



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Other names/site number N/A  
Name of related multiple property listing N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & Number: 342 US-70  
City or town: Mason State: Tennessee County: Tipton  
Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A Zip: 38049

## 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

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

*Charles [Signature]* 2/9/18  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
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 of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**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): \_\_\_\_\_

*Joan Salby*  
 Signature of the Keeper  
 For

3-27-2018  
 Date of Action

**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
1	1	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE /TRADE/ restaurant

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE /TRADE / restaurant

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, Concrete, Terra Cotta

**Narrative Description**

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que built ca. 1950 is located at 342 US70 (US79/State Route 1 in the Town of Mason, Tennessee (2013 population: 1,608), Tipton County (2013 population: 61,586). The building faces parallel to US-79. The one-story commerce/restaurant brick building sits on a 1.25 acre triangular shaped lot. The building has simplified mid-twentieth century modern-style, with two large picture windows that flank a central vestibule. Overall the building features symmetrical design, simple ornamentation, large display windows and brick veneer with a decorative terra-cotta edged parapet (Photo 1). The classic diner-style layout has the eating space in front, featuring a long counter, and the kitchen located in the back (Photo 15). The building has an eating space, office, restrooms, and two storage areas that are additions (Photo 25). Overall the building retains integrity of much of its original materials, design, setting, feeling, and association.

**Setting**

Bozo's is located in a rural area of the Mason community in West Tennessee, nearly an hour drive northeast of Memphis on US70 (US79/State Route 1). North of the property are agricultural fields and to the west are industrial buildings. The US Post Office and Bank of Mason are across US-70 to the east of Bozo's. The

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southwest lot line adjoins the United State Post office and the northeast lot line faces the Bank of Mason. Along the strip of the highway are other scattered commercial buildings. On the northern part of the lot, is ca 1960s Coca-Cola sign that reads BOZO'S (Contributing Object). Nearly adjoining the building, close to the center entry vestibule is a large neon sign that reads "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que." The late 1980s sign replaced the original one in-kind (Non-Contributing Object).

### **Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q. Contributing Building ca.1950**

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q at 342 US-79 is a one-story brick commercial building covered in blonde, wire cut brick with a flat roof and a parapet capped with decorative terracotta tile. The foundation of the building is continuous cast concrete. There are a series of chimneys composed of concrete block in the northern section of the building that serve the "hot pit."

The façade (east elevation), is symmetrical with a centered entrance, which projects from the main section of the building to serve as a vestibule for entering customers (Photo 1). Flanking the entrance are two large commercial one-light metal windows with a concrete sill and what appears to be original metal awnings. In the extended entrance is another large one-light commercial metal window with a concrete sill. On the north entrance extension is a nine-light and two panel wood door and on south side of the entrance extension is a six-light wood door (Photo 13) with an original metal awing over each door.

The north elevation contains two ten-light casement windows in the dining room section. In the kitchen section a casement window has been bricked in. In the hot pit section is a casement window that has been infilled with plywood, a single metal door, and access hatch to the smoker.

The building has been slightly altered on the rear (west) elevation, with additions clad in aluminum siding for food storage added ca.1970. (Photo 4). There are two original shed extensions, one of concrete block and one of the original blonde brick with an infilled casement window.

The south elevation contains a series of three ten-light casement windows (two have metal awnings), a single nine-light and two panel door, and two small windows. The rear addition is concrete block painted yellow with a metal shed roof.

### **Interior**

The interior contains many original features including the bar, layers of vinyl composite flooring, wood paneling, and what appears to be original plastic laminate tables. A nine-light and wood panel door leads diners inside from the central vestibule into a small waiting area defined by a pony wall on either side of the door. The waiting area opens into the large dining room space dominated by the original twelve-seat plastic laminate and chrome bar on the southern end of the dining room. The bar is split between the seventh and eight seats. A single swinging door with single light leading to the kitchen is aligned between the two bar sections. Behind the bar is original tile floor. In the northernmost section of the bar is a long rectangular window for wait staff to receive food. Two seats are missing from the bar, but the other ten retain their original vinyl coverings.

Lattice covered wood panels screen the men's and women's restroom doors from rest of the dining room on the northern end of the restaurant. The restrooms are identical with a powder room with door and small sink. The ceilings throughout are ca. 1980s acoustical tile. Light fixtures are a series of what appear to be original single tulip shaped pendants.

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The walls of the galley style kitchen are covered in white square tile with brown tile floors. The storage areas are concrete block. Due to the smoking process, the hot pit was not available to be photographed from the interior.

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q retains much of its architectural integrity through the original materials and design.

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**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.)

**Areas of Significance**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1950 -1968

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1950

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Criteria Considerations** **N/A**  
 (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

Thomas Jefferson “Bozo” Williams founded Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Q in January 1923. The family grew the business in several locations in the Mason area before building in the prime U.S. 70 location and rebuilding the current building in 1950. The history of Bozo’s is the story of the Williams Family and the thousands of families they have served over the years. It is locally significant under Criterion A from 1950-1968 for commerce as important commercial enterprise in the small community of Mason that took advantage of the proximity of the highway to draw in travelling customers and locals alike. As one of the Memphis area’s oldest barbeque restaurants, it is also an important example of the West Tennessee barbeque tradition.<sup>1</sup>

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Bozo’s was founded in January of 1923 by Thomas Jefferson “Bozo” Williams. Several other buildings that were used as the restaurant before the current 1950s one was built. The first building was located where the First Baptist Church of Mason currently stands on the opposite (east) end of town. This building was so small that there was not enough room for tables, so everyone was served at the counter (a “pig” sandwich sold for 15 cents). Bozo’s like most barbeque restaurants in West Tennessee served only pork. The original building was designed similar to many other diners found in the early 1900s: small, no tables, only enough room for a counter and some stools. Roadside diners originated in the late nineteenth century as “grab and go” horse drawn lunch carts near industrial sites for the working class. Diners began to evolve into stationary stations located in high traffic areas. These small diners, averaging around forty feet by sixteen feet, included a long counter with a row of stools with the kitchen located behind the counter.<sup>2</sup>

During the early 1920s the road that connected Memphis to Nashville was a winding road that looped through Fayette County before crossing the railroad tracks at Mason and continuing down Washington Street. In 1925, portions of what is now Highway 70 were completed, so Mr. Williams looked to find a better site located on the west side of Mason.<sup>3</sup>

**US Highway 70**

As automobiles became more in demand, citizens advocated for better roads to travel the country-side. This revolutionary movement changed the built environment and highway-oriented businesses became enterprising in providing goods and services for travelers.<sup>4</sup> Middle-class tourists invested in automobiles and traveled the country road with flexibility and leisure for family vacations. During this time one would stop for gas and find a “grab and go” meal from diners. Businesses would stand out with colorful signage and unique designs that offered quick and accessible service.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que,” Brochure, Mason, Tennessee, 12 October 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Howard L. Preston, *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991).111-119.

