

*Rise Up Again,
North Highland*



**NORTH HIGHLAND MEMORIAL
COMMUNITY CENTER**

779 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
P.O. Box 680502
Prattville, AL 36068
Telephone: (334) 361-7954



Photo by: Thomas Brantley

North Highland Memorial Community Center

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Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Psalm 127:1

A Documentary of the Origin of the North Highland Memorial Community Center

John Dozier, Project Director

June 18, 2010

Acknowledgments

Great care has been given in the recognition of individuals, organizations and companies that provided the initial thrust and volunteer effort in building the North Highland Memorial Community Center. The greatest threat to any new endeavor is overcoming inertia and transitioning from words or ideas on scratch paper to implementation. Some of the persons mentioned below were not specifically asked to volunteer their services. They saw the need after learning of the project and unselfishly rendered their support. Without their involvement at the initial stage of development, it would have been virtually impossible to complete this construction project: President of the North Highland Memorial Hall, Richard Roberts; Mr. Owen E. McAllister, Designer, Mahomet, Illinois; W. L. Bush Architect and Associates of Montgomery, Architect; Mr. Lorenzo Douglas, General Contractor/Building Superintendent; Alvin Thomas Construction Company, heavy equipment operator and other landscaping services; Reuben Construction Co., heavy equipment operator; Clark Stoudemire, plumbing contractor; Chambliss Engineering, detailed engineering services relative to the location of the building as placed on the construction site, the parking lot, elevations, and water drainage system; Robert Smith and Associates, concrete contractor; John Cutler and Associates, Masonry; Mayor Jim Byard, Jr., waived several building costs, provided partial payment for the water drainage system, permitted tons upon tons of fill dirt to be trucked in to complete the parking lot, stayed connected to the building project and was always willing to help; Mr. Buddy Buckner of the Water Board of the City of Prattville, furnished water line to the construction site and installed the water meter; and lastly our committee of approximately twenty people who internalized the building project, which meant sacrificing their time and money from their pockets to keep the project afloat. A final thank you to all who accepted the vision of the Memorial Hall committee and helped to make it become a reality.

Edited by:
Marian Dozier
Arthur Burt
Dora Holland
Lorenzo Douglas

Rise Up Again, North Highland

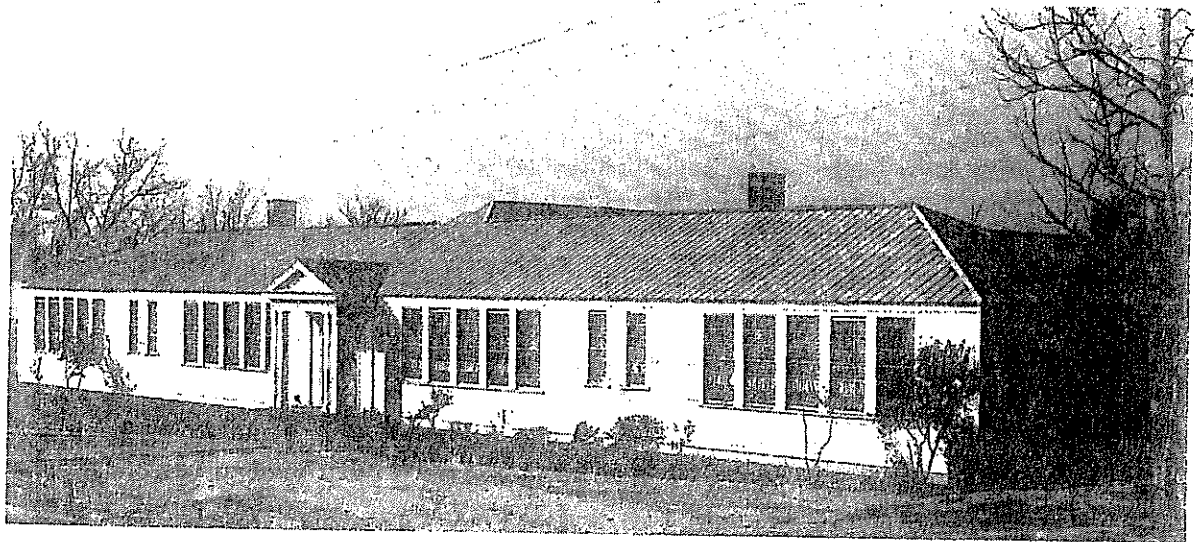
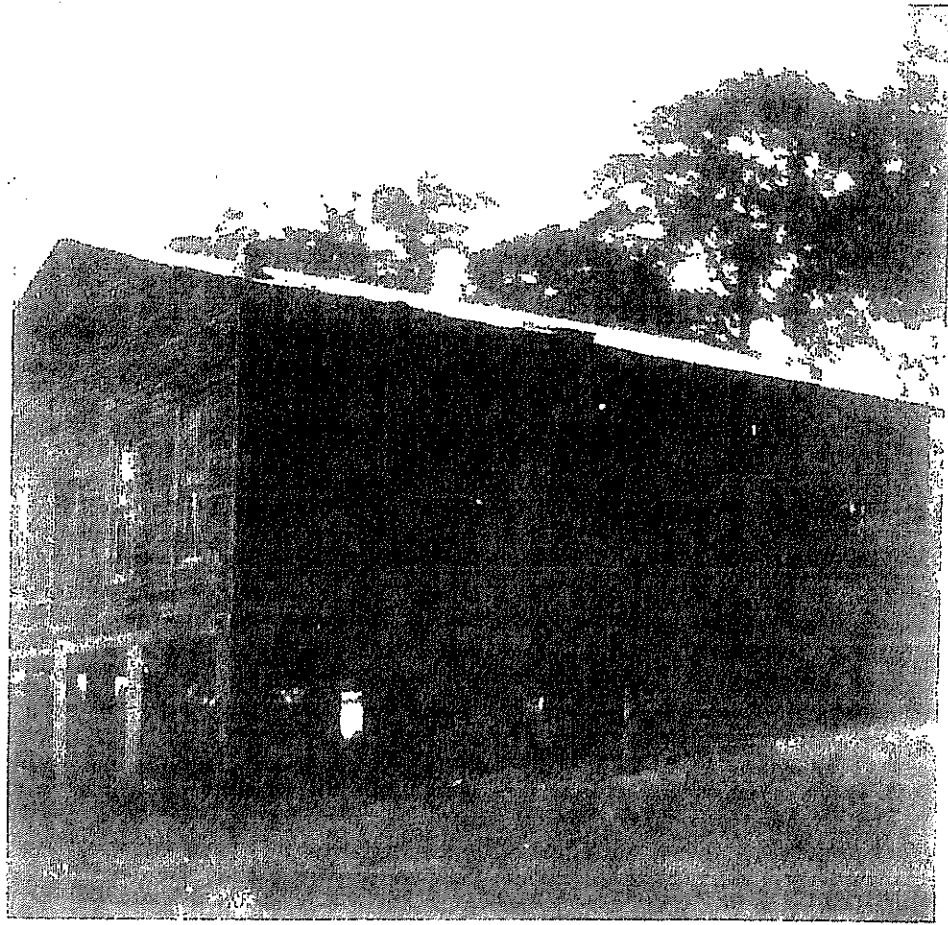
The name "North Highland" given the name of our school buildings is indestructible. Each time that a North Highland building has been destroyed for any reason or lost its identity, another has risen to take its place. North Highland has a life of its own: (1) the first school was a small wooden structure that once sat on a hill prior to 1939, the land now occupied by North Highland Park; (2) it progressed to the building constructed on Chestnut Street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive) in 1939; (3) later in 1961 to the fall of 1967, a new facility operated under the name North Highland and ended when Autauga County schools were integrated. It was re-named Prattville Junior High. Meanwhile the North Highland building erected in 1939 was left standing though not used as a public school. It had limited community use. However in 1981, this building was destroyed by fire. Then reality set in. Our name and our precious school building, North Highland, had been wiped out. The void was pronounced. But all was not lost. In December 1981, Autauga County School Superintendent Hargis deeded to the North Highland Recreation Center the five-acre lot on which the 1939 structure was erected; (4) lastly out of this action sprouted the North Highland Head Start facility on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. Remnants of the old school in the form of bricks and concrete pillars yet today bear evidence that they once supported a historic school building revered by the community (see pages 3 & 4).

However, for many the loss of the 1939 structure was still painful. It was not only a school. It was an extension of our homes and it unified the neighborhoods. North Highland was much like a sanctuary where we were loved and nurtured by teachers and school administrators. A big chapter in our history was lost in its destruction in 1981 and seemingly the effort of neighborhood leaders who helped shape our lives during this critical period of our lives as well. Such people as Mr. George Venice and his wife, Ellen, who owned a large tract of land on Tenth Street. The Venices operated a large playground and amusement park for children and adults. In addition, they owned a small convenience store. The Venices catered to the community for years until they were too old and no longer physically able to keep the property operational. Consequently, the property was sold to individual purchasers, which now forms much of the residential area of Tenth Street. Another example was Mrs. Lillian Pittman who operated the Blue Moon Café, a clean and well managed establishment, on Sixth Street. Mrs. Pittman was a compassionate and personable lady to everyone. She was forever smiling and willing to help those in search of good food in the neighborhood. Her prices were more than reasonable. She was known to make the best camp stew in the City of Prattville. Fond memories of her linger in the minds of those who knew her and her family. These are but two examples of people who were pillars in our neighborhood.

Where are the Venices and Pittmans of today? What will be our legacy? How will our generation be remembered? How can we alleviate this bewilderment within us? We pondered these questions in our minds. The situation was discussed among several members who had graduated from North

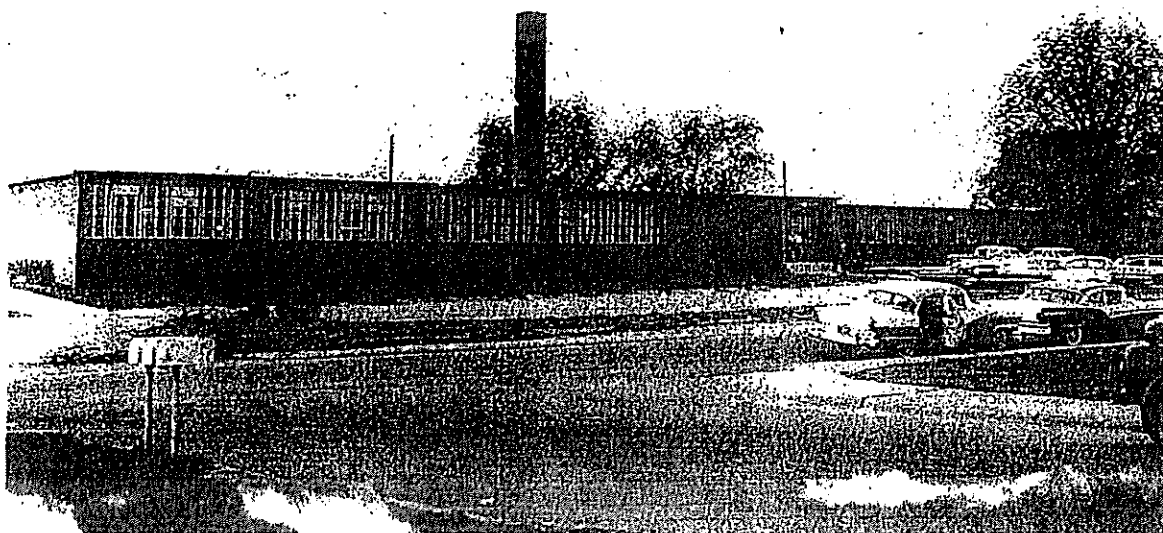
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Old North Highland

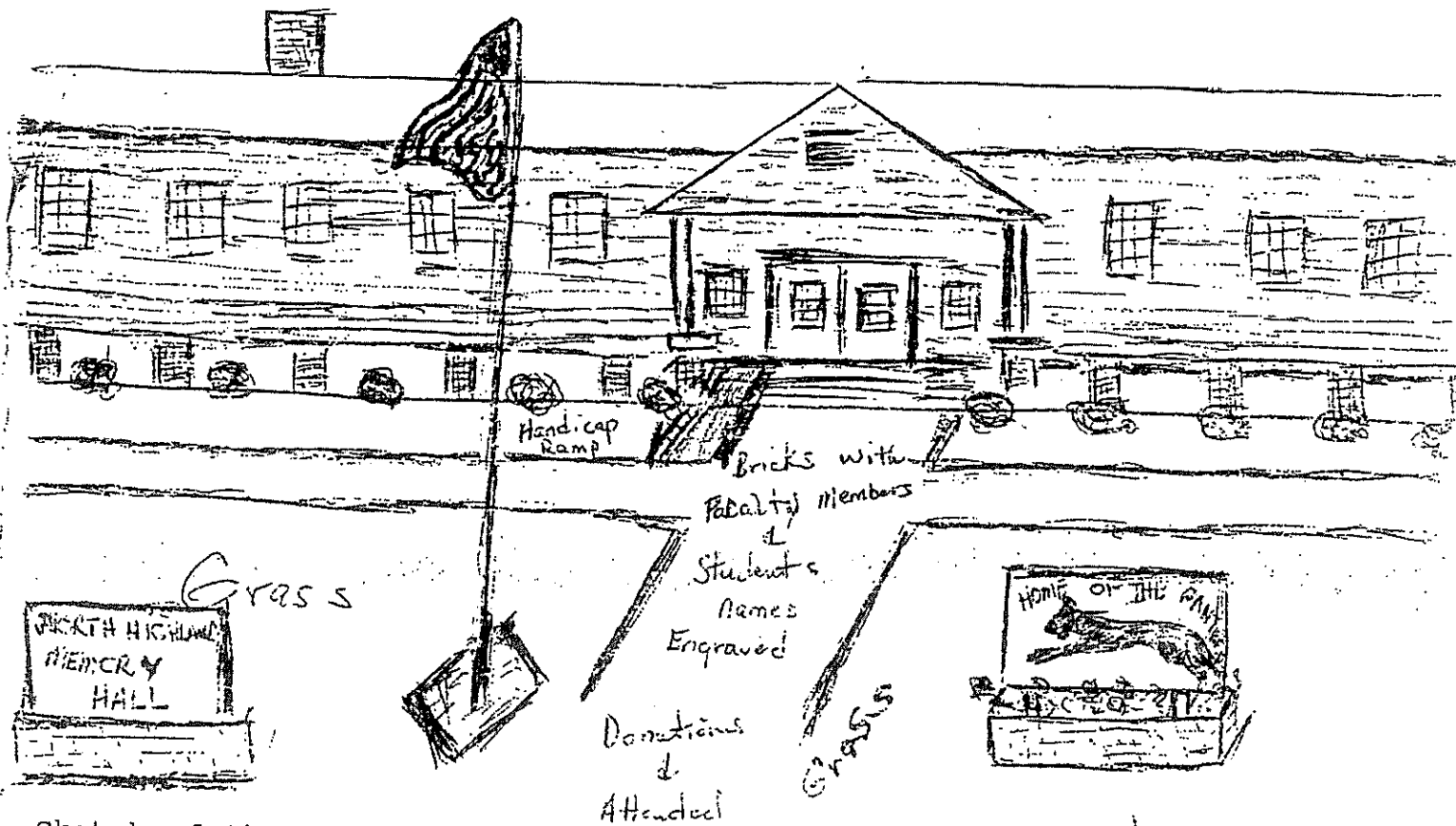


North Highland Chestnut Street
destroyed by fire in 1981

North Highland High School (1961)



