

**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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Union School
other names/site number Site #JO0214

2. Location

street & number north side of County Road 4670, west of Little Piney Creek not for publication
city or town Hagarville vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Johnson code 071 zip code 72839

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the
National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the
National Register.
 removed from the National
Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Union School
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

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

Public Schools in Arkansas Ozarks 1920-1940

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall
VACANT/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/Plain Traditional

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Wood

roof Metal
other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

LOCAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1929-1947

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Willis Warren and Orville Skaggs, Builders

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Union School
Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approx. 2.25 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>470253</u> Easting	<u>3943458</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Angela Alsup; edited by Ralph Wilcox, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 3 September 2010
street & number 323 Center Street, Tower Building 1600 telephone (501)324-9880
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mt. Levi Community/Dustin Holben, Trustee
street & number 354 Bend Rd. telephone (479)647-2721
city or town Knoxville state AR zip code 72845

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Summary

The Union School building is a traditional two classroom two story school house that was common to rural school districts in Arkansas from the nineteenth to the middle twentieth centuries. This is the second school building on nearly the same site near the town of Hagarville.

Elaboration

The Union School is located west of Little Piney Creek in the community of Mt. Levi. Union School is a plain, traditional two classroom school house. The first school building burned in 1928, and was rebuilt in 1929. The current Union School was built in 1929 by Willis Warren and Orville Skaggs along with other carpenters and craftsman. The exterior and interior finish is composed of wood. The foundation is composed of stone. An outhouse is located to the northwest of the school house. Fresh water was retrieved from the well located to the south of the school house. The school house was also used as a community center, Masonic Lodge, and a church as well.

South Elevation/Front

The front of the school is oriented around a center porch with a gabled roof. The porch is approximately one-third the width of the front and contains two solid wood doors, one per classroom. Directly to each side of the porch is one stationary six-pane window followed by two double-hung, nine-over-nine, windows. Above the porch, there are two six-pane stationary windows that provide light to the upstairs meeting room. The main roof gable runs east to west. The porch gable faces south. The upstairs room has a gable as well and it faces north to south.

East Elevation/Side

No windows or doors are on the first floor of this elevation, although there is a square, louvered attic vent in the main gable peak. Two six-pane windows, one near the front and one near the rear, fenestrate the upstairs.

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North Elevation/Rear

The rear of the school has one solid wooden door at the eastern corner. It also contains a group of six double-hung, nine-over-nine windows fenestrating the east classroom followed by a group of five more double-hung, nine-over-nine windows fenestrating the west classroom. The second floor contains two stationary, six-pane windows facing north.

West Elevation/Side

No windows or doors are on the first floor of this elevation, although there is a square, louvered attic vent in the main gable peak. Two six-pane windows, one near the front and one near the rear, fenestrate the upstairs.

Interior

The two room classroom on the lower floor is separated by sliding wooden partitions that would completely divide the classroom as needed. However, the partitions can be removed. On the sides of the planks are two wooden doors that could further separate the classroom as needed. Closets for each classroom are also located at the front of the building. The upper level room is a one room area that was used for meeting purposes.

Integrity

Although the school house is not occupied nor is it being used often for anything, it retains good integrity. The exterior and the interior finish are in good condition. Some of the rear double-hung windows and three of the window sashes have been replaced. The stone steps are a recent addition that were not original. A broken window on the upstairs front of the school has not been replaced. Electric lighting was added in the 1940's. The school very much reflects its original design and function, and the rural setting around the school also reflects its period of significance.

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Summary

The Union School is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its association with education of children in Johnson County. The Union School is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an intact example of an early twentieth-century rural school. It is also being submitted as part of a related multiple property listing entitled **Public Schools in Arkansas Ozarks 1920-1940**.

Elaboration

The Union School, located approximately 11 miles from Hagarville in Johnson County, served as the school house for the Mt. Levi community. Mt. Levi is located in the Ozark National Forest in northern Johnson County, approximately 20 miles north of the county seat of Clarksville. The first school house was built around 1886 and burned down on January 27, 1928, from a fire that started in the chimney flue. The first school house was located to the southeast of the current school house. The two room school house was used as a school, church, community center, and Masonic Lodge.

Mt. Levi acquired its name from Levi Petite, the first postmaster. A post office was located in Mt. Levi from approximately 1883 until 1953. Dr. Steven Monroe Graves moved to Mt. Levi around 1883. He owned a general store which contained a post office. It stayed open until the late 1930s. Dr. Graves also had a medical office in his home.

