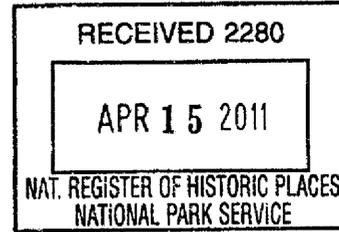


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station

Other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 210 S. Court Street

not for publication

city of town Montgomery

vicinity

State Alabama code AL county Montgomery code 101 zip code 36104

### 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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

4/13/11

Signature of certifying official

Date

Director, Center for Historic Buildings & Federal Preservation Office

Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

April 5, 2011

Signature of commenting official

Date

DEPUTY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register

5/16/11

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal
- private

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- building(s)
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		buildings
1	0	<b>Total</b>

**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)

Transportation: Road-Related (Vehicular)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement: Moderne  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: BRICK  
walls: BRICK  
roof: Other: Built-up Tar  
other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is located at 210 S. Court Street in Montgomery, Alabama. It is a small, modest, single-story building constructed in 1950-1951. The station contains elements of the Moderne style, which include asymmetry, horizontal emphasis, and windows that wrap around corners. Although it is a reserved example of the style and has undergone several alterations since its construction, it is still recognizable as a mid-twentieth-century bus station. It is located in downtown Montgomery, Alabama, directly adjacent to the Frank M. Johnson Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse and Annex. The station sits close to Court Street, separated only by the sidewalk; no landscaping features are present. Other surrounding buildings include low-scale commercial and office buildings.

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**Narrative Description**

See Continuation Sheets 7.1 to 7.3.

**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.

**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 a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Ethnic Heritage: Black
- Politics/Government
- Social History

**Period of Significance**

May 20, 1961

**Significant Dates**

May 20, 1961

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Arrasmith, W.S.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance for the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is limited to the single day of May 20, 1961, when the Freedom Riders were attacked by the mob awaiting their arrival at the station. Although the attack brought about important meetings in Montgomery and significant federal executive decisions and legislation in Washington, DC, these ensuing events were not directly related to the bus station. When the Freedom Riders continued on their journey, they departed from the Trailways Station in Montgomery. Therefore, the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station's involvement in the Freedom Rides was limited to a single day, May 20, 1961.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station was evaluated under Criterion Consideration G for exceptional importance as a significant site in the American civil rights movement and therefore eligible for listing although the Freedom Rider attack at the station occurred slightly less than fifty years ago. Despite the ordinary and somewhat altered appearance of the property, it is significant for its historic associations rather than its architectural merit.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)**

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is significant under Criterion A for its association with the Freedom Rides of 1961, an event that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history. The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is significant as a pivotal site in African-American ethnic history, politics/government, and social history. The arrival of the Freedom Riders and the subsequent riot at the station changed the course of the African-American civil rights movement and social history in the United States by focusing nationwide attention on interstate travel desegregation and the greater civil rights struggle in the South. The subsequent involvement of the Executive Branch of the government also contributed to the causes championed by the civil rights movement. The bus station—as it relates to the Freedom Rider attacks—uniquely conveys the areas of significance of early 1960s African-American civil rights history, American social history, and political history.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)**

The property is significant under Criterion A as the location of an event that has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history. The period of significance for the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is limited to the single-day Freedom Riders event: May 20, 1961. The arrival of the Freedom Riders and the subsequent riot at the station are the defining events of the site historically. Although the Freedom Riders remained in Montgomery for five days, civil rights leaders held meetings related to the riot at local churches and homes, and the riders subsequently left Montgomery from the Trailways bus station. However, the single-day event was so powerful, it garnered nationwide attention to this aspect of desegregation for interstate travel. The involvement of the Executive Branch of the government had a lasting impact on the civil rights movement. While the Montgomery Bus Boycott effectively launched the modern civil rights movement, the Freedom Riders event in Montgomery solidified the role of this southern city in the ongoing struggle. This was later reinforced with the Selma to Montgomery march.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

See Continuation Sheets 8.1 to 8.21.

**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--GSA  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Alabama Historical Commission; See

Name of repository: Continuation Sheets 9.1 to 9.3.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.3 acres  
(do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>16</u> Zone	<u>565197</u> Easting	<u>3581602</u> Northing	3	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing
2	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing	4	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary encompasses the footprint of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station and a five-foot buffer surrounding the building.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary for the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station includes the footprint of the building and a five-foot buffer surrounding the building. Because the station is separated from Court Street by only the sidewalk and historically has been located close to the Frank M. Johnson Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, this small buffer encompasses all character-defining features and reflects an appropriate boundary for this resource. The boundary encompasses all of the significant resources and features that comprise the property.

Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station  
Name of Property

Montgomery County, Alabama  
County and State

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Stephanie Foell, Supervising Architectural Historian [Parsons Brinkerhoff]  
organization A.D. Marble & Company, prepared for U.S. General Services Administration date March 2011  
street & number 3913 Hartzdale Drive telephone 717-731-9588  
city or town Camp Hill state PA zip code 17011  
e-mail foell@pbworld.com; bfrederick@admarble.com

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Photographs:**

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Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Photos are labeled individually with detailed descriptions and views.**

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station

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Exterior Description

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is located in downtown Montgomery, Alabama. Montgomery developed with two street grids at forty-five degree angles because two different towns, Old Alabama Town and New Philadelphia, were laid out on different parts on Montgomery's great Alabama river bend, and grew together to form Montgomery. Intersecting grids lead to odd alignments and extra streets coming together where the grids collide. Such an intersection occurs at the confluence of Court and Montgomery streets, just north of the bus station. Two buildings that figured in the events of May 20, 1961: the 1933 Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (constructed in 1933), at 15 Lee Street, and the Moore Building (c. 1940) at 217 South Court Street, remain in the immediate vicinity of the station. Other surrounding buildings include low-scale commercial and office buildings. The station sits close to Court Street, separated only by the sidewalk; no landscaping features are present.

The unassuming building has an essentially square footprint and a box-like form. The station is constructed of pre-cast and poured-in-place concrete slabs. The exterior walls are clad primarily in pale, buff-colored brick laid in common bond. The base of the building is covered with brick in a slightly darker tan color surmounted by a single-course band of the buff brick topped by a single-course band of the tan brick, creating a striped effect.

The facade, which faces east and is asymmetrical, contains a recessed entrance that surrounds double glass doors with aluminum frames topped by a glass transom. The entrance is reached by two steps that are covered with square, ceramic tiles. The entrance is covered by a protruding wood-frame canopy encompassed with porcelain whose coping encircles the northern portion of the east elevation of the building above a bank of windows with large fixed panes in aluminum frames. To the south of the entrance, is a single pedestrian opening, now covered with small square ceramic tiles. The entrance, demarked as the colored entrance on original architectural drawings, is surrounded by molded concrete trim.<sup>1</sup> The facade's plane extends to the south beyond the south elevation of the building. A low wall extends to the south and displays the striped pattern that originates on the building. The wall is capped with bricks.

The parapet of the flat roof extends around the north, east, and west elevations. It projects upward at the center of the facade beyond the building's profile. This extension forms a rectangular form enclosed only on three sides that forms a small tower. A small portion of the bus station sign's wood support frame and metal hardware remained in place at the time of the survey.

The north (side) elevation contains a single window that is part of the band of windows that wraps around the corner from the facade. Other than this single window, the north elevation is devoid of openings. The striped brick pattern established on the facade also continues on this elevation. Two downspouts are also present. New metal fencing that is part of the security features of the adjacent Frank M. Johnson Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is attached to this elevation.

<sup>1</sup> This entrance was originally an open portal without a door that did not access the building, but instead led to a covered walkway that spanned the south elevation and provided access to the bus bays.

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The south (side) elevation, slightly recessed behind the plane of the facade, is clad in concrete masonry units. Concrete masonry units form two articulated bands at the roofline. A recessed entrance with double, glass doors with metal frames flanked by glazed panels is the only opening on this elevation. A brick wall extends from this elevation and new metal fencing that is part of the security features of the adjacent Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse Annex is attached to this wall.

The west (rear) elevation is devoid of openings. The wall is divided into two planes, with the northern portion projecting slightly beyond the southern area. The striped brick pattern extends to the rear of the building.

The roof of the building is flat and covered with built-up roofing materials. Heating, cooling, and ventilation equipment is present. Simple concrete coping articulates the roofline parapet and central tower.

Interior Description

The interior of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is substantially altered from its original appearance. Contractors used the space for their on-site offices while the Courthouse Annex (completed in 2002) was constructed. Consequently, many interior finishes and spatial delineations were removed and cubicle-like partitions were installed. The partitions dominate the northern and western interior spaces, while areas to the east and south are open. The interior retains no recognizable articulated original spaces from initial construction; however, the present restrooms were added in 1968 and are the only remnant from the building's time as a bus station. No former spatial uses are delineated by interior historic building materials. The portion of the building that remains intact formerly contained the service area for white citizens (see Alterations, below.)

