

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 *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 Camp Crowder Gymnasium

other names/site number BE3238

2. Location

street & number 205 Shiloh Drive

☐ not for publication

city or town Sulphur Springs

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Benton code 007 zip code 72768

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 for 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.)

Cathie Malcher
Signature of certifying official/Title

8/8/11
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or 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

Date of Action



The Department of Arkansas Heritage

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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August 3, 2011

Ms. Carol Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Camp Crowder Gymnasium – Sulphur Springs, Benton County,
Arkansas

Dear Ms. Shull:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:crp

Enclosure

Camp Crowder Gymnasium

Name of Property

Benton County, Arkansas

County and State

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 count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

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/sports facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/plain/traditional

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD/weatherboard

roof METAL

other

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.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1941

Significant Dates

c. 1941

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)**Architect/Builder****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** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- ☐ **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.

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: _____

Camp Crowder Gymnasium

Name of Property

Benton County, Arkansas

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.58

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 369486 4038037
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

☐ 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 Anna Lee Janisch; edited by Clint Pumphrey, National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 6/30/11
street & number 323 Center St., 1500 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9789
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

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 Church of Shiloh
street & number P.O. Box 97 telephone (479) 298-3299
city or town Sulphur Springs state AR zip code 72768

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 listing. 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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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Summary

The Camp Crowder Gymnasium is a wooden frame building located at 205 Shiloh Drive in Sulphur Springs, Arkansas. The building was originally constructed in the early 1940s as part of Camp Crowder Military Base in Neosho, Missouri, where it served as a gymnasium and theater for military personnel during World War II.

Workers disassembled the weatherboard-clad structure in 1948 and moved it approximately 35 miles to Sulphur Springs, Arkansas. Much of the 6,576 square-foot building was reassembled on a continuous poured concrete foundation, though some walls rest on poured concrete piers. The high, central section of the building has a metal gable roof while the lower side sections are topped with metal shed roofs that slope away from the center. A rear wing, which housed the furnace, is covered with a shed roof covered in fiberglass shingles. The entire gymnasium measures 60 feet wide by 104 feet long.

Elaboration

North Façade

The north side of the Camp Crowder Gymnasium features a high central section topped with a gable roof and two shorter side sections with shed roofs that slope away from the center. The focal point of this elevation is a central, one-bay porch, consisting of a metal gable roof with exposed rafter tails supported by simple wooden posts. Poured concrete stairs lead up to the small porch, which shelters the area in front of the gymnasium's double-door front entrance. Centered above the porch are two three-over-three, stationary windows that are situated side-by-side and appear to have been painted over. Above these windows, tucked under the roof gable are a vent and a light fixture. To the left of the front porch are two one-over-one, double-hung windows with a false eight-over-eight mutton pattern, measuring 40" x 54". Immediately to the right of the porch is a single window that is identical to the ones on the left. A sliding door is situated just to the right of this window.

West Façade

The Camp Crowder Gymnasium's west side consists of a high, upper section and a lower section that extends outward across the length of the elevation. The lower wall features five pairs of one-over-one, double-hung windows with a false eight-over-eight mutton pattern, measuring 40" x 54". The four northernmost pairs are evenly spaced along the wall, but between these windows and the fifth, southernmost pair is a wooden double door. Nine three-over-three, stationary windows measuring 20" x 27" are spaced evenly across the upper wall. The rafter tails on both the upper and lower eaves are exposed.

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South Façade

Like the north elevation, the south side of the Camp Crowder Gymnasium features a high central section topped with a gable roof and two shorter side sections with shed roofs that slope away from the center. A small addition extends from the center section. Its shed roof begins halfway up the center wall of the main building and slopes outward, terminating with exposed rafter tails at the eave. The south side of the addition features two double-hung, eight-over-eight windows that are spaced evenly across the wall of the addition and have been painted over. There is a set of wooden double doors on the east side of this projection. The double doors are sheltered by a metal shed awning located at the east corner of the addition and the main wall. Above each side of the projection on the main wall is a louvered vent. Another vent is located on this wall, just under the roof gable. The only other prominent feature on this elevation is a tall, cylindrical metal chimney that extends up from the back left side of the addition.

