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

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School

Albemarle, Stanly County, ST0553, Listed 12/2/2014
Nomination by Heather Fearnbach
Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, December 2013

Overall view from the north

View of the 1965 addition from the south

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

See Supplementary Listing Record at the end of the nomination for revised period of significance information

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 Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 219 East North Street **N/A** not for publication

city or town Albemarle **N/A** vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Stanly code 167 zip code 28001

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:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

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.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	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)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

CLASSICAL REVIVAL
MODERNIST

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other CONCRETE

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.)

X **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.

X **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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance
1921-1965

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

Significant Dates
1921, 1952, 1965

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Holbrook, D. A., contractor, 1921reconstruction and expansion
Deitrick, William Henley, architect, 1952 north addition
Crampton, Guy E., and Associates, architects, 1965 south addition

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal Agency
☐ Local Government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.43 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)
See Latitude/Longitude coordinates continuation sheet

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

☐ 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 Heather Fearnbach
organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc. date 4/23/2014
street & number 3334 Nottingham Road telephone 336-765-2661
city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

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 City of Albemarle; Mayor Ronnie Michael
street & number 144 North Second Street telephone 704-984-9405
city or town Albemarle state NC zip code 28001

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.

Section 7. Narrative Description

Setting

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School occupies a prominent location at North Third and East North Streets' northeast corner near the town's center. The 2.43-acre tract contains a vacant educational complex comprising four connected brick sections: a school erected in 1900 and substantially reconstructed in 1921 following a fire that almost destroyed it, a 1921 classroom expansion to the north, a 1952 cafeteria and classroom addition north of the 1921 expansion, and a 1965 classroom and auditorium addition south of the 1921 building. Deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs line the foundation and ornament the grass lawn, which extends west and south of the school to brick retaining walls that border concrete municipal sidewalks.

The educational complex, situated at the lot's highest point, is slightly elevated above the surrounding sidewalks, streets, and parking lots. Therefore, concrete steps with metal railings ameliorate the grade change at all entrances. Albemarle Graded School's orientation was initially to the south, with the front door facing East North Street, but the primary entrance since the 1965 Central Elementary School addition's construction is on the west elevation, fronting North Third Street. A long, flat-roofed, three-tier, steel canopy supported by round steel posts shelters the concrete sidewalk leading from brick-bordered concrete steps to that entrance. On East North Street, two sets of brick-bordered concrete steps at the sidewalk, one near the 1965 addition's southeast corner and one at its southwest corner, interrupt the retaining wall and lead to concrete sidewalks that provide access to the building's auxiliary entrances. A 1980s frame modular classroom stands in the asphalt-paved parking lot east of the school. The rectangular gravel parking lot north of the modular classroom is overgrown.

Central Elementary School remained at 219 East North Street until the mid-November 2007 completion of the former Albemarle High School's renovation to serve as Central Elementary School. The 1925 Albemarle High School at 250 North Third Street, which has additions extending east to North Fourth Street, housed Albemarle Junior High beginning in 1960 and Albemarle Middle School from 1985 until 2004. The campuses shared an 8.5-acre tract until January 2, 2014, when Albemarle City Schools sold the south 2.43 acres containing the vacant Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School complex. The former Albemarle High School is not included in this National Register nomination due to the extensive nature of its rehabilitation and expansion.

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School's west and south National Register boundaries encompass the retaining walls near North Third and East North Streets. A paved parking lot separates the parcel from Central Elementary School to the north. The parking lot's south edge serves as Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School's north National Register boundary. On the east side, the rear lot lines of modest houses facing Fourth Street comprise the National Register

boundary. The area immediately surrounding the school is characterized primarily by early- to mid-twentieth-century residential development. However, the campus is located within the northeast quadrant of the Albemarle Downtown Local Historic District, which includes three National Register-listed clusters of commercial and industrial buildings: Downtown Albemarle, Second Street, and Five Points Historic Districts.

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School, 1921

Original Building

In 1900, the two-story, brick, hip-roofed Albemarle Graded School replaced the two-story, front-gable-roofed, frame 1875 school that had previously stood on the site. Historic photographs indicate that Albemarle Graded School featured round-arched second-story windows and a one-story porch that wrapped around the south elevation's projecting entrance and stair tower bays. Masons executed the walls in five-to-one common bond. A pointed parapet capped the wall dormer surmounting the south entrance bay, which contained a round-arched dormer vent, paired central second-story windows, and a double-leaf door topped by a large four-pane transom. A matching door was centered on the west elevation below the stuccoed belt course that separates the first and second stories. Hip-roofed dormers and tall interior chimneys with corbelled stacks pierced the roof. Double-hung two-over-two wood-sash windows illuminated the first floor rooms, while the arched second-story windows had a third pane in the upper sashes. The only elements of the 1900 structure that survive are the brick walls.

Exterior

After a catastrophic November 18, 1920, fire practically destroyed the 1900 school, local contractor D. A. Holbrook undertook a comprehensive reconstruction and expansion that resulted in a larger flat-roofed Classical Revival-style building.[1] Holbrook and his crew salvaged the 1900 building's brick walls and replaced the interior structural system, finishes, and roof. At the south entrance, they erected a no-longer-extant one-story flat-roofed portico with square brick posts spanned by a brick kneewall, tall frieze, molded cornice, and crenellated parapet. Holbrook and his assistants also constructed the one-room-deep addition on the 1900 building's north end that contains two classrooms flanking each floor's central corridor.

The building's evolution is clear on the exterior. The east and west five-to-one common bond brick walls built in 1900 each contain eight window bays. In 1921, masons infilled the school's west entrance to create a window and made the arched second-story window openings rectangular to allow for the installation of tall, double-hung, nine-over-nine, wood-sash windows. Double-hung, six-over-six, wood-sash windows fabricated at the same time light the first-floor rooms. The window treatment

[1] "1920 Fire Destroys Central School Here," *Stanly News and Press*, January 7, 1983.

in the five-bay north 1921 addition is identical. The addition, which continues the original building's corbelled cornice and flat-arched first-story window openings, is executed in six-to-one common bond. A projecting wood modillion cornice unifies the 1900 and 1921 walls and terra-cotta coping caps the flat parapet.

The north elevation's west side is blind. On its east side, a narrow, recessed, hip-roofed, two-story, brick hyphen, originally constructed to serve as the 1921 building's stair tower, connects the 1921 and 1952 additions. The hyphen's east elevation includes a slightly recessed first-story entrance with a double-leaf door surmounted by a ten-pane transom and a cast-stone cornice. Paired, double-hung, six-over-six, wood-sash windows light the second-story corridor. On the hyphen's west elevation, brick and concrete steps with metal railings lead to the first-story single-leaf entrance. The second-story is blind.

On the south elevation, southeast and southwest corner additions erected in conjunction with the 1952 wing provided space for a west stair hall and east offices. In an effort to blend these additions with earlier construction, the architect specified five-to-one common bond brick walls and double-hung, six-over-six, wood-sash windows. The 1965 addition required the removal of the 1921 south entrance portico.

