

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NR 9/20/07

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 Crossett Municipal Auditorium

other names/site number Site #AS0106

2. Location

street & number 1100 Main Street

not for publication

city or town Crossett

vicinity

state Arkansas

code AR

county Ashley

code 003

zip code 71635

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.)

Cathie Matthews

7/5/07

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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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:)

Crossett Municipal Auditorium

Name of Property

Ashley County, Arkansas

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Choose as many boxes as apply)

- private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property
(Choose only one box)

- building(s)
district
site
structure
object

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

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: 1, 1.

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: auditorium

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Tar
other Limestone

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)

Community Planning and Development

Politics/Government

Architecture

Period of Significance

1953-57

Significant Dates

1953-57

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Trapp, Clippard & Phelps—architect

C.W. Vollmer & Company Inc.—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:

Crossett Municipal Auditorium
Name of Property

Ashley County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>596928</u>	<u>3665015</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
					<input type="checkbox"/>	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 Cherub Alford, edited by Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date May 31, 2007
street & number 1500 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9787
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

ps 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 City of Crossett
street & number 201 Main Street telephone 870-364-4825
city or town Crossett state AR zip code 71635

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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Integrity

The Crossett Municipal Auditorium retains excellent integrity. The building retains its original windows and doors and still remains an excellent example of the Art Moderne style. In addition, the area of Crossett where the auditorium is located retains the small-town feel that it would have had when the building was built in 1953-1954.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Newspaper/local magazine clippings from City of Crossett 1953 Scrapbook.

Newspaper/local magazine clippings from Crossett Company 1953 Scrapbook.

Crossett Municipal Auditorium

Name of Property

Ashley County, Arkansas

County and State

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

School/Park Addition Subdivision; Lot 2, Block 1

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This is all the land that is historically associated with the Crossett Municipal Auditorium.

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SUMMARY

The Crossett Municipal Auditorium was built in 1953-54 in the Art Moderne Style, with an exterior of gray brick. The building was designed in a curved fashion to assist with acoustics inside. The roof is a tar, flat roof. This building includes seating for 1,009, a stage, downstairs dressing rooms, light booth, lobby, ticket booth, box office, and upstairs restrooms.

ELABORATION

The Crossett Municipal Auditorium was built in 1953-54 in the Art Moderne Style, with an exterior of gray brick. The building was designed in a curved fashion to assist with acoustics inside. The roof is a tar, flat roof. This building includes seating for 1,009, a stage, downstairs dressing rooms, light booth, lobby, ticket booth, box office, and upstairs restrooms.

Front/Southeast Façade

The front entrance of the auditorium faces southeast. Several large steps lead to the front entrance of three sets of double doors. Brick planters accent the staircase and the front of the building. Large squares of nestone highlight the entryway and spread out almost to the curved front corners of the building. Above the front doors are three awning windows.

Side/Northeast Façade

The northeast, or right, side of the building is adorned with a set of glass double doors and tall, thin, rectangular windows. The windows are comprised of two columns of seven windows each. The gray brick exterior continues along this wall.

Rear/Northwest Façade

The northwest side, or back, of the building has sharper corners and straight walls. The stage is located on the interior of this end of the building. A rolling dock door for moving props is located on the west side of the building.

Side/Southwest Façade

On the southwest, or left, side of the building is a concrete porch and a single door that leads to the backstage area. A set of glass double doors and tall rectangular windows mirror those on the northeast wall. At the time of construction, the building was connected by a covered walkway to the Crossett High School (later Norman Junior High). Though the school has since been torn down, a portion of the walkway still remains. This walkway features large, white, concrete columns and connects to the side entrance glass doors on the southwest side of the building.

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SUMMARY

The Crossett Municipal Auditorium at 1100 Main Street in Crossett, Ashley County, Arkansas, represents an excellent example of the Art Moderne style in Crossett. As a result, it is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C with local significance**. The building is also significant for its associations with the efforts of the Crossett Company to provide facilities for the community, including facilities for recreation and entertainment. The Crossett Municipal Auditorium is also being nominated to the National Register under **Criterion A with local significance**.