<sup>3</sup> “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que.”

<sup>4</sup> John Jakle, John A and Keith A Sculle. *Remembering Roadside America: Preserving the Recent Past as Landscape and Place* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011), 62-79.

<sup>5</sup> Jakle and Sculle. 79.

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A road to connect Bristol in upper east Tennessee with Memphis in southwest was first proposed early in the nineteenth century, but was never a priority by the state. By 1910, the Memphis to Bristol Highway became the main focus of the Tennessee Good Roads Association and the State Commission on Public Roads. Support for the road also led to the creation of the Memphis to Bristol Highway Association that focused solely on building this intrastate road. This organization of private business leaders, automobile enthusiasts and local city and county quickly found an advocate in a powerful Tennessee legislator, U.S. Senator Kenneth McKellar. McKellar continued to be a proponent of good roads with his support of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1916.<sup>6</sup>

After Tennessee established the State Highways Department in 1915, the Memphis to Bristol Highway was its first priority, but did not complete the route entirely until nearly 1930 due to funding problems, politics with county governments, and the extremely varied terrain of Tennessee. The Memphis to Bristol Highway was known as State Route 1 as the State's first state highway.<sup>7</sup> As part of the interstate route, the highway was known as "The Broadway of America" being the main thoroughfare connecting the east coast and west coast. In 1923, the standardized route system was established and the Memphis-to-Bristol, State Route 1, and Broadway of America became part of US70. Other named highways like the Lincoln, Dixie, and Lee Highways were also renamed into a cohesive numbered system nationwide. The segment of US70 between Memphis and Brownsville that Bozo's is located on also runs concurrently with US79. US70 became a major east-west highway of the Southern and Southwestern United States extending 2,385 miles (3,838 km).<sup>8</sup>

### **Bozo's Early History**

In 1925, Bozo's moved into a small building on the land that the current restaurant occupies. This restaurant, in use until 1933, was a combined Bar-B-Q restaurant and Shell gasoline station. During the first few years it operated with only a counter. A side room was later added for a few tables. Bozo Williams rented this property during his years on the current side of the street. After a few years, he saved enough money to purchase the land across the street (where the Bank of Mason currently stands). In 1933, he moved his restaurant across the road into a white wood-framed building.<sup>9</sup>

The white wood-framed building, in use from 1933-1941, was larger than any of the previous Bozo's. There was a small counter and room for eight tables and a potbelly stove. A carport roof protected the two gas pumps at the front. The Bar-B-Q pit was located at the back of the building and there was a small room for Bozo Williams to sleep at night. Mr. Williams continued to operate Bozo's until his death from pneumonia in 1935. During his marriage to Fannie Cotton Richardson Williams, Bozo was known as "Papa" to his eleven children. At the time of his death, four children remained in the Williams household and these three daughters and one son became heirs and co-owners of Bozo's. Many customers can tell you about their favorite story of their friendship with the Williams children: Iris, Rubye, Helen, and Allen Williams. Fire destroyed the Bozo's building the fall (probably late November) of 1941, and America was soon after thrust into World War II after Pearl Harbor was bombed December 7, 1941. No specific reason for the fire was

<sup>6</sup> Tammy Sellers and Holly Barnett, *The Tennessee Department of Transportation A Century of Achievement and Progress*, (Nashville: TDOT, 2015), 20.

<sup>7</sup> Sellers and Barnett, 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> Leland R. Johnson. *Memphis to Bristol: A Half Century of Highway Construction: A History of the Tennessee Road Builders Association, 1928-1978*. Nashville: The Association, 1978.

<sup>9</sup> "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que."



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ever determined, but one story is that the pit cook fired the meat heavily, then left the pit unattended, causing the fire.<sup>10</sup>

Another white wood-framed building was finished in 1942 and looked very similar to the burned-out building except it was a little larger. (Figure 1). There were not any gasoline pumps at this building. During World War II, Bozo's added many of the salads and sandwiches that are still on the menu today. This menu expansion was necessary because pork deliveries were limited to once weekly during the war. The Williams family did its part to serve the country during the war, keeping the restaurant open serving the public and wartime travelers. Helen Williams joined the Women's Army-Air Corps (WAAC) to serve in flight towers at Army Air Corp bases. Rubye Williams worked at Kennedy Veterans Hospital in Memphis. Allen Williams did security duty at the Naval Base in Millington, and Iris Williams stayed home to take care of the family business. After the war, Helen, Rubye and Allen came back to help run Bozo's on a full or part-time basis.<sup>11</sup>

There are many colorful stories that customers tell us about the building across the road. Many remember the slot machines used for gambling in the old building. Hot sauce was poured into empty whiskey bottles and placed on the tables. While many other areas of Tennessee remained dry, customers could enjoy a cold beer with their Bar-B-Q. Many local residents remember what was described as the "carload of Mexicans" traveling from New York to Mexico City that lost control of their car and plowed into the front porch of the restaurant (Figure 2). The second building on the opposite side of the road was also the victim of the fire in October or November of 1949. Helen Williams suspected a gas leak since a gas line had been installed a week or two before the fire, but there is no evidence to verify her suspicions. When word of the fire reached newspapers, offers of help came from friends, family and customers. Mr. Harry Coleman of Covington arranged for delivery of five Army surplus Quonset huts to serve dining areas, one hut was used for the kitchen and storage area and the last hut served as the barbeque pit. Help came so quickly that the Williams family was back in business just seven days after being completely burned out.<sup>12</sup>

### **Current 1950 Building**

Construction began in January 1950 on the present Bozo's Bar-B-Q building. During the years after 1933, the Williams had been able to purchase the land where Bozo's now stands. The "new" restaurant opened for business on Wednesday, April 5, 1950. Customers and friends sent so many flowers that there was barely room for customers at the counter on that busy Easter weekend. Car hops delivered food to cars during the first year or two in the new building. The restaurant was air conditioned in 1952, becoming one of the first buildings in Mason to have that luxury. Walker Chevrolet donated a clock in 1950 that still keeps time today. Business was so brisk that an automatic dishwasher was installed in the new building within a month or two of being opened.<sup>13</sup>

Building post World War II, the restaurant continued to take advantage of the proximity to the highway to draw customers in. Bozo's new building captured the "Broadway of America" or "Memphis to Bristol Highway" travelers.

