

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name: Medgar Evers House
other names/site number:

2. Location

street & number: 2332 Margaret Walker Alexander Drive not for publication ___
city or town: Jackson vicinity N/A
state: Mississippi code: MS county: Hinds code: zip code:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Kenneth H. P. Paul JUNE 30, 2000
Signature of certifying official Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register,
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the
National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the
National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
[Signature] 12/5/00

Medgar Evers House

Hinds County, Mississippi

Name of Nomination

County, State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:

Private

Number of Resources within Property:

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Category of Property:

Building

Contributing

1

Noncontributing

buildings

sites

structures

objects

Total

1

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions:

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification(s):

Ranch

Materials:

foundation: brick

roof: asphalt shingles

walls: asbestos shingles

other: wood

Narrative Description:

See Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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.

Areas of Significance
ETHNIC HERITAGE/black
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance
1956-1963

Significant Dates
1963

Criteria Considerations:

Property is:

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

Significant Person(s)
Medgar Evers
Cultural Affiliation(s)

Architect/Builder
Winston J. Thompson
Leroy Burnett

Narrative Statement of Significance: See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository:

MS Department of Archives & History

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than 1 acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	15	762380	3581640	C		
B				D		

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description See continuation sheet.**Boundary Justification:** See continuation sheet.**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title:	Deborah Wise Oakley	date: March 3,2000
organization:	Mississippi Department of Archives & History	telephone: (601) 359-6940
street & number:	P.O. Box 571	zip code: 39205
city or town:	Jackson	state: MS

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(s)

name:	Tougaloo College	telephone:
street & number:	500 County Line Road	zip code: 39174
city or town:	Tougaloo	state: MS

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Medgar Evers House, at 2332 Margaret Walker Alexander Drive in Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, has statewide significance for its association with the civil rights leader. The house is a typical example of the American ranch house built after World War II and was built for Medgar Evers and his family in 1956. The period of significance for the house is from 1956 until 1963, the year Medgar Evers was assassinated.

The one-story house has a long, asymmetrical facade facing south, with a single carport on the west end. The low-pitched asphalt shingle roof has a broad overhang. The exterior is clad primarily in asbestos shingles, but there is some board-and-batten siding under the porch and brick to the right of the porch. Decorative iron supports the roof around the carport and frames the large picture window under the porch. One entrance is located under the carport and is defined by a concrete stoop and a wing wall made from the same brick as on the front of the house. The windows on the house are steel-framed casements.

The east elevation is clad entirely in asbestos shingles, with two large steel-framed windows. The north elevation has another entrance, which leads into the kitchen. This entrance is also a single-leaf door. There are four steel-framed windows on this elevation.

The interior of the house is very simple. The original wood floors are throughout the house, except in the kitchen and bathroom, which have vinyl floor coverings. The dining and living rooms are combined in one large room. An open bar and built-in bookshelves separate the dining room and the kitchen. The kitchen has simple, plywood shelves that may have been painted since the Everses occupied the house. The original green tiles on the wall and green laminate on the counters are still in place.

The other rooms open off a hallway that runs down the middle of the house. There are three bedrooms, two on the south side of the hallway and one at the northeast corner of the house. Between this bedroom and the kitchen is the only bathroom in the house. Each of these bedrooms has its own closet. The bedroom directly adjacent to the living

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

room now houses a museum exhibit about the life of Medgar Evers. The rest of the house is completely furnished with period furniture that is very similar to the furniture used by the Evers. The northeast bedroom is interpreted as the children's room. Here the mattresses rest on the floor below the range of possible window shots, as they were placed for the Evers children.

The bathroom has its original light green, pink and white ceramic tiles, arranged in horizontal stripes around the tub and behind the toilet. The porcelain fixtures and the pink porcelain tub are also original.

The Medgar Evers House is a very intact representative of the life of the slain civil rights leader. The house was restored in 1994 with funds provided by the State of Mississippi through House Bill No. 1502, *Laws of Mississippi, 1993*. It is now owned by Tougaloo College and operated as a museum.

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Medgar Evers House, at 2332 Margaret Walker Alexander Drive, Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi, is significant at the statewide level under Criterion A for Social History and under Criterion B for its association with Medgar Evers, civil rights leader and first Field Secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Mississippi. The period of significance for the house starts in 1956, when the house was built for the Evers family, and ends in 1963 with the assassination of Medgar Evers in the driveway of the house. The house maintains a great deal of integrity to that period.

