

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAR 14 1986

date entered APR 10 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Lanier County Auditorium and Grammar School

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number East Church Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Lakeland

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia

code 013

county Lanier

code 173

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

City of Lakeland
name c/o James S. Shaw, Mayor

street & number Post Office Box 2647

city, town Lakeland

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia 31635

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Lanier County Courthouse

city, town Lakeland

state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Structures Field Survey:
title Lanier County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date ca. 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta

state Georgia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Lanier County Auditorium and Grammar School consists of two separate school buildings. They are one-story, brick-and-concrete structures, built over raised basements with arched and keystone recessed entryways topped with modified hipped roofs. Concrete is used for the keystones, quoins, and wall surfaces below the window level. Each building also has gables and original chimneys. The auditorium features an entry hall with a classroom on either side and a lobby that leads into the auditorium. The grammar school contains a central hall with five classrooms on one side and three on the other with side and rear exits. Both contain original woodwork, plaster walls, beaded board wainscoting, and transoms. The auditorium retains original seating for 600, the original stage platform (which is used also for a gymnasium), and decorative splayed tongue-and-groove beam ceiling. Plumbing, heating, and electrical systems were added after 1940. The buildings sit on a flat lot surrounded and separated by various modern buildings. The complex sits on the north edge of town with a residential area to the south, a cemetery across the road on the east, a mixed residential and farming area to the west, and more farmland on the north. The major change to the buildings was the replacement of windows in 1950.

Boundary

The auditorium and grammar school constitute the two surviving buildings of what was once a historic three-building educational complex. The center building was destroyed by fire in 1950. A new structure, built to replace it, now separates the two surviving historic structures, and newer structures have been built elsewhere on the former school grounds. In light of this situation, the proposed boundary for this nomination consists of just the land occupied by the two historic structures, as shown on the attached map.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1925 **Builder/Architect** Lloyd Greer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Lanier County Auditorium and Grammar School is significant in architecture as an unusual and distinctive example in a small Georgia town of eclectic early 20th century architecture. The compact, regular massing of the buildings, the use of brick, and details such as quoins, keystone arches, and pedimented front entryways suggest traditional, institutional Georgian Revival architecture. However, these elements are handled in a free, non-traditional way that reflects a contemporary early 20th century design approach. Other aspects of the buildings, especially the pronounced horizontality of the side elevations, the use of a "raised basement," and grouped windows under wide eaves, reflect possible Prairie-style influences. These architectural characteristics result from the fact that the buildings were designed by Lloyd Greer (1885-1952) of nearby Valdosta, Georgia, a highly trained, versatile architect known for designing many other schools, public buildings, and private homes throughout the south Georgia and north Florida area. The buildings are significant in education because they are the only remaining facilities associated with the county's first consolidated school system. The county was created in 1920, the same year the city and county schools began consolidation as part of a statewide movement toward consolidation. After this consolidation took effect, more school space was needed, and thus these two buildings were built in 1925 to augment the existing Lanier County High School. The auditorium has served many county groups as a meeting space since it was the largest meeting space in the county. The loss by fire of the pre-existing Oaklawn Academy/Lanier County High School Building in 1950 left these two structures as the only representatives of this early Lanier County educational effort. These areas of significance support property eligibility under National Register Criteria A and C.

Historical Narrative

The Lanier County Auditorium and Grammar School, built in 1925, mark a major plateau in the history of educational services in this south Georgia community. The City of Lakeland was known as Milltown until 1925. It was originally located in Berrien County. When Lanier County was created in 1920, Milltown was a small mill community of about 1300 people. The local economy was mostly farming and timbering. Sawn lumber was shipped by rail from Milltown to nearby Valdosta. In order to cultivate more tourists, who at the turn of the century had been flocking to many south Georgia locations, especially Thomasville, a local development company was formed. They dammed the local creek and created "Lake Irma," named for the mayor's daughter. By the time that community leaders had progressed toward having a new county created, which would give Milltown status as a county seat, they had three other objectives: to establish a community-owned newspaper, to have the Airline Railroad purchased by the Atlantic Coastline Railroad, and to consolidate the county schools into one school district. All of these were achieved by January 1, 1921.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Tinker, Nancy. "Milltown School," Historic Property Information Form, March 12, 1985. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Lakeland, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	<u>17</u>	<u>302230</u>	<u>3436000</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes just the nominated buildings and the land upon which they rest. It is all that remains associated with them due to intrusions and new construction. It is marked on the enclosed sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian
Historic Preservation Section
organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date February 28, 1986
street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone 404/656-2840
city or town Atlanta state Georgia 30334

