United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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For HCRS use only

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

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Condition excellent deteriorated moved date The present and original (if known) physical appearance Check one unaltered word original (if known) physical appearance

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

Situated on a spacious, tree shaded corner lot, the Frith-Plunkett House stands as the oldest residence in Des Arc. Built circa 1858, the house exhibits the pervasive influence of the Greek Revival style in antebellum Arkansas, eloquently communicated in the building's Classically derived portico. The building is a two-story horizontal weatherboarded woodframe structure raised slightly above grade on brick piers, exhibiting the one-room deep single pile with end chimneys that typifies the traditional "I" house form. An ell, constructed of the same weatherboard material as the house, extends from its rear elevation.

ELABORATION

The five bay principal (north) facade of the Frith-Plunkett House illustrates the impact of the Greek Revival style on the traditional "I" house form. Here, a single bay, two-story cross gable-roofed portico projects from the center of the elevation. The portico is supported by two pairs of finely crafted box columns with simple squared capitals that appear to have been designed in imitation of the Doric order. These columns carry an unembellished frieze and box cornice. The portico is capped with a triangular pediment that completes the imagery of the "Greek temple" front. Plain balusters, square in section, compose the portico's first and second floor porch rails. The columns visually embrace the main entrance to the house and the second floor balcony's entrance. Engaged box columns articulated with the same treatment as the portico columns, frame the double-doored front entrance. These engaged columns are flanked by sidelights set above wood panels and capped by a multi-light transom. The entrance itself is composed of impressive four-panel doors. The design of the second floor entry is almost identical to that of the principal entrance with one exception. Upstairs, access is provided through one oversized four-panel door. The first and second floors of the principal elevation display a fenestration of double-hung six-over-six light rectangular windows set in plain frames.

The east and west (side) elevations are quite austere in comparison to the principal facade. Although the building originally had two brick end chimneys, characteristic of the "I" house form, only the east chimney survives; the west chimney was destroyed in a 1960s storm. One double-hung six-over-six light window appears in the first floor of the east elevation, just south of the chimney while the west elevation, with its original chimney gone, is an uninterrupted weatherboarded wall. A one-story gable-roofed ell projects from the southeast corner of the house. The east facade of the ell is pierced by a single door with a shed awning and a six-over-six light double-hung window. It appears that the ell is contemporary with the main "I" structure. Physical evidence indicates that this ell may well have been the original detached kitchen, connected to the "I" house by a breezeway.

The rear (south) elevation of the Frith-Plunkett House is characterized by a one-story shed-roofed porch and the back of the gable-roofed ell. The porch, supported by square wood posts, originally ran the full 'ength of the elevation, probably creating the aforementioned breezeway between the "I" house and its kitchen. Now, the east end of the porch is enclosed, a result of the circa 1880s attachment of the ell. The

FHR-8-300A (11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

fenestration of the second story of the rear elevation of the house reiterates the articulation of the principal facade. However, the two eastern windows, probably not original to the structure, are shorter than the others in order to accommodate the pitch of the ell's gable roof below. (it is likely, therefore, that this window alteration dates to the circa 1880s attachment of the ell.) The first story of the south elevation is penetrated by one window flanked by two doors. The east door provides a rear entrance to the central hallway.

When the ell was attached to the "I" house, the back porch was extended to continue along the west side of the ell. However, the south extreme of the ell's porch was enclosed (circa 1960) to provide a modern bathroom and the enclosure is relatively small and unobtrusive on the building facade. The south facade of the ell has one window, identical in design to the window that appears in its east facade. The ell is capped with a simple cornice moulding and curvilinear brackets appear under the eaves of its gable roof.

In plan, the Frith-Plunkett House also reflects the typical arrangement of the traditional "I" house consisting of a central stair hall with one room to either side, both upstairs and downstairs. The four dwelling rooms, each with dimensions of 20 feet by 20 feet and 12 feet high ceilings are simply articulated, and each room was accommodated with a fireplace. The central hall is noteworthy for its flushboarded walls which display the marks of a circular saw, and its appropriately simple staircase with plain post balusters. Four-panel doors appear throughout the interior of the house. The ell continues to function as a kitchen.

One original outbuilding, a cistern, remains on the Frith-Plunkett House site. Located to the southwest of the dwelling house, this one-story hip-roofed structure is built of cypress boards. Square in plan, it is divided by a partition which separates the cistern from a storage area. Two doors on its north elevation provide access to the outbuilding and lattice work under the eaves of the building indicate the presence of the cistern inside.

