

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 **N/A** 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 TENNILLE WOMAN'S CLUBHOUSE
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 132 Smith St.
city, town Tennille (N/A) vicinity of
county Washington code GA 303
state Georgia code GA zip code 31089

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

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

Number of Resources within Property:

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

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A
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
Signature of certifying official

May 29, 1998
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

Edson H. Beall

7-1-98

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

Beall

Keeper of the National Register

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

SOCIAL/clubhouse
EDUCATION/library

Current Functions:

SOCIAL/clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

unclear

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	logs
roof	asphalt shingles
other	rock pillars

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Tennille Woman's Clubhouse is a one-story, log building built to be a clubhouse. The exterior walls are peeled, stained pine logs joined by saddlebag notching. The front entrance has flanking sidelights and a transom with the portico containing open log construction. The pillars on the front portico are made of limestone rocks. There is a marble cornerstone/commemorative plaque within one pillar. On the rear, there are two windows on the main block, each with four vertical divisions, one each on either side of the rear portico. There are shingles in the gabled ends. On the interior the main block is one large meeting room with a large fireplace, limestone over brick, with a log mantle suspended by a log chain. There is a granite plaque on one side of the fireplace. The interior is mainly peeled, stained pine logs. Flanking this room are a kitchen on the north and a library on the south. The porticos on the east and west sides allow for cross ventilation. The interior materials are peeled, stained pine logs. All the floors, walls, and doors are pine. The grounds include a semicircular driveway. There is a minimum of landscaping which includes large, open spaces on the south and west sides. The only other features on the property are the historic granite grill and connected seating, and the non-historic entertainment/meeting pavilion, open on all four sides. The clubhouse sits in downtown Tennille between a house and a city park forming a transition between residential and commercial areas. There have been very few changes to the property. Plumbing was installed when the structure was built. A gas heating system was installed c. 1986. Air conditioning was installed c. 1992.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION
SOCIAL HUMANITARIAN

Period of Significance:

1922-1948

Significant Dates:

1922

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

J.A.Mills, contractor

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Tennille Woman's Clubhouse is significant in architecture as an excellent example of an early 20th-century small-town clubhouse-type building in Georgia. It is architecturally distinguished by its overall Craftsman style, its use of natural local materials, and its fine craftsmanship. Architectural features of special note include the front portico with its rock pillars and open log construction, and the stone and brick fireplace with its unusual log mantel. Architecturally, the Clubhouse reflects early 20th-century interest in the arts and crafts, popularized by the "rustic" buildings in national and state parks. This style was frequently but not exclusively used in Georgia during this period for community landmark buildings and reached the height of its popularity during the 1930s with Federally funded construction projects.

The clubhouse is significant in education and social humanitarian history because it was built to serve the local woman's club but was also part of the larger movement of woman's clubs in the United States, a movement started in the 1890s. The local club began in 1914 as a sewing club, turning shortly to civic projects, becoming incorporated in 1920, and federated with the state and national program in 1921 after undergoing an application review in which the club had to be certified as being non-political and non-sectarian and being devoted to promoting better communities. It is still an active club today, with membership being about 40, which is about the historical number of members. The clubhouse was built with community support and supplies. The clubhouse has always served as a meeting place, with the club early on extending invitations to other groups--religious, patriotic, family, educational, and civic--to use the building free of charge. Besides meetings, there have been plays, family reunions, dances, and public hearings held here. The club sponsored school improvement projects and city clean-up projects, and it was also the site of the origins of the county's first publicly-supported library, opening in the south room in 1923 as the Woodrow Wilson Library. It eventually outgrew the room and moved to its own building and has remained the county's representative in the Public Library System of Georgia. The cornerstone indicates that the clubhouse was dedicated "To the Memory of the Washington Co. Boys who Served in the World War."

National Register Criteria

The nomination meets National Register Criterion A because of its association with the woman's club movement in the U.S. and in Georgia, having been built during the early 20th century when this movement was encouraging the building clubhouses across the country. The clubhouse was the center for many civic and philanthropic activities in this small community.

The nomination meets National Register Criterion C because of the construction of the building with pine logs which evoked an earlier, frontier era, both historical and patriotic, as well as the basic structure for the frontier, and its link to other similarly-designed and built women's clubhouses in

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Georgia and elsewhere. Its design and construction reflect the early 20th century interests in the arts and crafts and in "rustic"-style architecture.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance runs from the construction of the clubhouse (1922) to the end of the historic era (1948) because the building has always been used as a woman's clubhouse (and continues to be used as such) and was the center for many locally important social, cultural, and educational events and activities throughout the historic period.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

Contributing Buildings: one, clubhouse. Non-contributing buildings: one, the meeting pavilion
Contributing Structure: one, the grill and seating area.

