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National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91001585

Date Listed: 11/7/91

Graceland
Property Name

Shelby
County

TENNESSEE
State

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.

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

11/8/91
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination was amended to claim significance under Criterion B, for association with Elvis Presley.

Nineteen-thirty-nine was deleted as a significant date.

These changes were confirmed by phone with the Tennessee SHPO (11/5/91).

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls Mississippi Fieldstone,

WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Graceland, the home of Elvis Presley, is located on a 13.8 acre lot in the city of Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee. When Graceland was built on this property in 1939, the area was predominantly rural. Today the property is located in what is known as the Whitehaven community. This part of the county was annexed by Memphis in 1969. The neighborhood is commercial along Elvis Presley Boulevard with suburban houses on the smaller side streets. Graceland is an expansive property with mature tree growth in the middle of this neighborhood.

The physical description of Graceland involves three periods of ownership; the Moore Family, Elvis Presley, and the Elvis Presley Estate. The first owners of Graceland were the Moore family who built it in 1939. Elvis Presley bought Graceland in 1957 and lived there until his death in 1977. Today Graceland is operated as a house museum. Presley made alterations and additions to the original house during his occupancy and slight alterations have occurred to the buildings and site under the estate's management.

The name Graceland predates the purchase of the property by Elvis Presley. The first Graceland was the name of a five hundred acre farm owned by the Toof family located on the site during the nineteenth century. A descendant of the Toof family, Mrs. Thomas Moore and her husband built the present house in 1939. The architects were a prominent Memphis firm, Furbringer and Ehrman. Max Furbringer and Merrill Ehrman were responsible for such structures as the Raoul Wellenberg Memorial Shell (Overton Park Shell), the Memphis Humane Shelter, the West Tennessee Tuberculosis Hospital, the Temple Israel (now the Baptist Theological Seminary), and the Mid-South Coliseum. One of the few domestic buildings designed by the firm, Graceland was lived in by the Moores and their daughter Ruth Marie Moore. Music has always been a theme at Graceland since Ruth Marie Moore played harp and piano in the three large rooms that stretch across the front of the house.

The main structure is a five bay, two-story Neoclassical Revival structure with two single story wings. The roof is a side gable covered in asphalt shingles and there are two chimneys encased in stone. One chimney is located on the exterior wall of the north gable end and the other is located on the central ridge in the southern half of the roof. The west

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(main) facade is veneered in Mississippi fieldstone. The visual focus of the main facade is a two-story projecting portico.

This portico is composed of two pairs of smooth Doric columns with acanthus leaf capitals supporting an entablature complete with fascia, a smooth frieze and dentils, topped by a pediment with a small leaded oval window. Against the facade, the portico is flanked by two-story pilasters that match the columns. Underneath the portico is a Neoclassical Revival doorway. Stained glass sidelights and a transom window (made by Laukhuff Stained Glass of Memphis for Presley in 1974) surround the doorway. The entrance is flanked by engaged Doric columns on either side of the sidelights and pilasters to the outside. Spanning the doorway is a broken arched pediment with an entablature, complete with triglyphs and metopes across the door itself. On the second level, above the entry, there is a window with a small iron balcony. Keeping with the Neoclassical Revival style, this whole portico is painted white.

On the flat facade of the house, the first floor windows are double-hung with twelve over twelve panes. Above each first floor window is an arched half-circle white panel accented by a stone surround. The second story windows are double-hung with six over six panes. All of the windows have dark green shutters and are covered by a diamond-shaped metal grid. These grids were added by Presley in the late 1960s for security.

To the north and south of the center portion of the main facade are two single story wings with side gable roofs that are original to the house, except for the addition of the trophy room on the south end. The north wing is of frame construction and veneer with two six over six windows with green shutters in the section which is a part of the original floor plan of the house. The northern-most portion of this wing was the original four car garage and is now a part of the interior living space of the house. This portion of the north wing is also of frame construction and painted white. There is a small central pediment framing a six over six window with green shutters. Lattices are attached to the building on either side. The north facade of this (north) wing has a six over six window with no shutters. This wall is largely devoted to the electrical and mechanical systems of the house with electrical wires and air conditioning systems located here. The north wing houses a bathroom, bedroom, sitting room and offices.

The south wing, like the north, is frame construction and painted white. The west facade of the south wing has a large four-part window centered at the music room. The southern-most part of the south wing is the addition

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made by Presley which opens onto the 1957 pool and patio on the south facade. This facade has large doors (not currently used) to the west covered by bars, a group of five one over one windows covered by bars, and the current doorway used by the visitors to exit the trophy room on the east side. Brick steps lead down to the pool patio, now enclosed by an iron fence for safety. The trophy room is the only addition to the house that is visible from the main (west) facade. It is an extension off the music room built in the mid 1960s for use as an electric slot car track and later as the trophy room and for storage. The south wing consists of the music room which extends off the living room and an addition made by Presley in the mid 1960s.

The east (rear) elevation of the house is white frame with three additions visible (trophy room, den, and apartment) and irregular fenestration. Starting on the north end of the facade is the one-story addition to the garage made in 1978 by Vernon Presley, which is now used as office space. Under the low gable roof is a central doorway and a large off-center picture window on the south side of the door. To the south, is the back door connected to the back hallway which is currently the door used by visitors on the tour path. Extending from the flat elevation is the one-story den addition made by Presley during the mid to late 1960s. There are three groups of regularly spaced modern windows, all covered by metal grids. The roof of this addition serves as a sundeck accessed by a stairway from the den and also by a doorway on the second floor, directly above the den. South of the den is a projecting pedimented bay which is original to the house. The first floor of this bay has a rear doorway and the second floor has two narrow bathroom windows covered by metal security grids. The last bay of the original house consists of centered six over six windows both on the first and second floors. The single story music room bay consists of two French doors. The trophy room addition is painted white like the rest of the rear facade and extends from the flat elevation in a single story gable where a new entrance is located. This entrance vestibule consists of a pair of plate glass doors used by visitors on the tour path to enter the trophy room. The second story roof of the rear facade is asphalt shingle had has two attic dormer windows and two chimneys, one on the northern gable end and one located on the ridge in the southern half of the main house.

The floor plan and original decorative details of the main house are Neoclassical Revival in keeping with the exterior. In addition, Presley remodeled portions of the house to suit his own style. A foyer is located off the main entrance of the house. This hallway opens up with arches to either side into a dining room to the north and the living room to the

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south. Opposite the entrance is the main staircase to the second floor and a hallway extending to the rear of the house leading to a first floor bedroom, the kitchen, and the staircase to the basement. The color theme of this portion of the first floor is gold, white, and royal blue. At the time of Presley's death, the decor was red velour with Louis XV styled furniture. The estate chose to interpret the decor to the earlier period when Priscilla Presley lived here. The red decor and stained glass was done in 1974.

The foyer (Room 102) includes two Neoclassical Revival white and gold elliptical archway openings to either side. These identical archways are flanked by fluted pilasters, have keystone ornaments, and a radiating shell pattern in the architrave. Around the foyer is Neoclassical molding complete with a dentil coursework at the ceiling level. Mirrors were custom made and cut for Presley in 1974. They act as wall panels and as wainscoting up the main staircase giving the space a lighter and more spacious feeling. Presley had stained glass designed in 1974 by Laukhuff Stained Glass of Memphis in a rose pattern. The chandelier was bought by Presley in 1974 from Belvedere Lighting in Memphis and is Italian cut glass.

To the north of the hallway is the dining room (Room 101) measuring seventeen by twenty-four feet. The molding along the floor and ceiling are the same as in the living room. In the north corners are built-in rounded curio cabinets. At the floor level are two cabinet doors, then four shelves, and topped by a concave shell motif with a keystone at the top of the arch. The floor is carpeted around the full perimeter of the room and has black marble in the center where the table is located.

To the south hallway is the living room (Room 103) which also measures seventeen by twenty-four feet. The floor and ceiling molding matches that of the rest of the downstairs. The fireplace sections as well as most wall surfaces were paneled in custom cut mirrors in 1974 for Presley. Combined with the whiteness of the room, they give a feeling of spaciousness. The fireplace surround is relatively simple with wood and flat slabs of marble almost flush with the mirrored wall.

Off the living room, is the music room (Room 104) which measures fourteen by seventeen feet. Leading into this room are a transom and two large panels of stained glass. They were designed in 1974 by Laukhuff Stained Glass of Memphis and have peacocks as a motif.

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Behind the music room through a set of doors now covered by curtains is the trophy room (H on Site Plan). This room is a part of the main house but this entrance is not used currently. When Presley bought Graceland, this space was the patio. During the 1960s he enclosed the space and made this addition to house a slot car track and later to display his awards and many gold and platinum records. The museum uses this space for the same purpose but the current entrance is from the exterior in the east wall through a doorway built for better public access. This entrance vestibule was added with glass doors as a public entrance. Inside on the south wall is a display for the 1953-1958 era of Presley's life. Opposite is an inset display case that houses momentos from the years 1958 until 1960. The next room is the Hall of Gold where Presley's two hundred gold and platinum records are displayed along both walls. At the south end of this room there is another display area. The west wall contains keys to cities and foreign fan plaques and momentos sent by fans. The east wall has exhibits from the 1960-1969 movie era of his career, wedding attire from 1967-8, the 1968 Comeback television special, and clothes from 1969 and 1970. On the north wall are various portraits made of Presley throughout his life. A second hall also contains display cases. On the east side are civic and humanitarian awards, Presley's gun collection, and badges given to Presley by law enforcement officials. Along the west wall are stagewear from 1971-1972, 1973-1974, and 1975-1977. An exit door is located in the south wall of the trophy room.

