

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY  
NOMINATION FORM

Continuation Sheet

Item Number

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Name Historic: Church Street  
Historic District  
Common  
Location: Along a portion of Church Street between  
Auerhammer Drive and Gunter Road in  
Leesville  
Classification: District

Owner: Multiple ownership (see continuation sheet)

Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of Historic Places in South Carolina

Description: The six contributing buildings in the Church Street Historic District were constructed between 1865 and ca. 1909. The streetscape, with its setback houses and tall trees shielding the view of the houses, still depicts the scene described in The Leesville Sun of 1905: "The streets are wide and clean shaded by magnificent trees. They are lined with splendid residences - not crowded. We boast the finest homes on the ridge." The five residences and one church are individually owned and in good to excellent condition. Structurally sound, they retain their period setting.

Significance: The Church Street Historic District is significant as a neighborhood that developed in accordance with the birth and initial economic development of the town of Leesville during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The oldest residence in the district, the James C. Bodie House at 525 East Church Street, is a survivor of the era prior to the railroad and the incorporation of the town. The Bodie-Crawford House and the Ezekial Etheredge House are indicative of the emerging prosperity of the community, and of the adaptation of that part of Church Street to medium density residential. The Leesville Methodist Church is a substantial brick edifice in the Gothic Revival style, evidence that the congregation in 1909 was willing and financially able to build a church of permanence and style. The Church Street

Acreage 13.7 acres

Historic District retains integrity from this period, with only one building having been built since 1910.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Church Street Historic District nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying map entitled "Church Street Historic District" drawn to a scale of 100 feet to the inch.

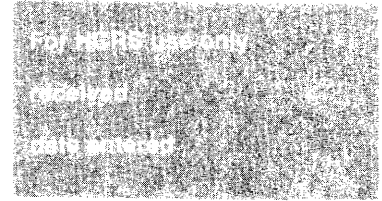
UTM Reference Point

A. 17/453520/3753240 B. 17/452948/3752900 C. 17/453030/3753200

Other Information

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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James O. Hite, Sr.  
Box 370  
Leesville, South Carolina

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Crawford  
Box 7  
Leesville, South Carolina

Rev. Tom Wilkes  
Leesville Methodist Church  
East Church Street  
Leesville, South Carolina

Edward Girvan  
510 East Church Street  
Leesville, South Carolina

Dr. John L. Gunter  
2414 Devine Street  
Columbia, South Carolina

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Buildings contributing to the historic character of the district include:

C-1. Riser-Drafts House, 500 East Church Street. This one story frame residence was built ca. 1900. The house is surrounded by an open balustraded porch supported by turned and bracketed posts. A portico projects from the porch to denote the entrance. A spindle frieze enriches both the porch and the portico. The scrollwork brackets are repeated in the portico, as well as in the raking cornice of the pediment. The building was constructed by James Riser; it was, for many years thereafter, the residence of Dr. Jim Drafts.

C-2. Gist-Duncan House, 502 East Church Street. Dr. F. B. Gunter built this multi-gabled Victorian cottage in 1905. The house has a wraparound porch enriched with turned posts and scrollwork brackets. A central projecting entrance and steep front cross gable are features found in four other Leesville houses. Dr. Gunter, well respected in the town, received mention in The Leesville Sun in anticipation of his move into the newly built house -- "Dr. Gunter now resides at Batesburg, but once lived in Leesville -- and we are glad to welcome him back among us." The old Leesville Railroad Depot was moved to the back of this property from the southeast corner of Main Street and Railroad Avenue, ca. 1975.

C-3. Ezekial Etheredge House, 409 East Church Street. This two story frame residence, built in 1895, has the multiple textures and asymmetrical form of the Queen Anne style. Architectural features include a projecting right full length bay, a projecting lower story porch with a spindle frieze and paired columns, and a pedimented entrance porch with an applied rising sun motif on its tympanum. A polygonal turret on the upper left story is clad in weatherboard, sawtooth shingles, fishscale shingles, and square shingles. A denticulated cornice is beneath the tent roof of this turret. The myriad shingles are repeated in the first story of the facade, beneath the porch. Dr. Ezekial J. Etheredge was a dentist, state legislator, and real estate broker and banker.

C-4. Leesville United Methodist Church, East Church Street. This brick Gothic Revival church was built ca. 1909, on the site of an earlier frame church. The present church has an apsidal plan and a corner tower, with entrance via the two exposed sides of the tower. An octagonal spire is set within the parapet of the tower. The church has traceried windows with stained glass. A brick educational building, appropriate to the earlier church in scale and texture, has been added. The construction of the new church reflects the growth in population and affluence of Leesville in the early 1900s.

C-5. Bodie-Crawford House, 511 East Church Street. This two story frame residence was built ca. 1870, by the master carpenter Caleb Watkins of Ridge Spring. The house is an extraordinary specimen of the Italianate style, with two story verandas. The house has an asymmetrical plan, with a two story wing to the left, extended on the front and back by balustraded verandas with octagonal pillars. A polygonal bay on the right side of the facade has a tripartite capped window on both floors. The central entrance, between the wing and the bay, has a molded pediment, with sidelights and transom, and a projecting polygonal oriel immediately above. An elaborate cornice, with pendant brackets, circumscribes the entire house. The building is sheathed in weatherboard. The exterior doors and windows have pedimented architraves.

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The interior walls, ceilings, and floors are of heart pine. Ceiling height is twelve feet on the first floor, and eleven feet on the second. Byron N. Bodie, who had the house built, served Leesville as postmaster, depot agent, and intendant (mayor). He also ran a mercantile store, and as a nurseryman imported the first camellias and pecans to be grown in the area. The house was built a few years before the town was incorporated. It is reported that Caleb Watkins observed the prevailing winds and the sun exposure, in order to properly orient the house. Caleb Watkins is credited with the design of several buildings in Saluda and Edgefield Counties, including the Methodist church in Ridge Spring.

C-6. James C. Bodie House, 525 East Church Street. This two story frame residence, sheathed in weatherboard, was built in 1865. The symmetrical facade has a double tiered gallery, with chamfered wooden posts and openwork balustrades. Shallow pediments surmount the doorways on each floor, with sidelights and transoms beneath the pediments. Two interior chimneys pierce the hip roof. The house was built before the coming of the railroad to Leesville, and is representative of the expansive farming community that preceeded the town. The house is only moderately changed, and has been traditionally well-kept, with its surviving outbuildings and farmlands.

Noncontributing buildings in the Church Street Historic District:

C-7. Leesville United Methodist Church Parsonage, East Church Street. A contemporary, one and one-half story red brick residence.