



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130
PHONE: 261-3184



FEB 19 1986

ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE
Nomination Form

RECEIVED

COUNTY Calhoun

NAME: Present (1) Margaret Woodruff Library (2) Variosa Club House
Historic (1) Margaret Woodruff Library (2) Variosa Club House

LOCATION: Street and Number Anniston and Alexandria Road

Town (Give directions if rural) Alexandria, AL - 10 miles North of Anniston, East of U.S. Hwy. 431

A MAP WITH THE LANDMARK MARKED MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM

(X)(1)

CATEGORY: Building (X)(2) Structure () Object () Site () District ()
(1) Under restoration (1) First free public library in Calhoun Co

USE: Present (2) Community club house and apartment
Historic (2) Community club house since 1961. Prior use - private residence. (First mention of house

OWNERSHIP: Public () Private (X) on deed as 1890.
Owner's Name Variosa Club

Mailing Address Mrs. H. A. Bryant, President, Rt 2, Box 280, Alexandria, AL 36250

INTEGRITY: Original Site (X)(2) Moved (X)(1) When? Library Building moved in 1978

From where? (1) Alexandria Spring (Give details in significance.)

Moved less than one block to Alexandria United Methodist Church - to carry out provisions of *

CONDITIONS: Excellent () Good () Fair (X) Ruins ()

THREATS: No (X) Yes () By What?

(X)(1)

RESTORATION WORK: Being considered () Underway (X)(2) Completed () Not planned ()

SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT: Open land () Woodland () Scattered buildings (X)
High building density () Commercial () Industrial ()
Residential (X) Rural (X)

Acreage Approximately 1 acre

For all categories other than a district and object give a site plan with a North arrow. Show related buildings.

For a district give a verbal boundary description and attach a sketch map of the district.

*Fred R. Martin's will. Library was used as Sunday School building until church expansion, when library was offered back to Variosa Club. To prevent destruction of library, it was moved to back lawn of club house. Library is about one block from original site.

SIGNIFICANCE:

(1) and (2)

Why is this landmark significant? (X) associated with events, persons, or movements
Local (X) State () National ()
(2) (X) a good example of a type or style of structure
(1) (X) other First free public library in Calhoun County.

Explain: (Briefly state why the above is true)(1) First free public library in Calhoun County was in continuous use from 1915 to 1958. Built as a cultural asset for the small rural community in 1915. See Enclosure - History of Library.

(2) Frontier Antebellum home.

Date of Construction or Period of major importance.(1) 1915; (2) First mention of house on deed was 1890.

Architect or Builder (Give name and biographies, if known)(1)Local citizens donated labor for construction; (2) See page 4 of abstract 0 1890 - John R. Rodgers and Mollie W. Rogers - it is possible that this mortgage could have been made to construct the house.

Give a complete but concise history of the Landmark. Include information on important people and events associated with the landmark. (USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY)

(1) The Variosa Club built the library as a cultural asset for the small rural community. The library was built in 1915. The club members acted as librarians. Charter members of the Variosa Club were original owners. Charter members were: (1) Margaret Woodruff, (2) Emeline Woodruff, (3) Marie Woodruff, (4) Govan Woodruff, (5) Martha Brewton, (6) Ruth Irwin, (7) Rosa Phifer, (8) Cora Smith, (9) Vera Smith, (10) Mary Ila Green, (11) Mrs. Ed Shield, (2) Lillie Atkins, (13) Grace Hardy, (14) Nannie Lou Meharg.

See Enclosure - History of Library.

(2) Mar-ho-illo- Indian-American name - Jas. Hall received land grant 8/2/1865. Creek Treaty-1832. House willed to Variosa Club for community club house by Fred R. Martin in 1961. (See Page 1, Original Entries, Abstract of Deeds - on file with Alabama Historical Commission.)

State sources of information, giving full bibliographical data:

- 1. Anniston Star - newspaper articles.
- 2. Variosa Club scrap book (letter, articles, newspaper clippings)
- 3. See Enclosure - History of Library

DESCRIPTION: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE LANDMARK MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM.

Complete as directed below for each category.

BUILDING:

(1) One (1) Open (1) None
Number of stories(2) One Foundation (2)Cement Block Basement (2) None

Wall Material: (Note changes from one floor or wing to another)
(clapboard, brick, stone, wood shingle, board and batten, stucco over wood or brick, metal, logs)

- (1) Studs and nails
- (2) Braced with hardwood. No studs. Seals are 12" x 12" thick. Put together with wooden pegs.

