

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NR 3-2-2006

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 Kerr-Booth House
other names/site number WH2371

2. Location

street & number 611 W. Center Avenue not for publication
city or town Searcy vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county White code 145 zip code 72143

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Kerr-Booth House
Name of Property

White 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	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

Historic & Architectural Resources of White County,
Arkansas

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

0

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)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls WOOD/Weatherboard, Shingle

roof WOOD/Shake
other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1890, c. 1910

Significant Dates

1890

1912

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Kerr, Z. E.

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:

Kerr-Booth House
Name of Property

White County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately one acre.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>614389</u>	<u>3901330</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 Elizabeth A. James
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date December 8, 2005
street & number 323 Center Street, 1500 Tower Building telephone 501-324-9789
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72205

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 Charles Braswell
street & number 611 West Center Avenue telephone 501-278-4863
city or town Searcy state Arkansas zip code 72143

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY

The Kerr-Booth House is located on one lot at 611 West Center Avenue in Searcy, Arkansas. One adjoining, unimproved lot is also part of the property. The major part of the house was built as a Queen Anne Victorian in 1890. The fourth owner of the house had a major addition added to the house and had much of the original decoration removed. The third and fourth owners were brothers; the house remained in the same family from 1900 to the early 1970s. It was built as a family home, and remained in one family for over seventy years.

ELABORATION

The two-story Kerr-Booth house is wood frame with weatherboard siding. The earliest photographs show a composition roof, although evidence in the attic indicates a wood shake roof. Currently, a wood shake roof caps the house. Evidence in the attic suggests that the original house was cross gabled and had two chimneys along the back wall. The house sits on a brick pier foundation with brick and stone enclosing a crawlspace under the original part of the house. A small access panel on the floor of the west side of the porch allows access to the crawlspace. There is a basement beneath the addition at the rear of the house accessed by an interior stairway. Removable panels cover access to what had been concrete coal chutes into the basement.

North/Front Façade

The ground floor of the north façade is covered by a one-story full length front porch. The porch has a wood shake shed roof supported by four square stone masonry columns across the front of the house. A stone masonry wall capped with a concrete slab connects the columns and delineates the porch boundary. The porch originally wrapped around three sides of the house, but the eastern side of the porch was later enclosed to form a bedroom. The enclosed portion of the porch is built between the two columns on the east half of the porch. It has two three-over-one double-hung wood windows centered on the wall. Centered on the front wall of the house is the main entrance. It is a wood door with an oval glass insert and sidelights. There is one window in the wall space on each side of the door. They are wood double-hung nine-over-one windows. The upper sash of the window is divided into nine separate panes including one large rectangular pane in the center, four small square panes in the corners, and four long rectangular panes along the edges. A gable end dominates the second story of the front façade. The gable peak is centered on a point between the front door and the window to its left. The triangular wall space in the gable end is sheathed with decorative wood shingles. A decorative semi-circular attic vent is centered in the gable end. Weatherboard siding covers the wall below the gable. There is a window opening containing two tall narrow versions of the windows on the first floor. West of this section of the façade is another wall plane sitting further back. This wall is capped with a hipped roofline. A single window is near the western corner of this wall. It is consistent in style and material with the other windows on the front façade.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

East/Side Façade

Continuing along the eastern wall, from south to north, the enclosed first floor area has two modern aluminum framed windows. The second floor wall above has a string of seven windows matching those on the front of the house. The wall then cuts back to the west marking where the rear of the original house once was. There are visible marks on the short north-facing wall of the first floor level indicating where a door led to the first floor screened porch. This addition has a hip roof, the side of which is visible on the east façade. The original house had a cross gable roof. A gable end forms the roof profile for the back half of the east façade of the original house. The triangular wall space within the gable has decorative wood shingle siding and a square louvered vent in the center. Centered beneath the gable is a window opening with two tall narrow windows matching those on the front of the house. On the first level there is a set of windows three windows aligned at the top. The windows on each end are double-hung wood windows, yet the middle window is stationary and is the same size and design of the upper sash on the surrounding windows. These windows are thirteen over one. They are similar to the windows found throughout the house, however the larger middle pane of glass is further subdivided with a diamond shape in the center that creates four smaller triangular panes filling the space on each of its four sides. There is decorative woodwork on the exterior wall above this window configuration. It includes two fan patterns that are thought to be part of the original Queen Anne architecture of the house. At this point the wall cuts east again, and has a door accessing the in filled portion of the front porch. The east facing wall of the enclosed area has six windows. These windows have three panes divided vertically above and a single large pane below. There is a gap between the windows that divides them into groups of three. The spacing of the windows indicates the positions of the stone pillars of the original porch. Above the porch roofline on the east-facing wall there is a single window, matching those on the front of the house.

