NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

**United States Department of the Interior**
National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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: Hankins' Store
Other names/site number: IN0255
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: Northeast corner of Ferry Road and Main Street (AR 14)
City or town: Oil Trough State: Arkansas County: Independence
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐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:

X **A** ___**B** ___**C** ___**D**

Martha Miller 3-26-14

**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

5.23.2014
Date of Action

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Private: | x |
| Public – Local | |
| Public – State | |
| Public – Federal | |

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Building(s) | x |
| District | |
| Site | |
| Structure | |
| Object | |

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**
**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
COMMERCE/department store/general store

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_OTHER/Plain-Traditional_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _WOOD, 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**

Hankins' Store is located in Oil Trough, Arkansas, at the intersection of Arkansas State Highways 14 and 122. The location is commonly referred by local residents as the north end of Main Street. Just north of the store is the old White River Slough that was left after the river changed course many years ago. Prior to 1940 this was the main course of the river. Many fishing docks and other ports were located on the river where ships could unload and load products. Oil Trough was a major river port when the store was built. This is one reason the store was located in its present location. The store building is approximately eighty feet long and forty-five feet wide. The original store building was eighty feet by thirty feet but an addition on the north side of the building in later years expanded the width to forty-five feet. The building was constructed using cypress lumber taken from large trees that were prominent along the river. The clapboard siding is original as are the windows and doors in the building. The steep roof is covered with corrugated sheet metal, and the building has a covered front porch supported by wood posts that once ran the full width of the building. The porch is twenty-two feet long and seven feet wide with three steps six feet in length with hand rails on each side.

## Narrative Description

### West/Front Elevation

The front part of the store is original with doors and windows that were installed at the time the building was built. Entrance into the building is through two original double doors measuring nine feet in height and two and one-half feet in width that are centered in the original part of the building. Two large four-paned windows flank the entrance doors, and they measure nine feet in height and are four feet wide. Above the doors is a transom window that is two feet in length and fifteen inches tall. The wood porch is twenty-two feet in length with three six foot steps with wood hand rails on each side of the steps. When the store was open an ice machine and two cold drink machines were on the porch.

The addition on the north side has a two-paned window measuring forty inches in length and thirty inches wide. This window is original to the time that the addition was built. To the right of the window is an entrance with a paneled wood door.

### North/Side Elevation

The addition on the north side of the building stretches the entire 80-foot length of the building. The siding is clapboard and is in reasonably good condition. There is one small window located near the front of the building on the north side. In the center of the building there are two boarded-up double doors that were originally used for unloading and loading feed when the store was used as a Purina Feed dealership. The north side is where a large pile of coal was stored when the store was heated by coal. There is a gravel driveway on the north side that runs along-side the store on the north side.

### East/Rear Elevation

The rear of the building has an entrance door towards the north end of the original building that was used by customers living behind the store. It was also used to carry in wood and coal for heating. There is a small window in the addition that was added to the original wall that is now boarded up. There is an offset room on the southeast corner that was used as an office. The office is attached to the store and has two windows, one located on the north side along with an entrance with a paneled door and one on the south side which is now boarded up. Air conditioner units are also located immediately behind the store under a covered roof. Air conditioning was added to the store in the 1960s.

### South/Side Elevation

The south side of the building is clapboard the entire length of the store. Near the front there is a large Pepsi sign that covers about half the side of the building. The sign has been there since the 1950s and is used by many travelers to identify the store. The kids always referred to the store as the "Pepsi Store." There is one small four-paned window near the roof about half way along the side of the building. Another window, now boarded up, is located in the center of the rear shed-roofed portion of the building. Some electrical wiring and exhaust piping is visible on the side of the building. Electricity was added to the building in the 1940s.

**Integrity**

The foundation and interior of the building is in fair condition. Most of the flooring is original but some has been replaced near the front entrance in high traffic areas. The ceiling is original and still in good condition. All interior walls are original and in fair condition. The clapboards on the outside of the building are in poor condition with many of the boards coming loose. Some boards above the porch are missing. However, it is the original siding and the building still has its original windows and doors.

