



Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor
Shea Lewis
Secretary

May 30, 2024

Kellie Dinkel
City Grant Administrator
203 South Commerce
Russellville, AR 72801

Re: Old Town Historic District – Russellville, Pope County

Dear Ms. Dinkel:

We are pleased to inform you that the above referenced property will be considered by the State Review Board of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, an agency of the Division of Arkansas Heritage, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of the preservation. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides recognition and assists in preserving our nation's heritage.

Listing of this property provides recognition of the community's historic importance and assures protective review of the federal projects that might adversely affect the character of the historic property.

Listing in the National Register does not mean that limitations will be placed on the property by the federal government. Public visitation rights are not required of property owners. The federal government will not attach covenants to the property or seek to acquire it.

We have enclosed a copy of the National Register nomination for your review. If you have any comments on the proposed nomination, please submit a letter with your comments, concerns, or concurrence to the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program at least 24 hours prior to the date of the State Review Board meeting.

You are invited to attend the State Review Board meeting at which the nomination will be considered. The board will begin meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 7th, 2024, at the Department of Arkansas Heritage headquarters at 1100 North Street in Little Rock.

If you have any questions regarding the State Review Board meeting feel free to call Ralph Wilcox, Travis Ratermann, or Megan Willmes at (501) 324-9880.

Sincerely,


Scott Kaufman
Director

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
1100 North Street • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-324-9150
ArkansasPreservation.com

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Old Town Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by W. 3rd St., S. Boulder Ave., W. 8th St., and S. Glenwood Ave.

City or town: Russellville State: Arkansas County: Pope

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ 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

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

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 the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>66</u>	<u>38</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>66</u>	<u>38</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling/ house
DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling/ duplex
COMMERCE/ TRADE/ specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling
DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling/ apartment building, duplex
COMMERCE/ TRADE/ specialty store/ music store

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Victorian, Folk, Queen Anne

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Tudor Revival, Spanish Revival,
Dutch Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/ Craftsman

MODERN MOVEMENT/ Ranch, Minimal Traditional, Mid-Century Standard

Commercial

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE, WOOD, SYNTHETICS,
STUCCO, METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Old Town Historic District is in Russellville, Arkansas; the county seat of Pope County. This primarily residential neighborhood is directly south of the city's historic business district and was positioned to provide pedestrian-oriented traffic to the city's commercial core. The district is now bounded by church grounds to the North; Highway 27/South Arkansas Avenue, which is a busy commercial road, and the single road of newer homes behind it, to the East; offices and a multi-family complex to the South; and a park and trail system to the West. The neighborhood was built to have 104 residential dwellings and one commercial structure. A few of the residential dwellings have been converted into multi-family over the years. Of these resources, (63%) sixty-six structures were built between 1890-1970 and are considered contributing to the district. They have not been altered significantly. Of the 38 noncontributing resources, 37 are dwellings and one is a business. Four were built after 1970, which is the cut-off date for the district's period of significance, but most of them are not eligible for contributing status due to non-sympathetic additions or to the covering up or removal of character-defining features such as original wood board siding with synthetic siding, the removal of original windows and doors, or other architectural elements.

The houses are mainly built in styles popular during the time of their construction including Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman, Revival Styles, Ranch, and other Mid-Century Traditional Styles. Their predominant exterior materials include brick, wood board, vinyl, and stucco. The

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

neighborhood was built by local or regional builders and developed over the course of a century. Most mid-century construction was created as in-fill; therefore, structures built during this period are scattered throughout. As a collection, these buildings retain the physical integrity that relays the building patterns that represent the growth of the town of Russellville from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The Old Town Historic District is mainly a residential neighborhood surrounded by modern development. The community is bound by large church developments on the North side. The multi-lot church developments include the Russellville First United Methodist Church, the First Baptist Church, and New Life Trinity Church. The East side of the community is bordered by one post-1970s residential street and then a commercial district which faces busy Highway 7/South Arkansas Avenue. This road connects the city of Dardanelle to Arkansas Tech University and Interstate 40. Business in the commercial corridor includes cleaners, a paint store, thrift store, beauty supply, dollar stores, restaurants, and an auto parts store. There is a more contemporary neighborhood to the South. This community mainly consists of small-scale mid and late twentieth century homes, multi-family apartment buildings, the Russellville Masonic Lodge, and the Forest E. Gardner Junior High School campus. Directly to the West is a trail system and James Park.

Blocks and Lots

The historic streetscapes of the district remain mostly intact with the same scale and setback as when they were originally incorporated into the city of Russellville. The community is made up of portions of the A.E. Luker, J. M. Shinn, and Torrence Additions, and parts of Russellville by Sections; a labeling the City uses for residential areas not included in neighborhoods. The streets are tree-lined and mainly laid out in a grid system. An exception to the standard street grid is South El Paso Avenue. Here the avenue does not continue through, disrupting the traffic pattern from West 4th to West 8th streets. This section of West 5th Street is the newest area of the district; the homes are built in the 1980s. Very little of the street layout has changed since the development of the first residential community.

Street Names

During the early twentieth century, and mainly due to the location of the railroad and that the town held the title of county seat, Russellville grew so quickly that it developed more by necessity than by plan. So, in 1930, the city council adopted an ordinance to re-name and number the streets and houses alphabetically or numerically, so any given address could be more easily located. Main and Oak Streets were the baselines where all numbers would begin. If a street was short and did not reach the baseline, it would be called "Places." Streets running north and south were to be "Avenues" named after cities. Avenues east of Arkansas Avenue would be

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

named for cities east of the Mississippi River, those west of Arkansas Avenue were named for cities west of the Mississippi.¹

Current Name:	Historic Name:
S. Glenwood Ave.	Long Street
S. El Paso Ave.	St Mary's Street
S Denver Ave.	River St.
S Commerce Ave.	S. Jefferson
S. Boulder Ave.	Torrence Street
W 3rd St.	W Madison St
W 3rd Place	Monroe St.
W 4th St.	Washington
W 5th St.	Bradley Ave.
W 6th St.	Central Ave.
W 7th St.	Wilson Ave.
W 8th St.	Robinson Ave.

Dwellings

The Old Town Historic District has a collection of houses representing all architectural periods of growth from 1890-1970. A home at 408 S. Glenwood Avenue was destroyed between 1919 and 1929, and the sole business within the neighborhood, J & B Music Sales, now stands in its place. A few residences have been split into multi-family apartment buildings, such as those at 500 and 506 S. Glenwood, and 511 S. Commerce Avenue. However, most dwellings are still single family. All houses are one, two, or two-and-a half-stories tall and vary in scale and massing usually by street or age built.

Stylistic Influences

Late Victorian (1890-1910)

“Victorian” homes were a popular style home built during the end of Britain’s Queen Victoria’s reign, from about 1860-1900. The onset of industrialization and the ease of transportation led to significant changes in American house design. Balloon framing became a standard building technique, simplifying the construction of corners, wall extensions, overhangs and irregular floor plans allowing house design to become more complex and changing from the typical box-like shape heavy-timber framing earlier architecture had required. The American public began to look to pattern books showing house components and architectural detailing for inspiration and materials.

Growing industrialization allowed house parts to be mass produced in factories and relatively inexpensively shipped throughout the country on the expanding railroad system. As a result, many Victorian-style homes have characteristic complex shapes and elaborate detailing. They showcase multi-textured walls, asymmetrical facades, and steeply-pitched roofs. The Victorians

¹Pope County Historical Association, *Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2, June 1999, “Ordinance Re-Naming City Streets Adopted” 23 Feb 1930, p 27.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

did not concern themselves with historical architectural accuracy when looking to past styles for influence in design details. Therefore, it is common to see mixtures of different historical style detailing within one house and regional folk influences in houses in this community. Elaborate wooden ornament such as spindlework and trim could be pre-ordered through catalogs and installed on simpler folk house forms built by local builders. The two most common Victorian era houses in this district are the more elaborate Queen Anne and the simpler Folk Victorian styles.

Ten buildings within the district are considered Folk Victorian due to their more simplified form. Because there have been a significant number of alterations to this group, less than half retain their historic integrity. One such house located at 500-502 S. Denver Avenue (PP0490), is the oldest house in the district, built in 1858. It does retain its Folk Victorian form; however, it has been changed from a single-family home to multi-family apartment and incurred significant additions to the rear. One of the larger Folk Victorian homes is the R.C "Bud" Brown Home at 602 S. Denver Avenue (PP0493) built around 1900. It still retains its high-pitched roof and Victorian-era form; however, it was built in a simpler style with less elaborate ornament than the Queen Anne homes nearby. Its classical columns on the wrap-around porch are some of its only ornamental detailing. The house at 506 S. Glenwood (PP0559), built in 1910, is one of the slightly more detailed Folk Victorians in the district. It displays decorative porch brackets and turned columns with fish-scale shingles in the porch gable, but on a basic house form.

