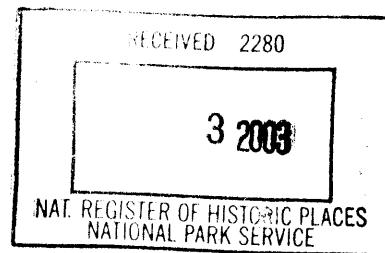


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name Monroe, Bill, Farm

other names/site number The James B. Monroe Farm, OH-20, OH-21

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication NA

city or town Rosine vicinity X

state Kentucky code KY county Ohio code 183 zip code 42370

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 X nationally statewide locally.

David L. Morgan 5-30-03
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, SHPO Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register _____

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): _____

Daniel J. V. V. 7/18/03

for Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0Name of related multiple property listing N/A**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Family Dwelling</u>
<u>Agricultural / Subsistence</u>	<u>pasture/timber/tobacco</u>
<u>Industry/Processing/Extraction</u>	<u>extractive facility (coal mine)</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Work in Progress Sub: _____**7. Description**Architectural Classification No Style

Materials	foundation <u>limestone blocks / limestone</u>
	roof <u>wood shingles / composite</u>
	walls <u>wood weatherboarding</u>
	other <u>permastone</u>

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance EntertainmentPeriod of Significance 1911-1929Significant Dates 1920Significant Person Monroe, William "Bill" SmithCultural Affiliation NAArchitect/Builder Monroe, James Buchanan (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance (See continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References (See 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: _____

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property approximately 1000 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	
1 16	521 110	4144 200	Horton Quad
2 16	522 105	4142 470	
3 16	522 050	4141 390	
4 16	519 730	4141 790	
5 16	519 600	4143 680	

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheet.)**Boundary Justification** (See continuation sheet.)**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title J. Paul McCoy
organization _____ date November 24, 2002
street & number 850 Wilkinson Trace #176 telephone (270) 846-7987
city or town Bowling Green state KY zip code 42103

Property Owners:

Jack Spinks, 1059 Lewis Creek Lane, Beaver Dam, KY 42320

Haward Spinks, 192 Windward Lane, Harford, KY 42347

Bill Monroe Foundation, PO Box 429, Rosine, KY 42370

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Section 7 Page 8 The Bill Monroe Farm: Ohio County, Kentucky

Narrative Description

The Bill Monroe farm is situated two miles West of the intersection of US 62 and US 1544. The significant property to be nominated encompasses the Bill Monroe Homeplace and the surrounding five acres owned by the Bill Monroe Foundation, as well as approximately 1000 acres owned by brothers Jack and Hayward Spinks. Aside from the contributing structure of the Homeplace and the contributing sites of an abandoned coal mine and Jerusalem Ridge, the property also contains the non-contributing Charlie Monroe House and one out-building. The property also contains two festival stages and a sorghum mill. The stages and mill are non-contributing structures. In addition to the five acres and Homeplace, the Bill Monroe Foundation plans to purchase the surrounding 1000 acres in the future.

The Charlie Monroe House (OH21) was built in either 1945 or 1946. Aerial maps from 1950, available at the offices of the Ohio County PVA, show the house was constructed by that time. Property record cards from the same office estimate the house's construction date as 1945. Oral history reports that Charlie Monroe moved back to Rosine between 1945 and 1946, thus the Charlie Monroe house falls well within the 50 year age requirement of the National Register.

The Charlie Monroe House (OH21), the first structure seen upon entering the Monroe farm, is a mid 20th century example of a southern bungalow. It was built by Charlie for himself and for his wife, Betty. The exterior walls, originally wooden clapboards, have been covered with Permastone. According to oral history, the Permastone was probably sold to Monroe by a traveling salesman in the 1950s. There is an attached garage, front porch, side porch, and shed rear porch where the original wooden clapboards are still visible. The house, which rests on a stone foundation, has three brick chimneys; one of which is covered entirely by Permastone. A small, single-crib barn is adjacent to the Charlie Monroe House. According to oral history, Charlie Monroe owned approximately 30 fox hounds. It is likely that this smaller barn was used as a shelter for the hounds, as well as a storage facility for small machinery and/or tools.

