

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



1423

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 First National Bank Building

other names/site number Monette State Bank. Old Bank Building/CG0255

2. Location

street & number 207 W. Drew Avenue

☐ not for publication

city or town Monette

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Craighead code 031 zip code 72447

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.)

Catherine Monette  
Signature of certifying official/Title

12/5/08  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

1-24-08  
Date of Action

First National Bank Building  
Name of Property

Craighead 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	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

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

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/  
Classical Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, BRICK  
walls BRICK, STONE, OTHER: glass block  
  
roof METAL  
other

## Narrative Description

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

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### SUMMARY

The First National Bank Building is situated on the southwest corner of the intersection of Drew Avenue and Edmond Street (Highway 18 and Highway 139 north), which is in the primary business section of Monette and the location of the town's only traffic signal. The building's distinctive Classical Revival style of architecture is outstanding in an area where most of the other buildings are designed in the Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial style, faced with plain brick or stone, with awnings shading the windows. The lot was purchased in 1917, and the construction of the building was completed in 1918. The two-story brick building is street level on a concrete and brick foundation and has a shed roof with raised metal seam roofing that replaced the asphalt roll roofing in mid-June 2007. The white, man-made sculptured stone façade with large round cement fabricated columns, intricate cement molded medallion, and other decorative details create a very distinctive principal elevation of the bank building.

### ELABORATION

Built in 1918, in the Classical Revival style, the First National Bank, Monette, Craighead County, Arkansas, is a prime example of the style in this small Arkansas town. Driving into Monette on either Arkansas Highway 18 or 139, the bank stands out in the crowd of Late-19<sup>th</sup> Century/Early-20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial style buildings. The large columns on the front (north) elevation support the recessed front porch. In 2005, an 18-wheeler lost control of his rig, and ran the truck into the front elevation, damaging the bottom of the columns. A large molded medallion adorns the central front of the parapet roof. The east elevation of the bank is now comprised of brick and glass block—used as infill for the original multi-pane banks of windows. The glass block was added around 1966, at which time the Monette Masonic Lodge #558 came into ownership of the building. The rear (south) elevation was originally a solid brick wall; however, openings were punched into the wall circa 1992, at which time the building was being used as a restaurant. The openings were for a window (upper half, centrally located), a door (upper half, left side), and a drive-thru service window (lower half, right side). The west elevation is former-shared wall between the First National Bank Building, and the Watkins-Agnue Drug Store, which was demolished at an unspecified date. Originally, the wall was red brick; however, the owners of the bank building from 1992-2007 painted the brick white.

### *Front/North Façade*

The principal (north) façade of the First National Bank Building clearly conveys the Classical Revival style of architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals. All exterior walls are load-bearing, 12"-thick brick (triple wide bricks) with parapet above the roof line. This type of brick was used because it made a smoother surface for the inside that could be plastered and then painted (sheet rock was not in use at this time). This north façade is decorated with cement fabricated sculptured stone, and intricate cement molded medallion

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and large round cement fabricated columns supported the recessed front porch. The front door was originally a large wood-cased door with one side panel and an elliptical fanlight fenestrating the space above the door, below the rounded arch. This door was replaced with a smaller door and part of the opening covered with plywood, alterations made circa 1966. Large wood-framed windows fenestrate the bottom floor of the building, while smaller windows fenestrate the second story of the bank, on both sides of the door. A window air conditioner unit was installed in the window on the northeast side at one time and has since been removed. Plywood covers portions of these windows. The front is completely man-made of sculptured stone. In 2006, a large truck ran into the front of the building and slightly damaged the large columns. This damage can be repaired.

### *Side/ East Façade*

The east elevation, adjacent to Edmonds Street (AR 139), has a sculptured stone base and decorative ledges near the top. This wall has extended spaced columns of stone and brown brick. The mansard is capped with stone. The windows are a large portion of this wall and are made of translucent glass blocks with a fluted design and framed with brown brick, an alteration made in 1966, when the Masonic Lodge #558 purchased the building. A single wood-cased door is near the back (south) side of the building. This door served as the entrance to the bank president's office and as the employee entrance for the bank employees and later the restaurant employees.

