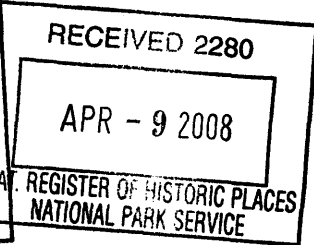
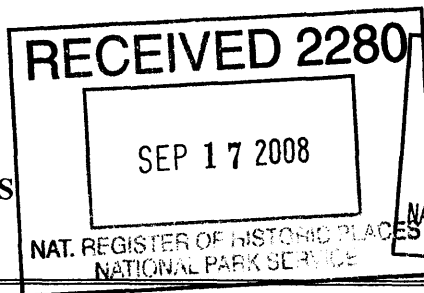


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 211 B Street SW not for publication N/A
city or town Lafayette vicinity N/A
state Alabama code AL county Chambers code 017 zip code 36862

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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]
Signature of certifying official/Title

04/04/08
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] 10/15/2008
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: FUNERARY Sub: Mortuary

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: FUNERARY Sub: Mortuary

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE

roof: ASPHALT

walls: BRICK

other: _____

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

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

- 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)

Commerce
Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance 1952-1958

Significant Dates 1952

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Vines, Julius Summers

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Deloach, Mitchell Angelo

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the 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):

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.85 ac.

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>16</u>	<u>649295</u>	<u>3640219</u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	5	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	6	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 David B. Schneider, Consultant; David Ray, Alabama Historical Commission

organization Schneider Historic Preservation, LLC date 3/3/08

street & number 411 E. 6th Street telephone 256-310-3620

city or town Anniston state AL zip code 36207

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 Vines Funeral Home, Inc.

street & number 211 B Street SW telephone 334-864-7128

city or town Lafayette state AL zip code 36862

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
county and State Chambers County, AL

7. Narrative Description

The Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service is a rectangular one-story brick veneer building with a side gable composition shingle roof with two interior brick chimneys. The building faces north and is located toward the front of its site at the southwest corner of B Street Southwest and Jackson Hill Street. The original core of the house is three bays wide and three bays deep with a gable stoop centered at its façade and a side gable porch at its east elevation. A cross-gable brick veneer addition was added to the rear of the building in 1975. In 1988, a rectangular chapel building facing east onto Jackson Street was built to the rear of the funeral home. The two buildings were subsequently connected by an open breezeway. Also located on the site are a garage (1996) to the southwest of the funeral home and a storage building (1958) to the south. The site slopes gently from south to north. Paved parking areas and driveways cover much of the east side of the site. The west portion of the site is covered with a grass lawn and casual landscaping.

The principal north façade is three bays wide with a central entrance flanked to the west by a double six-over-six light double hung sash window and to the east by a tripartite picture window. The central stoop has a front-facing gable roof supported by square wood posts and a concrete deck. Brick steps have simple iron railings. The three northern bays of the east elevation represent the original core of the house. The northern bay has a one-over-one light window that is similar to the windows at the façade. The gable porch at the center bay has been enclosed and a shed addition has been constructed at the southern bay. Both the porch and the addition have modern aluminum horizontal two-over-two windows. The 1975 addition is two bays deep with a single modern window to the north and an open garage bay to the south. The open breezeway extends from the 1975 addition to the chapel. A gable porch with decorative metal supports is centered at the façade of the chapel. The central principal entrance has double-leaf doors. The south elevation of the chapel is five bays wide with an entrance to the west flanked by single one-light windows. Windows at the rear (west) elevation of the chapel are similar. The 1975 addition projects one bay to the west of the original core and has modern aluminum horizontal two-over-two light windows in each of the three irregularly-spaced bays of its west elevation. Two original six-over-six light windows are evenly spaced along the west elevation of the core.