East Façade

The east side of the Camp Crowder Gymnasium is similar to the west side. The elevation consists of a high, upper section and a lower section that extends outward across the length of the elevation. The lower wall features five pairs of one-over-one, double-hung windows with a false eight-over-eight mutton pattern, measuring 40" x 54". The four northernmost pairs are evenly spaced along the wall, but between these windows and the fifth, southernmost pair is a wooden double door. Unlike the west side, however, a small lean-to was constructed between the double doors and the southernmost pair of windows. This small addition has a fiberglass shingle shed roof with a cylindrical metal chimney and features a door on the left side of its east elevation. Nine three-over-three, stationary windows measuring 20" x 27" are spaced evenly across the upper wall. The rafter tails on both the upper and lower eaves are exposed. An in-ground swimming pool sits vacant just to the east of this elevation.

Integrity

Though the Camp Crowder Gymnasium was moved in 1948, it has been situated in its current location for far longer than it was in Neosho, Missouri. The building retains its original siding, doors, and many of its original windows. Inside, the large roof trusses and the wooden basketball court also recall the building's initial construction. Though some windows on the lower half of the gymnasium have been replaced, an effort was made to retain the original mutton pattern. Once the renovations are complete, the structure will once again serve the recreational purpose for which it was originally built.

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Summary

Located at 205 Shiloh Drive in Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, the Camp Crowder Gymnasium has had many uses over the years. Originally constructed as a gymnasium in the early 1940s at Camp Crowder Military Base in Neosho, Missouri, the wood frame structure was moved to Sulphur Springs in 1948 and has at various times been owned by a university, a Bible translation school, a developer, and a church. The current owners, a Christian retreat center known as the Shiloh Community, began renovating the structure in 2010. Thanks to the efforts of the Shiloh Community, the building remains today as an excellent example of World War II gymnasium construction in Sulphur Springs. For this reason, the Camp Crowder Gymnasium is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C with local significance**. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a property owned by a religious institution and **Criteria Consideration B** as a property that has been removed from its original location.

Elaboration

Sulphur Springs lies in the far northwest corner of Benton County, just a few miles from the Missouri border. The Arkansas legislature created Benton County on September 30, 1836; it had previously been a part of Washington County, and before that, Lovely County. A three man commission located the county government at Bentonville on November 7, 1837. By 1840 the county had 2,228 residents dispersed across the hilly countryside, and its population grew steadily throughout the nineteenth century. Construction of the St. Louis & San Francisco Railroad through the county in 1881 missed Bentonville, but led to the founding of Rogers, now the county's major population center. Another line constructed in the county was the Kansas City, Fort Smith, & Southern Railroad, which reached Sulphur Springs in 1889.

As the name suggests, Sulphur Springs boasted many natural springs in and around its original town site. The community was known for one spring in particular, a rare lithium spring that was said to have healing properties. This assertion drew a number of settlers to the area in the 1870s, and on April 26, 1878, Sulphur Springs acquired a post office. During the 1880s the community was formally laid out, and soon had its first school and newspaper, the *Sulphur Springs Speaker*. When the railroad arrived at the end of the decade, a great deal of interest emerged in developing the area's springs, and hotels and other accommodations were soon established. The most notable of these was the Kihlberg Hotel, completed in May 1909 by the Sulphur Springs Sanitarium Hotel and Bath Company. The five-story, native limestone structure with 100 guest rooms would have been an ambitious undertaking in most any town, and the small village proved unable to attract enough visitors to make it successful.

Any hope Sulphur Springs held to develop its tourist industry was crushed by a series of fires during the 1910s. A blaze in 1911 destroyed many of the town's commercial buildings. Just one year later, on

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December 1, 1912, another fire broke out in the local power plant, knocking out power to the community's businesses and residences alike. Construction on a new facility did not start until 1914 and power was not fully restored until 1915. By then, many businesses had closed and the railroad had stopped promoting Sulphur Springs as a destination along their line.

In 1924 evangelist John Brown purchased a large portion of Sulphur Springs worth \$250,000, including three hotels (including the Kihlberg), two municipal properties, forty business lots, a number of residential lots, parks, springs, and a small lake. Brown had recently founded the John E. Brown College in Siloam Springs, where disadvantaged students worked off their tuition payments. However, the evangelist wanted to start another school in Sulphur Springs for students who could afford to make \$450 annual tuition payments. Brown soon moved his family to the community and opened John Brown University, a four-year, co-ed, interdenominational religious institution which he intended to be "jazzless" and "danceless." The school, which had an initial enrollment of 100 students from 16 states, offered classes in the colleges of liberal arts, Bible, and music.

