NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

992

OMB No. 1024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name ASHBY STREET CAR BARN
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 981 Ashby St. N.W.
city, town Atlanta (N/A) **vicinity of**
county Fulton **code** GA 121
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 30318

(N/A) **not for publication**

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

(X) **private**
( ) **public-local**
( ) **public-state**
( ) **public-federal**

Category of Property:

(X) **building(s)**
( ) **district**
( ) **site**
( ) **structure**
( ) **object**

Number of Resources within Property:	Contributing	Noncontributing
buildings	2	2
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	2

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0
Name of previous listing: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards — June 26, 1998

Signature of certifying official — Date

Mark R. Edwards
State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

(✓) entered in the National Register — Elsom A. Beall — 8.6.98

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

Keeper of the National Register — Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions:

work in progress (under new ownership)

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Warehouse

Materials:

foundation brick
walls brick
roof metal
other N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

Summary Description: The Ashby Street Car Barn, a trolley car maintenance facility, is a one-and two-story brick building located on a triangular shaped piece of land in an industrial area of northwest Atlanta. There is a two-story office area and a one-story former trolley maintenance and storage area with a clerestory window. The building has limited architectural ornamentation due to its industrial purpose. The interior space is mostly open. The space is divided today into the original maintenance bay, the shops, and the administrative area. The maintenance bay is the largest open space and is spanned by several metal trusses. There are some remaining vestiges of the trolley rails and some other trolley-related equipment. The shop area is on the southwest elevation and is offset from the gable-truss-roofed maintenance area, making the shop area's working height approximately one half that of the open bay. The shop area is divided by brick walls into three smaller areas. One of these rooms is now used as a demonstration room/classroom with displays. Administrative offices are located in the L-shaped loft on the second floor. Interior ornamentation is non-existent, although the metal stairway is original. The building retains many of its original steel-sash windows and several original roll-up doors. The grounds have concrete paving in front and on the south side. There is one outbuilding, a small, one-story building formerly used to store oil. While this building has been greatly enlarged, it still retains its historic character. The car barn is located in an industrial area of town near the railroad and the King Plow Center. Changes include adapting the building to new uses after the trolley system moved out, but these have changed the character of the building very little. The Ashby Street entrance bay for trolley lines was enclosed with modern "Roman" brick c.1950. Current plans are in the works to rehabilitate the building using the tax credit program. Part of the grounds will be used as a parking lot for an nearby rehabilitated factory that is now an arts center.

Topography and Site Description: The original building site had relatively flat topography surrounded by pine and hardwood trees, based on 1905 photographs. The former owner has stated that trolleys were once stored on the eastern side of the structure in a marshaling yard. This would seem to be the case as the topography would allow for such storage. However, the site's original topography has been significantly altered, probably due to the construction of the Marietta Street viaduct. Long soil grade ramps for rail and auto traffic were constructed to the northeast of the site, the location once occupied by the storage tracks. This change to the nearby topography necessitated the construction of a sloped berm extending along the northeastern boundary of the site. This berm can be seen in a circa 1950 photograph. A retaining wall which varies in height from two to ten feet runs southeast along the northwest side of Ashby and then continues at a height of approximately five feet to the northeast corner of the barn. This wall was constructed sometime after 1950, presumably to allow better soil control and ease of access for parking on the site. It appears that railroad trackage was utilized as partial structural support as the tips of track are visible above the wall. An original cast-iron power cable support pole still exists on site by the retaining wall.

The northwest and southwest grades are currently asphalt paved. No vegetation is present except for scrub located along the southeast and northeast side. All vestiges of the pine and hardwood trees of circa 1905 have been eliminated. A concrete pit loading dock dominates the southwest side of the structure.

A small outbuilding (originally 1034 sq. ft.) is located southwest of the car barn. It now has a separate address, 975 Ashby St. N.W. It was constructed in 1918, as an oil house. The large quantity of oil stored there was used to cool the large Ashby Car Barn transformer. According to City of Atlanta building permit records, this building was expanded and remodeled by Sears Roebuck and Company as a storage warehouse in 1975. It is now approximately 6,000 square feet, single story, flat roof with brick exterior that replicates the trolley car barn's exterior outward appearance. It does not physically connect to the barn but has the visible impression of doing so by its placement on the site. It is currently utilized as a photographers art studio. Although it has been added to, the 1918 brick building is still identifiable and retains its historic brick walls and details. No records or original building permits could be located on this structure.

