

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Myrtle Hall Branch Library For Negroes

Other names/site number: Myrtle Hall Branch Carnegie Public Library

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1109 State Street

City or town: Clarksdale State: MS County: Coahoma

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

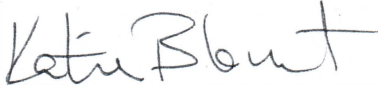
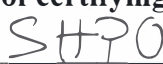
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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 X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

 _____ Signature of certifying official/Title:  _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	<u>Nov. 21, 2017</u> _____ Date
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In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official: _____ Title :	_____ Date _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

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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

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

☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/Library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes is located in Clarksdale, Mississippi on old 61 Highway now known as State Street and on the grounds of the former Myrtle Hall School. On January 14, 1930 the city of Clarksdale board of Mayor and commissioners passed, approved and adopted an order to a build a library for the colored (African American) citizens. The original 100 x 120 foot one-story brick building with a gable roof was completed and dedicated in May 1930. In 1967, a one-story, hipped roof brick addition on the south side increased the size of the library, and the entrance was moved from the north elevation to the west elevation.

Narrative Description

The Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes is located at 1109 State Street/Highway 61, in Clarksdale, Coahoma County, Mississippi. It is a brick one story building on the grounds of the Myrtle Hall School. State Street, also Highway 161, is the former U. S. Highway 61, a major north-south axis that runs the length of Mississippi. The neighborhood is mixed -use with the lots along State Street primarily commercial in nature and the east-west streets, including Garfield Street primarily residential.

Exterior

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The Myrtle Hall Library shares a large block with the old Myrtle Hall School, formerly an African-American school. The library is located on the northeast corner with school buildings to the south and west. Large mature trees shade the library and classroom building while a large open green space occupies about two-thirds of the lot where older school buildings used to stand.

The one-story library building faces south and is roughly T-shaped with the original library on the east side (see Figure 1 for historic image of the original wing). The original gabled section is brick masonry, while the 1967 west addition has a steel frame with brick veneer and a hipped roof. The roofs are covered by asphalt shingles. The projecting original wing on the east side features a wide cornice with cornice returns and a detached brick screen was added in front in 1967 to emphasize the new main entrance. When the west wing was added in 1967, the main entrance moved from the east elevation, facing Garfield Street, to the south side, facing State Street. The west wing (1967) has a covered porch supported by four wide brick piers. The entrance, near the intersection of the two wings, is sheltered under the porch. Double-leaf metal glazed doors with a transom allow access. The porch shelters two metal frame windows with a large fixed light set over an operable hopper window.

The west elevation is a brick wall with no fenestration. The hipped roof has a broad boxed eave.

The north (rear) elevation of the hipped-roof wing has a triple metal frame 1/1 window set in the southern corner while the remainder of the elevation is an unadorned brick wall. The west elevation of the gabled wing shows the northern gable return. An arched vent is centered in the apex above triple 6/6 double hung wood windows.

The east elevation faces Garfield Street. A single-leaf door is set in the north face of the hipped wing. The original gabled wing has four 6/6 double-hung sash wood windows covered with plywood, flanking the original center entrance, which has been infilled with brick.

Interior

The interior reflects changes that occurred during the 1967 renovation and addition and decay that has occurred since the building was abandoned in 1981. The 1930 building consists of a single large space with plaster walls, wide wood baseboards, pressed-wood acoustic-tile ceiling, and fluorescent lights. The original rear wall has been partially opened to a hallway connecting with the 1967 addition, and steel columns were inserted as structural supports. The larger 1967 addition features dropped ceilings, sheetrock walls (some covered later with thin wood paneling, wood slab doors with metal trim, and vinyl tile floors.

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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.)

- ☐ 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.)

Education

Ethnic Heritage/Black

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Period of Significance

1930 - 1967

Significant Dates

1930

1966

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Brewer, Skewes & Godbold

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The former Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes is being nominated for its statewide significance as one of only a handful of library buildings constructed in Mississippi for African Americans during the Jim Crow era of racial segregation. Until the 1950s, Clarksdale and Meridian were the only two cities in the state with a separate library building for black residents—other towns had no library service for blacks, sent a regular book mobile to black neighborhoods, or located a small library in a converted space such as a house. The building took its current form with an addition in 1967 made possible by federal grants that also required racial integration, and thus the building tells a fuller story of the transition in Mississippi from segregation to integration in public services.

