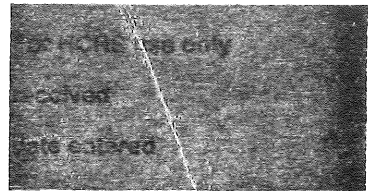


United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service



**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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

1. Name

historic John C. Campbell Folk School Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Flanking SR 1564, SR 1558, SR 1604, and SR 1565 not for publication

city, town Brasstown vicinity of congressional district Eleventh

state North Carolina code 37 county Cherokee code 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>n/a</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>n/a</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Esther Hyatt, Director Bob Fink, Interim Director
John C. Campbell Folk School

street & number

city, town Brasstown vicinity of state North Carolina 28902

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cherokee County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Murphy, state North Carolina 28906

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cherokee County Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Western Office, N.C. Division of Archives and History
13 Veterans Drive, Asheville, N.C. 28805

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John C. Campbell Folk School occupies a campus of 366 acres in the valley of Brasstown Creek in southeastern Cherokee County along the Clay County line. In this section of western North Carolina, the mountains are less steep and forbidding than they are in other areas, with gently rolling hills and broad, fertile valleys suitable in many places for row crop agriculture and the raising of livestock. The quiet, rural beauty of the area, undisturbed to the present by modern encroachments, has provided an ideal setting for the Folk School for almost 60 years.

Most of the main buildings of the Folk School date from the late 1920s and early 1930s, and in their variety they reflect the different formative influences and functions of the school. Scattered among the structures of American vernacular and popular derivation are several buildings of a distinctively European character. These reveal the school's direct lineage from the Danish folk schools that provided the model, and speak of the presence of two European instructors and builders at the school during its formative period -- Georg Bidstrup, a Dane, and Leon Deschamps, a Belgian. (See Statement of Significance for discussion of these men)

Inventory List (Numbers keyed to hand drawn location map)

Categories: K -Key structures.

C -Contributing structures

R -Recent structures consistent with the district in terms of form, scale, and materials but not contributing because of age.

- K 1. Farm House. The oldest original structure on the campus, dating from the turn of the century. It was present when the lands were acquired for the school in 1925, having been a dwelling of a previous owner, and it served as the first classroom building and dormitory at the school. It is a small, story-and-a-half, gable roof frame structure typical of the mountain region, built on a saddlebag plan around a central brick chimney, and enlarged with a one-story rear ell. A 1926 photograph reveals that the wide shed dormer across the front was added shortly after the school was established. The rear ell was probably enlarged at the same time, with a two-story sleeping porch added on the south side of the ell. The interior is simply finished, with plastered walls, four-panel milled doors, a batten door on the enclosed stair, and post-and-lintel mantels. In the breast of the rebuilt interior chimney in the rear ell, faced with rough stucco, is inscribed the Danish proverb "Har du reist og tretet dig / Kom sid ned og hvil hos mig," which translates as "If you are tired and weary from your travels, come sit by my side and rest a while." Now in limited use as a dormitory, Farm House remains the symbolic heart of the Folk School.
- K 2. Keith House. 1926-1928. The principal administrative and dormitory building since its completion in 1928. The first (west) section, containing the large community room, was begun in 1926 and built on a design provided by Dorothy Bacon (later Currie), a niece of Olive Dame Campbell who spent Christmas of 1925 with her aunt

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in Brasstown. It was subsequently enlarged under the supervision of Leon Deschamps. Keith House is a large, rambling frame structure of complex form, with its component features derived generally from the Craftsman and Bungalow styles. The weatherboarded building rests on a full stone foundation. The broad hip roof is composed of a system of intersecting gable and clipped gable projections, with multiple shed dormers. Windows on the main level are large, with 8 over 12 sash, and many have transoms. The square windows of the upper levels have 8 over 8 sash.

The interior contains four functioning levels. The full cellar floor houses the kitchen, food storage areas, and the dining hall. The main (first floor) level contains the foyer and lobby, craft sales area, the principal offices, and a large community room with a stage. The interior is handsomely finished with unpainted native woods. The second floor, reached by an open stair in the lobby, contains four dormitory rooms and two smaller offices. The top level has four more dormitory rooms lighted by dormer windows. Modern additions include a small greenhouse on the southeast side, and a fire escape and wooden deck area on the north.

- K 3. Log House Museum. 19th century; components moved to the Folk School and rebuilt in 1926. A dog trot log structure constructed from two nearby cabins. A type-written information sheet in the Folk School files dated August, 1926 expresses thanks to the neighboring people for contributions of labor and materials, and especially to the older men "who have taken such an interest in it." The Log House Museum may be the first community-based effort at preservation of rural vernacular architecture, log or otherwise, in North Carolina.

The two pen structure is covered with a continuous wood shingle gable roof, with the open dog-trot or breezeway between the pens. Both pens have half-dovetailed corner timbering. A fieldstone chimney stands at the gable end of one pen; the other features a mud-and-stick chimney with a base of V-notched logs, rebuilt in 1926 but apparently a feature original to the structure. It is one of three known mud-and-stick chimneys surviving in the state. The pens are detailed with board doors and shutters, wooden hinges, and puncheon floors. One of the pens served for a while as the residence of Georg Bidstrup. Today the structure functions solely as a museum. Recently it has been restored.

- R 4. Log and Frame Crib. 1970. A small two-pen log crib with V-notch corner timbering and a frame extension, all under a common wood shingle gable roof. It is located near to and complements the Log House Museum. The structure replaced a 1926 crib which was part of the original museum house development. The older structure was in an advanced state of decay in 1970 and removed.
- C 5. Open House. ca. 1939. A small open-air pavilion under a low-pitched pyramidal roof supported by square-in-section wood posts. It is used for outdoor performances, exhibits, and workshops.

