

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Clermont Woman's Club
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 655 Broome Street n/a not for publication
city or town Clermont n/a vicinity
state Florida code FL county Lake code 069 zip code 34711

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Suzanne P. Walker/Deputy SHPO 12/4/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Florida Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Signature of the Keeper Entered in the National Register Date of Action 1/7/93
Arlous Byers

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: Outdoor recreation

Social: Clubhouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social: Clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Frame Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Metal: Aluminum

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Period of Significance

1923-1943

Significant Dates

1923

1927

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Hartford, George (Architect)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Clermont Woman's Club
Name of Property

Lake Co., FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7
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4	2	5	0	4	0
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3	1	5	8	3	9	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mrs. Miriam W. Johnson/Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date December 1992

street & number R.A. Gray Blg., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Clermont (leased to the Woman's Club)

street & number P.O. Box 219 telephone (904) 394-4081

city or town Clermont state Florida zip code 34712

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

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

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SUMMARY

The Clermont Woman's Club at 655 Broome Street in Clermont, Lake County, Florida, is a 1923/1927, one-story, T-shaped, frame vernacular building with aluminum siding, resting on brick piers. Its side gabled roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. Fenestration is regular with 1/1 triple or paired double hung sash, or fixed 6 and 8 light windows. The property is owned by the City of Clermont and leased to the Woman's Club.

SETTING

The clubhouse is located on Lots 9 & 10 of Block 73 in one of the oldest residential areas of Clermont, a community of about 7,000, located near the intersection of U.S. Highway 27 and State Road 50 in the center of the Florida peninsula. When built on December 28, 1923, the building was rectangular; an addition was built on the rear in 1927. The lot immediately west of the clubhouse was occupied by the Methodist Church, which was located at the corner of 7th and Broome Streets.

In 1946, the City gave the Club a 99-year lease covering Lot 8 as well as Lots 9 and 10, with the stipulation that the building be used only as a clubhouse. The Methodist church was torn down in 1980, and the property is now flanked by vacant lots.

The clubhouse is surrounded with shrubbery (Photo 1). Trees on the property include: an East Palatka holly tree, and large arborvitae, and a long-leaf pine on the front lawn; and wild cherry trees on each side of the rear addition. Other vegetation includes Brazilian pepper bushes, Turk's cap, and sabal palm.

The clubhouse rests on the site of the community's original schoolhouse which occupied the site from the 1880s until c1916. Any archaeological materials would be related to this occupation; no archaeological testing, however, has been performed at the site.

EXTERIOR

The main entrance to the Clermont Woman's Club is located in the center of the north elevation (Photos 1 & 2). The entrance is sheltered by a front gabled, attached, wooden porch supported by square posts. Four concrete steps with iron railings lead up

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to the porch which has benches on either side. The entrance has a 15-light door with 5-light sidelights. "Clermont Woman's Club" is painted on the lintel over the door. The porch is flanked by triple, 1/1 double hung sash.

The west elevation includes the main block of the building and the rear addition (Photo 3). The main block has two sets of paired, 1/1 windows, two single, rectangular fixed windows in the center of the gable, and a single square vent at the peak. The west elevation of the addition has a single side entrance flanked by two single windows on the north and a set of triple windows on the south.

The south (rear) elevation includes a set of triple, 1/1 windows, three single 4/4 windows, and a vent at the peak of the gable (Photo 4).

On the east elevation of the main block, the fenestration mirrors that on the west elevation. The addition has two single windows and three fixed 4/4 windows (Photo 5).

INTERIOR

The interior of the clubhouse includes one large meeting room (Photo 6), a dining alcove (Photo 7), a restroom (Photo 8), and a kitchen (Photo 9) (See Floor Plan). The meeting room, entered directly from the main entrance, has two exposed heavy timber trusses, a tongue-and-groove heart pine floor, and Celotex walls. The ceiling is of drywall with a textured acoustical finish. The kitchen retains many of its original features, including an icebox (Photo 10). Most original finishes and hardware remain throughout the building (Photo 11).

HISTORIC ALTERATIONS

The original part of the clubhouse, as constructed by the community in 1923, was a simple rectangular building. It corresponds to the present main meeting room. It was probably unfinished on the interior. In 1927, the Civic (later Woman's) Club added a dining alcove, restroom, kitchen and storage area on the rear, creating the present T-shape of the building. It was heated by a wood stove until 1937, when two gas heaters were installed in the main room, and a gas range was installed in the kitchen. Also in 1937, the husbands of club members laid a new heart pine floor and rebuilt the front door area and porch. In

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the summer of 1941, the kitchen was remodelled for use as an emergency kitchen during World War II.

