



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**  
**State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

March 13, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vanessa Patrick  
Human Environment Unit  
NC Department of Transportation

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley   
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Historic Structures Survey Report, Widen and Improve US 321 from US 70 in Hickory to SR 1933 in Lenoir, PA 17-07-0039, U-4700, Multi County, ER 06-0885

Thank you for your memorandum of March 6, 2018, transmitting the above-referenced report. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments.

We concur that the **Julius V. Stirewalt Farm (CW0832)** is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for its association with Caldwell County's agricultural heritage and under Criterion C as an excellent and intact example of a farm complex retaining two dwellings that represent multiple generations of Stirewalt family occupation as well as a significant collection of historic agricultural outbuildings that retain a high degree of integrity. We agree with the boundaries illustrated on page 33 of the report.

We concur that the **First Church of God (CT1442)** is not eligible for listing in the National Register for the reasons outlined in the report. We would also add that the church is not an eligible example of modestly executed Modern church architecture under Criterion C. The long, one-story, 1975 rear addition to the modest 1961 Modern church is visible from the side public street. The addition changes the massing of the building from its historic period and is detrimental to its integrity.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or [environmental.review@ncdcr.gov](mailto:environmental.review@ncdcr.gov). In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Mary Pope Furr, NCDOT, [mfurr@ncdot.gov](mailto:mfurr@ncdot.gov)

Received: 03/08/2018  
State Historic Preservation Office



ER 06-0885

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III  
SECRETARY

To: Renee Gledhill-Earley, NCHPO

Due -- 3/30/18

From: Vanessa E. Patrick, NCDOT

Date: March 6, 2018

Subject: *Historic Structures Survey Report for Widen and Improve US 321 from US 70 in Hickory to SR 1933 (Southwest Boulevard) in Lenoir. Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina. TIP No. U-4700. WBS No. 35993.1.2. PA Tracking No. 17-07-0039.*

H-  
ALM  
JRB  
ER letters

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is conducting planning studies for the above-referenced project. Enclosed for your review is a report presenting the evaluation of historic architectural resources in the U-4700, Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell Counties *expanded* project area (one hard copy and one on flash drive). Survey photographs and site forms are included on the flash drive, and hard copies of the site forms are also supplied. GIS data is forthcoming and will be provided on a CD-ROM.

The report addresses two resources, the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm (CW0832) and the First Church of God Hickory (CT1442). The farm is recommended as eligible, the church as not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Initial screening of the *expanded* project area by NCDOT Historic Architecture identified which resources warranted additional study.

We look forward to receiving your comments on the report. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [vepatrick@ncdot.gov](mailto:vepatrick@ncdot.gov) or 919-707-6082. Thank you.

V.E.P.

Attachments

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# **HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT**

**Widen and Improve US 321 from US 70 in Hickory to SR 1933  
(Southwest Boulevard) in Lenoir  
Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell Counties**

**TIP # U-4700  
WBS # 35993.1.2  
PA # 17-07-0039**

**Prepared For:**

**Environmental Analysis Unit  
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Prepared By:  
AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc.  
701 Corporate Center Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27607**

**Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator**

**Sarah Potere**

**February 2018**

**HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY REPORT**

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**Sarah Potere**

**February 2018**



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**Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator  
AECOM Corporation - North Carolina**

**Date**

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**Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor  
Environmental Analysis Unit, Historic Architecture Team  
North Carolina Department of Transportation**

**Date**



## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc. (AECOM) prepared this report in February 2018 in support of the North Carolina Department of Transportation’s (NCDOT) proposed improvements to US 321 from US 70 in Hickory to SR 1933 (Southwest Boulevard) in Lenoir, Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell Counties (TIP No. U-4700; WBS No. 35993.1.2; PA No. 17-07-0039). NCDOT conducted a preliminary investigation that identified two potentially historic resources within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) requiring historic architectural assessment. It requested that AECOM evaluate these resources and provide a written report that included: photographs of the resources and landscapes; historic and architectural contexts (as needed); evaluations of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility; comparisons to similar types of resources in the region; and carefully delineated and justified NRHP boundaries, if appropriate.

As result of its analyses, AECOM recommends that the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm (CW0832) is eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion A and Criterion C. It is recommended that the First Church of God Hickory (CT1442) is not eligible for NRHP listing. The following table identifies the resources requiring evaluation and summarizes the recommendations regarding their eligibility.

<b>Resource Name</b>	<b>NC HPO Survey Site #</b>	<b>NRHP Eligibility Recommendation and Criteria</b>
Julius V. Stirewalt Farm	CW0832	Recommended eligible under Criterion A and Criterion C
First Church of God Hickory	CT1442	Recommended not eligible for NRHP listing

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## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

AECOM prepared this report in February 2018 in support of NCDOT’s proposed improvements to US 321 from US 70 in Hickory to SR 1933 (Southwest Boulevard) in Lenoir, Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell Counties (TIP No. U-4700; WBS No. 35993.1.2; PA No. 17-07-0039) (Figure 1). NCDOT conducted a preliminary investigation that identified two potentially historic resources within the APE requiring historic architectural assessment, the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm (CW0832) and the First Church of God Hickory (CT1442). It requested that AECOM evaluate these resources and provide a written report that included: photographs of the resources and landscapes, historic and architectural contexts (as needed); evaluations of NRHP eligibility; comparisons to similar types of resources in the region; and carefully delineated and justified NRHP boundaries, if appropriate.

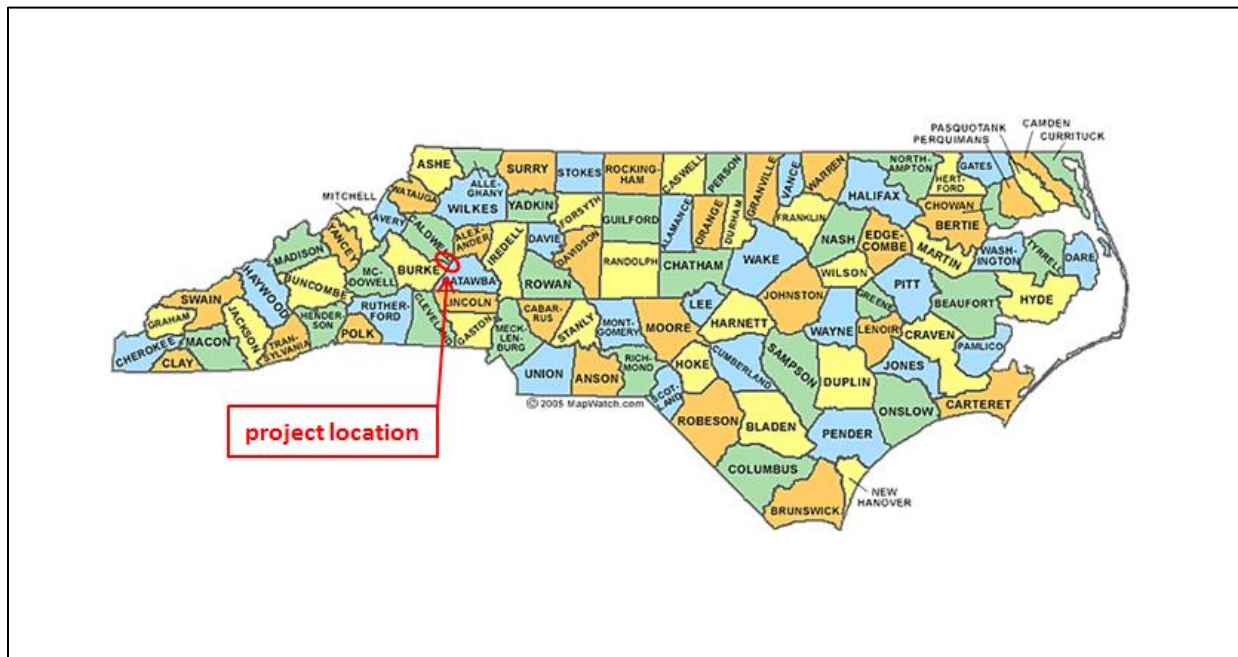


Figure 1: Project location map.

In January 2018 AECOM evaluated the resources as required, in compliance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, other state and federal regulations, and NCDOT’s current Historic Architecture Group Procedures and Work Products and the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office’s (HPO) Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports/Determinations of Eligibility/Section 106/110 Compliance Reports in North Carolina. As a result of its evaluation, AECOM recommends the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm (CW0832) as eligible for NRHP listing under Criteria A and C and the First Church of God Hickory (CT1442) as ineligible for listing.