ELABORATION

Crossett was founded around the turn of the nineteenth century in southeast Arkansas. The town was founded to house a sawmill and lumber company. Most of the leadership and capital for the establishment of the Crossett Lumber Company came from three families. The Crossett Company was started as a lumber operation, but soon developed into a number of wood-using industries. The first mill manager and co-owner of the company, E. W. "Cap" Gates, was the visionary behind the town.

During this era, company owned sawmill towns were common. This meant that the company owned "everything." You worked for the company, lived in a company house, shopped at the company store, sent your children to company-owned schools, and received company scrip as pay. Until 1946, every business and building in town, except a café, pressing shop and post office were company owned and operated. In 1946, due to the increasing size of the town, a new development plan was established and homes were sold to company employees. At this time, Crossett began its evolution from a company-owned town to a town with a thriving company at the base of its economy.

Crossett was named one of the 100 finalists in the 1953 All-America Cities Contest, sponsored by *Look Magazine* and the National Municipal League. "The City with a Plan" was the town's slogan, and it was true. In 1940, Crossett became the first planned city in Arkansas when the nation's leading city planners prepared the first plan for a future Crossett of 5,000 people. In 1953, the renowned firm planning firm of Harland Bartholomew & Associates of St. Louis, Missouri, completed months of tedious effort and presented to the City of Crossett a plan for a future Crossett of 25,000 people—five times the size. Crossett was the only city in the United States under 100,000 in population having a comprehensive city plan embracing all elements of community facilities. Many improvements were made to this already progressive town during the early 1950s.

Crossett had a rich history of public facilities, though none were long lasting. During the early days of the town, the Crossett Company saw to it that their employees were provided respectful entertainment and recreation by building a Natatorium, Clubhouse, Bandstand, and even a Carousel. However, as the years passed these facilities were lost to fire or torn down to make room for new facilities. The citizens began to feel the need for entertainment in their town.

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In December 1952, the Crossett Company answered the long-felt need for a community auditorium by donating the funds to cover the construction costs. An initial donation of \$125,000 was given to the school district in 1952, with additional donations to cover the remainder of the costs to be given the following year as needed. This facility was built to dually serve the needs of the community and the school and would be maintained by the school district. "We hope that this auditorium will provide facilities that have been lacking for cultural entertainment and at the same time provide a meeting place for any community gathering," a spokesman for the Crossett Companies said when announcing the donation.

In general, plans called for an auditorium with a seating capacity of nearly 1,000, with an entrance lobby, ticket booth, and service rooms. Dressing rooms would be located beneath the stage. The auditorium floor would be bowled and stepped to give each seat in the house excellent vision, and the building would be shaped to afford excellent acoustic conditions with sound absorbing surfaces. The auditorium was located approximately 80 feet north of the high school. The exterior appearance of the building was designed to be in "harmony" with the high school, and the two building were joined with a covered walkway. Though the school has since been torn down, a portion of the walkway still exists. Completed in the spring of 1954, the general construction cost for the building was \$158,484, which did not include heating, electrical and plumbing costs.

The completion of the Auditorium sparked locals into action. A group of progressive and interested citizens joined together to form the Crossett Cooperative Concert Association, whose mission was to bring the finest music and entertainment to Crossett. The organization's membership drive featured a free concert by world-famous opera, radio, and television star Jane Stuart Smith. The 1954-55 season featured five performances: Alexandre and Gaines, Soprano and Baritone; Nelson and Neal, Duo Piano; Ruthana Boris Dance Company; The Chanticleers, Male Quartet; and the St. Louis Sinfoniette.

Though currently the auditorium is primarily used by the Crossett Public School system, it has over the years served as a location for community meetings, medicine shows, concerts, touring theatrical programs, pep rallies, assemblies, funerals, political gatherings, pageants, local recitals and much more. The stage has been the site where young ballerinas performed in their first dance recital, where each Crossett Homecoming Queen has been crowned, and where talented instrumentalist wowed their parents at band concerts. The stage has also hosted Tony award-winning vocalists, world-renowned conductors leading the Arkansas Symphony, and headlining country music recording artists. For recent generations of Crossett youth, few buildings will hold such a wide variety of memories as the auditorium.