There are two small freestanding metal buildings, shown on the site plan/plat each as a "metal building," but they are non-historic and inconsequential.

Exterior: The current trolley car barn structure, constructed in 1927, is approximately 100 feet wide by 230 feet long, rectangular in shape with a 25 foot diagonal elevation on the northwest/southwest, making the building five-cornered. Ground floor square footage is approximately 22,340 sq. ft. A

partial second floor L- shaped loft is located on the northwest end of the structure. This loft is approximately 5,000 square feet.

From site investigation, the foundation is, in all likelihood, a perimeter cast-in-place continuous concrete spread footing, probably heavily reinforced due to the structure's building components, load-bearing brick and steel-trussed roof. The foundation extends from a undetermined depth to approximately 4 feet above grade with an 8" exterior chamfer which tapers back into the structure to meet the exterior brick facade. Face brick is a standard red building grade utilized in the 1920s. It is currently quite porous and has many voids. It has never been painted. The entire structure utilizes a common running bond, a pattern created by laying each vertical course brick joint at the midpoint of the previous course, with ceramic glazed halfbrick headers every sixth course. A soldier course runs above each window. Due to the age of the structure it is difficult to determine the exact type of mortar joint that was utilized between brick. A flush or plain cut joint seems most likely due to the time period of construction, however a weathered or struck mortar joint may have been utilized. A more modern raked front split halfbrick is utilized as a face brick for the newer ground floor store front elevation, installed circa 1950.

Support to the roof structure is provided by 16" thick brick "rolok" walls. 12" x 12" hollow clay masonry units are utilized for infill above and under the reinforced concrete header beam on the northwest elevation. This elevation's second floor is carried by this 20" x 20" spandral beam allowing an unencumbered entrance of four trolley cars.

Exterior walls run to a parapet approximately 3' above the roof line. The parapet is capped by an 18" wide concrete coping running the entire perimeter of the structure except for the northeast elevation where the gable roof extends over the brick exterior wall. All exterior walls are load bearing except for the northwest (front) elevation. An interior brick bearing wall also carries loads on the southwest side of the structure.

Roof: The structure actually has three separate roofs utilizing two distinct systems.

The flat roof sections which are located above the loft and along the southwesterly side of the building are covered with built-up hot mop asphalt plies, the top ply being gravel impregnated. These plies run vertically up the parapet and are heat fused to the concrete coping. Drainage is provided via scuppers to 6" diameter down spouts via leader heads, with crickets and cant strips providing slope to the scuppers. No internal drains are provided for. Roof structural support is integrated concrete slab and beam construction.

The gable roof section composes the majority of weather protection for the entire building, constituting approximately 75% of the roof area. Roof pitch is approximately 4 in 12. At the top of the

gable is a double-sided clerestory vault (monitor) with its own gable roof, with 4-in-12 pitch. Water proofing is provided via a urethane spray coating over corrugated metal on structural steel beams and bracing. The original roofing material is difficult to determine without a cut test, however it would appear from examination of the underside of the structure, which is exposed, that corrugated sheet metal was utilized as the original weather protection. This is borne out by a circa 1950 photograph showing the exposed sheet metal corrugated roofing on both clerestory and gable portion of the structure. [Mr. Applegarth, former owner, adds:] Corrugated sheet metal was utilized as the original weather protection on the sloped roof. Over this were several courses of hot tar and roofing felt and recently over this urethane foam and latex.

Roof structural support is provided via steel trusses built-up from riveted steel channel. The truss type appears to be a modified Belgian design, probably "Belgian Pitched" with a clerestory modification. Tension rods and compression members tie the twelve large trusses which run perpendicular to the structure together to limit lateral cord movement. Additionally, three of the major trusses have corrugated sheet metal curtains attached to them to form a solid truss. This may be for structural reasons but in all likelihood is for fire control. This feature does appear to be original. Roof truss loads are transferred to the aforementioned brick walls giving a maintenance bay clear span of approximately 75'. The shop area roof, approximately 200 feet in length on the southwest, is supported at the interior via steel trusses to H columns carrying the load to presumably spread footings. The gable roof shares this support system for approximately one-third of it length. Fire coatings on the exposed steel are nonexistent, however, it does appear that they have been painted. A 1927 Sanborn Insurance map refers to "Unpainted Steel Posts."

