

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 Alexander Teen Center

other names/site number Alexander PTA Recreation Center

## 2. Location

street & number 456 Rogers Street  not for publication

city or town Brookhaven  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Lincoln code 85 zip code 39602

## 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 X local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
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

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1		<b>Total</b>

**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)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Sports facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Brick  
walls: Brick  
roof: Asphalt shingles  
other: Wood floors  
\_\_\_\_\_

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

---

**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**

**See Continuation Sheet**

---

**Narrative Description**

**See Continuation Sheet**

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

**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.

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION; EDUCATION;  
ETHNIC HERITAGE:BLACK

**Period of Significance**

1947-1959

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Barnes, R.A.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Alexander Teen Center was built as the gymnasium for Alexander High School in 1947. It was in continuous use for physical education classes, interscholastic sports and community programs until 1959, fifty years before this nomination.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

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

See Continuation Sheets

---

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

See Continuation Sheets

---

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheets

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

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

**Survey of Public School Buildings in Lincoln**

Name of repository: **County, Brookhaven Separate School District**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_085-BRK-0954 \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre \_\_\_\_\_  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	15	743560	34955450	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		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**

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

name/title Steven D. Keys, Sr.  
organization Community Action Fostering Educational Activities date 10 Jul 2009  
street & number 82 Springfield Trail SE telephone 601-835-0993  
city or town Bogue Chitto state MS zip code 39629  
e-mail cafems@gmail.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 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:** See Photo Log

**City or Vicinity:**

**County:**

**State:**

**Photographer:**

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

---

**Property Owner:**

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

---

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, Mississippi  
County and State

name Community Action Fostering Educational Activities

street & number 82 Springfield Trail SE telephone 601-835-0993

city or town Bogue Chito state MS zip code 39629

**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.

Alexander Teen Center

Name of Property

Lincoln, MS

County and State

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7 Page 9

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

**Summary Paragraph**

The Alexander Teen Center is located in the south east section of Brookhaven, MS at 456 Rogers Street in a mixed commercial and residential neighborhood adjacent to Alexander Junior High School. It is a masonry, one-story building with a front-facing gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The building is simple box construction that rests on a concrete foundation with brick veneer. The gymnasium floor structural system consists of wooden beams supported by brick columns. The walls are constructed of hollow clay tile blocks. The dimensions of the gym are approximately 95' x 70' facing east toward the west side of Alexander Junior High School.

**Narrative Description**

Completed in 1947, the building faces east. Originally two sets of double leaf wood doors under wood canopies allowed access to the gymnasium floor. The doors flanked four single-fixed pane glass windows with brick lintels and sills. All windows had sills constructed of thin bricks in a soldier course placed horizontally. The brick lintels were constructed a series of thin bricks in a soldier course, set on edge. The window openings are currently boarded. A large exhaust fan with louvered vents is placed in the front facing gable. In the 1980s a one-story frame office was built on the exterior of the building covering the south door.

The south side of the building has nine single fixed-pane windows with the same brick lintels and sills. These are believed to be replacements windows. The original windows were metal-frame industrial type windows. Toward the west end concrete stairs with a steel railing rise to a concrete landing. A single fiberglass/metal door, probably a replacement, allows access to the gymnasium floor.

The west side (rear) has one window opening and a wooden door that allows access to the ground floor.

The north side has eleven single fixed-pane sheet glass windows. These have the same brick decorative features and are not the original. Offset to the west is a concrete stair with a steel railing that rises to a concrete landing. A single door allows access to the gymnasium floor. Immediately to the east a door at grade allows access to the ground floor. To the east of that door is a single window lighting the ground floor.

The interior of the main floor is a large open space. The ceiling of plywood sheets rises to a gable where wood purlins are strengthened by purlin trusses. Steel beams provide additional support. The walls are hollow clay tiles and the windows are set high in the walls. The floor is wood. The original metal backboards are still in use.

The ground floor was used to house the locker rooms, equipment room, storage area, restrooms and showers. It has concrete floors, and what remains of the clay tile blocks marking the shower and restroom area. The locker room area was once lined by wooden lockers on the east, north and south wall. Originally there were two ways to access the downstairs area from the gym floor. The main route was through the exit in the rear of the north wall and entering the ground floor from the outside. A "trap" door in the floor was located in the north out-of-bounds area near the middle of the gymnasium.

