

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Greenwood Gymnasium

other names/site number Old Rock Gymnasium; SB0893

2. Location

street & number 300 E. Gary Street

not for publication

city or town Greenwood

vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Sebastian code 131 zip code 72936

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Cathel Matheas

4/25/11

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"An Ambition to Be Preferred: New Deal Recovery Efforts and Architecture in Arkansas, 1933-1943"

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / school / gymnasium

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / school / gymnasium

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER / plain/traditional

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE; STONE / native sandstone
walls STONE / native sandstone (exterior)
WOOD / weatherboard
roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B. removed from its original location.
C. birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1938-1961

Significant Dates

1938

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
Previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

Greenwood Gymnasium
Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 385776 3898047
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael LeJong, AIA, LEED-AP; edited by Clint Pumphrey, National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 2/14/2011
street & number 323 Center St., 1500 Tower Building telephone 501-324-9789
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72202

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Greenwood Public Schools
street & number 420 N. Main St. telephone 479-996-4143
city or town Greenwood state AR zip code 72936

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Summary

The Greenwood Gymnasium is a load-bearing stone masonry building located at 300 E. Gary Street, near downtown Greenwood, Arkansas. It was built in 1938-39 by 100 workers employed and/or directed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This durable structure rests on a combination of concrete and native sandstone foundations. The building's dimensions are 108 feet long by 85 feet wide, encompassing two classrooms, lobby, gymnasium with basketball court, stage, bleachers and toilet/shower rooms each for boys and girls beneath the bleachers. Parapet walls at the west and east ends of the building are stepped such that clerestory windows provide day-lighting over the basketball court area. Lower flat roof areas extend from these clerestory walls to the north and south façades, each with a parapet wall with stone coping. The building's entrance features a distinctive portal of two simple arches leading to the lobby area which provides access to the north and south classrooms, as well as two entrances at the east side of the lobby to the basketball court interior.

Elaboration

The Greenwood Gymnasium provides an excellent example of enduring quality in construction of a Work Progress Administration project. This structure was built in 1938-1939 by 100 workers employed and/or directed by the WPA. Located at 300 E. Gary Street, this stone masonry load-bearing structure offered a welcome gymnasium and classroom addition to Greenwood Public School System with its completion in 1939. Within the one-and-a-half story area were bleachers on the north side and stage on the south side of the basketball court. Under the bleachers were separate locker/shower rooms for boys and girls; under the stage area was a trap door that gave access to the "soup kitchen" for those children in need. The one story area on the west end included two classrooms which flanked the exterior lobby area; two doorways to the basketball court area were on either ends of the lobby's east wall. The building's front entry was at its west end, distinguished by two simple stone arches which led into the exterior lobby area. It continues to function for its original owners in this manner as well as offer the Greenwood community a gathering place for its social events.

The structure is now surrounded by twenty others on the campus of Greenwood Public School system. The Greenwood Gymnasium stands out because of its unique appearance, having load-bearing stone masonry walls comprised of native sandstone laid in a random range ashlar appearance, parapeted with coping of same materials, and accented by scuppers fitted to the metal conductors and downspouts. Its plan is a simple one-and-a-half story square with a one-story rectangle added to the west face and its interior layout is nearly identical to the 1939 design.

Front/West Façade

The 85-foot long west (front) side faces Greenwood's Main Street. The entry portal is a two-foot-six-inch projection that is nearly 17 feet high and 28 feet long, having two simple vaults, each composed of an arch in keystone created out of ashlar stone. There is no impost at the spring line for these arches, set at a height of ten feet, two inches. Situated on either side of each arch is a two-foot wide pilaster mass having matching random range ashlar. The 27-foot wide portal has a capstone that overhangs about four inches. All

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in all it provides the structure with a prodigious entry. Situated on either side of the portal are 26-foot long random range ashlar masonry façades about 21 feet high, each with three window openings measuring three feet, nine inches wide by eight feet, eight inches high, flanked by two-foot wide pilaster masses. The pilasters are of the same sandstone ashlar masonry with a sloped capstone at sixteen-feet-three-inch height. This symmetry enhances the portal's grandeur on the west side of the Greenwood Gymnasium. In original photographs of the 1938 building, each of these six wood-framed windows were nine-over-nine and double hung, and their vinyl window replacements during the 1991 alterations were three-over-two and double hung. The 2010 restoration matched the appearance of the original 1938 fenestrations both in trim shapes and color, though the window frame material used was coated aluminum instead of wood.

The portal of 1938 offered a simple vault entrance to a lobby, which functioned as an exterior lobby area. At this lobby's east side were two doors with transom lights, leading into the gymnasium. Similarly at the north and south sides of the lobby area were doors with transom lights that led into side rooms; it is not known for certain what function these rooms originally had, though one photograph from the 1940 era indicates a classroom function which it continues to serve today.

The 1960 alterations had included stone masonry infills at the two simple vaults that failed to match the color, size or coursing of the surrounding random range ashlar. This infill was flush with the west interior face of locally quarried sandstone in this lobby-area; at the exterior this infill left two two-foot-ten-inch deep vaults. In the arch-portion of each infill was a transom fanlight. Below this was a 16-inch square inset for an exterior light fixture, centered above a single three-foot-by-seven-foot metal door. This infill enclosed what was an "exterior lobby" area, providing some comfort from the elements outside. However, it reduced considerably the amount of day-lighting for the lobby and for the other four doorways, each with transom lights.

In the 2010 restorations, all the masonry infill at the simple vault entrances was removed, and the original stone masonry was carefully refurbished. A curtainwall of anodized aluminum was added about ten feet from the west interior face of the lobby's arches to create a vestibule to the entrances of the north and south classrooms and the gymnasium area on the east side; it also provides day-lighting to all the transom lights of these doorways. Glazed aluminum doors in the curtainwall are centered on each archway. The curtainwall does not detract nor diminish the portal's 1938 visual impact, but does provide added protection from the weather that people expect today.

The alterations of 1991 attempted to address the accumulation roof-leak issues in part by the addition of a composite shingle hip roof structure over the original flat-roofed classroom-lobby portion of the Greenwood Gymnasium. This roof addition was placed directly atop the stone coping and abutted the west-facing gable of another 1991 gambrel roof addition, which encased the original roof over the one-and-a-half story main gymnasium made of weatherboard and mopped asphalt. The guttering and downspouts associated with these roofing alterations distracted from the grand portal appearance of the original structure and rapidly becameapidated in appearance.

The 2010 restorations involved the removal of all roof alterations, down to the original weatherboard. Modified bitumen roofing on quarter-inch gypsum deck, backed by three inches of rigid insulation was built atop the existing wood roof deck, keeping it as close to the original profile of the 1938 roofline as possible,

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including slopes toward existing scuppers in the stone parapets. A prefinished metal coping was added atop the original capstones using a design that minimized sight lines of its profile. Prefinished metal conductor heads and downspouts matched the originals of 1938.