Floors throughout the building are covered in small, square ceramic tiles that appear to be original. The majority of the floors are covered with white tiles interspersed with a lesser number of pale blue or pink tiles. However, the southern floor areas are covered in dark blue tiles. Larger, square, ceramic tiles form a baseboard around the perimeter of the interior. Walls are primarily covered in drywall. Several square support columns covered in the small tiles are located throughout the building. Ceilings throughout the building are covered with acoustical tiles and fluorescent panel lighting.

A small closet with concrete masonry unit walls contains a utility sink and water heater. The restrooms remain in their original location on the southern portion of the bus station, although original interior spatial delineations have been altered. Restroom walls are clad in larger, replacement, square ceramic tiles with various colors forming striped patterns. The floors are covered in small ceramic tiles that appear to be original.

Alterations

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In 1968, the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station underwent an expansion to the north and west. The firm of Greer, Holmquist & Chambers developed the project plans in 1967.<sup>2</sup> Additions constructed at this time combined to create a triangular extension to the station's rear and extend the facade to the north. Interior spaces were reconfigured at that time. Most commonly, smaller utility spaces were combined to create larger open spaces. As a result of these changes, the interior has been substantially altered from its original appearance.

However, later alterations completed as part of the Courthouse Annex construction in the late 1990s and early 2000s, removed these western and northern additions, essentially returning the building to a closer semblance of its original appearance and footprint. Most notably, the bus bays and waiting platform on the southern elevation were removed. While portions of the rear of the original building that contained the colored services area were also removed at that time, from the street the building remains nearly unchanged. An analysis of a 1951 photograph of the building, taken upon its opening, shows that the building's facade as it appears today has a high level of integrity on the exterior to 1961, when the Freedom Riders attack occurred.<sup>3</sup>

Surrounding Area

Montgomery's two oldest street grids converge at the location of the parcel of land that now contains the Greyhound Bus Station Terminal, which is located very close to Court Street. The eastern grid is oriented on the cardinal directions, while the western grid is skewed on a southwest-northeast orientation; the resulting parcel is essentially triangular in shape. The Frank M. Johnson Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is located at the corner of Lee and Church streets. It is executed in the Classical Revival style of architecture and looms over the diminutive Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station. Constructed in 1933, the courthouse predates the bus station and has always provided a dramatic backdrop for the terminal, which is directly southeast of the building. The new Courthouse Annex is directly adjacent to the south elevation. New metal fencing, part of the federal building's security features, are located around the building. A small grassy panel is directly to the rear. A metal historical marker denoting the significance of the Freedom Riders is located on the Court Street sidewalk in front of the station.

Planned Restoration Efforts

Shortly after the survey and photography of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station, the Alabama Historical Commission restored the exterior signage identifying the building as a Greyhound Bus Station.

<sup>2</sup> Greer, Holmquist & Chambers, "Alterations & Additions to the Bus Terminal Building, Montgomery, Alabama for Southern Greyhound Lines." Architectural Plans dated 22 May 1967.

<sup>3</sup> "New Bus Terminal to Hold Formal Opening on Thursday," *Montgomery Advertiser*, August 16 August 1951.

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Historical Narrative:

Early History of Montgomery<sup>4</sup>

In 1816, the land that is part of present-day Montgomery was still part of the Mississippi Territory. The territorial legislature created Montgomery County, named to honor Major Lemuel Purnell Montgomery, who was killed at Horseshoe Bend in 1814 during Andrew Jackson's confrontation with the Creeks. Land in Montgomery County went on sale in 1817. Two early purchasers were Andrew Dexter and John Falconer. Dexter realized the potential of the area with its appealing location on a high hill and nearby river transportation. He called his town New Philadelphia, and established streets that ran on a north-south and east-west grid. Shortly after Dexter founded New Philadelphia, native Virginian John Scott obtained adjacent land to the west. Scott established Alabama Town along the bend in the Alabama River, laying his streets out parallel to the river on a northeast-southwest axis. Initially, New Philadelphia attracted more settlers than Alabama Town due to its eastern location along the federal road from Milledgeville, Georgia. To capitalize on this trend, Scott established East Alabama on land east and south of New Philadelphia. Like in Alabama Town, he laid the streets in a northeast-southwest orientation. The parcel of land that contains the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station was located in the extreme southeast corner of East Alabama. In 1819, the year that Alabama was admitted as a state, all three communities merged to form Montgomery, which had a combined population of four hundred. The future site of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station would be located on Square 20, Lots 3, 4, 7, and 8. This area was initially owned by the Alabama Company, which deeded the land to Wade Allen in 1823. The area contained a mix of residential and religious buildings.

Montgomery grew rapidly; in 1846, officials designated it as the state capital. Anglo-American settlers and their slaves moved to the region, lured by the agricultural promise of the fertile soil. The years between 1846 and 1861, when the Civil War started, were the antebellum heyday of the town. Montgomery became a political and commercial center in the Southeast. Steamboats and railroads carried passengers and goods to and from the expanding city.

However, politics that threatened to disrupt the system of slavery that the South relied upon caused Alabama to secede from the Union on January 7, 1861. Shortly after, officials selected Montgomery as the capital of the Southern Confederacy for approximately four months. Delegates from southern states drafted a constitution and established a government. Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as the president of the Confederacy on the steps of the Alabama state capitol building. Soon after, officials relocated the capital to Richmond, which was closer to the war theater. Union General James H. Wilson and his federal troops occupied Montgomery on April 12, 1865; however, General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox three days prior, but word had not yet reached Montgomery.

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<sup>4</sup> This section is a summary of work presented in New South Associates, "Montgomery Perspectives; Architectural and Historical Documentation of the Figh-Pickett House, the Bartlett Building, and the Greyhound Bus Terminal of Montgomery," completed for the U.S. General Services Administration, 1997. On file at the Alabama Historical Commission, Montgomery, Alabama.

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In the years following the Civil War, Montgomery was the site of a Freedman's Bureau headquarters, and in 1867 the military occupied the city when officials granted African Americans the right to vote during a radical phase of reconstruction. As a result, Alabama reentered the Union in June 1868. However, this new period of enlightenment was short lived. African-American rights quickly declined and newfound civil liberties eroded as early as the 1870s, culminating with the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld racial segregation in public accommodations. Reinforcing this legal decision, the Alabama Constitution of 1901 effectively disenfranchised African Americans.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, African Americans established their own neighborhoods, churches, and educational facilities in Montgomery. African-American institutions and commercial enterprises flourished, building on rich historical and cultural traditions, while providing critical services to the community. During the early years of the twentieth century, African Americans and whites were segregated, with Jim Crow Laws mandating "separate but equal" facilities. In many instances, despite the separate-but-equal mandate, many African-American facilities could not be considered equal in terms of quality standards. Like many other municipal services, Montgomery's transportation improvements, such as the electric streetcar system first established in 1886, benefitted all citizens. However, by 1900, all public transportation systems enforced segregation of African Americans and whites. This transportation segregation would become the platform for Montgomery's most prominent civil rights struggles, capturing the nation's attention and informing the public about the reality of segregation in southern states.

Although the city remained essentially divided along racial lines, Montgomery grew in the first quarter of the twentieth century. During World War I, military personnel moved to Montgomery because of the proximity of Camp Sheridan and Montgomery Field (later Maxwell Field). In the years following the war, Montgomery flourished as a culturally refined city with a number of prominent writers and entertainers who either lived in or frequently visited the town. The advent of motorized vehicles—both cars and buses—brought changes to the city. In 1936, Montgomery City Lines, the newly established local bus franchise, replaced the street car service.

History of the Site of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station

*General Neighborhood Overview*

The area surrounding the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station developed as a residential enclave in the 1870s and 1880s. The large U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (now the Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse), constructed in 1933, loomed over the area. However, by the 1940s, commercial enterprises mingled with the residences. By 1953, Sanborn maps show that the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station and the Toddle House restaurant occupied the area directly southeast of the federal building.

*Site Evolution and Ownership History*

The site of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station had numerous property owners over time. W. St. John Naftel received the property in 1932 from F.L. Ridolphi and his wife as payment for a debt. Lucy Price Naftel

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Cantey inherited the property in 1940. During the 1940s, the Toddle House secured a lease from Cantey for a restaurant, which faced Court Street and was adjacent to the federal courthouse building.<sup>5</sup>

By 1950, Greyhound wanted to build a new station in Montgomery to replace an older station on North Court Street. After choosing the site behind the federal courthouse building, Southeastern Greyhound Lines and the Greyhound Corporation entered into a lease with Lucy Price Naftel Cantey and five of her relatives, who were lessors on the agreement, on May 15, 1950.<sup>6</sup> The lease stipulated that Greyhound would take control of the site on September 1, 1950, paying the lessors \$700 each month until August 31, 1952, when the lease with the Toddle House expired. At that time, Greyhound planned to assume control of that part of the parcel as well, with the rent rising to \$780 each month; however, it does not appear that this happened at that time; the Toddle House stayed in business for approximately another decade. The original lease was set to expire on August 31, 1970, but it was amended twice before then, giving Greyhound an extension until 1990. After 1970, the rent increased to \$1,250 per month. In 1967, Greyhound Lines, Inc., was the sole lessee. The arrangement continued basically unchanged until 1995, when the federal government assumed control of the parcel to construct an annex to the federal courthouse.