NON-HISTORIC ALTERATIONS

In 1966, an air conditioning system was installed; the gas heaters were removed in 1970. In 1975, the old cast iron kitchen sink was replaced with stainless steel, and the kitchen counter around it was rebuilt. In 1977, the exterior was covered with aluminum siding. The original Celotex ceiling in the main meeting room was replaced with insulated drywall at the same time. The original siding and features, including an outside door for ice delivery (Photo 12), remain intact under the aluminum. Some electrical wiring has been replaced and ceiling fans have been installed. In 1992, hail damaged the roof. The club plans to replace the present asphalt shingles with ones similar to the material shown in early photographs (Photos 13 & 14).

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SUMMARY

The Clermont Woman's Club is significant at the local level under **Criterion A** in the area of **Social History** because of the part the clubhouse played in the social and cultural development of the small community of Clermont, Florida. Built as a community project in 1923, in 1924 it became the clubhouse for the woman's club and served as the central meeting place for the community until 1940. It was used for some defense related projects during World War II.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The earliest permanent white settlers of record in the Clermont area arrived in 1853, but it was not until after the Civil War that some settlers, from Georgia and the Carolinas, began arriving. The only access to the area was by steamboat up the Ocklawaha River as far as Lake Harris, and then by horse and wagon south to the hill country which was then part of Sumter County and became part of Lake County in 1887.

In 1868, the family of Herring Hooks came from Americus, Georgia, to Yalaha on the south shore of Lake Harris. In the 1870s, they purchased some of the land farther south in the area around Lake Minnehaha. In 1884, one son, Thomas J. Hooks, an agent for the Florida Land & Colonization Company of Sanford, Florida, which had acquired 20,000 acres in south Lake County, sold several hundred acres between Lakes Minneola and Minnehaha to a group of men from New Jersey. They incorporated as the Clermont Improvement Company that year and launched a colonization project with the intention of building a model town. They named the community Clermont after Clermont-Ferrand, France, the birthplace of one of the company officers. Their promotional material and the building of two railroads through South Lake County in 1886-87 brought more settlers to the area.

Clermont was incorporated in 1891. By that time there were two churches, a school house, lumber mill, hotel, and several stores. The community thrived and was known as the tomato capital of the state until the Big Freeze of 1894-95. Following the freeze, the town charter was abolished and many settlers returned to their former homes or moved further south. For the next twenty years the town was run by a Board of Trade. There were no town taxes; every one contributed with private donations or man hours. During this period the Ladies Advancement Club was

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organized. It promoted such things as exhibits at the County Fair, placement of trash baskets in the downtown area, fund raisers for the Library Club, and other desirable public improvements, such as construction of a civic center. In 1913, the first bank was opened, and the first newspaper, the Clermont Clarion, later known as the South Lake Press, began publishing a weekly edition. In December 1916, the town was reincorporated.

When the Clermont Civic Club was organized in 1921, the Ladies Advancement Club was dissolved and turned over its funds to the Civic Club. The Clermont Civic Club joined the Lake County Federation of Women's Clubs which was composed of groups of women in the county such as the Women's Clubs, the Parent-Teachers Associations, the Business and Professional Clubs and Home Demonstration Clubs which had organized in 1920 for the civic improvement of their towns.

Under the new town government great strides were made in the provision of public improvements. In 1921, the town purchased the electric plant which had been built by a local citizen, and in 1925, they sold it to the Florida Public Service Company of Orlando. During this period the first streets were paved and water mains were laid.

TIN CAN CAMPERS

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Florida's typical tourists were wealthy Northerners who arrived by rail or steamboat to enjoy elegant hotels or spas on the east and west coasts. Social and technological changes in the late 1910s and early 1920s, however, transformed tourism in Florida. Through labor reforms, many Americans gained two week vacations. Combined with the rise of the automobile and construction of better roads, Florida suddenly became accessible to the working middle class.

Many of these visitors to the state arrived in automobiles laden with camping equipment and tins of food. Camping out their cars, they could enjoy Florida's beaches and sunshine at little cost, and return to the North after a few weeks. Camp grounds sprang up across the state to accommodate these "Tin Can Campers", who, though not wealthy individually, contributed to the state's economy collectively. A Tin Can Camper Association was created and lasted in the 1960s.