Public Libraries in Mississippi

Public libraries did not come into existence in Mississippi until the early 20th century. Prior to that private libraries were established by individuals or groups of people who formed “social

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libraries," generally formed through subscriptions. The first state legislature meeting in January 1818 chartered a subscription library as the Mississippi Literary Library of Gibson-Port.¹

The Yazoo Library Association was organized as a debating society in 1838. The members had access to circulating books. After renting two rooms from a Mr. Hanes in 1842, the library grew rapidly and by 1890 their printed catalog included 1700 volumes. Mrs. Fanny Ricks donated money in memory of her late husband, and the Yazoo Library Association built the first public library building in the state, completed in 1902 and listed on the National Register for its Beaux Arts style in 1975.²

Library services first came to Madison County in 1848 when the Board of Police granted a literary society use of a jury room in the courthouse for a reading room. Members could pay a subscription and had access to a number of periodicals, The Meridian Library and Literary Association, chartered by the Legislature in 1890, published lists of its collection in 1894. The Natchez Library Association and Reading Room formed in 1883 and placed a reading room in the old Institute Building. However, books could only be read in the room and did not circulate.³

Library historians report that there were only three public libraries in operation in Mississippi in 1900, in Natchez, Holly Springs and Biloxi. Following the lead of Yazoo City, the first decades of the century saw the growth of library facilities in the state, largely financed by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, often augmented with local funds. Carnegie libraries were constructed in Houston (1909), Mound Bayou (1910, although this building never functioned as a library), in Meridian both a main library and a library for African Americans (1913), Greenwood, Columbus, Clarksdale, and Jackson (1914), West Point and Okolona (1915) and Vicksburg and Gulfport (1916).⁴

¹ Willie D. Halsell, "The Forerunners: 1818-1900." In *A History of Mississippi Libraries*, Margarette Peebles and J. B. Howell, eds. (Montgomery, AL: Paragon Press, 1975), p. 31.

² Halsell, p. 34.

³ Halsell, p. 35-39.

⁴ Mary Lee Beal, "The Public Libraries Since 1900." In *A History of Mississippi Libraries*, Margarette Peebles and J. B. Howell (Montgomery, AL: Paragon Press, 1975), p. 47-48. Carnegie's library grants were not as well received in other Mississippi communities. For instance, Greenville's city council declined a Carnegie library in January 1912, noting that bond issues for a new city hall, a street paving program, and an improved sewerage system were "more vital to the city's growth" than a public library (*Delta Democrat Times*, Jan 13, 1912). Meanwhile, a New York editorial reprinted in the February 24, 1906 edition of the *Vicksburg Evening Post* stated, "Mr. Carnegie undoubtedly was actuated by a desire to bestow a substantial benefit, but his plan has a bad effect in that it causes many places to run into expenses that the citizens haven't contemplated and are not prepared for. And back of that is the fact that libraries are used by a very limited number of persons."

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By the early twentieth century, laws requiring that public spaces be segregated by race had hardened, and as a consequence, African Americans were excluded from many public spaces or given lower-quality spaces and service. This was certainly true of library service. Since blacks were not allowed in public libraries, white librarians typically set up bookmobiles that would travel to black community centers or schools on a regular schedule. As late as 1939, only two Mississippi cities, Meridian and Clarksdale, had library buildings for African American residents.⁵

The 1940s saw some progress, but in 1955, pioneering African American library Dorothy McAllister, a Vicksburg native and the librarian at Howard University, reported in her *Library Journal* article "Library Service in Mississippi" that only four Mississippi towns—Clarksdale, Meridian, Aberdeen, and Jackson—had library buildings for their black residents. As for other large towns, she noted:

The libraries in Greenville, Pascagoula and Hattiesburg consist of one or two rooms in buildings used as community centers. In Greenwood and Corinth the libraries have rooms in the high school building. In Brookhaven a small room has been partitioned off in a building belonging to the county teachers.⁶