The Bill Monroe Homeplace (OH20) is approximately half a mile up the road from the Charlie Monroe house. The 1000-square foot Homeplace was constructed in 1920 by Monroe's parents James Buchanan and Malissa Monroe when Bill Monroe was nine years old. All of the Monroe children, with the exception of Bill and Bertha, were born in a saddlebag log cabin on the exact same site. Bill Monroe was born in another house that once stood on the property (any record or remnant of this structure has been lost). The log house, which was likely constructed in the mid-19th century, reportedly burned to the ground in 1916 when Bill was five years old. The chimney and hearth of the log cabin were spared and incorporated into the design of the 1920 Homeplace.

The Homeplace consists of a frame saddlebag structure with a wing. The two rooms in the saddlebag section were used as bedrooms: one for James and Malissa Monroe and one for their daughters. The wing consists of a small breezeway adjacent to the saddlebag section. This breezeway was likely viewed as wasted space and later converted into Bill Monroe's bedroom. This bedroom connects to a small kitchen which in turn connects to the bedroom of Bill's brothers.

The house is wood framed in a T-plan with three gabled ends. Each room contains multiple windows, and connects to the outside by at least one exterior door. There are ten doors

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and fourteen windows throughout the house. There are three chimneys; one of which was originally built for the log structure that burned and is situated between the bedrooms of the parents and daughters. The remaining two chimneys date from 1917 and are located in the kitchen and brothers' room. The house is covered in wood siding with Victorian accoutrements on the spindles of the front porch and wood shingles on the roof.

Throughout the years following the fame and influence of Bill Monroe, vandals took many pieces of wood from the original structure as souvenirs. Approximately five percent of the wood on the front of the house was stolen or damaged. Along with this vandalism, natural weathering and poor upkeep had all but condemned the Bill Monroe Homeplace. The house sustained broken windows and holes in the roof, and the front porch had completely disappeared. The original foundation stones were sinking into the ground, and one of the brick chimneys was in danger of caving in. Despite these unfortunate instances, the basic design and integrity of the structure remained.

Upon purchasing the house and surrounding five acres, the Bill Monroe Foundation hired restoration expert Vic Hood from Tennessee. Hood, whose restoration credits include the Tennessee State Capitol Building, Davy Crockett's home, and the Hermitage—the home of Andrew Jackson, concluded that if the house was not restored immediately, it would not last another winter. The restoration process began on May 16, 2001 and was meticulously executed. Executive director of the Bill Monroe Foundation, Campbell Mercer, consulted David Morgan, the Kentucky State Historic Preservation Officer, for guidance in adaptive reuse and restoration. The restoration crew removed, numbered, and replaced wooden shingles and clapboards in order to maintain historic integrity while preserving the structure. They created wooden shingles and clapboards to replace rotten ones, and meticulously studied photographs to insure paint colors and stylistic adornment were rendered accurately. Other than the replacement of rotten or stolen materials, the only addition made to the Homeplace was electricity and a heating system. These alterations were necessary for lighting and heat for visitors.

Adjacent to the Homeplace are two non-contributing amphitheatres. There are two stages: one north and one south of the Homeplace. These stages were constructed from cedar that is native to the Monroe farm and are used for music festivals and performances held at the Homeplace. Although these stages are new construction, they do not severely impact the appearance of the farm as an historic site.

The abandoned coal mine that lies just east of the Homeplace was worked by Bill Monroe and his father, James Buchanan Monroe, in the 1920s. Besides being a contributing site as a poignant reminder of one of the original uses of the Monroe farm, work in the mine molded Bill Monroe's mind and body. Although the mine has been boarded up, three of its abandoned rail cars remain on the Monroe farm as reminder of the link. One car seems particularly poignant because a cedar tree has grown in its center.

Another use of the Monroe farm was the manufacturing of sorghum. A new sorghum mill has been constructed near the site of the coal mine and is non-contributing. The new mill is modeled after historic mills of the early 20th century in order to blend with the historic environment.

East of the sorghum mill and coal mine is the Pigeon Ridge overlook. This area of land was strip mined in the mid 20th century on three separate occasions. The final mining attempt followed the implementation of agricultural reclamation laws in the state of Kentucky.

