



761

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name: Beverly Drive-In Theatre
other names/site number:

2. Location

street & number: 5320 US Hwy 49 South
city or town: Hattiesburg
state: Mississippi code: MS county: Forrest code: 035 zip code: 39401-9011
not for publication _____
vicinity _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally X statewide _____ locally. 6 See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Handwritten Signature]

6-19-08

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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

[Handwritten Signature: Patricia Anderson]

7/30/2008

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Number of Resources within Property:
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Category of Property: District

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 3 | 0 | buildings |
| 2 | 0 | sites |
| 2 | 1 | structures |
| 1 | 0 | objects |
| 8 | 1 | Total |

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register** None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater, drive-in; DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions: Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification(s): NO STYLE

Materials:

foundation: Concrete
roof: Tar
walls: Wood, Brick
other: Wood, Metal

Narrative Description:

See Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- X **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.
- X **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.

Areas of Significance
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1948-1958

Significant Dates

Criteria Considerations:

Property is:

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

Significant Person(s)

Cultural Affiliation(s)

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance: See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet.

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: _____
-

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 11

| UTM References: | Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
|-----------------|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|---------|
| A | 16 | 282360 | 3462880 | C | 16 | 282120 | 3462680 |
| B | 16 | 282360 | 3462680 | D | 16 | 282120 | 3462880 |

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Mark Aston Ely, Historic Preservation Planner

organization: City of Hattiesburg

street & number: 200 Forrest Street P.O. Box 1898

city or town: Hattiesburg

Additional text by Russell Archer/William Gatlin- MDAH Staff

date: 01-08-2008

telephone: 601-545-4594

state: MS

zip code: 39403

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(s)

name: Dr. Suzette Hargroder/ Ms. Beverly Cutrer

street & number: 1907 Broadway

city or town: Hattiesburg

telephone:

state: MS

zip code: 39401

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

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

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 1

Beverly Drive-In Theater
Forrest County, Mississippi

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Beverly Drive-In Theatre is located at 5320 U.S. Highway 49, on the southern edge of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in Forrest County. The drive-in theater faces Highway 49 at its southwest boundary and encompasses approximately 12 acres. The district is bounded on the northwest by portions of Edwards Street and Brady Rd. and on the south by Old Airport Rd. The immediate area around the Beverly consists primarily of commercial buildings, such as service stations and a few retail outlets. These structures are built in close proximity to Highway 49, a 4-lane intercity highway. The areas to the immediate east and northeast of the Beverly are primarily residential. Edwards Street is two-lane and runs north; Brady Road is 2-laned and runs northeast; and Old Airport Road leads to the heart of a residential community known as Palmer's Crossing. The Beverly is one of few remaining drive-in movie theatres in Mississippi and was the oldest in operation in the state, prior to Hurricane Katrina. The theater site, for purposes of the National Register of Historic Places, encompasses a district that is still relatively intact. The district contains three buildings, two sites, two structures, and one object. Descriptions of these individual elements are as follows:

1. Screen tower #1 (1948) Contributing

The larger screen tower, referred to as Screen 1, is approximately 105 x 75 feet and is original to the 1948 construction. Screen 1 consists of a brick masonry screen tower sheathed on both sides with white asbestos/cement tiles, a popular siding of the post-World War II era. The main screen tower extends outward on both sides to accommodate paired Tudor arched openings for automobile entry and exiting. Several neon lights are attached to the screen tower, including the Beverly logo with a moon and shooting stars. The current Beverly script logo is the third documented version; it covers approximately one-half of the 75-foot screen width. Beyond the arched openings, the north and south parking lot walls consist of corrugated metal sheets arranged in a unique weave pattern between heavy timber light poles. The two drives open into a traditional semi-circular parking arrangement stretching over several acres. The metal posts that once held the speaker boxes are still in place at each parking space.