McAllister also gave insight into the logistics of maintaining two separate libraries for one town:

In all of the Negro branches except Jackson the books and periodicals are selected, purchased, and processed at the main library. Jackson, Brookhaven, and Meridian maintain a union catalog at the main library as well as the catalog at the branch. If a reader requests a book which is not in the branch the branch librarian may borrow it from the main library.⁷

McAllister concluded that the segregated system had "three obvious weaknesses: (1) inadequate support from public funds; (2) lack of use of the library; and (3) lack of professionally trained [African American] librarians."⁸

Clarksdale Carnegie Library

Clarksdale, located at the head of navigation on the Sunflower River, was the site of Indian settlements before John Clark bought 100 acres here in 1848. Clark filed a subdivided plat in 1869, but the spark for major development leading to the incorporation of the town came in 1882 with the arrival of the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad (Y&MV), which connected Memphis and New Orleans and ran through the rich cotton lands of the Mississippi Delta. Clarksdale served as an agricultural, industrial, and business center for the northern Delta and had a large African American community by the late nineteenth century.

⁵ Dorothy McAllister, "Library Service in Mississippi," *Library Journal* 86, no. 5 (March 1, 1955), p. 537.

⁶ McAllister, p. 537.

⁷ McAllister, p. 538.

⁸ McAllister, p. 539.

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In 1911, Andrew Carnegie made a one-time donation to the City of Clarksdale of \$10,000. The city bought a lot valued at \$10,000 at the corner of First Street and Delta Avenue. Memphis architect Charles O. Pfeil designed the Gothic Revival building which opened on April 14, 1914.⁹ When the Coahoma County Board of Supervisors began contributing to the library budget, the service provided in rural areas of the county expanded, with the establishment of stations in nine county schools and the beginning of a mobile service with one of the first bookmobiles in the South.¹⁰

Under the Jim Crow laws of the time, the Carnegie Library in Clarksdale served only white citizens, but it appears the bookmobile visited schools for black students in the county. Responding to a 1953 inquiry from Eunice Eley, Director of the Mississippi Library Commission, Miss Anona Jenkins, a Clarksdale Carnegie Library staff member, reported that an 1918 annual report stated that the library "had, to the best of its facilities, given its services not only to the city and county but also aided negro schools, churches and other organizations among the negroes."¹¹

Nonetheless, the actual library building remained off limits to black residents. In May 1929, members of the African American community appointed a committee to inquire about the construction of a library building for blacks. Dr. P. W. Hill, a dentist, Mr. A. L. Nichols, and Mr. William Yarbrough, wrote the director of the Carnegie Public Library stating that the corner of Garfield Street and Sixth Street would be a good location for the proposed library.¹² This site was on the same block as the 1921 2-story brick Myrtle Hall School, located in Clarksdale's newly annexed eastern suburbs and one of two African American schools in the city limits.¹³ Both the City of Clarkdale and the Carnegie Library Board of Trustees ultimately agreed with the proposal. The Board of Trustees minutes for January 7, 1930 report what must have been ongoing discussions between the various stakeholders:

In regard to the branch library for colored people, the act of the school board was read and the librarian authorized to get statement from the Supt. of Schools stating it to be a true and exact copy on minutes. This is to be included in minutes of the City. On December 19, Mr. J. H. Johnson and the librarian met with the committee of colored people and agreement was reached for the sum of \$1000.00 collected among the colored people to be added to the sum of \$2000.00 of the city, this set aside and appropriated for

⁹ Linton Weeks. *Clarksdale & Coahoma: A History*. (Clarksdale: Carnegie Public Library, 1982), 175.

¹⁰ Weeks, 176.

¹¹ Miss Anona Jenkins, Clarksdale, MS, to Mrs. Eunice Eley, Jackson, MS. August 3, 1953. Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹² Wm. Yarbrough, A. L. Nichols, and Dr. P.W. Hill, Clarksdale to Miss Wilson, Clarksdale, May 31, 1929. Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹³ Weeks, 149.

