

Alabama Register Property Information

RECEIVED
JUL 8 1992
Ala. Historical Commission



1. Name

historic JOE LEWIS BIRTHPLACE

and/or common TURNER SHEALY'S HOUSE

2. Location

street & number 1158 COUNTY ROAD 488 DIRECTIONS ATTACHED

city, town APPROX. 5 MILES — vicinity of LAFAYETTE

state ALABAMA county CHAMBERS

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input 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 ARTHUR SHEALY POWER OF ATTORNEY

street & number ROUTE #3 BOX 245

city, town LAFAYETTE — vicinity of _____ state ALABAMA 36862

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

ATTACHED

6. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved

date SUMMER, 1992

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This one story house is on a foundation of approximately twenty fieldstone piers. A few concrete blocks offer reenforcement to the sills. The original wood frame is covered with asphalt siding and aluminumsiding.

The original house was of the dogtrot style with a chimney on either end. The chimney on the right, crumbled. The chimney on the left received an addition of a brick stem in 1910. The front porch was a later addition. The kitchen was added first, and then the back bedroom. The bathroom and back porch were added in the 60's. It is assumed that at the same time aluminum siding was placed over asphalt siding.

The house has a new front door and most of the windows have been replaced. Linoleum has been put over the pine floor. The walls are pine siding and sheetrock. The asphalt shingled roof has no gutters.

The house seems solid and to the naked eye there appears to be no damage to the original weatherboards.

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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 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 type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT PERSON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1914

Builder/Architect PETER SHEALY

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

This house is significant as the birthplace of Joe Louis Barrow in 1914. Joe Louis was the most famous black man of his era. His skill as a boxer drew worldwide attention and helped bring respectability to the sport. His athletic ability and his demeanor helped pave the way for all blacks in sports. During World War II, Joe Louis donated prize money from matches to the war effort. Joe's family moved to Detroit in 1926. This is the only known building which symbolizes his early years in Chambers County. Joe Louis made a great contribution toward furthering Civil Rights in the armed forces.

Constructed in 1889 by Peter Shealy, who "passed through slavery", this folk house was originally a framed-up dogtrot on fieldstone piers. The 120 acre farm on which Peter built his house was purchased for \$5.00 an acre from Solan Bell, a plantation owner, who "hired out" Peter from "Master Shealy", prior to the War Between The States. Peter worked for Solan Bell until he saved the money to buy property. After his death in 1914, Joe Louis was born in the house when his Mother, Lili, moved in to "make the crops". Subsequent additions include a kitchen, a bedroom, porches and a bath. Siding was placed over the weatherboards in the 40's. The original fieldstones support the sills with the help of concrete blocks.

This nomination is a first effort of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society and the Fort Tyler Association to recognize the birthplace of Joe Louis. A five year plan has been developed with the anticipation that the Joe Louis project will generate an interest in African-American history in this region. The strategy is as follows: In 1992, prepare a nomination for the Alabama Register; in 1993, ask Civic Clubs and other organizations to purchase an Historical Marker, sponsored by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission; in 1994, nominate the property to the National Register; in 1995, display an exhibit on Joe Louis at the Fort Tyler Museum; in 1996, determine the feasibility of acquiring the property for a house museum.

