

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 Lewis, Jay, Residence

other names/site number "Boat House," Site #DE0238

2. Location

street & number 12 Fairview Drive not for publication

city or town McGehee vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Desha code 041 zip code 71654

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.)

Cathie Matthews 10/26/04
 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:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____	_____	_____

Lewis, Jay, Residence

Name of Property

Desha 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	
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2

buildings

sites

structures

objects

2

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT/other

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

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)

Statewide

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1955

Significant Dates

1955

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Edward Durell Stone, Architect

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:

University of Arkansas Library Special Collections, Fayetteville

Lewis, Jay, House
Name of Property

Desha County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>647540</u>	<u>3722844</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	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 Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date September 29, 2004
street & number 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street telephone (501) 324-9787
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 Chris & Dwana Lee
street & number 12 Fairview Drive telephone
city or town McGehee state AR zip code 71654

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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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SUMMARY

The Jay Lewis Residence, which was built in 1955, was designed by the Arkansas-born architect Edward Durell Stone. It is located in the small town of McGehee, Desha County, Arkansas, approximately one hundred miles southeast of Little Rock. The wood-frame house is located on the northwest side of town in a neighborhood developed in the 1950s and 1960s that is comprised mainly of Ranch-style homes. The Lewis Residence rests on a continuous red brick foundation and is topped by a front-facing gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. The house has two metal chimneys, although it had a brick chimney originally that was removed due to storm damage. The walls are covered in vertical cypress board siding, and the house stands out in appearance from its more conventional neighbors.

ELABORATION

The Jay Lewis Residence is located in McGehee, Desha County, Arkansas, which is approximately one hundred miles southeast of Little Rock on U.S. 65. It was built in 1955 and designed by Arkansas-born architect Edward Durell Stone. The house is located on the northwest side of town in a neighborhood comprised mainly of Ranch-style houses built in the 1950s and 1960s. The wood-frame house, which is sided with vertical cypress boards, rests on a continuous red-brick foundation. The house is crowned by a large front-facing gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. Six large Douglas fir beams support the eaves on the front and rear of the house. The house currently has two metal chimneys although it had a brick chimney originally that was removed due to storm damage.

The house is surrounded by a narrow, raised wooden walkway. Although constructed of 2x4's laid on their side that were originally visible, it has been covered with floorboards. Most of the house's windows are large stationary plate-glass windows or sliding-glass doors. The house also has a covered breezeway on the east side connecting it to an open carport, also designed by Stone, and built at the same time as the main house.

Front/North Façade

The north façade of the Lewis Residence is dominated by the central entrance and surrounding windows. Three wide wood steps lead up to the entrance and the front portion of the wrap-around porch. The wrap-around porch on the front is supported by six Douglas fir beams. The entrance features a front door with oriental motifs on it flanked on each side by a large plate-glass window. The first floor windows are flanked by decorative metal sconces.

Above the entrance and the first floor windows are two more plate-glass windows with two triangular windows extending into the gable peak above them. The windows on the first floor of the front façade provide light into the home's central entry/living/dining area. The second floor windows provide light into the upstairs bedroom.

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The wide eaves of the gable overhang on the front façade are supported by six large Douglas fir beams, three on each slope, that mirror the placement of the six beams supporting the porch.

Side/West Façade

Like the front façade, the west façade is spanned by the wrap-around porch. A set of three wood steps provides access to the porch towards the southern end of the façade. Towards the north end of the façade is a sliding-glass door that provides access to the home's northeast bedroom. To the right of the sliding-glass door are two small, rectangular, metal-framed windows set high in the wall that provide light to the two bathrooms. The small windows are followed to the south by another sliding-glass door that provides access to the home's southwest bedroom. The southern end of the façade has three screen panels that form the side of the rear screened-in porch.

Rear/South Façade

The rear façade of the house is dominated by a large screened-in porch that spans the entire façade. Although the bottom of the screened-in porch now has wood paneling, it was originally entirely made of screen. A wood door, located just left of center on the façade, provides access from the screened-in porch to the rear façade's portion of the exterior wrap-around porch. A single wood step leads up to the wrap-around porch in front of the door, and a deck (not original) juts off the porch at the west end of the facade. As on the front façade, the wrap-around porch is supported by six Douglas fir beams. The wide eaves of the gable overhang on the rear façade are supported by six large Douglas fir beams, three on each slope, that mirror the placement of the six beams supporting the porch.

The rear wall of the house, located inside the screened-in porch, has two sets of sliding-glass doors on the first floor. Above the sliding-glass doors, as on the front façade, are two more plate-glass windows with two triangular windows extending into the gable peak above them. The windows and sliding-glass doors on the rear façade provide light into the home's central entry/living/dining area.

Side/East Façade

The southern end of the façade has three screen panels that are the side of the rear screened-in porch. The screened-in panels are followed a short way down the façade by a sliding glass door that provides access to the house's den. Further north down the façade, a set of French doors provide access to the kitchen. (Originally, a sliding glass door provided access to the kitchen.) Towards the northern end of the façade is a set of two small rectangular metal-framed windows set high in the wall that provide light to the laundry/utility room of the house.

As on the other façades of the house, the east façade is spanned by the wrap-around porch. A set of three wood steps, located towards the northern end of the façade, provide access to the porch from the breezeway.

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Breezeway & Carport

On the east side of the house, towards the northern end, is a breezeway that leads from the house to the carport, located to the east of the house. The breezeway consists of a simple gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, and is supported by eight cypress posts, four each evenly-spaced on the north and south sides. A wood fence is located to the north of the breezeway, spanning the space from the house to the carport, which provides privacy to the service court area of the property.

The design of the carport mimics the design of the main house. The north side of the carport is sided with vertical cypress boards, except for the gable end and a small space at the bottom of the wall. The gable end is open with the structure exposed. The large, front-facing, gable roof of the carport is supported by four large wood beams, two on each slope. The majority of the east side of the carport is open, although the southern end is enclosed for a small storage area. The south façade of the carport, like the north side, is sided with vertical cypress boards, except for the gable end. Two small wood-framed, four-pane windows are located towards each end of the façade, and provide light into the storage area. The west façade of the carport is mainly open except for the eastern end of the storage area.

Interior

Although the interior of the house was not viewed, based upon the plan, the interior reflects Stone's later period of residential design, specifically with the elimination of the hallway. Stone always considered the hallway to be a waste of space, and the current owners indicate that the design of the house wastes no space. (In fact, the current owners wish that the house had more storage space.) The core of the house's design is the central entry/living/dining area, referred to by Stone as a "dogtrot," and the other rooms of the house open directly onto the central area. Most of the rooms are closed off from the central space by sliding Shoji screens, a design element that Stone used in other homes, including the Felix Smart Residence in Pine Bluff. The entire design of the Lewis Residence is very much based upon a design done in February 1954 for Harold N. Rosenberg of Englewood, New Jersey. (The Lewises visited the Rosenberg Residence in their consultation with Stone's office during the design of their house.)