Structural System: (If known)

Wood frame (X) (1) Load-bearing masonry () Iron or Steel ()
(X) (2)

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

(1) and (2)

Roof Type: (Gable/ Gambrel, Mansard, Flat, Hipped, Combination)

Shingles (1) and (2)

Roof Covering: (Wood shingle, Asphalt, Tile, Metal, Slate)

Roof Trim: (Cornices, bargeboard, brackets, etc.)

(1) Plain cornices

(2) Cornices, vergeboard, brackets

Porches: Front (type and description)(1) After library was moved, original concrete porch was replaced with wooden floor. (2) Covers 2/3 of the front of the house. A new concrete floor was poured in summer of 1978. Old columns had to be replaced at the same time.

Rear (type and description) None

Side (type and description) None

Doors: Main entrance (location, description)(1) Solid wood; colonial; six-glass panes in top half. (2) Far right and far left; solid wood colonial with six panes of glass in top half of doors.

Other entrances (location, description)(1) None. (2) Two rear doors - far right and far left; solid wood colonial; six panes of glass in top half of doors.

Windows: Types and number of each floor of facade(1) Regular double hung - two
(2) Regular double hung - two.

Types and number per floor for sides and rear(1) Two double hung windows on both east and west sides. No rear windows. (2) North - Eight double hung; South - Eight double hung; West-rear - four double hung; East regular double hung - two.

Interior: Describe mantels, stairways, wainscoting, plasterwork and any unusual features.

(1) Original wooden walls and ceiling.

(2) Plain mantel on South side and plain mantel on North side; both originals.

Other: Use this space to describe any additions, alterations, outbuildings or other features of the structure and its surroundings.

(2) Front lawn has two giant aged Southern magnolias; back lawn has two huge black walnut trees and a large pecan tree.

Original house had two rooms with a hall between them. The chimneys are in these original rooms. Two rooms, two baths and two enclosed porches have been added to accommodate the growing families and changing times. Center hall was enclosed to make a room.

On an additional sheet make a sketch of the floor plan of the building, showing dimensions if possible. Sketches of floor plans are enclosed.

THIS IS NOT REQUIRED!

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

STRUCTURE: On a separate sheet of paper give a complete as possible verbal description of the structure. (See examples)

OBJECT: On a separate sheet of paper give a complete as possible verbal description of the object. (See examples)

SITE: On a separate sheet of paper give the present description of the site and how the site is believed to have looked during its period of importance.

DISTRICT: On a separate sheet of paper give a general description of the district. Also needed is a numbered list of the structures in the district corresponding to the sketch map. This listing should include a name for the structure, a date of construction, a brief description, a statement of why the structure is significant, if it is.

A MAP WITH THE LANDMARK MARKED AND PHOTOGRAPHS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS FORM

Map: A U.S. Geological Survey Map is preferred, but if you are unable to obtain one a county highway map may be used.

Photographs: Black and white, glossy finish, 5 x 7, or 8 x 10, is preferred.

FORM PREPARED BY

Name Mrs. L. G. Scales

Date February 14, 1986

Address P. O. Box 197

Telephone 820-4177

Town Alexandria, Alabama 36250

Organization Variosa Club

For Alabama Historical Commission use only

STAFF COMMENTS:

