

INR LIST

AUG 14 1992

AHP

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

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**1. Name of Property**

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Historic Name: Lake Village Post Office

Other Name/Site Number: CH0062

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**2. Location**

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Street & Number: 206 S. Cokley St.

Not for Publication: NA

City/Town: Lake Village

Vicinity: NA

State: AR

County: Chicot

Code: 017

Zip Code: 71653

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**3. Classification**

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Ownership of Property: Public-Federal

Category of Property: Building





Lake Village Post Office  
Name of Property

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County and State

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**6. Function or Use**  
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Historic: GOVERNMENT Sub: Post Office

Current : GOVERNMENT Sub: Post Office

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**7. Description**  
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Architectural Classification:

Colonial Revival

Materials: foundation Concrete roof Asphalt  
walls Brick other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

SUMMARY

The Lake Village Post Office is a one-story, brick masonry structure designed in the Colonial Revival style of architecture and featuring a full basement. The building is built with an essentially square plan, but features a large addition to the southwest created by enclosing and expanding the original projecting rear loading dock. The entire building is surrounded with a small cornice just below the gutters and a flush cornice below that. The foundation is of brick atop poured concrete. The eastern portion of the structure is topped by a hipped roof; at its center is a cupola fenestrated on all four sides with 12-pane stationary windows. The cupola is topped by a bell cast pyramid roof with a weather vane at its apex. Immediately behind the hipped

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roof is a flat roof surrounded by a low parapet. The addition protrudes behind this section and also features a flat roof; a non-historic flat shed roof extends past the dock.

#### ELABORATION

The Lake Village Post Office is a one story, brick masonry structure designed in the Colonial Revival style of architecture and featuring a full basement. The building is built with an essentially square plan, but features a large addition to the southwest created by enclosing and expanding the original projecting rear loading dock. The entire building is surrounded with a small cornice just below the gutters and a string course below that. The foundation is of brick atop poured concrete. The eastern portion of the structure is topped by a hipped roof; at its center is a cupola fenestrated on all four sides with 12-pane stationary windows. The cupola is topped by a bell cast pyramid roof with a weather vane at its apex. Immediately behind the hipped roof is a flat roof surrounded by a low parapet. The addition protrudes behind this section and also features a flat roof; a non-historic flat shed roof extends past the dock.

The eastern, or front, facade features a central, aluminum frame door flanked by wooden half columns. The columns support a lintel accented with a dentil course; this is topped by a fabric awning emblazoned with the zip code 71653. A set of concrete stairs leads to the front door. The doors are flanked on both sides by twin double-hung, 12-over-12 windows. The cornice extends across the front of the building below the gutters; the brick below that is emblazoned with the words UNITED STATES POST OFFICE. Below that is the string course and immediately above the door is affixed the words LAKE VILLAGE ARKANSAS. On either side of the door are recessed areas with twin six-over-six windows; the concrete recessed areas are surrounded by simple metal railings. A cornerstone in the lower southern corner of this facade is inscribed: HENRY MORGENTHAU JR., SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY/JAMES A. FARLEY, POSTMASTER GENERAL/LOUIS A. SIMON, SUPERVISING ARCHITECT/NEAL A. MELICK, SUPERVISING ENGINEER/1938.

The easternmost part of the north facade is fenestrated by one eight-over-12 double-hung window, followed to the west by one two-over-two double-hung half window, a recessed area large enough to hold a full-sized window, another two-over-two double-hung half window, another eight-over-twelve double-hung window, and a four-over-four double-hung half window. Below the initial two-over-two window is a set of concrete stairs leading to a basement door. Below

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the final eight-over-12 window is a recessed area fenestrated with an eight-over-eight window; this recessed window area is also topped with a simple metal railing, as is the area where the stairs descend to the basement area.

The western facade, north to south, is fenestrated with a two-over-two double-hung half window and two eight-over-twelve double-hung windows. The addition then projects westward. Its northernmost area has a small set of steps leading to a door, then a large, roll-up bay door, and then an eighteen-pane stationary window. Beyond this is the loading dock, which extends across the rear of the building and features two swinging doors. The loading dock up to the addition's junction with the historic part of the structure is topped by a flat shed roof.

Beginning at the western corner of the south facade, a ramp leads off of the loading dock. Heading east, the addition is fenestrated by twin 20-pane stationary windows. The addition cuts in sharply to the north to rejoin the original structure, which is fenestrated by four eight-over-12 windows. Two more recessed, fenestrated basement areas are included in this section.

