

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Union	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting Ground

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Junction of
S.R. 1327 with S.R. 1329

CITY OR TOWN:
Waxhaw (Eighth Congressional District, The Hon. Earl B. Ruth)

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Union CODE: 179

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structures <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Robert H. Winchester, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of
Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting Ground

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Mineral Spring STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Union County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 248

CITY OR TOWN: Monroe STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on a flat wooded site at a rural intersection is Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting Ground. The camp ground consists of a five-acre open area surrounded on four sides by small frame structures called "tents." Originally the tents were somewhat temporary structures built of logs and hewed poles, occupied by families while the camp meeting was in session. Almost all of the tents have been replaced by more modern cabins in recent years. At the center of the open area is a sheltered gathering place called the "arbor", with a small frame church to the northeast. To the southeast, across the road which encircles the site, is the old graveyard with a new cemetery to the rear.

The arbor is a large open-sided frame structure eighty feet long and sixty feet wide with a two-part roof: a central gable roof and a pent two feet below the eaves that extends around all four sides. The roof cover is asbestos shingle over earlier wood shingle. Weatherboarding covers the exposed wall surface above the pent; the east and west gable ends contain rectangular louvered openings.

The structural system of the arbor, said to date from 1830, is mortice and tenon. The plate of the central ridge roof is supported by heavy hand-hewn beams, chamfered up to the height of about nine feet and diagonally braced at the upper corners. The same posts also support the ridge pole of the pent, which is notched in a few feet below the plate. Morticed into the main posts a few feet below where they are intersected by the ridge poles, are the beams which extend to the plate which forms the lower perimeter of the pent. This plate is in turn supported by a row of five plain posts on the ends and seven on each side. With the exception of the lower plate on the south side, which is an apparent replacement, the timbers all appear to be original.

The floor of the arbor is earth covered with sawdust. Rows of simple benches with common runners occupy most of the interior. Four long rows face towards the west end and take up two-thirds of the interior. In the center of the remaining third is a raised speakers' platform with a lower platform to the rear (west) end having benches facing east for the choir. Flanking the choir and the speakers' platform are short rows of benches which face inward.

The church, located to the northeast of the pavilion in the central square, is not the original one, but the last of a series said to have occupied the site. The main block is an unpretentious frame gable-roof structure, the only adornment being the delicate sawn barge board which repeats on the eaves and cornice returns, and the colorful stained glass windows set within rectangular molded frames. Somewhat recent additions to the church are the gable-roof entrance vestibule to the west and a one-story addition stretching across the rear.

The other major building, once a schoolhouse across the road, was moved and is used as the preacher's dwelling. It is a one-story frame structure with a gable roof having returns at the eaves, and narrow corner boards. On the front (south) end is a one-story hip roof extension, possibly a closed-in porch, with a centrally placed entrance. Sheltering

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the entrance is a porch with a gable roof supported by simple square posts.

The tents that line the square perimeter of the camp ground are cabin-like structures. In 1902, all of the tents were torn down except one, still standing in the south row. It is distinguished by a large pointed-arched window in the gable end. The materials and method of construction of the present tents are varied; however, for the most part they have the early form-- a rectangular one-story cabin with a gable roof, the end facing inwards having a shed roof across the front sheltering the entrance.

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting Ground is one of the few of its kind remaining in North Carolina. It was established at its present location in the same year (1830) as the camp meeting ground at Rock Springs [nominated to the National Register 2-24-72] but the meeting was an outgrowth of a much earlier one elsewhere. The buildings, especially the impressive central arbor, are interesting examples of vernacular architecture. The chief significance of the complex, however, is as a rare and still-functioning remnant of the Great Revival Movement, the extraordinary populist religious phenomenon that swept through rural America in the nineteenth century.

Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting Ground, established on March 26, 1830 ("For the uses and purposes [of] . . . all members of the Methodist Episcopal Church and county and state"), was begun on twenty-four acres bought from Matthew McCorkle by nine men acting as trustees for the Camp Ground. Pleasant Grove is said to have been used as early as October, 1829, and was begun as an outgrowth of the earlier (circa 1787) McWhirter Camp Ground which was restricted in growth because there was not a good water supply. The first permanent tents at McWhirter, however, were built between 1815 and 1820. The \$125 contract to build the arbor at Pleasant Grove was let to John C. Rape--"a small, lean man who loved to smoke his home-grown tobacco in his clay pipe." Before the arbor was completed, Rape is said to have required the help of his neighbors, particularly that of George Allison Winchester, whose grandson recalled in later years that he "was assigned to put on all the hip roof which at that time was something new and few carpenters knew how to put one on." Pleasant Grove, with an adequate water supply nearby, grew rapidly during the period before the Civil War. There are said to have been more than 200 tents built before 1860, most of them constructed of logs, forming two squares around the arbor; of these, only one survives. Jacob Wolfe, one of the original trustees, is credited with having built the first tent in Pleasant Grove. In addition to the arbor and tents, a church was constructed on the camp grounds in 1831 which, though remodeled in 1860, is thought to have been replaced by the present 1895 structure.

The camp meeting always started on Tuesday after the second Sunday in August and lasted for a full week. A trumpet blown at dawn was the signal not only to arise but to hold worship, each person in his own tent. The next blast brought the whole encampment to the arbor for prayer meeting at sunrise.

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Four other calls were blown by the trumpeteer, proclaiming the preaching services at 8 a.m., 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. The last was called "early Candle light." Provision for lighting the arbor included a twenty-six-place candle holder, said to have been about eighteen inches in width by two-and-one-half or three feet high, which hung inside the arbor. Lighting for the area between the arbor and tents was provided by fires built on mounds of stone placed fifty to seventy-five feet from each corner of the arbor. At the beginning of the camp meeting the ministers would come from far and near on horseback to preach. For a number of years, they received no pay for preaching but there were about twenty rail pens built for the preachers' horses, and members of the camp watered and fed them.

The camp ground was expanded in the second half of the nineteenth century. On December 29, 1868, Charles H. Austin and his wife, Fanny, sold the trustees of "the Pleasant Grove circuit of the South Carolina conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South" two-and-one-third acres adjacent to the camp ground, and on November 5, 1885, J. C. Bates and his wife Jane H. Bates, conveyed four acres to the "Pleasant Grove Church."

An interesting story is attributed to the camp meeting of 1886 which was held at nearby Antioch. A Brother Goodman Laney is said to have prayed in his service that an earthquake would come and shake the sinners, his prayer coinciding with the Great Charleston Earthquake of 1886. Laney's grave, which is located at Pleasant Grove Cemetery, bears the following inscription: "He prayed for an earthquake in Antioch Campground . . . and it was answered."

A general decline in interest in the camp meetings led to an order by the trustees for closing the camp ground in 1902. All the tents but one were torn down and hauled away. In October, 1911, the trustees deeded two acres to the Union County Board of Education for use as a school; however, by January 5, 1926, the school was abandoned, and the school building and the property where it stood reverted to the trustees of Pleasant Grove Church. On June 20, 1931, Lawson Howey deeded two acres contiguous with Pleasant Grove Church property to the trustees of the church. Led by Henry C. Byrum, Pleasant Grove Camp Meeting began to attract renewed interest, and by 1935 the camp had rebuilt seventy-one tents. It has continued to grow through the years.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Charles G. Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist; architectural description by Bruce MacDougal, survey supervisor.
 Atkinson, Leon. "Pleasant Grove Camp Ground," a talk given at Pleasant Grove to the Carolinas Geneological Society, August 9, 1969. Copy in Survey files, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
 Laney, Clara. "Pleasant Grove Camp Ground." Unpublished report, copy in Survey files, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.
 Union County Records, Union County Courthouse, Monroe, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES						
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE						
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds				
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"				
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"				
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"				
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9.9 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit Staff

ORGANIZATION: State Department of Archives and History DATE: 9 October 1972

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title Administrator, Office of Archives and History

Date 9 October 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Union County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds).
Winchester, George T. "Pleasant Grove is Legendary Shrine," Monroe Journal, August 30, 1957.



