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AUG 30 2001
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

1100

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut

Other Name/Site Number: WO0041

2. Location

Street & Number: 222 South First Street

Not for Publication: NA

City/Town: Augusta

Vicinity: NA

State: AR County: Woodruff Code: 147 Zip Code: 72006-0211

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public-local

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. __ See continuation sheet.

Cathie Matthews 8/21/01
Signature of certifying official Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property __ meets __ does not meet the National Register criteria. __ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register _____ ____ Entered in the National Register 10/14/01
__ See continuation sheet.
__ determined eligible for the _____ ____
National Register
__ See continuation sheet.
__ determined not eligible for the _____ ____
National Register
__ removed from the National Register _____ ____

__ other (explain): _____

_____ _____ _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Social Sub: meeting hall _____ _____
_____ _____

Current : Social Sub: meeting hall _____ _____
_____ _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Other: square-notched log construction
_____
_____

Materials: foundation WOOD, STONE roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD/log other _____
_____

Describe present and historic physical appearance:

Summary:

The Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut is a 70 foot by 30 foot rectangular structure that sits on the eastern bank of the White River at Augusta in Woodruff County. The square-notched cypress-log structure is supported on the east side by low stone piers and on the west by four-foot wooden piers. The structure features composition shingles on its end-gable roof and a stone chimney.

Elaboration:

The Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut is a 70 foot by 30 foot rectangular structure that sits on the eastern bank of the White River at Augusta in Woodruff County. The square-notched cypress-log structure is supported on the east side by low stone piers and on the west by four-foot wooden piers. The structure features composition shingles on its end-gable roof and a stone chimney. The entire foundation is masked by sheet metal.

The east, or front façade, features a wood door at its northern extreme, which is accessed by three formed-concrete steps. Moving north, the façade features a single, double-hung, six-over-six window, then a pair of double-hung, six-over-six windows, followed by a simple wooden porch with a small shed roof supported by log posts and accessed by three wooden steps at the porch's northern end. Another pair of double-hung, six-over-six windows is located just north of the porch.

The southern façade features a six-pane window, which holds an air-conditioning unit. This window is flanked to the west by a stone chimney, which is itself flanked by another six-pane window.

The west, or rear, façade features an observation porch with eight log supports for the gable roof overhang. The entire porch was screened in during the 1950s and the north end was later enclosed with rough weatherboard to create a meeting space for the Legion Auxiliary's meetings. This façade is built over a low bluff atop four-foot piers, which hold the building above floodwaters of the White River. The unenclosed end of the porch features a wooden door flanked to the north by three double-hung, six-over-six windows. An additional wooden door opens into the south end of the enclosed Auxiliary room. The enclosed area is fenestrated by a pair of double-hung, four-over-four windows. The enclosure maintains the Rustic appearance of the rest of the structure.

The north façade is fenestrated by three separate double-hung, six-over-six windows.

The most prominent feature of the interior is the large cut-stone fireplace. The interior features a large, 30 foot by 48 foot room, with the 30 foot by 22 foot north end partitioned into a kitchen and restroom area.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period(s) of Significance: 1933-34

Significant Dates: 1933-34

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: CWA

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

SUMMARY:

The Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with local significance by virtue of its status as the best example in Augusta of a vernacular log meeting hall and under Criterion A with local significance for its association with the local activities of the American Legion in Augusta.

ELABORATION:

The American Legion was founded in France during the relatively quiet and uneventful days that followed the signing of the armistice that ended World War I. American enlisted men from all three of the principal branches of the service then in existence -- the Army, Navy and Marine Corps -- were billeted in various locations for the purpose of maintaining a military presence while the negotiators worked out the details of the treaty that would outline the political future of much of Europe for the next decade. These servicemen found life during the occupation uneventful and boring, and this only compounded the frustration felt by many at not being allowed to return home to family and friends. A small group of officers -- and especially Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. and Lieutenant Colonel George A. White -- met to discuss the possibility of establishing a veterans' organization which would include all branches of the military and which would serve the immediate purpose of providing an outlet for some of the energy and frustration felt by the occupation forces but which would also set as its larger goal the establishment of a nationwide veteran's organization that would provide its members with both a social organization and a vehicle for voicing their collective concerns about such issues as national defense, subversive activity, radical thought, domestic social programs and veterans' affairs.