North Highland Headstart Center



Sketch of the proposed
Memorial Hall by

President Richard Roberts



Demolished home of Howard and Zora Spenser
779 Chestnut Street

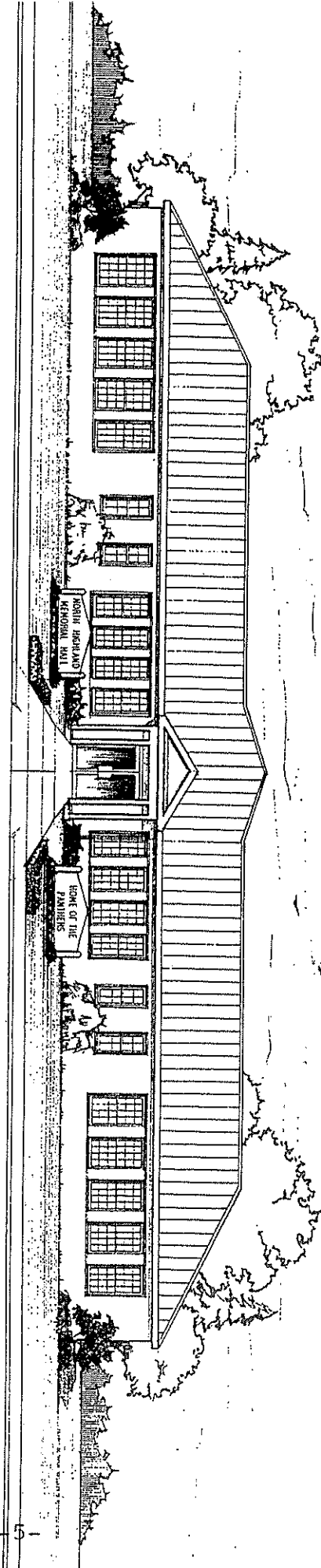
Highland High School. Henry Robinson suggested to the group the possibility of building a memorial to our beloved school. Meetings were held on an irregular basis to keep the dream alive. In 1997, the meeting became more structured as Richard Roberts, then President, presented a sketch of the envisioned memorial (see pages 5). Using this sketch, and adding the space requirement, John Dozier contacted, Mr. Owen McAllister, a friend of his who resided in Mahomet, Illinois to design drawings of the exterior and interior for planning purposes. The drawings were accepted by the Memorial Hall committee. Thus the resurrection of the Memorial Hall was now set in motion (see pages 7 & 8).

Next was to determine where the Memorial Hall would be located on the five-acre lot and how would we get seed money to make preliminary plans. The North Highland Recreation Center with Louis Sager as its president, met with the Memorial Hall committee and its president, Richard Roberts, on July 29, 1999 in the assembly room of the Bank of Prattville (now Whitney National Bank). It was a contentious meeting since the parent organization, the North Highland Recreation Center, did not want to cede any authority to the sub-organization, the Memorial Hall. However, the Memorial Hall committee prevailed with the remarkable leadership of President Richard Roberts. The president was determined not to be outwitted by a team of well versed men on the opposing side who planned to short circuit the committee's plans by effectively using the Robert's Rules of Order to successfully block any action brought to the floor. He courageously stood as president and refused to be subject to those guidelines since the committee was not familiar with them. The discussion proceeded without the Robert's Rules of Order guidelines and the committee was successful in getting a 99 year lease and the authority to sell trees from the property surrounding the North Highland Headstart facility to get seed money for the building project. Further, it was understood that the North Highland Memorial Hall as organized would function as a separate entity and have complete autonomy to use all funds received in its name.

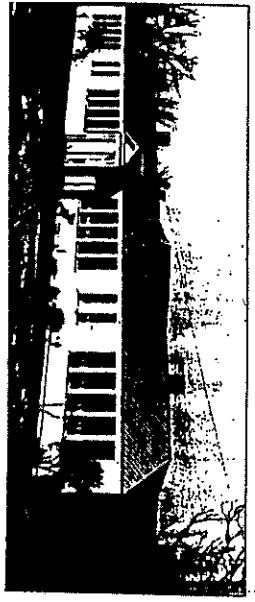
As to the location of the new facility, it was first thought that it would be located in an area behind the North Highland Headstart Center. This was the only logical area though a poor choice because of its slopes and uneven terrain. But it was the best choice on the lot. Among other things, it would require the removal of many trees, many tons of fill dirt would have to be trucked in and packed, roads would have to be made and it would not be "on a hill sending out a beacon light" as challenged by our school song. The matter was tabled to be re-visited at a later date.

The trees on the original five-acre lot were sold generating \$4,400 to start our journey of building the North Highland Memorial Hall. The committee assumed it would be relatively easy raising money from the alumni of North Highland High School. However, we knew that it was imperative that our organization be recognized by the Federal Internal Revenue Service as non-profit under 501 (c) (3) to generate tax deductible donations and not cause a hindrance in fund-raising efforts. CPA Bennie Hadnott, an alumnus and President of Watson Rice Consulting Group, Inc., was called into action. Bennie expertly took the reins, completed all the necessary forms and returned the documents to IRS on October 26, 2000 with a personal check for \$500.

Continued on page 9



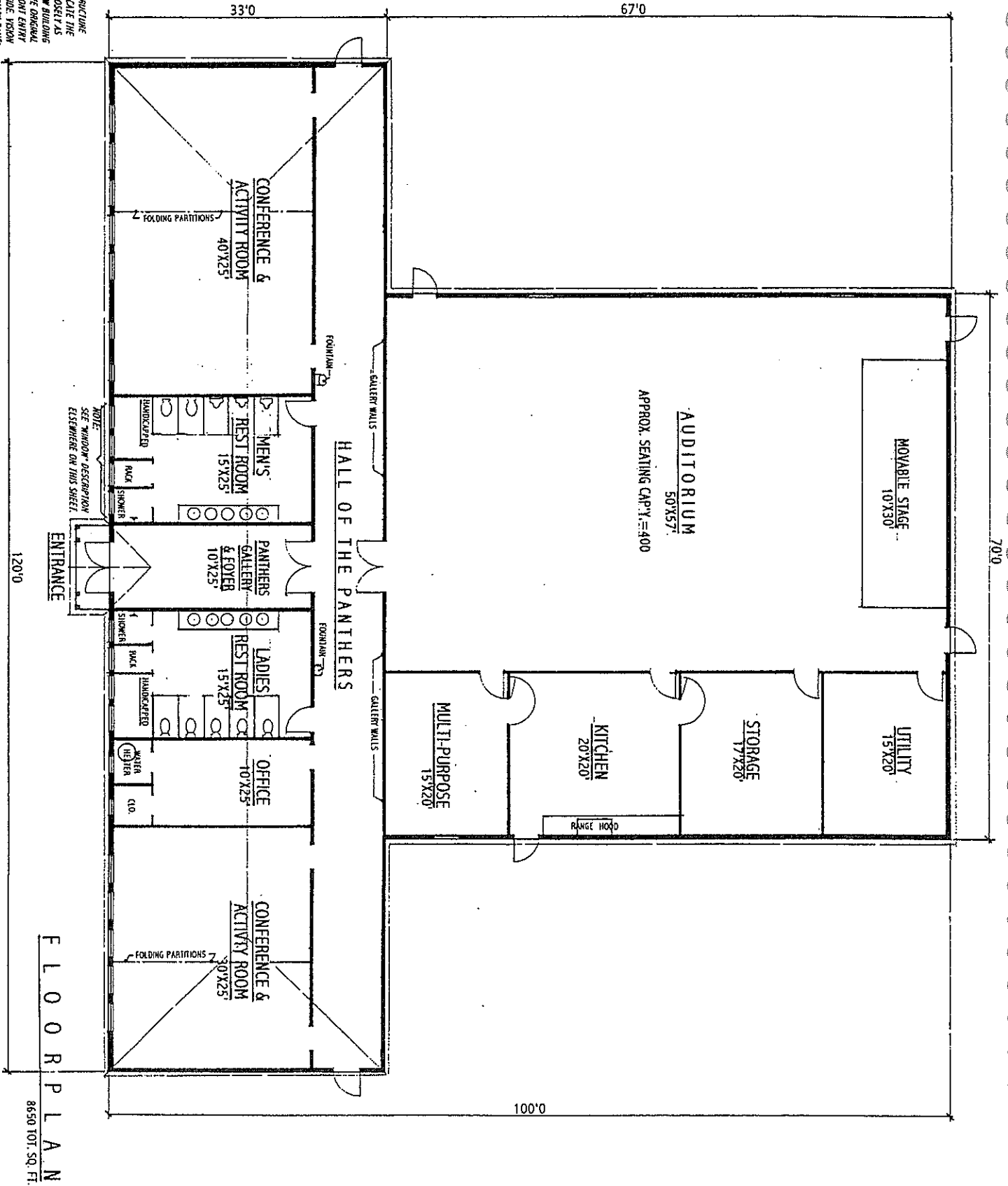
DELINEATION OF THE
NORTH HIGHLAND
MEMORIAL HALL



North Highland Chautau Street
 destroyed by fire in 1981.

NORTH HIGHLAND MEMORIAL HALL

WINDOW NOTE:
THE FRONT OF THE NEW STRUCTURE
HAS BEEN DRAWN TO REPLICATE THE
ORIGINAL STRUCTURE AS CLOSELY AS
PRACTICAL. DUE TO THE NEW BUILDING
SIZE AND ROOM LAYOUT, THE ORIGINAL
WINDOWS PLANNING THE FRONT ENTRY
HAS BEEN REDUCED TO A WIDE WINDOW
OBSCURING GLAZING OR PRIVATE PANE
APPLICATIONS WILL PROVIDE PRIVACY.



He never asked for reimbursement. Bennie brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table. This is one of the many reasons he was highly respected in our organization as the "go to guy." Approximately six months later, April 9, 2001, IRS approved North Highland Memorial Hall as a non-profit organization. There was a flow of paperwork from and to IRS before the agency reached its decision. But Bennie made the process look simple. That was not the case. We were now set to appeal to the general public for financial support.

At our July 2001 school reunion, we asked those in attendance if they were in favor of donating \$300 each to provide funds for the initial thrust of the building project. The answer was positively "yes." That would leave the Memorial Hall committee with getting the drawings and related documents in order. Thus the building would be completed in record time. In addition, Mayor Byard spoke at this reunion. He emphatically stated that the Black community should not expect others to build a facility for them. Instead, we should accept this responsibility. However, that was make-believe thinking and not reality. A few graduates, with little hesitation, stepped forward and donated as they should have. But the vast majority would not freely contribute. Overcoming the status quo or existing condition was proving to be a major problem.

November 6, 2001 we issued our first newsletter. The following goals were set:

1. Build the Memorial Hall by the desired date of July 31, 2003.
2. Set the cost of construction at \$450,000.
3. Raise \$45,000 from former students and friends by January 31, 2002 (donating \$300 by each of us may require a sacrifice to reach this goal).
4. Raise \$25,000 from local businesses and organizations by January 31, 2003.
5. Raise \$380,000 from other sources by January 31, 2003.
6. Complete construction within six months after the start date.

It was stressed that we must work as a team to accomplish these goals. Recommendations, suggestions, ideas, etc., were solicited.

In order to meet our goal of raising \$380,000 from foundations, corporations and companies, we immediately began sending proposals to organizations such as 3M Foundation, Metropolitan Life Foundation, ADM Foundation ... to name a few. We sent a copy of the organizations contacted to all on the mailing list. A pledge form was attached for former schoolmates to complete and return. Everyone was encouraged to become a member of the Memorial Hall Society as a minimum by contributing \$300. It was anticipated that we could easily get at least 150 graduates to donate \$300 resulting in the \$45,000 needed from this source. Meanwhile we were having fish fries, yard sales and selling T-shirts.

As a part of the newsletter, a "Memorial Roll Call" was printed showing the status of donors as they progress from one category/society to another. This would generate interest and move the building project forward. Simultaneously, we aggressively continued our search for the funds from other sources for the project (see pages 10-16). Two extra large books twice the size of a thick

Continued on page 17

North Highland Memorial Hall

Proposal for Funding from The Daniel Foundation of Alabama

1. List of Officers and Board Members:

See attached

2. Brief Description of Organization

The construction of the North Highland Memorial Hall/Center in the community of Prattville, Alabama has progressed at a steady pace. We have continued to receive substantial financial support from Mayor Byard and city councilmen as well from the general public. The city has also waived fees, provided trees to complement the Center's professional-quality landscape design, and shared in the cost of a required water drainage system. Lastly, the Mayor has committed to holding summer programs at the Center.

We have begun to be recognized as a community center, which was our original intent. The Prattville community is beginning to see the value of this facility, its strategic location, the critical space it will provide and the importance it will play in offering activities for all ages and populations. The Center's last quarterly session of the year, for an adult audience, dealt with "How to Prevent Family Violence and Abuse." However, this year we will place greater emphasis on the involvement of more preteens as we expand our outreach programs in many areas. This expansion should begin in June. We are excited about the growth that our organization is experiencing. The community shares our excitement and reservations have begun to be requested for our services.

The Family Support Center of Prattville has accepted our role in the community and has agreed to partnership with us. This has heightened our desire excel. However, in our exuberance, we are cognizant of what our expansion must bring to the community:

1. A meeting place for civic and social events and functions.
2. A place: to offer activities to youth such as a computer lab, after school tutoring and sports activities; for activities designed specifically for the economically disadvantaged; for arts and cultural programs for youths and adults; and a place to hold childhood obesity sessions, and drug and HIV/AIDS prevention sessions.
3. A literacy program for citizens. This activity is of vital importance due to the number of community members that are adults and cannot read or write. Through assessment of what activities the Hall should provide has been discovered that the illiteracy number are high in this area.
4. A place that will preserve the rich heritage and pride of an era represented by the history of the original school; displays of historical and educational exhibits for public viewing.

5. Collaboration with the Head Start Program to expand its current services at the Hall.
6. Occupational and training courses in addition to employability skills programs.

3. **Total amount to be raised and amount of commitments received as of date of application.**

The total amount to be raised is \$301,500. The amount raised to date is \$126,118, coupled with labor saving costs of approximately \$85,000. Commitments (including pledges) pending to date is \$48,200. We have been diligent in our search for funding from local (city, county, and individuals) and state sources in addition to foundation and corporate funders. Enclosed is a list of donors to date. Volunteers (local contractors and individuals) make up approximately 40% of the labor force thereby keeping the actual cost of the project to more than reasonable dollar cost.