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Thankfully, through luck and timing, Pigeon Ridge escaped abandonment as a strip mine and now provides a spectacular view of Ohio County and campground facilities for music festivals held at the Homeplace. Pigeon Ridge also provides an unobstructed view of the majority of Jerusalem Ridge.

The remains of two barns are located at the Homeplace. One barn lay approximately 100 yards to the rear of the Homeplace, and the other barn's remnants are located adjacent to the coal mine. It is hoped that they will be restored in the future.

Just south of Pigeon Ridge is the crest of land known as Jerusalem Ridge. It is from this ridge that the Homeplace derives its namesake (the Homeplace is generically referred to as Jerusalem Ridge, but this has been avoided throughout the course of this writing to eliminate confusion over the farm and a particular feature of the farm). The Old Horton Road ran along this ridge, and it was on this ridge that Bill Monroe honed his craft. One of Bill Monroe's most beloved instrumental works, "Jerusalem Ridge," was named after this particular geographical feature, thus immortalizing its importance. Monroe enjoyed Jerusalem Ridge as a hideaway where he could rehearse and sing in solitude without a chance of anyone hearing him. Sitting on the ridge, he could clearly hear the high "hollering" of the train conductors below which influenced his unique style of vocalizing. The "high, lonesome sound" known as bluegrass is a product of the interaction between Jerusalem Ridge and Bill Monroe. The atmosphere and inspiration provided by Jerusalem Ridge was instrumental in the development of Bill Monroe as a musician, innovator, and band leader, and is thus a contributing site equal in importance to the Homeplace (Smith, 19).

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The Bill Monroe Farm: Ohio County, Kentucky

Statement of Significance

The **Bill Monroe Farm**, near Rosine, Kentucky, meets National Register criterion B and is significant as the birthplace of Bill Monroe within the historical context of the **Development of Bluegrass Music as an Independent Genre of Country Music**. Bill Monroe is considered by many to be the “Father of Bluegrass Music.” His role in the creation of bluegrass music and the vast impact of his individual style is evident in the continued popularity of his music, the many honors and awards he received throughout his lifetime, and the numerous tribute concerts and recordings which pay homage to his musical legacy.

Like most musicians, Bill Monroe’s music is an expression of his personality and history. The singular style of his playing, musical leadership, and content of his songs were directly influenced by his experiences growing up on the Monroe Farm from 1911 to 1929. The importance of Bill Monroe’s birthplace to his music has not escaped Bluegrass fans; today, the Bill Monroe Homeplace serves as a pilgrimage for bluegrass fans the world over who journey to its site to experience first-hand the sights, sounds, and smells that shaped this great man and his uniquely powerful music.

The farm contains both the Bill Monroe Homeplace (OH20) where Monroe grew up and the Charlie Monroe House (OH21), the home of Monroe’s brother and one-time musical partner. The farm also contains the legendary Jerusalem Ridge, a rise of land immortalized by Monroe in his music and a key factor in his early musical development. The cultural setting, natural and architectural atmosphere, and history specific to the Monroe Homeplace and surrounding farm provide unique insight into the man, the music, and their significance to millions of people around the world.

The Roots of Country Music

As a direct result of Monroe’s stylistic innovations, bluegrass music grew from its roots in the old-time string band setting of country music. Country music has an extensive and complex history. (For a complete history of country music see, *Country Music USA*, by Bill C. Malone.) Its roots can be traced to immigrants who migrated to the New World in the 18th century. Along with few material possessions, these migrants—many from the British Isles—brought with them a rich tradition of music. This music included vocal ballads of love and loss and instrumental tunes for dancing. Both would one day become defining characteristics of country music.

Though the fiddle (violin) was the primary instrument of choice among immigrants to the New World, by the late 19th Century, mail order catalogs, such as Montgomery Ward and Sears & Roebuck, helped make musical instruments like the guitar and mandolin available to mass markets. Also during the 19th Century, the African banjar evolved into the instrument now known as the banjo, a louder and more playable version. These instruments provided rhythmic accompaniment used to augment and support the melodies of the fiddle and could be heard during performances by early string bands, musical ensembles formed in local areas to provide community entertainment.