For a building that has survived floods, tornadoes, and ice storms for 109 years, the building is still in fair condition, but does show signs of wear and tear, especially on the outside, common to any building of that age.

## 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.)

- [x] 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

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
COMMERCE

**Period of Significance**
1904-1963

**Significant Dates**
1904

**Significant Person**
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

**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.)

Hankins' Store is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance**. It is being nominated with a period of significance of 1904-1963 which encompasses the store's construction and many years of importance to the local economy of Oil Trough, Independence County, Arkansas. As one of the main stores in town, Hankins' Store was one of the most prominent stores in Oil Trough, and should be recognized for its important local history.

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

## HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

Although French traders and trappers were the first Europeans to visit the Independence County area when they sailed up the White River and camped at the area known as Oil Trough Bottom, permanent settlement of the area began c.1810. John Reed was one of the first settlers that arrived in the area, and he settled at the site of Batesville in 1812. Other people followed him to the area including Samuel Miller in 1813, Colonel Robert Bean in 1814 and James Trimble and his family in 1817. In response to the increased settlement, Independence County was created by the Arkansas territorial legislature on October 20, 1820, and the town of Batesville, which already existed, was in a central location, and had a location on a navigable river, was chosen as the county seat.[1]

The exploration and early settlement of Independence County was focused on the area's waterways, mainly the White River. According to Goodspeed, with respect to exploration, "French traders and trappers ascended White River long before the permanent settlement of the country traversed by it began. A party of these people encamped and hunted bear in the region now known as Oil Trough Bottom, in Independence County. … These traders and hunters left many marks of their travels at various places up and down the river, which were plainly visible to the pioneer settlers. Not a few of the streams and other natural objects were named by the French and Spaniards."[2]

When settlement began in the first decade of the 1800s, it also centered around the county's waterways. According to Goodspeed, "The permanent settlement of this territory is believed to have commenced about the year 1810, or perhaps a little earlier. John Reed located at the site of Batesville in 1812. Samuel Miller, of Tennessee, came in 1813, and subsequently settled on the creek that bears his name in this county. Col. Robert Bean ran the first keel boat up White River

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[1] *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, pp. 621, 623.
[2] *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 623.

and established himself at the mouth of Polk Bayou (Batesville) in 1814. James Micham settled near the same place in the same year."[3]

*Oil Trough History*

The Town of Oil Trough, Arkansas, is located approximately fifteen miles southeast of Batesville in Independence County and approximately twelve miles west of Newport, Arkansas, in Jackson County. It is located southwest of the White River in a rich area of bottomlands known as the Oil Trough Bottoms. The White River bottom is estimated to be fifteen miles long and averages about six miles in width. It is known as some of the richest farm land in the state of Arkansas.[4]

The fertile nature of the soil in the area was known at least as early as the 1830s. In 1838, German hunter Friedrich Gerstäcker traveled through the area, which he referred to as the "Oil Trove Bottom," and he commented on the fertile land and the size of the enormous trees in the area. He noted that the land could produce "sixty to seventy bushels of maize to the acre and pumpkins larger than a man can lift." In addition, one farmer named Magness was using the fruit of the paw-paw trees to make liquor.[5]

The area known as the Oil Trough Bottoms was first settled around 1817 with the arrival of Hardin Hulsey. Hulsey was soon followed by Charles Kelley, William Reed, Townsend Dickinson, William Dudley, James Miller, and John Safford (or Saffold). A post office was established on May 2, 1832, and was initially named Pleasant Island. However, on June 22, 1849, the name was changed to Oil Trough.[6]

According to legend, the name of the town came from the oil troughs which were used to store bear oil from bears in the area. By the early nineteenth century, the area was a favorite hunting ground for the French frontiersmen, and the stands of cane along the river as well as the limestone cliffs nearby provided excellent habitat for many kinds of wildlife, including bear. According to some accounts, the bear oil had many uses, including cooking, cosmetics, hair dressing, and tanning leather.[7]