4. **Description of how requested funds will be used.**

Requested funds will be used to continue the construction of the new North Highland Memorial Hall, which has a tentative completion date of June 30, 2006. The 5,625 square foot Hall will be similar in design to the old school which burned in 1981 but on a smaller scale. A design of the building is enclosed. The facility will be available for use by approximately 52,268 people from the tri-county area and will be centrally located one mile north of Prattville.

5. **Advise whether or not your organization is a branch or member of a national or regional organization and if so, what percentage of your income is remitted to such organization.**

The North Highland Memorial Hall is not a member of a national or regional organization.

CITY COUNCIL

DEAN R. ARGO
PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 3

MIKE RENEGAR
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
DISTRICT 5

BOBBY S. CARTER
DISTRICT 1

WILLIE WOOD, JR.
DISTRICT 2

TOM MILLER
DISTRICT 4

F.J. "MAC" MACREADY
DISTRICT 6

GENE HALL
DISTRICT 7

February 26, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

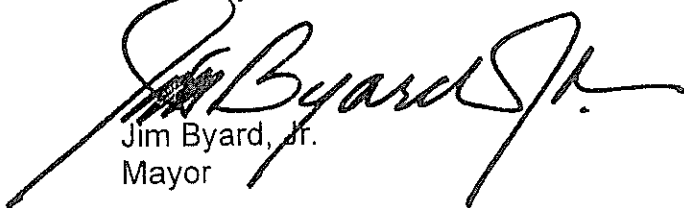
In order for a town to thrive, citizens must take roles of leadership in the community. Such a group is the North Highland Memorial Hall Committee. This group of men and women have joined forces to raise funds to construct a building which can be used as a center for educational programs, weddings, reunions and other community events. They are committed to working toward a center which will serve as a nucleus of the community, enhance the surrounding neighborhood and be an asset to Prattville as a whole.

They have chosen to build a replica of the old North Highland High School on its original site. Prior to integration, the school, which burned in 1981, served for many years as the cultural center of a closely-knit black community. Alumni of the North Highland School still meet regularly and are actively involved in a number of worthwhile service and community projects.

The City of Prattville commends this fine group of men and women for their dedication and determination to give something back to the community. They have planned various fundraisers and several citizens have made personal financial commitments to the project. However, since many involved are senior citizens on fixed incomes, they will be searching for other sources to finance this endeavor. Any financial assistance that you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

If you have questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jim Byard, Jr.
Mayor

EXHIBIT

12

161 Maple Drive
Montgomery, AL 36117

August 21, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Mamie Jones-Muse and I am an Alumnus of North Highland High School. I am a proud Panther graduating with the class of 1949. I was born and reared in the community surrounding the former North Highland High School along with several of my siblings. I am writing this letter in response to the North Highland Memorial Hall Committee's effort to attain a grant seeking financial assistance in building a new community center.

First of all, we are very thankful to this committee for having such a very fine dream of building this much needed facility in our community. When asked to write this letter I wanted to make sure that it was given my best effort so that I could adequately convey the personal and emotional sentiment that North Highland has had on me, as well as others, that grew up in this community.

The legacy and pride that walked its hallowed halls have impacted our alumni in such a way that many graduates that moved north to pursue greater opportunities have chosen to call Prattville "home" upon retirement. Many of my classmates, representing various walks of life, got their start in our humble North Highland environment. For this we are proud!

What a great asset this building will provide to this community, to have a place that represents the rich heritage and pride of an era gone by! What a great place to house the memories and class photos of a generation of a simpler, and somewhat happier time! I'm so excited about the opportunity to preserve a bit of history, so that my children and grandchildren alike will also appreciate its greatness. This building will serve as an excellent bridge from a simpler past to a modern future.

Finally, it is my prayer that the North Highland Memorial Hall Committee receives this grant in efforts to erect this much needed and positive impact to this area.

Sincerely,



Mamie R. Jones-Muse

MM/pt

EXBIBIT

Memorial Roll Call

(P) Pledge
(I) In Memory of

Legacy Society \$10,000 - \$20,999	Scholars Society \$5,000 - \$9,999	Classic Society \$1,000 - \$4,999	Honor Society \$500 - \$999	Memorial Society \$300 - \$499	North Highland Society \$100 - \$299
City of Prattville Arthur & Vonelle Burt John & Marian Dozier	Bennie Hadcott Audrey Smith Hodsden Thomas & Sylvia Brantley WAL *MART	Fannie & Isaac Reese Sharing & Caring Society Ezekiel Russell Mack Douglas International Paper Talle & Ellis Bishop Henry Robinson Theodis & Alice Riley Principal W. J. Glaze and Mrs. Grace Glaze Willie & Magnolia Watts Max Federal Credit Union Richard Roberts Ron McCarden & Family	Mayor and Mrs. Jim Byard, Jr. South Trust Bank Mamie Jones Muse Whitney National Bank Marlan Dozier Dorothy Harris Loretta Howard Joseph Huffman Leanna Daniels Spencer Huffman Queenie Ezelle Danielle Hadcott Eloise Bozeman Turner Bobby & Linda Zeigler Connell & Wilma Rutley	Gillespie Tire Service Arnold Yabber Jimmy Deamus Jimmy & Doris Gardner Karo Morris Mildred Rawlinson Com. Carl Johnson Stoudemire Construct. Co. Daisy P. Dozier(I) Eller Savage Carole Wright Bettye Huffman Carson Ward Chapel AMB Chur. Edward Vinzant Rev. George Cyrus Louise Huffman Davis(I) Barbara Cyrus John Marvin Mr. & Mrs. Billy Miles Dora Dozier Holland John & Rorie Jones Doris Robinson Willie Bates & Family Father, Son & Holy Ghost Church Christopher Copeland Bessie Marshall Jimmy & Cassandra Morris	Annie Smith Willie & Barbara Flakes Councilman Willie Wood Celest Dozier Robinson Hercules Cowling Peace Baptist Church Effie Moore Alice Huffman Attorney Stephen F. Black Attorney Joseph Sarto Oscar & Lora Dozier St. Paul AMB Church Snow Hill, AL. Class of 1969 LA Party Store First Baptist Church Emma Davis LeByron Cain(I) Von Wilbert Burt Edward & Marie Jackson Rev. Robert Robinson James Riley Holiday Inn/Flampton Inn Autauga County Alabama Democratic Conference (ADC) William Moncrief Claude Bozeman AMSOUTH Bank Friendship Baptist Church New Jericho Baptist Chur. Aminias Perry III Frank Dozier Pastor & Mrs. Bruce Nix Autauga County Miss Choir Robert Taylor Robert Myers
Anonymous donor Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Miller					
North Highland Society (continued)					
Tom & Rubye Kennedy Jessie & Annette Myers Napoleon & Ann Goodson Old Kingston Baptist Church Montgomery Advertiser Sarah Stephens Water Oak Grove Baptist Church Shiloh Baptist Church Harold & Ruby Jones Eloise Shuford Otis & Diane Taylor Mary H. Smith Spring Hill AME Zion Church Herman Moncrief Sally Russell Walter & Ann Jemison Weather Seal, Inc. Bernice Golsen Wilson Sam & Percie Marvin	Edgar & Carolyn Jackson Dean & Paula Argo Lillie C. Bowling Dwight & Shirley Steele HOME Place Farms, Inc. Gary Wells(I) Nicholas Gowen Derrick Gowen Tammy Shepherd-Vinson James & Jean Smith Charlie & Lillie Woods Vocenia Stoudemire Edward & Marie Jackson	Willie Rudolph Gowen *Given in gratitude for: *T. C. Lights(I) *Annie Stoudemire(I) *Julia Nell Thomas(I) *Fannie M. DeJarnett(I) *Bertram(I) & Mildred King *By Ron & Judy Fleming James Nixon Brown & Doris Thomas Principal Charles Everett(I) and Mrs. Minnie Everett(I) Malcolm & Nelda Cain Howard & Mary Rogers Sammie L. McGore Marvin Boyd The Hadnot Family Foundation	Freddie Douglas Leal & Lolita Smith Barbara Robinson Pilgrim Rest Baptist Chur. Ezra Crockett Mattie Dozier Johnson Prof. Gerry Dozier John Huffman Phillip M. Steele(I) Nathaniel & Louella Douglas		
Contractors volunteering their support:					
Alvin Thomas Construction Co. Douglas Construction Co. W. L. Bush Architect & Assoc. Robert Smith & Assoc. Chambliss Engineering Attorney Joseph Sarto Barth Lumber Company	Stoudemire Construction Co. Morris Reber Co. Reuben Construction Co. Davis Sod and Grassing Co. Southern Survey & Design C&W Heating & Cooling Gentry Ready Mix				

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: APR 08 2001

NORTH HIGHLAND MEMORIAL HALL INC
P.O. BOX 680502
PRATTVILLE, AL 36068-0502

Employer Identification Number:
63-1190564
DLM:
401094009
Contact Person:
DEBORAH C MOMON-TOWNSEND ID# 75070
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
September 30
Foundation Status Classification:
509(a) (1)
Advance Ruling Period Begins:
May 30, 2000
Advance Ruling Period Ends:
September 30, 2005
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information you supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c) (3).

Because you are a newly created organization, we are not now making a final determination of your foundation status under section 509(a) of the Code. However, we have determined that you can reasonably expect to be a publicly supported organization described in sections 509(a) (1) and 170(b) (1) (A) (vi).

Accordingly, during an advance ruling period you will be treated as a publicly supported organization, and not as a private foundation. This advance ruling period begins and ends on the dates shown above.

Within 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period, you must send us the information needed to determine whether you have met the requirements of the applicable support test during the advance ruling period. If you establish that you have been a publicly supported organization, we will classify you as a section 509(a) (1) or 509(a) (2) organization as long as you continue to meet the requirements of the applicable support test. If you do not meet the public support requirements during the advance ruling period, we will classify you as a private foundation for future periods. Also, if we classify you as a private foundation, we will treat you as a private foundation from your beginning date for purposes of section 507(d) and 4940.

EXHIBIT

MEMORIAL HALL ROLL CALL CLASSIFICATIONS

HERITAGE SOCIETY: Honors organizations and individuals who establish planned gifts such as charitable gifts annuities or who include bequests for support for the continuation of activities or specific community programs in their estates. These contributors ensure that North Highland Memorial Hall traditions of excellence will be perpetuated. The purpose of this distinguished society is to honor those have made the ultimate commitment to the Memorial Hall.

LEGACY SOCIETY: Recognizes and honors those individuals and organizations that have given more than \$20,000 during the course of their lifetimes. These donors have made a substantial commitment to the North Highland Memorial Hall that will be felt for generations. Their vision truly is inspired and provides an example of the generosity of the human spirit that is worthy of imitation.

SCHOLAR'S SOCIETY: Acknowledges the support of individuals and organizations that have contributed \$5,000, which enhances the foundation of the North Highland Memorial Hall. Having profound knowledge of successful patterns of experiences and as a requisite, the infrastructures to support those patterns, the Scholar's Society seeks to harmoniously blend both resulting in the optimization of scarce resources while developing highly productive lives.

CLASSIC SOCIETY: Honors individuals and corporations that made contributions of \$1,000 - \$4,999 during the previous calendar year. This distinctive society pays tribute to those who, through their financial leadership, enable the North Highland Memorial Hall to meet the ever changing social needs of the community, enhance the educational process through tutorial programs and other activities, facilitate character building and improve the quality of life of people within our city through activities provided.

HONOR SOCIETY: Honors individuals and corporations that contributed \$500 - \$999 during the previous calendar year. This society represents a prestigious group of donors who influence the development of the North Highland Memorial Hall and its programs. The leadership of this society is essential to the future of the North Highland Memorial Hall and its support of the community.

MEMORIAL HALL SOCIETY: Honors individuals and corporations that contributed \$300 - \$499 during the previous calendar year. This society whose membership will continue to grow and gird the North Highland Memorial Hall, recognizes those who have made substantial financial commitment.

NORTH HIGHLAND SOCIETY: Honors individuals and corporations that contributed \$100 - \$299 during the previous calendar year. Members of the North Highland Society are investing in the future of the North Highland Memorial Hall by providing support for its activities and programs.

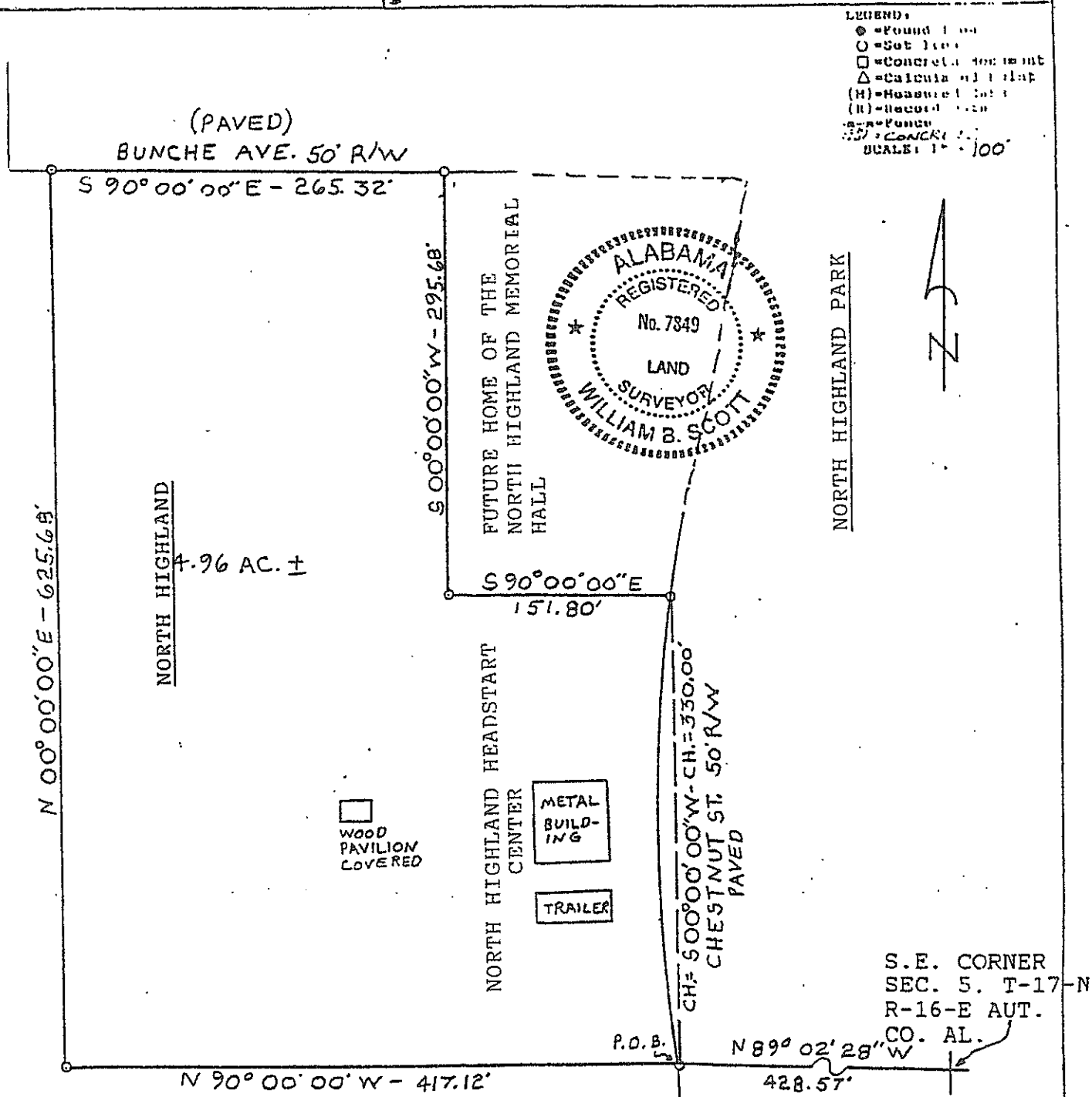
phone directory were purchased. They were called "The Foundation Center Directory." This directory contained the 10,000 largest U.S. foundations. It presented key facts on major funders including their fields of interest, contact information, financial, names of decision-makers, and over 80,000 sample grants with convenient indexes to help you quickly locate the best leads. There was also "The Foundation Directory Part 2. It contained the next 10,000 largest U.S. Foundations with key facts on America's most generous mid-size funders with 50,000 sample grants. So it was purchased as well. WOW! Twenty thousand funders! Armed with a fairly sufficient knowledge of proposal writing to get grants and 130,000 sample grants, this was going to be a piece of cake. We will have the money needed in short order. Hold on. As the saying goes "don't count your chicken before the eggs hatch." Quite true. Not a single proposal was awarded from these sources. All of these sources had canned negative responses.

