



ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS & HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

I. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Memory Chapel Funeral Home
and/or Common Name: Memory Chapel Funeral Home (Poe's Memory Chapel)

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 324 South Prairie Street
City: Union Springs, AL
State: Alabama County: Bullock Zip: 36089
Is the property located within the city limits? Yes No
Latitude: _____ Longitude: _____
Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ USGS Quad Map: _____

3. CLASSIFICATION

Category: Building(s) District Structure Site Object
Ownership: Public Private Both
Status: Occupied Unoccupied Work in progress
Public Acquisition: In process Being considered
Accessible: No Yes: restricted Yes: unrestricted

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name: Dr. James V. Poe, Jr. & Mrs. Bertha Coleman Poe
Address: 324 South Prairie Street or P.O. Box 566
City: Union Springs State: AL Zip: 36089
Telephone: 334-738-2644 334-738-3143
Email: blcpoe@aol.com drjvp1981@gmail.com

5. FLOOR PLAN & SITE PLAN

Attach sketched floor plan. If the property includes more than one building, submit a site plan showing the locations, dates of construction, and uses of the buildings.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION See Instructions for more information.

Construction date:	1910	Source:	Bullock County Tax Assessor
Alteration date:	1959-60	Source:	Mr. James V. Poe, Sr.
Architect/Builder:		Contractor:	
Physical condition: (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Ruinous)	Good	Remaining historic fabric: (High, Medium, Low)	High
No. of stories:	One Level and attic		
Historic use of property:	Residence - Commerce/trade (Doctor's Office)		
Current use of property:	Funeral Home; Bullock County NAACP Office; Social		
Architectural style category:	Colonial	Architectural style sub-category:	French Colonial
Basic typology:	Extended 1-House	Basic shape:	Square
Basic floor plan:	center hall&parlor	Historic Construction material(s):	Wood frame
Current exterior wall material(s):	Wood frame	Roof finish material(s):	Metal
Main roof configuration:	Shed	Foundation material:	Brick
Porch type:	Attached, entry porch		
Window type and materials:	Double hung - wood		
Describe alterations:	Men and women's bathroom added and embalming room		
Number and type of all outbuildings: (if significant, fill out separate survey form)	Garage and carport		
Exterior Architectural Description:	<p>Beautiful, sprawling white Victorian style, single family home with southern enhanced columns and hand-crafted bannister with wrap-around porch. The windows are large, spacious and the size of a door on the front and throughout the personalized, fanciful home. The magnificent, octagonal steep imposing roof is steep and tower-like. The roof is a bright silver metal structure. The one-of-a-kind Victorian influenced home is wood framed.</p>		
Description of Setting:	<p>Memory Chapel Funeral Home is located one-half mile from historic downtown Union Springs, Alabama. It is on the main street located at 324 So. Prairie Street. It is zoned in a residential/business location.</p>		

7. SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria (check all that apply and explain below). See Instructions for more information.

Criterion A: Associated with historical events and activities relating to the property that are important to the history of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion B: Person or group with whom the property is associated is important to the history of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion C: Type, period, or method of construction represents architectural features that are significant in the development of the community, state, or nation.

Criterion D: Property has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in Alabama's history or prehistory (archaeological component).

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (check all that apply and explain below)

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history |
| <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> funerary art | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> humanitarian | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For each area of significance checked above, explain why this property is important. Use additional sheets as necessary.

See attached sheets.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Use attached sheets as necessary

9. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreeage of nominated property: 1.08 acres

Attach a map showing the location of the property.

10. Person Applying for Historic Register Designation

Name: Bertha Coleman Poe

Address: 324 South Prairie Street/P.O. Box 566

City: Union Springs State: AL Zip: 36089

Telephone: 334-738-2644 334-738-3143

Email: blcpoe@aol.com

11. PHOTOGRAPHS:

Images are essential to the review process. They can be 4x6 color prints or digital images on a CD/DVD. All photographs will become the property of the AHC and will not be returned.