South Façade

The original south façade enclosing the "south classroom" had no ornamentation to its ashlar masonry except for the stone coping of the parapet and one scupper. The 2010 restorations replicated the one surviving metal conductor head from 1938 that was attached at this scupper location. This façade abuts the west stone masonry wall enclosing the main gymnasium; it is two feet, eight inches from the internal corner to the beginning of the south façade that encloses the main gym. From this external corner, the south façade of native sandstone and a random range ashlar, including the parapet with capstone, is eighty-two feet, eight inches long and twenty-one feet, four inches tall. As viewed prior to the 2010 restorations the façade's symmetry was deciphered by two window openings situated on either side of a three-foot-six-inch wide door opening. No photograph from the 1939 period has yet been located that offered a definitive view of the south façade; therefore verification of this exterior doorway, which served the original stage area, proved difficult. Pre-restoration study of tar-residue on the ashlar masonry offered perspicacity of a flashing outline for a gabled entry canopy centered above this stage door.

Situated at the east and west corners of the south façade are two-foot wide pilaster masses with a sloped capstone, identical to those found on the west façade. There are two scuppers along its parapet, each fitted to a metal conductor and downspout; these are located at third-points on the south façade. The stage door was not a prominent feature, as it was not centered on the south façade; instead it was located in proximity to a hatchway which led down to the original "soup kitchen" in a small basement area, under the eastern portion of the original stage area. The 2010 restoration process involved the infill of the door with a matching sandstone ashlar coursing. A study of the 1939 window openings of the south façade revealed them to be seven feet, five inches wide by eight feet, five inches high, which were apparently filled with pairs of wood windows, of the same type utilized in the west façade. It is easiest to perceive this façade's symmetry through the grouping of the two window openings between each corner-pilaster and downspout.

From certain photographs of the original structure, a clerestory wall can be scrutinized; this wall was, in effect, situated at the south and north ends of the original wood Howe parallel-chord trusses spanning about 47 feet over the gymnasium's basketball court. Although these photographs did not offer a concise view of those original clerestory windows, openings remained in the five-foot high wood clerestory wall--the upper portion of the south façade. This weatherboard wall sat back 18 feet from the ashlar masonry parapeted wall and was built atop the one-story roof over the stage area.

As an attempt to address the roof leaks with the original flat-roof structure, the 1991 alterations consisted of a composite shingle gambrel roof addition being built atop the capstone of the south façade's parapet. This roof extended over the one-and-a-half story gymnasium area over to the north façade. The roof addition was capped at the east façade's stepped parapet wall and had a gable at the west end which hid the ashlar masonry end wall of basketball court area. The gambrel roof system encased the south clerestory wall, thereby blocking day-lighting from its windows to the basketball court area below.

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The 2010 restorations removed all such roof alterations, whereby the roofing between the south clerestory wall and the southernmost parapeted ashlar wall was rebuilt, utilizing modified bitumen on quarter-inch gypsum deck atop three inches of rigid insulation, all over the existing wood roof deck. Likewise, the clerestory wall was restored with pre-finished fiber-cement smooth-lap siding on gypsum sheathing over the original wood stud construction, recreating its original 1939 appearance. Clad aluminum clerestory windows supplanted the window replacements of 1991, restoring the original appearance of the wood trim and the nine-by-nine, single-hung pair of windows in six-foot by two-foot-eight-inch openings. The most notable transformation through the 2010 restoration efforts was the re-introduction of daylighting to the basketball court area below, by way of reestablishing the fenestrations once covered over by the 1991 alterations.

East Façade

The east façade of the Greenwood Gymnasium presents another fine example of a stepped parapet wall in a random range ashlar masonry. Starting at each corner it has two twenty-one-foot-four-inch high walls which step up about two feet, four inches and then abut on the north and south sides of a 31-foot tall end-wall about 49 feet long. The 31-foot height of the native sandstone wall designates the one-and-a-half story gymnasium area; here the interior includes wood columns encased in oak car-siding with timber trusses above, and seven-foot-two-inch high wood car siding wainscot with cap trim, all encompassing the wood basketball court. While the walls of 21-foot to twenty-three-foot-eight-inch height have no ornamentation except for the stone coping of the parapet, the 31-foot tall façade offers symmetry with its fenestrations and doorways. During the 1991 alterations, the doors and lower windows had an infill of vinyl siding; the restorations of 2010 involved the removal of such infill and the rebuilding of the windows and doors to match the 1939 appearance.

Situated near each corner of the 31-foot high wall is an entrance having a seven-foot by three-foot five-panel stile and rail door and two-foot-ten-inch high transom lights, all nestled under a wood entry canopy that is four feet deep by ten feet, ten inches wide. The 2010 restoration process had to replicate each canopy using both tar-residue outlines on the ashlar masonry and certain photographs from the early 1940s; wood angle braces exhibit a decorative element to each entry canopy. The entrances which lead directly onto the gym floor consist of painted hollow metal door and frames with special profiles replicating its wooden predecessors.

Articulating the symmetry of the 31-foot tall wall is a pair of window openings, one atop the other, about six feet to either side of the building's center. The lower window opening--eight feet, five inches wide by seven feet, five inches high--proves identical to the south façade's fenestration; the upper window opening centers above the lower one and is four feet high by six feet, five inches wide, with a sill height about 18 feet above finish floor level. This upper fenestration consists of a pair of nine-by-nine, single-hung windows. The 2010 restorations have both upper and lower replica windows made of clad aluminum with a special trim profile matching the wood trim of the 1938 originals. The stone sills and jambs of the window openings remain as originally built.

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North Façade

The gymnasium's north façade symmetry differs from the south façade, because six two-foot wide pilaster masses are equally spaced along the eighty-two-foot-eight-inch length of the native sandstone, random range ashlar; the 21-foot height of this wall includes the parapet with capstone. Like the south façade, the north façade has a pilaster with sloped capstone at each corner, along with two scuppers along its parapet; each scupper is fitted to a metal conductor and downspout, located at fourth-points on this façade. Four other pilaster masses are located at points that correspond with the structure's large wooden Howe parallel-chord trusses on the interior, spanning the 47 feet over the gymnasium's basketball court. Each pilaster mass of matching random range ashlar masonry has a sloped capstone at height of sixteen feet, three inches. Centered between each pilaster are two levels of window openings measuring six feet, nine inches wide by nine feet high; the lower row of cut stone window sills are about three feet above finish floor level, while the upper row window sills are located about twelve feet, eight inches above finish floor level. The alterations of 1991 left all the window openings of the north façade with a vinyl siding infill. The restorations of 2010 involved the removal of all such infill and the installation of clad aluminum nine-by-nine, single-hung window pairs with a frame profile which recreated appearance of original fenestrations.

At the center of this façade, prior to the 2010 restoration, were two original five-panel stile and rail wood doors with an eight-inch mullion; tar residue on the ashlar masonry above this pair of doors indicated a similar entry canopy to those as east façade. The 2010 restoration process did not involve rebuilding this gabled canopy, as these doors no longer serve the original locker and shower room as exterior exits; they now serve as the entrance to the mechanical equipment room. Instead, painted hollow metal doors and frames with special profiles replicating its wooden predecessors were selected and installed for this opening, and do closely resemble the original wood doors and trim of 1938. The alterations of 1991 produced an aluminum walkway canopy that was flashed against the ashlar masonry along the north façade; onto this canopy six downspouts along the north side of the gambrel roof addition discharged water from the gutters above. The renovations of 2010 removed that walkway canopy system in its entirety, as well as the gambrel roof and its gutters and downspouts. Along with the bitumen roof system modifications rebuilt to match the profile of the original 1938 roof, metal conductors were also fitted to the two original scupper outlets in the parapet of the north façade. These downspouts are positioned midway between the face of a pilaster mass and the nearest window jamb, articulating the symmetry of the north façade.

