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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

MAR 21 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. **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 an 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 Bernice Civic Clubhouse

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number LA Hwy 2 N/A not for publication

city or town Bernice N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Union code 111 zip code 71222

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.)

Geri Hobdy 3/9/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Geri Hobdy, Date
LA SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
State of 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Entered in the 4.26.94 Date of Action National Register

Bernice Civic Clubhouse

Name of Property

Union Parish, LA

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/clubhouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

other: rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

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

N/A

(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.

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):

N/A

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

social history

Period of Significance

1938-1944

Significant Dates

none

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown (see below)

Primary location of additional data:

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

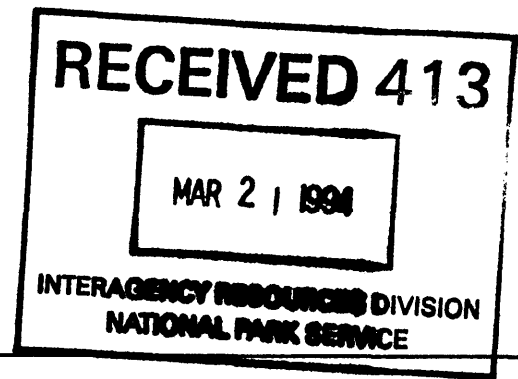
Name of repository:

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 1



The Bernice Civic Clubhouse (1938) is a one story frame building designed in the rustic manner. It is located amid live oaks in Oakhurst Park on the eastern edge of the small town of Bernice. Despite a few alterations, the building retains the bulk of its original character and hence can convey its historic role as the social center of Bernice.

The long, low building is sheathed in rough circular sawn boards. Across the front is a porch which has always been enclosed. It consists of clapboarded walls pierced by large, flat pointed arch openings. The roof is pierced by three gables and features exposed rafters and a few angle braces. The chimney, located at the center of the rear elevation, is of ironstone. Ironstone is also used to accent the front steps. The porch ceiling features exposed rafters and the facade unfinished clapboards and three sets of French doors.

The interior retains its original rustic character. The floorplan, which survives largely intact, consisted of a large meeting room with two relatively small service spaces on the eastern end and a stage flanked by bathrooms on the western end. At the center of the long back wall is an ironstone fireplace. The fireplace has a mantel shelf with beveled blocks in the Craftsman manner. The ceiling, of unpainted boards, is spanned by non-structural beams. The unpainted board walls feature a beveled board wainscot. The meeting room also retains its original wooden floor.

The building has received the following alterations within the last fifty years:

(1) The pointed arch openings have been screened and the last two bays on each end covered from the interior (see below).

(2) In the late forties/early fifties a small room was created on each end of the porch via the insertion of a wall and covering the arched openings on the interior. On the eastern side, the facade wall was removed to make one big room from the porch space and one of the previously mentioned service areas.

(3) The windows on the side and rear elevations have been replaced with metal windows.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, LA

Section number 7 Page 2

Assessment of Integrity:

The Bernice Civic Clubhouse would be immediately recognizable to anyone from the historic period, despite the few changes noted above. The small rooms on each end of the porch are not that noticeable from an overall exterior view because the porch was never completely open. What is remarkable is that the building has not lost its original rustic character, especially the unpainted interior.

Non-contributing Element

Also located on the clubhouse property is a building known locally as the "Boy Scout Hut." Although probably fifty years old, it does not relate to the significance of the nominated resource, nor is it individually eligible. Hence, it is being considered a non-contributing element.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 1

The Bernice Civic Clubhouse is locally significant in the area of social history because it was the small town's social center. It served in this capacity from its construction in 1938 up to and past the fifty year cutoff.

The building was constructed by the Bernice Civic Club, a ladies organization, to replace a gazebo-like pavilion built by the club in 1907. In addition to being used for Civic Club activities, the building was the scene of most of Bernice's social events, there being no other available facilities in town other than private homes.

The first gala function held at the clubhouse was a Christmas Dance, December 26, 1938, with admission by invitation. The prices, as noted on a surviving invitation, were couples \$1.25, stags \$1.00, and spectators 50 cents. It is remembered as quite a grand affair, with an orchestra, formal attire and a roaring fire in the stone fireplace.

The Civic Clubhouse was very popular to rent for dances, especially with the youth of the community. During the historic period dances were forbidden at the high school on conservative religious grounds, the principal being a staunch Southern Baptist. The ladies of the Bernice Civic Club, however, were more liberal. Hence their clubhouse was the only place for teenagers to have dances, including proms and more impromptu affairs. In reference to the latter, people fondly recall spur of the moment scrambles to scrape together enough money to rent the building. The rental secured, they then borrowed a jukebox from a downtown restaurant. Some also recall hearing a sermon the next morning on the evils of dancing, and while the preacher never mentioned the clubhouse by name, the inference was clear. A less controversial high school function held at the clubhouse was an annual baccalaureate dinner for seniors and their families hosted by the Civic Club.

The clubhouse was rented for a wide variety of social functions besides dances, including birthday parties, bridal showers, family reunions, etc. -- in short, any function too large to be held at home. A particularly popular activity was the boxed supper -- a fundraiser where individuals would bring decorated boxes with a complete supper inside to be auctioned off.

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Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, LA

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Note on Architect:

There are extant plans marked "A Civic Clubhouse for Bernice, Louisiana," J. W. Smith and Associates, Monroe, Louisiana. However, the building shown is in a formal neo-Georgian style. Whether J. W. Smith and Associates designed the existing Bernice Civic Clubhouse is unknown.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Bernice Civic Clubhouse, Union Parish, LA

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Bibliography

Morton, C. J. "Town of Bernice Was Founded 40 Years Ago." The Gazette, 1939 centennial edition.

Invitation to 1938 Christmas Dance, copy in National Register file.

Interviews with Clifton McIntosh, Jack Baldwin, Dr. M. Wick Laurence, Jr. and Cortez Laurence. These individuals were of high school age or older during the historic period. Mrs. Laurence was a member of the Civic Club.