

13-19-2095.55

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED *CV0016*

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
MOUNT OLIVET METHODIST CHURCH
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
FAIRGROUNDS

CITY, TOWN
RISON

STATE
ARKANSAS

VICINITY OF

CODE
05

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
FOURTH

COUNTY
CLEVELAND

CODE
025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
CLEVELAND COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (MRS. JAMES L. MOORE)
STREET & NUMBER

Not in use at present.

CITY, TOWN
RISON

STATE
ARKANSAS

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
CLERK'S OFFICE

STREET & NUMBER
CLEVELAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE

CITY, TOWN
RISON

STATE
ARKANSAS

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE 1975

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Mt. Olivet Church is a one-storey frame structure constructed c. 1870. The basic floor plan is rectangular with twin entries located on the short side of the rectangle. White clapboard walls and a gable roof of green shingles enclose the structure, which measures approximately forty feet by sixty feet.

The simple lines of the church are broken only by window and door openings, all of which have very plain trim. The windows are all six-light, double-hung sash. The north and south elevations each feature four such windows, and the rear of the church (east elevation) has two of them. The symmetrical facade features two separate entries, both of which have horizontally paneled doors. A boxed cornice with returns is found on both gable ends of the building with a plain frieze along both side elevations.

The simplicity of the exterior is continued in the interior of the church, which consists of a single open room. A row of square slender posts bisects the room, and a small raised platform lies across the northwest corner. The original floor has been covered over, and the ceiling has been lowered; however, restoration plans call for the removal of the floor and ceiling alterations. The original floor and the original board and batten ceiling are still in place.

In 1975 Mount Olivet Church was moved to a new location to prevent its demolition. The church now rests at the Cleveland County fairgrounds, about sixteen miles from the site where it was built. The Cleveland County Historical Society plans to move in several other historic structures from around the county to reconstruct a nineteenth-century village. The peaceful tree-shaded setting provided at the fairgrounds area is now more appropriate than the original site which lies near a busy highway.

The simplicity of Mount Olivet Church is typical of a great many nineteenth-century rural churches in Arkansas. Though moved from its original site, the building itself has changed little since its construction. Structurally, the building is in excellent condition and is now undergoing minor restoration efforts to return it to its original appearance.

Miss Olive
Church
Brush-
Olivet
Cleveland
County
Historical
Society

SIGNIFICANCE

7D	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
TORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES July 10, 1867

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mount Olivet Methodist Church typifies the simple style of rural Arkansas churches in the second half of the nineteenth-century. This Cleveland County church is a simple rectangular structure with a gable roof and plain trim around the symmetrically-placed window and door openings. The functional structure consists of one large room, approximately forty feet by sixty feet, which was used for church meetings.

According to the centennial edition of a Cleveland County newspaper, the early settlers in the area were predominantly of the Methodist faith. This fact is supported by census figures which show the Methodists as having the largest number of churches in the area in 1870. Mount Olivet, constructed about 1867, is the oldest surviving Methodist Church in the Cleveland County area.

On July 10, 1867, Anson and Harriet Black deeded an acre of land in what was then Bradley County to five trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. P. Culpepper, James Chambers, T. Harper, John Culpepper and Jonathon Cooper, trustees of the newly organized church, paid a token sum of ten dollars for a building site on the Pine Bluff-to-Warren road. The deed stipulates that the land be used "to erect and build or cause to be erected and built thereon a house or place of worship for the use of the members of Methodist Episcopal Church South...."*

Construction of the church is believed to have commenced soon after the land was acquired in 1867. Lumber was hauled by ox-drawn wagons from Warren, located some twenty-three miles away. Church members worked together to construct the building and to make the necessary furnishings for the interior. (Some of the original hand-hewn pews are still in existence and will be placed in the church when its restoration is complete.)

Like other rural churches in nineteenth-century Arkansas, Mount Olivet Church was both a religious and social center in the surrounding community. Brush-arbor and tent-meeting revivals were often held on the grounds of Mount Olivet Church. After Sunday morning services "dinner-on-the-grounds" enabled church members who were often isolated during the week to visit and have fellowship with other families.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Though the congregation of Mount Olivet Church still meets, the 1867 church building is no longer in use. To prevent its demolition the building was given to the Cleveland County Historical Society and moved to a new location at the county fairgrounds.

Mount Olivet Church is now being restored by the Cleveland County Historical Society. The building will be used for meetings of the society and other groups. The church is the first of several historic Cleveland County structures to be moved to the county fairgrounds as part of a planned pioneer village.

Though Mount Olivet Church has been moved from its original site, it nevertheless deserves National Register recognition because of its architectural and historic significance. Architecturally, Mount Olivet represents the simple style employed by rural churches scattered across Arkansas in the nineteenth century. The church building, which predates the organization of the county in 1873, is one of the oldest structures still standing in Cleveland County. Historically the construction of Mount Olivet Church illustrates the important role of religious institutions in the lives of nineteenth-century rural Arkansas people.

*Bradley County, Deed Record Volume I, page 597.

