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## **Belcher-Nixon Building in Ensley listed to National Register**

The Belcher-Nixon Building located at 1728 29th Street Ensley in Birmingham was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 12, 2009. The nomination was submitted by the property owners, John W. and Margaret A. Nixon, Jr.

Constructed c. 1922, it is the only historic commercial building remaining in Tuxedo Junction which was a predominantly African-American commercial center in the Birmingham suburb of Ensley. This commercial center served Tuxedo Park which was platted in 1899 and developed as a residential area for African-Americans employed at the US Steel Ensley Works. Tuxedo Junction was immortalized in a 1939 song of the same name written by Erskine Ramsay Hawkin's band. The band played the song at dances held in the American Woodmen Hall located on the second floor of the Belcher-Nixon Building. The song became a long-running national hit after it was recorded by the Glen Miller Orchestra in the 1940s. The recording sold over 3.5 million copies and topped the record charts for almost a decade.

The building also housed the offices of several black dentists and physicians, most notably Dr. Andrew F. Belcher who practiced here from c. 1922 to 1951 and Dr. John W. Nixon who took over Belcher's dentistry practice in 1951 and retired in 1988. Dr. Nixon was active in the struggle for civil rights in Birmingham in the 1950s and 1960s. He served as the president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), two terms as president of the Alabama Conference of NAACP Branches and one term as the chairman of the Southern Regional Conference of NAACP Branches.

The **National Register of Historic Places** is a program of the National Park Service and is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.

*To protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places is the mission of the Alabama Historical Commission, Alabama's state agency for historic preservation.*

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