Through the nineteenth century, Oil Trough grew and in 1852, the legislature approved the incorporation of the Oil Trough Academy. A co-educational academy, the first trustees were Edwin R. McGuire, James F. Saffold, and Daniel J. Chapman. By the 1870s, the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad was completed to the White River, and this allowed easy shipment of the grain and cotton crops from the Oil Trough area. In 1887, Oil Trough had

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[3] *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 623.
[4] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.
[5] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.
[6] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.
[7] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.

telephone service through the Oil Trough and Batesville Telephone Company. Also by the late nineteenth century, Oil Trough had two churches and a Masonic lodge, which was named for Edwin R. McGuire.[8]

Although the railroad was important to transportation in the Oil Trough area, the White River was also important, especially for shipping goods away from the area. According to *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*, "bear oil [was] shipped [from] here during the earliest days of settlement. Tree trunks were hollowed out with axes, the troughs were packed with bear grease, rafted together, and floated as far as New Orleans."[9] In addition to shipping goods on the river, for many years a ferry was the only way to cross the river in the Oil Trough area. In 1897, it was the *J. A. Woodson*, a stern-wheel paddle boat that was crossing the river. However, by the 1930s, the river was crossed by "The 'Oil Trough Barge,' as the ferry is called, [which] is a flat-bottomed, engine-propelled scow, held on its course by trolleys riding a steel cable." The fare was $0.25 for passenger cars and $0.50 for trucks. The ferry continued to be used until 1975 when a bridge was built between Oil Trough and Newark.[10]

Although the Oil Trough area has always been a farming community, the town now serves primarily as a residential community for residents working in Batesville and Newport. The town was not incorporated until July 22, 1959, and the population of the community has remained between 200 and 300 people for most of the period since its incorporation. With the mechanization of farming the work can be accomplished with fewer people forcing many people to look for work elsewhere. Farming today in the Oil Trough bottoms, as in most places, is mostly a family operation with members of the immediate family capable of doing most of the work required.[11]

*Hankins' Store History*

From the earliest days of Independence County's existence, commerce has been an important activity in the county. As Goodspeed notes in the *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*, "The principal trade of the place [Batesville] during its early existence was that of supplying the settlers with groceries and provisions, for which hides and furs from the then numerous wild animals were taken in exchange."[12]

By the late nineteenth century, however, the general store was the staple of commerce in many communities around Arkansas, and it was no different in Independence County. In addition to specialty stores such as groceries and drug stores, Goodspeed noted that Sulphur Rock had "eight

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[8] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.

[9] West, Elliott. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, p. 386..

[10] West, Elliott. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication, p. 386, and Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.

[11] Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.

[12] *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 627.

general stores," Pleasant Plains had "three general stores," Newark had "four general stores," Jamestown had "four general stores," and Cushman had "three general stores." Of course, since Batesville was the county seat, it was noted to have "fourteen general stores."[13] Although Goodspeed does not mention Oil Trough specifically, it is likely that the community also had general stores by the late nineteenth century.

From the earliest days of the United States, the general store was an important part of the American economy. In rural areas and small towns especially, the general store was where local residents bought groceries and supplies. However, in cities before the Revolutionary War, although general stores were present, the grocery trade was dominated by the public market. General stores started to appear in the seventeenth century in east-coast cities, and most storekeepers conducted both retail and wholesale trade. These cities continued to have several general stores into the eighteenth century, although specialized stores did begin to appear.[14]

The architecture of general or grocery stores in the colonial period resembled that of other retail establishments. During the 1600s, stores were small and usually included living quarters for the proprietor and their family. By the 1700s, although the basic design remained the same, there was more of an emphasis on more permanent materials. As a result, stores with brick or stone walls and with internal wood frames became more common. Frame structures became rarer due to the risk of fire, even though they still predominated.[15]

The location of general stores, especially in more rural areas, was governed by the "economics of transportation." As Henry Klassen writes in his book, *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*;

> Roads were few and physically modest, but such roads were the only market pathways that existed except for waterways. Country stores were located when possible at crossroads for practical reasons. A storekeeper could maximize any contact with potential passersby and be located at the one point where the greatest number of local settlers could take the fastest route to their supply source. At the time, settlers who were local producers could not profitably move heavy, bulky commodities for more than ten to twenty miles by land. The maximum travel distance to country stores was normally determined by a settler's proximity to roads and road conditions.[16]

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[13] *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Northeast Arkansas*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, pp. 628-629.
[14] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, pp. 43-44.
[15] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 45.
[16] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 52.