Contractor R. A. Barnes was originally in charge of the construction project; however, some of the work was completed by the school shop class. In the late 1980s an office area was added on to the front of the building with one set of doors being closed in.

Presently the gym is in good structural condition. Although a restoration process was begun in 2005, much care has been taken to preserve as much historic integrity as possible. Modern alterations include adding bath rooms on the gym floor level. The gymnasium floor had to be completely replaced with new wood materials because of damage sustained from age and insects.

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, MS  
County and State

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8 Page 10

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Alexander Teen Center Brookhaven, Lincoln County MS is locally significant under Criterion A in association with Entertainment and Recreation, Education and Ethnic Heritage/Black. The period of significance is from 1947, when the gym was built on property adjacent to the Alexander High School, to 1959, fifty years before this nomination.

Brookhaven like many Mississippi towns maintained separate school facilities for white students and African-American students. The Brookhaven Colored School's first principal was Professor Prince Cameron, of whom we can find very little history. Professor Cameron was succeeded by Professor P. D. Gullede in 1891; he served for some 42 years until 1933. The first Brookhaven Colored School was ravaged by fire in the early 1920s. In the late 1920s a two story building housing grades 1-10 was built in a section of town called "Little Italy." The school name changed to "Gullede School" in honor of Professor Gullede.

In 1933, Mr. A. A. Alexander became principal of Gullede School. Alexander was raised in rural Lincoln County where he attended a one-room school. At the age of 19, he entered Jackson College as a ninth-grade student and remained there until 1928 when he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in science and education. He received a Masters degree in Education from Northwestern University in 1952. Mr. Alexander served as Dean at Central Mississippi College in Kosciusko and taught at Lanier High School in Jackson before coming to Brookhaven. He served as Principal of the Brookhaven Colored School, later named Alexander High School in his honor, from 1933 to 1958. Under his administration, a new campus and facility was erected through the Works Progress Administration.

In 1937, also under the administration of Mr. A. A. Alexander, the school's first PTA was established. Alexander High School, being in the Seventh Educational District, was among the poorest schools in the district. Mr. Alexander had the vision of a gymnasium and he was able to get a plot of land where he could get one built adjacent to the campus. Mr. Alexander, along with H.T. Evans, C.E. Johnson, E.S. Reed and P.T.A. president Cecil Brown began to devise a plan to make the gym a reality. After securing a loan and accepting donations from the local community, work on a new gymnasium was ready to begin. Contractor R.A. Barnes was enlisted to begin work on the gym and later some of the work was completed by students in the shop class. In 1947, the all black Alexander High School became the proud owner of the first indoor full-court gymnasium (Alexander PTA Recreation Center), built for blacks in the Seventh Educational District. Very soon the gym became known as the Alexander "Teen Center". The Teen Center would become "the" gymnasium for black schools in the area. Alexander as well as other schools from surrounding areas were able to enjoy the gym. The gym was used for a wide range of activities such as physical education class, science fair display area, school band concerts, Junior and Senior proms, and "sock-hops" just to name a few. Prior to the erection of this building all basketball games were played outdoors<sup>1</sup>. In 1952 fire destroyed the Alexander High School main building. The gym, along with other temporary buildings, became classrooms until 1956 when a new School building was erected. In 1960 a new gymnasium was built on the campus of Alexander High School.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.alexanderpanther.mysite.com/>, 2007.

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, MS  
County and State

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8 Page 11

Brookhaven residents educated at Alexander High School have many fond memories of the Alexander Teen Center, both as an educational and social facility.

The gym (Teen Center) was our gym. We had physical education class there and downstairs was the locker room with showers and bath rooms. We had basketball games and tournaments, schools came from McComb, Monticello, Meridian and other places. I do remember Jackson State (College) and Alcorn playing there. I don't remember the years, maybe late 40's or early 50's.

**Mrs. Johnette (Tillman) Holloway Alexander High School Class of '52**

Mr. Alexander rejected the idea of the school board erecting a, "gymnasium," which would be like a cafeteria, gym and auditorium all rolled into one. This would require moving tables and chairs around for programs, basketball games and other events. He instead, had the vision of a gymnasium and he was able to get a plot of land where he could get one built adjacent to the campus. Mr. Alexander, along with H.T. Evans, C.E. Johnson, E.S. Reed and P.T.A. president Cecil Brown began to devise a plan to make the gym a reality. Contractor R.A. Barnes was enlisted to begin work on the gym and later some of the work was completed by students in the shop class. The "Teen Center" would become the first indoor full-court gymnasium for black schools in an area that spanned from Louisiana to Tennessee. Alexander as well as other schools in the surrounding area to include Jackson State (Jackson College) and Alcorn State (Alcorn A&M College) would use the gym to play games and host tournaments.