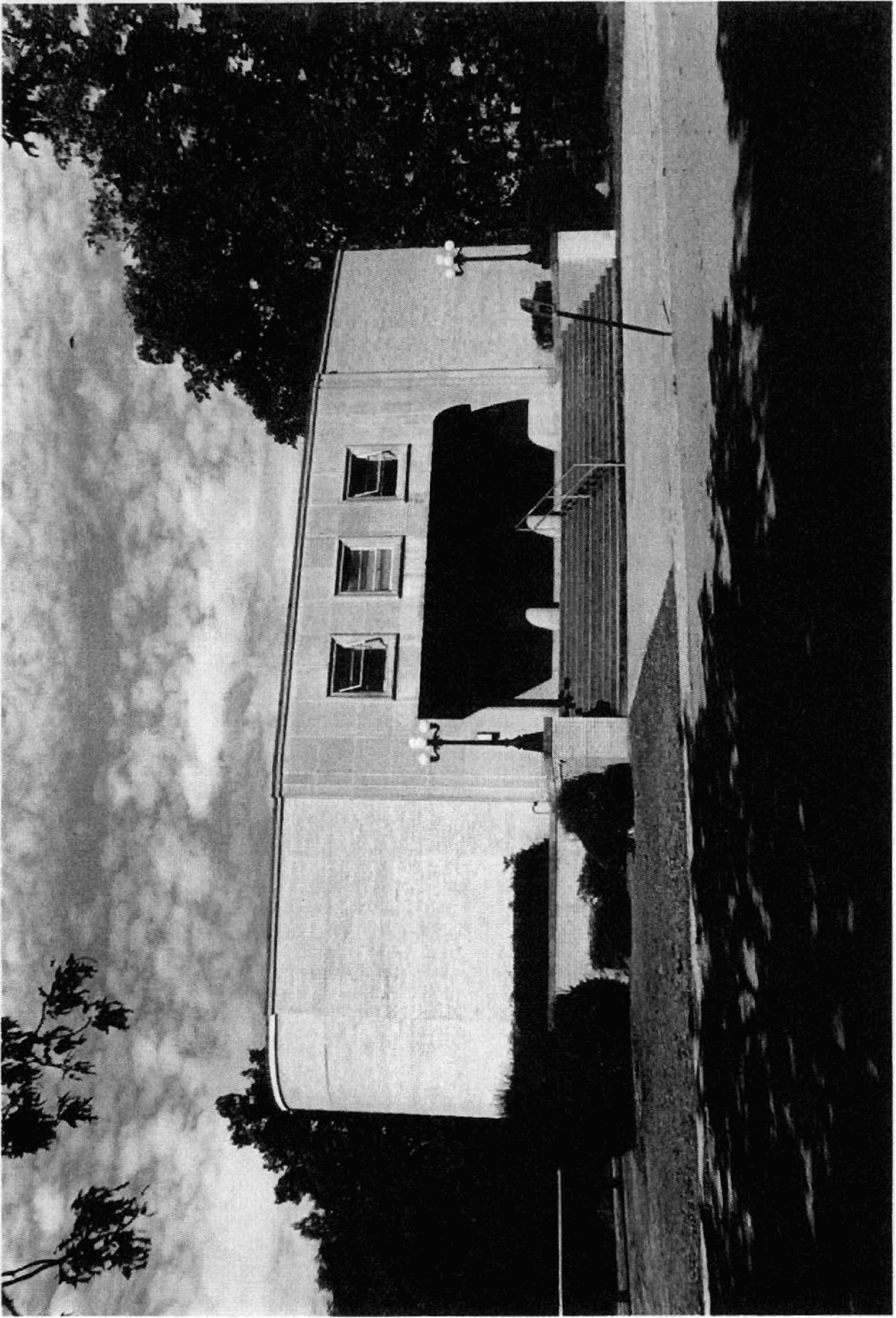
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