<sup>10</sup>"Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que."

<sup>11</sup> "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que."

<sup>12</sup> "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que."

<sup>13</sup> "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que."

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The Williams family not only served those who took country-side vacations but started a tradition of closing two weeks for vacation starting on Labor Day in 1945 and continued this practice until 1988. The restaurant closed on Mondays until 1960. From 1960 to 1994, the restaurant closed on Sundays. In January 1995, Bozo's started closing on Sundays and Mondays in order for owners and employees to have more time with their families. In 1961, sweet (mild) Bar-B-Q sauce was introduced to accompany the famous hot sauce. Beer continued to be sold until the early 1960s and one could hear their favorite songs on the juke box until the early 1970s. Buses continued to stop at Bozo's until the Interstate 40 opened in 1968. The interstate opening marks the end of the period of significance due to the expressway taking much of the travelers off of U.S. 70. However, by this point the Bozo's had been open nearly fifty years and was an important local institution helping the restaurant survive.

The neon sign that graced the front of the building was installed the same November 1963 that President John F. Kennedy was killed. The neon sign was replaced in 1989 by a new neon sign that replicated the old sign. In 1988, the Coco-Cola Company discontinued the popular returnable bottles that were one of the unique features of Bozo's. The only major recent addition to the menu occurred in 1991 when Bozo's added onion rings.

Along with serving an important commercial role in the small Mason community, Bozo's also filled a need as employer within the rural community and many employees enjoyed long careers at Bozo's. Mammie Taylor started chopping Bar-B-Q in 1964. Julie Wright began waiting on tables in 1967, and Lottie Dowell started cleaning dishes in 1972. Many members of the local community worked longer than ten years at Bozo's: Annie Bond, Doris and Wayne Hamby, Earnestine Jones, Lucy Kimble, Alma Twisdale Lane, Ernest Lauderdale, Dorothy Maclin, Shorty Maclin, Sandra Martin, Faye Perkins, Rosie Powell, Sally Seay, Betty Stafford, Celia Thompson, Ruth Twisdale, Bertha Waddell, Jake Whitmore and Thelma Yarbrough. Also many members of the Williams family worked at Bozo's through the years, the most notable being T.J. and Lexie Williams and Dot Cottam (who helped manage the restaurant from 1979 to 1990). And sadly, there were also some deaths of the family members involved with the business. Fannie Williams (Bozo William's wife) passed away in 1960. Iris Williams died in 1963. Allen Williams died in 1972. Rubye Williams passed away in June 1991 after a long period of illness due to strokes.

However, until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, Bozo's was not a welcoming place for all local residents or travelers as Black customers were required to order their food to go, like restaurants throughout the south. It is likely that Black employees did much of the smoking of the meat, food preparation, and cleaning at Bozo's as in other white-owned barbeque restaurants. Historians have documented that African-American owned barbeque restaurants that were rare examples of integrated spaces during the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>14</sup> A local resident recalled that "Although laws said differently, most Black people would not go into Bozo's to order food or sit down, as they remembered when they were



<sup>14</sup> Veteto, J. R. & Maclin, E. M..*The Slow and the Slow Cooked: Culture and Barbecue in the Mid-South*, (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2011. *Project MUSE*), 43-49.

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required to order food to go and not permitted to eat inside. And the old-timers shuddered as they crossed a bridge on the Gainesville Road west of town, where they knew a mob had lynched a man back in 1937.”<sup>15</sup>

Jeff Thompson, the former owner of Bozo’s began working at the restaurant at the age of fourteen. He is the great-nephew of Helen Williams and great-grandson of Bozo Williams. Jeff started cleaning tables during the summer of 1973 and continued to work summer vacations for six of the next eight years. Jeff studied restaurant management at the University of Tennessee and worked several years for two restaurants chains in Atlanta before returning to take over the family business. Helen Williams sold the restaurant to Jeff in February 1985 so she could retire. Helen passed away in 2004.<sup>16</sup>

### **Trademark Dispute with Bozo the Clown**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the trademark dispute with Bozo the Clown dominated Bozo’s owner’s attention and fascinated customers. It started in October 1982, when Helen Williams filed to register the restaurant’s name, Bozo’s, for a federal trademark. She was considering opening a Bozo’s on Beale Street in Memphis (NHL 05/23/66) and wanted to ensure no other restaurant could use the name. Larry Harmon, who claims to be the original Bozo the Clown and who holds all of the copyrights and trademarks for the character, decided to oppose Helen’s application for the restaurant trademark. Harmon ran into some problems. First of all Bozo’s Bar-B-Que was open at least two decades before he created his character. Secondly, the restaurant never has used the clown image in any advertising. If Mr. Harmon was to block Helen’s application, he would have to find a legal technicality to stop the registration. Mr. Harmon filed his opposition, claiming that Bozo’s was a small local restaurant, without enough inter-state patronage to justify a federal trademark. And just like the help received after the 1949 fire, Helen turned to her customers to help her win the legal case. Customers from all over the country wrote affidavits explaining how they were out-of-state customers of Bozo’s. The Patent & Trademark Office decided in favor of Bozo’s Restaurant and denied the Clown’s opposition in January 1989.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Harmon was not pleased with the ruling, so he appealed the case to the Federal Appeals Court in Washington, D.C. In April 1991, the Appeals Court again ruled for Bozo’s Bar-B-Que instead of the clown. Mr. Harmon continued to press his case to the Supreme Court of the United States. In October 1991, the Supreme Court decided not to hear the case and left standing the restaurant’s favorable Appellate Court Ruling. The legal battle was a tough one, but Bozo’s attorneys, Ms. Susan Flohr of Washington, D.C. and Larry Banks of Brownsville, Tennessee did a superb job of presenting the case. The story of this case has also been great interest to news media from coast to coast. Customers all over the country sent copies of articles that were printed in their local newspapers whenever a new development hit the press wires.<sup>18</sup>

### **Recent History**

<sup>15</sup> “Celebrating Unity And An Effort To Save A Dying Town,” <http://thefrontlinemusica.com/tag/bozos-bar-b-que/> (accessed 20 December 2017).

<sup>16</sup> “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que.”

<sup>17</sup> “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que.”

<sup>18</sup> David Margolick, “In Court A Bitter Fight for the Right to be Bozo.” *New York Times*. 02 August 1991, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/08/02/news/in-court-a-bitter-duel-for-the-right-to-be-a-bozo.html?pagewanted=all> (accessed 02 December 2017).

