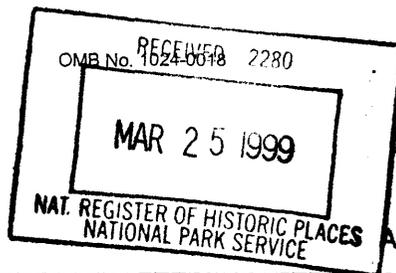


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



RECEIVED

DEC 21 1998

480  
Ala. Historical Commission

1. Name of Property

historic name Snead Junior College Historic District

other names/site number Snead State Community College

2. Location

street & number 220 North Walnut St. 308 West Mann Av. 201 College Av. 300 & 301 Elder St. not for publication N/A  
city or town Boaz vicinity N/A  
state Alabama code AL county Marshall code 95 zip code 35957

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 3/12/99  
Signature of certifying official Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this property is:
- entered in the National Register  
[ ] See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register  
[ ] See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register
  - removed from the National Register
  - other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Edson B. Beall 4/22/99

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check only one box.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
<u>4</u>	_____ objects
	<u>1</u> Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: Grammar School  
High School  
Junior College  
Library

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: Library  
Junior College

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Georgian Revival  
NeoClassical Revival  
Colonial Revival

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick  
roof Stone: Slate, Asphalt  
walls Brick  
other Stone: Limestone

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

(See Continuation Sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.) N/A

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Education

Period of Significance 1920 - 1949

Significant Dates NA

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Poundstone, Odis Clay, architect; Washburn, Stuart E., landscape architect

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A

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

Primary location of additional data:

- [ ] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other state agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[x] Other
Name of repository
Snead Junior College

USDI/NPS Registration Form

Property Name Snead Junior College Historic District  
County and State Marshall, Alabama

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**10. Geographical Data**  
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**Acreage of Property** approximately 5 acres

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing  
1 16 576580 3784520  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

=====  
**11. Form Prepared By**  
=====

name/title Pamela Sterne King & Trina Binkley, AHC Reviewer

organization Consultant

date 3-11-98

street & number 3307 Altaloma Way

telephone 205-823-1679

city or town Birmingham

state Alabama zip code 35216

=====  
**Additional Documentation**  
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

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

=====  
**Property Owner**  
=====

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

name Snead State Community College

street & number P. O. Drawer D

telephone 256-593-5120

city or town Boaz

state Alabama zip code 35957

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Name of Property: Snead Junior College Historic District  
County and State: Marshall, Alabama

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**Historic and Current Condition of the Property:**

The Snead Junior College Historic District is located in Boaz, Alabama in Marshall County and consists of all of the intact historic buildings, including the oldest extant structure, built on the school campus. The contributing properties document important development phases of what is now Snead Junior College from its seminal phase as Snead Seminary (Inventory #1), a private school, to its transition into a junior college (Inventory #s 2, 3, 4). Building construction was crucial to Snead's early growth and ability to serve the citizens of Boaz and Sand Mountain, and was a prerequisite for survival as a junior college. There are four contributing buildings that were built between 1920 and 1942 and occupy approximately five acres of land. There is also one non-contributing structure (Inv. #5) which is located geographically within the district core and is designed in keeping with the historic architecture. The entire campus consists of thirty acres and fourteen major buildings including an administration building, auditorium, science building, library, chapel, gymnasium, and dormitories for men and women (the women's dormitory also houses the school cafeteria). There is a sidewalk system, built c. 1920s, which replaced a dirt path system and interconnects the buildings into a single, semi - circular entity. Historic trees, and lush plantings also highlight the campus and provide a cohesive appearance.

The contributing properties include the Administration Building (1920 -21), Pfeiffer Hall (1942), Norton Library/Museum (1940), and Boatman President's House (1936). Together these buildings represent a variety of Classical architecture including NeoClassical, Georgian Revival and Colonial Revival and provide good local examples of each. The Administration Building (Inv. #1) is a fine local example of NeoClassical architecture, which was a dominant style of domestic and institutional architecture in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Characteristic of this style, the building's facade is dominated by a full-height porch or portico supported by columns or pilasters with classical capitals, and symmetrically balanced windows and center door. In addition, the district contains a good local example of the Colonial Revival style (Inv. #4), which became popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and resulted from the desire of architects and builders to evoke America's past by debunking the excesses of the Victorian period and restoring architectural order. The Boatman President's House (Inv. #4) reflects typical Colonial Revival characteristics including its rectilinear form with facade symmetry, gable roof with dormers, portico with smooth columns, double-hung shuttered windows, and center hall plan. The district also contains two good examples of Georgian Revival architecture (Inv. #s 2 & 3), a style which was a subset of Colonial Revival and displayed the formal and historically accurate characteristics of 17th and 18th century Georgian architecture and was very popular for public buildings such as schools, libraries, and city halls. Both Pfeiffer Hall (Inv. #2) and Norton Library (Inv. #3) display many of the defining characteristics of the Georgian Revival style including columned porticos, hipped roofs, large chimneys (Pfeiffer Hall), belt courses (Pfeiffer Hall), dentil moulding (Norton Library), multipaned double-hung sash windows with stone lintels, and a formal symmetry.

