

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Summerfield School Gymnasium and Community Center

Summerfield, Guilford County, GF7006, Listed 8/28/2012

Nomination by Cynthia de Miranda

Photographs by Cynthia de Miranda, October 2011



Overall view



Rear view

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Summerfield School Gymnasium and Community Center
 other names/site number Summerfield Rock Gym

2. Location

street & number 7515 Trainer Drive n/a not for publication
 city or town Summerfield n/a vicinity
 state North Carolina code NC county Guilford code 081 zip code 27358

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
 State or Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date
 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____ _____ _____	Signature of the Keeper _____ _____ _____ _____	Date of Action _____ _____ _____ _____
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
 private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)
 building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

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

Number of Resources within Property		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility, theater,
music facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility,
theater, music facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
OTHER: Rustic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation STONE: Granite
walls STONE: Granite
WOOD: Weatherboard
roof ASPHALT

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939-1962

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

Summerfield School Gymnasium
and Community Center

Name of Property

Guilford County, NC

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 17 598400 4006510
Zone Easting Northing

B _____

C _____
Zone Easting Northing

D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia de Miranda

organization MdM Historical Consultants, Inc.

April 23, 2012

street & number P.O. Box 1399

telephone 919/906-3136

city or town Durham

state NC

zip code 27702

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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n/a

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Summerfield School Gymnasium and Community Center, known locally as the Rock Gym, stands at 7515 Trainer Drive in Summerfield, Guilford County. The Town of Summerfield, incorporated in 1996, lies a dozen miles northwest of downtown Greensboro, the seat and geographic center of Guilford County. The Rock Gym stands on less than an acre at the northwest corner of the present-day Summerfield Elementary School parcel. That parcel occupies the southwest corner of Summerfield and Centerfield roads, south of the historic center of town. Trainer Drive cuts south through the larger, current school property from Centerfield Road before turning southwest to meet Summerfield Road. The Rock Gym is a masonry structure erected in 1938-1939 as part of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project at a rural consolidated high school in northwestern Guilford County. The building faces east toward Trainer Drive, but it is set back from the road behind a parking lot and positioned behind and just north of the Summerfield Elementary School, inside the curve of Centerfield Road to the northwest. To the north and east, across Centerfield Road from the Rock Gym, is the Summerfield Community Park. The park, developed concurrently by the WPA with the gym as an associated recreational facility, centers on a five-acre, man-made lake known historically as Schoolhouse Lake. Greenlawn Drive is the western boundary of the nominated property. While the Rock Gym remains little changed and at its original location, the school and park properties have been substantially altered. The 1924 consolidated Summerfield High School building and campus historically associated with the gymnasium became home to Summerfield Elementary School after the high school closed in 1962. The 1924 school building—along with two smaller buildings added in the 1950s and 1960s—were demolished in the early 1980s and a new building for Summerfield Elementary School was erected in its place. That building was remodeled and substantially expanded in 2011. An earlier high school building, erected in 1911 (not extant), occupied the site even before the 1924 consolidated high school building and was the first school on this site. At Summerfield Community Park, new buildings, drives, gates, and other landscaping features have likewise changed the character of the property.

Summerfield School Gymnasium and Community Center, 7515 Trainer Drive, 1939, ca. 1955, Contributing Building

The Summerfield School Gymnasium and Community Center is a Rustic Revival-style structure built of locally quarried granite rubblestone with Craftsman details rendered in wood. A small concrete-block rear addition dates to about 1955. A 2011 remodeling and expansion of the single-story, T-shaped Summerfield Elementary School building, erected in 1983, dramatically increased its footprint. Major construction included a two-story, hip-roofed addition to the north of the existing school building and a large, gable-roofed, single-story addition at the rear. The additions each come within about thirty feet of the facade and south sides of the gym, and the north addition to the school partially obscures the Rock Gym from the vantage point of Summerfield Road and Trainer Drive. Mechanical equipment fills a small space between the school's rear addition and the Rock Gym; solid brick walls about nine feet high enclose the east and west sides of the space and extend from the north side of the school's rear addition to within an inch of the the south elevation of the gymnasium and its own rear extension. The wall drops to about five feet in height at its northern end.. The gym houses a basketball/volleyball court, built-in bleachers, restrooms, locker rooms, and storage rooms; the addition provided larger locker room facilities.