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In 2005, much of the Johnny Cash biographical film *Walk the Line* set in the 1950s was filmed in Memphis. Filmmakers chose Bozo's as the location of several scenes to represent a 1950s roadside diner. In 2009, current owner John Papageorgeon bought the property with the goal to preserve the barbeque history. He made necessary upgrades and improvements like shipping the famous "hot, medium, or mild" sauce and Bozo's barbeque all over the world.



Screenshot from *Walk the Line* set in the 1950s and filmed at Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q, from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaZ4IHTE4jo> (accessed 20 December 2017).

### Barbeque in Tennessee

In an article titled "Tennessee BBQ" the authors use the example of Bozo's supreme court fight against Bozo the Clown to illustrate that Tennessee barbeque is "serious business, with a long history that is intimately wrapped up in local identity and authenticity."<sup>19</sup> Barbeque is known as the culinary technique of cooking meat at low temperatures for long periods of time and in the American south represents a long and varied tradition. It is now something of a popular culture phenomenon with television shows, blogs, and barbeque themed road trips showing that it has "a long history of permeation perhaps best experienced by the ongoing barbeque feud that plagues the South." The areas from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico bordered by Texas and Kansas City is known as the 'barbeque belt' and encompasses four distinct traditions: Carolina, Memphis, Texas, and Kansas City.<sup>20</sup>

Many argue that to be real bar-b-que the meat must be pork, unlike the Texas and Kansas City varieties which rely on beef. The reliance on pork stems from the southern colonies dependence "on the cheap, low-maintenance nature of pig farming. Unlike cows, which required large amounts of feed and enclosed spaces, pigs could be set loose in forests to eat when food supplies were running low. The pigs, left to fend for themselves in the wild, were much leaner upon slaughter, leading Southerners to use the slow-and-low nature of barbecue to tenderize the meat."<sup>21</sup> Southern reliance on pork eventually became a point of pride and Southerners eventually took greater care raising their pigs and "the relationship between the barbecue and pork had been deeply forged."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> James R. Veteto and Ted Maclin "Tennessee BBQ" from Southern Foodways Alliance <https://www.southernfoodways.org/oral-history/southern-bbq-trail/tennessee-bbq/> (accessed 02 December 2017).

<sup>20</sup> Natasha Geiling, "The Evolution of American Barbecue," Smithsonian.com 18 July 2013, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-evolution-of-american-barbecue-13770775/#pAj9mofBaCIHd76Z.99> (accessed 02 December 2017).

<sup>21</sup> Geiling.

<sup>22</sup> Geiling.

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Regional variations in barbeque styles are also thought to stem from “the influence that colonial immigrants had on the flavor and preparation of the meat.” From the British colonists in Virginia and North Carolina came the method of saucing the meat while cooking and a flavor for tart vinegar based sauces. In South Carolina, with a large population of French and German immigrants, the mustard-based sauce was developed based on traditional flavor preferences.

In Tennessee, a state with its own three distinct regions, barbeque traditions will vary from the Appalachian Mountains in the east where barbeque takes the form of “smoked hog shoulders or hams served with a thick and sweet sauce.” In Middle Tennessee the small town of McEwen has held a barbecue as a part of St. Patrick’s Irish Picnic since 1854, with a “secret sauce rumored to have originated in Ireland or developed locally in the 1920s.”<sup>23</sup>

In West Tennessee a tradition of whole hog barbeque developed which was distilled in Memphis to focus on perfectly smoked pork shoulder and ribs. In Memphis, the slightly sweet, tomato-based barbeque sauce is thought to have stemmed from the city’s river based location. As a busy river port on the Mississippi River, area residents could more easily obtain goods like molasses, which influenced the preparation of barbecue.<sup>24</sup> But no matter the sauce, the smoking of meat often relied on “pit bosses” that were often African-American men that used techniques passed down through generations and developed over decades of experience to perfect smoked pork to an art form. Memphis is now home to the famous annual Memphis In May World Championship Barbeque Cooking Contest held on banks of the Mississippi River since 1978. The popularity of the festival speaks to the ongoing importance of home barbecuing not confined to competition or a restaurant:

Smokers may be simple pit constructions for whole hogs, converted barrels, commercial side-box smokers, or grand smoker-trailers with lights. Smoking meat is a day-long affair: a full day or more for whole hog, less for smaller cuts. Most often hickory, but also oak, apple wood, and wine or whiskey barrel staves, are the raw materials that lead to a pinkish “smoke ring” just beneath the surface of the meat. The act of smoking barbecue has a certain Zen-like quality: minimalist, with an abiding awareness of temperature, smoke concentration, and the particulars of the meat. It is a meditation on time, smoke, and flesh that requires non-action as much as decisiveness. Producing good barbecue—meat that is falling-off-the-bone tender, moist, and smoky—is a skill that can earn local (or familial) fame, even when the results are never sold or entered into a contest.<sup>25</sup>

In *Fast Food, Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, John Jakle and Keith Sculle identify the regional variations, long cooking methods, and “a bit frowzy” appearance of even the best barbeque restaurants as reasons why barbeque never became a national fast food commodity like the ubiquitous burgers found in mass on the nation’s highways and interstates.<sup>26</sup> It is for these reasons that blogs and television shows now feature out of the way barbeque places and why travelers will make authentic places like Bozo’s a destination rather than stop along the way.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Veteto and Maclin.

<sup>24</sup> Geiling.

<sup>25</sup> Veteto and Maclin.

<sup>26</sup> John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle. *Fast Food Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 171-173

<sup>27</sup>For an example see Rebecca Strassberg, “The Only Regional Barbecue Guide You’ll Ever Need,” *The Thrillist* 03 August 2016 <https://www.thrillist.com/eat/nation/the-only-regional-barbecue-guide-youll-ever-need> (accessed 05 December 2017).