Interior

The 1921 building's interior features a central corridor plan with four expansive classrooms, a library, and offices on the first floor, and six second-story classrooms. Narrow hardwood floors, plaster-on-wood-lath walls and ceilings, tall baseboards, molded chair rails, and simple wood door and window surrounds characterize these spaces. Most rooms retain original five-raised-panel doors with six-light operable transoms, wood-frame blackboards, and built-in coat and storage closets added in 1940. In the wide central corridors, tall molded chair rails, picture rails, and a molded cornice embellish the plaster walls. At both ends of the first-floor corridor, ten-pane transoms and double-leaf wood doors with raised panels below six-pane upper sections allow light to penetrate the hall. The door at the north end of the 1921 addition's second-story corridor is the same, but in 1952 contractors installed double-leaf doors with two horizontal lower panels and three horizontal upper panes at the other second-story hall section ends.

Sprinkler systems, electric fans, and fluorescent lighting hang from most ceilings. In some classrooms and corridors, celotex or dropped acoustical tiles obscure the original plaster ceilings and commercial-grade carpeting covers the wood floors. Radiators heat the building and late-twentieth-century window units supply air conditioning.

Short halls in the two-story hyphen at the 1921 section's northeast corner provide access to first-floor exterior steel doors as well as stairs connecting the basement, first, and second stories. The flights of wood steps have painted risers and stained treads, solid vertical-board railings, and flat handrails that terminate at a square newel posts. The stairs to the basement have a straight run, while the steps between the first and second floors turn at a central landing.

The basement stair enclosure has plaster walls and a plaster ceiling. Basement finishes include poured-concrete and vinyl-composition-tile floors and plaster, beadboard, vertical-board, and gypsum-board supply and storage room walls and ceilings. The formed-concrete foundation remains exposed on the mechanical room's exterior walls, while rough-sawn vertical boards sheath a partition wall. One raised-six-panel door and later hollow-core doors secure the basement rooms.

Classroom and Cafeteria Addition, 1952

Exterior

Located at the campus's north end, the austere, Modernist, two-story, running-bond-brick wing designed by Raleigh architect William Henley Deitrick has a slightly deeper setback from North Third Street than the 1921 building.[2] The two-story hyphen's recess provides a distinct break between the two sections. The concrete campus sidewalk runs north/south on the addition's west side and turns east at its north end, terminating at brick and concrete steps with metal railings that lead to the north entrance and stair tower. The site grade drops about five feet in elevation between the north steps and the paved parking lot farther north.

The south elevation is blind. On the nine-bay-wide east and west elevations, tall, rectangular, steel-frame windows with hoppers illuminate the interior. The windows each comprise six horizontal panes, with the two central panes opening out like awnings from top hinges. The matching second-story classroom windows are grouped in sets of five. A single window lights each restroom. Near the east elevation's north end, brick and concrete steps with metal railings lead to the first-floor's double-leaf entrance, which is surmounted by a three-pane transom. Two single-leaf doors to the north provide access to the basement. Most of the original steel doors are intact. A metal-capped plywood cornice wraps around the building.

The north elevation's west side contains two first-story cafeteria windows and an exhaust fan vent, but the restroom wall above is blind. On the north elevation's east side, a two-story brick stair tower containing concrete steps with metal railings and open-air landings on each floor extends past the

[2] William Henley Deitrick, architect, plans for north addition, 1951, on file at the Stanly County Board of Education, Albemarle.

building footprint. The space is not climate-controlled, making the functionality of the three tall, rectangular, metal-frame windows' hoppers imperative.

Interior

The 1952 addition encompasses an open-plan cafeteria on the first floor and four classrooms and two restrooms flanking the second-story's central corridor. The interior is characterized by painted concrete-block exterior walls, gypsum-board-sheathed frame partition walls, and wood baseboards, chair rails, and door surrounds with mitered corners. Commercial-grade carpeting covers hardwood floors in most classrooms and the halls. The cafeteria floor is vinyl composition tile, while the kitchen, mop closet, and restrooms have square terra-cotta tile floors and baseboards. Wainscoting comprised of white square tiles with red bullnose tiles sheath the lower two-thirds of the dishwashing room's walls. An office, restroom, and storage areas occupy the kitchen's northeast corner.

Most classrooms and the corridors retain original Celotex ceilings and dropped fluorescent lighting, but a few have later dropped-acoustical-tile ceilings with fluorescent light panels, as do the cafeteria and kitchen. Operable transoms with three horizontal rectangular panes surmount classroom doors, which feature four horizontal wood panels and one glazed upper pane of the same size. Three additional two-pane transoms pierce each classroom's corridor elevation, providing ample light. The wood-frame bulletin boards and built-in bookshelves, sinks, and cabinets are original. Long electric heaters span the exterior walls under the windows. Ceiling fans and window air-conditioning units, added incrementally following the building's completion, cool the rooms. The restrooms retain original painted wood partition walls and white porcelain sinks and lavatories. In the halls, square terra-cotta tiles cover the water fountain niches' floors and the lower two-thirds of each wall. Steel staircases with round metal pole railings facilitate access between floors.

Classroom and Auditorium Addition, 1965

Exterior

William Henley Deitrick's successor firm Guy E. Crampton and Associates prepared plans for the Modernist 1965 classroom and auditorium building erected by contractor Dwight Stokes.[3] The flat-roofed one-story addition is characterized by a low profile, brick walls executed in running bond, bands of windows, steel-frame doors and transoms, and a metal-capped plywood cornice, much of which has been clad in vinyl siding. The auditorium's flat roof rises above the foyer and classroom wing.

[3] "Addition to Central Elementary School," 1964 plans in the Guy E. Crampton papers, MC00227, Series 3.24, Flat Folder 153, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh; Central Elementary School, 1965 plaque.

A one-story brick hyphen connects the 1921 building's south end to the 1965 addition's northwest corner, which is five steps lower in elevation. Two large, six-part, steel-frame windows pierce the hyphen's west elevation. A double-leaf steel door on its east wall provides access from the rear parking lot, a particularly convenient feature as the central office and foyer adjacent to the auditorium are just south of the door.

The primary entrance—two steel-frame, glass, double-leaf doors with transoms and a matching central section—is on the foyer's west elevation. A flat-roofed portico supported by aggregate-paneled square posts and pilasters shelters the entrance, which is oriented to North Third Street. Concrete and steel steps and steel railings facilitate access to the portico from the concrete campus sidewalk. A long, flat-roofed, three-tier, steel canopy supported by round steel posts extends from the portico to the brick-bordered concrete steps at the municipal sidewalk.

Double-hung, one-over-one, vinyl-clad replacement windows installed in groups of two, three, and five illuminate the classrooms and offices. The double-leaf steel door with a steel-frame transom on the south elevation and the east elevation's matching entrance are deeply recessed and accessed by concrete steps. Two sets of brick-bordered concrete steps at East North Street's sidewalk, one near the building's southeast corner and one at its southwest corner, interrupt the retaining wall and connect with the concrete campus sidewalks that lead to the building's auxiliary entrances.