The interior plan of the original portion of the building includes a small central entrance foyer, hallway, and vestibule with a chapel, sitting room, and storage room to the east and offices and bathrooms to the west. A viewing room and storage area were created circa 1975 when the former side porch was enclosed and a small addition was built adjacent to it. Other alterations reflect the changing spatial needs of the funeral home business and include the relocation of several walls, changed uses for several rooms, and the construction of the rear 1975 addition. The addition houses a casket display area, an embalming room, a dispatch area and lounge, and a garage. The original chapel retains a fireplace with a simple wood mantelpiece. Simple molded trim surround windows and doors within the original core. Walls and ceilings are finished with sheetrock and floors are typically covered with carpet or vinyl. Despite changes that have occurred to the original plan of the interior, it retains its overall historic simple utilitarian character.

The building is in generally good condition.

Archaeology

No formal archaeological survey has been made. However, the potential for subsurface remains that could provide additional information related to the historical development of the site as a funeral home is minimal.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2 name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
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The Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service is significant under National Register Criterion A as an example of a mid-twentieth century rural African-American owned funeral home. Constructed in 1952 by Julius Summers Vines, the building is representative of the black funeral home industry in the early to mid-twentieth century especially as it developed in Alabama. Undertaking was one of the few professions open to African-Americans in the days of segregation and black funeral directors joined doctors and lawyers at the top tier of the African-American economic and social hierarchy of many communities. Vines exemplified the entrepreneurial spirit of black funeral home directors of the period and played a leadership role in Lafayette, earning the respect of blacks and whites alike. The period of significance for the Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service extends from 1952 through 1958 reflecting the building's construction date and continued operation into recent history.

History

Julius Summers Vines was born on March 19, 1922 and grew up in the Sandy Level community of rural Chambers County as one of the seven children of Adolphus and Ada Vines. Adolphus was a farmer and his children grew up experiencing the hard physical labor that such a life required. The local high school provided no bus service for those living on unpaved roads, a hardship born predominantly by black families. Adolphus and Ada saved enough money to buy a truck in 1937 so that their sons could provide transportation for themselves and other students, in addition to earning extra money. The small bus service they operated, with Julius and his brother Houston serving as the mechanics, eventually received support from the Board of Education. After graduating from high school, Vines moved to Maine, later earned certification as an aircraft mechanic, and worked in a military mechanic's shop.

During World War II, Julius was drafted into the U.S. Army, reporting for duty at Fort Benning, Georgia on April 7, 1943. He was later sent to Camp Atterbury in Indianapolis, Indiana and was placed in the Army Medical Corps, where his skills as a bus driver and mechanic qualified him to drive and maintain an army ambulance. At a time when African-Americans were rarely allowed into actual combat, Vines was assigned to front areas and was often in the line of fire. Among the actions he participated in during the war were the D-Day invasion of France and the Battle of the Bulge. He served in different units during his service, including General George S. Patton's Third Army, with which he crossed the Rhine into Germany and later witnessed the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp. Vines was awarded several decorations and citations for his service, including the American Service Medal, the European African Middle Eastern Service Medal with three bronze stars, a Good Conduct Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

Vines' recollection of his return to the United States after the war was recorded by his daughters Merilyn Vines and Dr. Angela Vines:

Arriving back by ship in New York was bittersweet. Julius has served his country valiantly. He had suffered through the intolerable conditions that all black soldiers endured under the segregation policies of the Army. German prisoners, for example, were more highly regarded than the black U.S. soldiers. Upon returning to America, "the land of the free," Julius had hoped that the racial climate would have changed and that the war would have changed people's minds about how they treated each other. His hopes were dashed. There were no ticker tape parades for the colored soldiers.¹

Vines returned to Alabama but was no longer content to be a farmer. He moved to Cleveland, Ohio, where he had relatives, and found work in steel mills. He also worked as a bartender by night, saving money so that he could take advantage of the G.I. Bill and attend college. During this period, he frequently visited a funeral parlor near his home

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Section 8 Page 3 name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
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where he would talk with the morticians and funeral directors. Impressed by their professional appearance, Vines decided that he would pursue an education in mortuary science. He enrolled in the Welch School in Birmingham, Alabama, a predominantly black school that taught mortuary science and business administration. While in school, Vines worked at the Welch Brothers Funeral Home. When the school lost its accreditation in mortuary science prior to his graduation, Vines completed his degree in business and later enrolled in the Gupton Jones School of Mortuary Science in Nashville, Tennessee, where he began his studies in the fall of 1947. He graduated with a degree in Mortuary Science on December 17, 1948 and was licensed to practice embalming in Tennessee on December 20, 1948 and in Alabama on April 11, 1949.