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Following the technological advent of the phonograph and radio in the early 20th century and a mass migration of southerners to the north in search of work in the 1930's, demand for country music in commercial form began to expand. In 1922, Eck Robertson, a fiddler from Texas, became the first country musician to be recorded. Although there is debate concerning the veracity of Robertson's status as "the first", he has the strongest claim to the honor (Malone, 35). The success of this recording demonstrated the wealth of talent to be found in rural areas. The fledgling recording industry sent scouts across the rural south to locate and record country musicians. The success of this venture was epitomized in the landmark 1927 recordings of the Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers in Bristol, Tennessee. The recording industry was not the only medium growing in stature in the early 20th century. Radios were beginning to appear in households across the nation, and country music filled an important niche in radio programming. As a result of the growing mass appeal of country music and paid opportunities for its performance, string bands began to audition for radio programs in droves.

Radio stations such as WLS in Chicago, WLW in Cincinnati, WBT in Charlotte, and WSM in Nashville were major broadcasters of string band music. Numerous smaller local radio stations also provided string band programming, though the larger stations, such as WLS, WBT, and WSM, were capable of reaching approximately thirty-eight states. Country music continued to thrive and develop as thematic shows began to appear such as the National Barn Dance on WLS in Chicago, the Louisiana Hayride on KWKH in Shreveport, and the Renfro Valley Barn Dance on WLW. The Grand Ole Opry at WSM in Nashville broadcast live country music every Saturday night. The first seeds of a new musical genre were spread across the airwaves on October 28th, 1939, when the Grand Ole Opry became the site of a historical musical event: the first appearance of Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys.

Bill Monroe, and the Development of Bluegrass Music

From Monroe's earliest days, his personal experience and immediate locale contributed to his musical development. William "Bill" Smith Monroe was the eighth child of James "Buck" Buchanan and Malissa Vandiver Monroe. He was born on September 13th, 1911 on a farm near Rosine, Kentucky, relatively far from the Appalachian hearth of country music. Young Bill Monroe was the victim of extremely poor eyesight and though born into a large household, lived a relatively reclusive existence. Because his brothers often ignored him and made fun of his lazy eye, Bill Monroe spent much of his early childhood walking on Jerusalem Ridge, a timber-filled crest of land on the back of the Monroe property. It was in these solitary moments that young Bill would emulate the high "hollers" of the train conductors passing by below the ridge and sing old ballads learned from his mother. The Jerusalem Ridge hills gave Bill Monroe a sense of security and comfort and were faraway from the menace of his brothers and their jeering (Smith).

Although the Monroe farm did not generate enormous income, Bill Monroe worked hard on the diverse farm. James Monroe dealt in timber, tobacco, corn, molasses, hay, coal, and livestock. Bill worked in each of these capacities, including hauling railroad ties and coal to Rosine along the Old Horton Road. The ties were cut from the farm's vast amount of timber, and the coal was obtained from a small mine on the farm. These arduous tasks built enormous

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physical strength in young Bill and encouraged his self esteem: qualities for which he would later be famous.

Bill Monroe's mother, Malissa Monroe, an accomplished singer of old ballads and multi-instrumentalist, passed her love of music on to her children. She kept a fiddle on the bed at all times, and during a break from the arduous chores of turn-of-the-century farm life, she would play some old tunes to her attentive children. Following his mother's death in 1921, Bill's brother, Birch, laid claim to her fiddle. Shortly after, Bill's brother, Charlie, purchased a guitar and joined Birch in playing tunes in their spare time. Already an outsider among his brothers, Bill's lack of an instrument of his own threatened to further exclude him from his brother's companionship. It was a farm hand that first introduced young Bill Monroe to the mandolin, the instrument that would allow him to find the longed-for acceptance of his brothers and help him define his sound.