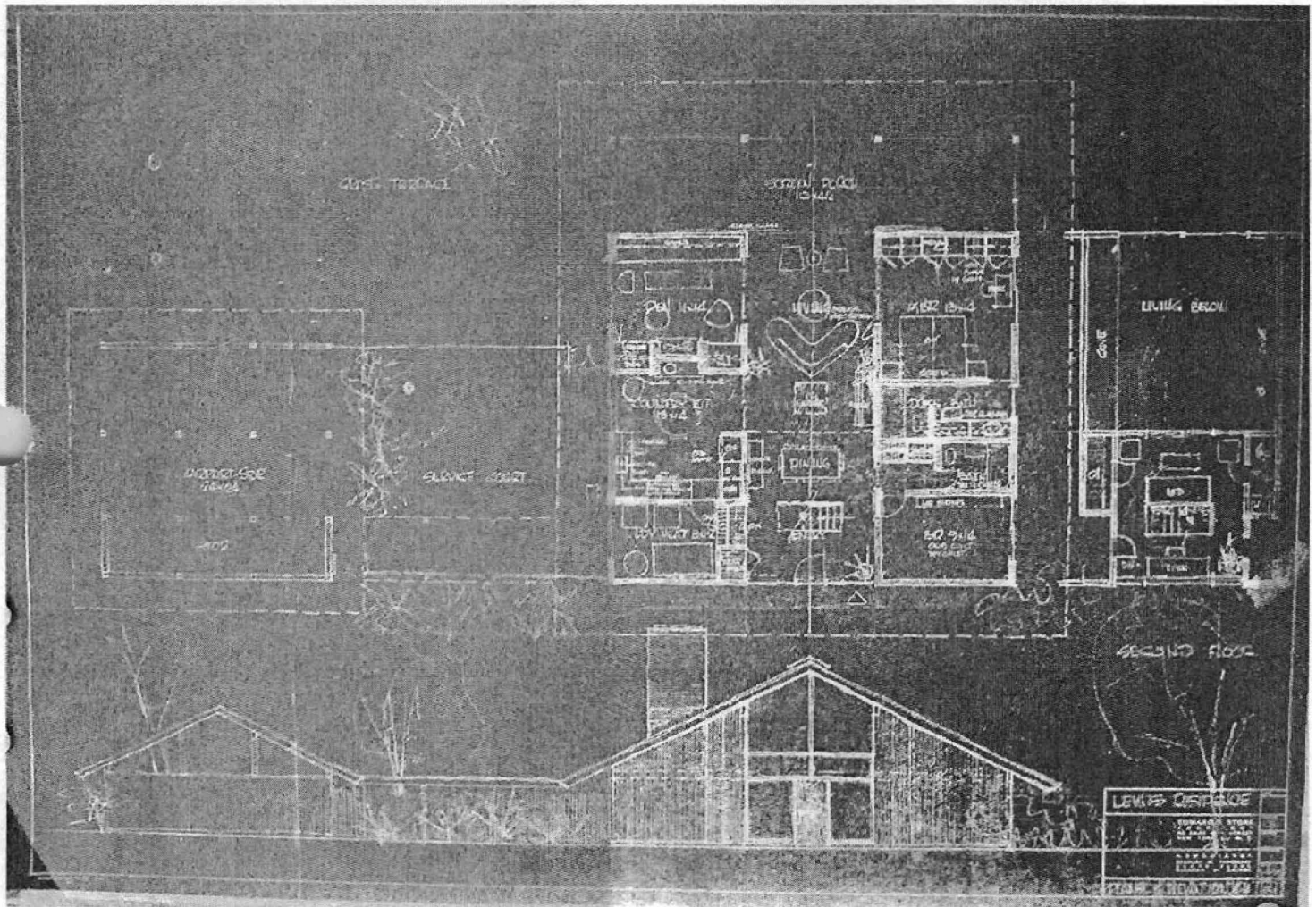
Integrity

Overall, the Lewis Residence retains good integrity. The most significant change to the exterior of the property is the loss of the original brick chimney on the eastern slope of the roof. However, it was removed several years ago as a result of storm damage. Otherwise, the Lewis Residence still reflects Stone's original 1955 design. The current owners have also indicated that the home's interior, with the exception of some cosmetic changes, still reflects Stone's original design. In addition, the neighborhood around the house still reflects its 1950s and 1960s appearance, and still reflects the house's original setting.

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Jay Lewis Residence plan and front elevation.

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SUMMARY

The Jay Lewis Residence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion C** as the only residence in Desha County, and one of only five in Arkansas, designed by the internationally-known architect Edward Durell Stone. The house, which was built in 1955, is one of the best examples of Stone's later residential architecture, which reflected more of his classical ideas and formal planning and eliminated the hallway through the use of an atrium or "dogtrot," rather than exhibiting the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright as his 1940s residential architecture had.

ELABORATION

Edward Durell Stone, who became one of the major figures in twentieth-century architecture, was born in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on March 9, 1902. By the time Stone was born, his father, who was in his mid-50s, was in semi-retirement after being a merchant in Fayetteville. His mother, whose maiden name was Johnson, had come to Fayetteville from St. Louis to teach English at the University of Arkansas. Stone described his years growing up by saying that, "I never knew very strong discipline; I was allowed to do as I pleased, and had a very happy, carefree boyhood."¹

Stone was a good student in grammar school, and he enjoyed spending time outdoors in his spare time, whether it was fishing or looking for arrowheads with his father, swimming, or looking for birds' nests, since the superintendent of his grammar school got him interested in ornithology. Even as a young child, Stone had awareness of what an architect was, due to the fact that his brother, Hicks, decided to be an architect after visiting the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.²

As a child, Stone was also very creative. He wrote, "I loved to build things and had all sorts of projects; and my mother, who was talented in the arts, encouraged my interest in building, in drawing, in anything creative. She gave me a room upstairs in our house, where I had my own carpentry shop and built furniture, boats and bird-houses."³ It was even as a young boy that Stone won his first architecture competition, and he "jokingly blamed my becoming an architect on Senator J. William Fulbright, a boyhood playmate, whose family owned the local paper."⁴ He described the competition by writing:

The local lumber company, with the cooperation of the Fulbright paper, had a competition for a birdhouse, open to the boys of two counties... I elected to build a bluebird house. I made a wooden box and surfaced it with sassafras branches cut in half, so that it had the appearance of a log cabin. ... So it was a very

¹ Edward Durell Stone. *The Evolution of an Architect*. New York: Horizon Press, 1962, pp. 16, 18-19.

² Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 18-19.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

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functional job with rustic charm. As somebody said, the design might have been influenced by Maybeck or Greene & Greene or some of the very early Wright houses. ...