There is evidence of a second outbuilding which stood west of the house and the present outbuilding. The second, smaller outbuilding was also square in plan, capped with a hipped roof and constructed of cypress. The Frith-Plunkett property represents potential archological value.

8. Significance

Specific dates	circa 1858	Builder/Architect	unknown	CHARGE STATE
1600—1699 1700—1799 _X 1800—1899	architecture	community planning conservation economics education engineering X exploration settlement	military music t philosophy politics/government	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

As Des Arc's oldest residence, the Frith-Plunkett house reflects the prosperity of the most successful economic era (1850-62) in this rural rivertown's history. As a result of its auspicious location on the White River, a critical transportation artery in antebellum Arkansas, Des Arc's population increased dramatically during the 1850s. According to the 1850 census the town, platted just two years earlier in 1848, had only 98 citizens, but by 1960 when Des Arc was at the peak of its economic heyday the city boasted a population of 2000. Both the house's builder, John Frith, and its second owner, William A. Plunkett, were associated with this early economic history. Frith opened one of the town's first stores in the early 1850s and by the end of the decade he emerged as a prominent merchant and real estate speculator. Plunkett established a successful wholesale and retail business in Des Arc after the Civil War, a period when the once-flourishing town was beginning to decline as the railroads, which initially bypassed Des Arc, surpassed the river as prime vehicles for transporting goods across the state. The Civil War period was quite devastating for Des Arc with many buildings burned and others moved to nearby DeVall's Bluff by the Union Army, thus rendering the survival of the circa 1858 Frith-Plunkett house especially compelling. Not only historically important, the Frith-Plunkett House, retaining much of its antebellum integrity, is an important East Arkansas vernacular example of the Greek Revival style. Though essentially an "I" house, a traditional Arkansas form, the two-story Classically-influenced portico distinguishes this residence. The portico depicts a clear understanding of the components of the Classical Greek Revival style. Although the Classical vocabulary is interpreted in a simplified fashion, careful attention to detail and craftsmanship is evident. Both architecturally and historically significant, the Frith-Plunkett House presents a unique representation of the architecture that formed the backdrop for Des Arc's pre-Civil War development.

9. Major Bibliographical Referen	nces
Prairie County, <u>Deed Records</u> , 1859, 1877. Prairie County, <u>Tax Records</u> , 1849 - 1880. 1850-1880 U.S. <u>Census</u> , White River Township, Prairie Ownsley, Ted, <u>Early History of Des Arc and Its People</u> .	
10. Geographical Data on the period	FOR NOT VERIFIED
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state code county	code
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Donald R. Brown, Historian	ya veri wesi tu pi
	date February, 1982
street & number Suite 500 Continental Building	telephone (501) 371-2763
city or town Little Rock	state Arkansas 72201
12. State Historic Preservation	Officer Certification
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: national stateX local	
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National His 665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Registe according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conser State Historic Preservation Officer signature	er and certify that it has been evaluated
title State Historic Preservation Officer	date 3/23/82
For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	er :
Keeper of the National Register	date
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	United States Department of the National Park Service
EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET	8200,21
Property: Frith-Plunkett House	Working No. 3/31/82-
State, County: AR, Prairie	Fed. Reg. Date: 2. /. 83
Federal Agency:	Date Due: 4/29/82 - 5/1
	Action: ACCEPT
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8. Significance	TERMS CRISS CERES
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Specific dates Builder/Architect	
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)	
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summary paragraph	
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7. Description

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

Situated on a spacious, tree shaded corner lot, the Frith-Plunkett House stands as the oldest residence in Des Arc. Built circa 1858, the house exhibits the pervasive influence of the Greek Revival style in antebellum Arkansas, eloquently communicated in the building's Classically derived portico. The building is a two-story horizontal weatherboarded woodframe structure raised slightly above grade on brick piers, exhibiting the one-room deep single pile with end chimneys that typifies the traditional "I" house form. An ell, constructed of the same weatherboard material as the house, extends from its rear elevation.