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

In 1914 a group of women in Tennille, Georgia, formed a sewing club. Shortly, however, the club began to extend itself, turning its focus as a social club toward civic projects. Since then, its role as a civic-minded organization has enhanced the quality of life for Tennille's citizens, as well as for many Washington Countians. The Tennille Woman's Club, which was an outgrowth of the sewing club, was organized in 1920, Federated in 1921, and is still a vital part of the community.

At the turn-of-the-century Tennille was enjoying the considerable prosperity that the Central of Georgia Railroad brought it: numerous visitors, merchants, salesman, etc., traveled through station 13 (Tennille) on the main line. Although "King Cotton" had reached its zenith several decades before the beginning of the 20th-century, agriculture prevailed and the county flourished. In fact, the first decade of this century was one of the most profitable periods in the history of Washington County. Thus, Washington Countians witnessed a building boom, growth of banks and schools, and the emergence of various cultural, civic, and social clubs. The Tennille Woman's Club seems to have stemmed from this prosperity.

In 1916 the club decided to suspend all pending activities in order to devote their time and energy to war work. However, by 1920 the main objective of the club was to build a clubhouse. Interest swelled, membership increased, and by February 1922 ground was broken for the new clubhouse.

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Enthusiasm was not limited to the membership, as a local reporter noted: "the entire community...joined in the project and gifts of money, logs, lumber, lime, cement, and rock began to come in." A few months later the cornerstone was laid with much fanfare, as various articles such as a U. S. flag, a picture of Woodrow Wilson, a Masonic poem, and a copy of The Sandersville Progress were placed in the cornerstone. The club voted to call the building the "Washington County Memorial Clubhouse" in honor of the World War veterans. The three outer doors were given as a memorial to the three Washington County boys who died in the first World War. Not only did the community gain a wonderful community center, it also erected a monument to its immense patriotism and civic pride.

Since the time it was built, the clubhouse has served as a meeting place for the Tennille Woman's Club. However, its function has not been limited to this; after the clubhouse was built, the club extended an invitation to all other religious, patriotic, family, educational, and civic organizations to use a building free of charge. This accessibility has made the Tennille Woman's Clubhouse a true community center.

The Woman's Club Movement in Georgia:

In 1916 there were 336 Woman's Clubs in Georgia with some 25,000 members. To join with the Georgia Federation of Woman's Clubs, this club followed a procedure similar to that used in the 1990's. That is, they expressed their goals consistently with those of the Georgia Federation of Woman's Clubs which sought to join women into a union with these criteria:

- [1] local, diverse purposes consistent in mutual counsel and helpfulness
- [2] non-political
- [3] non-sectarian
- [4] united in women's service and influence promoting better communities.

The local club asked to join and found two sponsoring, federated clubs. They agreed to pay district and state dues according to their membership, and when all was in order, they were initiated at a state meeting. Thus in 1921 the Tennille Woman's Club joined the State Federation, linking its efforts with women in many other communities in the county and in Georgia.

Within the scope of Federation's values above, individual clubs chose their own projects. Federated Clubs endeavored to promote and improve education, civic, social and moral dimensions of local community life. The annual state-wide assemblies heard reports in such areas as Arts and Crafts, Civics and Junior Civics, Conservation, Country Life, Education, Health, Home Economics, Kindergarten, Legislation, Music, Press, Red Cross and Home and School Improvement.

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During the 1920's, in Washington County, in addition to the Tennille Woman's Club, the Sandersville and the "Sisters' Community Clubs" were Federated, and there were community women's clubs in Warthen and Deepstep that did not seek federation. Only the Tennille and Warthen clubs are active today.

Membership:

A group of the most socially prominent, white women in Tennille, Georgia, organized themselves as a sewing club. Now the Tennille Woman's Club, it has continued to draw its members from that strata. Membership in the Tennille Woman's Club has historically hovered around 30 and numbers about 40 today.

Civic Activity of Tennille Woman's Club (1922-1948)

The club undertook to build a clubhouse in 1920. As an outgrowth of the patriotism of the war period, the clubhouse would honor soldiers from Washington County. The club members sold bonds and engendered broad community support. With the clubhouse, Tennille Woman's Club launched other services.