I won the first prize, two dollars and fifty cents, and it was announced in the daily paper. I was also the newsboy and delivered the papers, heralding my success. The prize was the first money I had ever earned and, when I found that I could do exactly what I liked best, have recognition and make money, it was my undoing.⁵

Stone began his higher education in the art department at the University of Arkansas shortly after the death of his mother. Miss Galbraith, who was one of the two teachers in the University's art department at the time, took an interest in Stone's talent, and wrote to his brother, Hicks, that he should be encouraged. In 1923, Stone moved to Boston and Hicks was able to get him a job as an office boy in the architectural firm of Strickland, Blodgett & Law.⁶

While Stone was living in Boston, he began formal architectural education at the Boston Architectural Club. Stone's education at the Club focused on drawing, and it was centered around classical orders and details. Stone had his work critiqued by architects in the Boston area as well as by professors at both the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard. It was while Stone was studying at the Boston Architectural Club that he met and was hired as a draftsman by architect Henry R. Shepley, whom Stone called his "first patron." Even though Stone went to work for Shepley, he continued his education in the evenings.⁷

In 1926, Stone entered a competition to win a special scholarship to Harvard, and was awarded first prize, a year's tuition. He ended up completing two years of architectural study in the year's time, and then transferred to MIT for his fifth year of study. He had been lured to MIT because Jacques Carlu, a professor there, was beginning to experiment with modern design, something in which Stone was interested. Stone's study of modern architecture would get a big boost in 1927 when he won the Rotch traveling scholarship, an award of two years of study and travel in Europe.⁸ Although Stone did study historic architecture in Europe, he, like other students, was becoming enamored with modern design. He wrote, "Le Corbusier's first books were being published and in nearby Dessau the Bauhaus was founded, all heralding the arrival of the new machine age. Those ideas were contagious and we students spent our time redesigning the United States on marble-topped café tables."⁹

⁵ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 19-20.

⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 20-21.

⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 22.

⁸ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 23-24.

⁹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 24-25.

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After studying in Europe, Stone returned to the United States, landing in New York in November 1929, which Stone said was “probably the least auspicious time in history to start an architectural career.” However, he was able to begin a career, slowly at first, by working on projects under other firms. Most notably, Stone worked on the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel under the firm of Schultze and Weaver and on the Radio City Music Hall and Center Theater at Rockefeller Center as the chief designer under the firms of Hood and Foulhoux; Corbett, Harrison and MacMurray; and Reinhard and Hofmeister.¹⁰

Stone became an architect in his own right with the design of the Mandel House in Mt. Kisco (Westchester), New York, in 1933 (NR listed 03/01/96). The house was the first modern house in the eastern U.S., and was a concrete and steel building designed in the International style. Although the modern design created large amounts of excitement in the architectural community, the excitement was not shared by all. When another house in the style was built in the area, it “created such a flurry in the community that the zoning ordinances were changed to prevent further shocks to their sensibilities.”¹¹

Much of Stone’s architecture in the 1930s employed characteristics of the International style and other modern architecture that he had seen in Europe. Features such as simple geometric forms and large windows marked his architecture during the period, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the A. Conger Goodyear House in Nassau, New York (NR listed 04/12/03), illustrate his design style. He also became successful enough in the 1930s that he was able to establish his own firm, Edward Durell Stone & Associates in 1936 in New York.¹² (Over the years the firm would expand to include Edward Durell Stone, Inc., Hicks Drafting Corporation, and Torch Realty.¹³)

Although Stone’s architecture of the 1930s was centered around the International style and the architecture that he had seen in Europe, his style would take a drastic turn in 1940 when he took a trip across the country to California. Stone had already begun to question the International style because the “style did not win general acceptance in this country: they were too sparse, too arid, too cold,” but a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright’s home, Taliesin, in Wisconsin turned Stone away from the style. Stone wrote: “Taliesin was a contrast to my previous concepts of residential design. The architecture was attuned to the natural beauty of the site; its natural materials, wood and stone indigenous to the countryside, seemed to remain so even in the structure itself. It was the first time I had ever walked through one of Mr. Wright’s buildings and I was overwhelmed by its beauty.”¹⁴

¹⁰ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, pp. 29-30.

¹¹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 32.

¹² Information on Edward Durell Stone found on “The Recent Past Preservation Network” at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 89.

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Stone's architecture through the 1940s, particularly his residential designs, would show a tremendous amount of Wright's influence with the use of natural materials and the use of an open floor plan, allowing the various spaces to flow and merge into one another. Stone further wrote:

My 1940 trip awakened me to the architecture we had created in our own country with indigenous talent and materials. I had been oriented towards European ideas because I had actually seen more of Europe than of my own country, but this was the beginning of my repudiation of the International style, and it led to a period of several years during which I expressed this new respect for natural materials in a series of wood houses in the east and in my native state of Arkansas.¹⁵

The visit to Taliesin cemented the friendship between Stone and Wright, and Wright would play a dual role Stone's life as a "friend and personal hero" until his death in 1959.¹⁶

Like many Americans, Stone had his life interrupted by World War II. Although Stone was too old to fight at the time, he did seek out a general in Washington who was looking for architects and engineers to design buildings and other facilities for the Air Force. Stone found that military life was a "frustrating, slow-moving, bureaucratic process," but even so he was able to make some accomplishments while in the military, including recommending that military bases be master-planned in order to facilitate efficient development. In addition, he worked on revolutionizing hangar design, which had remained stagnant even though planes were getting larger, making hangars obsolete in a short amount of time.¹⁷

After the war ended, Stone returned to New York and reestablished his office in Great Neck on Long Island although he moved it to New York City a short time later. Many of his first clients in the late 1940s wanted residential designs, so Stone was able to apply the things he had seen in Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture. He wrote that, "The houses which I designed during this period were a new departure for me. They were more indigenous and therefore more at home in this country than my earlier houses inspired by European architecture."¹⁸ The Willis Noll House in Fayetteville and Felix Smart House in Pine Bluff, both built in 1950, illustrate the influence of Wright on Stone's architecture during the period.

The late 1940s and early 1950s were a busy time for Stone in Arkansas. In addition to the residential designs being worked on, which included homes in Fayetteville, Harrison, Little Rock, Pine Bluff, and McGehee, he was involved with other public and institutional designs for the University of Arkansas. His first major

¹⁵ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 92.

¹⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 91.

¹⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 95-96.

¹⁸ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 97.