Most of the earliest surviving homes in the Old Town Historic District were built in a Late Victorian Era architectural style. Seven buildings in the historic district are constructed in the Queen Anne style, five of them are contributing to the architectural character of the historic district. Some notable Queen Anne houses in the district include the John F. Leonard House at 503 S. Commerce Ave. (PP0542) built around 1890. This home was on a well-traveled road and supplied a well where teams would water their horses going to the neighboring city of Dardanelle. The ornamental stationary and transom windows, along with Classical porch columns and decorative frieze brackets are some of the ornamental pieces likely ordered through a pattern book. The R.F. Roys House at 603 S. Commerce Avenue (PP0015) is one of the larger and more elaborate Queen Anne style homes in the community. It has a character defining corner turret topped with a finial, fish-scale shingles, classic porch columns, and decorative porch railing spindlework. Roys owned the first hardware store in town and worked as a building contractor, which may account for the level of ornament and detailing in his home. The W.C. Whorton House at 613 S. Commerce Ave. (PP0532) is similar in form but has been so altered that it has lost its historic architectural integrity. The home was constructed around 1895; but the porch was enclosed and aluminum siding was installed over the exterior walls by a later owner, hiding all the original ornamentation this house likely had.

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS (1900-1950)

Tudor Revival, Spanish Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, Colonial Revival

The Old Town District has some Revival style architecture with 20% of the architecture in the district being classified in this category. There were two phases of revival styles in the United States. The first phase was smaller and only lasted from the end of the nineteenth century to

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

about 1900. American architects were traveling to Europe for a formal education, and came back to the US designing European-inspired homes for the very wealthy. They were mainly built in the Italian Renaissance, Chateausque, Beaux Arts, Tudor, or Colonial Revival styles. It is likely that in Russellville, wealthy homeowners saw these style homes through travel or illustrated books and could afford to emulate smaller and simpler versions here. All of the homes in the district, built during this earlier revival style period are in the Colonial Revival Style. Characteristic elements of a Colonial Revival home can include an accentuated front door with a pediment supported by pilasters, slender columns, or brackets. Some houses have overhead fanlights or sidelights and most have windows with double-hung sashes, usually hung in pairs. An example of a larger Colonial Revival style home in this community is the house at 511 S. Commerce Avenue (PP0541) built around 1900. The only example of Dutch Colonial Revival, notable for the barn-shaped gambrel roof is the house at 802 S. Denver Avenue (PP0569), built around 1910. It is important to note that although the earliest construction phase of the revival style ended around the turn of the twentieth century, the Colonial Revival style of architecture continued to be very popular through both phases of revival design and some bastardized elements of this style can even be found on contemporary houses of today.

The second phase of revival style architecture began around 1920 and ended in the mid-twentieth century with the introduction of modernism. It was produced more widely and all across the US. Soldiers returning from World War I and purchasing their own houses, instigated the reproduction of original European homes spotted during their time overseas. The majority of houses built in The Old Town Historic District constructed during this building phase are Tudor Revival. A high-pitched side gable roof with a large gable on the front facade, narrow grouped multi-paned windows, massive chimneys—sometimes with chimney pots, a front door or porch with an arch, and non-structural half-timbering are common elements found on Tudor Revival homes. There are 11 Tudor Revival homes in the district; all built between 1928 and 1943. A typical example of a small brick Tudor Revival home is the house at 416 W. 6th Street (PP0500) built in 1928. This home showcases details such as the steeply-pitched roofs, asymmetrical gable, and arched front openings typical of this building style. There are two other style homes built during this design phase, in 1930. A Spanish Revival home at 430 S. Denver Avenue (PP0514) displays some similar design elements to Tudor Revival, but has the Spanish Revival characteristic of a red terracotta tile roof and yellow brick, sometimes used as the local counterpart to stucco or adobe. The house at 813 South Denver Avenue (PP0572) is the only house in the district built in the Mission Revival Style. This style is distinct from other revivals in that the house has a mission-shaped roof parapet, red tile roof, arched porches supported by large square piers, and smooth stucco walls. It appears the tile parapet cap is currently missing from this house.

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Craftsman

The largest concentration of homes built in Old Town are built in the Craftsman or Bungalow style. Forty-seven of the homes are Craftsman or Bungalow, meaning almost half the houses in the district classify as being built within the American Movements; with South Denver Avenue displaying an excellent grouping of them.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

The Craftsman home was directly influenced by the Prairie style created and made famous by America's most celebrated architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. He created the first American architectural style; with free-flowing interiors, low-pitched roofs with widely overhanging eaves, porches, porte-cocheres, square porch supports, and ornament that did not emulate other historic forms. His creation birthed the Modern Movement in American architecture. His contemporaries on the West Coast, spread early modernism and its American Arts and Crafts ornamentation with the construction of both Craftsman and Prairie homes. Eventually, some of the forms began to overlap creating the common Craftsman-style house. A typical Craftsman contains a low-pitched gabled roof with wide open eave overhangs, exposed roof rafters, and decorative beams or brackets under the gables, along with porches held up by tapered or square columns.

An impressive example of a large-scale Craftsman home is the Oscar Wilson House at 312 S. Denver Avenue (PP0564), built in 1917. This home has a low-pitched roof with wide overhangs, decorative brackets, and a green terra-cotta roof. The front gable is ornamented in stone tabby. The front porch columns are built of quarried stone, are large and square shaped, and extend to the ground level. The second floor has an open porch upheld with tapered square columns.

An example of a typical smaller Craftsman home is at 421 S. Denver Avenue (PP0513). The home has a low-pitched roof with wide overhangs, brick porch piers which extend to the ground, exposed roof rafters and decorative brackets. This home also has tapered wood columns sitting atop square brick piers on either side of the front porch steps.

MODERN MOVEMENT

Ranch, Minimal Traditional, Mid-Century Standard Commercial

As a strong reaction against traditionalism, style makers in the early twentieth century promoted designs without ornament, designing for the "machine age." This reduced buildings to their basic functional forms and started mainstream Modernism style architecture. High-end Modernism like that designed by western American-working architects, such as Rudolf Schindler and Richard Neutra, are rarely seen in rural Arkansas towns. But another mainstream style, known at the time as Contemporary, included Minimal Traditional and Ranch style houses. These styles dominated domestic architecture from the 1940s well into the mid-1960s. It was more conservative than the high-style Modernism being produced on the West Coast and was described as "middle-of-the-road-modern" and "modern inside and traditional outside." These more conservative Modern styles were promoted by the banking community, who considered them less stylistically risky. They had an interest in making sure homes were sellable and re-sellable to the everyday public when they were providing loans for veterans returning from World War II and purchasing their first homes.

Minimal Traditional style homes are usually small, post-war houses with a low or an intermediate pitched gabled roof, without overhangs, and with a minimal amount of architectural detailing. Good examples of this style home can be found at 505 (PP0485) and 508 (PP0560) South Glenwood Avenue.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

A little later, and after the FHA financial controls were lifted during the 1950s and 1960s, the Ranch style home took off, making it the most popular style of home built in the US. Most American Ranches were built in new developer-created communities with just a few different house plans. However, the Ranches in Old Town were mostly built as in-fill houses, which is why there are so few and they are spotted throughout the district. The Ranch home was one-story, wide, instead of deep, and built low to the ground with a low-pitched roof. The front entry is usually located off center and the front porch is often integrated into the roof of the main house. Most of these homes had a large picture window on the front facade. They usually included a carport or garage to park the family car in this new age of the automobile. The newest homes within the Old Town Historic District's period of significance are Ranch style and were built around 1970. The house at 304 South Denver Avenue (PP0563) has a typical Ranch form with the off-center front entrance, large picture window, flattened eaves, and wide front facade. But it also has traditional decorative elements such as the columned and gabled front porch, a steeper roof than what is commonly seen, and a bracketed awning on the side porch. These embellishments soften the modern edge of a pure Ranch home and are typical of Ranch homes in smaller American communities where traditionalism is valued.

A more highly styled Ranch home is located at 204 W 8th Street (PP0549). This Mid-Century home has more trend-worthy architectural elements such as the shed roof overhang and a carport created against a flattened front gable. More strong elements of the Ranch home reflective in this structure are the off-centered front door with the integral porch roof, front picture window, and built-in flower bed.

There is one commercial building in the district, the J&B Music Sales Building at 408 S. Glenwood Avenue (PP0551). It is a non-contributing building built around 1950 and classified in the Mid-Century Standard Commercial Style. It was originally built of brick with a low front-gable roof. A brick veneer has been installed over the front facade and vinyl siding over the front and back gables. A second metal building has been attached to its south side with a red brick veneer installed on its front facade.

Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

The houses in the Old Town Historic District contributing to the community's status as a historic district, retain their architectural and historical integrity. A contributing structure must still be recognizable as first built. The district's architecture is affiliated with the neighborhood's historical development between 1890 and 1970. Through understanding the built environment's change in style and scale, and its association with historical events and architectural trends of the time, one can interpret why and how the district represents the development of the community of Russellville and its place in the US, over these decades. Most of the district still retains its historic integrity (63%) and was built within this period of Russellville's evolution.

Non-Contributing buildings are structures which were built after 1970, in the period after the neighborhood was primarily developed, or have been significantly changed from when they were first constructed, resulting in the loss of character-defining features. Non-Contributing buildings

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

comprise 37% of the community and include 38 structures. Four of these buildings were built after 1970, while 30 of them have been altered so drastically with non-historic additions, unsympathetic modifications to roof lines, porch configurations, or covering up the original detailing, that they no longer possess sufficient physical integrity to convey their significance.