A School Improvement Association was appointed. Members went into the schools to teach. Classrooms were redecorated. Equipment for classes, playground and laboratories was purchased. Athletic equipment was donated. Stage furnishings were secured, a set of reference books was provided to the school library, and a free health clinic was held for school children. In the late 1920s, the club gave a complete set of Mission furniture for the stage of the new school that continued in use past the end of World War II.

Throughout the community the women had a hand in "running the town" as they worked to get out the vote, and sponsored "Clean up Weeks" when chimneys and streets were cleaned. Even the sewer system benefited from the energy of this club. Tennille Club members were also active in the state levels of the Woman's Clubs, hosting district meetings in 1922, 1939, 1951 and 1990. Ten different ladies held District offices in the early years, and Mrs. W. B. Smith was a state-level officer. In 1978 the club received a citation for its support of Talullah Falls School, long a special beneficiary of the Georgia Federation of Woman's Clubs.

Establishment of a free public circulating library was the dream of the club, so the club members set to work to organize and run it almost immediately. In 1923 the Woodrow Wilson Library was opened to the public in one room of the clubhouse, manned by Club volunteers. Soon the W.P.A. approved this project, salaried librarians were hired and in a few years, the City of Tennille joined the club in sponsorship of the library

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Log Construction: Was is a Women's Club Motif or Not?

By February, 1922, ground was broken for the new clubhouse on two lots purchased in December, 1921. Plans were purchased for a "commodious log building" to cost \$8,000. The origin of log design is not evident in club minutes and no member alive today dates from that era.

Log cabins have been powerful national symbol of "self-made America" determinedly hacking a new life out of ancient forest by hand. Five American Presidents were born in log cabins. Furthermore, it was consistent with the rustic, craftsman architectural style of the time. Later the New Deal projects would choose such rustic designs--almost as a representation of a project arising from plain people. Also, logs were a material readily available for in-kind donations. On May 15, 1922 contractor J. A. Mills needed more logs for the structure and, in The Sandersville Progress, made an appeal to members to secure them.

The club's membership was unable to ascertain any influence from the Georgia Federation of Woman's Clubs for the use of logs.

9. Major Bibliographic References

The Bibliography was provided by the consultant and the club:

Pittman, Bette, Tenth District President, Georgia Federation Woman's Clubs, Interview, July 6, 1997.

Macon Telegraph, "Club Women of Sixth District Meet Today," May 2, 1916.

Macon Telegraph, "Comprehensive Review of Activities of State Federation During Year is Given by President, Mrs. Fitzpatrick", October 25, 1916.

Macon Telegraph, "Women's Club Federated, 1896," Dec. 4, 1919.

Sandersville Progress, December 12, 1921.

Sandersville Progress, "Woman's Club," May 15, 1922.

Sandersville Progress, "Tennille Woman's Club 20th Birthday," May 31, 1934.

Sandersville Progress, "History of Woman's Club and Civic Work is Told," May 17, 1937.

Sandersville Progress, "History of Tennille Woman's Club," June 24, 1971.

"Tennille Woman's Club, Organized in 1914," unsigned, handwritten historical narrative belonging to the Tennille Woman's Club.

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

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- 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 #**

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Section 9--Major Bibliographic References

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:** files of the Tennille Woman's Club itself, Tennille, GA.

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): n/a

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 330540 Northing 3645640

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is that parcel shown on the enclosed tax map. Dimensions are as shown on the map.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is all that the current owners own at this location and that remains associated with the club.

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 19, 1998

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

name/title Josephine N. Cummings
organization Washington County Historical Society
street and number P.O.Box 6088
city or town Sandersville **state** GA **zip code** 31082
telephone (912) 552-5030

() **consultant**
() **regional development center preservation planner**
(X) **other:** historical society contact

NOTE: The club members themselves provided the initial research in 1993, Mrs. Cummings provided supplemental materials later.