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building, the city to erect same on school grounds by agreement of the school boards and Library board.¹⁴

The project moved ahead expeditiously. Four local contractors bid on the work in late February 1930, but existing records fail to identify the successful bidder. Whichever contractor won, they worked rapidly to complete the building. The Myrtle Hall Branch Library was dedicated on Sunday, May 4, 1930 (see Figure 1). The Clarksdale *Register* described the new library and the “elaborate ceremonies” of the dedication program in a long article that suggested the statewide importance of the building and the institution:

The library is a well lighted and ventilated room 25 x 50 feet and is splendidly equipped with lovely bookshelves holding the 1,600 volumes already placed at the disposal of the interested people of the colored race in Clarksdale. There are desks, tables and comfortable chairs.

The list of books is made up of reference works, religious works, fairy tales and books of practical value. They also have a good collection of school books, readers, which will be of great benefit to the younger patrons of the library.

One section of the library is very attractive—that is the one given over to the juvenile books in vivid bindings and pictures.¹⁵

The Sunday afternoon dedication included speeches by local white officials such as the Clarksdale Superintendent of Schools, H.B. Heidelberg, and J.H. Johnson, president of the board of trustees of the Carnegie library. A representative of the Rosenwald Fund, Mr. Tann, also spoke briefly, but the principal speakers were prominent African American leaders from around the state: Mayor B. A. Green, the mayor of Mound Bayou, MS; William H. Holtzclaw, president of the Utica Normal and Industrial Institute; and L.J. Rowan, president of Alcorn College, Mississippi’s African American land-grant college. The Alcorn College Band and the Imperial Harmony Club furnished the music. The *Register* also reported that “many white friends attended the dedicatory exercises Sunday afternoon and among the gathering there were some visitors from the North and East who were amazed at the progress of this Southern city and the co-operation of the two races.”¹⁶

The *Register* article continued:

The library will be operated under the management of Miss Hoyland Wilson who has served as librarian in Clarksdale for many years, and she will be assisted by Minnie

¹⁴ Carnegie Library Board of Trustees, Minutes, January 7, 1930. Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹⁵ “Myrtle Hall Branch Library Here Opened with Elaborate Ceremony,” Clarksdale *Register*, May 6, 1930, p.1

¹⁶ “Myrtle Hall Branch Library Here . . . ” May 6, 1930.

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Harris, a colored woman, who will serve as librarian and who has received instructions in conducting the work. The library will be open daily from *[illegible]* o'clock until 6 in the afternoon and evenings from 7 until 9 o'clock.

There has always been a branch library at the Coahoma County Agricultural High School for the colored school teachers of the county and when the teachers attended the meetings at the high school they could carry the desired books back to their respective schools. That branch proves somewhat of a clearing house for the schools of the county. The Myrtle Hall Branch will also be opened to the teachers and citizens of Coahoma County and the city of Clarksdale.¹⁷

The new Myrtle Hall library showed more initiative on Clarksdale's part than most other Mississippi cities, but comparisons of the white library with black library show that Clarksdale's library services were far from equal. The Annual Report of the Carnegie Public Library, October 1940-October 1941 noted that the book stock in the Main (white) library was 43,397 while the book stock in the Myrtle Hall Branch was 6,603. That year, the Main library added 1410 volumes while Myrtle Hall added only 195.¹⁸

The Julius Rosenwald Fund, noted for its school-building fund, also initiated programs to serve black libraries, distributing sets of 120 books to elementary and high-schools. In addition, the Rosenwald Fund piloted a program to train librarians at historically black colleges and universities. A second program funded five-year county library projects.¹⁹ According to librarian Anona Jenkins in 1953, Clarksdale and Coahoma County were beneficiaries of the Rosenwald Fund program beginning in 1928:

Clarksdale and Coahoma County, through its library service throughout the town and county and to negroes, attracted the attention of the Rosenwald Fund Committee in 1928. After their visiting the [Carnegie] library, a contract was drawn up whereby the Rosenwald Fund contributed financially for a period of years to the library and during that time the entire library service was expanded.²⁰

The Carnegie Public Library continued to operate segregated libraries into the 1960s, but broad social changes were sweeping the country as a result of the Civil Rights Movement, court ordered desegregation, and federal civil rights legislation. Funding for library services also changed with the adoption of the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964. Among other

¹⁷ "Myrtle Hall Branch Library Here . . ." May 6, 1930.

