

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



24

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

other names/site number Bowden Golf Course

### 2. Location

street & number 3111 Millerfield Road

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

city or town Macon

state Georgia code GA county Bibb code 021 zip code 31201

### 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 at the following level(s) of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Dr. David C. Crass 5 January 2015  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
 Dr. David C. Crass/Historic Preservation Division Director/Deputy SHPO  
 Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources  
 State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register  determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:)

Edson W. Beall 2-23-15  
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	3	structures
0	0	objects
1	4	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

foundation: N/A  
walls: N/A  
roof: N/A  
other: N/A

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

---

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Charles L. Bowden Golf Course is located on Millerfield Road approximately four miles northeast of downtown Macon. The course was designed by John "Dick" C. Cotton (1907-1994), a Macon professional golfer and businessman. The boundaries of the golf course were established in 1938 when the course was laid out on a former airfield. The clubhouse, parking area, golf cart shed, two maintenance sheds, putting green, and a driving range are located near the entrance on Millerfield Road. The course is an 18-hole, 6,492-yard, par-72 golf course. All of the buildings/structures, constructed in 1974, are noncontributing. The stone benches and a pumphouse dating from c.1940 are part of the landscape. The course is a mostly flat course with wide fairways of Bermuda grass. Sand traps and a small lake created from the stream on the property create the primary hazards. The course retains a high degree of integrity, as it remains intact from its original design. Trees, primarily pine, oak, crepe myrtles, cherry, and Bradford pear, line the sides of the fairways and all edges of the property. The thick expanses of trees on the edges of the course provide a visual buffer to the adjacent road and residential areas.

---

### Narrative Description

*The following description was prepared by Maryel Battin, consultant, with editing by Lynn Speno, Historic Preservation Division. The draft February 21, 2013 "Charles L. Bowden Golf Course" Historic Property Information Form is on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.*

The Charles L. Bowden Golf Course is located approximately four miles northeast of downtown Macon in a neighborhood of commercial and residential areas. Vehicle access is provided at the northern edge of the property off Millerfield Road adjacent to the clubhouse. The entire property is buffered on all sides by wooded areas. The property consists of approximately 229 acres on which are located an 18-hole, 6,492-yard, par-72 golf course, a driving range, putting green, and noncontributing resources including a clubhouse, golf-cart shed, and maintenance sheds.

Mature live oak trees are located throughout the course and near the parking area. There are also stands of yellow, long-leaf and loblolly pine, scrub oak, crepe myrtles, persimmon, wild cherry, and maple trees, as well as pampas grass and prickly pear cactus found within the course boundaries. Bermuda grass covers the tees, fairways, and greens. Common grass and weeds cover the rough.

Golf cart paths were installed when the course opened. They have been resurfaced since that time. The asphalt paths are located along each hole (photographs 3, 6, 9, 11, and 14).

On several tees, there are cobblestone benches that were installed when the course was built (photograph 8). The cobblestones were removed from the streets of Macon when concrete or asphalt was installed. Later, brick water fountains were added at some of the tees.

A pond is located at the midpoint of the 15<sup>th</sup> fairway (photograph 12). In order to provide a water hole on the course, a creek that ran through the property was dammed up, creating the pond. There is a stone pumphouse near the pond on the southeastern edge of the property. The cobblestone pumphouse was used to pump water from the pond for irrigation. The original brick spillway is still in use (photograph 13).



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

The golf course, paths, landscaping, stone benches, pond, and pumphouse are counted as one contributing site.

Golf course. Contributing site c.1940

The course has been laid out to take advantage of the natural topography of the land, which contains some rolling hills on the eastern edge of the property. Many of the fairways are flat and parallel each other, some with dogleg turns of long distances. Trees and shrubs mark the visual demarcation between fairways. Sand bunkers surround most of the greens and run along the edge of the fairway on several holes.

Hole 1 is a par-4, 412-yard hole with a long, flat, straight fairway with mature trees on the right side and young trees dividing the fairway from the adjacent driving range on the left side. Hole 1 has one of the widest fairways on the course. This hole, along with the tenth hole, is the site of the former airfield (photographs 1 and 2).

Hole 2, a par-4, 417-yard hole, has mature trees and shrubs on the right side and a sand trap next to the green (photographs 3 and 4).

Hole 3, par 4 and 327 yards, has a drainage ditch crossing the fairway near the tee (photograph 5). The green is surrounded by tall pines and sand traps.

Hole 4, par 3, 162 yards, has a narrow fairway with mature trees on both sides and sand traps at the green. It is the second shortest hole on the course (photograph 6).

Hole 5 is a par-5, 511-yard hole with a long, wide fairway. A dogleg to the right makes the green invisible from the tee. It is the second longest hole on the course (photograph 7).

Hole 6, par 4, and 405 yards, has a cobblestone bench at the tee with pines and scrub oak trees at either side of the fairway. Two sand traps surround the green (photographs 8 and 9).

Hole 7, par 5 and 505 yards, has a cobblestone bench and masonry water fountain at the tee, a wide fairway, and green with sand traps. A granite memorial to Dick Cotton, the course designer, is located at the base of a tree in the middle of the fairway (photograph 10). The memorial reads "Dick Cotton Tree –Founder Bowden – 1940."

Hole 8, par 3 and 213 yards, has a cobblestone bench at the tee, and mature trees at right and pines at left of fairway. The cart path runs part way through the middle of the fairway (photograph 11).

Hole 9, par 4 and 396 yards, has a cobblestone bench at the tee, mature trees at each side of the fairway, and an open green with no hazards. It has a narrow fairway.

Hole 10, par 5 and 505 yards, sits along the northern edge of the property near Millerfield Road and is a wide, straight, open fairway. It, along with the first hole, was the site of the former airfield (photograph 16).

The 11<sup>th</sup> hole, par 5 and 606 yards, is the longest hole on the course and is located on the eastern edge of the property. The tee, with a cobblestone bench, sits at the top of a hill. The fairway runs down to the green with mature trees on either side.

The 12<sup>th</sup> hole, at par-3, 203 yards, is one of the shorter holes on the course. It is located below the 11<sup>th</sup> hole along the eastern edge of the course. It has a cobblestone bench at the tee, narrow fairway with mature trees on both sides, and a green surrounded by two sand traps.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

The 13<sup>th</sup> hole heads west near the southern edge of the property. It is a par-4, 352-yard hole that has a wide fairway with mature trees at either side and an open green (photograph 14).

Located one in front of the other and parallel to hole 13, holes 14 and 15 head east. They are located at the southern edge of the property. Hole 14 is a par-4, 265-yard hole with dense vegetation on the right side of the fairway and a gully before the green.

Hole 15, par 4 and 303 yards, has a large pond at mid-point of the fairway. To the left of the pond is an abandoned pumphouse located in a swampy area with dense vegetation. On the south side of the pond is the original brick spillway (photographs 12 and 13).

Hole 16, a par-3 139-yard hole, is the shortest hole on the course. It has a cobblestone bench at the tee and narrow fairway lined with mature vegetation that rises to a domed green (photograph 15).

Hole 17 at par 4, 364 yards, is a wide, open, straight fairway located in the interior of the property. Oak trees are located on the right side of the fairway. The tee has a cobblestone bench.

The 18<sup>th</sup> hole, par 4 and 407 yards, heads north towards the 10<sup>th</sup> tee. It has a flat open fairway with young trees at either side rising to an open green.

The par numbers are based on the men's longest yardages. There are intermediate yardages (6,227 yards) and women's/youth yardages (4,991/4,812 yards) for each hole. Ladies par is 73.

Clubhouse: Non-contributing building c.1974 (photographs 17 and 19)

A masonry clubhouse is located adjacent to the parking area. It features a low-pitched, gabled roof pierced by clerestory windows. On the front façade, canvas awnings shade the jalousie windows and door with glass insert. Five brick pilasters define the windows and door. The interior consists of a small golf shop with exposed brick walls, lobby with exposed rafters and drywall finishes, a meeting area with exposed rafters and concrete block walls, and restroom and storage facilities.

Golf cart shed and maintenance buildings: Non-contributing structures c.1970s

A long, open shed provides cover for the golf carts. Two maintenance buildings are located near the 10<sup>th</sup> hole green (photograph 16).

In the 1970s, the number of golfers increased and the original clubhouse, being too small for all the players, was demolished. It had stood near a stand of four live oak trees, close to the tee of the 10<sup>th</sup> hole. The new clubhouse was built adjacent to the first tee.

A golf-cart shed, located adjacent to and behind the new clubhouse, was built during the 1970s.