ELABORATION

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8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 X 1800–1899 1900–		community planning conservation economics education engineering X exploration/settlement	military music philosophy	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation
Specific dates	circa 1858	Builder/Architect	unknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

As Des Arc's oldest residence, the Frith-Plunkett house reflects the prosperity of the most successful economic era (1850-62) in this rural rivertown's history. As a result of its auspicious location on the White River, a critical transportation artery in antebellum Arkansas, Des Arc's population increased dramatically during the 1850s. According to the 1850 census the town, platted just two years earlier in 1848, had only 98 citizens, but by 1960 when Des Arc was at the peak of its economic heyday the city boasted a population of 2000. Both the house's builder, John Frith, and its second owner, William A. Plunkett, were associated with this early economic history. Frith opened one of the town's first stores in the early 1850s and by the end of the decade he emerged as a prominent merchant and real estate speculator. Plunkett established a successful wholesale and retail business in Des Arc after the Civil War, a period when the once-flourishing town was beginning to decline as the railroads, which initially bypassed Des Arc, surpassed the river as prime vehicles for transporting goods across the state. The Civil War period was quite devastating for Des Arc with many buildings burned and others moved to nearby DeVall's Bluff by the Union Army, thus rendering the survival of the circa 1858 Frith-Plunkett house especially compelling. Not only historically important, the Frith-Plunkett House, retaining much of its antebellum integrity, is an important East Arkansas vernacular example of the Greek Revival style. Though essentially an "I" house, a traditional Arkansas form, the two-story Classically-influenced portico distinguishes this residence. The portico depicts a clear understanding of the components of the Classical Greek Revival style. Although the Classical vocabulary is interpreted in a simplified fashion, careful attention to detail and craftsmanship is evident. Both architecturally and historically significant, the Frith-Plunkett House presents a unique representation of the architecture that formed the backdrop for Des Arc's pre-Civil War development.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Prairie County, Tax Records, 1849 - 1880.

1850-1880 U.S. Census, White River Township, Prairie County, Arkansas.