¹⁸ "Annual Report of Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, Miss. For October 1940 to October 1941." Clarksdale Library Subject File. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹⁹ Michael Fultz. "Black Public Libraries in the South in the Era of De Jure Segregation." *Libraries & Culture*, Vol 41, No. 3 (Summer, 2006), 344-345.

²⁰ Jenkins to Eley, August 2, 1953.

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provisions, the act provided federal funding for "the construction of new public library buildings and the expansion, remodeling, and alteration of existing buildings for use as public libraries."²¹

The City of Clarksdale took advantage of the federal funding, filing an application for remodeling the Myrtle Hall Branch Library on November 1, 1965. The city estimated the total cost of the project would be \$53,121.00 and that it would expand the square footage from 1250 square feet to 3750 square feet. The federal application emphasized that segregated facilities would not qualify for funding, requiring applicants to respond to the question, "Do you understand and agree that Federal Funds are not available to any Building Project whose governing officials do not submit written assurance of compliance with HEW's regulation under title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964." The city responded in the affirmative.²² The Mississippi Library Commission, charged with administering the federal program, approved the application and entered into an agreement with the City of Clarksdale to provide funds necessary to remodel the Myrtle Hall Branch of the Clarksdale Public Library. The agreement, dated April 25, 1966 provided, in part that "It is understood that all services to be rendered to the public in this building will conform with the Civil Rights Act of 1964."²³

The City of Clarksdale retained the Clarksdale architecture firm Brewer, Skewes & Godbold to design the renovated library. B. A. Crawford Construction Company of Clarksdale served as General Contractors for the project. Work was completed by the spring of 1967 and the expanded and renovated Myrtle Hall Branch Library was dedicated on May 28, 1967. The primary speaker was Mrs. Lula G. Currier, Director of the Mississippi Library Commission. The renovated building doubled the size of the building and provided new space for public use, including a public meeting room, and offices and work space for the library staff.

The Myrtle Hall Branch Library remained in service until 1981. Community programs included children's reading programs, a consumer education program, and the creation of a Black History Room, with a collection of books by black authors and of interest to black readers.

Clarksdale has long connection with Blues music. In January 1979, the Board of Trustees established the Delta Blues Museum as a division of the library for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and making accessible to the public, information, programs and related services concerning the history and significance of the blues. Initially the museum was housed in the Meeting Room of the Myrtle Hall Branch Library, but it very quickly outgrew the space and

²¹ James C. Frantz. "The Library Services and Construction Act." *ALA Bulletin*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (February 1966), 151.

²² "Application For Library Services And Construction Act Funds For: Remodeling An Existing Building." Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

²³ "Agreement to Remodel A Public Library Building." Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

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moved to the Carnegie Library downtown, and in 1999 to its own building in the renovated Y&MV Railroad depot.

Comparable Properties

The Myrtle Hall Branch Library is significant at the statewide level as a building that represents not only the history of library service in the black community in Clarksdale and Coahoma County but in Jim Crow Mississippi. The building also tells the story of the integration of library service after years of struggle by civil right activists to enact racial equality into federal law. Built in 1930, the building provided library service to a historically excluded and underserved segment of the population. Throughout the period of segregation, the Myrtle Hall Branch library was the only public library for the African American community in Coahoma County and, for most of that period, in the entire Mississippi Delta. As a step toward full integration of public libraries in Clarksdale and Coahoma County, the 1967 expansion and remodeling, which gave the library its current configuration, represents the changing social standards in Mississippi, enforced by federal law and federal funding for libraries.