Successive meetings over the course of the next several months in both Europe and America further defined the Legion's mandate and purpose. However, it was the shooting of four Legionnaires during an Armistice Day parade in the lumber town of Centralia, Washington, in 1919 by socialist IWW organizers and the subsequent coverage of the trial that followed -- in which the Legionnaires were portrayed as the aggressors -- that both galvanized and tempered the Legionnaire spirit. Both the public and the Legion press recognized the dangers of extremism by any party while admitting the need for responsible vigilance against any activity that threatened the democratic form of government. The American Legion began to grow steadily thereafter through an organization that elected officers on the national, state and local levels and provided a voice for its members regarding a variety of national concerns. During the Depression the American Legion distinguished itself in particular through the expansion of local programs targeted at youth. Of particular note were the founding of American Legion Junior Baseball, the American Legion Oratorical Contest and Boys' State.

The Augusta American Legion post was named for Jess Norman, the first man from Augusta to be killed during World War I. It is unknown where the Legionnaires met previously, but on January 5, 1933, the *Augusta Advocate* announced that the Jess Norman Post planned to construct a hut on the banks of the White River for "a minimum amount of money" and with "all labor … contributed by the Legionnaires." The article foresaw one of the structure's future uses, noting that "many of the younger set are urging the Leion to make the floor big enough for dancing, and they point to that as a possible means of revenue in the future." The Legionnaires planned a fund-raising event: a boxing match to be held in the largest courtroom in the Woodruff County Courthouse (NR 12/22/82) that would feature such local pugilists as Jelly Porter, Banty Geeham and Half Pint Thompson. Tickets would cost from 25 cents to one dollar. The *Advocate* article following the event fails to reveal how much money was raised for the building project, but does note that the crowd "filled about three fourths of the courthouse."

The land on which the Legion Hut was built was conveyed to the American Legion by two quitclaim deeds dated January 6, 1934. The first deed was from W.B., W.E., Daryl and Martha Conner and the second was from W.C. and Emily Berry. Each stated that the sale price was one dollar, with the stipulation that construction begin on the Legion

Hut within 90 days.

Despite the earlier fund-raising effort, when construction began on the building it was as a project of the Civil Works Administration, one of the earliest of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" program designed to put Americans back to work at the height of the Great Depression. The CWA proved $1778.88 for the project, of which $1,120 was earmarked for labor. By January 11, 1934, work was underway, as the *Advocate* reported:

"A dozen or more workmen are busy in the woods cutting the 300 logs that Wade Sale has donated for the exterior and another small crew is leveling ground for the building. … The Stanley power boat 'Cut Off' will be used to bring the logs down the river to the building site."

By February, the Legionnaires realized that the CWA funds would be insufficient "since such items as the rock chimney, the chinking of the logs, etc. were not included in the orginal outlay" and the group began a membership drive in a bid to raise the money needed to complete the structure. They apparently succeeded, as a March 22 *Advocate* article noted that workers at the hut "have revived the lost art of making roof boards. The town had to be scowered (sic) to find froes and draw knives," but in two days the workers succeeded in making 6,000 of the 20,000 shakes needed for the roof. A week later, the city put in a road to the nearly finished hut, a kindness repaid by the Legionnaires by an offer to allow the city to hold its regular monthly council meetings in the building after its completion.

By May 24, 1934, everything was done except construction of the stone fireplace and chimney and the addition of a rail around the balcony, so the Legionnaires turned their thoughts to an appropriate way of inaugurating their new structure. On June 21, they announced that a barbecue would be held on the 4th of July to officially bring the Legion Hut into service.

Some 150 people attended the opening, and the *Advocate* provided a glowing review of the fare: "Although the event had been advertised as a barbeque, it turned out to be a banquet. Never before was such a dinner served here. There were three kinds of barbeque: -- Mutton, goat and pig, dishes and dishes of salad, cakes, pies, and every other good thing to eat."