Worley, Ted, Early History of Des Arc and Its People. Little Rock, 1957

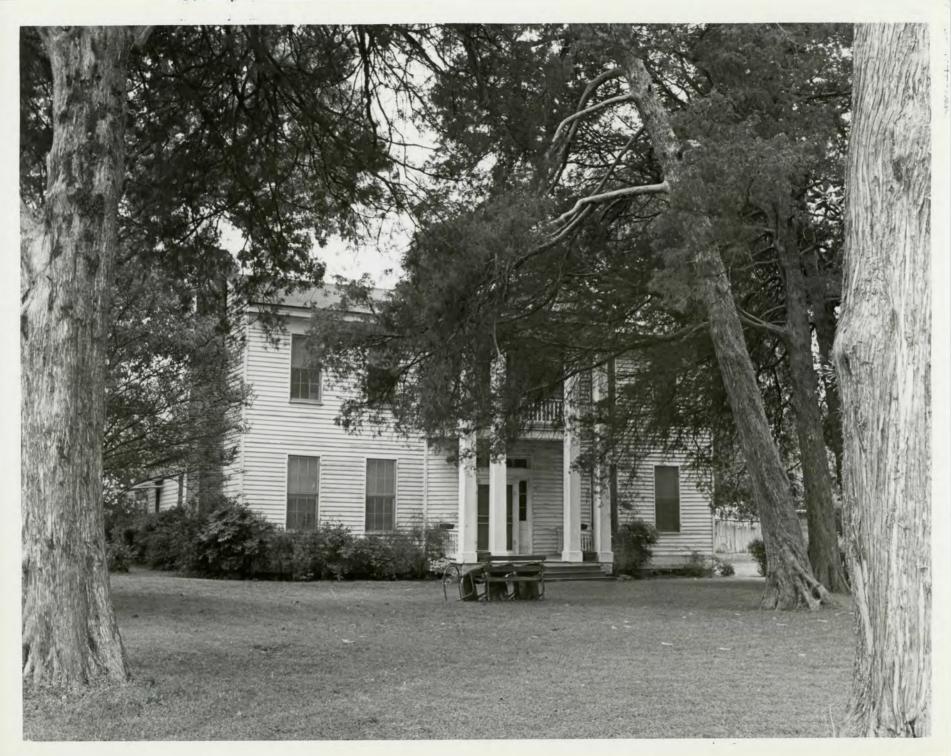
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street & number Suite 500 (ontinental Buildi	ing te	elephone (501) 37	1-2/63
city or town Little Rock		s	tate Arkansas	72201
12. State His	toric Prese	ervation	Officer Ce	rtification
The evaluated significance of the	is property within the st	tate is:		
national	state _	X local		
As the designated State Historic 665), I hereby nominate this pro according to the criteria and pro	perty for inclusion in the	e National Register	and certify that it has	been evaluated
State Historic Preservation Office	er signature	Wifn	1416	6
title State Historic Pres	servation Officer		date 3	/23/82
For HCRS use only				
I hereby certify that this p	roperty is included in th	e National Register	A A CALL STATE	1996 1978 San Grand
1 Rett Graven.			date 6/	10/82
Keeper of the National Regist	er		4	
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	Histional Park Service
EVALUATION RETURN SHEET	801.0107
	82602127
Property: Frith-Plunkett House	Working No. 3.31.82-985
State, County: Whave Co, alkansas	Fed. Reg. Date: FEB 1 /1983
Federal Agency:	Date Due: 7/8/82
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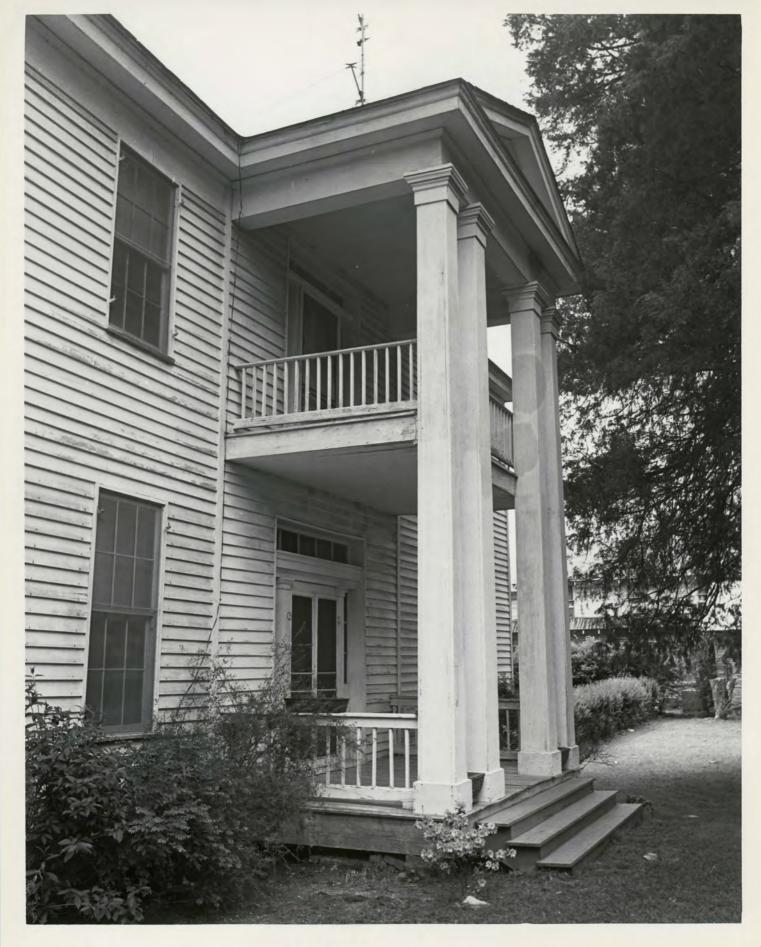
National Park Service