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The rectangular granite building features random-coursed rubblestone walls with beaded mortar joints, a gable-on-hip roof, slightly overhanging eaves, wood windows, and, at the facade, paired entrances sheltered by gabled hoods. Shallow shed-roofed extensions, also of granite rubblestone, stretch nearly the length of the building on its north and south sides to house the built-in bleachers. Weatherboard sheathes the gable ends of the roof as well as the clerestory window wall below the main roof. The original, triangular-shaped, louvered wood vent remains at the back gable, just above a rectangular modern metal vent added later. At the front gable, the original triangular wood louvered vent remains, but an oversized rectangular metal vent has been added immediately below it. Asphalt shingles, likely a 1950s addition as well, cover the main roof and the shed roofs, and matching stonework chimneys rise at the west and east ends of the north and south elevations, respectively.

Front entrances to the gym are at the north and south ends of the facade and are sheltered by bracketed, open-gable hoods. Each entrance has double-leaf paneled, partially glazed wood doors topped by a multilite transom. Two rows of three windows pierce the rock wall between the entrances, giving the building the appearance of two stories. In fact, the one-over-six double-hung sash windows of the lower row light restrooms and a stairwell, while nine-light awning windows above light loft-like storage areas along the east end of the building.

Originally, single-leaf rear doors exited the building at the west ends of the north and south elevations. The doorways remain, but they now provide access to the rear addition. The small concrete-block addition matches the width of the Rock Gym and measures less than a third of its length. The addition features fixed, four-lite, metal-sash windows just under the eave line of the flat roof.

Fenestration along the north and south walls of the original building consists of four pairs of six-light, wood awning windows that pierce the stone walls of each bleacher extension and four pairs of six-lite, wood awning clerestory windows above the bleacher extensions. Single-leaf metal doors allow egress from the addition at its north and south elevations, near the its juncture with the original building. A concrete stoop with pipe rail leads up to the door on each side.

The building's paired front entrances lead into matching small foyers with five-paneled wood doors on all interior walls. Straight ahead, double-leaf doors lead into the gymnasium's main space. Doors on the outer sides of each foyer lead to storage closets. In the north entry hall, the door in the south wall leads to a stairwell up to the storage areas. Beyond the stairwell hall, at its south end, is the girl's restroom. From the south entry foyer, a door in the north wall provides access to the boy's bathroom. Both foyers feature wood floors and painted beadboard walls and ceilings.

Five double-Howe wood-and-metal trusses support the roof of the gymnasium space and allow an open expanse for the playing area. Trusses are built-up and bolted together with metal plates. Vertical webs are also metal; all other parts are wood. The wood roof deck is exposed above the trusses. Five wood columns with chamfered edges support the trusses as well as the upper part of the walls on the north and south sides; beyond the columns are four rows of bleachers in each of the extensions along the side elevations. The bleachers are built-in wood benches that extend nearly the length of the shed-room extensions. The interior side of the building's load-bearing granite walls are unfinished, revealing the random coursed rubblestone; this is seen mainly at the back of the side bleacher sections, where the ceiling is painted beadboard. Interiors of the clerestory window walls are horizontal tongue-and-groove planks, as are the east and west walls enclosing

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the gymnasium space. On the south side of the basketball court, at mid-court, an elevated score box overlooks the playing area. The wood box is accessible from a built-in wood ladder in front of the bleachers. Bleachers at the west end of the building are in an elevated section, accessible from a boxed stairwell near the southwest corner of the basketball court. At the east end, the corresponding space is accessed by the stairwell at the front of the building, reached through the north entry foyer. Equipment storage rooms with built-in wood shelving fill the space, and an unglazed rectangular window opening near the center of the wall's width allows a view from the storage room to the gym floor.