Just over one week later, the Legionnaires showed that they had listened to the "younger set" back in January 1933, when they held the first dance at the Legion Hut, featuring Guy Willis and his orchestra at $1 a couple. "The main room of the hut with its large floor space and the screened in porch that overlooks the river makes the hut one of the most attractive dancing places Augusta has ever had," the *Advocate* reported. The building would see many more dances in the years to come, including many for a new generation of servicemen called to duty in World War II, and was the site of many city celebrations. It remains in service today through the joint ownership of the Jess Norman Post 166 and the City of Augusta.

The Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut remains the best example of a vernacular, square-notched log meeting hall in Augusta today. It is also noteworthy for its associations with the local activities of the American Legion and as a tribute to the Legionnaires who persevered through the depths of the Depression to see their building constructed.

The Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C with local significance by virtue of its status as the best example in Augusta of a vernacular log meeting hall and under Criterion A with local significance for its association with the local activities of the American Legion in Augusta.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography

Abstract of Title, Augusta Title Company

Augusta Advocate, January 5 and 12 and February 9, 1933; January 4, 11, and 25; February 8 and 22; March 22 and 29, April 26, May 24, June 21, and July 5 and 12, 1934.

Newport American Legion Community Building National Register nomination, 1991

Information provided by Charles H. Schmidt.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_ previously listed in the National Register
_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_ designated a National Historic Landmark
_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office
_ Other state agency
_ Federal agency
_ Local government
_ University
_ Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 15 648450 3905290 B _ ___ ___
C _ ___ ___ D _ ___ ___

Verbal Boundary Description:

A tract or parcel of land west of Front Street in the Town of Augusta, Arkansas, described as follows:

Begin 40 feet west of the northwest corner of Block 9 of the Town of Augusta, Arkansas, and run South 100 feet to a point of beginning; thence run west to the low water mark on the White River; thence run down said River to a point directly east of the North Line of Mulberry Street, or the southwest corner of said Block 9, then run east to the west side of Front Street, thence run north along said west side of Front Street to the point of beginning. All of said lands being a part of the NW ½ of Section 36, Township 8 North, Range 4 West.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary contains all of the historic resources associated with this property that retain integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Mark Christ/Community Outreach Director

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: July 12, 2001

Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880
City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by A. Bennett
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
Construction Detail

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co., AR
Photo by ~~[illegible]~~ K. Mills-Oosterhous
June 2002
Negative on file at AHPP
View from Northeast

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by K. Oosterhaus
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
View from south

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by A. Bennett
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
Interior

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by K Mills-Oosterhous
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
View from West

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by K. Mills-Oosterhous
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
View from northwest

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by A. Bennett
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPP
Detail of SW