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HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

In the fall of 1923, the men's luncheon club, known as the Unity Club, voted to sponsor a motor camp building to attract tourists. According to the local newspaper, the Unity Club circulated advertisements to tin can tourists who were at a gathering in Arcadia in 1924, urging them to "use our new motor camp with electric lights, city water, and on paved street--two blocks from stores." The construction was made possible by an agreement between the local governments and the merchants and citizens, the former having guaranteed one third of the money for materials if the other two thirds could be raised. Twenty-three local merchants and citizens pledged ten dollars each by November 29, and the following week twenty more gave from one to five dollars.

The plans and specifications were prepared gratis by George Hartford, a Northern architect who was spending the winter in nearby Minneola. It was decided to locate the building on two lots east of the Methodist Church which were owned by the City.

The piers for the foundation were set and all materials were on the grounds on the morning of December 28, 1923. Approximately fifty carpenters and willing citizens arrived with their tools and volunteered their labor. The ladies brought baskets of food to the Methodist Church next door and "it was anticipated that considerable fun and hilarity would accompany the task." The building was completed in one day, and within a week it was in use.

During the winter of 1924, the area was dotted with cars, tents, and laundry lines as winter tourists arrived to use the facilities. The campers' use of the site was short-lived, however, for "some criticism arose over using the site so near the church for camp purposes". On April 23, 1924, the Clermont Civic Club purchased the building from the Unity Club at the cash inventory of construction costs and began making improvements with the intention of using it for a civic center and clubhouse. From that time on, the tourists camped along Lake Minneola near what is now the JayCee Beach at 3rd Street and Lake Shore Drive.

In 1927, the Clermont Civic Club changed its name to the Clermont Woman's Club and doubled the size of the building by adding the dining alcove, rest room, and kitchen. A member of the club directed the work, following the style of the original

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building. In October the City leased Lots 9 and 10 on Block 73 to the Clermont Woman's Club for twenty-five years. The Club affiliated with the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs in 1932.

The clubhouse served the community as a meeting place for most civic and cultural events until 1940, as it was the only building in town which could accommodate large events until the Methodist church built the Hancock Building for youth activities in 1939-40. During the Depression, the club sponsored the first Clermont Flower Show and organized the Garden Club. Among the many groups who used the building was the Townsend Club. Dr. Francis Townsend of Long Beach, California, proposed to abolish poverty by paying two hundred dollars a month to everyone over sixty years of age, provided they spent it all each month. In 1936-38, the Woman's Club took over the operation of the local library and continued to operate it until 1952 when a corporation was formed to operate it.

Woman's Club also contributed to the war effort during World War II. In 1941, the club kitchen was remodelled for cooking classes in connection with the Defense Program, and the following year, Service Men stationed in the Clermont area were allowed to use the building. The Red Cross also held a Staff Assistance course in the building in 1943.

After the war, in 1946, the City gave the Club a 99-year lease covering Lot 8 as well as Lots 9 and 10, with the stipulation that the building be used only as a clubhouse. It has been used for monthly meetings, teas, receptions, and parties for the past forty-five years. In 1990, a Lease-Agreement was drawn up by the City outlining the obligation of the Club in more detail. It will run until December 17, 2045.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clermont Civic Club and Clermont Woman's Club. Minutes and Year Books.

Jahoda, Gloria. River of the Golden Ibis. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

Johnson, Miriam W. and Rosemary Y. Young. Clermont: Gem of the Hills: A History of Clermont, Florida, and Neighboring Communities. Clermont: Miriam W. Johnson, 1984.

Kennedy, William T., ed. History of Lake County, Florida. Facsimile Reproduction of the 1929 Edition. Tavares, FL: Lake County Historical Society, 1988.

Little Sentinel (supplement to Orlando Sentinel), October 2, 1977.

South Lake Press, November 1923-May 1924.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 9 & 10, Block 73 in the City of Clermont

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encloses the city lots that were associated with the Clermont Woman's Club during its period of significance, 1923-1943.

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Photographs 1 Clermont Woman's Club, Lake Co., FL

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- 1 1) Clermont Woman's Club, 655 Broome Street
2) Clermont, Lake County, Florida
3) Miriam W. Johnson
4) July 1992
5) Miriam W. Johnson, 1459 Bowman St., Clermont FL
6) N elevation, camera facing S
7) 1 of 14

Items 1-5 are the same for the remaining photos, unless otherwise noted.

