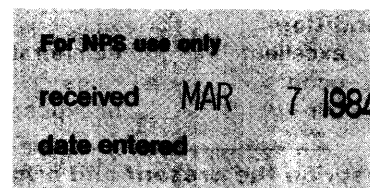


United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**historic Wood Home for Boysand/or common Wood Hall**2. Location**street & number Route 2, Box 3, Horton Street N/A not for publicationcity, town Mathiston N/A vicinity ofstate Mississippi code 28 county Webster code 155**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☒ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☐ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☒ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
		☐ no	☐ military
			☐ museum
			☐ park
			☐ private residence
			☒ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Propertyname Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Churchstreet & number 475 Riverside Drivecity, town New York N/A vicinity of state New York 10027**5. Location of Legal Description**courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the Chancery Clerk
Webster County Courthousestreet & number Highway 9 Northcity, town Walthall state Mississippi**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
☐ excellent	☐ deteriorated	☐ unaltered	☒ original site	
☒ good	☐ ruins	☒ altered	☐ moved	date <u>N/A</u>
☐ fair	☐ unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently situated on the campus of Wood Junior College is Wood Hall, a large, two-story on raised basement brick structure built in 1914. Originally constructed as a boys' dormitory for Bennett Academy, precursor to the present institution, the building bears some stylistic affinity with the Italianate, although the severity of composition and limitation of ornamentation indicate a vernacular interpretation employing a reduced vocabulary of forms and motifs.

Rectangular in plan, three-bays-by-seven, Wood Hall originally had a double-hipped roof which was subsequently modified and extended on the eastern end into a gabled portico rising two stories above the full basement level. Ornamental features of the building include brick segmental arches over most doors and windows; a transom-lighted main entrance (east elevation) and pedimented secondary entrance on the north; brick belt courses occurring at the first and second floor sill levels; a modillioned wooden cornice at the eaves; and a pair of chimneys with corbeled caps that pierce the roof. The tall, narrow, double-hung windows with their nine-over-nine glazing configuration are one of the more salient elements indicative of Wood Hall's Italianate origins. As built, shed dormers graced both the east and west elevations; these were supplanted by lunette-shaped ventilators positioned on the north and south facing roof planes. Porticoes over the east and north entrances, each consisting of four square columns, essentially flat roofs, and straight stair runs from the middle bay to ground level, have also been removed. In the 1920's an uncovered porch was constructed wrapping around to connect these two porticoes. Subsequently (ca. 1936) the structure was partially modified on the eastern end by the addition of the aforementioned gabled portico; thus the original roof planes and dormer were altered. Four large, square wooden columns define this new portico rising from a built-up brick porch such that the main (first) floor is left open and the second floor (originally a sleeping porch) is enclosed by ranges of multiple-light casement windows. The pedimented gable above the porches features handsome dentil molding and a circular light with delicate tracery. A divided brick and concrete stair with wrought iron railings rise from ground level to front the portico.

The plan of Wood Hall is similar through all three floors, consisting of a central hall which bisects the space east to west. Various instructional, mechanical, and storage rooms are arrayed on either side of this double-loaded corridor. The staircase is located at the western (rear) end of the hall; the stairs and balusters are of ornamental ironwork with a wooden handrail. As the building has been continuously occupied by the institution since construction, its structural integrity has been maintained.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500–1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☐ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☐ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☒ 1900–	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1914 Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Wood Junior College stands today in lasting tribute to a group of early Webster County families who founded and supported an educational facility for their children at a time and in a place where it would have otherwise been unattainable. The school, now located near Mathiston, is a direct descendant of an elementary school begun by a group of Methodist families at Colfax Chapel, circa 1880. Wood Hall, as the oldest extant building associated with the present campus, has assumed important historical and symbolic significance in its intimate connection with educational progress in rural northeast Mississippi.

Though the Mississippi Constitution of 1868 made provisions for a statewide system of free public education, in reality most localities went without or gained such facilities only through private initiative. Indeed, it was not until 1901 that public high schools were established in all towns of any import, and during this time it must be remembered that less than ten percent of the state's children lived in towns. Thus the majority of children in Mississippi had only limited access to education of any kind (James W. Loewen and Charles Sallis, editors, Mississippi: Conflict and Change [New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1974], pp. 150, 210).

The first school at Colfax Chapel, intended to serve that community along with Maben and Mathiston, apparently faltered after only a few years due to its isolated location and few students. In 1885 a second attempt at Clarkson was made with the formation of Woodland Seminary, an elementary level institution. Opening with sixteen students under the instruction of Sam Fagg, first paid teacher, this school was largely financed by special appeals made in Northern churches through the Freedman's Aid Society. When this source of support faded in the 1890's, the Women's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church became interested in the school, taking complete control in 1897. Around 1900 the institution was renamed Bennett Academy and a few years after that relocated to its present campus at Mathiston, primarily to be nearer to the railroad. At this time local citizens donated forty-three acres and \$5,000 to the school, this broad-based support apparently resulting from its being the only educational institution of any consequence (public or private) in the vicinity.

Wood Home for Boys (Wood Hall), originally built as a boys' dormitory in 1914, was financed through the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. I. C. Wood of Logan, Iowa. Functioning variously through the years as a dining hall, student union, and classroom building, Wood Hall has become the symbolic center and focus for student life at the school. In the 1920's the school began its transformation into a junior college with the elimination of lower level coursework, and in

9. Major Bibliographical References

Loewen, James W., and Charles Sallis, editors. Mississippi: Conflict and Change. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974.

