

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Bethel CemeteryOther names/site number: Bethel Crossett Cemetery, AS0173

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: At the end of Bethel Road, 3.5 miles north of the intersection of Highway 52 and Highway 133City or town: Crossett State: AR County: AshleyNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☒**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60.In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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 ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings

1

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY: Cemetery

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: Granite, Marble; CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Bethel Cemetery is located 275 yards to the east of Fairview Road (AR 133), with access to the cemetery gate provided by a short gravel drive known as Bethel Road. The cemetery, which is roughly 1.5 acres in size, is located within a roughly 3.5 acre tract of land in eastern Ashley County, approximately ten miles northeast of the town of Crossett, owned by the Cousins of Bethel Board, a group that works to maintain and manage the Bethel Cemetery. The cemetery contains at least 170 burials, with the possibility of several additional unmarked burials. The earliest known burial was in 1855 and the burials continue to the present day. The tombstones are manufactured out of marble, granite and concrete and were carved by stone carvers from as far away as Indiana. The iconography and detailed carvings found on the tombstones in the Bethel Cemetery represent many popular late nineteenth and early twentieth century motifs. Many of the carvings are in excellent condition and represent a wide swath of many popular as well as rare grave symbols.

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Narrative Description

The Bethel Cemetery is located 275 yards to the east of Fairview Road (AR 133), with access to the cemetery gate provided by a short gravel drive known as Bethel Road. The cemetery is still open to new burials; however, the majority of the cemetery currently fenced area is occupied by graves, with only a limited area available for new burials. The cemetery contains at least 170 burials, with at least 127 of these from before 1967. The tombstones were manufactured out of marble, granite, and concrete and were carved by local craftsmen as well as stone carvers from as far away as Indiana. The maker's marks found in the cemetery represent a wide geographical area: including Reynolds, New Orleans, Louisiana; Rosebrough, St. Louis, Missouri; an illegible name, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Morris Brothers, Memphis, Tennessee; and M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana. An ornamental fence in the cemetery also includes the company name "Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

The iconography seen throughout the cemetery includes many popular late nineteenth and early twentieth century motifs. Many of the carvings are in excellent condition and represent a wide swath of many popular as well as rare grave symbols. This includes Masonic symbols, weeping willows, clasped hands, roses, lilies, and various other funerary related flowers, crowns, gates of heaven, arches, columns, drapery, obelisks, open Bibles, doves, urns, military symbols, upward pointing hands, lambs, wreaths, stars, an anchor, and an unusual broken tree. Few graves are also marked by historic and modern military markers representing service in the Civil War, World War I, and Korean Conflict.

Enclosures

There are three enclosures that encompass graves in the Bethel Cemetery. A few family gravesites are enclosed by concrete or stone copings. One group of graves, including those of the Kelly and Smith families, are surrounded by concrete edging and covered with white landscaping rocks. A set of Ramsaur (Ramsorer) family graves is within a tall wire fence, with reinforcing corner poles. Within this enclosure, several small gravestones have been moved to one side of the enclosure and stacked. The fence has been damaged and repaired with reinforcing braces at each corner and one section has been removed to allow access for lawn equipment. A historic decorative metal fence, in good condition, remains around the grave of J. H. Morrison (1842-1902). This fence includes two types of decorative finials and reinforced metal corner posts. A final single grave, evidenced only by a deep depression, is enclosed by an elaborate metal fence with tall corner posts and wire mesh sides. The fence has lost a few sections, but three sides still remain in decent condition. The fence was manufactured by Hulbert & Gould of St. Louis, Missouri, as evidenced by large finials with the following text cast in the metal "HULBERT & GOULD PAT. FENCES".

Landscape Design and Vegetation

The open area of the Bethel Cemetery is surrounded by a wooded landscape, including large oaks and pines. Within the main cemetery fence there are three large jasmine shrubs and several

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small crepe myrtles. The majority of the fenced cemetery is covered in grass. Outside the main cemetery fence, a small section of graves of African-Americans from the local community is located on adjacent land to the northwest. This area is included within the nominated boundary for this cemetery and the land is owned by the current cemetery board. This historically African-American section includes seven marked graves and at least five unmarked graves. The graves outside the main cemetery fence are interspersed with large trees.

Grave Markers and Monuments

The grave markers in the Bethel Cemetery represent several distinct types and forms: including tablets and upright stones, columns, obelisks and one concrete slab grave cover. Tablet markers and upright markers of stone and concrete are the most common type of headstone found in the Bethel Cemetery. A few short obelisks are also located in the cemetery. Many of the oldest markers in the cemetery are composed of carved granite or marble. One large concrete grave slab is located in the African-American section outside of the main cemetery fence.

