

NR 8-17-87

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received _____
date entered _____

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic _____
and/or common Blytheville Greyhound Bus Station

2. Location

street & number 109 N. 5th Street _____ not for publication
city, town Blytheville _____ vicinity of _____
state Arkansas 72315 code _____ county Mississippi / _____ 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Greyhound Corporation
street & number Greyhound Tower, Station 1636
city, town Phoenix _____ vicinity of _____ state AZ 85077

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Mississippi County Courthouse
street & number Court Square
city, town Blytheville _____ state Arkansas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Blytheville CLG Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date March, 1985 _____ federal _____ state _____ county local
depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
city, town Little Rock _____ state Arkansas

9. Major Bibliographical References

Burleigh, Manfred and Charles M. Adams. Modern Bus Terminals and Post Houses. Ypsilanti, Michigan: University Lithoprinters, 1941.
WPA-Mississippi County Place File, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock
Telephone interview with Mary Mitchell of Blytheville, Arkansas, April 1987.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Blytheville 7.5'

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	1	5
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 Zone

2	3	1	7	6	1	2	1	0
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 Easting

3	1	9	7	1	9	6	1	8	1	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

 Northing

B

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Begin at the corner of Walnut and 5th Streets, go south 150 feet, then west 75 feet, then north 150 feet, then east 75 feet to the original beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Swanda and Steve Mitchell

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

date May, 1987

street & number 225 E. Markham

telephone (501) 371-2763

city or town Little Rock

state Arkansas

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Michael Swanda

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date

7-6-87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

7. 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

SUMMARY

The Greyhound Corporation constructed three basic types of bus terminals during a major expansion in the late 1930's and 40's. The Blytheville Bus Station is an excellent example of the island type terminal. This design offered easy access and was favored by a majority of bus drivers and patrons. Continuity of architectural style in its new terminals was important to the Greyhound Corporation as part of its emerging corporate image. The Blytheville Bus Station was part of this effort and remains today as one of the finest examples of the Art Moderne style in Arkansas. Individual themes of the Art Moderne style that are present in this building are a concern for volume and curvilinear form, highly visible polychrome treatments, strong horizontal and vertical elements and the use of "Modern" construction materials such as structural glass and stainless steel.

ELABORATION

The building is one story and has a rectangular floor plan with rounded corners. The front corners contain casement windows with 24 panes each. This curvilinear form is repeated in a set of unsupported projecting canopies located over the loading areas on both sides of the building and with a rounded single canopy over the front entrance. These canopies create a strong horizontal architectural element that continues in the back facade as two single brick courses painted blue. The building's horizontal appearance is offset by a large vertical Greyhound sign centered immediately over the front entrance, giving the entire building a nautical appearance. In all Greyhound station architecture, the Greyhound sign is a prominent vertical element in the design and functions as an integral part of the building.

The exterior walls of the primary elevation are covered with Vitrolux structural glass in alternating colors of two shades of blue and ivory. These colors are alternated ten times in bands of varying widths and give the exterior a contrasting polychrome appearance. The back facade is exposed brick, painted white. There are six entrances to the building. ✓ The main entrance facing Fifth street and a set of entrances on each side contain single pane double doors with transoms. Each transom has twelve panes decorated with an inverted triangle of frosted glass. Ornamental stainless steel hand rails are on each door, with a stainless steel door plate containing the Greyhound logo.

Other decorative details exhibited on the exterior of the building are pressed metal ceilings under each canopy, elongated ornamental electric lights at the main entrance, lighted signs over each side entrance that once designated segregated facilities, scalloped ✓ ivory "Vitrolux" trim and neon lighting on the main Greyhound sign.

The arrangement of interior space in the Blytheville Bus Station is reflective of both a corporate concern for an efficient transportation system and an unfortunate cultural ✓ concern, which persisted in most southern states until 1963, for the racial segregation of

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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its patrons. Originally, the central ticket office and adjacent kitchen area effectively separated two sets of waiting and bathroom facilities, including separate lunch counters. The smaller, unadorned facilities for blacks were discontinued and later converted to storage and freight areas as a result of federal desegregation efforts.

The design features and "Modern" materials used in the interior remain mostly intact today and were consistent with the architectural image of other Greyhound terminals constructed across the country during this period. The ceilings and curved interior walls are plastered and were originally painted in blue and pink. A "Presdwood" wainscot with molded trim and baseboards accents the walls of the larger concession and waiting room areas. A simple curvilinear ceiling partition delineates the main lunch counter space. Stainless steel was initially utilized throughout the interior in suspended lighting fixtures, counter tops at the ticket booth and lunch counter, lunch counter trim, foot rests and bar stools, and even in the name plates on the bathroom doors. The lunch counter, bar stools and the wooden benches used in the main waiting room have been removed in the last few years. The general color scheme of the building is continued in the restrooms with white tiles trimmed in blue.

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 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/
<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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1937 Builder/Architect Noland Van Powell/Architect
Ben White Sr./Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Blytheville Bus Station is the only remaining "Art Moderne" Greyhound bus terminal in the state of Arkansas. It stands as one of the purest examples of the Art Moderne style existing in the state's commercial architecture and is one of the finest examples exhibiting structural glass in its design. This isolated island-type station is unique in its small town setting. The exterior facade remains entirely intact with no alterations. The interior is relatively intact and still reflects its original design and purpose.

ELABORATION

In 1930, the Greyhound Corporation was organized from the former Motor Transport Company. The new corporation, which emphasized speed as representative of the restructured organization, adopted the form of a racing greyhound as symbol and Art Moderne as its architectural image. From 1935 to the early 1940's, Greyhound employed regional architects to interpret the streamlined building style in their distinctive blue and white terminals across the country. In several southern states, architect George D. Brown designed stations which utilized structural glass and were characterized by exteriors with blue Vitrolux veneer and ivory Vitrolite trim. Locations of these terminals included Charleston, Columbia, and Spartanburg, South Carolina; Bristol, Virginia; Charleston, West Virginia; and Savannah, Georgia.

According to a city official who recalls the event, the Greyhound Corporation constructed a new terminal in Blytheville in 1937 to replace an earlier structure. Although similar in style to the southern stations designed by Brown, the island-type station was smaller in scale. The island-type station was usually constructed in larger towns and cities where an appropriate lot with proper access could be obtained. The Blytheville island-type station is unique in its small town setting, where the L-plan terminal or the parallel loading terminal would have been more common.

The exterior of the Blytheville Bus Station is virtually unaltered from its original appearance. The only addition to the original has been the placement of a new Greyhound sign that hangs under the front canopy.