

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 29 1975

DATE ENTERED

APR 30 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC *wh*** ** Bob Burns House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

821 Jefferson

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

VICINITY OF

Third

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Arkansas

CODE

05

COUNTY

Crawford

CODE

033

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☒ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☒ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☒ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER: history

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Crawford County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 486

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arkansas

society
office

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Crawford County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

STATE

Arkansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT ☐ DETERIORATED
☐ GOOD ☐ RUINS
☒ FAIR ☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original house was built in 1885 by Alex Lacy, a Van Buren merchant. It was a white frame two-story Victorian style home.

The original floor plan had three rooms downstairs and three rooms upstairs separated by hallway. There was a front and back porch downstairs.

Sometime in 1890's, probably about 1893, when running water came to the city, a bathroom was built upstairs. The footed-tub and ceramic lavatory are still in the bathroom. The commode has been replaced by a more modern type.

Probably in early part of the 20th century, the backporch was boxed in and a kitchen in L-shape was built with a new backporch on north side. Sometime later, part of the boxed in porch room was made into another bathroom.

Mrs. Lacy had a small millinery shop in a building on part of the property in the 1880's.

The W.R. Burn's family moved to the house in 1896 when Bob Burns (stage name) was six and his brother, Farrar was eight. The boys lived here until manhood.

Mr. Burn did not purchase the house until 1901.

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The W.R. Burn family came to Crawford County in 1880 or 1881. Mr. Burn was a surveyor for the Frisco railroad when it was being built through Crawford County.

Robert (Bob) and Farrar were very talented musicians, getting their start, playing with small bands in Van Buren. They and some of their friends invented the "bazooka" which was to become world famous as a musical instrument and trademark for Bob Burns and Van Buren. The original bazooka, consisting of an iron pipe with another metal pipe over it and a whiskey funnel attached at the end with a piece of wire that moves top pipe back and forth has been given to the Historical Society.

This will go into a Burn family museum room along with other mementos and this room will be open to the public.

Bob Burns got his start to stardom playing with famous bands; then a radio show sponsored by Kraft. He also made several motion pictures. Bob Burns entertained the soldiers during World War I and II. One of the Army's guns is named the "bazooka" after the famous instrument.

For several years while Bob Burns' was famous as a radio comedian and movie star, his step-mother, Mrs. Kate Smeltzer Burn, had a gift shop in the home and it was open to the public.

The family name is "Burn" but they added an "s" to "Burn" for Bob Burns' stage name.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Clara B. Eno's History of Crawford County
The Press Argus, Bob Burns Edition, July 31, 1936
The Courier Newspaper, Monday, April 7, 1975

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

430
A

1	5
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3	7	7	9	2	0
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3	9	2	2	0	3	0
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B

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C

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D

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Robert M. Garner, President

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Crawford County Historical Society

8-14-1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 486

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Van Buren

Arkansas

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 Anne Bartley

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

12-9-1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Noting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/30/90

DATE

4.30.76

Property

Burns, Bob, House

CRAWFORD CO.

26000399

State

Ark.

Working Number

1229.75.2276

TECHNICAL

Photos

3

Maps

1

Existing appears incorrect called 4.30.76

CONTROL

OK

1.5.76

Additional information on Burns was obtained from Main Interior's Library Reference service 1-28-76. He apparently was well known in the entertainment world during the 1930's and 1940's.

HISTORIAN

Accept

E. Smith

1-28-76

NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

I don't see the significance.

Conf. return

Lebowich

2-2-76

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Agree with
Ed -
see Cyclopedic ref.

Accept
Cofe
4/28/76

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

Hung
4.30.76

National Register Write-up

Send-back

Entered

APR 30 1976

Federal Register Entry

6-1-76

Re-submit

INT:2106-74



Form No. 10-301a
(Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 29 1975

DATE ENTERED APR 30 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Bob Burns House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

____ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Crawford

STATE

Arkansas

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Dianna Kirk

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Southwest elevation and southeast facade, viewed from the south

PHOTO NO.

1 143

Southeast facade,
viewed from south.

1 143



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Crawford

STATE

Arkansas

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT

Dianna Kirk

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Facade, viewed from the southeast

PHOTO NO.

2 43



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COUNTY

Crawford

STATE

Arkansas

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT Dianna Kirk

DATE OF PHOTO 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Rear and southwest elevations, viewed from the west

PHOTO NO.

