United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places -- Registration Form

Cleveland Co. - Kingsland Old US 79, Kingsland Segment Cty. Rd. 22 between US 79 & Kight Rd. NR 9/28/05

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 Bronarty | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| 1. Name of Property | | 1 |
| historic name Old U.S. 79, Kingsland S | egment | |
| other names/site numberCleveland Co | ounty Road 22, Sites #CV0054-CV0055 | |
| 2. Location | | |
| street & number Old Highway 79 (Cleve | eland County Road 22) between U.S. 79 and Kight Road 🔲 no | t for publication |
| city or town Kingsland | | vicinity |
| state Arkansas code 2 | AR county Cleveland code 025 zip cod | e <u>71652</u> |
| 3. State/Federal Agency Certification | | |
| does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend in the Indianally statewide locally (See consideration of Certifying official/Title Arkansas Historic Preservation Programment of Federal agency and bureau | 7/28/05 Date | |
| 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. | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
| removed from the National Register. other, (explain:) | | |
| | X | |

| Name of Property | | County a | Cleveland County, Arkansas County and State | | | |
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| 5 CI | | - County - | nd State | | | |
| 5. Classification Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) (Check only one box) | | Number of Resources v (Do not include previously lis | | | | |
| ☐ private ☑ public-local ☐ public-State ☐ public-Federal | □ building(s)□ district□ site⊠ structure□ object | Contributing | Noncontributing buildings sites | | | |
| | | 2 | objects Total | | | |
| Name of related multiple (Enter "N/A" if property is not par | rt of a multiple property listing.) | in the National Registe | ng resources previously listed r | | | |
| Arkansas Highway History 6. Function or Use | and Architecture, 1910-1965 | | | | | |
| Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions | s) | Current Functions (Enter categories from instruc | tions) | | | |
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| TRANSPORTATION/road | -related (vehicular)/highway | TRANSPORTATION/r | oad-related (vehicular)/highway | | | |
| 7. Description | -related (vehicular)/highway | TRANSPORTATION/r | oad-related (vehicular)/highway | | | |

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

| Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment Name of Property | | Cleveland County, Arkansas County and State | | | | | |
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| 10. Geographical Data | | | | - | | | |
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| Boundary Ju (Explain why the | | selected on a continuation sheet.) | | | | | |
| 11. Form Pr | repared By | | | X. u | | | |
| name/title | Ralph S. Wilco | ox, National Register & Survey | Coordinator | | | | |
| organization | | listoric Preservation Program | | | date | | |
| street & numi | | ower Building, 323 Center Str | eet | | hone | (501) 324-9787 | |
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| Continuation | n Sheets | | | | | | |
| Maps A U | SGS map (7.5 | or 15 minute series) indicating | the property's location | n | | | |
| A SI | ketch map for l | historic districts and properties | having large acreage | or nur | nerous re | esources. | |
| Photographs | 5 | | | | | | |
| Rep | resentative blac | ck and white photographs of | the property. | | | | |
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| Property Ov | | | | | | | |
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| street & num | har | | | | 1 | telephone | |
| city or town | | | -4-4- | | | zip code _ | |
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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 fisting, 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, athering 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.

| Old U.S. | 79, | Kingsland | Segment |
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SUMMARY

Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment, is a two-lane concrete highway located just to the southwest of Kingsland, Cleveland County, Arkansas. The concrete segment is 655 meters long, and includes one bridge, the Kingsland Overpass, which was built in 1938 and crosses the current Union Pacific Railroad line. The highway segment is 22 feet wide and includes built-in concrete curbs and drainage outlets. Although concrete originally, the segment is now covered with a very thin layer of chip-seal.

ELABORATION

HIGHWAY

Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment, is a 655-meter long, two-lane concrete highway located just to the southwest of Kingsland. The highway curves away from the current U.S. 79 just outside of Kingsland, employing a "super-elevated" curve at the northeastern end, and proceeds in a southwesterly direction towards the former Saline River crossing. The nominated section includes the concrete-paved section completed in 1938 to eliminate the grade crossing over the current Union Pacific Railroad line (former Saint Louis Southwestern or Cotton Belt line). The segment ends at the Kight Road intersection.