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- K 6. Mill House. 1928. One of the most striking buildings on the campus, and one of the structures built under the supervision of Georg Bidstrup and Leon Deschamps, showing definite European influence. The building features a stone first floor level, with exposed rafter ends and half-timbering above. It has a three-level gable roof with king post gable ornament and wide shed dormers. Windows are of both a small casement and larger sash type. The interior is simply finished and provides several dormitory rooms. The steel water wheel on the south side remains in place; it was once part of a pumping system to pump water water to a reservoir upslope.
- K 7. (Former) Milking Barn (now Pittman Blacksmith Shop). ca. 1930. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A long, half-timbered, one-level barn under a broad gable roof, with vertical board gable ends and gabled ventilators at the peak of the roof. Of particular interest is the projecting gabled entry on the south side; it features double doors with diagonal bracing, and intricate oak leaf carving in the brackets, king posts, and tie beam. Three silos are located at the west end of the building.
- K 8. Hay Barn. 1931. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A gambrel roof bank barn with a stone foundation and regularly spaced square ventilators along the top of the foundation. The upper level is sheathed with horizontal weatherboards. A slightly lower gambrel roof extension covered with vertical boards projects from the west side along the bank. The interiors feature dramatic exposed timber framing. The school hopes to adapt the structure for use as a community theater.
- C 9. Frame Barn. ca. 1930. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A smaller, gable roof frame barn with spaced vertical siding to provide thorough ventilation.
- C 10. Spring House. 1928. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A small, stone, gable roof structure with square, six-pane windows.
- C 11. Oscar Cantrell Blacksmith Shop./ Bidstrup. 1946. A long, one-story gable roof building of stone, with a wide segmental-arch door in the south gable end, and six-over-six sash windows in the side walls.
- K 12. Tower House. 1933. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A small but tall, one-and-a-half story building with a stone first level and frame above. Wide shed dormers project from the north and south slopes of the gable roof. A massive stone chimney rises on the south side, dividing the dormer into two sections. Long sheds extend from the south and east sides of the building. The east shed is partially enclosed with vertical siding, and a gable roof storage building, also clad in vertical siding, is attached to the east end of the shed. Tower House contains one apartment for faculty or guests.
- C 13. Horse Barn. ca. 1930. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A gable roof frame barn with horizontal siding and ventilated eaves. Shed additions are attached to the sides, the one on the west having open bays for equipment storage.

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| | | 7 | 3 |
| C | 14. <u>Woodworking Building</u> . 1945. A long, one-story, L-shaped structure of stone with a gable roof. Eight over eight sash windows are in groups of two, three, and four to provide light into the open interior. This shop replaced an earlier woodworking shop that burned in 1944, and was built with the assistance of college students from an American Friends work camp. | | |
| C | 15. <u>Wood Storage Shed</u> . ca. 1932. A partially open, gable roof structure supported by square-in-section wood posts, with vertical siding at the gable ends. The shed is used for the storage and seasoning of wood. | | |
| R | 16. <u>Pottery Studio</u> . 1974. A low, one-story frame structure with a low-pitched gable roof, board and batten siding, and a full-width shed porch on the south elevation. A kiln is sheltered under a porch on the west gable end. To the east stands a small gable roof Dry Kiln Building set into the bank and covered with narrow horizontal weatherboards. | | |
| C | 17. <u>Sawmill</u> . ca. 1932. Two separate frame structures joined by a long, narrow, open hyphen that shelters the sawing equipment. The gable roof shop on the west end has exposed timbering on the exterior, with vertical board sheathing inside; this has been used as a leatherworking and wood carving shop. The gable roof storage building on the east end is partially enclosed, with spaced boards providing ventilation to the two bays. | | |
| R | 18. <u>Canning Building</u> . 1969. A simple gable roof structure of concrete block construction, with large studio windows and vertically sheathed gable ends. It was recently converted into enameling and pottery studio spaces. | | |
| C | 19. <u>Utility Building</u> . ca. 1932. A small stone utility structure under a gable roof. | | |
| R | 20. <u>Chicken House</u> . ca. 1929; 1983. A long low structure on a concrete slab, with reinforced concrete foundation walls. The frame superstructure of the building was badly deteriorated; the slab and concrete work is being reused as the foundation for a new fiber arts shop being erected on the site in the spring of 1983 to a design complementary to the surrounding farm buildings and shops. | | |
| R | 21. <u>Dairy Barn/Festival Barn</u> . 1971. A very large, open, gable roof structure with a trussed roof system and flanking shed wings. Originally used in the dairy operation, today the building functions as a protected area for outdoor festivals and workshops. | | |
| R | 22. <u>Orchard House</u> . 1954. A long, low dwelling house under a broad gable roof with an intersecting gable on the right side of the front elevation. It is constructed of brick with some frame work covered with asbestos shingles. A board and batten enameling house (22a) is adjacent; it has a gable roof with a ventilated cupola under a pyramidal cap. | | |

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- C 23. Weaving Building. ca. 1930; enlarged ca. 1946. A long building under a broad gable roof, faced with random fieldstone.— The windows of the original section have six-over-six sash. It was built as a laundry house and enlarged after World War II with a two-story addition with large studio windows for use as a weaving shop. It is to converted into a craft sales shop in 1983.
- K 24. Rock House. ca. 1932. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A small dwelling house faced with fieldstone. It has a gable roof with gable ends sheathed in horizontal weatherboards. Windows have six-over-six sash. A wide shed dormer with four windows is centered on the front (east) slope of the roof. A full-width shed porch shelters the front. A stone chimney stands on the north gable end. The structure has served as a lodging for faculty and guests.
- K 25. Hill House. ca. 1932. Bidstrup and Deschamps. A dwelling very similar to Rock House, but larger, with a projecting gable extension on the east gable end of the main house. Formerly used as staff housing; now leased to retired staff.
- R 26. Hubbell House. 1972. An octagonal frame house, built as a private residence and bequeathed to the Folk School in 1980; currently houses staff and students.
- R 27. Bidstrup House. 1982. A new earth insulated, solar heated dormitory building named in honor of Georg Bidstrup.
- 28. Moulton Garden. A memorial garden established by Anne Hughitt in memory of Dr. Gertrude Moulton of Oberlin college, a long-time supporter and student of the Folk School.
- 29. Camp Ground. A camping area for tents and motor homes that may be used by students attending the school.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1925 to present **Builder/Architect** Various