The main gymnasium space was originally heated, poorly, by two coal-fired stoves in the southeast and northwest corners of the bleacher shed-rooms; partial walls finished with beadboard separated the stoves from the bleachers and railings protected players from running off court and into the heat source. The stoves have been removed but a concrete pad remains at the southeast corner, as well as a patched hole for the stove pipe. The stove's niche at the northwest corner has been enclosed with wood walls to create a storage closet.

Below the west-end bleachers and behind the tongue-and-groove west wall of the gym are the original locker rooms and concrete shower bays, which have been converted to office and storage use. Original interior wall finishes are painted beadboard; some have been covered with plywood paneling. Fenestration on the original back wall of the Rock Gym consists of a single row of windows with wood louvers to ventilate what had been locker rooms. The rear addition originally housed updated locker rooms; those, too, are now used as storage space and are accessible from the original rear doors of the stone building.

The building has seen few changes since construction. The storage rooms above the east-end vestibules and rest rooms were originally balcony bleacher seats, like those at the west end of the gym. The area was converted to a locker room for a new high school football team around 1947; storage areas for baseball and football uniforms and equipment were created as well. Around 1950, the concrete-block addition was made to the back of the gymnasium to provide new locker rooms for men's and women's basketball and volleyball teams. About the same time, a concrete-block furnace room was built at the east end of the south side of the gym; the coal-fired furnace installed there provided heated water for overhead forced-air space heaters and hot water for the bathrooms and locker rooms. The furnace room was removed in 2011; a notch cut into in the eave to accommodate the furnace stack remains.¹

Although the Summerfield Community Park was historically associated with the Rock Gym as a complementary recreation facility, the park, unlike the gym, does not retain its historic character. New buildings stand along the north side of Centerfield Road, a large new gate marks the entrance to the park, and more formal landscaping has changed the once rustic appearance of the park.

¹ Dewey Trogden, longtime Summerfield resident, written recollections in the personal files of Linda Southard.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Summerfield Gymnasium and Community Center is a Rustic Revival-style granite building built by a county-sponsored Works Progress Administration (WPA) project that was completed in 1939 with substantial involvement and contributions from the local community. The building is an excellent and intact local example of the Rustic Revival style. Since its opening day, the building has offered residents of Summerfield a place for indoor sporting events and community gatherings. It meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation and Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an intact representative of the Rustic Revival style. The building is locally significant and its period of significance is 1939 through 1962; the building still serves its original function but the period after 1962 does not meet Criteria Consideration G. The building retains its architectural integrity and remains an important landmark in the community.

HISTORY AND ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION CONTEXT

Summerfield, in northwestern Guilford County, was a late eighteenth-century crossroads that evolved into an agricultural community. Originally known as Bruce's Crossroads, at the intersection of the Salisbury Road with a north-south road leading down to Guilford Courthouse, Summerfield later thrived as a rural commercial center: In addition to its crossroads location, Summerfield was a stop on both the stagecoach and, after 1888, the Cape Fear and Yadkin Railroad. Agriculture remained important to the community well into the twentieth century. In the 1920s, however, as automobiles became popular, Summerfield began to serve as a bedroom community to Greensboro, just fifteen miles away. The trend was slow for many decades, but the Route 220 bypass in 1952 hurt the community's commercial area by diverting through-traffic away from town and providing a faster route to shopping in Greensboro. Suburban development subsequently intensified, particularly at the turn of the twenty-first century. Summerfield incorporated as a town in 1996 to avoid annexation by Greensboro.²

A local school has been a fixture of the Summerfield community for two centuries. In the early nineteenth century, formal education was available in a log building that stood west of the crossroads. Throughout the 1800s, a series of small private schools operated in Summerfield. In 1911, Guilford County chose Summerfield as the location of a public school, completing the establishment of a county-operated public school in each of the Guilford's rural quadrants. In 1924, during the era of school consolidation, a "modern" brick building with auditorium replaced the 1911 frame school; this new school building was the first on the present-day site of Summerfield Elementary School.³

Accounts differ on the effect of the Depression on Guilford County's economy. Alexander Stoesen concludes that the economy was "relatively resilient" and that there were "not many large-scale relief construction projects in the county." Lynn and Burke Salsi, on the other hand, assert that Guilford County's diversified manufacturing economy in the early twentieth century was heavily affected by the Depression as demand for manufactured goods dropped greatly. By 1931,

² Nora Miller and Nancy Campbell, "Summerfield Historic District National Register Nomination, 2005," 15, 17, 25; Lynn and Burke Salsi, *Guilford County: Heart of the Piedmont* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2002), 44.