Vines originally intended to build a funeral home in Chattanooga, Tennessee but soon realized that he needed the network of family and friends he had at home to start a successful business. Accordingly, he returned to Chambers County and took a job as the funeral director/mortician at the People's Funeral Home in Lafayette. Chambers County had a population of 39,528 people in 1950 and Lafayette was its county seat, serving also as the retail and service hub for parts of Lee, Tallapoosa, and Randolph counties. In the strictly segregated community, the People's Funeral Home and its competitor the Silman Funeral Home competed in a collective service area that included more than 14,000 African-Americans.

Vines began planning to open his own funeral home almost immediately. He purchased the subject property from Marcellus and Margaret Freeman on November 11, 1950 for three hundred dollars². Because the GI bill would loan him money to build a house but not a business, Julius decided to build his facility to look like a residence and to live upstairs. After initially being denied a loan, Vines successfully negotiated with the Veterans' Administration and a mortgage for \$9,750 was executed on April 14, 1952.³

Construction of the Vines Funeral Home building commenced in the spring of 1952 and was completed later that year. Shortly thereafter, Vines married LeMerle Brooks and the couple lived in the upstairs of the funeral home for two years before building a separate house on an adjacent lot. For the next fifty years, Vines served as the sole proprietor of the Vines Funeral Home. Vines primarily served the rural areas surrounding Lafayette but also handled many funerals for African-Americans who had migrated to the North seeking higher paying industrial jobs between the 1950s and 1970s whose loved ones wanted them buried back home.⁴ The competing Silman Funeral Home primarily served people in the town of Lafayette. After losing Vines, its funeral director/mortician, the People's Funeral Home relocated to Langdale Alabama and later closed.⁵

In addition to its funeral business, the company operated an ambulance service. The service began at the same time as the funeral home, with Vines maintaining one hearse (which he designated a "combination hearse") that was used as an ambulance. Ambulance services as an adjunct business to funeral homes was quite commonplace before the 1970s, since funeral homes typically had to operate hearses and therefore had drivers and necessary equipment and facilities. In the 1970s, ambulance services were required to have operators trained in emergency medical technology and as a result many funeral homes discontinued their ambulance services. Vines obtained the necessary training for four of his employees and continued to operate, although he was eventually forced to discontinue the ambulance business due to insufficient revenue. The Mayor, City Council of Lafayette, and Chambers County Commission approached the company about resuming operations and supported the company in obtaining necessary state grants. Vines Funeral Home is now the only funeral home in the state of Alabama that still operates an ambulance service.⁶

Julius Vines suffered a massive stroke in 1999 and sold the business to Vines Funeral Home, Inc. on December 28, 2004. His eldest daughter, Marilyn Vines, is currently president of the company and his youngest daughter, Dr. Angela Vines, is its secretary.⁷

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4 name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
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African-American Funeral Homes

Traditional African-American burial practices did not involve the use of an undertaker until the early part of the twentieth century. Prior to that time, most blacks lived in rural areas where burials were handled by family and friends. With the increasing migration of blacks to urban centers, these customary practices gradually shifted to the use of undertakers. By the early part of the twentieth century, black funeral homes were common in most cities and this trend gradually filtered out into the countryside. The funeral business was one of the few professions open to African-Americans in the days of segregation and black funeral directors joined doctors and lawyers at the top tier of the African-American economic and social hierarchy of many communities.

While the economic conditions in rural communities were often not as lucrative as those in the cities, funeral directors in many small southern towns typically held important leadership roles and were often well respected by both the black and white communities. Julius Vines exemplified this type of leadership by assisting families in need in his community with no-interest loans and a variety of other services. Examples of other prominent African-American undertakers in Alabama in the early to mid-twentieth century included Smith and Gaston Funeral Home in Birmingham, the van Hoose and the Murphy funeral homes in Tuscaloosa, and the Edgar H. Battle Funeral Home in Phenix City. In recent years, the number of black-operated funeral homes has begun to decline as a result of increased competition from larger funeral corporations, changing tastes, and the increasing popularity of cremation.