To address roof leakage issues, the 1991 alterations included a composite shingle gambrel roof addition atop the parapeted capstone of the north façade which extended over the one-and-a-half story gymnasium area to the south façade. This roof addition was hipped at the east façade of the stepped parapeted wall. This roof addition had a gable at the west the end that hid the ashlar masonry end wall of the basketball court area. The gambrel roof system encased the north clerestory wall, thereby blocking the day-lighting from its windows to the basketball court area below. The 2010 restorations removed all such gambrel roof additions, including its guttering and downspouts. Similar to the upper portion of the south façade, the north clerestory wall now features smooth lap siding and clad aluminum fenestrations that recreate the building's 1939 appearance.

At the west end of the north façade, enclosing the main gymnasium area, is a wall twenty-one feet, four inches high that abuts the ashlar masonry wall enclosing the north classroom. This short east façade and the twenty-two-

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foot-six-inch façade of the north classroom are without any ornamentation on its ashlar masonry except, perhaps, for the capstone on the parapet and a scupper at the mid-point that is fitted with a metal conductor head and downspout. This western portion of the north façade is a match to the south façade, with its native sandstone laid in random range ashlar. Here a composite-shingle hipped roof was built in 1991 atop the stone coping of the north, west and south parapeted walls that defined the original flat roof area above this classroom portion of the Greenwood Gymnasium. The guttering and downspouts associated with this roof alteration diminished the visual impact of the west façade's front entry. All these were removed during the 2010 restorations, along with the stains on the ashlar masonry. The need for air-conditioning required the installation of condenser units located along the north façade in a symmetrical fashion. The pair of exterior doors that originally gave access to the shower and dressing rooms some six feet below grade currently provides entry to what is now the mechanical and electrical room.

Integrity

The Greenwood Gymnasium has proven to be a durable structure. Nonetheless, through the years it has undergone alterations, most notably in 1960 and 1991. The two vaulted portals on the west façade had stone masonry infill built in 1960, each with a metal door and transom fanlight. This enclosure of the exterior lobby area created a dark, uninviting space. In addition, the sandstone infill did not match the surrounding random range ashlar masonry. Alterations in 1991 significantly changed the exterior appearance as roof modifications resulted in the construction of a gambrel roof over the one-and-a-half story portion, as well as a hip roof over the western classroom portion the building. These roof additions, meant to address leak issues of the original flat-roofs of this structure, utilized composition shingles, vinyl gutters and downspouts. The gambrel roof enveloped the clerestory walls above the basketball court area, eliminating any day-lighting through its windows. Those original wood clerestory windows were at some time replaced with double-hung aluminum windows. Fenestrations below in the ashlar masonry were encased by vinyl siding over plywood infill and certain windows were simply covered with painted plywood panels. Interior alterations also occurred, such as wooden bleachers built in the 1960s atop original stage area at south side of basketball court; these were later removed by the time aluminum walkway canopies were built along north and east sides of the building in 1991. The exterior alterations weathered poorly, whereupon the Greenwood Gymnasium took on quite a dilapidated appearance.

The January 2010 restoration process for the Greenwood Gymnasium called for the removal of all such exterior alterations which detracted from the building's original 1939 character. The owner's goal was to reclaim this source of community pride and historical significance in Greenwood. Since completion of this restoration/renovation project, this structure's integrity has been rediscovered. For example, it is now apparent that the 1939 stone masonry parapet walls at the west and east ends of this structure were stepped in such a manner that they abutted with the north and south facing clerestory walls and windows, thereby providing day-lighting to the basketball court below. Extending from these clerestory façades are the lower flat roof areas, which slope to a parapet wall with stone coping. The north and south façades of the random range ashlar each have differing and interesting symmetries. There are no splendidiferous ornamentations apparent; but the utilization of simple elements such as pilaster masses, stone coping, fenestrations, scuppers, and downspouts enable the unique sense of symmetry of the north and south façades. This all reflects the pragmatic, honest approach of the 1938 WPA builders in creating the Greenwood Gymnasium.

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The restorative efforts of 2010 focused on such exterior architectural elements as window fenestrations, doorways, and entry canopies at the east end, the scupper and downspout system, new roofing system, original stone masonry refurbishments, new prefinished metal coping and siding for weatherization of the ashlar parapets, a curtain wall enclosure inside the "exterior lobby" at the west end, and new lap siding, windows, gutters, and downspouts on the clerestory façades. Since the completion of the cleaning and re-pointing restoration process, the original, locally-quarried sandstone in the random range ashlar coursing more clearly provides the warm yellow, orange, and brown tones of the original 1939 structure.

The restoration/renovation work on the interior included the architectural trim of the doors, transoms, wainscots, columns and bleachers. Also, the basketball court's wood surface was refinished; nonetheless, as athletes run across it, this original floor with steel-spring support still "sings" with its characteristic sound. The separate boys and girls dressing and shower areas, originally set six feet below finish grade, were infilled and a new concrete floor was installed, whereupon new restrooms, lockers, and a mechanical room were built under the existing north bleachers. Likewise, on the south side, after the infill and a new concrete slab were installed, workers laid matching wood flooring that extended from the basketball court to where original stage area had been. New ceiling finishes and lighting fixtures were added throughout the building, but day-lighting from the original window openings proves to be the best design feature of the Greenwood Gymnasium's restored interior.

Although the original architect and contractor remain unknown, the Greenwood Gymnasium nonetheless reflects the pragmatic, enduring design of its WPA builders and continues to offer a space that functions as a gymnasium and meets the cultural and social needs of its community.

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Summary

In the community of Greenwood, Arkansas, the WPA was responsible for two projects: Main Street's sidewalks and the Greenwood Gymnasium. The gymnasium structure was built during the declining years of the WPA, during Greenwood's 1938-39 school year. Roughly 100 men completed construction in a period of about three months, at a total cost of \$30,000. This gymnasium was Greenwood High School's site for basketball games for 30 years; afterwards this building was utilized for various other purposes including a basketball practice gym and as classrooms in Greenwood's expanding array of campus buildings. The "Old Rock Gym", as it has long been referred to by Greenwood residents, remains in use to this day, although 1968 was the last year that it served as the school's main gymnasium. For its associations with education in Greenwood and with the work of the WPA, the Greenwood Gymnasium is being nominated to the National Register with local significance under Criterion A. It is also being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as a good example of WPA construction in Greenwood.

Elaboration

By 1836 Arkansas was just beginning to establish a public education system, though many state programs, including aid for public schools, were generally unsuccessful. The state was still grappling with its county boundaries and with the establishment of judicial districts in an effort to bring some form of law and order to its population. Settlement was generally very rural and farming--and even trapping--was a way of life for most in the Greenwood area. From these humble beginnings grew the Greenwood School District and, eventually, the Greenwood Gymnasium.

