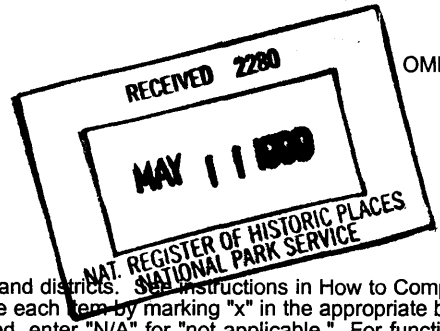
NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90

OMB No. 1024-0018



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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Seminole County Home

other names/site number Museum of Seminole County History/SE01180

2. Location

street & number 300 Bush Boulevard N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Sanford N/A ☐ vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Seminole code 117 zip code 32773

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 of certifying official/Title Date 4/30/99

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

for Edson H. Beall 6-10-99

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)

- ☒ buildings
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	3	structures
0	0	objects
2	3	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/institutional housing

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Masonry Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Stucco
roof Asphalt Shingle
other Wood: Porch

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.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or 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
Social History

Period of Significance

1926-1949

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Moughton, Elton J.
Dossey, Howard & Kelly Construction Company

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
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 36) 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 less than one acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	470770	3179380
2			
3			
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 Sidney Johnston, Counsultant; Gary V. Goodwin, Historic Preservation Planner

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date April, 1999

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Seminole County Board of County Commissioners

street & number 1101 East First Street telephone (407) 321-1130

city or town Sanford state Florida zip code 32771

SUMMARY

The Seminole County Home located south of the City of Sanford at 300 Bush Boulevard stands as an important historic architectural resource. The one-story Masonry Vernacular building, constructed in 1926, has an unusual asymmetrical mass and appearance with an irregular floor plan protected by a series of cross-gable roofs. Its brick walls are finished with a decorative pebble-stucco, which consists of a composite of black-and-white onyx, or quartz, pebbles. Three porches of various sizes project from the front facade and fenestration includes nearly sixty casement and double-hung sash windows with a variety of muntin patterns. Triangular brackets and purlins are mounted under the eaves and exposed rafter ends display a v-shape trim. The building contains some fifty-two hundred square feet of interior floor space and displays a superior level of craftsmanship. It has been rehabilitated for use as the Museum of Seminole County History. Notwithstanding the adaptive use, the building retains its early twentieth century character to a high degree.

SETTING

Seminole County lies in east central Florida with Sanford serving as the seat of government. The population of the county is nearly 350,000 and Sanford is the second largest municipality with some 35,000 residents. The primary transportation corridors consist of Interstate 4, U.S. Highway 17/92, State Road 46, and State Road 436. The Green Belt, a toll by-pass through east Orange and Seminole counties, ends in Sanford and provides quick access southward to the University of Central Florida, Orlando International Airport, and various theme parks south of Orlando. The CSX railroad tracks run through the county.

The county home stands some five miles south of downtown Sanford about three hundred feet west of U.S. Highway 17/92 in the Elder Springs area of Seminole County. Flea World, a large flea market, sprawls to the east and Interstate 4 lies some five miles to the west of the property. Orlando is located about fifteen miles to the south. Lake Jessup, a large body of water that empties into the St. Johns River, lies about one mile east. Five Points, the intersection of U.S. 17/92, State Road 419, and State Road 427, lies about one mile to the south. The terrain is relatively flat and the property rests on a small knoll. The building is part of the Seminole County Operations Center, which includes facilities for communications maintenance, EMS & fire training bureau, fire rescue center, and other county services. Vegetation consists of a relatively large camphor tree, live oak and palm trees, and small hedges of portacarpus and junipers.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Exterior

The irregular plan and asymmetrical rhythm of the building is evident from the front (east) facade (photographs 1, 2), which displays two projecting front-facing-gable extensions and a long side-facing gable. Another dominant feature of the front (east) facade is a series of three porches protected by gable and shed roofs. The central gable-roof porch, displaying pairs of square columns and balustrades, protects the primary entrance. The northernmost porch also exhibits paired columns and balustrades, but is protected by a shed roof (photographs 3, 4). The smallest of the porches projects at the southeast corner, where wood posts support a diminutive gable roof (photograph 5).

A small brick chimney pierces the ridge of the southernmost front-facing gable and a second larger chimney extends high above the roof of the central gable. Both chimneys are finished in stucco. Most windows punctuating the facade are six-over-six-light double-hung sashes placed asymmetrically. A pair of four-over-four-light double-hung sashes bracket an eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash arrangement at the southeast corner of the facade.

The south elevation continues the asymmetrical theme of the building (photographs 5, 6). It displays four eight-light casement windows and six-over-six-light double-hung sashes of various sizes. Near the center of the elevation stands a small stoop, which consists of a raised concrete platform with a projecting shed roof and a six-light paneled wood door.

The rear, or west, elevation (photographs 6, 8, 9) displays a series of projecting and receding rear-facing gable roofs that are connected by side-facing gable roofs, all of which cover an irregular wall system. The roof and wall system is more irregular than that found along the front (east) facade or any of the other elevations. Two projecting rear-facing gables of various lengths and one receding rear-facing gable contribute to the unusual appearance of this elevation. The two northernmost projecting gables display another unusual feature: from each extend small single, projecting cross-gables that nearly touch each other, forming a small courtyard at the central rear entrance (photographs 10, 11). This central rear courtyard leads to a four-light, paneled wood door and to steps that descend into a small basement that contains a furnace.

Near the southwest corner of the rear elevation are two, glazed paneled wood doors that open onto a relatively large stoop (photograph 8). Two additional doors are centrally placed in the central and northernmost cross-gable extensions. Fenestration along the west elevation is fairly regular but asymmetrical with six-over-six double-hung sash windows. One exception is an eight-over-eight double-hung sash immediately south of the

rear entrance in the courtyard (photograph 11).

The north elevation displays a cross-gable roof arrangement without projecting or receding walls (photograph 12). Fenestration consists of six-over-six double-hung sash windows and a lighted door.