2. Screen tower #2 (1979) Noncontributing

Screen tower #2 was constructed in 1979 and oriented at the southeast corner of the site. This screen, approximately 80 x 40 feet, consisted of high grade plywood applied to a frame of heavy

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 7

Page: 2

Beverly Drive-In Theater
Forrest County, Mississippi

pole timbers. Screen tower #2, with the exception of the heavy timber framing, was destroyed in 2005 as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

3. House (1948) Contributing

The original owners built their family home, a single level brick masonry building, beneath the main screen. The house was built to be sound and light-proof. A later renovation of the non-viewing side of the screen created a faux New Orleans style front façade, which is centered on the lower half of the screen. The façade consists of a two-story porch, three bays wide, with four square brick columns on the first story. The second floor balcony features ornate wrought iron balustrades and paired wrought iron posts, and three arched faux windows that give the appearance of having louvered shutters in the closed position. Centered on the first story façade are operable French doors topped by a semi-circular wooden frieze in a sunburst pattern. Louvered shutters are fixed in the open position on either side of the doors.

One wing of the house, a single-story, flat roofed structure, extends northeast from the house at an approximate 45° angle. This wing has clapboard siding and two over two wood sash windows with horizontal lights. The entire one-story home is viewable from the parking/viewing area, including approximately a dozen windows and three doors. Some privacy was afforded to the homeowners by vegetation planted along the edge of a small grassy yard area, east of the main portion of the house.

4. Concession/Projection shed (1948) Contributing

Toward the rear of the parking area, centered directly across from the screen, is the projection booth and concession stand. These two functions are housed within one cinder-block building, with the same mid-century design as the residential structure. The projection booth is housed in the two-story portion of the otherwise one-story structure. The projection booth was adapted, in 1979, to project upon a second screen, constructed on the southeast corner of the site. The concession/Projection shed features brick pilasters, similar to the columns on the front façade of the house. Much of the interior of this structure has plaster walls and a lay-in acoustical tile ceiling. A concessions counter exists along the east side of the space and an iron railing runs parallel to the counter, serving as a cue for food and drink patrons. Two restrooms are also included in this structure. On the west side of the building, two viewing windows allowed patrons to view the screen from the concession area. Two sets of paired aluminum doors lead

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 3

Beverly Drive-In Theater
Forrest County, Mississippi

from the west façade of the concession shed onto a patio featuring seating areas within clear view of the main screen.

5. Parking/Viewing Area (1948) Contributing

On the east side of the screen, a traditional semi-circular parking arrangement stretches over several acres. The parking/viewing area is paved with a rough concrete aggregate. Each semicircular row is slightly tiered to allow for an optimized viewing angle from each automobile. At the end of each row, lighted signs are still in place that show the number of each row at the top and a "Full" sign at the bottom. The metal posts that once held the speaker boxes are still in place at each parking space.

6. Goofy Golf Ticket House (ca. 1950's) Contributing

On the west side of screen 1, facing Highway 49, is the former Goofy Golf area, where the ticket house, cueing, and restroom facilities still remain. The ticket house and restroom are both housed in a one-story brick structure with a flat roof. The top half of the ticket house portion of the structure has wood walls containing wood awning-style hatch doors in the center of each wall. All of the goofy golf-related facilities, such as instruments, pathways, borders, and cups, have been removed.

7. Box Office/Entrance canopy (ca. 1949) Contributing

The flat-roofed box office and entrance canopy, constructed circa 1949, served as the primary theater entrance. The metal and glass box office divides two driving lanes beneath the once neon-lit canopy. Above the box office is a sign on which the words "BOX OFFICE" are spelled out in neon. A marquis, also with neon lighting, is placed on the northern edge of the canopy; it features a divided letter board for placement of two feature titles. The round metal support posts on either side of the canopy are anchored into large concrete planters that run the full length of the structure.

8. Goofy Golf Course (ca. 1950's) Contributing

The Goofy Golf Course once covered approximately one-half acre and featured miniature wooden buildings such as churches, windmills, and schoolhouses that straddled traditional putting greens with synthetic turf. All that remains of the course are remnants of the putting greens and holes for the cups.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 4

Beverly Drive-In Theater
Forrest County, Mississippi

9. Goofy Golf Sign (ca. 1950's) Contributing

The original art deco style Goofy Golf sign is still intact but in poor condition. The top portion of the sign, once lit in neon, features the word "Beverly's" written in script. Additional neon detailing exists on the side edges of the sign. Corrugated plastic panels with the words "Goofy Golf" once existed in the center of the sign.