Exterior Amenities: This building is a typical 1920's design for an industrial purpose. It has limited architectural ornamentation. The only noteworthy amenity that provides some architectural mention are the few copper leaders which still remain. These do show some craftsmanship but provide little if any significance to the architectural merit of the buildings

Interior Spaces: The overall impression of the interior is one of an open warehouse. The existing 1927 structure is subdivided into three parts: maintenance bay, shops and administrative. The maintenance bay is an open clear span area, extending from the northwest to southeast elevations. This was where the majority of repair work was accomplished and the trolley cars stored. The floor appears to have a thin top coating over a presumably thicker concrete structural slab. A relatively thick slab would be required due to the estimated weight (60,000 lbs.) of the trolley cars. Some imaging of the old trolley rails can be seen through some portions of the topping. One rail is totally exposed on the southwest and one in the center of the barn.

The northeast interior corner of the building has been modified with small administrative office space. No modification other than the brick infill of the barn's front facade is noted due to this office construction.

Vestiges of the wooden trolley power cable guide boxes still exist, as do some power cable hangers and insulators. The boxes run for approximately half the length of the structure, the remaining half having been removed. These boxes are inverted U-shaped fixtures hung from the roof trusses via metal threaded rod. No power cables are found within them. A large circular tank for the storage of de-icing salt or braking sand is still located on the southeast interior wall. It is resting on the lower cords of a roof's truss . All walls are exposed brick with pilasters to carry the roof loads from the trusses above.

The shop area runs along the southwesterly elevation. This area of the building is offset from the gable truss roof maintenance area, making the shop area's working height approximately one half that of the open bay. The shop area itself is subdivided into three smaller shop areas with brick walls between. Access to the three smaller shops located to the north is by single passage door or original industrial sliding (weighted closed) doors. Configuration of the rooms remain in their original state except for one which in now utilized as a demonstration and class room, its original function was that of a boiler room which originally was in a pit which has now been filled in with concrete to match the general ground floor level. Next to the former boiler room has been added a circular steel stair leading up to an intermediate floor living apartment.

Administrative spaces were located in the L-shaped loft on the second floor. Access to the second floor is via both exterior and interior single-passage doors at the northwest corner of the building. A stairwell rises to the underside of the cast-in-place concrete slab-and-beam roof. The original steel riveted staircase remains, consisting of a winder and straight section leading to a short second floor hallway that splits north-south to two large open bay rooms. Both rooms are rectangular with high ceilings (20 feet) of slab-and-beam exposed concrete. Walls are load-bearing exposed brick except for the northwest elevation which is brick/block infill over a structural steel truss. The southeast elevation in one room has been plastered during renovation (1993). Floors in both rooms are cast-in-place concrete, smooth steel troweled and finished with what appears to be a concrete sealer or wax.

Interior ornamentation is nonexistent, however, craftsmanship of the steel trusses and stairway is noteworthy, compared to today's bolted or welded construction. Rivets are symmetrically placed and set with precision. Although standard construction for 1927, they do present themselves well.

In 1997, there were three loft apartments on the second floor.

Fenestration: Natural light is provided via two sources: (1) The clerestory vault has steel-framed single-pane wire opaque windows running its entire length. These can be opened for ventilation via a hand-driven chain-drive system, which is currently in operation. Few of the original window panes have been replaced. (2) Exterior window placement is elevationally symmetrical with large steel-framed sash utilized except for the southeast elevation, which is windowless. The shop area has the largest of all sash. All windows are standard industrial steel frame, "L" or "T" sections welded together to form individual lights. The majority of units have operable projecting sash. Many panes have been replaced as evidenced by the different glazing utilized with wire mesh being the most prevalent.

Northwest elevation fenestration is symmetrical on the second floor utilizing the same (original) windows as the southeast elevation except size is reduced. The first floor store front windows installed circa 1950 are standard aluminum-frame fixed pane.

