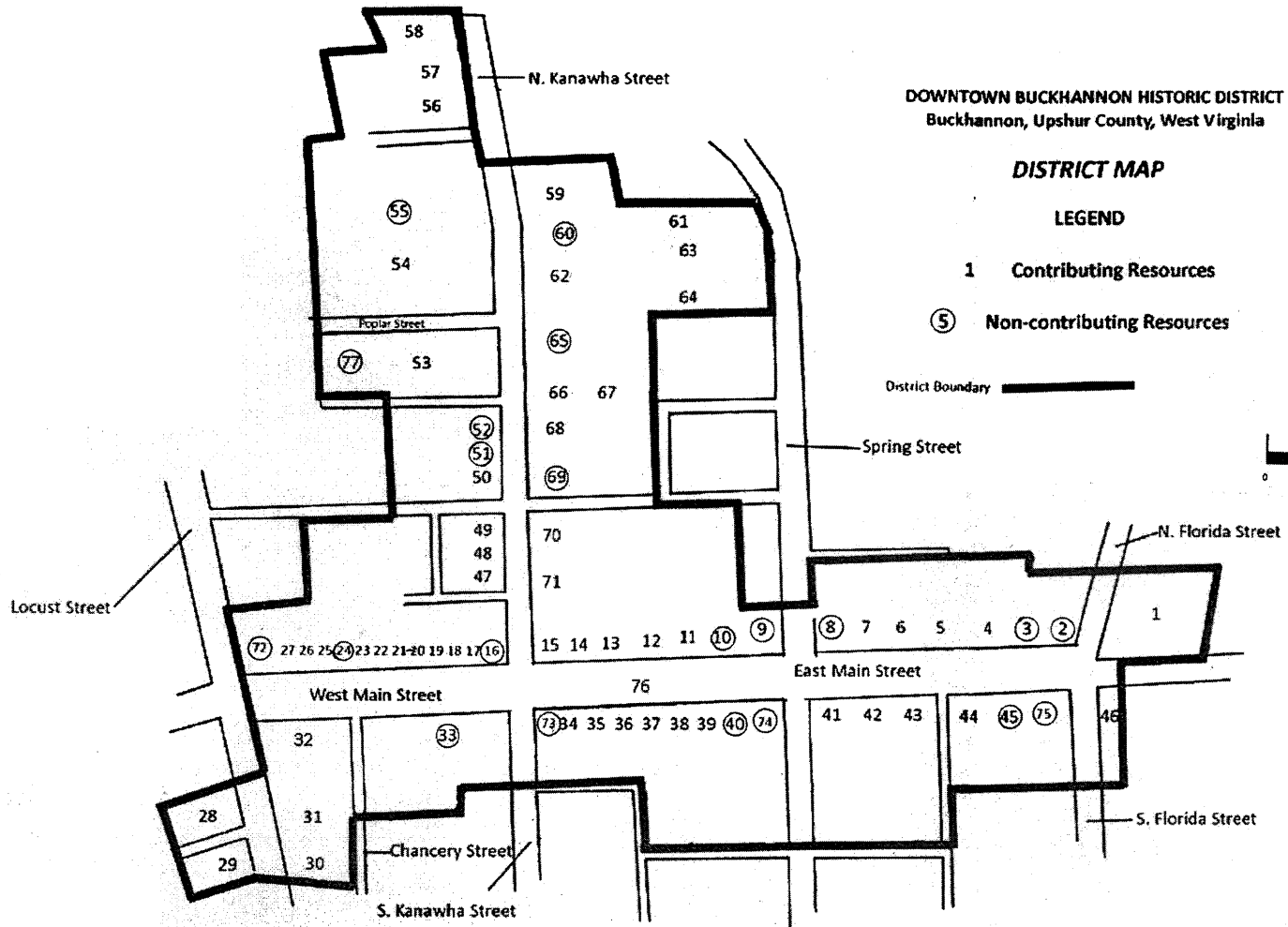
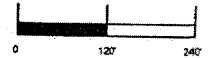
DISTRICT MAP

LEGEND

1 Contributing Resources

⑤ Non-contributing Resources

District Boundary 



TAYLOR & TAYLOR ASSOCIATES, INC.
Historic Preservation & Community Development Specialists
Brookville, PA