The old alignment of U.S. 79 has a width of 22 feet with no paved shoulders. However, unlike most concrete pavement done in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the segment does have built-in concrete curbs and drainage outlets. (For comparison, the current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Green Book indicates that a lane width of 11 feet 9 inches is desirable.) Each section of pavement is 11 feet wide and 50 feet long, and is composed of a gray stone aggregate mixed in the concrete. The pavement is also covered with a very thin layer of chip seal for a little more than half of its length.

BRIDGE

The old alignment of U.S. 79 contains one reinforced concrete deck girder bridge, which crosses the Union Pacific Railroad line (former Saint Louis Southwestern or Cotton Belt line). The bridge's design is comprised of flat reinforced concrete deck girders resting on metal rocker bearings on concrete piers that are skewed to accommodate the railroad line below. The guardrails on the bridge consist of evenly-spaced cast concrete uprights connected by inset panels of lancet-shaped openings. The bridge also has metal plaques set into large Art Deco-inspired endposts with information about the bridge name, builder, date of construction, and that it was done for the Arkansas State Highway Department and United States Bureau of Public Roads.

INTEGRITY

Overall, the Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment, has good integrity. The 1938 pavement remains throughout the segment, and it retains its original dimensions. Also, the Kingsland Overpass that was constructed in 1938 during the improvement of this segment remains. Additionally, the part of Cleveland County where the highway is located retains its rural setting, and the surroundings still reflect the period of significance from 1938 to 1953.

| Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment | Cleveland County, Arkansas |
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Although the pavement was covered with a very thin layer of chip seal for a little more than half of its length at a later date, it is similar in color to the original concrete, and is thin enough that the gaps between the different concrete sections are easily discernable.

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SUMMARY

The Kingsland Segment of U.S. 79, which is 655 meters long, was the main automobile route in that part of Cleveland County from the time of its construction in 1938 until the current U.S. 79 was built to the northwest of it in 1953. As a result, it is therefore eligible for nomination under Criterion A with local significance for its association with the development of Arkansas highway culture. Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment, is being submitted to the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property listing "Arkansas Highway and Transportation Era Architecture, 1910-1965" in conjunction with the historic context "Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965."

ELABORATION

What is now called Cleveland County was formed on April 17, 1873, by an act of the Arkansas legislature. Originally, it was called Dorsey County and named after Stephen W. Dorsey, a chairman of the Republican county and state committees and a U.S. Senator. However, the name of the county was changed to Cleveland County in 1885 in honor of then president Grover Cleveland. In its early years, much of the land was heavily timbered so there were lumber mills throughout the county and only a small portion of it was under cultivation with cotton and corn being the principal crops.¹

When the realization came after the Civil War that only railroads could be used to exploit the vast tracts of virgin timber in Arkansas, railroads and the timber industry developed as one. As a result, railroad lines were constructed further and further into the forests to enable the harvesting of timber, and occasionally the spurs were linked to become new through lines. The boom in railroad construction also greatly influenced settlement patterns throughout Arkansas. Some towns that had thrived on river trade and travel disappeared and many new towns sprang to life along the railroad lines.²

One of the railroads that helped to exploit the timber lands of Arkansas was what would eventually come to be known as the St. Louis Southwestern Railway or Cotton Belt. The origins of the Cotton Belt go back to 1871 with the chartering of the Tyler Tap Railroad, a three-foot gauge railroad that opened in 1877 between Tyler, Texas, and the junction with the Texas & Pacific at Big Sandy. The Cotton Belt was rechartered as the Texas & St. Louis Railway around 1880, and subsequently provided service through the timber, cotton, and rice areas of Arkansas between Texarkana, Clarendon, and Jonesboro. Trains began running on the line in 1884, but the line was forced into receivership the following year. It was reorganized as the St. Louis, Arkansas, & Texas in 1885, and became the St. Louis Southwestern in 1891. Even though the official name

Arkansas." Little Rock: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 2000.

¹ Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890, p. 592.