AECOM senior architectural historian Marvin A. Brown and AECOM architectural historian Sarah Potere, both of whom meet the Secretary of Interior’s qualifications for architectural history (CFR 36 CFR Part 61), conducted fieldwork, research and analyzed the resources, and drafted this report. As

part of this effort, they visited, documented, and photographed the resources and conducted supplementary research. This effort included reviewing Caldwell and Catawba County deeds, GIS data, plat maps, property and tax records; conducting research at the State Library of North Carolina; speaking with knowledgeable local residents; studying the Caldwell and Catawba County files of the North Carolina HPO; reviewing architectural histories and reports, and partially surveying Caldwell and Catawba Counties for comparable resources; and conducting online historical and genealogical research.

The project's APE is located within Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties, North Carolina. The locations of the two resources within Catawba and Caldwell Counties are identified at Figure 2.

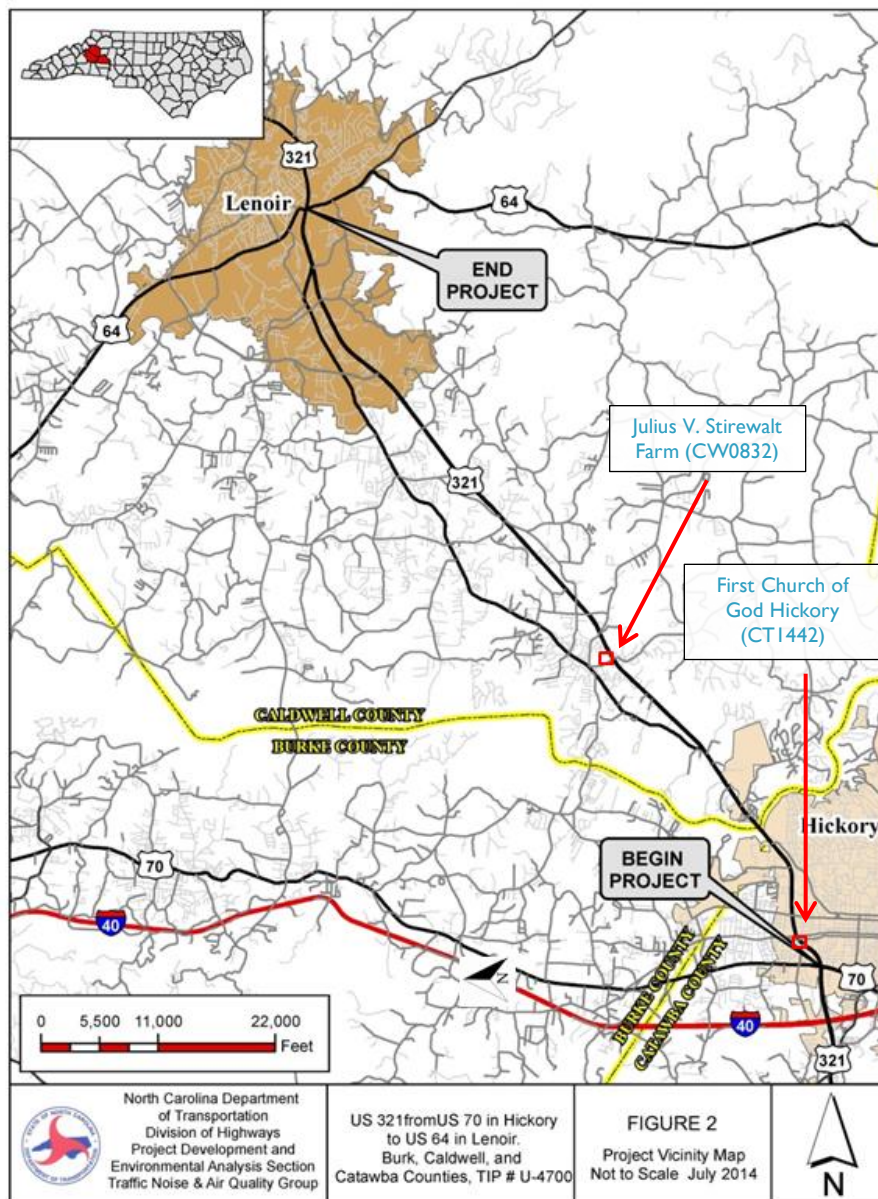



Figure 2: Resource locator map (figure courtesy of NCDOT).



### III. INVENTORY AND EVALUATIONS

#### Julius V. Stirewalt Farm

	Resource Name	Julius V. Stirewalt Farm
	HPO Survey Site #	CW0832
	Location	102 Dudley Avenue, Granite Falls
	PIN	2775.08 97 3775
	Date of Construction	Ca. 1910
	Recommendation	Recommended NRHP eligible under Criterion A and Criterion C.

#### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

##### Site

The Julius V. Stirewalt Farm sits near the bottom of a hill on an 18-acre parcel of agricultural land just one mile north of Granite Falls. Bounded on its southern side by Dudley Avenue, the house and its accompanying secondary structures sit a few hundred feet from the road on a slight elevation. The parcel is bounded on its northern and western sides by woods and on its eastern side by woods and US 321. A gravel drive leads from the road and curves up the small hill, crossing in front of the house. The drive terminates at the center of the farm complex directly to the west of the Stirewalt House. Despite extensive modern development—including the channeling of Dudley Road under the bridges of US 321, from which the farm can be viewed, and the addition of numerous modern commercial buildings along the divided highway—the Stirewalt Farm retains a rural feel. The property’s secluded setting can be attributed to the numerous mature trees, including crepe myrtles, white oaks, and the boxwoods, that rise at the southern edge of the property, effectively screening the farm from outside development. An actively cultivated field comprises the rear portion of the parcel and provides a buffer on the lot’s northern edge.

Multiple early-twentieth-century outbuildings accompany the Stirewalt House. With all but one located to the west of the house, these resources include three sheds and a well house, workshop, corncrib, barn, machine shed, and birthing shed (Figure 3). These buildings comprise the entire original collection of Stirewalt Farm outbuildings, save two—a frame apple house and a frame shed that were torn down between 1993 and 2005 (Figure 4). To the east of the house is located a second residential building, the previously recorded James Ledford House (CW0214): a stone Craftsman-style bungalow built ca. 1934. Although now on a separate parcel, the house and land upon which it sits historically belonged to the Stirewalt family. Like the outbuildings, this house is considered a contributing resource to the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm. Further, the property’s plantings, decorative features, and farmland comprise a contributing site.



Figure 3: Site plan of the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm, ca. 2018 (source: Caldwell County GIS).



Figure 4: Historic aerial photograph of Stirewalt Farm, ca. 1993 (source: GoogleEarth).





Figure 5: Left, view of the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm, looking west from driveway; right, view of Julius V. Stirewalt Farm looking to south from field.

### Julius V. Stirewalt House (contributing building)

The frame Julius V. Stirewalt House was built ca. 1910 as a two-story L-shaped house, oriented to the south, with a reduced-height, two-story, rear-ell extending from its northern side (Figure 6). In 1946, the Stirewalts added a one-story, frame, T-shaped addition to the west that doubled the house's footprint. It consists of a single-pile three-bay hyphen that holds a south-facing entrance—set in a Colonial Revival-style surround with a wooden keystone and pilasters—and a gabled perpendicular section at the east (Figure 7 and Figure 8). Both blocks of the house are clad in weatherboards edged by wooden cornerboards and elevated on continuous brick foundations. A basement underpins the eastern portion of the 1946 addition. Its exterior door opens on the east from the block's brick foundation, which is also pierced by fixed windows on the south and east (Figure 9).



Figure 6: View of Stirewalt House's (west) side elevation with L-shaped main block at right and ell at left.





Figure 7: View of front elevation (southwestern corner).



Figure 8: View of front elevation (southeastern corner) with L-shape original block at left and T-shaped 1946 addition at right.





Figure 9: Southwestern corner of 1946 Stirewalt House addition.

A multi-gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles and edged by plain molded cornices tops the house. Four chimneys rise from the roof. Near the center of the original block, an interior, double-flue, brick chimney extends above the ridgeline. A second single-flue chimney is found on the ridgeline of the block's northern ell. Another pair of double-flue brick chimneys serve the 1946 addition. One is a central interior chimney, the other an interior exposed-face chimney on the northern elevation (Figure 10).