- 2 6) Main entrance, N elevation, camera facing S
7) 2 of 14
- 3 6) W elevation, camera facing E
7) 3 of 14
- 4 6) S elevation, camera facing N
7) 4 of 14
- 5 6) E elevation, camera facing W
7) 5 of 14
- 6 6) Meeting Room, camera facing E
7) 6 of 14
- 7 6) Meeting Room, looking toward alcove and kitchen,
camera facing S
7) 7 of 14
- 8 6) Restroom, camera facing S
7) 8 of 14
- 9 6) Kitchen, camera facing SW
7) 9 of 14
- 10 6) Kitchen, showing old ice box and wainscoting, camera
facing E
7) 10 of 14
- 11 6) Kitchen, showing hardware on kitchen exit door and
novelty siding which was not covered when addition
was added, camera facing NW
7) 11 of 14

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Photographs 2 Clermont Woman's Club, Lake Co., FL

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- 12 4) July 1977
- 6) S elevation, showing outside access to old ice box
 before application of aluminum siding, camera
 facing NW
- 7) 12 of 14

- 13 3) Unknown
- 4) c1946
- 6) Main (N) elevation, camera facing S
- 7) 13 of 14

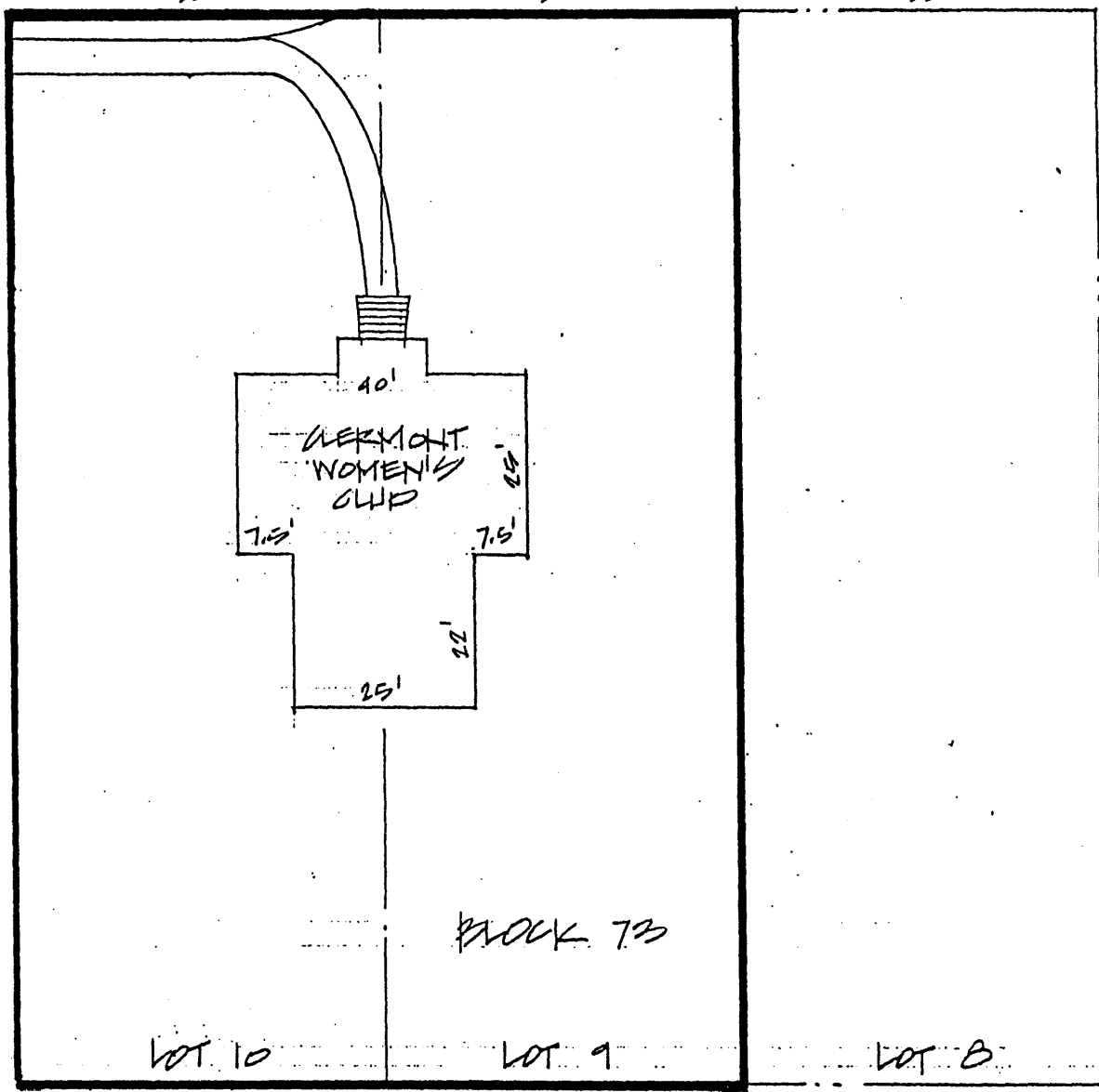
- 14 3) Unknown
- 4) c1951
- 6) Main (N) elevation, camera facing S