Noteworthy interior details include the original wooden vestibule, marble wainscoting, original post office boxes, and original counters, doors, and memo cabinets. The most prominent interior feature is a mural, titled "Lake Country Wildlife," by Avery Johnson.

The Lake Village Post Office is in good condition and retains the majority of its historic fabric. The modern addition, built in 1967 by ACS Construction Company, is largely unnoticeable from the front of the building and thus does not affect the basic architectural integrity of the building.

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**8. Statement of Significance**  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA

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Areas of Significance: Politics/Government

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: 1938-41

Significant Dates: 1938-41

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

SUMMARY

The Lake Village Post Office is associated with the historic context Arkansas Post Offices with Section Art as a U.S. Postal Service structure containing a mural financed through the U.S. Treasury Department's Section on Fine Arts. As such, it is eligible under Criterion A with statewide significance for its associations with the Sections efforts to employ Depression-era artists and place art in post offices around the country.

ELABORATION

In August, 1937, Congress passed an appropriation bill providing a \$23 million lump sum for construction of public buildings. Included in the allocation was \$75,000 for a new post office for Lake Village, the seat of the Chicot County, Arkansas's southeasternmost county. Though details of construction could not be located, the building apparently was completed by 1939.

On August 21, 1939, Edward B. Rowan, assistant chief for the U.S. Treasury

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Department's Section on Fine Arts, wrote Artist Avery Johnson of Denville, N.J., and invited him to "submit designs for a mural decoration for the Lake Village, Arkansas, Post Office on the basis of competent work [previously] performed under the Section." Johnson, who was working on designs for the 48 States mural competition, wrote Rowan on September 27 to accept the invitation.

Johnson was among the winners of that competition, which apparently delayed the Lake Village project. He did not submit information needed to prepare the contract for the mural until December of 1940. The final contract called on Johnson to create a mural 12' wide by 5' 3" tall, covering a total area of about 63 square feet. Johnson was to receive \$750 for the work, which was to be executed in oil on canvas.

Johnson submitted two color sketches as proposals for the Lake Village mural. Rowan informed him on January 17, 1941, that "the one with the cypress trees in the center is preferred. This has the standing deer on the right." Johnson's first payment of \$150 was approved on February 3, 1941.

While the Lake Village mural was not visited with the local controversy met by some Arkansas mural proposals, the location of a clock in the area where the mural was to be located elicited a flurry of no less than seven letters and memos between Washington, D.C., Lake Village, and Denville, N.J. Lake Village Postmaster John F. Mulligan informed Rowan on December 20, 1940, that the clock "can be moved easily to the center of the Public Lobby directly in the rear of the Vestibule and over the Parcel Post and Stamp Window. This will place same in the most central location possible in the Lobby." Rowan requested permission of the Supervising Architect on January 4, 1941, for the clock to be moved; bids were accepted and Mr. M.L. Rhodes of Lake Village was hired on February 24, 1941, to relocate the clock, a task for which he was paid \$35.

In March 1941, Johnson submitted a full-size cartoon of the mural to the Section. "I am also forwarding a print to the local committee down there and will await the approval both of your office and this committee before proceeding with the finished painting," he wrote in a March 3 letter to Edward Bruce, Fine Arts Section chief. Both apparently were approved, and Johnson was issued a \$250 dollar payment on April 1, 1941.

The finished mural was approved for installation on July 23, 1941, and Johnson sent it for installation by a Mr. Purser, who had installed another of the artist's murals in the Leland, Miss., post office previously. The



mural was hung on Sunday, August, 10, 1941. An August 15, 1941, article in The Chicot Spectator includes a lengthy interview with the artist, noting that Johnson "was especially interested" in the area's heavy deer population around Lake Chicot "and the deer were consequently made the most prominent element in the design."

Postmaster Mulligan reported the mural safely installed as of September 29, 1941, and Johnson's final \$350 payment was approved on October 29.

The Lake Village commission was one of six Johnson received for post office murals through the Section. The others were located at Bordentown, N.J., Mareilles, Ill., Liberty, Ind., North Bergen, N.J., and Catonsville, Md.

Despite the 1967 addition, the Lake Village Post Office remains a remarkably intact expression of Depression-era Colonial Revival design in a government building. It's historic value is only enhanced by Avery Johnson's "Lake Country Wild Life," a mural that celebrates both the natural bounty of southeast Arkansas and the Depression-era drive to put all Americans, including artists, to work.