Weber, Dr. Jasper. History of the Development of Wood Junior College. In WPA Source Material, Webster County, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Sapa, Miss.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property, entirely contained within the campus of Wood Junior College, encompasses one acre of land forming a rectangular figure with Wood Hall located at the center of the plot. Boundary lines are approximately 208 feet long and parallel to the walls of the structure

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

state	N/A	code	county	code
state	N/A	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Felix Sutphin, President, and Tomas Blackwell, Architectural Historian

Wood Junior College;

organization Mississippi Depart. of Archives & History date February 27, 1984

Horton Street;

street & number P. O. Box 571

telephone (601) 263-8128; 354-7326

Mathiston;

city or town Jackson

state Mississippi

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Kenneth H. P. Pool

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date FEB. 29, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 4/5/84

for Shelores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Wood Home for Boys (Wood Hall)

Continuation sheet Webster County, Mississippi

Item number

8

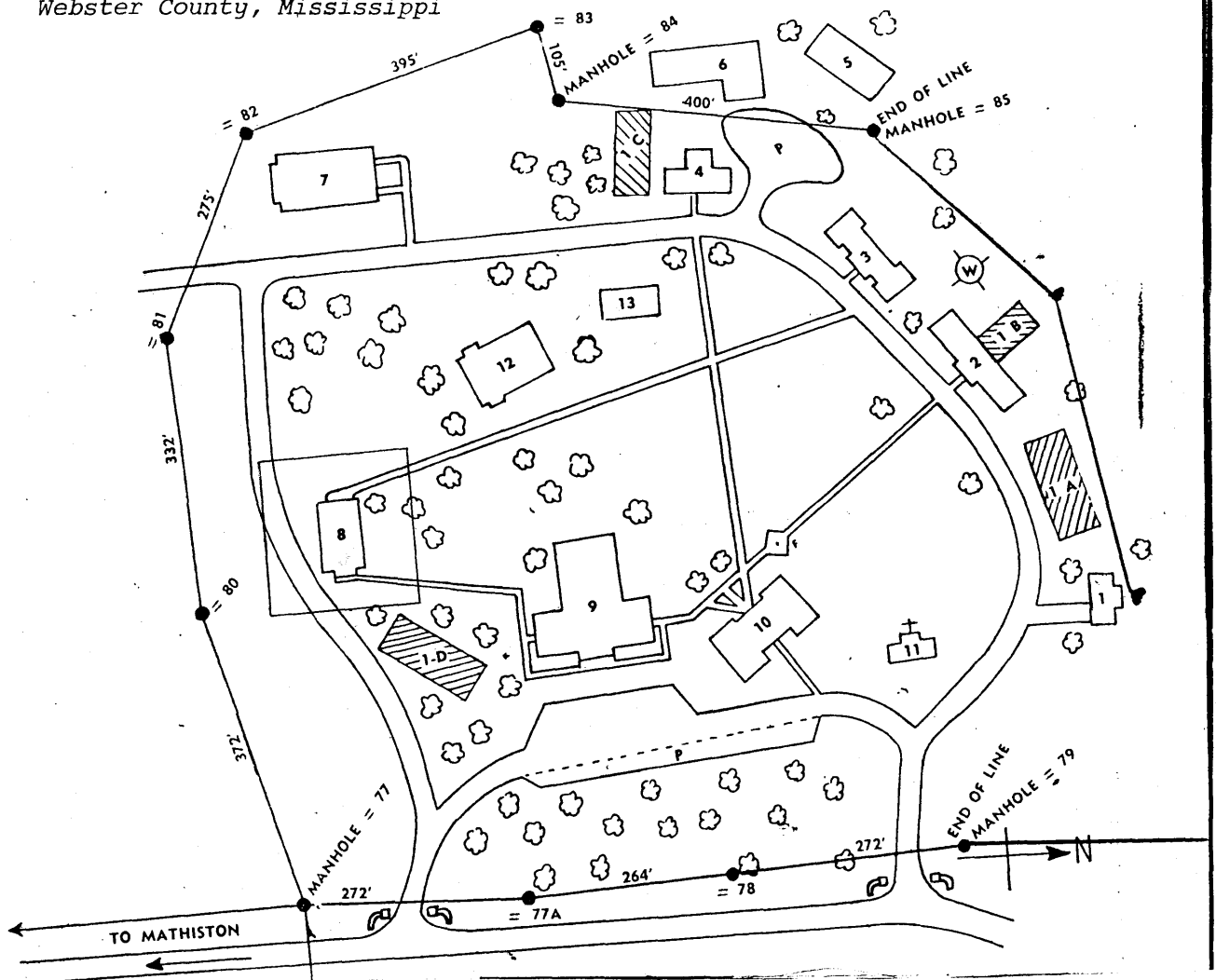
Page 1

8 - SIGNIFICANCE

1934 was renamed Wood Junior College after its most generous benefactors (Webster Progress, Eupora, Mississippi, March 16, 1933, and History of the Development of Wood Junior College, an unpublished manuscript by Dr. Jasper Weber, found in WPA Source Material, Webster County).

Many alumni have achieved positions of prominence in the public and private sector on both state and national levels, including: two Mississippi Supreme Court justices; an assistant to the Director, FBI; vice-chancellor at a state university, and various state officials and legislators.

WOOD HOME FOR BOYS (WOOD HALL,
Webster County, Mississippi





WOOD HALL

Wood Junior College

Mathiston, Webster County, Mississippi

Looking east at the principal facade.

Dr. Felix Sutphin, President, Wood Jr.
College

July 1982

Photo 1 of 2



WOOD HALL

Wood Junior College

Mathiston, Webster County, Mississippi

Looking northeast at principal and southern
elevations.

Dr. Felix Sutphin, President, Wood Junior
College

July 1982

Photo 2 of 2