The college campus began its physical development in 1899, as a grammar school, when the Boaz Academy was housed in one room of its founder's house, that of Mrs. Anna D. Elder. In 1901, a brick building was constructed partially with clay from the property of John H. Snead where he built a kiln so that students and local citizens could make bricks and transport them to the building site. In 1904, the industrial dormitory for girls was built, the

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McClesky Home for Girls; two years later the building was destroyed by fire. In 1915, both the Pollock - Lipe Hall for boys, and the Nottingham Primary Building (for elementary grades) were built where St. Paul Methodist Church education building now stands. In 1920 - 21, the Administration Building (Inventory #1) was begun to replace an original building. Due to the need for classroom space and funding constraints, the building was built in three parts starting with wings connecting the original building and finally demolishing the central portion and rebuilding. At the same time construction of the Administration Building (Inventory #1) was being planned, Snead administrators also made a comprehensive plan for the entire campus. Plans were to develop land on either side of the Administration Building for dormitories. It appears, however, that this aspect of the plan was not immediately effected at least until 1942; that is, the McClesky girls dormitory was rebuilt well before the c. 1920 plan and not replaced until Pfeiffer Hall was built in 1942, and the Eliza Pollock Lipe dormitory for boys was built in 1915 and remained until 1963. Directly behind the Administration Building was an area measuring 300 x 400 feet beyond which was a "second terrace", where a chapel was planned to its right and a library to the left (Norton Library/Museum, Inventory #3, is today to the right rear of the Administration Building). Beyond the second terrace, "on a slightly higher level," was an athletic field where a gymnasium "containing all necessary dressing rooms for athletic teams, and the social building, with rooms for societies, club and other organizations connected with the seminary" would be housed.

In 1924, the gymnasium was built on the planned site. While it remains extant, it was modernized c. 1970s, and has completely lost its historical integrity. By 1929, Snead College had decided to become a junior college, which would be contingent on the construction of new buildings and modernization of resources and equipment. Because of the Depression, plans for the junior college were put on hold until 1935, when the necessary \$500,000 had been raised and it received its junior college charter. As a result, in 1936, the President's House was constructed (Inventory #4) and added onto c. 1981. In 1940, the Norton Museum/Library (Inventory #3) was constructed to serve Snead students as well as the community, and in 1942, the \$100,000 Pfeiffer Dormitory for girls was erected which was designed by Odis Clay Poundstone, architect, and Stuart E. Washburn, landscape architect, of Atlanta. Until 1959, no additional buildings were built. In that year, Snead Junior College built its Student Union Building, an 18,500 square foot structure to house the chapel, student lounge, bookstore, snack bar, dining hall and kitchen, and fine arts departmental rooms.

The district is located a few blocks south of the railroad tracks that run through downtown Boaz. It is surrounded by an eligible residential historic district consisting of some of the finest homes in Boaz built between c.1910 and c.1940. The St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church (c.1920) sits immediately across the street just northwest of the Administration Building. It is also within one mile of the vast array of shopping outlets that located in Boaz during the 1970s.

Archaeological Component

Although no formal archaeological survey has been made of this building area, the potential for subsurface remains is probable. Buried portions may contain information that may be useful in interpreting the entire area.

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**Inventory:**

1. Administration Building - 220 North Walnut. (1920- 21). Two-story plus basement red brick and stone Neo-Classical style building constructed in three parts during the same building period. There is a central, projecting main entrance portion built with a full-height smooth cut stone facade; there is a double wood door transomed main entryway flanked by rectangular 12:12 wood windows. Above the doors is a projecting cornice with scrolled brackets and a central garland cartouche. Above the entrance cornice is a 12:12 double hung wood window with 3:3 side lights; this window is flanked by 12:12 double hung wood windows. The symmetry of the front facade is ornamented with four monumental fluted squared stone pilasters with classical capitals and molded base. The entablature contains a dentil cornice with a paneled stone parapet above. The entablature continues around the entire building, but the remaining parapet is brick. A series of three concrete stairs, and open landing leads to the entrance doors. There is a brick foundation and a flat asphalt roof.

The main stone entry facade is flanked by red brick bays which are slightly recessed with five rectangular 12:12 double hung wood windows along each floor with stone sills and brick lintels.

The central pavilion has recessed flanking sections of the same red brick with a series of four irregular height rectangular 12:12 double hung wood windows. Each of these areas is flanked by a pair of brick pilasters with decorative stone capitals and stone entablature.

On the west elevation, there are symmetrically placed rectangular 12:12 double hung wood windows with stone sills and brick lintels, and paired brick pilasters with stone capitals. There is also a stone beltcourse below the first floor windows, and there are a series of iron basement vents and vertical, 1:1:1 wood basement windows.