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John C. Campbell Folk School has been a unique experiment in education in the Southern Appalachians. The school was established in 1925 by Olive Dame Campbell and Marguerite Butler (later Bidstrup), educators who were profoundly committed to the advancement of rural life in the mountains and who believed that the indigenous folk culture should be the foundation for genuine social improvement. Modeled on the principles of the highly successful Scandinavian folk high schools which the two women had studied in Europe in the early 1920s, the object of the school was, in Mrs. Campbell's words, to "keep an enlightened progressive, and contented farming population on the land." The school was to serve also as a practical demonstration farm, as a center for the social and intellectual life of the community, and as a springboard for the establishment of cooperative associations. The school was named in honor of Mrs. Campbell's late husband, John C. Campbell (1867-1919), an educator and social reformer dedicated to the mountain region. The site at Brasstown on the Cherokee-Clay County line was selected largely because of the enthusiastic support of the farming community, which made generous donations in land, cash, materials, and especially labor to assist in the school's establishment. The curriculum was originally for young adults and promoted the agricultural and domestic arts, with courses in crafts, music, and dancing as well as training in good farming practices, forestry, and animal husbandry. The school became of widespread influence, and the farm, credit, and craft cooperatives established there have been especially important to the region. The school remains in operation with a curriculum chiefly in the folk arts, and it is open to students from across the nation. The campus of the school is a working farm in the valley of Brasstown Creek, surrounded by gently rising mountains, with the various structures reflecting the cross-currents of the formative influences and the diverse activities of the school. The original structure is a small frame dwelling of the early twentieth century, now called Farm House, which was standing when the lands were acquired and which served as the first classroom. Structures erected within the first few years of the school's founding include the handsome Keith House (the principal administrative and dormitory building) and a variety of workshops and farm buildings, many of which are of a distinctively European flavor owing to the presence of a Dane, Georg Bidstrup, as the first farm manager, and a Belgian, Leon Deschamps, as the first school engineer and supervisor of construction. Also on the grounds are nineteenth century log structures brought from neighboring farms in 1926 to serve as a mountain farm museum.

Criteria Assessment:

- Associated with a unique experiment in the appreciation and promotion of the culture of the Southern Appalachians and the advancement of life in the region through the introduction of the European folk school idea.
- Associated with the lives and work of Olive Dame Campbell and Marguerite Butler Bidstrup, women of enormous energy, dedication, and influence in the improvement of life in the mountains in the first half of the twentieth century.
- Embodies in its various buildings the cross-fertilization of European and American vernacular in a unique educational complex.

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Olive Dame Campbell (1882-1954), principal founder of the John C. Campbell Folk School, was born in Medford, Massachusetts, daughter of Lorin Low Dame, a school principal and botany teacher, and Isabel Arnold Dame.¹ She was a graduate of Tufts College in Medford.² This native New Englander's long career in the Southern Highlands, first in the company of her husband, John C. Campbell, and then as his successor, has had a lasting influence on the nation's understanding and appreciation of the Appalachian region.

John Charles Campbell (1867-1919) was born in La Porte, Indiana, to Gavin Campbell, owner of a railroad company, and Anna Barbara Kipp Campbell.³ After graduating from Williams College (1892) and Andover Theological Seminary (1895), he taught a few years in mountain schools in Joppa, Alabama and Pleasant Hill Academy, Tennessee. In 1901 he became dean and president of Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia; posts he held until 1907. His first wife died in 1905, and he met Olive Dame while traveling in Scotland in 1906. The two were married in March, 1907.⁴

Campbell had been drawn to the Appalachian region as a young employee of his father's company, and his dedication to the region was stimulated in part by a deep interest in Scotch-Irish culture.⁵ His devotion to the Southern Highlands and his efforts to document the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the region attracted the attention of the Russell Sage Foundation, and with the financial support of the foundation, he and Olive Dame Campbell surveyed the region extensively from 1908 until October, 1912. In 1913 the foundation created a Southern Highlands Division with an office in Asheville, N.C. Campbell became chief executive officer, and the couple made their home in Asheville until his death in 1919.

In their twelve years together, the Campbells were immersed in the study of every aspect of rural life in the southern mountains, and they labored for the relief of the economic and spiritual poverty of the region. At the Russell Sage Foundation, Campbell worked for the coordination of governmental and philanthropic activities, and he played a major role in the establishment of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers (now the Council on the Southern Mountains). He continued to collect materials for what he intended to be a comprehensive published survey of the Appalachians. Among her various projects, Mrs. Campbell collected the folk songs and ballads of the mountains, and she persuaded Cecil J. Sharp, the noted English folk musicologist, to visit the region. She accompanied Sharp on his trip through the area in 1916, and the resulting collection was published in 1917 as English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, compiled jointly by Sharp and Mrs. Campbell.⁶ The work remains a landmark study in mountain folk musicology.

One of the Campbells' fundamental beliefs was that effective work for improvement in the region should seek to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the mountains, and should enhance the dignity of the population by promoting a meaningful, productive, and fulfilling life on the land. To this end, the Campbells initiated studies of the Scandanavian folk schools that had successfully improved life in depressed rural areas in the countries of northern Europe. They planned a trip to Scandanavia to conduct a first-hand study of the folk school method in 1914, but war in Europe prevented their visit, and Campbell died before fulfilling this goal.⁷ Also unfinished at his death was his projected book on the Appalachians, of which only the preface and one chapter were complete.

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Olive Dame Campbell immediately set about continuing her husband's work. From his notes, she completed The Southern Highlander and His Homeland, which was published by the Russell Sage Foundation under her husband's name in 1921.⁸ The work continues to be one of the most important sourcebooks on the character of the region ever published.