The auditorium's exterior walls are blind, pierced only by a vent near the roof at the building's northeast corner and a double-leaf steel door close to the wall's center. Concrete steps with steel railings lead to the basement boiler room, which is served by the tall square smokestack that rises from the auditorium's northeast corner. A flat-roofed, vinyl-sided addition with a poured concrete foundation and a roll-up garage door projects from the auditorium's east elevation.

Interior

The addition's floor plan comprises three distinct parts: a connecting hyphen, central office, and foyer at its northwest corner, an expansive auditorium that occupies most of the north section, and a south wing containing eight classrooms and two restrooms. South of the foyer, four steps lead to the wide T-shaped corridor that extends south and east to the classroom wing. A short narrow hall at the building's east end provides access to two offices. The building retains all significant original interior finishes.

The auditorium looks as it did in 1965. Two flat, birch, double-leaf doors open into the foyer and two matching side entrances facilitate additional egress. The original steel-frame, blonde-wood seating maintains its initial configuration: a wide central section flanked by two wide aisles and two narrower

outer sections. The stage's flat proscenium arch reflects the Modernist aesthetic. Four slightly curved hardwood steps lead to the stage's hardwood floors. Velvet curtains are suspended from the ceiling on steel rods.

The auditorium's vinyl-composition-tile-covered floor slopes down to the stage, thus providing good vantage points throughout the room. The gypsum board ceiling's convex design was intended to improve acoustics. Original aluminum ceiling pendants featuring broad circular canopies are intact. Sprinkler heads and round HVAC vent covers also pierce the ceiling.

In the classroom wing, concrete-block walls, terrazzo and vinyl-composition-tile floors, dropped-acoustical-tile ceilings, and light-wood metal-frame doors surmounted by transoms are intact. Built-in bookshelves line classroom walls under exterior windows, while L-shaped wood cabinetry units encompassing coat and storage closets, ceramic sinks, and laminate countertops fill interior corners. Gypsum-board partition walls fill some spaces between classrooms designed to facilitate the open teaching format popular during the 1960s. Commercial-grade carpeting covers the office and some classroom floors. In the restrooms, large, rectangular, ivory-glazed-tile wainscoting sheathes the walls and ivory and variegated brown mosaic tiles cover the floors.

Modular Classroom
1980s, Noncontributing Building

A single-wide, one-story, vinyl-sided, frame modular classroom stands east of the school.

Integrity Statement

Albemarle Graded School-Central Elementary School retains integrity from its period of significance. Intact character-defining features in building sections completed in 1921, 1952, and 1965 include windows, doors, trim, walls, ceilings, floors, cabinets, bookshelves, blackboards, stairs, auditorium seating, and light fixtures.

Section 8. Statement of Significance

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School is locally significant under Criterion A for Education and Criterion C for Architecture. The 1900 building was the city's first public school and initially served white students from first grade through high school. However, following the adjacent Albemarle High School's 1909 completion, Albemarle Graded School housed only first- through seventh-grade classes. When Albemarle High School occupied a larger building to the north in 1925, Albemarle Graded School appropriated the former high school building, which is no longer standing. The campus remained Albemarle's sole public elementary school for white youth until the school board assumed oversight in 1933 of Wiscassett and Efird Schools, previously operated by textile manufacturing concerns for their employees' children. Albemarle Graded School became known as Central Elementary School in the late 1930s and remained in use as such until November 2007.

A 1920 fire almost destroyed the two-story, hip-roofed, brick Albemarle Graded School, but builders reconstructed and enlarged the 1900 structure three times. Albemarle contractor D. A. Holbrook executed the 1921 renovation and expansion that included the addition of a classical molded wood cornice ornamented with modillions and large multipane, double-hung, wood-sash windows. Thirty years later, Raleigh architect William Henley Deitrick designed the austere, Modernist, brick north wing that encompasses a first-floor cafeteria and second-story classrooms. The 1952 addition manifests statewide school improvements deemed important to update campuses. Central Elementary School's one-story, brick, Modernist, 1965, south auditorium and classroom building addition designed by Deitrick's successor firm Guy E. Crampton and Associates greatly increased the campus enrollment capacity and provided a much-needed venue to hold academic and civic events. The period of significance begins with Albemarle Graded School's 1921 reconstruction and expansion and continues through the completion of Central Elementary School's 1965 addition. The 1965 wing represents an ongoing pattern of public school improvement and therefore does not require exceptional significance justification due to the fact that it is not yet fifty years old.

Historical Background and Education Context

Stanly County children were afforded limited educational opportunities before the Civil War. Thirty-three public schools enrolled 660 students in 1850, but terms were short and facilities primitive. The situation remained similar through Reconstruction's early years as underfunded schools struggled to remain open. Late-nineteenth-century private academies such as Big Lick, Bilesville, Center, Gladstone, Prospect, and Yadkin Mineral Springs provided more comprehensive courses of study, but charged tuition that was cost-prohibitive for the average family. The Stanly County public school

system continued to expand, however, and in 1885, the Board of Education appointed committeemen for 67 school districts: 55 white and 12 black.[4]

Few records exist regarding nineteenth-century schools in Albemarle, the county seat. In the early 1860s, residents erected a one-room weatherboarded building where teachers beginning with Jim Hearne instructed youth for two-month annual terms at a monthly cost of $1.00 per student. Another private institution, Albemarle Academy, began offering classes to boarding and day students in 1875. On February 18th of that year, trustees Richard Anderson, Daniel Freeman, J. D. Hearne, J. O. Ross, and S. S. Stone bought a three-acre tract at North Third and East North Streets' northeast corner and commissioned the construction of a two-story frame school. Union County native Henry W. Spinks, a Trinity College graduate who began teaching at Albemarle Academy in 1875, acquired the property in March 1882. Spinks oversaw the private school's operation until July 1890, when he conveyed the building and acreage to educator J. A. Bivins. Methodist preacher Charles M. Gentry purchased the campus in January 1894 and with his wife Annie McCain instructed pupils until selling the parcel on October 13, 1899, to Albemarle's Board of School Commissioners, chartered by the state legislature on February 27, 1899, to create a public school system for the town.[5]

The transaction coincided with the need for a larger, more up-to-date facility. Builders constructed the two-story, hip-roofed, brick Albemarle Graded School, funded by a $5,000 bond, on the site in 1900. The edifice was Stanly County's first brick public educational institution. At that time, students studied at seventy-three other public schools, three of which were log and the remainder frame. Most county facilities operated for around ten weeks per year, but Albemarle's public and private schools remained in session for eight-month terms. The privately operated Albemarle Normal and Collegiate Institute, established as Englewood School in 1894 by New Jersey native Frances E. Ufford and Minnesotan Helen J. Northrup, also offered classes to young women.[6]

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[4] Ivey Lawrence Sharpe and Edgar Fletcher Pepper III, *Stanly County USA: The Story of an Area and an Era (1841-1991)* (Greensboro, N. C.: Media Press, Incorporated, 1990), 80-83.

