

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



OMB No. 10024-0018

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 an 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 processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Century Flyer

other names/site number CHDC Fun Flyer, Site #FA1348

2. Location

street & number 150 East Siebenmorgen Road

☐ not for publication

city or town Conway

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Faulkner code 045 zip code 72032

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 the procedural and professional requirements set for 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.)

Cathie Matthews
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/5/10
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and 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:) _____

James H. H. H.
Signature of the Keeper

5/28/2010
Date of Action

Century Flyer
Name of Property

Faulkner County, Arkansas
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 count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
3	2	structures
		objects
4	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other STEEL

Narrative Description

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

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SUMMARY

The Century Flyer was built by the National Amusement Device Company of Dayton, Ohio, c.1955. The train was originally located in Funland in Burns Park in North Little Rock, but was relocated to the grounds of the Conway Human Development Center (then known as the Arkansas Children's Colony) in 1959 for use by the residents. The train consists of the locomotive and three cars, and runs on a 0.75-mile long loop of track on the grounds of the Conway Human Development Center. The track crosses two bridges and also runs through a concrete tunnel, which also serves as a storage space for the train. Inside the loop of track are the station building and a small office building. Signals are also located outside the station building where the sidewalk crosses the tracks.

ELABORATION

The Century Flyer was built by the National Amusement Device Company of Dayton, Ohio, c.1955, for Funland in Burns Park in North Little Rock. In 1959, the train was relocated to the grounds of the Conway Human Development Center for use by the residents. The train consists of the locomotive and three cars that looks like a miniature version of a 1950s-era passenger train. The Century Flyer runs on a 0.75-mile long loop of two-foot gauge track on the grounds of the Conway Human Development Center. It is located to the west of the Center's buildings and to the east of I-40. The track crosses two metal bridges, which replaced wooden trestles c.1991. The track also runs through an approximately 70-foot long concrete tunnel, which also serves as a storage space for the train. Inside the loop of track are the brick station building and a small frame office building. Signals are also located outside the station building where the sidewalk from the station and office to the parking lot crosses the tracks.

Train (Contributing)

The Century Flyer train consists of the locomotive and three passenger cars. All of the pieces of rolling stock rest on two four-wheel trucks and are currently painted to mimic the Union Pacific Railroad paint scheme of gray, red, and orange. The locomotive also has "C.H.D.C. FUN FLYER" painted on each side. (The train's current paint scheme was painted by the Union Pacific Railroad employees in North Little Rock on August 23, 1992.) The locomotive is a miniature version of a 1950s-era diesel passenger locomotive, with wire-mesh fenestrations on each side mimicking windows and vents. The inside of the locomotive consists of the engineer's seat and the controls. The locomotive also contains the engine, which is a Ford four-cylinder, water-cooled, gas-powered industrial motor. The locomotive also has a three-speed transmission, and also has an oscillating MARS light, dual air horns, and a bell just like an actual locomotive.

The train's three coaches, like the locomotive, also have wire-mesh "windows" on each side with the three front ones rectangular and the rear one on each coach being round. The coaches also are painted so that the grouping reads "ARKANSAS RAILROAD EMPLOYEES." Each coach has four cloth-covered bench seats, which are accessed by diagonal openings on the left side of the coaches as you face the front. The rear coach also has a rounded back that mimics the streamlined observation coaches of the era.

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Track/Signals (Contributing)

The loop of track is approximately 0.75-miles long and is kidney-shaped. It is located to the west of the Center's buildings and parking lot and east of I-40. The track's crossties are creosoted wood and the rails are steel. The track's gauge is two feet. The rails are fastened to the crossties with four-inch steel rail spikes. The track is laid on a gravel bed.

Two signals are located where the sidewalk from the station to the parking lot crosses the tracks. Each signal is approximately 10 feet tall, and consists of a silver metal pole that holds a rectangular sign that reads "STOP/ON RED/SIGNAL" at the bottom. Above the sign are two flashing red lights located below metal crossbucks that read "RAILROAD CROSSING." The eastern signal also has a bell on top of the pole.

Tunnel (Contributing)

The railroad tunnel is built out of concrete and is arched at the top. It is approximately 70 feet long, ten feet wide, and approximately ten feet tall. The track goes through the tunnel and it is used for storing the train. In addition, a siding is also present in the tunnel.

Station (Contributing)

The station is a small brick and frame building built when the train was moved to the Human Development Center in 1959. The station has features similar to what would have been seen on a real train station, including the wide, overhanging eaves, bay window, and a concrete platform area out front.

The station is built on a continuous cast-concrete foundation and is topped by a hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles. The building is fenestrated by original, double-hung, six-over-six windows on the east side and double-hung, one-over-one windows on the other sides. An addition to the building has been constructed on the north, west, and south sides, to provide more space in the building.

Office (Non-Contributing)

The office building, which was built c.1995, is a one-story square building that is built on a concrete-block foundation. It is covered in vinyl siding and is topped by a hipped roof that is covered with asphalt shingles. The north and south sides of the building are fenestrated by a single double-hung, one-over-one window, and two doors on the east side provide access to the building. There are no openings on the west side.