### *Rear/ South Façade*

The rear (south) wall extends almost to the edge of the alley running behind the property, and is also made of red brick which, at some point, was partially covered with stucco. In 1992 during renovations for the restaurant, a small wooden two story structure was added onto this elevation to be used as a drive-through/pick-up area with a barbeque grill in the top portion. Originally, there were no openings in this wall, and in order to use this addition, a door was punched into the top section on the left side, and also one smaller window opening was created in the central portion of the upper level. An opening was made in the first floor, on the right side, for access to the drive-thru. This wooden structure was removed in January 2007, by Monette city employees because it had become unsightly and unsafe. The three openings are still there (second-story door, second-story window, and first floor door). Plans to re-brick these openings are currently being considered.

### *Side/West Façade*

The west elevation served as a common wall with the building next door for many years. During the 1950s through to the late-1970s, a pool hall occupied the building until a fire almost completely destroyed it and the remaining part had to be demolished. The lot has been vacant since that time, leaving the red brick wall exposed. The wall is capped with tile coping. Originally there were no windows or doors. During the 1992



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renovation (for the restaurant) a small opening, located near the top toward the north end, was created to install a window air conditioner unit to help cool the balcony seating area of the restaurant. There was also a small opening on the bottom near the south end also to be used for a window air conditioner. This wall was also painted white during this renovation; however, much of the paint has now washed off or faded away.

### *Interior*

There have been two major renovations of the First National Bank Building. One renovation was in 1966, by the Monette Masonic Lodge #558 who purchased the building on August 2, 1966, from the bank known at that time as Monette State Bank. It was then sold to David and Karen Wallace on November 29, 1991, and the Wallaces renovated the building to serve them as a restaurant. These renovations were completed in 1992.

Carolyn Bridges Turner, a current employee of the bank (which relocated to another site in Monette), who completed 46 years of continuous service with the bank in April 2007, provided information on the interior of the building as it was originally. The front (north) entrance was recessed between the two large white columns and there was a large eagle inlaid in the flooring near the entrance. There was an office on the east side of the entrance and the west wall was almost completely covered with large, ornate mirrors. A counter with three teller windows facing the west wall was in the center of the building, leaving work space behind the counter and in front of the windows. The teller counter was made of marble. The bank president's office was in the southeast corner of the building. There was a door in this area used by the bank president and as an entrance for the other employees. At one time, there was a small apartment in the rear of the building which was later used for storage. This area was behind the restroom, a very large vault, and a small narrow stairway leading to the second floor balcony where the customer safety deposit boxes were located. In the early years of the property's history, the building was heated with a large pot-belly stove located near the back of the building and cooled with a large fan located at the front of the building. Sometime during the late-1940s or early-1950s, central heat and air was installed. The exact date of the installation is not known.

When the First National Bank moved into their new building a block west of this building, they removed and sold several of the significant features from the interior of the bank. At the time of the move in 1965, the bank was known as the Monette State Bank. The large, ornate mirrors which adorned the majority of the west wall and the beautiful marble counter from the cashier counter were all sold. The large vault was moved to the new location and the customer safety deposit boxes were removed from the balcony area.

### *Alterations*

In 1966, when the building was purchased by the Monette Masonic Lodge #558, the following alterations were made: part of the interior floor tile was replaced; the interior walls were paneled; a kitchen was installed and equipped in the back of the building; the front entry door was replaced; the electrical wiring was

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replaced; and a new asphalt roll roof was installed (the asphalt roofing is in process of being removed and replaced with raised metal seam roofing in mid-June 2007). The multi-paned translucent glass windows were replaced in 1966 with glass block windows which have a fluted design, a new heat and air unit was installed, and the ceiling was lowered with a suspended tile ceiling.