The Greyhound Bus Company

The Greyhound Bus Company started off as an inspired idea of Carl Wickman. In 1913, Wickman's tire dealership in Hibbing, Minnesota, could not sell a seven-passenger touring car, so he bought it and used the vehicle to ferry local miners to work and social activities. Upon the success of his venture, Wickman and his partner S.R. Sundstrom moved to Duluth, Minnesota, and purchased existing intercity bus companies with the goal of connecting these enterprises and offering customers single-ticket travel within their system. One of the companies that the men purchased was called Greyhound and they adopted this evocative moniker for their growing company in 1930. In an effort to create an identifiable brand, Greyhound established standards for its drivers that included wearing an exclusive uniform. Buses were standardized in appearance and type as well.

Although the Great Depression caused hardships for Greyhound, the company survived and actually expanded during that time. During the mid-1930s, as Greyhound moved into the forefront of the mass transportation industry, company officials adopted the streamlined style for its buses and stations, conveying a modern design sensibility. Greyhound established its own stations to provide customers with safe and comfortable accommodations where they could wait for their buses.

Greyhound Bus Station Architecture and Architect W.S. Arrasmith

*The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station*

W.S. Arrasmith designed the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station. Arrasmith was a Louisville, Kentucky, architect who specialized in bus station design. Architectural drawings list Greer, Holmquist & Chambers of Birmingham, Alabama, as associate architects. Construction of the building commenced in 1950 and was

5 Book 178:382, Judge of Probate, Montgomery County Tax Records, Tax Assessor's Office, Montgomery, Alabama.

6 Book 9:569, Judge of Probate, Montgomery County Tax Records, Tax Assessor's Office, Montgomery, Alabama.

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completed the following year. The Brice Building Company of Birmingham, Alabama, served as the construction company; the enterprise had built fifteen bus terminals for Greyhound since 1945. The station opened in August 1951 amid much fanfare; Montgomery Mayor W.A. Gayle, Alabama Governor Gordon Persons, and Greyhound officials attended a ceremony to celebrate the opening.<sup>7</sup>

*Original Appearance of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station*<sup>8</sup>

The new bus station included a terminal building and a concrete concourse for buses. The design was derived from a standardized plan developed for Greyhound and cost \$300,000 to construct. The building's footprint was 80' x 125'. The building was designed in a modest interpretation of the Art Moderne style that was typically used for bus stations throughout the United States during the 1940s and 1950s. The streamlined and unornamented facade (east elevation) featured the Greyhound logo—a stylized greyhound dog—and signage, both executed in porcelain enamel on a truncated tower. A long series of fixed, steel sash windows, alternating bands of light and dark brick, and cut-stone coping emphasized the horizontality of the building. Supported by steel and masonry (brick) construction, the exterior walls were faced with buff brick. Original architectural drawings show a modest entryway, an opening with no door, for African Americans articulated by a sign reading "Colored Entrance." The single portal was surrounded by a molded concrete casing and illuminated from above by a projecting lamp. African Americans using the building had to go through the colored entrance portal which led directly into the bus bay area to access the building's interior from the rear of the segregated terminal. The larger central entrance for white passengers featured double doors topped by a curved marquee. The white entrance led to the main lobby. A canopy with a saw-tooth edge topped the loading platform on the south and west elevation, providing shelter for passengers during boarding or disembarking. The south elevation featured a ribbon of doors to accommodate passenger circulation and baggage claim. These features were removed during alterations to the property; the exact date of the changes is unknown.

Inside, the walls were clad in tile and plaster, with a plaster ceiling that was painted light blue. Enforcing local customs of segregation, Arrasmith designed separate facilities for African-American and white patrons. The front of the building contained facilities for whites, including a waiting room with one hundred red-leather upholstered chairs, restrooms, lockers, and a restaurant with U-shaped Formica counter. The African-American facilities were located in the rear of the terminal; they included restrooms, lockers, a lunch counter, and a waiting room with thirty chairs. Both restaurants were operated by Greyhound Post Houses, Inc., a subsidiary of Greyhound Lines. According to architectural plans, both areas were comparable in terms of building materials and finishes, but the white area was larger than the African-American section. The segregated facilities were divided by the ticket counters and baggage area that had windows to serve both populations. A single kitchen with a storage area, other general storage, and a garbage room were also present in the building. The terminal was equipped with fluorescent lighting, air-conditioning, and a public-address system.<sup>9</sup>

7 "New Bus Terminal Here to Hold Formal Opening on Thursday." *Montgomery Advertiser*. 16 August 1951.

8 The information on the original appearance is derived from Arrasmith's architectural drawings and the article "New Bus Terminal Here to Hold Formal Opening on Thursday," which appeared in the *Montgomery Advertiser* on 16 August 1951.

9 This information is derived from original architectural plans. The Montgomery Greyhound Station appears to have been built using the same materials for both African-American and white areas. However, as noted, the African-American area was smaller in size.

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The bus circulation pattern stipulated that vehicles enter the station by way of Court Street and exit onto Moulton Street. The bus concourse covered 8,000 square feet and contained six loading zones and parking for twelve buses. Originally, the station was slated to accommodate ninety-five arrivals and departures daily.

*W.S. Arrasmith, Architect*

According to Richard Longstreth of George Washington University, architect W.S. Arrasmith never gained prominence in his field during his active professional life or after. However, Arrasmith designed approximately fifty terminals for the Greyhound Lines bus company between 1937 and 1960. Located throughout the United States, these bus stations, particularly those designed prior to 1950, personified the emerging bus travel business by using streamlined designs that evoked the Modern era.<sup>10</sup>

William Strudwick Arrasmith was born in 1898 in Hillsboro, North Carolina. When he was a child, his family home burned to the ground and his mother designed the new house. As a result of this early exposure to architectural design, young Arrasmith became enthralled with the idea of designing buildings. He enrolled in the School of General Engineering at the University of Illinois in the fall of 1917, intending to study architecture. He completed his degree in 1921 and went to work for the prestigious and prominent firm of McKim Meade & White in New York City; however, after only six months, Arrasmith moved to Louisville, Kentucky, working first for local architect E.T. Hutchings and later Brinton Davis before briefly returning to Hutchings's firm for a second time. In 1926, Arrasmith formed a partnership with Clarence J. Stinson, the first of many professional affiliations that would mark his career. Arrasmith led in marketing the office's services, which focused on commercial buildings rather than residential. After only two years, Arrasmith ended his partnership with Stinson and joined respected Louisville architect Hermann Wischmeyer in a professional partnership that would last until 1945 when Wischmeyer passed away. Two of the firm's earliest commissions were for prominent buildings; they designed the Bowman Airfield terminal and the Scottish Rite Temple, both in Louisville, bringing the partners much acclaim.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after this strong start, the severe economic conditions during the Great Depression tainted the early years of the partnership. During these years, Arrasmith participated in design competitions. In 1933, the U.S. Army called Arrasmith, who was a Captain in the Army Reserve, to active duty with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Designed to provide work for young men during the Great Depression, the CCC greatly improved the infrastructure of the country, most notably at parks. Arrasmith worked in Jackson, Kentucky, although the precise nature of the work is not known. While in Jackson, Arrasmith completed some work for the Post House restaurants, owned by the Southeastern Greyhound Company, and he maintained contact with the company in hopes of obtaining future design projects.<sup>12</sup>

While Arrasmith welcomed the secure paycheck that came with his CCC assignment, he was pleased to return to his architecture firm when his duties ended. In 1936, the firm took on Fred Elswick as a partner. Elswick brought a significant commission with him: the design of a new State of Kentucky prison and hospital complex

<sup>10</sup> Frank E. Wrenick. *The Streamline Era Greyhound Terminals: The Architecture of W.S. Arrasmith*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2006, 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

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that included approximately sixty separate buildings. The firm felt extremely fortunate to have such a large and secure commission at a time when many architectural firms were unable to sustain their businesses.