Brown's efforts in Sulphur Springs ultimately failed to live up to expectations: the university never turned a profit and failed to receive accreditation. In the summer of 1926 the evangelist renamed the school John Brown College and Academy and restricted it to women. Males were mostly restricted to the Siloam Springs John E. Brown College and Academy. This move spurred a large number of complaints from the student body, so in the fall of 1928, Brown merged the Sulphur Springs campus into the John E. Brown College in Siloam Springs. The abandoned campus became the Julia A. Brown School on September 15, 1930, serving boys and girls in grades one through nine. Its role changed again in 1937 with the foundation of the Brown Military Academy of the Ozarks, which operated a summer program called Camp Buddy. Tragedy struck the campus on January 2, 1940, when a fire broke out in the old Kihlberg Hotel building. This structure, which had served as the main building on campus, was finally rebuilt in 1947, but with only two stories instead of the original five stories.

In 1948 the Brown Military Academy of the Ozarks acquired a gymnasium building from Camp Crowder, a United States military installation in Neosho, Missouri. In June 1946 Camp Crowder was placed on "standby" as a part of the drawdown following World War II. On January 9, 1948 an article in the *Neosho Daily Democrat*, described a massive sale of the camp's buildings:

A thousand and four buildings at Camp Crowder went over the WAA block here in the last two days in the biggest sale of surplus property in the Midwest and one of the fastest moving sales in WAA history. Some 2,900 persons attended the sale, held in the municipal auditorium.

Six hundred and fourteen buildings were sold yesterday ranging in size and price from a 6 by 6 sentry box for \$5.00 to a 60 by 217 warehouse for \$3,151.00. A post theater went for \$2,799.98

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Two-story barracks, which started at noon Wednesday for around \$600.00, were selling at the close of the sale for \$950.00 and up, and higher prices were the rule all along the line on the sales yesterday. Sales total was estimated at \$320,000.00 for the 614 sold yesterday, while the total for the two days was estimated at \$549,000.00.

The gymnasium building was dissembled and transported 35 miles to the Brown Military Academy in Sulphur Springs. It was reassembled under the direction of Mr. Hondrich, a local artisan. The building served as the school's gymnasium and theater, and the large stage area was utilized for student plays and musicals.

In 1951, shortly after the gymnasium arrived in Sulphur Springs, John Brown decided to shut down his operations in the town and gift his properties to Wycliffe Bible Translators. The linguistic training program, founded in 1934 by former missionary Cameron Townsend, had previously operated out of a farmhouse near Sulphur Springs. The school used the Camp Crowder Gymnasium as a recreation hall for students and faculty until 1964 when they sold the property to Copeland Development. Before the gymnasium could be demolished, however, the company went bankrupt. The Shiloh Trust, a non-denominational Christian ministry founded in 1942, purchased the complex including the gymnasium in 1968 and relocated their operations from Sherman, New York, to Sulphur Springs. They used the gymnasium as a storage facility, and by the 1980s it was badly in need of repair. In 1983, the Shiloh Trust sold the gymnasium and the 4.58 acres on which it sits to a sister organization, the Shiloh Church. The Shiloh Church began repairing the building for use as a skating rink, theater, basketball court, and volleyball court for a school that they operated. Then, in 2010, with the help of volunteers and donations, a restoration program began in earnest. Church officials hope to once again utilize the building as a gymnasium and theater, much in the way it was originally used at Camp Crowder in Neosho, Missouri.

Statement of Significance

Located at 205 Shiloh Drive in Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, the Camp Crowder Gymnasium has had many uses over the years. Originally constructed as a gymnasium in the early 1940s at Camp Crowder Military Base in Neosho, Missouri, the wood frame structure was moved to Sulphur Springs in 1948 and has at various times been owned by a university, a Bible translation school, a developer, and a church. The current owners, a Christian retreat center known as the Shiloh Community, began renovating the structure in 2010. Thanks to the efforts of the Shiloh Community, the building remains today as an excellent example of World War II gymnasium construction in Sulphur Springs. For this reason, the Camp Crowder Gymnasium is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** with **local significance**. It is also being nominated under **Criteria Consideration A** as a property owned by a religious institution and **Criteria Consideration B** as a property that has been removed from its original location.