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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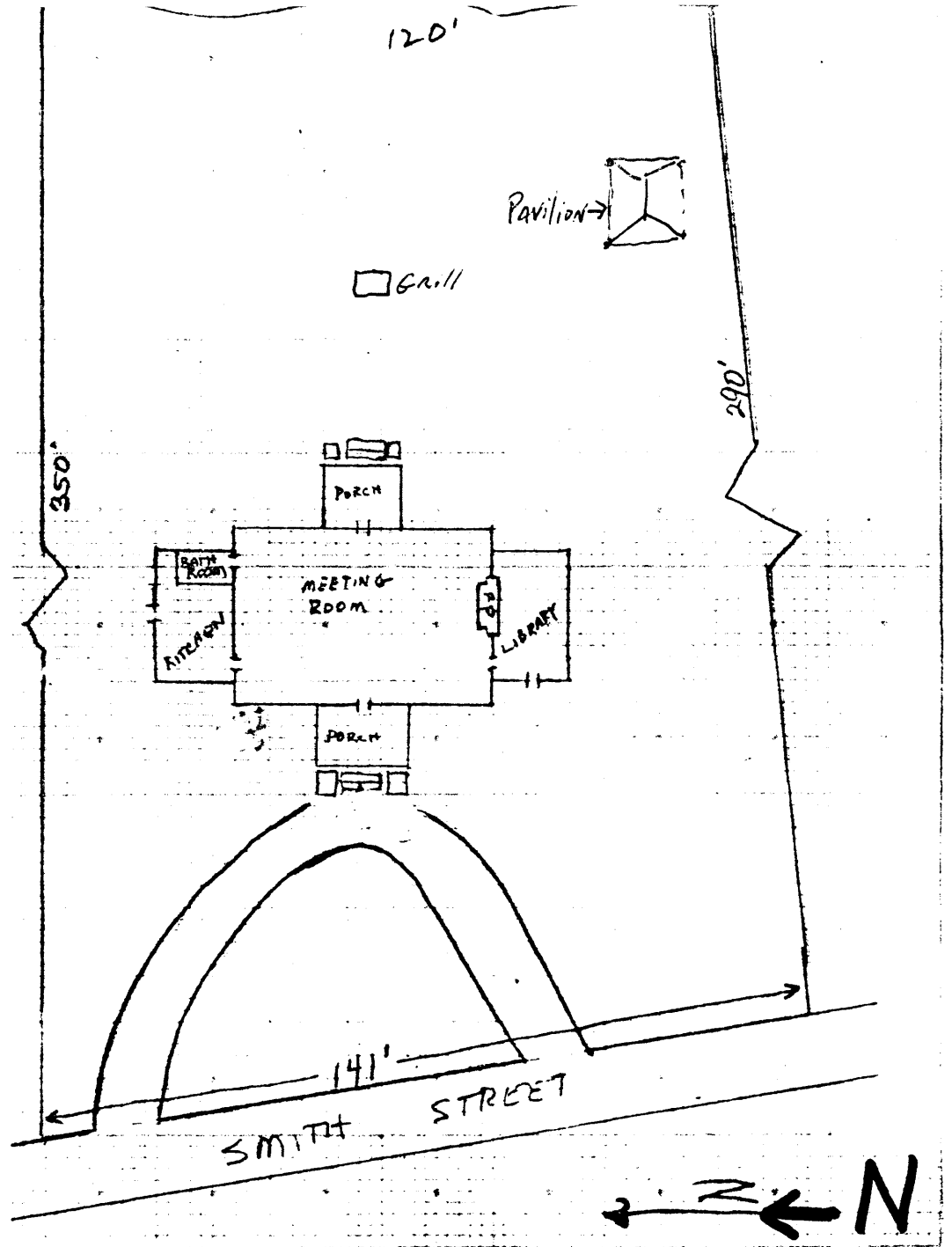
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Photographs

Name of Property: Tennille Woman's Clubhouse
City or Vicinity: Tennille
County: Washington
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: September, 1997

Description of Photograph(s):

- 1 of 13: Front (west) facade; photographer facing northeast.
- 2 of 13: Front facade, front door; photographer facing northeast.
- 3 of 13: Front facade, front porch and columns; photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 13: Front porch, column and commemorative stone detail; photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 13: North wing (kitchen) and front facade, with pavilion in left background; photographer facing southeast.
- 6 of 13: Rear (east) facade and kitchen wing on right; photographer facing southwest.
- 7 of 13: Rear (east) facade and library wing on left; photographer facing northwest.
- 8 of 13: Rear facade porch with ramp; photographer facing southwest.
- 9 of 13: Meeting Room (central room) looking toward kitchen; photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 13: Meeting Room (central room) looking toward fireplace and library; photographer facing southeast.
- 11 of 13: Meeting Room, fireplace with plaque; photographer facing south.
- 12 of 13: Meeting Room, fireplace; photographer facing southeast.
- 13 of 13: Grill/outdoor cooking area; photographer facing south.



Sketch Map (Site Plan)/
 Floor Plan
 Historic Name: Tennille Woman's
 Clubhouse
 Scale: Measurements are directly
 on the map.
 Source: Buddy Hudson
 Date: 1993
 Key: Rooms are marked directly
 on the plan.