[5] J. A. Bivins was the younger brother of Albemarle newspaper editor James Daniel Bivins. "An act for the establishment of a graded school in the town of Albemarle, Stanly County," Chapter 269, *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina passed by the General Assembly at its Session of 1899* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton and E. M. Uzzell, 1899), 407-408; Stanly County Deed Book 14, p. 596; Deed Book 18, p. 329; Deed Book 20, p. 131; Deed Book 23, pp. 575-577; United States Census, Population Schedules, 1880 and 1900; "School Days! School Days!," a history of schools from material gathered by Mrs. Paul D. Fry, in Albemarle Centennial Committee, *Albemarle, Stanly County Centennial, 1857-1957* (Albemarle: Albemarle Centennial Committee, 1957), 49.

[6] "An act for the establishment of a graded school in the town of Albemarle, Stanly County," Chapter 269, 405-406; "The Albemarle Normal and Collegiate Institute," *Record of Christian Work*, April 1907, 299-300; "A Big Day in Albemarle," June 11, 1907, newspaper clipping in the "Albemarle Normal and Industrial School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; "History of Education Here Shows Big Improvements," *Stanly News and Press*, April 12, 1957; "School Days! School Days!," *Albemarle, Stanly County Centennial, 1857-1957*, 52.

Within ten years of its founding, Albemarle Graded School provided several hundred white students with instruction throughout their primary school experience. The campus expanded in 1909 to include a second two-story hip-roofed brick high school southeast of the graded school. After the 1900 building suffered a devastating fire on November 18, 1920, contractors reconstructed the edifice and erected a two-story brick classroom addition at a cost of $15,000.[7]

In dramatic contrast, modest frame schools served Stanly County's African American students. The Rosenwald Fund, a national philanthropic organization devoted to erecting educational buildings for Southern African American children, subsidized the completion of six one-story, gable-roofed, weatherboarded schools in Stanly County during the 1920s. Beginning in 1921, Albemarle's African American youth attended Kingville School, which, although located on the south edge of town, was operated by the county school system. The campus initially comprised three classrooms, with a fourth added in 1922 and a teachers' home the following year.[8]

In 1923, approximately fifty educators instructed two thousand students at Albemarle's three white graded schools. In addition to the public campus, two textile mills, Efird Manufacturing Company and Wiscassett Mills, each operated schools for between five and six hundred of their employees' children. Albemarle Normal and Collegiate Institute reported serving about one hundred young women, most of whom were boarders. Significant population growth prompted the state legislature to issue a $200,000 bond to allow for the construction of a public high school north of Albemarle Graded School. Albemarle's Board of School Commissioners engaged Charlotte architect Charles Christian Hook to design the commodious Collegiate Gothic-style edifice. Fayetteville contractor E. C. Derby commenced construction in August 1924 and completed work just in time for almost three hundred students to register for classes on September 3, 1925. Albemarle Graded School subsequently appropriated the former high school building.[9]

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[7] "Graded School Closing," circa 1907 and 1909, and "215 Enrolled A. H. S. Opening Day, Sept. 3," [1923], newspaper clippings in the "Central Elementary School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; "1920 Fire Destroys Central School Here," *Stanly News and Press*, January 7, 1983.

[8] "Stanly County Schools," Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database, Julius Rosenwald Fund Archives, 1917-1948, John Hope and Aurelia E. Franklin Library, Special Collections, Fisk University, http://rosenwald.fisk.edu, accessed in April 2014.

[9] "Albemarle, Stanly County, North Carolina: Some of the Resources and Advantages," 1923 brochure in the Stanly County Museum's collection, Albemarle; "View of New Home Economics Laboratory," *The Midget*, Albemarle High School, January 1923, p. 1; "Committee Named to Select a Site For High School Building," *Stanly News Herald*, January 19, 1923; W. L. Mann, "Albemarle School Board member comments on school history," *Stanly News Herald*, September 25, 1923, newspaper clipping in the "Central Elementary School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; "Contract for New High School Building to be Let August 15th," *Stanly News-Herald*, July 29, 1924, p. 1; "Albemarle's New High School Building," *Albemarle Press*, September 10, 1925; Sanborn Map Company, "Albemarle, N. C," December 1913, Sheet 3, and April 1929, Sheet 12.

The city school system assumed oversight of the educational complexes that had been operated by Wiscassett Mills and Efird Manufacturing Company at the beginning of the 1933-1934 academic year, which was also the first term documented in Albemarle elementary school principals' annual reports. Wiscassett School, a fourteen-classroom, brick, two-story, Classical Revival-style building erected in 1912, accommodated 509 white first- through seventh-grade youth under the oversight of principal O. D. Ritchie and thirteen female teachers. The twelve-classroom, brick, two-story Efird School, built in 1916, served 516 white first- through seventh-grade students. Principal Zora Cox Eubanks led a staff of eleven female teachers.[10]

The economic challenges that ensued from the Great Depression resulted in limited school improvement funding during the early 1930s. However, the North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration (NCERA), the state's first New Deal program that created jobs for unemployed citizens, subsidized projects in Albemarle from 1932 to 1935 including school painting and grounds improvements.[11] The federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) followed, engaging citizens in work endeavors ranging from public health and manufacturing initiatives to cultural activities. In 1937, the program facilitated Stanly County educational and athletic building construction in New London, Norwood, Oakboro, Ridgecrest, and Stanfield, as well as the completion of two classroom wings and a gymnasium at Albemarle High School, at a total cost of approximately $280,000.[12] After the 1937 additions, Albemarle High School encompassed twenty-eight classrooms, a 750-seat auditorium, two gymnasiums, and a cafeteria. In 1938, what was then Stanly County's largest public educational institution employed twenty-three teachers who instructed 665 pupils.[13]

Also in Albemarle, contractors finished the one-story brick West Elementary School for white students and the one-story brick Kingville Elementary School to serve African American students in 1937. The Stanly County school board had allocated $43,000 for Kingville Elementary School's construction and furnishing cost. Designed by Winston-Salem architects Northup and O'Brien and Salisbury architect Thomas H. Yoe and erected by Charlotte-based Little Building Company, the structure that stands at

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[10] "Efird School," and "Wiscassett School," "Principal's Annual Report, Standard Elementary Schools," State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Services, Raleigh, N. C., 1934.

[11] J. S. Kirk, Walter A. Cutter and Thomas W. Morse, eds., *Emergency Relief in North Carolina: A Record of the Development and Activities of the North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration, 1932-1935* (Raleigh: North Carolina Emergency Relief Administration, 1936), 521.

[12] "High School Gymnasium Is Rated Among Best in State," February 26, 1937, newspaper clipping in the "Albemarle Senior High School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of School Planning, *Stanly County School Survey, 1977-1978* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 1978), 117-118.