The location of the Hankins' Store, on a main corner in the center of Oil Trough, perfectly exhibits these principles.

By the time that the Hankins' Store was built, there had been changes in the architecture of the general store. As Klassen writes:

> ...Country stores were often insufficient in size to contain bulky commodities acquired through bartering with local settlers. Such goods were often stored behind the store until a sufficient amount was accumulated for shipment to market. To protect these goods, some storekeepers built warehouses for safe storage of their bartered commodities, which were later sent to market. The country store's site sometimes included a chicken shed and stables, much like a farmer's physical arrangements. Customer arrangements were relatively simple. In the beginning, a hitching post or rail was in front of the store. Porches were often built that served as a loading dock for customers to pack their supplies onto their wagons. The country store's building and site were designed as a processing center, albeit a relatively simple one.
>
> As general stores became part of a settlement that eventually became a town, store architecture changed. ...Buildings became larger to handle warehousing and larger retail space. ...Window design became important as storekeepers used bay windows to emphasize product displays. Building facades still remained plain with most signs limited to the name of the establishment. ...
>
> Store interiors were practical but not always systematically maintained and arranged. Cleaning and dusting the shelves occurred during the slow business time of the year and perhaps only twice a year. Country stores always had a hodgepodge appearance.[17]

The problem with organizing goods in a store like the Hankins' Store was the necessity of offering a wide variety of goods in a relatively small area. Also, the lack of retail packaging early on meant that the country store was not designed for easy modular storage systems.[18] The Hankins' Store illustrates the design of the general store at the turn of the twentieth century, which often included a square front façade, a permanent awning over the porch, and advertising covering portions of the building's exterior.[19]

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[17] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, pp. 52-53.
[18] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 53.
[19] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 65.

What is now known as Hankins General Store was built in 1904 by Moore and Ellison. The store has had five owners over the years. Mr. Moore who built the store operated it for many years before selling to Bert Pridmore. Mr. Pridmore only owned the store a short time before selling to H. T. and Violet Hankins in 1945. However, even though the building has had several owners, little exterior alterations have been undertaken.[20]

While it was in business, the Hankins' Store not only was an important commercial establishment for the people of Oil Trough, it also welcomed customers from all over the United States. Notable visitors to the store have included President Jimmy Carter, and Arkansas Governors Bill Clinton and Orval Faubus. With respect to the meal items that could be purchased at the store, Hankins' Store was especially known for its ham and cheese sandwiches.[21]

The store has served the residents of Oil Trough and surrounding areas for over 100 years. For most of its existence the store has been a general store, stocking all types of merchandise, including clothes, groceries, hardware, seed, shoes, lunch meats, medical supplies and most everything that homeowners and farmers needed for their homes and farming activities. During the early years of the store's existence most of the people lived on farms and were sharecroppers, and they lived most of the year without any income until crops were harvested in the fall. Most of the merchandise was sold on credit with the promise to pay when the crops were harvested. In later years, many of the inventory items were dropped and the store became primarily a grocery and convenience store.[22]

The practice of using credit at the Hankins' Store was not unique to that kind ofestablishment. The book *Cowbells and Coffins: The Old General Store* also speaks of the practice. It says that "Many of the early mercantile stores served as their towns' first banks, often in a corner of the store inside handsome wood enclosures with ornate tellers' windows. Banker-merchants exchanged credit for prospective crops, sometimes issuing metal tokens with cash value. At the end of the month, accounts would be settled that had been registered in a thick ledger or on little white pads, stored upright in a wooden box or in a black metal McCaskey file."[23] In addition to serving as an early and rudimentary banking center, the general store was sometimes the news center as well, especially since many stores for many years had the first and only telephone in the community.[24]