Other than its ambulance service, Julius Vines Funeral Home in Lafayette was distinct in that it was fully licensed and that it was operated by a professionally-trained mortician. The other funeral homes in Lafayette at the time were not licensed and their morticians had been trained informally while working for white morticians.⁸ Vines was also the first African-American funeral director in Lafayette to publish funeral announcements when the Lafayette Sun began a "News Among Colored People" section in the mid-1950s.

African-American Businesses in Lafayette

Roy Silmon was a black delivery man for a furniture store operated by Ed Cutler when Cutler decided to expand his operations to include a funeral home in the 1930s. Cutler later set Silmon up in the basement of a building across the street to handle black funerals. Silmon separated from Cutler and opened Lafayette's first Africa-American funeral home in the 1940s.⁹

Because of its rural location and the relatively small percentage of African-Americans in the county, only about ten percent in 1950, Lafayette did not develop a traditional African-American commercial district. However, there were scattered Black businesses including Rowe's barber shop, Toot Greshem's shoe shop, a cab stand, and an ice cream and sandwich shop that were all located in close proximity to the court square.

Like Vines Funeral Home, the much-altered Silmon's funeral home is also located in a primarily residential section of town. Silmon's no longer remains in the Silman family. The funeral homes were the only African-American businesses in Lafayette in the 1950s that rose to the level of professional operations, as no records of black doctors, dentists, or lawyers have been documented.

¹ "Profile of a 'Greatest Generation' American: Julius Summers Vines," Merilyn and Dr. Angela Vines, 2006.

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² Lafayette, Alabama. Chambers County Judge of Probate. Deed book 109, p. 279; note that the spelling of Margaret's name is as indicated on the deed.

³ Deed book 273, p. 183.

⁴ Interview with Julius Vines, Lafayette, Alabama, by Marilyn Vines, August 2008.

⁵ Interview with Julius Vines.

⁶ Vines

⁷ Deed book 2004, p. 6229.

⁸ Interview with Julius Vines.

⁹ Interview with Ed Yeargans, Lafayette, Alabama, by Merlyn Vines, August 2008.

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Section 9 Page 6 name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
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9. Major Bibliographic References

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Holloway, Karla F. C. Passed On: African American Mourning Stories. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

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U. S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Census of 1930, 1950.

Vines, Merilyn and Dr. Angela Vines. "Profile of 'Greatest Generation' American: Julius Summers Vines." N.p., 2006.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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name of property: Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
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10. Geographic Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes a 0.85-acre parcel as shown on the accompanying scaled siteplan.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes sufficient land to include the funeral home and its associated garage and storage building.

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Accompanying Documentation Sheet