DROOME ST

470'

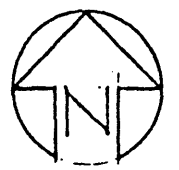
50'

50'



CLERMONT WOMEN'S CLUB

~~MARKET 11 2 25 0 11~~

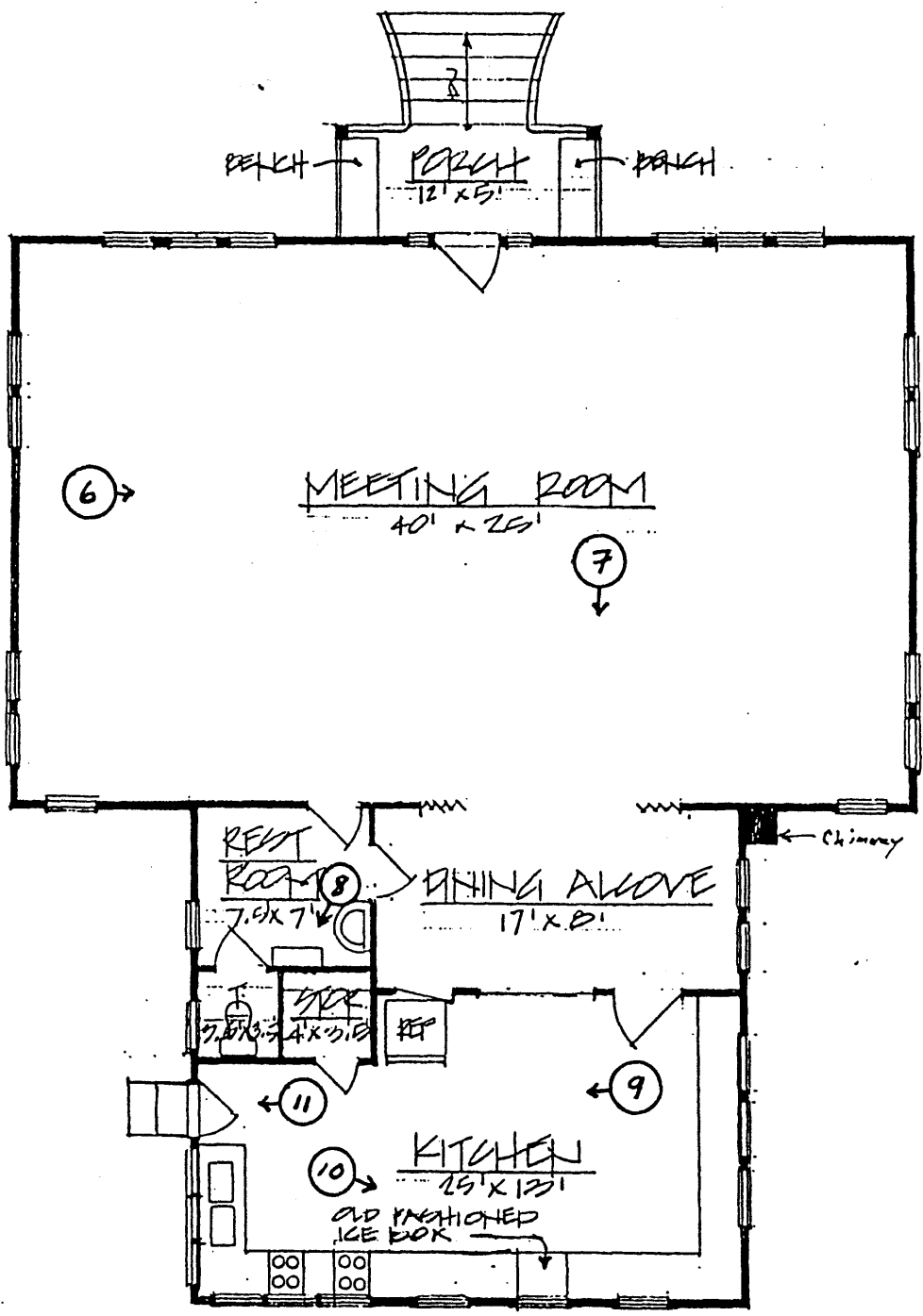


1
13

14

2

3



5

4

CLERMONT WOMEN'S CLUB

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

