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Alabama Register Property Information

Ala. Historical Commission

Added 3-24-95

1. Name

historic Mount Zion School

and/or common Mount Zion Community Center

2. Location

street & number Mount Zion Road

city, town vicinity of Greenville

state Alabama county Butler

3. Classification

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

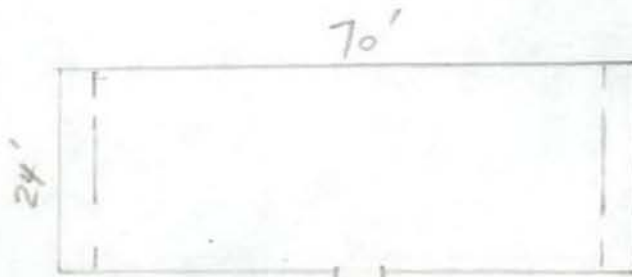
4. Owner of Property

name Butler County Commissioner's Court

street & number Court Square

city, town Greenville vicinity of state Alabama 36037

5. Please use space below to sketch floor plan/site plan.



6. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Mount Zion School is a one story structure located on a two acre lot. It was built on a conventional foundation about three feet above ground level. It is a wood framed structure with painted weatherboard on the exterior. There is a single ridge, *hipped* roof with asphalt shingles.

It was originally a two room school. The wall dividing the rooms was removed. A stage on the east end of the east room was also removed. There are cloak rooms on each end of the building. The original building had no restrooms. Some of the original chalkboards are on the walls. The building originally had six windows on the front and twelve windows on the back wall. The flooring is pine. The walls and ceiling are painted pine. The building was heated by a pot-bellied stove which was located between the two rooms.

7. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1934 Builder/Architect Riley Brothers Construction Co.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mt. Zion School building was built to provide a site to educate Black children who lived in the eastern part of Butler County, Alabama. This building is an example of the public school facilities offered to Blacks in rural areas prior to the racial integration of schools in Alabama. The building has served as a center for social activities for the community as well as an educational center. Preservation of this building will serve as an example of a typical rural, Black school in the segregated South of the 20th century.

In 1926 2 acres of land in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 3, Township 9N., Range 15E. of Butler County, Alabama was bought for \$200.00 by the Trustees of a new school. Lumber was donated and the property was donated to the State of Alabama. Around 1934 Riley Brothers Construction Company of Greenville built the two-room school. From 1934 until the mid-1960's, the building served as a school for Black children in grades one through six. Since the school closed, the building has been used by the community for family reunions, a summer feeding program site, group meetings and a variety of community functions.

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[Faint, illegible text, possibly a date or reference line]

[Faint, illegible text, possibly a paragraph of the main body]

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8. Major Bibliographical References

Unpublished manuscript by Gertrude P. Falls on the history of the school (included in file)

9. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 2 acres in Butler County, AL

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

Commencing at the southwest corner of the southwest quarter of the NE quarter, of Section 3, Township 9, Range 15, running north 140 yards, thence east 70 yards, thence south 140 yds., thence west 70 yds. to the beginning

10. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Newton

organization _____

date October 25, 1994

street & number P. O. Box 246

telephone 382-8700

city or town Greenville

state Alabama 36037

11. Please submit color slides of the property with this form.

12. Please return ALABAMA REGISTER form to:

ALABAMA REGISTER COORDINATOR
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
MONTGOMERY ALABAMA 36130-0900

7. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

HISTORY OF THE MT. ZION SCHOOL

The Mt. Zion school building is located in Butler County, Alabama in School District Seven. On January 30, 1926 Minnie Cook, Lillie Freeman and Iola Bell sold two acres of land for \$200.00 to Henry McCall, Din Knight, Joe Bedgood and Raphael Davidson. These men were to be Trustees of the new school. The land was located at Township 9N., Range 15E., Section 3, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$.

The land was purchased to build a school building in the community to educate and train Black children. With limited resources, it was not possible to immediately carry out the mission. By an act of God, some large trees were blown down on property owned by Henry McCall, Raleigh White and Mrs. Janie Pryor. Seeing the determination of the parents and patrons of the Mt. Zion community to build a school, the property owners donated these trees to the community. Raleigh White hauled the logs to the school site. James Franklin Brannon set up a sawmill and cut the lumber into shapes and sizes needed to build the school. The men of the community sorted and stacked the lumber in piles to dry.

