

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JAN 27 1993
NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sand Spring Presbyterian Church
other names/site number Sand Spring Church

2. Location

Intersection of Lafayette County routes 354
street & number and 399 in the Orwood community n/a not for publication
city, town Water Valley x vicinity
state Mississippi code MS county Lafayette code 71 zip code 38606

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Kenneth H. P. Paul JAN. 22, 1993
Signature of certifying official Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 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:)
for entered in the National Register 2/25/93
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Religion: religious facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Religion: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: vernacular rural church

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, concrete block

walls weatherboard
shingles

roof composition shingles

other n/a

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Property

The property nominated to the National Register of Historic Places is the Sand Spring Presbyterian Church building and the maintained grounds immediately surrounding the church. The nominated property is an approximately 1.4-acre portion of the approximately 17-plus-acre church property that comprises the church and its immediate grounds, woodlands, and a cemetery west of the church.

The Church

Sand Spring Presbyterian Church is a single room, wood frame structure constructed as a church in 1854. The building is approximately 38 feet 3 inches by 48 feet 4 inches overall in plan, and approximately 27 feet overall from grade to the ridge. The north and south elevations are gable ends; the east and west elevations have a soffit and cornice.

Original construction is post-and-beam on fieldstone foundation piers; the spaces between the original piers have been infilled with concrete block and the exterior of the foundation wall is painted throughout. Floor joists are 13 or 14 inches by 5 or 6 inches, and sills and the center beam are approximately 10 inches high by 11 inches wide. All members evident in the crawl space probably are original: hand-adzed throughout, and assembled without nails or other metal fasteners. Most structural members have very minor termite damage. From the weatherboard nailing pattern, posts and studs are at regular 16- to 18-inch intervals except below window sills where a single stud is centered below each window opening.

The exterior finish on the north, east and west elevations is the original painted weatherboards applied directly to the wood frame with square-cut nails at each post or stud. (Wire nails first appeared in Lafayette County after 1880.) Weatherboards are laid with 5-1/2-inch exposure. The exterior finish on the south

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1854

Significant Dates
1854

Cultural Affiliation
n/a

Significant Person
n/a

Architect/Builder
Turner, William/Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Sand Spring Presbyterian Church is particularly significant as an example of a building type and period, and for its state of preservation. The church was constructed in 1854 and retains its original exterior construction and interior configuration, including a post-and-beam frame, most weatherboarding, doors, windows, trim and interior furnishings.

The church is a rare surviving example of double-entrance wood-frame vernacular rural churches of the antebellum period in Mississippi. This vernacular form was favored for small rural churches, especially by Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian congregations from the 1830s into the 1870s, with a few examples built as late as the turn-of-the-century. Other extant examples of antebellum double-entrance wood-frame vernacular rural churches identified in the historic resource inventory files of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History's Historic Preservation Division include Bethany Presbyterian Church in Ariel (Amite County), Concord Presbyterian Church in Madison County, Boykin Methodist Church in Smith County, Friendship Presbyterian Church in Chickasaw County, and Franklin Presbyterian Church in Holmes County.

The church's post and beam construction -- hand-hewn and -adzed -- represents the antique techniques prevalent among early nineteenth century American pioneers settling new territory, techniques soon abandoned when mill-sawn lumber became locally available. Even square-cut nails such as those in the church's weatherboards survived only briefly until further industrialization brought wire nails. The large one-room gabled form, free of ornament, and the interior configuration of two aisles and a center section of pews with dividers -- all intact -- represents a simple type of early vernacular rural architecture that is increasingly rare in well-maintained examples.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Karr, Maxine H. "Orwood." In *The Heritage of Lafayette County, 176-178*. Oxford, MS: Skipwith Historical and Geneological Society, Inc., 1986.

Lafayette County, MS. Chancery Clerk. Deed Book I, p 315.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 1.4 acres

UTM References

A

16	249960	3793750
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

--	--	--

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

D

--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning point 1496.50 feet east of the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of Section 34, Township 9 South - Range 5 West, thence running east 220.00 feet, thence south 280.00 feet, thence west 220.00 feet, thence north 280.00 feet to the point of beginning, and containing 1.4 acres more or less.