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commission by the University was the Fine Arts Center, which included architecture, all of the visual arts, music and theater in one facility. To Stone's knowledge, it was the "first completely physically integrated Fine Arts Center."¹⁹ The Fine Arts Center would also lead to a design for the Sigma Nu Fraternity House, also built in 1949 with an addition in 1957. In addition to the commissions at the Fayetteville campus, Stone also designed a hospital (built 1950) and school (built 1954) for the University of Arkansas Medical School in Little Rock. By the time that the Carlson Terrace project was awarded, Stone even opened a field office in Fayetteville in late 1955. The office would remain open only a short time, however, before it was closed in late 1959.²⁰

However, during the early 1950s, Stone was still searching for a style to call his own. Since most of Stone's architectural training was based on classical design, he was looking for a style that was formal and based on classical ideas. He would finally find his style with the design and construction of the United States Embassy in New Delhi, India, in 1954. He "developed a more individualistic style, incorporating classical traditions and contemporary materials and methods."²¹ He described his thoughts on the complex in his 1962 autobiography:

First I decided to place the structure on a platform or podium under which automobiles could be sheltered from the 120 degree sun of India. Also – let's be frank – I wanted to keep them out of sight. The idea of a monumental building rising from a sea of multi-colored, tail-finned automobiles is simply revolting. I elected to place the offices on two stories around a water garden to gain the cooling effect of the fountains and pool. To shade windows and other glass areas from the sun and reduce glare, I adopted a terrazzo grille for exterior walls – an ancient principle in tropical climates. The entire building is shaded by a rectangular canopy separated from the second floor by several feet – a heat-dissipating breezeway. For proper shade I carried the canopy well beyond the wall of the building – beyond the reach of the cantilever – so columns were required for support. ... The result of solving all these considerations of climate and function produced a building type – a temple – almost as old as history.²²

The embassy also used several characteristics, such as placing the complex on a podium, grillwork for exterior walls, and canopies, that he would use on designs in Arkansas, notably the Carlson Terrace

¹⁹ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 41.

²⁰ Ernie Jacks (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Interview with the author. 16 September 2004.

²¹ Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

²² Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 138.

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Apartments at the University of Arkansas, built in 1956 and 1958, and the Pine Bluff Civic Center, built in 1963-1967. (Although the grillwork at Carlson Terrace probably provided some shading during the hot Arkansas summers, Stone wrote that it also "provides privacy and veils any irresponsible student housekeeping."²³)

The Embassy in New Delhi was also widely received in the architectural community, and really catapulted Stone onto the international scene. In fact, Frank Lloyd Wright called it one of the finest buildings in the past one hundred years, and said, "Ed, that's a perfectly beautiful building. If I were doing it I'd do it in the same way."²⁴ (Compliments from Wright were rare indeed. Although he called Stone an "honest" architect, he was not so kind to other firms of the day. For example, he often referred to Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, who are best-known for their work designing office buildings, as "Skiddings, Own-more, and Sterile."²⁵)

Stone's residential designs in the 1950s also changed, reflecting more of his classical ideas rather than exhibiting the influence of Wright. In fact, with respect to the Bruno Graf Residence in Dallas, Texas, built in 1956, Stone referred to it as a "formal" house that "evokes a sense of the classical Pompeian house, enclosed by high walls, with all rooms opening to courtyards."²⁶ It was also during the very late 1940s and early 1950s, with respect to residential design, that Stone was finally able to develop a plan that eliminated the "space-wasting" hallway," which was a "constant irritant" to him. Although the Noll Residence in Fayetteville and the Smart Residence in Pine Bluff were experiments in eliminating the hallway by using wide galleries that were meant to be multi-purpose spaces, the Jay Lewis House in McGehee, built in 1955, is the best example in Arkansas of a residential plan without a hallway.²⁷

After the completion of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, Stone became much more of an international architect. From the mid-1950s until the time he retired, Stone designed many commercial, civic, religious, and institutional buildings around the world. Probably his best known commissions from the later years of his practice are the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, designed in 1959, and the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair, designed in 1957. The magnitude and scope of the projects Stone received after the U.S. Embassy project in New Delhi also put an end to his residential design after the mid-1950s.

After the initial flurry of designs that Stone did in Arkansas in the late 1940s and early 1950s, only a couple of his designs were built in the 1960s. Although Stone completed designs for the University of Arkansas Alumni Center in 1962 and the proposed Greer's Ferry National Garden Park in 1966, they were never built.

²³ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 196.

²⁴ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 139.

²⁵ Robert C. Twombly. *Frank Lloyd Wright, His Life and Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1979, p. 384.

²⁶ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 141.

²⁷ Stone, *The Evolution of an Architect*, p. 97.

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Only his designs for the Pine Bluff Civic Center (1963-1967) and the First National Bank in Hot Springs (1969) were brought to fruition.²⁸ The Pine Bluff Civic Center is also significant among Stone's Arkansas designs in that it was the only collaboration in his native state with his son, Edward Durell Stone, Jr., who was the landscape architect for the project.

Stone continued to practice architecture, and also take an active role in the firm's practice, until he retired in 1974 due to health reasons. He died on August 6, 1978, after a brief illness, and was cremated and buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Fayetteville.²⁹

Edward Durell Stone will likely always be remembered as one of the greatest architects of the twentieth century. In fact, while the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair was under construction in 1958, Stone was featured on the cover of the March 31 issue of *Time* magazine. The accompanying feature article on him wrote that he was "One of the profession's freest spirits and by general consensus the most versatile designer and draftsman of his generation. Ed Stone was a pioneer modernist. He early set his mark on such buildings as Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art, [and] became one of the deftest interpreters of the International Style initiated by France's Le Corbusier and Germany's Bauhaus school."³⁰ His legacy is further cemented by the many awards he received during his career, which included three medals from the Architectural League of New York (1937, 1950, and 1953), a Gold Medal (1955) and two Honor Awards (1958 and 1967) from the American Institute of Architects, the Architectural Excellence Award from the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade (1965), and the First Prize in the 1973 American Society of Landscape Architects Competition.³¹

In 1954, Jay Lewis and his wife were looking for an architect to design a house for them in McGehee. Although his wife was originally from McGehee, Lewis was a native of New York. Lewis's father-in-law was the proprietor of the Eagle Store in McGehee and Eudora, and Lewis was trained as an internal auditor. He had the Phillips 66 distributorship in the area along with some farming interests that made him successful.³²

Lewis and his wife wanted a one-story house with a gable roof and they also wanted an inside courtyard. Initially, they had been working with an architect in Memphis who ended up designing a house for them that had more of what they did not want, such as a flat roof, than what they wanted, although it did have a courtyard.³³

²⁸ Ernie Jacks (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Letter to the author. 14 August 2003.

²⁹ Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

³⁰ "More Than Modern." *Time*, 31 March 1958, p. 56.

³¹ Ann Lee Morgan and Colin Naylor (eds.). *Contemporary Architects, Second Edition*. Chicago: St. James Press, 1987, p. 873.

³² Jay Lewis. Telephone conversation with the author. 14 September 2004.