The former Myrtle Hall Branch Library is one of two public library buildings in Clarksdale. The Carnegie Public Library, 114 Delta Avenue, constructed in 1914 and renovated several times, most recently in 1990, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing resource in the Clarksdale Historic District (NR, 2009). Libraries specifically built for African Americans in Mississippi are rare. Carnegie-funded libraries for African Americans were built in Meridian and Mound Bayou. The Meridian Carnegie Branch Library, built in 1912, was listed on the National Register in 1979 but demolished in 2008. The Carnegie Library in Mound Bayou, built in c. 1915 and designed by Robert Taylor, burned in 1935. The City of Jackson, MS established the George Washington Carver Library in 1950 to serve the city's African American community. From 1950 to 1955, the library was housed in a converted house located at 142-144 East Davis Avenue, listed as a marginal resource in the Farish Street Neighborhood Historic District (NR, 1980) and now non-extant. In 1955, a new Carver Library building, designed by Jackson architect N. W. Overstreet, opened on Mill Street in Jackson. This one-story Stripped Classic building is extant but has been vacant for decades. It was considered a noncontributing resource to the Farish Street Neighborhood Historic District in 1980, but would be considered contributing if this district were reevaluated and updated with a later period of significance.

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Major Bibliographical References

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

The Clarksdale Press Register

Clarksdale Public Library Subject File, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

Frantz, John C. "The Library Services Construction Act." *ALA Bulletin*, Vol 60, No. 2 (February, 1966), 149-152.

Fultz, Michael. "Black Public Libraries in the South in the Era of De Jure Segregation." *Libraries & Culture*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Summer, 2006) 337-339.

McAllister, Dorothy. "Library Service in Mississippi," *Library Journal* 86, no. 5 (March 1, 1955).

Myrtle Hall Branch Library, Statewide Survey File (027-CLK-0903), Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

Peebles, Margarette and J. B. Howell. *A History of Mississippi Libraries*. Montgomery, AL: Paragon Press, 1975.

Weeks, Linton. *Clarksdale & Coahoma: A History*. Clarksdale, MS: Carnegie Public Library, 1982.

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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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☒ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: Carnegie Library of Clarksdale and Coahoma County

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 027-CLK-0903

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 Acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34°11'44.65"N Longitude: 90°33'38.97"W

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the northwest corner of the intersection of State and Garfield, proceed 110 feet north, thence 120 feet west, thence 110 feet south, and 120 feet east to the starting point.

Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

Coahoma County,
Mississippi
County and State

Name of Property

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the city lot historically associated with the Myrtle Hall Branch Library.

10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Mary Frances Moton, CEO/President

organization: Family and Youth Opportunities Division, Inc

street & number: 347 Issaquena Ave.