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon
title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/10/86

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 4/10/86

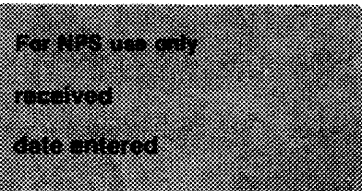
James M. McPherson
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**



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Continuation sheet Significance

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As the development in the new county seat progressed, and the population increased, it became obvious that the mills were no longer an important drawing card and that the name "Milltown" did not connote a progressive, forward-moving county seat. Thus on September 15, 1925, the name was changed to Lakeland.

This property's educational beginnings came when the Oaklawn [Baptist] Academy was erected by the Valdosta Association of the Georgia Baptist Convention. They purchased ten acres in Milltown around 1904 and constructed a two-and-a-half-story building there. It was one of several Baptist-supported schools that were accepted into the Mercer system; that is their graduates could go on to Mercer University in Macon. After it closed in 1911, the academy was purchased by the Milltown officials. County-owned secondary schools supported by public funds had been prohibited under Georgia law until 1912.

The movement to consolidate the county and city schools was an important one in every county where it occurred. It began as a mandate after World War I when the returning soldiers demanded a better education for their children than they had received. This discrepancy had become apparent to them when, in the military, they met people from other states with better education than Georgia was providing.

Prior to consolidation, schools were the responsibility of every community and the rural areas were naturally the poorest served. Money was raised by an assessment prorated by the number of school-age children in a family. If a family could not afford the fee, it would be asked to provide room and board for the teacher. Without money or room, a family's children would have to do without. County schools met for fewer months and for a smaller number of years; thus the pupils were short-changed on many levels.

In September, 1920, the local newspaper announced that consolidation would begin immediately. When it was enacted in 1921, it provided one school system for the city and county together, giving each child graded schooling and more money for the Milltown High School (formerly the Oaklawn Baptist Academy) to operate under its increased enrollment. County grammar schools for white students were consolidated into three school facilities including grades one through seven, to be located in the communities of Crisp, Stockton, and Milltown. In September, 1924, the Milltown Grammar School and High School (all housed in the pre-existing Oaklawn Academy) became overcrowded due to consolidation. As a result of this, an auxiliary facility was needed.

CONTINUED

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Trustees were appointed in 1924 to discuss the school system's needs. In September, they met with Valdosta architect Lloyd Greer and discussed several alternatives including: 1) construction of a single grammar school building, selling the Oaklawn Academy to the county for the high school; 2) construction of two annexes; or 3) construction of a new building and two annexes, and selling the academy to the county as a Courthouse.

Greer's proposal, adopted by October 9, included two new buildings with the academy becoming the high school. The trustees then purchased the original ten-acre tract and the academy building from the city. The two buildings being nominated were erected by August, 1925, to flank the academy building, by then the high school.

The auditorium also served as a gymnasium and was used for civic events as well, since it was the only meeting space of any size in town, except for the churches. Community theater was also held here.

The original ten-acre campus site eventually had other facilities built upon it that were not school related, including a canning plant (1936). Then on May 31, 1950, the original high school building (formerly the academy) was destroyed by fire after being struck by lightning. It was replaced by the 1950 structure northeast of the auditorium now used as a library and not part of this nomination.

By 1956, the elementary school population had outgrown their buildings, a site was found across town for a new grammar school, the white pupils for grades one through three were placed in the new structure, and grades four through twelve remained in the old grammar school building and the 1950 structure. Integration came in 1969 and in that year the Lanier County Board of Education built their offices between the nominated buildings on the site of the former high school.

In 1975 a new high school was constructed next to the new grammar school across town, leaving this educational site and these two nominated structures to new uses.