At the rear of the central hallway is a door which leads to a bedroom and private bath (Rooms 111 and 115). These are the private rooms of Presley's aunt, Delta Biggs who resides at Graceland as she has since 1967. These rooms are not open to the public.

The kitchen of Graceland (Room 110) is entered through the dining room or the rear of the hall. This is also private living quarters for Delta Biggs. The kitchen was remodeled in the mid 1970s and contains built-in cabinets and an eating peninsula. There is also a private sitting room off the kitchen as well as closets and a second (guest) bedroom and bath (Rooms 108 and 109). A back staircase leads up from the kitchen to the landing of the main staircase.

Behind the kitchen (to the east) is a long narrow hallway. To the south is a staircase to the basement and to the north it leads into the former garage which was converted into an apartment by Presley and is now used as offices. Directly opposite the kitchen is the den (Room 114) or "Jungle Room". This room is part of the tour path and entrance is from the basement staircase. The den measures fourteen by forty feet and was an

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addition to the house in the mid 1960s. In the northern wall is a built-in waterfall of cut fieldstone which was constructed in the mid 1960s by Bernard Grenadier. On the south wall of the room, there is a staircase leading to the roof which was used as a sundeck. In 1982 an opening was cut in the wall in the hallway so visitors could view the room without entering it.

The northern end of the hallway leads into a remodeled apartment which is used as private offices (Rooms 105, 106, 107, 112, and 113) by Graceland. The original space that was used by the Moore family as a four car garage with a rear entrance. In the mid 1960s Presley converted this area into an apartment. In 1978, Presley's father, Vernon Presley, remodeled this apartment and made a small addition to the rear. This part of the house has a living area, full kitchen, three bedrooms, and several bathrooms. There are exposed ceiling beams as well as natural wood wainscoting.

The basement is accessed by two staircases. One (which is paneled in mirrors) is located under the main staircase. The other is located at the rear.

Directly below the living room on the southwest corner of the house is the T.V. room (Room 002), measuring seventeen by twenty-eight feet. When the Moore family lived here this room was not furnished and was used casually as a library with a piano. In 1974, Presley had this room finished and remodeled with the help of Bill Eubanks, who then worked with Ingels' Interiors of Memphis. To the right is a built-in yellow vinyl padded wet bar. There are shelves along the walls of this corner nook and stationary stools are in front of the bar. The fireplace surround, upper walls, and ceilings of this room are mirrors. The west wall of the T.V. room is decorated with a lightning bolt and cloud motif which was a symbol in Presley's life for T.C.B. or "taking care of business in the flash". The south wall of the room has three built-in television sets, a stereo, and cabinets for Presley's record collection.

To the east of the T.V. room is an extra bedroom with a closet and bathroom. These rooms (004 and 005) are used for storage.

On the west wall house between the T.V. room and the pool room is a small closet which Presley used to store a film projector. The pool room (Room 001) is seventeen by twenty-four feet and is in the northwest corner of the house. Again, this room was unfinished when Presley moved to Graceland in 1957. The Moore family used the space for ping-pong and darts. Presley remodeled and finished this space in 1974 with the help of Bill Eubanks.

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The walls and ceiling are covered with three hundred fifty yards of printed cotton fabric. There is a gas fireplace of rough ashlar in the northeast corner of the room.

The last room in the basement is the laundry room (003) in the northeast corner of the house. Today, this room contains a washer and dryer and is used for storage.

The second floor at Graceland is not open to the public. The original floor plan included four bedrooms and three bathrooms. Presley made a few minor alterations including adding a wall and door in the upstairs hallway and converting one bedroom into his dressing room. All of the carpets, decorations, and furnishings are as Presley left them. There were no changes for the public, since the upstairs is always to be off-limits to visitors.

The hallway (Room 204) is separated from the public portion of the house by a door three steps up from the landing. This was added by Presley as was a curved wall, with a mirror glass panel, which originally overlooked the downstairs hallway. All the moldings in the hallway are in the Neoclassical Revival style and appear to be original. The upstairs rooms all radiate off this hallway. The doors are white and have black vinyl padding added to the three panel partitions of the door, probably for better sound proofing.

In the southeast corner is Presley's private office (Room 206), originally used as a bedroom. The walls are covered in button tufted gold padding and around the perimeter of the ceiling is a trough for indirect lighting and red neon.

In the northeast corner of the office is the bathroom (Room 208) used by Priscilla Beaulieu Presley (Presley's wife until 1973). The bathroom is carpeted and has a pink glass shower and toilet in the northern end, a counter in the southern end, and a large closet opposite the sink in the center.

Entered from the office, padded doorways mark the entry to Presley's bedroom (Room 202). A linen closet is in the southeast corner of the room. The doorway into Presley's bath and dressing room are in the north wall. The south and west wall are monochrome black paper with strips of imitation velvet. The other two walls as well as the ceiling are padded in gold glitter button tufted vinyl. In the center of the room is the nine by

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nine, double king size bed. Directly above it are two television sets recessed in the ceiling.

The master bathroom (Room 201) is also decorated in a black and red motif. The walls are mirrored. On the east wall is a long bathroom counter with a sink and an open tiled shower in an oval shape. The master bath opens directly into Presley's dressing area located in the northeast corner. The space has clothing racks and built-in shelves for shoes and storage.

Across the hallway in the northwest corner of the second floor is the nursery of Lisa Marie Presley (Room 205). In the eastern wall is a door to the sundeck (roof of the den) and a canopy which extended over her baby bed. The northern wall contains built-in shelves and cabinets for storage. A bathroom (Room 203) with sink, bathtub, toilet, and small cabinet is accessed on the west wall of the nursery. There is also a mini kitchen in the west wall.

There is a full attic which is unfinished. There are two cedar closets and the space is used for storage.

On the 13.8 acre grounds are a number of outbuildings and landscape features both original and added by Presley. As a result of the operation of a museum several changes were made to the grounds.

Starting at the front (west side) of the property, is a wall made of pink Alabama fieldstone. This was built in 1957 to lend more privacy and security to the estate. The entrance gates were also built in 1957 also by the Tennessee Fabricating Company. The gate is a pair of iron doors that when closed, represent an open book of music. Musical notes and a figure playing a guitar adorn each half of the gate. (C)

Inside the entrance, to the right, is a guard shack (Building A on Site Plan) built of stone in 1971, replacing a previous wooden one on the site. Approaching the house the paved driveway leads up a slight incline in the southerly direction and ends at a circular drive at the entrance to the house. (C)

To the south of the house stands a detached building (I on Site Plan) which was built in 1983 as a shuttle bus stop. This covered area consists of four vernacular columns supporting a low gabled roof resembling a pediment. The construction materials are the usual modern materials of wood, metal and plaster. Underneath is a trash can and a few stone benches for the visitors to wait. This was built by the estate. (NC)

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Behind the bus stop structure is a small building with two similar columns and a hipped roof used for Graceland employees. Built circa 1983 it is covered in siding and has a modern door and several metal framed modern windows. Both structures are small and painted white to integrate with the house itself. (NC)

On the south side of the trophy room is a kidney shaped pool (J on Site Plan) installed in 1957. Cut stone makes up the patio around the pool. In the 1980s, the estate added an iron fence around the pool for safety. The bath house (attached to the trophy room) were altered to accommodate public restrooms with handicap access. (C)

Extending off the pool area, to the south, is the Meditation Garden. This area (K on Site Plan) was landscaped from the fall of 1964 through the summer of 1965 for Presley to use as a private place for contemplation and meditation. The center of the garden has a circular fountain and a semi-circular arcade with Ionic columns with a pergola on top for vines. Behind this is a stone wall with four stained glass arched panels. This area was never intended to be used as a cemetery, but after Presley's death he was moved here on August 29, 1977 as a result of security concerns at a local Memphis cemetery (Forrest Hills). The garden is now a family cemetery for Presley and his father Vernon Presley, his mother Gladys Presley, and his paternal grandmother Minnie Mae Presley. An eternal flame is encased at the head of Presley's tomb and funeral wreaths continually sent by devoted fans adorn the gravesite. The cast iron fence around the graves was added by the estate. (C)

Connected by a sidewalk and located behind the trophy room is the racquetball building (M on Site Plan) which Presley built in 1975. It is a rectangular two-story modern structure with irregular fenestration. The facades are *Dryvet with natural wood across the cornice level. The entrance is in the west wall and leads onto the landing. Down a few steps is lounge area with a glass wall looking onto the racquetball court. Upstairs are two dressings rooms with baths, a hall that overlooks the court, and a staircase to the roof. The first floor of this building is open to tourists and the upstairs, previously used as a lounge for the tour guides, is used for storage. (C)

North from the racquetball building, a sidewalk leads to a covered carport directly behind the converted apartment area of the house. This covered carport (F on Site Plan) was added by Presley in the early 1960s as a place to store his many cars. Now his cars are on display across the street

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(since 1989) in the automobile museum. There is a fence under the carport which runs from the house to the office and smokehouse which closes in the backyard. Outside this fence are a few spaces for employees to park. (C)