³³ *Ibid.*

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On a trip to New York to visit family, Lewis's grandmother recommended a friend's grandson who was an architect. Lewis was mainly looking for some plans to purchase, but the friend's grandson was not willing to sell plans in a situation where he would not be able to supervise the building's construction. However, the architect recommended that the Lewises visit Stone, since Stone was an Arkansas native.³⁴

The Lewises were not familiar with Stone, but when they arrived at his office, they liked the buildings that were pictured on the walls, which were, of course, all of his designs. By the mid-1950s Stone was not designing many residences since his office had gotten into larger work beginning with the design of the Embassy in New Delhi, India. As a result, he told the Lewises that he could not offer a new concept in the design of a house for them. However, he told them that he had been working on a "dogtrot" concept that might meet their needs.³⁵

The Lewises went with one of Stone's associates (likely Richard Snibbe who was initially in charge of the project at Stone's office) to Englewood, New Jersey, to visit the Harold N. Rosenberg Residence, which Stone had designed early in 1954. The Lewises liked the plan and design of the house, and decided to hire Stone to design their home in McGehee.³⁶ In fact, the completed Lewis Residence would very much resemble the Rosenberg Residence.

Stone hated hallways in residential design, and he wrote in his autobiography that, "This space-wasting hallway was a constant irritant to me. I experimented in making use of this hallway as a playroom, gallery and so forth but it invariably remained a problem..."³⁷ He would later write that, "Corridors are the curse of the 20th Century and immediately establish an institutional dullness. You do not find them in classical architecture, where one traversed a courtyard or, as in Versailles, moved from one salon to another. The houses of Pompeii have no corridors."³⁸ The dogtrot and atrium plans that were beginning to come out of Stone's office at the period were in response to his desire to eliminate the hallway in residential design.

Ernie Jacks, one of Stone's associates, describes the development of the "dogtrot" plan in Stone's repertoire extensively in his memoir. He writes:

In the early and mid-1950s, a further progression developed: the beginning of the "atrium and "dogtrot" houses. ... During the time, Stone had begun the projects in Arkansas and spent much time there. In his travels, he rediscovered

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Edward Durell Stone. *The Evolution of An Architect*. New York: Horizon Press, 1962, p. 97

³⁸ Ernie Jacks. *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c. 2004, pp. 30-31.

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the dogtrot form. The original indigenous dogtrot of the old South consisted of two groups of rooms, usually living, dining, kitchen on one side and bedrooms on the other, arranged on either side of a large, open hallway – or breezeway – through which passed any and everything: people, dogs, chickens, pigs, whatever. In later times, farmers often enclosed this dogtrot hall as a screened porch or even glazed it as an interior living space where it continued to be a connecting link between all the other rooms.

From that inspiration, Stone developed his own dogtrot form... The various private spaces of the type opened, usually through sliding “shoji” screens, into either side of a large central two-storey space – the dogtrot – which became the primary living-family area. The entire interior was contained within a simple rectangle and covered with a single large gable roof. In form, it was a barn. The large roof and platform structure along with the interior sliding screens, imparted a distinct Japanese flavor to the design. The Arkansas house [Jay Lewis Residence] and the Rosenberg house in New Jersey are the best examples. This dogtrot plan form proved to be the answer to his crusade for a compact house without corridors, and almost all single family residential designs emanating from the Stone office after that...were variations of the dogtrot theme.³⁹

On January 31, 1955, Jay Lewis signed a contract with the Stone office for the design of his house, which would include the preparation of preliminary and working drawings and specifications. The contract stated that, “For the above work we will receive the fixed fee of \$2500.00. A \$500 retainer is due at this time; \$500 payable upon your return to Arkansas, and the remaining \$1500.00 upon receipt of completed plans.”⁴⁰

After the contract was signed, Stone set about finding someone locally to supervise the construction of the house. Stone had been working with the firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum and Rauch regarding some of his other projects in Arkansas, and in a February 8, 1955, letter to John Hill of the firm wrote that, “We are doing a small house for Mr. and Mrs. Jay Lewis of McGehee, Arkansas, and will do complete plans and specifications here. He would like for someone to visit the job occasionally while it is under construction. I do not believe that it will take more than three or four visits.” Stone was hoping to come to Arkansas himself in the near future, but said that, “it may be difficult, as I am in confinement – expecting a child in

³⁹ *Ibid*, 31-33.

⁴⁰ Edward Durell Stone. Letter to Jay Lewis. 31 January 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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July."⁴¹ Hill contacted Lewis about the project, writing, "I worked with Ed mostly on the various buildings that he has done in Arkansas and I am looking forward to having a part in his work again."⁴²

By the middle of February, the Lewises had returned to McGehee, and sent the next \$500 installment to Stone with a letter dated February 17. Lewis, throughout the entire process, was a very hands-on client, and it is reflected in a February 16, 1955, letter that he sent to Richard Snibbe of Stone's office, in which he wrote:

The following is a hodgepodge of thoughts and questions which we should like to bring to your attention –

You talked about using a type of grill-work to enclose the base of the house and I think we should perhaps be better off with a bricked in base with just vents and an entrance to the crawl space – that is the way most of the homes are put up here – and it seems that it would make for warmer floors during the winter months.

I also want to ask you about the upkeep requirements of the outside wood – will it have a protective coating?

Do you and Mr. Stone feel that cypress is the best wood for what you are planning or are you using it because it is a local product – also what type of cypress do you plan on using – would it be "heart cypress", I am asking this because I have been told that some cypress is soft, easily damaged and therefore not the best wood for the outside of a house.

What type of insulation are you planning on in the walls and under the roof? ...

What type of window did you decide on for the master bathroom? ...

Did you decide to leave the utility room as shown on the plans, with the sliding glass doors in it?

Did you get any opinions from your engineer as to air conditioning and heating units? ...

We don't know just what stage you are at in the formulation of our house – but we would like you to work some sketches of both the inside and outside before everything gets into the final stages – that will give us a chance to see just what's what.

⁴¹ Edward Durell Stone. Letter to John Hill of Erhart, Eichenbaum and Rauch. 8 February 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁴² John Hill. Letter to Jay Lewis. 15 February 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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Don't forget you said you would send some sketches of ideas for the fireplace on the den side – might also be a good idea to show us what the fireplace on the kitchen side will look like. ...

I guess that's about all for now – I am sure you must think it more than enough. ...⁴³

Snibbe was apparently used to the types of questions that Lewis had included in his letter. In his response to Lewis, dated February 24, 1955, Snibbe wrote:

Just to put you at ease – your questions are the usual thing, and a number of them can't be answered until we start detailing in earnest, but in general we think we can insulate the floor, and I assure you that it will be warm.

Outside wood needs no upkeep, especially if we use cypress, which is a semi-hardwood. We use glass wool insulation and/or aluminum. ...

We prefer floor to ceiling sliding aluminum sash throughout. Detailed heating units can be decided later.