Throughout the mid-1920s, Bill became an earnest student of the mandolin, though he did pick up the guitar from time to time. The guitar brought Bill his first experience with music outside his sphere of knowledge. Arnold Shultz, an African-American, was a regionally famed guitar player and fiddler. Although never recorded, respected and innovative musicians including Kennedy Jones, Ike Everly, and Bill Monroe himself were directly influenced by Shultz (Smith, 23). Arnold played country music, but he infused it with blues-like ornamentation and a unique style of picking. Shultz would often ask young Bill to accompany, or "second" him, on guitar when he fiddled for square dances. Bill paid close attention to the slides and blue-notes Shultz would incorporate into his playing. To paraphrase Monroe, this put the "blue" in bluegrass.

It was also in the 1920's that Bill began playing with his brothers Charlie and Birch at dances around the area. They called themselves "The Monroe Brothers," but their newly formed trio did not last long. In 1927, Charlie and Birch moved to Detroit and then Chicago in search of factory employment. The following year, James Buchanan Monroe died of pneumonia. With both parents dead, and his siblings in Chicago, Bill was alone—with the exception of an uncle. Pendleton "Uncle Pen" Vandiver, Malissa's brother, was a legendary fiddle player renowned for his lively bowing technique. For a time, Bill lived with Uncle Pen in his cabin on a hill just a few hundred feet south of Rosine. After the day's work, Bill and Uncle Pen would sit on the porch and make music deep into the night. The sounds would drift down the hill and seep into the quiet town of Rosine.

In 1929, Bill Monroe left Rosine to join his brothers in Chicago in search of work. It was in Chicago through the sounds of WLS, that Bill received his first exposure to jazz. This exposure further influenced Bill's musical ideals, exposing him to the wild improvisation and unique phrasing common in jazz of the period (Smith, 31). It was there that Bill, Charlie, and Birch again performed as the Monroe Brothers. Working in factories by day and playing music by night, the Monroe Brothers quickly began to make considerable amounts of money. Soon the strains of performance on the road proved too much for Birch, and Bill and Charlie carried on as a duo. Charlie sang lead and played guitar, and Bill played mandolin and sang high tenor in a beautifully pure falsetto. The Monroe Brothers began playing local radio programs frequently and chose to resign their factory employment. From around 1930 until 1938, Bill and Charlie

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performed as a duo, touring from Nebraska to Greenville, South Carolina. It was during this time that Bill began developing his signature style on the mandolin.

In string band music, the mandolin primarily served as an accompaniment instrument to be used only for rhythmic background. Bill Monroe brought the instrument into new creative territory, playing complex melodic lines similar to what a fiddler would do, to accent his brother Charlie's singing. Not only did he play melodically, Bill Monroe began incorporating blues-derived scales played with great agility, a future hallmark of the instrument and an innovation attributed directly to Bill Monroe.

The Monroe brothers parted ways in Greenville, South Carolina, after a series of disputes. This left Bill Monroe on his own for the first time as a musician. He soon assembled a group which included Cleo Davis on guitar and lead vocal, Art Wooten on fiddle, and Amos Garen on bass. The group was named the Blue Grass Boys, and they began performing on radio stations in Asheville, North Carolina, and Greenville, South Carolina. During this time, Bill Monroe further perfected his mandolin technique. As band leader, he instructed the Blue Grass Boys in playing tunes at increased tempos as well as in higher keys such as *B-flat* and *B*. Bill maintained the fast pace of the tunes with specialized accents on the mandolin which provided a backbeat. Backbeats would later become characteristic of rhythm and blues, soul, and rock and roll. These accents, consisting of staccato down strokes on the second and fourth beats of every measure, were known as "rhythm chops." Higher keys were unusual in country music, but were perfect for accentuating Monroe's high tenor voice. The quick tempos, the mandolin accents on the backbeats, and the uncharacteristically high keys further distinguished Monroe's sound from the standards of country and string band music. The Blue Grass Boys continued to grow in skill and reputation. They were ready for the next step.

On October 13th, 1939, Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys made their first appearance on the Grand Ole Opry. They were the first act in the 14-year history of the Opry to receive an encore. Monroe and his band became regulars on the Saturday evening broadcasts and supplemented Opry performances with a grueling tour schedule. Through touring, Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys spread their music, but it was during Monroe's Opry performances that his new sound began to infiltrate homes across America. As previously mentioned, WSM reached approximately 38 states, and many future bluegrass artists were listening.