Under this carport, a stone walkway leads to the former business office (O on Site Plan) of the Graceland estate. This frame structure, built circa 1939, is original to the property and probably served as servants' quarters for the Moore family. This was used by Presley's father Vernon as a business office. Since this space is a part of the tourist path, a low wall was installed for viewing into the office. (C)

Connected to the office is a two-room smokehouse (N on Site Plan) built in 1939, which is also original to the property. This building is constructed of brick and has heavy wood doors. Presley used this as a firing range and for storage. For the tour, the estate has cut two doors, one between the lobby of the office and the first smokehouse room and another between the two smokehouse rooms. (C)

All across the rear of the property are white wooden fences built to contain the horses owned by Presley. The horses were housed in a barn (R on Site Plan) located in the southeast corner of the property. The barn, circa 1939, is a gambrel roof wooden structure which is original to the property. The barn is still used for a stable. (C)

Opposite the barn in the northeast corner of the property are three trailers (two double-wide and one regular size) placed there by Presley in the late 1960s and 1974. These were used as residences by friends and employees of Presley. Currently Graceland uses one as an office, one as a tour guide break room, and one is lived in by the head maintenance employee and his wife. The only alterations to these has been normal painting, maintenance, and redecorating. (C)

Graceland now hosts between five and six hundred thousand visitors each year. It has been open for tour since 1982. There is a very strict policies that no commercial activity can take place on the grounds of the estate. The gift shops and even soda machines are located across the street where visitors purchase tickets. A small "picture taking" sidewalk was added directly opposite the house so that visitors could take snapshots of the mansion and would not ruin the lawn.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Performing Arts

Period of Significance
1957-1977

Significant Dates
1939
1957

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Presley, Elvis Aaron

Architect/Builder
Furbringer and Ehrman

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Graceland, the home of Elvis Presley, is significant under criterion B and criterion exception G as the residence of one of America's most famous entertainers. From his humble beginnings, Presley took legendary steps that shaped "Rock and Roll" music and the popular music of today. Elvis Presley's twenty-four year career in music and film made him a well known figure, famous throughout the United States and the world for his contributions to popular entertainment. Elvis Presley bought Graceland in 1957 after he launched his career and continued to live there until his death in 1977. Graceland, whose name has become synonymous with the history of rock and roll, was a vital part of Elvis Presley's life and remains an enduring cultural symbol in America.

Elvis Aaron Presley was born on January 8, 1935, in Tupelo, Mississippi. At the age of thirteen, he moved to Memphis, Tennessee with his parents. In 1953 Presley graduated from Humes High School and was working for Crown Electric Company as a truck driver. During the summer of 1953, Presley went to the Memphis Recording Service (part of Sam Phillips' Sun Record Company) and paid four dollars to record "My Happiness" and "That's When Your Heartache Begins" for his mother. By 1954, Presley was recording professionally with the Sun Record Company. His first big hit was "That All Right (Mama)" with Scotty Moore and Bill Black as his back-up musicians (This was a re-make of the 1946 original by Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup.). Memphis disc jockey Dewey Phillips played the song on July 10, 1954 on his radio show "Red, Hot, and Blue," it immediately became a success.

America at this time, especially in the South, was a society divided socially and musically by racial barriers. In the rural American South, the white population was listening to country and western music by such artists as Roy Acuff, Ernest Tubb, Ted Daffan, Bob Wills, and Jimmie Rodgers. The black population was listening to rhythm and blues from Big Bill Broonzy, B. B. King, John Lee Hooker, and Chester "Howlin' Wolf" Burnett. Socially and politically these two cultures were very segregated. At a national level, teenagers were listening to the ballads of Perry Como

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA

- 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 13.588 acres

UTM References

A

1	6
7	7
1	3
8	0

3	8
8	2
0	4
0	

Zone Easting Northing

C

1	6
7	7
1	7
6	0

3	8
8	1
8	6
0	

B

1	6
7	7
1	7
3	0

3	8
8	2
1	0
0	

Zone Easting Northing

D

1	6
7	7
1	4
0	0

3	8
8	1
9	0
0	

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Southwest Memphis, TN-ARK 404SE

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of Graceland are shown on the accompanying Shelby County property map as plat 38, lot 50.

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Boundary Justification

The boundaries for Graceland include the land historically associated with the property and are sufficient to protect the property.

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11. Form Prepared By

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city or town Memphis

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and Pat Boone. Sam Phillips of the Sun Record Company said, "If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel, I could make a billion dollars".¹ The middle class was a large section of the population and, as such, was targeted as the main consumers. However, teenagers were a growing population segment with diverse musical tastes. The unique style and musical talent of Elvis Presley took advantage of this growing diversity of teenage taste and made a tremendous impact on the music and culture of American society.

Elvis Presley's style made innovative leaps in the history of popular music. His flair, his looks and, most importantly, his music attracted teenage America. Presley had an air about him that was of simultaneously confident and humble. His image was enhanced by the "hep cat" clothes he bought from Lansky's on Beale Street in Memphis where many African-American Blues musicians bought their clothes. His music had a rockabilly sound that society had never heard before. Presley was able to take the "black" blues music and the "white" country music and combine them and still be accepted by popular society. Presley's singing style blended the gospel singing from his religious upbringing, the country music from the white South, the rhythm and blues from the black South, and the pop sound played across America. Middle class, white teenagers were captivated by the wildness of his stage performance and his music had a beat and energy that was new to them. Presley himself said, "I love the rhythm and beat of good rock and roll music and I think most people like it too. After all, it's a combination of folk or hillbilly music and gospel singing".²

This new rock and roll sound was taking hold all over America, especially in the South. At Sun Record Company, Sam Phillips was promoting other artists who played in the new rock and roll style. Johnny Cash, who sang "I Walk the Line", joined Sun Record Company in 1955. Carl Perkins recorded with Sam Phillips when his version of "Blue Suede Shoes" topped the Country, Pop, and R & B charts in 1956. In 1957 Jerry Lee Lewis was working at Sun when "Great Balls of Fire" and "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On" became smash hits. Elvis Presley's style was significant because he was among the first to bring about this hot new rock and roll sound.

¹ David P. Szatmary, Rockin' In Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1991), p. 36.

² Ibid., p. 35.

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Starting out small, Presley toured places throughout the South gaining exposure. Sensing the potential of a lucrative star, Colonel Tom Parker signed a contract as Presley's manager on August 15, 1955. Colonel Parker, a good business man, promoted Presley's career more than Sam Phillips at Sun Record Company. Knowing that Presley could make it big nationally, Parker helped Presley land a huge contract with RCA (Victor). RCA bought Presley's contract and publishing rights from Sun Record Company for thirty-five thousand dollars with a five thousand dollar bonus for Elvis Presley. At the time, this was an unusually large sum of money for a musician's contract. Steve Sholes of RCA-Victor "was impressed by the novelty of Presley's vocal style, his uninhibited movements on the stage, and the electrifying effect he had on the audience."³ "The very fact that RCA thought they could sell Presley to everybody meant that they were thinking along the same lines as Sam Phillips, that the day had finally arrived when an artist who combined elements of each field would appeal to everyone - urban and rural, black and white - embodying a fusion that had been building since the days of Jimmie Rodgers (himself an RCA artist), Bob Wills and Nat "King" Cole."⁴

The success of Presley led to a promotion of other Rock and Rollers by big record companies. Bill Haley and the Comets were recording with Decca Records when their "Rock Around the Clock" was at the top of the charts in 1955. Their music developed at the same time Presley was achieving recognition, but they lacked the youthful charisma and stage presence of Presley. The group also had a short-lived success. Capitol Records had Gene Vincent who wrote "Be-Bop-a-Lula" in 1956 and Imperial had Ricky Nelson record Fats Domino's "I'm Walking" in 1957. All of these performers had tremendous success, but short careers in the limelight. What is so phenomenal about the career of Presley was that it outlasted all other singers.

Presley recorded his first number one Pop single "Heartbreak Hotel" on January 10, 1956. "Heartbreak Hotel" also earned him his first gold record and was number one on the Pop charts, number one on the Country charts, and number five on the R & B charts. In 1956 he also filmed Love Me Tender

³ Charlie Gillett, Sound of the City (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), p. 54.

⁴ Stokes, Geoffrey; Tucker, Ken; and Ed, Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock & Roll Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: The Rolling Stone Press/Prentice Hall, Inc., 1986), p. 112.

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Graceland

TN

which was one of the top grossing films of the year. Presley performed on national network television shows in 1956 starting with "The Jackie Gleason Stage Show, Starring Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey", "The Milton Berle Show", "The Steve Allen Show", and "Ed Sullivan's Toast of the Town Show". His appearances on network television brought Presley into the living rooms of thousands of American families. In the 1950s, television was the newest form of promotion and through this revolutionary form of mass media, new stars as well as products could be promoted and "merchandised" to America. Colonel Parker had no less than seventy-eight Elvis Presley products from bobby socks and handkerchiefs to pencils and lipstick for the growing population of teenage girls who made up the largest part of Presley's fans.

In the conservative 1950s, such a captivating superstar was often met with controversy. Parents, teachers, religious leaders, and public figures such as Jack Gould (television critic for the New York Times) and Congressman Robert McDonald (from Massachusetts) denounced the coming of Presley and thought his effect on youth would promote delinquency. It was said that Presley's body language on stage and his presentation were sexually suggestive to the youth in America.