Mrs. Campbell then turned her attention to the Scandanavian Folk School idea and its possible application in the upland south. In 1922 she accepted a Scandanavian-American Foundation fellowship for an eighteen month study of adult education in the Scandanavian folk schools. She was accompanied on her journey by Marguerite Butler, a bright and energetic young Vassar graduate and for eight years a teacher at the Pine Mountain Settlement School in Harlan County, Kentucky. The two had met through the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers.⁹

Founded in the nineteenth century in Denmark under the leadership of reformer Nikolai Grundtvig (1783-1872), and spreading into Norway, Sweden, and Finland, the Scandanavian folk schools aimed to improve the life of rural people through a program of training in the agricultural and domestic arts and through the celebration of traditional culture. The primary goal of the schools was to "stimulate, enlighten, and enliven," and to encourage self-motivated learning in preparation for an enriching life on the farm. Mrs. Campbell thoroughly documented these guiding principles, described the schools she visited, and addressed the question of establishing such schools in America in The Danish Folk School: Its Influence in the Life of Denmark and the North, a work she began in 1924 and which was published in 1928.¹⁰

Upon their return, Mrs. Campbell and Miss Butler presented their findings to the April, 1924 annual meeting of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers in Knoxville, Tennessee. While their initial hope was that existing schools might be adapted to better meet rural needs, they received a mixed response to their ideas, and they determined to create such a school from the ground up. The Russell Sage Foundation provided a small grant to help them locate a site.¹²

For several months in 1924-1925 Mrs. Campbell and Miss Butler looked for a proper location for a folk school, studying communities in five states. They sought a rural community of landowners, a place where farming alone could support the inhabitants, and a place where such a school would be wanted and appreciated.¹³ Miss Butler visited Cherokee County, North Carolina, at the urging of Ann Ruth Metcalf, a former Pine Mountain colleague. Local inhabitants in the Brasstown and Hayesville area of Cherokee and Clay counties, led by Fred O. Scroggs, a farmer and storekeeper, and Colonel John H. Dillard, a Murphy lawyer and state legislator, received Miss Butler enthusiastically in a series of meetings at local churches. Of one such meeting, Miss Butler wrote Mrs. Campbell:

The church couldn't hold all the people; many stood outside looking in the windows. Again there were many questions - "What must we do to get this school here?" All I could do was to tell them that no decision could be made until you could also visit Brasstown.¹⁴

To encourage the school to locate at Brasstown, the citizenry pledged 800 dollars in cash, building materials, plants and bulbs, and about 1500 days of labor to help build

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the school. Also promised was a gift of 30 acres of land and an option on an adjacent 80 acre farm.¹⁵

By November 21, 1925, Mrs. Campbell had agreed to the Brasstown site. That day she wrote from the Regal Hotel in Murphy (the Cherokee County seat):

We have been offered a fine tract consisting roughly of twenty-five acres . . . the local people had already secured the promise of an option on the adjacent farm of 80 acres for \$6,000. It is a most desirable piece of property from all points of view - soil, water, pasture, fifteen acres timberland, farmhouse. The house could be made into a good building at comparatively little cost and it has an exceptionally beautiful outlook. . . . The interest and enthusiasm of not only the Brasstown region but the county seats as well [of Cherokee and Clay counties] are rather intoxication, and we are obliged to hold ourselves in hand and keep our heads.¹⁶

Two days later, on November 23, the school was incorporated under the name John C. Campbell Folk School, with Mrs. Campbell, Miss Butler, and Colonel Dillard signing and incorporators.¹⁷ On November 26, L.L. Scroggs and his wife, Lillie Scroggs, conveyed an unsurveyed tract of 25 to 30 acres to Mrs. Campbell, Folk School Trustee, "in consideration of one dollar and other valuable considerations." The deed noted that "this gift of the above described land is made by the above named Lillie Scroggs in memory of her deceased father W.J. Strange."¹⁸ The following day, Mrs. Campbell as trustee purchased the adjacent farm for \$6,000 from John E. and Bird Hall.¹⁹

Mrs. Campbell and Miss Butler moved into the farmhouse in December, 1925, when it was "so cold that water spilled within a foot of the fireplace froze."²⁰ But the following months were active and productive ones at the school. Local supporters provided labor and materials as promised. Modest cash support came from the American Missionary Association (Congregational Church), the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, and the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, though then, as now, the school was responsible directly to neither church nor state.²¹

By August of 1926, much had transpired at the Folk School. The school's bulletin of that month reported that the faded farmhouse "has become a trim gray farmhouse with green trimmings and rose covered trellises."²² On August 18, the cornerstone of the Community Building, later to be called Keith House, was dedicated,²³ with construction of the building to be supervised by a Mr. Roberson of Murphy. The design for the building was prepared by Dorothy Bacon, Mrs. Campbell's niece.²⁴ Much of the labor that went into the early improvements on land and buildings was provided from the local pledges.

The addition of two new staff members in the spring of 1926 was to have a permanent effect on the appearance and the programs of the school. Georg Bidstrup, a young Danish farmer and former student and teacher in Danish folk schools, arrived in May to direct development of the demonstration farm operation.²⁵ Mrs. Campbell earlier had written Grønvoild Neilson, an administrator at the Vestkirk Folk School in Denmark, to seek his help in attracting an experienced folk school teacher to America. Neilson's choice was Bidstrup, and the young man agreed to come.²⁶

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In addition to his farm duties, Bidstrup introduced Danish gymnastics to the locals, leading Saturday afternoon exercise classes for young neighbors. In August, Mrs. Campbell remarked on Bidstrup's rigorous farming and soil conservation principles, and noted that "he is learning his English very rapidly and seems happy and at home in this country."²⁷ Bidstrup was to remain at the Folk School for the next 45 years, eventually marrying Marguerite Butler and becoming director in 1952, six years after Mrs. Campbell's retirement and two years before her death. Bidstrup remained in close association with the school until his death in 1971.