LANIER COUNTY AUDITORIUM AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Lakeland, Lanier County, Georgia

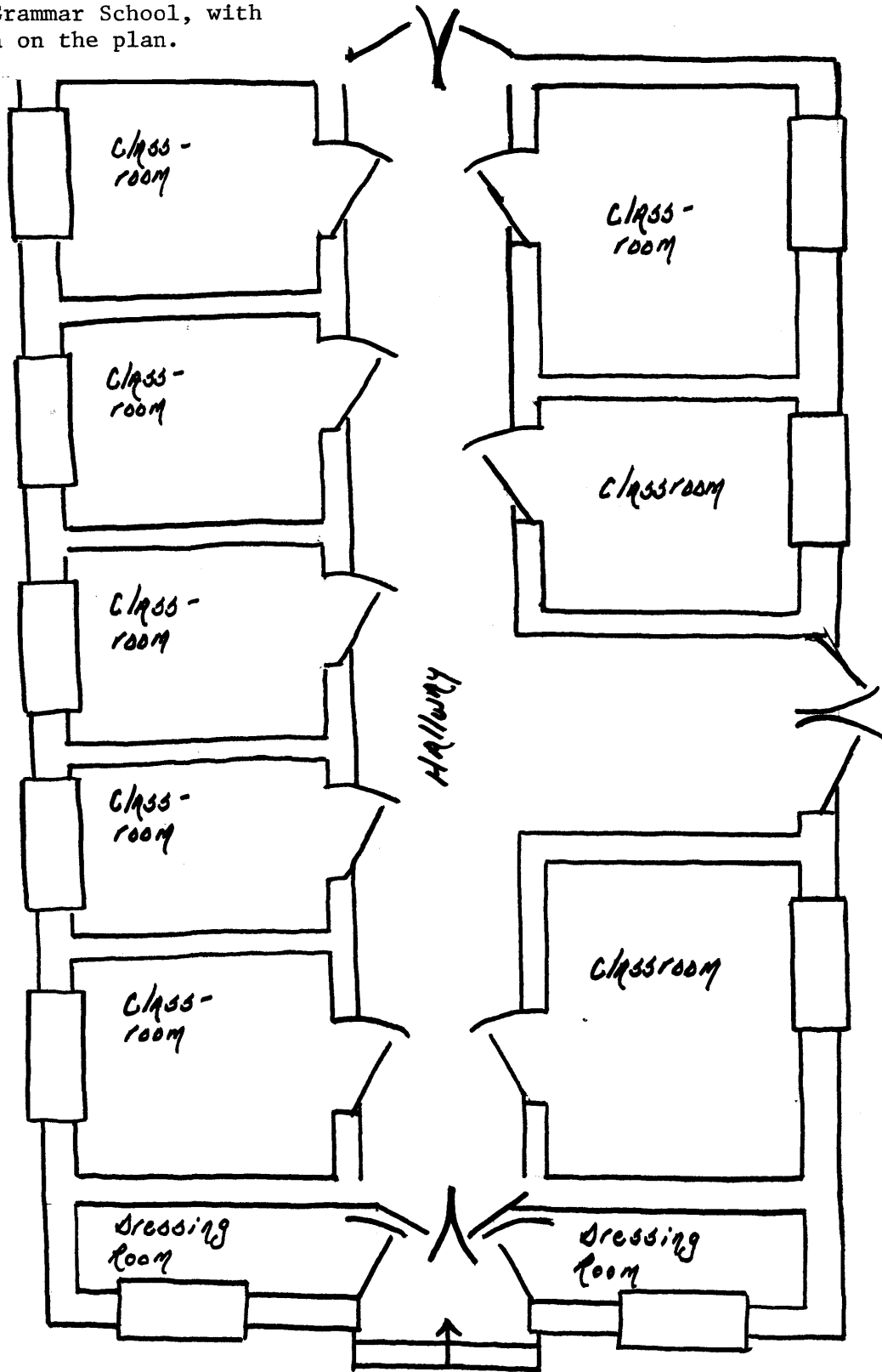
FLOOR PLAN

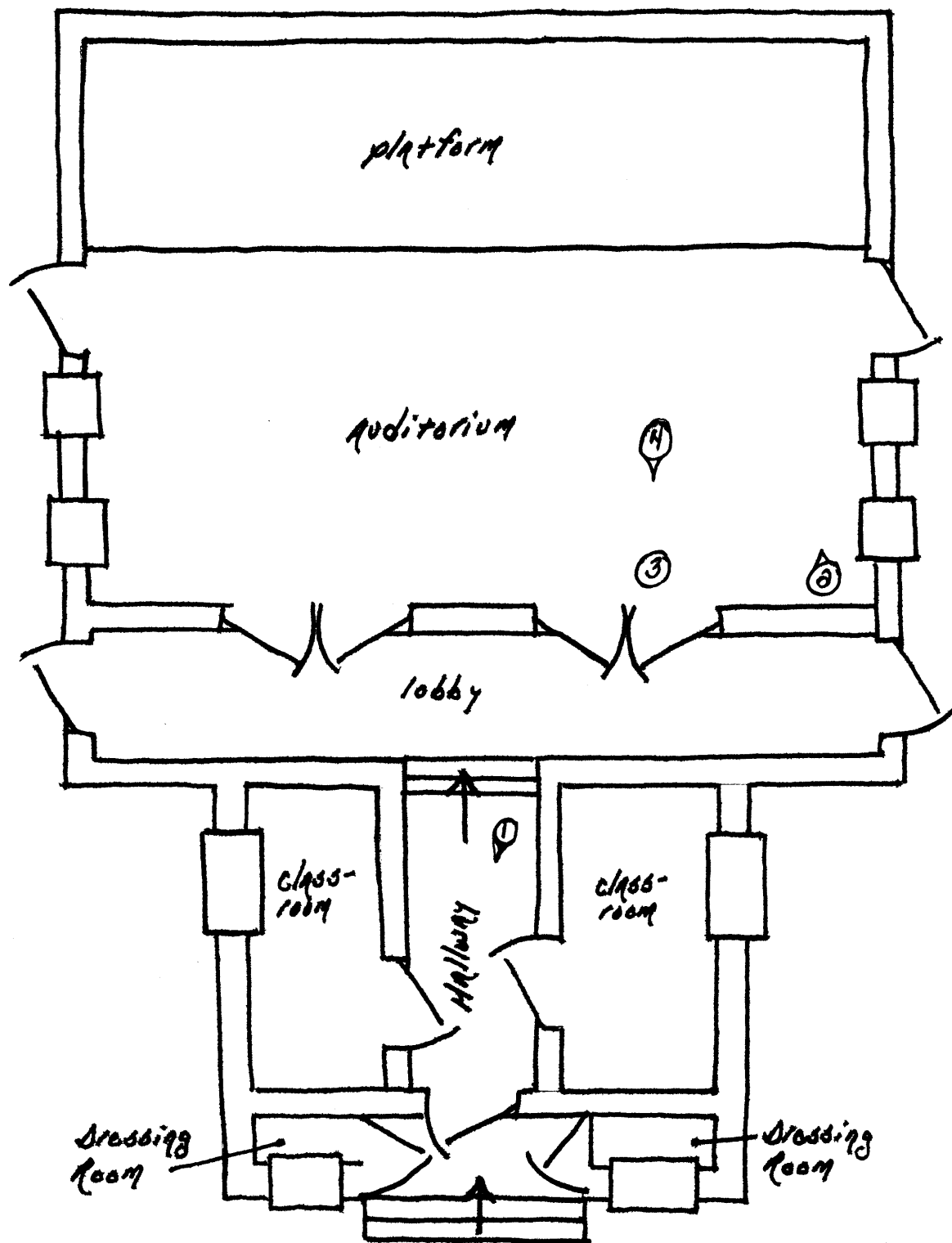
Scale: Not to scale

Source: Drawn by Nancy Tinker

Date: 1984

Key: Lanier County Grammar School, with
rooms as marked on the plan.





LANIER COUNTY AUDITORIUM AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Lakeland, Lanier County, Georgia

FLOOR PLAN

Scale: Not to scale

Source: Drawn by Nancy Tinker

Date: 1984

Key: Lanier County Auditorium, with rooms
as marked on the plan.