Interior

The plan of the interior of the building is defined by a series of long narrow hallways leading into relatively large common, or public, spaces and small rooms. The original plan divided the interior into three sections: superintendent's quarters (south end of the building); common area, dining area, and kitchen (roughly the center of the building); and the inmate's rooms (north and west end of the building). All of those spaces presently serve as exhibition spaces. Historically, the plan of the building placed the inmates in twenty-one rooms. The adaptive use rehabilitation of the building into offices and then a museum has resulted in the removal of several interior walls (c. 1965). Consequently, thirteen spaces now occupy the original twenty-one inmate rooms. The superintendent was quartered in the southern section of the building with those quarters insulated from the inmates by a common area, dining room, and kitchen. The superintendent's quarters were accessed from the outside by two doors at the southeast corner. The primary entrance doors for the inmates were in the central projecting gable and northernmost shed-roof porch and side-facing gable. Secondary entrances on the north and west elevations opened into hallways that also led to the inmate's quarters. Restrooms were contained within the small cross-gables that nearly touch at the rear elevation.

The ceilings rise approximately eight feet and, along with the walls, are finished with plaster. A few rooms contain dropped ceilings. Crown, picture, and toe moldings finish the walls. Original door frames and three-light transoms remain intact, although most doors have been removed and stored to accommodate circulation through the museum. The original wood doors that remain display their paneled features and brass hardware. Pine floors have been refinished and help provide a rich ambiance to the interior.

The primary entrance, in the central gable on the front, or east, facade, opens into a long narrow hallway (photograph 13), extending some seventy-five feet in length to a rear entrance. An administrative office for the Museum of Seminole County History occupies two former inmate rooms immediately to the right, or north, of the entrance. Former inmate rooms to the left, or south, house interpretative exhibits of the history of Seminole County and Florida. The hall empties into a former common area (photograph 14, 15) before continuing farther west to the kitchen (photograph 18) and additional exhibit rooms (photograph 16). On the south wall of the common area stands a textured buff brick fireplace with a carved cypress mantle (photograph 14). A skylight framed with beaded board pierces the ceiling and roof near the northwest corner of the former common area (photograph 15).

A narrow hallway opens at the north of the common room to an entrance at the north elevation and several exhibit rooms. The hallway dog-legs to the left, or west, to additional exhibit rooms (photographs 15, 19, 20), a men's restroom (photograph 21), and a rear exit.

The kitchen and restrooms occupy their original spaces. The archives/library occupies the space of the former pantry (photograph 24) and the original dining room now serves as a meeting room (photograph 25). South of the meeting room stands the former superintendent's quarters (photograph 25). A stem wall has replaced an original full partition (c. 1965), but conveys a sense of separation between the meeting room and the superintendent's quarters. The superintendent's space originally consisted of a combination dining/living room (photograph 25), parlor (photograph 25), kitchen (photograph 28), bed room (photograph 26), and restroom. French doors divide the combination dining/living room from the parlor, where a corner fireplace with textured buff brick and a carved cypress mantle stands in the southwest corner. The superintendent's office occupied the space beyond the parlor in the extreme southeast corner of the building (photograph 30). Those spaces now contain exhibits, with the exception of the former superintendent's office, which serves as a storage room.

Alterations (c. 1965)

Exterior

Relatively few alterations have been made to the exterior. Most exterior doors have been replaced to meet code and security standards. Additionally, a small breezeway that originally extended between the main building and storage building was removed several years ago (c. 1995). Plans have been made for its restoration. These changes only slightly affect the character of the building and do not compromise its historic integrity.

Interior

Interior alterations consist of the removal of several interior walls to provide improved circulation between exhibition rooms. In those areas where walls have been removed, header joists projecting from the ceiling and framed in pine remain to furnish a visual separation and guide to the original size of each room. In addition, a solid wall originally separated the former superintendent's quarters from the former dining area. It has been replaced by a stem wall, header joist, and column, which conveys a sense of separation between the areas. Most interior doors have been removed and stored to facilitate circulation through the museum. Notwithstanding these minor alterations, the overall plan and definition of spaces in the interior remains intact.

Contributing Outbuilding

An outbuilding stands at the southwest corner of the primary building. It displays a hip roof with exposed rafter ends, six-over-six-light double-hung sash windows, and paneled wood entrance doors with six lights at the northeast and southwest corners. A chimney rises along the east elevation and the exterior walls are finished in pebble-dash stucco. The undivided interior space contains some four hundred square feet of floor space and serves a storage function (photographs 6, 7, 9).

Noncontributing objects and structures

Along the north elevation stand a railroad semaphore, a short stretch of railroad tracks, and the base of a turntable that was originally located at Oviedo, Seminole County, Florida (photograph 12). Although the railroad-related structures were constructed during the historic period, they were relocated to their present site in the last ten years and have lost their historical context, and, consequently, are non-contributing.

SUMMARY

Seminole County Home fulfills criteria A and C at the local level in the areas of architecture and social history for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Under criterion A, the building was constructed in 1926 to house the indigent and poor of Seminole County. The building is representative of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history in that it demonstrates the commitment of Seminole County's leaders to care for its disadvantaged population. The plans for the building were prepared by Sanford architect Elton J. Moughton and the Dossey; Howard & Kelly Construction Company of Sanford supervised its construction. Under criterion C, the building displays Masonry Vernacular characteristics with an unusual pebble-stucco exterior wall finish and well-executed wood trim features. The building is one of few historic county homes left standing in Florida, and as a facility originally built as an institution for the poor, it represents the attitudes held concerning social welfare in the early part of the twentieth century.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Seminole County

Seminole County, organized in 1913, contains a number of communities with a nineteenth century heritage. Sanford, one of the oldest of those, was founded on the south shore of Lake Monroe in 1871 by Henry S. Sanford, an enthusiastic supporter of citrus cultivation and railroads. The town was incorporated in 1877, and three years later Henry Sanford helped organize the South Florida Railroad. Citrus and truck farming played important roles in the region's history. Chase & Company was formed there in 1884 and celery was introduced after devastating freezes in the mid-1890s. By 1912, Sanford was widely known as the "Celery City." The population fluctuated greatly during the interval, rising and falling with the fortunes of the citrus and vegetable industries. It ranged from 2,016 in 1890 to 1,450 in 1900 to 3,570 in 1910. Other smaller neighboring communities sharing this pattern of growth included Altamonte Springs, Chuluota, Gabriella, Geneva, Lake Mary, Longwood, Oviedo, and Paola.