This inventory list denotes each resource in the Old Town Historic District, its address, date built, style and National Register status. Details about each resource can be found on its Arkansas Architectural Resource Form, located at the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

Integrity

The Old Town Historic District retains its physical and historical integrity as a residential neighborhood. The district is composed of the neighborhood's one hundred single-family and three multiple-family dwellings, and one commercial building built between 1858-1989. Of these, 63 percent are considered contributing to its integrity. Non-contributing buildings are those that have been altered so significantly from when originally built that they no longer retain their physical historical characteristics or were built after the neighborhood's period of significance, from 1890-1970.

The setting, building pattern of the streetscapes and the houses, along with the materials and style of architecture in Old Town help to explain the architectural evolution of this community. By studying the remaining built environment, which is the largest and oldest intact area of residential Russellville, Arkansas, one can see how the city was developed, by whom, and why. It is an important historical component of this community and a good example of residential growth in a rural Arkansan county. It reflects common overall small town building patterns in the nation from 1890-1970 and deserves to be a part of the National Register of Historic Places; where it can enjoy the honors and incentives available to encourage protection of this important section of American history.

Old Town Historic District
 Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
 County and State

Inventory of Resources

AHPP Resource No.	Physical Property Address/ Historic Name	Date of Construction	Building Style	NRHP Recommendation	N/C Reasoning
PP0568	414 W 4th St	c. 1930	Minimal Traditional	Contributing	
PP0477	501 W 4th St/ Warren House	c. 1890	Queen Anne	Non-Contributing	Side addition enclosed side and back porches. Very large rear addition
PP0476	511 W 4th St	1946	Minimal Traditional	Non-Contributing	Front porch enclosed, balustrade not original
PP0475	513 W 4th St/ Burns House	c. 1900	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0550	607 W 4th St	c. 1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Replacement siding covers architectural details, doors replaced, replacement windows do not fit openings, porch column changed
PP0480	502 W 4th Place	c. 1970	Ranch	Non-Contributing	Siding and roof replaced
PP0489	415 W 5th St	1985	Contemporary	Non-Contributing	Outside P.O.S.
PP0488	417 W 5th St	1988	Contemporary	Non-Contributing	Outside P.O.S.
PP0487	501 W. 5th St	c. 1980	Contemporary	Non-Contributing	Outside P.O.S.
PP0486	503 W 5th St	1968	Ranch	Non-Contributing	windows replaced
PP0494	413 W 6th St	1929	Colonial Revival	Contributing	
PP0500	416 W 6th St	1928	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0495	417 W 6th St	1938	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0501	500 W 6th St	c. 1910	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0496	501 W 6th St	c. 1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Brick veneer added. Metal roof. Windows replaced
PP0497	503 W 6th St	c. 1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Metal roof, frieze trim & stucco in gable changed
PP0502	506 W 6th St	c. 1910	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Severely altered, brick veneer added, porch changed, garage added to front, windows & door changed
PP0498	507 W 6th St	c. 1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Replacement siding, metal roof
PP0503	512 W 6th St	1940	Colonial Revival	Contributing	
PP0499	513 W 6th St	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0548	217 W 7th St	1943	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Porch changed, windows replaced
PP0549	204 W 8th St	c. 1950	Mid-century Modern	Non-Contributing	Unknown
PP0577	213 W 8th St	1940	Minimal Traditional	Contributing	
PP0576	215 W. 8th St/ Myers House	c. 1915	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	

Old Town Historic District
 Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
 County and State

Inventory of Resources

AHPP Resource No.	Physical Property Address/ Historic Name	Date of Construction	Building Style	NRHP Recommendation	N/C Reasoning
PP0534	704 S Commerce Ave	1928	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0533	707 S Commerce Ave/ Ashmore	1913/ 1920 remodeled to 1 story	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0531	710 S Commerce Ave/ Bollinger House	c. 1890	Folk Victorian	Non-Contributing	Porch changed, siding replaced
PP0532	713 S Commerce Ave/ R.L. Harkey House	1900/ 1960 remodeled & bricked	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0563	304 S Denver Ave	c. 1950	Ranch	Contributing	
PP0564	312 S Denver Ave/ Oscar Wilson House	1917	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0565	320 S Denver Ave/ Davis House	1890/ 1940 remodeled brick Added	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0566	324 S Denver Ave	c. 1925	Minimal Traditional	Non-Contributing	Vinyl siding added, windows replaced
PP0567	328 S Denver Ave/ Lemley House	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0504	400 S Denver Ave/ Leonard House	c. 1905	Folk Victorian	Non-Contributing	Porches enclosed
PP0505	406 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Brick veneer added, windows replaced
PP0506	408 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Front window openings enclosed
PP0509	409 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0507	410 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0508	414 S Denver Ave/ Falls House	1922	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0511	415 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0510	418 S Denver Ave/ Simpson House	c. 1910	Folk Victorian	Contributing	
PP0513	421 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0512	422 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0514	430 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Spanish Revival	Contributing	
PP0490	500-502 S Denver Ave/ Ferguson House	1858	National Folk	Non-Contributing	Windows replaced, porch replaced
PP0578	501 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0518	503 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0519	507 S Denver Ave	1945	Ranch	Non-Contributing	Vinyl siding added, porch screened in
PP0491	508 S Denver Ave	c. 1910	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0520	509 S Denver Ave	1925	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0521	511 S Denver Ave.	1928	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0492	514 S Denver Ave	1928	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0522	601 S Denver Ave	c. 1930	Tudor Revival	Contributing	

Old Town Historic District
 Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
 County and State

Inventory of Resources

AHPP Resource No.	Physical Property Address/ Historic Name	Date of Construction	Building Style	NRHP Recommendation	N/C Reasoning
PP0575	219 W 8th St	1940	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0574	301 W 8th St	c. 1910	Colonial Revival	Contributing	
PP0573	305 W. 8th St	c. 1900	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Brick veneer added, siding added, windows replaced, porch changed
PP0571	313 W. 8th St/ Black House	c. 1910	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Siding added, windows replaced, door & window openings changed, porch baluster changed.
PP0546	510 S Boulder Ave	c. 1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Siding added, porch enclosed
PP0547	616 S Boulder Ave	c. 1910	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0515	400 S Commerce Ave	1930	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0516	408 S Commerce Ave	1943	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0517	410 S Commerce Ave	1989	Contemporary Ranch	Non-Contributing	Outside P.O.S.
PP0543	502 S Commerce Ave	1900	Colonial Revival	Non-Contributing	Roofline changed, front porch changed, side porch enclosed
PP0542	503 S Commerce Ave/ Perriman House	c. 1890	Queen Anne	Contributing	
PP0544	504 S Commerce Ave/ Rowan House	1900/ c.1920 porch altered	Queen Anne	Contributing	
PP0545	510 S Commerce Ave/ Calvin Rowan House	1900	Queen Anne	Contributing	
PP0541	511 S Commerce Ave	c. 1900	Colonial Revival	Contributing	
PP0540	600 (602) S Commerce Ave/ Carden House	c. 1900	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0015	603 S Commerce Ave/ Roys House	1906	Queen Anne	Contributing	
PP0539	607 S Commerce Ave/ Silas Henry House	1905	Queen Anne	Contributing	
PP0025	608 S Commerce Ave/ Love- Scarlett House	1899/ c.1930 front altered	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Contributing	
PP0537	612 S Commerce Ave	1928	Tudor Revival	Contributing	
PP0538	613 S Commerce Ave/ Whorton House	1905	Queen Anne	Non-Contributing	Siding added, front porch enclosed
PP0536	702 S Commerce Ave	1928	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Brick veneer added, window openings changed, chimney changed, siding, metal roof added, large carport seen from street view
PP0535	703 S Commerce Ave	1940	Bungalow/ Craftsman	Non-Contributing	Vinyl siding added, front porch changed

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1890-1970

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Olaf "Oley" Nelson-builder

Smith & Bryant- builder

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Old Town Historic District in Russellville, Pope County, Arkansas, is being nominated as being **locally significant** under **Criterion C: Architecture**, in that the area embodies the distinctive characteristics of architectural types, periods, methods of construction, and conveys the material and historical traits common in the US during the historic growth of the community from 1890-1970. It has a good collection of 19th and 20th century architectural styles that reflect national trends. The district's contributions also include original locations, settings and physical environments. The location, as well as the style of the buildings, retain their integrity and tell the story of the development of this community and its place in local and national history.