**Mr. Jessie Buie Alexander High School Class of '47  
Principal, Alexander High School 1960-1970**

I remember Mrs. Cecil Brown (President of PTA) going to the Bank with Mr. Alexander to try to get a loan to help pay for the cost of having the gym built. For a long time it was the only gym in the area for black schools. Teams from all around would come to Brookhaven to play because Mr. Alexander would allow other schools to host their games in the gym. I remember Jackson State (Jackson College) and Alcorn State (Alcorn A&M College) playing there a few times although I can't remember the years, but I'm almost certain that it was in the 1950's.

**Mrs. Josie (Byrd) Hightower Alexander High School Class of '60**

We had P.E. class in the gym; we would display our science fair exhibits in the gym as well as have the Jr. and Sr. Prom and "sock-hop." This was the only gym for black schools in the area. We had so many basketball games at the "Teen Center." I remember colleges even playing in the gym around the years 1951 and 1952.

**Mrs. Dorothy (Burge)Watkins Alexander High School Class of '51**

At a time when the opportunity for access to athletic facilities for African-American students was legally and socially restricted, the Alexander Teen Center was a haven for black youth. In the Brookhaven area, this was the only full-court indoor facility for basketball, volleyball and other athletic events. Built with private funds raised by the PTA, the Alexander Teen Center represents the efforts that African American parents took to provide opportunities to their children.

A similar facility is located in Picayune, Mississippi, the Picayune Colored Gymnasium. Built in 1930 by local businessmen, the two-story cinder-block building housed the only indoor full-sized basketball court available to African-Americans on the Gulf Coast in the 1930s and 1940s. Today the Picayune Colored Gymnasium is in very poor condition due to years of deferred maintenance and damage from Hurricane Katrina.

The Alexander Teen Center is historically significant to the Brookhaven area, especially to African-Americans since it is the only building remaining that can be directly associated with the "original" Alexander High School. The building maintains its integrity with only minor alterations.

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, MS  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 9 Page 12

---

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Williams, Otis T. "Alexander Panther." [Online] Available  
<http://www.alexanderpanther.mysite.com/>, 2007.

Holloway, Johnette, Alexander High School Class of '52. Interviewed by Steven Keys, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 01 May 2009.

Buie, Jessie, Alexander High School Class of '47. Interviewed by Steven Keys, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 21 April 2009.

Hightower, Josie, Alexander High School Class of '60. Interviewed by Steven Keys, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 01 May 2009.

Watkins, Dorothy, Alexander High School Class of '51. Interviewed by Steven Keys, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 01 May 2009.

Alexander Teen Center  
Name of Property

Lincoln, MS  
County and State

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 10 Page 13

---

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:**

Beginning in the southeast corner of Block 16, and running north along the west line of Rogers Street 100 feet to point of beginning, thence north 100 feet, thence west 100 feet, thence south 100 feet, thence east 100 feet to point of beginning, said land being situated in Petersburg, City of Brookhaven, Lincoln County, Mississippi, and being the North Half (N1/2) of a parcel of land described in deed from S. A. Funches to Clyde Smith dated August 28, 1936, and recorded in Book 195, pages 219-220, in the deed records in the office of the Chancery Clerk of Lincoln County, Mississippi.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary includes the city lot that has historically been associated with the property as recorded in the deed records in the office of the chancery clerk of Lincoln County, Mississippi.