The east elevation is highlighted with a series of four two-story round-arched windows with four panels of 15 lights and stone scroll keystones. Toward the rear of the building along the first and second floor is a pair of Palladian windows with elliptical arches and stone sills. Along the basement is a pair of rectangular 6:6 double hung wood windows and stone sills. Toward the front of the building is a secondary entrance with rectangular double wood doors and a stone keystone above. Six concrete steps lead into this entrance. Above this entryway is a balconied entrance with scrolled brackets and an iron rail which opens out from the auditorium. There are double wood doors, a six-light transom and stone keystone above.

The rear elevation contains symmetrically placed 12:12 double hung rectangular wood windows. The easternmost bay, however, is flanked with paired monumental brick pilasters with stone capitals. In the center of these pairs of pilasters is a two-story round-arched window with four panels of 15 lights. There is

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a stone scroll keystone above at the window arch, and a round stone inset on either side. Below the stone inset is a vertical 8:8 double hung wood window. A stone beltcourse runs beneath the first floor windows and stone sills. (C)

2. Pfeiffer Hall. 201 College Avenue. (1942).

Two story plus basement red brick Georgian Revival building with a stone dentiled cornice and a slate tile hip roof. On each end of the building is a brick chimney with a stone cap. Constructed as a dormitory with 13 bays on the front facade, the upper floor is lined with thirteen rectangular 12:12 wood windows flanked with wood shutters. The central main pedimented portico contains a central door and six windows on either side. Above each second floor window is a stone keystone. Below the second floor windows is a stone beltcourse, while the first floor windows have stone lintels and sills. Beneath every window is a slatted wood vent. This same window design, and stone belt coursing continues along each side elevation. The rear elevation also continues the stone belt coursing, and also has a central bay window, and a secondary entrance with a bracketed awning near each corner of the building. There is also a series of 12:12 wood windows and four rounded rooftop wood vents.

The pedimented portico has a series of four stone Tuscan columns with unadorned capitals and plinths, and there are two plaster pilasters with plain capitals. The pediment is decorated with dentil molding and a plain entablature. The central doorway has a simple cornice and a six-light transom. The portico floor is concrete and there are three concrete stairs leading up to it. On either side of the portico is a metal downspout. There is a brick foundation.

There is an extension, c. 1960s, that includes a brick breezeway and cafeteria in a style very complementary to the original building. The breezeway has decorative arched openings with a stone keystone and a decorative brick and stone surround; there is also a wrought iron rail within each arch and a pitched roof. The cafeteria is one story with a flat roof and stone coping. There is a series of seven rectangular 12:12 wood windows along the front facade of the cafeteria. (C)

3. Norton Library. 300 Elder Street. (1940).

One story Georgian Revival style brick building plus basement. The front entranceway consists of a slightly extended pavillion with a pedimented portico with dentils and a porthole surrounded by four keystones in the gable end. The entrance bay also has four fluted pilasters with Ionic capitals and base, one on either end of the pediment and two which flank the main door. The main wood door has a fluted wood surround with a broken pediment. There is a hanging metal and glass lamp in front of the door. The windows on either side of the door (between pilasters) are rectangular 12:12 wood with decorative flared stone lintels and wood sills. There are four rectangular 12:12 wood windows on the front facade with wood sills and and keystone above. The side elevations each originally had five windows identical to these; c. 1970s, two

(8-86)

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of these were partially bricked in on each side. On the rear facade, there are seven rectangular metal windows with eight lights and a wood sill. There is a brick foundation and a hip slate tile roof. (C)

4. Boatman President's House. 308 West Mann Avenue. (1936, 1981).

Two-story Colonial Revival brick house with pitched roof with two gabled wood vents. There is a central doorway with a pedimented portico with flared eaves, simple entablature, and two pairs of simple round columns with simple capitals and plinths. Above the entrance is a single 9:1 wood window with wood shutters. Flanking this central second story window is a double 12:1 wood window with shutters. This double window pattern is repeated along the first floor on either side of the doorway. There is a one-story sunporch extension to the right side of the main part of the house that has a set of three 9:1 wood windows with no shutters. On the other side is a one-story brick addition (1981) with a door flanked by a 9:1 wood window. There is a brick foundation and a pitched asphalt roof. (C)

5. William H. Osborn English Building. 301 Elder Street. (1988).

One-story red brick building with a pedimented portico and wood windows. (NC)

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Snead Junior College Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its documentation of the development of secondary and post - secondary education in Boaz, Alabama and Marshall County. The Snead Junior College Historic District documents the process by which the citizens of Boaz offered education to the "white boys and girls" of the relatively remote and impoverished Sand Mountain area of Alabama. Though operated as a private Methodist-supported school, it initially served under the auspices of the state's public education system and provided, at times, the only grammar, junior high, or high school education in Boaz. In the mid-1930s, the school transitioned into a junior college, and in 1967, the State of Alabama purchased the school as part of its tax-supported junior college system. Leaders of education in Boaz, though with a racially limited vision, strove to advance the future economic and social prospects of many of its citizens by continuously upgrading and expanding the offerings of what is now Snead State Community College.