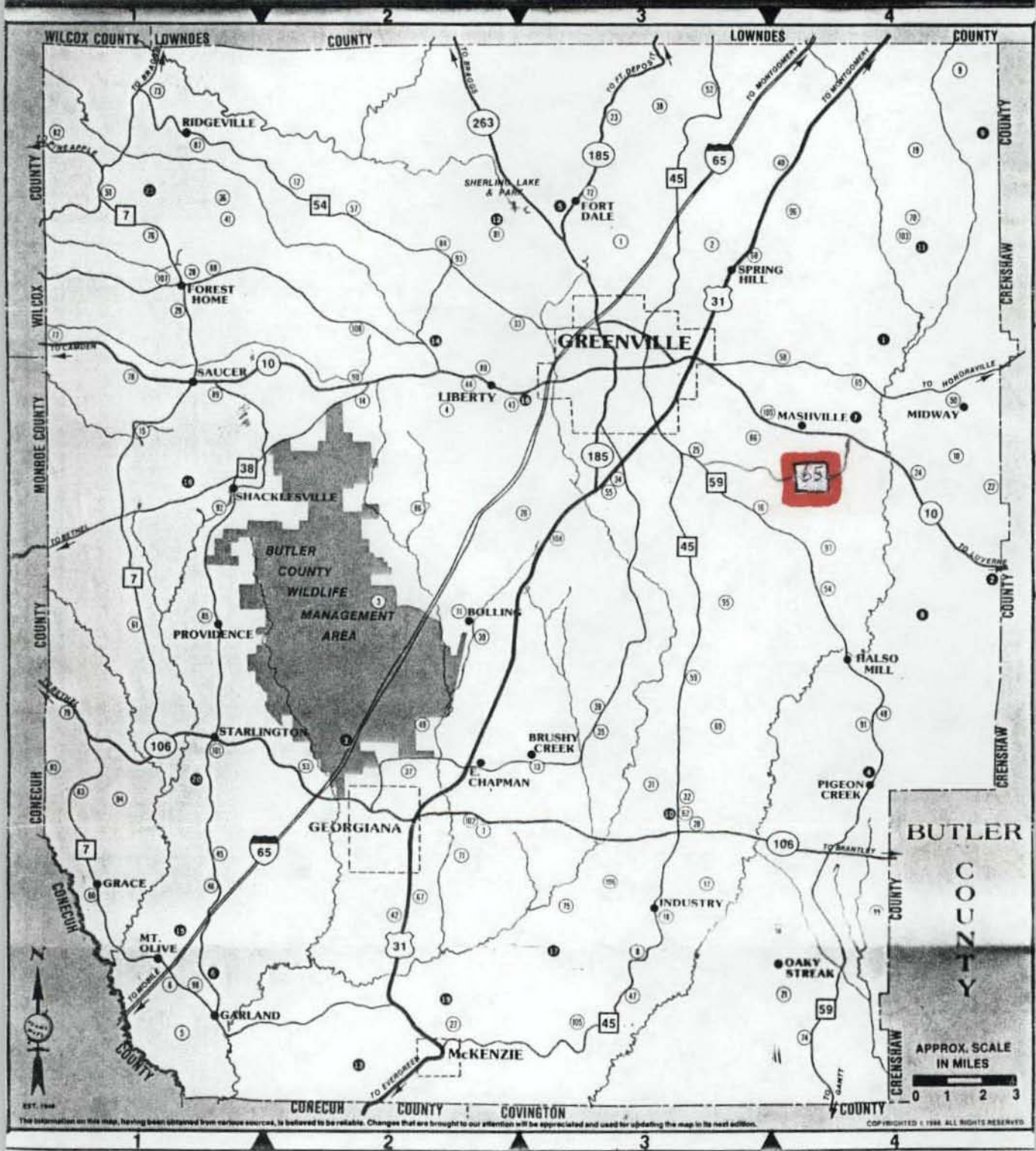
The lumber and other contributions were deeply appreciated by the community. However sufficient funds were not available to build the school. The school Trustees found it necessary to deed the property to the State of Alabama on March 6, 1926. This made the school eligible to receive state funding.

Riley Brothers Construction Company of Greenville, Alabama was hired to build the school. On November 30, 1934 the Butler County Board of Education assisted the school's patrons in buying 80 used desks for the pupils. The patrons contributed \$100.00 and a balance of \$85.00 was due to be paid by October 1935.

The first teachers to teach at the new school were J.L. Odom, who received \$40.00 per month and Amanda B. Faulk who was paid \$30.00 per month during the 1934-1935 school year. In the years to follow several teachers were employed there. The school offered classes for students in grades one through nine. Some classes were held in the nearby Masonic Lodge and the Mt. Zion Church. The impact of this school can be seen in the numerous students who climbed the ladder of success to great heights. Due to declining enrollment and the need for further education, the school was closed in the early 1960's. Students were bused to the elementary and high schools in Greenville.

The Mt. Zion Community Center, Inc. was organized on December 21, 1965. The Board of Directors were John H. Fails, Chairman, Robert Bennett, Henry Caldwell, John Henry Yeldell and Lambert Bennett. Its purpose was to improve and promote activities for the residents of the vicinity and to provide a site for people to gather. Repairs were need to the building and as a result the building was deeded to the Butler County Commission on August 23, 1979. The building is regularly used as the site for family reunions, a summer feeding program, group meetings, softball games and a variety of community functions.

Mount Zion School
County Road 65
Butler County, Alabama



The information on this map, having been obtained from various sources, is believed to be reliable. Changes that are brought to our attention will be appreciated and used for updating the map in its next edition. COPYRIGHTED © 1984. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.