Post-1900 markers include three groups of concrete markers, of three distinct types and method of construction. The first group is a set of upright, rectangular tablet markers with metal name plates inset on one side. These seem to be a vernacular form that used locally available material to create large, sturdy grave markers. This group includes markers for Ellen Smith and John Marcus Smith. The second type of concrete marker includes upright and ground markers, most likely constructed of concrete by a local craftsman. These markers are composed of at least two different mixtures of concrete and cured in some sort of plastic wrap as evidenced by the impression of the wrap on the rear of the markers. The front of these markers include hand-written names and dates, as well as varying decorative line borders. All of these markers seem to have been within a specific period of time between the 1920s through the 1940s. This type includes the markers for Hattie Mae Roberts (1906-1924), Jeffie J. and Charles W. Roberts (double headstone), J. C. Roberts (1909-1910), Lillian Roberts (d. 1910), Maggie Evans (1887-1929), as well as several others. The final type of concrete marker is a modern, square ground marker with metal name plates inset. These final ground level markers are found in one row at the northwest corner of the cemetery.

The grave markers in the Bethel Cemetery also exhibit a wide variety of classic cemetery iconography and symbolism. Several late 19th century tombstones, especially those of Grazilda Harbison (d. 1855), Martha McKinsiby (McKinstry) (1827-1864), Wm. J. McClurd (1849-1875), Marry Ann Kirkpatrick (1843-1871), Pink W. Whitlow (d. 1883), and Susan Withlow (1824-1872), feature very detailed and elaborate carvings featuring various funerary symbols. Unfortunately, although the carvings are still in very good condition, four of these stones have been broken in recent years by vandals. The stones are still on display, but two of the stones are now laid flat on the ground.

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Examples of the following funerary art and iconography can be found on grave stones in the Bethel Cemetery¹:

Draped Cloth – A draped cloth can be either looked at as a reverential accessory to a grave or as representing the veil between Heaven and earth.

Gates – In Christianity, gates often represent the passage from one realm to the next, or more literally the opening gates of Heaven.

Crowns – Crowns are often a symbol of victory, leadership, and distinction.

Books – A closed book often represents a completed life, although it may also represent virginity, secrecy, and mystery. An open book, on the other hand, can be compared to the human heart with its thoughts and feelings open to God and the world. In addition, any book can represent the Bible.

Lambs – Lambs are often used to mark the graves of children, especially infants, and often represent the innocence associated with youth. Lambs may also be associated with Jesus Christ, who was described as the “Lamb of God.”

Doves – Doves have become a symbol of purity and peace due to the story of Noah’s Ark and the presence of Doves as a promise of peace, but they can also represent the Holy Ghost.

Weeping Willows – The form of the weeping willow often brings to mind grief and sorrow, but it also suggests immortality in many religions. In Christianity, for example, it is often associated with the gospel of Christ since the tree will flourish and remain whole, no matter how many branches are cut off.

Anchors – Anchors often symbolize hope as referred to in Hebrews 6:19-20.

Wreaths – Wreaths, which usually are composed of laurel, can represent victory, eternity, immortality, and chastity. Eternity and immortality are represented in the leaves, which do not wilt or fade. The concept of victory comes through the Romans, who used the laurel wreath as a symbol of military and intellectual glory.

Roses – Roses are a symbol of love, martyrdom (red), and virginity or purity (white). Also, the rose was a symbol as a reminder of the perfection of a Heavenly paradise. Also, the Virgin Mary was referred to as the “Rose without Thorns.” This symbol is most frequently associated with women.

Lilies – Lilies, also known as Easter Lilies are a symbol of purity, chastity, and the attainment of heavenly qualities. They have a strong association with funerals, likely because of their strong scent, which could be used to cover unwanted odors.

Clasped Hands – Clasped Hands are often a symbol of matrimony, with one hand having a feminine cuff and one a masculine cuff. They are also used as a symbol of heavenly welcome, an earthly farewell, or a guiding hand to Heaven.

Angel – Angels were often used as symbols of heavenly messengers.

Arches – Similar to the gate form, archways are used as symbols of gateways or portals to Heaven.

Columns – Columns are often shown as broken, as symbol of the end of life.

Urns – The cinerary urn is one of the most common 19th century funerary symbols due to its long use as a container for funerary ashes.

¹ The following explanation of funerary iconography is taken from Douglas Keister’s *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography*.

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Upward Pointing Hand – This is usually a symbol of a soul rising to Heaven.

Stars – Stars are often symbols of divine guidance, echoing the single star as the Star of the East, guiding the Magi to Bethlehem.

A Broken Tree – A broken tree is a symbol of the end of life, usually seen on the graves of young men as a sign of a life cut short.