The original caddy shack was also demolished and a new metal maintenance building was constructed in that location. The caddy shack housed equipment and had a fireplace and space for caddies to eat, play cards, etc. The large metal maintenance building is located southeast of hole 10. Nearby is also a small concrete block maintenance building with open porch (photograph 16).

Because there are no houses visible from the playing area, the course has maintained its original view shed.

In the 1990s, over 2,000 additional trees and shrubs were added to the course and an irrigation system was installed.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION  
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
SOCIAL HISTORY

**Period of Significance**

1940 - 1961

**Significant Dates**

1940 – golf course completed  
1961 – integration of golf course

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Cotton, John "Dick" C., designer

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance is from the date of completion of the golf course in 1940 to 1961 the year the course was integrated.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

This 18-hole public golf course was designed in 1938 by John "Dick" C. Cotton (1907-1994), a Macon professional golfer and businessman. Cotton and other local golfers approached the City of Macon about the need for a public course after the Lakeside Course in Macon closed in the mid-1930s. The mayor of Macon, Charles Bowden, agreed to assist in any way, except financially. The city had no money during the Great Depression to build golf courses. A former, but vacant, airfield in east Macon, known as Miller Field, proved to be the ideal spot to lay out an 18-hole course. With the help of Works Progress Administration (WPA) labor, equipment from various businesses throughout the city, and the sale of subscriptions to fund materials, the course was completed and opened in September 1940. The golf course is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation as a good example of a golf course that opened in the 1940s. The golf course is significant at the local level in the area of politics/government for its direct association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Georgia. Created in 1935 by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, the WPA was a work program that hired the unemployed to build public facilities. The golf course is locally significant under Criterion C in landscape architecture for its design, which has remained relatively unchanged since its completion in 1940. The classic design of the course, in which the natural features are maintained, is typical construction for public courses of this era. The course is mostly flat, with the soil consisting of Norfolk sandy loam, and follows the natural terrain of the land, with a rise and fall of land about every five feet. The original layout, challenges, and setting of the golf course remain essentially intact. Bowden Golf Course is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of social history as the first public facility in Macon to integrate. The course integrated in 1961, close to a year before the Macon city busses integrated. The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled for desegregation of Atlanta's golf courses in a 1955 ruling *Holmes v. Atlanta*. Macon decided to follow Atlanta's lead and begin a movement for integration of its public facilities.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The golf course is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation as a good example of a golf course that opened in the 1940s in Macon. This was the only golf course built in Macon during this time. With the wide introduction of the game of golf in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, golf rose to become the primary recreational activity for many country clubs. The game also gave rise to new country clubs, in addition to public courses as the game spread in popularity to the middle-class by the 1920s. This spread in popularity helped give rise to more than 360 public golf courses being constructed in the 1930s and 1940s in state and local parks with funding provided by New Deal agencies.

The golf course is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of politics/government for its direct association with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Georgia. Created in 1935 by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, the WPA was a work program that provided work to the unemployed to build public facilities. Of all of Roosevelt's New Deal programs, the Works Progress Administration is the most famous, because it affected so many people's lives. Roosevelt's vision of a work-relief program employed more than 8.5 million people. For an average salary of \$41.57 a month, WPA employees built bridges, roads, public buildings, public parks, and airports. Under the direction of Harry Hopkins, the WPA would spend more than \$11 million in employment relief before it was canceled in 1943. The WPA employed far many more men than women, with only 13.5 percent of WPA employees being women in the peak year of 1938.

Bowden was one of many golf courses built across the country during the New Deal era with labor funded by the WPA. Funds paid 27 cents an hour for unskilled labor and 40 cents for skilled labor for 125 men. This WPA initiative changed the face of golf in the United States. Golfers, who in many instances could not afford to continue to play at private clubs, now were able to play at municipal courses at a reasonable cost. Bowden

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

Bibb County, Georgia

Name of Property

County and State

Golf Course was one of the many courses that benefitted from these New Deal initiatives. Without WPA funds to cover the cost of labor, the course would not have been developed. Having a municipal course close to the center of Macon allowed a greater number of golfers to participate in their chosen sport at affordable fees. Other known WPA-built courses in Georgia include the Bobby Jones Golf Course in Atlanta (1934), the 1936 Forsyth Golf Club in Forsyth, the Rabun County Golf Club in Clayton (1940), and the 1936 Jonesco Golf Course in Gray.

The golf course is locally significant under Criterion C in landscape architecture for its design, which has remained relatively unchanged since its completion in 1940. The classic design of the course, in which the natural features are maintained, is typical construction for public courses of this era. The ideas of orientation, views, sensitivity to topography, and the preservation of natural features are essential to classic design of golf courses. The course is mostly flat, with the soil consisting of Norfolk sandy loam soil, and follows the natural terrain of the land, with a rise and fall of land about every five feet. The original layout, challenges, and setting of the golf course remain intact. The course was designed by John C. "Dick" Cotton, a Macon resident and golf pro. At first Cotton was dubious about the viability of the former airfield as a site for a golf course, but after inspecting it, he designed an 18-hole course using, as his guide, a topographical map provided by the city engineer. Cotton was a golf professional, not a landscape architect. He used the "lay of the land" approach to provide open links-style fairways lined with trees to give the impression of a parkland, typical of late 19th and early 20th century courses.

Early golf courses did not have access to large earth-moving equipment so they were designed using the natural contours of the land. It was only after World War II that courses were constructed with large amounts of soil and rocks being moved by earth-moving equipment. Bowden is typical of the classic design and was one of the few courses built in the World War II era in Georgia. Tractors, shovels, and mules were used to lay out and plant the course. It was with the help of labor funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and tools provided by Macon businessmen that the course was developed. A creek running through the property was dammed by manual labor to provide a water hole, 5,000 pine and other trees were planted, and Bermuda grass was brought in from a field behind Central City Park in Macon.

By the 1920s, golf course architecture was a full-time profession in the U.S., but most courses were not designed by these professionals. Most were laid out and designed by local golfers or British immigrants who often remained as groundskeepers. No matter who designed them, golf courses were growing as the game spread in popularity.

Bowden Golf Course is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of social history as the first public facility in Macon to integrate. The course integrated in 1961, close to a year before the Macon city busses integrated. The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled for desegregation of Atlanta's golf courses in a 1955 ruling *Holmes v. Atlanta*. Macon decided to follow Atlanta's lead and begin a movement for integration of its public facilities.

When it opened in 1940, Bowden Golf Course was restricted to white players. Segregation was in effect in Macon and the South during this time. The 1896 U.S. Supreme Court *Plessy v. Ferguson* case and disenfranchisement laws served to hold back the rights of African American citizens and affected where they lived, went to school, conducted business, or participated in recreation. In Macon there was no municipal course on which African Americans could play, so the "separate but equal" clause in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case could not be applied.

Prior to 1960 there were few recreational facilities and no golf courses for African Americans in Macon. There were several playgrounds for African American families such as Mattie Hubbard Jones playground in Pleasant Hill owned by the Catholic Church, Daniels Park on the present site of the Macon Coliseum, Grays Hill



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

Bibb County, Georgia

Name of Property

County and State

swimming pool near I-75, Sawyers Lake near Jeffersonville Road in East Macon, and Central City Park. Most of those facilities focused on African American youth, not on adults.

The Douglass Theater, owned by an African American named Charles Douglass, was open to African Americans. Whites were allowed only in the balcony of that facility. The Roxy Theatre on Hazel Street showed movies to African American audiences in a Quonset-hut building. Luther Williams Baseball Field had a "colored section" and some companies such as Pepsi Cola, Dr. Pepper, and the U. S. Post Office had black baseball teams. All of these venues were segregated by race.

The struggle of African American golfers in Macon to integrate Bowden Golf Course parallels the struggle by other African American athletes to use public golf courses without discrimination in Georgia and throughout the country. This struggle was aided by the *Holmes v. Atlanta* court case and was instrumental in forcing Macon's City Council to open the course to all golfers without regard to their race.

African Americans had caddied for white players at Bowden since its opening. Beginning in 1954, a group of African American golfers petitioned the City of Macon for permission to play at Bowden Golf Course, but were not successful. In 1955 the U.S. Supreme Court case *Holmes v. Atlanta*, with Thurgood Marshall defending the black plaintiffs, ruled against Atlanta's "separate but equal" concept in public golf courses. That case gave Macon's African American golfers additional incentive to request to play on Bowden Golf Course, but permission was not granted until 1961 in spite of repeated requests to Macon City Council.

The desegregation occurred peacefully and without rancor in 1961. It was the first recreational facility integrated in Macon. Oscar L. Vinson Jr., president of the local New Era Golfers Association, wrote a letter to the *Macon Telegraph* thanking the mayor, city attorney, and members of the city council for making possible "for Negroes the usage of the Bowden Golf Course."