We will get your sketches out this week. We feel certain that you [sic] house will be comfortable and very beautiful.⁴⁴

Although Snibbe's letter apparently put Lewis's mind at ease concerning some of the issues around the design of the house, the lack of sketches quickly became a very sore issue with Lewis. In a March 7, 1955, letter (written after Lewis had sent a telegram to Stone that same morning), he wrote:

We are very disappointed about the way in which we have been treated by your office. It is a month now since we left New York, and in that time the only word we have had from you has been one brief letter, from Dick, with some answers to all our questions. That same letter stated that sketches would be sent out that same week; that was on February 24th and we still have not received the sketches nor had any other word from you.

I think that we are entitled to know what progress you are making on our home and at what stages you are in the preparation of our plans. ...

⁴³ Jay Lewis. Letter to Richard Snibbe in Stone's office. 16 February 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁴⁴ Richard W. Snibbe. Letter to Jay Lewis. 24 February 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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In consideration of the above I am asking that you please write me at least one letter a week advising me of the work you are doing on our home.
Hoping to hear from you in the very near future...⁴⁵

Lewis's March 7 letter apparently caused Stone's office to sit up and take notice, since much of the correspondence to Lewis for the next month or so was written by Stone himself, and not Snibbe. In response to Lewis's telegram, Stone wrote the following day that, "We will have the Working Drawings which, as you know, are time consuming, within the next four weeks. In the meantime we will send you a perspective sketch of the interior. ... If you will please be patient, we will get everything in your hands as soon as possible."⁴⁶ A week later, the sketch of the interior was sent to Lewis, and Stone indicated that they were proceeding with the working drawings and would keep him "posted from time to time."⁴⁷

Although things seemed to improve afterwards, it was apparent that everyone was walking on eggshells for a while, based upon a March 16, 1955, letter that Lewis wrote to Stone. He wrote:

I do not mean to rush you in the finishing of our plans but rather I want to know what progress is being made. ...

Dick wrote more than two weeks ago that sketches would be sent to us at that time, and you now say that you will send us a sketch soon.

This all makes me feel that we are being brushed off and not receiving the attention that we should. I realize that with us so far away it is easy for other projects and people to take most of your attention, but that does not make it right. ...

I am sure you will design a beautiful house for us and that we will be happy with it, but in the meantime please keep us happy by keeping us informed.⁴⁸

In the same letter, Lewis also continued his hands-on approach to the planning of the house, asking Stone about several aspects of the design, including the foundation wall of the house, the exterior siding (cypress

⁴⁵ Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 7 March 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁴⁶ Edward Durell Stone. Letter to Jay Lewis. 8 March 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁴⁷ Edward Durell Stone. Letter to Jay Lewis. 15 March 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁴⁸ Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 16 March 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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vs. redwood), the types of flooring for the interior, countertops, light fixtures, and samples of the plastic screening for the interior sliding doors.

Stone promptly responded to Lewis's letter, addressing the questions he asked concerning the finishes and details of the design, including indicating that his staff preferred cypress to redwood since it weathered more attractively. Stone also wanted to further ease Lewis' concern over the way he felt he had been treated, and he wrote, "I want to reassure you on the way your project is progressing. ... The fact that we are at a distance causes you to wonder whether your interests are being protected. I want to assure you that we are proceeding conscientiously with your project, and we feel you have no need for concern – relax!"⁴⁹

Stone's letter pacified Lewis. In addition to more questions on details concerning the design of the house, Lewis wrote on April 1 that, "We have received your most reassuring letter and the several interior sketches that you sent us, and we want you to know that we now feel much happier. The sketches look good and I am sure we are going to be very happy and proud of our house when it is completed. ... We were very glad to receive your letter and hope we will hear from you again soon."⁵⁰

On April 13, the working drawings and specifications for the house were finished and they were sent to Lewis along with the bill for the final \$1,500. In the letter that accompanied the drawings and specifications, Snibbe wrote:

We have completed your working drawings and specifications and we are all pleased with the results. We believe and hope your local Contractors will find them easy to read and understandable. Mr. Hill will be in charge from now on, answering Contractor's questions during bidding and supervising during construction.

We have tried to incorporate all your wishes in the drawings and have only deviated [sic] where aesthetic judgement [sic], and in some cases, cost were the governing factors.

In general, we have conceived of the house in terms of what we call "plank and beam" construction. This made it possible for us to extend a deck out all around the exterior of the house to make the rooms seem larger and give a beautiful floating appearance to the house reminiscent of oriental homes. The ceiling of the living area and that of the porch and overhangs

⁴⁹ Edward Durell Stone. Letter to Jay Lewis. 22 March 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁵⁰ Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 1 April 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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show the same planking, to further increase the visable [sic] size of your house, and create a continuity inside and out. ...

In general, we would strongly urge you to build the house just as drawn with as few changes as possible. This is for your own protection both money wise and because we know it will be beautiful the way it is. Everyone will want to change something, but you must stick to the drawings throughout the job to avoid countless headaches. Let them be your Bible. If we have made some mistakes or errors let us rectify them. Ask John Hill to help make your decisions before telling the Contractors anything. Then let him tell them. Work through him and you will be assured of a good job. ...

John Hill should go over the plans with the bidders and explain the structure, as our experience has been that this type of building is not too easily understood by local Contractors.⁵¹ They all want to put ties across the living room, which is certainly unnecessary. John will also explain such things as the need to make the roof planks of one piece to take care of the two cantilevers. They will be 28 feet long and tongue & groove, so will probably come from some larger yard than may exist in McGehee. ...

We are confident you will find the house very comfortable and beautiful, and we want to wish you good luck and happiness in it.⁵²

The plans for the house were well-received by Hill and the Lewises. Hill wrote that the plans "certainly look fine and you are to be congratulated."⁵³ Lewis wrote on April 19 that, "We received the plans, exterior sketch, and your letter, on Saturday. The house looks fine, it has taken on a slightly different aspect with the addition of the deck and we like it very much. ...Once again let me tell you how pleased we are with the plans for our home."⁵⁴ Now that the designing was finished, construction could begin.

⁵¹ The roof structure of the house, and the carport as well, is essentially comprised of two lean-tos that rest against each other at the gable peak. Although there are beams that go through the length of the house and carport, front to back, to support the roof planes, there are no rafters that go across the house from side to side to tie the two planes together. Most contractors, especially those who were used to doing standard construction in a limited local area, had a hard time constructing and accepting this uncommon structural system.