Around the same time, Arrasmith heard that Greyhound planned to build a new bus terminal in Louisville. Greyhound employed an architectural firm to design most of their buildings east of the Mississippi River, but the company also retained local architects—either in leading or supporting capacities. Arrasmith showed great interest in the project, not only because of the potential income, but also because he desired to design a building that would allow him to use a new stylistic vocabulary. Until this time, Arrasmith designed buildings that were generally traditional in appearance; his buildings used components of Revival architecture that evoked past styles. However, he longed to design a “bold, unique and totally modern building in a vernacular which would reflect the image of speed, efficiency, cleanliness and modernity—attributes [he] sensed Greyhound wanted to project.”<sup>13</sup> Although other architects had already designed streamlined Art Moderne buildings for Greyhound, Arrasmith proposed facing the building in enameled steel panels, which were used on gasoline stations and restaurants, but had never been used on a bus station. He designed the building with rounded corners, curvilinear surfaces, and a horizontal emphasis—all hallmarks of the emerging Moderne style. The building was clad entirely in Greyhound Blue enamel panels. This combination of design and building materials was original and Arrasmith won the commission, winning Greyhound’s confidence as well when officials announced that he would not require the oversight of a company architect. The resulting building was striking and an “instant landmark.”<sup>14</sup> Arrasmith helped Greyhound achieve its goal of developing a recognizable corporate identity. Greyhound was so pleased with the building, which Arrasmith delivered on time and within budget, that the company retained him as consultant architect and stipulated that he approve the designs of all forthcoming bus depots.<sup>15</sup>

Shortly after his initial success, Arrasmith designed a total of five stations in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana. Despite his early successes, Greyhound continued its relationships with other architects that they previously employed. However, in 1938, at the opening of the Hartford, Connecticut, station, which was designed by one of the company’s top architects, T.W. Lamb & Associates, Arrasmith benefited from another firm’s mistake. At the grand opening of the station, a bus was wedged between the station and the adjacent building because the architects had not allowed sufficient space for buses to enter and leave the station. As a result of this error, Greyhound chose Arrasmith as the architect for their station in Washington, D.C., a prominent commission.<sup>16</sup> Arrasmith promptly designed another landmark Streamlined Art Moderne station for Greyhound; however, instead of facing the building with enameled panels, he chose Indiana limestone, which proved to be suitably dignified for a building in the nation’s capital. Subsequently, Arrasmith designed stations in Atlanta, Buffalo, Cincinnati, and Chicago. His designs proved to be both practical in terms of usage and bus circulation, yet the buildings themselves were imaginative and innovative.

During World War II, Arrasmith served in the Army, but happily returned to his architectural practice when Greyhound officials contacted the Army and successfully petitioned for his early release. The company stated

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 53.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., 55.

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that he was a critical component of their building program, which helped to move both servicemen and civilians during the war. After Arrasmith's return to Louisville, the firm of Wischmeyer, Arrasmith & Elswick dissolved with the death of Wischmeyer. Arrasmith decided to leave Louisville and moved to Cleveland, where Greyhound's headquarters were located. While in Cleveland, Arrasmith became Greyhound's consulting architect and the foremost authority on bus station design. His first assignment was to complete a new terminal in Cleveland; this station was to be a landmark in the city and Arrasmith developed a skillful and sophisticated Streamline Art Moderne building that was his last in that style.

Shortly after his work on the Cleveland station, Arrasmith designed a station in Akron, Ohio, where he abandoned the Streamline Art Moderne style for a more modest Modern building. He instituted ninety-degree corners rather than rounded edges. The building was faced in pale brick. In his history of Arrasmith's work for Greyhound, Frank E. Wrencik wrote, "The two terminals conveyed different messages: the Akron terminal appeared to be no more than what it was, a contemporary building, whereas the Cleveland terminal was a building which symbolized a graceful machine in motion."<sup>17</sup>

During this period, Arrasmith developed stock plans for Greyhound, focusing on basic design features and concepts that were common to all Greyhound projects. This approach saved Greyhound both time and money, allowing for efficient and affordable station construction and recognizable branding. Of course, these stock plans were revised as needed to fit lot size and shape and accommodate various station sizes. In the cases of stations in Southern states, Arrasmith developed stock plans that segregated white passengers from their African-American counterparts. He adopted the more modest components of the Akron station for these stock plans, thus defining Greyhound's post-World-War-II design vocabulary. He retained the basic principals of bus station design in terms of the function of the sites and buildings, but their appearance departed dramatically from the earlier dynamic Streamline Art Moderne examples. Arrasmith designed stations in this more modest approach in Athens, Toledo, Youngstown, and Lima in Ohio; Battle Creek, Flint, and Grand Rapids in Michigan; Norfolk, Virginia; and Birmingham, Alabama, all before 1950. Arrasmith's developed his design for the Montgomery, Alabama, station during this timeframe. When comparing the Montgomery station to other modest stations from this era, the Montgomery station was one of the smaller, less elaborate designs. The Montgomery station displays few of the character-defining features or grandeur displayed in his high-style Moderne efforts, particularly those in larger urban settings.

By 1950, Arrasmith determined that he could continue his relationship with Greyhound from Louisville and he and his wife returned to the city that they considered their home. For the next three years, Greyhound projects comprised approximately seventy percent of his office's work with other substantial commercial commissions supplementing the bus station designs and gradually becoming more and more important to Arrasmith. However, in 1958, Greyhound invited Arrasmith to design new terminals in Pittsburgh, Detroit, and New Orleans. These new stations would also incorporate rental car facilities, a service that Greyhound wanted to offer their customers upon their arrivals in their destination cities. Despite the successful completion of these buildings, Arrasmith and Greyhound parted ways soon after they were constructed; Arrasmith did maintain ties

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 76.

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with Southeastern Greyhound, a branch of the company, although only minimal work would come from this relationship.

Arrasmith, along with new partner Will Tyler, produced other noteworthy designs for clients other than Greyhound. In Louisville, they completed plans for the Commonwealth School, the Kentucky State Office Building, and the 800 Building, the city's first skyscraper.<sup>18</sup> After seven years, Arrasmith dissolved his partnership with Tyler and worked by himself for several years. However, he realized that his energy had diminished as he grew older and he soon took on Arnold Judd as his partner. During their short affiliation, Arrasmith & Judd designed two Greyhound stations. However, the partnership lasted only two years; Arrasmith passed away in 1965 at age 67.

Segregation and the Civil Rights Movement

In the early 1950s, when the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station was constructed, segregation was widespread in the town and also throughout the South. However, at the national level, citizens began scrutinizing and challenging segregationists practices, questioning the validity of the notion of "separate but equal." In 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States heard the case of *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka*, ruling that school segregation violated the Constitution and integration must proceed with deliberate speed. This decision rendered the previous 1896 "separate but equal" ruling invalid. Despite this ruling from the nation's highest court, integration did not reach Montgomery until civil rights activists challenged the city's refusal to secure the rights of African Americans that *Brown v. the Board of Education* promised.

*The Significance of Montgomery in the Civil Rights Movement*

Montgomery, Alabama, played a significant role in the American civil rights movement. During the early years of the movement, Dr. Martin Luther King was a Montgomery resident and King's presence often put Montgomery in the national spotlight. Many scholars consider the city to be the epicenter of the civil rights struggle because of the importance of the 1955-1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott and its role in launching Dr. King as the national leader of the movement. Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, the congregation led by Dr. King during his years in Montgomery, is presently designated as a National Historic Landmark and is currently under consideration as a World Heritage Site.

In December 1955, Rosa Parks, an African-American seamstress, refused to give up her city bus seat to a white rider, launching the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which was subsequently led by a young and unknown Dr. Martin Luther King, a local Montgomery minister. The Montgomery Boycott lasted more than a year, with astonishing support from the African-American community. During this time, Montgomery became a focal point in the civil rights effort as the nation watched the progress of the boycott and also as Dr. King rose to national prominence as he promoted nonviolent resistance as a way for African Americans across the southern United States to demonstrate against segregation and discrimination. Dr. King continued his efforts from Montgomery, where he was the pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, until 1960, when he moved to Atlanta.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 99-91.

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In the intervening years, racial tensions remained high in Montgomery, where local government attempted to supersede federal mandates that required integration. Rather than follow a federal ruling ordering the city to integrate public parks, in 1959, the city closed all parks. Although a local federal judge, Frank M. Johnson (for whom the federal building is now named), declared the segregation unconstitutional, he did not have the authority to order the city to reopen the parks; they remained closed for six years.

In the years after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Dr. King left the town to return to Atlanta, and civil rights events in other towns overshadowed the seminal events in Montgomery. However, African Americans in Montgomery participated in sit-ins at lunch counters, and also visited the all-white city library and museum in attempts to desegregate these places.

In January 1961, John F. Kennedy became the President of the United States, nominating his brother Robert F. Kennedy to the position of Attorney General of the United States. Both men supported civil rights initiatives and favored stricter enforcement of civil rights legislation than the previous president, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Although various historians interpret the brothers' words and actions differently, with some assigning a greater degree of ambivalence to the issue than others, the role of the men is critical in the evolving story of the Freedom Rides. While many segregationist practices were considered to be local custom or the concerns of local law enforcement, the actions of the Freedom Riders and the angry mobs and the responses of local and state governmental officials and law enforcement required the Kennedy brothers to enforce federal law.