In March of 1957, Elvis Presley bought the 13.8 acre Graceland for one hundred thousand dollars as his residence with his parents. This was also the year that four of his songs, "Don't Be Cruel", "Hound Dog", "Teddy Bear", and "Jailhouse Rock" climbed to number one on the Pop, Country, and R & B charts, which was very unusual. In 1957 Loving You and Jailhouse Rock were also filmed. By this time Presley had been bestowed with the title of "The King of Rock and Roll" by an unknown disc jockey. This title is still undisputed by current rock musicians in popular culture.

In 1958 Presley filmed King Creole before he reported for draft duty. From 1958 until 1960 Presley served in the Army in West Germany. Returning to his career in 1960, his album "Elvis is Back" made it to the top five on the Pop album chart. Three singles went to number one: "Stuck On You", "It's Now or Never", "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" During the 1960s, Presley's career focused on films, and he was a major box office draw. Some of his best known movies are: G.I. Blues, Blue Hawaii, Viva Las Vegas, and Girl Happy.

During the 1960s, Presley's time was dominated by contracts in Hollywood and the very nature of his career changed. His exposure to the public was through a screen image and with no live shows. He had moved from the wayward youth symbol to that of a respectable young man and no longer created controversial waves in the public eye. Although his career was no

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 5

Graceland

7/14

longer in the entertainment limelight as the tumultuous 1960s evolved he retained a large league of followers and stayed as busy.

Ending some of his movie contracts in Hollywood, Presley decided to re-focus on the recording industry. December 3, 1968 he appeared on network television on an NBC show entitled "Elvis" (otherwise known as the "Comeback Special"). It was met with incredible success by critics and the public alike and helped to re-launch his recording career. In 1969, Presley recorded two albums entitled "From Elvis in Memphis" and "Back in Memphis". Favorites such as "In the Ghetto" and "Suspicious Minds" emerged from these recordings made at the American Sound Studios. In July of 1969 Presley started a four week engagement at the Las Vegas International Hotel and broke all existing attendance records. In 1970, he returned to Las Vegas and beat his own previous records. The attendance records demonstrate that his personal following remained numerous and devoted even though he was not performing the 1960s rock and roll of such bands as The Rolling Stones and The Doors.

In 1971, Elvis Presley received some of his most prestigious awards. The United States Jaycees presented him with the 1970 "Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Nation" award. At the young age of thirty-six, Presley received the Lifetime Achievement Award (previously called the Bing Crosby Award) from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. With this award, Presley's career reached its pinnacle. He was the now-safe musician being honored for his revolutionary contributions to the development of Rock and Roll in American music history. The city of Memphis honored Presley by changing the name of Highway 51 to Elvis Presley Boulevard.

In 1973 Presley did a television special called "Aloha from Hawaii" that was watched worldwide and he continued to tour and record albums. The last concert performance by Presley was on June 26, 1977 at the Market Square Arena in Indianapolis, Indiana. Just before he was supposed to start a new concert tour, Presley died of heart failure on August 16, 1977.

In recognition of his important contribution to music Elvis Presley received several important awards posthumously. These include: the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Award, the American Music Award of Merit, the Blues Foundation W. C. Handy Award, the Academy of Country Music's Golden Hat Award, and the Grammy Hall of Fame Award for "Hound Dog". The later was created in 1983 "to honor early recordings of lasting, qualitative, or historical significance". Over the course of his lifetime, Presley had fourteen Grammy nominations and won three.

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Graceland TN

Presley earned two hundred Gold and Platinum records during his career. He had one hundred forty-nine songs on Billboard's Hot One Hundred Pop Chart and one hundred fourteen made it to the Top Forty, forty went to the Top Ten, and eighteen went to the Number One. According to RCA, Presley has sold more than one billion worldwide and is responsible for selling more record units (singles and records) than any individual or group in history. Presley had a lifetime gross of 3.4 billion dollars.

The success of his career is not only counted in dollars. It lies in his contributions to music history in the birth of Rock and Roll. His style of singing and performing was an ingenious and revolutionary combination of music traditions that created a new one. Rock and Roll had its start with the musical innovation of Presley who had that special "something" that set him apart from the rest. The fans from his early days never wavered in intensity through all the changes in his career. From The Beatles to current groups such as U2, musicians claim Presley as one of their most important influences. John Lennon of The Beatles said that "Before Elvis, there was nothing" and that "every current rock musician owes his roots to 'The King'".⁵ In 1987, Life magazine featured an article showing how many famous musicians were influenced by his contributions to Rock and Roll. These include: Robert Plant, Brenda Lee, Billy Idol, Joan Jett, Carl Perkins, Ron Wood, The Beastie Boys, and Roy Orbison. The Smithsonian Institute said that Elvis Presley had "the most important voice in the history of American music".⁶

Elvis Presley always had, and still has a core of devoted followers, both young and old. His music made him an intrinsic part of American culture. Today there are over two hundred Elvis Presley fan clubs throughout the world, their loyalty has been transferred to Graceland, Presley's home and final resting place. Graceland Division of Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc. cares for Graceland and since 1982 has opened it to visitors. A tremendous success, Graceland hosts between five hundred thousand and six hundred thousand visitors each year from the United States and all over the world. A study in 1987 showed that Graceland was number five on a list of most visited historic house tours (after the White House, Mount Vernon, Hearst Castle, and the Biltmore Estate).

⁵ Ken Brixey, Elvis At Graceland (Published Exclusively for Graceland Division of Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc., by Cypress Press, Inc., 1983), NP.

⁶ Jane Stern and Michael Stern, Elvis World (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1987), p. 112.

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 7 Graceland *TN*

Graceland, the home of Elvis Presley is less than fifty years old, however, Presley's impact on the history of music in the United States transcends the the National Register criteria for age. Presley had one of the most important careers in the history of Rock and Roll, his music laid the path for later generations of musicians, making a lasting contribution to the history of music in American culture. For twenty of his twenty-four year career Presley made his permanent home at Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee. Based on his lasting contributions to the music and culture of America, Graceland as the home of Elvis Presley is a significant historic property.

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Graceland TN

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photo Page 1

Graceland *TM*

Graceland
3764 Elvis Presley Boulevard
Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee
Photo by: Jennifer Tucker
Date: December 31, 1990 and January 30, 1991
Negative: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

West facade, looking east
#1 of 43

West facade, looking east
#2 of 43

West facade, looking northeast
#3 of 43

Portico detail, looking east
#4 of 43

North elevation, looking south
#5 of 43

East elevation, looking southwest
#6 of 43

East elevation, looking northwest
#7 of 43

South elevation, looking north
#8 of 43

Swimming pool, looking south
#9 of 43

Swimming pool and south elevation, looking north
#10 of 43

Meditation Garden, looking southeast
#11 of 43

Meditation Garden, looking north
#12 of 43

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Graceland

TA

Swimming pool, looking south
#27 of 43

Swimming pool and south elevation, looking north
#28 of 43

Meditation Garden, looking southeast
#29 of 43

Meditation Garden, looking north
#30 of 43

Meditation Garden, looking east
#31 of 43

Racquetball Building, looking northeast
#32 of 43

Racquetball Building, interior
#33 of 43

Office and smokehouse, looking northeast
#34 of 43

Office and smokehouse, looking east
#35 of 43

Office, interior
#36 of 43

Office, interior
#37 of 43

Smokehouse, interior
#38 of 43

Smokehouse, interior
#39 of 43

Barn, looking south
#40 of 43

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Section number _____ Photos 4 Page _____