⁵² Richard Snibbe. Letter to Jay Lewis. 13 April 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁵³ John C. Hill. Letter to Richard Snibbe in Stone's office. 18 April 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁵⁴ Jay Lewis. Letter to Richard Snibbe in Stone's office. 19 April 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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As construction of the house began towards the middle of 1955, there were talks of having to make changes to the proposed design and some of the proposed materials, most notably substituting pine for the proposed Douglas fir for the house's beams. However, Lewis wrote to Stone on May 14, 1955, that, "I made inquiry into the availability of the various sizes of lumber we may need and have been told that it will not be a problem getting Fir in up to 20 foot lengths in the 4x12, 2x12, and the 2x6. The 4x4 posts also seem to pose no problem."⁵⁵ Ernie Jacks also recalls the trials of obtaining the large beams for the house in his memoir, and writes, "I consulted several suppliers I knew in Little Rock and discovered that the nearest source was the Douglas fir industry in California. So an order was placed – at no small expense, I should add – while progress otherwise languished. Finally, several weeks later the beams, wrapped and sealed, straight as an arrow, beautiful to behold, arrived via flatcar."⁵⁶

Although John Hill of Erhart, Eichenbaum and Rauch supervised the early parts of construction of the house, a new supervisor had to be found shortly after construction began. Hill wrote to Snibbe on June 14, 1955, that, "As you know I am going to San Francisco on July 1st. I called Jay and told him this about ten days ago and that I had lined up Ernest E. Jacks...and he will do the supervision as I had planned to do with, of course, your O.K. I think he is most capable and will probably do a better job than I (strong on structural)."⁵⁷ The supervision of the construction of the Lewis Residence was Jacks' first time in dealing with owners and builders and construction in the field. He recalls his experience:

...I was more than a little apprehensive at having that degree of responsibility for a design from such a nationally famous firm, but over the ensuing months, I learned much about human psychology, as well as much about the difficulties involved with constructing a well-designed building which differed considerably from anything the builders had done before. A whole new attitude was required, but the workmen, most of whom had been in the business for many years, found that transition very difficult to come by.

I was also a babe in the woods regarding financial arrangements. My agreement with the owner specified that I would be paid on an hourly basis for trips I made to the building site on weekends. The owner, however, a former New Yorker and an astute businessman, quickly realized that nothing had been said about telephone conferences. So, for the first several weeks, I found my evenings devoted to answering his and the builder's questions and all my spare hours otherwise spent chasing down leads in Little Rock on various

⁵⁵ Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 14 May 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁵⁶ Ernie Jacks. *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c.2004, p. 25.

⁵⁷ John C. Hill. Letter to Richard Snibbe. 14 June 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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kinds of materials and equipment for the house – with all my time free of charge. My practical education had begun – painfully.⁵⁸

Once Jacks arrived on the job to supervise the construction, it progressed fairly smoothly for a period of time. However, the beams that had been such a problem to get in the first place reared their ugly heads again. Jacks recalls the incident that again brought a delay to the construction:

One of the carpenters arrived at the jobsite early, making up an hour he had missed the day before. Being somewhat at a loss as to how to be productive working alone and having had little experience with reading construction drawings, he misinterpreted the plans and cut off all the priceless beams two feet too short. ... When I arrived from Little Rock, I found the entire crew – including the offending carpenter – standing around the useless stumps, in deep dejection, almost as though they were holding a wake. We discussed the entire gamut of possible remedies...but nothing seemed capable of withstanding the stresses which the beams would be called upon to bear...

Ultimately, the owner declared that neither the budget nor the schedule would tolerate reordering the beams, so the solution was obvious. Therefore, without even informing Dick Snibbe in New York of our misfortune, the house was built with its surrounding cantilevered deck four feet wide rather than six.⁵⁹

Construction of the house was further delayed by revisions that had to be undertaken concerning the foundation. Lewis wrote to Stone in June, saying, "After much discussion and consideration we have decided that we want to build the house on a slab. When we first discussed our house we stayed away from the use of a slab because it was new and untried in this section of country; since then there has been considerable building going on here and slabs have come more into their own, and the contractors have a better knowledge of how to properly lay down a slab."⁶⁰ The Lewis's proposed change to the house's foundation came late in the process, and the frustration of Stone's office is apparent in Snibbe's June 30, 1955, letter to Jacks saying, "We would prefer the house to be built as designed, of course, so we do not want to have a hand in changing it radically unless we are given the go-ahead to redesign with all the new conditions in hand. Since you are closer to the practices of the area, we suggest you take over and get a house built. The basic idea and plan is there."⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ernie Jacks. *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c.2004, pp. 23-24.
Ibid, p. 25.

⁵⁹ Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 18 June 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁶¹ Richard Snibbe. Letter to Ernie Jacks. 30 June 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

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Apparently, Lewis detected the frustration in Snibbe's letter as well. He wrote again to Stone in mid-July, and said, "I know that you would prefer our building the house exactly as drawn but you must keep in mind that your basis for keeping the deck low to the ground was an excavation and basement under the house, both of which we warned you, when in New York, would not be practicable in this part of the country. I mention this to remind you that it is a result of your design, rather than any change of mind on our part, that has made the revisions necessary."⁶² By the middle of August, Jacks indicated that, "the difficulties appear to have been resolved and I believe we are about ready to proceed with construction."⁶³

The construction of the house, especially given its innovative and unusual design, grabbed the attention of the residents of McGehee. As it took shape, it became known to the locals as the "Boat House" or the "Ark House." The reason, according to Jacks, was that, "The large bulk of the house and its deck cantilevered all around seemed to float or hover slightly above the ground and reminded the inhabitants there of the large paddlewheel steamboats which formerly, and at that time still occasionally, plied the nearby Mississippi River."⁶⁴

By the spring of 1956, construction of the house was completed and the Lewises moved in. They would remain in the house until 1978 when Lewis took a job with Wal-Mart and they moved to Bella Vista. Even though he no longer lives in the house (and now lives in Jackson, Mississippi), Jay Lewis has many good memories of the house, and remains proud of it today.⁶⁵

Chris and Dwana Lee, the current owners of the house, bought it in 1989 from the Pitman family after it had sat vacant for five years. Although there had been some cosmetic changes to the house by the previous owners, especially on the interior, and the chimney had been removed due to storm damage, the original design and plan of the house had remained intact. The Lees are aware of the significance of the property, and have started to reverse some of the cosmetic changes that occurred. In addition, they hope to reconstruct the missing chimney in the future based on the original plans, and restore the house to its original form.

Today, the Jay Lewis Residence remains a significant example of Edward Durell Stone's residential design in his native state of Arkansas. Stone, who became internationally-known, designed only five residences in Arkansas, and the Lewis Residence is the only example in McGehee. In addition, the Lewis Residence is the only example of Stone's "dogtrot" concept, which eliminated the use of a hallway, and was the answer to Stone's crusade for a house without corridors. The "dogtrot" concept served as the model for almost all

⁶² Jay Lewis. Letter to Edward Durell Stone. 14 July 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁶³ Ernie Jacks. Letter to Richard Snibbe. 13 August 1955. Found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

⁶⁴ Ernie Jacks. *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c.2004, p. 24.

⁶⁵ Jay Lewis. Telephone conversation with the author. 14 September 2004.