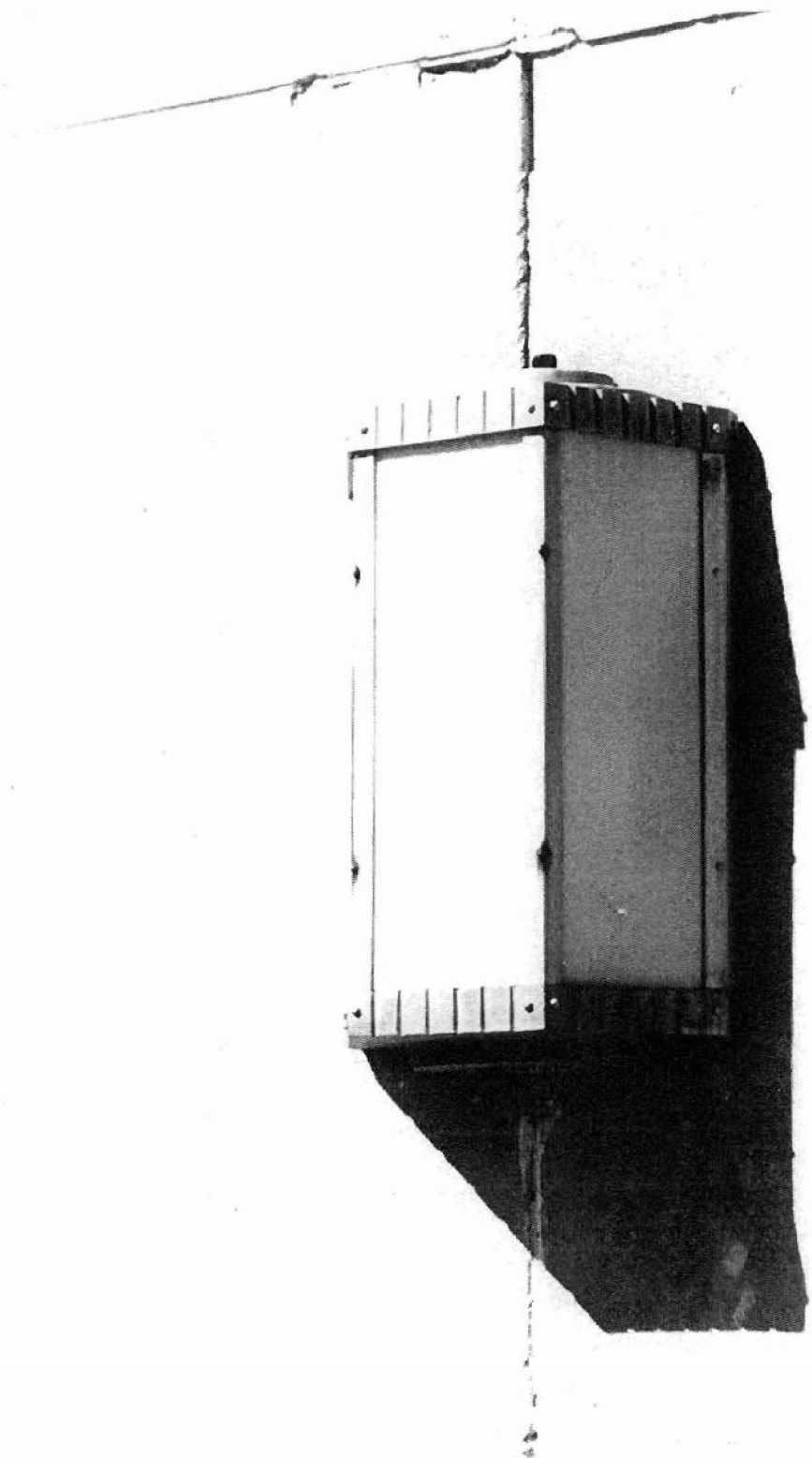
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