On January 10, 1851, the state legislature created Sebastian County out of Crawford, Polk, and Scott counties, naming it after United States Senator William King Sebastian. The county seat was temporarily set at Eaton Tatum's home in Jenny Lind. The newly elected commissioners, however, desired a more central location for the new county's courthouse, so they considered a small settlement (population 30) that was located on the banks of Vasche Grasse Creek, with the hope that this "future city would have good drinking/washing water." At 10:00 a.m. on March 10, 1851, as his gavel hammered Reuben Coker's dinner table, Judge Alfred Burton Greenwood proclaimed the new location to be the county seat of Sebastian County. Judge Greenwood had been elected circuit judge and had taken office for the Fourth Judicial Circuit just a week earlier, on March 3, 1851. He served the same ten Northwest Arkansas counties where he had been a prosecuting attorney from 1845 thru 1850. Coker had donated 40 acres beside Vasche Grasse Creek (translated from French as "fat cow") for the new county seat, which the county commissioners eventually named "Greenwood" in honor of Judge Alfred Burton Greenwood. Controversy over the county seat's new location led to its removal in 1854 to the "hub of the western frontier"--the bustling commercial center of Fort Smith. Then, in 1861, the state legislature divided the county into two judicial districts and recognized Greenwood as the official lower county seat.

It was from this point that the town of Greenwood, founded by John Carnall, began to truly grow from the tiny, 30-person settlement of 1851, into a robust city of over 7,000 citizens today. Greenwood's growth was at first relatively slow, reaching a population of just 200 in 1860. Still, at the outbreak of the Civil War, the

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lower county seat of Sebastian County had attained some importance as a business center. On September 1, 1863, Confederate and Union troops met just outside of Greenwood on Backbone Mountain, where both sides clashed for three hours over control of Devil's Backbone Ridge. The pressure of war brought economic challenges to Greenwood, causing a population stagnation that it would not overcome for a few decades.

One industry that did attract population and investment to Greenwood was coal mining, which developed into the town's chief industry from 1870 thru 1965. Immigrants came from all over the world to fill the jobs created by the operation, including those of German, Italian, Scottish, Irish, Russian and Mexican ethnicity. By 1938 the Sebastian County coal mining operations, employing some 1,600 miners, had extracted half a million tons of the hard black fuel. Most of the coal was a high quality, smokeless-burning fuel that proved to be in high demand. The coal was found in "low" veins, from 30 inches to 35 inches thick, lying at an angle of about 20 degrees. In 1887, the Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad was built from Fort Smith to Greenwood--a length of eighteen miles. This allowed the coal companies to ship their product to the principal markets of the time: railroad companies, and manufacturers and domestic consumers in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Omaha. At one time, Greenwood shipped out as many as 150,000 tons of coal, 56 cars of peaches, and 5,000 bales of cotton each year.

Miners worked about seven hours a day in less room than a mechanic under an automobile, lying on their sides with a kerosene lamp to light their way, digging the coal loose from the rock above it and slicing out a space below the vein to insert a dynamite charge. This task for miners was not for the faint at heart, as the physical and mental strain was fueled by the possibility that the blast might open a gas fissure and lead to an accidental explosion. Despite these dangers mine operators thought more about the safety of the mules than of the miners digging out these veins of coal, though local historians note that the miners did not seem to care about this danger as long as they were drawing their \$0.65 an hour salary. All mines would close down April 1 and reopen in July--in time to supply the early winter demand--allowing miners to spend their summers in their vegetable gardens, with perhaps a couple weeks of "cotton chopping" on plantations. The miners, who had little or no education themselves, desired greater instruction for their children, an added impetus for Greenwood Schools to develop suitable scholastic programs and facilities.

Before public education, the earliest settlers in the Greenwood area held school in their homes and churches. Students whose parents could afford to send them off to school put them in subscription schools, where students paid a "subscription," or tuition, to attend. The school's teacher negotiated the student's contract -- sometimes receiving payment from the parents in the form of goods or room and board for their children. The Act of 1843 provided a sixteenth section of land to accommodate public education. If parents wanted a public school, however, they had to apply to the courts to create one in their area. The Civil War erupted before many took advantage of this method of providing for public education, and much of the school funding was lost during Reconstruction.

The first school classes in Greenwood were taught at the elementary level. They began in 1870 in a one-room log house about 100 yards east of the old rock grade school located on what is now Denver Street. By some records Greenwood's first school was called "Buckner College", named after a Baptist missionary to the Cherokee Indians. It was founded in 1875 and met in a three-story, wood-framed, 60-foot by 120-foot structure, built at a

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cost of \$15,000. It contained an auditorium, six classrooms and living quarters for the president. Initially started as a Baptist institution, Buckner College opened on 1883, with attendance paid by subscriptions. Since there was no educational system for the masses in Arkansas in this period, Sebastian County's poorer children typically lacked a formal education.

As publicly funded education took hold in Sebastian County, students in the Greenwood area joined the Pleasant Ridge School District #12 based in Palestine. However, they attended school in the old Masonic Hall of Greenwood which was converted into classroom space. As the coal mines in the area attracted new residents and the city population increased, J.W. Beedlove and seventy-four other citizens applied to form a new school to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of students. They got their wish on July 8, 1881, when a judge issued a court order creating the Greenwood School District #25.

Greenwood became an incorporated city November 13, 1884, and for another seven years students crowded into its Masonic Hall. Then, in 1891, Greenwood decided to build another college in an old peach orchard on the west side of town, using rock moved with wheelbarrows from a nearby quarry. It was such a sturdy and imposing Italianate-style structure that they gave it the impressive name, "Greenwood Normal College." At first it was a three-teacher school, with one big room upstairs and two rooms on the ground floor. It was opened to fourth through twelfth grade students, although there were no twelfth grade graduates until 1915. In 1906 the school district joined another stone structure to the original by a long hall, doubling the size of the facility and renaming it "Greenwood High School." The new building had no indoor plumbing, but instead provided separate privies for boy and girls. The yearbook was named after the unofficial, but endearing name for this high school: "The Rox."

The high school eventually moved to an eight room stone building on the northeast side of Greenwood, and The Rox became a grade school in 1929. The school district built the new high school building with funds provided by a significant donation from E.S. Alexander, who subsequently insisted that the school board abolish corporal punishment. Constructed at a cost of \$23,299, the new Alexander high school initially accommodated 450 students. Unfortunately, the new building burned down its inaugural year, but it was rebuilt and still stands on Main Street today. This precipitated the change in name of the high school yearbook from "The Rox" to "The Phoenix," in recognition of this accomplishment. The school district continued to utilize The Rox for elementary grades until 1953 when a new structure with indoor plumbing was completed. After that the old school was abandoned for six years and fell into neglect until someone began using it for hay storage.

After suffering economic hardship throughout the 1920s, Arkansas was hard hit by the Great Depression, causing it to become technically bankrupt in the early 1930s. By 1932, faced with an insolvent state, Junius M. Futrell ran for governor, promising to scrap or reduce funding for many state programs. High among his objectives was ending state aid to high schools that he considered useless, in part because he felt that their graduates were not thoroughly educated and because he did not think Arkansas needed that many educated people. Unemployment, he thought, could be better dealt with by eliminating machines.