Though the development of what is now Snead College began in the late 1890s, no buildings remain from its earliest period as Boaz Seminary (1899 - 1906). There are, however, extant buildings from both major periods of development thereafter: Inventory #1 was built when it was the John H. Snead Seminary (1905 - 1935), and Inventory #s 2, 3, and 4 were built as part of Snead Junior College (1935 - present). The period of significance (1920-1949) reflects the extant historic buildings which contribute to the educational and architectural areas of significance within the parameter of the National Park Service's fifty-year rule.

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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Snead College Historic District is significant under Criterion C, Architecture, for its good examples of architectural styles including NeoClassical, Colonial Revival, and Georgian Revival. Such styles were typical for public and academic buildings throughout the United States in the late 19th Century and first half of the 20th Century. The district includes every extant building constructed on the campus which is over fifty years old and retains its architectural integrity: the NeoClassical Administration Building, 1920 - 21 (Inventory #1), Georgian Revival Pfeiffer Hall, 1942 (Inventory #2), Georgian Revival Norton Library/Museum, 1940 (Inventory #3), and Colonial Revival Boatman President's House, 1936 (Inventory #4).

Individually, these buildings document a continued desire to design the campus in a clean, serious, time - honored style reflecting the school leadership's intent to imbue students with traditional Christian morals and academic training. Collectively, the four historic buildings sit clustered in an oasis-like atmosphere protected from outside worldliness while offering students perhaps their only opportunity to prosper in Alabama's poor Sand Mountain region.

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**Historical Narrative**

The history of Snead Junior College reflects the economic development of Boaz and its concomitant social and physical growth. Beginning primarily between c.1844 and 1860, white settlers arrived in Marshall County to homestead. From 1860-77, the Civil War and Reconstruction virtually ended this migration. By the late 1870s, settlers again came to Sand Mountain to escape the vagaries of war, defeat, and poverty and to begin life anew. One such settler, Billy Sparks, arrived in 1878 from Butte County, Georgia, with visions of a new town. After purchasing 500 acres from his nephew in what would eventually become downtown Boaz, he offered to give a lot to anyone who would erect a building, or to anyone who bought a lot. Eventually, Sparks gave land for the first Baptist Church, first public school, first store, and cemetery.<sup>1</sup>

In 1886, town leaders of what had become known as Sparks Town, petitioned the federal government for a Post Office requesting the name of "Carlyle," a village several miles away. When they discovered that they could not use "Carlyle," they searched for another name, decided on the biblical name of Boaz, and petitioned the government again. By 1889, Boaz had its first school, first doctor, and two stores.<sup>2</sup> One of these stores was built in 1893 by John H. Snead who had moved from his 1852 birthplace in Snead, Alabama to open Snead Store along Boaz's burgeoning Main Street.<sup>3</sup>

News of the railroad spurred Boaz's first construction and economic boom which continued almost without interruption until the Great Depression set in. By then, Boaz had established itself as the area's primary trading center. In addition to Whitman's store, John H. Snead (for which Snead College would later be named), R. R. McCleskey, and J. G. Snellgrove all established mercantile and general stores in 1891. By 1892, the Nashville Chattanooga and St. Louis (N. C. & St. L) Railroad and depot were completed in the heart of Boaz. By 1893, Boaz's first hotel, Mann's Hotel, was built and its first newspaper established; and by year's end Boaz had ten stores, one depot, one warehouse, a sawmill, cotton gin, grist mill and planer, wood and blacksmith shop, photograph gallery, two churches, a school, and 27 places of residence. In 1896, the town of Boaz was incorporated and E. F. Whitman was elected Mayor and drew up the town charter.<sup>4</sup>

As Boaz grew and developed, so too did its education system. The first school in Boaz was situated in a log cabin in 1879 with Mrs. Sarah Sparks Williamson serving as its first teacher. Ten years later, in 1889, the school

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander, Jo, The History of Boaz, Alabama, Boaz Chamber of Commerce, c. 1970, pp.1-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Wright, Lucile Snellgrove, Boaz Builds By Biographies, Boaz: Boaz Printing Company, 1983, p. 301.

<sup>4</sup>Alexander, The History of Boaz, pp.8-11.