In 1992, after the building was purchased by David and Karen Wallace in November of 1991, the following alterations were made: the roof was repaired and the suspended ceiling and most of the paneling was removed; the kitchen was remodeled and restaurant equipment installed; the walls and the ceiling area under the balcony were sheet rocked and painted; vinyl tile and carpet was installed over most of the floor; and the small stairway at the rear of the building was repaired. A new stairway was built near the front center of this section with access to the stairway from both the east and west sides and leading to the upstairs balcony (which was used as a customer seating area). A serving counter for the food was installed near the center of the downstairs area and the small wooden addition was added onto the rear of the building for use as a customer drive-thru and a place to prepare barbeque. The heat and air unit was replaced and three window air conditioning units were installed, one to help cool the upstairs balcony area, one for cooling at the entrance of the building, and the other for the kitchen area. A chandelier was hung from the top of the upstairs ceiling over the stairway. The front door opened into a small cubical-type entry and then opened into a larger area which has double doors leading into the main section of the building. The exterior of the west wall was painted white and a new sign was hung on the front of the building.

### INTEGRITY

The exterior integrity of the First National Bank Building remains fairly high. The integrity elements of location and setting remain in good standing, as the First National Bank Building still rests at its original site, and the town of Monette remains the second-largest town in Craighead County—as it was at the time the bank was constructed in 1918. The plan of the building and the wonderful Classical Revival style architectural embellishments still exist, allowing the building to retain the elements of design and workmanship. Driving into Monette, and taking one look at this property, it is very easy to know—without any explanation—this property as a bank, thus retaining the elements of feeling and association.

The one element of integrity that has been compromised is that of materials—due mostly to the glass block infill on the east elevation that occurred in 1966. Possibly a reversible alteration, there are no known plans to remove the glass block and install historic-looking windows.

The interior elements of integrity are not in as good condition as the exterior. The building remained in basically the same condition after the restaurant closed until mid-2006, when the roof began to leak. During the last few months the interior has been badly damaged. The ceiling has fallen in, the walls are stained and crumbling, and the carpet and tile floor has been ruined.

First National Bank Building

Name of Property

Craighead County, Arkansas

County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** 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)

COMMERCE

ECONOMICS

### Period of Significance

1918 – 1958

### Significant Dates

1918 – 1958

### Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### 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:

Kohn Memorial Library, Monette, Arkansas

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# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

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### SUMMARY

The First National Bank building in Monette, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance** for its association with commerce and economics in Monette during the years of 1918 through 1958. This property is the last remaining historic banking resource in Monette, Craighead County, Arkansas.

### ELABORATION

The town of Monette is located on Arkansas Highway 18, in the northeast corner of Craighead County, Arkansas. It is bordered on the north by Missouri, on the east by Mississippi County, Arkansas, and is only a few miles west of the Mississippi River and the state of Tennessee.

Construction on the First National Bank Building was completed in 1918. The bank was established in Monette in December 1900, by F.M. Kuykendal, the first mayor of the town. The Bank of Monette operated from 1900 until circa 1904, a pattern that was followed for many years until the establishment of the First National Bank in 1918. The First National Bank, with several name changes, remained in continuous operation—at the same location—from 1918 to 1965.

### *Town and County History*

Craighead County was established as a county on February 19, 1859, and was named for a Senator Thomas B. Craighead, who was a senator from Mississippi and Crittenden counties. Most people thought these two counties, along with Greene County, were too large and proposed taking in land from the three counties to form a new county. Senator Craighead opposed this and had prevented the new county's creation for some time. When the issue came up for another vote in February 1859, Senator Craighead had mysteriously been called from the Senate Chamber and while he was out, the motion carried. He became furious at first but then accepted the vote with good grace. Senator William A. Jones (representing St. Francis and Poinsett Counties) made a motion to name the new county Craighead in the senator's honor. Senator Craighead then made a motion to name the new county seat Jonesboro, in honor of Senator Jones. Both motions carried and Jonesboro became the county seat of the newly created Craighead County. Jonesboro is located near the western border of the county instead of being centrally located. Due to the inadequate roads and the hardship of transportation during that time and with a large rural population particularly in the eastern area of the county, it was decided to divide the county into two sections. The Eastern District Courthouse was established in Lake City and the Western District (main) courthouse remained in Jonesboro. The Eastern District includes the towns of Black Oak, Caraway, Lake City, and Monette. Both courthouses are still in existence today and Craighead County is one of only a few counties in Arkansas with dual courthouses and county seats.