³ John E. Batchelor, *The Guilford County Schools: A History* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1991), 54-56, 65; Blackwell P. Robinson and Alexander R. Stoesen, *The History of Guilford County, North Carolina, U.S.A. to 1980* (n.p., n.d.), 134-135; Dewey Trogden, longtime Summerfield resident, e-mail correspondence with the author, November 21, 2011.

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according to the Salsis, unemployment and underemployment were on the rise throughout the county as work became scarce. Meanwhile, farm census reports show that acreage of cash crops across the state fell between 1930 and 1935, reducing the ability of farm laborers to earn money. Guilford County cities Greensboro and High Point had local work relief programs in the first years of the Depression, but federal programs brought work to the county in 1933.⁴

The federal Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) distributed relief funds and oversaw coordination of local projects; in North Carolina, a state ERA disbursed federal funds throughout the state. A significant number of work relief projects were underway in North Carolina as early as 1933 and 1934.⁵

While Summerfield was rural, it was hardly isolated, and the community was likely aware of the amenity-filled parks under construction as federal work-relief projects in Guilford County's cities in these early years. Greensboro's Country Park, opened in July 1934, included a man-made lake, a picnic area, and even a zoo. Municipal Park in High Point included an amphitheater, playing fields, landscaping, walking paths, a bathhouse and the state's largest outdoor swimming pool.⁶

Summerfield had no such amenities and few buildings available for either athletic or community uses. The boys' basketball team at Summerfield School played outdoors on a dirt court. Other county schools likewise played basketball on dirt, including Colfax, Stokesdale, and Monticello, if they did not have a gym, like Guilford College and Rankin high schools. Summerfield also fielded a school baseball team, which obviously did not require a built facility. Community events, meanwhile, were held in a local barn or in the town hall at the crossroads. Once the 1924 school building was erected, its auditorium was sometimes used for community events, including PTA and Grange meetings, concerts, festivals, fundraisers, and events like "Womanless Weddings," a theatrical craze enjoyed around the country.⁷

In the summer of 1934, the state ERA approved \$14,525 for a recreational park at Summerfield. Projects required a local sponsor, and Guilford County stepped up. Within days, the county voted to acquire sixty-two acres near Summerfield School for "Summerfield Recreation Park" intended to serve residents of the northwestern quadrant of Guilford County. Work for seventy-seven men would start a week later; more than half of the workers were to be from the Summerfield area.⁸

Work on the park was underway, but soon relief funds and labor were directed elsewhere. The diversion left the park incomplete and the gym still on the drawing boards. The community, clearly frustrated by the work stoppage, pulled together to agitate for construction to get back on track. In the meantime, new legislation replaced the ERA with the Works Progress Administration (WPA). By 1936, every local organization in Summerfield formed a committee to work towards getting the gym built as a WPA project. Later, a super committee that brought together members of disparate community groups formed to push harder for the gym's groundbreaking. Finally, the WPA allocated \$42,165 for the

⁴ Alexander R. Stoesen, *Guilford County: A Brief History* (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, 1993), 51; Salsi, 136-138; J. S. Kirk, Walter A. Cutter, and Thomas W. Morse, eds. *A Record of the Development and the Activities of the North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration, 1932-1935*. [Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton], 1936), 34.

⁵ Kirk et al., 14, 26.

⁶ Salsi, 137; Kirk et al., 209.

⁷ Trogden e-mail.

⁸ *Greensboro Patriot*, July 3, 1934, clipping in the personal files of Summerfield native and resident Linda Southard.