Graceland *TN*

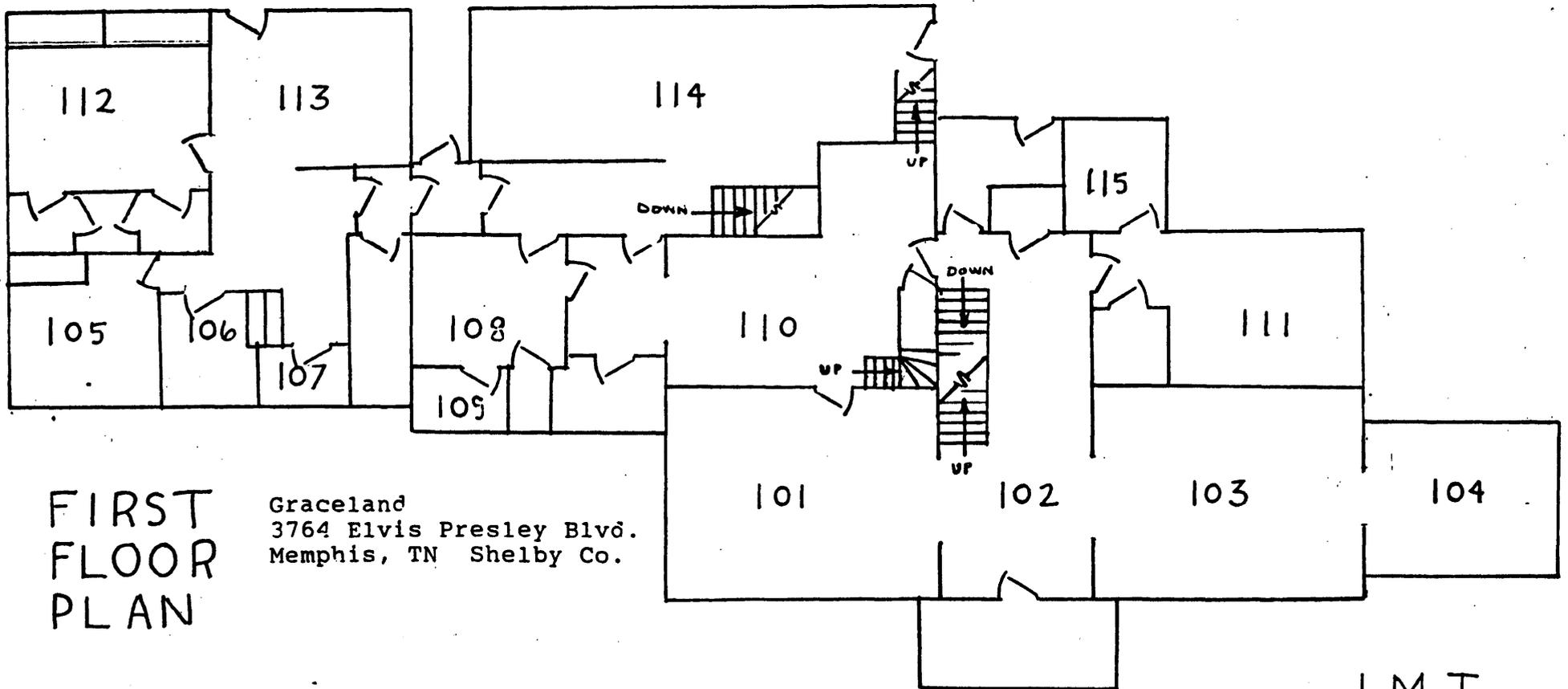
Barn, looking southeast
#41 of 43

Tour bus stop, looking south
#42 of 43

Tour bus stop, looking northwest
#43 of 43

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 101 DINING ROOM | 109 BATH |
| 102 HALL | 110 KITCHEN |
| 103 LIVING ROOM | 111 AUNT DELTA'S BEDROOM |
| 104 MUSIC ROOM | 112 OFFICE |
| 105 OFFICE | 113 KITCHEN/LOUNGE |
| 106 OFFICE | 114 JUNGLE ROOM (DEN) |
| 107 BATH | 115 BATH |
| 108 BEDROOM | |

NOT TO SCALE
 ROOM 103 =
 APPROX. 17 x 24'

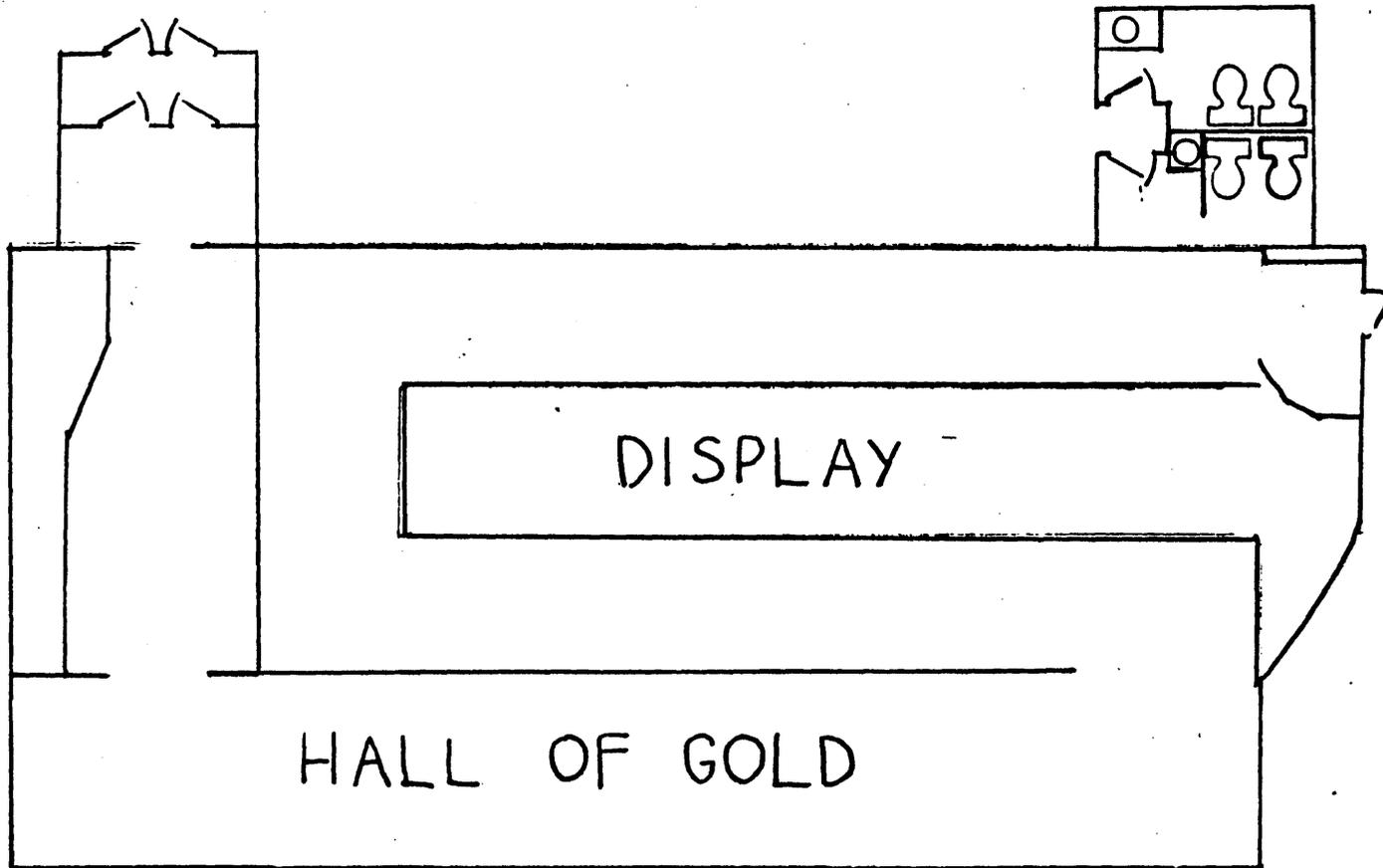


FIRST
 FLOOR
 PLAN

Graceland
 3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
 Memphis, TN Shelby Co.

TROPHY ROOM

Graceland - Estate of Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.



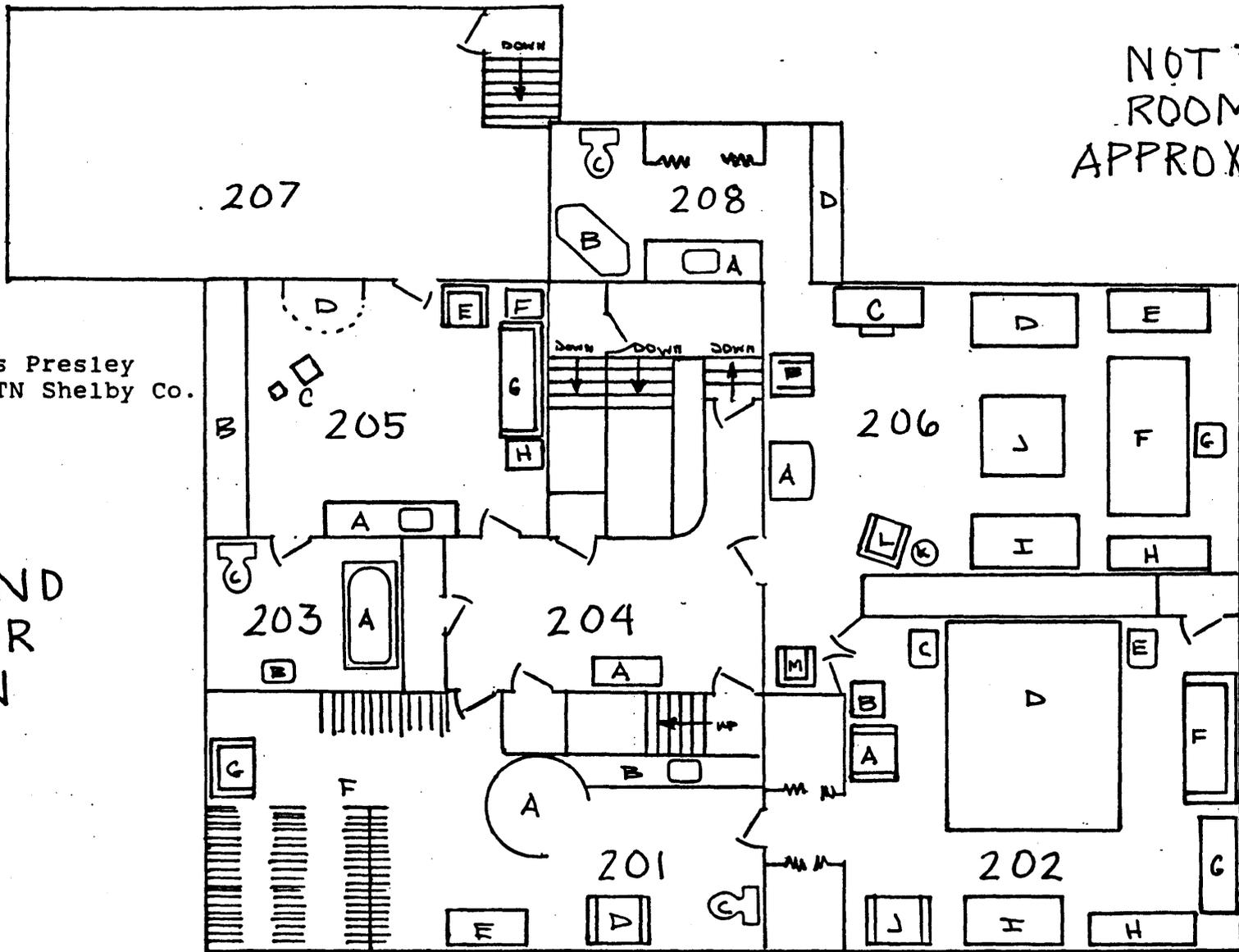
NOT TO SCALE

J.M.T.
5.1.91

NOT TO SCALE
 ROOM 202 =
 APPROX. 18x15'

Graceland
 3764 Elvis Presley
 Memphis, TN Shelby Co.