According to Mary Stirewalt Morrow, the current homeowner, the L-shaped porch (Figure 11) that embraces the southern elevation of the first-built block is original. (Its Craftsman-style appearance suggests, however, that it may have been added after 1910.) Its shed-roofed porch is supported by tapered wooden columns resting on concrete plinths supported by brick piers. Overhanging eaves cover a deep beaded cornice. The original flushboard ceiling remains, as do the original wooden floorboards. The porch is accessed from the south by two large stone steps, which are approached by way of a stone path leading east from the driveway. The porch covers the primary entrance to the house, an original five-paneled wooden door. A later shed-roof porch covers the basement entrance on the 1946 addition's eastern side (Figure 9) and a covering of similar design extends from the 1946 addition's northern elevation (Figure 10). All appendages are topped with asphalt shingles.

Two other additions or alterations mark the house's north elevation. After 1910 a shed-roofed L-shaped addition (Figure 12) rose along the north side of the original block. It holds bathrooms, which may have been its original function; alternatively, it may in part have once been a porch. After 1946 the Stirewalts converted a porch on the north side of the hyphen into an enclosed sunporch (Figure 13).





Figure 10: View of northeastern corner of rear elevation.



Figure 11: Detail of front porch (southwestern corner).





Figure 12: View of northwestern corner of rear elevation; note partial re-siding.



Figure 13: View of (northern) rear elevation of hyphen with once-open porch converted into sunroom.

The Stirewalt House appears to retain almost all of its original windows and plain surrounds. The original block features single two-over-two sash windows on its first floor and paired two-over-two sash on its second. Six-over-six sash serve the body of the 1946 addition. In 1946 two south-facing bays on the first floor of the original block, adjacent to the new hyphen, were given new six-over-six windows as well. The house also retains its wooden four and five-paneled exterior doors at its northern and eastern elevations.

The interiors of the ca.1910 and 1946 blocks retain many original elements as well. (The house has been unoccupied since the early 1990s and is sealed to prevent vandalism.) Hardwood floors are visible in both blocks at both stories. Other floors may remain intact beneath carpeting. Flush beaded board clads the walls and ceilings of both the first and second floor of the original block, which also retains many five-paneled doors in their original surrounds (Figure 14). An original wood stairwell, handrail, balustrade, and boxy newel-post remain in the original block's front hall. Plaster covers the walls of the later addition. Much of the later ceiling materials in the 1946 block have been removed as a result of vandalism.



Figure 14: View of through front doorway, looking east with original main stairwell in the foreground.

All fireboxes in the original house retain their mantels, which are modest post-and-lintel types with simple brackets supporting plain shelves. The 1946 addition retains manufactured Colonial Revival-style mantels that are similar but not identical to each other. They feature engaged fluted pilasters that rise from unadorned square plinths and support unadorned friezes. Ceramic tiles dating from ca.1946 surround all fireboxes throughout the house (Figure 15 and Figure 16). Thick beaded baseboards are found throughout the rooms in the 1946 block. Both blocks of the house also retain bathroom and kitchen fixtures dating from ca.1946.





Figure 15: Fireplace, five-paneled door, surrounds, and wallboards in first story of original block.



Figure 16: View of living room in 1946 hyphen looking to east.



Figure 17: View of second floor stairwell in original block, looking to west.



Figure 18: View of second-floor bedroom, looking to west.



**East Shed (contributing building)**

The small, early-twentieth-century, shed-roofed, frame shed (Figure 19) is located just a few feet from the northern (rear) side of the Stirewalt House. The building is clad in vertical wood siding on its northern, western, and eastern elevations and topped with standing-seam metal.



Figure 19: View of southwestern corner of east shed.

**Garage (contributing building)**

The early-twentieth-century single-bay garage (Figure 20) is located to the northwest of the Stirewalt House. The front-gabled frame building is clad in weatherboards. Standing-seam metal and exposed rafter tails adorn the building's roof.



Figure 20: View of southeastern corner of garage.

### Well house (contributing building)

The frame well house (Figure 21) is located to the south of the garage and west of the Stirewalt House. The structure is square in form. Four square posts support a pyramidal roof clad in asphalt shingles and featuring exposed rafter tails. The well has been sealed, and all associated equipment has been removed.



Figure 21: View of well house looking to the north.

### West Shed (contributing building)

The early-twentieth-century frame west shed (Figure 22 and Figure 23) sits to the direct west of the garage and to the northwest of the Stirewalt House. The building is clad in weatherboards and capped with a standing-seam metal shed roof displaying exposed rafter tails. The shed sits on a brick pier foundation and was used for storage according to the property's caretaker, William Burwell.



Figure 22: View of southeastern corner of west shed.





Figure 23: View of interior of west shed, looking to west.

### **Workshop (contributing building)**

Located directly west of the Stirewalt House, the frame workshop dates to the early twentieth century and was largely utilized for storage purposes (Burwell, 2018). The side-gabled building sits on a concrete-masonry-unit (CMU) pier foundation and is composed of a rectangular block clad in weatherboards. A fixed six-light window pierces the building's southern side, and a vertical board door is off-centered on the eastern side (Figure 24). A frame flat-roofed addition clad in weatherboards extends off the building's northern elevation. It is open on its eastern side. A second frame addition with a shed roof extends from the building's western side. This addition is clad in metal sheathing and is open on its southern side (Figure 25).



Figure 24: View of northeastern corner of workshop.



Figure 25: View of southern elevation of workshop.

**Corncrib (contributing building)**

The early-twentieth century frame corncrib (Figure 26) is linear in plan and rests on CMU piers. The building is clad in horizontal wood slats and capped with a standing-seam metal shed roof. It is located west of the garage. A simple slatted door opens at the east elevation (Figure 27).



Figure 26: View of rear (northern elevation) of corn crib.





Figure 27: View of corn crib interior, looking west.

### **Barn (contributing building)**

The frame gambrel-roofed barn (Figure 28 and Figure 29) was built prior to 1935, according to current property owner and Stirewalt descendant Mary Morrow. The building stands to the west of the Stirewalt House and faces east. Clad in weatherboards, the barn sits atop a continuous CMU block foundation. Unusual slat ventilation underpins the eaves on each of the building's four elevations. Two fixed six-light windows are found on the second floor on the building's eastern and western end elevations. Additionally, two centrally placed metal sliding-track doors open on both eastern and western elevations.



Figure 28: View of northern elevation of barn.



Figure 29: View of northeast corner.

Four stalls that once housed donkeys line the southern wall of the barn's first floor, which is composed of compacted dirt. Two thick, central, chamfered wooden posts were likely salvaged from an earlier building (Figure 30, left). A wooden staircase (Figure 30, right) leading to the barn's second-floor loft is found in the southeastern corner of the building. A large open space, the loft (Figure 31) retains its original wooden floorboards and gambrel roof framing. Utilized for hay storage, it has hay chutes along its south wall to allow for easy feeding. A large opening is cut out at the eastern side of the loft floor to facilitate the lifting up and stacking of hay in the loft. Hay was hoisted up through the hole from wagons below, obviating the need for an external hoist and hay doors



Figure 30: Left, interior view of barn looking to east; right, view of staircase to second floor, located in the barn's southeastern corner.





Figure 31: Interior view of second floor, looking to east.

#### **Machine Shed (contributing building)**

The early/mid-twentieth-century frame machine shed (Figure 32) is located to the west of the barn, at the edge of the primary farm complex. The building's three bays are divided by two square columns set on brick piers. The remainder of the building rests on a continuous CMU foundation



Figure 32: View of northeast corner of tractor shed.



**Birthing Shed (contributing building)**

The early/mid-twentieth century birthing shed (Figure 33) is located at the edge of the farm complex, just inside the wooded perimeter west of the Stirewalt House. The frame building is clad in metal sheathing, and its shed roof is topped with standing seam metal. The building rests on a CMU block foundation. It retains a wooden sled used to haul apples or hay (Figure 34).



Figure 33: View of eastern elevation of birthing shed.



Figure 34: Apple or hay sled in birthing shed.



### James Ledford House (CW0214) (contributing building)

Sitting on the parcel directly to the east of the Stirewalt House, the one-and-a-half-story, stone, James Ledford House (CW0214) was constructed ca. 1934 (Figure 35). Like the Stirewalt House, the Ledford House sits near the road but is shielded from view by a row of mature trees.