In June, 1926 Leon Deschamps, a forester/surveyor/engineer from Belgium, joined the Folk School. Deschamps had lived five years previously at the Pine Mountain settlement in Kentucky, Miss Butler's former home. Deschamps was to direct forestry operations and teach woodland management, direct construction of several buildings, and lead a Boy Scout troop which he established shortly after his arrival in Brasstown.²⁸ The presence of Bidstrup and Deschamps accounts for the distinctive European character of several of the early buildings erected at the school, notably Mill House, Tower House, and the major barns and shops. After 17 years with the Folk School, Deschamps moved to Swannanoa, near Asheville, N.C., where he joined Warren Wilson College and directed development of the campus there.

One of the most intriguing early events at the Folk School was the establishment of the log house museum. Built of components from two nineteenth century cabins located in the area, the dog-trot house was re-erected and finished with volunteer labor, including the help of "the older men who have taken such an interest in it."²⁹ The expenditure of time and effort in the early months of the school's existence to preserve a regional architectural relic reflects one of the basic principles of the folk school idea, that improvement must be grounded in local cultural tradition. Though there are earlier instances of people organizing to save colonial or antebellum landmarks in urban areas of the state, this may have been the first community-wide effort to preserve and celebrate rural vernacular architecture in North Carolina. The structure served a practical purpose also as the first residence of Georg Bidstrup.³⁰

The Folk School took firm root in the soil of Brasstown. By 1930, the school had initiated activities in the following areas:³¹

1. A Practical Demonstration Farm: Through the leadership of Georg Bidstrup, the school became a working dairy farm, with poultry operations as well. Wrote Mrs. Campbell in August, 1926:

The average farmer in this section will not be able to visit the nearest State Experiment Station near Asheville, . . . but he will visit the school. Therefore, we seek to make our farm as far as possible a demonstration station. . . . Already we have limed, fertilized, ploughed and planted soy-beans to turn under. Every acre is carefully planned for a system of crop rotation. We have stretched our old log barn to accomodate our team and a registered Jersey. We have built a model chicken house and installed pure-bred White Leghorns. . . .³²

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The farm operation flourished under Bidstrup's guidance. Within a few years he had coaxed 75 bushels of corn per acre from land that had previously yielded only 15 bushels.³³ Income from the dairy and poultry operations aided in the school's support. Forest management practices introduced by Deschamps likewise served an important demonstration function.

2. Cooperative Associations: The school provided the focus and leadership for several cooperative associations that were established shortly after the school's founding and which provided economic assistance for the surrounding population. These included a farmers' association (The Mountain Valley Cooperative), which operated a cooperative corn mill and creamery and assisted farmers in the acquisition of farm supplies and in the sale and distribution of farm products; a Savings and Loan Association, which enabled farmers to secure small loans for productive purposes; and a Handicrafts Association.³⁴ The Brasstown Woodcarvers turned the 'idle' activity of whittling into a source of supplemental income for its practitioners, providing artistic direction and a market for handmade crafts. This remains an important facet of the school to the present.
3. Center for the Social, Intellectual, and Recreational Life of the Community: From its inception to the present, the Folk School has maintained an open door policy with the surrounding community. This has included special meetings and instruction of a social and educational nature, plus a variety of community celebrations, festivals, and regular square dances, which remain today vital activities at the school. The only friction between the school and the community appears to have been over the subject of dancing, which in the early years was frowned upon by some of the local churches.³⁵ Strong community support and participation remain an important feature of the school.
4. Winter Course for Young Adults: Initially, organized courses were limited to the winter months when farm work was lightest, and they were intended for young adults in their late teens. Though a short session was held in February, 1927, the school proper opened in December of that year. As described in the local newspapers, instruction was provided in

simple field surveying, construction of model farm equipment, . . . ; cooking and sewing; grammar, reading, writing, and arithmetic of a most practical kind; lectures in history, literature, economic geography, natural history, civil government and health; daily music, Danish gymnastics and sports.³⁶

In the first year, students were limited to those who lived within walking distance or could board in the area. With the completion of Keith House and Mill House, the school could board about 30 students.³⁷ The majority of the student body continued to come from the general vicinity of the school, though during the Depression students were admitted from Farm Security projects as far away as Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and Oklahoma.³⁸

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Tuition was free, and students earned their board through labor on the farm. Entrance was based on the student's demonstrated interest, with past scholastic records bearing no part in the selection process. There were no examinations, grades, credits, textbooks, or standardized curricula. Instruction was directed at providing students with the skills and attitudes of mind that would help them live a fulfilling life on the land.³⁹

5. Special Short Courses: Early on, the Folk School attracted the attention of people of diverse backgrounds throughout a multi-state region who were interested in receiving instruction in certain aspects of its programs. By 1930 the school had offered a short summer course in gymnastics and singing games to teachers and community workers from four mountain states.⁴⁰ In years to come, this program was expanded to include instruction in a wide range of crafts and folk arts. In recent times, this has become the principal focus of the school, with short courses offered to interested people of all ages and backgrounds from all parts of the country. Subjects have included basketry, woodcarving and woodworking, blacksmithing, enameling, weaving, quilting, pottery, photography, music, folk dance, and many others.⁴¹

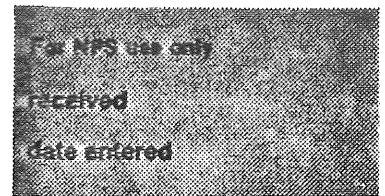
The Folk School weathered the Depression, and by the eve of the Second World War it was flourishing in all its programs. Additional lands were purchased between 1926 and 1939 to allow expansion of the physical plant and the farm operation.⁴² By the late 1930s, forty Jersey cows were tended by staff and students. Sixty-five craftsmen were affiliated with the Handicraft Association, and the five main workers were paid \$1,311.58 for their wood carvings in 1936.⁴³ In addition to the original staff, other instructors contributed to the success of the program, notably Murrial Martin, director of handicrafts, and Oscar Cantrell, blacksmith, among others. The Mountain Valley Cooperative managed a turnover of \$84,000 in 1938, paying farmers around \$37,000 for butter, poultry, and eggs⁴⁴ (this figure had increased to \$175,000 in 1944)⁴⁵ Income from the farm in 1938 came to around \$17,000 to help support a \$30,000 operating budget, with the remainder provided by the Presbyterian and Congregational missions that helped sponsor the school originally, interest from a small endowment, and private contributions.⁴⁶