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The city of Monette was founded in 1898, with a population of 250, following completion of the Jonesboro, Lake City, and Eastern Railroad (JLC&E). The railroad was indirectly responsible for the naming of Monette. The engineer had two daughters, one named Mona and the other Nettie. He suggested the name Monett to the town council when it was incorporated on May 14, 1900, and the name was accepted. The "e" at the end of Monette was added at a later date. The town continued to grow and by 1910, the population had doubled to 559 and almost doubled again by 1920 to 1,066. Since that time the population has remained stable with 1,111 in 1930; 1,074 in 1940; 1,113 in 1980; and the 2000 census showed 1,179. In 1900, when the charter was granted, there were 50 commercial outlets in town. In 1980, there 123 outlets and at the present time there are approximately 50.

Monette is located in the center of a very unique area known as "Buffalo Island." There are five towns located in this area. Besides Monette, there is Black Oak and Caraway in Craighead County, and Leachville and Manila in Mississippi County. This area, also called the "sunk lands," was created by the great New Madrid earthquake which began on December 16, 1811, and continued at regular intervals until February, 1812. During this period, Reel Foot Lake in west Tennessee, Big Lake in Mississippi County, St. Francis Lake in Craighead County, and many sloughs all over the area were formed. When French explorers came through the area shortly after this time and drew maps of the area showing all of the lakes, rivers, and many sloughs, it appeared to look like an island on paper. No one knows for sure how the name "Buffalo" became attached to the island area, but it is known that bison roamed the area in the 1840s. It is believed that the government surveyors who worked in the area at the time and used the French explorers' maps, applied the name "Buffalo" because that is what the Native Americans who lived in the area called the bison. It has been known as Buffalo Island since that time.

In 1898, four landowners donated nine acres of land each to provide a location for the site of a new town. The four landowners were: James Nance; Sam Stotts; William Stotts; and Joshua Lairson. The First National Bank Building sits on a portion of land donated by James Nance. Until this time, there had been a small settlement just south of the new town called Stottsville, but when the new town was established the post office and other businesses in Stottsville relocated to Monette. The post office became the Monette post office and Stottsville ceased to exist.

The Buffalo Island area, and especially the Monette area, was covered with heavy timber which had to be cleared by the settlers in order to farm. When the railroad came to the area, it provided transportation to take the timber to market. By 1900, Monette was booming with hundreds of employees needed to cut and haul the timber and also to operate the several saw mills that had sprung up in the area. The railroad was providing six trains per day and needed another one to meet the needs of the immense timber hauling from Monette. The *Craighead County Sun* reported that "there are not enough houses or even shacks to accommodate the immigration here." The *Sun* also reported that "land rents for \$5 per acre, can be bought for \$10 to \$25 per acre and fine timberland can be bought for \$5 to \$10 per acre." In January 1900, Monette had five general stores, two drug stores, two hotels, three churches, a school, and a depot, along with several



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other businesses. These buildings were wooden structures and most were built along both sides of the railroad and facing the railroad. The streets around which the town grew were named East Main and West Main.

In 1876, Arnold Stotts grew the first cotton crop on Buffalo Island and he also established the first cotton gin in the area on his farm. He also opened a store and several other businesses in the area. With the clearing of the land by the timber industry, more and more farms were established. The land was fertile and was excellent for growing cotton as well as corn, wheat, and soybeans. Cotton has been "King" and has always been the most important crop in the Monette area. In the 1920s, strawberries and radishes were money-making crops until the trade market became too unstable. Strawberries were profitable again in the 1950s. During some years, a few farmers have grown watermelons and cantaloupes but the market for these is not considered stable. During these early years, all farmers and most others had their own livestock and chickens to provide milk and butter, meat, and eggs for use by their families and to trade for other necessities. Some also raised cattle and pigs for market, and also everyone had gardens to provide vegetables for their families.

By 1909, people had begun building new buildings along Drew Avenue (Highway 18) which runs east toward Blytheville and west toward Jonesboro. Monette's first newspaper, *The Monette Sun*, was started in 1909, and the Monette Telephone Company was already supplying residents with telephone service.