MAP REFERENCE: MAP _____

U. T. M. Reference

Zone _____

Easting _____

Northing _____

Thematic Category _____

Added to ALABAMA REGISTER _____

NATIONAL REGISTER Potential

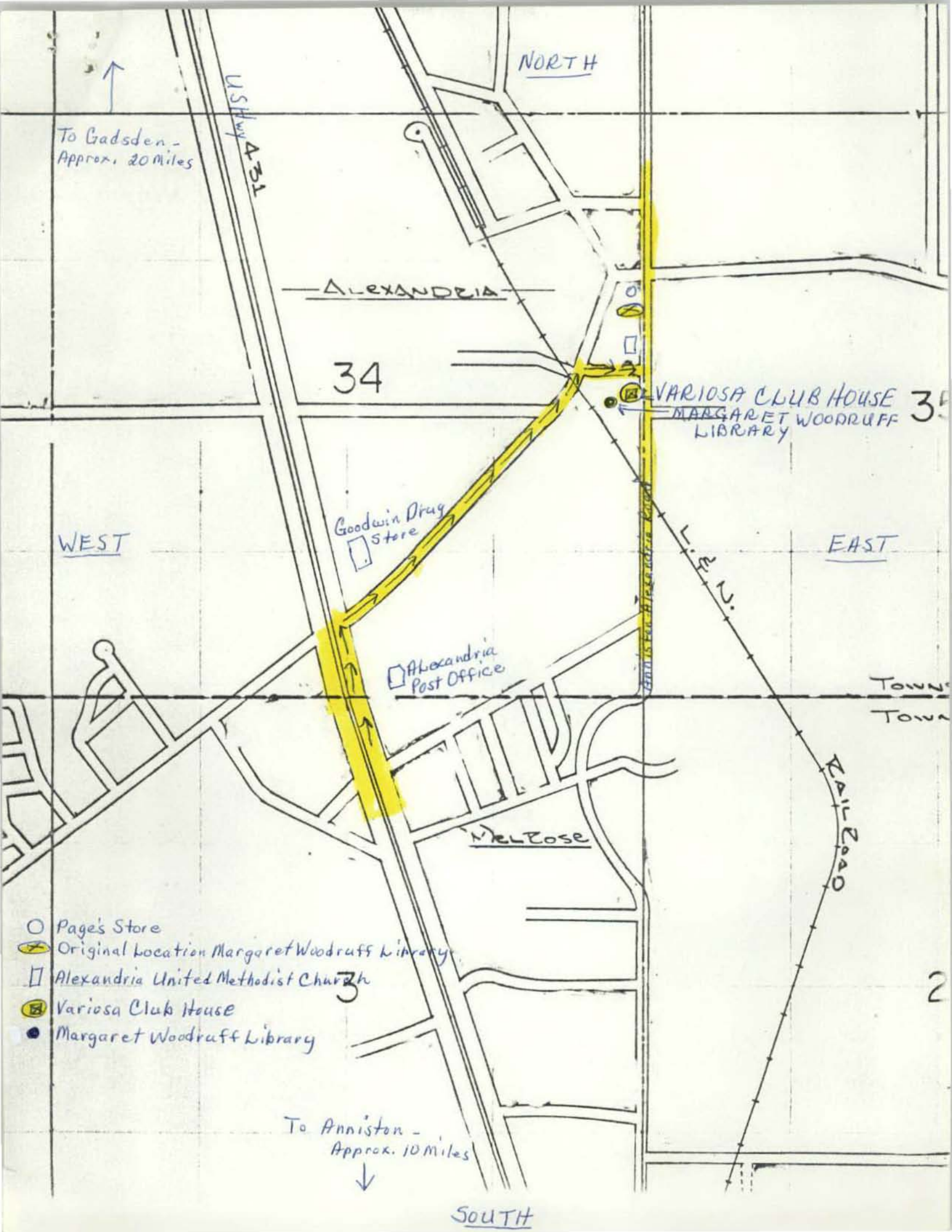
HISTORY OF THE MARGARET WOODRUFF LIBRARY

ALEXANDRIA, ALABAMA

The idea of a public library for the rural community of Alexandria was conceived by Miss Margaret Woodruff in 1913 at the organization of the Variosa Club. When Miss Woodruff died, the following March, her desire for a library was intensified. Mrs. H. T. Green donated land on which to build a library. The community raised funds for the building through bazaars, socials, and public donations. The opening of the first free public library in Calhoun County was August 26, 1915 when a book shower was held in the newly constructed building.

The library was maintained by the ladies of the Variosa Club until 1958. Because of the Book Mobile and the school libraries, there was little use of the Margaret Woodruff Library. It was decided to expand the library building into a community center. The Variosa Club was in the process of raising funds and making plans when a local public-spirited citizen passed away. Mr. Fred Martin's will stipulated that if the Variosa Club paid \$1,000 into his estate and deeded the Margaret Woodruff Library to the Alexandria United Methodist Church, his home (one of the oldest homes in Alexandria) would be deeded to the Variosa Club to be maintained and used as a community center.

The library was moved about one-half a block to the rear of the church, and was used as a Sunday School building until the summer of 1978. At that time the library building was offered back to the Variosa Club provided it was moved from church property. The Variosa Club and interested citizens of the community wanted to preserve the building, so again it was moved across the street to the grounds of the Variosa Club House grounds. This is the present location. The ladies of the club are in the process of restoring the building on this site.



NORTH

To Gadsden -
Approx. 20 Miles

US Hwy 431

ALEXANDRIA

34

VARIOSA CLUB HOUSE
MARGARET WOODRUFF LIBRARY

3

WEST

Goodwin Drug Store

EAST

Alexandria Post Office

L.A.M.U.

TOWN
TOWN

Melrose

Rail Road

- Page's Store
- ⊗ Original location Margaret Woodruff Library
- Alexandria United Methodist Church
- ⊞ Variosa Club House
- Margaret Woodruff Library

To Anniston -
Approx. 10 Miles

SOUTH