Two roll-up industrial wood doors located on the northwest wall contain individual lights providing some interior illumination when closed. These doors appear original and their locations do align with the aforementioned power cable guide boxes. A third roll-up door is located on the southwest elevation, but contains no provisions for natural light. It is a modern steel door not original to the structure.

Stairwell illumination is provided via an original sash. Exterior access to the stairwell is via a recently installed aluminum-frame glass store front door. The original transom of steel sash has been replaced with glass block during the recent renovation (1993). [Further information from Mr. Applegarth, former owner:] The stairwell is accessed via a recently installed bronze-frame glass door salvaged from a razed 70-year-old bank building. All three roll-up wooden doors have been replaced with steel but framed openings are original.

All original steel frames have been painted numerous times, the most recent color a pale green, approximating the standard original green oxide that most such industrial windows of the period employed. Most original window units are intact with a few being compromised with vents for interior ventilation purposes. All window openings are supported via steel "L"-shaped lintels to carry structural loads. Limited settling and cracking do appear around these openings, however, all windows and access points appear structurally sound.

Bathroom Facilities: Nothing remains of the original bathroom fixtures but the original facility locations remain, that being on the ground level southeast portion of the building and in the loft area.

Utilities:

Heat: Heat was originally supplied from a central coal-fired steam boiler located in the sunken boiler room on the southwest side of the building. Steam radiators of cast iron supplied the upstairs trolley men's showers, paymaster and office. Downstairs heat was supplied from an array of black iron pipes and from radiators. Later the coal-fired boiler was converted to natural gas fired and about 1948 the boiler was discontinued and gas-fired unit heaters installed.

Water: Water is supplied via pressurized main. A hot water boiler, probably gas fired, existed on the southwest elevation near one of the shop areas. There is an access cover in the foundation on the southwest elevation for possible coal or oil entry to the building. The access is bricked closed and the interior space has been heavily remodeled, so nothing of the original system exists except for the exposed brick chimney. Internal water distribution piping can be found in various locations throughout the building, this being galvanized threaded steel . Recent upgrades of copper piping were also identified. A separate hot-water heater, gas-fired, supplied hot water for the downstairs lavatories and the upstairs showers.

Power: The external overhead power supply is from the southeast side via weather head to the main panel. The original power distribution panel and portions of the system still remain intact. Ancillary systems, mostly in the new administrative spaces, have been updated and added to the system over the years. Some interior wiring has been updated mostly in the newly renovated sections of the building but most of the original system is still intact.

Fire Protection: According to a 1927 Sanborn map, the structure was listed as unpainted steel, however the building currently has a pressurized wet fire protection sprinkler system. This system, in all likelihood, is not original to the structure due to the technology employed. The only evidence of some type of original fire protection is the aforementioned steel curtains attached to the roof trusses. [The former owner, Mr. Applegarth, adds:] As shown on the drawing "System Designed for 50 Street Cars (wood) on Outside Tracks" the marshaling yard adjoining the car barn on the West Marietta St. side is fed by two 6" high-pressure water lines from the W. Marietta St. water main and thence tying in to an 8" supply to one of the two sprinkler systems at the car barn. The other sprinkler system feeds the Ashby Street water main. The two 6" water lines feeding the marshaling yard from W. Marietta Street each originally supplied a fire hose tower about 15' high. The foundation and water connection remain. High-pressure water from these hose nozzles could reach any point of the marshaling yard to extinguish any flames in the wooden cars.

Telephone: Based on records found in the Atlanta City Directory the first telephone to the building was installed in 1938. This may be correct as what appears to be abandoned junction boxes are manufactured from Bakelite, a common telephone/electrical insulation material first used in

1920's and 1930s. Telephone wire clips and conduits rise to the loft area where the administrative functions of the barn were carried out. An updated system is utilized in the newer office spaces and newly renovated second-floor loft.