Bridge #1 (Non-Contributing)

Bridge #1 is located at the northwest corner of the track's loop and crosses a small stream that runs through the property. Originally, the stream was crossed by a wooden trestle, and it is believed that the current bridge was put in place c.1991. The current bridge is a steel beam bridge on two concrete piers without any guardrails. The bridge's abutments are also cast concrete.

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Bridge #2 (Non-Contributing)

Bridge #2 is located on the southwest side of the track's loop and crosses the small stream that runs through the property. As with the location of Bridge #1, the stream was originally crossed by a wooden trestle at this location, and it is believed that the current bridge was put in place c.1991. This current bridge is also a steel beam bridge on two concrete piers without any guardrails. The bridge's abutments are also cast concrete.

Integrity

The Century Flyer at the Conway Human Development Center has excellent integrity. Although it is likely that parts have been replaced as they have worn out, the train still reflects the original design of the National Amusement Device Company from c.1955. According to members of the Central Arkansas Model Railroad Club, there are few of these particular trains in operation, which further testifies to the integrity of the train. The train has been repainted, most recently in 1992, but this change is purely cosmetic, and did not impact any of the train's decorative detailing.

The biggest change to the train's integrity was its relocation from Funland in Burns Park to the Conway Human Development Center in 1959. Now, instead of being in an amusement park setting as it was originally, it is located on the grounds of a mental health facility. However, the train's current setting has gained significance over the past fifty years. The train has been used by the residents of the facility since it opened in 1959 as a source of entertainment and amusement. Even though the train has been relocated, the fact that it still has the track, locomotive, and cars, allows it to reflect its original design as built by the National Amusement Device Company.

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** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- ☐ **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.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

c.1955, 1959

Significant Dates

c.1955, 1959

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)**Architect/Builder**

National Amusement Device Company, Builder

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
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

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SUMMARY

The Century Flyer at the Conway Human Development Center (originally the Arkansas Children's Colony) was built by the National Amusement Device Company of Dayton, Ohio, c.1955. The National Amusement Device Company was one of the two leading manufacturers of amusement park rides in the country and one of the most significant amusement park ride fabricators of the twentieth century. By 1959, the company had built more than 400 roller coasters in addition to fun houses, comic mirrors, Ferris wheels and merry-go-round chariots. The company was also well known for its miniature trains, which were shipped worldwide to places such as Venezuela, Canada, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, France, Belgium, England, and Hong Kong. As an excellent example of the miniature train work of the National Amusement Device Company, the Century Flyer is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance**.

Originally located in Burns Park's Funland in North Little Rock, the train was relocated to the Conway Human Development Center in 1959 for the use of the Center's residents. Due to the train's relocation to the Conway Human Development Center, the Century Flyer is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration B: Moved Properties**.

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

The modern day amusement park had its origins in the "pleasure gardens" of Europe. A phenomenon that began in France in the seventeenth century and soon spread throughout Europe, pleasure gardens were facilities where visitors could enjoy the great outdoors and take part in various activities that included bowling, tennis, shuffleboard, and sharpshooting. In addition to the sporting activities, the gardens had fountains, flowerbeds, and tree-lined paths so that visitors could stroll. Food and drink vendors were also present to serve visitors, and at night colorful lights lit up the parks – often an attraction in itself.¹

In the United States, although we did not have the extensive pleasure gardens like those in Europe, we did have large picnic groves. Usually located in larger populated area, picnic groves were popular gathering places on summer afternoons and evenings for picnics, strolling, and socializing.²

However, the first large amusement resort in the United States was Jones' Wood, which began in the early 1800s on 153 acres of wooded land on Manhattan Island between 70th and 73rd streets on the East River. Activities at Jones' Wood included bowling, billiards, shooting galleries, gymnastic equipment, wrestling matches, and foot races, and rides were also available for visitors including donkey rides, crude carousels,

¹ Kyriazi, Gary. *The Great American Amusement Parks: A Pictorial History*. Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1976, p. 12.

² Kyriazi, pp. 15-16.

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and swings for children. In addition to the activities, refreshments were available to visitors, there was music and dancing, and booths and tents lined the park's walkways.³

Although Jones' Wood was popular in the early 1800s, by the 1860s as buildings began filling up the streets that crossed the park site, the park eventually disappeared. However, as Jones' Wood was disappearing, a new park was developing that became the quintessential amusement park – Coney Island. Coney Island also led to the explosive development of amusement parks all across the United States in the early twentieth century.⁴

By 1919, over 1,500 amusement parks were located across the country with most cities of decent size having a park of their own. As was seen, however, with Jones' Wood in New York, the parks needed to be away from the city's growth. As a result, many of the parks of the early twentieth century became known as "trolley parks" since many were built by transit companies at the end of the trolley lines. Having transit companies building the parks at the end of their lines (usually on a body of water) made perfect sense. It gave the park a location away from the growth and grime of the city and it also gave visitors an easy way to get to and from the park. (Of course, it also provided a ready-made stream of fare-paying passengers for the transit company.) Many of these early parks included rides and games similar to what was available at Jones' Wood.⁵

Not surprisingly, early on, especially after the streetcars quit circling the parks that they developed, the job of ferrying passengers around the park became the job of a miniature train. Apparently, the popularity of miniature trains began at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 and they grew in popularity throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁶ Little is known about the train at the Exposition, other than the "West End Passenger Railway Company...controlled the narrow-gauge railway encompassing the entire enclosure."⁷ In addition, a general description of the Exposition grounds stated:

The grounds on which the Exhibition was held were enclosed within a close board fence nine feet high and 16,000 feet, or near three miles in circuit, within which was an area of 236 acres. The walks and drives through these grounds had a total length of seven miles, while five and a half miles of narrow-gauge railway, operated by steam, surrounded and intersected them,

³ Kyriazi, p. 16. One of the most popular refreshments at these early gardens was beer, which led to the term "beer garden" coming into use.