2009


DOWNTOWN BUCKHANNON HISTORIC DISTRICT
 Buckhannon, Upshur County, West Virginia

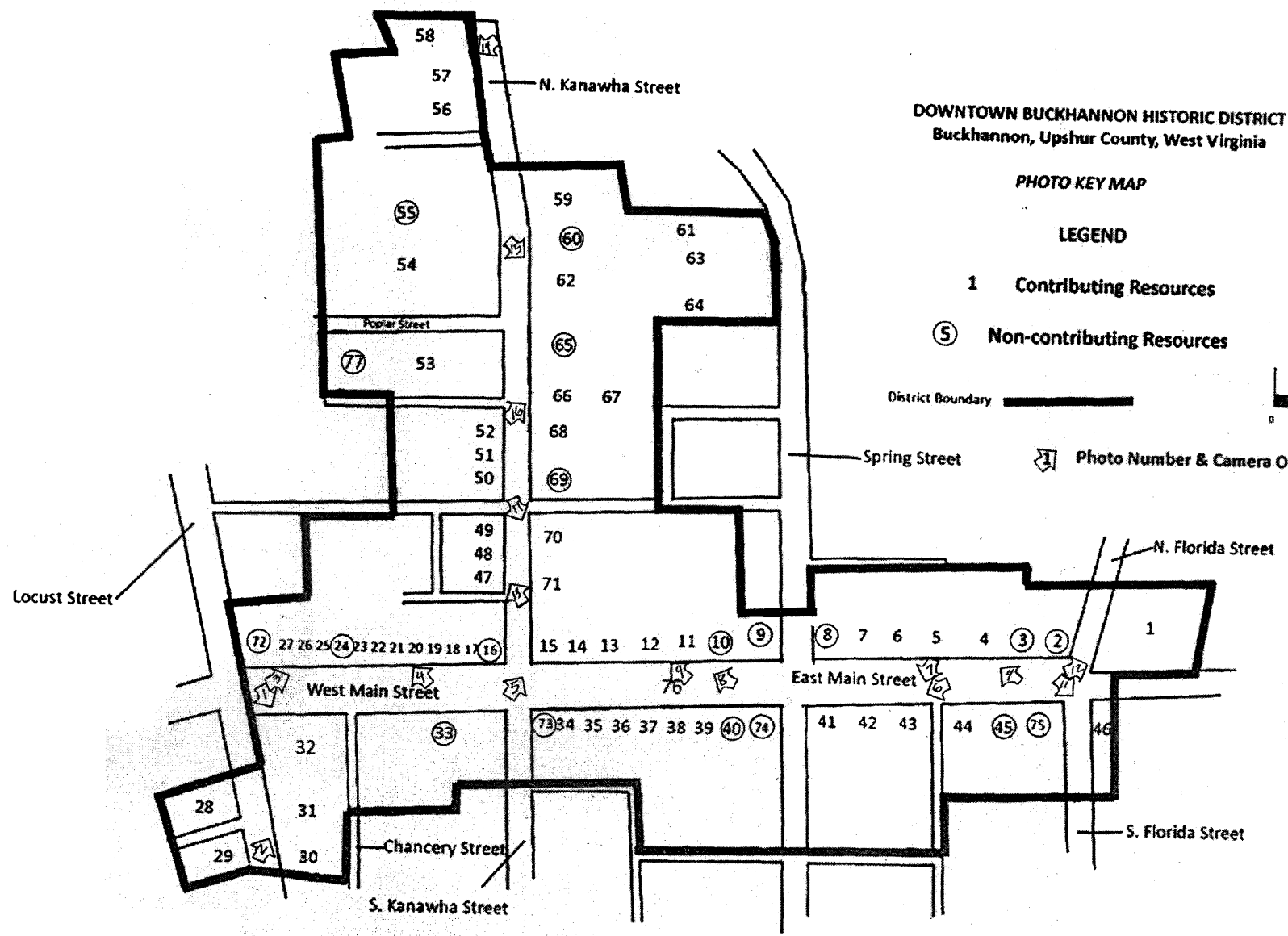
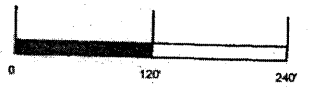
PHOTO KEY MAP

LEGEND

- 1** Contributing Resources
- ⑤** Non-contributing Resources

District Boundary 

 Photo Number & Camera Orientation



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