city or town: Clarksdale state: MS zip code: 38614

e-mail: dr.moton@yahoo.com

telephone (662) 902-4848

date: 6/8/2017

With additional information by Bill Gatlin and Jennifer Baughn, MDAH

Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

Coahoma County,
Mississippi
County and State

Name of Property

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

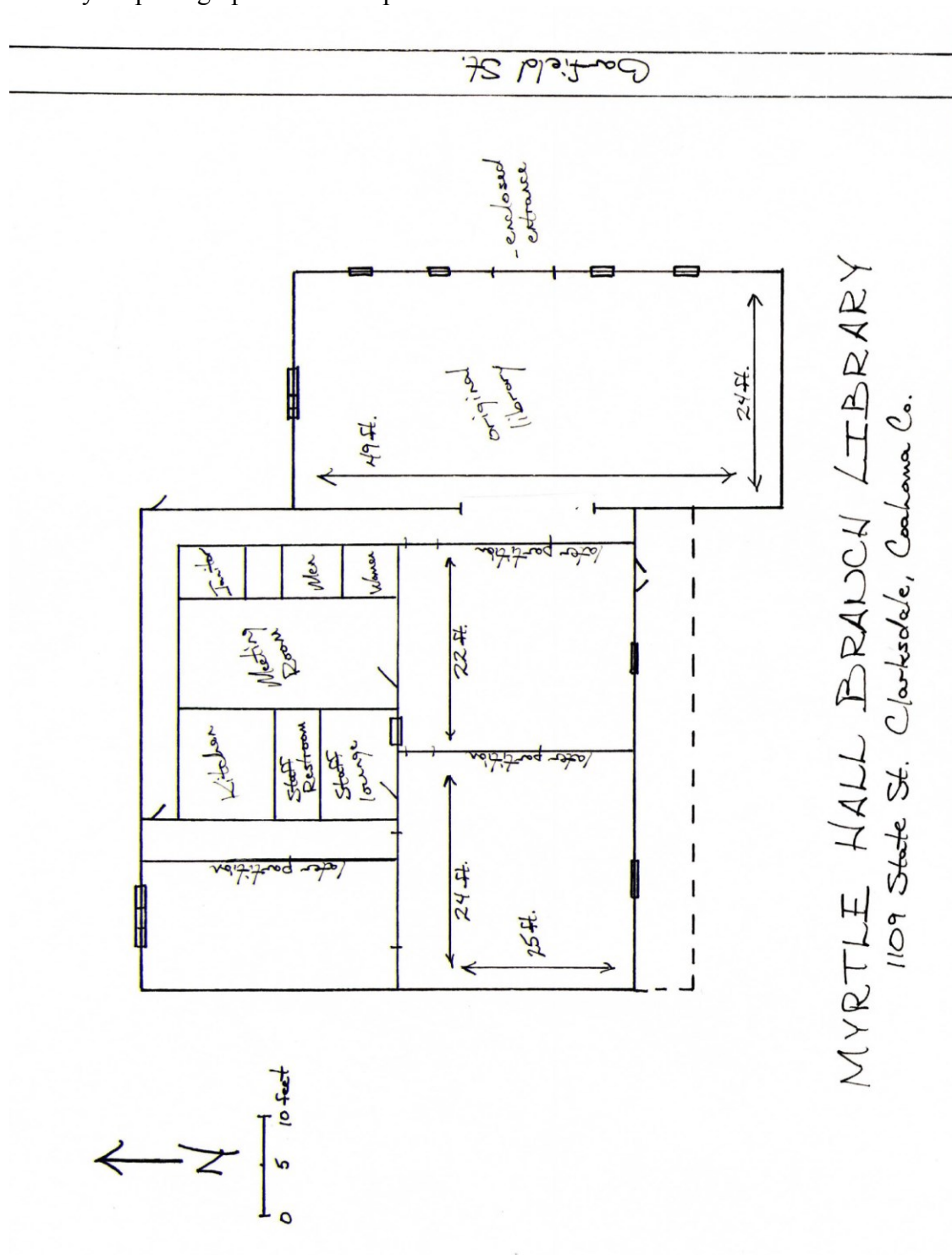


Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

Coahoma County,
Mississippi
County and State

Name of Property

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



Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

Coahoma County,
Mississippi
County and State

Name of Property

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



Figure 1: Myrtle Hall Library for Negroes, c.1940. Photo courtesy Clarksdale Carnegie Public Library Vertical File.

Myrtle Hall Branch Library for Negroes

Coahoma County,
Mississippi
County and State

Name of Property

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Myrtle Hall Branch Library
City or Vicinity: Clarksdale
County: Coahoma State: Mississippi
Photographer: Jennifer V.O. Baughn, MDAH

Date Photographed: November 3, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 9: S and E elevations, view to NW
- 2 of 9: S façade, 1967 section, view to NNW
- 3 of 9: S façade, view to NE
- 4 of 9: plaque under porch
- 5 of 9: N (rear) elevation, view to SSE, 1967 section in foreground and original gabled section to far left
- 6 of 9: N (rear) and E elevations, view to SW, with original gabled section to left and 1967 section to right
- 7 of 9: Interior of original section, view to S, with connection to 1967 section to far left
- 8 of 9: Interior of original section, view to SE
- 9 of 9: Interior of 1967 section, view to E, with original section seen through doorway on the left

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 100 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.



RTL AL

Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 1 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 2 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 3 of 9

1967

MYRTLE HALL BRANCH
CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

CONSTRUCTED WITH FUNDS FROM THE CITY OF CLARKSDALE
AND THE LIBRARY SERVICE AND CONSTRUCTION ACT IN
COOPERATION WITH THE MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION

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B. A. CRAWFORD CONSTRUCTION COMPANY GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Myrtle Hall Branch Library

Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 4 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 5 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS
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Myrtle Hall Branch Library

Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 7 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 8 of 9



Myrtle Hall Branch Library
Clarksdale, Coahoma Co, MS

Photo 9 of 9