⁴ Kyriazi, p. 16.

⁵ Kyriazi, p. 98-99.

⁶ Kyriazi, p. 110.

⁷ Ingram, J. S. *Centennial Exposition Described and Illustrated, Being a Concise and Graphic Description of this Grand Enterprise Commemorative of the First Centennary [sic.] of American Independence*. Philadelphia: Hubbard Bros., 1876, p. 692.

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affording rapid and cheap facilities of communication between the principal buildings and points of attraction.⁸

In the early days of miniature trains, many of them were custom built, and they were almost exclusively powered by live steam. Many times, the locomotive was a representation of a famous locomotive, a practice that continues today. The first manufacturer that produced a standardized park train for the amusement industry was the Cagney Brothers of New York City. The Cagney Brothers began producing a small live steam locomotive in the late 1800s through subcontractors, and all of the models they eventually offered were based on the New York Central Locomotive #999, which reached a speed of 112.5 mph in 1893. Although the company was one of the pioneers in the industry, they stopped production in 1928.⁹

Over the next few decades, several companies began building park trains. Although steam locomotives were still favored and built by many companies, such as Crown and Ottaway, real railroads were shying away from steam locomotives. It was no surprise that the miniature train industry followed suit. Internal combustion engines began to be used to power the miniature trains on a limited basis as early as the 1920s, and Cagney was the first company to mass produce a train with an internal combustion engine. As previously, it was modeled after a real locomotive, in this case the New York Central's *Commodore Vanderbilt*. (Interestingly, although streamlined, the *Commodore Vanderbilt* was a steam locomotive.) However, miniature trains powered by internal combustion engines were not produced in large numbers until the Miniature Train Company began producing a miniature version of the EMD F7, a popular passenger diesel locomotive.¹⁰

In recent years, to satisfy the desire for a steam locomotive while also trying to satisfy the desire for ease of maintenance, the miniature train industry has begun producing a "hybrid" locomotive. Although it looks like a steam locomotive, it is actually powered by an internal combustion engine. Many are powered by gas or diesel engines, although some companies, such as Chance Rides, also offer a propane-powered model.¹¹

In addition to companies like the Cagney Brothers and the Miniature Train Company, one of the other companies that was known for its miniature trains was the National Amusement Device Company. The National Amusement Device Company was the creation of Romanian-born immigrant Aurel Vaszin. Vaszin was born in Romania in April 1885 and came to the United States in 1904 as a cabinetmaker with \$9.50 in his pocket. His first job in the United States was at an amusement park in New Haven, Connecticut, where he worked as the carpenter on a roller coaster.¹²

⁸ Ingram, p. 106.

⁹ Information on amusement park trains found at: <http://www.trainweb.org/parktrains/history/index.html>.

¹⁰ Information on amusement park trains found at: <http://www.trainweb.org/parktrains/history/index.html>.

¹¹ Information on amusement park trains found at: <http://www.trainweb.org/parktrains/history/index.html>.

¹² Shama, Patricia. Finding aid for the Aurel Vaszin Papers (MS-98) at Wright State University Department of Special Collections and Archives, Dayton, Ohio. Completed June 2, 1981. Found online at:

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Vaszin left Connecticut in 1913 for Dayton, Ohio, where he helped engineer the Lakeside Amusement Park. Although he returned to Connecticut for a short time, it was his dream to return to Dayton and start his own business. In 1919, after saving \$2,500 Vaszin returned to Dayton and opened the National Amusement Device Company in 1920. The company began with engineering and building roller coasters.¹³

Vaszin's company grew quickly and by 1945 the *Dayton Daily News* reported that 75 percent of the roller coasters in the United States had been built by the National Amusement Device Company. By 1959, the company had built more than 400 roller coasters worldwide, and had also expanded their product line to include funhouses, comic mirrors, Ferris wheels and carousel chariots. Among Vaszin's notable roller coaster creations was the \$600,000 "Russian Mountain," which opened in Mexico City in 1964. The 110-foot tall, 5,000-foot long coaster was the world's largest coaster at the time. The company also built the first steel roller coaster in the world in 1968.¹⁴

Although the National Amusement Device Company was best known for their roller coasters, they were also a prominent manufacturer of miniature trains. Some of the company's work in Ohio included trains for Busch Gardens and the Cincinnati Zoo. In 1963 LeSourdsville Lake Park purchased a full-size reproduction of an 1860 Union-Pacific railroad locomotive No. 58, a tender, and four cars. The train held more than 50 passengers and wound its way over 4,400 feet of track through the park.¹⁵

However, the company's miniature trains made their way far beyond Ohio. In 1963, two locomotives and twenty cars were shipped to an amusement park in Mexico City. The two trains were placed on 7,000 feet of track, with half of the ride being underground. Eventually, National Amusement Company's trains were to become known world-wide. In Caracas, Venezuela, for example, examples were used in local shopping centers, while in Toronto, Canada, their trains were used during the Canadian exposition. In addition, they were placed in amusement parks in Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, France, Belgium and England.¹⁶

The company's work on miniature trains for amusement parks also led to an interesting project at Louisiana State University (LSU) in 1963. When LSU began to have parking problems on campus, they sought a creative approach rather than restricting parking. The result was the Tiger Trains, two trackless trains that

http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms98.pdf, and Dalton, Curt. "Vaszin Rode Roller Coasters, trains to Success." *Dayton History Books Online*. Found at: <http://www.daytonhistorybooks.com/page/page/1617676.htm>.

