

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic PANTEGO ACADEMY

and or common

2. Location

street & number Academy Street _____ not for publication

city, town Pantego _____ vicinity of

state North Carolina code 037 county Beaufort code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Pantego Alumni Association c/o Mrs. Laura Payne

street & number 124 McNair Street

city, town Washington _____ vicinity of state North Carolina

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Beaufort County Courthouse

street & number -

city, town Washington _____ state NC

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Mideast Reconnaissance Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Summer, 1980 _____ federal _____ state county _____ local

depository for survey records North Carolina Division of Archives & History, Survey Branch

city, town 515 N. Blount St., Raleigh _____ state NC

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Documentary photographs indicate that the early form of the Pantego Academy was quite typical of rural schools of the mid to late nineteenth century. The small frame structure, constructed ca. 1874, stood two stories tall with a gable front roof and measured three bays wide by four bays deep. Corner posts with simple molded tops rose to the frieze board and enframed the elevations. Double doors of vertical panels had simple casings, as did the six over six window sash. The interior of the school was divided into two rooms, one upstairs and one downstairs, with the stair rising along the front wall. The academy stood on a low pier foundation.

In the early twentieth century the school was enlarged and altered to its present appearance. Two, two-story, three bay additions were made on each side of the original structure and a seven bay ell was constructed to the rear. On the front elevation the two bays nearest the original structure contain single, secondary doors. The front portico, with its hipped roof, covers the center five bays of the nine bay facade and was also added at this time. It is supported by four simple Doric columns of solid juniper. The unusual yet graceful wishbone stair, a vernacular rendition of a classical form, is sheltered by the massive portico. The stair rises just inside the secondary doors over the central door to a second floor, central doorway. Thus, the stair, with its balustrade sheathed in narrow boards, forms a large arched opening over the central entrance on the first floor. Turned and chamfered newels are found at the base of the stair on each side. The exterior of the academy building is sheathed in molded weatherboard. Two-light transoms appear over the central first floor door and over the two flanking secondary doors at the base of the stairs. The existing five panel front doors are replacements, as are the solid paneled shutters on all windows. A simple frame belfry on the roof of the school still houses a cast iron bell and was constructed in 1879.

The southeast and northwest elevations of the main block have five bays and hipped roofs. The gable roof, rear ell is seven bays in depth and is centered on the main block of the school building. One story sheds with hip roofs are attached to the rear of the main block on both side elevations.

The first floor, central door enters directly into the main, or original, room, which was enlarged with the addition of the rear ell. Chamfered posts support the ceiling in this room. The ceiling, wainscoting, and walls are all sheathed in narrow, vertical beaded board. Molded surrounds frame the five panel doors and two over two window sash. The two wing rooms flanking the central room have molded chairrails. Entry into the right room, once a museum, is through double doors; the left wing room entrance is framed by a large arched opening. The upstairs is divided into two rooms with a large hall and is simply finished.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion	
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science	
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture	
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	military	social	
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater	
1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation	
		invention		other (specify)	

Specific dates ca. 1874, ca. 1910 **Builder Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Pantego Academy, established and built ca. 1874, has long been associated with education in this part of rural, eastern North Carolina. The Academy was created during a time when education in general was viewed with indifference by government and the public alike, and was considered secondary to the other problems of the day. It remains as a tribute to the dedication of Pantego's citizens, who overcame this apathy and created an institution which enjoyed a reputation for quality education for over eighty years. Established originally as a private school, the Academy was later converted for public school use. Although it has been enlarged over the years to accomodate expanding needs, the Academy's basic form, construction, and simple finish are typical of rural, small town schools of the late nineteenth century. It is one of a relatively small number of such schools which have survived, and remains a local landmark and source of great pride for Pantego.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Pantego Academy is associated with education in rural North Carolina during the latter half of the 19th century, a period when education in general did not have widespread support. It played an important role in providing opportunities for learning to citizens of this relatively isolated section of the state.
- C. Although enlarged over the years and now exhibiting an unusual exterior stair, the Academy's basic form, finish, and frame construction are representative of the typical rural school found in North Carolina in the late 19th century. It is among a dwindling group of such buildings which still survive in the state.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Pantego Academy was opened in the 1870s to serve the educational needs of the citizens of Pantego, a small farming and milling community in eastern Beaufort County. Although the town was not incorporated until 1881, it was settled as early as 1803 and a post office was at the site as early as 1828.¹

Prior to the establishment of the academy what schooling existed in Pantego was conducted on the second floor of the community's Grange Store, an inconvenience that convinced the citizenry that a more permanent building was necessary.² In 1874 the Pantego Educational Association was formed with George Old as president, W.J. Crumpler as secretary, and Walter Clark as treasurer. Other trustees were Jordan Wilkinson, H.L. Davis, E.S. Ratcliffe, P.H. Johnson, William J. Bullock, M.J. Whitley, J.T. Adams, Noah Bell, W.B. Windley, and Richard Shavender.³ Most of these men were farmers, although Bullock was a physician, while Clark and Windley were merchants. Old, Clark, Whitley, and Bullock were among the city commissioners of Pantego at the time of its incorporation. Dr. Bullock was magistrate for Pantego and served in 1890 as chairman of the county commissioners for Beaufort County.⁴ Clearly Pantego Academy was a project initiated by the leading citizens of Pantego.

