

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 Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Eight miles east on Sandtown Road

not for publication

city or town Cushman

vicinity

state Arkansas

code AR

county Independence

code 063

zip code 72501

### 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.)

Carli Matthews  
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/22/01  
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

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 |            |
|--|--------------|-----------------|------------|
|  | 1            | 0               | buildings  |
|  | 0            | 0               | sites      |
|  | 0            | 0               | structures |
|  | 0            | 0               | objects    |
|  | 1            | 0               | 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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

SOCIAL: meeting hall

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

SOCIAL: meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Plain-Traditional

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

other

Narrative Description

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

Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall

Name of Property

Independence, Arkansas

County and State

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 moved from its original location.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1946

Significant Dates

1946

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Summary

Constructed in 1946, the Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall is a Plain-Traditional style two-story block building located approximately eight miles from Cushman, Arkansas, in the small community of Sandtown. The symmetrically designed building of concrete block construction rests upon a continuous concrete foundation and is topped with a gable roof that is covered with shingles and crowned with a small belfry. A cemetery is located adjacent to the church, but due to the mixing of historic graves with non-historic graves it is ineligible for the National Register and is not included in the proposed boundary of this nomination.

### Elaboration

Located approximately eight miles from Cushman, Arkansas, in the small community of Sandtown, located in north central Independence County, the Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall is an excellent example of Plain-Traditional architecture. Constructed in 1946, the Lees Chapel Church and Masonic Hall differs from the majority of church buildings in this part of the state because it is constructed of concrete block instead of the more traditional weatherboard or fieldstone. The blocks used in the construction of the building were molded to have texture giving the building a somewhat rock faced, course ashlar appearance. The two-story block building sits upon a continuous concrete slab foundation and is topped with a gable roof covered with composition shingles. The roof is crowned with a small belfry topped with a needle-like steeple. The first story windows remain intact, but due to deterioration the second story windows have been removed.

### East Elevation

The façade of the building faces east and is defined by the centrally located porch. The porch features large concrete block piers and is sheltered by a gable roof covering. The church is entered through a set of wood doors that are original to the church. The building is fenestrated with two windows on the second story of the building. These windows have been covered with plywood due to deterioration.

### North Elevation

The north elevation is fenestrated by two six-over-six windows and a single wood door on the first story. Directly above the first story windows and door, the second story displays three smaller windows that are now sheathed in plywood. A single wooden entrance is located at the far corner of the eastern elevation.

### West Elevation

The back of the building is fenestrated with a single six-over-six window on the first floor. There is also a second story entryway that is accessible by an exterior wood staircase.

### South Elevation

The south side of the building is fenestrated with three six-over-six windows on the bottom floor. There are also three smaller windows located directly above them on the second floor that are now covered with plywood.

### Interior

The interior remains virtually unaltered. Four metal posts, two on each side of the center aisle, support the plank board ceiling above. The boards used on the ceiling are the remnants of the previous church located on the spot where Lee's Chapel Church is located today. The building is divided into two sections with a center aisle bisecting the pews that adorn both sides of the building. An original stage is located at the south end of the building. On the left side of the stage sits the churches original piano.

Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall

Name of Property

Independence County, Arkansas

County and State

**United States Department of the Interior**

National Park Service

## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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### **Integrity**

Since its construction in 1946 the building has undergone few alterations. The window openings are covered with plywood due to deterioration, but the size of the opening remains the same with no permanent infill. With the exception of the removal of the second story windows, the building retains all aspects of integrity. The setting of the area remains much the same as it did when the building was constructed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Summary

Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall, located in the small community of Sandtown, Arkansas, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** as the best extant example of a Plain-Traditional style two-story church building constructed of concrete block in the northwest part of Independence County. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties**. There is a cemetery located adjacent to the church, but it is not included in the nomination.

### Elaboration

By 1870 small settlements had developed throughout the hills of northern Independence County. The population was sparse in comparison to Batesville and other towns located more closely to the White River. Unlike easy to reach areas along the river, the rolling hills and deep valleys provided an element of isolation for the few families who had settled the treacherous northern part of the county. In 1873 a Methodist Church and school was built at Sandtown. As was the case for many other small communities, life revolved around the church building. It was the place of public meetings, community gatherings, and more times than not, the church-school signified a community.

Life changed dramatically for residents of the communities of Cushman and Sandtown in the 1880s when large deposits of Manganese ore were discovered in the hills surrounding the two small communities. In 1882 the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad completed its line to Batesville. In 1886 the rail line was extended to Cushman in order to take advantage of the mines. The principle mines of the area were the Southern Mine and the Turner Mines, both mines were owned or controlled by William Carnegie's Keystone Iron and Manganese Company of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. With the railroad and the mines the town of Cushman boomed. Although the rail line did not extend to Sandtown, as Cushman grew so did Sandtown.

By circa 1920 Sandtown had a cotton gin, grist mill, general store, post office and blacksmith shop. In the late 1800s Billy Smith founded the Montgomery Masonic Lodge 360 at Sandtown, and meetings were held at the Lee's Chapel Methodist Church. Throughout both World Wars the area mines saw heavy activity supporting the war effort and the population of Sandtown continued to grow. At one time over 1,000 people worked the mines. In 1946 the original Lee's Chapel Church was razed and a new concrete block church replaced it. Members built the new church on the exact spot that the previous one had sat. The plank board ceiling was salvaged from the first church and used for the new church. The original bell was also salvaged and is still in the church today. Members of the community recall that when there was a death in the area the church bell was rang and local men would come to the church to dig the grave of the recently departed person.