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moved near the present Dr. Pepper Plant on Highway 205. In 1894, an article in The Sand Mountain Signal stated that "on Friday, April 6, 1894, the Rev. Patterson introduced the subject of a public school for Boaz at a meeting of interested citizens." The people saw a need to establish a school district and held meetings and signed information was recorded with the probate judge's office in Guntersville. On December 14, 1894, the Alabama Legislature passed an act to establish the separate school district known as the Boaz School District of Marshall County.<sup>5</sup> In Section II. of the Acts of Fifty-eighth General Assembly, 1894-95, the legislation stated that the Boaz school district "shall receive its pro rata of all public school revenues, and shall be managed and controlled as prescribed by law for other districts in said county."<sup>6</sup> According to recent past president, Dr. William Osborn, however, the school received no public funding until it was incorporated into the State's junior college system in 1967.<sup>7</sup>

Marshall County's decision to create a separate school system was part of a state-wide trend that lasted from 1876 through the 1898-99 legislative session during which time some 250 new, separate school districts were established: between 1876 and 1884-85, 21 systems were established; from 1886-87, 13 were set up; between 1888-89, another 25 were established; between 1890-91 and 1892-93, 46 were set up; between 1894-95, 25 were set up; between 1896-97, almost 70 were established; and between 1898-99, another 50 separate school districts were set up. For the most part, none had the power to tax themselves and, because of the State Constitution of 1875, the State argued that "no public money could be devoted to the erection or repair of buildings, or for furniture."<sup>8</sup> Alabama's public school system depended on its own wits, it seems, in the most fundamental respects; and the Boaz School District would certainly be no exception.

The first school in Boaz constructed under this new act was located on the site of the present Snead Community College campus. The school was operated by Mrs. Anna D. Elder in her own home as a result of a number of Boaz girls who had approached her for "some book learning." Within a few years, however, it had become evident that Boaz's growing population demanded better educational facilities and advanced studies to prepare their children for college entrance. By 1898, the public school authorities had consented to transfer the Boaz Academy, as it had become known, to the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church contingent on its agreement to establish a

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<sup>5</sup>Alexander, Jo, The History of Boaz, pp. 108-111.

<sup>6</sup>Millican, Alta, A History of Snead Junior College Prior to 1940. A Master's Thesis. University of Alabama, University, Alabama: 1949, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup>Osborn, William, Dr., interview with Pamela King, 1-13-98.

<sup>8</sup>Weeks, Stephen B., History of Public Education in Alabama. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office: 1915, pp. 125-134.

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high school and continue the work of the grade school.<sup>9</sup> As was customary for public education in Alabama before 1901 when the new State Constitution was ratified, teachers of the Boaz Academy were to “charge a tuition fee and credit each patron with his pro rata of the public funds.” People unwilling or unable to pay the fee would keep their children at home.<sup>10</sup>

Until 1903, citizens of Boaz, and elsewhere around the State, would depend on this quasi- public/quasi-private educational system to educate its children. In 1903, general laws were passed that allowed municipalities, for the first time, to levy special taxes for the “purchase, maintenance and improvement of school property and the ‘maintenance of public schools.’” Moreover, new laws stipulated that the old school township boundaries would be abolished and new boundaries drawn to create public school districts according to centers of population and natural boundaries, and that every child should be within 2 & 1/2 miles of a school “if possible.”<sup>11</sup> As a result, in 1903, the citizens of Boaz built a two-story frame public school building where all grades were taught until 1924 when the building burned and the extant Boaz Elementary School was built. In 1936, the high school moved out of this building and built its own building. In 1961, the town of Boaz built a new public high school and the 1936 building became the Junior High School.<sup>12</sup>

Prior to the building of public schools in Boaz, however, and following the State’s 1898 decision to transfer the developing Boaz Academy to the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church, the Conference appointed E. B. L. Elder as both pastor of the Boaz Methodist Church and principal of the new private school. His wife, Anna, became his assistant. Both were experienced teachers and had graduated from Northwestern University.<sup>13</sup> The school’s avowed mission was primarily to serve the underprivileged whites of Sand Mountain. As one account put it, Boaz needed a school for the “hard-working, God-fearing white Protestants” who had come to Sand Mountain near the turn of the twentieth century from North Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama.<sup>14</sup> As a result, in 1901, the National Board of Managers of the Methodist Women’s Home Missionary Society pledged a \$10.00 cash voucher for the “special fund for work among Mountain Whites of Boaz,” and appropriated another \$2005.00 of operating expenses.<sup>15</sup> Alabama law, at that time, or course, prohibited coeducational education amongst black and white races. It stipulated only that all poll and local taxes would be expended in the district by

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>Weeks, Stephen B., History of Public Education in Alabama, p.137.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>12</sup>Alexander, Jo, The History of Boaz, pp. 61-63.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>14</sup>The Birmingham News, February 10, 1935; Alabama, May 22, 1942, p.12.

<sup>15</sup>Millican, Alta, A History of Snead Junior College Prior to 1940, p. 24.