Although the Bethel Cemetery is a relatively small cemetery located in a very rural area of Arkansas, the markers in the cemetery represent a wide variety of iconography as well as a wide geographical area of production. The maker's marks found in the cemetery represent craftsmen from at least five states and probably several unsigned markers from craftsmen in Arkansas. These include the following makers; Reynolds, New Orleans, Louisiana; Rosebrough, St. Louis, Missouri; an illegible name, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Morris Brothers, Memphis, Tennessee; and M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana. An ornamental fence in the cemetery also includes the company name "Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

Breakdown of Burials

Grave Date Distribution:

1850-1859:	2
1860-1869:	6
1870-1879:	6
1880-1889:	1
1890-1899:	9
1900-1909:	30
1910-1919:	18
1920-1929:	14
1930-1939:	14
1940-1949:	11
1950-1959:	10
1960-1969:	6

Non-historic Burials:

1970-1979:	3
1980-1989:	1
1990-1999:	6
2000-2009:	4
2010-2019:	1

Total Historic Burials: 127

Total Non-historic Burials: 15

Total Burials with Unknown Dates: 23

Total Known Unmarked Burials: 5 (may be several more)

Total Known Burials: 170

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Integrity

The Bethel Cemetery retains a high level of integrity including its setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The location, design, and setting have remained the same since its inception. The cemetery was once adjacent to the Bethel church, which was located to the east of the cemetery. This church was torn down in c. 2011 due to structural deterioration. The cemetery does include some later burials and monuments, but the historic burials and monuments greatly outnumber the modern stones. Also, the largest and most detailed monuments are the historic headstones, while later monuments are low to the ground and much smaller. That the cemetery retains its historic materials and the workmanship of the gravestones is readily apparent. The cemetery also retains its historic feelings and association with the families that settled this area in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The cemetery has suffered from some vandalism, including the breaking of a few tall tablet gravestones. These stones are still laid on the graves they represent, and the elaborate iconography on these stones has not been heavily damaged. The Bethel Cemetery is in good condition and is well maintained by an active cemetery board.

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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.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☒ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ART

Period of Significance

1855-1967

Significant Dates

1855

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Monument Maker: James Reynolds, New Orleans
Monument Maker: R. L. Rosebrough Sons, St. Louis
Monument Maker: Morris Brothers, Memphis
Monument Maker: M. A. Lawrence, Evansville

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Bethel Cemetery, located north of the community of Crossett in a rural area of Ashley County, includes interesting and important examples of a wide array of funerary iconography and artistic techniques from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the tombstones represent the best examples of high relief stone carvings in the area. In addition, the monuments in the cemetery, besides displaying popular funerary art of the period, also illustrate the work of several Arkansas and regional monuments makers from a wide geographical area, such as Reynolds, New Orleans, Louisiana; Rosebrough, St. Louis, Missouri; an illegible name, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Morris Brothers, Memphis, Tennessee; and M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana. An ornamental fence in the cemetery also includes the company name "Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

The Bethel Cemetery is **locally significant** and is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** for its display of funerary art and architecture during the Period of Significance, 1855-1967. The cemetery is also eligible for nomination under **Criteria Consideration D: Cemeteries** as the site that derives its primary significance from distinctive design features.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Ashley County was organized on November 30, 1848; as the fifty-third county in Arkansas. The county was formed from parts of the earlier counties of Chicot, Drew, and Union, with a final boundary adjustment made in 1861. The county was named for U. S. Senator Chester Ashley, the third Arkansan elected to the U.S. Senate and an important early leader in Arkansas Territory and the new State of Arkansas.² The surrounding area's economy has always been centered on agriculture. By 1855, most of the area's farms were focused on producing cotton, corn, wheat, potatoes, and livestock.³ Timber was also harvested throughout the county and then rafted down the Saline River to be processed in other communities.⁴ The many small agricultural centers of the county were affected by the arrival of the railroad in the area. Small communities that had previously been reliant on the county's waterways for transportation were bypassed by the railroad lines and eventually the merchants of those small communities conglomerated in the

² Deirdre Kelley and Bill Norman, "Ashley County," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, Central Arkansas Library System, 14 July 2016, www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net, Accessed 1 February 2017.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

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larger county seat of Hamburg.⁵ During the late 19th and early 20th century, the development of the wood products industry in the county lead to the establishment of the town of Crossett and its deep-seated ties to the Crossett Lumber Company and its successors.⁶ The development of the Crossett community was controlled by the local lumber company that owned all the land, mills and residential real estate in the area during the early 20th century. The county saw an explosion in population between 1850 and 1910, when the number of inhabitants grew from just over 2000 people to just over 25,000 people.⁷ After 1910, the county's population plateaued and eventually began to decline after the 1980s.

Bethel Church and Cemetery

Jonathan Hosea Callaway (1809-1868) was born in Georgia and moved to Ashley County, Arkansas, with his second wife, Martha Jane Jones, and his three children sometime around 1850.⁸ By 1860, the Callaway family included eight children.⁹ In 1867, Jonathan Hosea Callaway granted 40 acres to the local Bethel Church.¹⁰ A handwritten note in an 1887 church registry from the Bethel Church notes that the church building was built in 1849 by local "negro" craftsmen and paid for by Jonathan Hosea Callaway. The cemetery was established soon after the church was built. Notes in the church registry also state that the church was a part of the Hamburg Circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church with a building that measured 40 feet by 60 feet. The church was also noted to have been built with hand-hewn lumber and assembled with square wooden pegs.