8. Major Bibliographical References

attached

9. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 33 acres

Quadrangle name Tax Map Inclosed

Quadrangle scale _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

10. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Zachry, President

organization Fort Tyler Association

date September 20, 1992

street & number 403 Avenue C

teleonone 706-6436323

city or town West Point

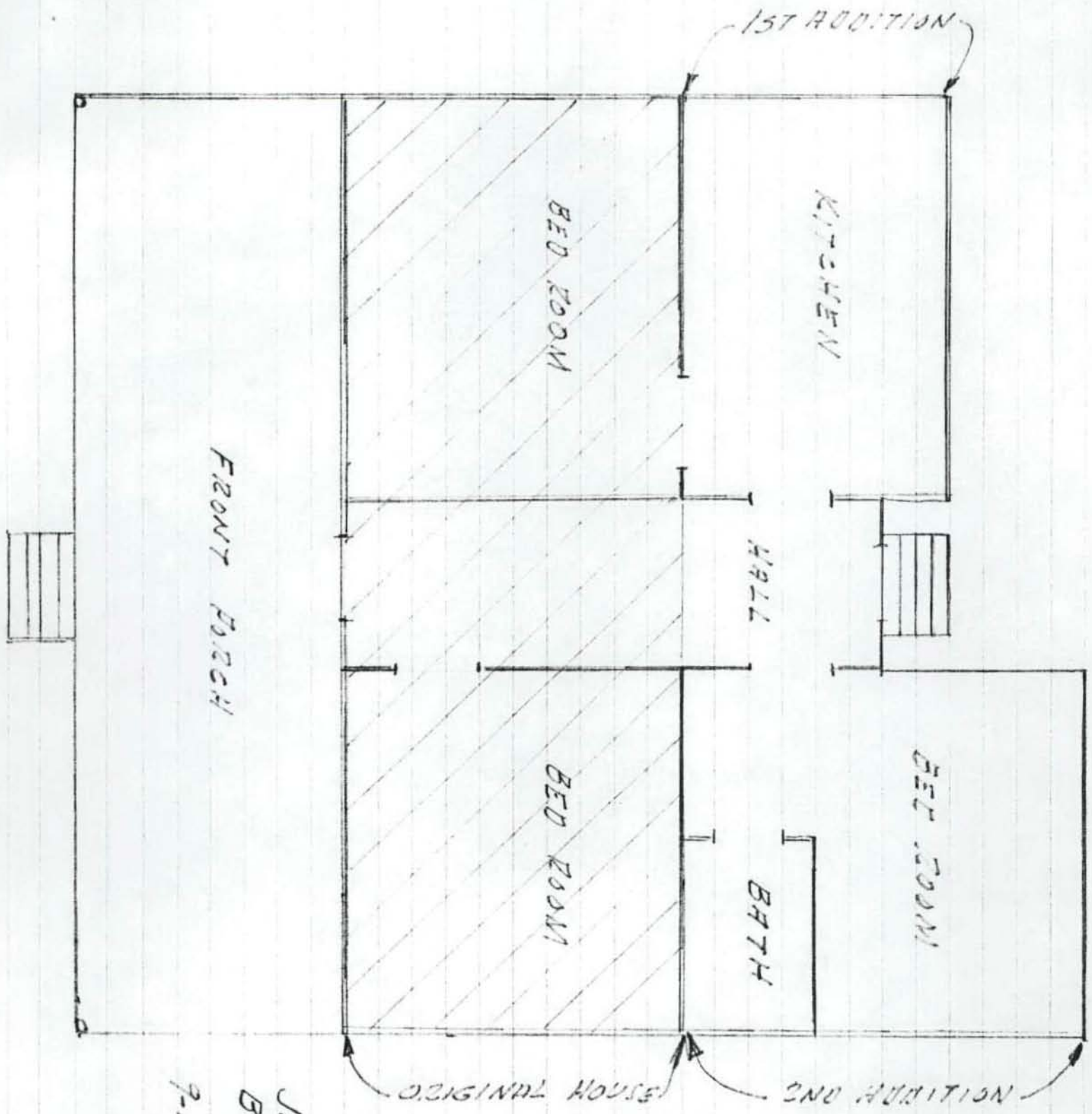
state Georgia 31833

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

Slides from Carl Summers, President
Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society

12. Please return ALABAMA REGISTER form to:

Melanie Betts
ALABAMA REGISTER COORDINATOR
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY ALABAMA 36130



JOE LOUIS
 BIRTHPLACE
 NTS
 9-10-92 CS

2---LOCATION

From the Square in downtown LaFayette go to Highway 50. After you have traveled 4.4 miles turn right at the Victory By Faith Ministries, go 1.2 miles (paved road turns into a dirt road). Turn left and go .3 of a mile. The farm is on the right.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Barrow, Joe Lewis (Jr.) Joe Louis, 50 years An American Hero
McGraw Hill, New York, 1988 pp.21-23

Louis, Joe My Life Story Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, New York
1947, reported by Grosset and Dunlap, New York, New York, p.13.

Meall, Chris Champion Joe Louis, Black Hero In White America
Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985, p.7.

Shealy, Turner, First Cousin, once removed, of Joe Lewis, owner
of property. Interview by Margaret Zachry, August 22, 1990,
on video tape and available.