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Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries · complete applicable sections)

STATE: Washington, D.C.
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

. NAME

COMMON: National Council of Negro Women's Headquarters
AND/OR HISTORIC:

. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1318 Vermont Avenue, Northwest
CITY OR TOWN: Washington
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
STATE: D.C. CODE
COUNTY: CODE

. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☐ Public ☒ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☐ Occupied ☒ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☒ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☒ Other *(Specify)* Business/Storage	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: National Council of Negro Women
STREET AND NUMBER: 1346 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest
CITY OR TOWN: Washington
STATE: D.C. CODE
STATE: Wash. D.C.

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Recorder of Deeds
STREET AND NUMBER: 6th & D Streets, Northwest
CITY OR TOWN: Washington
STATE: D.C. CODE
COUNTY:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: none known
DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
STATE: CODE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One) ☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed	
	(Check One) ☒ Altered ☐ Unaltered	(Check One) ☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

General Statement

A. Architectural Character: This house, built around 1885, takes the character of Victorian architectural style popular during the reign of Queen Victoria in England around 1840-1901.

B. Condition: Structurally sound, can be saved by renovation.

Description of the Exterior

A. It is a three story house plus basement with half-size windows. A two story, simple rectangular brick building in the rear facing the alley with entrance on the alley was a later addition to the house.

B. Foundation: Appears to be masonry and extends to the first floor.

C. Wall construction: Brick walls resting on masonry.

D. Porch: There is no porch; a small front yard and paved walkway leading to a staircase with iron balustrades.

E. Chimney : Red brick

F. Openings: Doors - Basement entrance is sunken and located under the front staircase. The front entrance is through a single door accentuated by a segmental pediment. Windows - The first floor three bay windows are framed in heavy wood and project outward. The second floor has three double hung windows with segmental Victorian arches. The third floor has three dormer windows projecting from the Mansard slate roof.

G. Roof: Mansard

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [x] 19th Century
- [x] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1930s - Present

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Historic

- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [x] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [x] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [x] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [x] Other (Specify) Afro-American History

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mary McLeod Bethune was one of America's most influential black leaders. She distinguished herself as an educator, an organizer of the women's movement, a civil rights advocate, and a government official. Her influence in these areas was both regional and national in scope during the period of the 1920s through the 1940s.

Mary McLeod was born in Maysville, South Carolina in 1875. She was the 15th child of Samuel and Patsy McLeod who, along with their older children , had been slaves. Mary McLeod's early years were typical of southern rural black children, with one exception - she was fortunate enough to obtain an education. She began her schooling at a missionary school in Maysville and later attended the Scotia Seminary in Concord, North Carolina, and the Moody Institute in Chicago.

Miss McLeod had hoped to become a missionary in Africa but was not given the opportunity to do so. As an alternative, she chose to work with Lucy Laney, a former slave, who had founded the Haines Normal Institute in Augusta, Georgia. After her stay at the Haines Institute, Miss McLeod moved to teach in Sumter, South Carolina, where she met and married Albertus Bethune, a fellow teacher. The Bethune's had one son.

The most successful of Mary Bethune's teaching experiences took place in Daytona Beach, Florida. On October 3, 1904, she opened the doors of her won school with only one dollar and fifty cents, charred splinters for pencils, and mashed elderberries for ink. Her students consisted of five little girls and her own son. The parents paid her only fifty cents per week for tuition. These humble beginnings were the nucleus of what later became a high school, a junior college, and finally, after merger with Cookman College, an accredited college for blacks in the state of Florida.

Education, however, was not the only field in which Mary Bethune assumed a position of leadership. Quite early in the twentieth century, soon after she had established herself as an educator in Florida, she became interested in organizing women's clubs. During her presidency of the State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs she met with representatives of women's clubs from fourteen states to lay out a general program which would combat segregated schools and inadequate health facilities for black children in the South. She also attempted to acquaint uneducated women with the use of the ballot as a means of ending social injustices.

Mrs. Bethune received national recognition as a supporter of the women's club movement when she became associated with the National Association of Colored Women. Her involvement with this organization permitted her to become acquainted with older established black female leaders who were most impressed with her work in Daytona Beach. In 1924 she became the president of the organization, and in May of that year, she suggested that a national headquarters be established. For four years, as president of the association, Mrs. Bethune attempted to engage numerous state women's clubs into a national effort to combat policies unfavorable to American blacks.

Mary Bethune's greatest success in the women's club movement occurred during the 1930s . On December 5, 1935, she founded the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) an organization "inclusive of fraternal, denominational, professional and lay groups." The organization grew out of a meeting held in New York City to which presidents and representatives of various national women's organizations were invited. She had expressed a desire to see black women united to "meet the unfolding of larger things."

The first office of the NCNW was located in Mrs. Bethune's home in northwest Washington. Within a few years, the membership had become large enough to make the acquisition of more spacious headquarters imperative and so Mrs. Bethune selected the downtown Washington site at 1318 Vermont Avenue, Northwest for its location. It is that building, still owned by the NCNW, which is being nominated for commemoration of Mrs. Bethune's aims.