Paraphrasing what most of them stated if they responded at all "We had funds to support 24 organizations. You were the 25th. However, your proposal was well prepared. We wish you success in your endeavor." Briefly stated in two words, get lost! We would have been better off saving the money wasted on the aforementioned. Approximately 90% of the funds granted by these foundations/companies goes to preselected groups. The other 10% goes to organizations who got their proposals in just hours or days before we did. Even a \$500 award could not be successfully received from organizations such as Radio Shack or The Brotherhood organization. Another obstacle we faced was that most grantors will not fund building project and for some reason they seldom allow the state of Alabama to compete for any kind of funding. This is baffling. But we persevered by selling raffle tickets, Boston Butts, yard sales, fish fries, soliciting donations from the public and by asking each committee member to donate a sum of money monthly.

Our fund-raising effort continued downhill. The last quarter of 2001 was not kind to us. We received only one pledge and that was not a good omen. Some stated that they would definitely donate but did not. Others said that they were waiting for a certain person to donate before they make a contribution. We admonished them that a wonderful opportunity awaited us when we have reached our goal. Therefore, none us should play the waiting game with this important building project.

Although the matter of the location of the Memorial Hall was tabled, a final decision had not been made. There was a vacant lot on a hill just North of North Highland Headstart Center that was an ideal location for the new building (see page 18). It met the definition of North Highland in our school song: "You stand upon a hill sending out a beacon light..." John and Marian Dozier set out to purchase this one-acre lot. The property of Howard and Zora Spencer was now inherited by two sisters, Althea Spencer Wall and Thelma Spencer. Negotiation was in full swing to purchase the property. By February 8, 2002, after a several months of negotiating with Althea on the purchase price and promising that the new building would always be her home, carrying her home address of 779, she finally agreed to sell the property for \$15,000 plus the payment of other legal

Continued on page 19



LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

COMMENCING AT THE S.E. CORNER OF SECTION 5 T-17-N, R-16-E AUTAUGA CO. AL. THENCE N 89° 02' 28" W 428.57' TO A SET IRON PIN ON THE WEST R.O.W. OF CHESTNUT ST. AND THE P.O.B.. THENCE N 90° 00' 00" W 417.12' TO A SET IRON PIN. THENCE N 00° 00' 00" E 625.68' TO A SET IRON PIN ON THE SOUTH R.O.W. OF BUNCHE AVE.. THENCE S 90° 00' 00" E 265.32' TO A SET IRON PIN. THENCE LEAVING SAID R.O.W. S 00° 00' 00" W 295.68' TO A SET IRON PIN. THENCE S 90° 00' 00" E 151.80' TO A SET IRON PIN ON THE WEST R.O.W. OF CHESTNUT ST.. THENCE CH. BEARING S 00° 00' 00" W 330.00' TO P.O.B. LYING IN THE S.E. 1/4 OF S.E. 1/4 SECTION 5 T-17-N, R-16-E AUTAUGA CO. AL. AND CONTAINING 4.96 ACRES MORE OR LESS.

costs. This was a major purchase for the Doziers and amounted to making sacrifices for the good of the Prattville community as others had been encouraged to do. They were following in the foot steps of their grand parents, the Venices, mentioned earlier on page 2. Attorney Joseph Sato, a retired Air Force Colonel, prepared the necessary documents. The property was purchased with several legal encumbrances noted. However, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity that required acceptance. With the assistance of Barbara Robinson, Connie Scott of the Tax Revenue Office of Prattville and Attorney Sato, all questionable items were cleared. Fortunately, Barbara, our financial secretary, worked in the Tax Revenue and dealt with real estate property. Consequently she was there to lead us through the troublesome areas. The one-acre lot was later granted to North Highland to become a part of the original 4.96-acre lot. This was truly a blessing and a big "thank you" went to the Howard and Zora Spencer family. Mr. Douglas and John Dozier finished demolishing what was left of the house on the property as a preliminary step toward construction (see page 5).

Meanwhile we had failed miserably in getting 150 alumni to donate \$300 by Jan. 1, 2002. As a part of our newsletters we included a list of all who had contributed on the Memorial Hall Roll Call list to allow the public to judge our success and encourage contributions. In addition, we attached pledge forms. At this point, only 36 people had responded to our request. Instead of raising \$45,000 by January 31, 2002 we had only raised approximately \$11,000. Many were watching from the sidelines, waiting and procrastinating. The time was now that we worked together. And to think, you could not ask for a better location for the facility. It looks as if this opportunity would be squandered. However, failure was not an option. By May 6, 2002 we had begun mailing the newsletter to 380 people. Then in August of the same year it increased to 453 then to 470 months later. It was imperative that the alumni, friends and the Prattville community be kept abreast of our progress. This project must be kept alive! God was always in our plans. Barbara chose words from the book of Psalms to remind us who was really in charge. She selected "Psalm 127:1: Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." This was our chant at the close of every meeting.

In April 2003, we had received \$21,149.48 for the building project. Getting financial support from the government, foundations and companies was difficult. As stated earlier, approximately 90% of the money went to pre-selected groups of which we were not included. We continued to scramble for the remaining 10%, which seemingly was always exhausted. We contacted celebrities like Tiger Woods and the compassionate one, Oprah Winfrey. Turns out, we were not in their pre-selected group either. Oprah never responded but we just knew she would hear our plea. So we thought her office made a mistake by not getting the proposal to her. A second proposal was sent to her. We're still waiting. Shaquille O'Neal apparently blew us off.

We selected W. L. Bush Architect and Associates to develop the plan and specifications based on the preliminary set of plans drafted by Mr. Owen McAllister of Illinois (See pages 21 & 22). Mr. Bush prepared the plans and specifications in good order. On May 3, 2003, the plans and

specifications were proudly presented to the alumni and to the general public. The building was impressive to say the least. To think, after six years of planning and discussing the project, construction was about to begin within weeks. A cost breakdown of Phase I, Steps to the dried-in stage, was provided and required \$66,144 for the completion of this phase. Simultaneously, we had engaged the services of Southern Survey and Design to survey the lot and draft the site plan. We were frantically trying to get both the drawings and the site plan to the city by November 2003 to maintain a schedule. The following contractors volunteered their support:

Alvin Thomas Construction, Inc.
Douglas Construction Co.
W. L. Bush Architect & Associates
Roosevelt Horton & Associates

Stoudemire Construction Co.
Morris Rebars Co.
Ruben Construction Co.
Davis Sod and Grassing Co.

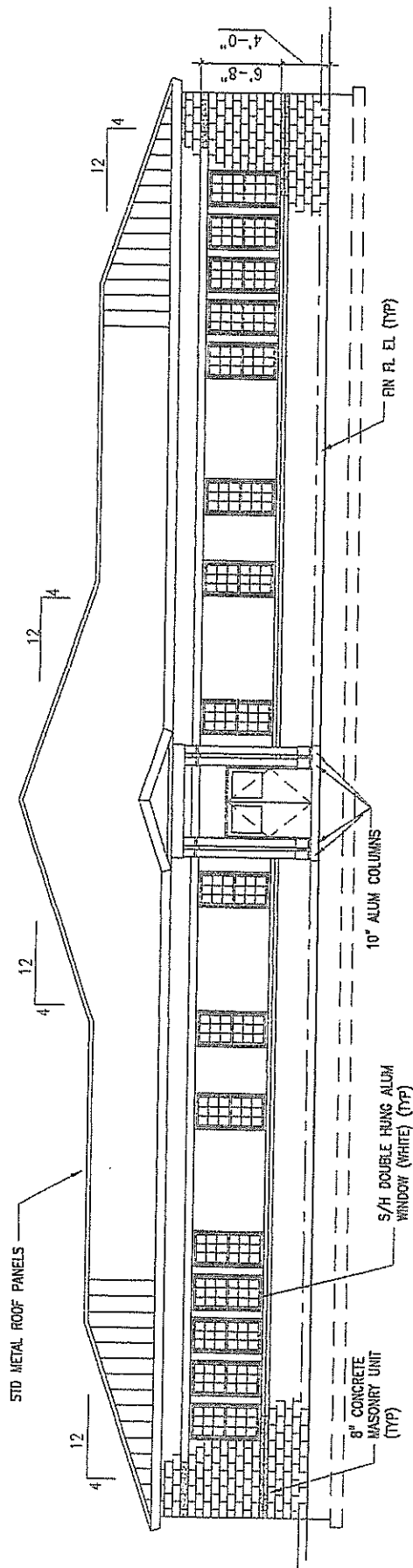
Additional money was needed to pour the footings and foundation. It was estimated that 70 cubic yards of concrete would be required at \$ 49 per cubic yard. A "Get in on the foundation" program was launched. It proved successful. We surpassed our goal of \$4,345.56. Total receipts amounted to \$ 4,717 (see page 23).

Finally we began to inch forward. During the last two weeks of July 2003, we received \$5,000. Included in this figure was \$1,000 from Walmart and \$1,650 from the luncheon on July 25th sponsored by the Hadnott Family Foundation of Teaneck, New Jersey. The total amount in the building fund account had risen to \$30,012. Indeed, this was a good month for our fund-raising effort. We thanked those who contributed and hoped that those standing on the sidelines would join in with their donations so that we could get the walls up and the roof on. We knew at this point we could not count on financial assistance from the big companies, foundations and corporations. However, in response to a proposal sent to the City of Prattville, Mayor Byard stated that he would include North Highland Memorial Hall in his 2004 budget.

We continued to beam with gladness about our new building even though there was a shortage of funds. The anticipation of this beautiful building kept our spirits high. This fantastic 8,650 square foot structure was an outstanding facility (see pages 21 and 22). The plans called for a 40 x 25 foot room with a movable partition to provide for two meeting areas if needed, a 30 x 25 foot room with a movable partition serving the same purpose, a 10 x 25 foot office and a seating capacity in the auditorium/assembly room of 400 people. It was the perfect size and capacity.

Now with approximately \$33,000 raised and the plans and specifications in hand, we began to look ahead for the completion of Phase 1 of the project, the "dried-in stage." This stage consists of having the floors, walls, roof, windows and exterior doors in place, which was estimated to cost \$66,144. We depended heavily upon volunteer labor and simply could not afford to pay the going rate except for those items crucial for the project. Therefore, in some instances, we were able to

Continued on page 24

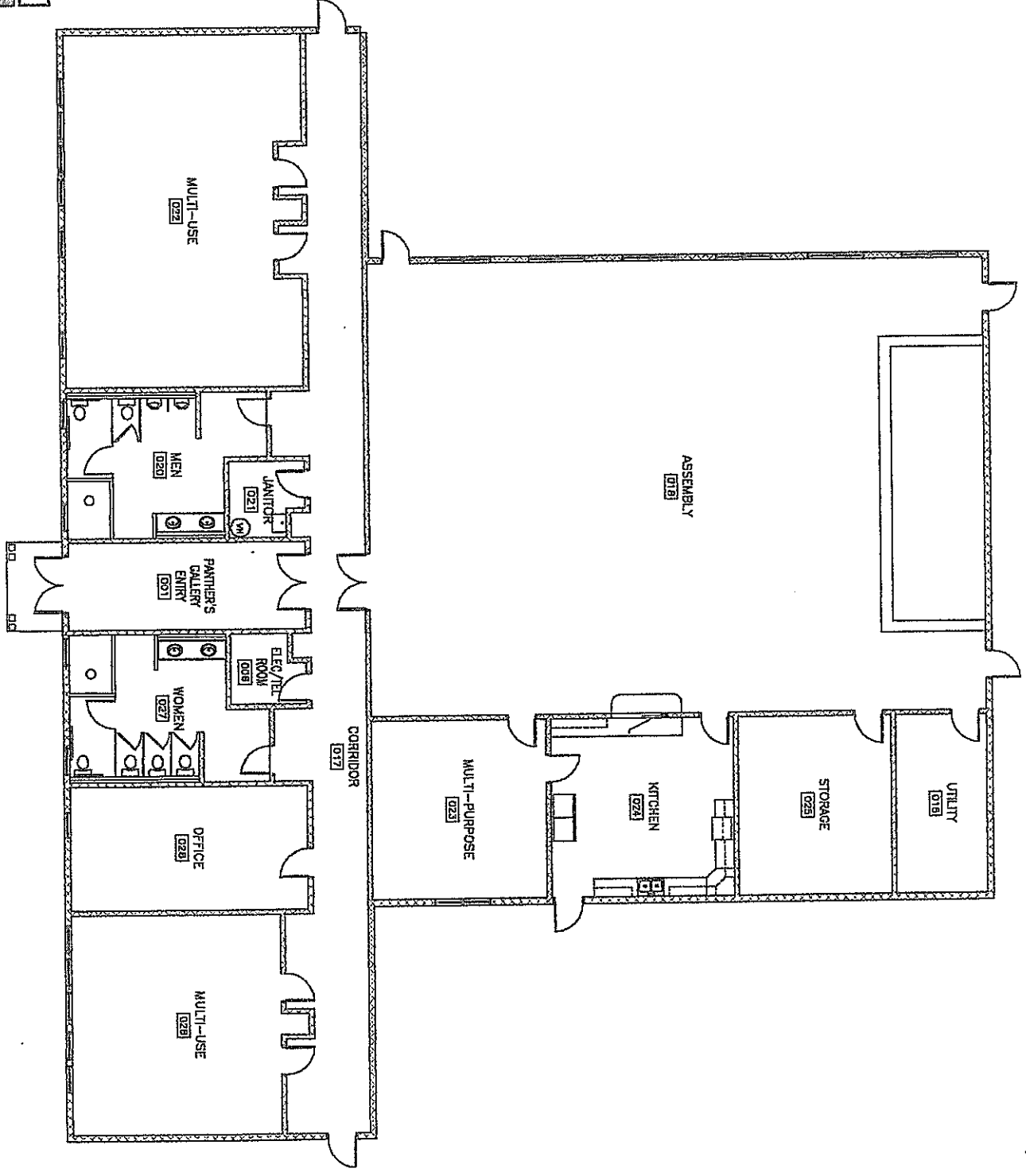


FRONT ELEVATION

WLB
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& ASSOCIATES
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FLOOR PLAN