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

### **Barbeque at Bozo's**

The barbeque at Bozo's is a result of nearly sixty years of making barbeque in the same "hot pit." One reviewer described the experience as "Besides the taste and smell of smoldering hickory, there is a certain ambiance that sprinkles a magic on every plate."<sup>28</sup> Noted southern historian and commentator Shelby Foote described Bozo's as the best pork barbecue he has ever eaten."<sup>29</sup> In an article entitled, "The South's Best Butt" in Southern Living authors Hana Raskin and Jennifer V. Cole state that Bozo's has "long been famed for its treatment of pork shoulders, which emerge moist and tender from the pit, bearing the faintest trace of smoke."<sup>30</sup> In 2015, reviewer Tim Shirley described enjoying the pork sandwich at Bozo's

It came just the way I like it-'dirty!' That's right, 'dirty'- smoky, tender and loaded with bits of the bark or outer crust mixed throughout the meat. That contrast in texture, combined with the smoky flavor of the meat, the slightly sweet but mostly tangy sauces and mayonnaise-based slaw made one serious bbq sandwich. For those who want even more vinegar punch, Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q offers a tangy vinegar slaw as well. The ribs, only available on weekends, were tender and had a nice barbecued crust with slight, yet noticeable smokiness. But it was the bar-b-q sandwich that impressed me the most and one that I'll be back for. In fact, I can already taste my next trip there, all clown' aside.<sup>31</sup>

In a sidebar on Bozo's in the book *Roadside Attractions*, Claudette Stager describes Bozo's simply as "delicious and the best I'd ever eaten in a region known for barbeque."<sup>32</sup> The eighty years that barbeque has been smoked under the Bozo's name in Mason it seems that the art and science creating great pork has been mastered.

### **Bozo's Longevity**

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<sup>28</sup> Libby Murphy, "Mason is a mouthwatering culinary epicenter" Jackson Sun 28 June 2016 <http://www.jacksonsun.com/story/life/style/jackson-life/2016/06/28/mason-mouthwatering-culinary-epicenter/86497228/> (accessed 05 December 2017).

<sup>29</sup> Margolick.

<sup>30</sup> Hana Raskin and Jennifer V. Cole, "The South's Best Butt" Southern Living, <https://www.southernliving.com/travel/souths-best-barbecue-restaurants> (accessed 04 December 2017).

<sup>31</sup> Tim Shirley, "Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q (Mason, TN) – BBQ Time TravelTime Travel" 06 March 2015 <http://memphisbbqguide.com/bozos-hot-pit-bar-b-q-mason-tn/> (accessed 04 December 2017).

<sup>32</sup> Brian Butko, Sarah Butko, *Roadside Attractions: Cool Cafes, Souvenir Stands, Route 66 Relics & Other Road Trip Fun*, (Stackpole Books: Mechanicsville, PA, 2007), 82

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
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Former owner and great-grandson of the original “Bozo” Williams says that the “story of Bozo’s cannot be fully told without thanking two groups of people that have supported four generations of the Williams Family: the Employees and Customers. Without the efforts of the good people working at Bozo’s, the reputation for the quality of food and good service could never have been achieved. Without the loyalty and friendship of our customers for eight decades, Bozo’s might have disappeared like so many of the small restaurants that dotted America’s highways before interstates and fast-food chains.”<sup>33</sup> Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que is locally significant as important commercial enterprise in the small community of Mason that took advantage of the proximity of the highway to draw in travelling customers and locals alike. It may be a birthday celebrated at the restaurant, the long lines on a Saturday night, or stopping by “the old place across the road” on a trip to Memphis. No matter what special memories customers may hold about the restaurant, almost everyone will agree that it is the taste of the bar-B-Q that has kept generation of families returning to Bozo’s for years and years. The national recognition in books, newspaper and magazine articles, and in recent years articles and blogs, document Bozo’s place in Tennessee’s barbeque tradition.<sup>34</sup>



**Detail photo of Bozo’s ca. 1960 sign posted by Yelp user Larry M. June 24, 2016, one of over fifty photos posted by users as a part of their review of the restaurant. Bozo’s has a 4.5 out of 5 star Yelp review with reviewers coming from as far as Minnesota, Texas, North Dakota, and Massachusetts . Yelp is a crowd-sourced restaurant review website.**

**[https://www.yelp.com/biz\\_photos/b-bozo-hot-pit-bar-b-q-](https://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/b-bozo-hot-pit-bar-b-q-)**

### **Barbeque and Roadside in the National Register in Tennessee**

In order to meet the needs of travelers, service stations, motor courts, motels, and quick service restaurants like Bozo’s located along the new roadways. In Tennessee, other than general stores that took advantage of roadside locations before the Good Roads Movement, only a few examples of roadside architecture are currently listed in the National Register. Outside Knoxville, the 1930 Airplane Service Station (NR 3/18/04) is a notable example of memetic architecture designed to attract drivers with its unique airplane design. In West Tennessee, there are currently no early to mid-twentieth century roadside properties listed in the National Register, although the Booker T Motel built Humboldt in Gibson County in the early 1950s for African-American travelers has recently been identified as eligible for listing and a nomination is underway. No properties in Tennessee are listed in the National Register associated with the state’s barbeque tradition.

<sup>33</sup> “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que.”

<sup>34</sup> See as examples Ardie A. Davis, *America’s Best BBQ* (New York: Andrews McMell Publishing, 2015), 180 and Vince Staten, *Real Barbecue: The Classic Barbecue Guide to the Best Joints Across the USA* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 83 and Sara Foster’s *Southern Kitchen: Soulful, Traditional, Seasonal* (New York: Random House, 2011). For national web coverage see: “Travelogue: Three Days of Eating (and Other things) In and Around Memphis, Tennessee” from Food For Thought <http://www.foodforthoughtmiami.com/2016/01/travelogue-three-days-of-eating-and.html> (accessed 20 December 2017).

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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“Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Que,” Brochure, Mason, Tennessee, 12 October 2015.

Preston, Howard L. *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

Jakle, John A and Keith A Sculle. *Remembering Roadside America: Preserving the Recent Past as Landscape and Place*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011.

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Murphy, Libby “Mason is a mouthwatering culinary epicenter” *Jackson Sun* 28 June 2016 <http://www.jacksonsun.com/story/life/style/jackson-life/2016/06/28/mason-mouthwatering-culinary-epicenter/86497228/> (accessed 05 December 2017).

Raskin, Hana and Jennifer V. Cole, “The South’s Best Butt” *Southern Living*, <https://www.southernliving.com/travel/souths-best-barbecue-restaurants> (accessed 04 December 2017).

Shirley, Tim “Bozo’s Hot Pit Bar-B-Q (Mason, TN) – BBQ Time TravelTime Travel” 06 March 2015 <http://memphisbbqguide.com/bozos-hot-pit-bar-b-q-mason-tn/> (accessed 04 December 2017).

Butko, Brian and Sarah Butko, *Roadside Attractions: Cool Cafes, Souvenir Stands, Route 66 Relics & Other Road Trip Fun*. Stackpole Books: Mechanicsville, PA, 2007.



Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
 Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	X	State Historic Preservation Office	
previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency	
previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency	
designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government	
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University	
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other	
recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #		Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): TD-164			

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

---

**10. Geographical Data**

---

**Acreeage of Property** 1.25 acre      **USGS Quadrangle** Mason, 415 NE

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927    or     NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 269344 | Northing: 3921499 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

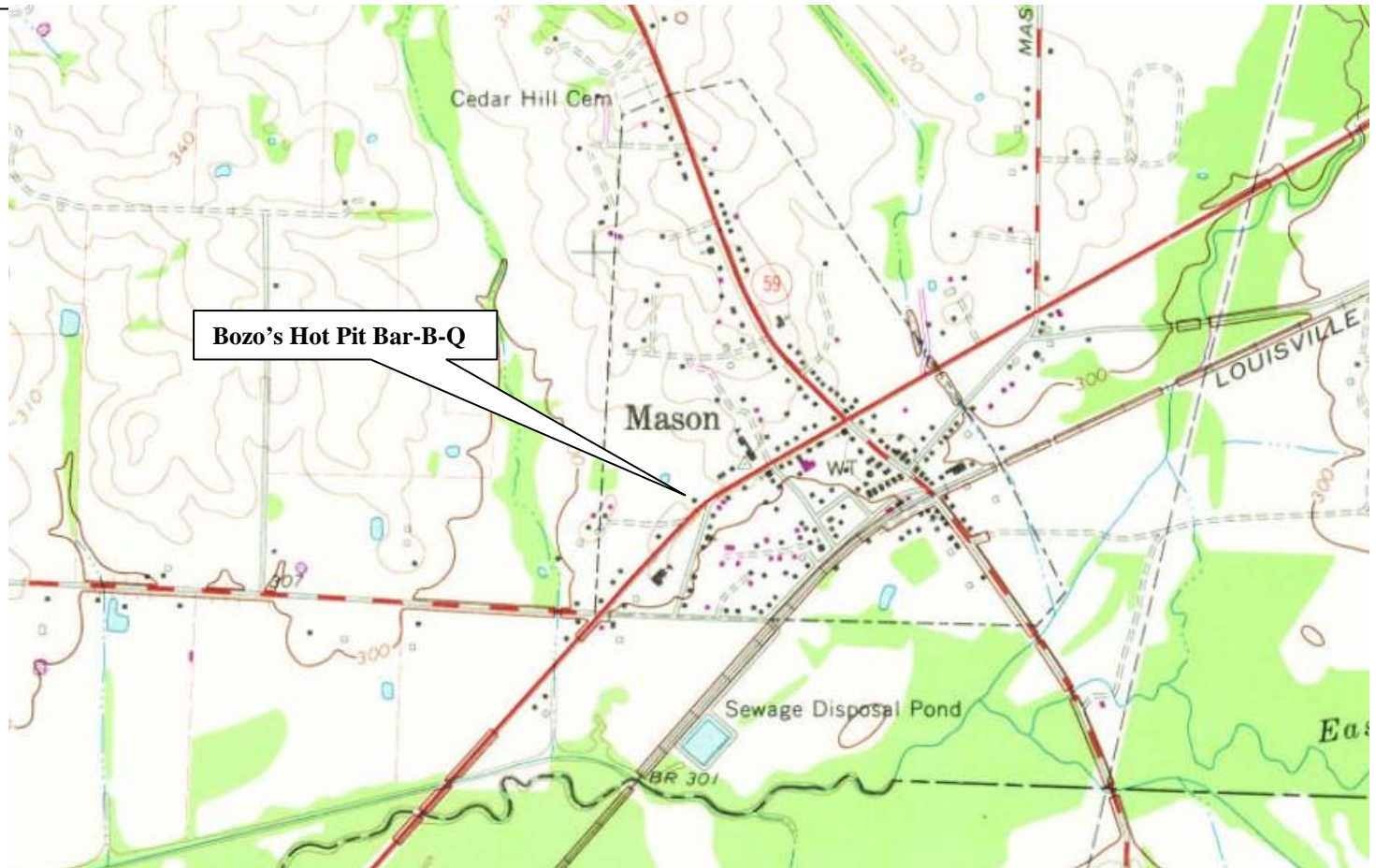
Tipton County parcel 084138C A 02100 makes up the National Register boundary of Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que. It is a 1.25 acre, triangular-shaped parcel. The parcel is parallel to US-70/79 on the southeast. The northern boundary adjoins an open farm field. The western boundary adjoins a lot with a commercial use.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary that is parcel Tipton County ID 084138C A 02100 includes all property historically associated with Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que.

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

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**Location Map, USGS Topo Mason, 415 NE, 1973**  
**Scale: 1: 24, 000**

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

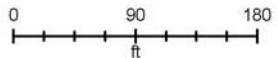
Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

Tipton County - Parcel ID 084138C A 02100



**TIPTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

DISCLAIMER: THIS MAP IS FOR PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT PURPOSES ONLY. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED FROM PROPERTY INFORMATION RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS AND IS NOT CONCLUSIVE AS TO LOCATION OF PROPERTY OR LEGAL OWNERSHIP.  
MAP DATE: September 12, 2017



**Boundary Map-The National Register Boundary includes all of Tipton County Parcel ID 084138C A 02100.**

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

Name Maggie Johnson, Jasmine Champion, and Holly Barnett  
Organization Memphis Area Association of Governments and THC  
Street & Number 8289 Cordova Road, Suite 103 Date 12/20/17  
City or Town Cordova Telephone 901-729-2871  
E-mail [holly.m.barnett@tn.gov](mailto:holly.m.barnett@tn.gov) State TN Zip Code 38112

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

**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 100 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.

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
Name of Property

Tipton County, Tennessee  
County and State

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que  
City or Vicinity: Mason  
County: Tipton State: Tennessee  
Photographer: Maggie Johnson  
Date Photographed: February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