Although this source indicates that Vaszin came to the United States in 1904, other sources say that he arrived in 1912.

¹³ Dalton, Curt. "Vaszin Rode Roller Coasters, trains to Success." *Dayton History Books Online*. Found at:

<http://www.daytonhistorybooks.com/page/page/1617676.htm>.

¹⁴ Dalton.

¹⁵ Dalton.

¹⁶ Dalton.

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were used to take students around campus, the first such campus transportation in the country. Each train had two large tigers painted on the front grill of the engine, while the words Louisiana State University were painted on the sides. The trains' locomotives were built on the frames of gasoline tractors and the whole train, which carried 18 students, rode on rubber wheels.¹⁷

Vaszin remained active in the National Amusement Device Company until he sold it to a Toledo company in 1973, which renamed it the International Amusement Device Company. Even though Vaszin sold the company, he remained with it as a consultant until his death on May 15, 1979.¹⁸

The Century Flyer was built by the National Amusement Device Company c.1955. Reflecting train design of the period, the locomotive was built to mimic a diesel passenger engine of the period. The cars of the train also echo railroad car design of the period, with the rounded end on the third car echoing the design of the streamlined observation lounge cars that were found on many passenger trains of the era. Over one thousand of the trains were built by the company, but today less than ten remain in operation.¹⁹

The land encompassing Burns Park, which is where the Century Flyer was initially located, was offered to the City of North Little Rock in 1948 by the federal government. The city paid \$20,000 for the original 870 acres, but received a credit of \$1,000 for dedicating the land for a public park. The park was named for Mayor William M. Burns on April 11, 1950, in thanks for the many years of community service that he gave to North Little Rock.²⁰

Burns Park continued to grow during the 1950s when the Veterans Administration at Fort Roots gave 700 acres to the city to expand Burns Park, bringing its size to more than 1,500 acres. Prior to the 1960s, little of the park was developed. However, Funland was one of the first developments in the park. Robert S. Starkey and Jess B. "Woody" Woods of Woody's Barbecue began leasing ground for amusement rides in 1957. The rides at Funland included the Century Flyer and Shetland pony rides, among others.²¹

However, the Century Flyer did not remain at Burns Park for long. In 1959, the Little Rock Chapter of the Railway Business Women's Association purchased the train for \$20,000 for use at the new Arkansas

¹⁷ Dalton.

¹⁸ Shama, Patricia. Finding aid for the Aurel Vaszin Papers (MS-98) at Wright State University Department of Special Collections and Archives, Dayton, Ohio. Completed June 2, 1981. Found online at:
http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms98.pdf.

¹⁹ Information on the Century Flyer provided by the Conway Human Development Center. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²⁰ Bradburn, Cary. *On the Opposite Shore: The Making of North Little Rock*. Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 2004, p. 193.

²¹ Bradburn, p. 193.

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Children's Colony.²² The Arkansas Children's Colony was created on January 25, 1955, through Act 6 and had been strongly lobbied for by then-Governor Orval Faubus. Construction on the complex began in 1958 and it was dedicated on October 4, 1959.²³

In the early days of its existence, the Colony served mentally-handicapped children and housed 256 residents. However, by the early 1970s, additional cottages had been built and over 1,000 children lived at the facility. In 1971, the legislation governing the Colony was expanded to include children with certain physical disabilities, such as autism, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy, and the facility was renamed the Conway Human Development Center in 1981.²⁴

Once the Century Flyer was relocated to the Arkansas Children's Colony in 1959, it became a popular part of the campus. Residents could ride the train around the 0.75-mile loop of track, across two bridges, and through the train's tunnel. The tunnel also provided necessary storage for the train in order to protect it from the elements. In addition, a small station building was built near the east end of the track's loop to provide a waiting area for passengers.

Workers from the Union Pacific's Jenks Shop in North Little Rock have also played a role in the continued maintenance and upgrade of the train since it was relocated to Conway. Workers repainted the train in a Union Pacific paint scheme in 1992 and also replaced the train's wooden trestles with concrete and metal bridges in c.1991.

Since the Century Flyer's relocation to Conway in 1959, it has provided entertainment and joy to countless resident children and visitors to the facility. Current plans call for repainting the train and also providing cars that can be better used by wheelchair-bound patients. The current work will represent a collaborative effort between the Conway Human Development Center staff, the Conway Human Development Center Volunteer Council (the Center's non-profit support organization), and the Central Arkansas Model Railroad Club. The Century Flyer represents an important part of the Conway Human Development Center's campus, and an important example of the miniature train work of the National Amusement Device Company.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

The Century Flyer is a good example of a 1950s-era miniature train, and illustrates the development and design of miniature trains during the period. Miniature trains rose in popularity after the Philadelphia

²² Information on the Century Flyer provided by the Conway Human Development Center. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²³ Milford, Lea. "Arkansas Children's Colony." From *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture* found online at: <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2575>.