During the Second World War, activity slowed at the school, and the winter course was discontinued as young people were called into the service or worked in the war effort.⁴⁷ In later decades, the expansion of government agricultural support programs, changes in public education, and the universal decline of the small family farm superseded some of the school's original functions. Apparently the winter course was not reestablished after the war.⁴⁸ The school continued to operate the demonstration farm until June, 1974, when the farm lands were leased and the dairy herd and machinery were sold to two local farmers.⁴⁹

Today, the school operates mainly as a center for instruction in crafts and folk arts, and it enjoys a wide following. In 1982, 1,082 people received instruction in 95 different subjects.⁵⁰ Income is provided by tuition, interest from an endowment, private foundation grants, and an occasional state or federal grant. Under the direction of the present board and the leadership of Esther Hyatt, who became director in 1976, and Bob Fink, Administrative Assistant, the school has initiated a capital improvements

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drive to upgrade the campus and rehabilitate several of the oldest buildings for continued or adaptive use.

The John C. Campbell Folk School is of broad historical significance as a unique experiment in American education and as an important example of the international cross-fertilization of ideas. The campus and its early buildings, which reflect the school's first origins and functions, remain largely intact. Modern economic and social conditions have of necessity changed the nature and emphasis of the school. But retaining the motto "I sing behind the plough" -- taken by Mrs. Campbell from a Danish folk song -- it remains as the legacy of the compassion, determination, and innovative spirit of Olive Dame Campbell and her remarkable associates. It continues to play an important role in the life of the Southern Highlands.

Footnotes

¹General biographical data on Olive Dame Campbell from William S. Powell (ed.), Dictionary of North Carolina Biography (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press [projected multivolume series], 1979-), I, 318, hereinafter cited as Powell, DNCB. Sketch on Olive Dame Campbell by David E. Whisnant.

²Frieda Morgan Terrell, "An Historical and Contemporary Study of the John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, N.C." (unpublished masters thesis, University of Tennessee, 1969), 15, hereinafter cited as Terrell, "The John C. Campbell Folk School."

³Powell, DNCB, 316-317. Biographical sketch on John C. Campbell by David E. Whisnant.

⁴Terrell, "The John C. Campbell Folk School," 15.

⁵Terrell, "The John C. Campbell Folk School," 15.

⁶Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp (eds.), English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1917).

⁷Ruth Dame Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," The American-Scandinavian Review (June, 1945), 104. Hereinafter cited as Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell."

⁸John C. Campbell, The Southern Highlander and His Homeland (New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, 1921) For a bibliography of additional published works by Campbell, see biographical sketch in Powell, DNCB, 317.

⁹Pat McNelley, The First 40 Years: The John C. Campbell Folk School (Atlanta: McNelley-Rudd Printing Service, 1966), 49. Hereinafter cited as McNelley, The First 40 Years.

¹⁰Olive Dame Campbell, The Danish Folk School: Its Influence in the Life of Denmark and the North (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1928). For a bibliography of additional published works by Mrs. Campbell, see biographical sketch in Powell, DNCB, 318.

¹¹Olive Dame Campbell, "Adult Education in Scandinavia and America: Two Addresses

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Delivered at the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 8-10, 1924" (New York: Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, 1924). Cited in Powell, DNCB, 318.

¹²Gertrude S. Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center," News and Observer (Raleigh), October 27, 1939. Hereinafter cited as Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center."

¹³McNelley, The First 40 Years, 6.

¹⁴Quoted in McNelley, The First 40 Years, 7.

¹⁵McNelley, The First 40 Years, 8. Also Fred O. Scroggs to Marguerite Butler, November 25, 1925, collected papers of the John C. Campbell Folk School, John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, N.C., hereinafter cited as Folk School Collection.

¹⁶Olive Dame Campbell to unnamed addressee, Murphy, N.C., November 21, 1925, Folk School Collection.

¹⁷Certification of Incorporation of the John C. Campbell Folk School, November 23, 1925, Folk School Collection.

¹⁸L.L. and Lillie Scroggs to Mrs. John C. Campbell, Trustee for the John C. Campbell Folk School, November 26, 1925, Book 89, p. 124, microfilm copy, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raliegh, hereinafter cited as Cherokee County Deeds.

¹⁹Cherokee County Deeds, Book 89, p. 117.

²⁰Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," 106.

²¹McNelley, The First 40 Years, 9.

²²Bulletin of the John C. Campbell Folk School, No. 2, August, 1926, Folk School Collection. Hereinafter cited as Bulletin no. 2, Folk School Collection.

²³Typewritten draft of dedication statement for the Community Building, August 18, 1926, Folk School Collection.

²⁴Plans for Community Building, Folk School Collection.

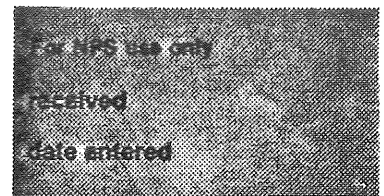
²⁵Typewritten draft for a speech or bulletin text, Olive Dame Campbell, August, 1926, Folk School Collection. Hereinafter cited as August, 1926 draft comments.

²⁶"Dansker udnaevnt til leder af et stort højskolearbejde i USA," in Kristeligt Dagblad (Denmark), May 2, 1952, clipping in Folk School Collection.

²⁷August, 1926 draft comments, Folk School Collection.