Among these musicians were Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs, who eventually became members of the Blue Grass Boys, touring with the group from 1946 to 1948. Flatt brought a unique type of guitar playing to the group, one which involved rhythmic strumming on the higher strings and melodic runs on the bass notes. Before national audiences heard Earl Scruggs play banjo on the Grand Ole Opry, the instrument was played almost strictly in a frailing style known as "claw hammer." This style, requiring only the thumb and index finger, did not lend itself well to the fast tempos of Monroe's style of music. Scruggs, a native of North Carolina, learned a regional style of banjo playing that involved playing rolling chords with the thumb, index, and middle finger. This three finger technique, known today as "Scruggs picking," was an extremely lively and articulate sound and delineated the banjo as a solo instrument rather than strictly a rhythmic one. It also allowed the banjo to be played at break-neck tempos. Scholars regard this era of Monroe, Flatt, and Scruggs as the standard by which all bluegrass music is based. Also, during this period, other groups like the Stanley Brothers were incorporating the

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highly stylized sound of Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys with their own brand of string band music. As this imitation began to spread, the genre known as bluegrass came into being.

No one knows for sure where the term “bluegrass” was first used generically to describe the style of music pioneered by Monroe and further popularized by Flatt and Scruggs. In 1948, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs left the Blue Grass Boys to start their own group: Flatt and Scruggs and the Foggy Mountain Boys. This group proved to be among the most popular groups of all time. Neil Rosenberg, perhaps the preeminent bluegrass scholar, believes that the term “bluegrass” likely stemmed from fan’s requests during performances by Flatt and Scruggs. Fans would shout, “Play some of those blue grass tunes,” referring to the tunes Flatt and Scruggs performed as members of Monroe’s Blue Grass Boys (Rosenberg, 101--102). This plausible explanation directly links the generic term for the music to the band name of Bill Monroe’s musicians.

Monroe continued to play bluegrass until his death in 1996. The Blue Grass Boys existed from 1939 to 1996, and the list of the group’s sidemen is too lengthy to repeat in its entirety. During its 57 year history, a great number of guitar players, banjo pickers, and fiddlers were members of the Blue Grass Boys. Many of those players, who honed their skills during their tenure with Bill Monroe, have made lasting contributions to the bluegrass music of today. Among them are Jimmy Martin, Mac Wiseman, Kenny Baker, Josh Graves, Bill Keith, Richard Greene, Peter Rowan, Glen Duncan, and Del McCoury. All of these musicians have formed their own noteworthy groups and have propagated, as well as enhanced, the bluegrass style of music pioneered by Bill Monroe in the 1930 s and 1940 s.

Today, bluegrass music is a vibrant and growing genre of music. Because it has retained the chief characteristics established by Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, bluegrass is easily distinguishable from other forms of today’s country music. The audience for bluegrass encompasses people from all ages and walks of life. In this regard, bluegrass is among the few truly cross-cultural musical genres. The popularity of bluegrass music can be seen in the ever-growing number of bluegrass festivals across the world, the growth of newly formed academic departments wholly devoted to the study of bluegrass music, and the multi-platinum sales of albums such as the 2001 soundtrack to the hit movie “Oh Brother, Where Art Thou.”

Although there is debate over the identity of the creators of bluegrass as an independent genre, Bill Monroe or Monroe, Flatt, and Scruggs, there is no question that Bill Monroe was the chief synthesizer and architect of the music we call bluegrass. As Richard D. Smith writes, “He [Monroe] was very much like the director of a major motion picture: A director does not do all the script writing, acting, cinematography, sound recording, and editing by him/herself. But the director brings everything together in accordance with his/her own vision of the final film” (Smith, 115). It may be presumptuous to attribute the absolute paternity of bluegrass music to Bill Monroe, but it is obvious that without the so called “Father of Bluegrass Music,” bluegrass music, as we know it, would not exist.