SECOND
 FLOOR
 PLAN



J.M.T.
 5.1.91

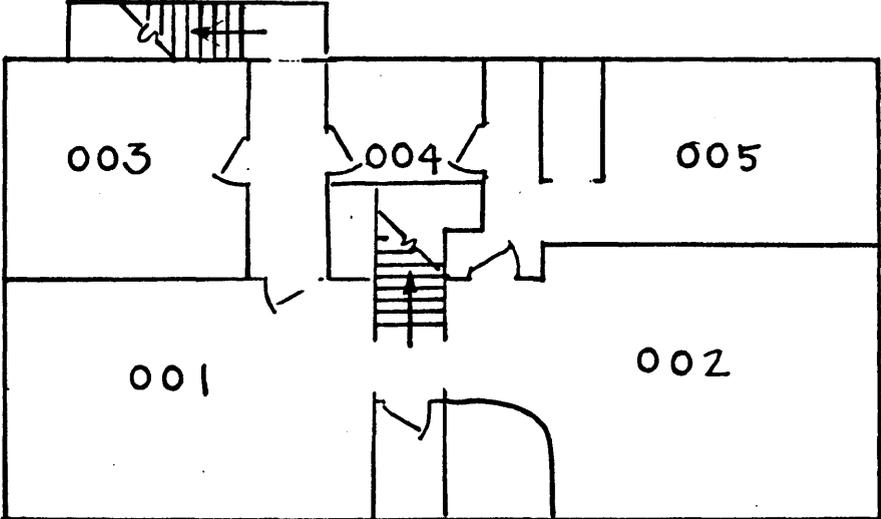
201 BATH AND DRESSING ROOM	205 LISA MARIE'S BEDROOM
202 ELVIS' BEDROOM	206 ELVIS' OFFICE
203 BATH	207 SUNDECK
204 HALL	208 BATH

- 001 POOL ROOM
- 002 TV ROOM
- 003 LAUNDRY
- 004 BATH
- 005 BEDROOM

NOT TO SCALE
ROOM 002 =
APPROX. 17 x 28'

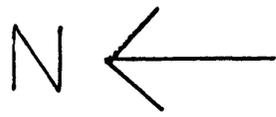
BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

Graceland - Estate of Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.

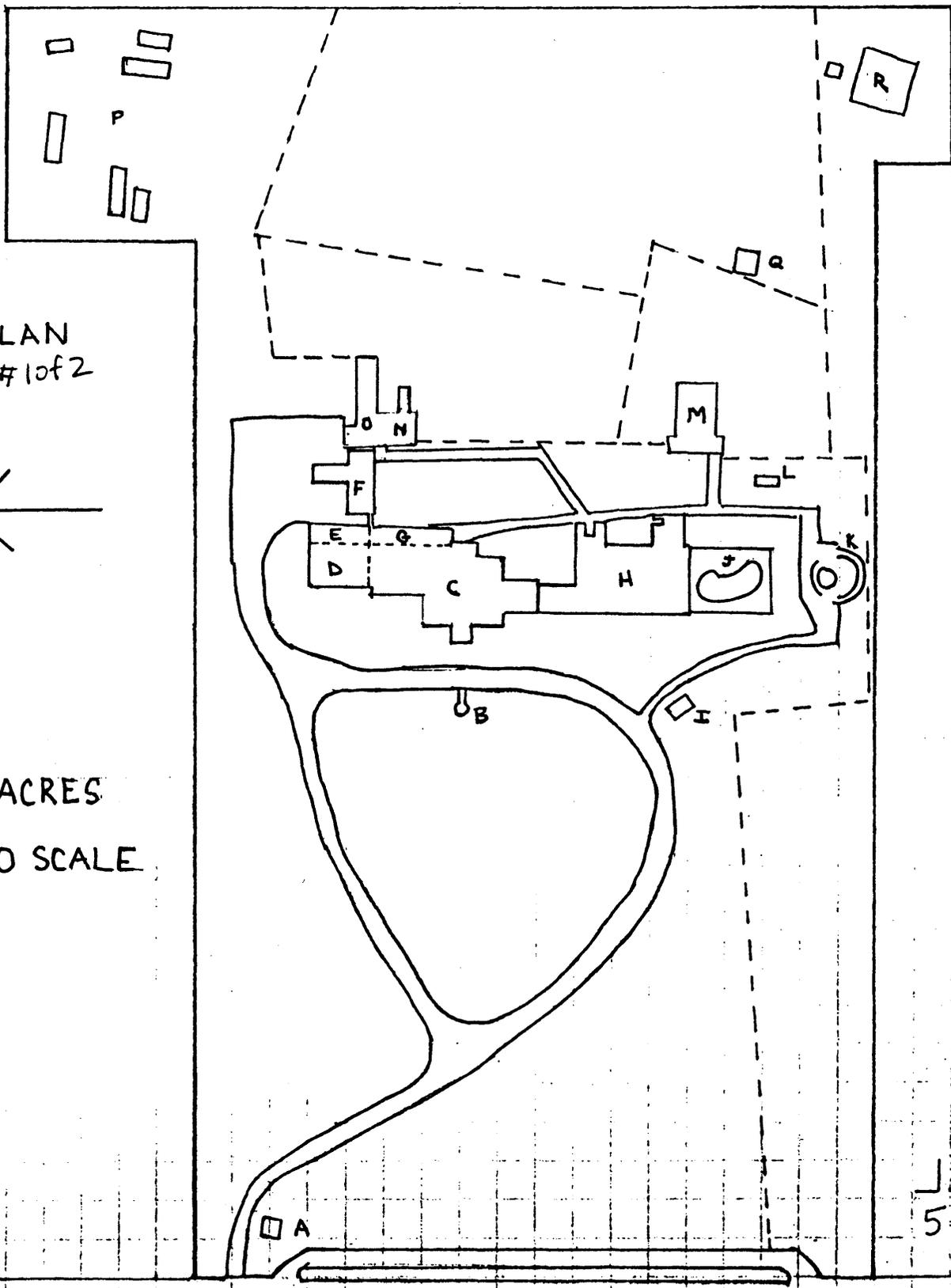


GRACELAND — ESTATE OF ELVIS PRESLEY
3764 ELVIS PRESLEY BLVD.
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

SITE PLAN
#1 of 2



13.8 ACRES
NOT TO SCALE



ELVIS PRESLEY BLVD.

J.M.T.
5-1-91

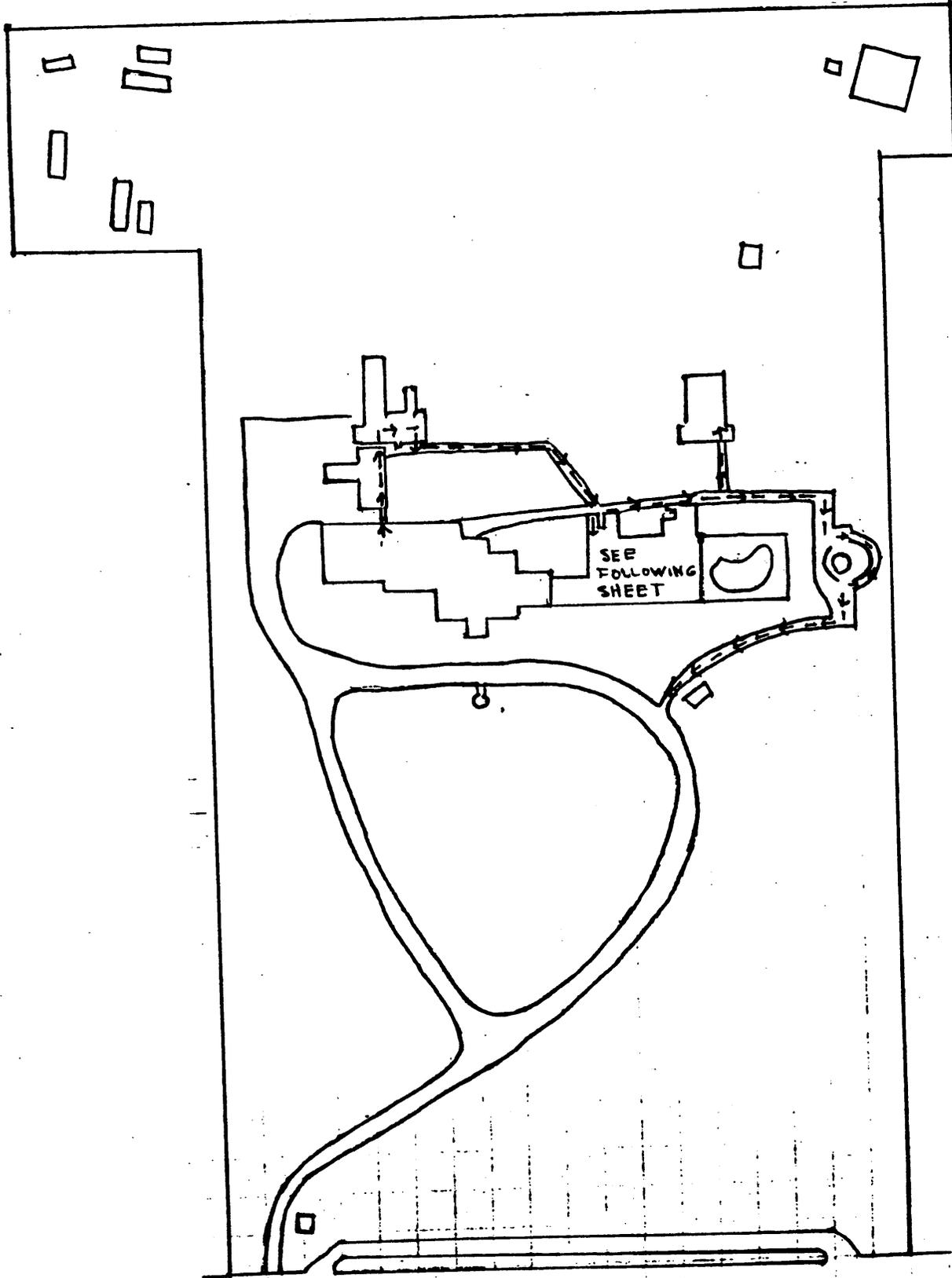
Graceland - Estate of Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.