The following text was hand-written inside the front cover of the 1887 church registry for the nearby Bethel Church¹¹:

"Bethel Church History (illegible word) 1887

Bethel Church built 1849 by (illegible name), Jonathan Hosea Callaway paid \$2300.00 for the negro who manage the work as he was a skilled workman. All hand made lumber was used.

Official lands Grant was made to the church in 1867 of 40 acres.

Granting land and church for the use of any Orthodox Church.

Naming the following Trustees;

Johnathan Hosea Callaway

Frank (illegible), Sr.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bill Norman, "Crossett (Ashley County)," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, Central Arkansas Library System, 17 November 2016, www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net, Accessed 1 February 2017.

⁷ Kelly, "Ashley County," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*.

⁸ United States Census Rolls, 1850.

⁹ United States Census Rolls, 1860.

¹⁰ 1887 Bethel Church Register, copies provided by Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

¹¹ The 1887 register the Bethel Church was donated to the Crossett Public Library by a great, great, great granddaughter of said of Mr. Callaway.

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John O. Callaway
Edward J. Callaway
K. W. Ward"

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The 1887 registry also lists the name of many buried in the Cemetery as members and leaders of the Bethel church, including Jonathan Callaway, who donated the original 40 acres for both the church and cemetery, Elisha Callaway, J.H. Johnson and his son Whitmore Johnson, Joe Meeks, Sarah Billingsly, Mark and Sarah Noble, Nannie Callaway, Thos. Napoleon Mann, and W.C. Mann. The Bethel Church stood to the west of the cemetery until c. 2011, when it was demolished due to the heavily deteriorated state of the structure. The cemetery is now the only remaining remnant of the early community in this area. By 1992, the land surrounding the 3.5 acres owned by the cemetery board was sold to the Georgia Pacific Corporation for timber harvesting.¹² The caretaker of the cemetery at that time reported that when he learned of this action, he went to Ms. Eva Johnson, the previous owner of the surrounding land and was able to convince her to give him a large donation for cemetery upkeep.¹³ Bethel Cemetery is an active cemetery with the latest burial in 2010 and limited areas reserved for future use.

Iconography and Carvings

The grave markers in the Bethel Cemetery also exhibit a wide variety of classic cemetery iconography and symbolism. Several late 19th century tombstones, especially those of Grazilda Harbison (d. 1855), Martha McKinsiby (McKinstry) (1827-1864), Wm. J. McClurd (1849-1875), Mary Ann Kirkpatrick (1843-1871), Pink W. Whitlow (d. 1883), and Susan Withlow (1824-1872), feature very detailed and elaborate carvings featuring various funerary symbols. Unfortunately, although the carvings are still in very good condition, four of these stones have been broken in recent years by vandals. The stones are still on display, but two of the stones are now laid flat on the ground. Unfortunately, there is no evidence for the names of the carvers of these monuments, other than a single remaining legible signature line on the monument for Grazilda Harbison that states "Vicksburg." The tombstones of Mary Ann Kirkpatrick, Pink Whitlow, and Susan A. Withlow include the most striking carvings due to their high relief and elaborate detailing of the iconography. The tombstone of Pink Whitlow, with its large stone drapery and detailed floral wreath and long epitaph is one of the most important examples of funerary art in the Bethel Cemetery. Another unsigned, yet excellent example of funerary art can be found on the gravestone of Mrs. M. A. Franklin (1883-1909). This stone features a detailed surrounding archway border resting on bases labeled "LIFE" and "TRUTH" with a keystone labeled "LOVE." Inside the arched border is an elaborate open gateway with clouds above and a floating crown with a cross emerging from the top and rays of light emerging from the bottom.

¹² Property Record from the files of Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

¹³ *Ibid.*

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Examples of the following funerary art and iconography can be found on the noted gravestones in the Bethel Cemetery¹⁴:

