

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Ohev Sholom Temple

other name/site number: B'Nai Sholom Temple

2. Location

street & number: 949 10th Avenue

not for publication:           

city/town: Huntington

vicinity:           

state: W.Va. code: WV county: Cabell code: 011 zip code: 25701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally.  
(☐ See continuation sheet.)

William G. Gann  
Signature of Certifying Official

2.4.94  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of Certifying Official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date

of Action

☐ 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):

Ohev Sholom Temple  
Name of Property

Cabell County, WV  
County and State

=====

**5. Classification**

=====

**Ownership of Property:**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

☒ building(s)      ☐ object  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**      0

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**6. Function or Use**

=====

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: Religious Facility:  
Synagogue

RELIGION: Religious Facility:  
Synagogue

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification:**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL:  
Eclectic: Romanesque, Byzantine

Foundation CONCRETE  
Walls BRICK, TERRA COTTA

Roof TERRA COTTA, METAL LANTERN  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Ohev Sholom Temple  
Name of Property

Cabell County, WV  
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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☒ 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1925-1926

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ohev Sholom Temple  
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Significant Dates  
1925-26  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
Meanor & Handloser, Architects  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance  
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

Ohev Sholom Temple  
Name of Property

Cabell County, WV  
County and State

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: less than one (1) acre

UTM Regerences (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17      374280      4252320  
Zone      Easting      Northing

2                                      
Zone      Easting      Northing

3                                      
Zone      Easting      Northing

4                                      
Zone      Easting      Northing

\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Carl F. Agsten, Jr., Architectural Historian

Organization: WV Div. of Culture & History      Date: December 15, 1993

Street & Number: Cultural Center      Telephone: (304) 558-0220

City or Town: Charleston      State: WV ZIP: 25305

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Ohev Sholom Temple  
Name of Property

Cabell County, WV  
County and State

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Property Owner  
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(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name: B'Nai Sholom Congregation

Street & Number: 949 10th Avenue Telephone: (304) 522-2980

City or Town: Huntington State: WV Zip: 25701  
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**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Ohev Sholom Temple  
Cabell County, WV

Description

The Ohev Sholom Temple is Huntington's oldest standing synagogue, and has been in continuous use since its dedication on June 11, 1926. Located at the intersection of 10th Avenue and 10th Street in Huntington, the six-story Temple possesses a commanding presence among its neighbors of single- and multiple-family dwellings, a YMCA building and a few small businesses. The building is constructed primarily of brick, with terra cotta band courses and ornament. Sheltering the sanctuary is a handsome squared dome, sheathed in green terra cotta tile. The temple is eclectic in style, with strong Byzantine and Romanesque influences. Like many Byzantine temples, the building's plan is centralized, and the generous height of the structure results in a massing which is nearly cubic. Inside, the sanctuary walls and vaults are of plaster covered in canvas, and are decorated with impressive ornament of plaster and terra cotta. The sanctuary's stained glass windows were made by the Blenko Glass Company of Milton, West Virginia. An addition of matching brick, built in 1965, was joined to the south end of the Temple to accommodate classrooms, offices and other activities. The addition is contextually sensitive and unobtrusive. Today the facilities are home to the B'Nai Sholom Congregation, following the merger in 1975 of the Ohev Sholom Congregation with the orthodox congregation of B'Nai Israel. The Temple is in very good condition and is lovingly maintained by its active congregation.

The Temple faces north onto 10th Avenue with a facade of notable distinction. The dominant feature is the elaborate rose window, ornamented in an eclectic and personalized style. Symbols for the window are adapted from those of Jewish cultural heritage, beginning with the Magen David, or "Star of David", at the window's center. Three arched doorways serve as the Temple's entrance. Like the rose window above, they are ornately decorated. The archivolt is decorated with acanthus leaves in a beaded pattern. The center tympanum contains a cornucopia, and the tympana on either end contain torches. The gabled entrance wall of the nave is sandwiched between two of the four massive corner towers, which jut partly from the building's perimeter to give the effect of bastions. The towers' long narrow windows and ornamented tops, which suggest crenellations, contribute to their defensive quality. The exterior walls display a fascinating juxtaposition of austere brick surfaces interrupted by impressive ornament. The masonry is of the finest workmanship, displaying elegant uniformity in the flemish bond of the brickwork and in the intricate band courses and details.

Outside the northeast corner of the building, a Holocaust memorial has been installed. The memorial, installed in April 1993, consists of three polished granite panels, engraved with the names of concentration camps, a memorial plaque embedded in an exposed-aggregate walkway, and two benches. The memorial is sober and restrained, and invites quiet contemplation.

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Ohev Sholom Temple  
Cabell County, WV

Description (continued)

The interior of the Temple is dominated by a large and impressive sanctuary. Before the addition was built in 1965, functions other than worshiping were relegated to spaces in the corner towers or in the basement. The centralized plan and the sanctuary's height (60 feet to the dome's interior) combine to emphasize the vertical axis, thereby giving a "heavenly" quality to the space. Contributing to this effect is the dramatic lighting, which enlivens the space through 12 bevelled clearstory windows positioned just below the high dome, and through the 16 stained glass windows made by the Blenko Glass Company. The rose window, which plays such a large role in the facade composition, is of minor contribution in the sanctuary because of its position in the back of the choir loft. Details in the sanctuary are predominantly Roman: crests, shields, swags and torches. Cornucopias are featured in prominent positions, perhaps as a reference to the "land of milk and honey". The Ark, which houses scrolls of the Torah, is a pedimented niche with Corinthian columns. Centered in the Ark's pediment is the Magen David. Hebrew inscriptions are contained in the frieze.