On January 2, 1912, a disastrous fire completely destroyed five stores, including Citizens Bank. The loss was estimated at \$50,000. Fifteen days later, the Monette Spoke Manufacturing Company was totally destroyed in another fire. On December 22, 1912, the remainder of the Monette business district was almost completely destroyed when another fire ruined at least 11 more businesses. The town had no fire fighting equipment and townspeople watched helplessly as the frame buildings went up in flames. It was not until 1947 that the first volunteer fire department was organized by Roy Jacobs, who became the first fire chief. Jacobs had also been the co-founder of the Monette State Bank. The residents of Monette were determined not to give up and began to re-build their businesses. This time they used mostly brick to construct the new buildings and many of them are still in existence today.

In the early years there were three hotels in town: the Park Hotel, Hammack Hotel, and the Fisher Hotel. The Fisher Hotel, owned by Dr. G. C. Fisher was a three-story hotel with a fine restaurant on the bottom floor. Fisher also built the first electrical plant in Monette, prior to 1920. It was a small, 32-volt system, and was expanded in the early 1920s by Tom Burris of Jonesboro, who installed a steam-generating plant. Ark-Mo (Arkansas-Missouri) Power purchased the plant in 1926, and improved the plant. Ark-Mo Power later merged with Arkansas Power and Light Company (AP&L) which is now known as Entergy Corporation and still serves the area. Ark-Mo brought natural gas to the area in the mid 1950s, and later had to sell the gas property when they merged with AP&L. The gas company is now known as Arkansas Western Gas Company.

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After the Great Depression the city of Monette obtained a grant and installed a city water system in 1935, with the PWA constructing the city's water tower. The water tank is still in use as part of the water system. In 1951, the city initiated a modern sewer system and shortly after added storm sewers to the system.

Since the town's early days, baseball has been a strong recreation program and a popular form of entertainment and is still important today. The first semi-pro baseball tournament in the nation was held in 1930 in Monette at the "Buffalo Park," located on the north side of Highway 18 and about ¼ mile east of the business district.

The first bank in the new town was established on December 3, 1900, as the Bank of Monette. Mr. F. M. Kuykendal was the first mayor of Monette and was instrumental in establishing the bank which opened with capital stock of \$10,000. Mr. J. E. Jones was president, Kuykendal was vice-president, and Mr. U. O. Ashby was cashier. A few years later another bank opened named Citizens Bank, which operated in Monette for several years. After Citizens Bank in Monette closed, there was only one bank in town for many years until United Federal Savings and Loan opened in the 1970s. This institution was closed when the savings and loan business collapsed. Again Monette had only one bank until Leachville State Bank (now Heritage Bank) opened a branch in 1995. Heritage Bank is still in operation.

### *History of the Property*

On November 9, 1917, the bank organizers purchased the property at 207 W. Drew Avenue and started construction on a new building. The building was completed in 1918, and it was reported in the newspaper that it was a magnificent structure and at least 25 years ahead of its time. First National Bank was in business in Monette until 1931, when it failed as did all other banks in Craighead County with the exception of the Bank of Nettleton. Mr. J. H. Hancock was president of the bank when it closed its doors. Sometime later the bank was re-established as Monette State Bank and continued to occupy the building until they built a new facility a few doors west of this one, and sold the older building to the Monette Masonic Lodge. Mr. Roy Jacobs was a co-founder and became the bank president. Mr. J. W. Buzick was the major stockholder. After many years as Monette State Bank the name was changed to MidSouth Bank and now has been sold to Liberty Bank of Arkansas. Throughout its many years of existence, the bank has been an integral part of the community. It has served the citizens of Monette and the surrounding area with all of the services that a bank normally provides, as well as being supportive of the school and schoolchildren in their many projects. They have always been supportive of the local charities and community projects. In fact, the owner of Liberty Bank donated a building that had been used as the bank drive-thru facility to the city and the city remodeled the building for a new City Hall. Also, when the city needed the property on the southeast and southwest corners at the intersection of Drew Avenue and Edmonds Street (Highway 18 and Highway 139 north) in order for the State Highway Department to widen the intersection and install a new turn signal, the bank sold the property to the city at a much reduced price. In 1969, Monette State Bank was instrumental in bringing industry to Monette. Charles Frierson, Jr., president and chairman of the board of Mercantile Bank of

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Jonesboro and chairman of the board of Monette State Bank, purchased a large share of the total municipal bond issue Frolic Footwear needed to open a plant in Monette. Also in 1969, Colson Wheel Plant opened in Monette and both banks were active in the financing of this venture. The shoe factory shut down recently but Colson is still in operation and has expanded, providing many jobs. Bank employees have always been active in the community during the years, serving as mayors, council members, school board members, and in many other areas of leadership.