The Lake Village Post Office is associated with the historic context Arkansas Post Offices with Section Art as a U.S. Postal Service structure containing a mural financed through the U.S. Treasury Department's Section on Fine Arts. As such, it is eligible under Criterion A with statewide significance for its associations with the Section's efforts to employ Depression-era artists and place art in post offices around the country.

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9. Major Bibliographical References
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*The Chicot Spectator*, August 15, 1941.

*Arkansas Gazette*, September 10, 1937.

U.S. Treasury Department's Fine Arts Section materials, National Archives.

Falk, Peter Hastings, ed. "Who Was Who in American Art," (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1985).

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Previous documentation on file (N.S.):

- 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 -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A 15 659780 3689020      B \_\_\_\_\_  
C \_\_\_\_\_                      D \_\_\_\_\_

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point formed by the intersection of the western edge of South Cokley Street with a perpendicular line running parallel with the building's northern elevation and located approximately 50 feet to the north thereof, proceed westerly along said line for approximately 200 feet; thence proceed southerly along a perpendicular line for approximately 200 feet; thence proceed easterly along a perpendicular line for approximately 200 feet to its intersection with the western edge of South Cokley Street; thence proceed northerly along said edge to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

This boundary contains all the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Mark Christ/Communications and Development Director

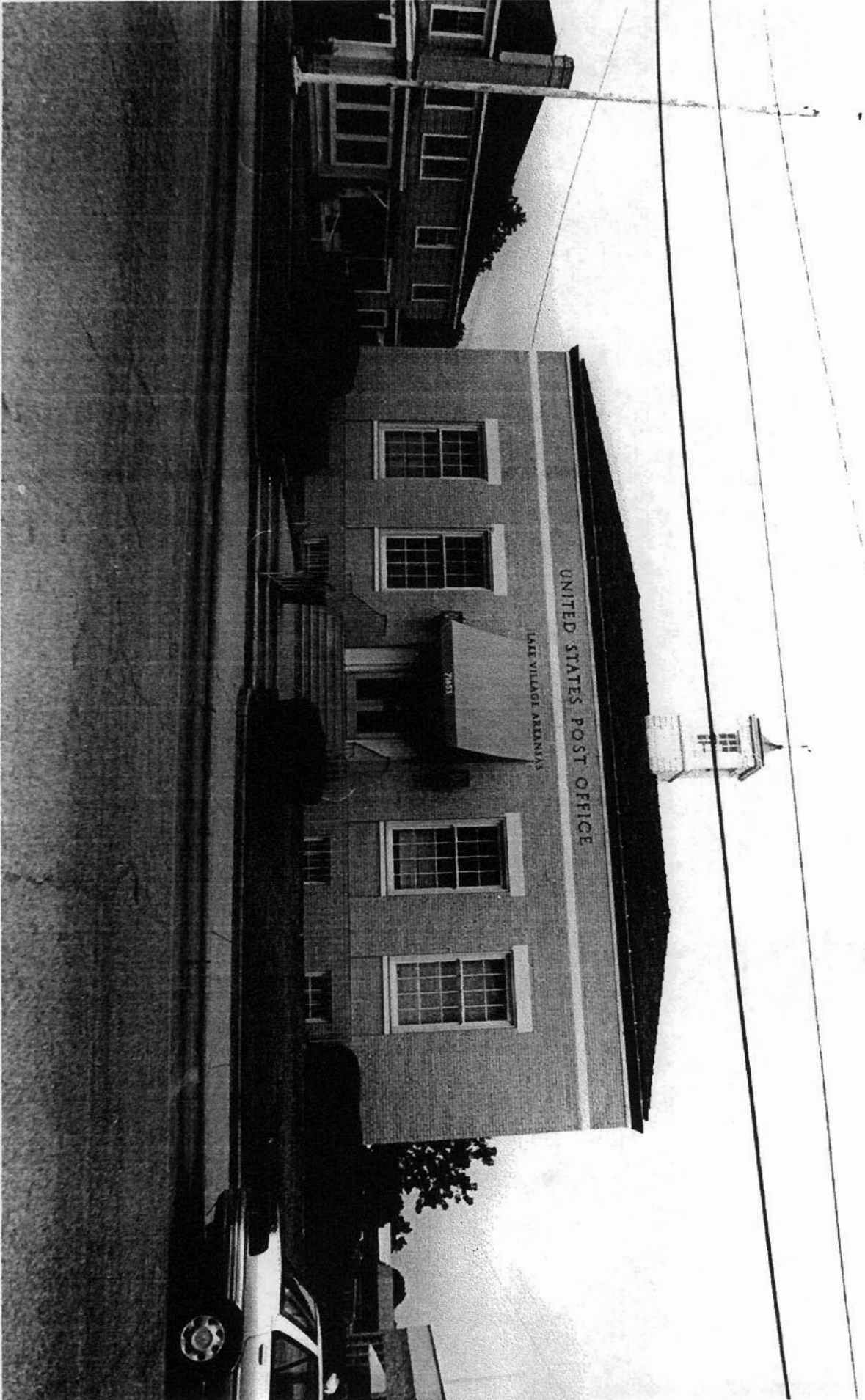
Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: October 14, 1997