The house is a handsome Craftsman-style bungalow. A recessed Craftsman-style front porch supported by a wooden arch resting on tapered stone columns embraces the front (southern) elevation of the house (Figure 36). Stone stairs climb up to the porch and the house's intact Craftsman-style front door, which is centered between paired nine-over-one sash. A front-gabled dormer with three windows of the same style sits atop the building's side-gabled roof. The dormer's original weatherboards were recently replaced with vinyl. Two exterior-end stone chimneys with unusual crown-like caps are found on the building's eastern side. On the rear (northern) elevation, a mid-twentieth-century frame dormer sits atop the roof, which is clad in asphalt shingles (Figure 35). With the exception of this dormer, the exterior of the house is almost completely intact. Access to the building's interior was not available.

Although located on the parcel adjacent to the Stirewalt Farm, the Ledford House was built by and historically owned and occupied by the Stirewalt Family. As such, it is considered a contributing resource. The house was assigned the name Ledford, for a later owner, as part of a previous inventory.



Figure 35: View of front (eastern) elevation of Ledford House.



Figure 36: View of southwestern corner of Ledford House.



Figure 37: View of side (northern) elevation of Ledford House with later-added shed dormer rising at rear.



### Concrete Shed (non-contributing)

The mid/late-twentieth-century square shed (Figure 38) is located to the northeast of the Stirewalt House on the Ledford property. The CMU block building is topped with a flat, standing-seam, metal roof and features fixed windows on its northern, southern, and western sides. A door opens from its western elevation. The building is believed to post-date the farm's period of significance and therefore is recommended as a non-contributing resource.



Figure 38: View of concrete shed, looking to northeast.

### Site (contributing)

Various historic landscape features contribute to the rural feeling and setting of the Stirewalt Farm, even though the farm is not as large as it originally was. The number of mature plantings, and the way in which they were positioned, demonstrates the importance the Stirewalts placed in the cultivation of an attractive landscape. A decorative grove of American boxwoods (Figure 39), planted by Mary Payne Stirewalt, lines the portion of the gravel drive to the southeast of the house, leading to the farm complex. Mature crepe myrtles line the main driveway across from the house, and sit in a row to the building's northeast. Mature oaks and other trees also punctuate the grounds near the house. A largely intact, round, stone planter (Figure 40) lies to the southwest of the house, to the south of the well house. Additionally, to the north, west, and south of the Stirewalt House and its outbuildings many acres of actively cultivated fields remain (Figure 41 and Figure 42). In recent years, these have been planted in alternating crops of soybeans, wheat, and corn. These fields greatly aid in the parcel's retention of its agricultural setting, despite the large-scale commercial development that has occurred in the near vicinity.



Figure 39: Boxwood garden with crepe myrtle in foreground and Stirewalt House in background.



Figure 40: Looking W at decorative planter w/ shop in background





Figure 41: Field looking NE from birthing shed toward barn.



Figure 42. Looking north across field to wood line at western edge of property

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Julius Valentine Stirewalt (1866-1912) and Mary Payne (1861-1928), both originally of neighboring Alexander County, married in 1889. By the taking of the 1900 census, they were residents of Caldwell County's Little River Township. At that time Julius was listed as a farmer who owned his own land. He was the head of a household that included Mary and their four children (U.S. Census).

In 1909 Julius acquired the 26.5 acres of land on which the Stirewalt House currently sits. He purchased the land from a W.E. Starnes for the sum of \$750. Maxine McCall details the early years of the Stirewalts' farm in Granite Falls in her publication *Etched from Granite* (McCall 1999: 364):

When the Stirewalts came to Granite Falls, J.V. acquired three tracts of land (about 136 acres in all) and... built a 12-room farm house on one of the tracts at the edge of town, just off the Dudley Shoals Road. On their farm, J.V. and three of his sons—Walter, Meade, and Fred—operated a large orchard, harvesting over 1000-1500 bushels of fruit...Golden Delicious and Stayman Winesap apples were their specialty, but in addition to apples and peaches, they also grew barley, wheat, and corn, and kept a few white-face beef cattle. And they ventured into the nursery trade with a stand of 2000-3000 or more English and American boxwoods.

Recognized as astute businessmen, Walter and Meade both served for many years on the Board of Directors of the Granite Building and Loan Association.

Following the death of Julius in 1912, Mary continued to reside in the house until her death in 1928. As of the 1920 census, Mary's household included three of her five surviving children. Following Mary's death, her eldest son, Alonzo or Meade as he was called, took over as head-of-house. The 1930 census records him as head of household living with all four of his single adult siblings: Walter (35), Fred (32), Virginia (29), and Arthur (27).

Shortly after the 1930 census, Virginia Stirewalt married C.D. Tilley and the two were gifted land from her brothers on which to build a house. This land is now the small adjacent parcel on which the James Ledford House (CW0214) sits. Following this gift, Virginia ceded her interest in the rest of family property to her brothers. In 1934 Walter Stirewalt married Louise Boliek (Figure 43) and the two resided in the Stirewalt family home. Arthur Stirewalt also married in 1934, but chose to remove from the house and sell his interest in the family property to his three brothers. As of the 1940 census, Walter was listed as head of the family home. He resided there with Louise, their daughter Mary, and his two unmarried brothers, Fred and Meade. According to Mary Stirewalt Morrow, the eastern wing of the house was added shortly thereafter, around 1946. The addition allowed Walter and his family, and Fred and Meade, to effectively have separate quarters.



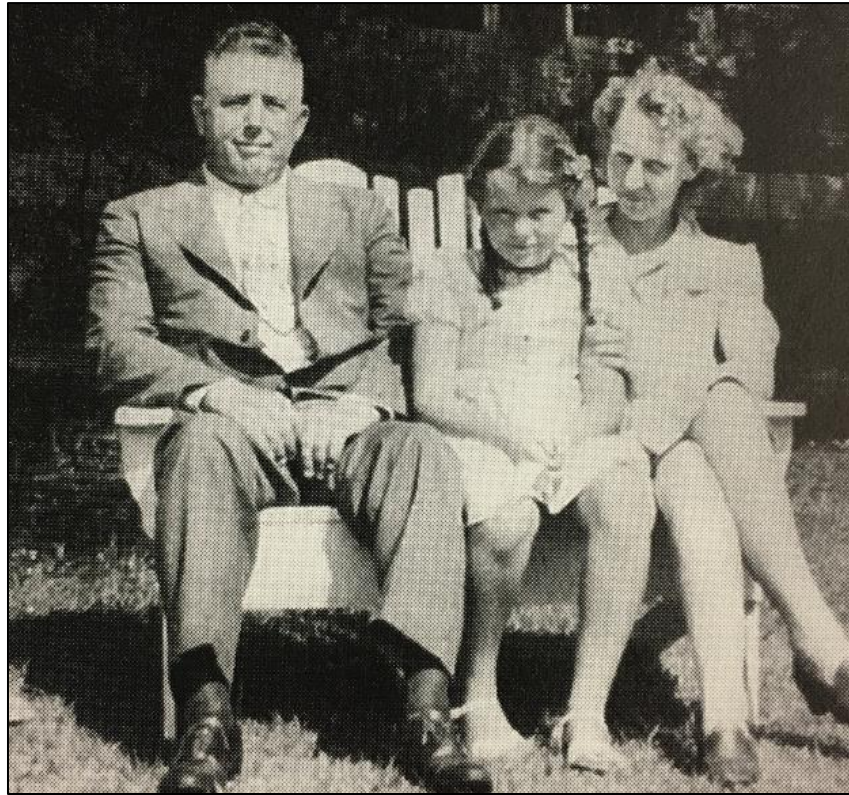


Figure 43: Walter, Mary and Louise Boliek Stirewalt, date unknown (source: McCall 1999:364).

By November 1964 both Arthur and Walter had died, leaving Meade as sole proprietor of the property. In April 1965, Meade sold the 26.5 acre Stirewalt family parcel (including the house) to his niece Mary Louise Stirewalt Morrow (only daughter of Walter and Louise). Mary retains ownership of the property today, although she resides in Mooresville.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION

A survey of a portion of Caldwell County's rural housing stock revealed a small number of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century farmhouses roughly comparable to the Stirewalt House. Only one of the identified houses displayed the same L-plan with rear ell, but all were relatively substantial two-story residences, as opposed to the more common and smaller one-story farmhouse. While surviving farmhouses were difficult to find, locating such farmhouses with a complement of accompanying secondary farm buildings proved even more difficult. None of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century farmhouses identified during the survey retained as exemplary and complete a collection as that found on the Stirewalt Farm.