The mid-1950s to mid-1960s, the period during which Bowden Golf Course was established, was a time of great social change for black citizens of Georgia and the nation at large. While this time period in particular is known for the intensity and activity of what later came to be known as the Civil Rights Movement, these mid-20th-century years served as a culmination of almost 100 years of discrimination towards black United States citizens.<sup>1</sup>

Early efforts to eliminate racial discrimination in the United States led to the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, on December 6, 1865, which banned slavery throughout the country. With the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment on July 9, 1868, freed slaves were officially granted the rights of full citizenship. However, many African Americans in the South were allowed only limited rights in practice. The Fifteenth Amendment was ratified on February 3, 1870, and banned race-based voting qualifications.

However, many of these rights granted to African Americans were taken away at the turn of the 20th century. The 1896 Supreme Court case, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and the disfranchisement laws put into place throughout the South at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, forced equality for black citizens back several steps. *Plessy v. Ferguson* upheld the constitutionality of "separate but equal." Separate but equal affected all aspects of the lives of African American citizens including housing, schools, business, and recreation. The disfranchisement laws effectively prevented blacks from voting without having to change the Fifteenth Amendment.

<sup>1</sup> Much of the remainder of this social history derives from *Meadowbrook Country Club National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (North Carolina, listed 12/16/2009). Sybil Argintar.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

### Integration of the Game of Golf

Recreational facilities for the sport of golf, especially throughout the South, were segregated at both public and private facilities from the earliest days of the sport in the late 19th century. While many private and municipal facilities were open to white players, it took almost 100 years for the sport to be fully integrated and open to both races. Golf as a sport has been popular on an amateur basis within the black community from its earliest days, although the opportunities to learn and play the game were minimal. Most black golfers served as caddies to white players at the public courses and private white country clubs, where their greatest learning opportunities came from watching the game from the sidelines. Some municipal golf courses, including the Municipal Golf Course in Asheville, North Carolina, and Clearview Golf Club in East Canton, Ohio, which was designed, built, and owned by an African American in 1946, allowed blacks to play.

Beginning in the mid-1950s, after the landmark *Brown v Board of Education* Supreme Court ruling, many municipal courses throughout the country began to allow blacks to play, but even this was often on a limited basis and difficult for those who encountered glares of intolerance. It was not until the 1990s that blacks were finally offered membership in private white country clubs and began to be fully accepted into the professional golf circuit. The winning of the 1997 Masters tournament by Tiger Woods, the first African American to win this prestigious title, was therefore monumental in scope as it symbolized full integration of blacks into the game of golf.

There were many black golfing pioneers who paved the way towards full integration of the sport. One of the earliest was John Matthew Shippen Jr. (1879-1968), a minister's son and caddy at the Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, who entered the Second U.S. Open Championship in 1896 in Shinnecock, New York, along with a local Native American, Oscar Bunn. There was an uprising among the rest of the playing field, which was all white. However, the president of the United States Golf Association (USGA) allowed Shippen and Bunn to play. Shippen played in five more U.S. Opens, before serving as the greens keeper and head golf pro from 1932 to 1964 at the country's first private black country club, Shady Rest Country Club in Scotch Plains, New Jersey, founded in 1921.

Another important early figure in the history of black golfers was Joseph M. Bartholomew of New Orleans (born in 1881) who, like most blacks interested in the game, began his study of the game working as a caddy, in this case working for the all-white Audubon Golf Course in New Orleans. A white member of another club, the Metairie Golf Club near New Orleans, learned of Bartholomew's skill and interest in golf and helped sponsor him to go to New York to receive training as a golf course architect in the late 1910s. Bartholomew returned to New Orleans in 1922 and designed a new course for Metairie, which he was never allowed to play. Other black citizens contributed significantly to the game - one of the most notable of which was Dr. George F. Grant, a dentist in Boston who invented and patented the golf tee in 1899. He was not given proper credit for its invention until 1991.

Robert "Hard Rock" Robinson was another black pioneer in the early years of the 20th century. Born in 1914 in Camden, South Carolina, he moved with his family in 1922 to Pinehurst, North Carolina, which featured several Donald Ross-designed golf courses. Robinson, in his teen years, became the personal caddy and assistant to Donald Ross, and later for such famous golfers as Ben Hogan and Sam Snead. Despite these connections, Robinson was not allowed to play at Pinehurst, which in the 1950s employed as many as 500 black caddies who worked sunup to sundown carrying one bag for \$2 or two bags for \$3.78.

The USGA, although it did not have a specific segregation policy, did not welcome blacks at its events. Another major golf association, the Professional Golf Association (PGA) had a "Caucasian-only" clause in its by-laws by 1934. In response to these discriminatory policies, in 1925, black golfers in Washington, D.C. started their own national association, the United Golfers Association (UGA, originally named the United States Colored Golfers Association). Many black golfers, due to the organization of the UGA, finally had a way



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

to play the game professionally. The UGA was divided into districts, most of which were in the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, and Midwestern states. Shady Rest Country Club, originally Westfield Golf Club, a white club purchased by blacks in 1921, contained a nine-hole course, tennis courts, bridle paths, trapshooting, and a croquet lawn. It was the site of the first National Colored Golf Championship on July 4, 1925. A second championship game followed in 1926 at another private black club, Mapledale Country Club, founded in the 1920s in Mapledale, Massachusetts.

The UGA could not have existed had there not been golf and country clubs that allowed black golfers to play, even if they could not be members. However, these private country clubs were located in the Northeast and Midwest, not in the South. Some of these clubs included Sunset Hills, Kankakee, Illinois; Douglass Park, Indianapolis, Indiana; Rackham, Detroit, Michigan; Mohansic, New York; Highland Park, Cleveland, Ohio; Cobb Creek, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Palos Park, Chicago, Illinois; and Casa Loma Country Club, Powers Lake, Wisconsin. In addition to these private venues, Langston Golf Club, a public course for blacks, was established in Washington, D. C., in 1939, and a public black country club, Clearview Golf Club in East Canton, Ohio, was founded in 1946.

Segregation laws were so prevalent in the South that there were very few places to play. Most black golfers left the South if they wanted to play professionally, but a few, like John Brooks Dendy, stayed and "...stood toe to toe with Jim Crow and refused to blink first..." Dendy, who began his career as a caddy at the Asheville Country Club in the 1920s, went pro in 1932, but could not earn enough money to continue. He returned to Asheville in 1940 and resumed his work in service at the Asheville and Biltmore Forest country clubs.

Eventually, playing in a segregated black organization became intolerable for professional black golfers. The facilities often were not as good as those of their white-only counterparts and the prize money, as Dendy had experienced, was far less than those awarded through the USGA or the PGA. Professional black golfers wanted to be able to play in fully integrated championship games. The first battle won for additional playing fields was on the public courses. It was not until the mid-1950s, however, that municipal golf courses in the South began to open their doors to integration. One of the earliest public courses to do so officially was the Lions Municipal Golf Course in Austin, Texas, which formally integrated in 1951.

One additional Supreme Court case, *Holmes v Atlanta*, with Thurgood Marshall defending the black plaintiffs, ruled in favor of the plaintiffs leading to additional laws to desegregate public parks and golf courses. Nevertheless, black players continued to be harassed and were not welcome at most public golf courses. The movement for equality of recreational facilities continued to make progress, however, and by the 1960s, most Southern states had at least one golf course where the black pros were allowed to play. Tournaments and additional professional associations were formed, including the Skyview Golf Association in Asheville, North Carolina, and clubs in Atlanta and Macon, Georgia, and Knoxville, Tennessee.

Opening private facilities to professional black players was another battle to be won. Playing with the PGA was a major goal of many black golfers. Bill Spiller, a black golfer in the 1940s, was instrumental in causing the PGA to change its "Caucasian-only" policies. Born in 1913 in Oklahoma, Spiller, completely self-taught, was known as one of the top players in California by 1943. He won many amateur tournaments, and by 1947 decided to turn pro. He played other golf pros in two PGA tournaments which were open to blacks, one in Los Angeles, California, and one in Chicago, Illinois, but sought more equity in the game. Spiller sued the PGA in 1948 for their discrimination policies and won, and as a result blacks were allowed to play in the PGA tournament. In 1961, the PGA eliminated their "Caucasian-only" policy for membership, a big step in the fight for equality. Charlie Sifford, who began his golfing career as a caddy at the Carolina Country Club in Charlotte, North Carolina, was the first African American member of the PGA, receiving full membership in 1965. Lee Elder, another notable black golfer, was invited to play at the Masters tournament in 1975.