The academy was to be a private school rather than a public school. This was the common pattern in the 1870s in North Carolina where "the plain mandatory provisions of the constitution that the General Assembly and the county commissioners provide public schools for four months each year for all children were violated." The main reason for this plight of public schools was public indifference and apathy; these forces were successfully overcome by the founders of Pantego Academy.⁵

While the Pantego Educational Association raised money for the school building, land was obtained from one trustee. On November 27, 1877 Walter Clark and his wife Augusta Clark, in consideration of the concern that they "had for the community⁶ and the cause of education," deeded an acre of land to the trustees of the academy. Walter Clark was an unswerving friend of the academy during its early days. In addition to serving Pantego as a city commissioner, a merchant, and a friend of education, Clark was a farmer, a railroad and extension agent, and the proprietor of the Pantego Hotel.

The Pantego Academy had twenty-seven students when it opened in 1875 under the principalship of Henderson Snell of Scuppernong. During the 1880s the school saw a gradual expansion of staff and curriculum. In spite of frequent staff turnover and a chronic lack of money, the academy gained a reputation for quality. The school ran into serious financial difficulties in the early 1890s when the building had to be leased "in order to pay a big debt against the school." The academy was saved when Walter Clark bought up the lease.⁷ The school struggled until 1901 when Dennis Davis, a Disciple of Christ minister, took charge. Davis and his assistants Annie Joyner and Henderson Mizelle put Pantego Academy back on its feet again. Later, in

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1909, the Woman's Betterment Association was established, and the school's chronic financial problems were partially alleviated by this group of women who aided the school by the "purchase of desks, auditorium seats, pianos, blackboards, and so forth."¹⁰

In 1907 Pantego Academy made the change from private academy to public school. Title to the building was passed to the Beaufort County Board of Education.¹¹ In 1910 the citizens of Pantego's school district passed a bond issue which made possible the building of an addition to the academy. It was at this time that the building began to be altered to its current appearance.

The school had a great period of growth under the leadership of Fred Parker of Loretto, Virginia, who was principal from 1914 until his death in 1929, by far the longest tenure of any Pantego principal. Parker orchestrated the transition of Pantego Academy to Pantego High School. During his fifteen years the school doubled its enrollment, added new departments and new teachers, and in 1925 opened a new \$25,000 brick building.¹²

In 1937 the old academy building was declared unsafe for classroom use. A new building was constructed and the old building was turned into office space.¹³ In 1944 it was remodeled again and turned into a lunchroom.¹⁴ In 1966 the building, by this time having been phased out of use, was purchased by the Pantego Alumni Association.¹⁵ The association, mindful of the importance of the old academy and the difficult struggle for quality education in the nineteenth century, is currently restoring the building.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹D. D. Topping (ed.), "Pantego and Its School of Yesterday and Today" (Unpublished manuscript, 1927), 1. hereinafter cited as Topping, "Pantego and Its School"; William S. Powell, The North Carolina Gazetteer (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 370.
- ²Rosa Gray Hamilton, "The History of Pantego School" (Unpublished typescript, 1949, 3, hereinafter cited as Hamilton, "History of Pantego School." Ursula Fogleman Loy and Worthy, Pauline Marion (eds.), Washington and the Pamlico (Washington, North Carolina: Beaufort County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 270-271.
- ³Hamilton, "The History of Pantego School," 3.
- ⁴Levi Branson (ed.), North Carolina Business Directory of 1877-1878 (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1878), 32; Levi Branson (ed.), North Carolina Business Directory for 1890 (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1889), 95-96, 101, hereinafter cited as Branson, North Carolina Business Directory for 1890; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Beaufort County, North Carolina: Population Schedule; Topping, "Pantego and Its School," 2.
- ⁵Hugh Talmadge Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, North Carolina: The History of a Southern State (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973, third edition), 534.
- ⁶Beaufort County Deed Book 43, p. 337. Although no reference is made to the building itself, it is likely that it had already been built on the site before Walter Clark deeded it to the academy.
- ⁷Branson, North Carolina Business Directory for 1890, 96, 101; Levi Branson (ed.), North Carolina Business Directory for 1896 (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1896), 97.
- ⁸Hamilton, "History of Pantego School," 4-6; Topping, "Pantego and Its School," 5.
- ⁹Hamilton, "History of Pantego School," 6-7.
- ¹⁰Topping, "Pantego and Its School," 7.
- ¹¹Beaufort County Deed Book 157, p. 110.

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¹²Hamilton, "History of Pantego School," 9-10.

¹³Hamilton, "History of Pantego School," 12.

¹⁴Washington Daily News, June 24, 1978.

¹⁵Beaufort County Deed Book 605, p. 54.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Pantego

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	8	3	4	9	3	4	0	3	9	3	9	6	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification As shown on the attached tax map; property bounded on northeast by a tiled ditch, on southeast by a line 10' from edge of building, on the northwest by a line 10' from wall of building, and on southwest by Academy Street.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county n/a code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Historical significance: Jim Sumner (Researcher)
Architectural description: Beth Thomas (Survey Specialist)

organization N.C. Division of Archives & History date June 12, 1984

street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone 919-733-6545

city or town Raleigh state North Carolina

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William S. P. Jr.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 12, 1984

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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of North Carolina Press, 1968.

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United States Census Office. Tenth Census of the United States, 1880:
Beaufort County, North Carolina, Population Schedule. Microfilm copy,
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Washington Daily News. June 24, 1978.