Surging growth in the early twentieth century sparked the creation of Seminole County in 1913 and Sanford was designated the seat of county government. County commission actions allocated funding for the construction of bridges and roads, courthouse, a home for the indigent, a hospital, and a jail. Within several years, Dixie Highway was built through the county, roughly forming the alignment of present-day U.S. 17/92. Sanford's commercial center expanded and the population stood at five thousand in 1915. Furthermore, new farms were created south of the city. The Florida East Coast Railway extended a line through Chuluota and other settlements in the eastern part of the county, where the company sought profits from transporting harvests reaped by growers cultivating crops. In 1920, the population of the county reached eleven thousand. During the

Florida land boom of the 1920s, Seminole County experienced substantial additional growth. The population reached 14,738 in 1925 and real estate assessments soared to nearly twelve million dollars by 1927. Agricultural production drove the robust economy as the number of farms increased from five hundred and seventy-three to eight hundred and ten between 1920 and 1925. Groves and farm acreage reached 13,020 in 1927.

During this period of expansion, the government of Seminole County embarked on an ambitious plan to improve its jail and county home, and expand the road system. The City of Sanford pushed its municipal limits southward, where new residential subdivisions claimed former groves and farms. Even smaller settlements, such as the Elder Springs area, named for a small spring that fed Lake Jessup south of Sanford, was effected by the land boom, when, in 1926, the Orlando realty firm of Conrad-Walker Company opened Elder Springs Garden, "the summer and winter resort of Florida." Near the spring, the company offered for sale fifty lots along the Dixie Highway and ten lots fronting on a lake. That year, the economy began a downward spiral as the land boom of the 1920s collapsed.

Although Seminole County residents enjoyed a relatively diversified economy and the population continued to climb, reaching 18,735 by 1930, the Great Depression made its full impact in the early-1930s, when hundreds of properties went into foreclosure and several banks failed. The expansion of the government sector, increasing tourism, and bumper vegetable and citrus harvests helped to buoy the economy during the period. In 1937 alone, some 3,325,000 crates of celery were shipped out of Florida, most from Seminole County farms. The Sanford Armory and Seminole County's Big Tree Park were developed, in part, with financial assistance from the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal program implemented by the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. By 1940, the county's population had expanded to 22,304, with much of the growth occurring in Sanford.

During the 1940s, the county's population continued to rise, reaching 24,560 in 1945. NAS Sanford opened during World War II to train Navy pilots. Many servicemen stationed in Florida during the war returned with their families after the war to take up residence. The state also began to attract a growing number of retirees from the North and Midwest. Relatively inexpensive housing and low property taxes appealed to retired Americans who relied on a fixed income. Over the ensuing decades, the state's growth accelerated. Seminole County shared in that growth, with the population rising from 51,983 in 1970 to 287,521 by 1990 and 310,890 in 1993.

Almshouse/County Home Context

In United States history, the almshouse or poorhouse was a very real thing. Many generations of Americans

were brought up with a "reverence for God, the hope of heaven, and the fear of the poorhouse." The almshouse concept in America derives its roots from 1690s England, when the City of Bristol experimented with caring for and housing paupers. This British "workhouse" of the seventeenth century was transplanted as a social institution to the American colonies during the eighteenth century and renamed the "almshouse." Despite its long heritage, the American pauper institution in its various manifestations has been accorded relatively little scrutiny. Too often names such as almshouse, county home, county hospital, poor farm, and poor house were applied indiscriminately to institutions that collectively housed the aged, infirm, insane, indigent, and needy. Not all "inmates," a term commonly used to characterize those persons housed within these institutions, were aged people, although all were destitute. They included children, the deaf and the dumb, indigent in need of hospitalization, and the insane, as well as mentally capable paupers. Only in the early twentieth century were concerted attempts made to physically separate and house people classified within those various categories independent of each other. Too often petty criminals, vagrants, and tramps were institutionalized along with the destitute and clinically insane, making for intolerable conditions and an explosive environment between inmates. During the Progressive Era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, distinguished social reformers, such as Jane Addams of Hull House in Chicago and author and social worker Robert Hunter, went far to address the needs of people living in poverty and caring for the poor and paupers. Federal housing studies by the U.S. Congress in 1892 and President Theodore Roosevelt's Housing Commission (1902) prepared exhaustive studies of slums, tenements, and the needs of those in almshouses.

In 1904, Florida had the smallest number of institutionalized paupers of any southern state. The state's institutional poor totaled one hundred and twenty-four in 1904, with most of those in Jacksonville, Tampa, and Pensacola. Little had changed by 1910, although by then Florida ranked just above Louisiana in the number of paupers. The census enumeration inventoried public almshouses in eleven Florida cities. The names for places that housed Florida's needy reflected common labels assigned to almshouses then in vogue: Brevard County Home (Titusville); Duval County Hospital (Jacksonville); Escambia County Poor Farm (Pensacola); Hillsborough County Poor Farm (Tampa); Lee County Poor Farm (Fort Myers); Marion County Poor Farm (Kendrick); Monroe County Poorhouse (Key West); Orange County Home (Orlando); Santa Rosa County Poorhouse (Milton); Walton County Poor Farm (DeFuniak Springs); and Washington County Almshouse (Vernon). Jacksonville claimed ninety-seven inmates, and the smallest number (two) were recorded in Fort Myers and Key West. Later, almshouses were established in Seminole and Volusia counties, among others. Eighty-two of Florida's paupers in 1910 were of African-American descent, one native American, the remainder Caucasian. A relatively high rate of admission into these Florida almshouses (933) in 1910 was offset by an equally high rate of discharges (721) and mortality (161). The census explained that its review of almshouse pauperism was only a qualified examination of poverty in the United States, because no attempt had been made to calculate the poor who received public assistance at their homes or the poor who were assisted by private benevolent institutions.

Alexander Johnson, general secretary of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, in his "The Almshouse, Construction and Management" (1911), addressed several pressing concerns about care for the poor. He attributed the confusion in the terms used for these institutions to regional customs and preferences. His research indicated that "almshouse" was typically applied to institutions in New England and some eastern states; "poorhouse" in the Midwest; "county infirmary" was a legal term adopted in Ohio and "county asylum" in Indiana; "county hospital" in California; and "county home" in Maryland and many parts of the South. Commenting that "...it is poor judgment to say poor farm," Johnson continued, presaging the age of political correctness of the late twentieth century, "In all our newer nomenclature we are continually trying to find milder names for disagreeable things, by which we may seem to soften the harsh facts of existence. But a change in name usually indicates something more than a desire for euphemism. It has usually been with a genuine desire to make the almshouse into a real home for worthy poor people that a change of name has been adopted. With a less offensive term has usually come a milder and kinder management."

