

ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS & HERITAGE NOMINATION FORM

Alabama Historical Commission
725 Monroe Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Murder Creek Baptist Church

AND/OR COMMON

Belleville Baptist Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

County Road 15

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Belleville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Alabama

— VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

Conecuh

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" 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

Belleville Baptist Church Deacons (John C. Holman, Chairman)

STREET & NUMBER

Route E

CITY, TOWN

Evergreen

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Alabama

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Conecuh County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Evergreen

STATE

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Alabama Inventory

DATE

1976-present

— FEDERAL STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Alabama Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Montgomery

STATE

Alabama

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Belleville Baptist Church is a single-story frame building of the Greek Revival style completed in 1852.

The entablature of the building's full-length pedimented portico with dentiled cornice rests on four square wooden columns and on two pilasters which frame the flush board facade of the structure. The dentilation continues along the roofline of the original block of the structure, and continues parallel to the facade along the roofline of a 1950 addition which abuts the rear of the original block.

At the portico's ceiling level two ^{9/6}~~9/9~~ double-hung sash windows flank a central entrance leading to a slave balcony. This upper entrance is accessible by an exterior balcony reached by a flight of stairs ascending from the extreme left side of the facade.

At the lower level, two single-leaf paneled doors, each framed by a simple cornice and pilasters, lead into the sanctuary. Four 9/9 double-hung sash windows per side light the sanctuary, which comprises the original block of the building.

The 1950 rear addition of three rooms gives the church its T-shape. No significant changes have been made since that time, and many of the original interior furnishings are still in use.

8 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<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

1852

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. R. Hawthorn

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Murder Creek Baptist Church was organized in 1818 by Reverends Alexander Travis and David Wood. Later, at an unspecified date, the church was renamed Belleville Baptist Church. Alexander Travis was the father of Alamo hero William B. Travis. Reverend Travis served as pastor of the church from 1820 until his death in 1852, the year that the present church building was erected.

Church minutes from 1851 show that in June of that year plans were made and a committee of six was appointed to oversee the building of a new church to replace the earlier one. By August, a builder, J. R. Hawthorn, was selected and the sum of \$1900 was agreed upon as the building cost.

Hawthorn settled in Conecuh County in 1817 and amassed considerable wealth. In 1837 he was the Democratic nominee for Governor against Republican Jephtha V. Perryman. He came within seven votes of victory.

Belleville Baptist Church serves the community today as it has since its organization in 1818. The 1852 structure still houses the congregation. With the exception of the addition of two Sunday School rooms and a fellowship hall to the building's rear, the church remains very near to its original condition.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Minutes of Murder Creek Baptist Church, Sanford University Library, Birmingham, Alabama.
2. Riley, B. F., History of Conecuh County, 1881.
3. Associational minutes and Bethany (Burnt Corn) Church minutes.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Belleville

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 489700 3478480

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Margaret J. Gaston

ORGANIZATION

DATE

March, 1981

STREET & NUMBER

Route E Box 134

TELEPHONE 376-2231

248-2528

CITY OR TOWN

Evergreen

STATE

Alabama

12 FOR ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION USE ONLY

Staff Member David Baldwin

ADDED _____ Number _____

Thematic Category Architecture and Society-Religion

National Register Potential

Added to National Register _____



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
725 MONROE STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130
PHONE: 832-6621

ALABAMA REGISTER OF LANDMARKS AND HERITAGE
Nomination Form

COUNTY Conecuh

NAME: Present Belleville Baptist Church Historic Murder Creek Baptist Church

LOCATION: Street and Number Belleville, Al.

Town (Give directions if rural) located on Co. Rd. 15 approx. 1/2 mi. from Hwy. 84 in Belleville.

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

CATEGORY: Building (x) Structure () Object () Site () District ()

USE: Present Church Historic Church

OWNERSHIP: Public () Private ()

Owner's Name Belleville Baptist Church deacons Deacon (chrmn.) John C. Holman

Mailing Address Rt. E Evergreen, Al. 36401

INTEGRITY: Original Site (x) Moved () When?

From where? (Give details in significance.)

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

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

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

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

Acreage approx. 6 acres.

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

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

SIGNIFICANCE:

Why is this landmark significant? (x) associated with events, persons, or movements
Local (x) State (x) National ()
() a good example of a type or style of structure
() other

Explain: (Briefly state why the above is true)

See page 1 attached

Date of Construction or Period of major importance. Begun in 1851 completed in 1852

Architect or Builder (Give name and biographies, if known)

see page 2 attached

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)

Page 1 and 2 would apply here plus

page 3 attached.

State sources of information, giving full bibliographical data:

So noted on pages 1, 2, & 3.

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

Complete as directed below for each category.

BUILDING:

Number of stories 1 Foundation brick Basement _____

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

Structural System: (If known)

Wood frame (x) Load-bearing masonry () Iron or Steel ()

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

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

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

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

Porches: Front (type and description) completely across front - roof line not
dropped but same height as house part

Rear (type and description) none

Side (type and description) none

Doors: Main entrance (location, description) 2 doors on front are wood faced with wood trim, china door knobs.