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Boundary Justification The existing property of Sand Spring Presbyterian Church is the original property conveyed from James Brown to the Elders of "Sand Spring Church" as recorded with the Chancery Clerk of Lafayette County in Deed Book I, page 315 on June 25, 1859. The verbal boundary description cited above delimits the maintained grounds immediately around the church. The boundary as submitted does not include a nearby cemetery because it is visually separate from the church building.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Robbins

organization John Robbins Architects date September 25, 1992

street & number POB 528 telephone (601) 234-4994

city or town Oxford state MS zip code 38655

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elevation is painted cement asbestos shingles; the date that shingles were installed is not known. Each corner has a single cornerboard. The trim on the gable rakes is plain boards; the eave soffits have a large plain angled board trim above and a similar angled molding below. The cornice returns on the gable ends the width of the soffit only. Centered on the north elevation is the painted inscription in block letters "1854/SAND SPRING/PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH", but this inscription is not evident in a pre-1936 photograph of the church. An outdoor lighting fixture is centered between the lines 1854 and SAND SPRING.

The roof is gabled with a pitch of approximately 1:2, rise to run. The existing roofing is composition shingle which, because of the building's siting and height, is not visible from the church grounds except at the edges of the roof. The date of the most recent re-roofing is not known. There are no existing eave gutters or evidence of earlier gutters (including no evidence of gutters in a pre-1936 photograph of the church), but there is a fieldstone splash laid directly on grade, approximately 3 feet wide, continuous around the foundations on the east, south and west sides.

The building has two masonry stoops, one at each of the north doors. The stoops were constructed in the first half of the twentieth century; the concrete deck at the bottom of the stoops is dated December 2, 1949. Earlier steps are documented in a pre-1936 photograph with the caption, "My picture shows that the steps [to the doors of the church] were large rocks. I believe that my aunt, Mrs. W.W. Elliott of Oxford (Mary Quay Orr Elliott) had steps made that are the ones, there now sometime prior to centennial celebration in 1950.¹"

The church has three windows each on the east and west walls. The windows are double hung, nine lights per sash, without pulleys or weights, and each window opening is approximately 3 feet 5 inches

¹ The circa 1936 photograph is in the collection of Dorothy Dell (Mrs. Calvin J.) King of Batesville, Mississippi; the caption was written on a photocopy of the photograph enclosed in an October 7, 1991 letter from Mrs. King to William Goodson of Harrison, Arkansas.

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by 9 feet 8-1/2 inches; sash frame and trim are painted inside and out. Construction of the six windows is consistent with sash in other mid-nineteenth century structures in Lafayette County, and probably are original to the construction of the church.

The two doors on the north elevation each have matching double doors, each leaf has two panels, and each door has a four-light transom. The doors were fabricated with full mortise-and-tenon construction, with solid panels and applied panel molds; each leaf is hung on iron hinges. The east door has evidence of three generations of lockset hardware, of which two are extant; on the west door the single existing lockset may be original. The doors, frames and trim are painted inside and out. The doors probably are original: The two pairs of doors match and there is no evidence that the doors were cut or enlarged to fit the openings. Some of the hardware probably is original.

The interior arrangement is shown on the attached plan. The floor is approximately three feet above grade at the north wall. Each of the north doors enters upon an aisle separating the sanctuary into three sections of pews. Each pew in the center section has a middle divider. The "choir" end of the church has two section of pews. This arrangement of pews is slightly changed from the historic configuration with "partitioned" pews at the rear of the church for slave -- subsequently free black -- congregants.

The interior flooring is nailed directly to the floor joists without subflooring; the underside of the flooring visible in the crawl space has vertical sawmarks; the flooring is painted throughout, with modern carpeting in the aisles. The base is plain wood, approximately 11 inches high with a chamfered toe mold, painted throughout. The dais at the south end of the church is covered with modern carpeting. The existing wall finish is painted gypsum board, and the existing ceiling finish is fiberboard tiles; original wall and ceiling finishes and the dates of covering or replacement with modern materials are not known.