²⁴ Milford, Lea. "Arkansas Children's Colony." From *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture* found online at: <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2575>.

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Centennial Exposition of 1876, with early miniature trains being steam-powered and modeled after steam locomotives. However, as the railroad industry changed during the twentieth century, so did the look of miniature trains. Instead of being steam-powered and modeled after steam locomotives, miniature trains began to take on the look of the diesel-powered passenger locomotives of the period. In addition, they began to be powered by internal combustion engines, which were much easier to maintain.²⁵

The Century Flyer at the Conway Human Development Center is a perfect example illustrating this trend. Modeled after a diesel passenger locomotive and powered by a gas engine, the Century Flyer is a good representation of the miniature train technology of the 1950s. The locomotive and cars mimic the streamlined passenger trains that were starting to show up on America's railroads in the 1940s and 1950s. In addition, the train's internal combustion engine has been much easier to maintain than a steam engine would have been.

Not only does the Century Flyer illustrate the trend in miniature train design from the 1950s, it also represents an excellent example of the miniature train work of the National Amusement Device Company. The National Amusement Device Company was one of the two leading manufacturers of amusement park rides in the country and one of the most significant amusement park ride fabricators of the twentieth century. By 1959, the company had built more than 400 roller coasters in addition to fun houses, comic mirrors, Ferris wheels and merry-go-round chariots.

However, the National Amusement Device Company was not just known for their roller coaster designs, which have included some of the largest in the world along with the first steel roller coaster. The company has also been well known for its miniature trains. The reputation of the National Amusement Device Company's trains went beyond the United States. Examples of the company's trains have been shipped worldwide to places such as Venezuela, Canada, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, France, Belgium, England, and Hong Kong.

Due to its significance as an excellent example of the miniature train work of the National Amusement Device Company, the Century Flyer is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance**. In addition, due to the train's relocation to the Conway Human Development Center, the Century Flyer is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration B: Moved Properties**.

²⁵ Information on amusement park trains found at: <http://www.trainweb.org/parktrains/history/index.html>.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bradburn, Cary. *On the Opposite Shore: The Making of North Little Rock*. Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 2004.

Braithwaite, David. *Fairground Architecture: The World of Amusement Parks, Carnivals, and Fairs*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968.

Dalton, Curt. "Vaszin Rode Roller Coasters, trains to Success." *Dayton History Books Online*. Found at: <http://www.daytonhistorybooks.com/page/page/1617676.htm>.

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Information on the Century Flyer provided by the Conway Human Development Center. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Ingram, J. S. *Centennial Exposition Described and Illustrated, Being a Concise and Graphic Description of this Grand Enterprise Commemorative of the First Centennary [sic.] of American Independence*. Philadelphia: Hubbard Bros., 1876.

Kyriazi, Gary. *The Great American Amusement Parks: A Pictorial History*. Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1976.

Milford, Lea. "Arkansas Children's Colony." From *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture* found online at: <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2575>.

Shama, Patricia. Finding aid for the Aurel Vaszin Papers (MS-98) at Wright State University Department of Special Collections and Archives, Dayton, Ohio. Completed June 2, 1981. Found online at: http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms98.pdf.

"Train Club Volunteers 'Are Working on the Railroad' With the Mini-Train at CHDC." *Arkansas Railroader*. Volume 40, Number 9, September 2009, p. 5.

Century Flyer
Name of Property

Faulkner County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 5 acres.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 551941 3884556
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

☐ 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 Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date January 19, 2010
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9787
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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 _____
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 listing. 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.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