After WWII the United States Government quit buying Manganese from the local mines. The last mine closed in 1959. With the closing of the mines the population of the town declined. With better roads and the convenience of the automobile the townspeople turned to nearby Batesville for their shopping and other needs. Today the Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall is the most prominent reminder of the community of Sandtown.

The church still meets annually to raise funds in an attempt to restore the church to its original glory. The second story is still used on a regular basis as meeting hall for Montgomery Lodge #360.

### Significance

Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** as the best extant example of a Plain Traditional two story concrete block church building in the northwest part of Independence County, Arkansas. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties**, not for its religious merit but rather for its architectural value.

Lee's Chapel Church and Masonic Hall  
Name of Property

Independence County, Arkansas  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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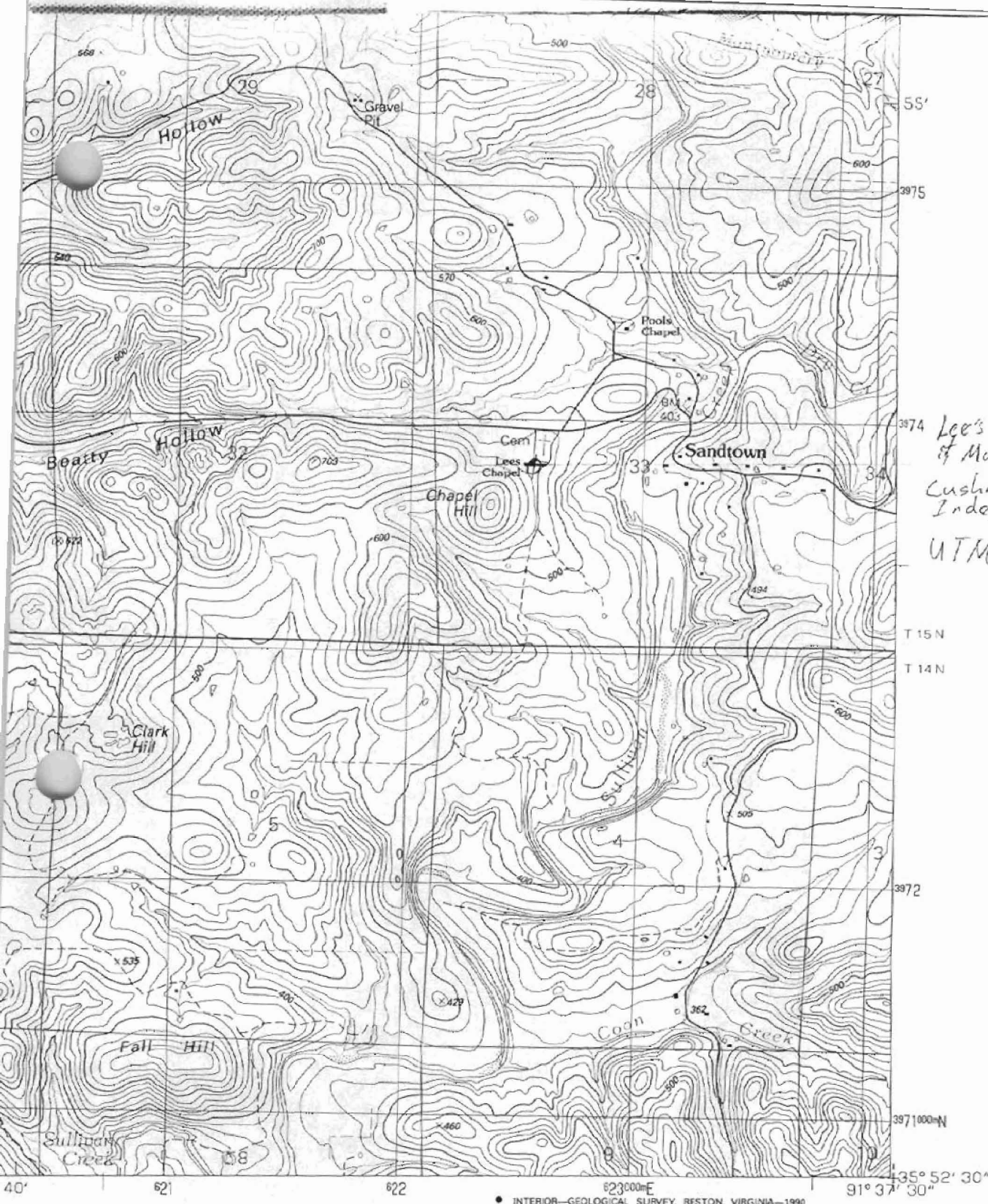
### Bibliography:

Independence County Chronicle April 1961 Volume II No. 3 page 9.

August 2000, James Haigwood, Interviewer, Maude Hamlett.

August 2000, James Haigwood, Interviewer, Roberta Tugwell.



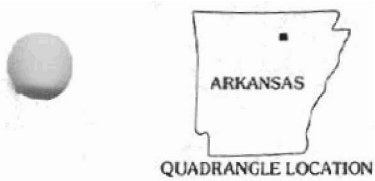


Lee's Chapel Church  
 & Masonic Hall  
 Cushman Vic,  
 Independence Co, AR  
 UTM: 15/622530S  
 3973800

**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

PHUR ROCK  
 1985 15E



**SANDTOWN, ARK.**  
 35091-H6-TF-024

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