D/ LANIER COUNTY AUDITORIUM AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Lakeland, Lanier County, Georgia

SKETCH MAP

Scale: 1" = 140'

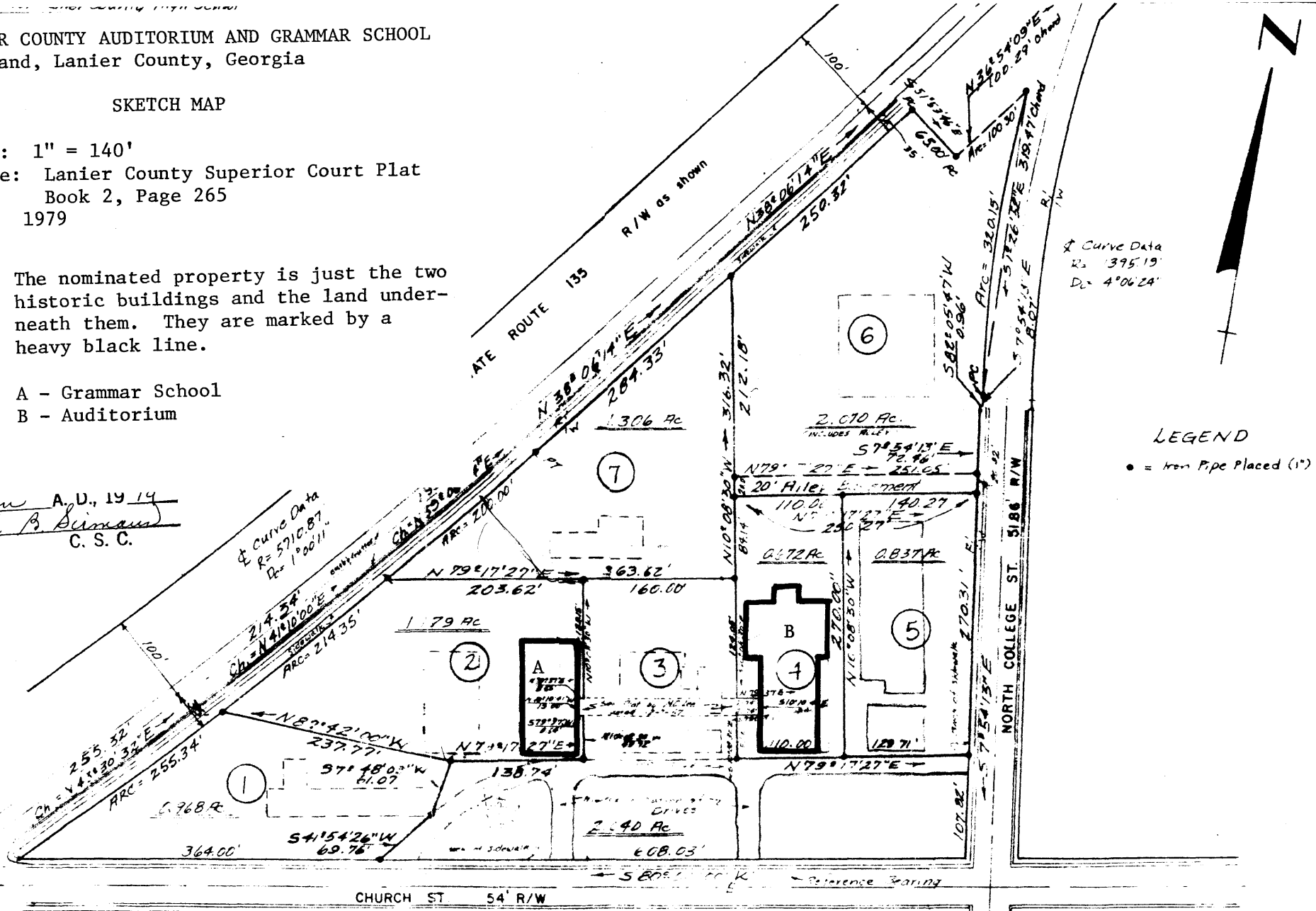
Source: Lanier County Superior Court Plat
Book 2, Page 265

Date: 1979

Key: The nominated property is just the two historic buildings and the land underneath them. They are marked by a heavy black line.

- C/ A - Grammar School
B - Auditorium

at 4
Reco
Page
day of Jan A. D., 19 14
Maude B. Bismant
C. S. C.



Curve Data
R = 395.19'
D = 4°06'24"

LEGEND
● = Iron Pipe Placed (1)

SURVEY FOR

LANIER COUNTY BOARD
OF EDUCATION

SURVEYED BY

HARRIS SURVEYING AND ENGINEERING CO.
1000 Peachtree Street, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Location in the City of Lakeland,
Georgia, in the 2nd 4th of the 1st
City Section of Lanier County,
Georgia.

This Survey and Plat is a correct
and true copy of the original
survey and plat as shown to the
County Clerk of Lanier County,
Georgia.

