

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received DEC 27 1985

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Cooper, Henry, House

and/or common The Daughters of American Pioneers Museum; Cooper Cabin

**2. Location**

street & number Park Avenue \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Parkersburg \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Wood code 107

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Daughters of American Pioneers

street & number Park Avenue

city, town Parkersburg \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state West Virginia

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wood County Courthouse

street & number #2 Government Square

city, town Parkersburg \_\_\_\_\_ state West Virginia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title City Park Reconnaissance Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Winter 1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Unit, The Cultural Center

city, town Charleston \_\_\_\_\_ state West Virginia

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>1910</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The Henry Cooper Log House, or the Daughters of American Pioneers Museum, is located at the center of Parkersburg's City Park, Wood County, West Virginia. Originally, the cabin was located in Slate District, Wood County on Elizabeth Pike about nine miles from Parkersburg in present day Mineral Wells. Henry Cooper, the man who built the cabin, came from eastern Virginia in 1800. He took out a government loan of several hundred acres of ground and 1804 erected the log cabin. In August 1910, the City of Parkersburg purchased the structure from a Cooper decendent named F.L. Barnett and his brother-in-law M.L. Lemasters for \$400, and sought to preserve it as a fine example of the early architecture of the first white settlers in the Parkersburg area. After being dismantled, the house was rebuilt in the Park in September, 1910 and in 1911 was granted by the City Council to the Centennial Chapter - Daughters of American Pioneers. This chapter is now operating the cabin as a museum.

The original cabin consisted of a large living room on the first floor, a large bedroom on the second floor and an attic. In addition, there were two porches and a kitchen which was built on the outside of the front porch. Central to the house was an immense fireplace with a chimney which was made up of stone. A staircase at the right side of the fireplace served as an access to the second floor. For ventilation, the log cabin was equipped with eight windows: four on the first floor and four on the second floor. Two short doors served as entrances to the lower floor.

Structurally, the Cooper log cabin was a conventional rectangular structure measuring 20 feet in width, 24 feet in length and approximately 20 feet high. Another typical characteristic was its gable-type roof which was comprised of wood shingles. The logs that were used were hewed and tapered at the end. These hewed logs were pegged or secured with dowels at the tapered end for firmer and more stable matching. The spaces left in between logs were packed with clay and chopped straw. With regard to the type of wood itself, Henry Cooper used oak.

As it stands today, the Cooper house retains its basic original appearance, except for the two porches; every part of the house has been preserved. It still has a large lower room, a pantry for the kitchen, one large room on the second floor and an L-shaped stairway. A large L-shape covered porch has been added to replace the old porch. The stone chimney was partially re-built. However, the mantle-piece and the open fireplace are still in their original location.

Several structural changes have been made to the building in order to insure its continued preservation. The installation of steel I-beams to provide more support to the building has been found to be necessary. Also the spaces in between the logs are now patched with concrete instead of the traditional clay and straw material. The original wood shingles roof is now made of asphalt shingles. Gas pipes have also been added for additional heat and plumbing for running water, as this is now, and has been since, 1910, a semi-public facility. The oak wood now appears darker due to a regular creasote treatment as a preservative.

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The Cooper log dwelling stands in the Parkersburg City Park on a 55-acre tract bounded by Park Avenue on the west, 23rd Street on the north, Ray Street on the east, and 17th Street on the south. Because of changes to the Park's landscaping and additions, over the years, of buildings and other facilities to the Park's plan, the Cooper log dwelling does not stand within a potential historic district. As the building has achieved significance on its present site since 1910, it is important to note that boundary lines reflecting the building's immediate environment have been described in the verbal description.

While the cabin has undergone some changes in its transformation from a settlement period private residence to a museum, it does retain its basic 1804 configuration and overall appearance. There is integrity of site as the building was moved seventy-five years ago, well within the historic period. The Henry Cooper Log House stands as a visible link with Wood County's early settlement period, one which, because of its present use, will endure.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) historic preservation

**Specific dates** 1804; 1910      **Builder/Architect** Henry Cooper - original owner

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

The Henry Cooper House is of exceptional significance as representing the first historic preservation effort in the history of the State of West Virginia, as well as one of the state's first museums.<sup>1</sup> It is also of local historical significance in being representative of the early rural settlement period of Wood County and the central Ohio Valley.<sup>2</sup>

Explanatory Notes

<sup>1</sup> The people of West Virginia have always evidenced a keen pride in their heritage, perhaps more so than those of most other states. This is due, in part, to the unique manner in which West Virginia gained statehood, torn by Civil War from the mother state of Virginia and struggling to establish and maintain an identity of its own, as well as the many painful episodes in the state's history which have served to endow West Virginians with what historian John G. Williams called "a particularly strident form of state patriotism." It is this "strident formal patriotism" that has motivated West Virginians to take an intensive pride in their cultural heritage, and moved them to take steps to preserve important parts of that heritage earlier than many other states. Just to cite one example, West Virginia's historic preservation legislation pre-dates the National Historic Preservation Act.