Masonic Symbols – J. H. Callaway (1809-1868), James R. Franklin (1822-1897), Mark Noble (1840-1919), Cordelia Edwards (d. 1926)
Draped Cloth – Pink W. Whitlow (d. 1883)
Gates – Mrs. M. A. Franklin (1888-1865), J. M. Hartley (1871-1932)
Crowns – Mrs. M. A. Franklin (1888-1865)
Books – Thos. Nepelean Mann (1887-1918), William Harbison (1801-1876), Mary L. Moffatt (1830-1905)
Lambs – Elizabeth Allen Comer, Robbie L. Kelley (1935-1936), George W. Edwards (1888-1942), Clifton Hartley (1900-1902)
Doves – Junia May Burnell (1897-1900), Susan Withlow (1824-1872), Jessie H. Kelley (1888-1897)
Weeping Willows – William J. Moffatt (d. 1874)
Anchors – G. H. Edwards (1845-1912)
Wreaths – William Edward Powell (d. 1858), Pink W. Whitlow (d. 1883), Susan Withlow (1824-1872)
Roses – Eliza H Tunstill (1858-1865), Mary Ann Kirkpatrick (1843-1871)
Lilies – J. F Ramsaur (1819-1904)
Clasped Hands – Elisha Callaway (1862-1841), Cornelia Johnson (1837-1900), Grazilda Harbison (d. 1855), Robert F. Meeks (1858-1896)
Arches – Mrs. M. A. Franklin (1888-1865)
Columns – William Edward Powell (d. 1858)
Urns – J. F Ramsaur (1819-1904)
Upward Pointing Hand – J. H. Morrison (1842-1902)
Stars – J. M. Hartley (1871-1932)
A Broken Tree – Wm. J. McClurd (1849-1875)

Craftsmen and Stone Carvers

Although the Bethel Cemetery is a relatively small cemetery located in a very rural area of Arkansas, the markers in the cemetery represent a wide variety of iconography as well as a wide geographical area of production. The maker's marks found in the cemetery represent craftsmen from at least five states and probably several unsigned markers from craftsmen in Arkansas. These include the following makers: Reynolds, New Orleans, Louisiana; Rosebrough, St.-Louis, Missouri; an illegible name, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Morris Brothers, Memphis, Tennessee; and M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana. An ornamental fence in the cemetery also includes the company name "Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

¹⁴ The following explanation of funerary iconography is taken from Douglas Keister's *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography*.

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Reynolds, N. O.

The gravestone for George M. Whitlow (1817-1867) includes the signature "Reynolds, N. O." This rounded top monument includes a floral border at the top of the stone and chamfered sides. The text is basin and most of the stone has been left flat. James Reynolds was a marble dealer and gravestone carver who lived and worked in New Orleans, Louisiana. The earliest record of James Reynolds found to date is from a collection of papers from the Andrew Cannon family collection held at Louisiana State University. In the collection there are letters written in 1860 regarding the purchase of marble and tombstones from a Mr. James Reynolds of Ludwig and Reynolds, New Orleans.¹⁵ A record for James Reynolds from an 1861 New Orleans city directory notes that he lived along North Roman Street at number "35 Roman d. 2" (now numbered as 222 North Roman Street) and had his marble yard at 186 Rampart. He continued to be noted in city directories through the 1880s. He was also listed as providing stone work for St. Joseph's Church on Common Street in New Orleans. By 1872, Reynolds was living at 97 St. Andrew Street, New Orleans, with his marble works at 160 to 162 Poydras Street. He also owned a sandstone works on Tchoupitoulas Street, between Washington and Third Streets.¹⁶ Only two other monuments in Arkansas, with the signature "J. Reynolds, N. O.", are known to exist. One features the masonic square and compass symbol in a roundel and is located in the Hamburg Cemetery in Ashley County (NR 9.23.2011) and the other is a chest tomb located in the Green Cemetery in Ouachita County.

R. L. Rosebrough Sons

The Bethel Cemetery also contains a marker by the noted St. Louis company of R. L. Rosebrough Sons, which is known today as the Rosebrough Monument Company. The stone with the signature "Rosebrough, St. Louis." was commissioned for "Cornelia, wife of J. H. Johnson" (1837-1900). This stone includes various text styles as well as an incised shield border around the text. The top of the rectangular stone includes a roundel with a banner at the top that states "FAREWELL" and a pair of clasped hands of the marriage symbol type. The left hand includes a masculine cuff while the right hand includes a more elaborate and somewhat feminine cuff.

The stones of R. L. Rosebrough Sons are signed either "Rosebrough & Sons, St. Louis" or simply "Rosebrough, St. Louis." *The Industries of St. Louis*, published in 1887 noted:

This is the largest house in its line in St. Louis, and has been built up to its present prosperity by thoroughness in every detail of its management, superior

¹⁵ Andrew Cannon Family Papers (Mss. 4979), compiled by Chris Brown, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University Libraries, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University. 2008.

¹⁶ Kevin William, Archivist, Tulane University. E-mail to Nicole Hobson-Monis, Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. 16 June 2011. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. (Taken from the files of the National Register nomination information for the Hamburg Cemetery, Ashley County).