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

As the first African American golfer to play there, Elder's participation represented a major step in the integration of the sport of golf. Some private venues were beginning to change their policies in the 1970s and 1980s, but the carrot, so to speak, for all professional black golfers, was to be able to play at the Augusta (Georgia) National Golf Club's Masters tournament. This was significant because the Augusta National was a private all-white club in the South and Southern private clubs resisted full integration. As late as 1990, private clubs such as Shoal Creek Country Club in Birmingham, Alabama, refused to open its doors, saying that "...the country club is our home and we pick and choose who we want..."

The PGA, however, in a major change in its outlook from earlier years, took a stand and stated that they would not pick sites that continued to institute discrimination policies. Shoal Creek took notice, since losing the PGA Championship game would be a major loss of prestige and a financial blow, and later in the year, Louis Willie, a Birmingham insurance executive, was made an honorary member. Also at this time, Ron Townsend, another black golfer, was the first non-white member to be admitted to the Augusta National Golf Club. This was the final step in setting the stage for Tiger Woods to be the first African American to win the Masters in 1997, almost 100 years since golf had gained popularity as a sport in the United States.

---

**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

*The following historic context was prepared by Maryel Battin, consultant, with editing by Lynn Speno, Historic Preservation Division. The draft February 21, 2013 "Charles L. Bowden Golf Course" Historic Property Information Form is on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.*

Around 1937 or 1938 a group of Macon, Georgia men, headed by Dick Cotton, who had been the professional at the Lakeside Golf Course in Macon before it closed, approached the City of Macon with the idea of a new public golf course. These men felt there was a need for a new municipal course in east Macon. With Miller Airfield no longer operating as an airfield, the group suggested the old airfield as a possible location. The mayor agreed to help in any way except financially because the city was, at that time, paying its employees in scrip. Funds were not available for this type of project.

**Dick Cotton**

According to his son Quinton, John C. "Dick" Cotton was born in March 28, 1907 near Dallas in Itasca, Texas. His father was Alvis Quinton Cotton and his mother (name unknown), who had married at age 13, had 12 children, all of whom except Dick, the youngest, were born in Anniston, Alabama, before the Cottons moved to Texas. The family owned a cotton farm that failed due to the boll weevil infestation of the 1920s. When Dick Cotton was six years old, the Cotton family returned to Anniston, where the family found employment in a local cotton mill. While in Anniston, one of Dick's older brothers married a woman from Macon, Georgia, so the Cottons followed him to Macon where many of the family started work in the cotton mill in Payne City, an incorporated city within the city limits of Macon. The family lived in a mill house in Payne City with no indoor plumbing, two toilet facilities up the street, and an outdoor spigot. During his early years Cotton also learned to play golf, although none of his family participated in the sport and it appears that he was self-taught.

Dick Cotton attended Mercer University in Macon on a scholarship, but did not graduate. He became a professional tap dancer and joined a minstrel troupe that provided entertainment during traveling medicine shows. For two years he travelled with the shows up and down the East Coast and as far west as St. Louis, Missouri. He had learned to dance from some of the African Americans who worked the Payne City mill. When

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

Bibb County, Georgia

Name of Property

County and State

"talking pictures" became available, these shows lost popularity. After he left the vaudeville shows, he took a business course in Macon where he met his future wife's mother when he sold her an insurance policy.

After marriage, he continued in the insurance business and was also the golf pro at the Lakeside Golf Course in Macon, a public course with sand greens. Cotton tried to participate in golf tours but there was not enough money in it to support his growing family.

With no public golf course in Macon in the late 1930s, a group of men approached Mayor Bowden about the need for a new municipal course. With Miller Airfield no longer a viable entity, the group suggested the old airfield as a possible location. Camp Wheeler was about to open nearby and it was felt that the course would provide recreation for the troops.

At first Cotton was dubious about the viability of the site for a golf course, but after inspecting the site he designed an 18-hole course using, as his guide, a topographical map provided by the city engineer. The city engineer and Cotton worked for months documenting the requirements for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to fund the project including the man-hours needed, yards of dirt to be moved, plantings, and cost of building the clubhouse and lake. The city and WPA administration officials announced approval of the project on June 10, 1938. WPA funds were to pay 27 cents an hour for unskilled labor and 40 cents for skilled labor for 125 men. Peeler Hardware, a local Macon business, provided tools for the men. Many scrub oaks had to be removed so that the location for the tees and greens could be determined. Baker-Maddox Tractor Company of Macon provided a tractor that was able, using a railroad iron tied to the rear of the tractor, to level the ground. Bermuda grass roots came from Central City Park in Macon because no funds were available for seed. Five hundred pine trees were planted and land for the lake was cleared by hand using picks and shovels. The clubhouse was built by the skilled labor paid with WPA funds. Lifetime memberships sold by the Junior Chamber of Commerce paid for the gasoline for the tractor and trucks, provided at eight cents a gallon because this was a government project. All of these contributions meant that the course with its clubhouse opened without costing the City of Macon any money. Once opened, the greens fees were 35 cents for 18 holes and 75 cents for greens fee and a caddy.

After the course was built, Cotton was the golf pro at Bowden for its first few years, then left c.1946 to start a dairy farm on 100 acres on Mumford Road on the outskirts of Macon. At first he had a milk cow herd given to him by a friend from Wisconsin, but sold it to concentrate on buying and processing milk. He eventually sold the business to Gold Bond Dairies in 1954.

Dick Cotton then opened the Middle Georgia Roofing Company. His son, Quinton, was involved with a steel design firm in Macon but wanted to leave to learn to fly. So, his father took over that business and named it the Dick Cotton Company. He was also building apartments around Macon, some of which were located near Bowden Golf Course.

Although he was no longer working at Bowden Golf Course, Cotton was interested in its development until his death on November 14, 1994.

### **Works Progress Administration**

In 1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt started initiatives which became known as the New Deal. These initiatives promoted publicly funded work projects to reverse the economic decline being experienced in the United States. Highest priority was given to the construction of recreational facilities because it was believed that recreation would be of the greatest benefit to citizens and would promote health and happiness. Agencies

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

Bibb County, Georgia

Name of Property

County and State

began to build swimming pools, gyms, ice-skating rinks, tennis facilities, and golf courses to achieve this goal. Also that year, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which was charged with administering federal grants and loans to the states and local governments, first issued golf course grants. From 1933 to 1942 most of the growth in golf courses was attributed to public work forces under the New Deal.

Because the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933 mandated that FERA should end two years after its inception, a new program was needed to take its place. The program put in place was called the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which took over and improved the programs put in place by FERA. The WPA was created May 6, 1935, by authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935.

The WPA agreed to pay \$55,000 towards the labor of the Bowden Golf Course. The Junior Chamber of Commerce agreed to raise \$11,000 in memberships and contributions from the community for the approximately \$70,000 total cost of developing the course. There would be 18 holes and two practice greens. With a pay rate of \$2.70 per day, the laborers used equipment and supplies donated by the community. Trees and shrubs were planted and the old airfield hanger was used to house the tools.

By the end of 1935, 206 towns in 39 states had new or renovated golf courses, clubhouses, and grounds. Seventy-five new courses had been built by the WPA; of these 13 were 18-hole courses, the remainder 9-hole courses. Fifteen courses were expanded from 9 to 18 holes. An additional 62 courses were being constructed by early 1937. More than \$12 million worth of work at approximately 368 courses had been completed.

This WPA initiative changed the face of golf in the United States. Golfers, who in many instances could not afford to continue to play at private clubs, now were able to play at municipal courses at a reasonable cost. Bowden Golf Course was one of the many courses that benefitted from these New Deal initiatives. Without WPA funds to cover the cost of labor, the course would not have been developed. Having a municipal course close to the center of Macon allowed a greater number of golfers to participate in their chosen sport at affordable greens fees.

### **Development of Golf in United States**

Most of the early American golf courses were built along the eastern seaboard. It is believed that the Savannah Golf Club is the oldest golf club in the United States, dating its origins to 1794. The golf course that exists there today dates to 1899. In 1884 Oakhurst Golf Club was founded in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The Quoogue Field Club, Quogue, New York, was designed by James Hepburn and R.B. Wilson in 1887 as a Scottish, links-style course. In 1888 a Scottish sportsman named John Reid and several of his friends took a handful of clubs and some balls to a pasture in Yonkers, New York, to play a rough three-hole course and then founded the St. Andrews Golf Club.

Early golf courses in Georgia include the Glen Arven Country Club in Thomasville, designed by J. Wyman Jones, which was established in 1892 and is thought to be the oldest course still in use in Georgia. Other known WPA-built courses in Georgia include the Bobby Jones Golf Course in Atlanta (1934), the 1936 Forsyth Golf Club in Forsyth, the Rabun County Golf Club in Clayton (1940), and the 1936 Jonesco Golf Course in Gray.