The slab for the foundation of the North Highland Memorial Community Center required 70 cubic yards of concrete. The cost per cubic yard of the concrete was \$49. Construction began on December 29, 2004. The persons below donated the funds to build the foundation:

An Everlasting Tribute To North Highland

<i>Audrey Smith Hodsden</i>	<i>Charlie & Lillie Wood</i>	<i>Dwight & Shirley Steele</i>
<i>Dorothy Harris</i>	<i>Sylvia Duncan Brantley</i>	<i>Thomas Brantley</i>
<i>Arthur & Voncile Burt</i>	<i>Willia Rudolph Gowen</i>	<i>The Moncrief Family</i>
<i>Coach & Mrs. Charles A. Cooper, Sr.</i>	<i>Gertrude Grant</i>	<i>James Nixon</i>
<i>Marian Dozier</i>	<i>John Dozier</i>	<i>Joseph Johns & Family</i>
<i>Quennie Ezelle</i>	<i>Willie James Ezelle, Jr.</i>	<i>DeAnton DeRamus</i>
<i>Doris Faulkner Thomas & Brown Thomas</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Thomas</i>	<i>George Venice(I)</i>
<i>Ellen Venice(I)</i>	<i>Latrica Thomas Gardner</i>	<i>Theodis Riley</i>
<i>James Rogers</i>	<i>Ron McCarden & Family</i>	<i>Alice Riley</i>
<i>Historical People's Museum</i>	<i>Richard Roberts</i>	<i>Willie Hoss(I)</i>
<i>Mr. & Mrs. Paul Wells(I)</i>	<i>Paul Daniels</i>	<i>Leanna W. Daniels</i>
<i>Dianne Taylor</i>	<i>Christine Wells</i>	<i>John Huffman</i>
<i>Laura Key Pennington</i>	<i>Vencent Key(I)</i>	<i>Samuel Key(I)</i>
<i>Ashley Nixon</i>	<i>Lena Howard</i>	<i>Willie L. Watts</i>
<i>Connell & Wilma Rutley</i>	<i>Daisy P. Dozier(I)</i>	<i>Jimmy DeRamus</i>
<i>Principal & Mrs. C. P. Everett(I)</i>	<i>Mrs. Rosa L. Lott(I)</i>	<i>Oscar Dozier(I)</i>
<i>Mamie R. Jones-Muse</i>	<i>Isom & Clara Jones(I)</i>	<i>Rebecca Stringer Holbert</i>
<i>Sammie Lee Moore</i>	<i>Albert J. & Mary Faulkner</i>	<i>Harold & Ruby Jones</i>
<i>Ezra Crockett</i>	<i>Otis Crockett(I)</i>	<i>Coach Sandy Morris</i>
<i>The Rev. & Mrs. T. H. Huffman(I)</i>	<i>Mary E. Bracy(I)</i>	<i>Annie Bell Cheeks-Stoudemire(I)</i>
<i>The Rev. Eddie W. Coleman II & Mrs. Helen Livingston Coleman</i>		<i>Robert Duncan</i>
<i>The Benson Family of Easy Street</i>	<i>Ruby Kate Williams Brantley</i>	<i>Ruthie Marvin Warren(I)</i>
<i>The Rev. Willie & Ola Marvin(I)</i>	<i>Josette Wood Marvin(I)</i>	<i>Joseph Marvin(I)</i>
<i>Herman & Alma Bradford</i>	<i>Maxine & Lonnie Johnson(I)</i>	<i>Reuben & Ruby Davis</i>
<i>Leal & Lolita Smith</i>	<i>Bobby & Alandria Zeigler</i>	<i>Aaron & Eliza Burt(I)</i>
<i>Marvin Boyd</i>	<i>James Riley & Family</i>	<i>John Marvin & Family</i>
<i>Eloise Bozeman Turner</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Ernest & Ora Lee Smith (I)</i>	<i>Gloss Smith(I)</i>
<i>Betty Jean Smith Turner(I)</i>	<i>Joe Watkin Smith(I)</i>	<i>Charlie & Willie Mae Rudolph(I)</i>

In memory of the Douglasses & Lamars who emphasized "Get Your Education." Love them, Pansy.

(I) In Memory of

*** History records the names above as those knowing the importance of a foundation. ***

get a labor intense job done at a 75% savings or at no cost. For example, a \$25,000 job could be done at a cost of \$6,100, the cost of materials only. Of course, this meant accepting long delays in some cases as others worked us into their schedule. During periods when there were no funds to buy supplies or pay laborers, no work was done. The building project was idled. But our contractors were our greatest asset. This project could not be even attempted without them and their understanding of our situation. Mr. Douglas, serving in the capacity of general contractor/building superintendent, was our chief advisor. He was extremely knowledgeable of the construction of buildings. We counted on him and his expertise through every phase of the building project. He was always present to progressively guide each task through completion while circumventing known troublesome situations. Mr. Douglas would not accept payment for his work. He would only accept "gas money" as he used his tractor, truck and other equipment to work on this project.

Magic Johnson, the famous basketball player, comes to town! Mr. Gregory Calhoun, President and CEO of Calhoun Enterprises, sponsored a Financial Empowerment Seminar on March 11, 2004 in Montgomery featuring Magic Johnson and eight community leaders including Mayor Bobby Bright. Thomas Brantley and John Dozier were the only two committee members attending the seminar. Needless to say, Magic Johnson was on a rigid time schedule but did manage to share a few minutes in the advertisement of the Memorial Hall (see page 25) . Magic Johnson nor Mr. Calhoun made a donation to the Memorial Hall but their publicity supporting the building project gave us more recognition in the community.

The Prattville City Council passed its capital budget on April 6, 2004 that included \$15,000 for the Memorial Hall building project, which was to be disbursed in September 2004. We were very pleased to receive funding from the city. Members of the Memorial Hall committee were quick to thank the city at the following city council meeting on the 20th of April. The annual Pocket Change Drive that began a year earlier with the receipt of \$400 now had increased to approximately \$1,100.00 the following year. It became a popular event as a fund-raiser as we interacted with the community while collecting coins. With these two occurrences, we could sense a gradual change in our financial problems.

However, the shortage of funds continued to plague the work on the facility. It was in effect a stop and go building project. Work was limited to the availability of funds. We recognized this fact and dealt with it as best we could. But it was frustrating watching and waiting for donations or grants to be received to continue the work. Money was not our only problem. By July 2004, the committee had struggled for at least eight months to get the required survey work completed for the building site by Southern Survey and Design of Montgomery. This failure caused the city to prohibit us from doing any work whatsoever on the project. This was in actuality was a "stop work order." Due to the size of building, a general survey that one gets for the construction of a house was not acceptable. This survey was more detailed and involved the application of engineering standards in the site plan. It was a dreadful experience making weekly status checks

Continued on page 26

To: North Highlanders and Friends:

Hear ye, hear ye! Magic Johnson comes to town! Mr. Gregory B. Calhoun, President and CEO of Calhoun Enterprises, sponsored a Financial Empowerment Seminar on the 11th of March in Montgomery featuring Magic Johnson and eight community leaders including Mayor Bobby Bright of Montgomery. Mr. Calhoun went from a bag boy in a supermarket to Store Owner in 1984. He now owns four supermarkets with over 400 employees working in Alabama. He represents the new minority business profession.

Mr. Calhoun, speaking prior to Magic Johnson's presentation, set the stage for Magic Johnson. His motivational talk dealt with "Vision: Thinking Outside the Box." Too often we don't challenge ourselves to achieve higher goals, etc. Thus we confine ourselves to a comfortable box within to work. Following Mr. Calhoun, Magic Johnson supported this vision. He attributed his success to "thinking outside the box." He did not let the past determine his future. Magic Johnson challenged financial institutions and the business world that stood between him and success. He said that at times it seems as though you have to "take" what you rightfully deserve or what you may be entitled. Two cautions he left with us: (1) when you have become successful and making a profit, put the profit back into the business that it may continue to grow and (2) don't become extravagant and begin to buy expensive clothes and luxury automobiles. He emphasized researching a venture or business extensively before making a final decision.



The photo above was taken at the Financial Empowerment Seminar. Holding the drawing of the North Highland Memorial Hall are John Dozier, Project Director, Magic Johnson, featured speaker, and Mr. Gregory Calhoun of Calhoun Enterprises. The photo was taken by Thomas Brantley (Class of 66).

with the surveyor when little or no work had been done. We were given many excuses each time and a promise to complete the site plan. This surveyor had more excuses than Beetle Bailey in the comic strip. We finally terminated his services, received a \$1,000 donation from him, which was subtracted from the balance due, paid him the remainder and said "adios amigo." At the end of this frustrating period, a second surveyor, Chambliss Engineering, rescued us. The company knew of our problem but would not offer its services unless asked. When asked, the company expeditiously completed the final task of the survey job, which was the preparation of the site plan. "How much were we charged for preparing the site plan" you may ask? No charge. Chambliss engineering volunteered its services. Mr. Clyde Chambliss was involved in many such project in the City of Prattville. He stated that our effort was of a noble cause and that the building was needed in the city. The cost of the services performed was approximately \$3,400 not to mention time wasted waiting for the first surveyor to complete his work. Now how do you like "them apples?" We really thank Mr. Chambliss and may God continue to smile upon his company.

The survey is now complete. Our next action was to secure the building permit. Alvin Thomas, Lorenzo Douglas, Clark Stoudemire and John Dozier met with Mr. Joel Duke of the City Planning Department and Fire Marshal, Terry Brown, on July 20, 2004, weeks before the proposed start date, to secure the permit. Much to our surprise and dismay, we were informed by the fire marshal that because of the size of the building a dual fire sprinkler system would be required. One section of the system would direct water to the wood structural members of the ceiling in the event of a fire; the other section would direct water to the floor area. By the fire code, a sprinkler system is required when more than 300 people occupy such a structure. The planned Memorial Hall greatly exceeded this number. Since adding the sprinkler system could not be done with volunteer labor, hiring a company to install the system in the 8,650 square foot building would increase the cost by an estimated cost of \$39,000, which we did not have. Instead of building the roof frame of wood trusses, we could have used metal trusses as preferred by the fire code. This would reduce the cost of the system approximately \$20,000. But now we would have to purchase the metal trusses to support the area of 8,650 square feet then hire a company to install them. The metal trusses plus labor for the metal workers would have exceeded the \$39,000 mentioned earlier added to an estimated cost of \$450,000. This was devastating and unbelievable. Simply heart breaking! The remedy? Based on the fire code, the revised building plan could not have a capacity greater than 300. We hurriedly shifted gears and worked with the architect, Mr. Bush, to reduce the size of the structure by one-third to 5,625 square feet, which did not require a sprinkler system. The cost of the facility as revised was estimated to cost \$301,500. This permitted us to use volunteer labor and local laborers hired by the building superintendent and proceed with the building project. This reduction required a major change to the depth of the building and a brutal change to the assembly/auditorium, which went from a seating capacity to a capacity of 400 to 200. However, we would still have a beautiful facility and would appreciate it. But the reduction was painful (see pages 27 & 28).