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project and in 1938, work was again underway. Construction began on the gym and continued on the lake as well as landscaping and roadways through the park.⁹

Local resident Dewey Trogden recalls the construction of the gym; he was six years old at the time. The stone for the building—as well as for the core of the dam and for some bridge abutments in the park—was quarried from the nearby Gamble farm on Pleasant Ridge Road. WPA workers, according to Trogden's recollection, opened the quarry; he guesses that mules hauled sleds loaded with the stone through the woods from the farm to the building site.¹⁰

The Bugler, the school newspaper, reported on construction and community fundraising throughout 1938. Local men worked the actual construction, but nearly everyone in Summerfield contributed to raising the gym in some way. School fundraising competitions pitted classes against each other, and families made donations in cash and in tobacco. Even young school children brought in money, selling flowers to have something to donate to the effort. The budget for the gymnasium was \$52,000, with the community on the hook for thirty percent of that. Community money went towards doors, windows, roofing, wiring, and plumbing for the gym; federal funds were used for materials for the park drives and the dam for the lake.¹¹

The building was complete in September 1939; the five-acre lake and gravel park drives around it had been finished sometime before. A much-anticipated dedication party was set for the end of the month, and the Greensboro newspapers reported heavily on plans for the party: a community dinner of barbecue and Brunswick stew, followed by dancing in the new gymnasium. State WPA administrator C. C. McGinnis attended, as did the County Superintendent of Public Instruction Thomas R. Foust; planners expected two thousand citizens to attend as well. The newspaper coverage and high attendance rate for the party illustrates the building's importance to the community. Fundraising continued even at the dedication in the hope of building bathhouses and a club house at the lake in the near future. The newspapers referred to the building as a gymnasium and community center, making clear the intended multi-use function of the building. Indeed, the Rock Gym has been used since its completion for all indoor high school sports as well as for community events like festivals, square dances, fundraisers, and invitational basketball tournaments. It has also been a polling place.¹²

Summerfield High School closed in 1962, but the school campus became home to Summerfield Elementary School. The 1924 school building was demolished in 1983 and a new school building erected. That building was remodeled and substantially enlarged in 2011. The 1939 gymnasium remains in use for both school athletics and community functions.

⁹ *The (Summerfield School) Bugler*, October 1938, and unmarked newspaper clipping headlined "Money for Summerfield's Gym and Lake is Allotted," both in personal collection of Linda Southard.

¹⁰ Dewey Trogden, longtime Summerfield resident, written recollections in the personal files of Linda Southard and copied in the property's file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.

¹¹ Notes taken from issues of *The Bugler*, in the personal files of Linda Southard.

¹² *Greensboro Record*, September 29 and 30, 1939; *Greensboro Patriot*, October 2, 1939; *Greensboro Daily News*, October 2, 1939; all clippings are in the personal files of Linda Southard; e-mail communication with Linda Southard, April 22, 2012.

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ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Federal relief programs built scores of recreational facilities during the Depression. In North Carolina, such projects included parks, playgrounds, golf courses, campgrounds, gymnasiums, and skating rinks. Larger parks included swimming pools and bath houses, lakes and boat houses, tennis courts, barbecue pits, and amphitheaters. Individual projects cost between \$2,000 and \$100,000.¹³

The ERA heartily endorsed school gymnasiums of the sort proposed by Summerfield, since they offered space for indoor sports for students as well as for community events. According to an agency-authored report of its activities in North Carolina between 1932 and 1935, "Several different types of gymnasiums have been built owing to the different amounts of labor available, and the wishes of the local community and the materials used or supplied by the local people. The plans for each gymnasium were approved by the State Board of Education and by the State Insurance Commission so that the necessary number of exits and other fire and safety measures were provided."¹⁴

From 1933 through 1935, relief programs built eighty-four school gymnasiums throughout the state. Photographs of a number of them show that, while standard plans were not in use, many shared characteristics seen also in the Summerfield gym. Paired entry doors at either end of the facade and the shed-roofed extensions along the length of the building enclosing built-in bleachers were not uncommon features. Roof types varied but all would have been supported by trusses to allow for a clear span at the interior. Federal-relief gyms were built of masonry or frame construction.¹⁵