### **Developing Bowden**

Fortunately Dick Cotton, with the help of the city's engineer, was able to design the Bowden course. The course opened on September 29, 1940, after two years of construction. It was named for Charles L. Bowden,



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course

Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia

County and State

mayor of Macon at that time. Dick Cotton was the golf professional. He gave golf lessons during the day and sponsored parties for officers in the armed forces in the clubhouse in the evenings. Two ells were added in 1942 to either side of the original building to house the parties. Cotton asked a painter named McGee to paint murals on sheets of plywood that were installed as wall decoration in the clubhouse.

When World War II broke out, gasoline was rationed and the number of golfers dwindled. However, there were several professional golfers stationed at nearby Camp Wheeler, Cochran Field, and Herbert Smart Field. Military personnel were allowed to play without charge and several golf pros stationed at these installations played at Bowden including Lloyd Mangnum, Charlie Yates, Andy Gasper, Ted Luther, Frank Metsgar, and Bob Stuhler.

By the early 1950s, both white men and women golfers played the course. Most of the caddies were African American. Occasionally the players allowed their caddies to hit balls but no African Americans played the course.

### **African American Golfers**

Many African Americans were introduced to the game of golf by being employed as caddies. For them, this was seen as a more viable alternative to working in the tobacco or cotton fields. They earned minimal wages for days of considerable labor, often working 54 holes in one day. Caddy fees in 1916 were approximately 50 cents for 18 holes and 70 cents for 18 holes with two bags. Some became professional caddies, such as Robert (Hard Rock) Robinson of Pinehurst, North Carolina, who was personal caddy for Donald Ross, the famous Scottish golf course architect who designed more than 400 courses in the United States including five in Georgia - the Augusta Country Club course, East Lake Golf Course in Atlanta, Idle Hour Golf Course in Macon, the Washington-Wilkes Country Club course, and Athens Country Club course. Robinson also caddied for Ben Hogan and Sam Snead in championship play. Herman Mitchell from Little Rock, Arkansas, was Lee Trevino's caddy for many years. Other white player-African American caddy partnerships included Gary Player and Alfred Dyer, Ben Crenshaw and Carl Jackson, and Hal Sutton and Freddie Burns. However by the 1960s, golf carts began to take the place of caddies and their number declined.

African American golfers realized that they needed an organization that would represent their interests. In 1925 the Colored Golfers Association of American was organized. The name was changed in 1930 to the United Golfers Association (UGA). The organization represented African American golfers and was divided into districts representing various areas of the country. It was not until much later that the Southeast was brought into the fold because many of the African American players and caddies had left the South for better opportunities to play elsewhere. In many areas of the country by the 1940s, the UGA golf tour was attracting top-flight players. Local communities where tournaments took place benefitted from the influx of revenue. Sports and entertainment celebrities appeared at these events making the tour not only a sporting event, but a social one as well. This was not true in the South however where there was still resistance due to segregationist policies. It was not until the 1960s that African American clubs in the South began to be organized. In 1964 Jekyll Island, Georgia, was host to the Southeastern Open tournament. It was after that tournament that the North American Golfers Association (NAGA), a regional organization for African American players, was formed. However, the UGA remained the only national organization for African American players. The southeastern tournament on the NAGA circuit included the Macon Four-Ball.

The greatest need for African American golfers was a place to play their chosen sport. Before 1939 there were approximately 5,200 golf courses in the United States, 700 of which were municipally owned. Fewer than 20 were open to African Americans and they were located outside the South.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

Shady Rest Country Club near New York City, originally a white-owned club purchased in 1921 by African Americans, held the first National Colored Golf Championship in 1925. The Mapledale Country Club in Stow, Massachusetts, also African American-owned, had a championship tournament in 1926. Langston Golf Club in Washington D. C. was a public course for African Americans established in 1939. However, it was not until 1951 that integration took place at the Lions Municipal Golf Course in Austin, Texas, one of the first in the South. In the 1950s some of the municipal courses in the South allowed African Americans to play on designated days, but it was not until the 1955 Supreme Court case *Holmes v. Atlanta* that additional laws were passed to desegregate public parks and golf courses.

However, private facilities were not included in these changes. Bill Spiller, an African American golfer from Oklahoma, turned pro in 1947. He was instrumental in having the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) overturn its discrimination policies to allow minorities to play in PGA tournaments. The PGA then made its tournaments invitational. It was not until 1965 that African American golfer Charlie Sifford, from North Carolina, was given full membership in the PGA.

The UGA and NAGA, both still viable organizations, were instrumental in getting the PGA to invite African Americans to play at the Masters tournament in Augusta. In 1975 Lee Elder was the first African American to play in the Masters. In 1995, as U.S. Amateur champion, Tiger Woods was invited to play there. In 1997 he won the tournament.

Maconite Robert Jones was one of the youngest Bowden caddies at nine years old. Born in 1952, he caddied at Bowden until c.1970. He lived near the course and walked to work where he was paid \$5.00 to carry a bag for 18 holes. Often he would work two or three rounds per day. He was one of 25-30 African American caddies and in 1973 became the Macon City Golf Champion. Several of the white golfers would ask for Jones as their caddy and often would let him hit balls during the round. The first time he was permitted to play the course, at age 14, he scored 80 for 18 holes. When Jones was 11 years old, c.1964, Loddie Kempa (1921-1979), pro at the course from 1962-1978, one of whose parents was Cherokee, the other white, gave Jones a set of clubs and allowed him to play the course without charge. Jones became a professional golfer in 1974, played with Gary Player when he visited Macon, and won the New Era Golf Tournament at Bowden in 1979.

In 1954, 48 African Americans petitioned the Macon City Council and mayor for the right to play on Bowden Golf Course. They stated that 300 people were interested and wanted the right to play two days per week. In spite of repeated attempts, no action was taken by the local government until 1961.

In 1961 the course was finally opened to African Americans. That year, the Macon city attorney discovered that only custom, not any written restriction, had kept African Americans from being allowed to play on the course. The Macon City Council agreed to the integrated status on June 6, 1961. It was pointed out that apparently no African American had even tried to use the course. Adding to the decision was the fact that the Atlanta case of *Holmes v. Atlanta*, affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court, "fully established the right of Negro citizens to use public golf courses in the State of Georgia without discrimination".

In 1961 the New Era, the first local tournament for African American players was held at Bowden. Its name came from the black organization that first started integration at Bowden. The tournament featured Lee Elder, the first African American golfer who would, in 1975, play in the Masters tournament. Elder shot a 62, the record low score for the Bowden course. Bobby Singleton, a Macon resident aged 18 or 19, was his caddy. Elder wanted him to tour with him but his mother would not let him go.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

According to Jones, Oscar Vinson and Ed Grant, both local African American golfers, started the New Era Tournament so that minority golfers would have a venue in which to compete. When Grant and Vinson organized and promoted the tournament it included approximately 150 amateurs and 90 pros with over 500 spectators. Well-known African American golfers including Charlie Sifford, Teddy Rose, and James Black all played at Bowden. In recent years the tournament has not been as widely promoted and attendance has fallen off. Jones now teaches young golfers, many of them children of golfers with whom he worked. Today's local golfers who keep the New Era tournament going include Joe Pinkney, Isaac Harden, and David Lucas, Georgia State Senator.

Local golfers who helped integrate Bowden include Edward Grant, Oscar Vinson, Leonard Grant, and Larry Glover. There were a number of notable golfers who played and/or competed in tournaments at Bowden Golf Course. Ted Rhodes, an African American professional, tried to play in the Los Angeles Open in 1948 but was rebuffed because of the PGA's "Caucasian only" clause. In 1949 he won the National, the UGA's biggest championship and went on to win the Houston Open, the Sixth City Open, the Gotham Open, the Ray Robinson Open, and the Joe Louis Invitational. He won the Negro National Open in 1949, 1950, 1951, and 1957. Tiger Woods mentioned Ted Rhodes after his first win at the Masters saying he was one of several African American golfers who paved the way for Woods to be accepted at the Masters.

H. M. Holmes and Oliver Holmes, known for their 1955 court case taken all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court that "fully established the right of Negro citizens to use public courses in the State of Georgia without discrimination", played at Bowden.

James (Jim) Lacey Dent, born May 9, 1939 was born in Augusta, Georgia, but could not play at Augusta National, home of the Masters in his early years, although he caddied there as a youth. He turned pro in 1966 and went on to win 12 tournaments on the Senior PGA tour between 1989 and 1998.