3 43

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 29 1975

DATE ENTERED

APR 30 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Bob Burns House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

___ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Crawford

STATE

Arkansas

3 MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE United States Geological Survey, Van Buren Quadrangle

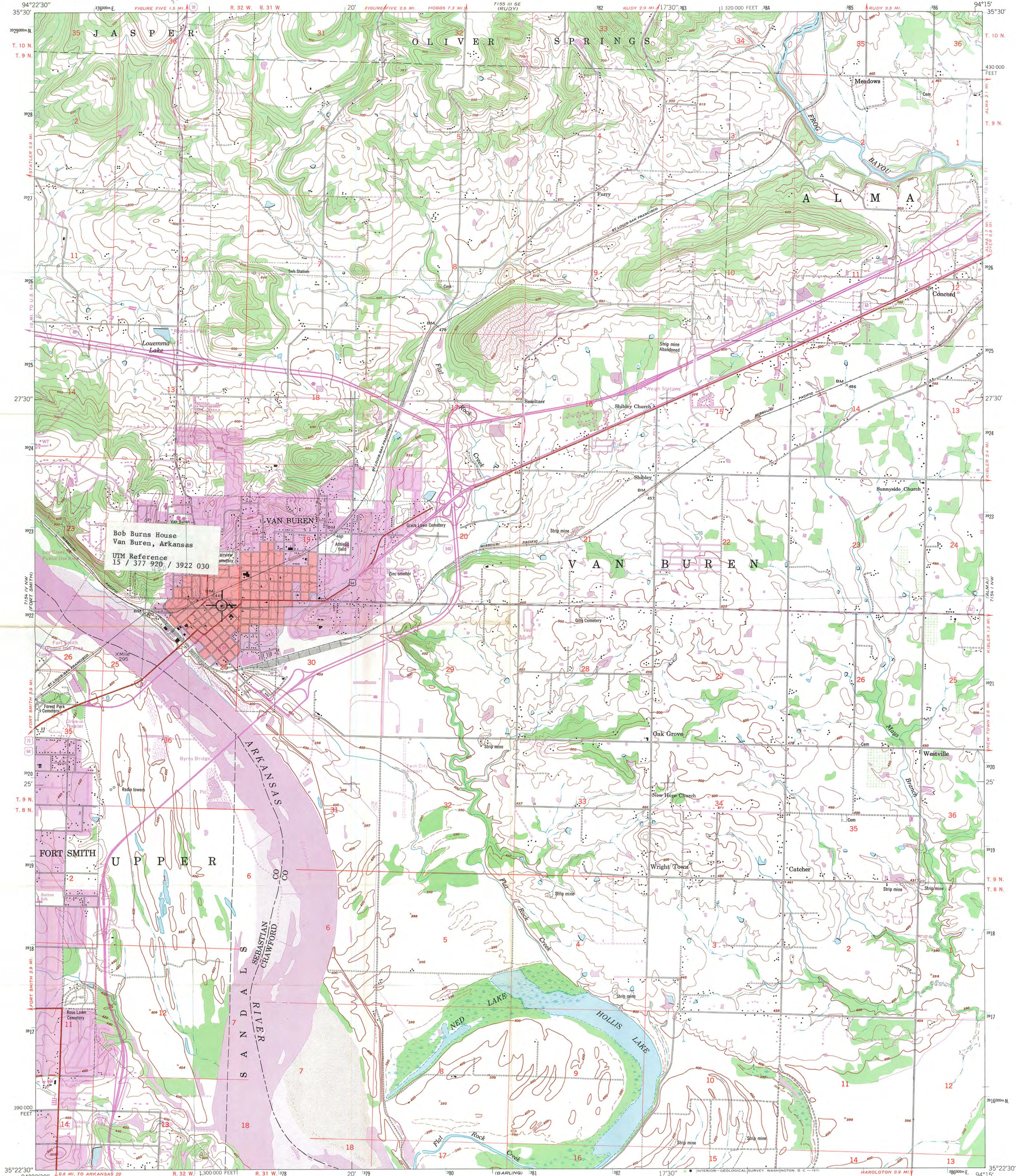
SCALE 1:24,000

DATE 1947, photo revised 1971

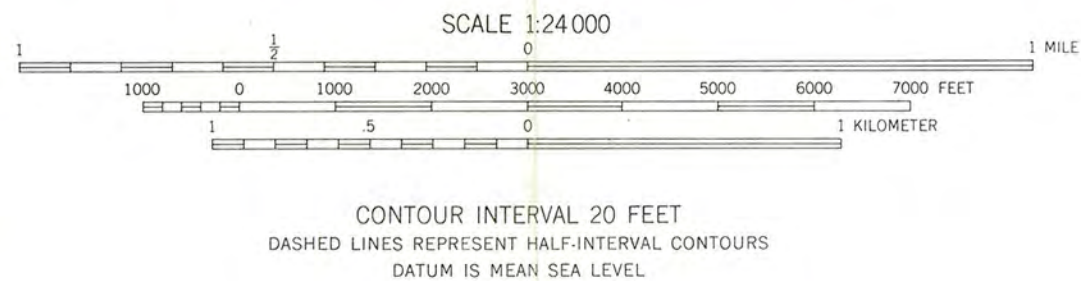
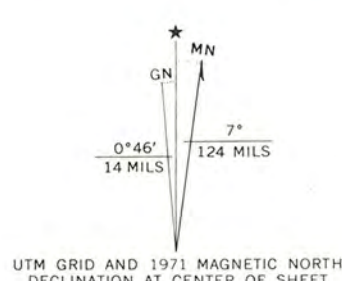
4 REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



Mapped by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
Control by USC&GS, USGS, and CE
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods
Aerial photographs taken 1946. Field check 1947
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system,
north zone
Unchecked elevations are shown in brown
No distinction is made between dwellings, barns,
commercial and industrial buildings
Red tint indicates area in which only
landmark buildings are shown
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
AND BY THE ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1971. This information is field checked.
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 16 LANE	Light duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 16 LANE	Unimproved dirt
U. S. Route		State Route
Interstate Route		

RECEIVED
DEC 29 1975
NATIONAL REGISTER

VAN BUREN, ARK.
NE 4 VAN BUREN 15' QUADRANGLE
N 3522.5-W 9415.7/5
1947
PHOTOREVISED 1971
AMS 7154 IV NE-SERIES V884

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE Arkansas

Date Entered APR 30 1976

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Main Building, Arkansas Baptist College	Little Rock Pulaski County
Van Buren Historic District	Van Buren Crawford County
Burns, Bob, House	Van Buren Crawford County

Also Notified

Hon. Dale Bumpers
Hon. John L. McClellan
Hon. Wilbur D. Mills
Hon. John P. Hammerschmidt

Regional Director, Southwest Region

PR-M. Mott:fd 5-4-76

State Historic Preservation Office
Ms. Anne Bartley
Acting Director, Department of
Natural and Cultural Heritage
The Old State House
300 West Markham
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

THE NATIONAL
CYCLOPÆDIA OF AMERICAN
BIOGRAPHY

BEING THE
HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE LIVES OF THE FOUNDERS, BUILDERS AND DEFENDERS
OF THE REPUBLIC, AND OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE
DOING THE WORK AND MOLDING
THE THOUGHT OF THE
PRESENT TIME

VOLUME XLII



University Microfilms
A Xerox Company
Ann Arbor, Michigan
1967