Lighting: The original interior electrical lighting system was provided by incandescent single-bulb steel-pan light fixtures. Power to these fixtures was provided via electric metallic tubing placed on walls and roof trusses. Power for the fixtures was supplied from the electrical supply panels on the southwest interior wall. Lighting fixtures appear to have been spaced every twenty-five feet and hung from the lower cords of the roof trusses. The administrative space and shop area utilized the same type of fixtures.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

( ) **nationally** ( ) **statewide** (X) **locally**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

(X) **A** ( ) **B** (X) **C** ( ) **D**

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): (X) **N/A**

( ) **A** ( ) **B** ( ) **C** ( ) **D** ( ) **E** ( ) **F** ( ) **G**

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance:

1927-1946

Significant Dates:

1927

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Unknown

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

Statement of Significance: The Ashby Street Car Barn is significant in architecture because it is a good and rare example of an industrial building built to be a trolley car maintenance facility. The building retains its original size, shape and massing, with its original clerestory windows for light and ventilation in the center of the maintenance area. It retains other original windows, and some trolley rails and other trolley related equipment. Most importantly, the building retains its three major interior work areas including the large maintenance facility, the smaller shop, and the two-story office "headhouse," which identify it as a trolley maintenance building. Its overall straightforward utilitarian design and construction using brick, concrete, and steel trusses is characteristic of this type of functional building. The building retains a high degree of integrity; the partial enclosure of the four original doorways does not seriously detract from the buildings overall design.

The building is also significant in transportation because it was built for and used by the Atlanta Northern Railway Company during the historic period of 1927-1946 and until 1951 by the successor firm Atlanta Northern Lines, Inc. Atlanta Northern was a subsidiary of what became Georgia Power. This 1927 barn was built on the same site as an earlier c. 1904 barn. The 1927 building was built to help modernize the system and was larger than the earlier one. The barn served as the major logistics support facility for the Marietta-Atlanta interurban service until it stopped in 1946. This line was a major means of transportation before the interstates and MARTA. In the latter years, 1942-1945, the line provided transportation for defense workers going to the Bell Bomber Plant (now Lockheed-Martin) in Marietta. This car barn is the only remaining building associated with the Atlanta-Marietta interurban trolley line, once the largest of its kind in the South, and one of only two known trolley car facilities remaining in Atlanta.

National Register Criteria

The Ashby Street Car Barn meets National Register Criterion A because as a trolley car barn it is part of one of the broad patterns of American history in the area of transportation systems, one that was a forerunner of the present rapid-rail system. It also meets Criterion C because it retains the original building and materials for this trolley repair and maintenance building, including the clerestory windows, an important lighting source for the operation of the facility.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

1927 marks the construction of the trolley barn, the major building on the property. 1946 marks the end of continuous interurban trolley service under the original ownership of the line. The pre-existing 1918 oil house contributes to the significance of the trolley barn facility during this period of significance.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The two contributing resources are the car barn itself and the oil building. The open space of the former marshaling yard to the northeast of the car barn also contributes to the character and significance of the property but is not counted as a separate resource. The two noncontributing buildings are two small nonhistoric metal buildings.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

The history of the Ashby Street Car Barn can be separated into two time periods. Two different maintenance facilities have occupied the same property location since the establishment of the rail line.

Original Barn (1904-1926) [No longer extant.]

The original building was constructed circa 1904 by the Atlanta Northern Railway Company. It was utilized as both an overnight storage parking facility and a power supply substation. The cars entered the four-bay gable-roof structure from the northwest, off Ashby. This structure had the same site orientation as the present (1927) structure.

The trolley barn structure provided and housed the necessary 550-volt DC step-down equipment to match the Atlanta intercity trolley voltage. Once the interurban trollies reached the city limits, and to continue on to their final stop at Marietta and Fairlie streets, 550 volt DC was required. The interurban ran on 3,300 volts AC between Atlanta and Marietta. This 3,300 voltage was apparently considered too dangerous for city use. As can be seen in the 1904 floor plan of the structure, a portion of the facility (southwest) does not appear to allow storage of trollies. This may have been where the transformers were located. Additionally, power poles with their cross bars can be seen running south along the southwest elevation. This may be an indication of the transformer room location as external power could be easily tapped without having to utilize large interior power cabling to transfer current to far-reaching locations within the building. The utility poles mentioned exist today, as a comparison of 1904 and 1993 photographs bears out. [Explanation added by Mr.

Applegarth, former owner:] The Ashby St. car barn took one leg of the three-phase 25-cycle power from the Atlanta Water and Electric Power Station and stepped it down by means of the 150 KW transformer to 550V single phase so that the suburban lines did operate from the Westinghouse AC system. To the extent that these trolley car motors were series wound they were able to also operate on the 550V DC or 600V DC intercity lines. Such series motors were operated carefully in order that they not "run away" by insufficient field voltage application but they were greatly advantageous in that they could be reversed in field so as to operate as generators during braking, not only to brake but also to put power back into the system. Mr. Steinmetz said that the suburban line operated at 550V secondary.