The Elijah Estes House (CW0422), located at 2619 Old Johns River Road in Collettsville (Figure 44), was built ca. 1872-1903. A 2016 survey of the resource by S. Alan Higgins described the house as follows (Higgins, 2016):

[A] two-story, frame L-Plan house with a rear, centered one-story ell. It is situated on a stone pier foundation beneath a ribbed metal roof and covered with drop siding. The

area beneath the gables is ornamented with diamond-shaped wood shingles. A one-story T-shaped frame addition is attached to the rear elevation...

The house retains its original L-shape with rear ell plan (despite twentieth-century additions), windows, and siding. It is accompanied by an early-twentieth-century gambrel roof barn, a chicken coop, and an assortment of early/mid-twentieth century sheds. The Estes House was recommended as ineligible for NRHP listing by Higgins; however, in its comments on the report, the North Carolina HPO determined the resource merited eligibility under Criterion C as the building is thought to have been a “lone example of a late-nineteenth-century L-plan house within the immediate vicinity.”



Figure 44: Elijah Estes House (CW0422) 2619 Old Johns River Road, Collettsville.

The ca. 1890 G. Haywood Hartley House (CW0231) stands at the top of a hill at 3924 Coy Hartley Road in Hudson (Figure 45). A 2011 survey of the house by Marvin A. Brown, which resulted in the resource being determined NRHP eligible under Criterion C, described it as follows (G. Haywood Hartley House (CW0231) HPO):

The Hartley House was built... with a two-story front block and an offset, one-story, rear ell that gave it an L-shaped footprint. Both blocks are of frame and sided with original weatherboards and topped by gabled roofs. The front block is three bays wide and one room deep... a hipped roof porch shades all three front bays. It retains its original, Victorian, turned posts and jigsaw brackets... The one-story rear ell is marked by a gable-end roof and two chimneys... An open L-shaped porch once wrapped along the rear of the front block and the inside wall of the rear ell. It was enclosed along the back of the house.

Like the Stirewalt House, the Hartley House retains intact early-twentieth century farm buildings which include a granary and stock barn. The Hartley House also retains a large number of mid-twentieth century farm buildings including sheds, chicken coops/houses, and hog pens, most of which were not included within its NRHP-eligible boundaries due to the house’s determined period of significance.





Figure 45: G. Haywood Hartley House (CW0231) 3924 Coy Hartley Road, Hudson.

The C. M. Radar House (CW0349) located at 5115 Valley View Circle in Lenoir (Figure 46) was built ca. 1882. Following her 1987 field survey of the house, Vickie Mason wrote the following (C.M. Radar House (CW0349) HPO):

The proportions of the house, like those of many farmhouses, follow the traditional two-story, single-pile form with exterior end chimneys, and reflect modest decorative detailing. A one-story wraparound porch with a two-tier entrance bay... typifies late 19th and early 20th century porch treatments popular in the county. A notable feature of the farmhouse is the boarding on the exterior wall surface sheltered by the porch; this portion of the front façade is covered with horizontal, beaded boarding instead of weatherboarding found on the remainder of the house.

A handful of mid-twentieth-century frame sheds are the only remaining farm buildings that accompany the Radar House on the parcel.



Figure 46: C.M. Radar House (CW0349) 5115 Valley View Circle, Lenoir.

The house at 2827 Old Johns River Road in Collettsville (Figure 47, left) was briefly surveyed by S. Alan Higgins in 2016. In his survey report, Higgins described it as follows (Higgins, 2016):

... it exhibits an I-house form rather than an L-plan; the house adapts to regional inflections in its inclusion of a full-width façade porch and partial-width upper story porch. The house also is characterized by Folk Victorian influences, including turned porch posts and balusters, as well as decorative gable-end shingles in the central façade gable.

As of 2018, the house appears to remain relatively intact, retaining its original weatherboard siding, six-over-six sash windows, exterior end chimneys, and porch elements. The building's original piered foundation appears to have been replaced/filled-in with CMU blocks.

The Magruder Hill Tuttle House (CW0362) located at 2640 Tuttle Lane in Lenoir (Figure 47, right) was constructed between 1886 and 1907. In her 1986 survey of the resource, Vickie Mason reported (Magruder Hill Tuttle House (CW0362) HPO):

This handsome two-story frame house with Colonial Revival styling is the result of a 1907 addition to an earlier three-room house constructed in 1886-1887... The symmetrically balanced, three-bay, single-pile structure with a two-story rear ell features a side gable roof with boxed cornices that return, and interior corbel capped chimneys. A projecting center bay with clipped sides, decorative brackets, and pedimented gable is the focal point of the house. The porch with a projecting entrance bay with a pedimented gable, scrollsawn brackets, and turned balustrade and columns combine to enhance the style of the house.

The house retains an early-twentieth century gambrel roof barn. All other outbuildings have either been lost or significantly altered.



Figure 47: Left, 2827 Old Johns River Road, Collettsville; right, Magruder Hill Tuttle House (CW0362) 2640 Tuttle Lane, Lenoir.



The Julius V. Stirewalt Farm is recommended eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion A in the area of Agriculture due to its near complete collection of intact early-twentieth century outbuildings, supported by a minimally altered, early-twentieth-century, two-story farmhouse. Following the survey of farmsteads with comparable houses in Caldwell County, the Stirewalt Farm surfaced as retaining the best collection of early-twentieth-century farm buildings associated with a late-nineteenth or early-twentieth-century farmhouse. In addition to the retention of these resources, the landscape surrounding the house and farm largely retains its early-twentieth-century appearance and has not been altered by later twentieth-century additions or subtractions, which is a very rare trait. The farmstead retains a key element missing from many of the other identified farmsteads: the retention of its barn. The gambrel roofed barn's placement at the center of the farm serves as a crucial anchor to the farm complex. The significance of the Stirewalt Farm gains further support from the retention of the James A. Ledford House (CW0214) situated on its neighboring eastern parcel. The collection of two houses and outbuildings paints the complete multi-generational story of the Stirewalt family and their agricultural endeavors in rural Caldwell County throughout the course of the twentieth century.

In addition to Criterion A, the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm also merits eligibility under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Stirewalt House is largely intact, retaining its original weatherboards, windows and doors, porch, and chimneys. Original floors, flushboard walls and ceilings, staircase with newel-post, four and five-paneled doors and original window and door surrounds remain on the building's interior. The house's ca. 1946 additions contribute to its significance, for they demonstrate its natural evolution to meet the needs of the family that has owned it since its construction. Supporting the Stirewalt House is a near complete cast of outbuildings, almost all of which retain excellent material and architectural integrity. The farmstead's barn, corncrib, garage, and sheds exhibit no signs of alteration. Minor additions have been made to the workshop, although these appear to be early. For these reasons, the Stirewalt Farm proves an excellent example of an early-twentieth-century Caldwell County farmstead.

The Julius V. Stirewalt Farm does not boast association with any significant historical person and is therefore not recommended as eligible for listing under Criterion B. As neither the house nor its outbuildings are likely to yield important historical information on the basis of their appearance or construction, the farm also recommended as not eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion D.

The period of significance for the Stirewalt Farm is recommended as extending from ca.1910, when the initial section of the Stirewalt House was built, to ca. 1950, by which date the addition to the Stirewalt House, almost all of the outbuildings, and the Ledford House were built, and the principal plantings were in place. The farmstead is recommended as eligible at the local level of significance.

JULIUS V. STIREWALT FARM		
Element of Integrity	Level of Integrity	Assessment
Location	High	Stands on site where it was built.
Design	High	Retains original form and historic additions; retains extensive amount of exterior finish including original siding, windows, and doors, and interior finishes including doors, floorboards, flushboard ceilings and walls, and mantles.
Setting	High	Despite proximity to US 321, house remains separated from road by mature trees; additionally retains surrounding fields and early agricultural buildings and landscaping, which contribute to the retention of its original rural setting.
Materials	Medium/High	Retains original form and extensive amount of exterior finish including original siding, windows, surrounds, chimneys, and doors. Limited alterations to interior of building—retains original floors, flushboard walls and ceilings, mantles, and doors.
Workmanship	Medium/High	Retains original form and extensive amount of exterior finish including original siding, windows, surrounds, chimneys, and doors. Some modern alterations to interior of building, and to rear (north) elevation.
Feeling	High	High integrity of location, design, and setting and medium/high integrity of materials and workmanship; therefore high integrity of feeling.
Association	High	High integrity of location, design, and setting and medium/high integrity of materials and workmanship; therefore high integrity of association.