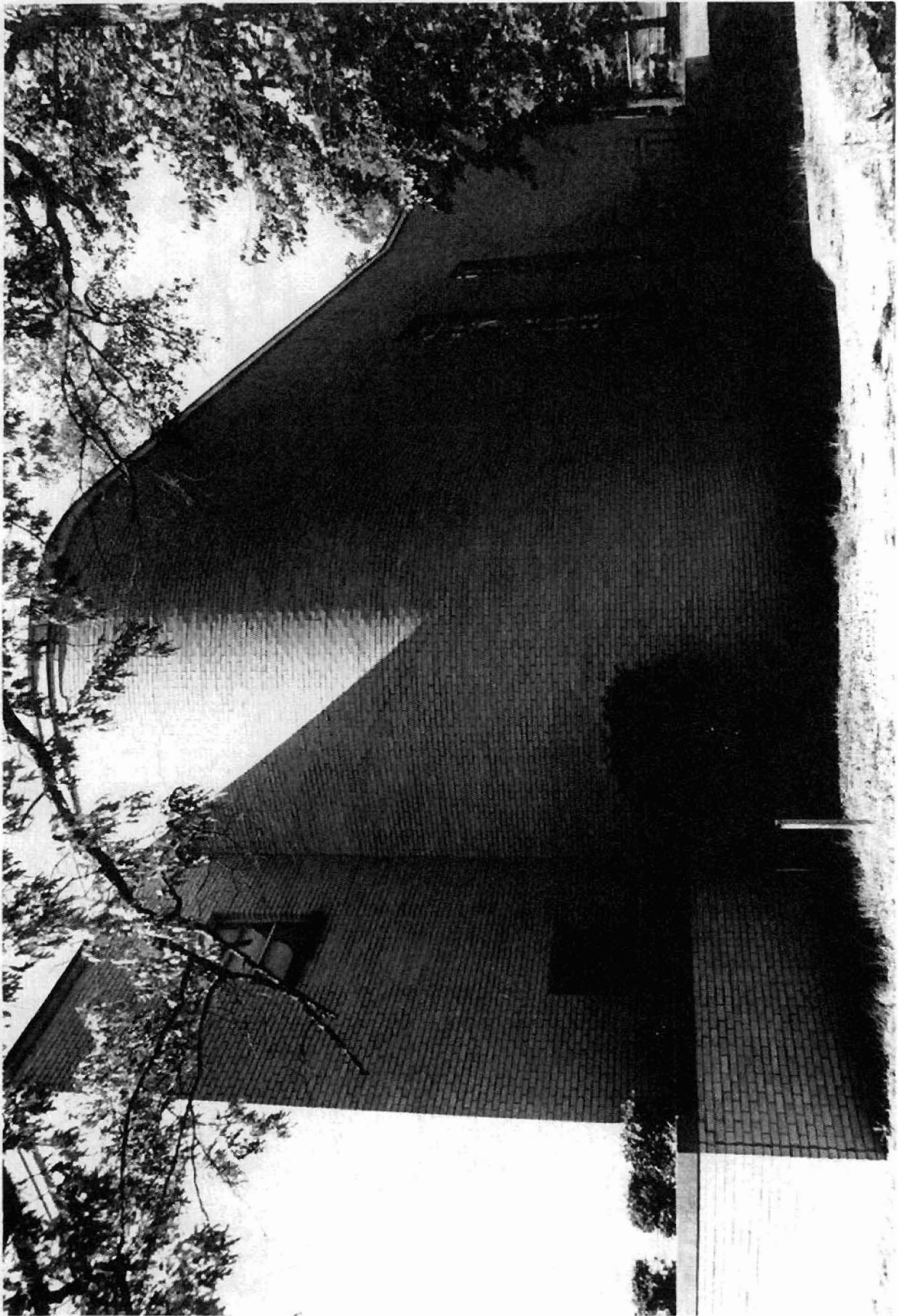
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