In the 1920s, approximately twenty-five hundred almshouses operated throughout the United States. Nearly three hundred and fifty thousand acres of land supported these institutions and adjacent farmlands with some twenty-eight million dollars allocated from public coffers for their operation. The management of almshouses throughout America was largely supervised by local authorities. State and federal agencies played little role in their administration or oversight. Consequently, the degree of care afforded the needy was in direct proportion to the sympathies and political will of the public and county officials of a political jurisdiction, along with the character and efficiency of the superintendents and matrons. Two different systems of management prevailed throughout the country. Ninety percent of almshouses were then under the direct supervision of county officials through a hired superintendent or keeper. The remaining ten percent were operated through a contract system in which an almshouse property owned by a municipal government was leased to a manager, or in some cases the property was privately owned and the almshouse manager paid per inmate.

Not infrequently, the lessee of an almshouse did not live on the premises, but on an adjoining farm, often leaving the inmates with no supervision for long periods of time each day. In one Georgia almshouse, the superintendent assured a state inspector that "the inmates get along better without anyone around. They look after themselves all right." In one Virginia almshouse inmates were "at liberty to come and go as they pleased." Superintendent's quarters typically were a single-story house separate from the main facility, although some were integrated within the primary facility.

Physical and social conditions of 1920s almshouses varied considerably from place to place. One Alabama institution was "on a steep mountain side, and at times inaccessible." A Connecticut almshouse "occupied an old farmhouse, and when last visited appeared to be in poor condition." Another Connecticut facility consisted

of a "modern brick structure...of good order and reasonable comfort." Almshouses in Maine were typically very old farmhouses. County homes in North Carolina included "every type and condition of building, from wretched shacks to creditable plants." One Kentucky almshouse, organized in 1876, consisted of "eight neat little cottages...grouped around a fine old-fashioned farmhouse, all the buildings in excellent repair." With few exceptions, homes for the poor in South Carolina were unpainted, dilapidated shacks and one Virginia almshouse consisted of "three wooden cottages erected in 1859 [where] sexes are separated when it can be done." Treatment also varied. Some homes gave very kind treatment; a few would whip inmates if they refused to work.

Nearly two hundred and fifty needy people were housed in Florida's public pauper institutions in the mid-1920s. Of the six hundred and twenty-three acres of real estate maintained by those county operations, one hundred and eighty acres were cultivated with crops to support the inmates. The buildings, furnishings, land, and farm equipment amounted to an investment of $345,170. Annual public funding amounted to $72,914 and some $1,639 was generated from sales of produce grown on farms. The majority of the state's pauper institutions were relatively small, containing fewer than twenty-five inmates and one-quarter of them housed fewer than ten inmates.

The Federal government's bureau of labor statistics encountered several difficulties in assessing almshouses. Foremost in their findings on almshouses was the "almost universal illiteracy of almshouse superintendents." The bureau found the actual management of the almshouse often fell to the matron while the superintendent supervised the farm work. Efficient and economical development of land required substantial knowledge and experience about farming. Yet, not surprisingly, few successful farmers were also almshouse superintendents. Most southern states employed the contract system in which, too often, the superintendent made the almshouse employment "a means for providing a support for himself and his family and of laying up money for the future...with the inmates necessarily suffering from neglect." Many superintendents, it was observed, were political appointees of a county government and were replaced with every election or change in local politics. Far too infrequently the superintendent belonged "to a class only slightly superior to the majority of inmates. He is rarely in a class with the other officials of the county. He is not the type of man who could be elected register of deeds or clerk of courts."

Mary Clark, executive secretary of the Women's Prison Association, observed in 1919 that "The multiplication of almshouses is extravagant and ineffectual to a degree seldom realized, because these institutions are too uninteresting to be contemplated by the modern health or social worker long enough to be understood." In New York, outside of New York City, she counted sixty-two municipal almshouses in a region with fifty-seven counties and five million people. Indiana claimed ninety counties each with its own almshouse and a population of only three million. "Let the expert in State finance," she concluded of this disparity, "picture

these sources of little institutions, with their miscellaneous and unclassified populations, purchasing supplies and running farms, each according to its own self-selected plan, in its own political milieu, generally changing such policy as it may have and losing most of the experience it may have gained with every election of county officers." In the 1920s, supporting a trend toward consolidation, the North Carolina State Board of Charities declared that "Measured by any decent standard of social efficiency the county home is a failure. From the very nature of the problem it could not be a success. The number of paupers in most county homes is so small that it is not economical to maintain them in well-kept county homes." The Pennsylvania Welfare Commission concurred, observing that "The smaller the political unit represented in the almshouse the more impossible it is that the institution shall be properly maintained." Elsewhere during the 1920s state boards in Illinois, Michigan, and West Virginia worked to abolish small-unit almshouses. Many students of almshouses during the 1920s believed the institution trailed far behind the care available to victims of epilepsy, insanity, and tuberculosis, essentially placing the almshouse "just about where it was when the United States began its march of progress in social welfare."

Later, in 1930, Glenn Steele of the U.S. Children's Bureau, commented that "Not all public poorhouses, almshouses, or county homes are quite as gruesome as others; but except the comparatively small percentage of those for whom institutional care is necessary, institutionalization of able-bodied aged is frequently unnecessary, cruel, and not infrequently expensive. The psychological effects of life in these concentration camps for the aged should offer a most interesting subject of investigation, but even without it, in a purely empirical way, every social worker is familiar with the stubborn resistance of most old folks against commitment to an institution."