[13] Central Elementary School, "Central's History: 132 Years of Education, 1875-2009," PowerPoint presentation compiled by Central Elementary School staff, 2009.

what is now 621 Wall Street in Albemarle replaced the frame Rosenwald school that had occupied the site.[14]

In 1940, Albemarle High School enrolled 709 students, Central Elementary School served approximately 550 youth, Efird School teachers instructed 360 pupils, West Albemarle School's roster included 227 young scholars, and Wiscassett School housed 325 children. Due to building materials shortages, little school construction occurred during World War II. In 1945, Albemarle's one high and four graded schools—Central, Efird, West, and Wiscassett—served 2,300 students.[15] Continued population escalation required campus acquisitions and improvements. Kingville Elementary School became part of the Albemarle school system in 1949 and received a cafeteria that year. A new campus, North Elementary School, replaced Efird School, which was subsequently demolished, and Wiscassett School, which had burned and was razed in order to allow for a YMCA's construction on its site. In 1952-1953, North Elementary School principal J. W. Swaingen oversaw sixteen teachers. The same academic year, West Albemarle Elementary School, operated by principal Robert T. Clark and nine teachers, benefited from the completion of an addition containing a library, two classrooms, and a cafeteria. At Kingville School, principal E. E. Waddell supervised seven elementary-grade teachers and four high school-level faculty. In 1954, contractors finished a gymnasium and a second classroom building on the Kingville campus. The city school system's growth also involved the 1954 acquisition of East Albemarle School, originally operated by the county. Contractors soon erected a classroom building at that site.[16]

A $1,250,000 school bond allowed for the construction of a new Albemarle High School on Palestine Road, which was completed in 1958. Two years later, the former Albemarle High School building at 250 North Third Street became Albemarle Junior High School.[17] In 1964, the former Kingville Elementary School campus, then known as South Albemarle School, gained an auditorium designed by

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[14] "West Albemarle School," "Operation of Plant and Sanitation Survey of North Carolina Public Schools," State School Commission and State Board of Health, Raleigh, N. C., 1940; Stanly County Board of Education, meeting minutes, July 1, 1935, May 28, 1936, March 2, 1937; "Kingville Colored School Building," Northup and O'Brien Architectural Records, MC 00240, Series 1, Flat Folder 283, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh; Sharpe and Pepper, *Stanly County USA*, 96.

[15] "Albemarle High School," "Central Elementary School," "Efird School," "West Albemarle School," and "Wiscassett School," "Operation of Plant and Sanitation Survey of North Carolina Public Schools," State School Commission and State Board of Health, Raleigh, N. C., 1940; Chamber of Commerce, Albemarle, N. C., "Albemarle, North Carolina: Offering Industrial, Agricultural, Recreational, and Educational Opportunities," ca. 1945 brochure in the Stanly County Museum's collection, Albemarle.

[16] State Department of Public Instruction, *Educational Directory of North Carolina* (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, 1953), 88; Sharpe and Pepper, *Stanly County USA*, 96.

[17] "History of Albemarle Senior High School," ca. 1986 document in the "Albemarle Senior High School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; *Stanly News and Press*, August 12, 1986, newspaper clipping in the "Central Elementary School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; Central Elementary School, "Central's History: 132 Years of Education, 1875-2009."

William Henley Deitrick's successor firm Guy E. Crampton and Associates. The architects also prepared plans for the 1965 classroom and auditorium addition that replaced the building erected in 1913 to house Albemarle High School on Central Elementary School's campus.

Although the U. S. Supreme Court decreed school desegregation in 1954, most North Carolina municipalities took more than a decade to integrate. In response to a selective integration bill passed by North Carolina legislators, the Charlotte, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem school boards allowed African American students to apply for admission to white schools in the summer of 1957.[18] However, it was not until 1965 that the Albemarle school system implemented its initial integration measures. In order to facilitate the process, Stanly County began its largest school consolidation campaign in 1961, converting ten existing county high schools to elementary schools and erecting three new high school campuses. Campus integration began during the 1965-1966 academic year, when Albemarle City schools included four elementary schools—Central, East, West, and North—that served first through sixth grade students. Albemarle Junior High School housed seventh through ninth grades and Albemarle High School tenth- through twelfth-grades. South Albemarle School accommodated all twelve grades.[19]

The Stanly County public school system achieved complete desegregation in 1968. That year, as part of the reorganization, South Albemarle School closed and the complex successively served as a technical institute, a day care center, and beginning around 1982, as a community center. The Albemarle City and Stanly County school systems merged in 1996.[20]

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[18] "Supreme Court Orders Local Officials to End School Segregation 'as Soon as Practicable,' " *Winston-Salem Journal*, June 1, 1955, p. 1.

[19] State Department of Public Instruction, *Educational Directory of North Carolina* (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, 1966), 95; "Kingville Elementary School" file, State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, N. C.; Dodenhoff, *Stanly County*, 99-100; "A History of the Albemarle City Schools," ca. 1970 document in the Stanly County Public Library vertical files, Albemarle, p. 2; Sharpe and Pepper, *Stanly County USA*, 85-86; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *School Survey: Stanly County, 1977-1978*, 116-119; Division of Survey and Field Services, *Stanly County Public Schools*, 145-155.

[20] The City of Albemarle undertook a renovation of the former South Albemarle School in 2008. The complex remains in use by the community as the E. E. Waddell Center, which encompasses meeting spaces and a library, gymnasium, playground, and athletic field. Dr. Elbert Erwin Waddell was the school's principal from 1943 through 1963. Stanly County Deed Book 1216, p. 991; Keith Wolf, Director, City of Albemarle Planning and Community Development Department, telephone communication with Heather Fearnbach, May 5, 2014; City of Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department, "E. E. Waddell Community Center," http://www.ci.albemarle.nc.us/Government/Departments/ParksandRecreationDepartment/ParkLocations/tabid/113/Default.aspx, accessed in May 2014.

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School History

The city of Albemarle's first public school grew to serve several hundred white students annually within a decade of its founding in 1900. Eleven pupils graduated from high school in 1907 and nineteen scholars completed the full course of study in 1909. Enrollment then numbered 312 with principal Scott and teachers supervising around 231 regular attendees. In order to better accommodate high school students, administrators expanded the campus in 1909 to include a second two-story hip-roofed brick structure that stood southeast of the graded school. Characterized by a gabled entrance portico and a shaped parapet surmounting the central bay, the high school encompassed first-floor classrooms and a second-story auditorium.[21]

Although a November 18, 1920, fire caused significant damage to the 1900 graded school building, the brick exterior walls withstood the blaze. Contractor D. A. Holbrook and his crew undertook the $15,000 reconstruction and expansion. Displaced first- through seventh-grade students attended classes in the high school auditorium and nearby church Sunday School classrooms until the graded school re-opened in 1921. Two years later, the campus accommodated over five hundred pupils.[22] Despite the fact that the upper and lower grades had separate administrations, the facility operated as one unit and occupied the same city-owned tax parcel. All grades shared amenities such as the auditorium in the high school building, athletic fields, and gardens.