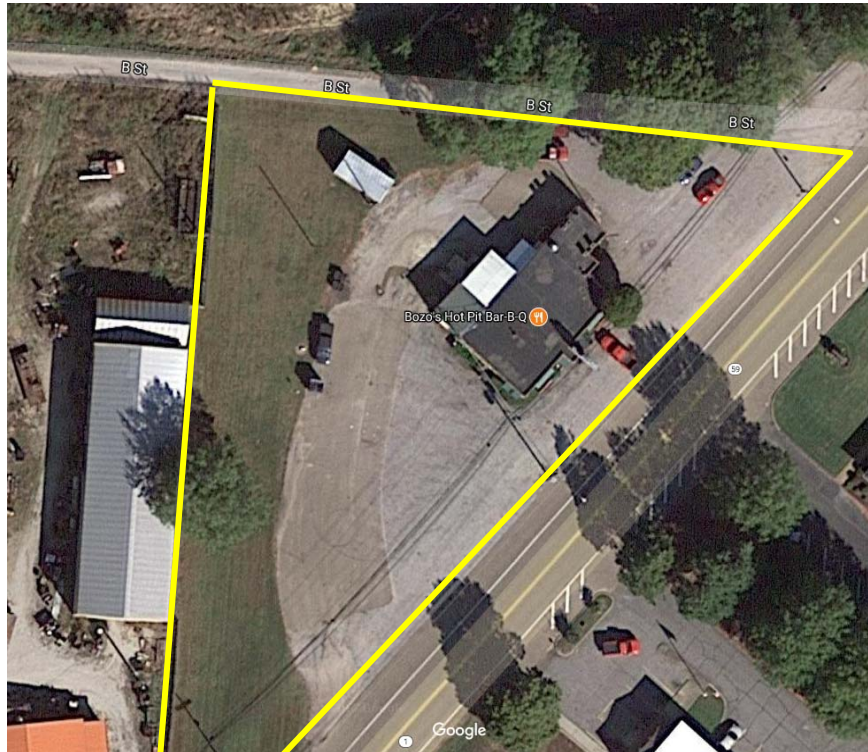
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 27. Front façade. Photographer facing west.
- 2 of 27. Side façade oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 3 of 27. Side façade. Photographer facing south.
- 4 of 27. Back façade oblique. Photographer facing southeast.
- 5 of 27. Back façade. Photographer facing east.
- 6 of 27. Side façade. Photographer facing north.
- 7 of 27. Front façade, Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q Sign. Photographer facing southwest.
- 8 of 27. Façade showing original windows. Photographer facing north.
- 9 of 27. Façade showing aluminum awing over north entrance door and large commercial one light metal window. Photographer facing south.
- 10 of 27. Façade showing brick. Photographer facing south.
- 11 of 27. Interior vestibule floor. Photographer facing north.
- 12 of 27. Interior vestibule north entrance 9 light horizontal wood panel door. Photographer facing north.
- 13 of 27. Interior vestibule south entrance single two vertical panel door. Photographer facing south.
- 14 of 27. Interior showing entrance 9 light horizontal wood panel door into restaurant. Photographer facing east.
- 15 of 27. Interior. Photographer facing south.
- 16 of 27. Interior. Photographer facing north.
- 17 of 27. Interior showing one light window. Photographer facing southeast.
- 18 of 27. Interior counter and barstools. Photographer facing northwest.
- 19 of 27. Interior bar stools. Photographer facing southwest.
- 20 of 27. Interior bar stool. Photographer facing west.
- 21 of 27. Interior floor behind counter. Photographer facing west.
- 22 of 27. Interior behind counter. Photographer facing north.
- 23 of 27. Interior kitchen. Photographer facing north.
- 24 of 27. Interior kitchen. Photographer facing south.
- 25 of 27. Interior storage facing north.
- 26 of 27. Interior showing ladies bathroom entrance. Photographer facing southwest.
- 27 of 27. Interior ladies bathroom. Photographer facing south.
- 28 of 28. Coca-Cola Bozo's sign and adjacent US70/79. Photographer facing north

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
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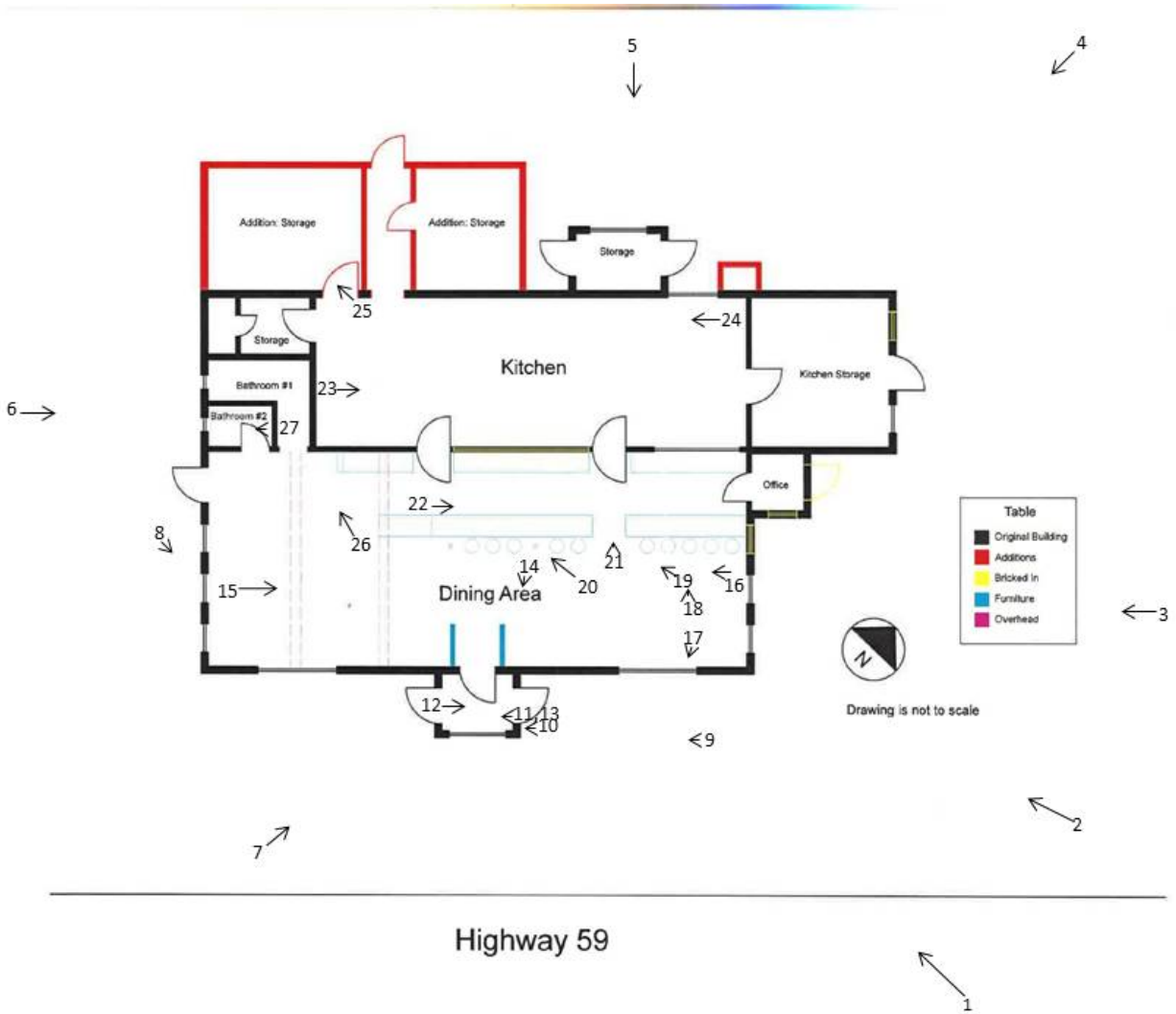
**Aerial Overview**



Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q  
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**Floor Plan** (photo locations keyed to plan)





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q

Name of Property

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 25



Figure 1: 1940s View of Bozo's at previous location across US70/79 from existing building

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 26

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q

Name of Property

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 2: Photo of wreckage when car lost control and ran into building



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Q
Name of Property
Tipton County, Tennessee
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 3: 1955 USGS Topo, Mason, 415NE with the US70/79 shields prominently shown



67

67

REPAIRS

COOK

# RESTAURANT



<b>WILDER LP</b> L&S COMPANY, INC. 901-475-4447	<b>COOK'S</b> PEST CONTROL 901-475-4447	<b>Mainline Motors</b> 901-475-4447	<b>SCRAPYARD &amp; RECYCLING CENTER, LLC</b> 901-476-8415
<b>KB CONCRETE</b> 901-461-9998	<b>KIMERY PROCESSING &amp; MEAT MARKET</b> 731-764-2499	<b>GHOATE'S</b> AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING 901-755-4797	<b>DW Hauling</b> 731-612-4216



S  
B-Q  
PLANT





HOZO'S







BOZO'S  
HOT PIT BAR-B-Q  
RESTAURANT







**BOZO'S**  
**HOT PIT BAR-B-Q**  
**RESTAURANT**



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<b>KB CONCRETE</b> FOR ALL YOUR CONCRETE NEEDS CALL 901-461-9998	<b>KIMERY PROCESSING</b> & MEAT MARKET 731-764-2499 4015 W. STATE ST. (AT I-55) MEMPHIS, TN 38117	<b>CHOATE'S</b> AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING PLUMBING Family-Owned & Operated Since 1928 901-755-4797	<b>DW Hauling</b> FOR ALL YOUR HAULING NEEDS CALL 731-6	



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2011

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2014



EXIT































**BOZO'S**  
with  
*Coca-Cola*

1 1/2

STOP



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 2/12/2018      Date of Pending List: 3/9/2018      Date of 16th Day: 3/26/2018      Date of 45th Day: 3/29/2018      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      3/27/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



## Holly M. Barnett

---

**From:** Holly M. Barnett  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 09, 2018 10:39 AM  
**To:** 'Colleen Curtis'  
**Subject:** RE: Bozo's Hot Pit BBQ Nomination

Thank you!

---

**From:** Colleen Curtis [<mailto:colleen.curtis@capitol.tn.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 09, 2018 10:38 AM  
**To:** Holly M. Barnett  
**Subject:** Bozo's Hot Pit BBQ Nomination

Holly,  
Please send my congratulations to Bozo's Hot Pit BBQ for their nomination into the TN Historic Commission. I am sending my concurrence and support to the commission for their review.

Best,  
Debra Moody

**Colleen Curtis | Legislative Assistant | Representative Debra Moody**

425 5th Ave N. Suite 650 Nashville, TN 37243  
p: 615.741.1100 ext. 44129 | m: 615.500.0420 | Representative Moody: 615.741.3774

[Colleen.Curtis@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:Colleen.Curtis@capitol.tn.gov)



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Town of Mason

12157 Main Street  
Mason TN 38049  
901-294-3525 Phone  
901-294-2307 Fax

RECEIVED

JAN 17 2018

TN. HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION

Mr. E. Patrick McIntyre Jr.  
Executive Director  
Tennessee Historical Commission

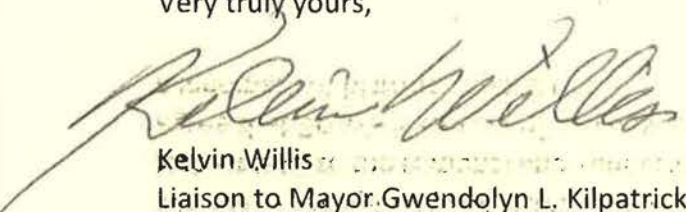
Re: Bozo's Hot Pit BBQ  
Mason Tennessee  
Dear Mr. McIntyre:

We are in receipt of your letter dated November 3, 2017 concerning the nomination of **Bozo's Hot Pit BBQ** to the National and Tennessee Registers of Historic Places. We most wholeheartedly agree that **Bozo's** is worthy of this designation. Undoubtedly Bozo's deserves this recognition as a landmark of historic importance.

Bozo's is an institution in Mason. It is a driver of economic development, jobs and tourist activity. We are proud of the continuation of this eatery whose origins date back to 1923. We look forward to the approval of this historic designation and will work with the owners to ensure that the date of the marker unveiling it will be an event not only Mason, Tipton County, and the entire area will never forget!

We appreciate your consideration of Bozo's for this richly deserved honor. The Mayor and the Board of Aldermen unanimously support their nomination. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,

  
Kelvin Willis  
Liaison to Mayor Gwendolyn L. Kilpatrick  
Town of Mason, Tennessee

Gwendolyn Kilpatrick, Mayor  
[MasonMayorGKilpatrick@rittermail.com](mailto:MasonMayorGKilpatrick@rittermail.com)



**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
2941 LEBANON PIKE  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0442  
OFFICE: (615) 532-1550  
E-mail: [Claudette.Stager@tn.gov](mailto:Claudette.Stager@tn.gov)  
(615) 770-1089



February 8, 2018

J. Paul Loether  
Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington, DC 20240

*National Register Nomination*

- *Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que, Tipton County, Tennessee*

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct nomination for listing of the *Bozo's Hot Pit Bar-B-Que* to the National Register of Historic Places. We received two comments in support of the nomination: one from Representative Debra Moody and another from the Town of Mason Mayor Gwendolyn L. Kilpatrick.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, please contact Holly Barnett at (615) 770-1098 or [Holly.M.Barnett@tn.gov](mailto:Holly.M.Barnett@tn.gov).

Sincerely,

Claudette Stager  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

CS:hb

Enclosures(2)