The Beverly Drive-in Theatre retains a high degree of integrity. Although some of the sites structures were damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the theater was an ongoing business venture prior to the storm. The essential elements necessary to run a theater are in place. Even the unique home under the screen remained occupied until 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 5

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

Statement of Significance

The Beverly Drive-in Theatre, Hattiesburg, Forrest County, Mississippi is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with Entertainment/Recreation as an drive-in movie theater serving the Hattiesburg and Forrest County community. The Beverly Drive-In is also eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture as one of the State's last surviving Drive-in theaters.

ENTERTAINMENT

A context for the national history of the drive-in movie theater was established in the nomination of the Spud Drive-In Theater, Driggs, Teton County, Idaho (NR 2005). According to the nomination:

Inspired by his twin love of cars and movies, entrepreneur Richard Hollingshead, Jr. combined the two, and in 1933, opened the first drive-in theater in Camden, New Jersey. Hollingshead patented his design for the theater, which consisted of a screen tower and a series of ramps in a fan-shaped arrangement, and sold rights to use the design for \$1,000 and 5% of the gross receipts. A theater with a 300-car capacity required six to seven acres of land; a 600-car drive-in required twelve acres.¹

The early years of drive-in theaters saw slow growth. Many were initially leery of the idea, and the Depression limited NEW COMMERCIAL endeavors of many kinds. On average, it cost approximately \$30,000-\$35,000 to construct a drive-in theater-no small sum in the 1930s.² The first eight years were slow enough in drive-in growth, but the WWII era saw no growth at all due to nationwide limits on construction, gas rationing, and the unavailability of tires.³ By 1946, only 102 drive-in theaters existed in the United States.

The post-war economic boom in the U.S. was mirrored by the drive-in theater boom. In 1947, there were 155 drive-ins; by 1949, there were 820; and by 1955,

¹ Chester H. Liebs. *Main Street to Miracle Mile*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985), 153-154.

² Kerry Seagrave. *Drive-In Theaters*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 1992), 28.

³ Seagrave, 32-33.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 6

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

there were nearly 4000.⁴ Post-war drive-in construction and growth were greatly aided by technological improvements made during the war years. The previously problematic sound system was finally solved when RCA developed an in-car speaker system (thus providing great relief to surrounding neighborhoods), and projection technology improved enough to allow for larger and larger drive-ins without losing picture quality to the farther rows. These economies of scale allowed for more profitable operations.

Along with the economic boom came the post-war baby boom, a factor that made the drive-in theater more popular than ever. Parents did not have to worry about sitters, as the kids could come along and sleep in the back seat. And if they did become a bit unruly, and cried or screamed, one need not be worried about disturbing other patrons. The drive-in theater became a primary family recreation activity in the post-war decade. The convenience of it was hard to beat: families could dress as they liked (including small children in footed pajamas); they could eat, drink, and smoke in their cars; and there was never a problem with parking. Add to that the growing American obsession with the automobile and the result was that, even though the drive-in theaters showed mostly only B-grade or second run movies, people flocked to them in numbers as never before.⁵

With the flood of families attending the drive-in came amenities designed just for them. Many drive-ins installed bottle warmers for parents who brought infants. Play areas, picnic areas, and of course, the concession stands (or even mobile refreshment carts) with a variety of foods were all drive-in features not found in the traditional indoor theater. Some theaters offered more elaborate entertainment, including miniature golf courses, driving ranges, live music and dancing, and more. The drive-in theater was not simply a movie but became an "entertainment event."⁶

During the 1950s, the drive-in thrived as a new business venture. The facility was considerably less expensive to build than an indoor theater, and they boomed in contrast to their more traditional predecessor. From 1946 to 1953, 85 new indoor theaters were opened, while almost 4700 closed their doors for good. In contrast to those figures, almost 3000 new drive-ins were built, while only 342 closed

⁴ Seagrave, 33.

⁵ Liebs, 157-158.

⁶ Seagrave, 65.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 7

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

down.⁷ There clearly was a significant trend occurring, and as their popularity grew, many drive-ins stayed open year round.