Federal legislation enacted in the mid-1930s attempted to uplift the needy and hastened the demise of almshouses. The National Housing Act (1934) and the U.S. Housing Authority (1937), in concert with other New Deal programs, such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Public Works Administration (PA), helped to develop low-income housing to assist the disadvantaged and needy. By 1940 some three hundred and fifty USHA projects had been completed or were under construction throughout the country. Social Security provided a great impetus to keep people out of poverty in old age, assist needy widows, and care for children. By 1940 the *Monthly Labor Review* could report that "The Almshouse is gradually disappearing.... Its inmates have had only one characteristic in common–that they were destitute." Despite this progress, in its 1940 special report on institutional populations, the bureau of the census classified together the "aged, infirm, or needy" within the nation's institutions. By then, many Florida counties, including Gadsden, Jackson, and Union, had no home for the needy or any governmental mechanisms to assist them. Some almshouses persisted into the 1950s. Federal entitlement and "Great Society" programs implemented by the administration of President Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s resulted in the closing of the doors of most remaining almshouses, some of which had endured for over one century.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

One of the early actions by the Board of County Commissioners of Seminole County was to establish a home "for the indigent who through old age or sickness or misfortune have been deprived of a good home and in their old age turn to the county authorities for assistance." In June 1915, after deliberating nearly two years about developing a county home, the board purchased the "Vaughn Place," which had been settled by A. J. Vaughn in the 1870s. Subsequently, the home was owned by J. A. and Alice Y. Harrold, other early settlers who conveyed the property to the county in 1915. The house stood on a forty-acre tract with two hundred citrus trees just outside the city limits of Sanford on Mellonville Avenue near the intersection of Twenty-fifth Street. The home, citrus grove, and surrounding farmland made an ideal location for housing the indigent, where inmates cultivated and harvested fruits and vegetables for their rations. This location served as the Seminole County Home for nearly ten years.

Development pressures in south Sanford during the Florida land boom compelled the county to relocate the county home. In June 1925, the Mellonville Avenue property was sold to Fred Clark of Longwood for sixty-five thousand dollars. The agreement stipulated that the county home would remain at the former Vaughn Place until a new facility was completed. By the close of the land boom, the area had been redeveloped with residential subdivisions, such as Oak Hill, Wynn Wood, and Sanfo Park.

Seminole County commissioners John Meisch, Boston Steele, and B.F. Wheeler formed a committee to investigate a suitable location for a new county home, one large enough to accommodate several buildings and a farm. The commissioners settled on a site south of Sanford and west of Lake Jessup and the Dixie Highway near Elder Springs. The parcel contained sixty-nine acres in township twenty, range thirty, section fifteen. Another smaller section was added, bringing the total acreage to eighty-two. In May 1925, the county purchased the property from Cassandra Schultz for nine thousand nine hundred and eighty dollars. County engineer Fred Williams surveyed the property and plans began for the development of the new county home.

Sanford architect Elton J. Moughton was hired to prepare the plans for the facility. A native of Ohio, Moughton was trained in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was the one hundred and fifty-third architect to register to practice in the profession in Florida. He opened a studio in Sanford in 1916 and over the following decades prepared the plans for the many of Seminole County's public buildings, including the Sanford City Hall, Sanford Public Library, Sanford Armory, Sanford Fire Station, Seminole County jail, and Seminole Memorial Hospital. Church projects consisted of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, Congregational Christian Church, First Christian Church, and Holy Cross Episcopal Church. The Hotel Forrest Lake in Sanford was among his largest designs during the 1920s and Orange City City Hall in Volusia County was one of his few projects outside of Seminole County. During World War II, he served as head of the building section of the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers for the construction of military bases in Florida and Georgia.

The county issued a request for construction bids in February 1926 and awarded the contract the following month to the Dossey, Howard & Kelly Construction Company of Sanford for $35,306. James Dossey, Claude Howard, and Joseph Kelly formed the company about 1926. Dossey and Kelly had arrived in Sanford in the early-1920s and initially operated separate carpentry businesses.

They formed the partnership to secure larger construction jobs during the land boom. The new county home was to house both "whites and negroes" with fireproof construction of steel and stucco, although brick was used in its construction. The *Sanford Herald* reported the building as an "Ultra-Modern Institution." The site was cleared and ground broken in mid-1926. A water works with a three thousand gallon pressure tank and a septic tank were installed on the grounds and electricity furnished by Florida Public Service Company. Construction was completed in mid-October 1926 and the building was occupied by the inmates and the superintendent and his family after the water connection was established. Furnishings included cots, mattresses, rocking and straight chairs, and window shades.

Other buildings were subsequently constructed on the property, including a garage (1926), pest house and stockade (1927), a wood-frame building for African-American patients (1932), and a dairy barn (1932). In 1937 an infirmary was constructed and a small portion of property was platted for use as a pauper's cemetery about one-quarter mile north of the home. All of these buildings, with the exception of the 1937 infirmary, have been demolished. The 1937 infirmary has been altered on its exterior and interior to the extent that it no longer retains its architectural integrity.

Howard Browning served as the first superintendent of the Seminole County Home in its new location. Browning had first been hired in the capacity of county home superintendent in 1922, when he replaced W.J. Woodbury. Browning's wife, Lydia, served as matron. The combined salary of the Brownings amounted to one hundred dollars per month. As political appointees, the superintendents of the county home served at the pleasure of the Board of County Commissioners. The appointment system and health problems of several superintendents resulted in a relatively high rate of turn over of superintendents. On average, a superintendent served between one and three years and a few resigned after only several months. Salaries increased from fifty dollars per month in 1923 to one hundred and twenty dollars each month by 1949. Between the early-1930s and 1949 county home superintendents included T.W. Ballew, Hilton Brown, Howard Browning, R.L. Dann, L.P. Driskell, J.L. Parish, Monroe H. Smith, and W.C. Williamson. Williamson was a former deputy sheriff who had served as superintendent at the original home in 1918 and 1919. The spouses of several of these men served as county home matron. During Williamson's stint as superintendent in 1931, his sister, Mrs. W.J. Woodberry, held the post of matron. When Monroe Smith tendered his resignation in December 1946, the county

commission approved a one hundred dollar bonus and applauded his "splendid service."

The superintendent's primary responsibility consisted of supervising and protecting the county home property. He essentially served as an on-site manager. An adjacent farm included citrus groves and livestock. Fruit harvested on the farm was typically sold and the proceeds deposited in the general revenue funds. In 1945, five hundred and eighty-five boxes of oranges and forty boxes of tangerines harvested from the grove yielded $1,103.75. Fertilizer and other supplies were purchased to improve crop yields. Peas and other truck crops were also cultivated on the farm. Supplies for the home were awarded monthly, predicated on the lowest bid, to a vendor in Seminole County. Some canned foods came from the canning kitchens supervised by Seminole County's Home Demonstration Agent. Fresh meat was furnished from farm livestock and local butchers. Paul Biggers was placed in charge of the county hog farm in 1934 and supplied the home with fresh pork.