The original store building was 80 feet in length and 30 feet wide with a rolling ladder along the north wall so the clerk could reach the items on the higher shelves. The rear of the building had a 20-foot loft area for storage across the entire width of the store with beautiful spindles around the front. The loft and rolling ladder were later removed after the store was purchased by the

[20] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[21] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[22] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[23] Beverley, Mary Frances, with a foreword by Tumbleweed Smith. *Cowbells and Coffins: The Old General Store.* Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1987, p. vii.
[24] Beverley, Mary Frances, with a foreword by Tumbleweed Smith. *Cowbells and Coffins: The Old General Store.* Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1987, p. viii.

Hankins family. There was also a small office near the back door that was used as an office. This area was enclosed with a three-foot railing matching the spindles used on the loft. Heat for the store was provided by a coal-fired potbellied stove in the back. As in many general stores, the store was not just a place to buy supplies. The store was also a place for the locals to catch up on the latest happenings in the area.[25]

As the stock of the store increased and was diversified in the 1930s, an addition to the store was added on the north side of the building to be used for storage of larger items such as feed and hardware. The addition ran the full length of the original building and was approximately 15 feet in width. After the Hankins family purchased the store in 1945, the addition was converted to a recreational room with pool tables for several years. (The pool tables were moved after several years to another building on Main Street that originally housed a movie theater.) After the pool tables were moved, the room was used to house livestock feed after H. T. Hankins became a Purina Feed Dealer. The Purina agreement lasted for several years, but was eventually cancelled as dairy farmers in the area began to go out of business in the 1950s. The room then reverted back to a storage area. Around 1960, part of the north wall was removed opening up what had been the storage area, and enlarging the shopping area of the main store.[26]

Violet Hankins operated the store for 53 years until she had a stroke at the age of 82. She passed away in 1999. The store was open seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. until around 8:00 p.m. After her death, her youngest son, Parmer Hankins, kept the store open until 2004 when the store closed. The increased use of automobiles, and the opening of larger stores in the nearby cities of Batesville and Newport, meant that area residents did most of their shopping away from Oil Trough.[27]

Although the Hankins' Store closed in 2004, the survival of the business illustrates the importance of the store to the Oil Trough community. Indeed, in all parts of the country for several centuries, the general store was an institution that supplied many necessities for the community. However, with the consolidation of commercial activity in larger towns and cities, and with the increased use of the automobile, the general store has quickly become a thing of the past. However, the Hankins' Store is a rare survivor of the type, and illustrates the importance of the general store to Oil Trough's commercial history.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

As Klassen writes in *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*, "Prior to the Civil War, the romantic images and the grumbling realities of country store life and trade held true, but more critically, the country store represented an essential commercial outpost in the nation's frontier and hinterland. Its spatial isolation and architectural presence in a landscape dominated by nature often meant that it was the only form of communal civilization that existed. But as much as it was a center of community life, the country store was also capitalism penetrating its spatial margins so that the economy of the nation could maximize

[25] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[26] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[27] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.

markets through settlement trade."[28] Not only that, "Country storekeepers were the pioneers of commerce in the South that followed the small farmers."[29]

For over 100 years the Hankins' Store was a pillar of the community. Early residents in Oil Trough and the surrounding area depended on it for most all their needs during the first 50 years it was in operation. Credit was extended to those who needed it to provide for their families. Many were never able to pay or just refused to pay, but Mrs. Hankins always said that children deserve to have food on the table whether the parents could or would pay or not, and she was going to see that they had something to eat. She honored that commitment during all the years she operated the store. Many of the bills were never collected. She was a real strength for many people in the area. She not only provided food when they needed it, she also arranged for many people to have rides to the doctor or social services offices when necessary. During the war years she assisted those in the community who could not read or write well in answering letters to their husbands and sons in the military. Most of the area residents depended on Mrs. Hankins for many things besides just waiting on them in the store. The store had a significant commercial impact on the community and surrounding area from the time it was built in 1904 until it closed in 2004.[30]