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Fortunately for Junius Futrell, who served as Arkansas's 30th governor from 1933 to 1937, the federal government's New Deal programs helped buoy the state's budget. The state itself did little to combat the effects of the Depression except to offer tax relief. Over much of the state, schools either closed or, in violation of the constitution, districts started charging tuition. The initiatives of newly elected president Franklin Delano Roosevelt, beginning in 1933 with establishment of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began to reverse the downward spiral of Arkansas's ravaged economies.

Subsequently, in July 1935 the largest and best known of the federal work relief programs, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), was established by President Roosevelt to further combat unemployment and stimulate a crippled national economy. During the eight years of its existence, 8.5 million people nationwide received WPA paychecks totaling nearly \$11 billion. Despite the fact that Arkansas lacked the matching funds requested of states partaking in federal programs under the Roosevelt administration, the WPA nevertheless provided the state with much-needed social services and infrastructure improvements. Meanwhile, the program's salaries--\$50 per month--supported thousands of families and the merchants who depended on their business. By June 1943, when WPA closed its books, it had expended almost \$117 million of federal money in Arkansas, along with \$36 million from local and state sponsors. Many would review this period of federal intervention as one which radically improved the status of education in Arkansas, and Greenwood was no exception.

The WPA was responsible for two projects in Greenwood area. The first project was the Main Street sidewalks, designed to give the general public and school children a safer means to walk up and down the busy thoroughfare. A newspaper account reported that the National Youth Administration (NYA), a part of the WPA, started this construction July 20, 1934, and built these sidewalks on both sides of the street from town to both grade and high schools, under the supervision of W.B. Carter. Portions of this sidewalk remain with the NYA stamp embedded in the concrete.

The second project was the Old Rock Gymnasium, whose construction began on March 6, 1937, before temporarily stopping on June 30. It was started up again on March 29, 1938, under new supervision, providing steady work for 32 men. The Greenwood school newspaper of that time period reported the WPA project's supervisor was Mr. V.A. Gramlich, and noted the cost of the building was \$32,000. This cost was reported to be \$7,000 less than other gyms of this type of construction, thanks to the crew and their supervision, which some reports indicate numbered roughly 100 men all together by the project's end. The Greenwood Gymnasium was completed in time for the 1938-39 school-year.

Through the cooperation of Greenwood City Council, the Greenwood School District, and the people of the town, this WPA project provided the community with a much needed gymnasium structure. An article from the Greenwood High School newspaper, the *Bull Dog Spotlight*, claimed that the building had a seating capacity of 2,500, contained two classrooms, a music room, band room, stage, and bleachers. In addition to the Rock Gymnasium's basketball court, there was a heating unit, basement, five showers and nine lockers. Its stage area, the paper reported, "was to be used for play practice, expression and auditorium subjects." The

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newspaper added, "[f]or the first time in the history of Greenwood schools, the basketball players could boast of an adequate indoor court of 42 ft. by 74 ft."

When the Greenwood Gymnasium opened in 1939, it provided students with many new amenities. This building was Greenwood's first indoor gymnasium, boasting a basketball court with wood steel-spring flooring. Situated six feet below finish grade underneath the bleachers on the north side of basketball court were separate boy's and girl's dressing rooms with indoor plumbing for restrooms and showers; such amenities were not contained in most homes in the community. This building also had a cafeteria, kitchen, and stage area on the south side, and classrooms on the west side. The finished-wood bleachers reached from the court floor to nearly the top of the building, providing great views of both games and stage events. Under the stage area, accessed by a hatch in the floor, was a "soup kitchen" where some students, from homes that had no provisions, could have their meals prepared. The gymnasium's finished appearance and its amenities provided a great sense of elation for those first students who used it and resulted in a real sense of community pride.

The Old Rock Gymnasium became a place where self-confidence, teamwork, "Bulldog spirit," and community pride could be found in many who passed through the rock archways. Hundreds of students, family members and friends cheered from the wooden bleachers. Dozens of students have memories of basketball practices in the gymnasium and the excitement of the competitions against rival teams. Some may remember the drama and humor of the plays presented on the stage. Others may even remember those welcome meals served during that era when some families struggled to provide for their children. It is a memorable place, which shaped many young people's lives and endeared them to the legacy of the WPA.

Statement of Significance

In the community of Greenwood, Arkansas, the WPA was responsible for two projects: Main Street's sidewalks (built in 1934) and the Greenwood Gymnasium. The gymnasium structure was built during the declining years of the WPA, during Greenwood's 1938-39 school year. Roughly 100 men completed construction in a period of about three months, at a total cost of \$30,000. This gymnasium was Greenwood High School's site for basketball games for 30 years; afterwards this building was utilized for various other purposes including a basketball practice gym and as classrooms in Greenwood's expanding array of campus buildings. The "Old Rock Gym", as it has long been referred to by Greenwood residents, remains in use to this day, although 1968 was the last year that it served as the school's main gymnasium. For its associations with education in Greenwood and with the work of the WPA, the Greenwood Gymnasium is being nominated to the National Register with local significance under Criterion A. It is also being nominated under Criterion C with local significance as a good example of WPA construction in Greenwood.

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Greenwood Gymnasium

Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas

County and State

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Verbal Boundary Description:

From a point beginning 105 yards east of the intersection of West Gary Street and North Main Street, travel 50 yards east, then 40 yards north, then 50 yards west, then 40 yards south to the point of origin.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary contains the land that is historically associated with the Greenwood Gymnasium.

