

# INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Iredell County

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR  THEMATIC NOMINATION

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Damascus Baptist Church Arbor

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER End of dirt lane, 0.1 mile SW of jct. of SR 1581 and SR 1582, 0.6 mile W of jct. with NC 115

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Central

9th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

037

Iredell

097

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Damascus Baptist Church  
c/o Rev. Irvin L. Wallace

STREET & NUMBER

Route 2

CITY, TOWN

Harmony

VICINITY OF

STATE  
North Carolina

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Laura A. W. Phillips (Winston-Salem)

ORGANIZATION

Consultant for Survey and Planning Branch

DATE

February 4, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

Archives and History

TELEPHONE

(919) 733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Damascus Baptist Church Arbor, in rural northwest Iredell County, is located in a picturesque setting near the crest of a hill above Snow Creek with mountains in the near distance. The arbor is part of a complex which also includes an early twentieth century frame church, a mid-twentieth century education building, and a cemetery dating from the mid-nineteenth century.

The arbor is the main focus of historical interest. Built in 1855, it is a rectangular, open structure approximately 35' X 55' with hand hewn, pegged frame, log rafters, fairly new metal roof, and dirt floor. The gable-on-hip roof has weatherboarded gable ends, one of which has "1855" painted on it. The support posts of the arbor rest on fieldstones. At the west end of the arbor is the pulpit on a slightly elevated platform. Two steps lead up to the platform on either side. The front and sides of the pulpit have a weatherboarded skirt, and the rear is shielded by a weatherboarded panel the width of the platform which runs from ground to roofline. The pulpit is on the downhill side of the arbor, which may have been planned to allow for a natural rise in the seating which spreads out on three sides in front of the pulpit. The wooden pews presently in the arbor are circular sawn and appear to date from the late Victorian period.

The church, which was built between 1907 and 1909, is situated east of the arbor. It is a plain, 1 X 4-bay gable-end-front building with louver-shuttered side windows. In recent years the interior was remodelled, a narthex was added to the front, and an addition was built at the rear, but otherwise the original form of the church fits the pattern of simple rural frame churches built in the Piedmont throughout most of the nineteenth century. During the mid-twentieth century a one-story red brick education building was constructed and attached by a corridor to the west side of the church.

The cemetery is located on the open hillside southwest of the arbor. It contains around 200 markers laid out in straight rows with no artificial boundary. The oldest markers are fieldstones, most of which are uninscribed. Those that are inscribed, however, reveal that the cemetery dates from at least 1857.

The entire Damascus complex is well maintained.

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

\_\_\_\_\_ NATIONAL

\_\_\_\_\_ **X** STATE

\_\_\_\_\_ LOCAL

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1855; 1907-1909

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Damascus Arbor, built in 1855 of heavy-timber pegged construction, ranks with Bethesda, Centre and Bethany Presbyterian Churches in being one of the oldest remaining religious structures in Iredell County. But unlike these other churches, the Damascus Arbor is representative of a specialized form of religious structure built during the nineteenth and early twentieth century in Piedmont North Carolina. Arbors were used by congregations until more permanent structures could be erected and/or as a center for revivals, camp meetings or other special services and church-related functions. The once common arbor has greatly diminished in number through the years, so that in Iredell County, Damascus Arbor is one of the very few remaining and is certainly the oldest example of this architectural type.

## CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The Damascus Arbor is associated with the spread of organized religion in the North Carolina Piedmont region developing out of the Great Revival which hit the area in the early nineteenth century. It is representative of the religious structural form--the permanent wood arbor--which became a socio-religious institution during the nineteenth century (and lasted well into the twentieth century in some instances).
- C. The Damascus Arbor is an excellent and rare example of the mid-nineteenth century religious arbor. Through both its open design and heavy-timber pegged construction, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of this specialized architectural form.



FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Iredell County

Damascus Baptist Church Arbor

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Footnotes (Cont'd)

<sup>3</sup> Transcript.

<sup>4</sup> Homer M. Keever, Iredell Piedmont County (Iredell County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), p. 124.