Continued on page 29

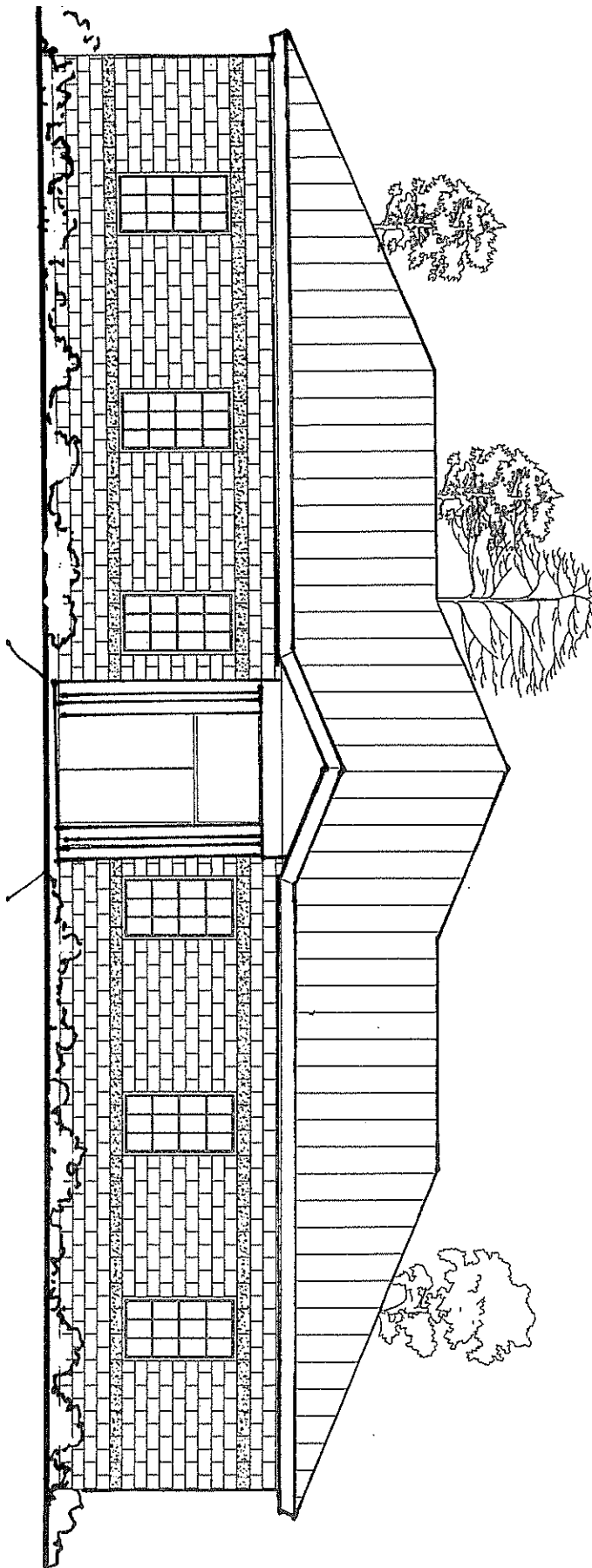
**V.L.BUSH
ARCHITECT
ASSOCIATES**

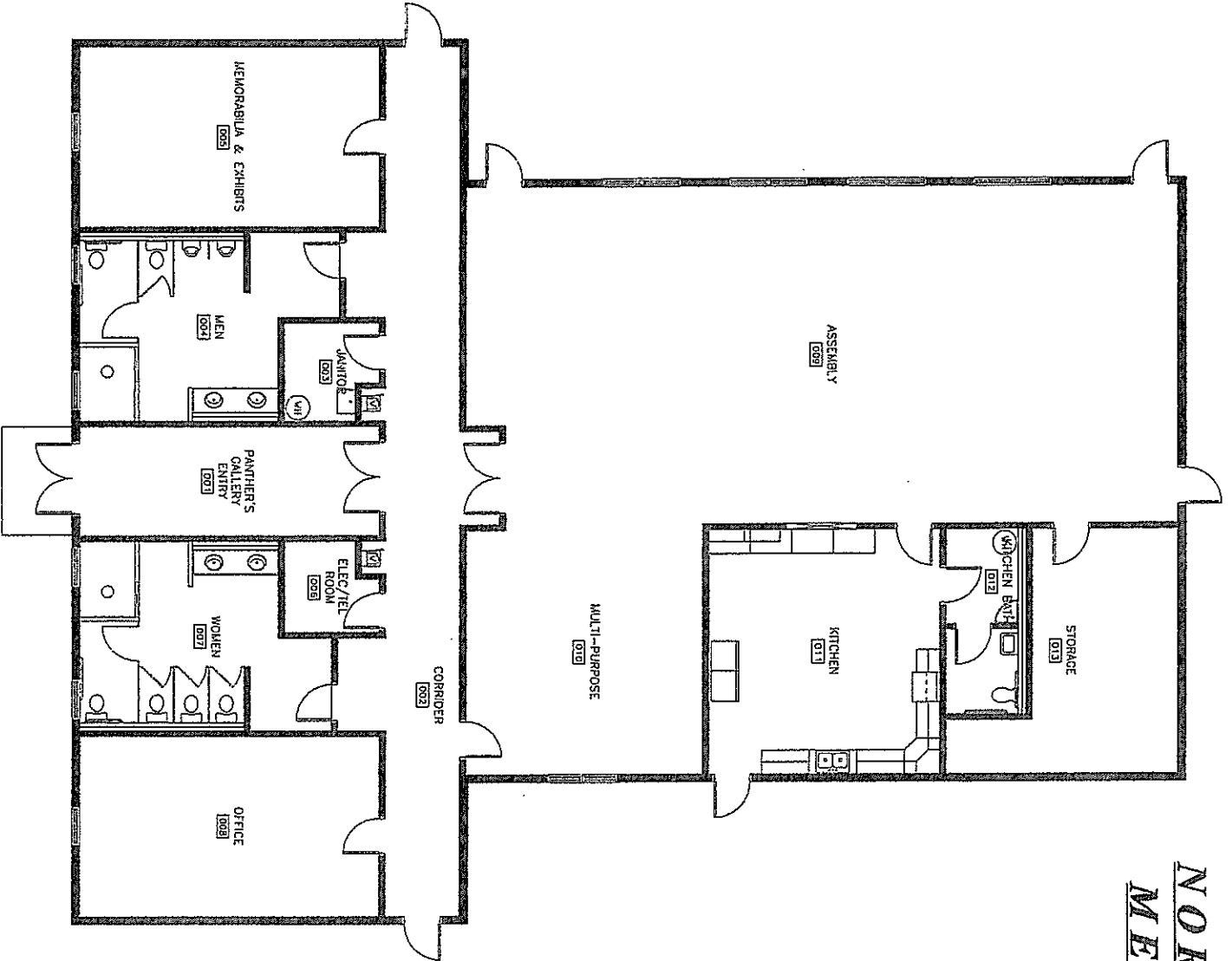
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**NORTH HIGHLAND
MEMORIAL HALL**





NORTH HIGHLAND
MEMORIAL HALL

The question arose, how are we going to keep the momentum going and stay on track following this setback? Again we needed the services of Chambliss Engineering to re-draw the site plan at an approximate cost of \$3,400 to meet the requirement of the city. Mr. Chambliss did so in record time, for which we were grateful. Really, we asked too much of him and became an irritant because he was in business to make a profit. Instead we had become a drain on his resources. But nevertheless he finished the work. Shortly thereafter, we were back on schedule.

After this episode, we turned to Alvin Thomas, Lorenzo Douglas, Clark Stoudemire and Robert Smith. These contractors formed the backbone of our building project. Mr. Thomas brought his heavy equipment to the job site and began clearing the ground of trees. He was a master at work handling large trees as if they were wooden fence posts, flipping them over and stripping all limbs from them. Then to the next tree. Watching him work was simply amazing. After clearing the building site of trees, weeks later he mounted his bulldozer and masterfully handled it as he cleared and excavated the land, enjoying every minute of it. The site was now ready for the next phase.

On September 10, 2004, Mayor Byard's office released the \$15,000 as planned earlier in April. This is really when new life was breathed into our project. This increased the amount in our building fund to \$49,847.82. Members of our committee started doubling and in some cases tripling their donations and effort. Reality had set in that the community center would really be built. This generated a high level of enthusiasm.

During the month of October 2004, we had reached the point where we had begun to plan for the ever elusive ground-breaking ceremony. Mr. Douglas had started on the layout of the foundation (see page 32). Since we were a member of the Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce, we notified this office. They were eager to set a date based on the availability of Mayor Byard and other concerned people. The long awaited ground-breaking ceremony took place on October 19, 2004 at 3:00 pm. The rain gave way to a highly spirited and well attended event. Approximately 40 people, which included Memorial Hall committee members, gathered on the site and expressed their approval of the project (pages 30 & 31).

Work on the project began on December 29, 2004. The layout of the foundation had been lined and staked. However, two months had passed and there had been few dry days since the start date to prepare the site for the footings and foundation. There was no other choice but to wait until the weather changed for work to be done properly. Since nearly all the work would be done by the contractors shown on page 20 and during their slack time from their regular jobs, progress was dramatically slowed. We were very fortunate to have this group of volunteers available to help us with this building project. Several contractors maximized their in-kind contributions by not charging the Memorial Hall for work that could cost as much as \$25,000. Mayor Byard and the City of Prattville were among those making sizable in-kind contributions as we dealt with a water drainage system that was a part of the construction project. Mayor Byard agreed to pay one-half

Continued on page 33

To: North Highlanders and Friends:

The long awaited ground-breaking ceremony took place on October 19 at 3:00 p.m.. The rain gave way to a highly spirited and well attended event. Approximately 40 people, which included Memorial Hall committee members, were present at the ceremony and expressed their approval of the project. To our surprise, we were told by the Prattville Area Chamber of Commerce who provided the shovels and invited city officials and other leaders of the community, that this was one of the largest number of people in attendance for such an event that they could recall. Excitement filled the air as the future plans for the facility were discussed.



Photo by Thomas Brantley

From left to right: W. L. Bush (Architect), Lorenzo Douglas (Contractor),
Mac Macready (Councilman), Jim Byard, Jr. (Mayor), Bill Gillespie (Councilman),
Clark Stoudemire (Contractor), John Dozier (Project Director),
Tom Miller (Councilman), Mary Adair (President)

"It must be borne in mind that the tragedy in life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in not having no goal to reach. It isn't a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it a calamity not to dream. It is not a disaster to be unable to capture your ideal, but it is a disaster to have no ideal to capture. It is not a disgrace not to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace to have no stars to reach. Not failure but low aim is sin."

Schoolmaster Benjamin E. Mays (Ebony 09/04)

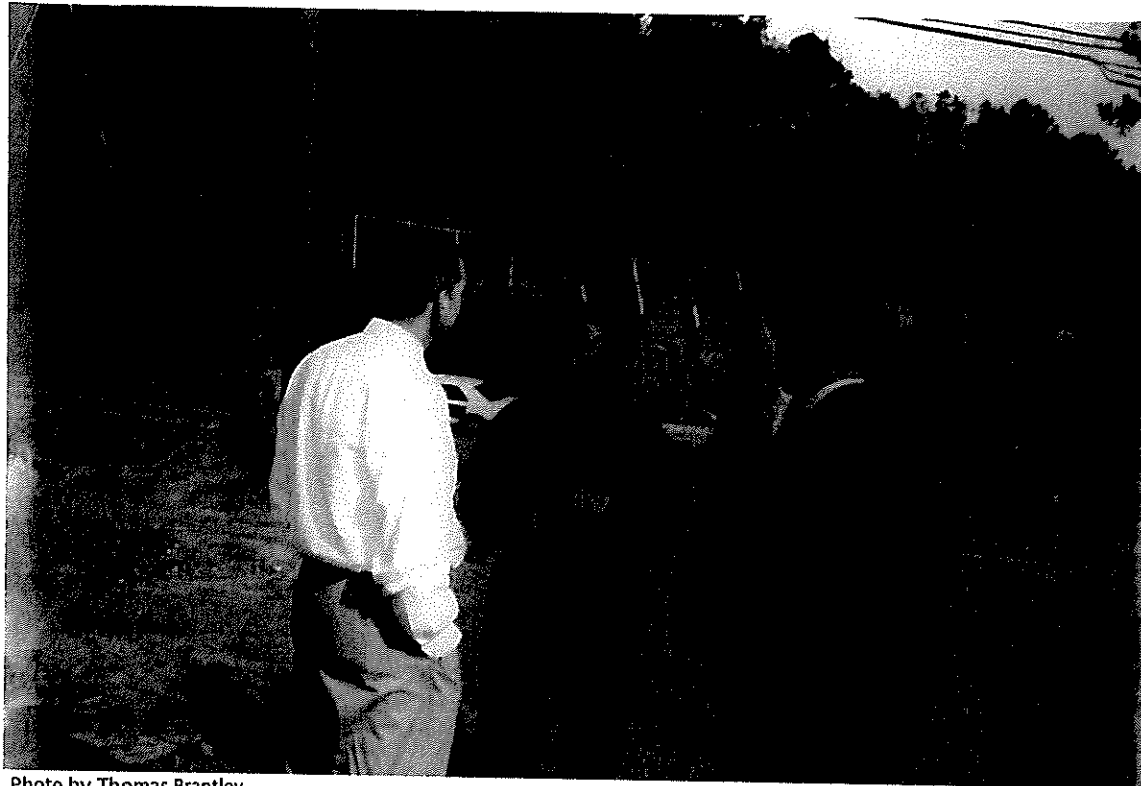
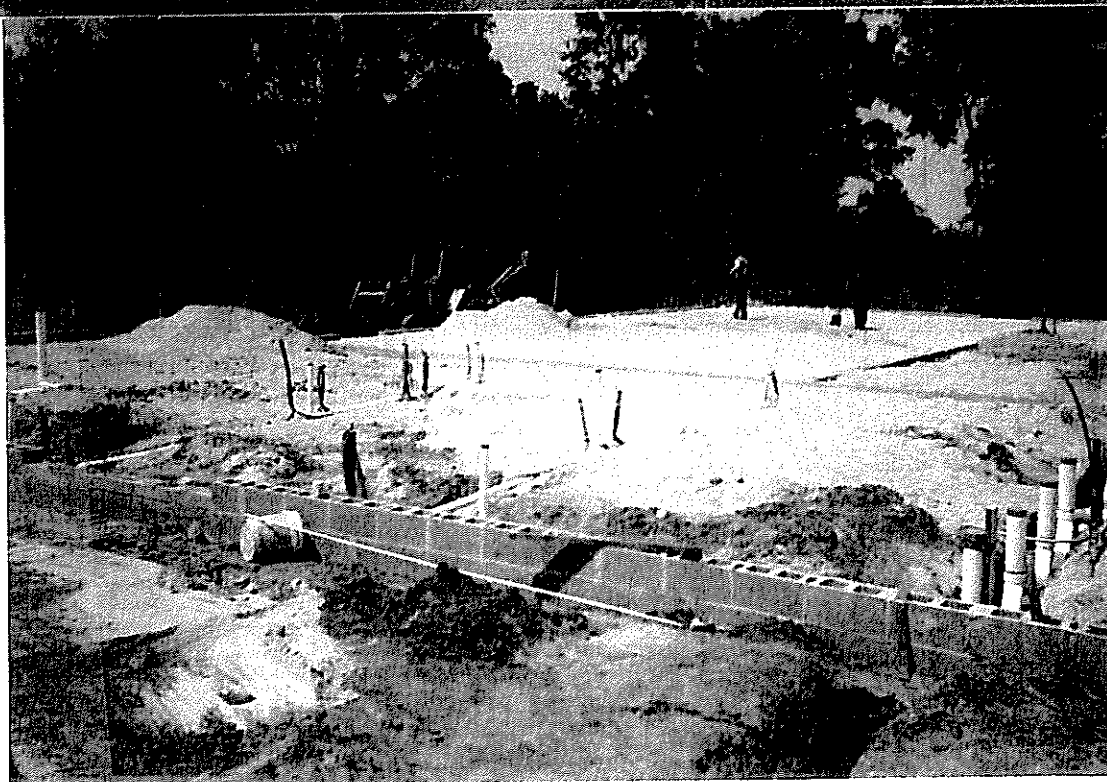


Photo by Thomas Brantley



Photo by Thomas Brantley

Ground-breaking Ceremony



Work in progress for the footings
and foundation of the North Highland
Memorial Hall.

of the \$6,600 required to purchase 42" concrete pipes which would carried water under the parking lot from the street to a ditch at the rear of the building site. The city would incur an additional cost of \$8,500 connecting existing pipes to those on the work site. The work began on this job after the weather changed for the better. Alvin Thomas brought his heavy equipment to the job site. He and his personnel laid approximately 150 feet of the concrete pipes into a seven foot deep ditch along the property line that parallels Wilberforce Avenue, which was once shared by playful school boys and snakes. Several weeks following the completion of this work, Sammie Moore coordinated with City of Prattville personnel and tons upon tons of fill dirt were delivered by trucks to fill the ditch and build up the parking lot area.

The pleasant weather also allowed Mr. Douglas to continue his work on the layout of the footings and foundation for the building. Construction was proceeding well. Mr. Douglas dug the trenches for the under ground plumbing and set the many PCV pipes, etc., in place under the direction of Clark Stoudemire, the plumber (see page 32).

We recognized the fact that the Memorial Hall could have been completed within six months (1) if the total amount of money needed was available to do the work and (2) if favorable weather prevailed during the performance of construction. But there was a shortage of funds and a wetter than normal season was experienced. There was another monster of an obstacle that the committee had to consider that may delay the completion of the project: the heating and air-conditioning system. A cost effective, energy efficient system was critical to the operation of the facility. The system must be designed to permit heating and cooling of different areas of the building as needed. Cooling and heating the entire area continuously was not acceptable. The cost of the system was priced at \$47,000. How could this system be procured? Getting a grant was not likely, especially within six months and was not considered an alternative. Every avenue we took to borrow the money ended in a roadblock. However, one company based in California offered a 60 month loan requiring the first two payment of \$1,236 and the last two payments of the same amount to be paid in advance. The terms were not affordable and the monthly payments were out of our reach. Out of desperation, the mortgage department of MAX Credit Union was contacted. The critical facts were given the credit union and their assistance was requested. The credit union allowed John and Marian Dozier, members of the committee, to increase their equity line of credit on their home by \$47,000 (equity loan closing cost was \$733) to purchase the system. A separate legal fixed rate agreement was then prepared whereby this money was loaned to the Memorial Hall with affordable monthly payments of \$551.78 for a ten year period with the understanding that the loan would be paid in full within five years if funds became available.

