

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Great Branch Teacherage  
other names/site number Great Branch Rosenwald School Teacherage

**2. Location**

street & number 2890 Neeses Highway not for publication  
city or town Orangeburg vicinity X  
state South Carolina code SC county Orangeburg code 075 zip code 29115

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant    nationally    statewide X locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official                      Date

Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official                      Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
I, hereby certify that this property is:		
<u>  </u> entered in the National Register <u>  </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u>  </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u>  </u> See continuation sheet.		
<u>  </u> determined not eligible for the National Register		
<u>  </u> removed from the National Register		
<u>  </u> other (explain):		

Great Branch Teacherage  
Name of Property

Orangeburg County, South Carolina  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>                    </u>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Education Subcategory: Education-related housing

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Vacant/Not In Use Subcategory:

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
Other: American Folk Tradition

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
foundation Brick  
walls Wood  
roof Asphalt  
other                     

Narrative Description  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Great Branch Teacherage  
 Name of Property

Orangeburg County, South Carolina  
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**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.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a grave.
- d a cemetery.
- e a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- f a commemorative property.
- g less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education  
 Ethnic Heritage/Black

**Period of Significance**

1925-1954

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository:  
 S.C. Dept. of Archives & History

Great Branch Teacherage  
Name of Property

Orangeburg County, South Carolina  
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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>17 499744 3709065</u>	3 <u>17 499663 3708971</u>	5 <u>17 499729 3709115</u>
2 <u>17 499782 3709012</u>	4 <u>17 499657 3709076</u>	

\_\_\_See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Rosa M. Kennerly  
 organization Great Branch Community Center date 10 July 2007  
 street & number 2890 Neeses Highway telephone (803) 533-1828  
 city or town Orangeburg state S.C. zip code 29115

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Great Branch Community Center  
 street & number 2890 Neeses Highway telephone (803) 533-1828  
 city or town Orangeburg state S.C. zip code 29115

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). **Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

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Great Branch Teacherage

Name of Property

Orangeburg County, South Carolina

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The Great Branch Teacherage is located at 2890 Neeses Highway, approximately ten miles west of Orangeburg, South Carolina, on South Carolina Highway 4. The cottage, which sits on an approximately five-acre parcel of land, is a wooden-frame single-level structure. Featuring a lateral gabled roof with exposed rafter tails and a wide eave, the massed-plan cottage consists of three bedrooms, a living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, pantry, and two bedroom closets. The roof of a central front porch supported by four large wooden square posts extends from the main roof at the same pitch and serves as a distinguishing feature. This teachers' cottage, built in 1924-25, was an important part of the Great Branch School complex. The school, built in 1917-18, was one of the first Rosenwald schools in South Carolina; arsonists burned it in the early 1960s. The campus also contained a cannery, a shop, a storage building, well house, and two outdoor privies. The Great Branch Teacherage is the only building or structure from the school complex retaining its integrity from the period 1918-1954. Though it is in relatively poor condition, the teacherage retains almost all of its original features and has not undergone any significant alterations.

This one-story wooden building sits on wooden sills and brick piers. The exterior walls, of balloon frame construction and clad with clapboard, are still standing, and the building has its original form. The teacherage has paired windows flanking the central porch, two single-leaf windows on each side elevation on the first floor and a single window in each gable, three single windows and a paired window on the rear elevation, and four windows on a large gabled dormer above the porch, which allowed more light and air to filter into the house. Use of natural light became a signature part of Rosenwald project designs. A front porch with brick steps leads to the tripartite front entrance that consists of a single-leaf paneled and glazed door and sidelights with underpanels. There was also a back porch that opened to the kitchen, but it is no longer extant. A tripartite rear entrance, still present but in poor condition, was once accessed by the rear porch. Both porches will have to be repaired, replaced and/or restored. A deteriorated, diamond-patterned asbestos-shingled roof with one chimney on the front slope and two chimneys on the rear slope covers the house and must be replaced.

According to available South Carolina Department of Education records, the home was built through the Rosenwald project's specifications for a three-room residence for teachers. Rosenwald teachers' homes associated with larger schools helped to make them centers of community life by offering practical instruction that would attract both students and parents from surrounding school districts, and attract better-qualified principals and teachers who would become local leaders. The house contains 1,297 square feet of living space.

The main entry into the home accesses directly the living room that features a large fireplace. The dining room is to the left [west] and the kitchen is behind or north of the dining room. The home was built so that the kitchen and dining room could be used as a home economics class if needed. There are three bedrooms, and each has a fireplace, which was used to heat the rooms. The two bedrooms on the eastern side of the home share a divided closet.

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From ca. 1955 until the early 1970s local families occupied the house, and it later fell into disrepair due to neglect. Some floorboards and all interior walls will need to be repaired and/or replaced. The ceilings also will need to be repaired and/or replaced and insulation installed. There is no electricity or running water in the building.

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Great Branch Teacherage

Name of Property

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The Great Branch Teacherage, on South Carolina Highway 4 between Orangeburg and Neeses in rural Orangeburg County, South Carolina, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a relatively intact and rare example of Rosenwald-funded teachers' housing from the period 1917-1932, when the Julius Rosenwald Fund was helping build schools and associated buildings to support the education of black children in the South.

The Great Branch School that once stood on the site, was built in 1917-18, was enlarged in 1922-1923, and closed ca. 1954; arsonists burned it in the early 1960s. Great Branch was one of the first Rosenwald schools in the state, constructed for the East Liberty School District # 55.