The neighborhood includes many good examples of architecture built during its period of significance. The remaining earliest period of construction includes Victorian era Queen Anne and Folk Victorian style homes. Looking at the location of these earliest structures helps one to understand how the neighborhood was originally platted including the distance between the homes and lots, the most common setbacks, the scale of the houses, popular building styles and materials, and the overall streetscapes of this time period. This era of building holds some of the largest and, besides the Folk Victorian known for its lack of ornament, the most elaborate homes in the district. The next period of development from 1910-1929, also retains good contributing housing stock. Most of these structures were built in Revival or Craftsman Styles. One can see from their development, where the city was growing during this time period. Empty lots in the district were highly sought after and good-sized homes were being built next to their older counterparts. After the Great Depression, the Craftsman Bungalow became the most popular house style in the US and Russellville became a manufacturing city. The building patterns of Old Town changed, matching the national trends of building style, scale, and economic condition, of the time. There is a growth spurt of smaller bungalows in the community, filling the remaining rows of empty and individual lots. During the 1950s-1970, growth in the neighborhood slowed down as planned communities on the edge of town become more popular. By this time, the overall development of the streets in Old Town came to a peak and the building pattern of constructing several houses in a row had stopped. The architectural style and scale of homes on individual streets became more diverse as the last remaining lots were filled with low, wide Ranch Style homes. During this time, the district's one commercial structure was built signifying how the abutting downtown commercial district is starting to encroach upon the neighborhood. Only four more houses are built after 1970, after the neighborhood's period of significance, and therefore are Non-Contributing.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

History of Russellville

Russellville was first formed in Pope County, Arkansas, in 1829, seven years before Arkansas became a State and one year after the Cherokee people were driven from its lands.² It is bordered to the North by the summit of the Boston Mountains; where it was heavily forested with pine, oak, and hickory interspersed with walnut, ash, and cherry above rich coal beds. Natural springs are located on the West side and to the South is the Arkansas River, where the soil was a rich sandy loam that required no fertilizing. In the 1880s, cotton plantations were located here.³ Pope County was named for the third Governor of the Arkansas Territory, John Pope, and was primarily formed out of a portion of Crawford and Conway counties.⁴

Before white men were established in the vicinity of modern-day Russellville, Cherokee settlements were set up along the Arkansas River.⁵ English naturalist Thomas Nuttall who traveled through Arkansas in his exploration of its natural resources, noted in 1819 that there were no white people living in present-day Pope County.⁶ He wrote:

*Both banks of the river, as we proceeded, were lined with the houses and farms of the Cherokees, and though their dress was a mixture of indigenous and European taste, yet in their houses, which are decently furnished, and in the farms, which were well fenced and stocked with cattle...argue a propitious [sic] progress in their population. Their superior industry, either as hunters or farmers, proves the value of property among them.*⁷

The Cherokee had migrated west into Arkansas from the 1780s through the 1820s to escape the expansion of Euro-American settlements in the eastern part of the US after the Revolutionary War. The remaining eastern Cherokee were eventually pressured into signing the Turkeytown Treaty of 1817, in which land in the East was exchanged for land in the Arkansas Territory, between the Arkansas and White Rivers. The goal of the federal government was to have the

² Pope County Historical Association, *History of Pope County, Arkansas*, 2nd ed. (Winston-Salem, NC: Jostens Pub. Co., 1999), p. 12.

³ "Russellville, the 'Sweet Auburn of the Plain,' and the Adjacent Country the 'Arcadian Land' of the Arkansas Valley," *The Russellville Democrat*, December 7, 1882, p. 1.

⁴ Capitola Glazner and Bobbie J. McLane, forward, in *Pope County Arkansas United States Census of 1860 and Marriage Books B&C December 1849 Thru December 1859*, 1967, forward.

⁵ George Sabo, "Native Americans," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*, July 12, 2023, [https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/native-americans-408/#:~:text="The first Cherokee settlements in day Russellville \(Pope County\).](https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/native-americans-408/#:~:text=)

⁶ Gene W. Boyett, *Hardscrabble Frontier: Pope County, Arkansas in the 1850's* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990), 1.

⁷ Leslie Stewart-Abernathy, "Cherokee," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, July 11, 2023, [https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/cherokee-553/#:~:text="The dispersed families were organized, well as Dutch Creek and 11.](https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/cherokee-553/#:~:text=)

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

Cherokee abandon their native land and move to what was, at the time, the most western area of North America— Arkansas. Those that did so became known as the “Western Cherokee.”⁸

The Cherokee were given land that was not managed by the federal government; therefore, not considered a reservation. The Western Cherokee cleared this land to establish scattered family pastures, farmsteads and farms, build mills, and organized it into traditional “towns” spread along tributaries on the North side of the Arkansas River: much like those of their later white counterparts. The natives recognized that those who adopted more conventionally white values and lifestyles rose to positions of power and authority more easily within in their own, as well as, white man’s society.⁹ Some Cherokee even enslaved African-American people.¹⁰ Western Cherokee petitioned the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to send missionaries to the Arkansas settlements.¹¹ Some of the Protestant missionaries founded Dwight Mission in 1820, near where Russellville now stands, to teach Native American children Anglo-American customs and the English language.¹² The children were taught reading, arithmetic, writing, agricultural arts, sewing, etc. At one time, the school had as many as seven assistant teachers and more than one hundred Cherokee children enrolled.¹³

In 1828, the US government, along with the new Arkansas Territory, pressured the Western Cherokee into ceding their Arkansas lands to the United States through the Treaty of Washington.¹⁴ As a result, most of them were forcefully moved to Indian Territory, in northeast Oklahoma, leaving their domesticated community to be occupied by white settlers migrating to the area.¹⁵

First Settlers

Not long after this, the prairie which would become Russellville, was first settled by men of European descent. In 1834, a saddler named P.C. Holledger built the first log house at the corner of what is now West Main and North Houston streets.¹⁶ Although referred to as a prairie, the land was actually densely wooded with an abundance of deer and turkey.¹⁷ It was known as Chactas Prairie and was situated at the intersection of two trails, at what is now Main and Denver streets.¹⁸ The north-south trail came down the Illinois Bayou and led to the Arkansas River. The east-west trail passed a grove of trees, which became known as Prairie Grove, and a small stream which drained into it, known as Prairie Creek.¹⁹

⁸ Stewart- Abernathy.

⁹ Sabo. Stewart- Abernathy.

¹⁰ Stewart- Abernathy.

¹¹ Sabo.

¹² Stewart- Abernathy.

¹³ *Russellville Centennial, 1870-1970: Arrows to Atoms*, 1970, p 6.

¹⁴ Stewart- Abernathy

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶D. Porter West, *D. Porter West’s Early History of Pope County* (Dover, AR, 1831), p. 9.; David L. Vance, *Early History of Pope County; A History of Pope County in the Nineteenth Century and in the Early Part of the Twentieth Century* (Mabelvale, Ark.: Printed by Foreman-Payne Publishers, 1970), p. 106.

¹⁷ Vance, p. 106.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

The next year, Holledger's home was purchased by the Dr. Thomas Russell family who had just come to the area from Illinois, and to whom the town would eventually be named. By 1836, the settlers were building homes. Local lore says that the first store was built by Jacob L. Shinn, at what is now the corner of Main and Denver streets.²⁰ The first tavern was built by Coke Darnell, diagonally across the street from Shinn's mercantile store and these two businesses became the catalyst for Russellville's first commercial center.²¹

Many families migrated to Arkansas from other states for economic opportunities; especially for the possibility of land ownership.²² Kinship and community ties also served as strong enticements. Letters back home from the settlers about new-found prosperity persuaded their old friends and family to join them. One such former North Carolina resident wrote to a cousin that he had "better leave them hill sides for someone else to work and come to Arkansas were [sic] the land is better."²³

In 1850, 28 percent of the county's white population listed Tennessee as the state of birth, while 8 percent in 1850 and 11 percent in 1860 recorded North Carolina. Thus, 75 percent of Pope County's population in the late 1850s listed Tennessee, North Carolina or Arkansas as the site of birth.²⁴ Residents born in non-southern states made up about 2 percent of Pope County, with half of them coming from Illinois.²⁵ Migrants tended to seek areas to settle similar in temperature, rainfall and soil to where they were from.²⁶

For example, one group that traveled to the area by a covered wagon caravan from Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, in 1840, included seven familial groups of the Shinn family, five familial groups of the Harkey family, the Reeds, McAnultys, Fowlers, John Linker family, Jackson Shandy family, Charles Pless family, and the William Brooks families.²⁷

In 1858, one of the daughters of another early Russellville family, Emily Torrence, wrote to her cousin back in North Carolina that "...this part of the county is so filled up with North Carolinians that it is called Carolina. There is [sic] only two families that live near us but what is either North or South Carolinians."²⁸

The federal and state government attracted settlers to Arkansas by offering inexpensive land. Under the Federal Act of 1832 settlers could purchase as little as forty acres for the small price of \$1.25 an acre. The Graduation Act of 1854 reduced the price per acre even more, to \$1.00, if the

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

²² Boyette, 5-6.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *History of Pope County, Arkansas*, vol. 2 (Topeka, Kan.: Josten's Pub. Co., 1981), p. 443.

²⁸ Letter from Emily Torrence to Mary Ellen Torrence (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Southern Historical Collection, October 1, 1858).

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

land remained unsold after ten years.²⁹ Then the Swamp Act of 1850, which gave Arkansas the right to sell millions of acres of swamp land to the public and use the proceeds to finance improvements such as levees and drainage ditches, resulted in the sale of 10,320 more acres in Pope County.³⁰ This was hugely successful for the region, as evidenced in Pope County polls which increased 22 percent between 1849 and 1851 while the number of landowners increased 225 percent in the same years.³¹ It was also common for landowners to purchase the land at these reduced rates, with the intention of reselling it at a profit. Although the act was titled the Swamp Reduction Act, much of the land was not actually filled with swamp.