² Elliot West. The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, p. 55.

⁵ Drury, Geotge H. The Historical Guide to North American Railroads. Milwaukee, WI: Kalmbach Books, 1985, p. 289.
⁴ "Pulling Into the Station: Arkansas Railroad Depots on the National Register of Historic Places - A Scenic Tour Map of

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of the railroad changed several times, the route had been known as the Cotton Belt since at least 1886.⁵ (The Cotton Belt would remain an autonomous railroad until it was absorbed by the Southern Pacific in the mid-1980s.⁶)

The development of the railroad in Cleveland County also brought about the creation of settlements and towns, including Kingsland. A post office was established at the settlement of Cohasset in 1883 although the name was changed the same year to Kingsland. (Arkatha was also given as a possible name for the community.)⁷ Kingsland was incorporated the following year and was also a stop on the St. Louis, Arkansas, & Texas by the late 1880s. Goodspeed's history of the area described Kingsland by saying that, "At Kingsland there is a furniture factory, giving employment to quite a number of men, and a wagon shop does considerable local business. The village contains a number of stores and has a population of about 600."

It is unknown when the route that would become U.S. 79 in the Kingsland area was constructed, but it is likely that it was the main route through the area through much of the late 1800s. It is known that the route was in existence when early state road maps were published in 1916. By 1924, the route had been designated B-7, which was a secondary federal aid road, and it was paved in gravel. In 1926, the road was redesignated Arkansas Highway 3, and it was initially paved in asphalt in 1930. Finally, the highway was designated U.S. 79 in 1935.

During the late 1920s and 1930s, the State Highway Commission embarked on a large-scale campaign to upgrade Arkansas's roads. As a result, many miles of roads were paved or rebuilt and many bridges were built. At the same time, the Commission examined the issue of railroad grade crossings, which were becoming increasingly dangerous with the increased number of automobiles using the state's highways. In their *Ninth Biennial Report*, the Arkansas State Highway Commission wrote:

Realizing the dangers and evils attendent [sic.] to railroad grade crossings, considerable effort has been made during the progress of the present improvement program toward the elimination of this hazard. Since January 1, 1927, we find that the Commission has been successful in eliminating a total of

⁵ Map of the Cotton Belt Route, St. Louis Southwestern Railway Co., St. Louis Southwestern Railway Co. of Texas, Tyler Southwestern Railway Co., and Connections. Map. Unknown Publisher, 1886.

⁶ David Price. Telephone conversation with the author. 30 December 2002.

⁷ Russell Pierce Baker. From Memdag to Norsk: A Historical Directory of Arkansas Post Offices, 1832-1971. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Genealogical Society, 1988, pp. 47 and 122.

⁸ Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas, p. 596.

⁹ Arkansas State Highway Commission road maps of Arkansas, 1916, 1924, 1926, 1931, and 1935. In the files of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department and the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

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121 dangerous crossings, 105 by relocation of highways and 16 by structures, of which 3 were underpasses and the balance overhead crossings.

A recent survey indicates that 481 railroad grade crossings on the State Highway System are still existent. It is evident from the number cited that it is impracticable from a financial standpoint to eliminate all such crossings and that some burden of responsibility is upon the motorist to observe due care and caution that accidents be held to a minimum.

Careful and continued study is being given to this problem not only by the State Highway Commission but by the railroad companies as well, who have rendered cordial support and assistance in practically all instances where grade separations have occurred. Where the elimination of a grade crossing has necessitated a structure, agreements have generally been reached with the railroad that the cost of construction be shared equally with the state.¹⁰

Evidence indicates that the State Highway Commission seemed to prefer eliminating grade crossings through relocation rather than by constructing new structures. The Commission eliminated six crossings through relocation during the 1932-1933 program, 23 crossings in the 1933-1934 program, and it was estimated that they would eliminate eight crossings in the 1934-1935 program. On the other hand, no crossings were eliminated by structures in the 1932-1933 program, eight crossings in the 1933-1934 program, and it was estimated that they would eliminate only two crossings in the 1934-1935 program.