Bill Monroe was not just influential in terms of his own style of music. Like a true innovator, the influence of Bill Monroe crossed genre lines and cultural boundaries. Monroe’s music has influenced artists as diverse as Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry, Bob Dylan, Jerry Garcia, Waylon Jennings, George Jones, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Chris Hillmen of the Byrds, and countless others. As a result of both Monroe’s accomplishments and his cross-

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cultural influence, he received the National Medal of the Arts and a Grammy for lifetime achievement. He is a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame; the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; and the Bluegrass Hall of Honor. Bill Monroe performed at the White House many times at the requests of four United States Presidents. Bill Monroe is an American Icon, a musical innovator, significant to the entire world.

The restoration of the Homeplace was completed on August 23, 2001 in a ceremony attended by approximately 5,000 people. Along with a host of bluegrass fans and Monroe devotees, attendees included many respected persons such as Kentucky Governor Paul Patton and renowned bluegrass artists such as Ricky Skaggs and Ralph Stanley. Tourists and bluegrass fans make pilgrimages to the Homeplace from as near as Owensboro, Kentucky, and as far away as New York, California, Europe, Australia, and Japan. Perhaps nothing is more demonstrative of Bill Monroe's significance than the diversity among his fans and admirers. Bill Monroe once wrote,

"High in the Hills of old Kentucky, stands the fondest spot in my memory. I'm on my way back to the old home: the light in the window I long to see."

--Bill Monroe, "I'm On My Way Back To The Old Home."

For the millions of musicians and admirers all over the world who have been inspired by this pioneer of bluegrass and the music he helped create, the light in the window is burning once again.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 18 The Bill Monroe Farm: Ohio County, Kentucky

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes properties 106-17 and 106-18 owned by Jack and Hayward Spinks and property 106-17A owned by the Bill Monroe Foundation. These properties are on file at the PVA office in Ohio County, Kentucky and collectively encompass approximately 1000 acres.

Verbal Boundary Justification

This boundary closely approximates the boundary of the Bill Monroe Farm in the 1920s and includes the contributing sites of Jerusalem Ridge, the coal mine, and the Homeplace. The farm as a whole is not *only* significant to Bill Monroe in terms of name association. The land itself was extremely influential on Monroe as a musician, band leader, innovator, and human being. The land was instrumental in molding Monroe into a significant person.

