

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Davis, James M., House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 2763 Old Highway 14 South

not for publication

city or town Pelham

vicinity

state South Carolina code SC county Spartanburg code 083 zip 29650

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 local

Signature of certifying official

Date

Title _____ 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

James M. Davis House
Name of Property

Spartanburg County, SC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| X | private |
| | 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	2	buildings
		district
1		site
	1	structure
		object
2	3	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

American Foursquare

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Stone

Foundation: Brick

walls: Weatherboard

Vinyl

Asphalt

roof: Metal

other: Concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The James M. Davis House is in southwestern Spartanburg County in the community of Pelham, north of the Pelham Mill Village. The 1.53-acre property is bounded by Old Highway 14 South on the west, East Greer Street to the south, two neighbor's properties to the north, and Davis Circle to the east. The west-facing large two-story house sits off the street and is approached from either Old Highway 14 South or East Greer Street by a semicircular driveway . There are two contributing resources: the house and a landscaped yard including a stacked stone wall. There are two noncontributing buildings and one noncontributing structure: a ca. 1950 detached garage, a ca. 1950 wood-frame playhouse, and a ca. 1915 stone well surrounded by a ca. 1950 stone-faced pergola.

Narrative Description

The James M. Davis House is a substantial two-story, wood-frame, raised, single-family dwelling constructed ca. 1915. The house, a central hall type, Prairie Box or American Foursquare variation, has a pyramidal roof with wide overhanging eaves, a hipped front-facing dormer, two symmetrically placed internal chimneys, and a one-story, full-width porch that wraps partially around both sides of the house with shed roof and overhanging eaves. (Photos 2-3). On the southern elevation is a one-bay wide by one-bay deep hip-roofed square projecting wing, into which the front wraparound porch terminates. The house displays Prairie form and Craftsman details, typical of the American Foursquare, with its simple square plan, pyramidal roof, symmetrical façade with central front entry, and wide overhanging eaves.

The American Foursquare developed as a purely American residential form that was a simplified, economical reaction to Victorian asymmetry and elaboration of detail. These houses often incorporated Craftsman details. Some examples of Craftsman details in the Davis House include the hipped roof and hipped front dormer, paired double-hung windows with multi-glazed upper sashes only, triple multi-pane window in the single central dormer, and a symmetrical fenestration pattern (Photos 2-3). In addition, porch supports are brick with pairs of squared wood posts. The Craftsman style was popular during the early twentieth century for its emphasis on simple lines, natural materials, and attention to the hand of the maker.

The main entrance of the Davis House is centrally located on the front façade accessed by a grand brick stair with stepped cheek walls. The five-bedroom, two-bathroom house has approximately 3,580 square feet of living space. The floor plan on the first floor includes two front parlors, a bedroom, dining room, bathroom, and kitchen (Photos 10-15). The second floor is accessed by one centrally located staircase (Photo 17). The floor plan on the second floor features four bedrooms and one bathroom (Photo18).

Alterations to the house include historic and recent sympathetic changes. The most significant alteration was the application of vinyl siding over the original wood weatherboard in 1989. The siding does not, however, obscure the form or details of the house and does not detract materially from its overall architectural integrity.

Aluminum awnings were added to the façade at the central portion of the front porch and to the second-story windows at an unknown date. The northern half of the west-facing front porch and a portion on the north façade was enclosed circa 1930 to accomodate a sleeping porch, a common historic alteration (Photos 8-9).

Continuation Sheet 1 Item number 7 Narrative Description

The contributing site is the original landscaping complete with an assortment of foundation plantings, mature trees, a semi-circular driveway in front of the main house, and a low, ca. 1915 stacked stone wall that runs along the south side of the property at East Greer Street (Photos 1, 4-5, 19-21). In addition, a paved driveway at the rear of the main house leads to the two-story detached garage. The noncontributing structure on the property is a stacked stone well constructed ca. 1915 just east of the main house (Photos 10, 24).

Two historic resources do not contribute to the historic or architectural significance of the James M. Davis House because they were built later than the period of significance of 1915-1943. They are a two-story detached garage and a one-story, wood-frame playhouse. The detached garage, built ca. 1950, is a two-story concrete block building with two garage bays between two entry doors on the south façade and residential space on the second floor (Photo 22). The second-story living space, approximately 800 square feet, includes two bedrooms and one bathroom. The one-story, wood-frame playhouse (or doll house), also built ca. 1950, has a side-gabled roof with scalloped vergeboard, front porch, double-hung windows, and a central entry door. It was built north of the main house. (Photos 23-24)

The Davis family has continuously owned and lived in the house since its construction. The house has been updated with modern amenities such as electricity, running water, and indoor plumbing. With the exception of the addition of vinyl siding, the house retains its original form and style, footprint, building materials, fenestration pattern, and significant architectural features. The property, with its associated historic site, buildings, and structures retains its historic integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, feeling and association.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1915-1943

Significant Dates

ca. 1915

1943

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Davis, James Marvin

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A owed 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.