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the race that paid them for their schools.<sup>16</sup>

Though the Academy started with only one room and 70 pupils, its enrollment quickly swelled to 189 in the first year and new facilities were necessitated. In order to raise money, the Methodist Conference authorized Mrs. Elder to travel North to solicit funds for a new building. Mrs. Elder proved successful, and in 1901, a new building was constructed from local clay bricks that John H. Snead had provided from a kiln he had built for that purpose. The next year, however, E. B. L. Elder resigned as principal because of poor health, and J. T. Terry was appointed his successor. Two years later, in 1904, with money Anna Elder had solicited through the Home Mission Society and a gift of three acres from John H. Snead, an industrial home for girls was constructed and named the McClesky Home for Girls in honor of Snead's wife, Mrs. J. E. McClesky. The building was destroyed by fire in 1906.<sup>17</sup>

In 1905, the Boaz Academy changed its name to the John H. Snead Seminary after Snead forgave the school's indebtedness of \$4,160 which he and R. R. McClesky had held in mortgages.<sup>18</sup> The newly formed Seminary would offer a three-year high school program that would, according to school records, serve as a preparatory school to "advance the students intellectually, morally and spiritually."<sup>19</sup>

Snead Seminary outlined specifically how it would meet that goal. The school, records stated, would "give training for Christian work, thoroughly prepare teachers for positions in the schools of Alabama and other states, and prepare young men and women for citizenship and the various duties of life." Toward this end, the school offered four types of courses -- "Classical, Latin-Scientific, biblical and Teacher Training," all in a military setting. "The young women," according to its catalogues, "were organized into companies and were given the Military {sic} setting-up exercises and company marchings, and the young men were organized into similar companies for the same purpose." In addition, Snead would maintain its mission to reach the economically disadvantaged white children of Sand Mountain by allowing students to work for the school as a way of offsetting tuition costs. These goals and techniques appeared to be successful; in 1910, Snead Seminary became accredited by the State Board of Education.<sup>20</sup>

From 1907-1924, the school continued its physical and institutional growth: in 1907, past president W. P. Weston

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<sup>16</sup>Weeks, Stephen B., History of Public Education in Alabama, p. 115.

<sup>17</sup>Alexander, Jo, The History of Boaz, pp. 108-09.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p.109.

<sup>19</sup>Millican, A History of Snead Junior College Prior to 1940, pp. 42-48.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

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sold the boys dormitory to Snead; in 1915, the Pollack-Lipe Hall for boys was completed along with the Nottingham Primary Building on the present site of the St. Paul Methodist Church educational building across the street. In 1920-21, the administration building (Inv. #1) was completed in three phases as monies became available, and in 1924, the state-of-the-art gymnasium was erected which remains on campus but has been completely modernized in recent years. By then (1922-23), Snead Seminary had become the largest secondary school in the Methodist Conference.<sup>21</sup>

In 1929, the University of Chicago conducted a survey of educational needs in Alabama and recommended that a junior college be developed for Northeast Alabama. That same year, the Survey Committee of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Conference conducted a study of the Seminary's equipment, service needs of the area, and the school's current program, and recommended the discontinuance of the Junior High School (the primary grades 1-6 having been discontinued in 1924 when the town of Boaz built a public school) and the addition of two years of college. The new school program would include only the Senior High School and the additional Junior College curricula. According to studies, there was no school higher than the high school within a radius of 57 miles of Snead Seminary which encompassed a population of over 475,000.<sup>22</sup> And since the turn of the century, according to newspaper accounts, the junior college movement was perhaps the most dramatic development in American public education. Junior colleges, one newspaper explained, stood "midway between the old liberal arts college and the higher technical school."<sup>23</sup>

According to the Albertville Herald, the "important function of a junior college [is] to serve its immediate geographical area." In an interview with Snead president, Dr. Conway Boatman, the article pointed out that "one of the chief reasons for the creation of a junior college, is the geographical one. It enables many students to live at home and attend college. To others it means that they will not have so far to go." "Statistics," he continued, "have shown that more than 90 percent of the students in attendance at college live within a 100 mile radius of the college. This explains the reason why boys and girls do not get to college -- distance is a strong deterrent." Snead Junior College, according to the Birmingham News, will be the "largest and best equipped of the Southern mountain schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church and an authorized world service project of the church." As such, it was to be a "self-help institution serving the mountain boys and girls of the South along with those from other fields of life."<sup>24</sup> Toward that end, vocational courses for boys would be paramount including woodworking and sheet metal working, general shop, and fundamentals of the building trades.<sup>25</sup> For girls, secretarial science and

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>22</sup>Albertville Herald, September 1935, p. 23.

<sup>23</sup>The Birmingham News, December 30, 1934, February 10, 1935.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., Albertville Herald, September 1935, p. 23.

<sup>25</sup>The Birmingham News, December 30, 1934.