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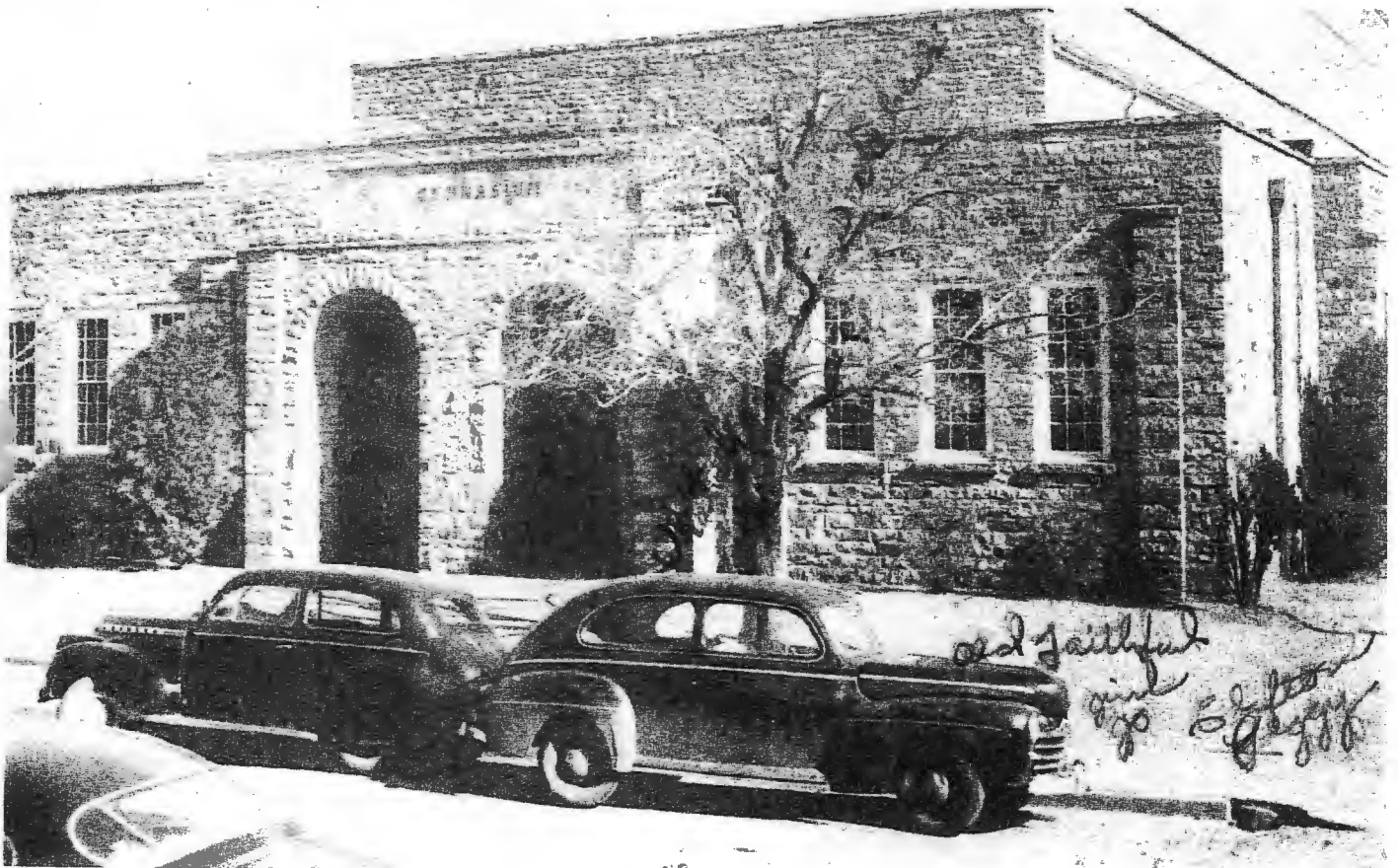


Greenwood Gymnasium, 1939.

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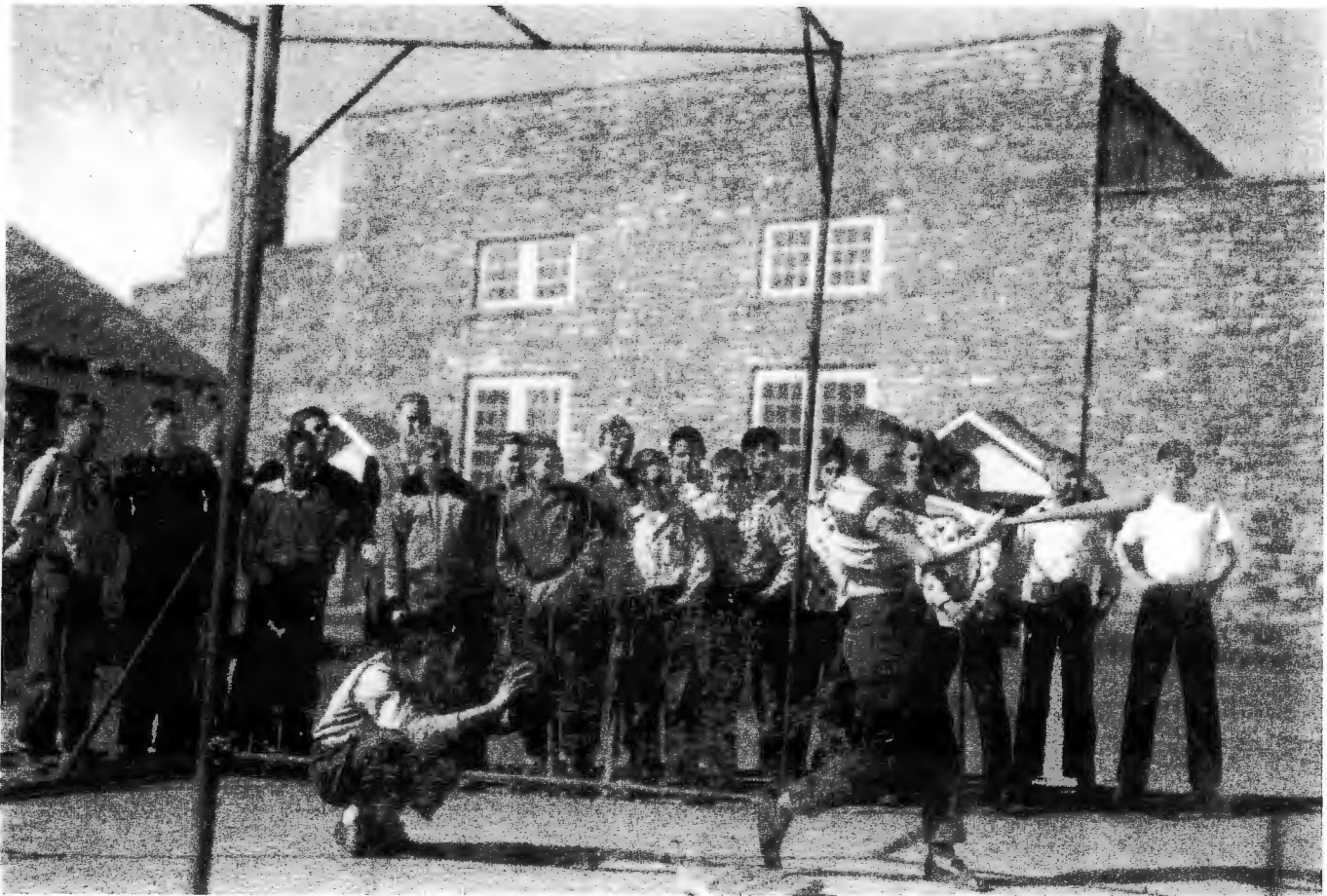


Greenwood Gymnasium, circa the early 1940s.