Along with the transformer equipment, the Ashby barn housed a trolley that was utilized as an emergency transformer transporter with large capacity transformers which could be physically moved to the site of a damaged trolley or substation. Since the Atlanta Northern Line utilized only a single track, it was imperative that repairs to the system be accomplished quickly to ensure regularity of service.

All substations (Bolton, Gilmore, Smyrna, Fairoaks, and Marietta) including Ashby were constructed with brick with each containing a single 150 KW Westinghouse oil-insulated transformer, coils, switches and fuses. In 1912 this dual voltage power system was abandoned for a 600 volt DC integrated system matching city and interurban power requirements.

This building was apparently razed around 1926 or 1927 as a building permit was applied for in 1926. This new construction was part of a major system-wide upgrade to improve the interurban s efficiency, as gas powered transport (bus and automobile) were beginning to have a impact on the revenues of the Atlanta Northern Company.

New Barn (1927-present):

The new trolley car barn (which is currently on the site) was in all probability placed over a portion of the original barn's footprint. Inspection, overlaying, and measurements of a 1911 USGA map and the original barn's floor plan with current site and building surveys indicate this. This construction overlap may have been done to minimize disruption to track and power cable locations. This limited expansion of the new barn to the southwest. This was the only direction in which to expand, as the storage marshaling yard was to the northeast. The diagonal corner of the structure at the property line (west elevation) seems to verify this. There is no architectural or internal functional reason to warrant such a building configuration.

The new barn was thus larger than the original with a shop area, administrative spaces, storage and maintenance areas. It was constructed during a period of declining revenues but also during an extensive modernization period that was initiated in 1925 to attempt to regain past levels of

passengers and revenues. This building then served as the major logistics support facility for the Marietta-Atlanta interurban until service was discontinued in 1946.

The Interurban System:

In the late 19th and first half of the 20th century, electric-powered interurban transport played an important role in the development of the suburb. Without this cheap and reliable form of transport, the growth of the outer city neighborhoods would not have occurred until the dawn of the automobile. Interurbans had major impacts on suburban New York, Columbus, Cincinnati and most northeastern and Midwest cities. Even west coast cities had their own type of Interurbans in San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego. The growth of the suburbs due to interurban systems changed the landscape of America.

On July 17, 1905, the first run of the Atlanta/Marietta interurban trolley system was initiated. Service was to continue for some forty years, connecting Atlanta, a rebuilt modern city, to a small southern town, Marietta. The Atlanta/Marietta interurban was the largest system in the South, with an average annual passenger load of 800,000 and providing peak year passenger travel of 1,402,503 in 1920 and 2,976,609 in 1945.

The line provided service from within downtown Atlanta, from Walton and Fairlie Streets, to Marietta Square in Marietta. The service line was 18.07 miles with stops at Fair Oaks, Smyrna, Gilmore Bolton, Hills Park and the Bell Bomber Assembly Plant in Marietta (1943). Cars could reach speeds of up to 65 MPH, making the Atlanta / Marietta trip, with stops, in less than 60 minutes. Various layover and storage loops existed along the route as the system was of single track; total trackage was 195 miles. The entire right of way was privately held by the company.

The interurban was a significant factor in the lives of the people of Atlanta and Marietta who depended on the service during a time of few automobiles or buses. When the line was established in 1905 no modern major roads existed between the two cities. US 41, then Georgia Route 3, was not opened to major traffic until 1940, when it was vastly improved. Until then this road was not sufficient to carry heavy vehicles or traffic volumes. The interurban filled a need and provided cheap transportation for the general public. Its major contribution was during the two world wars, especially World War II when defense workers utilized the system to near capacity from 1942 to 1945. Between these years the Atlanta Northern became the major means of transport for construction and production crews working at the Bell Bomber plant in Marietta. Due to war-time gas rationing, many Georgians parked their cars and rode the interurban. The system provided a valued service to the nation and the local community.