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Bibliography

Benton County Heritage Committee, ed. *History of Benton County, Arkansas*. Dallas: Curtis Media Corporation, 1991.

Lancaster, Guy. "Sulphur Springs (Benton County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. June 8, 2010. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=6176> (accessed June 22, 2011).

Lord, Allyn. "Benton County." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. February 4, 2011. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=748> (accessed June 22, 2011).

Neosho Daily Democrat.

"Timeline of John Brown University." 2011. <http://www.jbu.edu/archives/timeline/> (accessed June 22, 2011).

Warden, Don and Monte Harris. "Bentonville (Benton County)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. November 6, 2009. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=828> (accessed June 22, 2011).

Camp Crowder Gymnasium

Name of Property

Benton County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

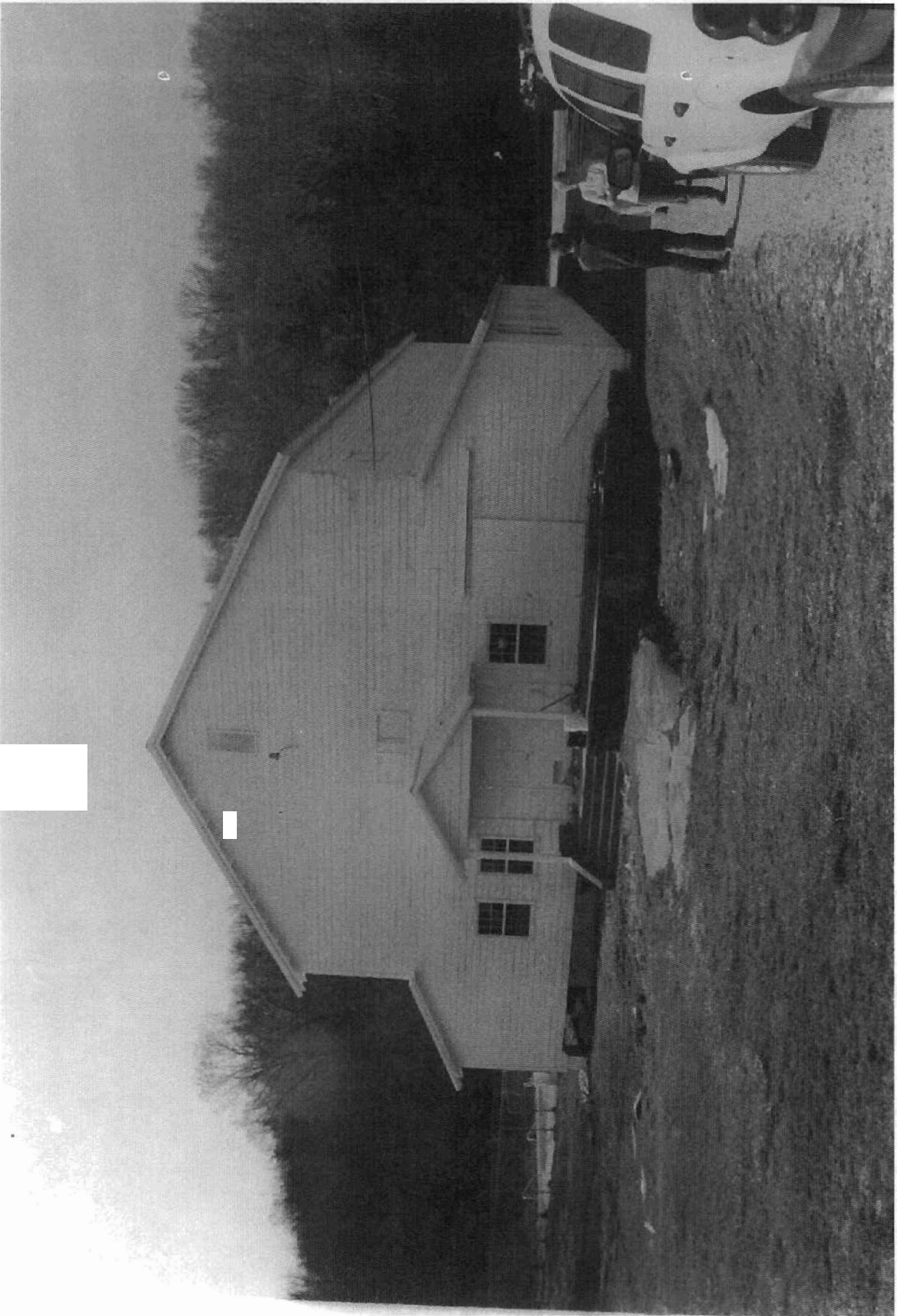
Section number 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