V.4/2, p. 90

BURNS, Bob (Robin Burn), entertainer, was born in Greenwood, Ark., Aug. 2, 1890, son of William Robert and Emma (Needham) Burn. His father was a civil engineer. Bob Burns received his education at public schools in Van Buren, Ark. As a boy he learned to play several musical instruments, including the mandolin, guitar, violin, cornet, and piano and at the age of fifteen played his own invention, the bazooka, with the Van Buren City Queen Silver Cornet Band. He contrived the bazooka by accident in 1905 when he fitted together two pieces of gas pipe and began playing the device as though it were a trombone. It made a semblance of tone, and subsequently he improved upon the idea by fitting together two pieces of metal tubing, one sliding upon the other, the sliding tube having a funnel at the end to throw out the sound. Having no mouthpiece, the tone was varied by the sliding movement as in the case of the trombone. He gave the instrument the name of bazooka, which he copyrighted in 1920. A weapon of the U.S. Army during the Second World War was given the name bazooka by the troops because of its resemblance to the musical instrument which Burns invented and popularized. Bob Burns began his professional career as an entertainer in 1911 when he toured the South with the Black Cat Minstrels show in which he teamed with his brother, Farrar Burn, in blackface, although he had appeared with that group as early as 1907 playing the bazooka. He continued in vaudeville and carnival business for some years and at various times also was an orchestra leader, river ferry pilot, hay and magazine salesman, peanut farmer, and advertising salesman. From 1922 to 1930 he was associated with Claude West as the team of Burns & West. During 1930 he and John Swor worked for Fox Motion Pictures as a black-face team, playing Black and Blue in "Up the River." Beginning in 1931 and continuing until his retirement in 1947 he was well known as a radio entertainer. He first did comedy bits on local West Coast radio shows and in 1932 became known as Soda Pop in the "Circus Radio Show" on the West Coast for the National Broadcasting Co. Burns had become friendly with Will Rogers (q.v.), appearing in several of Rogers' pictures, such as "Young as You Feel," and Rogers encouraged the development of his talent and advised him to go East. In July, 1935, he auditioned for Paul Whiteman in New York and subsequently appeared as guest star on his coast-to-coast program, "The Paul Whiteman Hour." He was an immediate success and was signed as guest with the "Rudy Vallee Music Hall" for numerous engagements. In December, 1935, he joined the Bing