*The Freedom Rides of 1961*

This atmosphere of segregation coupled with attempts to change the status quo remained in the city in the early 1960s when civil rights activists and students organized the Freedom Rides throughout the South. Designed to test the validity and enforcement of segregation on the nation's new interstate system, which was subject to federal oversight, integrated groups of riders rode various bus routes throughout southern states. The Supreme Court, in its 1960 decision in the case of *Boynton v. Virginia*, declared that segregation in interstate travel, including bus station facilities, violated the Interstate Commerce Act.<sup>19</sup> Despite this ruling, law enforcement officials within some local jurisdictions in southern states still supported segregation on interstate buses, and many citizens in the South also supported the segregationist stance within their towns. To test this system and draw attention to the de facto segregation practices in the South, the Freedom Riders would travel in racially mixed groups, sitting where they pleased and trying the policies of segregated restrooms and dining areas.

Leaders of the Freedom Rides patterned their efforts after a 1947 Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) project known as the Journey of Reconciliation. CORE, which formed in 1942, sought to apply the principles of nonviolence as a tactic against racial segregation, most notably campaigning for equality and voting rights. CORE's staff recruited and trained the thirteen initial riders, but within a month after attacks on the initial group in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama, the movement became broader, as new riders not associated with CORE joined the effort. CORE emphasized nonviolent actions and warned the volunteers that their actions would stir the ire of white supremacists and surely result in savage attacks to which they could not physically

<sup>19</sup> Raymond Arsenault. *Freedom Riders; 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. Oxford England and New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, xi.

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respond. Because of this foreknowledge, critics believed that the Freedom Riders were essentially courting martyrdom while disregarding personal safety and civic order by knowingly provoking those with opposing views.<sup>20</sup> This perceived antagonism also tested those who sympathized with their cause; even citizens who supported desegregation viewed the Freedom Riders as reckless, unnecessarily confrontational and outside agitators. However, the relentless attacks and imprisonments only galvanized the cause, with new riders joining the effort.

The Freedom Rides are viewed as a pivotal event in civil rights history because the initiative transcended the traditional legal approach of many civil rights efforts, moving the struggle out of the courtroom and into the American Southerners' daily lives.<sup>21</sup> By essentially challenging federal officials to enforce their own laws and uphold the constitutional rights of African-American travelers, the Freedom Riders hoped to draw attention to the lack of change in the South despite recent court decisions. One of the motivations behind the Freedom Rides stemmed from the language that the U.S. Supreme Court used in its 1955 second decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* that desegregation be achieved "with all deliberate speed." By 1961, these words rung hollow to civil rights supporters who believed that too much time had passed with very few tangible or measurable changes.<sup>22</sup>

On May 4, 1961, thirteen activists in Washington, D.C., chosen by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), climbed aboard Greyhound and Trailways buses bound for New Orleans. Some of the riders made only partial journeys, with new activists taking their places along the way.<sup>23</sup> The riders consisted of a mix of African Americans and Caucasians, with clergy and students comprising the majority of the group. The early portion of the initial journey went smoothly with little trouble in Virginia and North Carolina. However, as the group moved deeper into the South, hostility from local citizens and law enforcement officials increased. In South Carolina, an angry mob beat the riders. Martin Luther King, Jr., meeting the group in Georgia, warned, "You will never make it through Alabama." Indeed, King uncovered a conspiracy among police, local officials, and the Ku Klux Klan to stop the Freedom Rides by physical force. Despite the very real threats of harm, the Freedom Riders continued their journey. Just outside of Anniston, Alabama, segregationists firebombed one of the buses and a mob attempted to attack the riders as they fled the burning vehicle. When the second bus reached Birmingham, Alabama, a mob with similar intentions also assaulted the riders, who were dragged away and beaten nearly to death. Bull Connor, Birmingham's Public Safety Commissioner, effectively held the CORE freedom riders hostage for five days until plans for their departure from his city were firm. The CORE riders flew from Birmingham to New Orleans. Young activists with the Nashville Student Movement refused to let the Freedom Rides be stopped with violence and organized a group to pick up the ride in Birmingham where CORE left off.<sup>24</sup>

The situation in Birmingham resulted in a standoff between the Kennedy brothers and Alabama Governor John Malcolm Patterson. John Seigenthaler, the Attorney General's special assistant, traveled to Montgomery to

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 179-180.

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negotiate with Patterson, who wanted to avoid the involvement of federal officials to resolve the impasse. During discussions, Floyd Mann, Alabama's director of public safety, agreed to escort the Nashville student Freedom Riders from Birmingham to the Mississippi border where their safety would effectively become that state's responsibility. Mann proposed that the state highway patrol would accompany the riders, although Birmingham and Montgomery police would assume responsibility within those jurisdictions. Mann himself offered to ride on the bus as added protection.<sup>25</sup> President Kennedy approved this plan and agreed not to intervene.<sup>26</sup> Although Patterson reconsidered this plan, wanting to keep the Freedom Riders in Alabama for prosecution for disobeying the laws of his state, a plan for the group to leave Birmingham progressed.

After spending the night in the Birmingham bus station, the Nashville student Freedom Riders awoke on Saturday, May 20, 1961, to board a Greyhound bus to Dothan, Alabama, by way of Montgomery, where only a short layover was planned. However, Greyhound's driver, Joe Caverno, refused to drive the group due to the violent bombing outside of Anniston. After Governor Patterson assured Southern Greyhound officials that the presence of state and local law enforcement would prevent a similar event, Caverno agreed to drive the bus.<sup>27</sup> Twenty-one student Freedom Riders boarded the bus to make the journey. John Lewis, a student activist who would later become a key figure in the civil rights movement and a U.S. Congressman, was one of the Freedom Riders on this portion of the journey.

Mann planned three phases for the ninety-mile trip from Birmingham to Montgomery. A local police escort accompanied the bus to the Birmingham city line, where several highway patrol cars, a low-flying highway patrol plane, and vehicles with FBI observers, state plainclothes detectives, and reporters assumed escort responsibilities. Approaching the Montgomery city limits, Mann contacted L.B. Sullivan, Montgomery's public safety commissioner—who also happened to be a noted segregationist. Sullivan assured Mann that a large contingent of local police was waiting at the Montgomery Greyhound bus station, reiterating a claim that Sullivan and Marvin Stanley, Montgomery's acting police chief, made earlier in the day to FBI agents, who in turn passed the information on to Justice Department officials in Washington, DC.<sup>28</sup>

Special assistant Seigenthaler, still in Montgomery, therefore, had reason to believe that the Freedom Riders' safety was assured. After calculating the arrival time of the bus, he enjoyed breakfast before planning to meet the bus. However, because the bus did not make planned stops, it arrived in Montgomery early. Despite Sullivan's assurance of a prodigious police escort, a lone motorcycle patrolman escorted the bus through the city and no police were waiting at the station when the bus arrived at 10:23 a.m. Although initially misled by the quiet situation at the arrival bay of the station, where a handful of citizens and reporters gathered, the Freedom Riders soon discovered that a crowd of approximately two hundred protesters crowded the streets and the arrival bay area. Among the crowd were several notorious Klansmen who were involved in the Birmingham violence, as well as the de facto ringleader of the mob, Claude Henley, a friend of the commander of the city's patrol

25 Juan Williams. *Eyes on the Prize; America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. New York: Penguin Books, 1987, 153.

26 Arsenault, 205.

27 Ibid., 207-208.

28 Ibid., 211; See also David Halberstam. *The Children*. New York: Random House, 1998, 309.

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division, Captain Drue Lackey. Lackey, Henley, and Sullivan agreed to the lack of police presence so that Henley could "teach the Freedom Riders a lesson."<sup>29</sup>

Reporters greeted the Freedom Rides, but before the first question could be answered, a mob bearing lead pipes and baseball bats attacked first the reporters, smashing their equipment, before turning their attention to the Freedom Riders. Among the reporters attacked that day were Herb Kaplow and Moe Levy (NBC); Calvin Trillin (*Time Magazine*); and Don Uhrbrock and Norman Ritter (*Life Magazine*). Ritter notably tried in vain to shield the Freedom Riders from the mob.<sup>30</sup>

By this time, some of the Freedom Riders formed a human chain by joining hands. John Lewis encouraged the group to hold their ground and stand together while following nonviolent protocol, but the mob quickly overwhelmed them. Lewis remembered the scene, stating that "out of nowhere, from every direction, came people. White people. Men, women, and children. Dozens of them. Hundreds of them. Out of alleys, out of side streets, around the corners of office buildings, they emerged from everywhere, from all directions, all at once. . . . They carried every makeshift weapon imaginable. Baseball bats, wooden boards, bricks, chains, tire irons, pipes, even garden tools—hoes and rakes."<sup>31</sup>

The mob pushed some of the Freedom Riders against a retaining wall (located to the rear of the building and no longer extant), from which they jumped to the ground eight feet below. With most of the mob above on the loading platform, these riders attempted to escape. Some of the female riders spotted a taxi cab and asked the African-American driver to take them to Reverend Ralph Abernathy's First Baptist Church. However, due to segregationist policies and a limit on the number of passengers he could take, the driver agreed to take only five of the women, all of whom were African Americans, leaving two white riders. These soon located another cab and although the driver objected, citing the same segregationist policies as the first driver, the women entered the cab, but were subsequently pulled from the vehicle and beaten by the mob.

