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

### National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received

IR 8-17-87

date entered

not for publication

code

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

#### Name 1.

historic

and or common Blytheville Greyhound Bus Station

#### Location 2.

109 N. 5th Street street & number

city, town

Blytheville

#### Arkansas 72315 code state 2 Classification

Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public both Public Acquisition in process being considered	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible yes: restricted X yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture X commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:	

vicinity of

county Mississippi /

#### **Owner of Property** 4.

Greyhound Corporation name

street & number Grevhound Tower, Station 1636

city, town	Phoenix	vicinity of	state	AZ 85077	
5. L	ocation of Le	gal Description		and the second second	
courthous	e, registry of deeds, etc.	Mississippi County Courthouse	1. 3		
street & ni	umber Court Square				
city, town	Blytheville	alling a second of the second of	state	Arkansas	
6. R	epresentatio	n in Existing Surveys			
the Blyt	theville CLG Survey	has this property been deter	mined e	ligible? <u> </u>	s no
lete Mar	ch, 1985	federal	sta	ite county	_X_ local
depository	y for survey records Arkans	as Historic Preservation Program			
olity, town	Little Rock		state	Arkansas	

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Burleigh, Manferd and Charles M. Adams. <u>Modern Bus Terminals and Post Houses</u>. Ypsilanti, Michigan: University Lithoprinters, 1941.

WPA-Mississippi County Place File, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock Telephone interview with Mary Mitchell of Blytheville, Arkansas, April 1987.

## **10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property <u>Less than on e</u> Quadrangle name <u>Blytheville 7.51</u>	Quadrangle scale <u>1:24000</u>
UT M References	
A 115 2 317 61210 319 719 61815 Zone Easting Northing	B L L L   Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Begin at the corner of Walnut and 5th Streets, go south 150 feet, then west 75 feet, then north 150 feet, then east 75 feet to the original beginning.

List all stat					
	es and countles for prope	rties over	lapping state	or county boundar	ies
state N/A		od <del>e</del>	county		code
tate		ode	county		code
11. F	orm Prepared	l By			
name/title	Michael Swanda and St	eve Mito	chell		
organization	Arkansas Historic Prese	ervation	Program	date May, 19	87
street & num	er 225 E. Markham			telephone (5)	)1)_371-2763
city or town	Little Rock			state Arkans	as
12. S	tate Historic	Pres	ervatio	n Officer	Certification
As the decis	nationalX. st	State of the second	local		
665), I hereby according to	nominate this property for in the criteria and procedures se Preservation Officer signature	clusion in t et forth <b>by t</b> /	the National Reg	ister and certify that	Act of 1966 (Public Law 89- it has been evaluated
665), I hereby according to State Histork	nominate this property for in the criteria and procedures set	clusion in f et forth by t re	the National Reg	ister and certify that	it has been evaluated
665), I hereby according to State Histork Ittle State For HPS (	nominate this property for in the criteria and procedures se Preservation Officer signatur Historic Preservation O	clusion in t et forth by t re	the National Reg the National Par Market	ister and certify that <b>k Service.</b>	it has been evaluated
665), I hereby according to State Histork Ittle State For HPS (	nominate this property for in the criteria and procedures se Preservation Officer signature Historic Preservation O	clusion in t et forth by t re	the National Reg the National Par Market	ister and certify that <b>k Service.</b>	it has been evaluated
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665), I hereby according to State Historic title State For NPS ( I hereb	nominate this property for in the criteria and procedures se Preservation Officer signatur Historic Preservation O use only y certify that this property is in	clusion in t et forth by t re	the National Reg the National Par Market	ister and certify that k Service. date date	it has been evaluated $7 - 6 - 87$

7. Dese	ription		
Condition X_excellent good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	Check one unaitered altered	Check one X original site moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY

The Greyhound Corporation constructed three basic types of bus terminals during a major expansion in the late 1930's and 40's. The Blytheville Bus Station is an excellent example of the island type terminal. This design offered easy access and was favored by a majority of bus drivers and patrons. Continuity of architectural style in its new terminals was important to the Greyhound Corporation as part of its emerging corporate image. The Blytheville Bus Station was part of this effort and remains today as one of the finest examples of the Art Moderne style in Arkansas. Individual themes of the Art Moderne style that are present in this building are a concern for volume and curvilinear form, highly visible polychrome treatments, strong horizontal and vertical elements and the use of "Modern" construction materials such as structural glass and stainless steel.