Medgar Wylie Evers was born on July 2, 1925, in Decatur, Mississippi. Medgar lived in the segregated South, but when he was drafted into the Army in 1943, and served in Europe, Medgar Evers saw a different way of life, one in which color was not the determining factor. When he returned home to Mississippi, Medgar attempted to register and vote in his hometown, but was forced away.

Medgar Evers then went on to attend Alcorn College, where he met his future wife, Myrlie Beasley. After graduation from Alcorn College, Medgar and his new wife moved to Mound Bayou, Mississippi, where Medgar took a job as an insurance salesman for Dr. T. R.M. Howard's company. It was in this job that Medgar saw first-hand the poverty and substandard living conditions of many black people in the Delta. Medgar Evers did much more than sell insurance to these people. As a matter of fact, he felt bad about attempting to sell insurance to people who didn't even have enough food to eat. Soon he began using his sales visits to encourage people to join the local chapter of the NAACP or to organize chapters where needed.¹

In 1954, Medgar Evers attempted to enroll in the Law School at the University of Mississippi.² The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that public school segregation was unconstitutional; at the same time, the University of Mississippi denied Medgar's application because his letters of recommendation had come from people in Newton

¹ John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for civil rights in Mississippi* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 49.

² Mrs. Medgar Evers with William Peters, *For Us, the Living* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 87.

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

County, where he was raised, rather than the county he resided in. Medgar Evers never reapplied for admission. Rather, he accepted the opportunity to make his crusade against racism a full-time job. In 1955, Medgar Evers became the state field secretary for the NAACP, the first salaried staff position for this organization in Mississippi. Medgar soon moved to Jackson and set up the NAACP office on Farish Street, but later that year moved it to the Masonic Lodge on Lynch Street. In this new job, Medgar Evers traveled the state, urging black citizens to register to vote and to join their local NAACP chapters, at a time when they were likely to be severely punished for attempts to do either. The newly formed White Citizen's Councils would publish the names of those people who tried to register or who signed petitions to end segregation. Those listed would then be subject to economic repression; their loans would be called in, credit and mortgages denied.³ The NAACP did try to provide some financial relief from these hardships, but often their resources were not enough. Often Medgar Evers provided personal assistance individuals who suffered reprisals.

Those identified as trying to register or protest were often brutally beaten by the White Citizens' Council and the Ku Klux Klan. Several men, among them Gus Courts and George Lee, were killed for their attempts to register to vote.

The civil rights movement continued to grow in Mississippi as other organizations entered the mix. Many of these groups were much more radical and younger than the conservative NAACP. Medgar Evers, torn between his loyalty to the NAACP and his desire to see quick change, continued to work wholeheartedly for the NAACP and took part in other organizations' activities when he could.⁴

Students protested and sit-ins and demonstrations were held. The state NAACP demanded a bi-racial committee to work towards desegregation in Jackson. Then Jackson Mayor Allen Thompson refused to meet their demands. He claimed they were all "outside agitators" and did not represent the local interests. When he committed publicly to the status quo, Medgar Evers requested equal time to respond, in a speech that was well reasoned and seemed to have an impact on the opinions of some white Mississippians.

³ Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for civil rights in Mississippi*, p.50.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.117-118.

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

All the while, the threat of violence against the family loomed. The more vocal Medgar Evers became, the more endangered was his life and the lives of his family. When a firebomb was thrown into the carport, Evers became more cautious. The family slept with their mattresses on the floor, with German Shepherds in the backyard. Evers instructed all the family members to leave the porch light off until everyone was safe in the house.⁵

On the evening of June 11, 1963, President John F. Kennedy spoke on television about the idea of equal rights and outlined proposals that would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Medgar Evers was returning home from a late-night meeting that day, and as he got out of his car, a shooter from a vacant lot across the street fired the bullet that wounded Evers fatally. Evers's wife and children, who heard the shot, raced outside. Medgar Evers had somehow managed to drag himself up the driveway and onto the carport stoop.

Many Civil Rights leaders attended Medgar Evers's funeral including Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Bunch, undersecretary of the United Nations and T.R.M. Howard. After the service the crowd left the church and many proceeded to walk towards Capitol Street. This led to a short-lived violent protest in Jackson.⁶

Byron de la Beckwith was tried for the murder of Medgar Evers twice in the two years after the assassination. Both were declared mistrials, when the all-white juries could not reach an agreement. In 1992, with new evidence, the case was heard again, and Beckwith was convicted of murder on February 5, 1994, in Jackson, Mississippi.