During the early decades, great hostility existed between the owners of indoor theaters and the owners of drive-ins, though there was actually very little competition in the traditional sense. This was largely because, early on, all the major studios also owned or contracted with most of the existing theaters, so they had a monopoly over the showing of A-grade movies. Drive-ins and independent theater owners were left with mostly B-grade movies and old westerns. In addition, surveys were actually conducted that clearly indicated that drive-ins did not steal patronage from indoor theaters; in fact, those who went to drive-ins would not have attended traditional theaters-a whole new group of movie patrons emerged to attend the "ozone" theaters.⁸

The drive-in theater saw its peak in the late 1950s and from there started a steady decline. The reasons for the demise of the "ozoners" are complex and interrelated. Given the huge success of these theaters in the '50s, the drive-in owners made no efforts to improve the stock of films they showed. They saw no reason to worry that they had access to only B-grade or second run films. People poured in anyway, as the novelty of the drive-in brought them flocking. Early on, there was an endless choice of these films available as the film studios poured out mediocre films to fill their studio-owned indoor theaters. In the late 1940s, this film studio monopoly was challenged and the studios were forced to sell off their theaters. Once this occurred, they did not have a need to produce as many films and the number of available features dropped precipitously. At about the same time that some of the drive-in novelty was wearing off, the unavailability of new films was realized and attendance began to drop.

As attendance dropped at the drive-ins, the first things to go at the outdoor facilities were the "extras." The playgrounds (also effected by sharp increases in liability insurance costs), the shuffleboard courts, and the diaper stations and bottle warmers, all slowly disappeared. As these extras disappeared, the theaters were less appealing to families-the mainstay of the drive-ins. Family drive-in attendance was also frustrated by the permanent installation of daylight savings

⁷ Seagrave, 65.

⁸ Seagrave, 65.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 8

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

time in 1967. The pushing back of sunset meant pushing back the start time of the movies. In some northern areas, movies could not start until well past nine o'clock at night, making it less appealing for families with young children who did not want to be out so late.

Meanwhile, teenagers found new places to meet and socialize. The rise of the mall had a significant impact on drive-in attendance. Indoor theaters survived by going multi-plex, and building smaller theaters. This was an effective remedy to the decreasing numbers of movie-goers. It was very difficult for drive-ins to follow suit. Some drive-ins did divide into 2-, 3- or even 4-screen theaters, but still, they were too large for the number of cars that passed through the gates.

While the advent of television had little impact on the drive-in, later television-related developments did. Cable television, video cassette recorders, home entertainment centers, all participated in the decline of the popularity of the drive-in. The family room at home with its comfortable seating and easy access to bathrooms and snacks provided a more convenient and comfortable place to watch a movie. Add to that the changing nature of the automobile in America; no longer a huge gas-guzzler with roomy bench seating front and back, the newer cars were compact with little room for comfort or cuddling.

A final, but not insignificant, factor in the demise of the drive-in was the sheer size of the typical facility and the fact that the land often became too valuable. As communities continued to grow and sprawl, they began to encroach on the theaters that were once located well outside the city limits. Drive-in owners could continue to struggle with diminishing sales and revenues, or they could sell the 20-30 acres the theater sat on for sometimes millions of dollars for commercial or residential development. Adding to the incentive to sell out was the fact that most of the facilities were reaching 20, 30, even 40 years of age, and maintenance costs were beginning to grow; the incentives to invest significant amounts of money into a failing industry were pretty small.⁹

The history of the growth and decline of the drive-in movie theater in Mississippi is consistent with the broader U.S. history of the industry and the Beverly Drive-In Theatre illustrates that history. The Beverly, built in 1948, was the second drive-in to

⁹ Liebs, 164-167.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 9

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

open in Mississippi.¹⁰ The post-war growth of the drive-in was also seen in Mississippi, with the total number of theaters reaching 70 by 1959. The decline of the drive-in in Mississippi followed the national trend, and today there are only two operating drive-in theaters in the state.¹¹

Herby and Sue Hargroder moved to Hattiesburg from New Orleans in 1948 to open the Beverly Drive-in Theater. The theater was named for their daughter. The Hargroder's theater, the largest in Mississippi, opened on May 28, 1948 with an admission of 39 cents, which included popcorn and soft drinks. Opening night attendance reached 1166. The Hargroders operated the theater until 1980, when Mr. Hargroder died. "Miss Sue," as she was widely known in the Hattiesburg community, ran the theater until 1981, when she leased it to other operators for six years. Hargroder terminated the lease in 1987 when the operator began to show "adult films".¹²

With the exception of a few benefits for charity, the Beverly screen remained dark until 2001. At that time, N&S Theaters, a Wisconsin partnership, leased the Beverly and reopened the theater in October 2001. Business remained strong until Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005, causing significant damage to a screen, concession booth and ticket office. The theater remains closed and the property is for sale, either as a theater or for other development.