The choice of stone for the Summerfield gym, of course, had everything to do with availability. According to local recollections, the stone could be had at a nearby farm, and employable men were around to quarry it. Another Guilford County community gymnasium built in the same period, High Point's Allen Jay School Gymnasium, was likewise built of stone. Unlike the Summerfield gym, where the stone was all quarried from a single site for the project, the Allen Jay School Gym used stone donated from individuals who collected it and hauled it to the site. The stones are varied in size and color and add to the rusticity of the building.¹⁶

While Rustic Revival stone buildings share a characteristic style of federal relief construction, in North Carolina they are much more common in the western part of the state. In its rustic stone buildings, the WPA was influenced by another federal relief agency, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC was very active in western North Carolina, helping to build the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Its work, unsurprisingly, derived from the National Park Service's design standards for national parks and focused on built structures in stone or timber that would read as an extension of the natural environment. Craftsman and Colonial Revival elements crept into the WPA's version Rustic Revival. Many western counties have WPA-built stone schools that resemble the Summerfield building. Examples in Avery County alone include the large Elk Park School (NR 2004), which includes a gymnasium ell, and smaller stone schools at Banner Elk and Beech Mountain, both of which also include attached gymnasiums. A freestanding stone gym

¹³ Kirk et al., 84, 98.

¹⁴ Kirk et al., 221

¹⁵ Kirk et al., 222-223.

¹⁶ Laura A.W. Phillips, "Allen Jay School Rock Gymnasium National Register Nomination Form (draft), 2011."

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at Newland differs; it features Gothic Revival detailing. Likewise, Cove Creek High School (NR 1998) in Watauga County stands out with its Collegiate Gothic style.¹⁷

The Rock Gym's thick rubblestone walls, random-laid coursework, and beaded mortar joints are indicative of the craftsmanship and materials associated with Rustic Revival style. The building's overall simplicity, meanwhile, allows the stone and masonry work to stand out. The Craftsman-derived features in wood—bracketed hoods at the exterior and chamfered columns and beadboard walls at the interior—speak to the building's WPA connection, as the two styles often mingled in WPA buildings. The gymnasium is the only Rustic Revival building in Summerfield.

The Summerfield Gymnasium and Community Center retains a high degree of integrity at the interior and exterior. Its intact design, craftsmanship, and materials convey the hand-built, rustic esthetic that is associated with a significant segment of WPA projects. Changes post-dating the period of significance are very minor. The extensive additions to the back and side of the nearby school building do compromise the setting to some extent, but they do not touch the historic building nor completely obscure it from Centerfield Road. No site changes have been made on the north and west sides of the building's site, and those elevations still relate to their surroundings as they did historically. The gymnasium building, which remains in its original location, maintains its strong physical association with both the school and the Summerfield Community Park to the northwest.

¹⁷ Clay Griffiths, "Elk Park School National Register Nomination Form, 2004," 1-2, 8-9.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Summerfield Gymnasium and Community Center is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map entitled "Tax Map, Summerfield Gymnasium and Community Center."

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary has been drawn to encompass the entire historic resource and the intact open setting around the building while excluding the modern school buildings to the east and south.

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PHOTOGRAPH INFORMATION

All photographs taken by Cynthia de Miranda, October 2011. The digital files are at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh.

1. Façade, view toward west.
2. Façade and north elevation, view toward south.
3. Rear elevation, view toward east.
4. West side with mechanical enclosure walls, view toward east.
5. South elevation and façade, view toward west.
6. Site immediately south of south elevation, view toward west.
7. Site east and north of property, view toward southeast.
8. Site at rear of property, view toward east.
9. Façade of remodeled school building with north addition in background, view toward northwest. New school building is NOT within the National Register boundary for the gymnasium
10. Interior, view toward east.
11. Interior, view toward west.
12. Interior showing original locker room, view toward north.
13. Interior showing storage loft, view toward south.
14. Interior showing added locker room, view toward southwest.
15. Interior showing storage loft, view toward north.