### NATIONAL REGISTER PROPOSED BOUNDARY

The recommended boundary of the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm is composed of the following six parcels (Figure 48) that were historically associated with the farmstead, retain their integrity, and allow the historic property to retain an appropriate and sufficient setting:

- (1) all 18.32 acres of parcel 2775973775, owned by Mary Morrow, on which the Stirewalt House and its outbuildings sit, a portion of which extends southeast *across* Dudley Avenue;
- (2) all 0.41 acres of adjoining parcel 2775977258, owned by James Ledford, on which the Ledford House is located;
- (3) all 0.20 acres of parcel 2775976353, owned by Mary Morrow, which is surrounded on all four sides by the 18.32-acre Stirewalt parcel and the Ledford parcel;
- (4) all 0.06 acres of bifurcated parcel 2775978149, owned by Mary Marrow, located on the north side of the 18.32-acre Stirewalt parcel and the east side of the Ledford parcel, **and** the entry drive that divides the 0.06-acre parcel, which does not have a parcel number, extending out to the edge of NCDOT right-of-way associated with US 321;
- (5) all 0.13 acres of parcel 2775977377, owned by Glenn Greer, that adjoins the Ledford parcel on its south and the 18.32-acre Stirewalt parcel on its west; and
- (6) all 1.34 acres of parcel 2775966721, owned by Mary Morrow, which adjoins the southern edge of the 18.32-acre Stirewalt parcel, a portion of which extends southeast *across* Dudley Avenue.


The boundary of the Julius V. Stirewalt Farm conforms to the exiting DOT right-of-way along US 321.





Figure 48: Proposed Julius V. Stirewalt Farm NRHP Boundary.

## First Church of God Hickory

	Resource Name	First Church of God Hickory
	HPO Survey Site #	CT1442
	Location	306 14th Street Southwest, Hickory
	PIN	279208882097
	Date of Construction	Ca. 1961
	Recommendation	Recommended not eligible for NRHP listing

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

#### Site

The First Church of God Hickory occupies four parcels at the corner of 14th Street SW and 3rd Avenue SW in southwest Hickory (Figure 49). The church sits on the northernmost parcel, approximately 90 feet from the road, and is oriented to the east. A large grass clearing separates the church from the street and was the location of an earlier church. To the south of the church, occupying over half of the church’s property, is a paved parking lot. South of the parking lot is a grassy lawn scattered with mature trees. Residential parcels surround the church to the east, west, and south. A power plant rises across the street to the north.



Figure 49: Site plan of First Church of God Hickory



## First Church of God

The current First Church of God was built ca. 1967. Its architect was Dallas Carroll Abee, Sr., who was likely assisted by his son, Dallas Carroll Abee, Jr. The Modernist brick building use a linear plan composed of two sections: the 1967 church sanctuary and the ca. 1979 single-story educational wing, which extends from the church's rear (western elevation) (Figure 50 through Figure 53). In its 2015 Hickory Survey Update, Acme Preservation Services describes the building as follows:

The First Church of God Hickory (CT1442) at 306 14th Street SW incorporates similar elements [as Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (CT1480) and Highland Methodist Church (CT1367)] to update the traditional gable-front sanctuary form... the brick church building displays a projecting front bay, deep eaves, exposed purlins, and cast-concrete window panels on the [northern and southern] side elevations. The decorative vertical façade panel of cast concrete [on the eastern elevation] contains a stained-glass cross opening, and the side elevations exhibit groups of one-over-one windows and cast-concrete spandrels over a row of horizontal fixed-sash windows.

This description well summarizes the building's largely straightforward exterior design. The exterior's only other notable original design features are its soaring, slender, three-sided spire—clad in aluminum panels and reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1949 design for Phoenix's proposed Southwest Christian Seminary (built as First Christian Church in 1971)—and its freestanding brick bell tower, which is comprised of four tall posts capped by a brick box pierced by multiple cross-shaped cutouts and a lofty metal cross.

The church's single-story educational wing is of masonry construction and utilitarian in design. Modern plate-glass doors on the east serve as an entrance to the wing. Large, fixed, single-pane windows cross the addition's western and southern elevations. A porte cochère extends from the southern elevation and connects to the northern corner of the church.



Figure 50: View of front (eastern) elevation of church.



Figure 51: View of northeastern corner of church with education wing to rear.



Figure 52: View of northwestern corner of education wing with rear gable of church rising at the center.





Figure 53. View of northeastern corner of education building and bell tower, at left, and of front elevation of church, at right.

The church's interior is simple in design (Figure 54). Original wooden pews form two lines on either side of a central aisle, which faces a stained-glass cross set in the eastern elevation. A wood-paneled ceiling supported by sleek modern wooden arches crown the sanctuary. Similar arches appear in multiple Abee-designed churches. Pendant lights that appear to be original hang from above. At the front of the church, stairs lead to the nave, which is composed of a large open platform backed by the stained-glass cross and a modern projection screen.



Figure 54: View of interior of sanctuary, looking north, with roof detail at right.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### First Church of God Hickory

The congregation of the First Church of God Hickory was founded in 1908 under the leadership of Rev. J.L. Lundy. Early meetings of the church were held in the homes of congregants (First Church of Hickory, 2017). In 1913 the need arose for a formal church building. Completed between 1913 and 1914 on the current property, the building was constructed of rusticated concrete block and of modest size, only 1,500 square feet. In addition to serving as a place of worship, this early church building served as headquarters for the First Church of God state camp meetings. The popularity of these meetings eventually prompted the need for more space, and so a second building was added to the site (First Church of God Hickory (CT1442), HPO) (Figure 55):

An L-shaped, two-story building was constructed with kitchen, dining and sleeping areas... In 1928, classrooms were built... In 1940, Camp Sain was established [and camp meetings were moved there.] This 5.38 acre retreat located southwest of Hickory was given by Sanford and Zona Sain (First Church of God Hickory ((CT1442), HPO).

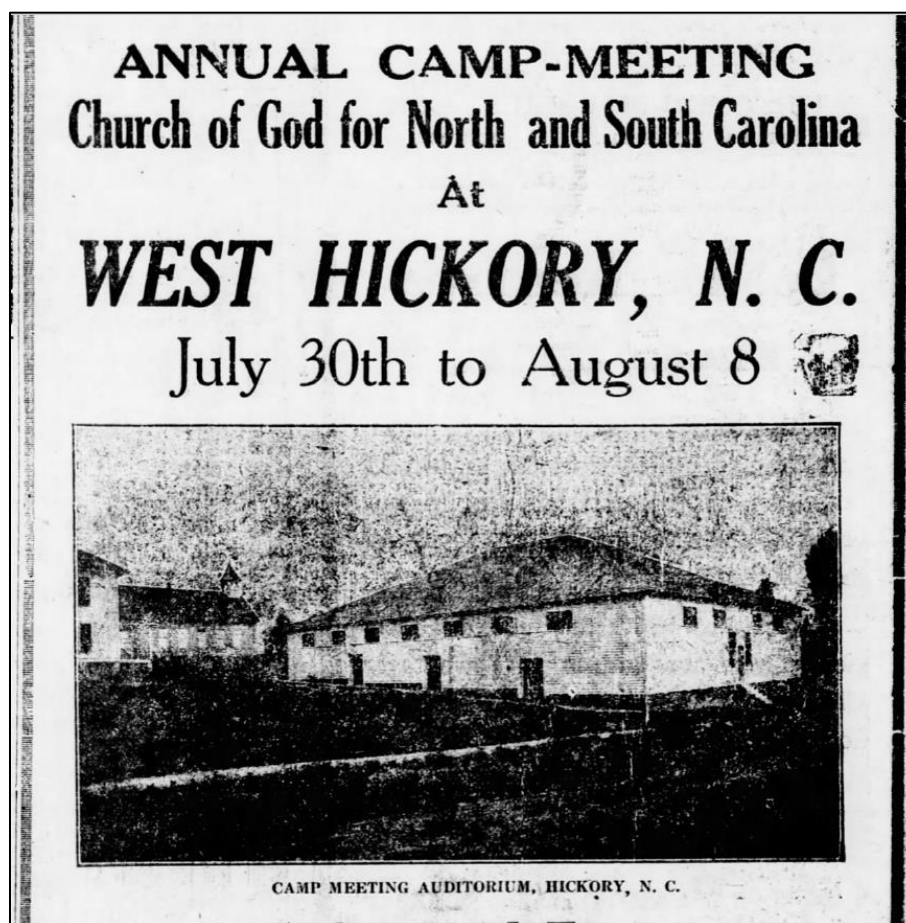


Figure 55: 1920 advertisement in the *Hickory Daily Record* showcasing the original 1914 church in the background, and a two-story camp building in the foreground (source: *Hickory Daily Record*, 1920).