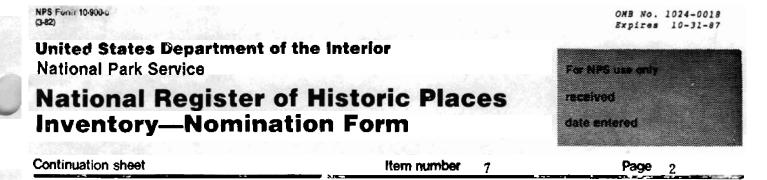
### **ELABORATION**

The building is one story and has a rectangular floor plan with rounded corners. The front corners contain casement windows with 24 panes each. This curvilinear form is repeated in a set of unsupported projecting canopies located over the loading areas on both sides of the building and with a rounded single canopy over the front entrance. These canopies create a strong horizontal architectural element that continues in the back facade as two single brick courses painted blue. The building's horizontal appearance is offset by a large vertical Greyhound sign centered immediately over the front entrance, giving the entire building a nautical appearance. In all Greyhound station architecture, the Greyhound sign is a prominent vertical element in the design and functions as a integral part of the building.

The exterior walls of the primary elevation are covered with Vitrolux structural glass in alternating colors of two shades of blue and ivory. These colors are alternated ten times in bands of varying widths and give the exterior a contrasting polychrome appearance. The back facade is exposed brick painted white. There are six entrances to the building. The main entrance facing Fifth street and a set of entrances on each side contain single pane double doors with transoms. Each transom has twelve panes decorated with an inverted triangle of frosted glass. Ornamental stainless steel hand rails are on each door, with a stainless steel door plate containing the Greyhound logo.

Other decorative details exhibited on the exterior of the building are pressed metal ceilings under each canopy, elongated ornamental electric lights at the main entrance, lighted signs over each side entrance that once designated segregated facilities, scalloped ivory "Vitrolóx" trim and neon lighting on the main Greyhound sign.

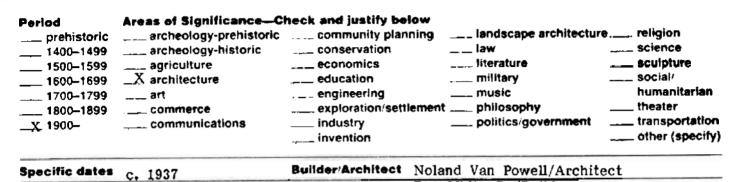
The arrangement of interior space in the Blytheville Bus Station is reflective of both a corporate concern for an efficient transportation system and an unfortunate cultural  $\checkmark$  concern, which persisted in most sothern states until 1963, for the racial segregation of



its patrons. Originally, the central ticket office and adjacent kitchen area effectively separated two sets of waiting and bathroom facilities, including separate lunch counters. The smaller, unadorned facilities for blacks were discontinued and later converted to storage and freight areas as a result of federal desegregation efforts.

The design features and "Modern" materials used in the interior remain mostly intact today and were consistant with the architectural image of other Greyhound terminals constructed across the country during this period. The ceilings and curved interior walls are plastered and were originally painted in blue and pink. A "Presdwood" wainscot with molded trim and baseboards accents the walls of the larger concession and waiting room areas. A simple curvilinear ceiling partition delineates the main lunch counter space. Stainless steel was intially utilized throughout the interior in suspended lighting fixtures, counter tops at the ticket booth and lunch counter, lunch counter trim, foot rests and bar stools, and even in the name plates on the bathroom doors. The lunch counter, bar stools and the wooden benches used in the main waiting room have been removed in the last few years. The general color scheme of the building is continued in the restrooms with white tiles trimed in blue.

## 8. Significance



Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) SUMMARY

The Blytheville Bus Station is the only remaining "Art Moderne" Greyhound bus terminal in the state of Arkansas. It stands as one of the purest examples of the Art Moderne style existing in the state's commercial architecture and is one of the finest examples exhibiting structural glass in its design. This isolated island-type station is unique in its small town setting. The exterior facade remains entirely intact with no alterations. The interior is relatively intact and still reflects its original design and purpose.

Ben White Sr./Builder

### ELABORATION

In 1930, the Greyhound Corporation was organized from the former Motor Transport Company. The new corporation, which emphasized speed as representative of the restructured organization, adopted the form of a racing greyhound as symbol and Art Moderne as its architectural image. From 1935 to the early 1940's, Greyhound employed regional architects to interpret the streamlined building style in their distinctive blue and white terminals across the country. In several southern states, architect George D. Brown designed stations which utilized structural glass and were characterized by exteriors with blue Vitrolux veneer and ivory Vitrolite trim. Locations of these terminals included Charleston, Columbia, and Spartanburg, South Carolina; Bristol, Virginia; Charleston, West Virginia; and Savannah, Georgia.

According to a city official who recalls the event, the Greyhound Corporation constructed a new terminal in Blytheville in 1937 to replace an earlier structure. Although similar in style to the southern stations designed by Brown, the island-type station was smaller in scale. The island-type station was usually constructed in larger towns and cities where an appropriate lot with proper access could be obtained. The Blytheville island-type station is unique in its small town setting, where the L-plan terminal or the parallel loading terminal would have been more common.

The exterior of the Blytheville Bus Station is virtualy unaltered from its original appearance. The only addition to the original has been the placement of a new Grehound sign that hangs under the front canopy.