The sanctuary is home to a Skinner pipe organ, installed during the Temple's construction in 1926. Pipes located behind screens in all four corners are powered by hidden wind trunks of 10" diameter. The Skinner organ is understandably a source of pride to the Congregation. The sanctuary's electrical fixtures are original as well, and are in good working order. These include a large central chandelier and many wall sconces, distinctive in their many small globes and metal framework.

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Ohev Sholom Temple  
Cabell County, WV

Statement of Significance

The Ohev Sholom Temple is a synagogue of architectural and historical significance, which through diligent maintenance and stewardship by the Congregation continues to possess a high level of integrity. Its design, by the once-prominent firm of Meanor and Handloser, is a creative synthesis of diverse architectural fashions into a structure which is specific to the cultural and religious traditions it represents. As an artful example of eclecticism among the academic revivals its architectural contribution is significant.

Historical background:

The Ohev Sholom Congregation was organized in 1887, just 15 years after the incorporation of Huntington. Their first permanent home was built in 1892 at the corner of 5th Avenue and 10th Street. Many members of the congregation, then as now, were outstanding citizens who were prominent in Huntington's political and civic development, most notably Samuel Gideon and Emanuel Biern, who were the Congregation's founders. Their contributions and those of many other members are well documented in Huntington's histories.

The growth of the Jewish community kept pace with the burgeoning city, such that by 1919 the Congregation had outgrown their facility. On November 1 of that year they bought a lot on the corner of 10th Avenue and 10 Street, and plans were begun to raise funds and erect a new synagogue. Exactly when Meanor and Handloser were contracted as the architects is not readily known, but the old synagogue was not sold until January 1924, and construction of the new synagogue began early in 1925. Original drawings for the Temple, dated November 1924, are preserved today in the Congregation's possession.

By 1924 Meanor and Handloser was a mature and productive architectural firm. During their partnership, which lasted from 1915 to 1944, Meanor and Handloser became one the pre-eminent design firms in the state, with offices in Huntington and Charleston. They were the architects for several buildings which have been nominated or are eligible for the Register (but few with the present level of integrity of the Ohev Sholom Temple). In Huntington they were responsible for the Coal Exchange Building, First National Bank and Union National Bank, among others. In Charleston they designed the Diamond Department Store, Sacred Heart High School and the downtown C&P Telephone Company building.

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Ohev Sholom Temple  
Cabell County, WV

Statement of Significance (continued)

Architectural context and significance:

Within the context of Romanesque Revival, the Ohev Sholom Temple shares many characteristic elements, most notably the gabled nave, the rose window, and the round arches of the entrance. The enriched archivolt and richly ornamented tympana of the arched entrance are also characteristically Romanesque, as are the twin "battlemented" towers which border the nave wall.

In contrast to the Romanesque, however, the building is centralized and vertically extended in a way which is essentially Byzantine. On this form the squared dome of terra cotta, which is in no way Romanesque, appears appropriate. Much of the ornament diverges from the Romanesque as well. Classical Roman details are prevalent on the interior and the facade. The ornament atop the wall buttresses of the facade is stylized in a way which suggests an adaptation of the Byzantine.

As a late example of the academic revivals, whose heyday lasted from 1890 to 1930, this temple displays an almost Sullivanesque freedom in its interplay of plain brick form and diverse ornament. The eclectic styles have been distilled such that the masonry form of the Temple's masses prevails.

This successful design which is eclectic in nature came from an architectural firm which was certainly in step with the architectural trends of its time. Of Meanor and Handloser, Wilbur Meanor was the more formally trained, and it is he who is often given credit for the design of the firm's major projects. He was educated at Washington and Jefferson College, and received his architectural degree from M.I.T. in 1909. His early practice was with the firm of Alden & Harlow in Pittsburgh, from 1909 to 1912. The many synagogues of Pittsburgh probably played a role as prototypes for the Temple in Huntington, particularly the Rodef Shalom Temple (1906) by Henry Hornbostel, which is considered an architectural masterpiece.

The Ohev Sholom Temple is unique within the context of Huntington's architectural resources, and stands out as a distinctive contribution to the state's built environment.

Sixty-seven years of continuous use, along with important maintenance and replacement projects, have contributed to the overall integrity of the structure. In 1988 the congregation undertook the repair and replacement of the terra cotta roof. Plans are now being made to repair the canvas surfaces of the sanctuary, which have cracked in several places due to expansion and contraction. Ongoing projects such as these will ensure the future integrity of this fine building.

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Ohev Sholom Temple  
Cabell County, WV

Bibliography

100 Years, Jewish Community, Huntington, WV 1887-1987. Centennial publication by B'Nai Sholom Congregation, 1987.

Clark, Walter E., ed. West Virginia Today. West Virginia Editors' Association, 1941.

Miller, Doris C. A Centennial History of Huntington, West Virginia 1871-1971. Huntington, WV: Franklin Printing Company, 1971.

Wallace, George Seldon. Huntington through Seventy-Five Years. Huntington, WV, 1947.

Verbal Boundary Description

The property consists of a 125'(E-W) by 200'(N-S) lot on the northeast corner of Block #109 in Huntington, bounded by 10th Avenue to the north, a lot currently owned by the YMCA to the west, a public alley to the south, and 10th Street to the east.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The property is the full extent of land historically associated with the Ohev Sholom Temple.