Seigenthaler, arriving on the scene and realizing that a full-scale riot was in progress, attempted to help the two female riders who were being assaulted. However, he was challenged by three men and despite identifying himself as a federal agent—or perhaps because he was one—they hit him on the back of the head with a metal pipe. After he fell to the ground, the mob attacked him, kicking him in the ribs and pushing him under the rear bumper of his car, where he remained for nearly a half hour until a reporter discovered him.<sup>32</sup>

The Freedom Riders who remained on the loading platform of the station, unable to escape their attackers, received the most serious injuries. The only white male rider, Jim Zwerg, bowed his head in prayer as the mob closed in around him. According to Fred Leonard, another Freedom Rider, "It was like those people in the mob were possessed. They couldn't believe there was a white man who would help us."<sup>33</sup> Claude Henley and other Klansmen kicked Zwerg in the back and then hit him over the head with his own suitcase. As Zwerg struggled

29 Ibid., 212.

30 Ibid.

31 John Lewis and Michael D'Orso. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. New York: Harvest Books, 1999, 157-158.

32 Arsenault, 213-214; "Uneasy Calm Returns to City, But Only Briefly," *Montgomery Advertiser*, 22 May 1961.

33 Arsenault, 214.

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to get up, the members of the mob pinned his arms behind his back while others—including women and children—punched him in the face. Zwerg finally lost consciousness and his attackers threw him over a railing and proceeded to look for new targets.<sup>34</sup>

Now focusing on the African-American Freedom Riders, the Klansmen brutally attacked John Lewis, Bernard Lafayette, and William Barbee (who was not on the bus, but traveled ahead to make subsequent travel arrangements and was at the station to greet his friends). Barbee suffered the brunt of the assault; after being hit, the Klansmen forced a jagged piece of pipe in his ear and hit him on the head with a baseball bat, inflicting permanent damage that shortened his life. The mob attacked Lewis next, quickly rendering him unconscious with a blow to the head. Leonard, Lafayette, and Allen Cason, Jr., escaped by jumping over the retaining wall and running into the adjacent post office.<sup>35</sup>

Several prominent individuals witnessed the riot taking place at the bus station from other nearby buildings which are still present and maintain their historic integrity from 1961. John Doar, an official with the justice Department's Civil Rights Division, watched the riot from a third-floor window in the adjacent Federal Building. He was relaying the events to another Federal Official, Burke Marshall saying, "... There's not a cop in sight... It's awful." Also watching from the Moore Office Building, located directly across the street from the bus station was Virginia Durr, wife of attorney Clifford Durr and sister-in-law of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black.<sup>36</sup>

Floyd Mann, not trusting Sullivan's commitment to maintaining peace through police presence, had stationed patrolmen a few blocks from the station and traveled to the station himself. Although he had no jurisdiction within the city limits, he was prepared to intervene if the Montgomery police abandoned their responsibility. Arriving on the scene five minutes after the riot started, Mann was shocked by what he was witnessing. Making his way to the loading platform, where a local man named Miles Davis was attempting to save Barbee's life, but was now under attack himself, Mann tried to pull attackers off of the men. When his efforts proved futile, Mann pulled his pistol, fired two warning shots and shouted, "I'll shoot the next man who hits him! Stand back! There will be no killing here today!"<sup>37</sup> Mann succeeded in dispersing the crowd on the loading platform, but other areas of the station were still in turmoil.<sup>38</sup>

While the Montgomery police force eventually arrived about ten minutes after the bus' arrival—in time to arrest the most violent members of the mob—they exhibited no real effort to detain or arrest anyone involved in the beatings. In fact, the officers were generally passive, which emboldened members of the mob even more when they realized the police were sympathetic to the mob's cause. Writing in the *Birmingham News*, Tom Lankford stated "I saw whites and negroes beaten unmercifully while law officers calmly directed traffic. I was an eyewitness to the mob attack last Sunday on the so-called 'freedom riders' in Birmingham. But with all its terror, it didn't compare with this. . . Saturday was hell in Montgomery." <sup>38a</sup>

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid, 215.

37 Interview with Tommy Giles by Stephanie Foell, Montgomery, Alabama, 15 November 2006; Arsenault, 215.

38 Williams, 155.

38a Arsenault, 154.

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When Sullivan arrived at the station, he was primarily interested in asserting his authority over Floyd Mann, who seemed to be the only official interested in helping and protecting the Freedom Riders. Attorney General MacDonald Gallion asked a deputy sheriff to read Judge Walter Jones' recently issued injunction, which barred the Freedom Riders from traveling in Alabama, to Lewis, who was lying on the pavement.<sup>39</sup> Other officials refused to call ambulances or help the injured otherwise seek medical attention. Convinced that Zwerg was dying, Lewis and Barbee sought help for him. However, they were told that all of the city's white ambulances were in the shop that weekend. Realizing the severity of the situation, Mann ordered Tommy Giles, one of his young patrolmen who also served as a police photographer, to drive Zwerg to St. Jude's Catholic Hospital.<sup>40</sup>

As the other riders scattered, they learned that they were legally considered outlaws in the state of Alabama for their actions, so not only did they need to seek refuge from physical harm but also arrest. Reverend Solomon S. Seay, Sr., upon hearing of the plight of the Freedom Riders, offered his home as a refuge and the riders began to gather there in the early afternoon of the day of the attack.<sup>41</sup>

Although all of the Freedom Riders had left the station, the mob continued to riot, burning the belongings of the riders and attacking newsmen and anyone else who appeared to be an outsider or a sympathizer. Although between two hundred and three hundred people were actively rioting, the Montgomery police did not interfere and allowed the rioters to continue until Floyd Mann called approximately seventy highway patrolmen to the scene. Finally, three hours after the riot started, Sullivan made a few arrests and authorized the use of tear gas to disperse the mob. Despite these efforts, the violence continued for two more hours, with smaller gangs creating problems in surrounding areas and igniting cars. Members of the mob also attacked two African-American bystanders, setting one on fire and breaking the other's leg. By the time the rioting ended six hours after it began, twenty people were seriously injured. In a brief, informal press conference, Sullivan showed his disregard for the victims, but later softened his stance when other city leaders worried about how Montgomery's handling of the situation would look to the rest of the world. However, state officials disputed Sullivan's claim that he didn't know the Freedom Riders were arriving. Judge Richard Rives led this charge, stating that he overheard a local Klan member declare that Sullivan kept his word, allowing the Klan to beat the riders without police interference.<sup>42</sup>

The attack on John Seigenthaler proved to be another serious issue resulting from the riot. When the press learned that the mob attacked a personal representative of the president and Sullivan refused to call an ambulance for him, the situation in Montgomery received additional press coverage. When Robert Kennedy learned that the Montgomery police did little if anything to protect the Freedom Riders and innocent bystanders, he called Governor John Patterson, who refused to take his call. President Kennedy then realized that the state's disregard for the federal government and the tacit support of civil disorder could only be remedied by

39 Arsenault, 216.

40 Interview with Tommy Giles, Alabama State Police photographer and former patrolman, 15 November 2006.

41 Recorded interview with Dr. Solomon Seay, Sr., by Dr. Howard Robinson, et. al., 11 April 2006. The Montgomery Civil Rights Oral History Project, National Center for the Study of Civil Rights and African-American Culture, Levi Watkins Learning Center, Archives Department, Alabama State University, Montgomery Alabama. Recordings accessed on 17 November 2006.

42 Arsenault, 218-220.

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dispatching federal marshals to Montgomery. President Kennedy ordered that the marshals arrive in Montgomery within twenty-four hours; however, many were in the town at Maxwell Air Force Base by midnight.<sup>43</sup>

In order to remedy the situation, President Kennedy released a statement to the press, urging local and state law enforcement officials to perform their duties, while also requesting that citizens—implying the Freedom Riders themselves—refrain from provoking more unrest in the South. Attorney General Robert Kennedy released a more detailed statement which described the events leading to his decision to send federal marshals to Montgomery, essentially justifying his choice to send the troops, which he had wanted to avoid doing.<sup>44</sup>

As the governmental events were unfolding, the Freedom Riders continued to gather at the home of the Reverend Solomon Seay. Despite the violence that they encountered, the group vowed to continue with their effort and felt a renewal of purpose. The Freedom Riders realized that they needed the support of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference to continue. The conference, comprised of southern African-American religious leaders, was widely recognized as the leading nonviolent civil rights group. Dr. King, initially reluctant to associate himself with the Freedom Rides, acknowledged that the events in Montgomery had reached a serious level and agreed to go to Montgomery.<sup>45</sup>

Photographers and journalists, who were often attacked as fiercely as the riders, recorded the savage scenes, not only in Montgomery, but in other towns as well. Generally, mob members believed that the media coverage unfairly portrayed them as savages and other regions of the country did not understand their long-held segregationist beliefs and therefore would not understand their reactions to integration efforts. Mobs quickly identified the photographers in the crowd and often smashed cameras and destroyed film.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, relatively few photographs of the Freedom Rider attacks survive; however, this should not be construed to mean that the events were not significant.