SITE PLAN #2 of 2

SITE PLAN KEY

- A. Gate guard house
- B. Sidewalk for taking photos
- C. Main house - 1939
- D. Office (previous garage and later apartment)
- E. Office (1978 addition)
- F. Carport
- G. Jungle room (1960s addition)
- H. Trophy room
- I. Tour bus stop and guard house
- J. Swimming pool
- K. Meditation garden
- L. Maintenance building
- M. Racquetball building (1975)
- N. Smokehouse (1939)
- O. Office (previous servant's quarters, 1939)
- P. Trailors
- Q. Shed
- R. Barn

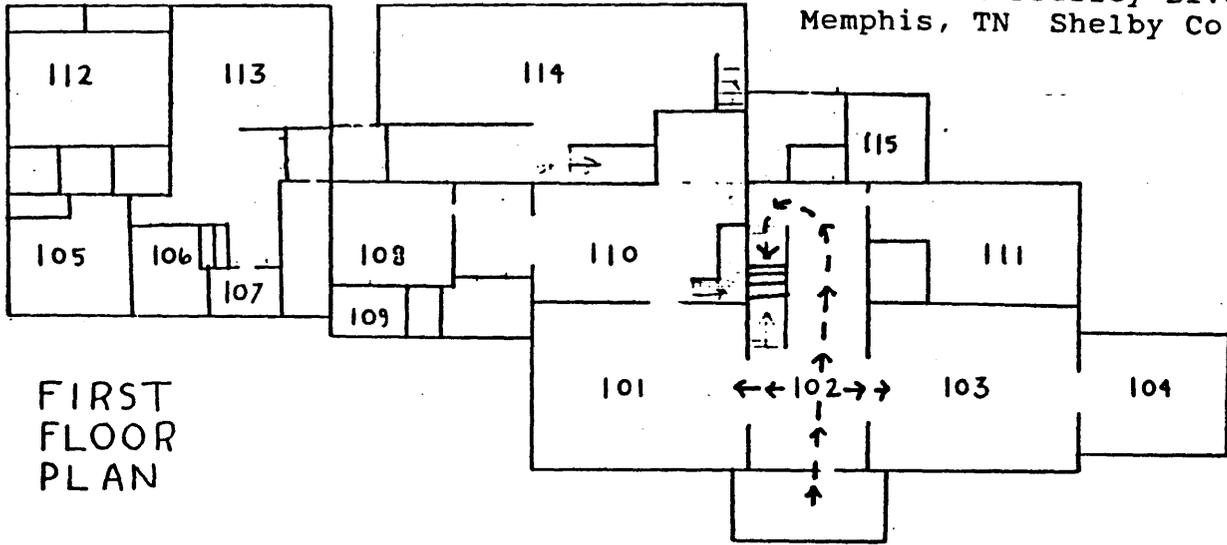
Graceland - Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.



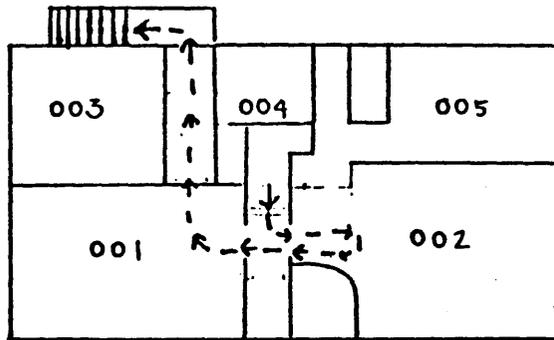
TOUR PATH #1 of 3

GRACELAND TOUR PATH

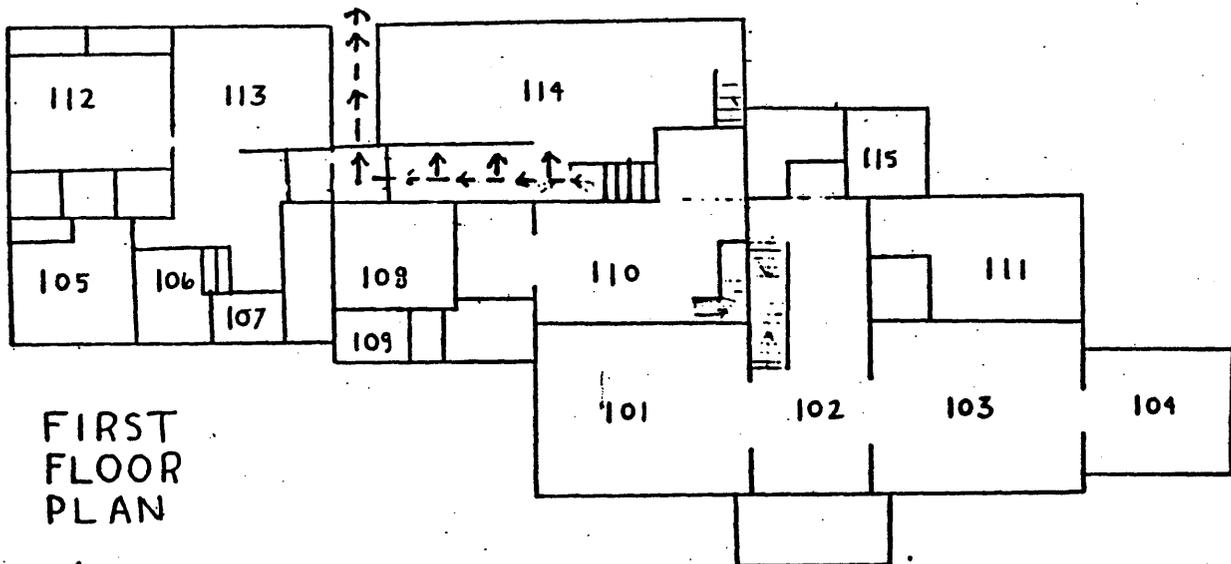
Graceland - Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

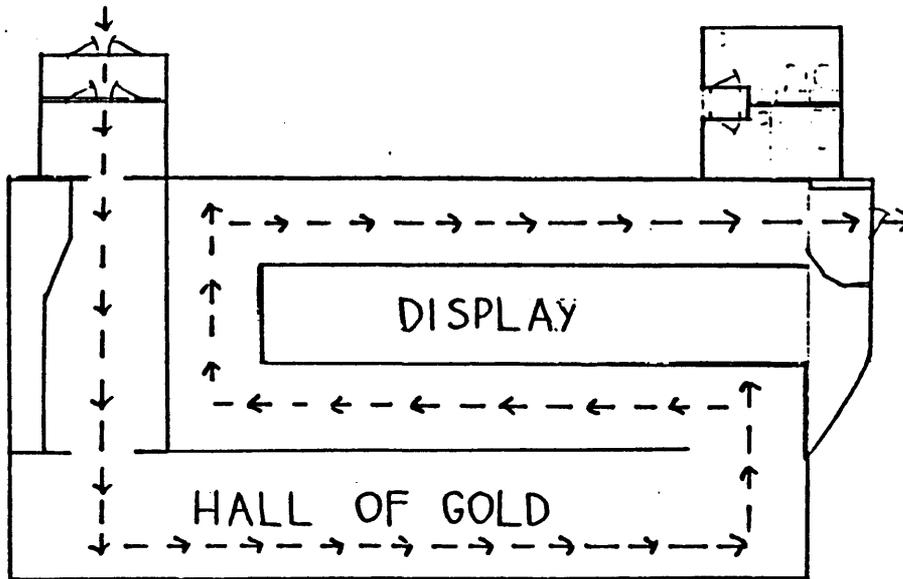


FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Graceland - Elvis Presley
3764 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN Shelby Co.