Several pastors presided over the congregation in its early years including William L. Shinn, G.H. Pye, R.T. Vest, W.A. Southerland, W.H. Oldham, Chester Thompson, Rufus F. Miller, C.W. Hatch, and J.T. Lackey. In 1929 a new, larger church building (Figure 56) was constructed and served the congregation until the current building was built in 1967 (First Church of Hickory, 2017). The present-day church was built by Guy Frye and Sons for \$250,000 and designed by local Hickory architect Dallas Carroll Abbee, Sr., likely with the assistance of his son,

At the time of its completion the new building featured a sanctuary, 11 classrooms, an office, and restrooms. This new building was constructed behind the 1929 church, which was eventually torn down, allowing the new sanctuary to front the street. In 1979 the one-story educational wing was added to the rear of the church building ((CT1442), HPO).



Figure 56: Left, exterior view of the 1929 church date unknown; right, interior view of the 1929 church, date unknown (source: <http://www.hickoryfirstchurch.website/history/>).

### **Dallas Carroll Abbee, Sr. and Dallas Carroll Abbee, Jr.**

Dallas Carroll Abbee, Sr. (1910-2003), who was principally responsible for the design of the First Church of God Hickory, was a prolific Hickory architect who designed many buildings during the mid- and late-twentieth century (Figure 57). The online archive NC Modernist Houses includes the following biography of him (NC Modernist Houses 2017):

Abbee's father was [brick mason and contractor] Solomon Lafayette Abbee who [Dallas Carroll Abbee] started in Hickory in 1945 as an architect. Abbee was in the first graduating class of the old Hickory High School which became the Catawba Arts and Sciences center. He earned a BS in Architectural Engineering from NCSU in 1931 and opened a solo office in 1935.

During WWII, he worked for the Oak Ridge, TN office of Skidmore Owings and Merrill. He was asked to go with them to New York but he decided to return to Hickory instead. He partnered with Aiji Tashiro in 1948 then went solo in 1952. Abbee and Tashiro were the original architects for Lutheridge in Arden, NC. In 1958 he partnered with James Elbert Biggs and went solo again in 1963.

Abbee designed many buildings, including the Wildacres Conference Center near Little Switzerland, NC. His son is architect Dallas Carroll Abbee, Jr., who had George Matsumoto as a design instructor at NCSU.



Figure 57: Left, Dallas Carroll Abee, Sr., date unknown (source: <http://www.ncmodernist.org/abee.htm>); right Dallas Carroll Abee, Jr., date unknown (source: <http://www.hickorync.gov/content/abee-architect-pa>).

Following his return to Hickory in 1945, Abee Sr. designed a multitude of resources for the community and region, including religious, residential, and commercial buildings. Although sometimes leaning toward a Modernist style, the majority of his buildings were utilitarian and/or traditional in design. From 1948 to 1953, Abee was in partnership with Aiji Tashiro as the firm of Abee & Tashiro. This partnership produced the only known commission (actually an ongoing series of commissions) associated with Abee that has been determined eligible for NRHP listing, Lutheridge (BN6304). Built over more than a decade beginning in 1949, this Buncombe County Lutheran Conference center was determined NRHP-eligible (Acme Preservation Services 2017 and NC HPO concurrence letter, January 18, 2018 at <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/ER/ER-Reports/ER%2017-3031.pdf#page=39>):

under Criterion A as an excellent and intact example of a mid-twentieth-century retreat established by the Lutheran Church and under Criterion C for its significance as a collection of recreation-associated buildings designed by the architectural firm of Abee & Tashiro as a blend of the Rustic Revival and Modernist styles of architecture.

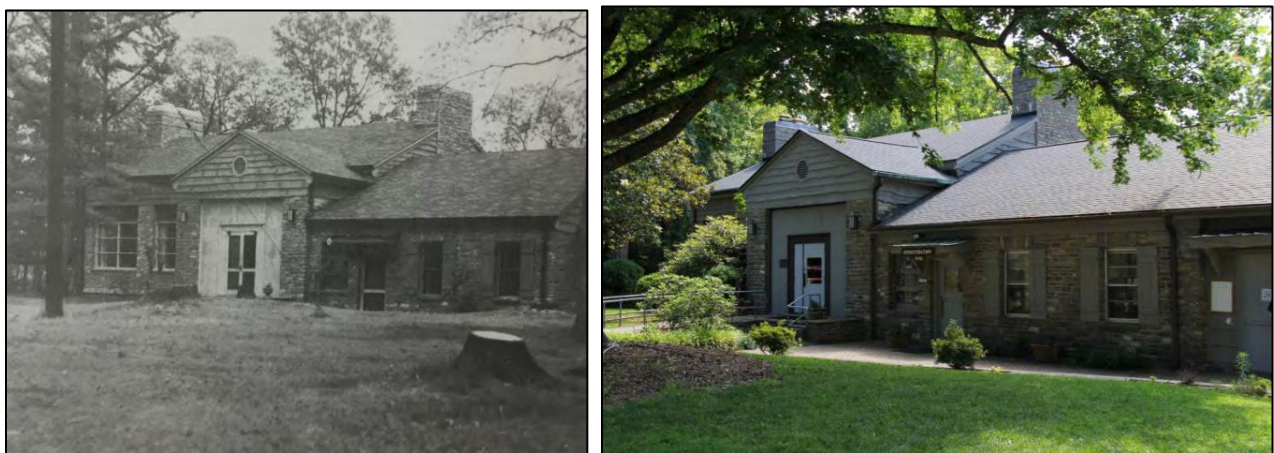


Figure 58. Early photograph of Efird Hall (1949) at Lutheridge and 2017 photograph by Clay Griffith

In 1961, during Abee's partnership with James E. Biggs, the NC AIA gave Abee & Biggs an Award of Merit for their design of Friendship Lutheran Church in Taylorsville, NC, and also for their design of



the Chamber of Commerce building in Hickory. The pair won a third Award of Merit in 1963, just before the dissolution of their partnership, for their design of Hickory's main fire station (NC Modernist, 2018; *North Carolina Architect* 1965:14, 21; Acme Preservation Services 2015). The Modernist church still stands largely unaltered, although it has received modern additions (Figure 59). The fire station, however, has undergone significant alterations and the Modernist former Chamber of Commerce building was demolished within the past few years.



Figure 59: Friendship Lutheran Church, ca. 1961 (source: <http://www.ncmodernist.org/NCARCHITECT/1965-01.pdf>).

In 1965 Dallas C. Abee Jr. joined his father in his practice and became a full partner in the firm in 1978. Following in his father's footsteps, Abee, Jr. had graduated from North Carolina State University's School of Design in 1960. Before joining his father, he worked for Asheville-based Six Associates. During the 1970s the firm focused their designs largely on furniture mills and textile plants throughout Hickory and the surrounding area. It firm was also responsible for the redesign of a portion of the city center of downtown Hickory during the town's period of urban renewal in the mid-1970s. It also continued to design churches and residences. When his father retired in 1989, Abee, Jr. took over the firm, which continues to operate as Abee Architect, PA. (*Hickory Record* 2014; *Hickory Record* 2010; Town of Hickory 2018)

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION

A general survey of mid- and late-twentieth-century resources in Hickory and its surroundings—via a literature search and fieldwork—was conducted following the recordation of the First Church of God, to assist in evaluating its NRHP eligibility. The intent was to place the building in context with other local churches of its period and design, and with the overall design work of Dallas Carroll Abee, Sr. and, to a lesser extent, his son. The survey strongly suggests that the building is neither a notable representative of local, mid-century Modernist, church architecture, nor of the architectural designs of the Abees.

The ca. 1961 Highland Methodist Church (CT1367) (Figure 60), a church of notable modern design located on the north side of Hickory, was surveyed in 2015 (Acme Preservation Services) as part of the Hickory Survey Update. The report describes it as follows:

The Highland Methodist Church complex is dominated by the striking geometry of its sanctuary, which features a front-gable roof with two front roof beams anchored to the ground with concrete footings and angular side walls. The peak of the front gable

extends forward beyond the sawtooth brick walls framing a large metal-frame mosaic glass wall designed by the architects [Harrell and Clark, local Hickory architects]... An interior brick chimney rises at the rear (east) of the building, and the sanctuary connects to a two-story, rectangular-plan wing containing classrooms and offices. The rear section has a flat-roof, vertical window bays with cast-concrete panels, metal-frame glazed entry doors, and a cantilevered porte cochere on the lower level at the rear of the building.