Now that we had developed a plan to borrow the money, what was our plan to pay the note? We sought twenty two volunteers via the newsletter and from our committee to donate \$25 monthly to make the loan payments. Those making this monthly contribution would be released from their obligation as funds were received which could be applied to the loan. This plan worked well and we were able to secure the heating and air-conditioning system. Consequently, one more monster

had been successfully challenged.

The building puzzle was beginning to fall into place. Construction was being performed at a slow but acceptable rate. Most of all, there was a significant change in our fortune. This change was precipitated by Senator "walking" Wendell Mitchell. He could not provide financial support when requested. But working through Councilman Willie Wood of the City of Prattville, we were led to President Carole Wright, a professional consultant and proposal writer. She had knowledge of a foundation that would possibly fund our proposals and would assist in their preparation. Within less than three months, we were granted \$10,000, the following year \$15,000 and the third year \$5,000. We will be forever grateful to Senator Mitchell and his supporting cast for giving us a shot in the arm when we were floundering aimlessly as we searched for financial assistance. During this same time period, Dr. and Mrs. Tom Miller (Dr. Miller was on the Prattville City Council) through a local granting agency awarded our organization \$10,000. In comes Walmart with a community grant of \$1,000. Contributions were steadily increasing from all areas. Lastly, we had begun to enjoy much success with fund-raising activities.

In January 2005, we had raised \$75,141.77 and it looked as we were really getting traction on the building project (see page 35, President Mary O. Adair's letter). However, we had a problem with name recognition. Since people not familiar with the organization's name of North Highland Memorial Hall and the attention of those who interacted with it at various functions was short, it was always a hassle getting others to know us and our mission. We found ourselves saying "no. We are not a church or a funeral home" or any of the many images brought to mind. On many occasions, people were reluctant to ask about our organization. Therefore, the committee voted unanimously on March 7, 2005 to change the name of our organization to North Highland Memorial Community Center. Since we were becoming known as a community center, which was our original intent, our name and function would be easily recognizable, resulting in a higher degree of visibility and increased financial support. Attorney J. Robert Faulk of Prattville, who provided legal/administrative support free of charge, processed the paperwork to make the name change. We were definitely on the move.

Just as we were completing the work on the foundation and footings in March of 2005 another monster appeared. The building superintendent, Lorenzo Douglas, underwent surgery. We thought we would suffer another big setback. It was anticipated that he would not return to the job site for six to eight weeks. However, within a month he was back on the job. He was unable to stand up for long periods of time supervising as he once did. Instead he carried a folding chair with him and supervised from a seated position. No one could ask for a more dedicated supervisor especially since payment was not accepted for his performance. But his concentration was on productivity and getting the building up. The personnel working for him were paid at a reduced rate since this construction was not their primary job. They worked on this community project during their slack time from other jobs. This naturally slowed the progress of the work and required committee members to double their effort in areas. But since we had a shortage of funds,

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ANNUAL REPORT JANUARY 31, 2005

We are pleased to present our annual report for The North Highland Memorial Hall (Hall). A lackluster year was anticipated because of the slowdown of the economy, which was affecting every vein of the society. However, this projection was in error due to the resiliency of the alumni of North Highland High School. Beginning in January 2004, alumni and friends pressed forward and began donating in an impressive fashion, contributing as little as \$20 to over \$1,000. Simultaneously, the Hall sponsored activities which added to the impetus burst of momentum. Other local organizations came to our aid such as the Autauga County Mass Choir, Sharing and Caring, Ten Gentleman and a local merchant, The Turtle Shell. In addition, Wal*Mart donated \$1,000 for the second year; W. L. Bush Architect & Associates revised the drawings of the Hall to reduce the building size to 5,625 sq. ft. (we could not afford the \$39,000 fire sprinkler system) as required by the city at no cost; Chambliss Engineering was desperately needed at a critical time, performed its service at no cost; and Southern Survey and Design reduced its cost by \$1,000 at our request. Alvin Thomas Construction Co., Douglas Construction Co., Reuben Construction Co., and Stoudemire Construction Co. cleared the construction site at no cost, a \$20,000 job.

The Hall reached inward to the Prattville community. Promoting unity within the community and adding a measure of strength, its committee members were participants of the United Way campaign, the Relay For Life, the Compassionate Friends, the annual Cityfest, the Prattville Tree Commission and of parades commemorating special events. A scholarship program was instituted which permitted all seniors regardless of the school attended to apply, as required by the IRS Code 501 (c)(3). Two \$500 scholarships were awarded to college bound high school seniors. The results proved worthy of its continuation with the possibility of expansion. In cooperation with the Prattville Public Library, a "Hooked On Phonics" program was instituted to raise the reading and comprehension level of elementary students. Lastly, all committee members were members of churches within the community, enhancing the Hall's effect.

The alumni and friends strongly continued to donate funds through the third quarter. During this quarter the City of Prattville awarded \$15,000, which lifted the Hall to greater heights in terms of funds and expectations of the future. In addition, Mayor Jim Byard, Jr. will include the Hall in his annual budget so as to provide continued support and will contract with the Hall to provide space for summer programs sponsored by the City of Prattville. He approved a work order to provide one-half of the \$6,600 required to purchase concrete pipes which will carry water from the street to the rear of the facility. The City also will incur a cost of approximately \$8,500 connecting pre-existing drainage pipes to the newly installed pipes. Mayor Byard is commended for the attention given the Hall.

The fourth quarter ushered in a high degree of excitement about the building project as the start date approached. Our goal was to start work shortly after October 19. However, due to the rainy weather coupled with the lack of slack time of the contractors volunteering their services, the project did not proceed as planned. As we look to the completion of the building, we must solidify our revenue base by giving much consideration to the sustainability of the operation once the facility is opened to the public. A model must be developed that can be replicated. If the model is administered in a timely and prudent manner, the sustainability plan will enable the project to continue, enhance its efforts and assume responsibility for the future years. Lastly, the amount raised to date is \$75,141.77; the quarterly newsletter is mailed to 550 residents. This was a magnificent year. We thank all for their contributions.



Mary O. Adair
President

this was better than no progress at all.

The pouring of concrete for the footing, foundation and the floor of the building was done in a timely fashion. Robert Smith & Associates, which included his wife, swung into action on this task. He was an action-packed concrete contractor. Those working with him had to keep up with him or leave work area. Additionally, he dictated how the tasks would be performed. If one was not comfortable with the manner in which he controlled the work, they could vacate the premises. Needless to say, Robert Smith did his work in record time. He did not believe in wasted effort and he did a super job.

With the floor complete, work began on the concrete block walls, windows and roof. Mr. Douglas supervised the building of the walls, installation of the windows and the roof. He advised the committee to secure lesser priced windows of a good quality and 25-year roof shingles from our former schoolmate, Charlie Griffin of Barth Lumber Company in Clanton, Alabama.

On September 25, 2005, we had reached the dried-in stage. Now work could be done on the outside as well on the inside of the building. When we met with C&W Heating & Air-conditioning Company months earlier, its supervisor had stated emphatically that it was imperative that his technicians get inside the building as soon as the roof had been completed (see page 37). The company immediately started the installation of the heating and air-conditioning system after the completion of the roof. Barth Lumber Company supplied the windows, roof shingles, and the required R-30 insulation at cost and allowed us to establish our own monthly payments; Southern Sash of Montgomery supplied all the doors except the front door, which was purchased from Independent Glass of Montgomery at a special cost.

As of October 2006, the building was approximately 90% complete; \$158,936.79 had been raised. Upon completion, the total cost was figured at \$242,579, which was 20% less than the estimated cost of \$301,500. The lower cost was attributed to several factors: Mr. Douglas, the building superintendent, donating his services, special rates or discounts offered by suppliers, laborers working at reduced rates or performing at no cost, contractors who did likewise and committee members who volunteered their time.

Work progressed at a very good pace and donations were flowing well during the last quarter of 2006. The increase in receipts continued into 2007. As a matter of fact, foundations, banks, friends, and former schoolmates jumped on board and donated superbly. Former schoolmates like Bennie Hadnott, Audrey Hodsden, Arthur & Voncile Burt and John and Marian Dozier stepped forward and contributed big bucks. This was not unusual for them. In addition, during the month of April 2007, Thomas and Sylvia Brantley, another couple on our committee was stepping up with big bucks, spearheaded the Annual Pocket Change Drive. Sylvia donned a prisoner uniform at the local jail as a part of the drive. A record amount of \$2,790.10 was raised which holds to this date. A profitable yard sale added several hundred dollars to the pot. These receipts made it

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possible for construction to accelerate from nearly a standstill to an acceptable rate. Excitement filled the air as we started drawing the construction to an end.

A few month earlier, February of 2007, we had begun planning for an opening date of July 1, 2007. However the following jobs had to be completed: (1) interiors doors and restroom partitions, (2) restroom counters and kitchen base cabinets, (3) vinyl tile flooring (4) and Phases 1 through 4 of the electrical wiring, all jobs totaling \$46,771. The interior doors, door hardware and restroom partitions were supplied by Southern Sash of Montgomery. We were unable to promptly pay Southern Sash several times because of the shortage of funds. But we kept the company apprised of our situation and it continued to extend credit upon request. Southern Sash provided excellent services.

Mr. Douglas, under the directions of the plumbing contractor, Stoudemire Construction Company, supervised the installment of plumbing fixtures, etc., and the partitions in the restrooms with the help of a laborer. Committee members voluntarily purchased the necessary commodes and other items needed for the restrooms including the tiled floors.

The restroom counters and kitchen cabinets were made and installed by T&T Cabinets. T&T is a cabinet maker in the neighborhood. A professional job was done on the restroom counters and kitchen cabinets. The vinyl flooring was purchased from Lowe's at a 10% discount as recommended by an alumnus, Willa Rudolph Gowen. We were very fortunate to get the vinyl flooring because it looked as though we were going to open the Center with a bare concrete floor. This was not desirable but we had no choice since there was no money for floor tile. Then on July 27, during Reunion 2007, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Miller nearly floored us at the luncheon by presenting us with a check in the amount of \$11,000. This was one-fourth of the \$46,771 written above. We were able to get the tile and apply funds toward the other jobs to be completed. There was no labor cost for laying tile because it was done by Willie Frank Bates, a retired contractor, and James Nixon, a retired mechanical supervisor.

Wiring of the building presented its challenges that delayed progress for a few months. The building supervisor having knowledge of electrical requirement, had done some preliminary work to facilitate the completion of the job in an effort to reduce its cost. It probably did but we did not have \$27,500 to make a one-time payment to the contractor. Therefore, the contractor provided a cost breakdown based upon four phases, requiring payment after each phase had been completed: Phase 1 - \$4,500, Phase 2 - \$4,500, Phase 3 - \$13,500 and Phase 4 - \$5,000. The difficulty arose getting the contractor back on the job after each phase when the money became available. This job was holding up the readiness of the community center, which was frustrating and created much tension. In order for us to progress past this point, it was necessary that a loan of \$4,000 be accepted from two members of the committee.

Sylvia Brantley and Marian Dozier teamed up to make the foyer an eye opening beauty. With their own funds, they purchased matching light fixtures to complement the chandeliers they had secured earlier for the auditorium, a large colorful picture, a large buffet, stands, a settee, ceramic floor tile, attractive baseboard, and other decorative items. All totaled in excess of \$4,000.

The last major hurdle to clear was the installation of the suspended ceiling. The advantages of acoustical tile in the ceiling far outweighed the application of drywall. Its beauty and absorption of sound were two major features when the drawings were planned. During that time no one on the committee was known to have experience hanging suspended ceilings. That is, of course, until Willie Frank Bates retired, returned to Prattville from Mt. Vernon, New York and became a committee member. He and James Nixon lead the team in installing the acoustical tile. The question may be asked "If money was so tight, how did the community center buy acoustical tile for the 5,625 square foot building in the first place?" Well, after randomly selecting an area or room that required the acoustical tile, each committee member donated money to purchase it. The plan worked well.

The final act for the committee members was to assemble, clean concrete block walls, paint the interior and tie up all loose ends of jobs completed. Everyone pitched in like beavers damming up a stream in anticipation of reaping a bounty of food for their ecosystem. The end was in sight and all of us could envision a significant reduction in the stress that we were experiencing. This was a time of rejoicing.

Now that the community center was basically operational, we concentrated our thoughts on equipment and furniture, etc. We were always proactive in determining our needs. There was always someone in the committee making observations of what may be needed and the source for the particular item(s). In this instance, Sammie Moore knew of a source for salvageable office furniture. His source donated a large secretarial desk, an executive desk, and more than enough office chairs; Ron and Judy Fleming donated \$4,000 to procure comfortable stack chairs for the assembly room/auditorium; the Rutley-Smith-Crockett-Dozier family donated a new refrigerator, range hood, and a stainless steel sink with fixtures; Arthur Burt and family donated a new range, a new dishwasher, a mop sink with fixtures, a new super size ice maker, a flag pole and flag, and an entrance way wrought iron rail system, New Orleans style; Mary Adair donated two lighted vanity cabinets; Edward and Sandra Harvey donated an upright piano which had been in the family for many years; Alabama Power Company furnished two 50 gallon Rheem water heaters and Mrs. Lenore Kirkpatrick donated nine new books to establish our library and Mr. Douglas set up the parking lot using his equipment and personnel. Now everything was in order.

North Highland, rising for the fifth time, opened its doors to the public as a community center on a very pleasant and excitement filled afternoon of November 15, 2007 (see pages 40 and 41). It was built primarily as a training center to meet the needs of the Prattville community. Therefore, the building was designed so that six different courses can be taught simultaneously. Each of the six

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North Highland center opens



Photo essay by Angelique Suzanne Progress

Addressing the guests of the grand opening of the North Highland Community Center Nov. 15, John Dozier thanks all the individuals who assisted in the successful building and organization of the new center.



Members of the North Highland Association, Sylvia Brantly, Loretta Howard and Leanna Daniels headed straight to the kitchen after the ribbon-cutting to ensure everyone had plenty to drink.



North Highland supporters Nell Motley and Julia Jones enjoy the buffet supplied by the North Highland Association. Motley commented that the new community center was a great asset to Prattville and will allow many activities to take place that wouldn't otherwise.



District 5 County Commissioner Carl Johnson had the honor of cutting the ribbon at the North Highland Community Center last Thursday evening in Prattville.

sections was configured for the connection of telephones, televisions and computers. Movable partitions will be required between several of the sections. Benefits flowing to the community will be:

1. Training courses, after school tutoring, recreational activities, seminars, conferences, social and civic events, exercise programs, parties and reunions.
2. Computer familiarization courses, preparation of budgets and money management, drugs and obesity sessions, notary and other administrative services.
3. A literacy program designed to help adults in the community who cannot read or write.
4. Exhibits and pictures of persons who helped shaped our destiny.
5. Arts and cultural programs for youth and adults; other programs as may be needed.