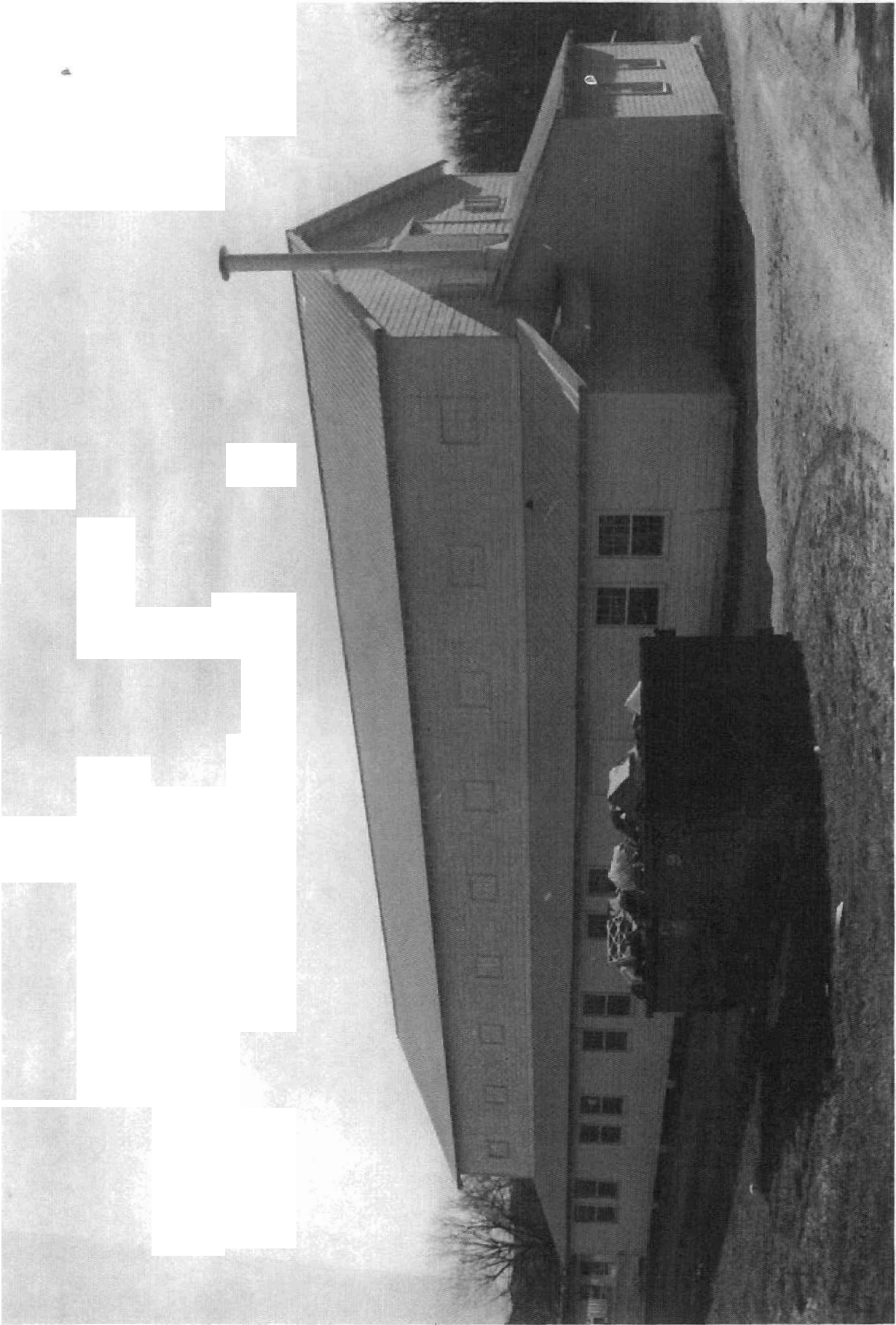
Benton County Assessor's Office Parcel #14-00361-003.