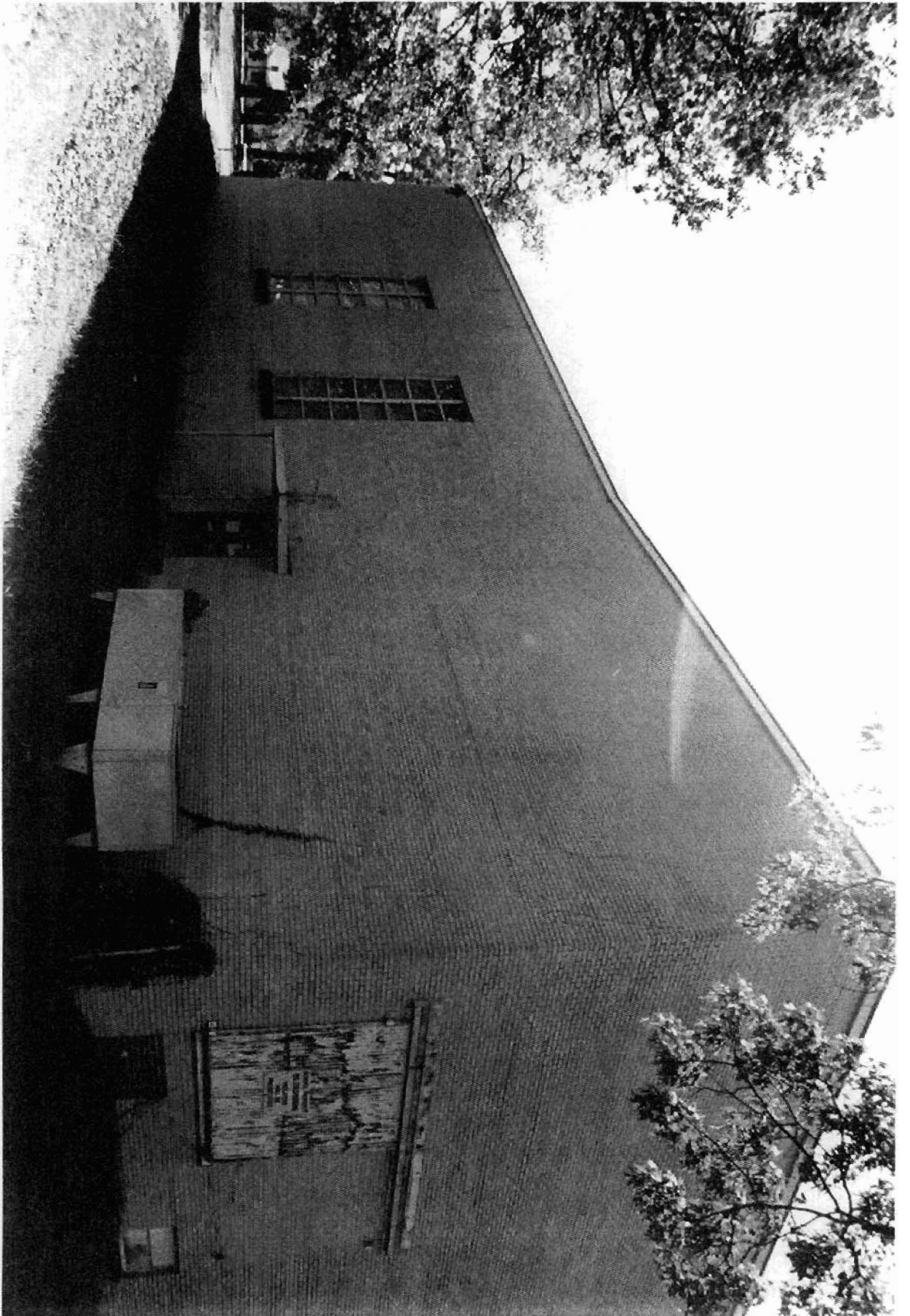
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