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workmanship in its product, and fairness in its dealings. It was originally established in 1858, by the late R. L. Rosebrough and his son, J. W. Rosebrough, in a little one story shop, 35x15 feet, on Broadway. Steadily the business grew and thrived as a result of their industry. Since the death of Mr. R. L. Rosebrough in 1866, the business has been continued by Mr. J. W. Rosebrough and his brothers, who have been trained to the business and educated in all its details. The firm occupy as works and salesrooms a massive and elegant building of great convenience and architectural beauty, covering an area of 73x109 feet. The force employed numbers fifty, and includes artistic designers, draughtsman and skilled workmen. The work turned out is done in the highest style of art, the materials used being the finest Italian and American marble, and domestic and Westerly granite, for which latter they are exclusive agents; and their whole attention being paid to cemetery work, which is made in all styles from the simplest headstone to the most elaborate monument or mausoleum. Many of the finest achievements of memorial art that are to be found at Bellefontaine, Calvary and other local cemeteries are the product of these works, and the house also constantly receives orders from other parts of Missouri, from Kansas, Illinois, the South and Mexico, for their superior and beautiful work. Fine designs, perfection of workmanship, and prompt and accurate filling of orders have combined to secure for this house its prominent standing and enduring success.¹⁷

Found in several historic Arkansas cemeteries, the stonework of Richard L Rosebrough and his sons was commissioned by Arkansans with the money to afford this notable stone carver from St. Louis. *The Industries of St. Louis* (1887) also includes a drawing of the monolithic building that housed the marble and stone works in St. Louis, encompassing six city blocks. Originally established in 1858 by Richard L Rosebrough, ownership of the company passed to his son, J W Rosebrough, after Richard Rosebrough's death in 1866.¹⁸

Morris Brothers, Memphis.

The signature "Morris Bros. Memphis" appears on the stone for William Harbison (1801-1876). This stone includes various incised texts and a roundel at the top that features an open Bible. The Morris Brothers were a dynamic and large monument erecting company in Memphis, Tennessee. They employed carvers in their Memphis operation and also in Carrara, Italy. Many of the more elegant and large sculptures were erected by Morris Brothers, having been shipped from Italy. Little else is currently known about the company.¹⁹

M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana.

¹⁷ *The Industries of Saint Louis*, St. Louis: J. M. Elstner & Co., Publishers, 1887. pp 77-78.

¹⁸ Nancy Spivey, "Hamburg Cemetery, Historic Section," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 2011.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

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The large headstone for William Edward Powell (d. 1858) originally included a tall, purposefully unfinished column topped by a wreath of flowers, symbolizing the end of a too short life. The tombstone's column was previously toppled and is now in two parts resting against the original base. This tombstone is signed "M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Ind." along the base. The firm of Kent & Lawrence, Marble Works, also referred to as the M. A. Lawrence Marble Works was located in Evansville, Indiana and in advertisements was noted as being "near the Court House." The marble works was also noted in local advertisements as being a branch of a possibly larger marble works located elsewhere. Not much is known about this marble dealer as advertisements have only been found in newspapers in Evansville, Indiana, between 1850 and 1852 that reference the Lawrence Marble Works. One 1852 advertisement noted that M. A. Lawrence had the "largest and finest stock of Italian and American Marbles."²⁰ M. A. Lawrence, age 40, is noted in the 1860 United States Census for Evansville, Indiana, as a Marble Dealer with extensive real estate and personal property holdings. He is shown as living with his wife and three children as well as two servants.

"Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

A. G. Hulbert was a leading manufacturer of wire and iron fences in the St. Louis area.²¹ He also had factories for the production of fencing in St. Louis. He originally started his fencing business in Iowa, with branch factories in Kansas and Texas and eventually established an office in St. Louis in 1880.²² He specialized in farm fencing and heavy iron fencing and owned several patents on fence production methods and types. He was in partnership with a Mr. Gould for six years, prior to 1887. He was mentioned in the *Industries of Saint Louis* (1887) as a prominent businessman with many business interests in the St. Louis area, including the publication of an agricultural paper.²³

Select Biographies

George Whitlow (1817-1865) & Susan Whitlow (1824-1872)

George Whitlow was born and raised in South Carolina. He married Susan Whitlow, who was from Alabama, and moved to live in Mississippi for a time before 1850. While in Mississippi they had several children together. In the mid-1850s, the Whitlow family moved to the Ashley County area with their children and at least two slaves and settled on a plantation of roughly 400 acres.²⁴ In the 1860 United States Federal Slave Census, George Whitlow is shown to have twelve slaves, ranging in age from 2 years old to 40 years old working on a farm in Mill Creek Township, Ashley County.

²⁰ Anton H. Maria and Ronald C. Counts, *From the Cincinnati Arch to the Illinois Basin: Geological Field Excursions Along the Ohio River Valley*, Geological Society of America, 2008. p 100.

²¹ *The Industries of Saint Louis*, St. Louis: J. M. Elstner & Co., Publishers, 1887. p 203.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ United States Census Rolls, 1850 & 1860.