In 1946, the line was purchased by J. C. Steinmetz (born 1903). Steinmetz was the epitome of an American entrepreneur. From humble beginnings he built a small empire of gasoline and diesel bus systems in the Atlanta metropolitan area from Forest Park to Sandy Springs to Fairburn to Stone Mountain. He had his sights set on the Marietta line as early as 1941, but could not overcome the political and economic issues of purchase until 1946 when he became owner of the system. The trolleys did continue to operate until February of 1947 as the buses ordered by Steinmetz (to replace the trolleys) were not ready for service. The last interurban car ran on January 31, 1947. [Added by Mr. Applegarth, former owner:] During the fuel and equipment shortage Steinmetz operated anything he could patch together and make run. He was even ahead of his time by converting six buses to bottled gas (liquefied natural gas).

The demise of the system cannot only be attributed to the buses of Steinmetz. Although his purchase was a contributing factor, the writing was on the wall for all to see. The mobility of the gasoline and diesel powered bus, the rise of Greyhound Bus Lines, and the automobile manufacturers, along with tire and rubber companies, were too strong a lobby for the privately held interurban public systems to overcome. After WWII, the automobile age boomed, war vets were returning, gas rationing was a thing of the past and the pent-up consumer demand for the freedom of the automobile all contributed to the interurban's final demise.

The 1927 trolley car barn is the last vestige of barns that once existed in many locations in and between Atlanta and Marietta. The system it maintained was a significant part of the commerce, economic and transportation system of Atlanta and had a major impact on the communities of both of the cities and citizens it served.

Since the 1946 purchase by J. C. Steinmetz, the property has come under very usages, with part leased out to tenants. In 1974, W. F. Applegarth became a part owner. In October, 1997, the Steinmetz estate and Mr. Applegarth sold the property, and as of this writing it again has two owners.

Between 1946 and 1951, the property was used by Atlanta Northern Lines, and was vacant from 1951 to 1953. Then a series of tenants began. Mr. Applegarth became involved in 1967 with his supply company, supplying equipment to HVAC contractors. Applegarth used the building for his business with other portions leased to other enterprises until the recent sale.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Hipp, Mark. Draft nomination for "Ashby Street Trolley Car Barn", Fall, 1993, prepared for a class at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Applegarth, William F., owner, draft nomination, dated June 28, 1993; supplemental errata to the Hipp draft, above, Dec. 14, 1993; supplemental information Sept. 26, 1994 answering questions from staff, all of which were very detailed additions to the original nomination.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) **N/A**

(X) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested** on December 10, 1997 from the National Park Service
( ) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
( ) **previously listed in the National Register**
( ) **previously determined eligible by the National Register**
( ) **designated a National Historic Landmark**
( ) **recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #**
( ) **recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #**

Primary location of additional data:

(X) **State historic preservation office**
( ) **Other State Agency**
( ) **Federal agency**
( ) **Local government**
( ) **University**
( ) **Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. one acre

UTM References

A) Zone 16 Easting 739180 Northing 3741000

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is shown on the enclosed plat/site plan 1997-1998 showing the buildings. It is delineated by a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is all that remains associated with the car barn and all the current owner owns associated with that property. It includes the trolley barn, the oil house, and the former marshaling yard.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** May 29, 1998

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) ( ) not applicable

name/title Mark Hipp
organization Student, Architecture 6402
street and number Georgia Institute of Technology, College of Architecture
city or town Atlanta **state** GA **zip code** 30303
telephone N/A [as of fall, 1993]

() **consultant**
() **regional development center preservation planner**
(X) **other:** student

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

Name of Property: Ashby Street Car Barn
City or Vicinity: Atlanta
County: Fulton
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: September, 1997

Description of Photograph(s):

1 of 10 Corner facade of building; photographer facing east.

2 of 10: Garage doors just to the side of corner facade; photographer facing east.

3 of 10: West side of building, with corner to the left; photographer facing northeast.

4 of 10: East side of building showing clerestory window; photographer facing northwest.

5 of 10: First floor, office, east side of building in front; photographer facing south.