Charles Sifford was the first African American athlete to compete on the PGA tour. He became a member of the PGA tour in 1961 and won the Greater Hartford Open in 1967, the first sanctioned PGA event ever won by an African American. He won the Negro National Open six times in the 1950s.

Well-known Caucasian golfers also played at Bowden. Albert J. "Duck" Swann, a Maconite all his life, played golf at Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) where he was elected to Georgia Tech's "All Time" golf team in 1958 and to its Athletic Hall of Fame in 1964. In 1983 he became the first American to win the British Senior Open Amateur Championship.

Jim Stuart, also a Maconite, worked at Bowden for several years and became the first player to win two consecutive Mid-Amateur Championships in 1990 and 1991.

Jerry Pate was born in Macon. He won the U.S. Amateur in 1974 and was a member of the victorious U.S. teams at the Walker Cup and the Eisenhower Trophy in 1974.

Arnold Blum, born in Macon in 1922 and a lifelong amateur, graduated from the University of Georgia where he won the SEC Championship in 1941. He was a member of the victorious 1957 U.S. Walker Cup Team, played in the Masters tournament five times, qualified for the U.S. Amateur 16 times and reached the quarterfinals twice. From 1960 to 1961, he was president of the Georgia State Golf Association and is a member of the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame and the Southern Golf Association Hall of Fame.



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

Following is a timeline of the integration of various entities in Macon, showing that Bowden Golf Course led the way in integration in Macon:

Integration of the golf course June 1961  
Integration of busses March 1962  
Integration of polling stations May 1962  
Integration of Mercer University April 1963  
Integration of hospitals April 1966  
Integration of restaurants and the YMCA August 1966  
Integration of housing and neighborhoods July 1967  
Integration of laundromats January 1968  
Integration of juries and courts December 1969  
Integration of jails July 1973

It is clear from newspaper accounts in the 1960s, that Bowden was the first public facility to be desegregated in Macon. According to the *Macon Telegraph*, integration of lunch counters did not occur until November 1, 1961; bus segregation ended March 5, 1962; polling stations were desegregated in May 1962; Mercer University dropped its segregation policy in April 1963; and a citizen's panel was formed in 1971 to aid the Bibb County Board of Education meet its legal requirements for school desegregation. It appears that the peaceful desegregation of the golf course presaged peaceful integration of other facilities. In an effort to capture the history of the desegregation of the golf course, a documentary entitled *Playing it Down* was produced in 2010 to tell the story of African American caddies and of the first African American foursome to play at Bowden in 1961.

In 2006 the Macon Golf for Kids program was founded at Bowden Golf Course utilizing a portion of the property to teach children the fundamentals of golf. Approximately two-thirds of the golfers at Bowden today are African American and one-third white. The course continues to welcome all players.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

---

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

"Aldermen Praise Leader's Actions." *Macon Telegraph*, January 18, 1939.

Ambrose, Andy, Brooke Barger and Alexis Oliver. "Negroes Cannot Play Here: The Desegregation of Atlanta's Golf Courses." *Atlanta History Center, A Journal of Georgia and the South*. Volume XLIII, Number 1, date unknown.

Argintar, Sybil. "Meadowbrook Country Club." *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, December 16, 2009. On file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina.

"Backtalk: 40 Years Ago: A Drive Down the Fairway for Integration." *New York Times*, November 5, 1995.

Battin, Maryel. "Charles L. Bowden Golf Course." *Historic Property Information Form*, February 21, 2013. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

"Bibb Citizen's Panel To Help On Integration." *Macon Telegraph*, July 23, 1971.

Camp, Brenda L. and Yvonne Shinhoster. "Energy: It Demanded an Outlet." *Macon Telegraph*, February 18, 1979.

"Citizen's Forum Outlines Goals." *Macon Telegraph*, July 28, 1971.

Cotton, Garrett Middlebrooks. "Bowden Golf Course A Success Story." *Macon Magazine*, May/June 1995.

"Council's Action Opens City Golf Course to Negroes." *Macon Telegraph*, June 7, 1961.

"Entrants in Macon's First Women's Golf Tournament in Many Years." *Macon Telegraph*, April 1, 1941.  
Golfers' biographies: <http://www.gghof.com/sites/courses/custom.asp?id=1010&page=61372>.

"History in the Making at Macon's Bowden Golf Course." *Macon-Bibb County Parks and Recreation Dept. Newsletter* Jan/Feb/March 2010.

"Integration of Lunch Counters Here Carried Out Without Any Disturbances." *Macon Telegraph*, November 1, 1961.

"Jay-Ces Take Over Task of Raising Course Funds." *Macon Telegraph*, June 26, 1938.

Jerris, Rand, USGA: "A New Deal for Amsterdam's Golfers", December 18, 2009,  
[www.usga.org/news/2009/December/New-Deal-for-Golfers](http://www.usga.org/news/2009/December/New-Deal-for-Golfers).

Jerris, Rand, USGA. Email September 26, 2012.

"Jones Impresses Player With His Willingness." *Macon Telegraph*, September 11, 1973.

Macfie, Sam. "Playing it Down: The Struggle for Respect by Macon's Black Golfers." November 2010.

"Macon Will be Proud of its Negro Golfers." *Macon Telegraph*, June 16, 1961.

McDaniel, Pete, Geoff Russell, and Martin Davis. *Uneven lies: the heroic story of African-Americans in golf*. Greenwich, Conn: American Golfer, 2000.

"Members Sought for Golf Course." *Macon Telegraph*, August 7, 1938.

"Mercer Drops Race Barrier For Students." *Macon Telegraph*, April 19, 1963.

"Negro Golfers Use of Course to be Studied." *Macon Telegraph*, July 29, 1954.

"Negro Golfers Want to Play." *Macon Telegraph*, April 30, 1954.

"Negroes Here Ask Golf Course Use." *Macon Telegraph*, April 5, 1961.

"New Course Opens Today for Golfers." *Macon Telegraph*, September 29, 1940.

"Remembering the Civil Rights Movement." Oral History with Peter Brown.  
[http://faculty.mercer.edu/davis\\_da/fys102/administration.html](http://faculty.mercer.edu/davis_da/fys102/administration.html).



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

Pavlechko, Hattie L. "A golf course architectural restoration-modernization design: [CAP undergraduate thesis], *Cardinal Scholar*, Ball State University, <http://cardinalscholar.bsu.edu/handle/handle/189092>

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1924 corrected to 1961, page 341.

Taylor, Nick. "Some Highlights of the WPA. A (Very) Partial List by State, The Enduring Legacy of the WPA." [www.americanmadebook.com](http://www.americanmadebook.com)

"Time Lines of Golf History", 1851-1945, *Wikipedia* [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timelineofgolfhistory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timelineofgolfhistory) (1851–1945)

Manis, Andrew Michael. *Macon Black and White: an unutterable separation in the American century*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004.

"Project Favored for Golf Course." *Macon Telegraph*, June 10, 1938.

Richardson, Charles. "Dick Cotton's vision blossomed in birth of Bowden Golf Course." *Macon Telegraph*, November 27, 1994.

"Segregation Is Ended At City Polls." *Macon Telegraph*, May 5, 1962.

"Segregation of City Buses Is Ended Here." *Macon Telegraph*, March 5, 1962.

"Turpin, Bill. "Group Named to Study Use of Golf Links." *Macon Telegraph*, July 30, 1954.

World Golf Hall of Fame, [www.worldgolfhalloffame.org](http://www.worldgolfhalloffame.org).

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned) N/A



Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

---

### 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 229 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**  
**Datum if other than WGS84:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <b>Latitude:</b> 32.865891 | <b>Longitude:</b> -83.565884 |
| 2. <b>Latitude:</b> 32.859927 | <b>Longitude:</b> -83.557800 |
| 3. <b>Latitude:</b> 32.852995 | <b>Longitude:</b> -83.573756 |
| 4. <b>Latitude:</b> 32.860101 | <b>Longitude:</b> -83.573705 |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the district is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached National Register map, which is drawn to scale.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the property is the current legal boundary of the Charles L. Bowden Golf Course.

