UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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# 7 DESCRIPTION

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#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Mato Kosyk house is a small one-story, rectangular, white frame building located about three-quarters of a mile west of Albion on a gravel road. It is not entirely visible from the road, and access to it is by a private driveway leading south from the road, then west to the house lot.

Its overall dimensions are approximately thirty feet by twenty feet. The front porch is open on the east and north sides. The porch floor is concrete. Three wooden pilasters support the porch roof on the north side, and four more support it on the east side. The east side contains two windows and a dormer window above the porch.

1. 2.

A single door on the north side enters the house from the porch. One window on the north side is immediately to the east of the door. Two more windows are on the rear north side. The south side of the house contains three standard Windows and one shorter window. The rear (west side) of the house contains one single door at ground level near the northwest corner of the building, and a back porch door semi-enclosed and screened. A wooden tool shed, approximately six feet by ten feet, is located about thirteen to fifteen feet west of the back porch.

There is a raised concrete slab in the southwest corner of the house lot, possibly to cover a well. A small concrete bunker is located on the south side of the house, about five feet south of the south end of the east porch, possibly to house an electric generator.

The entire house site, approximately sixty feet by forty-five feet, is enclosed by a chain length fence. There are three pine trees, one elm, and one catawba tree within the south perimeter fence line, two pine trees just outside of the east perimeter fence, and one pine tree in the northeast corner of the house lot. The house was built about 1910.



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SPECIFIC DAT	ES Approximately 19	LO BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT unknown	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This structure is important because of its association with Mato Kosyk. Kosyk (1853-1940) was the most popular poet of the Sorbian people. The Sorbs, or "Wends", as they are also called, form the smallest of the distinct nationalities within the Slavie language group. They occupy an area called Lusatia, which is presently in the German Democratic Republic, and today native speakers of their language number approximately 80,000. For centuries they led a somewhat isolated existence among their forests and marshes, and the Germans who migrated into Lusatia threatened to submerge their culture and language. Only two enclaves of immigrant Sorbs were established overseas, in Texas and Australia.

Beginning with the dawn of Sorbian nationalism about the middle of the nineteenth century, the rich oral tradition of the people was first given written form, and a Sorbian national literature was born. A high point was reached in the work of Mato Kosyk. He was born in Werben in 1853, the son of a peasant. At an early age, he turned his hand to poetry and journalism, and between 1880 and 1884 earned immediate popularity with a series of epic poems based upon Sorbian Folk themes. The Sorbian Wedding in the Spreewald (1880), The Treason of Margrave Gero (1882), and The Fall of Brandenburg (1882) all belong to this period.

Disillusioned by the lack of opportunity afforded one of his nationality and education, Kosyk immigrated to the United States in 1884, where he studied theology. He was ordained as a Lutheran pastor, and served a number of churches throughout the midwest. His last pastoral assignment was at El Reno, Oklahoma, from 1908 to 1913.

At this point he retired, and with his wife and son, he moved to the Albion area, where he bought a farm. He engaged actively in farming for a few years, but gradually abandoned all outside activities in order to devote himself entirely to his poetry. Kosyk composed lyrics, elegies, and epics in his native Sorbian and regularly mailed these works back to Germany, where they were published. To this period belong his <u>Autobiography</u> (1928), two volumes of <u>Poems</u> (1929, 1930), and <u>Poems of Later Years</u> (1933-37). The poet often employed some American, notably Indian, motifs derived from his extended residence in Oklahoma.

At the time of his death in 1940, little notice was given to his work, since the Nazi regime in Germany actively suppressed manifestations of Sorbian cultural

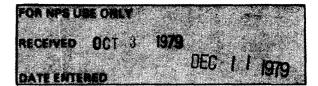
## **9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Dalitz, R. and Stone, G., "Mato Kosyk in America" (Unpublished MS, Oxford, En ., 1976). Nielsen, G. R., In Search of a Home: The Sorbs (Wends) on the Australian and Texas Frontiers (Birmingham, England, 1977). Engenrand, G. C. M., The So-Called Wends of Germany and Their Colonies in Texas and in Australia. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1934). **10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA** UTM NOT VERFISO ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_\_ Under 1 acre QUADRANGLE SCALE \_\_\_\_\_\_. QUADRANGLE NAME Albion OK UTM REFERENCES A 115 3 015 41515 318 318 91410 B ZONE EASTING NORTHING 70NF NORTHING Е G н VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION SE, NE, NW, SE 1/4 Section 5 T2N-R21E LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES CODE STATE CODE COUNTY COUNTY CODE CODE STATE • : FORM PREPARED BY NAME / TITLE Dr. Douglas Hale, Supervised by Dr. Annetta L. Cheek ORGANIZATION DATE Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey May 19 **STREET & NUMBER** Oklahoma State University (405) 567 CITY OR TOWN St<u>illwater</u> 0K STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS: LOCAL STATE\_ NATIONAL \_\_\_\_ 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 Servige STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE DATE 9/18/79 TITLE

FOR NPS USE ONLY			
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY	IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTI	3 <b>R</b> - 1	1. A.C. 1.
Sally A Oldham		DATE 12/11/79	
ATTEST: But GAUDUCAAL	acty Chief of Keges.	DATE 10/5/79	
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**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



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nationalism. In recent years, however, there has arisen an enormous interest in this most popular of all Sorbian writers, the "Nightingale of the Blota". Efforts have been made by Professor Klaus J. Dippmann of Berlin and Professor Richard H. Dalitz, of Oxford, among others, to erect a suitable monument in Albion to Kosyk's memory. The increasing interest in Sorbian culture in East Germany continues to enhance the significance of Kosyk and his work.

This structure, where Kosyk spent the last 27 years of his life, is the only remaining building that is associated with Kosyk's life.