Section Page 8

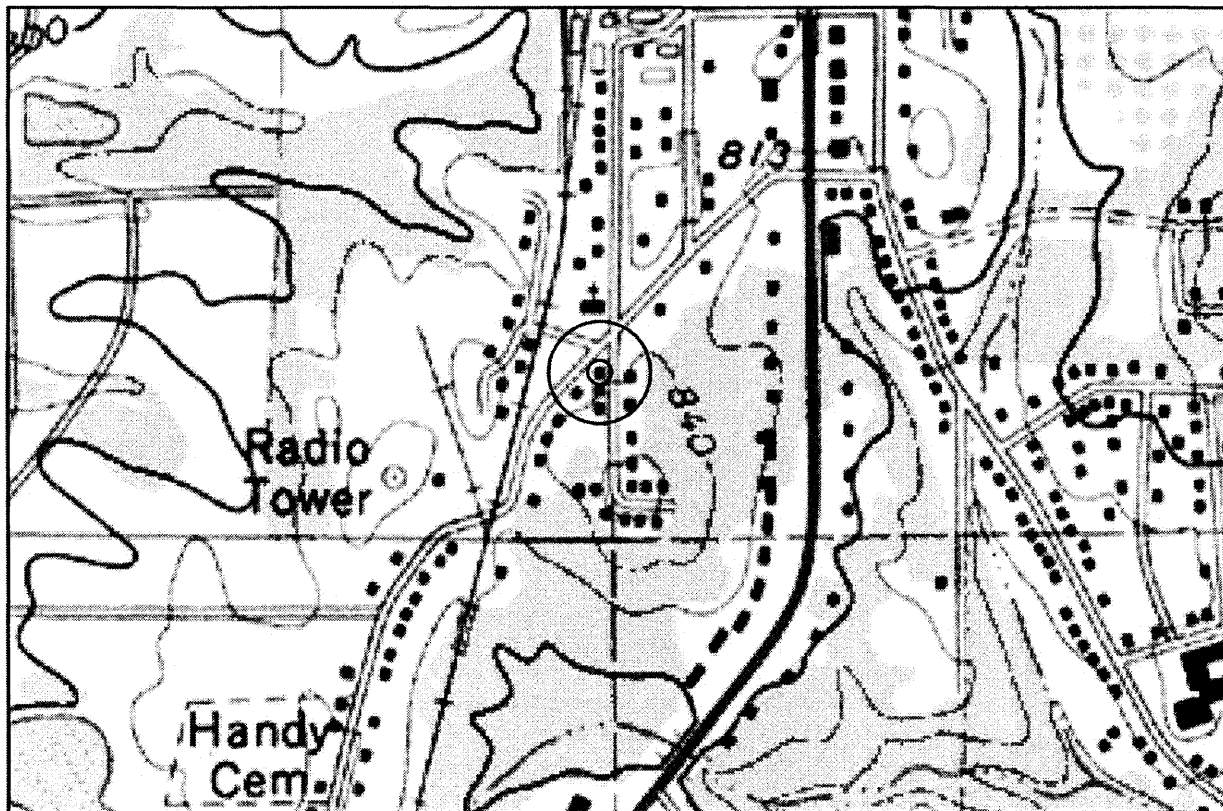
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Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service