The superintendent reported to the board and generally worked closely with two commissioners. For much of its history, overall management of the home was divided between one commissioner who managed the grove and another who supervised the direct operation of the home.

Other staff members besides the superintendent and matron included a cook, maid, and nurse. A nurse position was made permanent by the commission in 1926. Rachel Lee of Mississippi was appointed nurse of the county home in the early-1940s. She had graduated in 1928 from Piney Woods School, a teacher training school in Mississippi, and earned her certificate as a registered nurse in 1931. She arrived in Sanford in the late-1930s and was granted a nurse's license by the Florida State Board of Examiners of Nurses on July 31, 1941. Her salary was set at eighty-five dollars a month in 1944; she was among the longest-serving employees of the county home. Other occasional temporary positions and appointments were made to improve the health and social welfare of inmates. In 1935 Anna Badie was allowed a small sum to nurse inmate Carrie Oliver and the following year Joe Fold was appointed preacher of the home at a salary of ten dollars per month. In addition to salaries, during the 1930s the county generally allocated about two hundred dollars each year for repairs and additions to the county home and another two hundred dollars for fixtures and furnishings.

County home inmates gained admittance on a basis of demonstrated poverty, and in some cases poor health. The Board of County Commissioners reviewed each application and either approved or denied admittance at board meetings. Inmates occupying rooms between the opening of the home in 1926 and 1949 included W.H.H. Allen, Tom Christian, Herbert Francis, George Green, Mrs. Mary Huck, John Ladd, R.B. Lynch, Bill Meyers, Mrs. Jack Powell, Martin Seybold, T.G. Self, and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Riley. Several African-American inmates occupied the home, including Henry Brown and Walter Singleton. They remained in the building until a new facility for African Americans was completed in 1932. Discharged inmates during the period included Ed Howard (1926-1930) and Herbert Francis, who was discharged in November 1938, but re-admitted in

February 1939. A. B. Roberts was discharged in 1939 upon the recommendation of superintendent Smith, who indicated that Roberts's ailment was cured. Not all applicants were admitted. Reverend E. D. Brown of the local Presbyterian Church spoke on behalf of eighty-three-year-old Mrs. Corpany, who he described as "completely infirm." After conferring with county nurse Frances McDougal, the commission indicated that the county home was inadequate to care for her. In 1950, twelve inmates were housed in the facility, eight men and four women. Six years later, only five men and one woman occupied the county home.

Seminole County Home appeared to operate smoothly for most of its existence, relatively free of the political posturing and cronyism recorded by officials with the census bureau and by other federal agencies examining the nation's almshouses. One superintendent, T. W. Ballew, made skillful political use of the inmates in his charge. Ballew had been appointed superintendent in June 1949 and soon reported to the board that "considerably more work and longer hours [are] attached to the operation of the home than anticipated...and [I do] not feel like I could continue at the present salary...." Ballew negotiated with the board for nearly one year for a salary increase. Then, in June 1950, he persuaded the inmates to petition the board on his behalf. In a carefully crafted letter, twelve inmates "humbly petition your honorable body to retain our present superintendent and his wife (Mr. and Mrs. T.W. Ballew) who have endeared themselves to us by their wonderfully good treatment and their orderly manner in conducting the affairs of the Home." The board finally relented to the Ballew's advances and granted them a combined fifty dollar per month increase.

The first hint of a significant problem emerged in the late-1940s, prior to and during T. W. and Mrs. Ballew's tenure as superintendent and matron, when Eleanor Ravenel, a Sanford nurse, alleged improper operation at the county home. The board conducted an investigation and closed the matter in June 1949. Matters escalated after Ravenel heard of Mrs. T. W. Ballew, the matron, striking an inmate. The commission appointed a County Home Advisory Committee composed of Reverend W. P. Brooks of Sanford's First Baptist Church; Mrs. B. B. Crumley, president of the Sanford Woman's Club; Dr. Frank Quillman, director of the Seminole County Health Unit; Ben Jones, councilman of the Town of Oviedo; and Grace Bradford, a congressional committeewoman from Altamonte Springs. The committee investigated the allegations, found little to support the charges, but made recommendations in December 1950 for closer scrutiny of daily operations. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Ballew's resignations were requested by the board, and in January 1951, Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. Cramer of Sanford were appointed superintendent and matron.

The Seminole County Home closed in 1964 and the residents were placed in private facilities. The building was then occupied by the county's extension agent. It served as the Seminole County Agriculture Building until 1980, when the extension agency moved to a new Agriculture Center. In 1982, the Board of County Commissioners authorized the Seminole County Historical Commission to use the former county home as a museum. Exhibits and an administrative office now occupy the spaces used by inmates and superintendents

between 1926 and 1964.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The term "Masonry Vernacular" applies to buildings that display no formal style of architecture and is defined as the common masonry construction techniques of lay or self taught builders. Prior to the Civil War vernacular designs were local in nature, transmitted by word of mouth or by demonstration and relying heavily upon native building materials. With the coming of the American Industrial Revolution mass manufacturers became the pervasive influence over vernacular building design. Popular magazines featuring standardized manufactured building components, plans, and decorating tips flooded consumer markets and helped to make building trends universal across the country. The railroad also aided the process by providing cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, the individual builder had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to select to create a design of his own.

Masonry Vernacular is more commonly associated with commercial building types than with other types of architecture. In Florida, most Masonry Vernacular buildings predating 1920 were developed with brick, but a number of older examples feature the rough-faced cast blocks popularized by Henry Hobson Richardson in his Romanesque buildings of the late nineteenth century. The Masonry Vernacular designs of the 1920s and 1930s were often influenced by popular Spanish and Art Deco designs of the period. Features often included arched openings for doors and windows and medallions adorned wall surfaces. Most buildings were constructed with either brick or hollow clay tiles, the latter poured solid with concrete. Exterior walls were often finished with a textured stucco. Some stuccoes were embellished with colored glass chips, pebbles, pigments, or shells.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Seminole County Home is an uncommon example of Masonry Vernacular construction. It has an irregular, rambling floor plan executed with brick walls and cross-gable roofs. A pebble-dash stucco finishes the exterior wall surfaces. Porches framed with wood columns and balustrades open along the front facade. Wood trim features include triangular brackets and purlins mounted under the eaves and v-shape rafter ends. Nearly sixty wood double-hung sash and casement windows punctuate the walls, admitting natural light into interior spaces. The interior plan retains its original design to a high degree and allows for a natural flow between rooms and hallways. The original division of inmate, public, and superintendent spaces remains evident. The design, materials, and setting of the building creates a distinctive ambiance and sense of place. Specifically built as a county home, its home-like design and layout demonstrates the prevailing attitudes and policies concerning meeting the needs of the poor in the 1920s.