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The James M. Davis House is being nominated under National Register Criterion B on the local level for its association with prominent local merchant and community leader James Marvin Davis (1877–1943), with Commerce as the Area of Significance. Davis, a Pelham native, built this large modified American Foursquare home ca. 1915, locating it on a shaded hill, across the street from his general store. He operated this store, on the west side of Old Highway 14 South, for nearly sixty years. The Davis family home is the last remaining historic resource associated with James M. Davis because the general store across the street which he operated until his death was torn down in 2007.

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

James Marvin Davis (1877–1943) was a prominent member of the community as well as a leader in Pelham's commercial history, operating Davis Mercantile, a general store, in Pelham from ca. 1905 until his death in 1943. He opened Davis Mercantile, a dry goods and mercantile store which was one of the only general stores to serve the Pelham Mill Village area, circa 1908. Between 1905 and 1910 Davis and Company was one of three general stores listed for Pelham in the *South Carolina State Gazetteer and Business Directory* (Lucas and Richardson). The store was a two-story building with groceries, hardware, livestock feed, and candy on the first floor and dry goods, such as cloth, pictures, and shoes, on the second floor.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Early settlers were arriving in the Pelham and Batesville area as early as the 1780s. Originally known as Buena Vista, because of the natural beauty of the Enoree River, the town's name was changed to Pelham in 1880 (*Memories of Pelham and Batesville*, unpublished). Pelham Mill and Pelham Mill Village were located north of the Enoree River at the Spartanburg-Greenville County line. The original mill on the site of Pelham Mill was built circa 1820 but burned. By the 1830s Phillip C. Lester and Josiah Kilgore rebuilt the mill, then called Lester's Factory (it had also been called Buena Vista Factory). After an 1853 fire, Lester and his sons again rebuilt the mill now calling it Lester & Sons. In 1880, Arthur Barnwell purchased the mill and renamed it Pelham after the place he lived at the time: Pelham, New York. Pelham Manufacturing closed its doors in 1935, forcing numerous locals to find work at other nearby mills. The mill and many of its warehouses burned in 1941 leaving only ruins of the mill ("Pelham-Batesville region played major role in beginning of area textiles, *Greer Citizen*, July 26, 1989). The Pelham Mills Site, an archaeological site including the ruins of all the Pelham textile mills from ca. 1820 to 1941, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 19, 1987.

Davis was born and spent his whole life in the Pelham area. He was born to Ann Lister "Hattie" and John Wesley Davis, both of South Carolina, in March 1877. In 1900 James Davis was listed as 23, single, living at home in Reidville Township (southwestern Spartanburg County), and the eldest of six children (*U.S. Federal Census*, 1900). He married Frances E. Shuler in 1905, began his family, and opened his business.

In 1910 James M. Davis is listed in the United States Federal Census as a home owner and in retail dry goods. By 1910 he and Frances had three daughters (Ruth, age 4; Willie Mae, age 3; and Lila, age 2) (*U.S. Federal Census*, 1910). By 1920 the Davis family had grown to include Dennis, age 9; Elcie Lee, age 7; and a newborn

Continuation Sheet 2 Item number 8 Statement of Significance

Mary. James Davis was listed as a retail merchant and they were at the same location in Reidville, Spartanburg County (*U.S. Federal Census*, 1920). The Davises had a total of eight children.

Davis Mercantile burned sometime in the late 1920s and was rebuilt with a smaller store in the same location. This was a one-story building with a front porch and central entry doors. Eventually two gravity-flow gas pumps were installed in front of the store. Davis kept the store stocked with basic supplies such as groceries, kerosene, livestock feed, hardware, medicine, various dry goods, tobacco products, and candy and soda. A pot-bellied stove, used to heat the store in the winter months, served as the gathering place for men to chew tobacco while discussing crops or politics. Locals also used to play checkers outside the front of the store. Pelham Precinct, Spartanburg County, used the store as its voting place until the Pelham-Batesville Fire Department was built in 1969 (*Memories of Pelham and Batesville*, unpublished).

After James M. Davis died in 1943, his children kept the store open. His son, Dennis Davis ran the general store after his father passed away. Then, daughters, Lila and Elcie ran the store for Dennis while he served overseas during World War II. The store closed in 1963 after Dennis's death ("Pelham-Batesville region played major role in beginning of area textiles," *Greer Citizen*, July 26, 1989). The store is no longer extant; the roof collapsed during a large ice storm and the building was torn down in 2007.

The James M. Davis House was not only the center of the Davis family life, but throughout the twentieth century it was important to the community's social history. Often, teachers who taught at local area schools boarded at the Davis House during the school year. In addition, Lila Davis, a retired registered nurse who had worked for the Greenville Hospital system, served the medical needs of the Pelham community for many years. Family members say it was not uncommon for members of the community suffering from various ailments to drop by the house to seek nurse Lila's advice. Friends and neighbors return to the house every year for the family's annual Christmas party.