Medgar Evers was certainly the first statewide figure of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi. He could not organize every event across the state, but it is certain that his influence was instrumental in many of these events. Medgar Evers loved his native state of Mississippi and was dedicated to the cause of the Civil Rights movement here.

⁵ Evers, *For Us, the Living*, p.287.

⁶ Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for civil rights in Mississippi*, p.167.

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Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dittmer, John. *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

Evers, Myrlie & William Peters. *For Us, The Living*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi. Historic Preservation Division, Statewide Survey files.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi. Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Landmark file.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The house is located on Lot Eleven (11) and the west half of Lot Fourteen (14), Elraine Resurvey Part Four (4), according to the Plat Book 5, Page 18, in the records of the Chancery Clerk of Hinds County, Mississippi

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the house and the land associated historically with Medgar Evers.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information is the same for all photographs:

- 1.) Medgar Evers House
- 2.) Jackson, Hinds County, Mississippi
- 3.) Deborah Wise Oakley, MDAH
- 4.) March, 2000
- 5.) Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Photo 1 of 6	View of south facade, facing north
Photo 2 of 6	View of north elevation, facing south
Photo 3 of 6	View of interior, living room

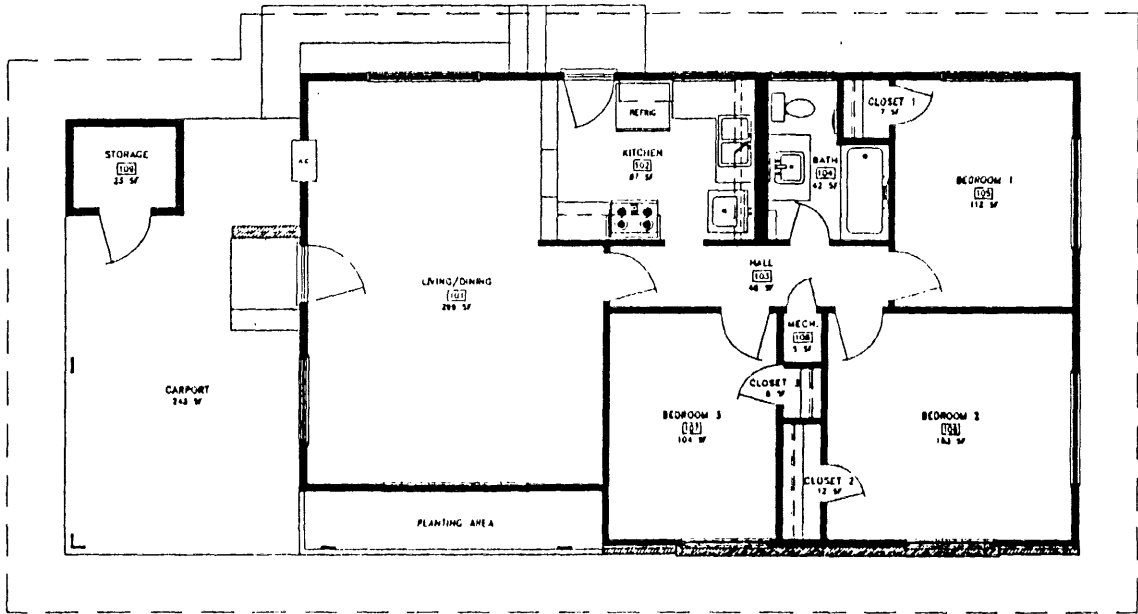
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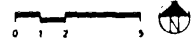
Medgar Evers House
Hinds County, Mississippi

Photo 4 of 6	View of interior, kitchen
Photo 5 of 6	View of interior, hallway
Photo 6 of 6	View of interior, children's bedroom



FLOOR PLAN

DRAWINGS CONSTRUCTED FROM FIELD MEASUREMENTS TAKEN JULY/AUGUST 1994 877.72 TOTAL GROSS SF EXCLUDING CARPORT AND DETACHED STORAGE



MEDGAR EVERS HOLKE
 JACKSON, HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

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Continuation Sheet**

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 00001459	Date Listed: 12/5/00	
Evers, Medgar, House	Hinds	MISSISSIPPI
Property Name	County	State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Mal M. Way
for Signature of the Keeper

12/5/00
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 3

This nomination is amended to show that the Mississippi SHPO recommends that the property be considered significant statewide.

This amendment has been confirmed with the Mississippi SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)