Many settlers before 1850 claimed “tomahawk improvements” on the land they settled. These squatter’s rights involved the clearing of a bit of land or the construction of a residential pen as claim of ownership. This was historically recognized by custom and also, depending on the area, sometimes by law. However, this was not a guaranteed form of acquisition in Arkansas. Some were willing to assume the risk, but others only squatted temporarily while on their way further westward in their migration.³²

When a postal route was established in the community, neighbors from the prairie settlement met to decide on a name for the town.³³ The decision was between Shinn, the first shopkeeper, and Dr. Thomas Russell, the current occupant of the first house. Russell suggested, in all humbleness, the community be named Shinnville. However, the name Russell was chosen after it won a coin toss in 1842 and the town was named Russellville.³⁴ By this time, the town boasted of four houses, two stores and twenty saloons—all frame buildings.³⁵ There is only one house remaining from the very earliest Anglo settlement period in Russellville, the Ferguson House (PP0490) at 500-502 S. Denver Avenue. It was originally built in 1858 then later remodeled into a duplex.

Early Residents & Addition Namesakes

Land first settled by the earliest white families eventually became part of the town of Russellville as it grew and expanded to the South, creating sections of what is now known as “Old Town.” It is what is left of the earliest residential neighborhood of Russellville. The “Old Town Neighborhood” as we now know it, evolved from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. This district was created from plats once owned by some of the original settlers. When Russellville was first platted, it was not unusual for one family to possess at least a forty-acre patent, as that is how the property was divided by the federal land office. Some families owned several patents. When the land was later sold and incorporated into the town of Russellville, it was platted and named for the original white settler. By exploring some of the

²⁹ Boyette, p. 7.

³⁰ Mary C. Suter, “Swamp Land Act of 1850,” - *Civil Rights Digital Library* Search Results, September 1, 2022, [https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/swamp-land-act-of-1850-7402/#:~:text=](https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/swamp-land-act-of-1850-7402/#:~:text=The%20Swamp%20Land%20Act%20of,%20principally%20levees%20and%20drainage%20ditches.) The Swamp Land Act of, principally levees and drainage ditches. Boyette, 7.

³¹ Boyette, p. 7.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Fay Hempstead, *Historical Review of Arkansas: Its Commerce, Industry and Modern Affairs*, vol. 3 (Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1911), p. 1338.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Vance, *Early History*, p. 110, 114. West, p 12.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

earliest families who lived in and were the namesakes of what is now the “Old Town Historic District” it gives us an understanding of who some of the first residents of the town and surrounding area of Russellville were, what attracted them to the area, and how they lived.

James Madison Shinn, b. 1812-d. 1873: As a young man of 28, and with his wife, Sophia Harkey, several brothers and their families, Sophia’s family, and their friends formed a caravan to travel by covered wagon from Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, to Arkansas in 1840.³⁶ They settled in what would become Russellville, at a time when only one house stood.

Shinn bought 160 acres in 1844, through the Land Act of 1820 which forced Native Americans to abandon their land, four years after arriving. James Madison was a successful merchant and one of the first businessmen in the community. There is some controversy as to whether he or a very well-known and auspicious relative, Jacob L. Shinn, erected the first store; narrowly missing becoming the namesake of the town.³⁷

In 1846, Shinn served in the Mexican War and as Captain of a Company of Arkansas Troops.³⁸ He and Sophia had ten children.³⁹ He was a Mason and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁴⁰ He was so well respected, the community elected him to represent Pope County in the State Legislature in 1845. James Madison donated seven acres of land, where Oakland Cemetery is today, to the Methodist Church for a church building and a cemetery in the mid-1800s.⁴¹

He was a successful businessman and farmer and later became a minister.⁴² He sold forty acres of his Russellville land to a neighbor, John T. Torrence, in 1854.⁴³ Then in 1861, purchased 40 more acres, this time in Newton County, from the Huntsville Land Office.⁴⁴ He and Sophia moved to Newton County around this time.⁴⁵

He also served as a Private in the 21st Regiment of the Arkansas Infantry in the Confederacy, in 1862.⁴⁶ During the war, like many Southerners, he lost a significant amount of his assets. He

³⁶ *History of Pope County, Vol II* (1981), p 443. Josiah H Shinn, “History of Shinn Family,” n.d., accessed November 3, 2023.

³⁷Fay Hempstead, *Historical Review of Arkansas: Its Commerce, Industry and Modern Affairs*, vol. 3 (Chicago, IL: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1911), p 1338. Jacob L. Shinn, wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_L._Shinn.

³⁸ Hempstead, p. 1338.

³⁹ Census of the United States, manufactures, Pope County, Arkansas: 1850 § (1850).

⁴⁰ Hempstead, p. 1338.

⁴¹ Vance, *Early History*, 132.

⁴²*History of Pope County, Arkansas, 1st ed.* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter, 1979), p 15. 1850 Census

⁴³“ Bill of Sale from Shinn to Torrence, 1853 ,” n.d.

⁴⁴ US Homestead and Cash Entry Patents, Pre-1908, Doc No 13016, 1 Aug 1881.

⁴⁵ Census of the United States, Newton County, Arkansas § (1860).

⁴⁶ US Civil War Soldier Records and Profiles, 1861-1865, accessed at Ancestry.com,

https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/3361901:1555?tid=&pid=&queryId=9dea2532ed4fd260a527e4036aa5d0c7&_phsrc=wBc2&_phstart=successSource.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

continued in the legislature until his death, in 1873, at sixty-one years of age.⁴⁷ He died intestate while residing, farming, and ministering in Newton County.⁴⁸

Austin E. Luker, b. 1827-d. 1900: Luker was a blacksmith by trade. He was originally from Tennessee and married a Georgian named Elizabeth, who was known as Tamsey. In 1857, he received 120 acres through a Swamp Land Application in Arkansas. He is shown in the 1860 Census as living in Pope County, Illinois Township, with Tamsey and three children; they eventually had six, four of which survived to adulthood.⁴⁹

Luker's land holdings were significant. He built his first Pope County home on Long Street (now South Greenwood Ave.) but later built a new house for his family on Torrence Street (now South Boulder Avenue).⁵⁰ During the Civil War, he served as a Private in the Pope County Home Guard of Minute Men, typically made up of landowners who were too old for service.

Luker and his sons were all working blacksmiths by 1880. Austin was the owner of "A.E. Luker & Company," a mill and gin business. Then, the family opened a wagon and plow factory at the close of the Civil War. They began a partnership, along with A.T. Davis, forming "Luker Davis & Company" a few years later.⁵¹ By 1888, the factory had the ability to produce 400 wagons per year.⁵² Their shop manufactured farm and spring wagons, buggies, and other items.⁵³ The factory building was located on the corner of B Street and El Paso Avenue and housed a public entertainment hall on the second floor. Bands and a local pianist regularly performed classic songs here and it became a popular social club for the people of Russellville.⁵⁴

Austin Luker served as the one of Russellville's first mayors and played an important role in the town's growth.⁵⁵ He was a generous man. He donated land for the Baptist Church, although not a Baptist himself.⁵⁶ He also donated land to a formerly enslaved family, allowing them to live close to Russellville, when people of African descent were typically cast to the most rural of communities. One of the townswomen explained of his generosity, "(Luker) was a generous man with a large heart... at the close of the War between the States, the negroes were free and A.E. Luker gave a couple of old slaves that we children knew as Aunt Doshia and Uncle Ted a plot of ground and small house across the branch in the south west corner of town."⁵⁷

John T. Torrence Family, b. 1803-d.1889 : Originally an Irishman, Torrence moved to Pope County from Lincoln County, North Carolina. He was listed as a manufacturer in the 1885-1886

⁴⁷Faye Hempstead, *Historical Review of AR, Vol 3*, (2016) p. 1338.

⁴⁸ *Pope County Administrator's Bond*, 6 Nov 1899. Pg 155.

⁴⁹ 1860 Census

⁵⁰May Russell, "Early Houses and Stores in Russellville, Arkansas," *Pope County Historical Association Quarterly* 22, no. No. 2 (n.d.): 61-61.p 61.

⁵¹ Vance, *Early History*, 125.

⁵² *Arkansas Family Historical* (Russellville, AR: Pope County Historical Association, n.d.).

⁵³ Vance, *Early History*, 163.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p 14.

⁵⁵Russell, p 61.

⁵⁶Russell, p 61.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 7.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

tax list, one of only three Russellville residents being taxed, including A.E Luker's father, J.H. Luker, and J.K. Harkey, all very early residents.⁵⁸ Usually only landowners were taxed during this era. The 1860 census, lists him as a tanner from North Carolina, his wife as Jane, and that they have five children.⁵⁹ John, along with other early residents, was instrumental in moving the county seat to Russellville from Dover.⁶⁰

Emily Torrence, one of John and Jane's children wrote several letters to her cousin, Mary Ellen Torrence, back in North Carolina in 1858 describing life in Pope County. They serve as a great resource for understanding the life of a young woman living in early Russellville. She often writes of tending the cattle, gossips about friends from North Carolina, and attending church meetings. She busies herself with worry of Scarlet Fever, the health of her family and neighborhood, the idea of marriage, and lack of rain. Her social life consisted of participating in quiltings, singings, and house raisings.⁶¹

Evolution of the Town and Neighborhood

Russellville officially became incorporated as a town in 1870.⁶² Around this same time, the town's public school system was founded in a one room log building and the first newspapers were established.⁶³ Before the public school was opened, short term private schools were taught by different teachers, usually on a three or four month term.⁶⁴ If educated, this is how children of the Anglo-Settlers were taught.