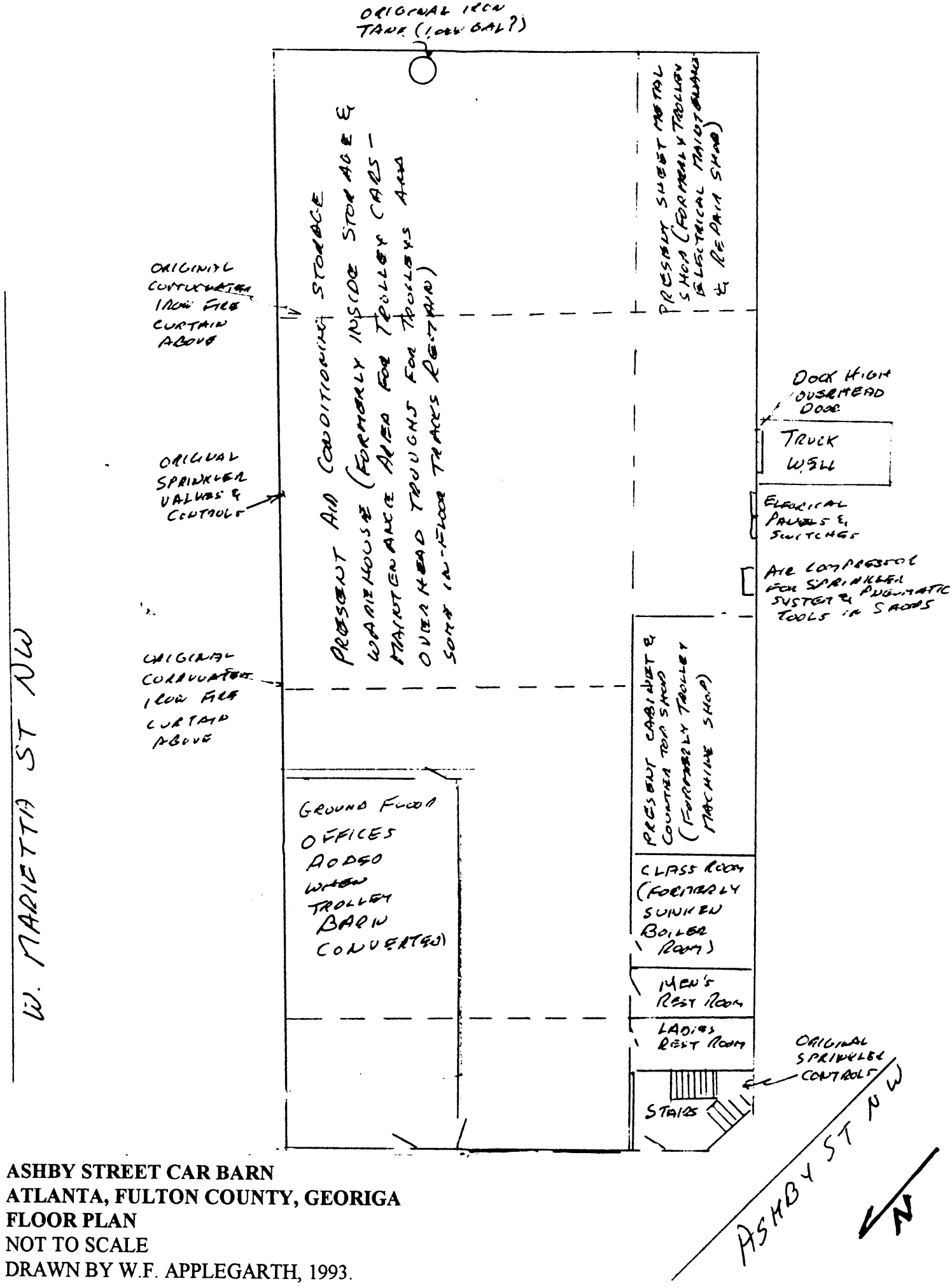
6 of 10: First floor, warehouse area; photographer facing southeast.

7 of 10: First floor, warehouse area, at south/southeast end of building showing de-icing salt tank; photographer facing south.

8 of 10: First/Second floors, at corner of building, stairway; photographer facing northeast.

9 of 10: Second floor stair hall, ceiling, at corner of building.

10 of 10: Second floor apartment, east wing of building; photographer facing east.



ASHBY STREET CAR BARN
ATLANTA, FULTON COUNTY, GEORIGA
FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE
DRAWN BY W.F. APPLEGARTH, 1993.