As was the case with other drive-in movies, the Beverly offered a complete entertainment package. A concession stand served "movie foods." The Hargroders installed a fenced-in playground near the concession stand. In 1960, they added a miniature golf course. Like other drive-in operators, they sought to maximize their space by adding a second screen in 1979.

The Beverly had features similar to other drive-in movie theaters. The lot was large and paved, with parking for 500 cars. Poles located throughout the lot held speakers. A drive-through ticket booth was at the front of the theater, with the concession stand and projection room in a free-standing building in the lot. The large screen was a common feature in all drive-ins.

¹⁰ "Bill Strong's Eclectic Mississippi Photo Tour," <http://www.phototour.com/echtml/Beverly.html>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2005.

¹¹ "DriveInMovie.com," <http://www.driveinmovie.com/MS.htm>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2008.

¹² Susie Spear, "Life Goes On Beneath the Movie Screen", *Jackson Clarion-Ledger*, 9 December 1991.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 10

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

However, the Beverly has one feature unique to Mississippi drive-ins, and not common in other states. When the Hargroders built the Beverly in 1948, they incorporated a three-bedroom, two-bathroom family home into the screen tower. The sound-proof home has a sunporch and a two-car garage. "Miss Sue" lived in the house until her death in 1998 and until recently it was still occupied by members of the Hargroder family.

The Beverly Drive-in Theatre played an important role in the lives of several generations in Hattiesburg and the vicinity. Many people have fond recollections of evenings spent at the theater. Joann Anderson Williams of Petal, MISSISSIPPI, recalled:

When I was a teen-ager in 1964 or 1965, all of the kids would go to the Beverly Drive-in. We didn't really care too much about what movie was playing. We would go there to be alone with our date and smooch the whole time. I will always have fond memories of this magical place. We didn't have Disney land back then but we did have the Beverly Drive-in.¹³

Charlene Magnum of Hattiesburg had her own memories of the Beverly:

I had my first date with my husband at the Beverly. I met my husband at a New Year's dance in January 1949 and in march we went to the movie. We went with another couple, Bill Miller and Ruth Pittman in his 1949 Ford. We saw a movie about people playing around a swimming pool. We had a wonderful time.¹⁴

Hattiesburg author and restaurateur, Robert St. John's, memories were from more recent times. St. John attended Beeson Academy, located near the theater. He recalled:

The Huge Beverly screen was visible from our football field. I can remember as a junior high student being at the Friday night varsity football game and watching various movies from my seat in the bleachers during halftime. Beeson Academy wasn't big enough to have a marching band, so in lieu of drum majors, majorettes and tubas, our halftime entertainment featured Burt Reynolds, Sally Field and Richard Pryor-without sound of course.

¹³ Iris Raeshun, "Beverly Drive-In Theater Expects Capacity Crowd for Reopening," *Hattiesburg American*, 5 October 2001.

¹⁴ *Hattiesburg American*, 5 October 2001.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 8

Page: 11

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

In the latter days of the Beverly, new management, leasing from the original owners, resorted to cheesy soft-core skin flicks to help generate their dwindling business. This posed quite a quandry under the Friday night lights of the Beeson Academy football field.

Our team, by that time was used to the momentary flashes of flesh. However, it served as a great strategic distraction for the visiting team. Especially when the Beverly was showing such celluloid classics as "Swedish Stewardesses in Love." A 75-foot tall bosom in the distance will thwart any opposing teams play calling.

To this day I think that it was the 7,500 square feet of exposed flesh, rather than the mighty Beeson Trojans' awe-inspiring football prowess, that helped our tiny school win as many football games as we did.¹⁵

The Beverly Drive-In Theatre, Hattiesburg, Forrest County, Mississippi, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its association with entertainment in the local community.