Alexander Teen Center

Name of Property

Lincoln, MS

County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

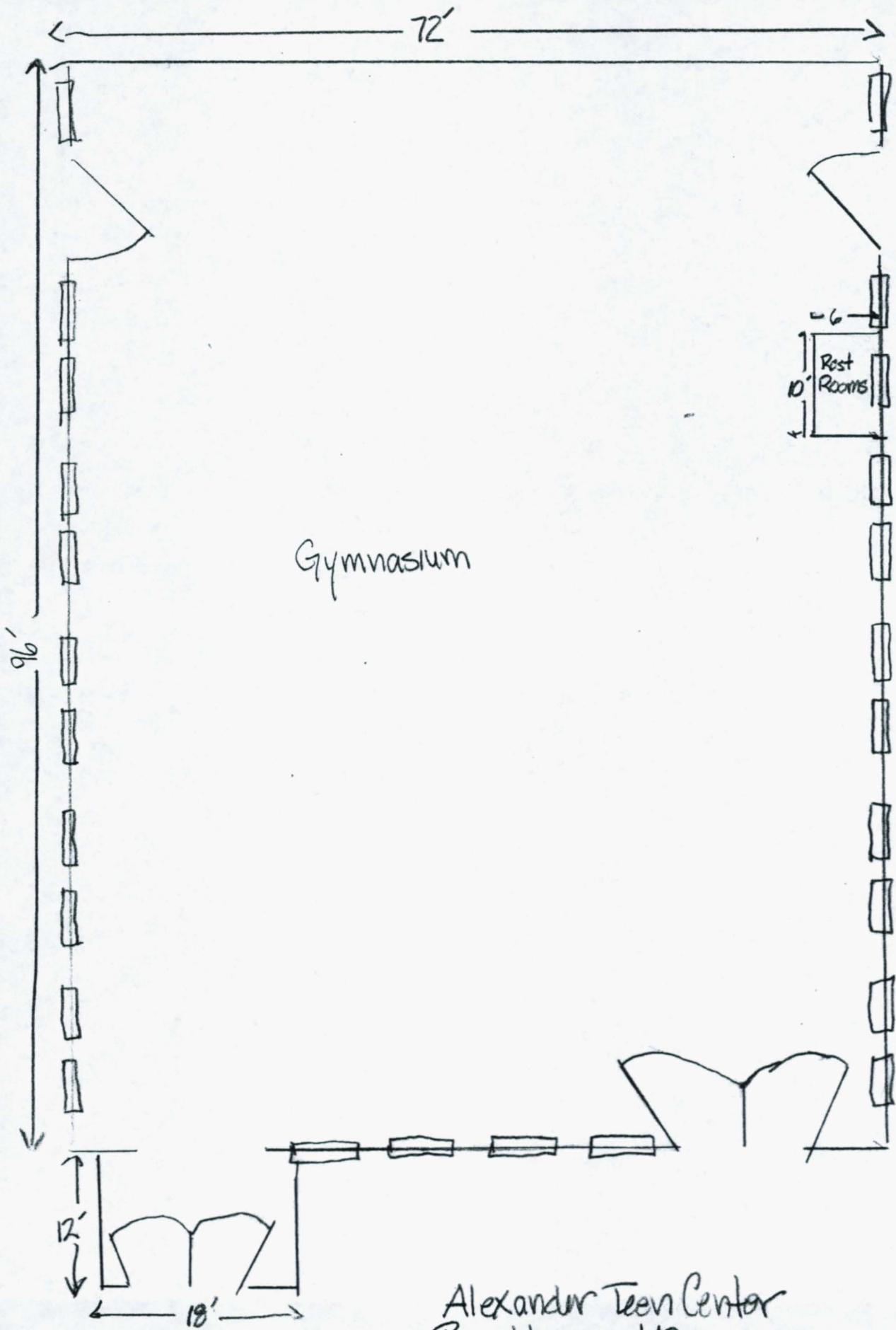
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section:        Photos        Page 14

**PHOTOS**

ALEXANDER TEEN CENTER GYMNASIUM  
BROOKHAVEN, LINCOLN COUNTY, MS  
STEVEN KEYS, SR.  
JUNE 8, 2009  
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