*The Aftermath of the Freedom Riders Attack*

On Sunday, May 21, 1961, more than one thousand people, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other prominent civil rights leaders, gathered at the First Baptist Church (Colored) in Montgomery, where Reverend Ralph Abernathy was pastor, to show support for the Freedom Riders who were waylaid in the town. For several hours, the congregation sang hymns and freedom songs and listened to testimonials. However, outside of the church another angry mob of segregationists convened. The crowd shouted racial epithets and threw rocks and Molotov cocktails.<sup>47</sup> Soon the mob proved to be too large and violent for the federal marshals, who were summoned after Governor John Patterson first declared "qualified martial rule" and later martial law. Attempting to protect the church, Governor Patterson deployed a battalion of National Guardsmen to disperse the crowd. While the National Guard used tear gas to disperse the crowd outside, Dr. King encouraged those gathered inside to remain calm, stating "we've come too far to turn back. . . We are not afraid and we shall

43 Ibid., 220-221.

44 Ibid., 222-223.

45 Ibid., 225.

46 "Bloody Rioting Rages Here After 'Freedom Riders' Arrive," *Alabama Journal*, 20 May 1961.

47 Arsenault, 1-2.

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overcome.”<sup>48</sup> The situation outside of the church was so dangerous that the church congregants and Freedom Riders could not leave the church until the morning. When they departed the building, they boarded a convoy of military trucks, evoking images of fleeing refugees, and returned to one of the city’s African-American neighborhoods.<sup>49</sup>

For two days, beginning Monday, May 22, the Nashville student freedom riders along with student leader Diane Nash, met with an array of movement leaders including King, Abernathy, CORE leadership, SNCC reps and others at the home of Dr. Richard Harris, a prominent black pharmacist, to map out a strategy for continuing the freedom rides.<sup>50</sup>

On May 24, 1961, the Freedom Riders departed Montgomery from the Trailways Bus Station, located on Lee Street. Three hundred National Guard troops cordoned off the street, providing protection as the group departed for Mississippi. Several troops rode the bus with the Freedom Riders, disembarking at the Alabama state line.<sup>51</sup>

Very few members of the mob were arrested on May 20, 1961, or in subsequent weeks. Among those who were arrested included liberal whites who tried to intervene on behalf of the Freedom Riders; they were generally cited with disorderly conduct and fined. In a small show of justice, Claude Henley was arrested several days after the attack, but was charged with attacking newsmen and not the Freedom Riders.<sup>52</sup>

#### *Impact of the Freedom Rides*

According to historian Raymond Arsenault, the events in Montgomery transformed the Freedom Rides and subsequently the civil rights movement. The riot transformed a limited experiment into a full-fledged movement.<sup>53</sup> The attacks in Montgomery garnered worldwide attention and forced the federal government to intervene instead of deferring to states to solve civil rights issues. While the Freedom Rides as a whole are significant, the events in Montgomery were individually of the utmost importance to the civil rights movement. While the Montgomery Bus Boycott established the town as a focal point in the movement, the Freedom Riders attack in Montgomery solidified the role of Montgomery in the ongoing struggle. This was later reinforced with the Selma to Montgomery march. Locally, the Freedom Rides resulted in more moderate governmental leadership. Following national visibility created by the Anniston, Birmingham and Montgomery violence, there were approximately sixty bus rides throughout the South with more than four hundred riders participating.

#### *Impacts of the Civil Rights Struggle in the South*

With Montgomery continuing to play a critical role in the civil rights struggle, Dr. King conducted the March on Washington in August 1963, which contributed to the successful passage of civil rights legislation signed by President Lyndon Johnson in July 1964. The following year, King received the Nobel Prize for Peace. Also in

48 Williams, 158, 237, and 239.

49 Arsenault, 2.

50 Arsenault, 248.

51 “Guardsmen ‘Ring’ Bus Station Area,” *Alabama Journal*, 24 May 1961.

52 “Ex-Reserve Policeman is Charged,” *Alabama Journal*, 23 May 1961.

53 Arsenault, 223.

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1965, in an effort to draw attention to disenfranchised African Americans, King and a group of citizens completed the Selma to Montgomery March, which was responsible for the passage of the Voting Rights Act later the same year.

Significance Evaluation

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is significant under Criterion A as the location of the attack on the Freedom Riders. This evaluation was completed under the guidelines presented for Criteria Consideration G, which allows properties that have attained significance within the past fifty years to be listed. The period of significance for the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is May 20, 1961, the day that the Freedom Riders were assaulted.

*Evaluation*

The National Register of Historic Places eligibility of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station has been evaluated under the standards for exceptional importance set forth in the National Register Bulletin *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years*. Particular application has been made of National Register Criterion A, i.e., qualities of significance associated with "events which have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." Although the bus station was constructed more than fifty years ago, the Freedom Riders event occurred in 1961; therefore, the site must be evaluated for its exceptional importance. Recently developed civil rights historic contexts as well as a comprehensive scholarly book on the Freedom Rides assisted in evaluating these events of the relatively recent past. The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is exceptionally important as a significant site in the American civil rights movement and is significant under Criterion A. Similarly, the site was evaluated under Criterion B for exceptional importance because important persons associated with the property would have likely had an association with the Freedom Rides and/or the civil rights movement, which occurred within the past fifty years. However, the station is not the site that is best associated with the productive lives of these civil rights leaders. The bus station was not evaluated for exceptional importance under Criterion C because it was constructed in 1950-1951. As a work of architecture, it is not eligible under Criterion C. There are numerous other examples of bus stations that personify the Art Moderne style and have higher degrees of integrity. At this time, the bus station was not evaluated for eligibility under Criterion D; however, the recent construction of the Frank M. Johnson Federal Courthouse and Annex has likely disturbed archeological resources.

In this analysis, multiple sources were taken into full consideration. These include:

- Utilization of the National Historic Landmarks draft context study entitled *Civil Rights in America: Racial Desegregation in Public Accommodations*;
- Comprehensive analysis of Freedom Rides according to the published work *Freedom Riders; 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* by Raymond Arsenault, which is the most detailed and definitive source on the subject;
- Interview with Tommy Giles, an Alabama police patrolman and photographer present at the Montgomery Freedom Riders incident;

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- Discerning the role of the Montgomery Freedom Riders incident in the greater civil rights movement according to various scholarly resources including the Pulitzer-Prize winning book *Parting the Waters* by Taylor Branch and other books and articles;
- Reviewing the body of work of architect William Arrasmith and most notably the place of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station in the nationwide collection of bus stations as described in *The Streamline Era Greyhound Terminals: The Architecture of W.S. Arrasmith* by Frank E. Wrenick;
- Comparatively analyzing other civil rights properties listed in the National Register, designated as National Historic Landmarks, or designated as World Heritage sites;
- Reviewing other properties listed in the National Register under Criterion Consideration G as exceptions to the standard fifty-year rule;
- Completing extensive documentary research into primary and academically sound sources; and
- Examining academic papers and other written interpretation specific to the evaluation of National Register eligibility for properties that have achieved significance in the recent past.

### Exceptional Importance Evaluation under Criterion Consideration G

According to the National Register of Historic Places Bulletin entitled *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*, the National Register recommends assessing properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years according to several standards.

#### **Historic Context**

The long-term impacts of some events in American history may take years to come to fruition or to be fully understood, thus supporting the logic of the National Register's generally accepted passage of a period of fifty years for the nomination of properties. Despite the relatively recent events of the American civil rights movement, many significant impacts and changes brought by the efforts of the movement were immediately evident. The era and its associated efforts are the subject of a National Historic Landmarks thematic study entitled *Civil Rights in America: Racial Desegregation in Public Accommodations*. This valuable historic context not only places the Freedom Rides in the context of the era, but also within the greater context of twentieth-century American history. The Freedom Rides were responsible for desegregating interstate travel in the American South and for raising the level of awareness of the ongoing civil rights issues throughout the United States. Perhaps most importantly, the Freedom Rides exposed segregation issues in the South to the rest of the nation. The rides ultimately instigated the involvement of the executive branch of the federal government, which recognized the need to intervene to insure both fairness and peace, spurring the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This federal legislation solidified the federal government's intolerance of segregation and violence directed to those who sought equality.

#### **Scholarly Evaluation**

In recent years, scholarship focusing on the civil rights movement in the United States has grown tremendously. Numerous scholars have written academic articles and books that focus on specific events and on the movement as a whole. These sources proved valuable in the assessment of the importance of the Freedom Rides in the

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continuum of the civil rights era. Perhaps the definitive and most valuable source on the Freedom Rides is *Freedom Riders; 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* by Raymond Arsenault. Published in 2006, the book is an exhaustive history of the events of the summer of 1961 and their subsequent impacts. Additionally, other notable scholars have written articles, essays, and more concise books on the Freedom Rides (see Works Consulted, Section 9). The consensus among these writers and academics is that the importance of the Freedom Rides simply cannot be overestimated. Likening the significance of the Freedom Rides to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and public school and university desegregation, the Freedom Rides are widely considered to be a pivotal endeavor of the civil rights movement. Furthermore, the Freedom Rides events in Montgomery are also considered to play a crucial role in the overall success of the movement. The attack and subsequent federal involvement brought national and international attention to the ongoing civil rights movement and caused an outcry that the executive branch of the federal government could not ignore.