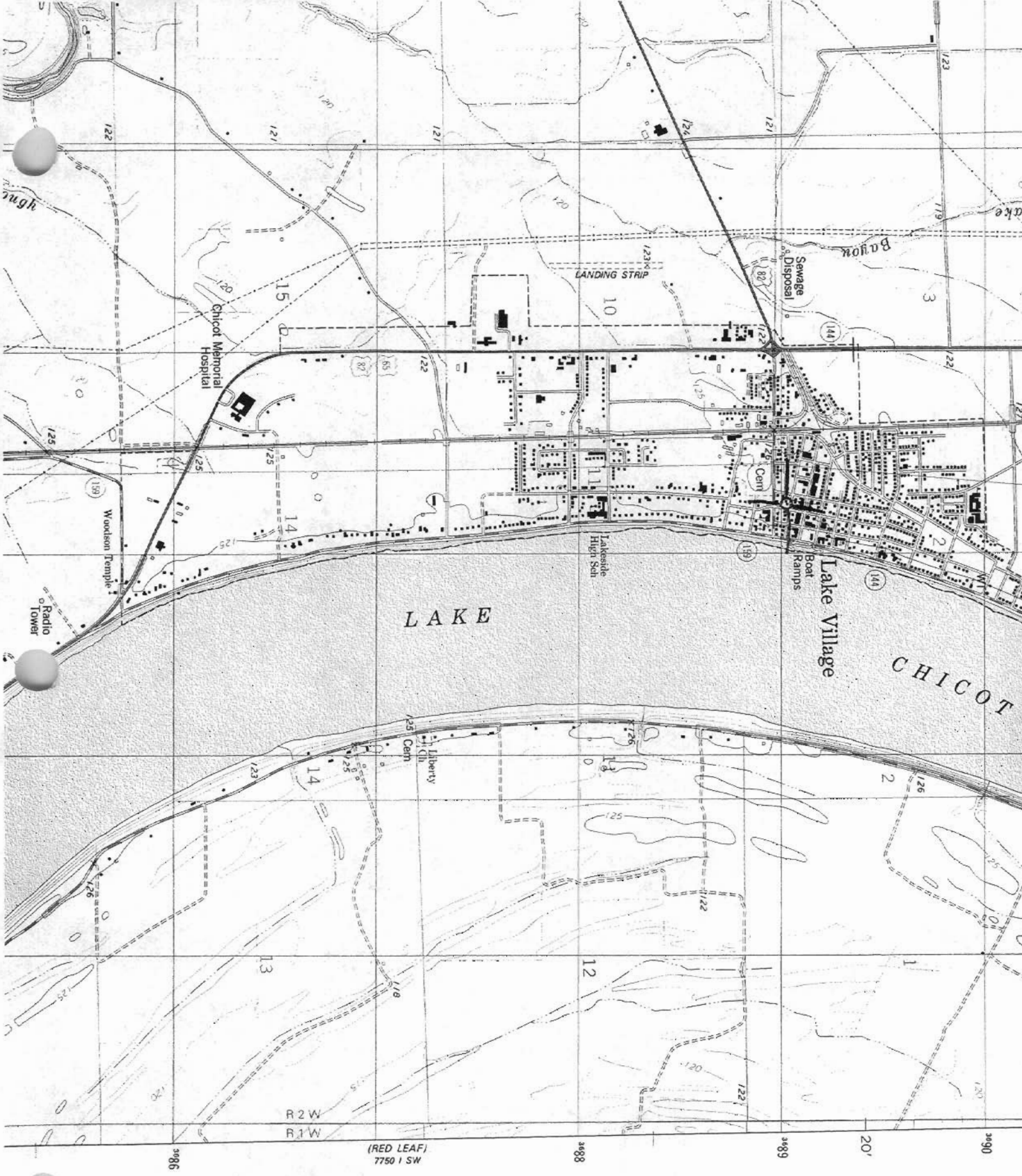
Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201









Lake Village Post Office  
 Lake Village, Chicot County, Arkansas  
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