ARCHITECTURE

Although the architecture of the Beverly-Drive-In theatre can best be described as "utilitarian," it represents an important type of building in the post-war era. Theaters could be very simple or rather ornate. However, with their large screens, open lots and projection buildings, drive-in movie theaters were very similar.

With the decline of the drive-in industry, many theaters have been completely lost. Although some sources indicate there were once as many as 70 drive-in theaters in Mississippi,¹⁶ the most definite list obtained thus far lists 45 theaters¹⁷. Of these, only two theaters are in operation, one in Iuka, Tishomingo County and one in Guntown, Lee County. All the rest are closed. Some, like the Royal Drive-in in Meridian, Lauderdale County, are deteriorating ghosts, with their lots overgrown and the screens on the verge

¹⁵ Robert St. John, "Reopening of Beverly Drive-In Sparks Memories of Youth," *Hattiesburg American*, 29 May 2001.

¹⁶ www.driveinmove.com.

¹⁷ "Drive-Ins.Com, The Definitive Source for Drive-In Information." <http://www.drive-ins.com/dbdirs.htm/code=ms/skip=0>. Internet. Accessed 14 February 2008.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 12

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

of collapse. Others are completely lost, either returning to an undeveloped state or giving way to the press of commercial or residential growth.

The Beverly Drive-In remains one of the best preserved of Mississippi's historic drive-ins. Although damaged by Hurricane Katrina, the Beverly was an operational drive-in prior to August 2005 and retains all the necessary elements to, once again, operate as a drive-in theater. The Mississippi Heritage Trust recognized the statewide significance of the Beverly Drive-In when it named it one of Mississippi's 10 Most Endangered Places in 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section: 10

Page: 13

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

Bibliography

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Hattiesburg American

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<http://www.driveinmovie.com>

<http://phototour.com>

Jackson Clarion-Ledger

Mississippi Business Journal

Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Statewide Survey File: 035-HAT-5009,
Beverly Drive-in Theater.

National Register Nomination: Spud Drive-In Theater, Driggs, Teton County, Idaho.

National Register Nomination: 66 Drive-In Historic District, Carthage, Jasper County,
Missouri.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 14

Beverly Drive-In Theatre
Forrest County, Mississippi

Verbal Boundary Description:

POB SW/CR NE1/4 SE ¼ N to SE row county Rd Nely Alg Co Rd to City Limits to LN
40 w to POB cont 10.8 AC

Boundary Justification:

This is the legal description of the premises historically associated with the Beverly
Drive-In Theatre.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: Photos Page: 15 Beverly Drive-In Theater
Forrest County, Mississippi

Photographs:

For all photographs:

1. Beverly Drive-in Theatre
2. Forrest County, MS
3. April 2007
5. Mark Ely, City of Hattiesburg
6. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS

Photo 1: Box office, Entrance Canopy, Screen 1, facing southeast

Photo 2: Box office canopy, facing south

Photo 3: Screen 1, facing southeast

Photo 4: Double arched openings on Screen 1, house, facing southeast

Photo 5: Screen 1, House, facing southwest

Photo 6: Parking areas, Screen 1, facing southwest

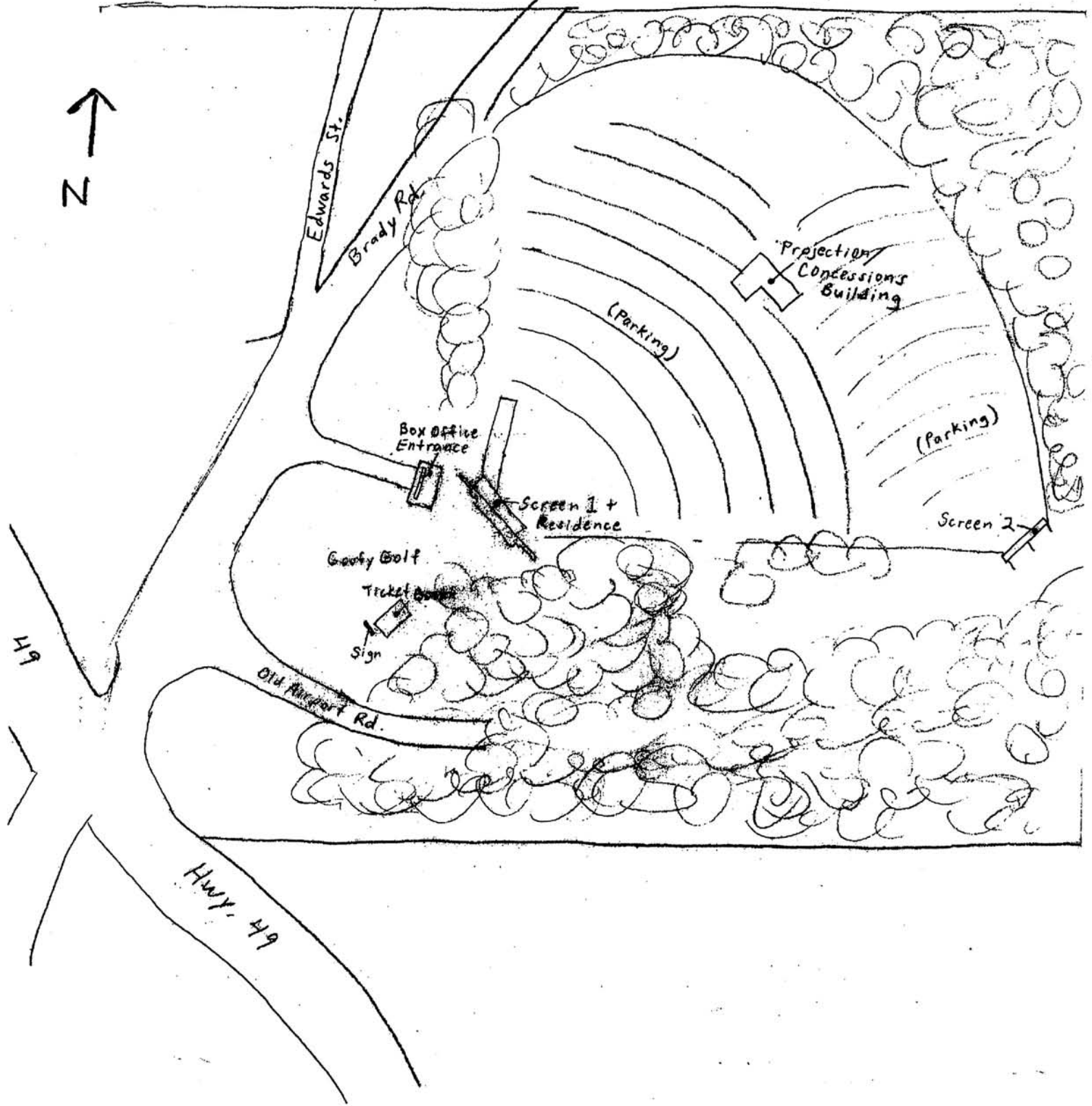
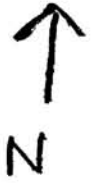
Photo 7: Goofy Golf sign, Screen 1, facing northeast

Photo 8: Screen 1, facing southeast

Photo 9: Box office/Entrance canopy, screen 1, facing east

Photo 10: Parking Area, Concession/projection building, facing northeast

The Beverly Drive-In Theatre, 5320 U.S. Hwy. 49, Hattiesburg, MS





Beverly Drive - San Theatre - Forrest County, MS 39001



Bentley Theatre - Forrest County - MS 0002



Beverly Driven In Theatre - Forrest Country - MS - 0003



Beverly Drive - In Thicket - Forrest County - MS - 0004



Beverly Drive - In Theatre - Forrest County - MS - 0005



Beverly Drive In Theatre - Forrest County - MS 0006



Beverly
DRIVE-IN Theatre

Beverly's
OFN

Beverly Drive - San Theatre - Forrest County, - MS - 0507



Beverly Drive - In Theatre - Forrest County, MS - 0008



Beverly Drive - In Theatre - Forrest County, - MS - 0009



Beverly Drive-In Theatre - Forrest County - MS - 0020