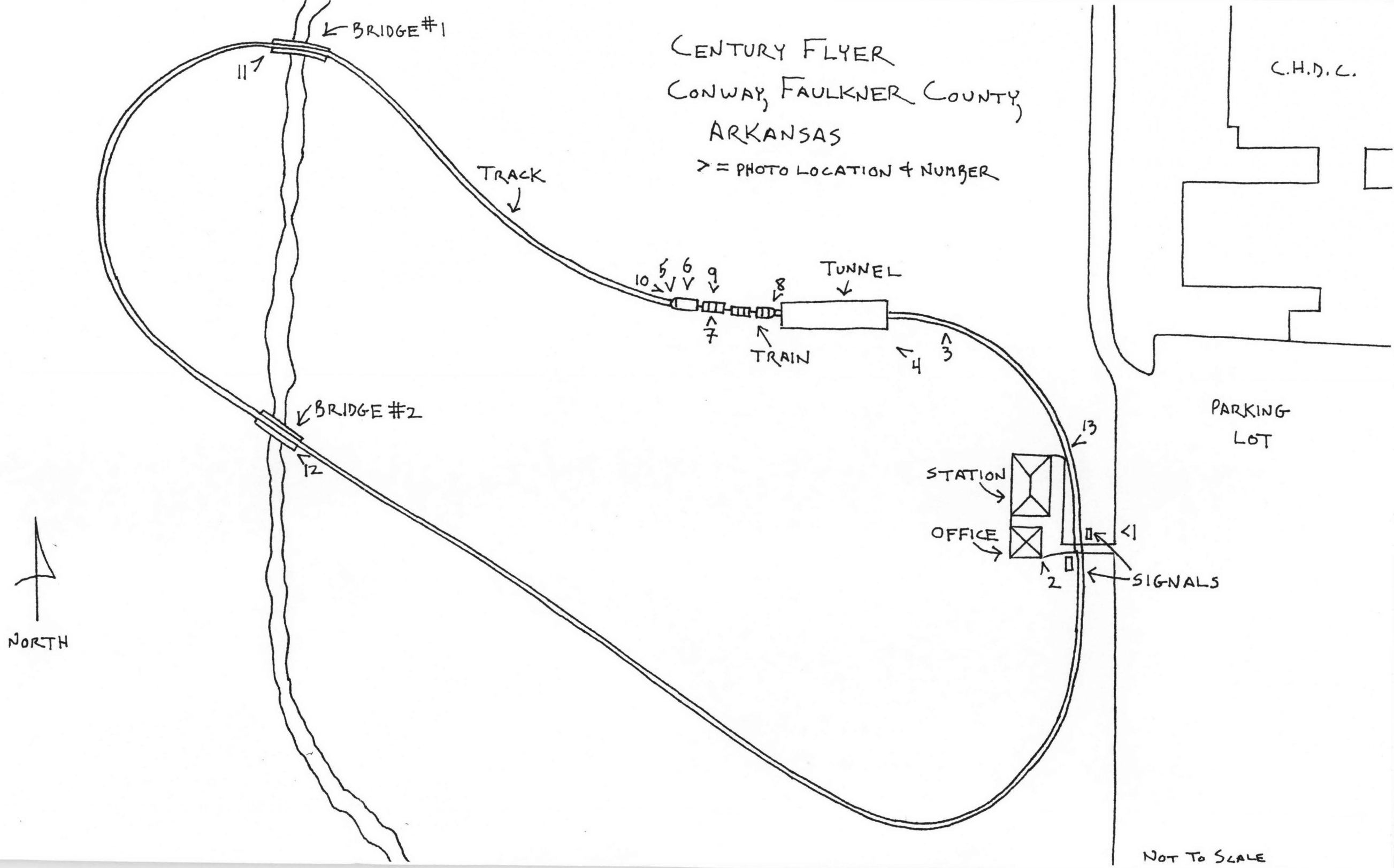
Beginning at the southwest corner of the Conway Human Development Center parking lot at UTM point 15/552070E/3884556N, proceed westerly for 150 feet. Thence proceed northwesterly parallel to the railroad track for 875 feet. Thence proceed perpendicularly to the northeast for 325 feet. Thence proceed southeasterly for 680 feet to the northwest corner of the parking lot. Finally, proceed southerly along the western edge of the parking lot to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary contains the Century Flyer and all of its associated features – track, tunnel, bridges, station, office, and signals – and its immediate surroundings.

CENTURY FLYER
CONWAY, FAULKNER COUNTY,
ARKANSAS

> = PHOTO LOCATION & NUMBER



NOT TO SCALE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Century Flyer
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Faulkner

DATE RECEIVED: 4/16/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/12/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/27/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/31/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000284

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 5/28/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Intact Amusement trains such as this are not a common property.
The train moved to present location +50 years ago. Retains
Excellent integrity. might demonstrate additional significance
for its use as a Recreational/therapeutic Device.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept/C

REVIEWER J. Gibbons DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/☒ see attached SLR Y/☒