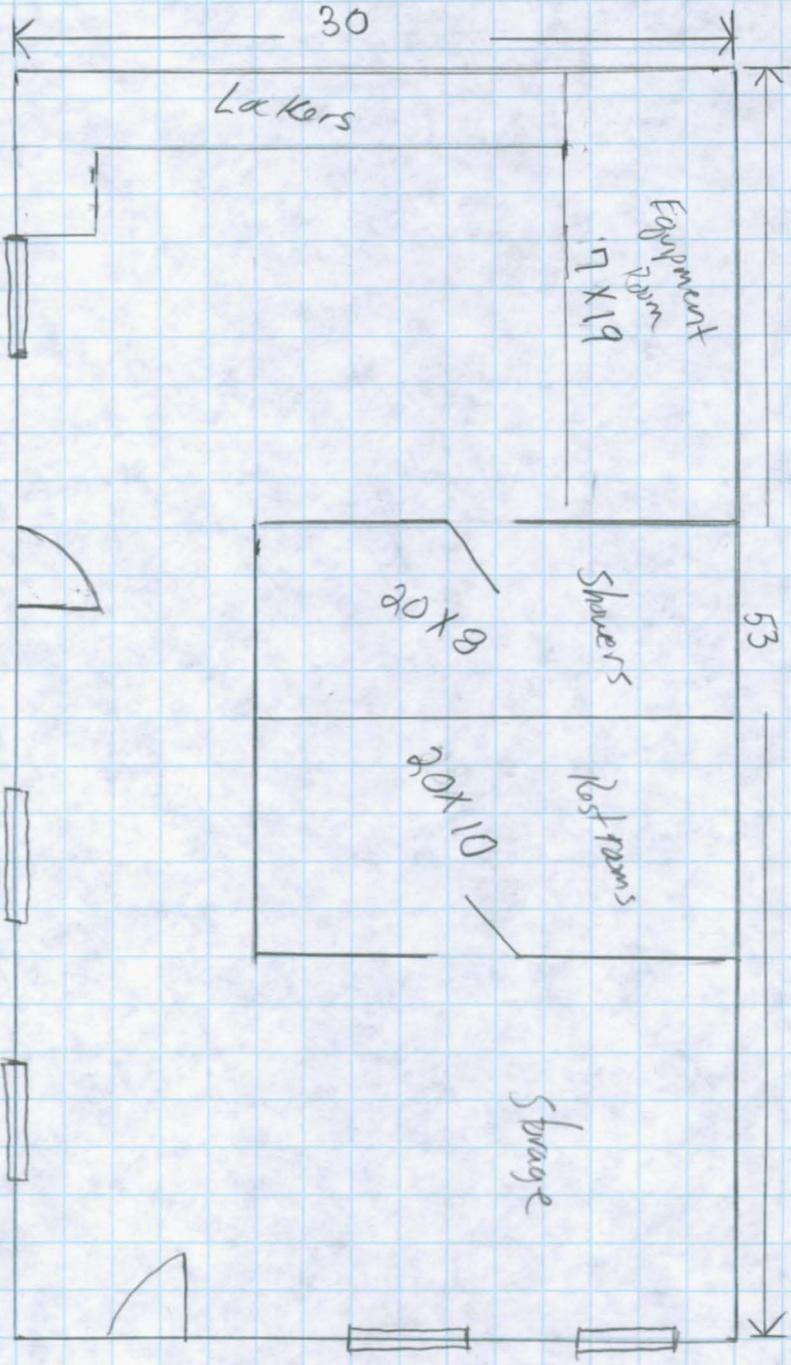
PHOTO 0001	SOUTH ELEVATION, VIEW TO NORTH
PHOTO 0002	EAST ELEVATION, VIEW TO WEST
PHOTO 0003	NORTH ELEVATION, VIEW TO SOUTH
PHOTO 0004	VIEW TO SOUTHWEST CORNER OF GYM
PHOTO 0005	BASEMENT SHOWERS, VIEW TO SOUTH
PHOTO 0006	BASEMENT RESTROOM, VIEW TO SOUTHWEST
PHOTO 0007	FRONT ROGERS STREET, VIEW TO NORTH
PHOTO 0008	INSIDE GYM, VIEW TO EAST GOAL
PHOTO 0009	INSIDE GYM, VIEW TO WEST GOAL
PHOTO 0010	BASEMENT DIRT WORK STOPS, VIEW TO SOUTH



Alexander Teen Center  
Brookhaven, MS

+D N

1/8" = 1'



Basement  
Alexander Teen  
Center  
Bridgewater, MS  
(original use)