v. 42, p. 91

NATIONAL REGISTER DATA SHEET

1 NAME as it appears on federal register: Burns, Bob, House
 2 OTHER NAMES:
 3 date of entry: 4-30-76
 4 county code: 033

5 LOCATION street & number: 821 Jefferson St.
 city / town: Van Buren
 vicinity of:
 state: AR
 county: Crawford
 6 NPS REGION: Southwest

7 OWNER ☐ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☐ MUNICIPAL ☒ COUNTY ☒ MULTIPLE ☐ FEDERAL (agency name):
 8 ADMINISTRATOR:

9 EXISTING SURVEYS ☐ NABS ☐ NAE ☐ NNL ☐ FUNDED? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ CONGRESS. DISTRICT: 3d
 10 SOURCE of NOMINATION ☒ STATE ☐ FEDERAL

11 WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☒ YES, NAME: ☐ NO
 12 WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? ☒ YES, NAME: ☐ NO
 13 ACREAGE: 1
 if state who prepared form?
 county historical society
☒ LOCAL ☐ PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

14 CONDITION ☐ deteriorated ☒ altered ☒ original site
☐ excellent ☐ ruins ☐ unaltered ☐ moved
☐ good ☐ unexposed ☐ reconstructed ☐ unknown
☒ fair ☐ unexcavated ☐ excavated
 15 features: ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 ☒ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-2 ☐ SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-3
☐ NOT INTACT-0 ☐ NOT INTACT-0
☒ UNKNOWN-4 ☐ UNKNOWN-5 ☒ UNKNOWN-6
☐ NOT APPLICABLE-7 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-8 ☐ NOT APPLICABLE-9

16 ACCESS ☒ YES-Restricted ☐ YES-Unrestricted ☐ No Access ☐ Unknown
 17 ADAPTIVE USE ☒ YES ☐ NO
 18 SAVED? ☒ YES
 19 IS PROPERTY A HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ yes ☒ no

20 AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:
☐ ARCHEOLOGY-prehistoric-2 ☐ COMMERCE-6 ☒ ENGINEERING-11 ☐ LANDSCAPE ARCH.-15 ☐ POLITICS/GOVT.-21 ☐ RECREATION-28
☐ ARCHEOLOGY-historic-1 ☐ COMMUNICATIONS-7 ☒ ENTERTAINMENT-26 ☐ LAW-16 ☐ RELIGION-22 ☐ SETTLEMENT-29
☐ AGRICULTURE-3 ☐ CONSERVATION-8 ☐ EXPLORATION-12 ☐ LITERATURE-17 ☐ SCIENCE-23 ☐ URBAN PLANNING-31
☐ ARCHITECTURE-4 ☐ ECONOMICS-9 ☐ HEALTH-27 ☐ MILITARY-18 ☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN-24 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
☐ ART-5 ☐ EDUCATION-10 ☒ INDUSTRY-13 ☒ MUSIC-19 ☐ SOCIAL/CULTURAL-30
☐ INVENTION-14 ☐ PHILOSOPHY-20 ☐ TRANSPORTATION-25
 21 CLAIMS: explain
 'first' ☐
 'oldest' ☐
 'only' ☐

22 functions
 WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT: PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 CURRENTLY: COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICES & MUSEUM
 23 dates of initial construction: 1885
 major alterations:
 historic events:
 24 ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION

25 architectural style(s):
 VERNACULAR GREEK REVIVAL
 26 architect:
 27 master builder:
 28 engineer:

29 landscape architect / garden designer:
 30 interior decorator:
 31 artist:
 32 artisan:
 33 builder/contractor:

34 NAMES give role & date
 PERSONAL:
 EVENTS:
 INSTITUTIONAL:

35 NATIONAL REGISTER WRITE-UP
 ✓ Frame, clapboarding; 1--2 1/2-story sections, irregular shape, intersecting gabled and hipped roof sections, interior chimney, off-center glazed entrance with transom, within front porch with balustraded deck, pierced attic roundel; 20th c. additions. Vernacular. Home of Bob Burns, entertainer and inventor of musical instrument "bazooka."