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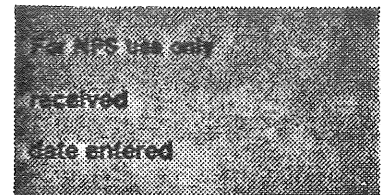


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- 28 August, 1926 draft comments, Folk School Collection.
- 29 August, 1926 draft comments, Folk School Collection.
- 30 August, 1926 draft comments, Folk School Collection.
- 31 Typewritten draft describing activities at the Folk School, n.d. (ca. 1930), Olive Dame Campbell?, Folk School Collection. Hereinafter cited as 1930 activities draft, Folk School Collection.
- 32 Bulletin no. 2, Folk School Collection.
- 33 Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center." Also McNelley, The First 40 Years, 37.
- 34 1930 activities draft, Folk School Collection.
- 35 McNelley, The First 40 Years, 37.
- 36 Quoted in McNelley, The First 40 Years, 13.
- 37 Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," 110.
- 38 Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," 110.
- 39 Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center." Also McNelley, The First 40 Years, 13.
- 40 1930 activities draft, Folk School Collection.
- 41 Brochures of the John C. Campbell Folk School, various years, Folk School Collection.
- 42 Cherokee County Deeds, Book 97, p.249; Book 97, p. 359; Book 97, p. 37; Book 97, p. 513; Book 96, p. 554; Book 106, p. 595; Book 106, p. 597; Book 107, p. 170; Book 111, p. 403; Book 130, p. 148.
- 43 Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center."
- 44 Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center."
- 45 Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," 114.
- 46 Carraway, "Folk School is Rural Center."
- 47 Coolidge, "Vibrations from a Danish Bell," 113-114.
- 48 Bulletin no. 29, October, 1947, John C. Campbell Folk School, Folk School Collection.

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⁴⁹Esther Hyatt to author, June 2, 1983, John C. Campbell Folk School file, Survey and Planning Branch, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, Hereinafter cited as Hyatt letter.

⁵⁰Hyatt letter.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 366

Quadrangle name Peachtree, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UMT References

A	<u>117</u>	<u>229670</u>	<u>3881600</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

B	<u>117</u>	<u>229430</u>	<u>38815715</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

C	<u>117</u>	<u>229150</u>	<u>3881410</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

D	<u>117</u>	<u>228850</u>	<u>3880830</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

E	<u>117</u>	<u>229020</u>	<u>3880325</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

F	<u>117</u>	<u>229850</u>	<u>3880200</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

G	<u>117</u>	<u>230125</u>	<u>3880920</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

H	<u>117</u>	<u>230030</u>	<u>3881330</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	

Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is a 366 acre tract belonging to and incorporating the Folk School and its buildings and including surrounding fields and woodland in continuous association with the school, as delineated on the enclosed plat map.

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

state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a
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state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Tesh Southern, Restoration Specialist

Archaeology and Historic Preservation Section

organization N.C. Division of Archives and History date September 1, 1982

street & number 109 E. Jones Street

telephone 919/733-6545

city or town Raleigh

state North Carolina 27611

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date July 5, 1983

For HCRS 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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National Park Service

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_____. The Life and Work of John C. Campbell. Madison, Wisconsin: College Printing Company, 1968.

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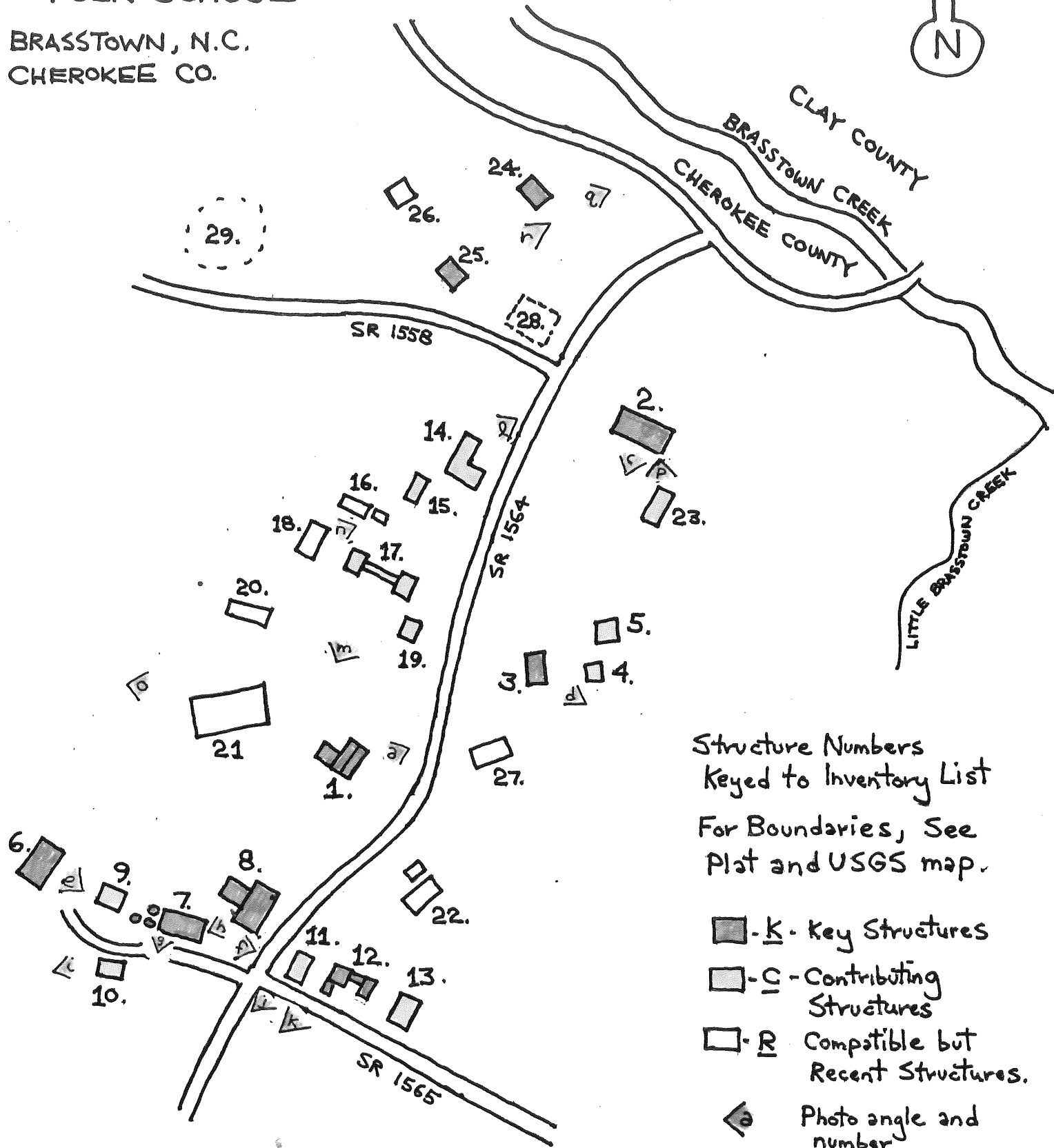
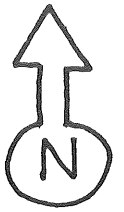
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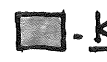