county and State

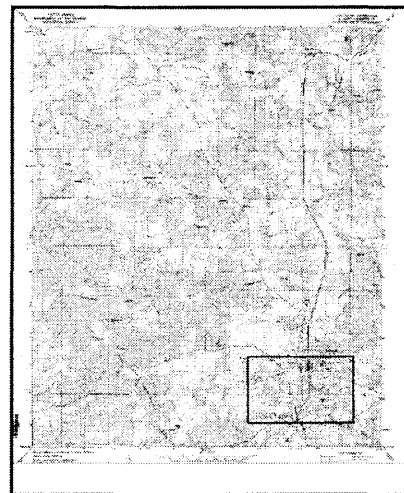
Chambers County, AL

Topo Map



U.S.G.S. Lafayette Quadrangle
Created: 1971; Revised: 1983

UTM: 16 / 649295 / 3640219



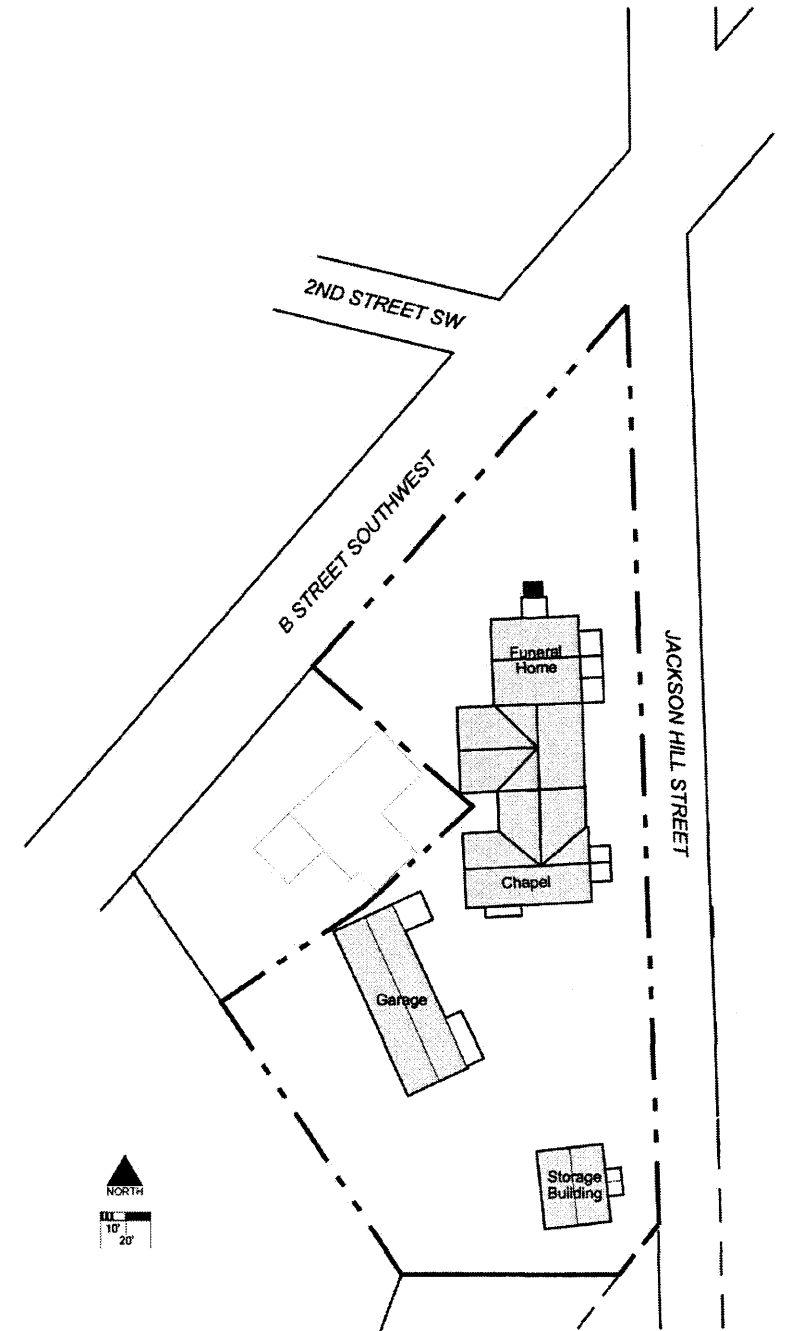
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Siteplan



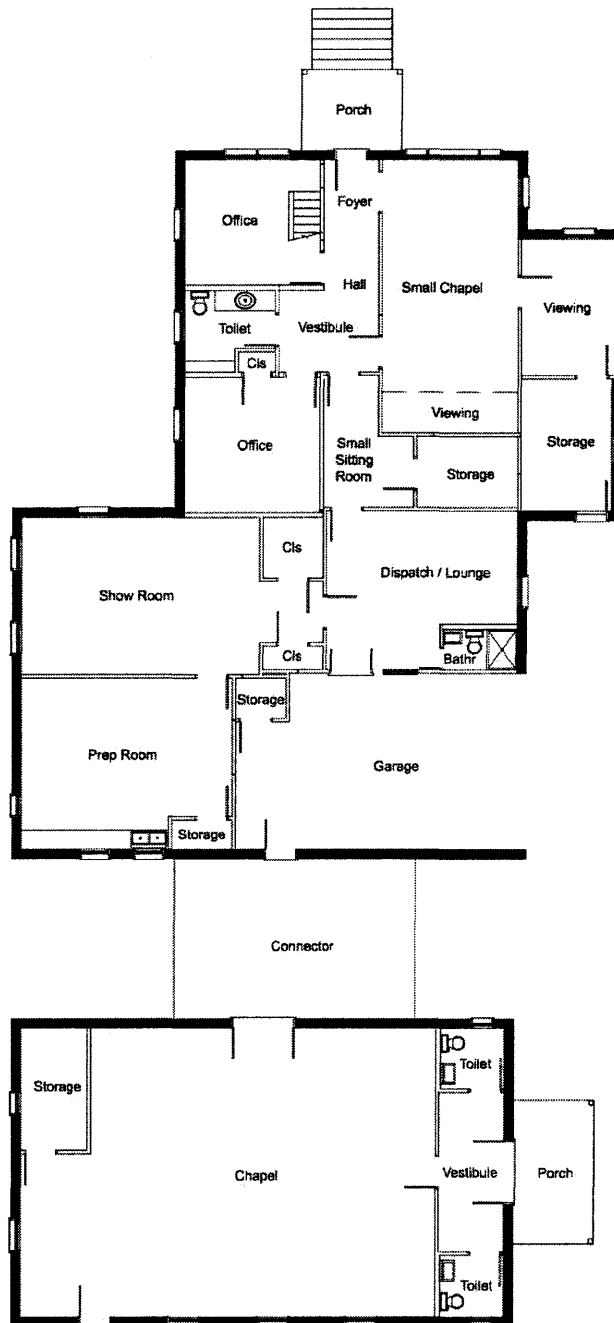
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Floorplan