---

### 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Lynn Speno, National Register Specialist  
organization Historic Preservation Division, GA Dept. of Natural Resources date December 2014  
street & number 254 Washington Street, Ground Level telephone (404) 656-2840  
city or town Atlanta state GA zip code 30334  
e-mail Lynn.speno@dnr.state.ga.us

---

### Additional Documentation

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

---

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Charles Bowden Golf Course

City or Vicinity: Macon

County: Bibb State: Georgia

Photographer: Charlie Miller, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

Date Photographed: May 28, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 20. Hole 1, stone steps to tee. Photographer facing southeast.
- 2 of 20. Hole 1, green. Photographer facing south.
- 3 of 20. Hole 2, fairway and cart path. Photographer facing southwest.
- 4 of 20. Hole 2, fairway and sand trap. Photographer facing south.
- 5 of 20. Hole 3, stone culvert. Photographer facing southeast.
- 6 of 20. Hole 4, tee and fairway. Photographer facing south.
- 7 of 20. Hole 5, fairway. Photographer facing northeast.
- 8 of 20. Hole 6, stone bench on tee. Photographer facing north.
- 9 of 20. Hole 6, cart path and fairway. Photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 20. Hole 7, Cotton memorial. Photographer facing northeast.
- 11 of 20. Hole 8, tee, stone bench, and cart path. Photographer facing southeast.
- 12 of 20. Hole 15, pond. Photographer facing north.
- 13 of 20. Hole 15, brick spillway. Photographer facing north.
- 14 of 20. Hole 13, tee and fairway. Photographer facing southwest.
- 15 of 20. Hole 16, green. Photographer facing north.
- 16 of 20. Hole 10, towards maintenance buildings. Photographer facing southeast.

Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Name of Property

Bibb County, Georgia  
County and State

17 of 20. Clubhouse. Photographer facing west.

18 of 20. Plaque from 1940 clubhouse. Photographer facing south.

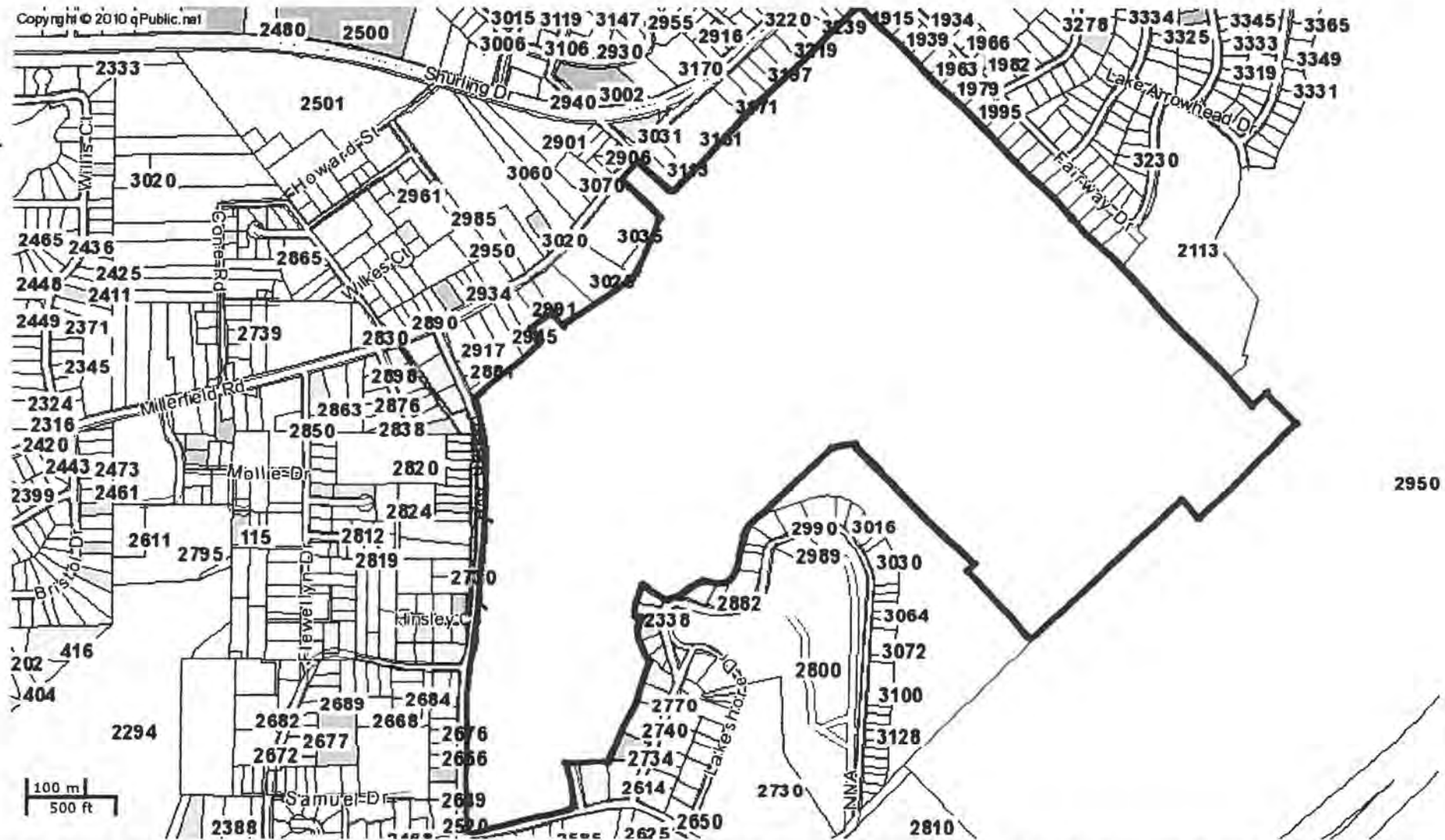
19 of 20. Plaques on clubhouse. Photographer facing west.

20 of 20. Road to original clubhouse located between putting greens. Photographer facing southeast.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.





Bibb County makes every effort to produce the most accurate information possible. No warranties, expressed or implied, are provided for the data herein, its use or interpretation. The ass information is from the last certified taxroll. All data is subject to change before the next certified taxroll.

**CHARLES BOWDEN GOLF COURSE  
 BIBB COUNTY, GEORGIA  
 NATIONAL REGISTER TAX MAP  
 NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY**