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elementary teaching curricula would be stressed.<sup>26</sup>

Establishment of Snead Junior College, the sixth such school in Alabama, the newspaper continued, would begin to reverse the “discouragingly small number of high school graduates who attend college in North Alabama.” Snead is part of the “great junior college movement,” the newspaper said, “to bring a higher and practical education to the masses.” By 1930, according to the Albertville Herald, there were 475 institutions doing “some junior college work, but the Carnegie Foundation in a study of [1935] has counted nearly 700 in the United States.” Small faculties and close personal interaction with young students, the newspaper explained, was necessary for youth to provide them with “advice, encouragement and sympathy,” that a university could not. “[T]he junior college is concerned chiefly with the student as a developing individual,” it said. Moreover, the college will operate a bus from Albertville to Gadsden via Alabama City and Attalla, serving a “thickly industrial area,” thereby enabling students to work, live at home, and attend college. And to further encourage Sand Mountain youth to pursue college courses, Snead College expenses were the lowest in the State in 1935. Students who commuted paid only \$118.00 per year and for those who resided on campus the expense was \$262.00 for boys and \$244.00 for girls.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, economic constraints caused by the Great Depression halted development of the new school program until 1935 when a fundraising campaign began to secure minimum funding for an endowment and equipment for the Junior College.<sup>28</sup> The fundraising campaign was more than a necessity for the new junior college. It was a requirement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools that some \$125,000 be raised -- \$100,000 for an endowment and another \$25,000 for new buildings and renovations -- in order to qualify for accreditation. As a result, the annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church unanimously authorized the trustees of Snead Seminary to plan and promote a fundraising campaign. Methodist Bishop Wallace E. Brown, of Chattanooga, was appointed Chairman and Snead president. Dr. Conway Boatman was appointed Vice Chairman. In addition, Aubrey C. Cooper of the Veterans' Administration in Tuscaloosa was appointed chairman of Snead alumni; Bessemer postmaster Felton Collier was chairman of Jefferson County; and C. B. Creel, city editor of The Birmingham Age-Herald, was named Birmingham coordinator.<sup>29</sup>

On May 22, 1935, the University Senate authorized organization of the college. Moreover, in addition to the

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<sup>26</sup>Millican, A History of Snead Junior College Prior to 1940, p. 46-48.

<sup>27</sup>Albertville Herald, September 1935, p. 23.

<sup>28</sup>Millican, A History of Snead Junior College Prior to 1940, pp. 204-5., The Birmingham News, December 30, 1934.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, February 10, 1935.

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discontinuation of the junior high school classes, the high school portion of the school would no longer be called the John H. Snead Seminary but would become the Snead Academy, and the college would become the Snead Junior College. School officials anticipated that the new and modernized facilities required to become an accredited junior college would also benefit the high school. Dr. John L. Brasher, who was the first president of Snead Seminary from 1906-1911, said in a 1935 interview with The Sand Mountain Banner that “[i]f the continuation of strong spiritual emphasis is placed upon the institution, the senior high school will have an ever increasing enrollment. Many parents will send their children to the school if they feel that its spiritual as well as its literary standing tends to produce high character.”<sup>30</sup>

Five years later, in 1940, the town of Boaz built its first free public high school with the result that Snead Academy was discontinued having, by then, graduated some 1200 students since its beginning in 1905.<sup>31</sup> That same year, the new Norton Library was built (Inventory # 3 ), and two years later, Pfeiffer Hall (Inventory #2) girls dormitory was constructed. With new facilities and the high school having moved, Snead began to devote itself entirely to its junior college work and increased its vocational training to include teacher training, business administration, agriculture and home economics, manual arts, as well as an introductory two-year course in law, medicine, dentistry, engineering and liberal arts.<sup>32</sup>

In 1941, Snead Junior College was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and in 1942, Dr. Festus Cook was named president, where he served until 1954. During his tenure, the school experienced a serious drop in enrollment as young men and women joined the World War II effort. After the war, from 1946-50, veterans again swelled enrollment to reach a peak of 355 students in 1949. After more lean years in the early 1950s, enrollment again climbed between 1954 and 1959 when enrollment hit 410.<sup>33</sup>

In 1967, the State of Alabama acquired Snead Junior College from the North Alabama Conference of the Methodist Church, and it became the fifteenth school in the State’s newly created junior college system. Begun during Governor George C. Wallace’s administration, the state tax-supported junior college system had reportedly “crippled” Snead. As a result, the State assumed the school’s debts of \$135,000 and appropriated an additional \$350,000 for the next two years’ operating expenses. This action came after the Methodist Church had voted to close the school unless it could be taken over by the state or some other organization. Now under the auspices of the Alabama State Board of Education, the name was changed to Snead State Junior College.<sup>34</sup> By 1989, the

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<sup>30</sup>Sand Mountain Banner, November 21, 1935.

<sup>31</sup>The Birmingham News, October 1, 1989.

<sup>32</sup>Millican, A History of Snead College Prior to 1940, pp. 200-25.

<sup>33</sup>The Alabama Courier, Athens, Alabama, March, 26, 1959, Albertville Herald, September 1935, p. 43.

<sup>34</sup>The Birmingham News, February 10, 1967.

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school had 32 university parallel-college transfer programs, 11 career/technical programs, among them the only veterinary technology program in the State, and an enrollment of some 1500.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1989.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Snead Junior College Historic District is in Boaz, Marshall County, Alabama as represented on the enclosed base map at a 1" = 200' scale.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries contain the greatest concentration of contributing historic buildings and their immediate yards within the historic core area of the Snead Junior College Campus. The majority of the resources have a rectilinear association to the gridded street system, with the exception of Boatman Hall which is situated at an angle to the rest of the district. Although Boatman Hall lies on a corner lot opposite the Administration Building, it is contiguous to the district core and an important resource to the district overall.