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Specific dates Sulider Architect	
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)	nolesimbrias 💜
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completeness	
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applicable criteria	
justification of areas checked	
relating significance to the resource	
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relationship of integrity to significance	
justification of exception	
other	
9. Major Bibliographical Referen	ces
10. Geographical Data	
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Verbal boundary description and justification	
11. Form Prepared By	
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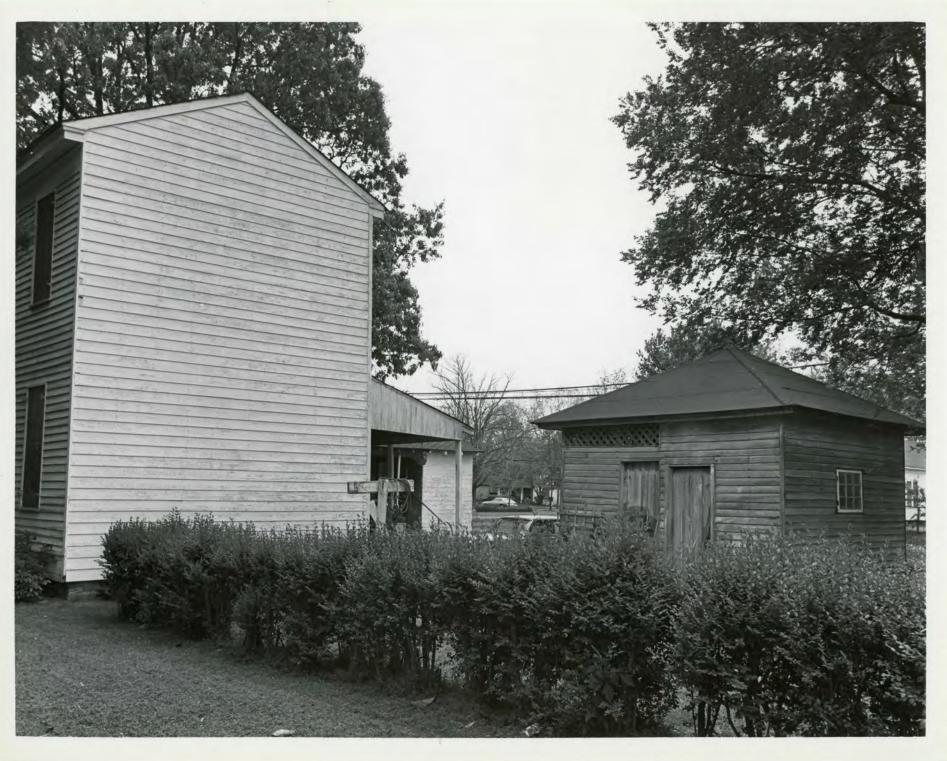
Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from Northeast No. 1 of 8



Bob Dunn, photgrapher May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from East No. 2 of 8



Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from East No. 3 of 8



Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from Northwest No. 4 of 8



Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from South No. 5 of 8



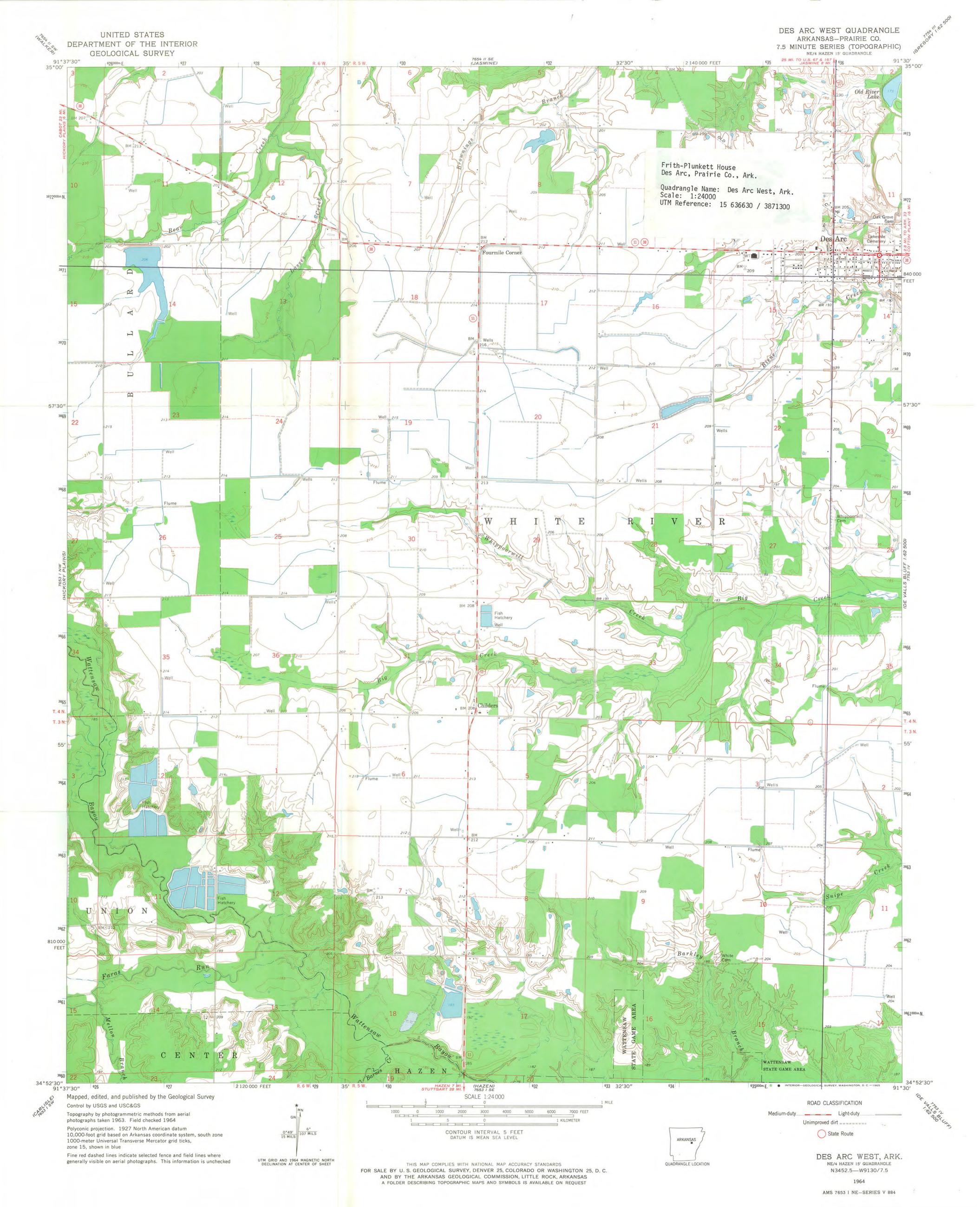
Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from Southeast No. 6 of 8



Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from South No. 7 of 8



Bob Dunn, photographer May, 1981 Negative at AHPP View from North No. 8 of 8



CITY OF DES ARC

OFFICE OF MAYOR WILLIS EDDINS

P. O. BOX 308

DES ARC, ARKANSAS 72040

May 14, 1981



Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Suite 500 Continental Building Main and Markham Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Att: Joan Williams Baldridge

Dear Ms. Baldridge:

I would like very much for the former W.A. Plunkett home in Des Arc, to be a part of the National Register of Historic Places as it is very old and has a lot of historical background surrounding it. I, for one, think these historical places should be preserved for future generations to see, enjoy and appreciate.

Please keep in contact with me on the progress being made. If there is anything that I may do to help you, please do not hestitate to let me know.

Very truly yours,

Eddens

Willis Eddins

Mayor

WE/1f



AHPP 1901

June 1, 1981

Ms. Joan Baldridge State Historic Preservation Officer Suite 500, Continental Building Markham and Main Street Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Ms. Baldridge:

I would like to add my support to the nomination of the W. A. Plunkett house in Des Arc, to the National Register of Historic Places. The Plunkett House is one of the oldest homes in Des Arc and has been a land mark in town for years.

I believe that all of the residents of this area would like to see this old home listed and restored, if possible. The Bethell House of Des Arc is an outstanding example of what can be done to our old homes in order to restore and preserve them for future generations.

Very truly yours,

Guyman DeVore County Judge

GDV/bd

DEC 19 1981

Mr. Wilson Stiles
State Historic Preservation Officer
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
Suite 500, Continental Building
Markham & Main Streets
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Mr. Stiles:

This will confirm that I am fully aware of the effects of listing a property in the National Register of Historic Places. I recognize that, under the National Historic Preservation Act, I am entitled to object to the proposed listing of my property by a notarized written statement. If I am the sole owner and I object, my property will not be listed. If there are multiple owners of this property and a majority of the owners object, the property will not be listed.

Following is the name and adress of my property.

Phunk	et Home	
8th 4	main St	
	Des arca	an
		72040

I hereby waive my right to object to the proposed listing and notify you that I request that my property be listed in the National Register at the earliest possible date.

Sincerely,

Um v Mis Homey & Drewny Owner of Record

12-14-81

Date



Phone: (501) 371-2753

Carol D. Shull
Acting Keeper of the National Register
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
440 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: National Register Nominations for:
Taborian Hall, Little Rock
Terminal Warehouse, Little Rock
Pfeiffer House and Carriage house,
Piggott, Arkansas
Franklin County Jail, Ozark
Frith-Plunkett House, Des Arc
Applegate Drugstore, Rogers

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review six nominations for individual properties for the National Register of Historic Places. The properties are:
Taborian Hall, Little Rock; Terminal Warehouse, Little Rock; Pfeiffer House and carriage house, Piggott; Franklin County Jail, Ozark; Frith-Plunkett House, Des Arc; and Applegate Drugstore, Rogers, Arkansas. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Wilson Stiles

State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure

WS/js