TROPHY ROOM



OUTLINE / FINAL PLAN
 GRACELAND EXECUTIVE OFFICE P.D.
 4.286 AC.

(Pb. 132, Pg. 77)

BOUNDARY

TAX MAP
 1" = 100'
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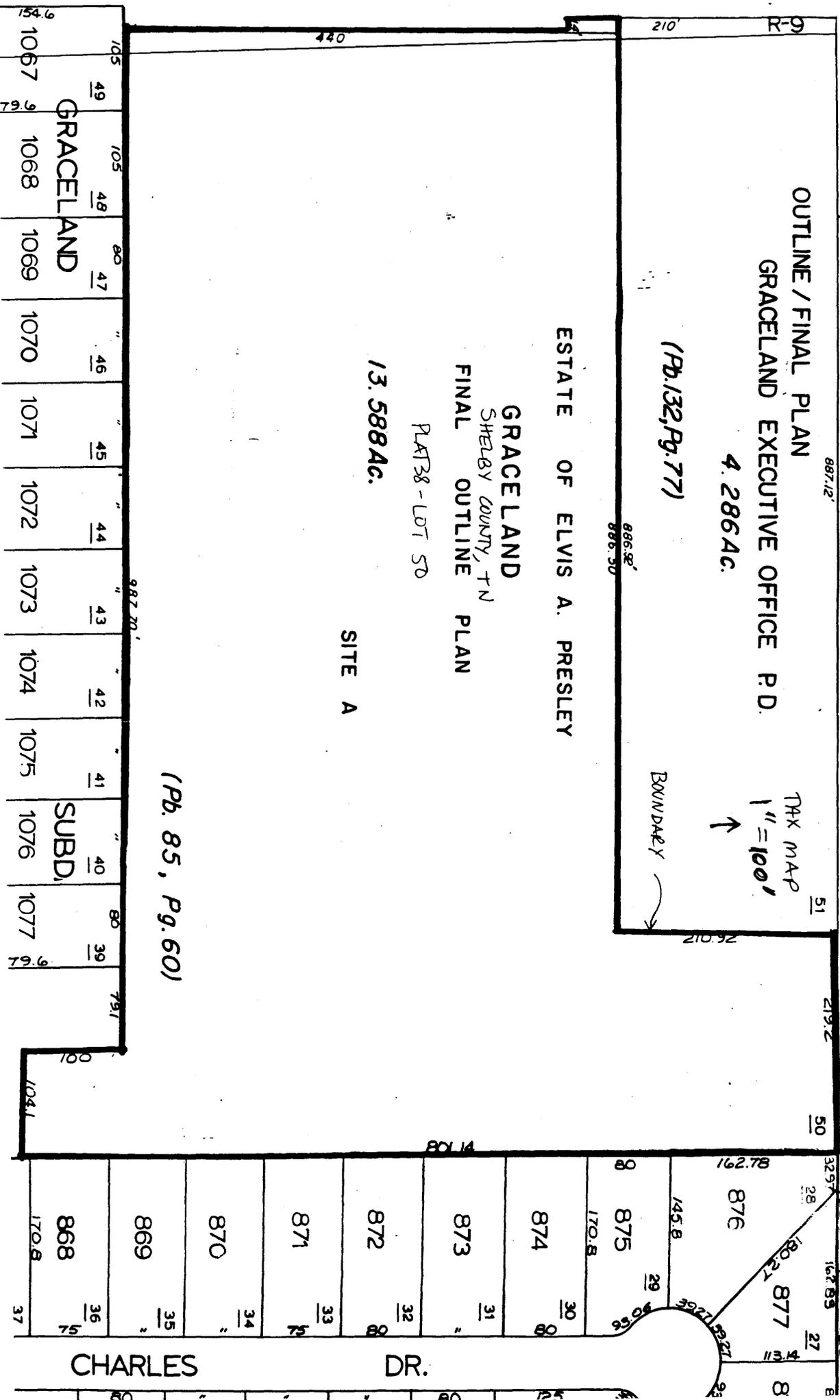
ESTATE OF ELVIS A. PRESLEY

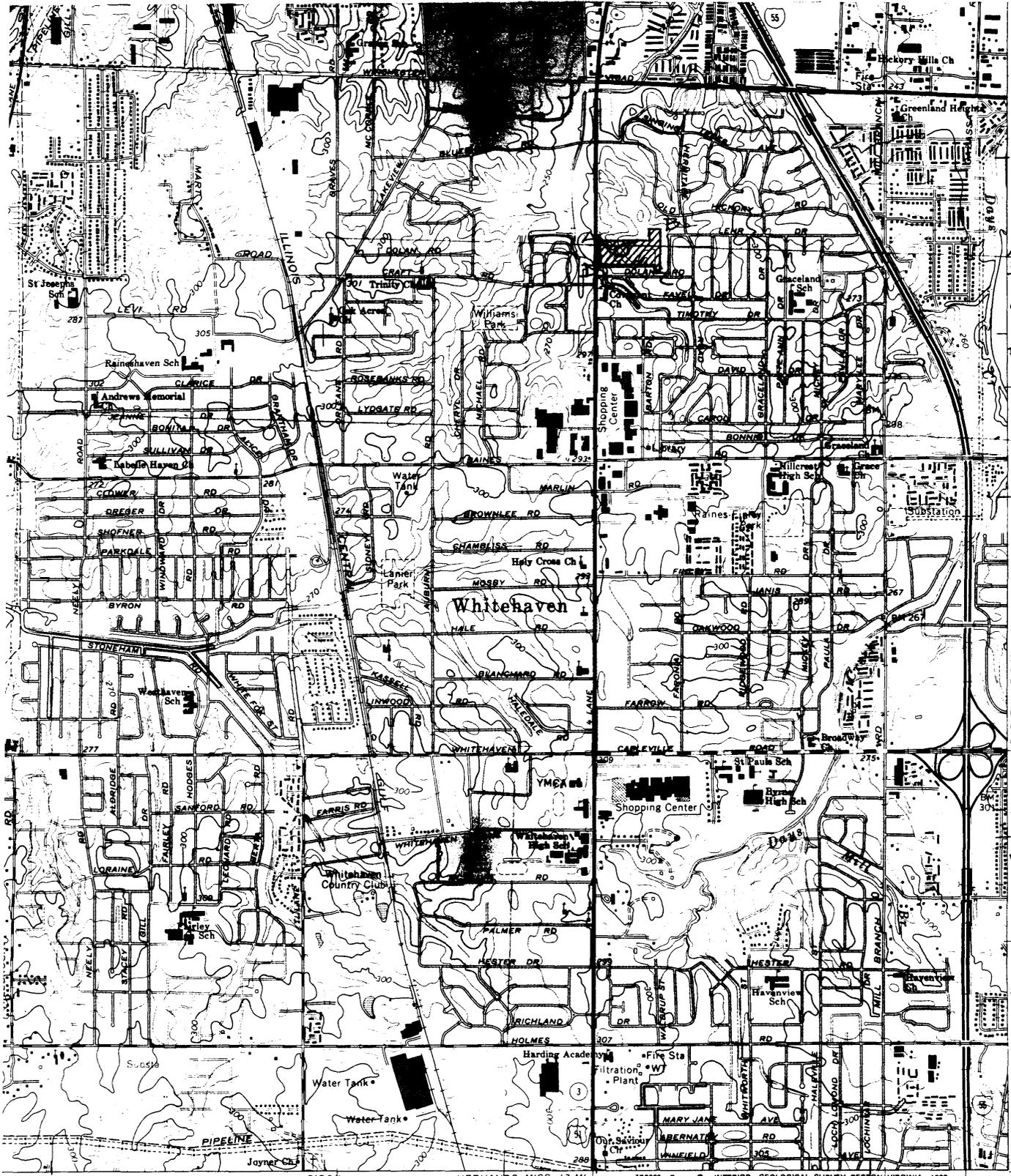
GRACELAND
 SHELBY COUNTY, TN
 FINAL OUTLINE PLAN

PLAT 38 - LOT 50
 1/3.588 AC.

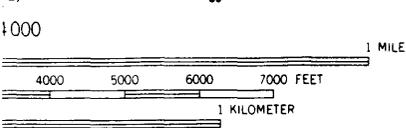
SITE A

(Pb. 85, Pg. 60)

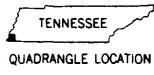




Graceland
 Memphis, Shelby Co
 TN
 A: 161771380/3882100
 B: 161771730/3882100
 C: 161771740/3881860
 2'30"
 D: 161771400/3881900



AL 10 FEET
 5-FOOT CONTOURS
 AL DATUM OF 1929
 L MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 Y, NASHVILLE, TENN. 37219,
 ON, LITTLE ROCK, ARK. 72201,
 ION, VICKSBURG, MISS. 39181
 ID SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	—————	Light-duty	—————
Medium-duty	—————	Unimproved dirt	-----
○ Interstate Route	⬡ U. S. Route	○ State Route	

SOUTHWEST MEMPHIS, TENN. — ARK.
 SE/4 MEMPHIS 15' QUADRANGLE
 35090-A1-TF-024

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
 State of Tennessee agencies from aerial photographs
 taken 1973. This information not field checked
 Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

1965
 PHOTOREVISED 1973
 DMA 2954 II SE—SERIES V841

(PLEASANT HILL
 3882100)