The U.S. 79 grade crossing at the St. Louis Southwestern Railway line would have been a good candidate for replacement. The fact that the highway and the railroad line are not perpendicular with each other would have meant that visibility at the crossing would have been limited. Also, visibility would have been further compromised by the fact that the line winds around Kingsland to the east of the crossing and makes a sharp southwest turn to the west of the crossing.

The construction of the Kingsland Overpass was done as two separate jobs by the Arkansas State Highway Commission. The construction of the approaches was Job #7253, and the winning proposal, submitted by D. B. Hill of Little Rock, was received on July 14, 1938. The contract for the project was for 120 working days and the cost to construct the approaches was \$19,694.00. The construction of the Kingsland Overpass was Job #7243, and the winning proposal, submitted by S. M. Dixon of Warren, Arkansas, was also received July

¹⁰ Arkansas State Highway Commission. Ninth Biennial Report of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. Russellville, AR: Russellville Printing Company, 1930, p. 32.

¹¹ Arkansas State Highway Commission. Eleventh Biennial Report of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. Publisher unknown, 1934, p. 15.

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14, 1938. The contract for the project was for 200 working days and the cost to construct the overpass was \$63,157,00.¹²

The completion of the Kingsland Overpass eliminated the dangerous U.S. 79 crossing at the St. Louis Southwestern Railway line, which, given its limited sight distance, was likely one of the more dangerous parts of the highway in the area. It also furthered the Arkansas State Highway Commission's goal for the "elimination of this hazard." Even though the road is not currently part of U.S. 79, the Kingsland Overpass still provides a safe crossing of the railroad line for the local residents.

In Arkansas, U.S. 79 was the main highway between West Memphis and Magnolia across the southeastern part of the state. The fact that this portion of U.S. 79 was the main route between West Memphis and Magnolia, and ultimately Austin, Texas, meant that it was also a highly traveled road for both automobile and truck traffic. 13 The amount of traffic using U.S. 79 ultimately led to the construction of the current U.S. 79 to the northwest of the 1938 alignment. The new highway was opened to traffic in 1953.

Today the 1938 alignment is still used as a county road and it is also still possible to drive the 1938 alignment for its entire length. Remarkably, all of the alignment retains the original 1938 concrete pavement, although much of it has had a thin layer of chip seal placed over it. However, the patches have retained the width of the original concrete pavement and have not obscured the original built in curbs and drainage outlets.

U.S. 79 is currently one of the main highways between Memphis and Magnolia, and has been for many years. Due to the amount of traffic that uses the highway, much of the road has been upgraded to current highway standards. Early sections of the highway are rare, especially ones that are still drivable. As a result, the 1938 alignment of U.S. 79 in the Kingsland vicinity remains an extremely intact example of early highway design and construction, and a tangible reminder of early highway travel in Cleveland County.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kingsland Segment of U.S. 79, which is 655 meters long, was the main automobile route in that part of Cleveland County from the time of its construction in 1938 until the current U.S. 79 was built to the northwest of it in 1953. As a result, it is therefore eligible for nomination under Criterion A with local significance for its association with the development of Arkansas highway culture. Old U.S. 79, Kingsland Segment, is being submitted to the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property listing

¹² Bob Scoggin of the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. E-mail to the author, 19 May 2005.

¹³ From 1935-1944, U.S. 79 connected West Memphis, Arkansas, with Austin, Texas. In 1944, the north terminus of U.S. 79 was moved to Russellville, Kentucky, and in 1987 the south terminus was moved to Round Rock, Texas.

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[&]quot;Arkansas Highway and Transportation Era Architecture, 1910-1965" in conjunction with the historic context "Arkansas Highway History and Architecture, 1910-1965."

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the U.S. 79 and the Old Highway 79 (Cleveland County Road 22) intersection, the 1938 alignment of U.S. 79 follows Old Highway 79 (Cleveland County Road 22) 655 meters to the southwest. The width of the boundary includes 15 feet on either side of the 1938 highway centerline.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary contains the most intact portion of the 1938 U.S. 79 highway alignment in the Kingsland vicinity.