However, the survival of the general store in rural Arkansas for so long, as in many rural areas of other states, was not uncommon. As the book *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space* states, "Country stores at crossroads were still able to thrive in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, because rural people had no fast way to travel to town. People traveled by horse and wagon over dirt roads that were poorly maintained. ...A poor transportation network in rural areas prevented chain companies from operating a store profitably while maintaining company operating policies of maximizing profits through volume trade."[31]

The importance of the general store in rural life and commerce is perfectly stated in *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*, which states that "The country store was a growth machine both in the nation's frontier and its hinterlands. Much like its city counterparts, the country store flourished when it dominated local trade. Moreover, country storekeepers followed the nation's frontier just as city grocery stores followed residential growth. But unlike city food retailing, the country store played a critical role in the territorial expansion of capitalism. Such stores were the business frontiers of the United States. The railroads and the telegraph were critical in making money the dominant currency in the hinterland, and the country store was the financial distribution point. The country storekeeper was not only a grocer but also a banker, a real estate agent, and an entrepreneur in general. As crude as it was in its spatial design, the country store provided a space where capitalism in the

[28] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 60.
[29] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 58.
[30] Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.
[31] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, p. 93.

United States frontier and hinterlands could advance."[32] The importance of a general store like Hankins' Store is also echoed in *Foxfire 9*: "Most communities in the mountains, as elsewhere, failed as viable communities without several essential institutional and social anchors: a post office, several churches (which usually doubled as schoolhouses on weekdays), a grist mill, a blacksmith shop – and a general store."[33]

For over 100 years, the Hankins' Store has served Oil Trough and the surrounding areas as the Wal-Mart of its day. Farmers and homeowners depended on the store for all the things they needed for everyday existence. With limited transportation in the early days the store was the only place available to them to purchase needed supplies and food. It served the community and its citizens for well over a century. For the important role that the Hankins' Store has served in the commercial history of the Oil Trough community, it is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion A** with **local significance**.

[32] Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, pp. 236-237.
[33] Wigginton, Eliot, and Margie Bennett, ed. *Foxfire 9*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1986, p. 83.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Beverley, Mary Frances, with a foreword by Tumbleweed Smith. *Cowbells and Coffins: The Old General Store*. Austin, Texas: Eakin Press, 1987.

Griffith, Nancy. "Oil Trough (Independence County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. Found at: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=5603.

Information on the Hankins' Store provided by Garland Hankins, Oil Trough, Arkansas.

Klassen, Henry C. *The American Grocery Store: The Business Evolution of an Architectural Space*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993.

West, Elliott. *The WPA Guide to 1930s Arkansas*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987 reprint of 1941 publication.

Wigginton, Eliot, and Margie Bennett, ed. *Foxfire 9*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1986.

**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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** _Less than one_

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: 35.632333° Longitude: -91.462809°
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**
**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
A part of Fractional Block 30 of the Town of Oil Trough, Arkansas, described by metes and bounds as follows: Commencing at the southeast corner of said Block 30, thence west along the north line of North St. 213 feet to beginning corner of parcel, thence north along west line of Sullivan property 165 feet, more or less to White River, thence westerly with the meanders of said river to point where the half section line of Section 30, Township 12 N, Range 4 W, intersects south bank of White River, thence south along said half section line to southwest corner of said Block 30, thence east 132 feet, more or less, to place of beginning.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
This boundary takes in all of the property historically associated with the nominated property.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: _Garland Hankins, Edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator_
organization: _Arkansas Historic Preservation Program_
street & number: _323Center St., Suite 1500_
city or town: _Little Rock_ state: _Arkansas_ zip code: _72201_
e-mail: ralph@arkansasheritage.org
telephone: _501-324-9787_
date: _December 20, 2013_

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**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.)