The moving and reconstruction of the Henry Cooper House is the earliest manifestation of historic preservation as a cultural and educational project in the state's history. The project was conceived by prominent West Virginia historian and journalist Alvaro F. Gibbens (1837-1906). Gibbens was the longtime editor of the West Virginia Journal, and, in 1890 co-authored Prominent Men of West Virginia with George W. Atkinson, later the 10th governor of West Virginia. The book is still used as a valuable research tool by state historians. Gibbens was, among his many achievements, the founder of the Parkersburg chapter of the Daughters of American Pioneers. One of the first projects conceived by Gibbens and the D.A.P. was to preserve what was believed to be Wood County's oldest pioneer-period building by purchasing it from the Cooper family heirs, and moving it to the Parkersburg City Park. Gibbens died before the project could be gotten under way, but the project was given added impetus by preparations for the celebration of Parkersburg centennial (of incorporation) in 1910. Accordingly, in 1910, the Henry Cooper House was dismantled, moved, and reconstructed in Parkersburg's City Park, approximately nine miles from its original location in nearby Mineral Wells. It served as a focal point of Parkersburg's centennial celebration of 1910 and, being the state's first such project, as the seed, in a sense, from which historic preservation in West Virginia grew. It has continued to serve the public as a reminder of their heritage in its continued function as a museum, displaying artifacts from the early settlement period of the Ohio Valley. The Henry Cooper House, as a pioneer-period museum, was thought to be of significance in 1939 by the Writers Project of the W.P.A., who discuss it briefly in their West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State as one of Parkersburg's "Points of Interest."

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Allen, Bernard L., Parkersburg: A Bi-Centennial History, Parkersburg Bi-Centennial Committee, Woodroff Enterprises, 1985.

Blizzard, WillCam; "Parkersburg's Pioneer Cabin", Charleston Gazelle - Mail, June 14, 1970; pp. 4m - 5m.

(See continuation sheet - #9, p.2)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Parkersburg, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at the southeastern corner of Park Avenue and Washington Avenue (at the entrance to City Park and its intersection with Washington Avenue) the boundary runs 250 feet along the south edge of the park drive and thence 275 feet due south in a straight line to a

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael J. Pauley, Historian, and Nimfa H. Simpson, Senior Planner

organization Planning Division/Development Dept. date January 13, 1984

street & number One Government Square telephone 304/424-8858

city or town Parkersburg, state West Virginia 26101

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local


As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12/23/85

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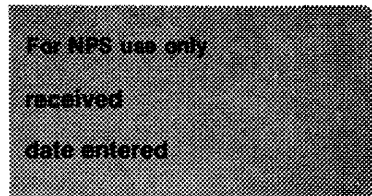
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 2/6/86  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

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The Henry Cooper House has served, as one of the state's earliest museum, to educate generations of West Virginian's in the methods and means by which their ancestors first settled on the land and how they survived, and as a visible link with that pioneer post.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Cooper, the builder of this two-story log house, settled in what is now Slate District of Wood County in 1800. He is said by local historians to have been the first settler in the district, purchasing the first land sold there. When he built the house in 1804, it was the first two-story log structure in Wood County. It is the oldest log building extant in Wood County, and is, therefore, significant as representative of early settlement period log construction in the area.

The Henry Cooper House is, therefore, significant for its close association with early Wood County, and is exceptionally significant as the first stop in West Virginia's historic preservation movement and as the state's oldest museum.

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Major Bibliographical References

Longsner, Dew; A Log Builders Handbook, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press,  
Emmaus, 1982.

Tavener, Elizabeth (Mrs. Ray Tevener), "The Log Cabin in the City Park",  
West Virginia Review, June 1912, pp. 144-145.

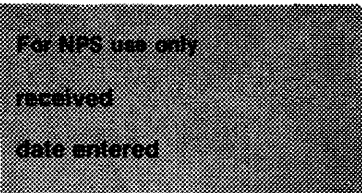
Tiano, Toni; History of City Park, (Unpublished Report), May 1980, pp. 5-6.

West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia, vol. 8, Richwood, West Virginia, 1974, p. 65.

West Virginia: A Guide to the Mountain State, W.P.A. Writers Project, Charleston,  
1941.

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point intersecting with the 640' contour line; thence along the contour line westward to its intersection with Park Avenue, thence northward along the eastern edge of Park Avenue 350 feet to the point of origin at Washington Avenue and the Park entrance (see sketch map), so as to enclose an area approximately one acre in size which has served as the setting for this museum since 1910. The boundaries, consisting primarily of city street, park drives, and raised, knoll-like features, give the one acre setting an almost natural setting, with the log house as its focal point.