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Pink Missouri Whitlow (d. 1883)

Pink Whitlow was the first wife of William Whitlow, son of George and Susan Whitlow.²⁵ William was also a farmer in the Ashley County area, west of the town of Hamburg. After Pink Whitlow passed away, her husband William moved to Hamburg and operated a mercantile business and eventually became mayor of Hamburg. William eventually remarried to a Bettie Bell Rolfe and had five additional children. William and his second wife are buried in the Hamburg Cemetery. The small community of Whitlow, to the west of the Bethel Cemetery was named after the Whitlow family and members of the family remain in the area. The tombstone of Pink Whitlow is one of the most elaborate in the cemetery and includes the following inscription under an elaborately carved drapery and carved funerary flower wreath:

“PINK M. WHITLOW
Departed this life
Mar. 29, 1883,
In her 27th Year.
She left three little Girls
MARY SUE, aged 4 years,
ESSIE, aged 2 years,
& WILLIE PINK, aged 3 mos.
With a loving Husband to mourn her loss.
She has only gone to Heaven where we
hope to meet again.”

William Harbison (1801-1876) & Grazilda Harbison (d. 1855)

William Harbison was born in South Carolina, like many others who settled in the area of the Bethel Cemetery in central Ashley County.²⁶ William married Grazilda Harbison sometime before 1840. In the 1860 United States Federal Slave Census, William Harbison is shown to have eighteen slaves, ranging in age from 1 year old to 33 years old, working on a farm in Mill Creek Township, Ashley County. According to local historians, William Harbison was an attorney and was instrumental in the organization of the Presbyterian Church in Hamburg in 1859 and served as Ruling Elder there.²⁷ Grazilda Harbison's burial in c. 1855 was the first recorded death date in the Bethel Cemetery.

Martha J. (Harbison) McKinstry (1827-1864)

²⁵ Whitlow family biographical information provided by local historian Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

²⁶ United States Census Rolls, 1850.

²⁷ Harbison family biographical information provided by local historian Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

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Martha J. McKinstry was the wife of James Y. McKinstry and mother of William J. McClurd (1849-1875), who is also buried in the Bethel Cemetery. Martha J. Harbison may have married her first husband a Mr. McClurd sometime before 1849. She is listed in the 1850 United States Census as living with her parents, William and Grazilda Harbison, with her one year old son William J. McClurd. Martha married James Y. McKinstry on August 24, 1853, in Marshall County, Mississippi. It is unknown why she was not buried with either of her husbands.

Mark Noble (1840-1919) & Sarah Noble (1844-1919)

Mark Noble and his wife Sara Noble are both buried in the Bethel Cemetery. Mark joined the 2nd Regt, Arkansas Calvary in 1862 and was elected Lieutenant of Slemon's Brigade. He was captured in May of 1865 and released on June 10, 1865.²⁸ On his return to Ashley County he bought a farm in the Mill Creek Township, north of Crossett.

J. F. Ramsaur (1819-1904) & Catherine Wellborn Ramsaur (1827-1902)

John Fraknlin Ramsaur was a local farmer, who had moved to Ashley County by way of Mississippi, from his birthplace of North Carolina.²⁹ John F. Ramsaur and William Harbison were instrumental in the organization of the Presbyterian Church in Hamburg in 1859 and served as Ruling Elders there.³⁰

Eva C. Ramsour (Ramsaur)

The mother of John Franklin Ramsaur, Eva C Ramsour (Ramsaur), also moved to Ashley County, after the death of her husband Jonas Ramsour (Ramsaur) in Mississippi in 1857.³¹ Eva C. Ramsour died in 1869 and was one of the first few community members buried in Bethel Cemetery. Her tombstone also records one of the earliest birth dates found in Ashley County cemeteries, January 26, 1799.

African-American Section

The African-American Section, outside the main fence of the cemetery may include the burials of enslaved and previously enslaved individuals who worked on area plantations and small farms. Local tradition indicates that some of the enslaved individuals may have been associated with the plantation owned by the Bell family and originally started by Washington Lovett Bell and his son Mr. Ben L. Bell. The Bell family was known to have had one of the largest plantations in the area before the Civil War. The Goodspeed biographies of 1890 note that the

²⁸ Noble family biographical information provided by local historian Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

²⁹ United States Census Rolls, 1860.

³⁰ Ramsaur family biographical information provided by local historian Gwen Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

³¹ United States Census Rolls, 1860.

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Bell plantation was at least 1200 acres and the family owned somewhere between 30 and 40 slaves.³² It is also thought that these enslaved individuals may have helped to build the original Bethel Church near the cemetery. Unfortunately, only a few later gravestones remain in the African-American section and the possible early field stone markers in the area have been lost.

Statement of Significance

The Bethel Cemetery, located north of the community of Crossett in a rural area of Ashley County, includes interesting and important examples of a wide array of funerary iconography and artistic techniques from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the tombstones represent the best examples of high relief stone carvings in the area. In addition, the monuments in the cemetery, besides displaying popular funerary art of the period, also illustrate the work of several Arkansas and regional monuments makers from a wide geographical area, such as Reynolds, New Orleans, Louisiana; Rosebrough, St. Louis, Missouri; an illegible name, Vicksburg, Mississippi; Morris Brothers, Memphis, Tennessee; and M. A. Lawrence, Evansville, Indiana. An ornamental fence in the cemetery also includes the company name "Hulbert & Gould" of St. Louis, Missouri.