The Monette Masonic Lodge #558 purchased the bank building on August 2, 1966. In order to save money, the lodge members did most of the renovations (including the installation of the glass block on the east façade) themselves. The Lodge did not actually move into the building until 1970. The lodge has always held their meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, and the Eastern Star (the ladies group of the lodge) met on the first and third Tuesday. Besides the regular member meetings, there were many meetings throughout the year that included the entire family of the members as well as other guests. For many years, the lodge served as an important social activity center for the community with most of the leaders and prominent people in the community being members. However, attendance and membership started to decline in the mid 1970s, and the Monette Eastern Star chapter was forced to disband. The Masonic Lodge members continue to meet at their new location in Monette but are much smaller in number than during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

On November 29, 1991, the Monette Masonic Lodge sold the building to David and Karen Wallace who made extensive renovations and opened a restaurant in the building. At first business was good but the Wallace's were forced to close the business. Later, the building was rented to a family who opened a Mexican restaurant, but there was not enough customers wanting this type of food on a regular basis, so after a few months it was also forced to close. Soon after this, the furnishings and kitchen equipment were sold and the building has now been empty for several years.

The exterior of the building looks much as it did in 1918, when first constructed and needs only minor repairs. It is easily recognized from a picture in a newspaper from 1936. However, the interior has been drastically altered, but was still in very good condition until the roof began to leak in the fall of 2006. Now the ceiling is falling in and the walls are wet and crumbling, and the carpet and tile being severely damaged.

On May 29, 2007, David and Karen Wallace deeded the First National Bank Building to the City of Monette. New roof installation began on June 11, 2007, and there are plans to clean and dry out the interior. The other repairs will be done as funds become available. Plans are to restore the exterior of the building as closely as possible to its original appearance (with assistance and advice from the Department of Arkansas Heritage). The interior will be repaired using all of the original material that is still usable. After the repairs are made the City plans to move the Buffalo Island Museum into this building. The museum is now located at the city park in an old building that was originally a school building and then used for many years as the meeting place for the Monette Senior Citizens group. Due to its out-of-the-way location, there is not a lot of activity

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

and it is believed that moving the museum to the First National Bank Building it will make it more accessible and increase visitation.

### SIGNIFICANCE

The First National Bank building in Monette is the only remaining building in the Buffalo Island area of the late-19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Classical Revival style of architecture. With only minimum alterations to the exterior of the building since 1918, it is easily recognizable from the very earliest photographs. Although the architecture is outstanding and makes the building very important and unique in the two or three block business district, the primary significance of the institution has been in the areas of commerce and economics. Throughout the years, the First National Bank Building has played a very important part in the success and development of Monette and the surrounding area. The bank has provided financing for many of the farmers, merchants, timber industry, landowners, homeowners, and others. They were instrumental in bringing industry to Monette by providing financing. These factories provided jobs for many of the displaced farm workers who could no longer find work on the farms due to the mechanization of farming. Also, the bank has been known for its contributions to charity and to many other projects in the community. They have not only been a good banking institution, they have been a good citizen. As such, the First National Bank Building, Monette, Craighead County, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance**.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carolyn Bridges Turner, Personal Interview, Monette, Arkansas, April 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Charles A. Stuck, *The Story of Craighead County*, The Hurley Company, 1960.

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Craighead County Courthouse, Eastern District, Lake City, Arkansas.

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Harry Lee Williams, *The History of Craighead County, Arkansas*, Southern Historical Press, Inc., Greenville, S.C., 1995.

Hershel "Plug" Eaton, *Monette, Arkansas, The Capital of Buffalo Island*, The Craighead County Historical Society, Jonesboro, Arkansas, April, 1981, Quarterly.