The town slowly recovered from the Civil War, until about 1872 when the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad line was built with a stop in Russellville.⁶⁵ The line was completed in 1876.⁶⁶ The railroad eventually changed its name to the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway in 1906, and then the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company in 1917.⁶⁷ Its completion through town attracted commerce, making Russellville the business center of the county.⁶⁸ Commercial transportation which had been maintained by steamboats along the Arkansas River until the construction of the railroad, now used it as the primary source to transfer produce and merchandise.⁶⁹

Furor erupted when the railroad was built through Russellville instead of Dover, which had been the Pope County seat since 1840. Although the original survey, drawn before the Civil War,

⁵⁸ Tax Record §, Collection List No. 1 (1886), Dive No 8, Collection List No. 1, Arkansas.

⁵⁹ Census of the United States, Pope County, Arkansas: 1860 § (1860).

⁶⁰ *Russellville Centennial, 1870-1970*; *Arrows to Atoms*, 1970, p 11.

⁶¹ Letter from Emily Torrence to Mary Ellen Torrence (Chapell Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, March 9, 1858).

⁶² West, p 12

⁶³ Vance, *Early History*, 141, 144.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.14.

⁶⁵ West, p 10. "Russellville," *The Russellville Democrat*, 12 July 1882, pg 1.

⁶⁶ Vance, *Early History*, 26.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p, 147.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 103.

⁶⁹ "Russellville, the 'Sweet Auburn of the Plain,' and the Adjacent Country the 'Arcadian Land' of the Arkansas Valley," *The Russellville Democrat*, December 7, 1882, p.1.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

planned for the tracks to go through Dover, the war stopped the project.⁷⁰ After the war, when the project was reinstated, some of Russellville's more wealthy and influential local residents pledged a great amount of money to the project with the intention of changing the railroad's path to Russellville. Most of the growth of the town at the end of the 19th century is due to their successful endeavor.⁷¹

When the railroad was finished, Russellville had a population of about 800.⁷² There were fifteen stores including a tin shop, shoe shop, and saddlery shop, two blacksmith shops, two carpenter and cabinet shops, two cotton gins, a flouring mill and wood carding factory, two silversmiths, two hotels, one barber shop, a livery stable, one market house, and one saloon. The community had two churches: Presbyterian and Methodist Episcopal, six doctors, five lawyers, and one dentist. Russellville socialized through the lodge of the International Organization of Good Templars, the lodge of the Free Masons, and a Sunday-school. The town also supported one newspaper, "The Democrat."⁷³

This same year, the public school extended its schedule to a nine-month period.⁷⁴ The next year, in 1877, land was purchased to build a permanent school.⁷⁵ In the 1880s, Russellville graduated its first high school class with three members.⁷⁶ This same year, it completed the largest train depot on the Little Rock and Fort Smith road outside of Little Rock.⁷⁷

In 1882, the state-of-the-art Melrose Cotton Mill was built to the east of town on the railway line, and run by Jacob Shinn, one of the town's early settlers.⁷⁸ The mill had 3,000 spindles and produced and sold rope and twines, carpet warp, Chandler's wick, and batting.⁷⁹

Russellville had grown so much that the eastern and southern boundaries of town were extended to encompass the James Madison Shinn and Torrence Additions in 1883.⁸⁰ Both had been settlements by early North Carolina families.⁸¹ By the 1890s, houses were being built on these new city plats to form what is now the "Old Town Historic District."⁸² The new section of town was so popular that in 1893, River Street (now South Denver) was graded and extended further through the Torrence Addition making it one of the most attractive thoroughfares in town.⁸³

⁷⁰ Vance, *Early History*, p.23.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 147.

⁷² David L Vance, "Russellville (Pope County)," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, November 9, 2023, <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/russellville-963/>.

⁷³ West, p. 10.

⁷⁴ Vance, "Russellville."

⁷⁵ Pope County Historical Association, p.14.

⁷⁶ Vance, *Early History*, 141.

⁷⁷ *Russellville Centennial 1870-1970: Arrows to Atoms*, 1970, p. 11.

⁷⁸ *The Russellville Democrat*, 7 Dec 1882, pg. 1.

⁷⁹ *Brock's Reports on the Woolen, Cotton, Silk, Carpet, Flax, Jute, and Wood Hat Manufacturers and Cotton and Wool Dealers of the United States and Canada* (New York, NY, 1895), p. 11.

⁸⁰ "An Ordinance," *The Russellville Democrat*, January 18, 1883, pg. 1.

⁸¹ *The Russellville Democrat*, April 14, 1881, pg. 3.

⁸² *The Russellville Democrat*, 23 Jan 1890, p. 3.

⁸³ *The Russellville Democrat*, 11 May 1893. p. 3.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

Around this same time, the Russellville and Dardanelle Railroad line was built. It was designed to move millions of feet of timber from Dardanelle to Russellville where it could be shipped out on the railroad. It also moved passengers and coal from the mines south of Russellville to Dardanelle.⁸⁴

Russellville had become so accomplished that in 1887, an election took place to move the Pope County seat to Russellville from Dover.⁸⁵ Some wealthy townspeople agreed to donate the land and money to build a courthouse.⁸⁶ This, along with the convenient location of the railroad, were the primary factors why Russellville won the election.⁸⁷ Also in 1887, Weimer Savings Bank was established. It was the first bank in Russellville and eventually became the Bank of Russellville.⁸⁸ By the time the seat was moved, the town was the largest in Pope County with a population of nearly 4,000 and held five brick stores: J.L. Shinn, W.J. White, R.J. Wilson, Harkey Bros, and Howell & White.⁸⁹ In 1890, there were a few lots left for development in the Torrence Addition with Lawrence Bradley listed as the real estate agent.⁹⁰

By 1897, the city had grown to about a seven block commercial district with around 17 residential blocks surrounding it inside the city limits. Each residential block had about three or four houses on it.⁹¹ However, only approximately two blocks of this earliest area remain in what is now referred to as the "Old Town District". It mostly encompasses the West side of the 300 block of South Denver Avenue.

Although, in 1901, electric lights arrived in Russellville, most homes used coal as a source of heat.⁹² The coal mines, a couple of miles outside of town, provided an abundant and inexpensive natural resource and opportunity for employment to the local community. Three large coal companies were formed around town which employed several hundred men and leased several hundreds of acres of land for mining.⁹³ In 1903, the largest operation, the Ouita Anthracite Coal Co. developed. The company owned about 1,000 acres of a coal field three miles west of the city. It handled 1,000s of tons of coal daily and employed 85 men. Most of this coal was used commercially as the company shipped to Missouri, Texas, and even to the Native American and Oklahoma territories. Around 1906, Humphrey-Smith Coal Company, which was a smaller scale operation, sold domestically and heated many Russellville homes. This company was located 2-1/2 miles north of Russellville and operated 350 acres of coal field.⁹⁴

⁸⁴ Vance, *Early History*, 25.

⁸⁵ "Proclamation of Election in the Matter of Location of County Seat," *The Russellville Democrat*, 16 Feb 1887, p. 3.

⁸⁶ "\$50,000 Court House Bond," *The Russellville Democrat*, 25 August 1886, p. 3.

⁸⁷ Pope County Historical Association, p. 12. "Proclamation of Election...", pg. 3.

⁸⁸ Vance, *Early History*, p.121.

⁸⁹ Vance, *Early History*, p. 115. "Pope County, Arkansas," *The Russellville Democrat*, 27 July 1905, *The Courier=Democrat* edition, pgs. 9-16.

⁹⁰ *The Russellville Democrat*, 11 May 1893, p. 3.

⁹¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Russellville (1897) (Russellville, AR, 1897).

⁹² *History of Pope County, Arkansas, vol. 2* (Topeka, Kan.: Josten's Pub. Co., 1981), p. 15.

⁹³ Vance, *Early History*, 156.

⁹⁴ "Pope County, Arkansas," *The Russellville Democrat*.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

By 1904, the district had expanded by more than 3.5 times adding additional acreage of the J.M. Shinn, J.T. Torrence, and A.E. Luker's Additions to town. The expansion included both sides of Greenwood Ave., West 6th, West 7th, both sides of West 8th Street, and South Commerce. The Old Town Historic District was completely residential at this time. The number of houses on each block had doubled from when it was first adopted as part of the city. The Russellville community, as-a-whole encompassed two banks, a laundry, a wholesale grocery house, ice and cold storage plants, a bottling works, machine shops, planing mills, two cotton gins, a roller mill and several coal mines, local and long-distance telephone service, and excellent mail facilities. It also had corn mills, cotton land, livestock, large timber areas, and supported three newspapers.⁹⁵

A 1905 newspaper article promoting the town stated:

*The place is beautifully laid out, the streets being wide and everywhere lined with large shade trees, whose spreading branches present an appearance of comfort and tranquility during the long summer days. The sidewalks are paved with flagging, of which there is an abundance near the town, and the buildings are mostly brick, constructed after modern designs, being really beautiful and attractive. Some of them are ornaments in an architectural way and would do credit to many much larger cities. The dwellings are generally comfortable and conveniently arranged and display a refined taste in keeping with the high culture and progress of the people.*⁹⁶

But in 1906, devastation hit downtown Russellville. A fire burned 22 buildings, destroying three blocks, which was half the downtown business district.⁹⁷ A fire department had been organized the year before; but unfortunately, it had not had time to learn to operate the department efficiently.⁹⁸ However, the economy and the town's will to continue growing was so strong that within six months new buildings were erected in their place—this time only in brick—and the town was soon booming again.⁹⁹ A few years later, one of the first picture shows, the Electric Theater opened.¹⁰⁰ Nineteen homes remain from the building period from 1900-1909. There is a good concentration of them in the 500 and 600 blocks of South Commerce Avenue. Other pockets include the Southeast corner at west 4th and South Glenwood Avenue, and where South Commerce ends at west 8th Street.