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Deed Record Book 37, p. 281-283.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The building lies near the intersection of U.S. Highway 17/92 and Bush Boulevard, its boundaries being described as the curb line of the curving alignment of Bush Boulevard along the east elevation and part of the south elevation, a parking lot line and the line of a wood fence for the remainder of the south elevation, the curb line of a road leading to a parking lot on the north elevation, and a parking lot line to the west. The property is located in part of SEC 15 TWP 20S RGE 30E THAT OT OF E 1/2 OF SE 1/4 NWLY OF ST RD 15 & 600 (LESS BEG NW COR OF NE 1/4 OF SE 1/4 RUN E 277.73 FT S 160.46 FT SWLY ALONG CURVE 411.35 FT S 79.34 FT W 67.01 FT SLY ALONG CURVE 77.84 FT TO R/W NLY ALONG R/W 665 FT TO BEG)

Boundary Justification

The boundary encloses less than one acre of property historically associated with the former Seminole County Home in the above-referenced legal description. The boundary, larger than the footprint of the building, is defined by adjacent roads and parking lots and is sufficiently small to avoid taking in surrounding non-contributing buildings that support the Seminole County Operations Center.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

List of Photographs

1. 300 Bush Boulevard
2. Sanford, Florida
3. Sidney Johnston
4. 1998
5. Historian, DeLand, FL
6. View showing front (east) facade, facing west
7. Photograph number 1 of 30

Numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

6. Oblique view showing front (east) facade, facing northwest
7. Photograph number 2 of 30

6. Oblique view showing front (east) elevation, facing southwest
7. Photograph number 3 of 30

6. View showing northeast corner and northernmost porch, facing southwest
7. Photograph number 4 of 30

6. View showing southeast corner, facing northwest
7. Photograph number 5 of 30

6. View showing south elevation & outbuilding, facing northeast
7. Photograph number 6 of 30

6. Oblique view showing outbuilding, facing southwest
7. Photograph number 7 of 30

6. View showing southwest elevation, facing northeast
7. Photograph number 8 of 30

6. View showing rear (west) elevation, facing east
7. Photograph number 9 of 30

6. Detail view showing part of central & northernmost gable extensions on rear (west) elevation, facing east
7. Photograph number 10 of 30

6. Detail view showing rear (west) courtyard & entrance, facing east
7. Photograph number 11 of 30

6. Oblique view showing north elevation, facing southwest
7. Photograph number 12 of 30

6. View showing central hallway, facing west
7. Photograph number 13 of 30

6. View showing fireplace in main exhibition room (former common area), facing southwest
7. Photograph number 14 of 30

6. View showing main exhibition room (former common area), facing north
7. Photograph number 15 of 30

6. View showing central hallway and exhibition room, facing east
7. Photograph number 16 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room, facing south
7. Photograph number 17 of 30

6. View showing kitchen, facing southwest
7. Photograph number 18 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room and northernmost hallway, facing west
7. Photograph number 19 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room, facing northeast
7. Photograph number 20 of 30

6. View showing men's restroom, facing south
7. Photograph number 21 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room, facing east
7. Photograph number 22 of 30

6. View showing meeting area (former dining area), facing south
7. Photograph number 23 of 30

6. View showing meeting room (former dining area) & archives/library (former pantry), facing north
7. Photograph number 24 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room (former superintendent's quarters), facing east
7. Photograph number 25 of 30

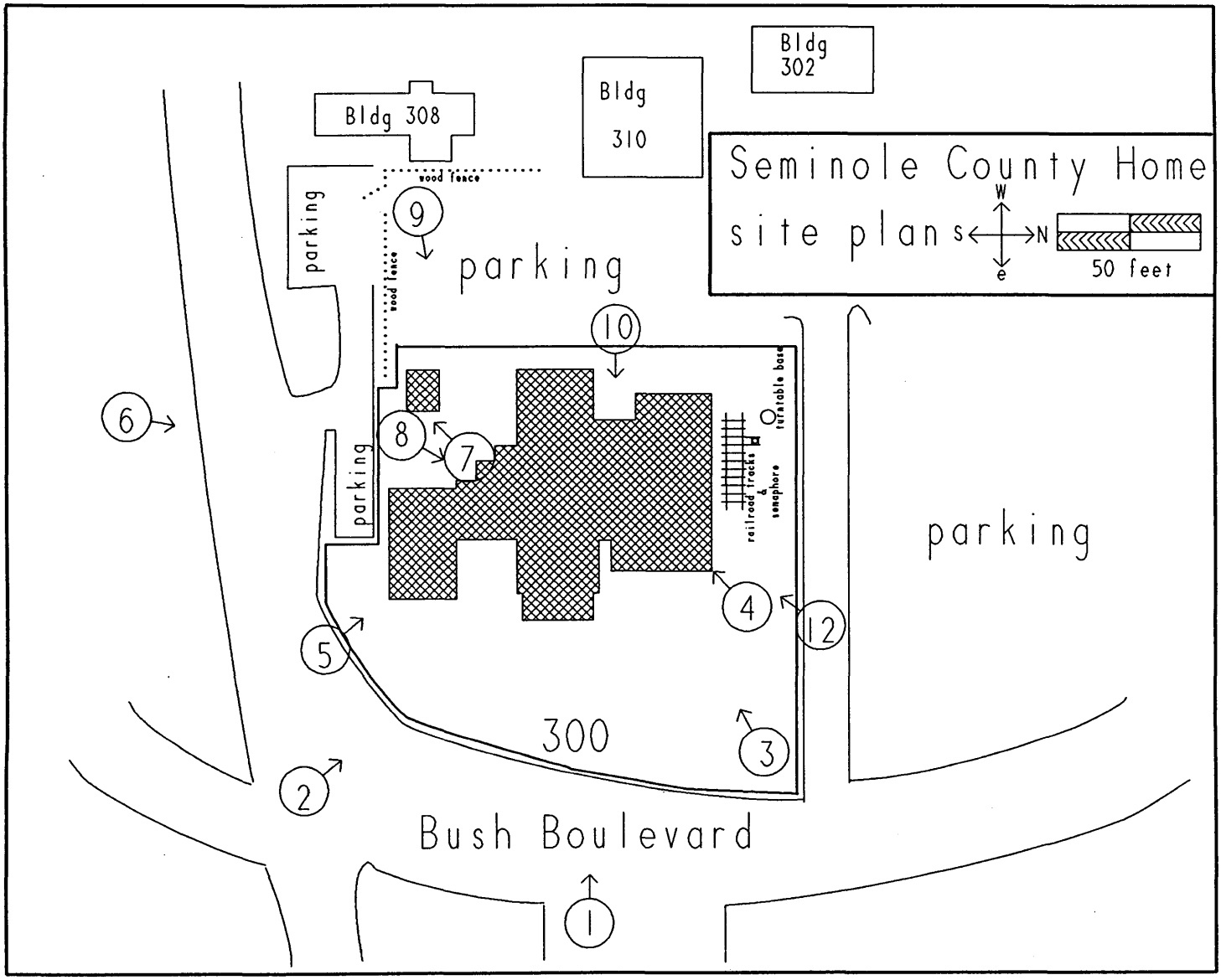
6. View showing exhibition room (former superintendent's bedroom), facing southeast
7. Photograph number 26 of 30