~~0001~~ 0001

South Elevation View to North

~~0001~~



Alexandre  
Learning Center

0002

~~East elevation~~

East Elevation, View to west



Q003

North Elevation View to south



0004

view to southwest corner



0005

Basement Showers, view to south



0006

basement East room, view to southwest



0007

Front Rogers St. view to North



0008

Inside Gym, view to east goal



0009

Inside gym, view to west goal



0010

Basement Dirt Work stops, view to south



# Big Eight Champs

Circa 1950 - 1951

Big  
8

Champs



Alexander Teren Center, Lincoln County, MS Historic Photos

Mamie Dickey



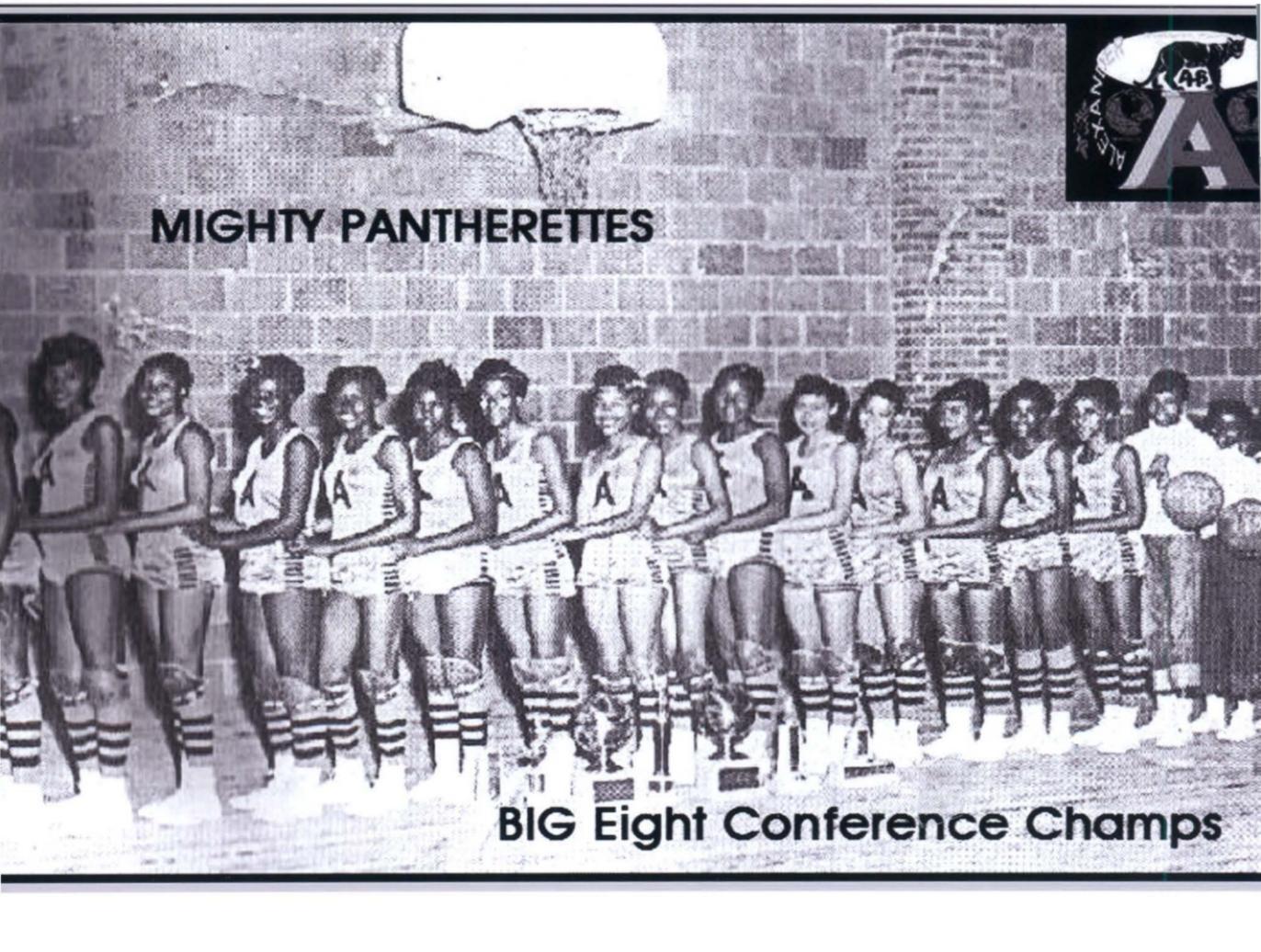
Margaret Wilson



Members of the 1954  
Blg 8 Southern  
Region Championship



Alexander TeenCenter, Lincoln County, MS Historic Photo 2



# MIGHTY PANTHERETTES

**BIG Eight Conference Champs**

Alexander Teen Center, Lincoln County, MS Historic Photo 3

# Big Eight Conference

Beulah Tillman   Ada Morgan   Margaret Wilson   Coach Zipporah Thompson   Leora Nelson   Clara Fountain   Mamie Dickey

## Alexander High School

Brookhaven, Mississippi

1954 Alexander Golden  
Pantherettes



Alexander Teen Center, Lincoln County, Historic Photos 4