Mrs. Bethune served as president of the National Council of Negro Women from 1935 to 1949. During these fourteen years, membership in the Council rose to over 850,000 through its twenty-one affiliated organizations and its ninety local councils.

While in the nation's capital, Mrs. Bethune began what was to become a long involvement with the federal government. In 1930 President Herbert Hoover appointed her to the White House Conference on Child Health. As the years progressed, her involvement in federal affairs increased.

In 1935 President Franklin D. Roosevelt chose Mary Bethune as the Director of the Division of Negro Affairs, a key position in the National Youth Administration (NYA). As the most influential member of Roosevelt's "Black Cabinet" (a number of distinguished blacks who served as advisors to the president), Mrs. Bethune conducted a program of education, guidance, and recreation for black youths in camps, schools, and communities throughout the nation during the height of the depression. In this position, she insisted that the program employ qualified blacks as staff members in its state and local projects, and that a policy be adopted whereby black supervisors would conduct all black projects. The program, in its first year under Mrs. Bethune's directorship, benefitted approximately 30,000 students.

Mrs. Bethune's insistence upon the inclusion of blacks in the New Deal programs led her in August of 1936 to begin meetings with other members of the "Black Cabinet." These blacks, who included William H. Hastie, Ralph J. Bunche, and Robert C. Weaver, were specialists and advisors in various governmental departments who strove to make themselves heard when questions relating to blacks were discussed and policies were made. Mrs. Bethune urged that qualified blacks recommended by this group be given the opportunity to serve in governmental positions whenever vacancies occurred.

In 1940, with the threat of United States involvement in what was to become the most serious war of the twentieth century, Mary Bethune appealed to President Roosevelt to include the services of black women in his plans for the country's defense. She maintained that black women had the capacity for leadership and administration as well as the ability to perform routine tasks necessary to a program of national defense. The next year, she asked all thinking black women in the United States to volunteer their services in the cause of national defense. She requested a mobilization of black women to study the defense program and to urge the acceptance by federal authorities of blacks into the defense program.

In addition to her involvement in federal, educational, and NCNW activities, Mrs. Bethune had still another important function in the capital city. From 1936 to 1951 she served as President of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Mrs. Bethune felt that one of the most vital and important achievements of the black historian was his effort to provide accurate histories about black people. She believed that an understanding of the past of different races would eventually result in the reduction of racial barriers. Often during her presidency, she urged that the history of the Negro be presented on a level that children might comprehend and appreciate. She believed that the history of the race was a vital part of the black child's education.

Mary McLeod Bethune died on May 17, 1955, at her home in Daytona Beach, Florida. She was buried in the city on a grass-covered mound overlooking the Bethune-Cookman campus.

Mary McLeod Bethune is of national significance because for more than thirty years she successfully worked to further the progress of black Americans. As an educator she helped thousands of black youths through the founding of the Bethune-Cookman College and her work with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. As an organizer of women's clubs she worked to acquaint women with the intelligent use of the ballot, to combat segregation and adequate health facilities in the South, and to promote unified action among women in all matters affecting the lives of American citizens. As a government official she conducted a national program of education, guidance, and recreation for black youths, insisted on the employment of qualified blacks in governmental positions, and urged the engagement of blacks in programs of national defense. She made a great

(Number all entries)

8 - Significance

impact on each of the areas she worked in a quarter of a century ago. That impact can still be felt today.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

ethune, Mary McLeod. "The Negro in Retrospect and Prospect", Journal of Negro History, XXXV No. 1 (January, 1950).

ranklin, John Hope. From Slavery to Freedom A History of the American Negro. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947.

olt, Rockham. Mary McLeod Bethune. Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1964

ueller, Ruth C. "The National Council of Negro Women", Negro History Bulletin, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (November, 1954).

eare, Catherine O. Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: Vanguard Press, 1951.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES					
ORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	38°	54'	28"	77°	01'	05"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

PPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

ST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

ATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
ATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
ATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
ATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

FORM PREPARED BY

AME AND TITLE:
Marcia M. Greenlee, Historical Projects Director

RGANIZATION
Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation

DATE
2 july 1974

REET AND NUMBER:
420 N Street, Northwest

TY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE
D.C.

CODE

STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form No. 10-301
Rev. 7-72

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
Washington, D.C.	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: National Council of Negro Women's Headquarters

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1318 Vermont Avenue, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
D.C.			