RECEIVED
 DATE ENTERED
 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bradley County Deed Record Book, Vol. I, p. 597.
 Cleveland County Herald (Rison, Arkansas), March 14, 1973.
 Goodspeed Publishing Company. Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890.
 Wilson, Cora. "Mt. Olivet Methodist Church." Unpublished manuscript on file with Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 5	5, 7, 4, 6, 8, 0	3, 7, 5, 7, 1, 1, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

DIANNA KIRK, HISTORIAN

ORGANIZATION

ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

STREET & NUMBER

300 WEST MARKHAM

CITY OR TOWN

LITTLE ROCK

DATE

SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

TELEPHONE

501-371-1639

STATE

ARKANSAS

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Gene Richardson* GENE RICHARDSON

TITLE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

SEPTEMBER 9, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

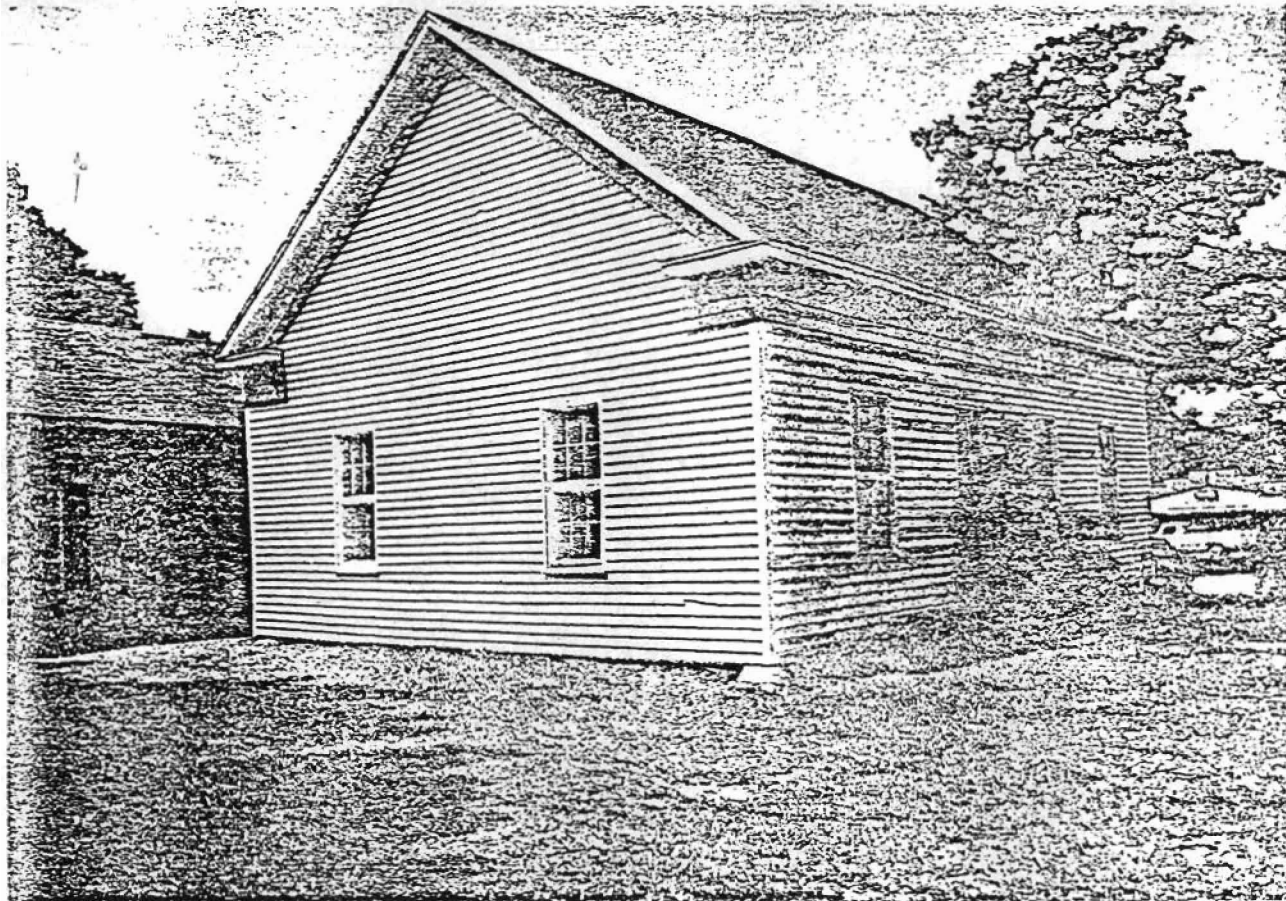
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Form No. 10-301a
(Rev. 10-74)

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME

HISTORIC

MOUNT OLIVET METHODIST CHURCH

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

CITY, TOWN

RISON

— VICINITY OF

COUNTY
CLEVELAND

STATE
ARKANSAS

3 PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT DIANNA KIRK

DATE OF PHOTO SUMMER, 1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

4 IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

NORTH ELEVATION AND FACADE, VIEWED FROM THE NORTHWEST

PHOTO NO