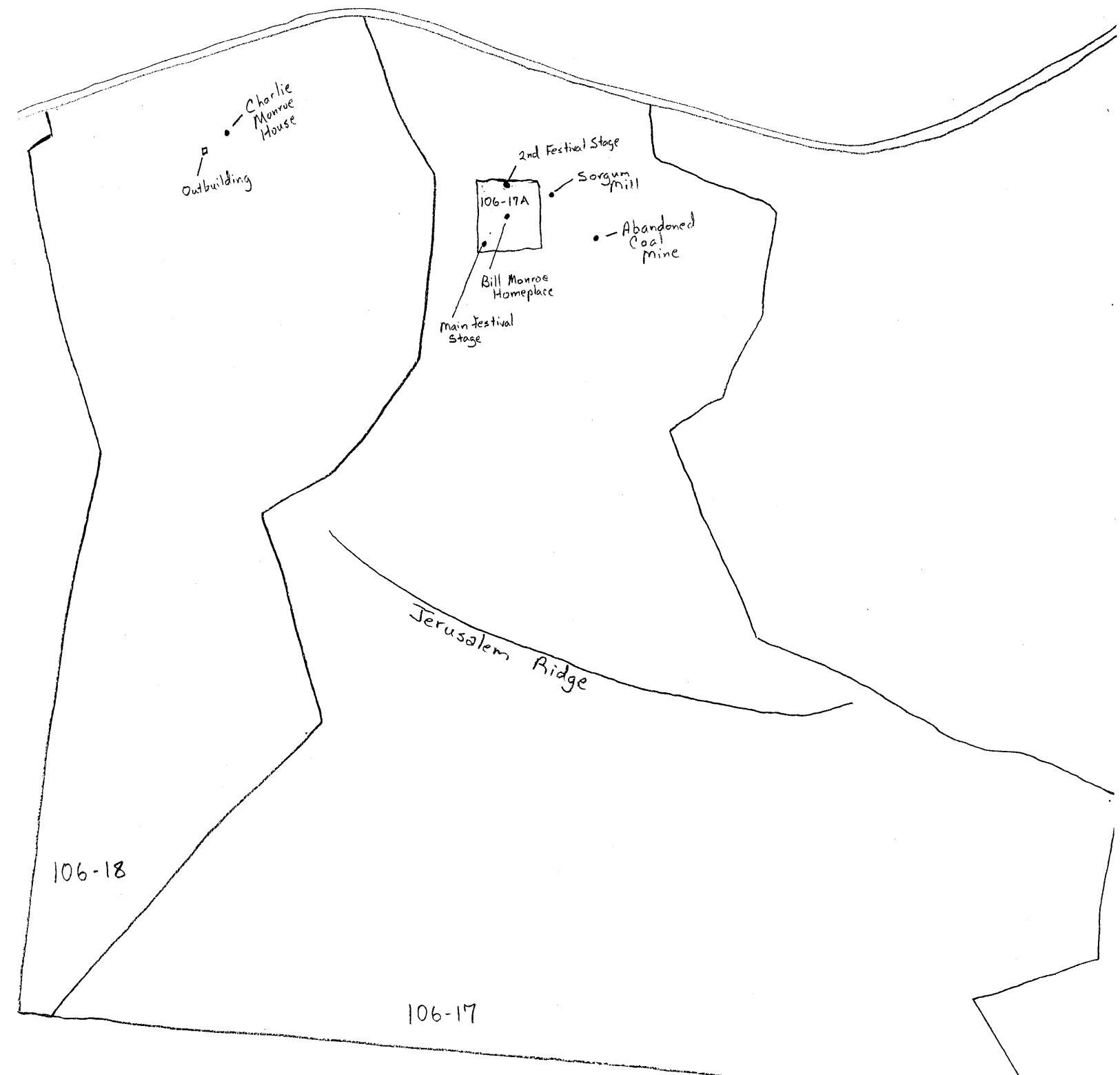
The significance of the Monroe Farm is not *only* limited to structures and sites. The significance may also be found in the sights, smells, and sounds of the farm. In my personal observations, I have seen visitors come to tour the Bill Monroe Farm. These visitors do not simply walk through the Homeplace and then leave. I have seen people hike through the woods or take the three mile trek to the peak of Jerusalem Ridge just to "experience the atmosphere." Fans of Monroe are intrigued by the surroundings of the Bill Monroe Farm. They want to experience the connection between the land, the man, and the music.

According to Richard D. Smith, Monroe purchased his farm in Sumner County, Tennessee because of its resemblance to the Bill Monroe Farm in Ohio County, Kentucky. Smith writes, "It is of no small significance that this corner of Sumner County closely resembles the terrain in Ohio County, Kentucky, nor that Bill would raise Black Angus cattle, foxhounds, and game chickens here, and plow, cut hay, and haul materials using old-fashioned horse and mule teams whenever possible. Monroe's new farm was clearly a reinvention of the world of his childhood..." (Smith, 130).

Each acre of the Bill Monroe Farm is a vital piece of history concerning a musical pioneer. Monroe's character and stature were constructed on this land. The trees, streams, fields, sounds, and smells intertwine to create an atmosphere inseparable with Bill Monroe. The property of significance should include the area of the original Monroe Farm. The proposed boundaries are justified as they closely proximate the original property lines.

Sketch Map of Bill Monroe Farm

Map not to scale



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 03000648

Date of Listing: July 18, 2003

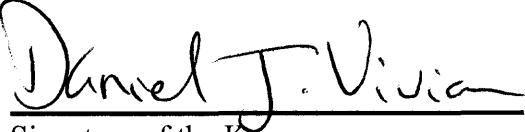
Property Name: Bill Monroe Farm

County: Ohio

State: Kentucky

none
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Daniel J. Vizcaino
for _____
Signature of the Keeper

July 18, 2003
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 2. Location

The street and number of the property is hereby changed to: approximately two miles west of the intersection of US Hwy. 62 and Kentucky State Route 1544.

Section 5. Classification

The category of property is hereby changed to district.

The Kentucky State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

**National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**