The Bethel Cemetery is **locally significant** and is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** for its display of funerary art and architecture during the Period of Significance, 1855-1967. The cemetery is also eligible for nomination under **Criteria Consideration D: Cemeteries** as the site that derives its primary significance from distinctive design features.

³² "Ben L. Bell," *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*, Chicago, IL, USA: Goodspeed Publishing, 1890.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Spivey, Nancy. "Hamburg Cemetery, Historic Section." National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form, files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. 2011.

United States Census, 1850, 1860, 1890.

Williams, Jimmie D. "Bethel Cemetery." L.D.S. Survey. 1 April 1967. Files of Gwen
Stephenson, Crossett, Arkansas.

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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): AS0173

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.5 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

- | | | | |
|----|------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| A. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600441.00 | Northing: 3675546.00 |
| B. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600494.00 | Northing: 3675548.00 |
| C. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600495.00 | Northing: 3675459.00 |
| D. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600438.00 | Northing: 3675460.00 |
| E. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600415.00 | Northing: 3675498.00 |
| F. | Zone: 15 S | Easting: 600439.00 | Northing: 3675498.00 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Starting at a point (A) with UTM coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600441.00, Northing 3675546.00 and then East to a point (B) with coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600494.00, Northing 3675548.00 and then South to a point (C) with coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600495.00, Northing 3675459.00 and then West to a point (D) with coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600438.00, Northing 3675460.00 and then North to a point (E) with coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600415.00, Northing 3675498.00 and then West to a point (F) with coordinates Zone 15, Easting 600439.00, Northing 3675498.00 and then North, back to the starting point at (A).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Bethel Cemetery.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Gwen Stephenson
organization: Cousins of Bethel Board

name/title: Callie Williams, National Register Historian (Edited By)
organization: Department of Arkansas Heritage, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
street & number: 1100 North Street
city or town: Little Rock state: Arkansas zip code: 72201
e-mail callie.williams@arkansas.gov
telephone: 501.324.9789
date: February 1, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Bethel Cemetery

City or Vicinity: Crossett vic.

County: Ashley

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Callie Williams

Date Photographed: November 17, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, camera facing northeast.

Photo 2 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, camera facing northwest.

Photo 3 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, encompassing fenced Ramsaur family plot, camera facing southeast.

Photo 4 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, detail of concrete gravestones of the Roberts family, camera facing west.

Photo 5 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, encompassing the Comer family plot and three military markers, camera facing northwest.

Photo 6 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Mrs. M. A. Franklin, camera facing southeast.

Photo 7 of 26: Detail of gravestone of James R. Franklin, camera facing southeast.

Photo 8 of 26: Detail of heavily weathered gravestone with angel carving, camera facing southwest.

Photo 9 of 26: Detail of concrete gravestone of Ellen Smith, camera facing west.

Photo 10 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Wm. J. Moffatt with weeping willow carving, camera facing west.

Photo 11 of 26: Detail of gravestone of J. M. Hartley with gate and star carving, camera facing west.

Photo 12 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Mary Ann Kirkpatrick with carved rose, flowers and elaborate boarder, camera facing west.

Photo 13 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Wm. J. McClurd with carved broken tree motif, camera facing west.

Photo 14 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Pink M. Whitlow with carved flower wreath and elaborate drapery motif, camera facing west.

Photo 15 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Susan A. Withlow with carved flower wreath and dove motif, camera facing west.

Photo 16 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Martha McKinstry with carved flowers and clasping hands motif, camera facing down.

Photo 17 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Cornelia Johnson with a carved banner and clasping hands motif, camera facing west.

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- Photo 18 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Cornelia Johnson with a makers mark "Rosebrough, St. Louis.", camera facing west.
- Photo 19 of 26: Detail of gravestone of George M. Whitlow with a carved border and flowers motif, camera facing west.
- Photo 20 of 26: Detail of gravestone of George M. Whitlow with a makers mark "Reynolds, N. O.", camera facing west.
- Photo 21 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, encompassing the fenced gravesite of J. H. Morrison, camera facing northwest.
- Photo 22 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, encompassing a fenced gravesite, fence stamped "Hulbert & Gould", camera facing south.
- Photo 23 of 26: Overview of Bethel Cemetery, view from African-American section to main fenced section, camera facing east.
- Photo 24 of 26: Detail of gravestone of Frances Lane with carved branch motif, camera facing west.
- Photo 25 of 26: Detail of gravestone of George W. Edwards with carved lamb motif, camera facing west.
- Photo 26 of 26: Detail of gravestone of G. H. Edwards with carved anchor and branch motif, camera facing west.

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

