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U.S. Geological Washington West Quadrangle

SCALE: 1:24000

DATE: 1971

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

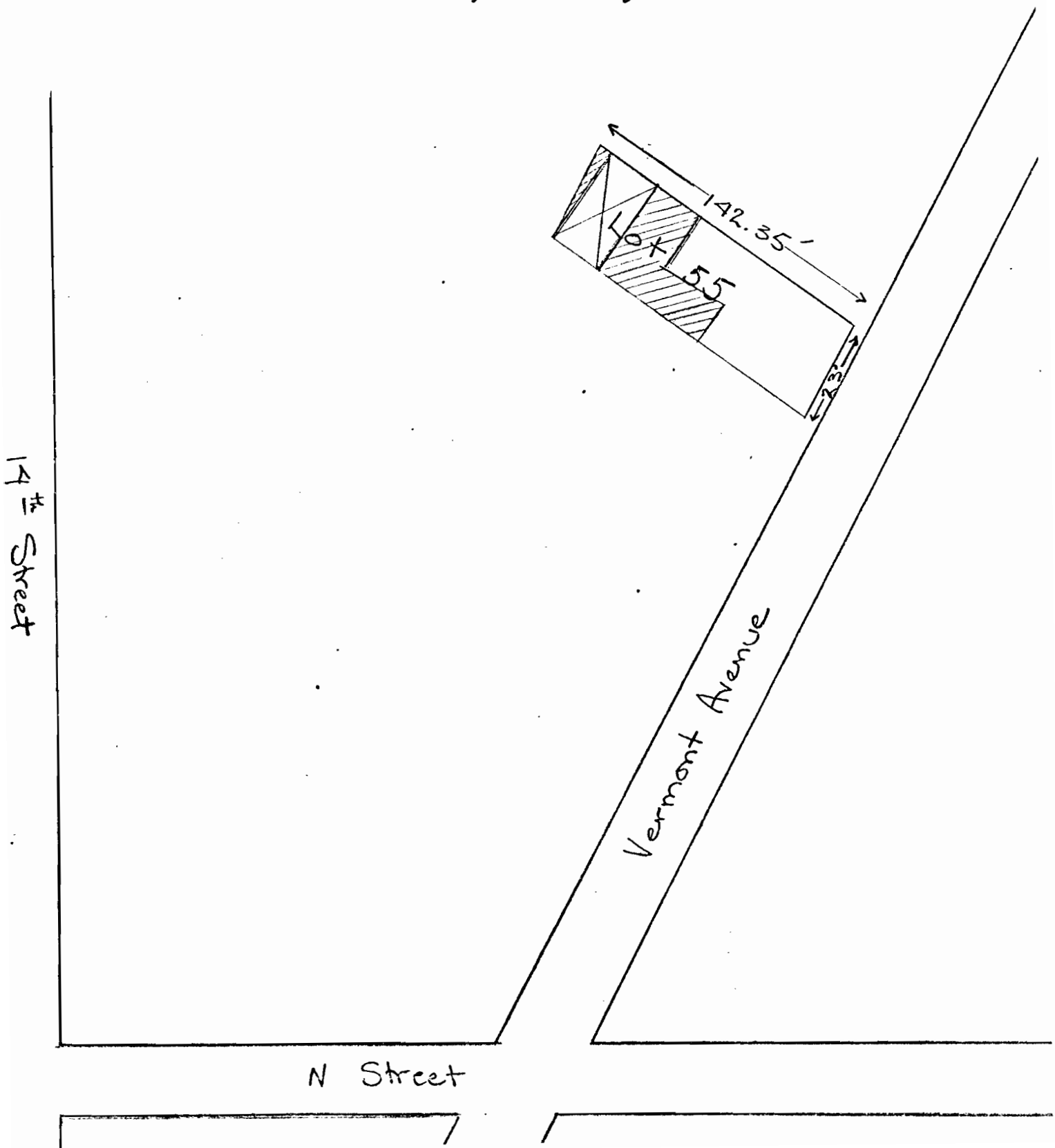
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1973—729-148/1441 3-1

National Council of Negro Women's
Headquarters
1318 Vermont Avenue, Northwest
U.S.G.S. 7.5'
Latitude 38 54' 28"
Longitude 77 01' 05"
Columbia Heights
LeDroit Park
Eckington
Logan Circle
Thomas Circle
Dupont Circle
Tidal Basin
WASHINGTON
U.S. CAPITOL
Washington Monument
Reflecting Pool
Zero Milestone
EAST POTOMAC PARK
Golf Course
Navy & Marine Memorial
Union Station
Coliseum
McMillan Reservoir
Filtration Plant
Howard University
Trinity College
Glenwood Cem
Prospect Hill Cem
St Marys Cem
Playground
Childrens Hospital
Garfield Park
Stanton Park
Lafayette Park
Washington Channel

Submitted by:
Afro-American Bicentennial
Corporation

National Council of Negro Women's
Headquarters
1318 Vermont Ave., N.W.
Square 242
Lot 55
3,214.67 sq. ft.



Form No. 10-301a
(7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE	
Washington, D.C.	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: National Council of Negro Women's Headquarters

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1318 Vermont Avenue, Northwest

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
D.C.			

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Myrna Harris

DATE OF PHOTO: May, 1974

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation
1420 N Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Front elevation with photographer facing west.

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1973—729-152/1446 III-1