South/Rear Façade

A full width porch and a full width covered balcony dominate the rear facade. Looking from left to right on the balcony level there is a window, an eight light glass door, two individual windows, and a group of three windows. The three windows at the eastern end of the balcony are among a ribbon of eleven windows that look out of one room on the southeastern corner of the second floor of the house. Three windows face south, seven face east, and one faces north. The windows have fittings for screens. It may have been a "tuberculosis room" at one time. All of these windows are consistent in style and materials to the windows on the front of the house. From left to right on the porch level there is a small window, a wood door with transom light above, two windows looking south from the kitchen. To the east of these windows the siding changes indicating that that area was enclosed at a different time. The two windows to the east of the front door are four-over-one double-hung wood windows. The window to the west of the door is consistent in style and materials to the windows on the front of the house. The first and second level of the porch are supported by six square wooden columns. There is a delicate fan shaped wood bracket filling in the corners between the columns and roof. The columns are all connected at the base with a wooden balustrade consisting of small square wooden balusters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

West/Side Façade

The west side of the house is characterized by the porches at each end. The front porch creates the northwest corner while the back porch completes the southwest corner of the house. A set of French doors lead to the formal dining room. The doors face north beneath the front porch. A single window is on the western wall next to the French doors and also opens into the dining room. Above the porch roof, there is a single window in the same position. The dining room projects westward from the house but remains aligned with the front porch. There are three windows facing west in the dining room. There is one horizontal window between two vertically oriented windows (there is a matching configuration of windows on the east side of the house). The windows on the ends are double-hung wood windows, yet the middle window is stationary and is the same size and design of the upper sash on the surrounding windows. These windows are thirteen-over-one. They are similar to the windows found throughout the house, however the larger middle pane of glass is further subdivided with a diamond shape in the center that creates four smaller triangular panes filling the space on each of its four sides. The dining room has a metal roof over approximately one third of its length. Above this roof the west gable looms over two windows of an upstairs bedroom. The original house ended at the southwest corner of the dining room. With the rear addition in place the wall cuts to the east two more windows with the diamond pattern open into the dining room from the south. The west facing wall of the addition has three windows with the identical pattern. On the second floor level a pair of windows provides light to a small bedroom. An additional window at the west corner provides light for the rear staircase. At a lower level a stained glass window provides light to the stairway to the basement.

INTEGRITY

The Kerr-Booth House has undergone many changes since its construction in 1890. However, many of the changes were made early in its history by the longtime residents of the Booth family. Much of the original building material still exists in the form of siding, windows, and doors. The house has grown with the needs of its owners and helps to tell the stories of their lives. The Kerr-Booth House has been well maintained over the years and is expressive of its history as a family residence.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

SUMMARY

The Kerr-Booth House at 611 West Center Avenue in Searcy, Arkansas is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** as an excellent example of the Queen Anne style with Craftsman modifications. The house was built by Z. E. Kerr as his family residence in 1890. The Kerr-Booth House has been well maintained and retains much of its original building material. This property is also being submitted under the multiple property listing "**Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas.**"

ELABORATION

Mr. Z. E. Kerr and family built the house in 1890 as the family residence. He was a druggist in Searcy at the time. The Kerr family sold the house shortly after they built it. On October 16, 1900, Ms. Laura Whitworth purchased the home from the Kerrs. She sold it to Mr. Henry W. and Mrs. Ruth Booth in 1905. Members of the Booth family remained owners of the house until the 1970s. Ruth Booth gave birth to her first child at the house; however, she and the child died at childbirth in 1909. Mr. Booth was so upset that he sold the house to his brother George D. Booth. The Booths were merchants in downtown Searcy. The house remained with George Booth for many years and was always called "the Booth House." Henry W. Booth later built the house down the street where the law office of Mike Miller is located.