Most homes, in the earliest period of neighborhood construction in Old Town, were built in either the Folk Victorian or Queen Anne or Craftsman styles; however, there are also two Colonial Revival style homes built during this time period. The R.C. Brown House at 602 S. Denver Ave. (PP0493, photo 27) is one of only four contributing Folk Victorians in the district. The house was built around the turn of the twentieth century and retains its simple ornamented folk exterior and its historic form including: high pitched roof, wrap-around porch, original

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *The Russellville Democrat*, July 27, 1905, pg 9-16.

⁹⁷ Vance, *Early History*, 163

⁹⁸ *Russellville Centennial*, p 42.

⁹⁹ Vance, *Early History*, p. 165.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 125.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

windows, and Doric columns. There are five other Folk Victorians and one National Folk style house remaining but all have been changed so significantly by covering up or removing character-defining features that they no longer contribute to the integrity of the district.

The most popular style of building during the earliest remaining era of neighborhood construction was the Queen Anne. Seven still remain in the district with five of them retaining their contributing status. The houses built at 504 (PP0544) and 510 S. Commerce (PP0545) were built by Calvin D. and William H. Rowan. The brothers built 510 together around 1895. Then, William built his own house next door, at 504 (photo 15), a little later.¹⁰¹ They first opened a grocery store together, then around 1900, created what became a highly successful mercantile business.¹⁰² Each of these houses are two-and-a-half-stories tall, with wood clapboard siding, and wrap-around front porches indicative of other Queen Anne homes built in the neighborhood. The original porch columns on 503 are still intact. The original porches on 504 and 510 likely looked very similar to these, when they were first built. The porch on 504 was “modernized” around 1920 by replacing the spindle columns with tapered square columns on brick piers.¹⁰³ The most highly stylized Queen Anne in the district is the R.F. and Eva May Roys House at 603 S. Commerce (PP0015, photo 16). It has a corner turret, fish scale shingles in the gables, and has both upper and lower porches. The Roys home displays Queen Anne characteristics found in other cities around the US, but is the only Queen Anne in the Old Town Historic District to have them. Roys was a hardware dealer, which may account for his incorporation of such a high level of decorative detailing. Later his son, George took over his business and lived in the house. It remained in the Roys family until 2015.¹⁰⁴

Two early large Colonial Revival style homes were built around 1900. Only 511 S. Commerce (PP0541, photo 17) is contributing. Its Colonial Revival characteristics include symmetrically balanced windows and doors on the front facade with accentuated center doors. It has currently been altered into an apartment building.

Russellville’s early building boom continued through the beginning of the twentieth century. It won a competition with several Arkansas towns to gain one of four agricultural schools in 1909. The towns had to raise money matching a state appropriation; and Russellville outbid Fort Smith, Ozark, and Morrilton. To get the school, the city supplied sixty-thousand dollars and 340 acres of land one mile north of Russellville. The Second District Agricultural School was built on 140 acres of the land with the remaining 200 put into cultivation.¹⁰⁵ This eventually became known as Arkansas Polytechnic College and is now Arkansas Technical University. The acquisition of the school encouraged even more growth in town. By 1911, Russellville had a population of 2,936 with three banks, eight churches, three public schools, and two hotels, seventeen miles of

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² 1900 United States Federal Census for Calvin D & William H Rowan. “Pope County, Arkansas,” *The Russellville Democrat*, 27 July 1905, *The Courier= Democrat* edition pg 83.

¹⁰³ Smith, p. 124-125.

¹⁰⁴ Pope County Tax Assessor Sales Records, 2015, accessed at https://www.arcountydata.com/parcel_sponsor.asp?item=28DF16&Page=1&countycode=POPTAX, accessed on 26 Feb 2024.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

concrete sidewalks. In addition, a franchise had been obtained for waterworks and a new train depot had been built.¹⁰⁶

The residential sections kept growing too. In 1913 in "Old Town," A.E. Luker's Second Addition was added, expanding the town to the Southwest by about two blocks.¹⁰⁷ But new homes were being built in existing sections of the district too. In 1917, Swedish-born contractor, Olaf F. Nelson built an impressive new two-story brick Craftsman style house at 312 S. Denver Street (PP0564, photo 26), for Oscar Wilson, in the James Madison Shinn Addition, where a very early house had been. It has decorative brackets, a green terra-cotta tile roof, with upper and lower porches, a large stone front porch with square columns, and impressive porch steps. Oscar ran a dry goods store and was the son of Confederate Captain R.J. Wilson. Later the home was purchased by Confederate Colonel T. M. Neal, founder and president of the Bank of Russellville.¹⁰⁸

By 1919, the town had a population of 5,000. It supported three banks, a creamery, foundry and iron works, roller flour mill, two wholesale houses, the largest horse and mule market in the state, a waterworks, light and power plant, modern theater and hospital, a high class band, paved streets, nice sidewalks, a modern business section with wide streets and nice homes.¹⁰⁹ This second building boom includes houses built from the turn of the twentieth century until around 1930. Twenty-five homes were built during this building period, and they are scattered throughout the district, filling in what were empty lots and replacing some of the oldest remaining homes. The highest concentration of houses built during this period are on the north side of the 500 block of West 6th Street. There is also a cluster on South Commerce Avenue toward West 8th Street. These homes are built in the Revival or Craftsman Style of architecture. Revival Style architecture loosely emulates old building styles seen by veterans while in Europe during WWI. In Old Town, these styles mainly consist of Colonial and Tudor Revivals; however, there is one beautiful example of a Spanish Revival home, in the district, at 430 S. Denver Ave. (photo 25). An impressive example of a Tudor Revival from this era can be found at 415 S. Denver Avenue (PP0511). It has exposed rafters and square front porch columns, typical of other homes of this era; but, it is unique in that it has double brick rowlock arched window openings and an overly exaggerated high pitched front gable (photo 24). However, the most common style of architecture during this era is the Craftsman style home; such as the one at 508 S. Denver Ave. (PP0491). The Craftsman homes of this era in Old Town often include a wide front porch, square columns, wood siding, exposed rafter tails, and sometimes decorative brackets (photo 18).

Russellville grew so quickly it developed more by necessity than by plan. So, in 1930, the city council adopted an ordinance to re-name and number the streets and houses alphabetically or numerically, so any given address could be more easily located. Main and Oak were the baselines where all numbers would begin. If a street was short and did not reach the baseline,

¹⁰⁶ Hempstead, p. 591. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and Patrick Zollner, Missouri Pacific-Depot: National Register nomination § (1992).

¹⁰⁷ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Russellville, 1913 (Russellville, Arkansas, 1913).

¹⁰⁸ *History of Pope County, Arkansas, 1st ed.*, p 68. *Arkansas Democrat*, 8 Nov 1921, p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ *Russellville Centennial*, p. 16.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

they would be called "Places." Streets running north and south were to be "Avenues" named after cities. Avenues east of Arkansas Avenue would be named for cities east of the Mississippi River while those west of Arkansas were named for cities west of the Mississippi.¹¹⁰

One of just a few periods of historic economic and population decline in the city of Russellville occurred in the 1930s-1940s due to the repercussions of the nation-wide Depression in 1929. During this time period, agriculture and mining also declined greatly outside of town, due to the mechanization of farming. However, as the nation pulled out of the Depression, Russellville saw an increase in manufacturing.¹¹¹ In 1942, Sugar Creek Foods located in Russellville. Then four years later, Single Refrigerator Company began operations. In 1947, International Shoe Company arrived, and the town's industrial sector started to thrive. Shortly afterwards, AVI, ARKCO Foods, Inc., Standard Rendering Company, Ralston- Purina Company, Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, Morton Frozen Foods, Mobley Ready-Mix, Andrews Ready-Mix, Rockwell Manufacturing Company, and Dow Chemical Company arrived in Russellville.¹¹² In the period between 1930-1949, most of the houses built in the district were generally smaller than those built during the first part of the twentieth century. Typically, they were Craftsman-style bungalows or Revival style homes; however, there were a couple of Minimal Traditional style homes. The houses built during this time belong to an eclectic social and economic group of residents including merchants, bricklayers, and teachers. The home at 607 S. Denver (PP0523) is typical of one of the smaller Craftsman Bungalow style homes built during this time period (photo 19). It has the characteristic square front porch columns, exposed rafters, wide porch, and low front stucco-ed gable. Several in Old Town are veneered in brick. This home is unique in that it has exposed angled-cut porch ceiling beams as ornament. An example of a typical Tudor Revival style home of this era is at 408 S. Commerce (PP0516). It has the commonly found features of an arched front door, high-pitched gable roof, rows of two or three windows, and stucco and wood half-timbering in the gables (photo 20). Minimal Traditional homes were built quickly and of inexpensive materials, to fill the housing void for soldiers returning from WWII. Typical homes of this style have eaves with little or no overhang, simple ornament, low or intermediate pitched roofs, are small, and just a single story tall. An example is the home at 324 S. Denver Ave. (PP0566).

