1. NAME
   COMMON: "Lighthorse Harry" Lee Cabin
   AND/OR HISTORIC: Lee Cabin

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER: Lost River State Park (2 1/2 miles west of Mathias on County Route #12)
   CITY OR TOWN: Mathias
   CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54
   COUNTY: Hardy
   CODE: 031

3. CLASSIFICATION
   CATEGORY (Check One)
   District  Site  Object
   Building  Structure  Object
   Public  Private  Public
   Public Acquisition: In Process
   Being Considered
   Status: Occupied
   Unoccupied
   Preservation work in progress
   ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
   Yes: Restricted
   No: Unrestricted
   Presented Use (Check One or More as Appropriate)
   Agricultural  Commercial  Educational
   Government  Industrial  Entertainment
   Park  Private Residence  Museum
   Private  Religious  Scientific
   Other (Specify)  Transportation

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
   OWNER'S NAME:
   State of West Virginia, Department of Natural Resources
   STREET AND NUMBER: 1800 Washington Street
   CITY OR TOWN: Charleston
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
   COURT HOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
   Hardy County Courthouse
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   CITY OR TOWN: Moorefield
   STATE: West Virginia
   CODE: 54

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
   TITLE OF SURVEY:
   DATE OF SURVEY: Federal  State  County  Local
   DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   CITY OR TOWN: State: CODE
The Lee Cabin is a frame and hewn-log structure which is in essentially the same condition as when it was occupied as a summer home by the "Light-horse Harry" Lee family more than 150 years ago. The building is two stories high and has four rooms, two upstairs and two downstairs. The exterior is dominated by a cut-stone chimney which serves the structure with cooking and heating facilities.

The cabin is well lighted through the abundance of windows--twelve pane double-hung--symmetrically placed. There is one to the front of each room, but the back is built into the side of a knoll and only has windows in the upstairs rooms. Following the contour of the ground, the foundation rises several feet toward the front, and a wide porch supported by log stilts is on that side. The structure is situated on a hillside to take advantage of a natural spring which opens under the house.

The interior walls, now painted white, are the smoothed and fitted sides of the building logs which also form the exterior. The upstairs bedrooms are exposed above the slanting roofline, and the rough timber rafters and plank roof boards form the ceiling.

Now owned by the State of West Virginia, the Lee Cabin has been preserved with minor restoration. It is presently used as a museum and contains furniture and other objects related to the period of its private use by the Lees.
### Statement of Significance

The "Lighthorse Harry" Lee Cabin is significant because it was owned and built by Henry Lee, commonly referred to as "Lighthorse Harry" for his cavalry days of the American Revolution. Lee was also a politician who served in bodies which helped set the foundation for the new American nation. His cabin is somewhat typical of many early log structures—more sophisticated than frontier log houses—constructed as seasonal homes around the health springs of Virginia's back country. Almost incidentally, Henry was also the father of Robert E. Lee, who owned the property, along with three brothers, from the early nineteenth century until 1832.

This brilliant Revolutionary War cavalry commander is especially known for his operations against Paulus Hook and in covering the retreat of General Nathanael Greene across North Carolina to Virginia in 1781. He was also a member of the Articles of Confederation Congress from 1785 to 1788, Governor of Virginia, 1792-1795, commander of the troops which suppressed the famed Whisky Rebellion of 1794, Congressman from 1799 to 1801, and author of the well-known eulogy of Washington which praised our first president as "first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen."

In 1796, Lee received title to more than 60,000 acres of land in the old Northern Neck of Virginia, including that on which he built his cabin.

In 1800 Lee completed his frame and log cabin near a salt spring in the area called Howards Lick. Possibly with a view toward commercial development of his property, he "improved" the spring by lining it with marble slabs. For some years the Lee family continued to use the cabin as a summer retreat and hunting lodge, especially seeking the healing qualities of the spring when Henry's second wife, Anne Hill Carter, sought rest and renewal.

Henry Lee's propensity for bad business operations led to estrangement from other branches of his family. This may have caused him to seek refuge from his creditors by retreating to an isolated portion of Virginia. He had dealings with such well-known figures as Robert Morris of Philadelphia, General Benjamin Lincoln, and, at one time, had borrowed $27,000 in short-term notes from George Washington.

Unable to satisfy all creditors, "Lighthorse Harry" voluntarily surrendered to the sheriff of Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1809, and was committed to debtor's prison for about two years. The Lost River property on which the Lee Cabin was built was saved by the Lee family in their bankruptcy proceedings, for it had been transferred in joint ownership to four sons, including Robert E. Lee.

### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)</th>
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**Instructions**

**PERIOD**

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- [ ] 16th Century
- [x] 18th Century
- [ ] 19th Century
- [ ] 20th Century

**SPECIFIC DATE(S)**

- 1800 (Constructed)

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

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- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [x] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Landscape
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [x] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

The cabin remained in Lee hands until 1879. The State of West Virginia acquired it in the 1930’s as a portion of Lost River State Park and has helped in maintaining the old building since then.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Lost River State Park Once Holding of Lee and Sulphur Springs, Is Show Place" Charleston (West Virginia) Daily Mail, Aug. 9, 1936.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 Acre

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Mrs. Nancy Snider, Field Agent & James E. Harding, Research Analyst
West Virginia Antiquities Commission
Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

Name: Leonard M. Davis
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: March 12, 1974