Figure 60: Highland Methodist Church (CT1367) at 1020 12th Street Place NW, Hickory.

Located in downtown Hickory at 324 2nd Avenue SE, the largely intact, masonry Christ Lutheran Church (CT1408) (Figure 61) was constructed ca. 1970 and displays an unusual curvilinear design. The one-story building is comprised of two curved wings linked by a central sanctuary that projects forward from the main body of the building. Dark stained-glass windows topped with cast concrete panels adorn both side wings of the church. The front of the building is striking for its lack of windows. Decorative vertical bands of brick score the elevation, to the front of which is attached a severe metal sculpture topped by a cross and thorn-like crown. The building's architect was not determined.



Figure 61: Christ Lutheran Church (CT1408) at 324 2nd Avenue SE, Hickory.

Also located in downtown Hickory, at 2780 N. Center Street, is Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (CT1480) (Figure 62) designed by Abee or Abee & Biggs and built in 1958. Described in the Hickory Survey Update as “breaking from the more conservative forms of Gothic Revival-style church buildings that



were built in Hickory during the 1940s and 1950s” (Acme 2015) Mt. Olive’s design diverges greatly from the traditional cruciform plan. The church resembles a large two-story brick box, with tall banded windows on its primary and secondary elevations. A large tower topped with a cross, similar to that found at the First Church of God, is located to the building’s north. Multiple later one-story wings are attached to the building’s south and were built in the 1970s and 1990s according to the Hickory Survey update (Acme, 2015). North Carolina’s brick manufacturers featured the church in an advertisement they placed on the rear cover of *Southern Architect*—the magazine of North Carolina’s AIA—in June 1959 (Figure 63).



Figure 62: Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (CT1480) at 2780 N. Center Street, Hickory.



Figure 63: Images of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church lauding its use of reinforced brick masonry, walls with vertical slits glazed with stained glass, and “open-textured brick organ screen” (Southern Architect 1959)

Bethany Lutheran Church (CT0495) (Figure 64, left), constructed in 1962 and designed by Abee & Biggs, is located at 127 17th Street NW in Hickory. The large masonry building is rectangular in plan with tall narrow bands of windows adorning its western elevation. A tall multi-story bay projects from the main mass of the building on the church’s southern elevation. Bands of windows punctuate the bay from top to bottom. A concrete courtyard abuts the bay and serves to connect this original building with a newer series of buildings. A large metal cross embedded in a concrete base stands at the center of the courtyard.

Providence Missionary Baptist Church standing at 1110 E. Pine Street (Figure 64, right) in Lincolnton in neighboring Lincoln County provides another good example of mid-twentieth-century design by Abee & Biggs. Constructed in 1960 the brick church is modest in size and features a shed roof design. The building's front corner stands taller than the rest of the church, mimicking a traditional bell tower and features a large embedded stain glass cross. A recessed porch serves as the building's primary entrance



Figure 64. Left, Bethany Lutheran Church (CT0495) at 127 17th Street NW, Hickory; right, Providence Missionary Baptist Church at 1110 E. Pine Street, Lincolnton.

Located outside of the town of Taylorsville in neighboring Alexander County, Friendship Lutheran Church (Figure 65) was built by Abee & Biggs and won them an AIA Award of Merit in 1961. The 1965 edition of the AIA publication *NC Architect* describes it as follows:

A wooden umbrella houses this rural church in Alexander County. The resulting tabernacle type structure combines the idea and tradition of the old and vigor of the contemporary. Entering the structure from all sides gives a sense of gathering, welcome and worship and is in keeping with the tradition of rural churches being places of meeting as well as worship.

Views to the interior of the church revealed a wooden ceiling and arch system similar to that of the First Church of God.



Figure 65. Friendship Lutheran Church at 5300 Church Road, Taylorsville.



Two later churches were identified in the greater Hickory area that credit the Abee firm for their designs. Considering their late-twentieth-century appearance, they were likely primarily or entirely the work of Dallas Carroll Abee, Jr. The New Life Baptist Church in Conover and the Mountain View Baptist Church in Hickory (Figure 66) are both multi-gable structures that feature a more traditional church design. Like the First Church of God Hickory, they lack the unique and modern design features found in many of the previously discussed comparable churches.



Figure 66. Left, New Life Baptist Church at 4639 County Home Road, Conover; right, Mountain View Baptist Church at 4266 River Road, Hickory

In order to obtain a greater sense of Abee Sr.'s architectural influence within the greater Hickory region, a selection of his (or Abee & Biggs') commercial and residential designs were also investigated as part of the survey. Examples of these buildings are depicted at Figure 67 and Figure 68. The Ballenger House, the most traditional of the group, was reportedly based upon the eighteenth-century house Virginia's Carter's Grove in James City County, Virginia. (<http://hickorylandmarks.org/mgcrouch/crouch-house-list-homes.htm>).



Figure 67. Left, Hickory Fire Station (CT0889) at 42 and 46 3rd Street NW, Hickory which has been heavily altered; right, Old Hickory Chamber of Commerce at 470 Highway 70 SW, Hickory which has been demolished within recent years.



Figure 68. Top left, James E. and Ellen S. Biggs Jr. House at 750 8th Street Drive NW, Hickory; top right, Cass Ballenger House at 867 20th Avenue Drive NW, Hickory; bottom, J. Spurgeon and Beulah Abee Philips House at 530 5th Avenue NE, Hickory

It should be noted that while this report emphasizes the Abees, due to their design of the First Church of God, much of the work for which Abee, Sr. is or could be noted was done in partnership with James Biggs as the firm Abee & Biggs. Indeed, Dallas Carroll Abee, Jr. sang the praises of both his father and Biggs in a *Hickory Record* story (2010) story about the Abee firm and his practice:

Abee said he gained much through working with his father, who was Hickory’s second licensed architect, and with James Biggs, whom Abee credits with helping to bring modern architecture to Hickory in the 1950s.

Any future assessment of the works of the Abees would require a careful examination of Abee & Biggs.

The First Church of God Hickory is recommended as not meriting NRHP eligibility under Criterion A, as it has no connection with any significant historic events. Although the church served as a camp meeting ground for churches in both North and South Carolina for much of its early history, all buildings associated with these historical events have been removed.

The church is additionally not recommended as eligible for NRHP listing under Criterion B. The Abees do not appear to qualify as “persons significant in our past” and, further, the church had no



notable association with their lives. It was one of many designs, rather than an office, home, or other place with an important connection to their work and lives.

In order to merit eligibility under Criterion C, an architect-designed resource such as the First Church of God Hickory should be a notable example of its particular architectural style or a notable representative of its designer’s work. As discussed above, the church is not believed to be a notable local example of mid-century Modernist religious design and is also not a notable work of the Abees. More architecturally impressive works by Abee, Sr. (or Abee & Biggs) include Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (CT1480), Bethany Lutheran Church (CT0495), Friendship Lutheran Church, and Providence Missionary Baptist Church. Additionally, Highland Methodist Church (CT1367) and Christ Lutheran Church (CT1408) in Hickory are better examples of the style by other architects. Further, residential work by Abee or Abee & Briggs is also better representative of their design abilities. This work includes the Modernist James E. and Ellen S. Biggs Jr. House (Biggs’ personal residence) and J. Spurgeon and Beulah Abee Philips House.

The First Church of God Hickory is not likely to yield important historical information on the basis of its appearance or construction, and is therefore recommended as not eligible as an architectural resource under Criterion D.

<b>FIRST CHURCH OF GOD HICKORY</b>		
<b>Element of Integrity</b>	<b>Level of Integrity</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Location	High	Stands on original place upon which it was built.
Design	Medium	Most of church remains intact, but an addition about twice its size extends to rear.
Setting	Medium	Largely retains mixed residential and non-residential setting, but power plant across street appears to post-date the church building.
Materials	Medium	Most of church remains intact, but an addition about twice its size extends to rear.
Workmanship	Medium	Most of church remains intact, but an addition about twice its size extends to rear.
Feeling	Medium	High integrity of location and medium integrity of design, setting, materials, and workmanship result in medium integrity of feeling.
Association	Medium	High integrity of location and medium integrity of design, setting, materials, and workmanship result in medium integrity of association.

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