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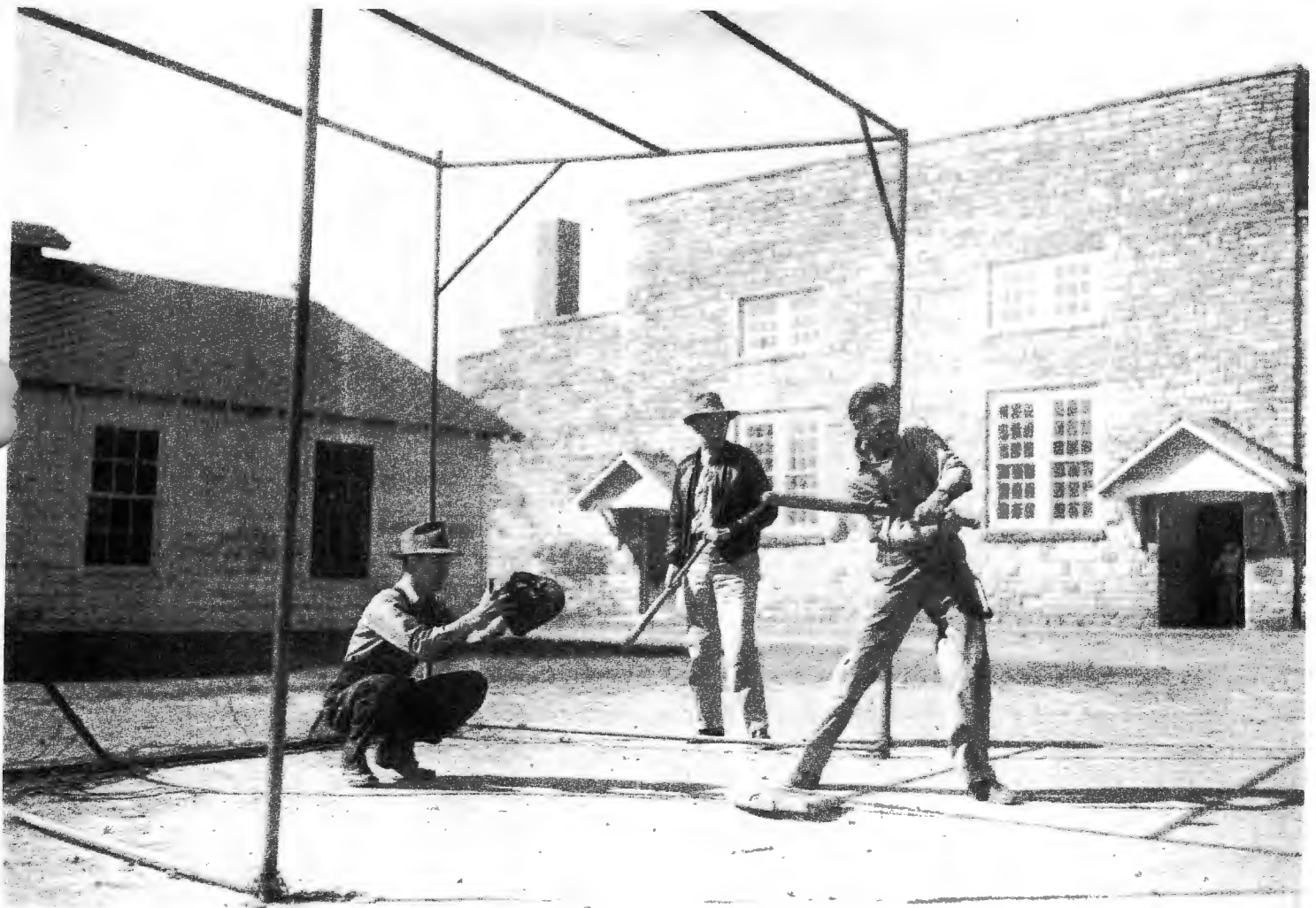


Greenwood Gymnasium, circa the early 1940s.

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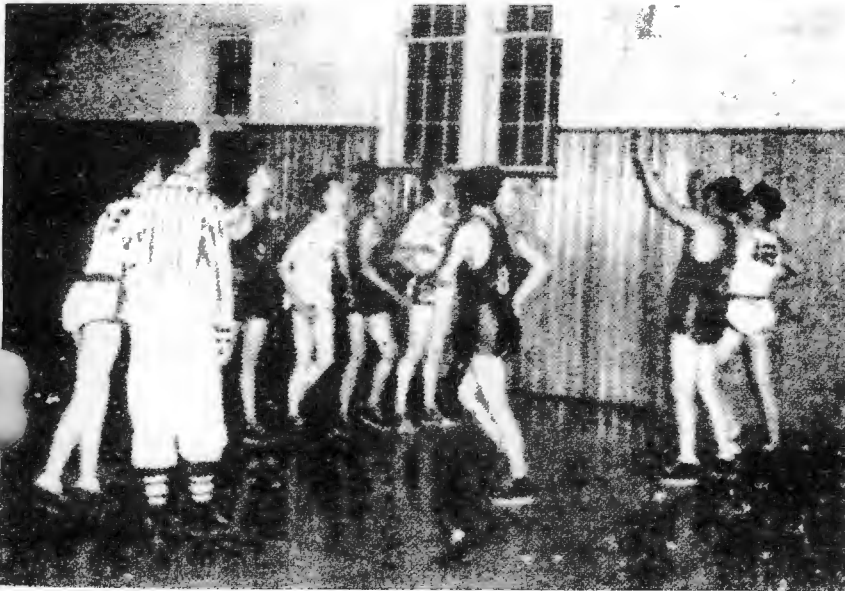
East Façade of the Old Rock Gymnasium, circa the early 1940s.

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Greenwood Gymnasium, interior
looking at the east end of the gym, circa
the 1940s.

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Greenwood Gymnasium, interior looking at the east end of the gym, circa the 1940s.

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Interior photograph taken from the bleachers on the north side, looking south towards the stage area, circa the 1940s.

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Interior photograph during a basketball game, looking north towards the bleacher area, near the west end of the court, circa the 1940s.

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Photograph of the girls' basketball team, taken inside the exterior vestibule, looking at the west entry doors to the basketball court area, 1948.

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Photograph of the boys basketball team taken outside in front of the west entrance, 1948.

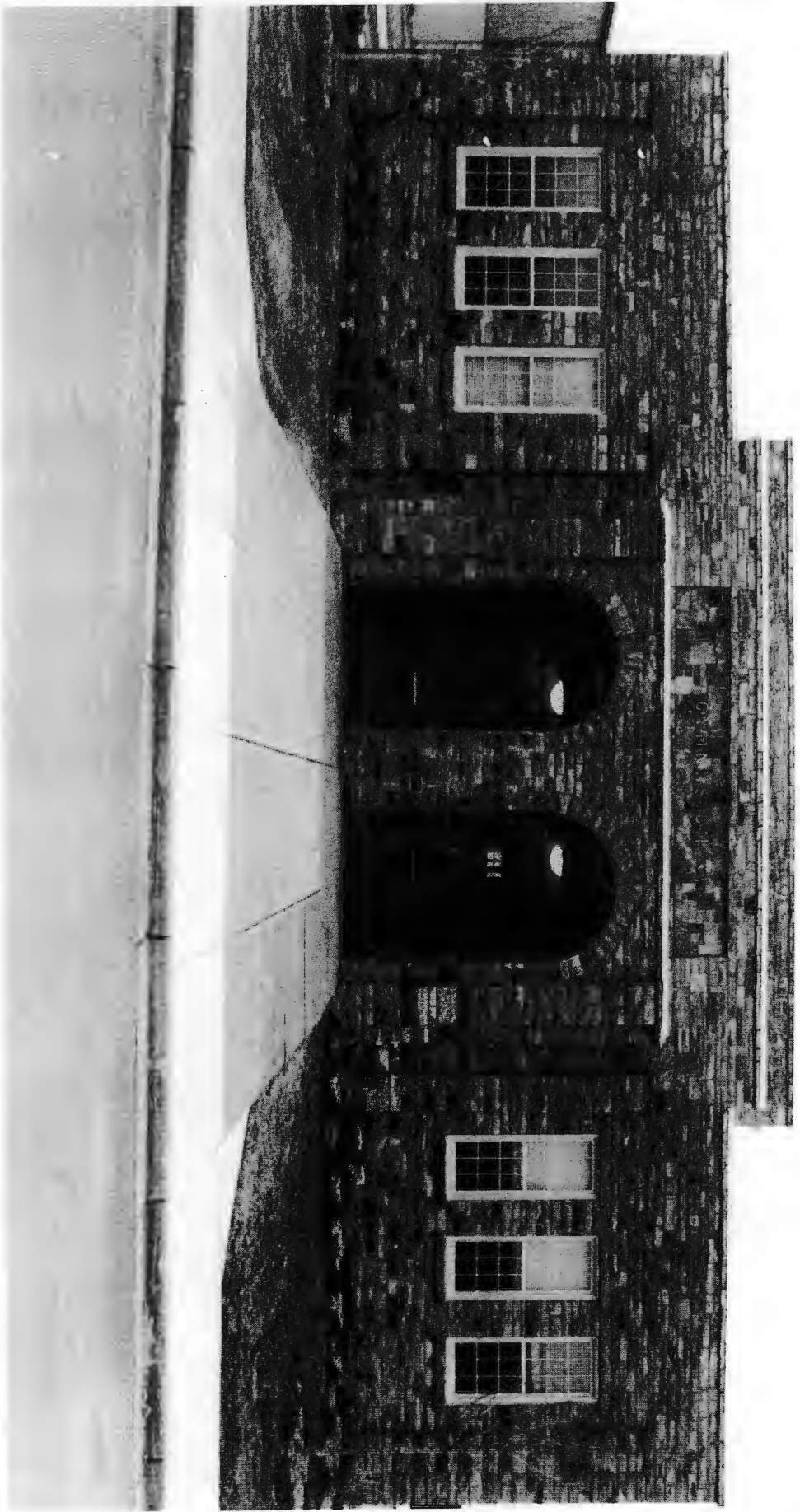
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Greenwood Gymnasium with the front entry alterations, circa 1960.