The church is heated with four modern gas space heaters. There is no evidence of earlier heating.

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Interior lighting is modern throughout, with no evidence of earlier lighting.

A belfry above the north gable was removed during reroofing prior to 1936. The bell is now located in front of the church on painted concrete steps. The cast inscription on the bell reads CS Bell & Co - 28 - Hillsboro' O. The bell is mounted for pulley swing operation. The belfry is documented in a pre-1936 photograph with the caption, "When church was re-roofed sometime one summer before I was 18 (I was born 8-13-18), the bell tower was removed. The bell in the yard on concrete base is that bell."²

The Site

The church is sited at the intersection of two roads, Lafayette County 354 and Lafayette County 399, along the Lafayette-Panola County line approximately 3 miles north of Lafayette County 315.

The grounds around the church are a small hillock that rises from the roads along the east and north sides and from woodlands on the west and south sides. The grounds around the church are maintained cleared, with several standing trees.

Adjacent to the church grounds is the Orwood Cemetery on part of the church's original 17-plus acres. Land between the church and the cemetery is heavily wooded and the cemetery is not visible from the church grounds. Orwood Cemetery is not included in this nomination.

Views from the church grounds are of pastureland, rough farm structures and woodlands -- a scene that, with the exception of road paving and power lines, probably is substantially unchanged since the mid-nineteenth century.

² See note 1.

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Historic Context

Orwood, located in the southwest corner of Lafayette County, Mississippi near the Panola County line, was settled in 1837 by the Green McKie family, who were among the first white settlers to arrive in this portion of the Chickasaw Cession after the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek of 1832-1833 between the United States and the Chickasaw Nation. The community was named Orrwood for the Orr family when a post office was established in 1881, though the current spelling indeed has one 'r'.

In 1848, the Chickasaw Presbytery was established within the Synod of Memphis, Tennessee. In September 1850, sixteen members of the Presbyterian church in Water Valley, Mississippi, living on the north side of the Yocona River, petitioned the Session of the Water Valley church for permission to organize a separate church, "...for no other reason, but that the distance is so great from the (Water Valley) church and the road so difficult that we and our families cannot attend regularly..." (Minutes of the Session of the Water Valley church, September 19, 1850). The petition was granted and a pastor and a ruling elder were appointed to organize the church on the first Sunday in October, 1850. By that date, charter members numbered 22, at least one of whom -- Katura Brazell -- was black.

The first church was constructed of logs and was located approximately one mile west of Sand Spring Presbyterian Church in Panola County; it was a Union church for Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians. The present Sand Spring Presbyterian Church was built in 1854. James Brown donated the land -- approximately 17-3/4 acres -- and William Turner of Oxford was the contractor, assisted by white and black members of the congregation. In the cemetery on the church property, the first burial was Joseph Capps in 1854, followed by an infant of the McKie family in 1855.

Black members of Sand Spring Presbyterian Church had pews at the rear of the church until 1880 when the black members organized their own church, called Cooper's Church. After five years, Cooper's was dissolved and the members returned to Sand Spring.

True to the motivations of its founders, the Sand Spring Presbyterian Church was founded in a remote part of the region --