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF THE SIGNAL, LOOKING WEST

#1



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

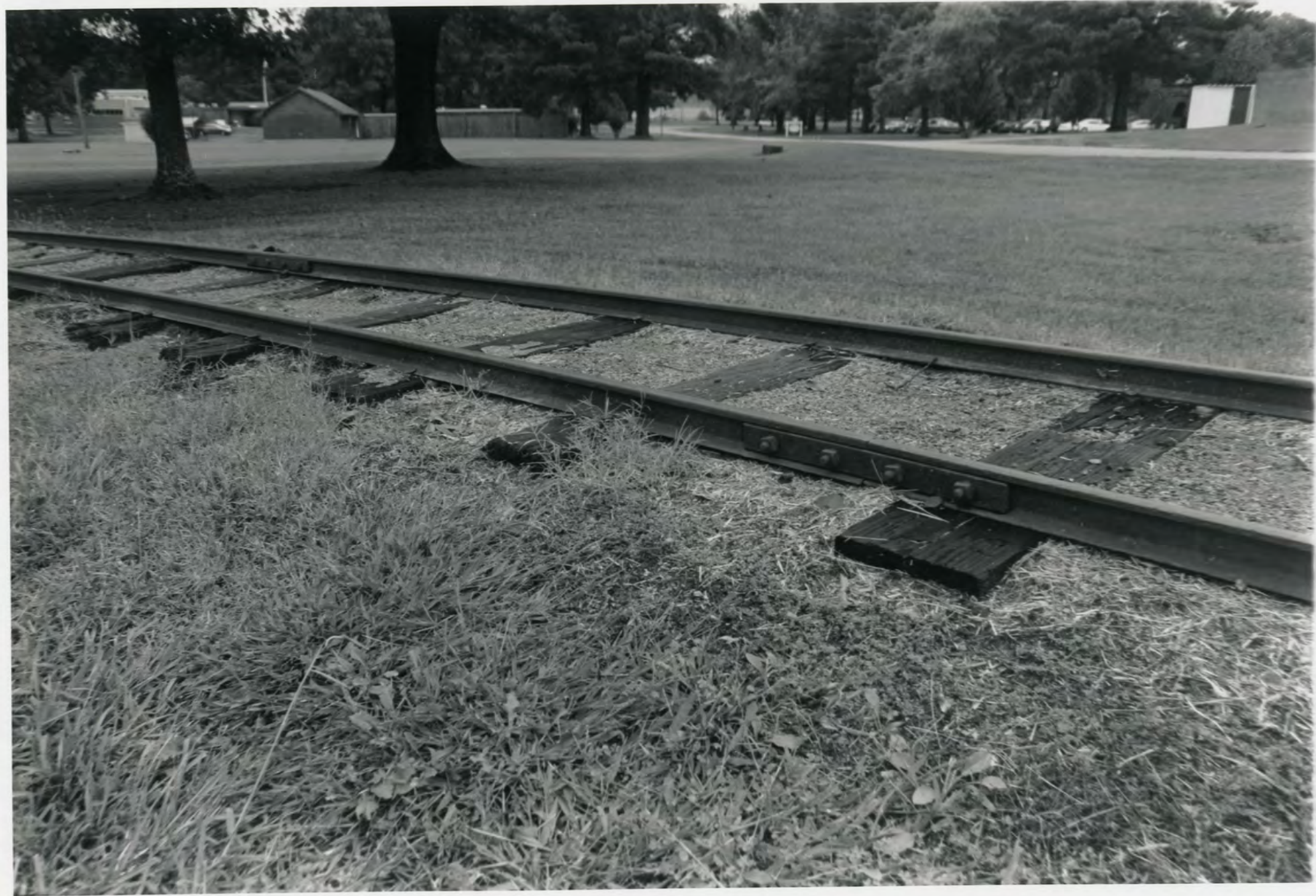
RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF THE OFFICE, LOOKING NORTHWEST

#2



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

TRACK DETAIL, LOOKING NORTH

#3



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF THE TUNNEL, LOOKING NORTHWEST

#4



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF THE LOCOMOTIVE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

#5



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR
VIEW OF THE LOCOMOTIVE, LOOKING SOUTH

#6



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF A PASSENGER CAR, LOOKING NORTH

#7



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF THE TRAIN, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

#8



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF A PASSENGER CAR, LOOKING SOUTH

#9



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

LOCOMOTIVE HEADLIGHT DETAIL, LOOKING SOUTHEAST

#10



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF BRIDGE #1, LOOKING NORTHEAST

#11



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

VIEW OF BRIDGE #2, LOOKING NORTHWEST

#12



CENTURY FLYER

FAULKNER COUNTY, AR

RALPH S. WILCOX

OCTOBER 2009

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR

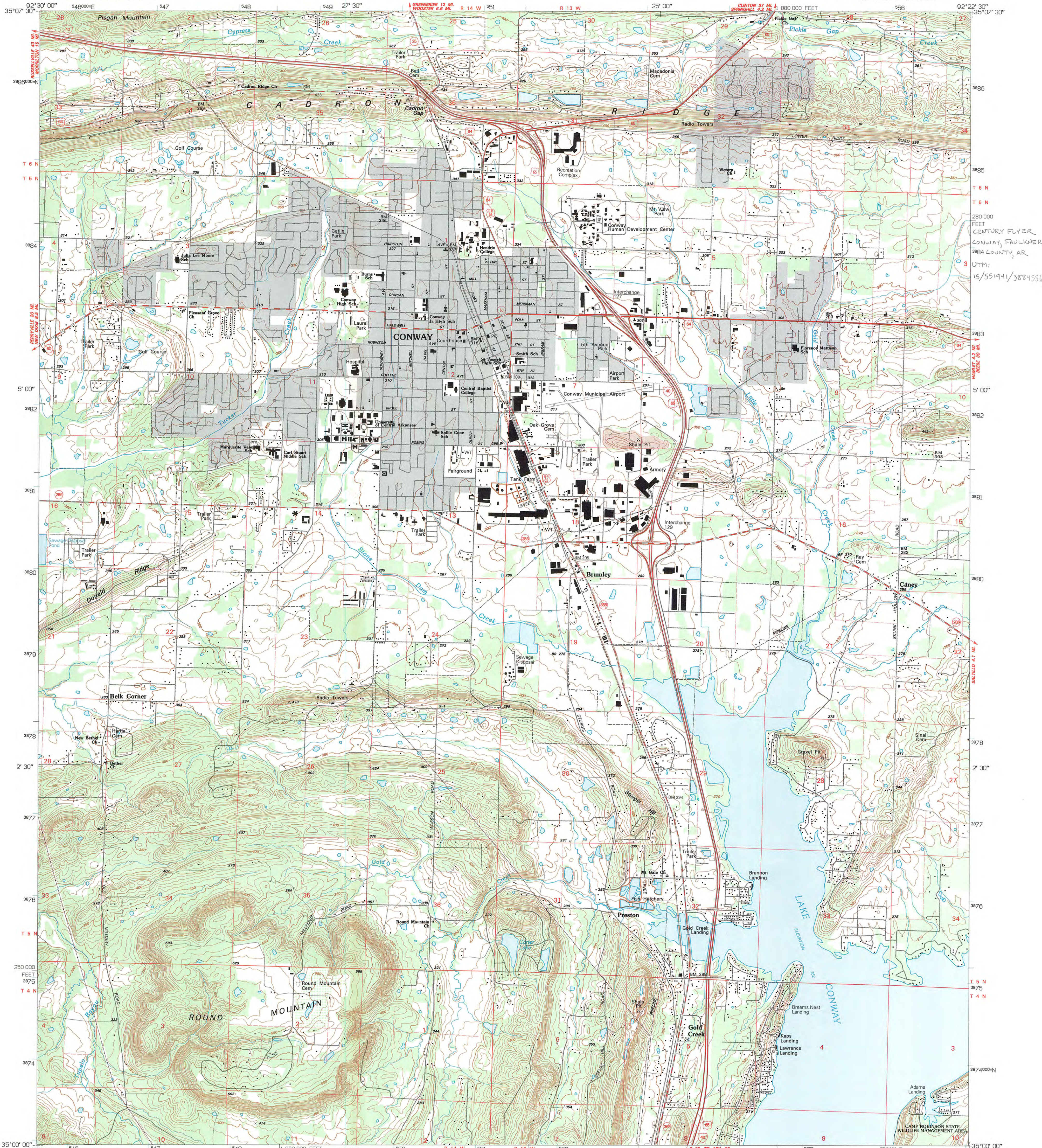
VIEW OF THE STATION, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