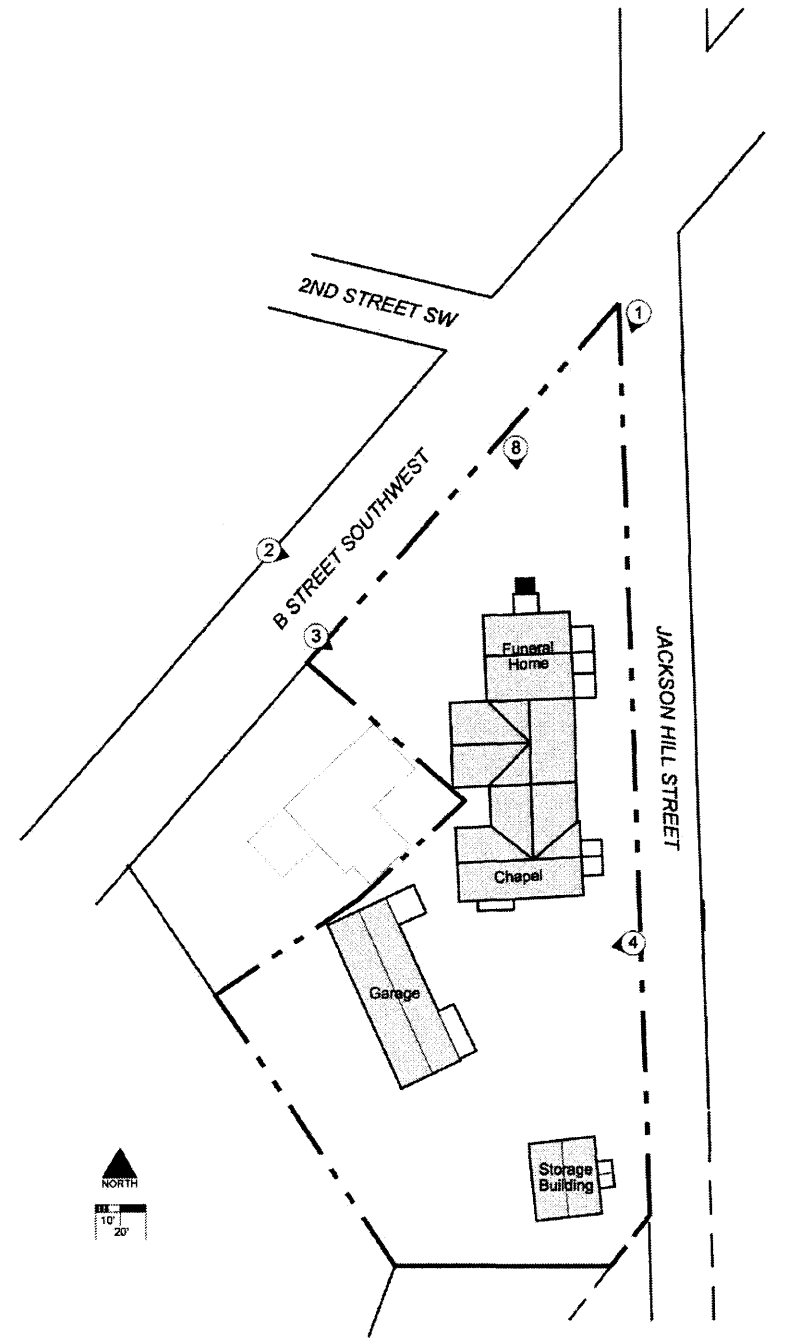
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Siteplan, Photo Locations Indicated