12. REMINDER:

Along with this completed application, include attachments for Items 5, 9 and 11 and send them to:

Alabama Historical Commission
Attn: Lee Anne
468 S. Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mr. James V. Poe, Sr., owner and entrepreneur, of Memory Chapel Funeral Home, 324 South Prairie Street, Union Springs, Alabama, opened the doors of the funeral home to the Union Springs/Bullock County community during the 1950-1960-1970 civil rights, voting rights movement when no other business, church, home, or civic organization would venture to do so. Memory Chapel Funeral Home was the established meeting place/home of the civil rights, voting rights movement in Union Springs/Bullock County. In addition to meeting space, Mr. Poe provided food, transportation, telephone and duplication supplies and equipment for the movement. In addition, he provided lodging and food for the Freedom Riders from the North. At Memory Chapel Funeral Home, candidates for political offices and volunteers strategized voter education, voter registration and voter turn-out, which lead to the election of many Black politicians in Union Springs/Bullock County. Prior to the Civil Rights/Voting Rights Movement, there were no African Americans elected to political office in Union Springs/Bullock County, even though, they were the majority population. Mr. Poe lead the one and only voters/civil rights march in Union Springs/Bullock County in 1965. He and his family continued in the movement even after incendiary material was dropped on their home from a helicopter and many telephone calls with threats upon their lives!

Mr. James V. Poe, Sr. was the first African American to hold the title of City Councilman in Union Springs. Today, the majority of elected public officials are African Americans in Union Springs/Bullock County.

Throughout American history, different groups of citizens have fought for rights that the American Constitution gave them. The civil rights movement in the United States is about the campaign of citizens to win their rights guaranteed in the American Constitution...the pursuit of liberty, justice and freedom for all. African Americans, because of their skin color, did not have the same rights that white people had. There was discrimination in employment, education, housing, public accommodations, voting. This injustice on African Americans led to a time of social unrest. In the 1950's and 1960's, African Americans rose up to fight against the social systems and public authorities that had taken these rights away. African Americans were "sick and tired" of being "sick and tired" of going

to the back of the bus, drinking colored water, going to the colored toilet and being discriminated, discounted and ignored on a daily basis when freedom, justice, equality and the pursuit of happiness was guaranteed under the constitution. Many whites supported the Civil Rights Movement.

Slavery ended (1861-65), and African Americans were made citizens and got the right to vote. However, there was so much prejudice against blacks that these new laws were often ignored. In the southern states many laws were passed, "Jim Crow Laws", that separated Blacks from whites in public. Blacks were treated as second class citizens.

Prior to the Civil Rights Movement, in Union Springs, African Americans were not employed in the banks, Court house, law enforcement or the United States Post Office. Many business owners would not serve African Americans, especially in hotels and restaurants. If they were served, many were served at a side/back door or from a window. The primary employment opportunities for African Americans was domestic work and farming. Domestic workers earned \$2.00 per day, from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

The American Civil Rights Movement actually began as far back in history as 1783; the year when Massachusetts legally outlawed slavery within its borders. Throughout American history, there have been a number of important events that have occurred in the struggle for justice and equality for all. In the 1950's, African Americans and supportive whites came together in a series of nonviolent protests known as the Civil Rights Movement. African Americans had fought very hard for their right to be treated as equal citizens in the United States, yet segregation still existed.

Today, Memory Chapel serves as a hub for the gathering of many political office-seekers and voters during elections. Memory Chapel is the main office of the Union Springs/Bullock County Branch NAACP, serving the community in matters of equality, freedom and justice. Historically, in 1951, the NAACP along with Thurgood Marshall decided to fight for the rights of African American children who were still forced into schools that were completely segregated yet still considered "equal." They believed that segregated schools dehumanized African Americans just as much as slavery had done. In the Supreme Court Case, Brown V. Board of Education, the court ruled in 1954 that schools in all states had to be "desegregated" or integrated. The court decision sent the message that segregation in America

would not be tolerated. The Union Springs/Bullock County Branch NAACP, reorganized in 2008, was named Alabama's Branch of the year 2012-2013 for its programs, information and service to the community.

Biographical References

Biographical Article. Mr. James V. Poe, Sr. The Historical News.
State of Alabama. December 2012.

Deeds. Bullock County Courthouse. Probate Office. NN p. 451.

Legal Description of 324 So. Prairie Street. Bullock County Tax
Office.

Maps. Bullock County Courthouse. Tax Assessor's Office and
Bullock County Tourism Office. "Welcome to Bullock County,
AL.

Personal Interviews. John McGowan, former Mayor, Union Springs.
March 2009.

Henry C. Davis, retired teacher/principal, Bullock County
and former School Board Member. March 2009.