The Kerr-Booth House was originally a true Queen Anne style home with gingerbread trim. George Booths did not like the gingerbread trim and had it removed. The front door of the house was originally at the northwest corner and two narrow windows were spaced across the porch identical to those now on the second floor. The front door opened into a hall area with a staircase. The parlor was only part of what is now the living room. The beam where the original wall was is still in place. Mrs. Booth liked to entertain and according to her daughter, Julia Booth Rand, she liked to "keep up with the Joneses." She had the stairway taken out and the wall removed between the rooms, opening up a large room where she could have big parties. It is likely that at this time the addition was made to the back of the house. The original scaffolding of the shake roof is still visible in the attic indicating the original roofline. Boards in the stairwell to the basement are stamped with "FROM CHAS T. ABLES & CO, LITTLE ROCK ARK" and "MR. GEO D. BOOTH, SEARCY, ARK.," indicating the lumber company supplying the lumber for the addition and the owner of record at the time the addition was made. The stairway was relocated to the back of the house in the addition. When daughter Julia was ready to get married a stairway was rebuilt in the front of the house for her to descend and the current front stairway was added.

During this period Galloway College, a women's college in Searcy, went bankrupt. The Booth brothers bought the campus for the amount the college owed their business. In May 1934, about nine months later, it was announced that Harding College would be moving to Searcy and occupying the campus. Thus, past residents of the Kerr-Booth house were at least partly responsible for getting Harding College to Searcy.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Mrs. Booth remained here until her death in the early 1970s. Her first husband died; she later married a Mr. Rand. When he became older and could no longer climb stairs, Mrs. Rand enclosed what is now the library as their bedroom. It had been a part of the wrap-around porch on the front, accessed by the French doors now between it and the living room.

After Mrs. Booth-Rand's death the house changed hands several times. The first person, Paul Parsons, added the sheetrock over the original walls which were wood boards covered with canvas and wallpaper. An example of this is visible at the top of the basement stairs. At one time the house was used as a children's home for several years. At the time it had long shag carpet and other modern additions. The water heater was put in an enclosure on the back porch. The enclosure was taken off when the house was last painted and the water heater moved to the basement.

The radiator heating system was still connected when the Riseners bought the house but had not been used since the central HVAC units had been put in. They disconnected the radiators and took a few out to be able to arrange furniture as almost all outside walls had a radiator located on them. Some were left because of their relationship to the history of the house. The location of the steam boiler indicates the steam heat was not part of the original house. There are visible coal chutes on the back of the house. These used to have large double doors that opened from the back yard to the basement so the coal could be shoveled in. The boiler is also still in place in the basement.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kerr-Booth House at 611 West Center Avenue in Searcy, Arkansas is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance** as an excellent example of the Queen Anne style with Craftsman modifications. The house was built by Z. E. Kerr as his family residence in 1890. The Kerr-Booth House has been well maintained and retains much of its original building material. This property is also being submitted under the multiple property listing "**Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas.**"

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Written narrative prepared by Mrs. Lynn Risener and Mrs. Heber Taylor, both previous residents of the house.

Early title information reported by Strother Abstract Company, 308 East Market Avenue, Searcy, Arkansas, 72143.

Muncy, Dr. Raymond Lee. Searcy, Arkansas, A Frontier Town Grows Up with America. Searcy, Arkansas: Harding Press, 1976.

Other information related to the house, Mrs. Rand, and the neighborhood gathered through conversations with neighbor, Mr. Leon Van Patten, 610 W. Center, Searcy, Arkansas 72143. Mr. Van Patten is associated with the White County Historical Society and is well known for his knowledge of the history of Searcy.

Kerr-Booth House
Name of Property

White county, Arkansas
County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

LEGAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Block 19, Less the East 10 feet thereof, Of Jones Addition to the City of Searcy, Arkansas, being a part of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 10, T-7-N, R-7-W

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes the land historically associated with the Kerr-Booth House.