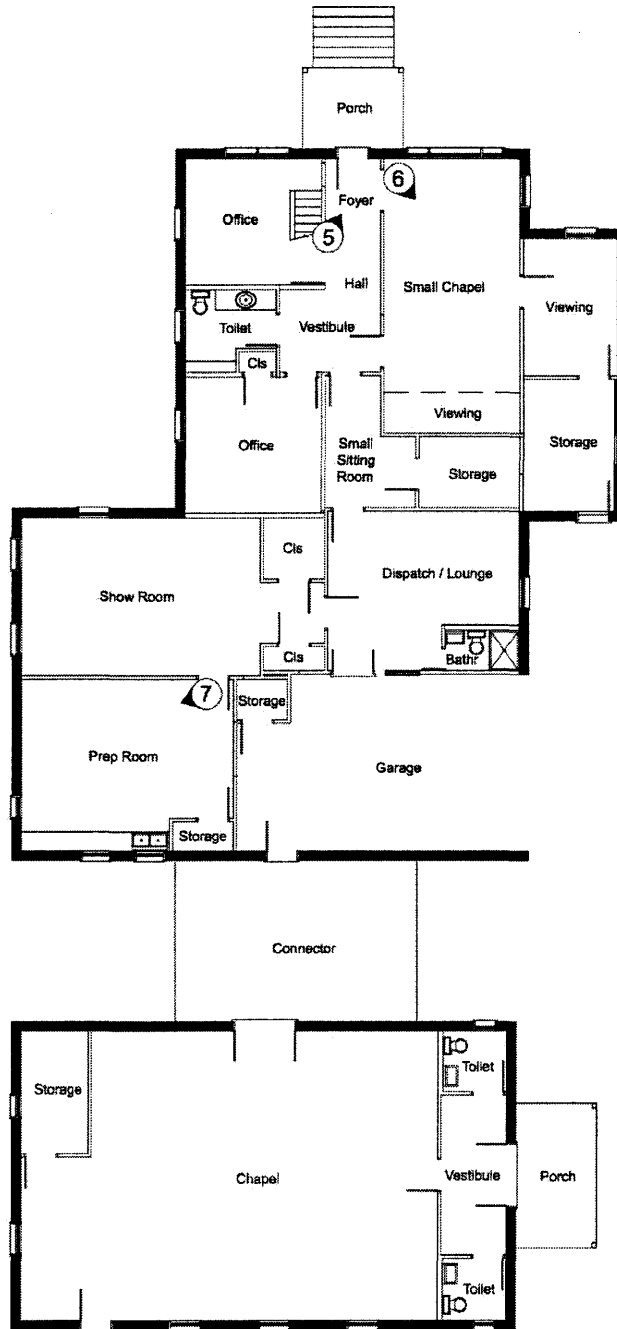
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Floorplan, Photo Locations Indicated



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Accompanying Documentation Sheet

name of property:

Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service

Section _____ Page 13

county and State

Chambers County, AL

Photographs

1. Vines Funeral Home and Ambulance Service
2. Lafayette, Chambers County, AL
3. David B. Schneider
4. November 2006
5. 411 E. 6th St., Anniston AL 36207
6. North facade (right) & west elevation (left) camera, facing southwest
7. Photo #1

6. North facade (left) & east elevation (right), camera facing southeast
7. Photo #2

6. West elevation, camera facing east
7. Photo #3

6. South (left) and east (right) elevations, camera facing northwest
7. Photo #4

6. Interior, hallway, camera facing northeast
7. Photo #5

6. Interior, chapel, camera facing southeast
7. Photo #6

6. Interior, embalming room, camera facing northeast
7. Photo #7

6. Historic Photo, circa 1955
7. Photo #8

6. Ambulance garage, camera facing west
7. Photo #9

6. Storage building, camera facing southwest
7. Photo #10