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Nan Harrell Snider, *Monette, Arkansas*, White Printing, Paragould, Arkansas, 2000.

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First National Bank Building  
Name of Property

Craighead County, Arkansas  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 739856 3975039  
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.)

Lot 162, Block 5 of the Original Survey to the town of Monette, Arkansas

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ernestine Harrell/Chairperson; Sarah Jampole Marks/Survey Historian  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 5-29-2007  
street & number 323 Center Street, Ste. 1600 telephone 501.324.9874  
city or town Little Rock State Arkansas 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 City of Monette, Jerry Qualls/Mayor  
street & number P.O. Box 382 telephone 870-486-2000  
city or town Monette state Arkansas zip code 72447

**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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

First National Bank Building  
Name of Property

Craighead County, Arkansas  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 162, Block 5 of the Original Survey to the Town of Monette, Arkansas.

## VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above verbal boundary description includes all land historically associated with the First National Bank Building: Monette, Craighead County, Arkansas.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First National Bank Building  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Craighead

DATE RECEIVED: 12/13/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/03/08  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/18/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/26/08  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001423

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: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 1.24.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the  
National Register**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

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



- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Sarah <sup>Jamison</sup> Marks
- ④ May 2007
- ⑤ ~~ATTP~~
- ⑥ North elevation, looking south
- ⑦ #1





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Ralph Wilcox
- ④ October 2007
- ⑤ APTP
- ⑥ North elevation and east facade,  
looking SW
- ⑦ #2





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Ralph Wilcox
- ④ October 2007
- ⑤ ~~ATTP~~
- ⑥ East elevation, looking west
- ⑦ #3





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Ralph Wilcox
- ④ October 2007
- ⑤ AHHP
- ⑥ East elevation, and south facade,  
looking NW
- ⑦ #4



- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Ralph Wilcox
- ④ October 2007
- ⑤ ~~HTH~~
- ⑥ South elevation looking NE
- ⑦ #15





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Sarah Jampole Marks
- ④ May 2007
- ⑤ AHPP
- ⑥ West elevation and partial north  
façade, looking SE
- ⑦ #6





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Sarah Jampole Marks
- ④ May 2007
- ⑤ ~~HAHP~~
- ⑥ Detail @ roofline, North elevation
- ⑦ #7





- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Sarah Jampole mance
- ④ May 2007
- ⑤ ~~HTP~~
- ⑥ Entablature detail, north entrance
- ⑦ #8