Verbal Boundary Justification

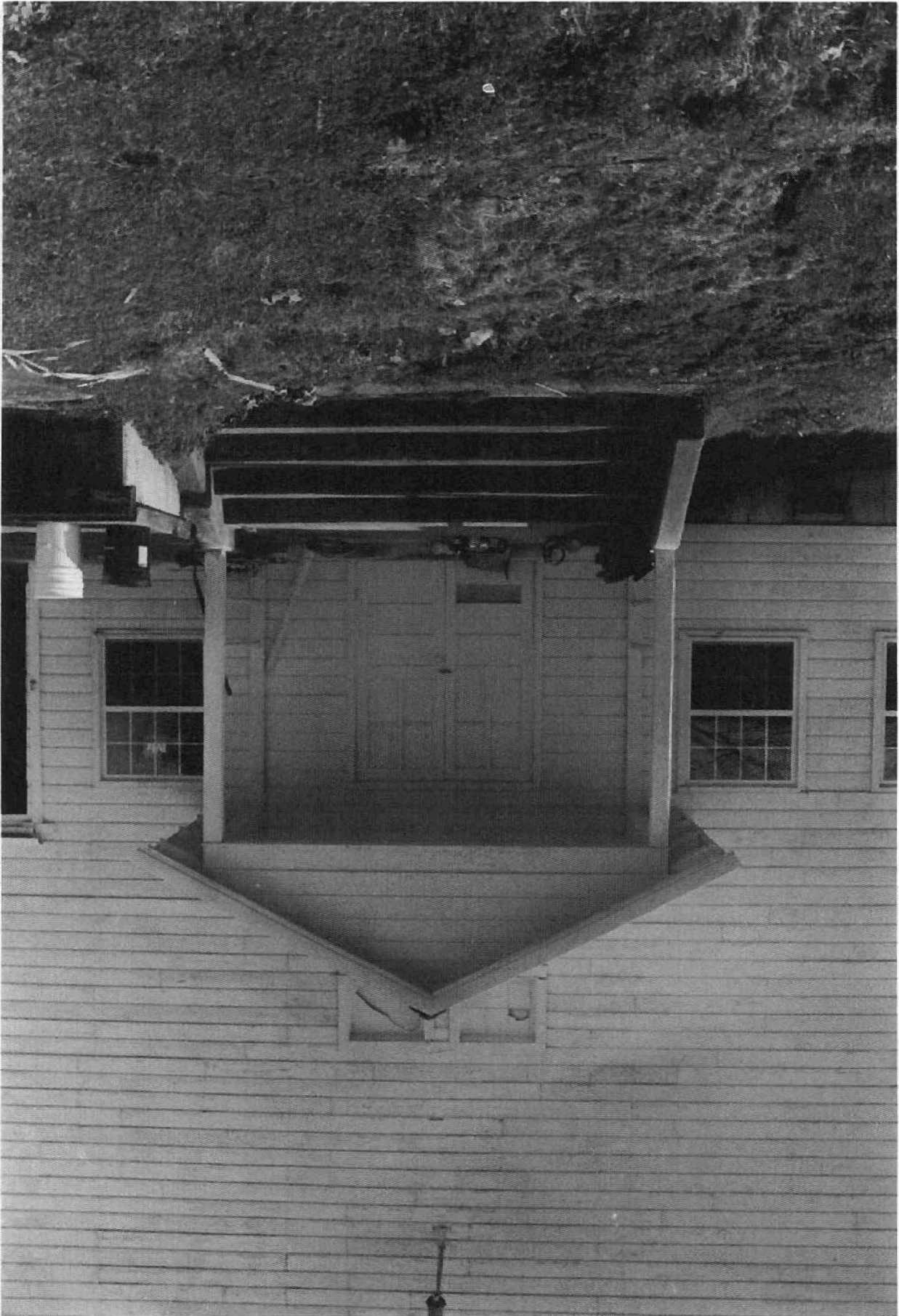
The boundary contains the land that is historically associated with the Camp Crowder Gymnasium since it was relocated to Sulphur Springs.













7057 11 SE
(SOUTH WEST CITY)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Camp Cauder Gymnasium
Sulphur Springs, Benton Co., AR
UTM Reference:
15/369486/4038037

STATE OF
GEOLOGICAL

LITTLE

94° 30'

166000m E

367

ANDERSON 1/4 MI.
NOEL 3.5 MI

368

369 27° 30'

370

R 33 W.

R 32 W

31

MT.

714

4040000m N.