Albemarle High School's enrollment increased from approximately sixty students in 1918 to 215 scholars when classes began in September 1923 under the direction of principal J. B. Miller and seven female teachers. A newly-completed rear addition provided six additional classrooms and students utilized a home economics laboratory finished earlier in the year. The improvements only alleviated crowded conditions on a temporary basis, though, and significant population growth prompted the state legislature to issue a $200,000 bond to allow for the construction of a high school north of the graded school. In May 1925, Albemarle High School principal M. F. Teeter reported an average daily attendance of approximately 209 of the 238 students enrolled in eighth through eleventh grades. Teeter, six women, and two men instructed classes and a part-time athletic coach oversaw the football, basketball, and baseball teams. After high school grades moved to the new campus in September 1925, the graded school expanded into the former high school building, thus gaining twelve classrooms and an auditorium.[23]

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[21] "Graded School Closing," circa 1907 and 1909, and "215 Enrolled A. H. S. Opening Day, Sept. 3," [1923], newspaper clippings in the "Central Elementary School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle.

[22] "1920 Fire Destroys Central School Here," *Stanly News and Press*, January 7, 1983.

[23] "View of New Home Economics Laboratory," *The Midget*, Albemarle High School, January 1923, p. 1; "Committee Named to Select a Site For High School Building," *Stanly News Herald*, January 19, 1923; W. L. Mann, "Albemarle School Board member comments on school history," *Stanly News Herald*, September 25, 1923, newspaper

Albemarle's elementary school principals' annual reports, first available for the 1933-1934 academic year, indicated that two institutions then shared the Albemarle Graded School campus. Principal Helen Meares and nine other female instructors taught 401 first through fourth-grade students under the auspices of Albemarle Public School. At Albemarle Grammar School, principal Rosa Parker and eight other female teachers instructed 362 students enrolled in fourth through seventh grades. The complex included nineteen classrooms, lunch and music rooms, a library, and an auditorium. Although there was not a gymnasium, students exercised on three outdoor basketball courts, and a playground with a pole, bar, muscle rings, slide, ladder, eight swings, two "strides," and an "ocean wave."[24]

During the 1939-1940 term, enrollment numbered 587 with an average daily attendance of 523 youth. Mrs. Parker remained principal, overseeing sixteen female teachers in the two-building complex by then known as Central Elementary School. Students participated in extracurricular activities including student council, Junior Red Cross, and Library and Safety Clubs, as well as an outdoor spring festival and field trips. Campus improvements included interior painting, floor sanding, light fixture installation, bookshelf and coat closet construction in each classroom, restroom additions to first-grade classrooms, cyclorama and venetian blind installation in the auditorium, creation of a first aid room with an examination area and medical supplies, and the acquisition of tables, chairs, filing cabinets, wall art, and library books.[25]

Campus enrollment remained robust through the 1940s. In June 1946, principal Rosa Parker reported that daily attendance for the preceding school year averaged 556 of 634 enrolled students. The faculty comprised a librarian, a music teacher, and sixteen women instructors for either two or three sections of each grade. During the 1948-1949 school term, Parker and eighteen full-time and two part-time female teachers educated 661 first through seventh-grade pupils. Facility improvements included painting two of the campus's eighteen classrooms and the cafeteria, which moved in 1952 to a two-story Modernist classroom and cafeteria building designed by Raleigh architect William Henley

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clipping in the "Central Elementary School" vertical file, Stanly County Public Library, Albemarle; "Contract for New High School Building to be Let August 15th," *Stanly News-Herald*, July 29, 1924, p. 1; "Albemarle's New High School Building," *Albemarle Press*, September 10, 1925; Sanborn Map Company, "Albemarle, N. C," December 1913, Sheet 3, and April 1929, Sheet 12; "Principal's Annual High School Report," State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Services, Raleigh, N. C., 1924-1925.

[24] Rosa Mae Blakeney Parker, who was married to insurance salesman and realtor Benjamin Carl Parker, is referred to as "Mrs. B. C. Parker" in most period documents. North Carolina Marriage Index, 1919; "Albemarle Public School," and "Albemarle Graded School," Stanly County, "Principal's Annual Report, Standard Elementary Schools," State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Services, Raleigh, N. C., 1934.

[25] "Central Elementary School," "Principal's Annual Elementary School Report," State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Services, Raleigh, N. C., 1940; "Central Elementary School," "Operation of Plant and Sanitation Survey of North Carolina Public Schools," State School Commission and State Board of Health, Raleigh, N. C., 1940; U. S. Census, 1940.

Deitrick. Central Elementary School's staff included twenty-three teachers under Parker's direction during the 1952-1953 academic year.[26]

The city of Albemarle initiated a school improvement campaign in preparation for campus integration, which began during the 1965-1966 academic year. In order to accommodate increased enrollment on Central Elementary School's campus, Deitrick's successor firm Guy E. Crampton and Associates prepared plans for the 1965 classroom and auditorium addition that replaced the building erected in 1913 to house Albemarle High School. During the 1965-1966 academic year, principal Robert T. Clark supervised twenty-two teachers.[27]

Architecture Context

Schools erected throughout North Carolina during the 1920s and 1930s manifested new design standards for substantial, fireproof buildings. The Department of Public Instruction's Division of Schoolhouse Planning provided standardized floor plans, elevations, specifications, and guidance regarding educational building construction. Many school systems then hired architects to design sizable masonry edifices, often with Classical Revival or Gothic Revival elements, to replace modest, one- and two-room, frame schools. Tall, grouped, double-hung, multipane windows typically illuminated classrooms, libraries, auditoriums, and gymnasiums. The buildings also encompassed central heating plants, multiple restrooms, and cafeterias; amenities that were not present in earlier schools. The distinctive architecture of campuses erected or improved during this period makes them civic landmarks.

The style and form of Stanly County educational institutions reflected statewide trends. Most of the schools completed within the twentieth century's first three decades displayed classical stylistic elements, then a popular choice for buildings intended to symbolize "democratic ideals, inspire patriotism, and elevate public taste."[28] Ancient Grecian and Roman architecture served as the archetypes for overall composition and details, with ornament drawn from classical precedents intended to embody permanence and refinement. Buildings were typically brick, flat-roofed, and one- or two-stories in height.

Trinity College graduate and World War I veteran Charles A. Reap oversaw the improvement of numerous Stanly County campuses. Reap became the county school superintendent in 1919, the same

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[26] "Central Elementary School," "Principal's Annual Elementary School Reports," State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Services, Raleigh, N. C., 1946, 1949; State Department of Public Instruction, *Educational Directory of North Carolina* (1953), 88.

[27] State Department of Public Instruction, *Educational Directory of North Carolina* (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, 1966), 95.