When we announced our goal to build a community center, few people took us seriously. Yet we stayed the course and moved slowly ahead toward our goal. Today we stand at the finish line with property valued at more than \$400,000 - ready to serve the Prattville community. Many people are in awe of our accomplishments. How did we do it we are asked occasionally? First, at the outset it was understood that there was no way our goal could not be achieved without donations and volunteers. A constant prayer was prayed: "Lord, please soften the hearts of those who are able to help us." Secondly, respect the qualifications of individuals who volunteer. Show them that they are earnestly needed. Do not elevate or give preference of one over the other thereby creating conflicts or resentment, which result in the loss of production. Continually thank them publicly for their effort. And lastly, use the situational leadership approach. This means that no one person can effectively lead in every given situation. For instance, in some areas during construction we worked under the directions of Mr. Douglas and Mr. Smith, then the leader changed to Mr. Alvin Thomas, Mr. Arthur Burt or Mr. Willie Frank Bates and so on. We had to recognize and accept the ability, skill and leadership of each person on our team. To do otherwise, would be the sub-optimization of the building effort, which would impede progress and may cause a hostile working environment. We were constantly aware of problems that affected the team and made every effort to minimize or circumvent them.

We thank everyone who made the grand opening possible, including the two young nine year old boys who emptied their pockets into our donation containers during several of our Pocket Change Drive fund-raisers. For the record, our regular fund-raiser team consisted of: Mary Adair, Sammie L. Moore, Quennie Ezelle, Barbara Robinson, Hester Williams, James Nixon, Thomas Brantley, Sylvia Brantley, Loretta Howard, Eller Savage, Leanna Daniels, Henry Robinson, and John Dozier. Sheriff Herbie Johnson made a special trip each year to make a donation. Sarah Stephen of the Prattville Progress pitched in \$100 in April 2006; Commissioner Carl Johnson pitched in \$100 in 2007; not to be left out Spring Hill AME Church and the Father, Son and Holy Ghost Church donated impressively. This was considered a community activity. Both the community and the team enjoyed the participation (see page 43).

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May 15, 2006

To: North Highlanders and Friends:

The article below recently appeared in the Prattville Progress. We thank the editor, Sarah Stephens, for writing it. We would like to share it with the readers of this newsletter.

The Prattville Progress

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Community center one step closer to completion

By Sarah Stephens
Progress editor

John Dozier has a hard time containing the excitement in his voice when he talks about the North Highland Community Center.

After years of planning, fund-raising and dreaming, it looks like the center is almost nearing completion.

"We are about \$15,000 away from completion, but we know it is going to come," Dozier said. "We have had a few setbacks, but this really is going to happen. The doors will be open soon, maybe as early as July."

"We have had a few setbacks, but this really is going to happen. The doors will be open soon, maybe as early as July."

—John Dozier

The center is located on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, near the old location of the original North Highland School.

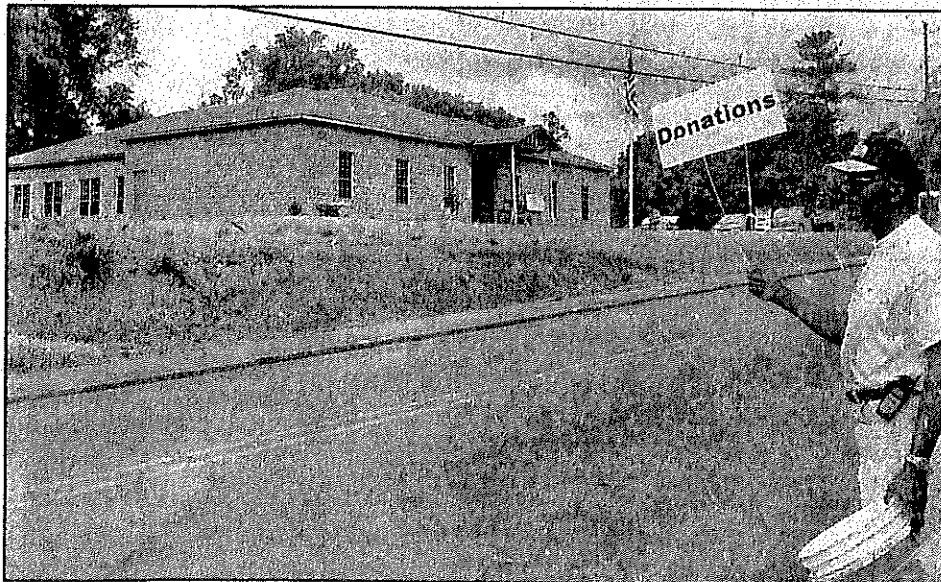
The school served the needs of black children's education during segregation. Though the school has been

closed for more than 30 years, the alumni of the school still gather to remember the old times.

They wanted to do something to make a lasting mark on the community where the school once was located. Each year they have had alumni out in the streets on certain days rattling buckets, asking passersby to throw their loose change.

"We have come a long, long way," Dozier, who is president of the alumni association, said.

The building is about 90 percent complete, Dozier said.



Sarah Stephens Progress

John Dozier advertises for donations for the North Highland Community Center on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. The center has been in the planning stages for many years and construction began a few months ago. The organization still needs to raise about \$15,000 to complete the building.

We especially thank the concrete finishers. There is something special about these men. Often most of them may not have been paid to work on a job. But if they see a truck delivering concrete, they come in like flies with their equipment and jump right in to help. Men like Arthur Roberts and Charles Davis are of exceptional character. Then there were those who saw work in progress, stopped their cars and made a brief visit to tell us that we were doing a great job. This moral support was welcomed and it lifted our spirit knowing that others were concerned about our welfare. Two such persons were Ms. Jane Finley and Dr. (City Councilman) Thomas Miller.

The Montgomery Advertiser and The Prattville Progress played an important role in getting out the information to the public regarding our progression and needs. The Prattville Progress went every step of the way, from the very first announcement of our plans to build the Memorial Hall to its grand opening. Even though members of its staff changed periodically, The Prattville Progress stood solidly behind us, for which we shall ever be grateful.

Just as Pilgrim Rest Missionary Baptist Church allowed the Memorial Hall committee to meet in its building for \$120 per year, two hours weekly, when we were homeless or lacked a permanent facility, we will extend this privilege to other nonprofit organizations.

Our commitment to the community in which we serve shall ring true in Article II, Object, of our by-laws from this day forward:

This organization has been established to promote civic and social improvements among the communities of Prattville, Alabama, and its environments; to raise funds and to contribute such to worthwhile and deserving projects; to create and provide for the less fortunate and those in need; to conduct educational programs aimed at improving the lives of people; to carry on and promote social exchange between people and to provide the necessary facilities for the comfort of its members; and to conduct enterprises to carry out and effect the purposes of this organization.

**Names and Faces
of
Our Committee**

Arthur Burt	Marian Dozer	Doris Thomas
Leanna Daniels	Effie Moore	Hester Reese
Sylvia Brantley	Thomas Brantley	Greg Muhammed
Barbara Cyrus	Willie Frank Bates	Lizzie Thomas
James Nixon	Loretta Howard	

Meet Your Staff

Mary Adair President

North Highland High School graduate. Graduate of St. Jude's School of Nursing, Faulkner University AAA program, Trentholm State Technical College Radio and TV Broadcasting Studies. Thirty-two years of experience as an LPN. Worked at the Autauga Medical Center for 26 years and in nursing homes for five years. Currently employed by Naphcure at Staton Correctional Facility. Member of Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, the Autauga County Black Heritage Association and the Autauga County Alabama Democratic Conference.

Richard Roberts Vice-President

North Highland High School graduate. Retired from the U. S. Air Force in 1988 with 24 years in law enforcement. Graduate of extensive Air Force mid-level management courses, academies and leadership training courses. Responsible for manpower, equipment, training, planning and scheduling as assigned to mid-level managers. Graduate of the Alabama Law Enforcement Academy. Employed at International Paper Company of Selma, Alabama. Deacon and member of the male chorus at the Mt. Ararat Missionary Baptist Church in Selma, Alabama.

Barbara Robinson Financial Secretary

Autauga County High School graduate. Served as Secretary of the North Highland Memorial Hall for four years. Attended Troy State University of Montgomery where she studied Computer Science for a 2½-year period. Completed a computer/clerical training program at Riley College of Montgomery and several other technical/business courses. Worked in the Army, Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) for 13 years and as a Sales Associate. Supervised as many as 16 cashiers. Hired by Autauga County while attending the aforementioned training program and assigned to the Probate Office. Accepted the position as Collection Clerk to broaden her experience. Employed by the Autauga County system for 12 years and is currently working as a Mapping Clerk. Member of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church and has been the Secretary of the Autauga County Alabama Democratic Conference for ten years.

Eller Savage Recording Secretary

North Highland High School graduate. Served four years as Recording Secretary of the North Highland Memorial Hall. Completed one year of accounting at Riley College in Montgomery, AL. Completed two-year computer training course at Prattville High Vocational School. Employed by Harlan Sprague Dawley for the past 25 years in animal research for cancer and leukemia. Functions as supervisor and group leader. Occasionally writes articles in the Prattville Progress on current events concerning the Black community. Member of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church. Served as Secretary-Treasurer for the Senior Usher Board for 20 years.





Photos



Bessie Marshall

Assistant Recording Secretary

Attended North Highland High School. Employed for 15 years as a Quality Analysis Inspector for Webster Industries, a manufacturer of parachutes, freezer bags and other products. Worked in the capacity of Trainee Advisor at Gurney Manufacturing for 17 years. Operated forklifts and other equipment or machinery voluntarily during employment to broaden her experience. Serves dutifully in the position of Assistant Recording Secretary. Member of Water Oak Grove Baptist Church, Prattville and serves as the President of the Usher Board.

Sammie Moore

Treasurer



North Highland High School graduate. Served as Assistant Treasurer for the North Highland Memorial Hall for four years. Previously employed by Allgas Montgomery County for 30 years as a Mechanic and Service person. In addition, answered delivery calls, collected payments and placed orders for customers. Currently employed by the City of Prattville as a Mechanic Apprentice and assists mechanics, performs automotive services and other miscellaneous tasks. Sales Associate at the family owned business; assists customers, operates cash register, controls daily receipt of funds, receives deliveries of supplies and performs inventories. Active member of the Lily Hill Missionary Baptist Church since 1950. Currently serving as President of the Male Usher Board. Youth Counselor and field trip coordinator. Responsible for the receipt of funds for the Youth Department. Member of the Program & Planning Committee.

Henry Robinson

Assistant Treasurer



North Highland High School graduate. Served as Treasurer of the North Highland Memorial Hall for four years. Graduate of the Automotive Mechanic course at John M. Patterson Technical College. Employed by International Paper for the past twenty-six years. Active member of the Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. Worship Master of the Saint James Lodge 750, Prince Hall affiliated.

Rev. George Cyrus

Spiritual Adviser



Graduated from North Highland High School in 1964. Religious Studies: Samford University, Birmingham, AL; Selma University, Selma, AL. Classification: Itinerant Elder A.M.E. Church – Ninth District Alabama Conference. Pastor of St. Paul A.M.E. Church for 20 years; Selma A.M.E. Church, Wilcox County, for 14 years. Pastor of Pleasant Hill A.M.E. Church, Prattville and Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church, Prattville as of September 8, 2003. Served as Spiritual Adviser for the North Highland Memorial Hall for four years.

Photos



Ron McCarden
Program Coordinator

MBA degree from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics Engineering Technology from Savannah State University in Savannah, Georgia. Former U.S. Naval officer and a native of Atlanta, Georgia. Became a member of the North Highland Memorial Hall Committee in the year of 2002. Formulates guidelines to facilitate strategic planning which complement the organizational plan, the marketing plan and financial documents. Develops reading improvement programs and teaches reading improvement courses such as "Hooked On Phonics" to students requiring remedial or preparatory instructions. Administers the scholarship program and the equipment program for college bound students. Provides leadership in all areas of the organization as the need arises. Member of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church.

Bennie Hadnott
Financial Adviser



MBA degree from Iona College. North Highland High School graduate. Certified Public Accountant in New Jersey, Washington, DC and Connecticut. Distinguished career in the field of Accounting spans over more than a quarter-century of services to a wide range of clients; small and large business, federal, state and local governments; non-for-profit, real estate firms and health care. Advised such major interests including the City of New York, New York Health and Hospital Corporation, Salomon Smith and Barney, Coca-Cola Bottling, Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield - a large insurance company and the 65-million member National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. Merged his thriving practice, Bennie Hadnott CPA PC, with Watson Rice LLP of New York, which is one of the nation's oldest and largest CPA and consulting firms. Served on several boards and professional and civic organizations such as the AICPA, New York State Society of CPAs, 100 Black Men of New York, Inc. and Ronald McDonald's House. Served as the President of the two separate and distinct operations ... Watson Rice Consulting Group and Amerimedix Healthcare Solutions.

John Dozier
Project Director



MBA degree from the University of Northern Colorado. North Highland High School graduate. Retired from the U.S. Air Force with 24 years of service. As an Aircraft Maintenance Superintendent, was responsible for the technical training of approximately 1,000 students per day with the support of 160 instructors. Master Instructor certified. In another role, responsible for the maintenance of 210 trainer aircraft with a workforce of 350 aircraft mechanics. After retirement, was employed by the University of Illinois, Champaign - Urbana, Grants and Contracts Office. Retired with 21 years of service. Assisted various university departments in the preparation of proposals, grant applications, agreements, budgets and written correspondence. Reviewed contracts, agreements and grants of approximately \$200,000,000 annually. Deacon and Church Treasurer at Salem Baptist Church, Champaign, IL. As principal fundraiser, raised \$800,000 to build a 13,000 square foot addition to the church. Member of Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church and the Autauga County Alabama Democratic Conference.

School Song

*Dear old North Highland,
Praises high we sing to thee:
Thy halls resound knowledge
Voices raised in glee,
We will cherish ever,
Precepts great, taught us today;
We will fail thee never,
All along life's way.*

*You stand upon a hill
Sending out a beacon light,
In this wide world you send
Souls rescued from night.
Many deeds extol your fame
So with pride we sing your name,
Alma Mater, school so fair
Is our proclaim.*

Chorus

*North Highland, Dear old school we love,
You are deep within our hearts,
Your aims we'll hold high above
Though we from thee part.*

**A Tribute to
Mrs. D. Nelda Cain**

Thank you, Nelda, for permitting me to piggyback on your history packed publication entitled "North Highland High, Remembrance of Events Past." The intent was to use some of your material to build a bridge from the past to the present in order that we may better understand the role we should play in our community, learning from past experiences. My motives were to inspire, motivate and challenge highlanders and friends to become more community oriented and actively participate in community affairs. This has been accomplished to a high degree by permanently placing an object within their sight to act as a constant reminder in which they can claim part ownership, the North Highland Memorial Community Center. Your collection of historical moments will be indelibly printed in our minds for untold years and you will be remembered for diligently preserving much of the history of our cherished alma mater.



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