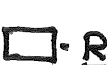

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JOHN C. CAMPBELL FOLK SCHOOL

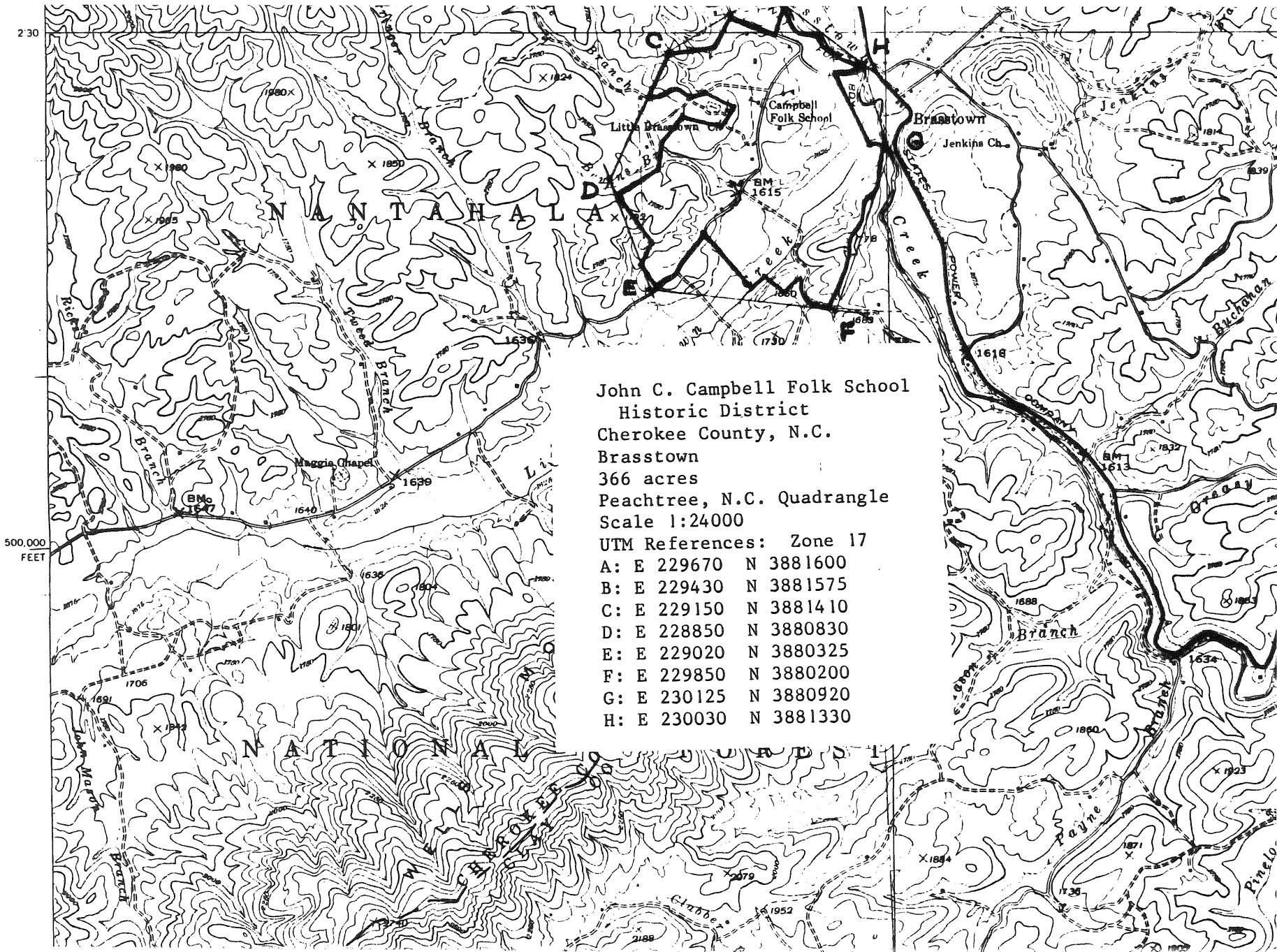
BRASSTOWN, N.C.
CHEROKEE CO.



Structure Numbers
Keyed to Inventory List
For Boundaries, See
Plat and USGS map.

-  - K - Key Structures
-  - C - Contributing Structures
-  - R - Compatible but Recent Structures.
-  Photo angle and number





John C. Campbell Folk School
Historic District
Cherokee County, N.C.
Brasstown
366 acres
Peachtree, N.C. Quadrangle
Scale 1:24000
UTM References: Zone 17
A: E 229670 N 3881600
B: E 229430 N 3881575
C: E 229150 N 3881410
D: E 228850 N 3880830
E: E 229020 N 3880325
F: E 229850 N 3880200
G: E 230125 N 3880920
H: E 230030 N 3881330