Other entrances (location, description) 1 side door at each side (rear) which is the entrance into fellowship hall which was added at rear of original bldg. in the 1950's.

Windows: Types and number of each floor of facade all are double hung, two on front, 4 on each side of original bldg. 10 windows in new addition (upstairs) 4 downstairs in fellowship hall that are not double hung but casement windows.

Interior: Describe mantels, stairways, wainscoting, plasterwork and any unusual features. Sheetrock replaced badly deteriorated plaster walls in 1972. All wood trim around windows and baseboards. Walls and trim are painted white. Pineboard floors approximately 12" wide covered with carpet. Original handhewn pews are still in use. The pews are of pine also and seat depth is approx. 21" - back ~~height~~ height approx. same. Each piece being planed from heart pine.

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

Sunday school rooms at rear and fellowship hall were added in the 1950's.

Two doors at rear of sanctuary open into the Sunday school rooms. ~~XXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXX~~ One on each side of 2 step platform that holds rostum and 2 chairs.

the rostum ~~is the same one that was~~ is the same one that was used when church was built.

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

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 Margaret J. Gaston Date 3-31-81
Address Rt 1 Box 134 Telephone Bus. 376-2231
Town Evergreen, AL 36401 Telephone home 248-2528
Organization _____

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

INDIVIDUAL SITES

1. **Belleville Baptist Church (#562)**
Bellville
One mile south of Jct. with county road 23 (R22/N27/30)
(Total number of slides 15 :4- interior;11- exterior)

SIGNIFICANCE: ARCHITECTURE, CRITERION C.

Belleville Baptist Church is significant as an intact example of a frame church fashioned after the Greek Revival style. It is the only church in the county with a slave gallery accessed by an exterior stair.

The church was founded in 1818 by Rev. Alexander Travis and David Woods as the Murder Creek Baptist Church. The name was changed to Belleville Baptist at an unknown date. In 1851, church records show that plans were being made to build a new church. J.R. Hawthorne, son of Joshua Hawthorne, was selected as the builder for the sum of \$1900. The fellowship hall, Sunday school rooms and bathrooms were added in the early 1950s. The interior was sheetrocked and carpeted in 1971.

#562 Belleville Baptist Church

R22 N27-30

Belleville Baptist Church is a two story, gable front church with several Greek Revival details. Built in 1841, this rectangular church has a 1965 rear addition. Sheathed in weatherboard and resting on brick piers, this church has a dominant recessed porch that is supported by four square columns with Doric capitals. Other stylistic details include the denticulated cornice and the large pedimented overhang.

Today, the church has a T-shape plan. The facade features a pedimented portico that shelters three single doors, two 9/6 windows, and flushboards. Two single doors lead to the sanctuary on the first level and exterior stairs lead to the second level slave gallery. The two shuttered windows flank the upper door. There are four 9/9 shuttered windows on each side and two original windows used in the addition. There are also smaller windows on the rear addition.

The interior has been modernized and is very simple. A large cemetery with a modern chain link fence is on the property. The oldest marked grave is thought to be in this cemetery and dates 1826.

Inv. #562 Belleville Baptist Church

The church was founded in 1818 by Rev. Alexander Travis and David Woods as the Murder Creek Baptist Church. The name was changed to Belleville Baptist at an unknown date. In 1851, church records show that plans were being made to build a new church. J.R. Hawthorne, son of Joshua Hawthorne, was selected as the builder for the sum of \$1900. The fellowship hall, Sunday school rooms and bathrooms were added to the rear of the church in the early 1950s. The interior of the church was sheetrocked and carpeted in 1971. Aside from the addition to the rear, the exterior of the church has not been modified. It is one of few Greek Revival style structures in the county. Its exterior stair leading to the slave gallery is also unique not only to Conecuh County, but also to the state in general.⁴³

FULL DESCRIPTION

Inv. #827 Dr. H.S. Skinner or Lide House

This enclosed dogtrot is one of the last remaining antebellum homes in the county and is an excellent example of early 19th century vernacular architecture. The house was built in 1821 by a Richardson. It was originally a log dogtrot. In 1882 Dr. Henry Smith Skinner, a dentist, bought the house from Cyrus Newton. Skinner enclosed the open passage and weatherboarded the exterior. In 1905, the east detached, three-sided room was added and in 1908 or 1909, the west detached room was added. The detached kitchen came from another house south of Belleville. The house remained in the Skinner family until recently. The house is significant not only for its unique construction, but also because it retains several of its outbuildings including a bathhouse, a dairy house, a chicken coop, a smokehouse, a corn crib and a garage. There is also evidence of a flower garden on the west side of the house which was once complete with walkways and fences.⁴⁴

FULL DESCRIPTION

Inv. #828 Belleville Academy Teacherage

This pyramidal roof structure served as the "teacherage" or boarding house for the teachers at Belleville Academy. It is the

⁴³ Margaret Gaston, "History of Belleville Baptist Church," Evergreen-Conecuh Public Library, Heritage files.

⁴⁴ Interview with Eugenia Brown, 28 April 1992 and Barlow and Jones.