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. west elevation, looking east
7. #1



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Heritage Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. District of West elevation
7. #2



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. South elevation, looking north
7. #3



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co, AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. east elevation, looking northwest
7. #4



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. north elevation, looking southeast
7. #5



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. Interior, south side of building
7. #6



1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. Interior, North side of building
7. #7

ROCK GYMNASIUM

RENOVATION & RESTORATION of 1938 WPA PROJECT

REDEDICATED FALL 2010

GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Kay Johnson - Superintendent

John Ciesla - Asst. Superintendent

Jerry Cecil - Asst. Superintendents

School Board Members

Larry Rhodes - President

Mary Ann Sandifer - Vice President

Todd Halsce - Secretary

Greg Hasley

Paul McElhorn

Ruth McConnell

Clenna Jean Nichol

Design & Construction Team

MAHQ Architecture, Inc.

Architects - Planning & Design

Fort Smith, Arkansas

ES&C Engineering & Consulting Services

Mechanical & Electrical Engineers

Fort Smith, Arkansas

Bethens Construction, Inc.

Construction Manager

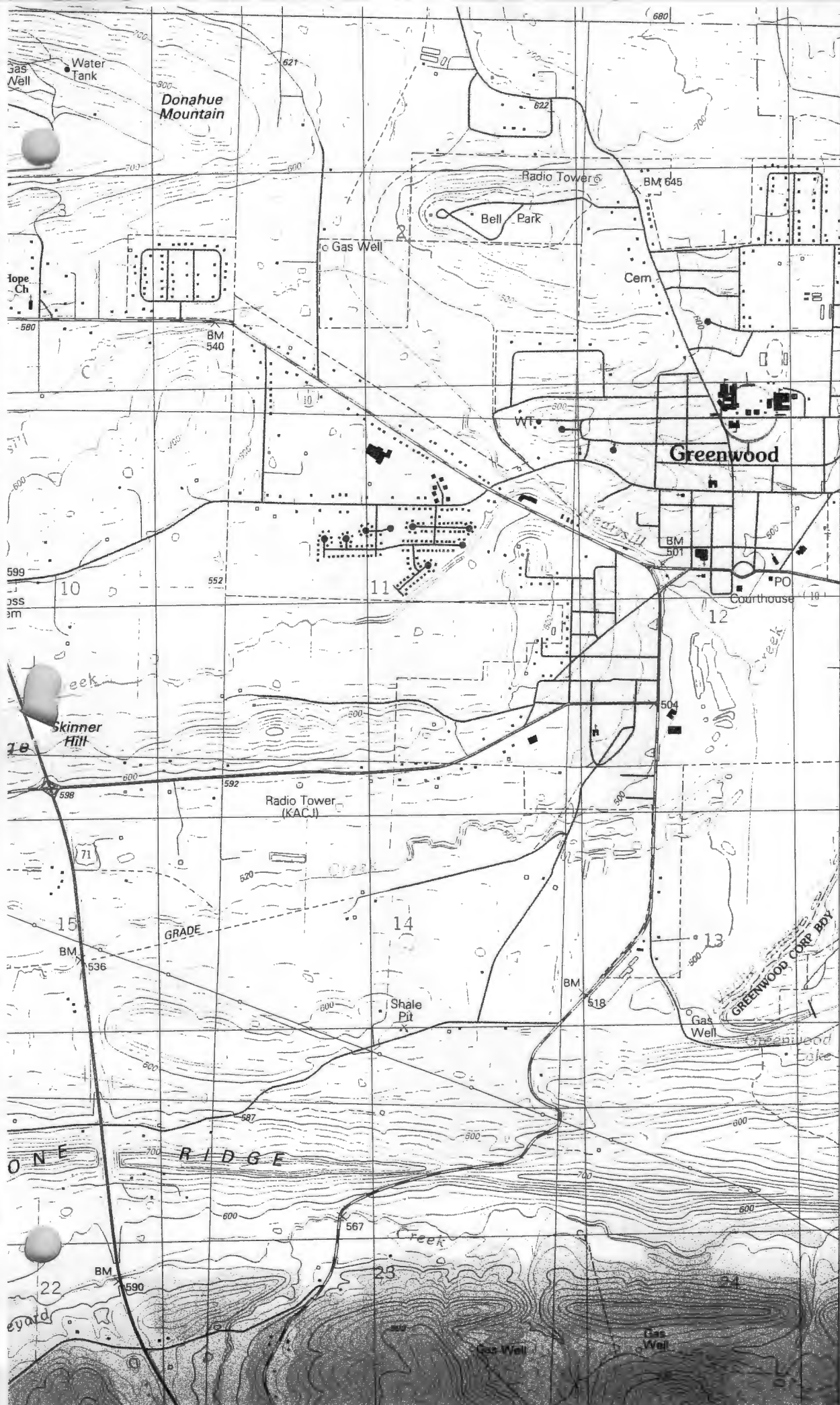
Fort Smith, Arkansas

Jim Byrum

Director of School Operations

Greenwood Public Schools

1. Greenwood Gymnasium
2. Sebastian Co., AR
3. Ralph Wilcox
4. February 25, 2011
5. Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock, AR
6. Plaque located in west lobby
7. #8



T 7 N
T 6 N
3899
3898
3897
12' 30"
3896
3895
3894
BURNVILLE 3.8 MI.
BOONEVILLE 20 MI.
7154 II NW

Greenwood Gymnasium
Greenwood, Sebastian
County, AR
UTM Reference:
15/385776/3898047