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single family residential designs coming from the Stone office after the mid-1950s. As a result, the Lewis Residence remains an important example of Arkansas's mid-twentieth-century architectural heritage.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Jay Lewis Residence is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **statewide significance** under **Criterion C** as the only residence in Desha County, and one of only five in Arkansas, designed by the internationally-known architect Edward Durrell Stone. The house, which was built in 1955, is one of the best examples of Stone's later residential architecture, which reflected more of his classical ideas and formal planning and eliminated the hallway through the use of an atrium or "dogtrot," rather than exhibiting the influence of Frank Lloyd Wright as his 1940s residential architecture had.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Correspondence for the Jay Lewis Residence (Box 62, Folder 57) found in the Edward Durell Stone Papers at the University of Arkansas Library Special Collections.

Information on Edward Durell Stone found on "The Recent Past Preservation Network" at www.recentpast.org/people/stone.html.

Jacks, Ernie (associate of Edward Durell Stone). *The Elegant Bohemian*. Unpublished memoir, c.2004.

Jacks, Ernie (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Interview with the author. 16 September 2004.

Jacks, Ernie (associate of Edward Durell Stone). Letter to the author. 14 August 2003.

Lee, Chris & Dwana (current owners of the house). Interview with the author. 7 September 2004.

Lewis, Jay (original owner of the house). Telephone conversation with the author. 13 August 2004.

Lewis, Jay (original owner of the house). Telephone conversation with the author. 14 September 2004.

"More Than Modern." *Time*, 31 March 1958, pp. 56-64.

Morgan, Ann Lee, and Colin Naylor (eds.). *Contemporary Architects, Second Edition*. Chicago: St. James Press, 1987.

Plan and front elevation drawing of the Lewis Residence in the possession of the current owners, Chris & Dwana Lee.

Stone, Edward Durell. *The Evolution of an Architect*. New York: Horizon Press, 1962.

Twombly, Robert C. *Frank Lloyd Wright, His Life and Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1979.

Lewis, Jay, Residence

Name of Property

Desha County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The east half of Lot 7 and all of Lot 8 in the Sherland Fourth Addition to the Town of McGehee.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes all of the land historically associated with the Jay Lewis Residence.



Arkansas Department of
**Arkansas
Heritage**

Mike Huckabee, Governor
Cathie Matthews, Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

Historic Arkansas Museum

Delta Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



**Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program**

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www.arkansaspreservation.org

December 1, 2004

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Jay Lewis Residence – McGehee, Desha County,
Arkansas

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

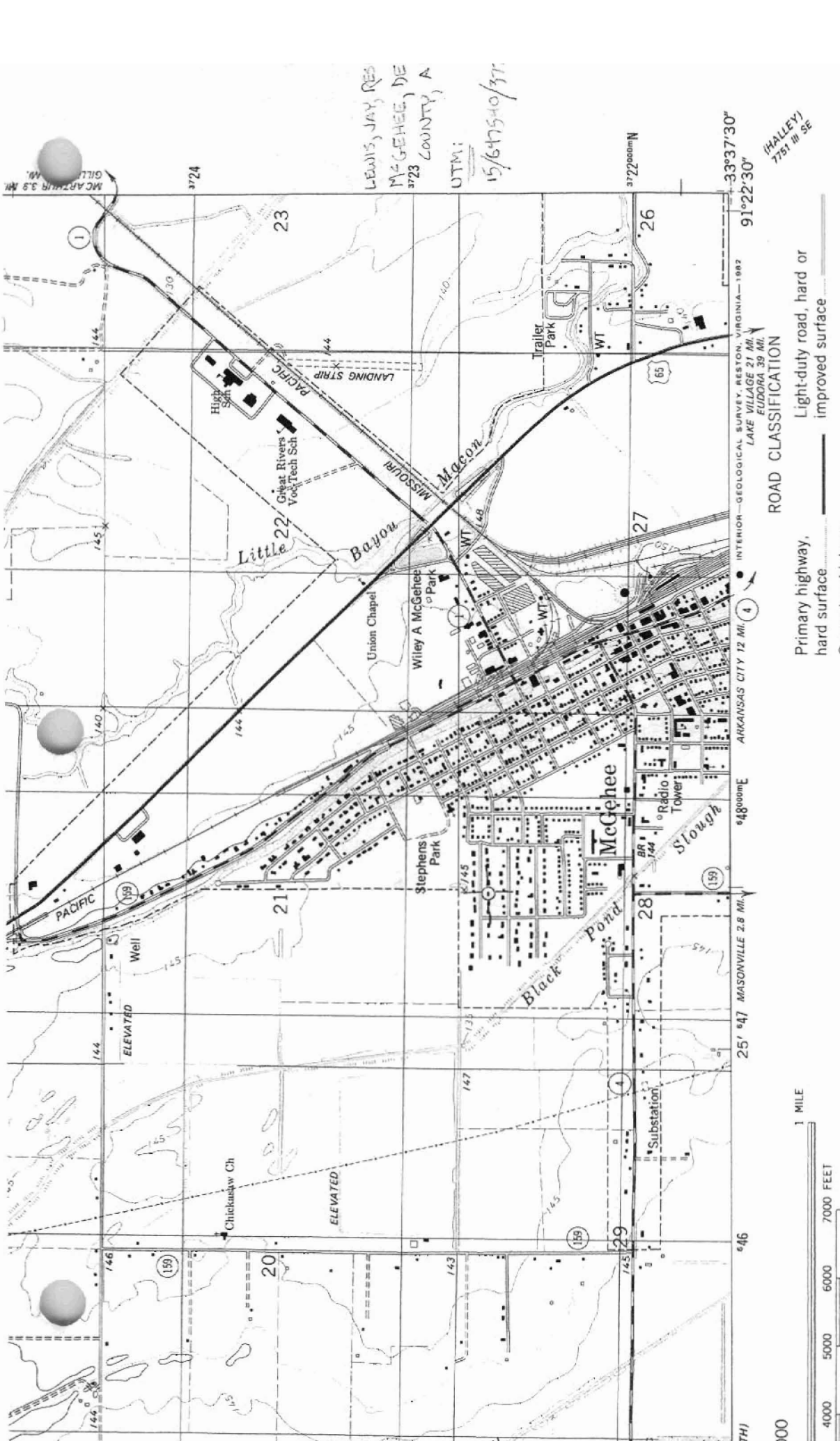
Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure

Equal Opportunity Employer



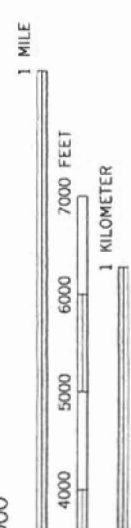


- ROAD CLASSIFICATION**
- Primary highway, hard surface ————
 - Light-duty road, hard or improved surface ————
 - Secondary highway, hard surface ————
 - Unimproved road ————
 - Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

MC GEEHEE NORTH, ARK.
 NW/4 MCGEEHEE 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3337.5-W9122.5/7.5

1981

DMA 7751 III NW-SERIES V884



VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 IN, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204
 D SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