NORTH: ↑

SCALE: 1 inch = 900 feet

SOURCE: Bibb County Tax Assessor's Office qPublic

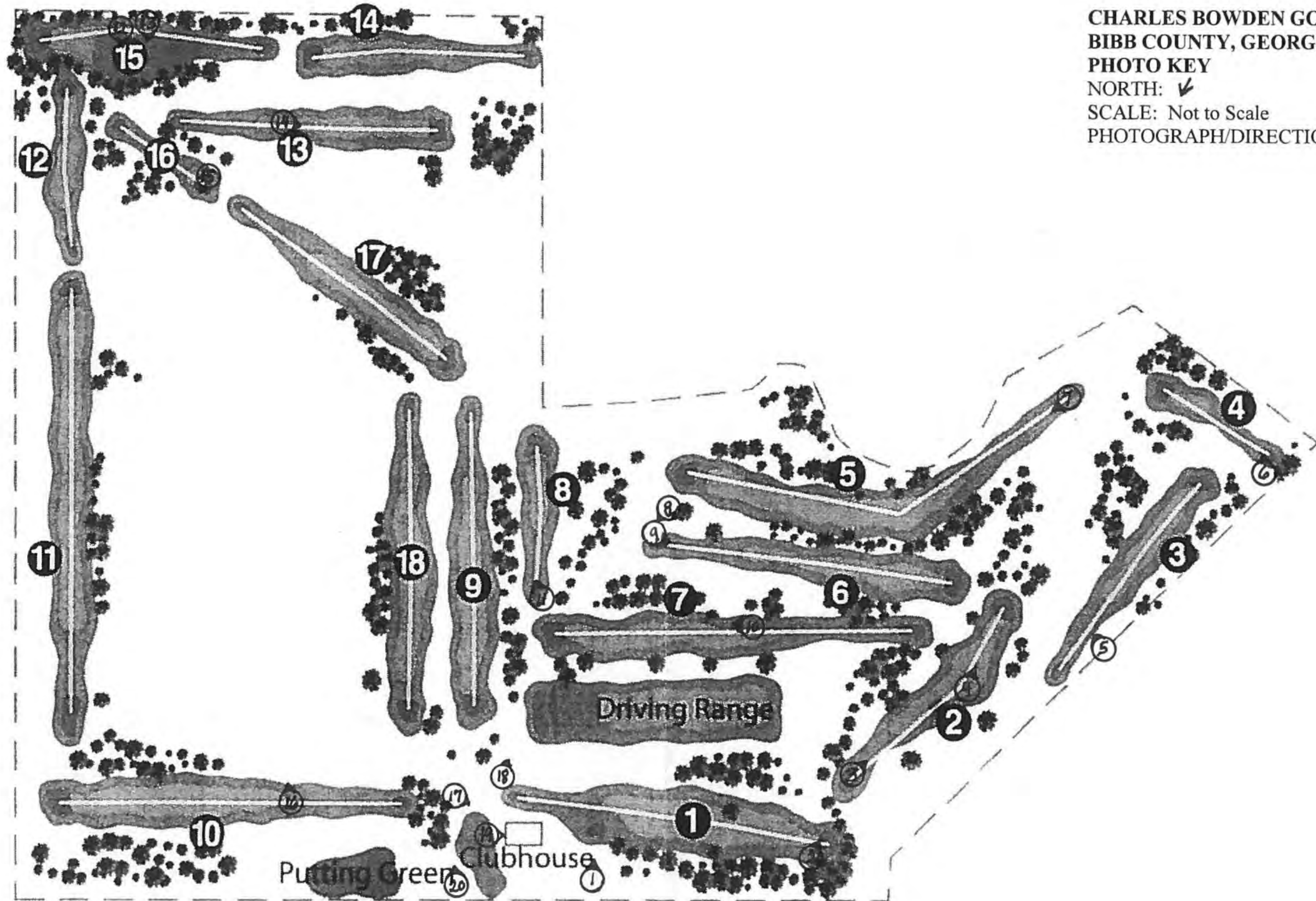
**CHARLES BOWDEN GOLF COURSE  
BIBB COUNTY, GEORGIA**

**PHOTO KEY**

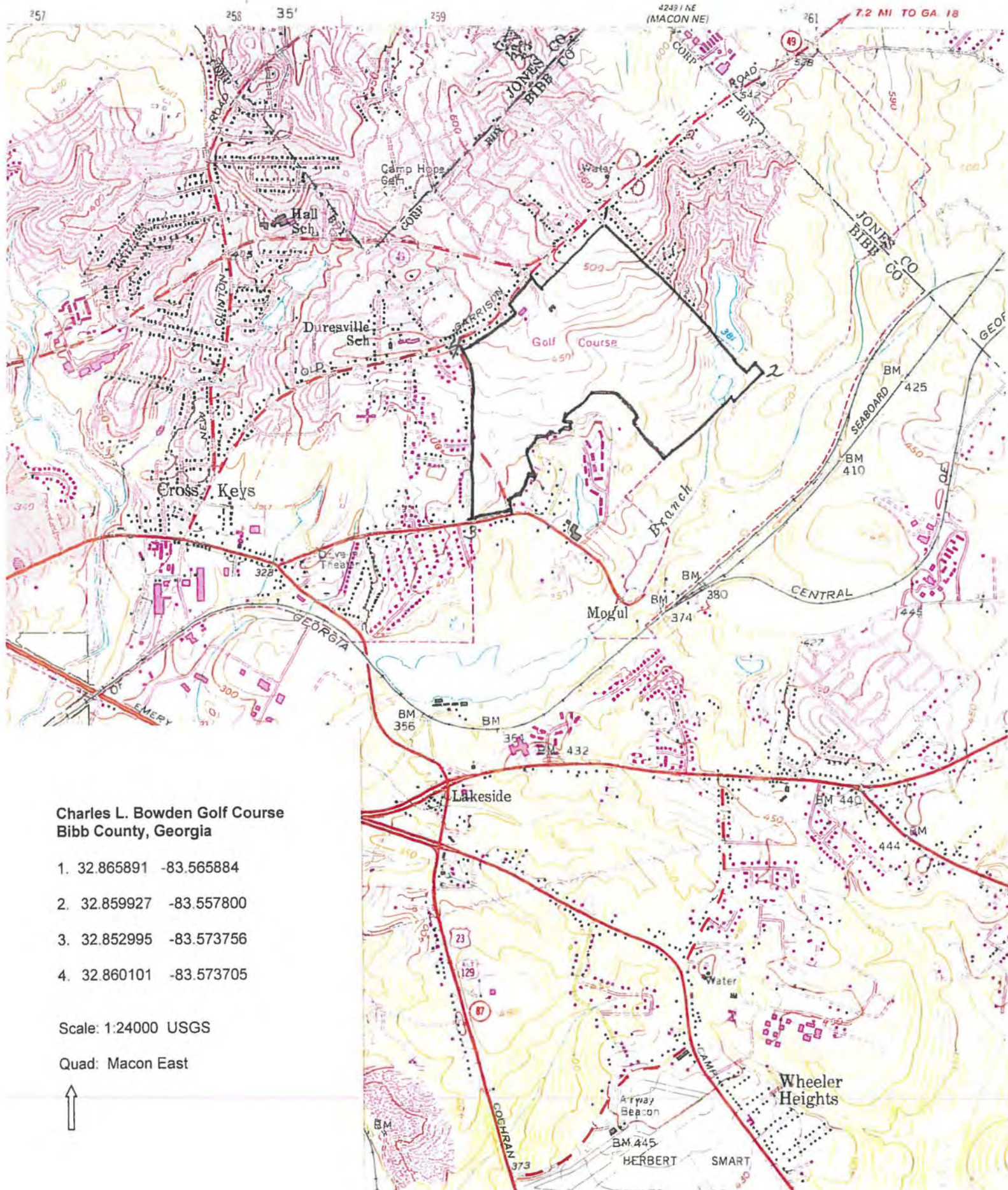
NORTH: ↓

SCALE: Not to Scale

PHOTOGRAPH/DIRECTION OF VIEW: Ⓝ







**Charles L. Bowden Golf Course  
Bibb County, Georgia**

1. 32.865891 -83.565884
2. 32.859927 -83.557800
3. 32.852995 -83.573756
4. 32.860101 -83.573705

Scale: 1:24000 USGS

Quad: Macon East

































6 PAR  
4



◆ 405  
◆ 356  
◆ 267











DICK COTTON TREE  
FOUNDER BOWDEN  
1940































BOWDEN MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE

CONSTRUCTED BY

1938

W P A

1939

SPONSORS

CITY OF MACON

AND

JUNIOR CHAMBER

OF

COMMERCE



CHARLES L. BOWDEN MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE

OPENED SEPTEMBER 29th, 1940.

CONSTRUCTED BY  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
AND CITY OF MACON  
DESIGNED BY DICK COTTON

ADMINISTRATION  
CHAS. L. BOWDEN, MAYOR  
H.W. PITTMAN, MAYOR PRO TEM.

COUNCIL

W. B. BILBAY	J. L. OWINGS	D. W. W. MCCOY
TAYLOR S. KEMPER	R. T. TALLER JR.	C. E. ODOM
MRS. C. C. HARROLD	HENRY HARRIS	H. W. PITTMAN
W. C. CARLISLE	R. D. CHAFFIN	H. C. STEWART

THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF THE FOLLOWING CITIZENS  
THIS PROJECT WAS MADE POSSIBLE

B. S. SANDERSON	BOB GAMBLE	ROY GADDY
C. W. WOODS	ADRIAN NEWCOMB	STANLEY
R. H. MOORE	W. S. TERRY	GEORGE WADDEY
H. S. BROWN	T. C. O. KAGAN	REMY J. S.
R. D. CROWLEY	S. A. RIDGELL	R. E. ACCOIL JR.
J. L. OWENS	S. R. MULLOY	CLIFF WASTAD
C. W. GREEN	DICK COTTON	OSCAR LONG

SPONSORED BY JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BOWDEN GOLF COURSE PRO SHOP

ERECTED IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE  
BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION  
RODNEY THOMPSON, MGR.

CITY COUNCIL RECREATION COMMITTEE  
DR. ANDY LAWRENCE, CHAIRMAN  
DAVID SANDERSON  
FRANK STRICKELBLOW  
ED. DEBORG  
CLAUDE HOLMES

ADDRESS: CHESTER STATION  
LODGE 1250-000  
1974





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Bowden, Charles L., Golf Course

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: GEORGIA, Bibb

DATE RECEIVED: 1/09/15      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/06/15  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/15      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/24/15  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000024

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      2.23.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



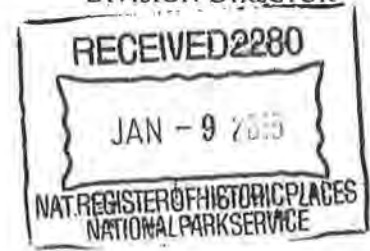


HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

MARK WILLIAMS  
COMMISSIONER

DR. DAVID CRASS  
DIVISION DIRECTOR

January 6, 2015



J. Paul Loether  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, N.W. 8th floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Utoy Cemetery, Fulton County, Georgia** and the **Charles L. Bowden Golf Course, Bibb County, Georgia** to the National Register of Historic Places.

- Disk of National Register of Historic Places nomination form and maps as a pdf
- Disk with digital photo images
- Physical signature page
- Original USGS topographic map(s)
- Sketch map(s)/attachment(s)
- Correspondence
- Other:

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ constitute a majority of property owners.
- Special considerations:

Sincerely,

Lynn Speno  
National Register Specialist

Enclosures