The school was built as a two-room school, for a cost of \$2550.00 --- \$500.00 from the Rosenwald Fund, \$1847.00 from the black community in the vicinity, \$8.00 from the white community in the vicinity, and \$100.00 each from Orangeburg County and the state of South Carolina. It first had two teachers, one of them also serving as principal.

By the end of the 1921-1922 school year enrollment had grown enough to justify a significant addition of three rooms to the school, at a cost of \$2050.00 --- \$600.00 from the Rosenwald Fund, \$650.00 from the black community in the vicinity, and \$400.00 each from Orangeburg County and the state of South Carolina. Three additional teachers were hired as well, for a total of five, one of them serving as principal.

Because the school was a five-teacher school, finding enough qualified local teachers was challenging. Although Tuskegee Institute distributed plans for teachers' homes, support structures such as these were not part of the Rosenwald building program at the time. School boards resisted spending additional funds for these kinds of facilities at African American schools. Consequently, beginning in 1920, the Fund offered to pay fifty percent of the cost of a teachers' home at schools with at least an eight-month term. Initially the grant could run as much as \$1,000.00. By 1922, however, the Fund scaled its maximum award back to \$900.00. The Rosenwald Fund contributed \$900.00 towards the construction of the Great Branch Teacherage and the local "Negroes" provided \$1,750.00 match, evidence that the black community valued education.

During a time when education was not a priority of state funding for African American children, the Great Branch School and its teacherage were unusual and landmarks in the community. The teacherage housed its first principal, Professor William M. Jennings, who was seen as a pivotal individual in the community. He served as the school's principal and agriculture teacher from 1922 to 1933. The school had an average enrollment of 150 students, one principal/teacher and three or four additional teachers. Teachers did not specialize as much in subjects as they did with grades. For example, one teacher taught first and second grades while another taught third, fourth and fifth

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grades. Enrollment in first through ninth grades determined how many grades a teacher would teach. The Great Branch School ended at ninth grade, and students would have to travel to Orangeburg to complete high school.

Since state government officials of the 1920s had relatively little interest in the education of "Negroes", local leaders were largely free to determine the curriculum and other administrative matters at their schools. South Carolina State College (now South Carolina State University) and Claflin University, two historically black institutions in nearby Orangeburg linked with the Great Branch School and many other "colored" local schools to help direct their efforts of educating the children in their communities.

During the Rosenwald building program, 217 teachers' homes were built throughout the Southeast. Eight of those were built in South Carolina. Of those eight, the Great Branch Teacherage is one of only two known to be still standing, along with the teacherage at the State College Training School on the South Carolina State University campus in Orangeburg.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Negro Rural School and Its Relation to the Community* (Tuskegee: Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institution Extension Department, 1915); J.H. Brannon, "Report of State Agent for Negro Schools," 1917-18, in *50th Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina* (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Education, 1918), pp. 96, 102; J.H. Brannon, "Report of State Agent for Negro Schools," 1922-23, in *55th Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina* (Columbia: South Carolina Department of Education, 1923), p. 91; Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006); National Trust for Historic Preservation, The Rosenwald Schools Initiative, [www.rosenwaldschools.com/index.html](http://www.rosenwaldschools.com/index.html), accessed 15 November 2006.

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**References**

Brannon, J.H. "Report of State Agent for Negro Schools." In the *Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina*, 1918, 1923. Columbia: South Carolina Department of Education, 1918, 1923.

Hoffschwelle, Mary S. *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South*. New Perspectives on the History of the South. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006.

*The Negro Rural School and Its Relation to the Community*. Tuskegee: Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute Extension Department, 1915.

National Trust for Historic Preservation, The Rosenwald Schools Initiative,  
<http://www.rosenwaldschools.com/index.html>, accessed 15 November 2006.

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**Verbal Boundary Justification**

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "Great Branch Teacherage" on the accompanying Orangeburg County Tax Map 0097-00-03-004.000, drawn at a scale of 1" = 50'.

**Boundary Description**

The boundary of the nominated property is restricted to the historic teacherage and its immediate setting.

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Name of Property  
Orangeburg County, South Carolina  
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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property: Great Branch Teacherage  
Location of Property: 2890 Neeses Highway  
Orangeburg vicinity  
Orangeburg County, South Carolina

Name of Photographer: Leah Brown, S.C. Department of Archives and History  
Date of Photographs: May 2006, October 2006, January 2007  
Location of Original Negatives: S.C. Department of Archives and History

1. Oblique view from southwest, with Teacherage at left and Community Center at right
2. Oblique view from southeast
3. Oblique view from southwest
4. East elevation and oblique view of north [rear] elevation
5. West elevation and oblique view of north [rear] elevation
6. Detail of central front porch
7. Detail of front entrance
8. Detail of brick foundation pier
9. Interior view of corridor, with failing plaster walls, door surrounds and wood ceiling
10. Interior view of corridor, with deteriorated/damaged plaster walls and low wainscoting
11. Interior view of room with vertical board wainscoting
12. Interior view of room with vertical board wainscoting and horizontal paneled door
13. View of one of the rooms' mantels and firebox
14. View of one of the rooms' mantels with closed firebox
15. South Carolina Sinking Fund Commission Photograph, Great Branch Teacherage, 1935-1950