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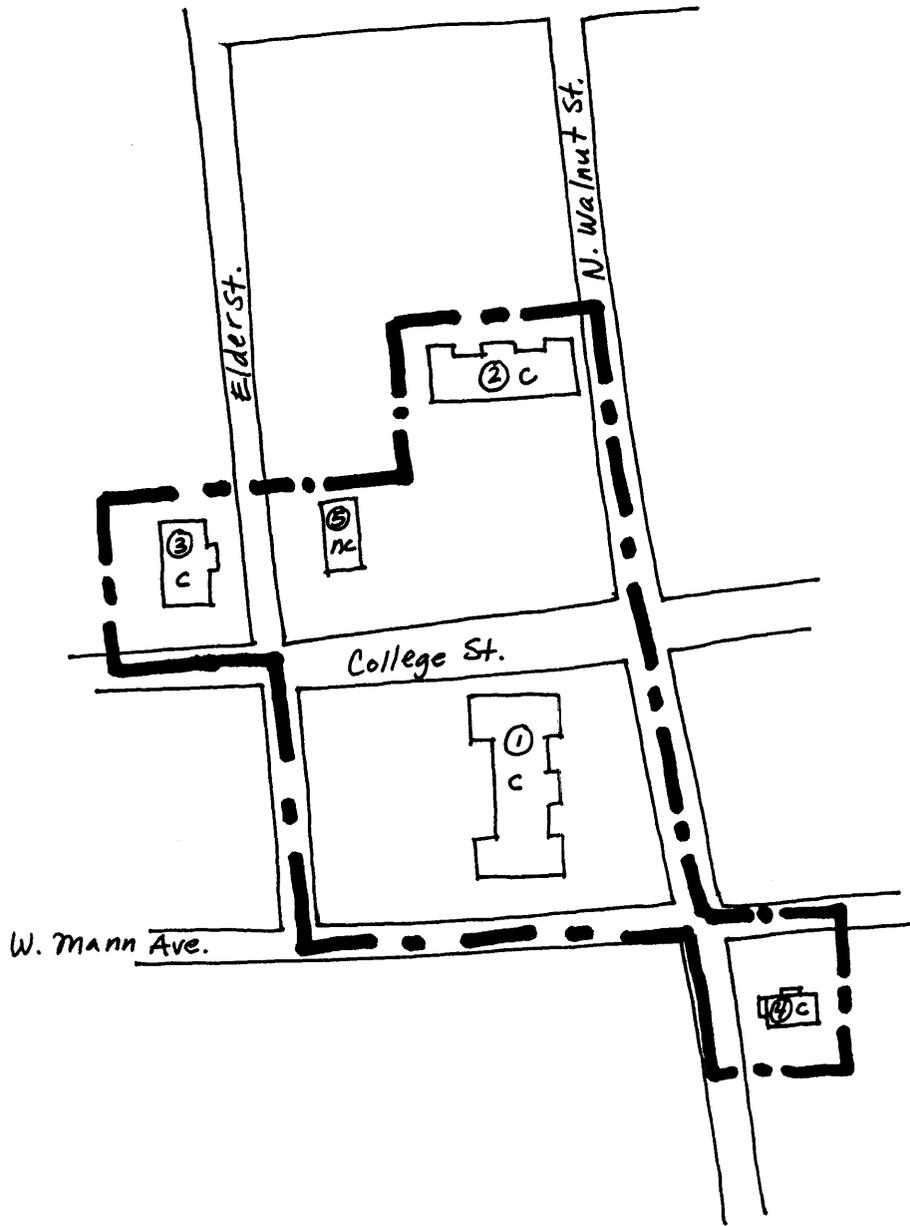
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**Photos**

1. Snead Junior College Historic District  
Administration Building (Inv. #1)  
220 North Walnut Street  
Boaz, Alabama 35957  
negatives - AHC  
view of front, side facade facing southeast
2. view of front facade, camera facing east
3. view of front entranceway, camera facing east
4. view of Palladian windows, camera facing northeast
5. view of front landscaping, sidewalks, camera facing northeast
6. Pfeiffer Hall (Inv. #2)  
201 College Avenue  
view of front facade, camera facing south
7. view of front facade, camera facing south
8. view of front portico, camera facing southeast
9. view of rear, camera facing north
10. Norton Library (Inv. #3)  
300 Elder Street  
view of front facing northeast
11. view of front facade facing east
12. Boatman President's House (Inv. #4)  
308 West Mann Avenue  
view of front facade, camera facing north
13. William H. Osborn English Building (Inv. #5)  
301 Elder Street  
view of front facade, camera facing northeast



Snead Junior College Historic District  
Boaz, Marshall County, Alabama

1" = 200'