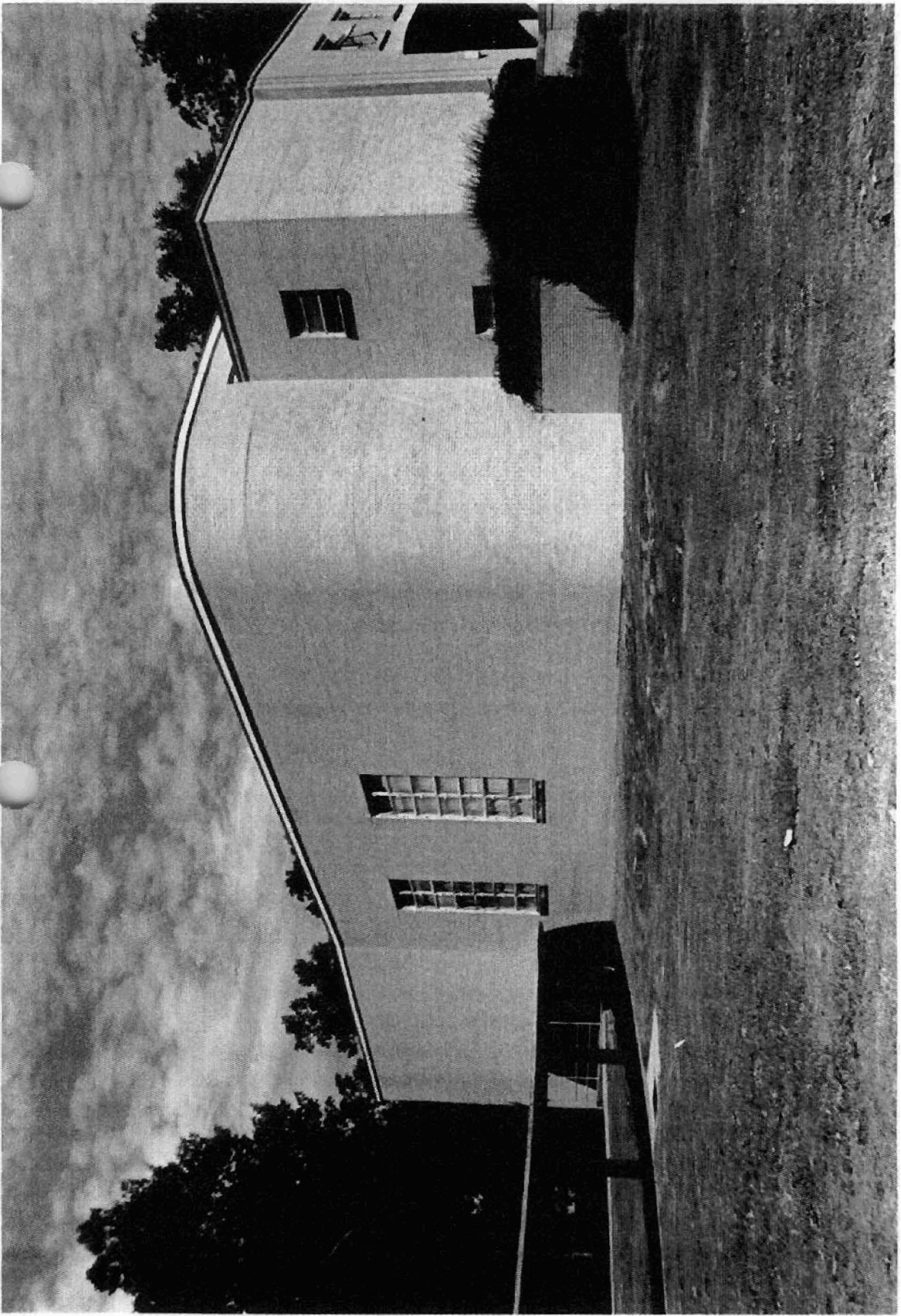
The Crossett Municipal Auditorium at 1100 Main Street in Crossett, Ashley County, Arkansas, represents an excellent example of the Art Moderne style in Crossett. As a result, it is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance**. The building is also significant for its associations with the efforts of the Crossett Company to provide facilities for the community, including facilities for recreation and entertainment. The Crossett Municipal Auditorium is also being nominated to the National Register under **Criterion A** with **local significance**.