**Fragile or Short-Lived Resources**

The evaluation of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station as a fragile or short-lived resource will entail an assessment of the building as it relates to the civil rights movement and not as a bus station as a resource type since it derives its significance from its association with important events. Other resources that have been determined to be exceptionally important and eligible for listing in the National Register are often of a distinct or unusual building type or architectural style. However, when assessing exceptional importance related to the civil rights movement, many of the resources are actually commonplace buildings that are more than fifty years of age and have achieved significance not for their architecture, but for their relationship to historic events in the 1950s and 1960s. Because many of these buildings are not extraordinary architectural examples and due to the recent nature of the events that make them potentially important, they are at a particularly high level of risk. Within Montgomery, the Empire Theater, the site where Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat and where she was subsequently arrested, was demolished for a museum honoring her. Although the site may have not had a direct link to the boycott, visitors to Montgomery now have a very different backdrop to the site of the historic event. Similarly, many churches and schools with ties to the civil rights movement have undergone alterations to keep them from becoming functionally and structurally obsolete or have been abandoned. While select sites, most notably the Lorraine Motel in Memphis where Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated, have been memorialized or turned into museums, one of the most important aspects of the civil rights movement is that it was comprised of regular people; many of the sites associated with the movement are similarly standard or normal. Therefore, these seemingly mundane sites perhaps are at a greater risk than more ornate or striking examples of architecture. Furthermore, because to some individuals the civil rights movement represents an embarrassing, or at least unpleasantly controversial, period in American history, much like slavery and its associated built resources, the properties are endangered because the owners or the greater public may not deem them worthy of preservation.

**Time**

Time is another compelling aspect involved in evaluating the exceptional importance of the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station. As stated in the National Register Bulletin *Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years*, "the more recently a property has achieved significance, generally the more difficult it is to demonstrate exceptional importance." Although it is a typical and modest bus station constructed in the 1950s, the building derives its significance from the attack on

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the Freedom Riders in 1961, an event that occurred forty-seven years before the time of the current evaluation. Because the event that caused the bus station to achieve significance occurred nearly fifty years ago, the assessment of exceptional importance is relatively uncomplicated because adequate time has passed, allowing the Freedom Rides to be placed in the historic continuum of the civil rights movement and American history.

**Comparative Evaluation of the Significance of a Property**

Many civil rights sites have not been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at this time for reasons described above. However, the National Park Service developed a travel itinerary entitled "We Shall Overcome: Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement." The itinerary contains approximately fifty sites in twenty-one states. While the list is not comprehensive, it contains many of the most notable civil rights sites. Some sites are not associated with the nonviolent practices of the Freedom Riders and Dr. Martin Luther King, but all are associated with achieving the ultimate goal of racial equality. Like the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station, many of the resources are typical—even mundane—examples of architecture that have been determined to be historically significant for their role in the American civil rights movement.<sup>54</sup> The National Historic Landmarks draft context study entitled *Civil Rights in America: Racial Desegregation in Public Accommodations* identifies eight bus stations that played critical roles in transportation desegregation. Three of these have been demolished. Other stations retain higher levels of integrity. However, the Montgomery station is exceptionally significant not only for the role that it played in desegregation, but also for being the site of one of the most significant civil rights events during the movement. Scholars agree the attack in Montgomery effectively changed the course of the civil rights movement. Therefore, this station is important for its role in the greater civil rights struggle and not just for its role in desegregating transportation, which was the focus of the study.<sup>55</sup>

The conclusion of this intensive evaluation is that the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is significant under Criterion Consideration G for exceptional importance as a significant site in the American civil rights movement. The property is significant under Criterion A as the location of an event that has made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history. The period of significance for the Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is limited to the single-day Freedom Riders event: May 20, 1961. The arrival of the Freedom Riders and the subsequent riot at the station are the defining events of the site historically. Although the Freedom Riders remained in Montgomery for five days, civil rights leaders held meetings related to the riot at local churches and homes, and the riders subsequently left Montgomery from the Trailways bus station. However, the single-day event was so powerful, it garnered nationwide attention to this aspect of desegregation for interstate travel. The involvement of the Executive Branch of the government had a lasting impact on the civil rights movement. While the Montgomery Bus Boycott effectively launched the modern civil rights movement, the Freedom Riders event in Montgomery solidified the role of this southern city in the ongoing struggle. This was later reinforced with the Selma to Montgomery march.

<sup>54</sup> See <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/travel/civilrights/>, the National Park Service travel itinerary "We Shall Overcome: Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement," for a list of sites. Accessed 15 June 2007.

<sup>55</sup> National Park Service. National Historic Landmarks Survey. *Civil Rights in America: Racial Desegregation in Public Accommodations, Draft*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 2004.

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The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is not eligible under Criterion B. Although several prominent people, including John Seigenthaler, Byron White, and John Lewis, were involved in the Freedom Rides and Attorney General Robert Kennedy and President John F. Kennedy took action from their posts in Washington, DC, there are other sites that are more strongly associated with all of these people's productive lives and that more closely illustrate their lasting contributions to American history.

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station is not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. A review of Greyhound bus stations nationwide, many of which were designed by W.S. Arrasmith, shows that the Montgomery station is a modest example constructed at a time when Greyhound was focusing on efficiency at the expense of abandoning the landmark streamlined Art Moderne styles that embodied the pre-World War II promises of improved passenger travel. The station is based on a stock plan developed by Arrasmith for Greyhound. Although Arrasmith altered these stock plans to meet the site and needs of each city where they were used, these 1950s stations are ubiquitous and there are many others with more architectural merit and higher degrees of integrity. Similarly, while W.S. Arrasmith designed several notable Art Moderne stations for Greyhound, his later designs—of which Montgomery's station is one—are more rote. Overall, Arrasmith was a solid architect, but he cannot be considered a master nor can the Montgomery station be considered as a masterpiece.

*Integrity Evaluation*

The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station retains collectively high levels of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling on the exterior. The station remains in its original location, with many surrounding buildings from its era of construction extant on adjacent parcels. The recently constructed Courthouse Annex, a large building, does encroach on the parcel, but important views to the historic Frank M. Johnson, Jr. Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (which formerly included the post office where some of the Freedom Riders sought refuge) and the 1940s era historic Moore Office Building across the street where some witnessed the riot, remain intact. Although some exterior changes have occurred, original materials remain in place. Most importantly, the building's facade, which is immediately recognizable as a mid-twentieth-century bus station, continues to convey its original function. The recent restoration of character-defining signage increases the integrity of association, design, and materials. Other alterations to the building, which was enlarged after the Freedom Riders attack, returned the footprint of the building to resemble more closely its appearance during the period of significance. This essentially bolstered the overall integrity of the building. While the building is not eligible under Criterion C because bus stations of this type and vintage are ubiquitous, the exterior integrity insures that it is able to convey its critical role in the Freedom Riders attack, for which it is significant under Criterion A. The Montgomery Greyhound Bus Station retains little integrity on the interior. This lack of interior integrity does not diminish the building's ability to convey the reason it is significant. However, the Freedom Riders attack occurred on the exterior of the building, which retains integrity. The station continues to convey its original use as a bus terminal.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Name of Property: Greyhound Bus Station  
City or Vicinity: Montgomery  
County: Montgomery County  
State: AL  
Name of Photographer: S. Foell  
Date of Photographs: November 2006  
Location of Original Digital Files: A.D. Marble & Company  
375 E. Elm Street, Suite 200  
Conshohocken, PA 19428

Photo # 1 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0001)  
Facade (east elevation), view to southwest

Photo # 2 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0002)  
Facade (east elevation), view to southwest

Photo # 3 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0003)  
Facade (east elevation), view to west

Photo # 4 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0004)  
South and east elevations, view to northwest

Photo # 5 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0005)  
Bird's eye view of north and west elevations, view to south

Photo # 6 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0006)  
Interior-view to the east

Photo # 7 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0007)  
Interior-view to southeast

Photo # 8 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0008)  
Interior, restroom-view to southeast

Photo # 9 (AL\_Montgomery County\_Greyhound Bus Station\_0009)  
Interior showing entrance on east elevation, view to northeast





**STEEL FABRIC & CONCRETE WORKS**  
This building was constructed in 1911 and was the first building in the world to be constructed of reinforced concrete. It was designed by the architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, and was built by the Steel Fabric & Concrete Works. The building is a landmark of the early 20th century and is a fine example of the use of reinforced concrete in architecture.



1  
THE BROWN BUILDING  
1910





EXIT

PUSH





EXIT





EXIT

PUSH

PUSH