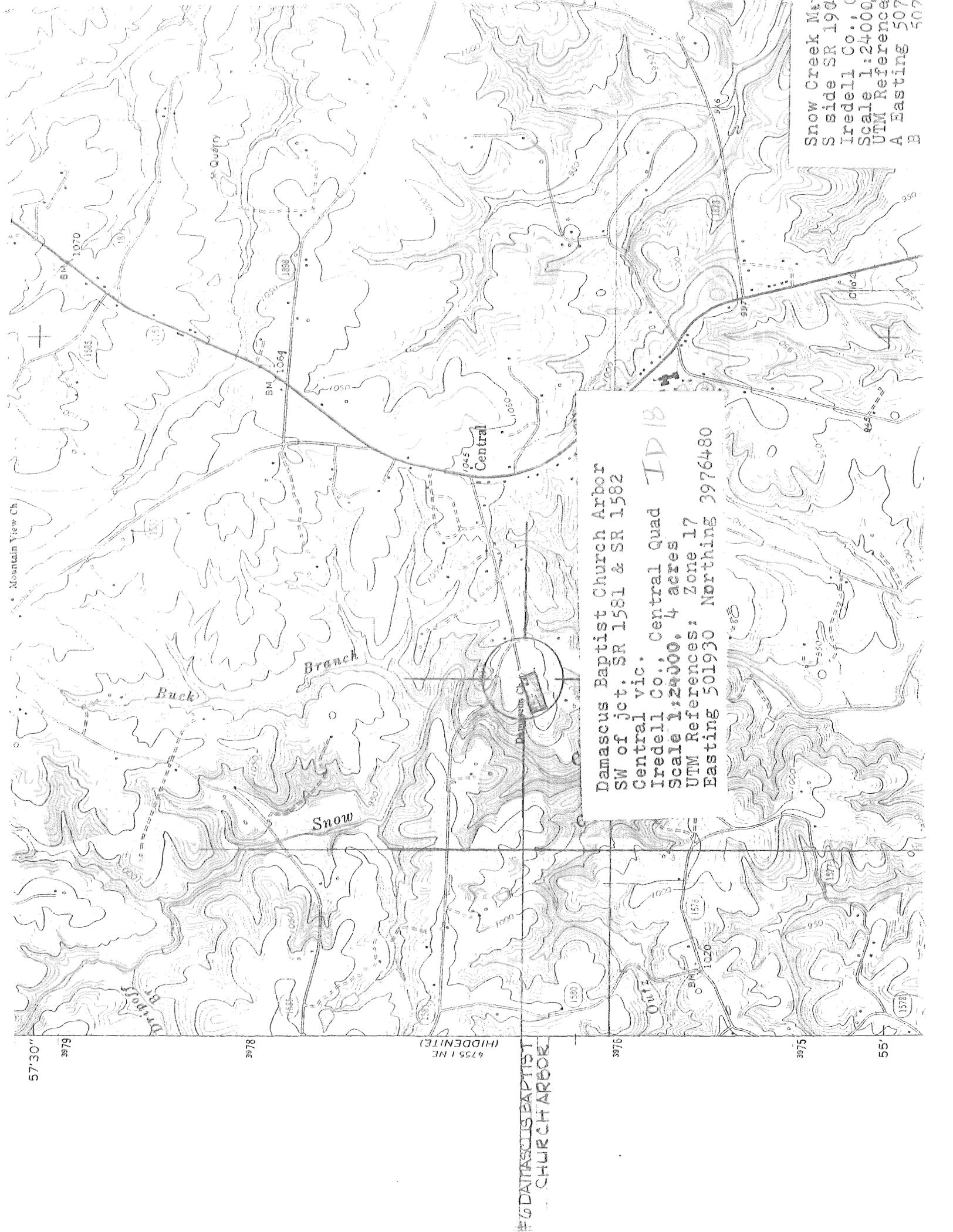
<sup>5</sup> Transcript.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Simpson Smith, "Camp Meetin' Time," Historic Preservation, Vol. XXX, No. 2 (April-June, 1978), pp. 20-23.

<sup>8</sup> Statesville Landmark, October 18, 1907, excerpt in the Homer Reever Files, James Iredell Room, Iredell County Public Library, Statesville, N.C.; Pearl Goodin Sloan, "Sharpesburg Township," in Iredell County Landmarks, compiled by Virginia Fraser Evans (Statesville: The Iredell County American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1976), p. 86.

<sup>9</sup> Laura A. W. Phillips, interview with Damascus Baptist Church members at the church July 17, 1979.



57°30"

3978

3978

4755 1 NE  
(HIDDEN LINE)

3976

3975

55'

#6 DAMASCUS BAPTIST  
CHURCH ARBOR

Damascus Baptist Church Arbor  
SW of jct. SR 1581 & SR 1582  
Central vic. ID 18  
Iredell Co., Central Quad  
Scale 1:24000, 4 acres  
UTM References: Zone 17  
Easting 501930 Northing 3976480

Snow Creek Mt.  
S side SR 190  
Iredell Co., NC  
Scale 1:24000  
UTM Reference  
A Easting 507  
E