Only eight structures were built between 1950-1970 when growth in the district significantly slowed. During this era, US home building trends tended to favor the automobile over the pedestrian and homeowners sought larger lots outside downtown areas. Because most households owned at least one automobile by then, it was not necessary to be within walking distance of amenities anymore. Lots in the suburbs, on the edge of town, were generally larger, providing space for the storage of a family car and wider lots for children to play on. The homes that were built in the district during this time period were Ranch style or had modern influences, with low wide massing, and a wide picture window. Because there were very few homes built

¹¹⁰J. B. Lemley, "Older Streets of Russellville," *Pope County Historical Association Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (September 1998): 37-39. "Ordinance Re-Naming City Streets Adopted," *Pope County Historical Association Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (June 1999): p. 27.

¹¹¹William S. Bonner, Charles S. Scheck, and Glenn C. Griffin, rep., *Pope County Planning Studies Report* (Fayetteville, AR, 1965), p. 166.

¹¹² *Russellville Centennial*, p. 16.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

during this time period, it is difficult to find a “typical” ranch style house in the district. The house at 304 S. Denver (PP0563, photo 21), although it also displays some traditional ornament, has common Ranch style massing seen in the district and across the nation in this style of housing stock. Also, during this period, the district’s only commercial building was constructed at 408 S. Glenwood Ave. (PP0551). It has significantly changed since built with a large side addition, contemporary brick veneered front, and vinyl siding around the roofline (photo 22).

In 1972, the first Nuclear Power Plant in the Southwest was constructed by Arkansas Power & Light a few miles west of Russellville, on a peninsula built on one the of the largest lakes on the Arkansas River.¹¹³ It is the state's only nuclear power plant. During the 1950s and 1960s, nuclear power was discovered to be a clean and efficient source of energy and plants were constructed nationwide. When it was announced that Nuclear One would be built in Arkansas, Russellville’s Mayor C.A. Hughes named it the “event of the century” explaining “this announcement today will be recorded [as]...possessing the greatest potential in the first 100 years of Russellville’s history.”¹¹⁴ Indeed the city did grow 31.7% from 1960-1970. Then 23.6% from 1970 until 1980; with most of the city’s growth in the suburbs and on the south side of town. During the 1980s several small Contemporary houses were built next to each other on West 5th Street. This is the first example of the construction of several houses in a row, in the district, since the 1940s. An example of one of these houses is at 417 West 5th Street (PP0495). It is considered to be built in the Contemporary style due to its low-pitched gabled roof with wide overhanging eaves, and an uninterrupted wall on the front facade (photo 23). It is likely these homes were built as rental property. At this time, several apartment buildings were being built just south of the district in this same style. The area across W. 5th Street has not been developed. In the late 1920s a water tower is shown to occupy the space. But today it is an unpaved lot with several metal industrial-style buildings on it (photo 15). In more recent years, the population of Russellville has slowed, with only a 3.7% growth rate from 2010-2020 and no new houses in the district.¹¹⁵

The community has slowly changed over the decades, but remains a popular and sought-after area of town. Although some original buildings have been lost, others have been built in their place, filling empty lots and creating a diverse architectural housing stock within the district. The various styles and eras when the buildings were built reflects the growth of Russellville from 1890-1970. There are 104 buildings in the district. Many homes were built by prominent citizens, some with leadership roles in banking, retail, and local politics, others laboring men and school teachers. The district represents a microcosm of growth, development, and architectural styles popular in the city of Russellville and influenced by national trends. It houses a good collection of late 19th and 20th-century single-family residences that retain their physical and architectural integrity. Due to the fact that the neighborhood includes the best collection of 19th and 20th-century residential architectural styles in the city, it is being nominated with **local significance** under **Criterion C: Architecture**.

¹¹³ Vance, *Early History*, p.191.

¹¹⁴ Maranda Radcliff and William Tyrell Leeper, “Arkansas Nuclear One,” *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, 27 July 2023, <https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/arkansas-nuclear-one-2161/>.

¹¹⁵ Decennial Census of Population and Housing §, accessed February 2, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/search-results.html?searchType=web&cssp=SERP&q=Russellville city, Arkansas>, accessed 2 Feb 2024.

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

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Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas

Name of Property

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Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

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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

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 39.6 acres.

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 15 | Easting: 487470 | Northing: 3903820 |
| 2. Zone: 15 | Easting: 487556 | Northing: 3903783 |
| 3. Zone: 15 | Easting: 487586 | Northing: 3903578 |
| 4. Zone: 15 | Easting : 487686 | Northing: 3903433 |
| 5. Zone: 15 | Easting : 487680 | Northing: 3903253 |
| 6. Zone: 15 | Easting : 487648 | Northing: 3903081 |
| 7. Zone: 15 | Easting : 487455 | Northing: 3903082 |
| 8. Zone: 15 | Easting : 487286 | Northing: 3903229 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See Boundary & UTM Map

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Old Town Historic District boundary embraces a concentration of buildings developed from 1890-1970 in what is left of the oldest residential area of Russellville. The 39.6 acre neighborhood has 103 houses and one commercial building, built during this period. The contributing structures correlate with the developmental history of the city.

Inside the boundary, the district has changed and grown with the evolution of the community; with the building patterns reflecting increases or decreases in the population and level of prosperity in the city of Russellville. The street configuration remains mostly unaltered, and all existing structures are in their original locations. Some buildings have been altered, especially through the replacement of siding, windows, and doors, or through the construction of additions. Those that are considered contributing to the architectural and historical integrity of the historic district retain their character-defining features and design attributes.

Outside the historic district boundary, changes are considerable. North of the district has been claimed mainly by large church grounds and their parking lots. One block to the east is

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Highway 7, also known as Arkansas Avenue. It is a very busy commercial thoroughfare. The eastern edge of the district, which is South Boulder Avenue, is separated from Arkansas Avenue by one block of small homes built around the 1980s. The south boundary of the district abuts a multi-family development, offices, and a school. The southwest corner of the district is composed of a few homes that appear could be included in the period of significance but have been significantly altered with infilled porches, siding, etc. Other homes in this area are newer and built outside the period of significance. The western boundary of the district is divided by a walking and bike trail system and a public park.

In summary, the district boundary includes what is left of the earliest residential development of the city of Russellville from 1890-1970. This is the time period most of the buildings in the district were built and what remains of the oldest residential architectural fabric of this community.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Antoinette Johnson, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator

organization: Johnson Consulting, LLC, and Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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city or town: Little Rock state: AR zip code: 72201

e-mail: ralph.wilcox@arkansas.gov

telephone: (501) 324-9787

date: March 12, 2024

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Old Town Historic District
Name of Property

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Old Town Historic District

City or Vicinity: Russellville

County: Pope

State: Arkansas

Photographer: Antoinette Johnson

Date Photographed: 12-30-23 & 2-27-24

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27. South Denver Avenue at West 3rd St. looking southwest.
- 2 of 27. South Denver Avenue at West 3rd Place looking northwest.
- 3 of 27. South Denver Avenue between West 4th and West 5th Streets looking northwest.
- 4 of 27. South Denver Avenue and West 6th Street looking southeast.
- 5 of 27. S Denver Avenue and W 7th Street looking northeast.
- 6 of 27. S Glenwood Avenue between W 5th and W 6th Streets looking west.
- 7 of 27. S. Glenwood Avenue at W 5th Street looking looking northwest.
- 8 of 27. W 6th Street between South Denver and S Glenwood Avenues looking southwest.
- 9 of 27. S Denver Avenue between W 6th and W 7th Streets looking southeast.
- 10 of 27. S El Paso Avenue and W 3rd Place looking south.

Old Town Historic District

Pope County, Arkansas
County and State

Name of Property

- 11 of 27. W 5th Street between S Glenwood and S Denver Avenues looking southeast.
- 12 of 27. S Denver Avenue and W 5th Street looking north
- 13 of 27. S Denver Avenue and W 4h Street looking northwest.
- 14 of 27. W 4th Place between S Glenwood Ave. and S. Denver Ave. looking south
- 15 of 27. 504 S Denver Ave., example of Queen Anne, looking west
- 16 of 27. 603 S. Commerce Ave., Roys House, ex. of elaborate Queen Anne, looking east
- 17 of 27. 511S. Commerce Ave., example of Colonial Revival, looking east
- 18 of 27. 508 S. Denver Ave., example of early Craftsman, looking west
- 19 of 27. 607 S. Denver Ave., example of Craftsman Bungalow, smaller home, looking east
- 20 of 27. 408 S. Commerce Ave., example of later Tudor Revival, looking west
- 21 of 27. 304 S. Denver Ave., example of Traditional Ranch, looking west
- 22 of 27. 408 S. Glenwood Ave., only example of Standard Commercial, looking west
- 23 of 27. 417 W. 5th St., example of Contemporary, looking south
- 24 of 27. 415 S. Denver Ave., example of larger Tudor Revival, looking east
- 25 of 27. 430 S. Denver Ave., example of Spanish Revival, looking west
- 26 of 27. 312 S. Denver Ave., Oscar Wilson House, ex. of large Craftsman, looking west
- 27 of 27. 602 S. Denver Ave., R.C. Brown House, ex. of Folk Victorian, looking west

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