[28] Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, portable edition (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 457.

year that North Carolina strengthened compulsory school attendance legislation. As enrollment escalated during his nine-year tenure, Reap and the school board orchestrated the closure of forty of Stanly County's almost seventy schools, but increased capacity by subsidizing campus improvements and school construction in rural and suburban areas. Between 1921 and 1931, contractors built brick schools at eleven county-operated facilities.[29]

During that period, Albemarle's Board of School Commissioners funded construction at the city-run campus containing Albemarle Graded School and Albemarle High School. David Augustus Holbrook's prolific general contracting firm undertook the 1921 work at Albemarle Graded School and likely erected other Stanly County educational buildings. Charlotte architect Charles Christian Hook designed the expansive Collegiate Gothic-style Albemarle High School, finished by Fayetteville contractor E. C. Derby in August 1925.[30]

Albemarle Graded School manifests classical design components including a molded wood cornice ornamented with modillions and large multipane, double-hung, wood-sash windows. The south entrance's one-story flat-roofed portico with square brick posts spanned by a brick kneewall, tall frieze, molded cornice, and crenellated parapet was an excellent example of the style, but was removed to allow for the 1965 addition's construction. Intact interior features installed in 1921 include narrow hardwood floors, plaster-on-wood-lath walls and ceilings, tall baseboards, simple wood door and window surrounds, five-raised-panel doors with six-light operable transoms, wood-frame blackboards, and molded chair rails, cornices, and picture rails.

The Classical Revival style was pervasive in residential, commercial, governmental, institutional, and religious building design during the twentieth century's first decades. The four-story, brick, sixty-room Albemarle Hotel, completed at a cost of almost $100,000 in January 1923, stands at 179-195 North Second Street only a few blocks southwest of Albemarle Graded School. The hotel features a similar wood modillion cornice and rectangular form. The two-story, brick, early 1920s commercial building at 129 North First Street also retains an original wood modillion cornice. The style's enduring popularity can be seen in architects Northup and O'Brien and Thomas H. Yoe's design for the 1938 Albemarle City Hall at 144 North Second Street, which has a tripartite plan and a simply executed façade ornamented by a pedimented entrance surround.[31]

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[29] Sharpe and Pepper, *Stanly County USA*, 83, 85; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, *School Survey: Stanly County, 1977-1978*, 116-119; Division of Survey and Field Services, *Stanly County Public Schools: A Survey Report* (Nashville, Tennessee: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1971), 145-155.

[30] D. A. Holbrook and Sons, *D. A. Holbrook and Sons: Contractors and Engineers* (Charlotte, N. C.: Builders Brochure Company, 1960s), 3.

[31] "Hotel Albemarle," *The Midget*, Albemarle High School, January 1923, p. 3; Dodenhoff, *Stanly County*, 75-77, 85; "Albemarle City Hall," Northup and O'Brien Architectural Records, MC 00240, Series 1, Flat Folder 290, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

Northup and O'Brien and Thomas H. Yoe also collaborated on the design of the one-story, flat-roofed, brick, Classical Revival-style Kingville Elementary School erected in 1937 at what is now 621 Wall Street Wall Street to serve Albemarle's African American students.[32] The building's austere thirty-one-bay façade features a slightly projecting central entrance bay with corner pilasters framing its round-arched doorway. Tall nine over-nine-sash windows clustered in groups of five originally illuminated the interior, which comprised ten classrooms and an auditorium.

Stanly County campuses continued to evolve as the twentieth century progressed. Most schools erected during the 1920s and 1930s were demolished as part of system-wide improvement campaigns initiated when mid-twentieth-century population growth resulted in increased enrollment. Only two, Albemarle High School and Oakboro Elementary School, have remained in continuous use for educational purposes since their construction. As facilities became overcrowded, architects including Leslie N. Boney of Wilmington, William Henley Deitrick of Raleigh, Macklin and Stinson of Winston-Salem, and their successor firms designed new Stanly County campuses as well as additions to and renovations of existing buildings, all of which were Modernist in style.[33]

Modernism was slow to gain widespread acceptance, but architects and others involved in the building trades promoted the style as an economical, up-to-date alternative to classical architecture. Innovative design precepts enhanced connectivity between interior and exterior spaces. Architecture critic Lewis Mumford approved of Modernist campus design, characterizing the period's educational buildings as "schools for human beings," a complete departure from the 1930s schools he deemed "self-important WPA barracks."[34]

The North Carolina Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction evaluated educational buildings statewide in the late 1940s and found that 1920s schools and austere depression-era facilities were in many cases functionally inadequate. In 1949, the General Assembly allocated fifty million dollars and local bond issues made an additional seventy-five million dollars available for school construction. The desire for progressive campuses led to consultation with North Carolina State College's newly created School of Design faculty, all strong supporters of Modernism. The School of Design and the Office of School Construction advocated contemporary architecture at workshops for local officials and architects in 1949 and 1950, and NCSC professor Edward W. Waugh took a leave of absence in 1949 to develop design standards for the Office of School House Planning. Raleigh architect William Henley Deitrick, who had been actively involved in NCSC School of Design's

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[32] "Kingville Colored School Building," Northup and O'Brien Architectural Records, MC 00240 Series 1, Flat Folder 283, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

[33] D. A. Holbrook and Sons, *D. A. Holbrook and Sons: Contractors and Engineers*, 17.

[34] Crow Island School, erected in Winnetka, Illinois in 1939-1940, is widely regarded as being the first public campus to use Modernist design principles to embody progressive education philosophies. Janice E. Tubergen, "Crow Island School, Winnetka, Illinois," National Historic Landmark Nomination, 1989, 7.2-3, 8.2, 6-9; Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* (New York, Penguin Putnam, Inc., 1998), 230.

creation, supported the new standards by utilizing them in his firm's plans for campuses beginning with Sherwood-Bates Elementary School (1950) and Daniels Junior High School (1951) in Raleigh and then in myriad other locations throughout North Carolina.[35]

Deitrick had been a leading proponent of Modernist architecture in North Carolina since the 1930s, although he also designed many classically styled buildings throughout his career. After graduating from Wake Forest College, serving in the navy, and gaining experience as a building contractor, Deitrick attended Columbia University's architecture school in New York City from 1922 until 1924. He then moved to Raleigh and supervised the construction of educational buildings conceived by school planning specialist James A. Salter and other architects until establishing his own firm in 1927. The expansive Italianate-style Needham Broughton High School in Raleigh, completed in 1929, was one of Deitrick's first and most significant projects. The North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects recognized the campus design with an award of merit in 1930.[36]

Deitrick's reputation for quality design grew as his firm executed many subsequent school and public works projects. He also served as Wake Forest College's architect for two decades beginning in 1931. In 1946, following a period of undertaking commissions for World War II military installations and other government-subsidized facilities, Deitrick incorporated his firm, which at that time employed a thirty-five-member staff. Deitrick was known for incubating nascent talent. Guy Edwin Crampton Jr., John Knight, Arthur McKimmon, J. Norman Pease Jr., G. Milton Small, and Thomas T. Hayes were among the many notable architects who worked in his firm. Crampton, a George Washington University graduate, rendered drawings for several Washington, D. C., architects prior to joining Deitrick in 1950. Nine years later, he purchased the firm and renamed it Guy E. Crampton and Associates. Deitrick continued to consult through the early 1960s and died in 1974. Crampton died in 1978, two years after his retirement.[37]

Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School's 1952 and 1965 Modernist additions reflect the firm's proficiency in educational building design. Both are efficiently arranged, take full

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[35] Edward Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds: New Architecture in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), preface, 8; David R. Black, "Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh Associated with the Faculty of the North Carolina State University School of Design, Raleigh, North Carolina," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1994, E15-16; Catherine W. Bishir and M. Ruth Little, "William Henley Deitrick," *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000282 (accessed August 2014).