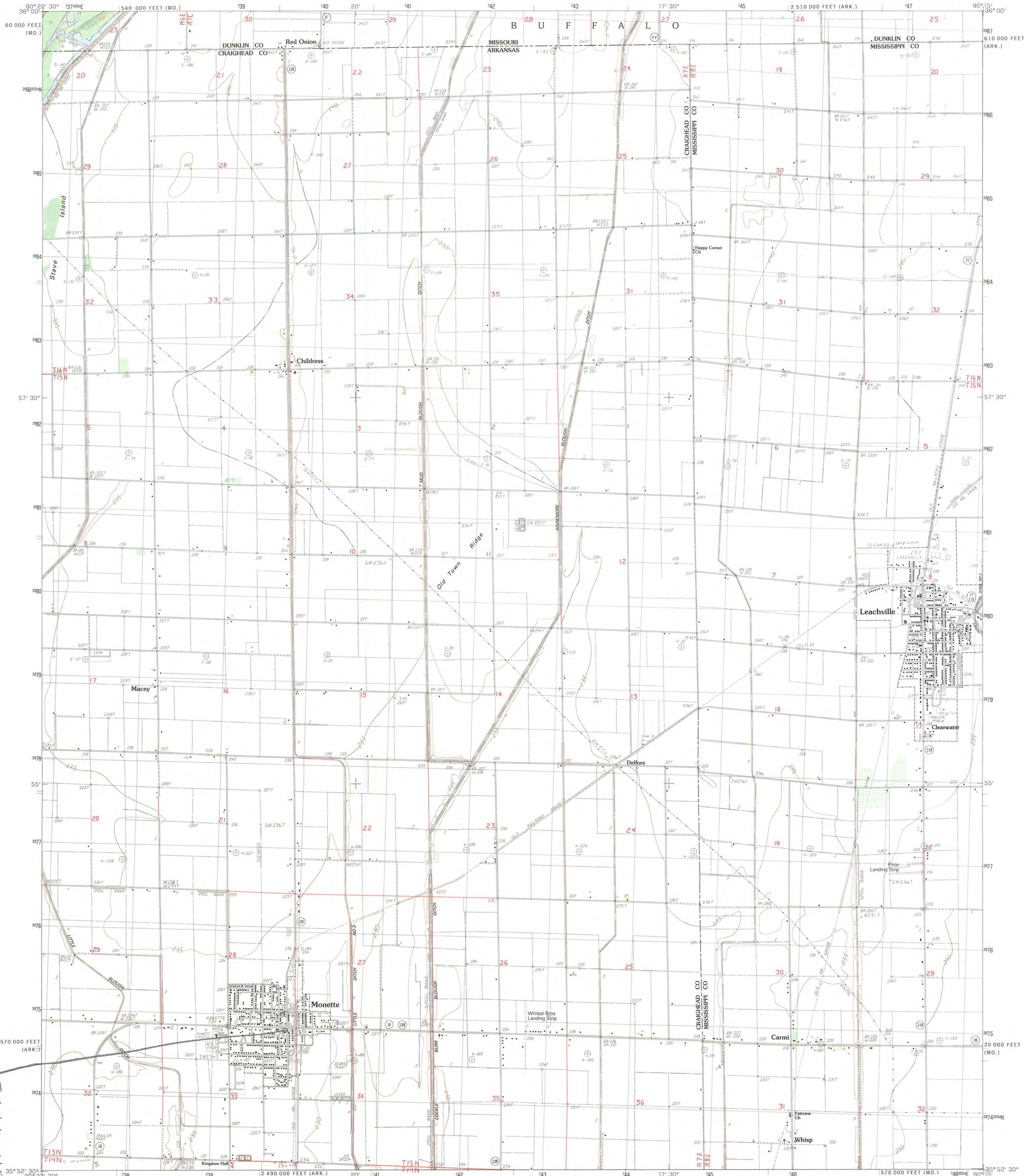


- ① First National Bank Building
- ② Craighead County, Arkansas
- ③ Sarah Jampole Marks
- ④ May 2007
- ⑤ ~~HTTP~~
- ⑥ front (north) entrance door
- ⑦ #9



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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ARKANSAS-MISSOURI  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



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FIELD CHECKED 1979. MAP EDITED 1983  
PROJECTION 1983 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM  
GRID 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR  
10,000-FOOT STATE GRID TICKS  
UTM GRID DECLINATION 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION 1983 EAST  
VERTICAL DATUM 1983 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
HORIZONTAL DATUM 1983 NORTH AMERICAN DATUM  
To place on the predicted North American Datum of 1983  
move the projection lines as shown by dashed corner ticks  
(5 meters south and 9 meters east)  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of any  
Federal and State reservations shown on this map

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1	2	3	1 Paragould East
4	5	2 Cardwell	3 Arbyrd
6	7	8	4 Dixie
			5 Manila North
			6 Lake City
			7 Caraway
			8 Manila South

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35090-H3-TF-024





**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:

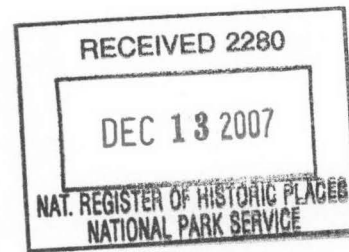
[info@arkansaspreservation.org](mailto:info@arkansaspreservation.org)

website:

[www.arkansaspreservation.com](http://www.arkansaspreservation.com)

December 5, 2007

Dr. Janet Matthews  
Chief of Registration  
United States Department of the Interior  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1201 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20005



RE: First National Bank Building; Monette, Craighead County

Dear Dr. Matthews,

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 Sarah Jampole Marks of my staff at (501) 324-9874. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:sjm

Enclosure

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