AMERICAN
LEGION
POW
MIA
HONOR RIBBON 1975

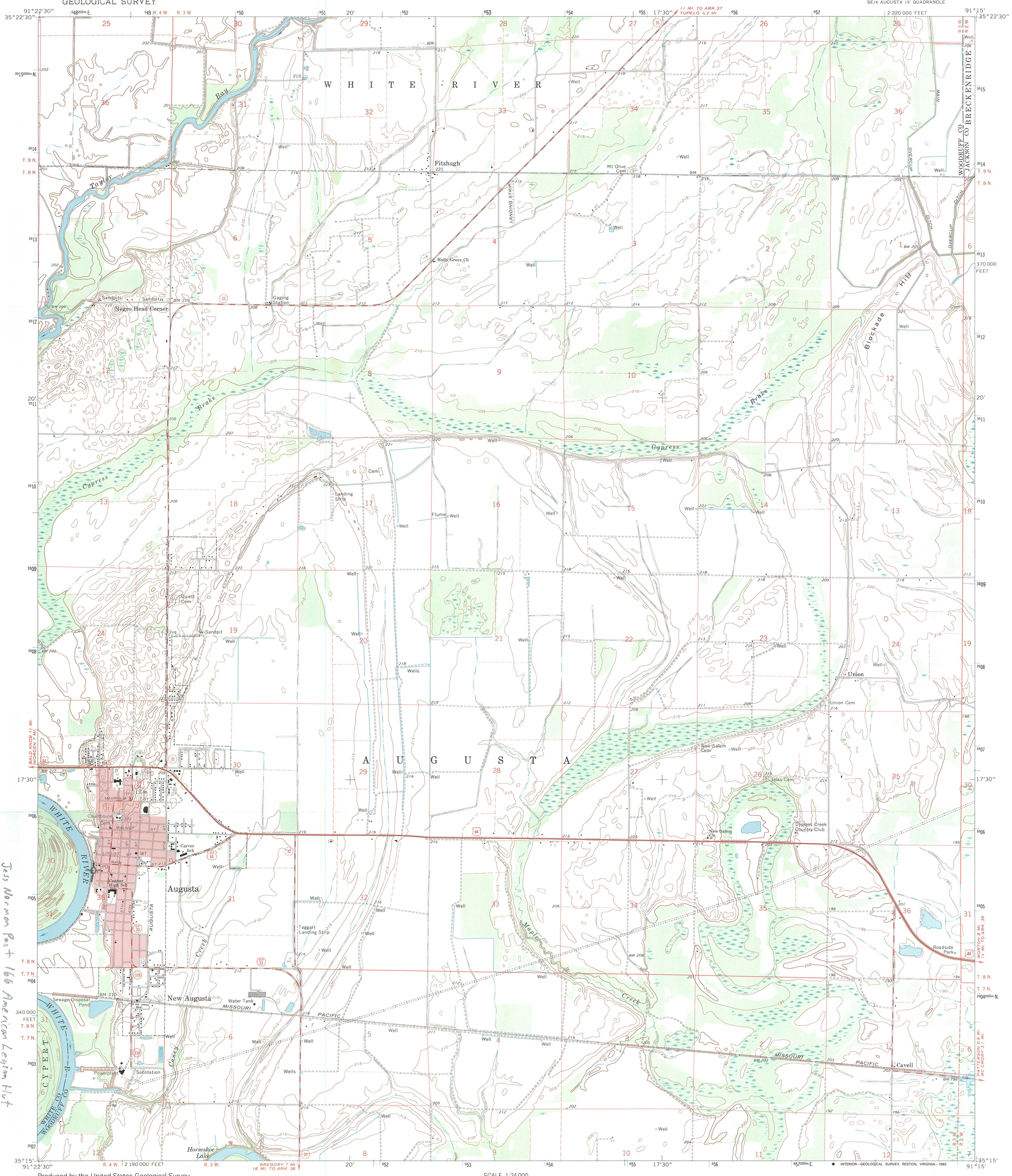
Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by A. Bennett
June 2000
Negative on file at AHPC
Fireplace detail

222
AUG
ERICAN LEGION
JESS
N POST 662

Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff Co, AR
Photo by A. Bennett
June 2000
Negative on file at ATHP
Detail of east porch

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

AUGUSTA QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SE/4 AUGUSTA 15' QUADRANGLE



Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut
Augusta, Woodruff County, AR
15/648450/3905290

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966-67. Field checked 1968
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Photoinspected from 1990 source; no major culture or drainage changes observed. Boundaries revised and names verified 1993

MN
GN
0°58'
17 MILS
2½°
44 MILS
UTM GRID AND 1993 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24 000
1 ½ 0 1 MILE
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 .5 0 1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ARKANSAS
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3
4		5
6	7	8

1 Bradford
2 Augusta NE
3 Tupelo
4 Augusta SW
5 McCrory
6 Georgetown
7 Gregory
8 Grays

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty — Light-duty
Medium-duty — Unimproved dirt
U. S. Route — State Route

AUGUSTA, ARK.
SE/4 AUGUSTA 15' QUADRANGLE
35091-C3-TF-024
1968
MINOR REVISION 1993

The Department of
Arkansas
Heritage

Mike Huckabee, Governor
Cathie Matthews, Director

Arkansas Arts Council
▪
Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
▪
Historic Arkansas Museum
▪
Delta Cultural Center
▪
Old State House Museum

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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August 23, 2001

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C St. NW
Room NC 400
Washington, D.C. 240

RE: Jess Norman Post 166 American Legion Hut, Augusta, Woodruff County

Dear Ms. Shull:

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

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

enc.

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