[36] Bishir and Little, "William Henley Deitrick;" "Guide to the Guy E. Crampton and William Henley Deitrick papers and drawings, 1928-1977," MC00227, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

[37] Ibid.; "Guy Edwin Crampton Jr.," *The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects*, American Institute of Architects Archives, Washington, D. C., http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd1009213.aspx (accessed August 2014).

advantage of natural light and air circulation, and facilitate connectivity between interior and exterior spaces. The austere, two-story, running-bond-brick-veneered, flat-roofed Central Elementary School classroom and cafeteria building completed in 1952 per the plans of William Henley Deitrick is a product of the school system's mission to provide large, well-ventilated, and amply lit instructional areas and separate, modern, sanitary food service facilities for North Carolina students. Tall, rectangular, steel-frame windows with hoppers illuminate the interior, which is characterized by painted concrete-block exterior walls, gypsum-board-sheathed frame partition walls, hardwood floors, wood baseboards, chair rails, and door surrounds, and original Celotex ceilings and dropped fluorescent lighting. Operable transoms with three horizontal rectangular panes surmount classroom doors, which feature four horizontal wood panels and one glazed upper pane of the same size. Three additional two-pane transoms pierce each classroom's corridor elevation. The wood-frame bulletin boards and built-in bookshelves, sinks, and cabinets are original.

Central Elementary School's Modernist 1965 addition designed by Deitrick's successor firm Guy E. Crampton and Associates greatly increased the campus enrollment capacity and provided a much-needed venue to hold academic and civic events.[38] The expansive one-story, flat-roofed building's function to provide offices, an auditorium, and classrooms guides its form. The auditorium's flat roof rises above the foyer and classroom wing. The materials are typical for schools erected during the period: brick walls executed in running bond, aggregate-paneled square portico posts and pilasters, bands of windows, steel-frame doors and transoms, and a metal-capped plywood cornice. A long, flat-roofed, three-tier, steel canopy supported by round steel posts extends from the portico to the brick-bordered concrete steps at the municipal sidewalk.

The auditorium interior looks as it did in 1965. Two flat, birch, double-leaf doors open into the foyer and two matching side entrances facilitate additional egress. The original steel-frame, blonde-wood seating maintains its initial configuration: a wide central section flanked by two wide aisles and two narrower outer sections. The stage's flat proscenium arch reflects the Modernist aesthetic. Four slightly curved hardwood steps lead to the stage's hardwood floors. The auditorium's vinyl-composition-tile-covered floor slopes down to the stage, thus providing good vantage points throughout the room. The gypsum board ceiling's convex design was intended to improve acoustics. Original aluminum ceiling pendants featuring broad circular canopies are intact.

In the classroom wing, concrete-block walls, terrazzo and vinyl-composition-tile floors, dropped-acoustical-tile ceilings, and light-wood metal-frame doors surmounted by transoms are intact. Built-in bookshelves line classroom walls under exterior windows, while L-shaped wood cabinetry units encompassing coat and storage closets, ceramic sinks, and laminate countertops fill interior corners.

[38] "Addition to Central Elementary School," 1964 plans in the Guy E. Crampton papers, MC00227, Series 3.24, Flat Folder 153, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

The African American Kingville Elementary School, originally operated by the county, also received a series of austere mid-twentieth-century additions. In 1949, the City of Albemarle acquired and improved the campus with a simply-executed cafeteria, followed by a gymnasium and a second classroom building in 1954 and an auditorium in 1964. Guy E. Crampton and Associates designed the improvements executed between 1958 and 1964 at what became known as South Albemarle School. The firm's other Stanly County commission during the period involved 1963-1965 plans for expansions of the Albemarle High School campus on Palestine Road, the first phase of which had been completed in 1958.[39]

[39] Sharpe and Pepper, *Stanly County USA*, 96; "Kingville School," 1958-1964 plans in the Guy E. Crampton papers, MC00227, Series 3.22, and "Albemarle High School," 1963-1965 plans, Series 3.21, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University, Raleigh.

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Section 10. Geographical Data

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

1. Latitude: 35.352827 Longitude: -80.195874

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of Stanly County tax parcel #654801354469 (2.43 acres), as indicated by the heavy solid line on the enclosed map.

Scale: one inch equals approximately one hundred feet.

Boundary Justification

The nominated tract contains the Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School and associated historic landscape. The west, east, and south lot lines remain the same as they were in 1921 at the beginning of the period of significance. A paved parking lot separates the parcel from Central Elementary School to the north. The parking lot's south edge serves as Albemarle Graded School – Central Elementary School's north National Register boundary.

Section 11. Additional Documentation

Photo Catalog

All photographs by Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc., 3334 Nottingham Road, Winston-Salem, NC, December 2013. Digital images located at the North Carolina SHPO.

1. 1921 school and 1952 addition, west elevation, looking northeast
2. 1952 addition and 1921 school, northwest oblique
3. 1921 school and 1952 addition, east elevation, looking northwest
4. 1965 addition, south elevation
5. 1965 addition, west elevation, hyphen and entrance
6. 1921 school, first floor classroom, looking northeast
7. 1921 school, second floor corridor, looking north
8. 1952 addition, cafeteria, looking north
9. 1952 addition, second floor classroom, looking southwest
10. 1965 addition, auditorium, looking east
11. 1965 addition, classroom, looking east

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 14000991 Date Listed: 12/2/2014

Property Name: Albemarle Graded School - Central Elementary School

County: Stanly State: NC

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper

12·2·2014
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 6: Current Function

VACANT/NOT IN USE hereby replaces "EDUCATION"

Section 8: Period of Significance

The Period of Significance for the building is hereby changed to 1921-1933 and 1951-1965.

The 1921-1933 period of significance reflects the school's importance under Criterion A, when the school served as the sole graded school for the city, before the school system incorporated the industry-owned elementary schools. The 1951-1965 POS represents Criterion C - the Modernist addition to (and conversion of) the school itself, as a significant local example of the new direction and directives in school design espoused by the State. The architect is a key figure in school design in North Carolina, and the auditorium and classroom addition to the original school is indicative of the design ethos of both the designer and the State-directed plans.

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)