Form 10-306 (Oct. 1972) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES
(Type all entries • complete applicable sections)

1. NAME

COMMON:
Smokemont Baptist Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Oconaluftee Baptist Church

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
6 miles south of Cherokee, NC on N.C. 641 in Great Smoky

CITY OR TOWN:
Cherokee

STATE: North Carolina

COUNTY: Swain

ENTRY DATE

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)

District
Site
Object

OWNERSHIP

Public
Private
Both

STATUS

Public Acquisition:
In Process
Being Considered

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

Yes:
No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural
Commercial

Government
Industrial

Private Residence
Military

Religious

Transportation

No:

Other (Specify)

PRIVATE ACQUISITION:

3. Public

IN PROCESS:

Public Acquisition:
In Process

4. AGENCY

National Park Service, Department of Interior

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Southeast Regional Office

CITY OR TOWN:
Atlanta

STREET AND NUMBER:
3401 Whipple

STATE: Georgia

CODE: 13

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Swain County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Bryson City

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
None

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:
This is a rectangular building with a single, extended steeple on the front. It is one story with attic. It is a frame structure with weatherboard walls, painted white. The roof is gabled, and covered with sheet metal. The upper portion of the steeple extends approximately 10' above the roof, and is roofed in sheet metal, topped by a lightning rod. The top four feet of the steeple is louvered to form a belfry.

Overall size of the main room is 50'X30', and the entryway formed by the extended tower is 8'X8'.

Basic Interior Plan: Basic interior is an auditorium with foyer. The bell is still in place in the belfry, and attic and belfry may be reached by ladder through a trap door. There are no stairs.

Religious and homecoming services are held occasionally, so the building is still furnished with pews, a pot-bellied stove, and a pulpit. There are no modern utilities.

Floors: The floor is 1"x8" board, unfinished.

Ceilings: The ceiling is 1"x8" pine, unfinished.

Windows: There are a total of seven windows in the building. All are rectangular, single hung. There is a 9 over 9 in the end of the extended steeple, and the steeple is flanked by 4 over 4 windows. There are two 4 over 4's on the east and west sides of the main room. All components of the windows are manufactured. There are several broken lights.

Doors: There are a total of three doors. There is one on the south, or back of the building, and two opening into the extended steeple. All doors are standard size, rectangular. They are four panel, wooden, with modern hardware.

Heat for the building is provided by a wood burning pot-bellied stove and there is a central, single, brick chimney.

General Location: The building is oriented north and south, and sits on a hill overlooking Smokemont Campground. It is located on the east side of Oconaluftee River, off U. S. Highway 441, in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Smokemont Baptist Church, historically known as Oconaluftee Baptist.  
Order of significance: 3rd

The present church building was erected in 1912. However, the church was organized at a much earlier date. The church was constituted June 6, 1836. The constituting presbytery was made up of Adam Corn and David Elder. Robert Collins and Ephraim Minges were elected deacons, and the charter membership totaled 21.

Rules of decorum were established, by-laws were promulgated, and the church as an organization was a reality.

Records of the church were kept until 1895.

In the isolated communities of the Great Smoky Mountains, the church was a center of social, as well as spiritual life. The records of the Oconaluftee Baptist contain records of deaths, marriages, baptisms, and the joining and leaving of the fellowship by members. There are also records of members being called before the church and being charged with such offenses as swearing, lying, and slander. In many cases the accused was found guilty and excluded from membership in the church. In others, the charges were proven unfounded, and the cases dropped.

The name of the community and church were changed in the early 1900's from Oconaluftee to Smokemont. This came about when logging and lumbering operations began in the mountains, and a lumber company established its headquarters on the Oconaluftee River and called the camp Smokemont.

It cannot be determined why no church records were kept following 1895. The church continued as a body until 1935, some 40 years later. At that time, the Smokemont area was included in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
### 8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Records, 1836-1894, Oconaluftee Baptist Church


### 9. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES**

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**APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:** 3 acres

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

**STATE:**

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### 10. FORM PREPARED BY

**NAME AND TITLE:**

Paul Gordon, Historian

**DATE:** 7-27-73

**BUSINESS ADDRESS:**

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

**PHONE:** (615) 436-5615

**CITY OR TOWN:** Gatlinburg

**STATE:** Tennessee

**CODE:** 47

### 11. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

**State Liaison Officer recommendation:**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [x] None

**State Liaison Officer Signature:** [Signature]

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is: [ ] National [ ] State [ ] Local

**I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.**

**Director, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation**

**Date:** 11/96

**ATTEST:**

**Deputy Assistant Secretary**

**Date:** 12/31/75
The church is still used on occasion, chiefly as a homecoming site for descendants of Oconaluftee area pioneers.

The church has been rehabilitated and repaired by the persons using it in the years since 1935. Unfortunately, care has not always been taken to maintain the original integrity of the building.

However, the association of a distinctive culture, and the documentation provided by the records make it a valuable part of the pioneer story. Generally, documented history is non-existent in the mountains.