## 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: Hankins' Store
City or Vicinity: Oil Trough
County: Independence State: Arkansas
Photographer: Benjamin Harvey
Date Photographed: June 19, 2013

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

1 of 7 – West façade, facing east.

2 of 7 – South façade, facing north.

3 of 7 – East façade, facing west.

4 of 7 – East and north facades, facing southwest.

5 of 7 – North façade, facing south.

6 of 7 – Chimney in store interior, facing southeast.

7 of 7 – Interior view of store, facing west.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing 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.).
**Estimated Burden Statement**: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**Hankins' Store, Oil Trough, Independence County**

WGS 84
Lat. - 35.632333°
Long. - -91.462809°

N

**Hankins' Store, Oil Trough, Independence County**

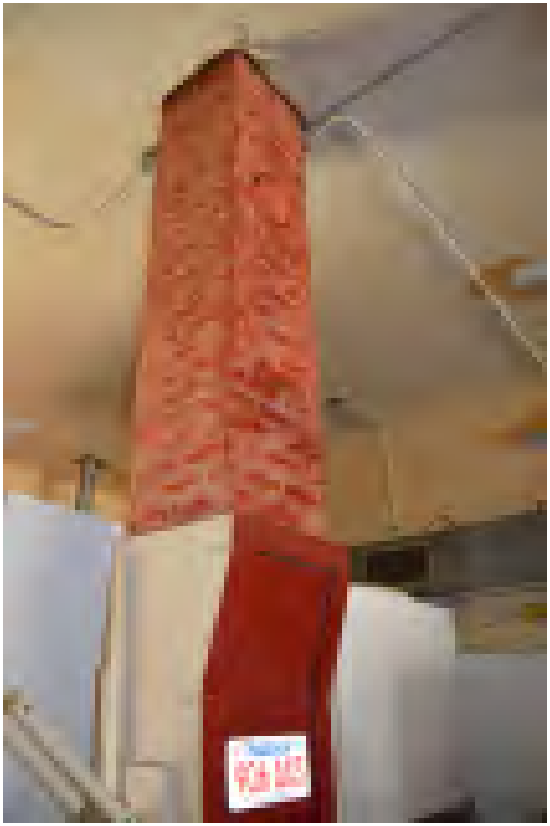
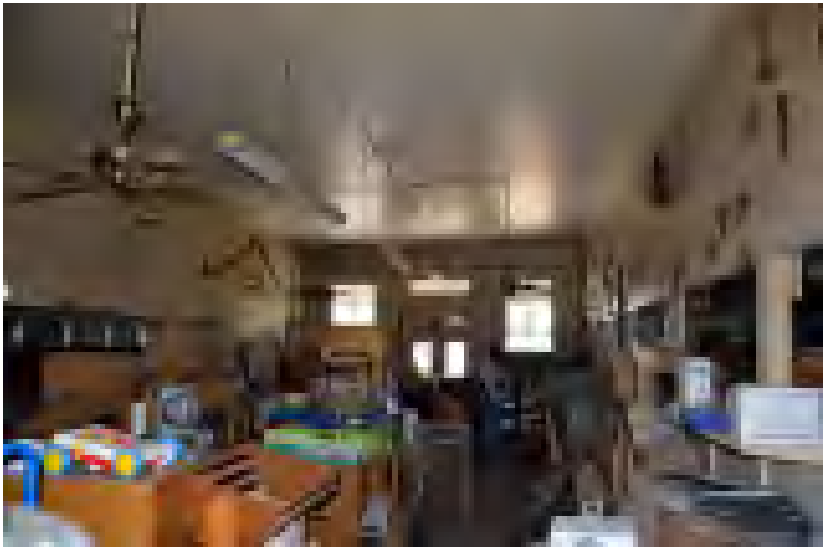
WGS 84
Lat. - 35.632333°
Long. - -91.462809°

N

PEPSI

OIL
TROUGH

5
Arkansas
99
906 AXS
The Natural State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