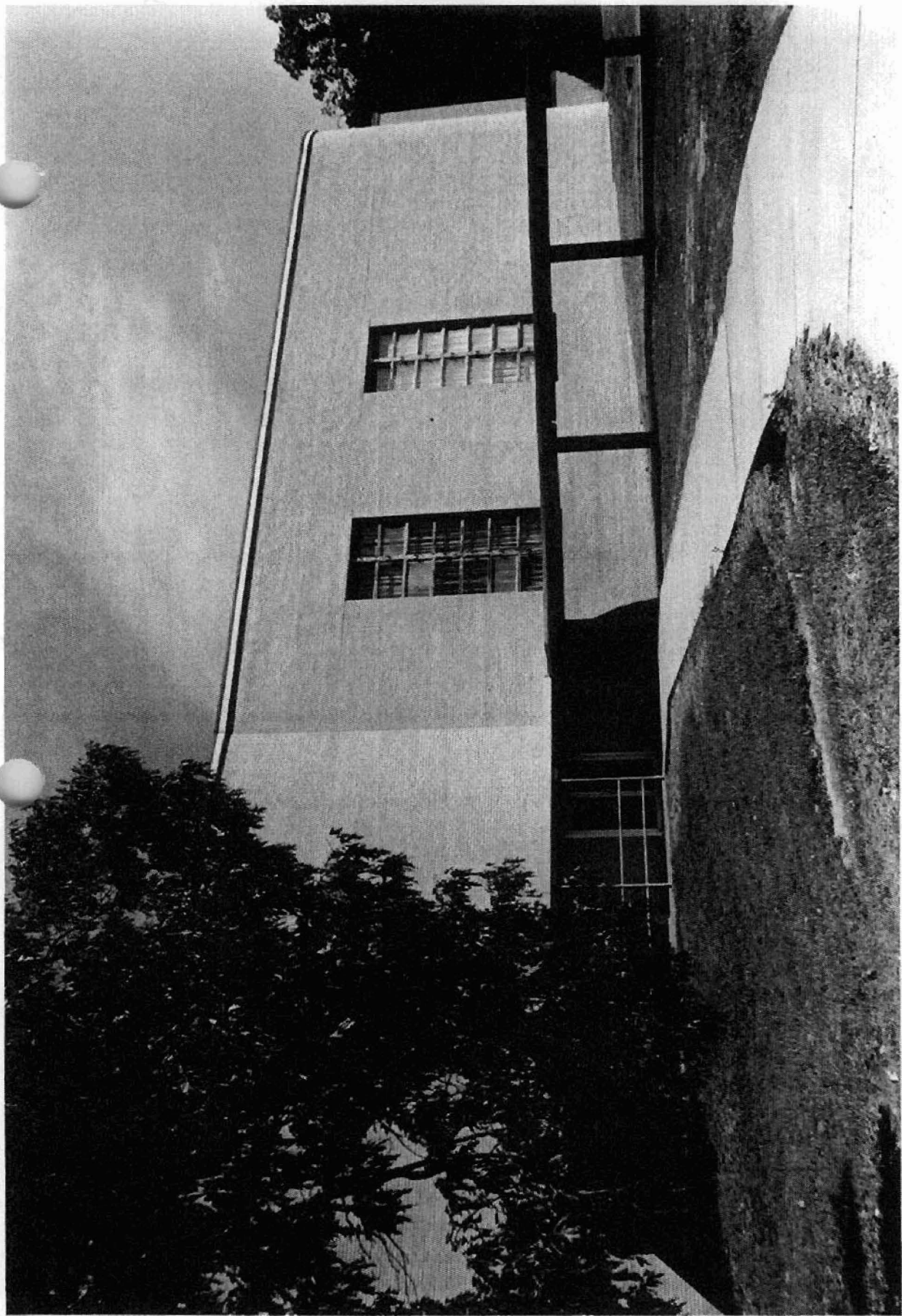














CROSSETT MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM
CROSSETT, ASHLEY COUNTY, AR

INTERIOR
VEY

STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT
WS 100 XS



UTM REFERENCE:
15/546924/3665015 A (NAD27)