Johnson County has a long history of education being an important facet of rural life. Johnson County was formed in 1833, and used land that formerly belonged to Pope County. Johnson County is approximately 676 square miles. The first school was opened in Johnson County in 1832 or 1833. In 1833, General Albert Pike educated children in a house along Piney Creek. Clarksville opened the first school for the blind in Arkansas in 1850 and the first deaf and mute school in Arkansas in 1851. Unfortunately, both specialty schools closed within a year of opening.

In 1843, the Arkansas Legislature passed laws that allowed for public schools to be funded from public taxes. However, this system was impractical because it did not provide the necessary monies in order for the system to work as it should have. Even though this system should have been successful, the individual towns were left to mostly fend for themselves in terms of education. As late as 1913, the Board of Public Schools in Clarksville struggled in to order to construct a new school building in the town.

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However, the early schools were “pay schools” in which the parents of children would directly pay the teachers to teach the children in private homes. This meant that only the wealthy could afford to have educated children. Education was an extravagance that labor-class whites could not afford.

By the mid 1800s, a movement started in order to foster education for all the children of Johnson County. This idea was an education for all that the leaders of the movement were quick to implement. It can be seen by the rapid increase in schools over a thirty year period. Most of the schools were known to be in educationally superior form with good teachers, supplies, and arranged in such a way as to be a better learning environment for students.

In 1860, Johnson County contained 49 public schools and around 125 people with teaching licenses. By 1889, there were 77 school houses and 83 school teachers. According to Ella Molloy Langford in her *History of Johnson County Arkansas*, by 1921, “every neighborhood now has a public graded school, and has terms ranging from five to nine months each year.”

The original Mt. Levi school house, which was built around 1886, was considered a \$425 loss to the Mt. Levi community when it burned on January 27, 1928. The fire started in the chimney flue. After the original school house burned, the new one was built to the northwest of the original site by Orville Skaggs and Willis Warren for \$1,000. Its lumber was supplied from S.D. Flint’s sawmill. The two room school housed first through fourth grade in the first room and fifth through eighth grade in the second room. The two teachers were Miss Velma Graves and Mildred Beasley. School was held for the first time in the new building on July 21, 1929. In addition to being a school, the building was also a church, community center, and Masonic Lodge.

The exterior and interior design of the new Union School building is very similar in design to a Rosenwald Foundation school house plan for rural schools that was first included in a 1924 book entitled *Community School Plans*. Both the model school house and the Union School house are a two room classroom separated by a removable partition and both are on two acres of land as called for in the plan for the community school. The emphasis on lighting the school house is demonstrated by all the windows found in the school.

However, there are still major differences. The school plan calls for the school to face east and west, but the Union School faces north and south. This facing of the school disrupts the design that was based partially on the amount of light given from the windows facing east and west. The Union School only has windows on the sides of the building in the classrooms that face north and south.

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The Union School was consolidated with the Lamar School District in 1944. In 1947, the property was conferred to the Mt. Levi Community from the Lamar School District. The Union School was an important part of the Mt. Levi community because it was a multipurpose building used for many of the social functions in the community. Since it was used as a Masonic Lodge, church, and a community center as well it shows how important the building was to the community. The building, because of the removable partitions, could be used for a wide variety of community functions such as plays, dances, and church services. This would have served the purpose of bringing the community together in such a way that would not have been possible if not for the building's presence.

After the school was consolidated it was still used for other purposes. Until 1965, the upstairs room was used as a Masonic Lodge. The school house was used for community dances until the 1960s. The building was used until the 1970s, and since that time it has remained unoccupied, and only used for special occasions.

Statement of Significance

The Union School is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its association with education of children in Johnson County. The Union School is also being nominated under **Criterion C** as an intact example of an early twentieth-century rural school. It is also being submitted as part of a related multiple property listing entitled **Public Schools in Arkansas Ozarks 1920-1940**.

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Bibliography

The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Western Arkansas: Yell, Pope, Johnson, Logan, Scott, Polk, Montgomery, and Conway Counties. Chicago: 1891.

Herald Democrat Newspaper. Clarksville, Arkansas. 1928-1930.

Langford, Ella Molloy. *History of Johnson County Arkansas: The First Hundred Years.* Clarksville: 1921.

Mickel, R.W. *History of Johnson County Arkansas, Volume I.* Clarksville: 1983.

Information on the Union School at the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Offices. Little Rock, Arkansas.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the Southeast corner of the Northeast quarter of the Southeast corner of the Section Four, Township Eleven north, Range twenty two West of the 5th Principal Meridian, Arkansas, thence North 157 and half yards, thence West 70 yards, thence South 157 and half yards, thence East 70 yards to beginning, containing 2 and a quarter acres, more or less.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all the land historically associated with the Union School.