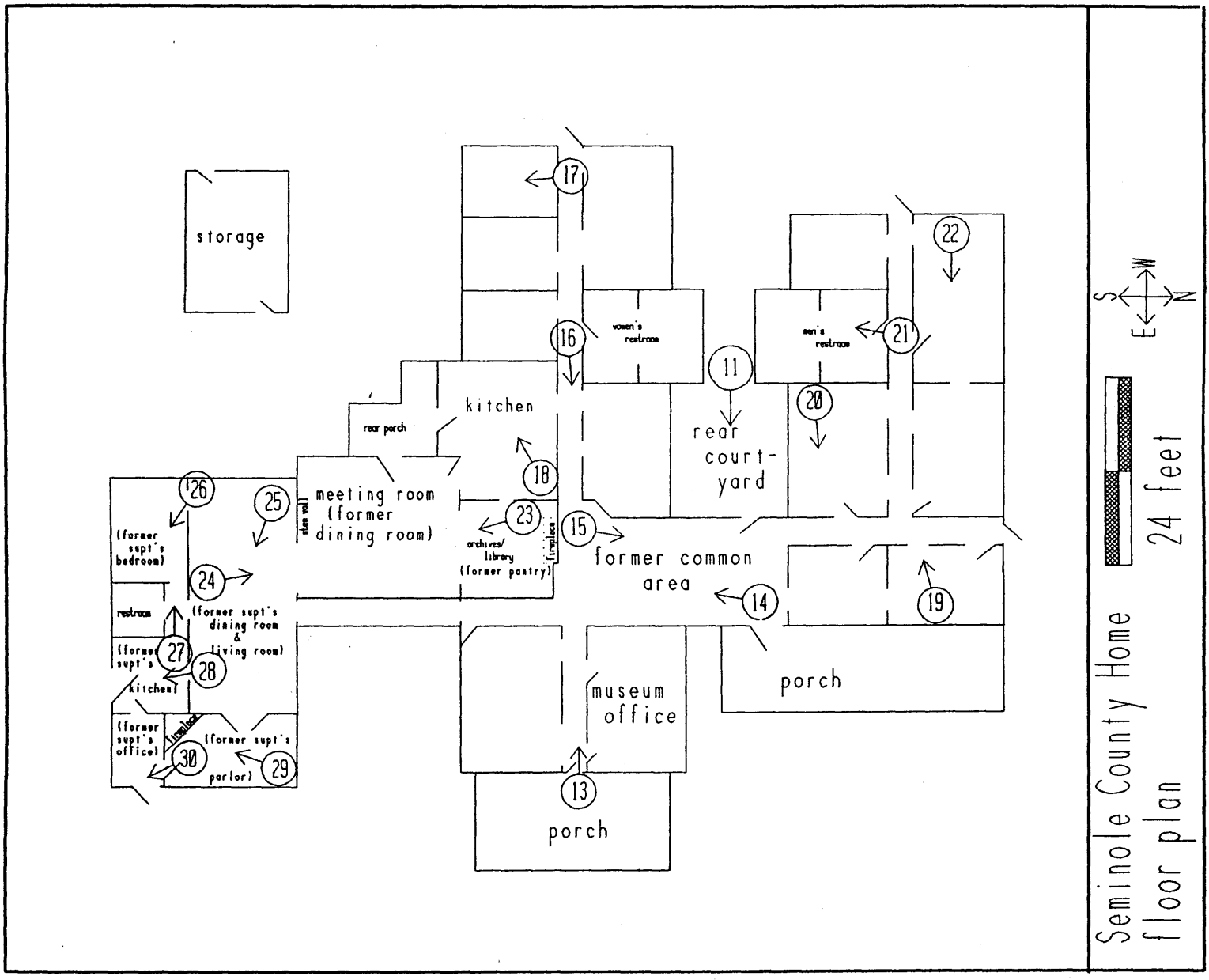
6. View showing former superintendent's quarters, facing west
7. Photograph number 27 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room (former superintendent's kitchen), facing south
7. Photograph number 28 of 30

6. View showing exhibition room (former superintendent's parlor), facing southwest
7. Photograph number 29 of 30

6. View showing store room (former superintendent's office), facing south
7. Photograph number 30 of 30


Bldg 302
Bldg 310
Bldg 308
Seminole County Home
site plans
W
S
N
e
50 feet
wood fence
parking
9
parking
wood fence
10
6
8
7
parking
turntable base
railroad tracks & semaphore
parking
4
12
5
300
3
2
Bush Boulevard
1


storage
17
16
women's restroom
men's restroom
21
22
11
20
kitchen
rear porch
rear court-yard
18
meeting room (former dining room)
23
archives/ library (former pantry)
fireplace
15
former common area
14
19
26
25
stone wall
(former supt's bedroom)
24
restroom
(former supt's dining room & living room)
27
28
(former supt's kitchen)
fireplace
(former supt's office)
30
(former supt's parlor)
29
museum office
porch
13
porch
W
S
N
E
24 feet
Seminole County Home
floor plan