For many years Davis filled the store's delivery truck or "dray truck," on Christmas Eve with fruits, nuts, groceries, and candies and delivered good wishes to the less fortunate. Davis was also a deacon and member of the Pelham Baptist Church. He served as a trustee of the Pelham Schools for thirty five years. He was buried in nearby Ebenezer Cemetery.

Continuation Sheet 3 Item number 9

Bibliography

B.P. Barber & Associates, Inc., Property of the J.M. Davis Estate, Plat Book 159, Page 103. Plat Records, Spartanburg County Assessor's Office.

Belcher, Ray and Joada P. Hiatt, *Greer Then & Now*, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, 2007.

"J.M. Davis of Pelham Taken; Rites Thursday," *Greenville News*, February 16, 1943.

McAlester, Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2000.

Memories of Pelham and Batesville, unpublished, authors include Evelyn George, Dot Howard, Frances Merritt, Evelyn Satterfield, Harold Satterfield, Jr., Fred Smith, Joyce Smith, and Virgil Smith.

Owens, Lori, "Pelham-Batesville region played major role in beginning of area textiles," *Greer Citizen*, Greer, S.C., Wed. July 26, 1989.

Rakar, Regina, *Interview with Elcie Davis, June 7, 2009*, Spartanburg County, S.C.

South Carolina State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1890-91.

South Carolina State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1905-1910. Published by Lucas and Richardson Company.

Spartanburg County Assessor's Office. Detail Property Information.
<http://www.spartanburgcounty.org/asrinfo/mcdetails.aspx?recid=9-07-...>

Telephone Directory, Greer, S.C., Also listings of Lyman, August 1959.

United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Pelham Quadrangle, South Carolina, 1983.

United States Federal Census, Spartanburg County, S.C.

1900
1910
1920

James M. Davis House
Name of Property

Spartanburg County, SC
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.53 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 388032 3858253
Zone Easting Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing

2 Zone Easting Northing

4 Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

(see continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

(see continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lannie E. Kittrell, MHP, Architectural Historian [with assistance from the SC SHPO Staff]

organization _____ date February 11, 2010

street & number 730 Vision Road telephone 843/216-1973

city or town Mount Pleasant state SC zip code 29464

e-mail lanflor@yahoo.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: James M. Davis House
2763 Old Highway 14 South

City or Vicinity: Pelham

County: Spartanburg County **State:** South Carolina

Photographer: Erin Craven

Date Photographed: June 7, 2009

Location of Original Digital Images: S.C. Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. Main house and property, front lawn
2. Main house and property, west façade (close)
3. Main house and property, south façade
4. Main house and property, north façade with doll house and detached garage
5. Main house and property, approach from East Greer facing NE
6. Detached garage, approach from rear drive
7. North facade with doll house in foreground
8. Main house and property, porch enclosure
9. Main house and property, porch enclosure (2)
10. Main house interior, front entry door and northwest parlor
11. Main house interior, northwest parlor
12. Main house interior, northwest parlor (3)
13. Main house interior, staircase
14. Main house interior, southwest parlor
15. Main house interior, dining room
16. Main house interior, rear porch looking into kitchen

Continuation Sheet 4 Item number Photographs

17. Main house interior, staircase from upstairs
18. Main house interior, upstairs hallway facing east
19. Main house and property, rock wall facing NW
20. Main house and property, rock wall (detail)
21. Main house and property, view from front porch facing W
22. Detached garage, southeast oblique
23. Doll house, south façade
24. Doll house, north façade
25. Rock well

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 18 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.

Continuation Sheet 5 Item number 10

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundaries of the nominated property are shown as the black line marked "James M. Davis House," on the accompanying Spartanburg County Plat, Book 159, Page 103, drawn at an original scale of 1" = 100'.

According to the plat recorded December 29, 2005 with the Office of Register of Deeds, Spartanburg County (Book 159 Page 103) of the J. M. Davis Estate, the 1.53-acre property begins at a point near the intersection of East Greer Street and Old Highway 14 South and follows northerly 115.02' and continues northerly 59.67' until just past the driveway. Here the property line continues eastward 150.47' and then jogs northward 76.64' and back eastward 141.32' where it turns southward 14.11' and continues in an eastward direction 26.62' to a point near the center of Davis Circle. From here the property line continues in a southerly direction along Davis Circle for 45.27', 41.80', 39.07', 59.72', and 90.43' where it meets at a point near the intersection of Davis Circle and East Greer Street. From here the property line continues in a westerly direction parallel to East Greer Street for 371.56' to the beginning point near the intersection of East Greer Street and Old Highway 14 South.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

According to the plat recorded December 29, 2005 with the Office of Register of Deeds, Spartanburg County (Book 159 Page 103) of the J. M. Davis Estate, the 1.53-acre property is bounded by Old Highway 14 South on the west, East Greer Street to the south, two neighbor's properties to the north, and Davis Circle to the east.