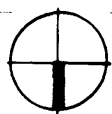
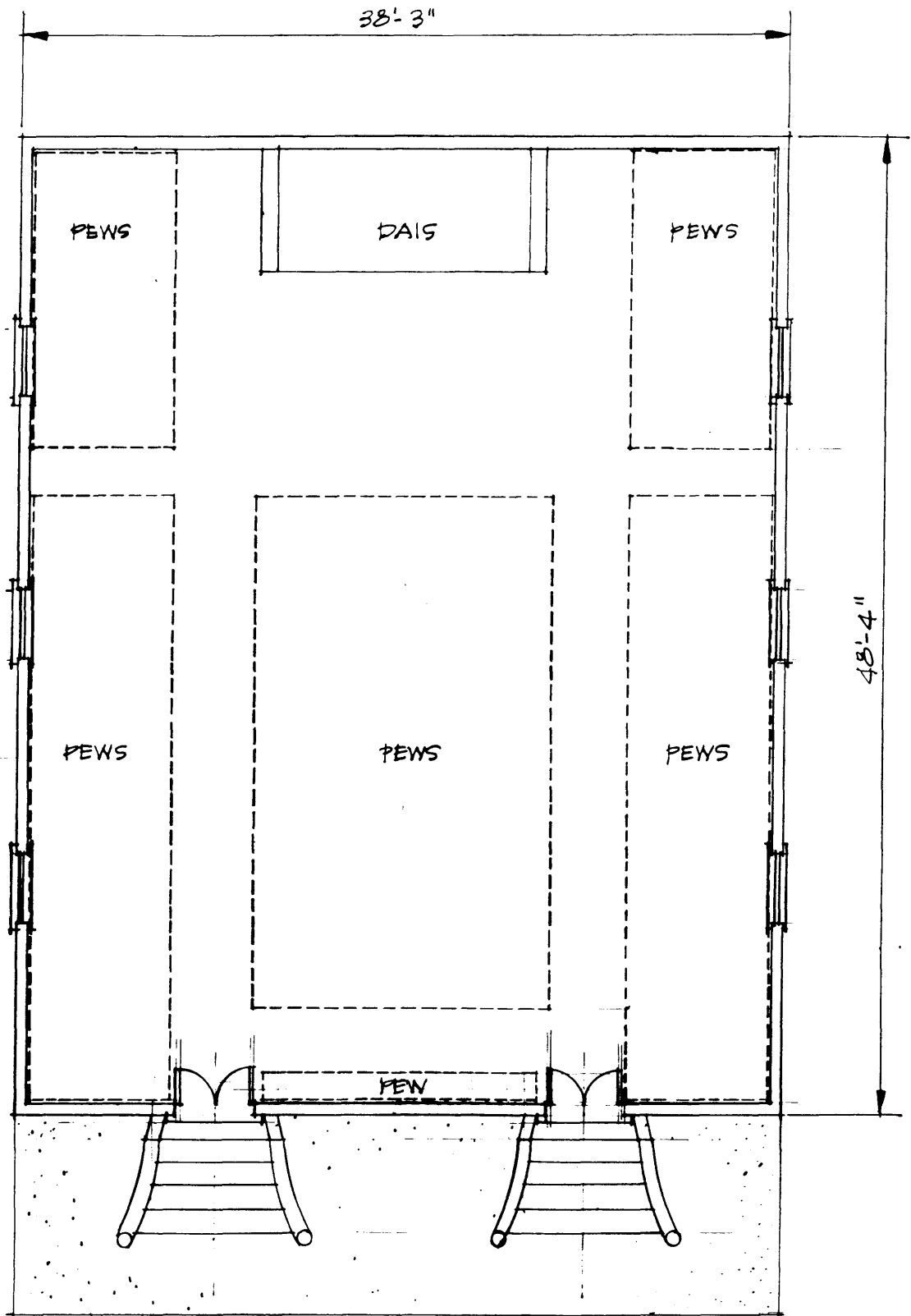
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remote even by local standards today. What early settlers saw -- a sparsely populated setting of creeks and rolling wooded hills -- remains unchanged. Indeed, the county population has declined steadily since the 1950s in favor of more-developed population centers. Besides the church, the Orwood community has had a post office (1881-1908, not extant), a school (constructed in 1910 and extant though used only as a polling place), a general store (not extant), and a grist mill (not extant). Of the church and school buildings that remain, only the church is maintained today.

Sand Spring Presbyterian Church's congregation is active, with regular maintenance of the church, cemetery and grounds, regular religious services and an annual homecoming the first Sunday in October.



FLOOR PLAN @ $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$

6/92

SAND SPRING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 WOOD COMMUNITY
 LAFAYETTE COUNTY
 MISSISSIPPI