#13

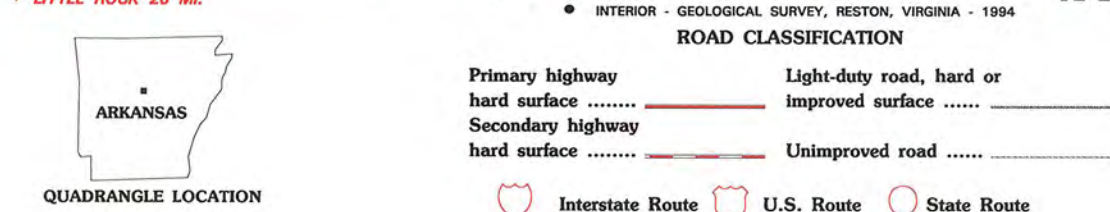
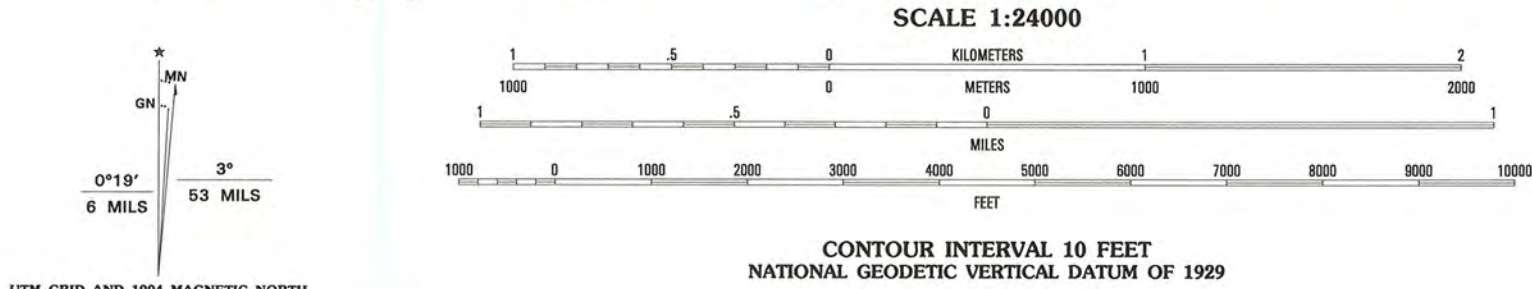
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

CONWAY QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS-FAULKNER CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

SW/4 CONWAY 15' QUADRANGLE



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1958. Field checked 1960-61. Revised from aerial photographs
taken 1969-90. Field checked 1993. Map edited 1994
Universal Transverse Mercator projection
10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute
intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map
Gray tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Menifee
4	5	6	2 Greenbrier
7	8	9	3 Holland
			4 Gleason
			5 Hamlet
			6 Fourche
			7 Mayflower
			8 Cato

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

CONWAY, ARK.
SW/4 CONWAY 15' QUADRANGLE
35092-A4-TF-024

1994

DMA 7554 III SW - SERIES V884



The Department of
**Arkansas
Heritage**

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program

1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 324-9880
fax: (501) 324-9184
tdd: (501) 324-9811

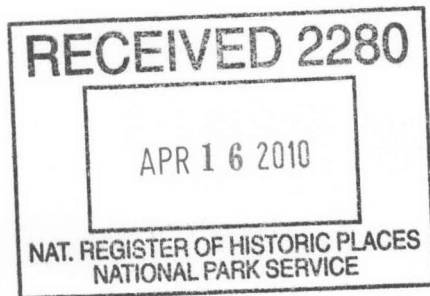
e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

www.arkansaspreservation.com

An Equal Opportunity Employer



March 8, 2010

Ms. Carol Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Century Flyer – Conway, Faulkner County, Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure