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Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Locust Grove Historic District  
other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number Centered along S.R. 42 between Hi-Hope Drive and Grove Road  not for publication  
city or town Locust Grove  vicinity  
state Georgia code GA county Henry code 151 zip code 30248

### 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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Will R. Hoover William R. Hoover 31 May 2016  
Signature of certifying official/Title Dr. David C. Crass/Historic Preservation Division Director/Deputy SHPO Date  
Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register  determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  removed from the National Register  
 other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

John Edson H. Beall 7.18.16  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
 (Check only one box.)

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
157	76	buildings
2	2	sites
1	1	structures
0	1	objects
160	80	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

1 (Locust Grove Institute Academic Building)

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, financial institution, specialty store, restaurant, department store, warehouse

SOCIAL: meeting hall, clubhouse

GOVERNMENT: city hall, post office

EDUCATION: school

RELIGION: religious facility, church school

FUNERARY: cemetery

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTANCE: storage, agricultural field, agricultural outbuilding

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: communications facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE: business, specialty store, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL: meeting hall, clubhouse

GOVERNMENT: city hall

EDUCATION: school

RELIGION: religious facility

FUNERARY: cemetery

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTANCE: storage, agricultural field, agricultural outbuilding

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

LANDSCAPE: plaza, street furniture/object

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS:  
Colonial Revival, Classical Revival  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman  
MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style  
OTHER: Single Pen House, Hall-Parlor House,  
Central Hallway, I-House, Queen Anne Cottage,  
Gabled Wing Cottage, Georgian Cottage,  
New South Cottage, Pyramidal Cottage,  
American Small House, Ranch House

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK, STONE, CONCRETE  
walls: WOOD: weatherboard  
BRICK  
roof: ASPHALT  
other: METAL: cast iron (storefront elements)

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Locust Grove Historic District is a relatively intact railroad community located in southern Henry County, about 35 miles south of Atlanta. It includes both commercial and residential areas that are primarily oriented alongside or near the railroad corridor, which bisects the district in a north/northwest to southeast direction. The terrain is mostly flat with gently rolling hills. Commercial buildings are concentrated on one side of a two-block area along Highway 42, parallel to Cleveland Street and the railroad line. This area is characterized by one- and two-story masonry buildings dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most storefronts are plain in design with little detailing. They are attached in rows that directly abut the sidewalk. Several warehouses are located on secondary streets. Residential areas extend outward in several directions, with informal landscaping on varied lot sizes. Larger lots tend to be on the periphery where they reflect residual agricultural uses. The historic houses represent common late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century types and styles, with a few mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century examples. Some have Victorian-era details or pared-down classical details, but many have little ornamentation. Community landmark buildings include the Locust Grove Institute Academic Building (1905, now city offices), Locust Grove Baptist Church (1907), the former Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (1907), Shoal Creek Baptist Church (re-built c.1964), Locust Grove Elementary School (1955), and the Locust Grove Woman's Club (founded 1914, building constructed 1955). There are two historic cemeteries. The areas outside of the district are characterized by a mix of agricultural fields, remnants of pecan orchards, new residential subdivisions, and a large outlet mall.



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## Narrative Description

**Note:** *The following section was written by Kerri Chandler, Robert Corona, John-Joseph Jackson, Lisette van Leemput, Jessica McCarron, Carla Penque, Amber Rose, Danielle Ross, Clint Tankersley, and Christie Thiem (under the direction of Professor Richard Laub of Georgia State University, Atlanta) in April 2014 as part of the "Historic District Information Form" for the proposed Locust Grove Historic District (document on file at the Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Stockbridge, GA). It was edited by Historic Preservation Division staff.*

## SUMMARY

Located in the Piedmont region of Georgia approximately 35 miles south of downtown Atlanta, Locust Grove is composed of an intact historic commercial district with adjacent residential areas that developed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Situated on a slight rise, Locust Grove was reputedly named for a grove of locust trees once located in the center of town. The town is in an agricultural area and it grew around the railroad tracks that bisect the city northwest to southeast. Georgia State Route 42 (Highway 42) runs parallel to the railroad line on the west side of the tracks, while Jackson Street runs parallel to the railroad on the east side. The district encompasses approximately 310 acres that roughly correspond to the city limits as they existed in 1965, which extend along the railroad line on both sides.

Locust Grove is characterized by a mainly flat terrain with small rolling hills, mature trees, and several roads that follow the natural topography of the land. The lot sizes vary, growing larger as they move further from the central commercial district. Patterns of land subdivision tend to be irregular. Many residences have expansive front lawns and feature gravel or cement driveways (photograph 22). Remnants of pecan groves mark the landscape as well as open fields (some formerly agricultural), orchards, and drainage gullies. Landscape features include mature pecan, pine, and oak trees, as well as various hedgerows; and while there are several lots without structures, most are filled with residences and outbuildings dating from the 1880s to the 1960s.

The majority of historic commercial development is located along Highway 42 with contributing buildings that consist mainly of late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century, attached, one-story, commercial buildings (photographs 1, 2, 8, and 9). Most feature brick facades with storefronts and cornices; some of the storefronts have been altered, though most alterations took place within the period of significance. A few warehouses are also found near the commercial buildings (photographs 35 and 39). Community landmark buildings include the former Locust Grove Institute Academic Building (1905, now city offices, photograph 10), Locust Grove Baptist Church (1907, photograph 12), the former Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (1907, photograph 20), Shoal Creek Baptist Church (re-built c.1964, photograph 15), Locust Grove Elementary School (1955, photograph 18), and the Locust Grove Woman's Club (founded 1914, building constructed 1955, photograph 27). There are two historic cemeteries located next to churches (photographs 13, 14, and 16).

Much of the concentrated residential section is in the southern half of the district, although there are few clear patterns and development is scattered. Many of the houses are situated at least 30 feet from the road. The character changes to a more rural feel as the curvilinear streets meander out of the central commercial district. A few barns and other outbuildings remain on some of the larger lots, though most agricultural activity has ceased. The city of Locust Grove continued to develop with the addition of several new subdivisions into the 1990s and beyond, as well as large-scale retail establishments just outside the district boundaries. Since the newer development is mostly outside the historic core, it does not impact the integrity of the district.

## HISTORIC TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

The primary transportation methods used within the Locust Grove Historic District were the railroad and the automobile. The tracks of the former East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad are now primarily operated by Norfolk Southern and CSX railroads. Historically, the train depot was located just east of the tracks in the center of the district. Today, the depot is no longer extant, but there is a newly constructed, non-



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contributing, train-viewing platform in its place, completed in January 2014 (photograph 4). The tracks, laid in the 1880s, are at-grade with the surrounding streets and are surrounded by rocks and gravel (photograph 33). Georgia Highway 42 is to the east and Jackson Street is to the west of the railroad tracks.

Highway 42 is the main thoroughfare that connects Locust Grove to McDonough, Georgia to the north and Jackson, Georgia to the south. The state route is a heavily travelled, two-lane road going both north and south, with only one traffic light at the intersection of Bill Gardner Parkway. It is paved and does not have sidewalks running alongside it, except in the downtown commercial strip. The downtown sidewalks are partially elevated so that pedestrians and storefronts are out of the way of traffic (photograph 2).

Peeksville Road is another heavily travelled road that runs east of the railroad tracks away from the center of the district. It is a two-lane road that runs from the downtown commercial center to the residential area east of the tracks. The road is paved with asphalt, lined with residences on either side, and there are no sidewalks. A drainage ditch runs on either side of the road which creates a slope in the topography of the yards that front the road.

Jackson Street runs parallel to the railroad tracks in the district and is lined with residential housing to the east. There are no sidewalks along Jackson and the automobile traffic is at a minimum. Historically, Jackson Street accessed a small group of early 20th-century commercial buildings on the east side of the tracks, but today the only historic commercial building is a former barbershop/juke joint.

Indian Creek Road is in the southwest quadrant of the district. The road is not heavily travelled, but serves as an access road to several local streets. Indian Creek Road is a two-lane road and does not have sidewalks. Bill Gardner Parkway (formerly Hampton Road) runs east-west and feeds traffic from Interstate 75 into the district. Bill Gardner is a four-lane, heavily travelled asphalt road that ends at Highway 42 and the railroad tracks. There are sidewalks that abut the parkway on either side of the street.

The street patterns of the district are predominately curvilinear with a small grid-like area immediately west of the commercial district. The curvilinear roads are a result of the placement of the railroad tracks that diagonally curve throughout the downtown area. Due to the location and positioning of the tracks, the earliest developed lots are often irregular shapes.

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Pecan groves (or sometimes just remnants) are located in various areas throughout the city limits of Locust Grove with the most predominant ones being located on Jackson Street, Club Drive, and the neighboring roads. Additional groves can be found in several areas in the northernmost edges of the town, side by side with a short-variety of peach trees. Some of the larger groves are outside the district, since the district boundaries were drawn to exclude areas that are primarily agricultural.

Several street corners and other public areas are large, grassy, open fields (photographs 21 and 26). Many of these plots were historically used for farming but are no longer used for this purpose. Many of these areas are now graded. Wooded areas are still a prominent feature in many of the residential areas. Trees serve as a buffer for many houses on main roads such as Highway 42 and the pattern is replicated in residential areas on Jackson Street and Rose Lane. The most common trees seen in the area are oak, pine, and pecan. In many of these same areas mature shrubbery is also present, defining lines of sight and contributing to the overall streetscapes.

The main commercial area runs on the west side of the tracks for about two blocks roughly from 3831 to 3948 Highway 42. Buildings in this strip abut the sidewalk and are equidistant to the road. A few small trees, benches, and street lamps are the result of recent streetscape projects. Streetscapes on the rest of Highway 42 to the north and south of the downtown area feature free-standing buildings placed further back from the

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street with sidewalks in some areas. Residential area streetscapes vary, but large front yards with houses separated from the streets by trees or tall shrubbery are the most common. Some older residential areas, such as Jackson Street, feature small stretches of sidewalks that were never connected to one another. Sidewalks are uncommon in most areas outside the downtown commercial area.

There is a small park on the corner of Cleveland Avenue and Indian Creek Road at 186 Indian Creek Road (a noncontributing site). The park serves as a community green space with benches. The other noncontributing site is a small plaza (Mayor's Walk Park) between 3840 and 3841 Highway 42 in the commercial area (where an alley once existed). There is a historic cemetery (a contributing site) to the west of the Locust Grove First Baptist Church at 10 Cleveland Street. The cemetery sits on a hilly topography and has graves that date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onward, as both a church cemetery and a city cemetery. An African-American cemetery (a contributing site) is located adjacent to Shoal Creek Baptist Church. This cemetery has expanded since the demolition of Shoal Creek School, previously located at the front of Shoal Creek Baptist Church, between the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>1</sup>

#### LAYOUT AND DISTINCTIVE AREAS OF THE DISTRICT

The oldest residential area is to the east of the railroad and runs along Jackson Street and Peeksville Road, and is bordered to the north by Club Drive and to the south by Grove Road. This residential area is cohesive with few commercial businesses, except for 747 Jackson Street, 749 Jackson Street, and 751 Jackson Street, the latter two of which are non-contributing. The date of construction for the single-family residences along these corridors date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the earliest house believed to be at 900 Jackson Street. The houses that were built along Jackson Street and Peeksville Road corresponded with the laying of railroad tracks through the downtown area in the 1880s. The lots along Peeksville Road and Jackson Street vary in size. Many of the lots located on Jackson Street are narrow and deep, while lots on Peeksville Road tend to be shallower, but wider. This corridor displays a range of house types and styles. The Queen Anne cottage and the gabled wing cottage (some with hipped roof variants) tend to be the most consistent house types found in the southeast quadrant. Most residences along Club Drive are post-World War II ranch houses. There are no sidewalks or streetlights in this section. The setbacks of each property vary.

Another distinctive area of the district is the southwest quadrant of the district bounded by Bill Gardner Parkway (Hampton Road) to the north, Shoal Creek Baptist Church at 1747 L.G. Griffin Road to the south, Cleveland Street to the east, and the district boundary to the west. There are no sidewalks or streetlights in the southwest area of the district. This portion includes a historic African American neighborhood south of Indian Creek Road, particularly along Ridge Street. The houses south of Indian Creek Road are single-family residences from various time periods which sit on lots of varying sizes. Common types include gabled wing cottages and Queen Anne houses; there is also an intact single-pen house as well as a saddlebag house. There are several industrial buildings and former cotton warehouses in this corridor. Shoal Creek Baptist Church, re-designed in 1964, occupies the southern tip of the district and has a cemetery on its grounds. To the west is Locust Grove Elementary School (built in 1955 as an African-American "equalization school"), which still functions as a school. It has a large parking lot facing L.G. Griffin Road and is set back far from the road. The school does not have sidewalks on L.G. Griffin Road or on Shoal Creek Road, but there is a walkway on campus.

Smith Street and Carter Lane are all laid out in a grid-like pattern and represent later development with the expansion of the downtown area during the years after World War II. The Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (1907), currently known as Christian Growth Center, sits on the corner of Ridge Street and Indian Creek Road at 60 Ridge Street. North of this area, there are more civic buildings laid out in irregular lot sizes. The police station and fire station are found at 35, 69, and 79 Frances Ward Drive. Frances Ward Drive also

<sup>1</sup> Donetta Brown Interview.

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serves as a boundary to the new housing development that was built around the 1994 Tanger Outlet Mall to the west. The former Locust Grove Institute (now city hall) and the First Baptist Church and cemetery (also the city cemetery) are located on large lots between Bill Gardner Parkway and Cemetery Circle.

The Locust Grove Institute (LGI) is on the corner of Highway 42 and Bill Gardner Parkway at 3644 Highway 42. The former school comprises the entire corner and is accessible via Bill Gardner Parkway or by Highway 42. It currently serves as Locust Grove City Hall and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1986. There are long driveways leading up to the former school, but no sidewalks. The lot for the former school is an irregular shape, with the intrusion of the lot for the fire station from Frances Ward Drive to the west.

The north portion of the district near Brown Avenue and Highway 42 consists primarily of houses that were constructed during the post-World War II development period between 1945 and 1960. There are also a few houses in this area that were built prior to 1930. There is a large residential lot at 281 Jackson Street with much unfarmed open land, one house, and at least two outbuildings (photograph 22). This area has less of a residential feel due to open spaces and heavier traffic on Highway 42, but there are areas with sidewalks in front of the houses. There is no lighting along the streets in the north area.

The narrow commercial corridor lies in the center of the district. It runs along the west side of Highway 42 and borders the east side of Cleveland Street, running parallel along the west side of the active railroad tracks. The commercial buildings date to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A majority of these are connected as a commercial row with shared walls. Most commercial lots on Highway 42 are very small at 15-by-90 feet, with a couple of exceptions for larger buildings. All of the commercial buildings along Highway 42 can also be accessed from the rear at Cleveland Street, which has a mixture of commercial and industrial buildings. Vehicular access to the commercial district is available through street-side parking, parking lots to the rear of the commercial row along Cleveland Street, and parking across Highway 42 along the railroad and the train-viewing platform accessed by crosswalk.

Although the busy roadway of Highway 42 inhibits pedestrian traffic, visitors have access to the main commercial district through sidewalks and raised walkways. The raised walkway is a feature created by the lowering and paving of Highway 42 in the late 1930s (photographs 2 and 8). The commercial row is set back from the street and abuts the sidewalk. The sidewalk has brick pavers and street furniture, including street lamps, benches, and trash receptacles, which are new aspects of 21<sup>st</sup> century efforts by the city to improve the commercial district's streetscape. The landscaping does not attempt to replicate the historic landscaping of the commercial area. The commercial area was once connected to the railroad by a gradual unpaved grade that led down to the tracks. This grade was leveled during the lowering and paving of Highway 42 in the late 1930s so that the southern end of the commercial area is now several feet above the paved road. The northern portion of the commercial area remains flush with Highway 42 (photograph 9). A concrete and brick walkway has been laid out in front of the multiple retail buildings to create space between the storefronts and the street. Towards the southern end of the commercial area, the walkway begins to rise above street level in order to stay flush with the storefront entrances. This elevated walkway is reinforced by a brick retaining wall and metal guardrails have been installed for pedestrian safety. Green space that was not present historically was also incorporated into the commercial area during the modern landscaping efforts. These areas include the Mayor's Walk Park, which creates a break in the multiple retail buildings where an alleyway once existed.

Further south on Highway 42, between L.G. Griffin Road and Indian Creek Road, the sidewalks narrow and the street is not as walkable for pedestrians. There is a small noncontributing strip mall at the south end of the commercial area, south of Indian Creek Road.



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## ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISTRICT

The predominant architectural types and styles vary according to the time of development of the sub-areas of the district. As documented in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings* (1991), a house "type" refers to the overall form (the outline or "envelope") of the main or original part of the house and the general layout of the interior rooms. This includes the floor plan and the height. In contrast, a "style" relates primarily to the external ornament or decoration of a house and also to the aesthetic qualities of its overall form. Houses belonging to the same type may exhibit different styles, and the same architectural style may appear on different house types. Many houses in Georgia have little or no architectural style and are characterized only by their type.

The range and variety of architectural types and styles found within the residential districts of Locust Grove display the developmental growth of the city. Examples of popular architectural styles date from the 1880s to the end of the historic district's period of significance in 1966. Types range from the modest single pen, to the asymmetrical massing of the Queen Anne house, to the horizontal massing of the ranch house. The majority of Locust Grove's earlier residences are wood-framed houses with brick pier foundations. Residences of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century are often brick with concrete foundations. The following descriptions of Locust Grove's architectural types are derived from publications of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, specifically *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*.

### House Types in Locust Grove

Single pen houses are small one-room houses that are typically square or rectangular with a single entrance and an exterior chimney to the side of the house. Single pen residences were seen mainly in rural areas of Georgia between 1850 and 1900. Single pen houses were often expanded as additions were made to the one-room house. Locust Grove's historic district has one remaining wood-framed single pen residence located at 87 Roberts Road (photograph 19).

Hall-parlor houses consist of two unequal rooms with an entry into the larger of the rooms. These houses are typically gabled and are heated by one or two exterior end-chimneys. This house type was popular in Georgia from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was often constructed for industrial and agricultural workers. Only a few hall-parlor houses are located in Locust Grove, including 910 Jackson Street and 150 Arnold Street, both built in 1920. Another is located at 107 Bowden Street.

Central hallway houses are two rooms wide and one room deep with a central hall or passageway dividing the rooms. They typically have a side-gabled roof with exterior chimneys located at the ends of the house. Only two have been identified in Locust Grove, including one at 276 Cleveland Street built in 1930.

An I-house is one room deep, two rooms wide, and two stories tall with a central hallway with a staircase between the two rooms. These houses typically have a side-gabled roof with exterior chimneys on both ends. This construction type was popular in Georgia between the 1840s and 1890s. Only one example of an I-house exists in Locust Grove. The I-house located at 114 Club Drive was constructed in 1900, later incorporating multiple rear additions.

The gabled wing cottage was a popular house type in Georgia between the 1880s and 1910s and is frequently seen in the residential districts of Locust Grove. The gabled wing cottage is a one-story house that creates a distinctive "L" or "T" shape with a front-facing and side-facing gable. This type is typically wood-frame construction and often incorporates various stylistic elements. Gabled wing cottages are concentrated along Jackson Street and Ridge Street, and were built between 1875 and 1930. Some examples include 878 Jackson Street, 900 Jackson Street, 27 Ridge Street (photograph 38), and 52 Ridge Street. Many of Locust Grove's residential areas include a uniquely modified version of the house type in which the roof is hipped rather than gabled. A few examples of this variation include 110 Ridge Street, 286 Ridge Street (photograph

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36), and 296 Ridge Street. A two-story version, a gabled wing house, is found at 527 Jackson Street (photograph 25).

The Georgian cottage is a one-story house type that was built for a long period of time in Georgia. The floor plan consists of a central hallway with a pair of rooms on either side. The configuration is square or nearly square and the roof is often hipped. The chimney location is the most identifying characteristic, as they are usually symmetrically placed between each pair of rooms. The floor plan can be incorporated into a two-story building, becoming a Georgian house. Only a few examples of Georgian cottages and Georgian houses are found in Locust Grove, dating between 1887 and 1910. Examples are at 569 Jackson Street, 661 Jackson Street, and 960 Jackson Street.

Queen Anne cottages were popular one-story residences in both urban and rural areas in Georgia. Queen Anne houses are two-story Queen Anne cottages with identical characteristics except for the height. General characteristics of Queen Anne types are an asymmetrical floor plan with central massing and projecting front and side gables. The roofs are often pyramidal or hipped or complex with chimneys located to the interior. The Queen Anne cottage and house types in Locust Grove date from between 1893 and 1925 and are concentrated in the older parts of the district. They are among the most abundant house types in the district. Some examples of Queen Anne cottages in Locust Grove include 70 Bowden Street (photograph 24), 38 Combs Street, 781 Jackson Street, 810 Jackson Street, 863 Jackson Street (photograph 32), 32 Peeksville Road, 105 Peeksville Road, and 102 Ridge Street. Queen Anne houses in Locust Grove include 3590 Highway 42 (photograph 11), 377 North Jackson Street (photograph 23), 435 Jackson Street, and 63 Peeksville Road (photograph 29).

The New South cottage was a popular house type built between the 1890s and 1920s during a period of great economic growth in the South. It resembles a Queen Anne cottage but is distinguished by its emphasis on symmetry and a central hallway. The New South cottage also has a central massing with either a hipped or pyramidal roof with interior chimneys. The central hall is flanked on either side by pairs of rooms with one side of the house projecting forward; it often includes two front-facing gables or a front-facing gable and a gable that faces the back of the house. There are only a couple of examples of New South cottages in Locust Grove, dating between 1925 and 1930: 917 Jackson Street and 95 Peeksville Road (photograph 28).

The bungalow house type features a long, irregular floor plan, but is rectangular in shape with the narrow side of the house typically facing the street. Low-pitched roofs with wide overhangs and integrated porches are common. The bungalow peaked in popularity between 1900 and the 1930s but does not appear very often in Locust Grove. Locust Grove's bungalows fall between the 1920s and 1940s and include 37 Peeksville Road (photograph 30).

The American Small House began to make its way into Georgia's residential architectural types by the 1930s. The houses are compact single-story residences with four or five rooms. After World War II, small frame and brick American Small Houses introduced a forward facing gable and a small covered porch. Roofs are typically gabled with no eaves but are occasionally hipped. Common exterior materials are wood weatherboard or asbestos shingles. Locust Grove has only one American Small House located at 57 Brown Avenue.

Ranch houses became popular nationally and in Georgia after World War II. They have a low profile, asymmetrical facade, a horizontal orientation, minimal ornamentation, and often an attached carport. Ranch houses are abundant in Locust Grove and are often found in areas of newer development dating from the 1950s to the 1970s. Some examples include 93 Brown Avenue, 74 Club Drive, 3528 Highway 42, 81 Indian Creek Road, 107 Indian Creek Road, 127 Indian Creek Road, 943 Jackson Street, 107 Roberts Road, 125 Roberts Road, 88 Smith Street, 106 Smith Street, 116 Smith Street, and 276 Shoal Creek Road (photograph 37).

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### House Styles in Locust Grove

The residential areas of Locust Grove also feature several architectural styles popular from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Typical of rural areas, many residences lack any particular academic style and those that do not, maintain simplistic and modest versions of popular academic styles. Descriptions of Locust Grove's architectural styles are derived from Virginia and Lee McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses*<sup>2</sup> and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division's *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*.

Queen Anne style houses feature an irregular plan and an irregular massing of building and roof forms, usually featuring a dominant, front-facing gable. Queen Anne-style houses have one or more porches, that usually wrap-around, with turned or decorative posts. Decorative detailing, bay windows, varying window sizes and shapes, and patterning with shingles to avoid a smooth-walled appearance are common features of the Queen Anne style. Locust Grove houses adorned in the Queen Anne style are most often found on the Queen Anne cottage and house types. Examples include 435 Jackson Street, 931 Jackson Street, 32 Peeksville Road, and 63 Peeksville Road (photograph 29), which feature elements of the Queen Anne style, including shingled facades and trim along wraparound porches.

The Folk Victorian style was very popular in Georgia and borrowed stylistic elements from the Queen Anne and Italianate styles that were transferred to more traditional house forms. The Folk Victorian style is usually found in the form of decorative elements applied to a gabled-wing or central hallway house, which is the case in Locust Grove. These decorative details include turned or jigsaw woodwork such as brackets, spindle work, and porch posts located on porches, gables, and around window and door openings. Examples of the Folk Victorian style in Locust Grove can be seen at 845 Jackson Street and 858 Jackson Street.

Craftsman style houses are characterized by exposed structural elements such as ridge beams, truss work, rafter tails, and knee braces. The main body of a Craftsman-style house is typically wood framed and sometimes uses shingles or brick. Stone, brick, or concrete block is used for Craftsman foundations. An excellent example of the Craftsman style in Locust Grove is the bungalow at 37 Peeksville Road (photograph 30).

### Building Types in the Commercial Area

Descriptions of Locust Grove's commercial architectural types are derived from Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*.<sup>3</sup> The city's commercial area developed in tandem with the railroad and the agricultural industries that thrived in Locust Grove. Most of the buildings in the commercial district date to between 1900 and 1945 and are one-story commercial block buildings. The exceptions are a single two-story commercial block building on the west side of the tracks (photograph 7) and a wood-framed barber shop/"juke joint" (photograph 31) on Jackson Street on the east side of the tracks in what was once a small African-American commercial district.

The central commercial area consists of approximately 20 buildings constructed primarily of brick and concrete block that border the west side of Highway 42 opposite the railroad line. The majority of the buildings are constructed in rows with common walls between each property, a building type known as multiple retail (photographs 1, 2, 8, and 9). Brick is the most common building material. Ornamentation is limited to simple detailing, corbeled brickwork, and rusticated concrete block. Facades are commonly divided into two parts: the ground-level storefront with a single entrance and display windows, and the upper façade, usually a simple

<sup>2</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, 1987.



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cornice. Architectural features on several buildings include recessed entrances (photograph 5), flat arches, and cast-iron columns (photograph 6).

One-part commercial blocks can be free standing or built alongside similar commercial buildings. These attached versions are known as multiple retail (see photograph 9). They are one story in height, consisting of a storefront and an upper wall between the storefront and the roofline with a flat or sloping roof with parapets. Locust Grove's historic storefronts are designed to display merchandise and to light the interior, with large display windows. Entrances often have glass and wood doors, either recessed or flush with the sidewalk. Upper façades often have a full-width rectangular panel, historically the location for signage. These panels, as well as the cornice at the roofline, may have decorative detailing such as brick corbelling (photograph 2).

Locust Grove has a single two-part commercial block located amongst the one-part commercial blocks at 3840 Highway 42 (photograph 7). A two-part commercial block is distinguished by its division of the façade into two distinct sections: the ground floor and one or more upper floors. The ground floor is similar to the one-part commercial block, containing a storefront, while the upper facade features regularly spaced windows that often indicate office space. The cornice at the roofline of the building may have decorative detailing such as brick corbelling. The example in Locust Grove is two stories in height. It previously had retail establishments on the first floor, which is currently a restaurant.

Adjacent to Locust Grove's historic commercial area are a few historic industrial and warehouse buildings. Several are on Cleveland Street. These warehouses are brick with flat, sloped, or low-pitched gabled roofs. Some have small, evenly spaced, multi-pane windows. The warehouses, like the strip of historic multiple retail buildings, were constructed on the west side of the railroad tracks in order to accommodate the Locust Grove commercial area and to have easy access to the railroad. Examples include the warehouses at 3940 Highway 42 and 230 Cleveland Street, both built in 1912 and located just south of the commercial strip. The warehouse constructed at 250 Cleveland Street was built in 1951 (photograph 39) and the warehouse located to the west directly behind the commercial strip at 170 Cleveland Street was constructed in 1906 (photograph 35).

Other notable non-residential buildings include the former post office (1963), constructed in the International style and now used as a music store (photograph 3). The c.1940 telephone exchange building is a small front-gabled brick building with minimal fenestration (photograph 34).

## COMMUNITY LANDMARK BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES, AND SITES

### The Railroad

The railroad line that runs through Locust Grove was constructed in 1882 as a part of the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad (ETV&G). It is a contributing structure to the district, since it still follows its historic path directly through downtown Locust Grove, adjacent to both commercial and residential areas (photographs 4 and 33). The tracks are slightly elevated, and all crossings are at grade.

### Locust Grove Institute (LGI) Academic Building

The former Locust Grove Institute Academic Building (completed 1905, listed in the National Register in 1986) is what remains of a former educational institution that was very important to the town's history, often serving as the economic and cultural center of the town. It is now part of a municipal complex (photograph 10). In 1894 the Baptist-affiliated school was initially housed in a large wooden building for the first few years of operation. The preparatory school soon expanded by adding two large dormitories, a two-story brick administration and classroom building, and several smaller support buildings. The large administration building is the only portion of the school that survives to the present day. It was one of the last buildings designed by James W. Golucke, a Georgia architect known for his courthouses and educational facilities. The building has

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elements of classical styles, including Neoclassical Revival. The symmetrical façade features a central entrance bay with a white wooden portico. Tall brick pilasters are set at regular intervals on the front of the building. Windows are accented by stone lintels. A wooden cupola replicates architectural details from the rest of the building, such as dentils, as well as the LGI symbol. This cupola was replaced in the 1980s after the original one fell off the building and was destroyed. The building remains nearly unchanged from its original form, except for the one-story addition to the rear, added in 1951-1952, and the changing of window frames from wood to metal in the 1970s. The interior retains a largely unchanged second-story auditorium from the period of construction.

#### Barber shop/"juke joint"

Located at 747 Jackson Street (photograph 31), directly across the train tracks from the historic downtown business district, this currently vacant building is the last remnant of a northern pocket of the historic African-American district that once thrived in the area. The small building sits alone along the road with a vast field behind it, which once was occupied by several buildings, identified by members of the community as being single-pen or shotgun houses. This remaining building served as the *de facto* community center and meeting place for the African-American community and, according to reports, it shifted functions depending on the time of day. It was used at various times as a barbershop and entertainment venue (juke joint). The vernacular building is a front-gabled wood-framed building with a shed-roofed front porch. It has a stepped metal parapet that once displayed signage. This contributing building is a rare surviving remnant of African-American commerce in the district.

#### Shoal Creek Baptist Church and Cemetery

Shoal Creek Baptist Church was founded in 1866 and the present building is located at the south end of the district (photograph 15). The church has served as a pillar in the surrounding African-American community, as well as a meeting place for social events, Sunday school, and church services. The building was altered to its present appearance in 1964, and expanded in the 1970s to include a rear annex (seen in photograph 17). It is a simple front-gabled building that has had brick veneer added to the exterior. It includes a gabled entry portico, stained glass windows, and a narrow steeple on the ridge. The premises also include a small concrete block building that may have been a Masonic lodge. Shoal Creek Baptist Church has an adjoining cemetery that has expanded over the years. The cemetery has a variety of early markers (including many from the 19<sup>th</sup> century) with a design that reflects rural African-American cemeteries (photographs 16 and 17).

#### Locust Grove Elementary School (originally Shoal Creek School)

Locust Grove Elementary School, built in 1955 as Shoal Creek School, is located on the corner of Shoal Creek Road and L.G. Griffin Road on the south end of the district (photograph 18). It was initially constructed as one of hundreds of "equalization" schools built across the South in the 1950s in an effort to maintain educational facilities that were separate from white students (see a more complete discussion in the history section below). Locust Grove Elementary is one of three equalization schools that are still extant in Henry County. It is still being used as an educational facility for all students. The single-story brick building is typical of many 1950s International Style schools with a horizontal appearance, large banks of windows, minimalistic ornamentation, and flat metal awnings and coverings over walkways. The playground that once entertained children during recess is now the Shoal Creek Baptist Church parking lot.<sup>4</sup>

#### Locust Grove Baptist Church

Built in 1917, this large brick church was built in the Neoclassical Revival style (photograph 12). The building features a hipped roof, a wide cornice, dentils, and other classical details. Perhaps one of the most unusual

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<sup>4</sup>Donetta Brown interview.

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features is the use of the longer side of the rectangular building as the main entrance. It has no steeple or bell tower. The entry portico with pediment features four Doric columns in front of three wood-and-glass double entry doors. There are stained-glass windows on all sides. Window openings have rounded arches with keystones above. As the church grew in size, an additional building was constructed on the property to serve as a community center (noncontributing). Additional growth of the congregation necessitated a move to another location in 2008. The historic building was then used as event space, but the need for interior renovations has left the majority of the building largely unused for the past several years.

### Locust Grove Cemetery

After land deeds were formalized in 1878, the Locust Grove Cemetery came to serve as a final resting place for several generations of residents (photographs 13 and 14). Originally serving the congregation of Locust Grove Baptist Church, this public cemetery currently contains over 1,600 graves on several acres. The cemetery is on a gently rolling, open expanse of land which features many large family lots as well as smaller individual lots. Vegetation is relatively sparse. Headstones and personalized ornamentation of all kinds can be seen throughout the cemetery, reflecting the time periods of the burials, as well as the individual character of each person or family. Gravestones range from simple slabs to ornately carved monuments.

### Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (now Christian Growth Center)

Originally serving as the Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (1907), the building sits on the corner of Ridge Street and Indian Creek Road with little setback from the road (photograph 20). It has been known as the Christian Growth Center since 1977.<sup>5</sup> The white-painted brick building has usual massing and form, including a curved projection next to an entry into a two-story bell tower.

## NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Opened in January 2014, the train viewing platform located downtown caters to avid train enthusiasts and serves as a reminder to the public that this mode of transportation is the reason behind Locust Grove's existence (photograph 4). Located on the site of the town's former train station, it was intended to promote the town's history. The open platform with a roof is considered a noncontributing structure.

Another recent addition to downtown is Mayor's Park, which runs between two of the groups of historic businesses on Highway 42. Previously an alley or small side street, the small plaza was elevated and turned into a pedestrian connection to parking lots behind the historic shopping district and the main walk of the downtown area. It is considered a noncontributing site. Another small park at 186 Cleveland Street is also a noncontributing site.

A 1990s fountain by the Locust Grove Institute is considered a noncontributing object.

In general, other noncontributing properties within the district fall into two categories: buildings constructed after 1966, and therefore outside the period of significance, and buildings modified beyond reasonable recognition of their original appearance so that they have lost historic integrity. However, the majority of properties are contributing to the district, because they are within the period of significance and retain the required integrity.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Growth Center. "About The Church," Accessed April 2014. [http://christian-growth-center.com/site/ms.asp?sec\\_id=180012960](http://christian-growth-center.com/site/ms.asp?sec_id=180012960)



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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Period of Significance**

1882-1966

**Significant Dates**

1882 – railroad tracks completed through town

1893 – incorporation of Locust Grove

1905 – Locust Grove Institute building completed

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Golucke, James W. (architect)

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the arrival of the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad in 1882, because the railroad line is the reason for the town's prosperity, as well as its earliest documented extant resource. The end of the period of significance in 1966 represents the time when almost all of the lots within the historic city limits were built out.

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**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Locust Grove Historic District is significant under Criteria A and C at the local level for its role as a commercial center in southern Henry County between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The town of Locust Grove was settled as a rural frontier village prior to the 1850s. After the arrival of the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad in 1882, the small town began to prosper as the center of commerce for the surrounding agricultural-based economy. Locust Grove was first incorporated in 1893. Its early economy relied on the distribution of cotton, peaches, and other farm produce. The district is significant in architecture for its small representative collection of commercial, religious, and institutional buildings commonly found in Georgia towns, and also for its good examples of several residential types and styles popular between the 1880s and 1960s. House types represented include single pen, hall-parlor, central hall, New South cottage, gabled wing cottage, Queen Anne cottage, pyramidal cottage, bungalow, American Small House, ranch house, and gabled wing house, as defined in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*. Stylistic influences include Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, and Craftsman. The district is also significant in commerce because its central business district was a primary location for the buying and selling of goods and services for the southern portion of Henry County. The district is significant in community planning and development because its plan is a good example of a railroad strip-type town, as defined in *Georgia Community Development and Morphology of Community Types* (Roth, 1989), a statewide context. The primary orientation of the town is toward the railroad, which influenced subsequent street patterns and business locations.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The history and growth of Locust Grove is closely tied to the construction of a railroad line, as was common with many small Georgia towns. The area had been sparsely settled before the 1850s. It experienced little growth after the Civil War, and remained a rural settlement until the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad constructed a line between Rome, Atlanta, and Macon (a distance of 158 miles) during the early 1880s. The tracks were completed through Locust Grove in 1882. Locust Grove prospered with a transportation- and farm-based economy that distributed local peaches, pecans, and other produce. Raw cotton was brought from the region by train to Locust Grove, where it was processed by a cotton gin and shipped out to be used for textiles. Farmers also packed the produce from their fields and orchards for distribution by rail. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Locust Grove was a thriving town with a variety of stores, offices, residences, warehouses, and churches. The Great Depression and boll weevil infestation had a negative impact on the region in the late 1920s and 1930s. The return of veterans and the post-WWII economy brought some renewed prosperity in the 1950s and the town is currently an ex-urban community for the greater Atlanta metropolitan area.

The Locust Grove Historic District is significant in the area of architecture for its good collection of commercial industrial, and residential buildings, as well as churches and schools, dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. These represent examples of many of the common types and styles of buildings historically constructed in Georgia. Commercial buildings in the district are a varied collection of small attached and freestanding buildings of masonry construction with common setbacks along the sidewalk. Most date from between 1900 and 1930, and are aligned along the western side of the railroad tracks. The brick commercial buildings possess storefronts that include such character-defining features as large display

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windows, recessed entrances, transoms, brick parapets and pilasters, segmental-arched windows, and corbeled brickwork on the cornices. As is typical in many small towns, the details tend to be simple variations of predominant architectural trends. Several facades are made of rusticated concrete block. Cast iron elements, such as columns and pilasters, are seen on a few commercial buildings. All commercial buildings are one story, except for one excellent example of a large two-story commercial building that was constructed in 1906 in the center of the business district. On the east side of the tracks is a rare surviving example of a small vernacular wooden building used for multiple purposes, such as a barbershop and "juke joint," by the African American community. It retains its false front (parapet made of seamed metal), wood siding, and front porch.

Several good examples of warehouses are also seen in the district, mostly on secondary streets and to the west of the business strip. A former cotton warehouse constructed in 1912 is an excellent example of a typical brick industrial building with minimal detailing.

Residential buildings include good examples of several types, such as central hallway, hall-parlor, New South cottage, gabled wing cottage, Queen Anne cottage, pyramidal cottage, Georgian cottage, bungalow, Queen Anne house, gabled wing house, American Small House, and ranch house, as defined in *Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings*. Stylistic influences include Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival, although there are few high-style examples. There is a small concentration of African-American domestic architecture on the south side of the district. One extremely rare example of an intact single-pen house still stands in Locust Grove. Most houses in the district have good-to-excellent integrity with few additions and only minor alterations.

The Locust Grove Historic District also contains architecturally significant community landmark buildings including the former Locust Grove Institute Academic Building (1905, listed on the National Register in 1986), First Baptist Church of Locust Grove (1916), and the former Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church (1907). The architect for the Locust Grove Institute was James W. Golucke (1857-1907) of Golucke and Stewart, who designed many courthouses and county jails in Georgia. Best known for his public buildings, Golucke usually designed monumental brick buildings using either the Romanesque Revival style or classical styles. The Locust Grove Institute is an excellent example of classical symmetry and understated classical details on an institutional building. The Locust Grove First Baptist Church is a large Neoclassical Revival-style building with an unusual orientation for a church; the longer façade is the main entrance. The former U.S. Post Office on Highway 42 (now a retail store) was constructed in 1963 and is Locust Grove's only commercial building in the International Style. Locust Grove Elementary School (1955) was also constructed in the International Style, though subsequent alterations have impacted this design in some sections of the building.

The district is significant in the area of commerce as the center of commercial enterprises in the surrounding area from the late 19<sup>th</sup>- through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The historic business district along Highway 42 and the railroad line reflects Locust Grove's role as a center of commerce for many of the surrounding farms and unincorporated communities. The business district (near where the railroad depot formerly stood) was historically the primary location for the trading, buying and selling of goods, services, and commodities on a local basis. The historic commercial buildings are representative of the types of commerce that contributed to the town's economy after the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad came through Locust Grove in 1882. The district's commercial buildings are typical of the mercantile, professional, and banking businesses commonly found in Georgia's small railroad towns. These buildings contained grocers, pharmacies, general merchants, professional offices, and banking institutions. In the only two-story example, there were ground-floor retail spaces with the upstairs reserved for professional offices and living areas. Warehouses also contributed to Locust Grove's role as a packing and distribution point for local commodities such as peaches and pecans, as well as places where small cotton gins processed local cotton for distribution to a wider market.



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The Locust Grove Historic District is significant in the area of community planning and development for its intact town plan, and as a good example of a railroad strip-type town in Georgia. Historian Darlene Roth evaluated several types of towns in the statewide context, *Georgia Community Development and Morphology of Community Types* (1989). Locust Grove fits the description of a "railroad strip" town where the tracks run through the middle of town and the main street and associated commercial development parallel the tracks and are oriented toward them. According to Roth, this is the most common form of railroad town found in Georgia. Locust Grove experienced its first major growth from the railroad, followed by a steady outward expansion. Though a small settlement had existed for several decades, the town did not prosper until after the East Tennessee, Virginia & Georgia Railroad arrived in 1882. Locust Grove was first incorporated in 1893. The railroad tracks from Rome to Macon, through Atlanta and Locust Grove, were an important freight and passenger route, making the railroad vital to the town's agricultural-based economy. While the rail line was re-organized and merged several times, it continued passenger service through Locust Grove until the late 1950s. Within the historic district, Locust Grove has retained the core of the basic street pattern that it has had since the 1880s. Locust Grove's early main street (Highway 42) runs parallel to the railroad with most commercial development on the west side of the railroad, where a depot once also stood. Residential areas extend in all directions, although they also generally follow the railroad path. On the outskirts are larger lots with remnants of farms and orchards. This historic layout is still clearly evident in the Locust Grove Historic District.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

**Note:** *The following section was written by Kerri Chandler, Robert Corona, John-Joseph Jackson, Lisette van Leemput, Jessica McCarron, Carla Penque, Amber Rose, Danielle Ross, Clint Tankersley, and Christie Thiem (under the direction of Professor Richard Laub of Georgia State University, Atlanta) in April 2014 as part of the "Historic District Information Form" for the proposed Locust Grove Historic District (document on file at the Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Stockbridge, GA). It was edited by Historic Preservation Division staff.*

1820s-1880s

Locust Grove, which is part of Henry County, is located on what was once Creek Indian territory. (Henry County was once a much larger county, incorporating much of present-day DeKalb and Fulton counties.) The unincorporated Locust Grove community began in the early 1820s as a rural frontier village dependent on an agricultural economy. The town acquired the land through a treaty with the Creek Indians, signed January 8, 1821. This land was surveyed into 202½-acre land lots and drawn by lottery, with a grant fee of \$19.00 per land lot. It is believed that the town name originated from a grove of flowering locust trees surrounding the home of William Carroll, who owned a store and established the first post office.

By the 1850s, the village grew to include a tavern, store, blacksmith shop, shoe shop, school, and churches. In 1870, the first store was built on Main Street, which is now Highway 42. None of these early buildings survived. The oldest existing commercial and residential buildings in Locust Grove date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some of the early settlers of Locust Grove included Archibald Brown, Sarah and W.H. Castellaw, Alexander Cleveland, Thomas Colvin, George P. Combs, Samuel Gardner, and Thomas Price. These individuals share a lineage with many of the current residents of the town.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Rainer, *Henry County Georgia: The Mother of Counties*, 1, 11, 90-91.

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An important source of information about the early residents of the town comes from the Locust Grove Cemetery and the records of the adjacent Locust Grove Baptist Church. (This cemetery has sections that have functioned at various times as a city cemetery and a church cemetery.) According to excerpts from the church minutes, as noted in *History of First Baptist Church, Locust Grove, Georgia – Keeping House for God*, Indian Creek church was constituted in 1825 by members of the Baptist order in the fork of Towaliga and Indian Creek. In 1862, the church congregation moved to a site just north of the present Locust Grove Cemetery during the pastorate of Reverend Kimball. On February 2, 1878, an indenture was made between Archibald Brown and members of Indian Creek Church in which Brown deeded two acres of land to be used as a place of worship. In April of 1878, William H. Smith gave Indian Creek Church another three acres of land in the northeast corner and three-fourths of an acre for church burial purposes.<sup>7</sup>

John L. Gardner, who owned the land west along the new railroad on Cleveland Street, along with his two older brothers Manny and Samuel G. Gardner, and their father, Samuel W. Gardner, operated a store in the commercial strip that was built in the 1880s along the new railroad on Cleveland Street. In 1890, they expanded their business holdings to include Gardner's Hardware Store. John inherited the store and under his ownership it prospered. After his wife died, Manny Gardner slept in the upstairs of this store as the night watchman. John Gardner also owned the property across the tracks where Otis Upchurch and Purnie lived. He planted the pecan trees that remain there today. On that same property was a factory that built coffins --- Holsombach Furniture and Undertaking Company.<sup>8</sup> John Gardner kept a hearse and horses in a barn behind the store so that when a person would pass away, he would sell a lot from the cemetery section of his land and provide the coffin and hearse service.

### 1880s – 1920s

The Locust Grove community experienced limited growth until the rail line connecting Rome and Macon, Georgia, was completed in 1882. On June 2, 1882, the *Henry County Weekly* reported the train arrival, which was met by approximately 400 spectators. Railroad management camped in town and made announcements of passenger service that would begin soon.<sup>9</sup> The event was a result of a quickly evolving regional railroad system. The East Tennessee Virginia & Georgia Railroad had originated in Tennessee in 1869 and was the product of the consolidation of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad with the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad.<sup>10</sup> In 1880-1881, the ETV&G purchased the Georgia Southern Railroad, extending it from Dalton, Georgia to Selma, Alabama. In 1881 it bought the Macon and Brunswick Railroad, a 174-mile road between Macon and Brunswick. To connect these widely separated lines, ETV&G built its "Atlanta Division" from Rome to Atlanta to Macon, a distance of 158 miles, completed in 1882.<sup>11</sup> This is the route that went through Locust Grove. By 1894, ETV&G merged with Richmond and Danville Railroad to form Southern Railway. Southern Railway ultimately became what is now Norfolk Southern Railway.

This rail line filled a gap between Macon and Rome via Atlanta. It resulted in the establishment of numerous railroad towns, including Locust Grove, which was chartered on December 20, 1893. The original city limits extended one quarter mile in every direction from the train depot in the center of town. The city consisted of one mayor and five council members. The first mayor was M. P. Sowell. The first appointed city council

<sup>7</sup> Author unknown, *Locust Grove Cemetery History*, 2011.

<sup>8</sup> (Miss) Clifford Williams & (Mrs.) J.C. Arnall, *History of Locust Grove, Georgia*. Locust Grove: City of Locust Grove, 1948.

<sup>9</sup> Rainer, *Henry County Georgia: The Mother of Counties*, 91.

<sup>10</sup> Storey, "East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad History." Rail Georgia.

<sup>11</sup> Storey, "East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad History." Rail Georgia.

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members were G.P. Combs, C.M. Mahone, J.L. Gardner, R. C. Brown and W.H. Peek. The first city clerk was C. W. Williams.<sup>12</sup>

Before the railroad arrived in town, Archibald Brown had already helped the town to develop a small commercial area in 1870; he ran a general store, a blacksmith shop, a wood shop, and a shoe shop just east of the present downtown area. (These buildings are not extant.) However, after the coming of the railroad in 1882, more stores and warehouses began to spring up along the strip of area that lay west of the new railroad line. J. B. Dickson was the first person to build a store (non-extant) on what was then Main Street but today is known as Highway 42. The first cotton warehouse was built by George Schaeffer in 1882, which later became the Merchants and Planters Warehouse. In 1883, Archibald Brown built a concrete storehouse on Main Street with a blacksmith shop on the rear of the lot. He also built a public gin using a new 10-horsepower steam engine. Despite the fact that the store suffered fire damage twice, the walls of the building remained standing and it later housed the Leslie-George Pharmacy. (Arch Brown lived in a house one-half mile east of town, which was remodeled to become the home of Dr. E. G. Colvin.<sup>13</sup>)

Locust Grove's three cotton gins, several warehouses, stores, and residences were built west of the railroad and commercial downtown area. The main residential and commercial areas are still presently divided by the railroad. The commercial center emerged as a secondary trade area, as the Locust Grove train stop was between the Henry County seat of McDonough and the Butts County seat of Jackson. Locust Grove was a major rail distribution center for peaches, cotton, and other agricultural products.<sup>14</sup>

Harrison Speer, a local entrepreneur, kept a store in his residence, and he was also the first to operate a public gin, which was powered by horses. Bill Colvin and R. F. Smith operated the first steam gin in 1874.<sup>15</sup> In 1889, Sylvanus Baxter Kimball, with local capital, organized and erected the Farmers Cotton Oil Company. Mr. Kimball was a long time member of the Henry County Board of Education and the Locust Grove Baptist Church.<sup>16</sup> The Farmers Cotton Oil Company was sold to the Southern Cotton Oil Company and later operated by the Henry County Gin Company.<sup>17</sup> Cottonseed oil was produced in cottonseed oil mills, and it was an important commodity for the purpose of illumination and as a substitute for olive oil. In 1880 there were no cotton seed oil mills in Georgia, however, by 1890 there were 17 cotton seed oil mills producing products valued at \$1,670,196 in annual revenue. One of these notable mills listed in the computation of economic statistics for the time period is Farmers Cotton Oil Mfg. Co., Locust Grove; it was owned and operated by A.G. Combs.<sup>18</sup>

A milestone development in this era was the establishment of one of Locust Grove's most distinguished landmarks, the Locust Grove Institute (LGI). It was established by the Providence Indian Creek Baptist Church, later known as the Locust Grove First Baptist Church. The first building opened on November 1, 1894, with only 13 students and two instructors. In a year it grew to 85 students. LGI continued to grow rapidly and several houses in the community were used as dormitories to house students, including the Combs-McKnight-

<sup>12</sup>Mills, "Historic District Recommendation Report," 3.

<sup>13</sup>Williams & Arnall. *History of Locust Grove, Georgia*.

<sup>14</sup>Mills, "Historic District Recommendation Report," 3.

<sup>15</sup>Griffin, "History of Locust Grove."

<sup>16</sup>Rainer, *Henry County Georgia: The Mother of Counties*, 228.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>Obediah B. Stevens, Georgia. Dept. of Agriculture, Robert F. Wright. *Georgia, Historical and Industrial*, (Atlanta, GA: Franklin Printing, 1901), 349-351.



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Morfoot House. Classes at LGI were only offered to white students, as was typical of this era of racial segregation.<sup>19</sup>

The Locust Grove Institute served an important purpose by providing college preparatory classes and was one of the first schools in Georgia to be accredited by the Association of Schools and Colleges of the Southern States. The curriculum stressed learning in all facets of life, but its primary goal was building character. The academic building that is still standing was constructed in 1904-1905 for a total cost of \$14,000.<sup>20</sup> The architect/engineer who oversaw construction of the building was James W. Golucke. Golucke's career as an architect began in the mid-1890s and lasted until his untimely death in 1907. He designed at least 27 courthouses in Georgia and four in Alabama, and was considered a genius in his field.<sup>21</sup> The original 1894 building was destroyed by fire in 1906. The institute was repurposed as a military training program academy in 1918. A notable graduate was Dwight Laing Rogers, a Democrat who served in the Florida House of Representatives from 1930-1938 and represented Florida as member of the U.S. House from 1945 until his death in 1954.

Fires occurred frequently in Locust Grove in this period. During this late 1800 to early 1900 period there were 33 fires in the town. Some of the properties destroyed included the gin house of the Southern Cotton Oil Company, a former Methodist church used as a home by Tom Barnett, and the African-American Merchants and Planters Warehouse. Other notable fire tragedies include the gin owned by A.G. Combs, Hiram Colvin's house, and R. C. Brown's home and store (which was burned twice), the Bank of Locust Grove, and the aforementioned Locust Grove Institute wooden building, along with the adjacent boys' dormitory.<sup>22</sup>

Another notable building that caught fire was the Locust Grove Hotel on June 13, 1904. The hotel began operation in the 1890s, when it was then originally called the Mitchell House. Dr. and Mrs. T. J. Mitchell opened the hotel and ran it for the next four years. They rented the house from Bill Combs but moved back to their home in four years. Mr. and Mrs. Willis Moore were the second tenants to live in the hotel in 1900. The building was rebuilt at an unknown time, after which Mr. and Mrs. T.J. Upchurch lived there. Mr. Upchurch died March 1, 1918 and Mrs. Upchurch and her daughter Mrs. Dobson ran the hotel briefly. Several others ran it in the following years until the building became a private residence through sometime in the 1940s; it is no longer extant.<sup>23</sup>

Despite some of the early fires that plagued Locust Grove, the city continued to grow and by 1900, it had a population of 254.<sup>24</sup> During the early 1900s, there were 18 houses occupied by white residents.<sup>25</sup> One notable house is the home of R. C. Brown built c.1912 (still extant). An early photo of R.C. Brown's house on what would later become Highway 42 shows a water tower and the smokestack of the local cotton gin in the background. Growers harvested and ginned cotton locally. Cotton was generally the cash crop for farmers in the Locust Grove area and agriculture continued to be a main economic driver until the decline of 1966. The building that housed the cotton gin also had a steam engine to operate the gin. R.C. Brown ran the gin located at 120 Cleveland Street, but contrary to the photo caption, he did not run a lumber business. The Browns, who had been in the area since its early settlement, were a successful family. Brown was one of three gin

<sup>19</sup>Mills, "Historic District Recommendation Report," 4.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Caldwell, *The Courthouse And The Depot*, 577.

<sup>22</sup>Williams & Arnall. *History of Locust Grove, Georgia*.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 Population by counties and minor civil divisions, 1910, 1900, 1890. (Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1912), 79.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

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operators in Locust Grove. Southern Cotton operated a gin on Jackson Street and the third was run by Hugh Price at 250 Cleveland Street.<sup>26</sup>

The first telephone arrived in Locust Grove on March 27, 1908; it was installed by McDonough Telephone Company. The phone line ran from Stockbridge to Jackson and consisted of a simple pay station and one phone. It had been installed in the store of M.P. Sowell, which by the 1940s was the residence of J.C. Madden.<sup>27</sup> Later, the town council, which consisted of Mayor H.H. Brown and clerk C.H. Castellaw, allowed the switching of the telephone service from McDonough Telephone Company to Southern Bell Telephone Company. The company then erected, ran, and maintained a public telephone and telegraph until 1940 when it began the community dial system. The phone exchange building that originally housed the community dial system still exists at 120 Highway 42.<sup>28</sup>

J.T. Davis, affectionately called "Uncle Johnnie" by locals, often generously supplied water. He had an abundant spring on his farm. During droughts, people came to this spring even from adjoining counties to haul water in barrels. He had technical engineering training and he had an ambitious vision: he wanted to use the roadways and streets to pipe water to town. With no modern machinery to dig ditches, he used a mule, a small plow, pick, and shovel to lay the pipe. Soon water in an abundant supply was brought to town by this one pipe. Although the exact date of the construction of this single pipe into town is unknown, it was prior to 1910.<sup>29</sup> In February 1910, permission was given to J.T. Davis to lay additional pipelines for water in the town of Locust Grove, with certain limitations and regulations. A tank was built near the cemetery to supply the town with water. Davis built watering troughs at convenient places for horses and mules. Six hydrants were installed and bathrooms were added to many houses.<sup>30</sup>

Soon after, in June 1914, a committee was formed to install gaslights in various parts of town. E.S. Combs ran a line from his home to the main business street. Gas alone was used until June 1918, at which time the committee added six oil lamps to light the street. They looked like lanterns on posts and were not very bright. E.S. Combs hired J.H. Knott to climb a stepladder early every evening to light every street lamp at a salary of \$30 per month.<sup>31</sup>

Historically, the African-American community of Locust Grove made the Shoal Creek area their home; this area is delineated by Smith Street, Cleveland Street, L.G. Griffin Road, Shoal Creek Road, and Indian Creek Road. The early African-American community was built around the Shoal Creek Baptist Church, which was founded in 1866, but moved to its present site at 176 L. G. Griffin Road in the 1890s. The church served as the heart of the African-American community for decades. A wooden building was constructed c.1900 to hold services for worshipers.<sup>32</sup> The sanctuary was extensively changed in the early 1960s; it was bricked and an addition was added to the front.<sup>33</sup> The adjacent Shoal Creek cemetery is indicative of a long lineage of African-American history with several grave markers indicating that a number of the buried were likely born into slavery. Another area with a concentration of African-American residents is Flatbush. This area is located to

<sup>26</sup>Warren Holder Interview. Locust Grove, Georgia. February 18, 2014.

<sup>27</sup>Williams & Arnall, *History of Locust Grove, Georgia*, 6.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid*, 4.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid*.

<sup>32</sup>Virgil Sims, "Shoal Creek Baptist Church History, 1866-1970," Georgia Baptist History Depository, Special Collections, Jack Tarver Library, Mercer University, Macon, Georgia - Reel 633.

<sup>33</sup>Georgia State University Preservation Planning Class, "Locust Grove Design Guidelines," 28.

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the east of the commercial downtown section and the railroad tracks, and is situated at Jackson Street and Arnold Street.<sup>34</sup>

The first organized women's clubs in Georgia were called civic leagues and civic clubs.<sup>35</sup> Before and during World War I, civic club activities were patriotic; later their interests turned to social and literary pursuits. What is now the Locust Grove Woman's Club began in 1914 when a joint meeting of the Baptist and Methodist Missionary societies organized a women's civic league called the Locust Grove Civic League for the purpose of "civic improvement." In 1917 it became a member of the General Federations of Women's Clubs and the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs, and changed its name to the Locust Grove Woman's Club. One of its first projects was a clean-up day for the town. During World War I, the club make bandages for wounded soldiers, among other activities. The club met in the local elementary school for its first few decades. Mrs. Claude Gray was first president and served until the civic league became the Locust Grove Woman's Club in 1917. Mrs. John Gardner became president and was succeeded by Mrs. John S. Brown.<sup>36</sup> There were 62 members by 1921. The Locust Grove Woman's Club has been active continuously since its organization.

### 1920s-1945

In 1900, Locust Grove had a population of 254 and by 1920, it had increased to 539.<sup>37</sup> The city limits by this time were extended so that they began at the Southern Railroad depot located along Main Street, which is now Highway 42, just north of Smith Street, and stretched about three-fourths of a mile north to Brown Avenue and three-fourths of a mile south to Sims Road. Also, the boundary of the city expanded about one-half mile east to what is today Louise Way and one-fourth mile west to the end of Smith Street.<sup>38</sup> Industry and commerce were thriving in the city of Locust Grove by the 1920s. Along with economic and population growth, the city expanded its public services.

Examples of the advancement of public services were the installation of water utilities and electricity. The first water pipeline was commissioned by John Williams, the manager of Southern Cotton Oil mill, and it ran from Davis Springs to the Southern Cotton Oil mill. However, the date of this achievement is unknown. The feat was apparently accomplished by plowing a ditch with a mule and pumping the water into a large well. Previously J.T. Davis had utilized the spring on his farm to lay down pipe that would enable water to flow to the city. Davis later sold his spring and farmland in 1932 to M.M. Brown who then ran Locust Grove's first public waterworks until 1946. Afterwards the spring, along with one acre of farm land, was ceded to the city. J.B. McCary Engineering Company was given a contract in March 14, 1946 to build a more modern water system for the city, utilizing the existing spring on the farm.<sup>39</sup>

In December 1927, talks were underway with the State Highway Board of Georgia, the city of Locust Grove, and Henry County about the possible construction of a highway through downtown Locust Grove, which was agreed upon by all three parties. The laying of the pavement for State Route (Highway) 42 began at the city of McDonough to the north and stopped at the Locust Grove city limits. In the process of the paving of Highway 42, much of the city came together to spare the trees that had been planted by J.R. Williams and were in the path of the project. In 1939 a permit was by given R.H. Brown, the city mayor, and council, authorizing the

<sup>34</sup> Virgil, "Shoal Creek Baptist Church History, 1866-1970."

<sup>35</sup> Rainer, *Henry County Georgia: The Mother of Counties*, 309.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Thirteenth Census of the United States*, 79.

<sup>38</sup> Williams & Arnall, *History of Locust Grove*, 2-3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.



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further necessary right-of-way for construction through Locust Grove to the Towaliga River. Highway 42 was completed in that same year from McDonough to the Towaliga River, which is a branch of the Ocmulgee River located southeast of the city near Forsyth; this helped improve travel between Locust Grove and Griffin (the county seat of nearby Spalding County).<sup>40</sup>

Dr. Claude Gray ran the Locust Grove Institute until 1928 when he was replaced by W.W. Williams, who then served the school until it closed in 1930. The school's property was then given back to the Locust Grove Baptist Church, while the boys and girls dormitories were sold and the main building soon became the Locust Grove Public School. (The dormitories are no longer extant, but the main building is currently used as city hall.) Both the Great Depression and the introduction of public schools in Henry County led to the demise of LGI in May of 1930. The school remained empty until 1936 when the academic building became a public elementary school for the city.<sup>41</sup>

An important event occurred during this era for the African-American community in Locust Grove. During the 1930s, Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr., father of civil rights icon Martin Luther King, Jr., ministered Shoal Creek Baptist Church for two years.<sup>42</sup> Parishioners of Shoal Creek Baptist Church are very proud of their church's association with Reverend King.

A school built in the 1930s as a Rosenwald School, also played a significant role in the history of African Americans in Locust Grove. Although it is outside of the district, the historic Unity Grove School still exists; it is located about three-and-a-half miles northwest of the city, nestled in the woods at LeGuin Mill Road, in the southern part of Henry County. The two-room, wood-framed schoolhouse was an educational venue for local African-American children from the early 1930s to approximately 1954. One of the teachers at Unity Grove, James Weldon Johnson, was an early pioneer for African Americans: a scholar, songwriter, politician, diplomat, author, educator, and lawyer, and the first African American to be admitted to the Florida bar after Reconstruction. James Weldon Johnson was a leader in the NAACP and his association with the Unity Grove School is a source of local pride.<sup>43</sup>

A notable member of the Locust Grove Woman's Club was Bernice Gardner Brown, who died in 2006. Mrs. Brown was born on May 17, 1916 in Locust Grove to Lula Elizabeth Gaillard and Samuel Howell Gardner. As a member of the Locust Grove First Baptist Church since 1929, she served in many of the church's activities. She received her teaching certificate from Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, and received her teacher's degree from Bessie Tift College in Forsyth and her Master's Degree from the University of Georgia. She served as president of the Locust Grove Woman's Club from 1942 to 1943, 1946 to 1948, and 1972 to 1976. She was honored as Locust Grove Historian and Citizen of the Year and she was a member of the Retired Teachers' Association, Bridge Club, Delta Kappa Gamma, and Hospital Auxiliary. She was also the first teacher in Henry County for Special Education. She was instrumental in the efforts that led to the Locust Grove Institute Academic Building's nomination to the National Register and in the conservation treatment of damage that had occurred to its cupola.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>40</sup>Williams & Arnall, *History of Locust Grove, Georgia*, 4.

<sup>41</sup>Mills, "Locust Grove Historic District Recommendation Report," 4.

<sup>42</sup>Roark, "MLK Legacy includes Henry County." *The Henry County Times*.

<sup>43</sup>Robinson, "Historic School to be Studied for Preservation," *The Henry County Times*.

<sup>44</sup>*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, "Bernice Brown Obituary." Accessed March 28, 2014, <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/atlanta/obituary.aspx?n=bernice-brown&pid=17100662&fhid=5071>.

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### 1945-Present

In 1948, the city of Locust Grove was still a small bustling agriculture and railroad town; it had 28 businesses in operation, 26 were white-owned and two were owned by African Americans. Several had existed since the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. An important employer of Locust Grove residents was Robertson Furniture, which was established in August 31, 1946. They produced an upholstered line of chrome furniture for doctors, hotels, and lawyers' offices.<sup>45</sup>

The number of businesses in Locust Grove by the 1940s demonstrated that the city was not only a thriving commercial town but that it was also moving away from an agricultural economy towards a retail economy. From the 1920s onwards, the various uses that the stores underwent signified the transition occurring in the town as it continued to develop and expand its boundaries.

The only two known African-American businesses during 1948 were located on Jackson Street across the railroad tracks from the commercial strip and the train depot (non-extant). Of these buildings, only one remains: it is referred to by locals as the "Juke Joint," and is located at 747 Jackson Street. According to Locust Grove resident Donetta Brown, Tom Watkins owned this business, and used it as a barbershop. Tom Watkins was also the owner and driver of a bus that transported students to and from the Shoal Creek School.<sup>46</sup>

A modern, International Style, "equalization school" for African-American children was built next to Shoal Creek Baptist Church around 1954, for grades one through nine, to replace the Unity Grove Rosenwald School. It was called Shoal Creek School. It was initially constructed as one of hundreds of schools built across the South in the 1950s as "equalization" schools in an effort to maintain educational facilities that were separate from white students. Funding for equalization schools was established through a program implemented by Governor Talmadge called "Minimum Foundation Program for Education".<sup>47</sup> These schools served as sources of pride for the African-American community because they were seen as their own. Many of the teachers held some of the highest-paying jobs for African Americans in rural communities.<sup>48</sup> There were over 500 equalization schools built for African Americans across the state of Georgia. By 1970, education had been desegregated across the state and many of the modern schools were closed and left vacant only after a few years of use. Today the building is still in use as Locust Grove Elementary School.

While there were separate residential and commercial areas, in a small town like Locust Grove, some aspects of segregation may have been less visible than in the city, where there are more facilities to segregate. This perspective was shared by James Rosser, an African American man born in Locust Grove in 1943. He stated that there were indeed segregated shops and other facilities, but while he worked at a construction company, he had not experienced problems obtaining contracts to work, despite being African American.<sup>49</sup>

In 1953, Locust Grove became part of the Georgia Power "Better Home Towns" program. More than 60 Georgia towns in Georgia adopted the program when it started in 1944. This program was the product of

<sup>45</sup> Larry Adams, "Robertson's Furniture Recipe for Success". *Wood and Wood Types*. August 1, 1997.

<sup>46</sup> Donetta Brown interview.

<sup>47</sup> Steven Moffson. "Equalization Schools in Georgia's African-American Communities, 1951-1970." Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources. 2010.

[http://www.georgiashpo.org/sites/uploads/hpd/pdf/Equalization\\_Schools\\_in\\_Georgia.pdf](http://www.georgiashpo.org/sites/uploads/hpd/pdf/Equalization_Schools_in_Georgia.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> James Rosser interview, Locust Grove, Georgia. February 18, 2014.

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Charles A. Collier, who was vice president in charge of sales at the Georgia Power Company.<sup>50</sup> He was concerned about the lack of industrial progress and run-down conditions of smaller towns in Georgia. He claimed there were two reasons for the malfunctioning of small towns. One was that the land had lost its fertility because of single-crop agriculture and the other was the lack of value added through manufacturing in the small towns.<sup>51</sup> The program assisted towns through local committees that worked to identify local improvement requirements, increase employment, and make the towns more attractive to businesses, industries, and residents. The program was so popular that by 1948, the company decided to turn it into a contest where a town could become a "champion." In 1953, Locust Grove competed and was awarded a "Certificate of Achievement," which had no further prize attached.<sup>52</sup> The details of what Locust Grove achieved in 1953 to merit this recognition are unknown.

In 1955 a new clubhouse was built for the Locust Grove Woman's Club. It was on land donated by Bryant and Lucille Hubbard on what is now Club Drive. Through the years the club worked on city beautification projects, organized a Halloween party fundraiser, contributed to the Tallulah Falls School, and bought books for the local elementary school.

Another development that had a high impact on the commercial face of the town was the construction of Interstate 75, which opened west of Locust Grove on October 15, 1969. In the 1950s, the interstate program was started under President Eisenhower. This particular plan for I-75 was announced in 1962, and construction had finished seven years later.<sup>53</sup> According to Robert Price, who became mayor in 2012, the interstate changed the face of Locust Grove.<sup>54</sup> Because the town was now more accessible, it brought in more residents. In addition, the construction of the interstate caused a decrease in farmland. This catalyzed a change in the local economy, shifting from agriculture to commerce. This movement went hand-in-hand with the postwar deindustrialization, after which the national economy as a whole changed from a dependency on the primary and secondary sectors (agriculture and industry) to tertiary sector dominance. The commercialization process had already started by 1969, when the interstate attracted several roadside restaurants and motels.<sup>55</sup>

As a response to this rapid development and change in economy, Mayor Charles P. McCarter set up a "Comprehensive Community Sketch Plan" in 1973, discussing future growth and developing new industries.<sup>56</sup> Farmland in Henry County in general had dropped from 177,093 acres to 107,507 between the 1940s and 1960s and had often made way for the timber industry, which catered to the local Robertson Furniture Company and the Penn Pulpwood Company in McDonough.<sup>57</sup>

Interestingly, the railroads that had made Locust Grove were now seen as a hindrance to further growth. Concerns arose regarding the development of the central business district because the downtown was bisected by the railroad tracks. The report encouraged mixed-use development of commercial and light industrial developments in the CBD.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Wade H Wright. *History of the Georgia Power Company 1855-1956*. Atlanta: Georgia Power Company, 1957.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> "State Winners Named in Champion Town Contest," *Snap Shots*, November 1953.

<sup>53</sup> Reaves, *Historic Henry County*, 33.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Price interview, Locust Grove, Georgia. February 18, 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Reaves, *Historic Henry County*, 33.

<sup>56</sup> Barry D. Greenhouse, "A Comprehensive Community Sketch Plan for the City of Locust Grove, Georgia," Department of Community Development, State of Georgia, 1973.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*



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Due to this growth and increased attention, Locust Grove became aware of the importance of its historic resources. In 1983, the municipality purchased the Locust Grove Institute, which had served as a public elementary school since 1936. There were already small changes made to the building in the 1950s. A one-story brick addition was made in 1951-1952 to the rear of the historic school building for a lunchroom. At the same time, the main stairway was changed and fire escapes were added. The octagonal cupola above the portico was struck by lightning in the 1970s and had to be removed and re-constructed. In addition, the wood-framed windows were replaced by metal-framed ones. After numerous renovations and the rehabilitation of the structure, the interior was modified to house various city government offices, presently known as the Locust Grove Municipal Complex (city hall). The Locust Grove Institute Academic Building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 4, 1986. The diversity of functions of the building during its existence, ranging from educational to religious and now civic, made clear the local significance of the building. Substantial parts of the institute, such as the auditorium, retain much of their historic character, allowing the building to serve a vital role in the interpretation of Locust Grove's past.

As the timber industry waned and the Atlanta metropolitan area grew rapidly in the 1990s, Locust Grove became a "bedroom community," where the vast majority of its residents worked in or near Atlanta.<sup>59</sup> Like most towns on the periphery of the Atlanta metropolitan area, Locust Grove began to experience suburban-scale development in the late 1990s that continued into the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The town boundaries grew more than 400% between 2000 and 2011: from 2.2 square miles to nearly 11 square miles.<sup>60</sup> Accordingly, the city's population doubled in that same period; from only 2,322 in 2000 to nearly 5,657 in 2012. As a result, Locust Grove has begun a transition from a rural bedroom community to an expanding suburban city. This also brought along an influx of younger people.<sup>61</sup> The growth of Locust Grove is welcomed by most of the residents, as the population growth brings in more job opportunities and city improvements.<sup>62</sup>

Locust Grove currently offers a growing selection of retail, dining, lodging, and business opportunities. One major addition was the Tanger Outlet Mall, which also serves as the western boundary of the historic area of town. The mall has been located in Locust Grove since 1994, when it was only the second outlet center opened by the company in the state. A first expansion to the outlet added 48,000 square feet of additional retail space and with recent expansion activity that began in 2011, it will continue to play a role in attracting visitors and opening job opportunities.<sup>63</sup>

Locust Grove still appreciates its railway heritage. Approximately 55 trains pass through Locust Grove daily<sup>64</sup> (none of them stop) and the establishment of the train-viewing platform enhanced this local feature. Construction of the platform began in 2012 to draw in more visitors downtown. In addition, it taps into the popularity of train spotting, a hobby that attracts visitors from all over the country. The platform was opened during a ceremony on January 31, 2014.<sup>65</sup> Norfolk Southern and CSX currently operate the railroad going through Locust Grove.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>59</sup> City of Locust Grove, "Our Town," Accessed March 1, 2014. [http://www.locustgrove-ga.gov/our\\_town.php](http://www.locustgrove-ga.gov/our_town.php).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> US Census Bureau, "Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: Locust Grove 2010". 2012. Accessed March 1, 2014, [http://factfinder2.census.gov/rest/dnldController/deliver?\\_ts=412175692227](http://factfinder2.census.gov/rest/dnldController/deliver?_ts=412175692227).

<sup>62</sup> Bernon Ash interview, Locust Grove, Georgia, February 18, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Bonnie Hammock interview, Locust Grove, Georgia, February 18, 2014

<sup>64</sup> Elaine Rackley, "Locust Grove Gets Train Viewing Platform". *Henry Herald*. June 14, 2012.

<sup>65</sup> Locust Grove Main Street, "Train Platform," Accessed March 2014. [http://locustgrovemainstreet.com/train\\_platform.php](http://locustgrovemainstreet.com/train_platform.php).

<sup>66</sup> "Norfolk Southern Railway". Railga.com. Accessed March 2014, <http://railga.com/ns.html>.

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Locust Grove Historic District

Name of Property

Henry County, Georgia

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Name of Property

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Locust Grove Institute Academic Building**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately 310 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

**Datum if other than WGS84:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 33.359577 | Longitude: -84.118833 |
| 2. Latitude: 33.359738 | Longitude: -84.114716 |
| 3. Latitude: 33.355132 | Longitude: -84.111387 |
| 4. Latitude: 33.350646 | Longitude: -84.106041 |
| 5. Latitude: 33.347507 | Longitude: -84.102584 |
| 6. Latitude: 33.344423 | Longitude: -84.099607 |
| 7. Latitude: 33.342173 | Longitude: -84.103501 |
| 8. Latitude: 33.336812 | Longitude: -84.108289 |

Locust Grove Historic District  
Name of Property

Henry County, Georgia  
County and State

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>9. Latitude: 33.339403</b>  | <b>Longitude: -84.111688</b> |
| <b>10. Latitude: 33.344875</b> | <b>Longitude: -84.114169</b> |
| <b>11. Latitude: 33.356987</b> | <b>Longitude: -84.119251</b> |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The National Register boundary is indicated with a heavy black line on the attached National Register map, which is drawn to scale.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the intact and contiguous historic properties in the town of Locust Grove, roughly encompassing the pre-1965 city limits. Historic commercial and residential areas were included, but large areas of agricultural land outside the more densely concentrated core were not included. This farmland was historically more rural in character and outside the city limits during the period of significance. New subdivisions and shopping centers were also excluded.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Denise P. Messick, National Register Historian  
organization Historic Preservation Division, GA Dept. of Natural Resources date May 2016  
street & number 2610 Georgia Highway 155, SW telephone 77-389-7844  
city or town Stockbridge state GA zip code 30281  
e-mail denise.messick@dnr.ga.gov

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)



Locust Grove Historic District  
Name of Property

Henry County, Georgia  
County and State

---

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Locust Grove Historic District

City or Vicinity: Locust Grove

County: Henry

State: Georgia

Photographer: Charlie Miller, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

Date Photographed: November 3, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 39. 3831-3840 Highway 42 (US 23); photographer facing northwest.
- 2 of 39. 3846-3848 Highway 42; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 3 of 39. 3918 Highway 42; photographer facing west/northwest.
- 4 of 39. Train viewing platform between Highway 42 and railroad tracks; photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 39. Cast iron column on 3840 Highway 42; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 6 of 39. Tile outside entry of 3840 Highway 42; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 7 of 39. Façade of 3840 Highway 42; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 8 of 39. 3841-3844 Highway 42; photographer facing southwest.
- 9 of 39. 3831-3836 Highway 42; photographer facing northwest.
- 10 of 38. Former Locust Grove Institute Academic Building (now city hall); photographer facing southwest.
- 11 of 39. 3590 Highway 42; photographer facing northwest.
- 12 of 39. Locust Grove Baptist Church; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 13 of 39. City Cemetery; photographer facing west.
- 14 of 39. City Cemetery; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 15 of 39. Shoal Creek Baptist Church; photographer facing west.
- 16 of 39. Shoal Creek Cemetery; photographer facing southwest.
- 17 of 39. Shoal Creek Cemetery; photographer facing northwest.
- 18 of 39. Locust Grove Elementary School; photographer facing west.
- 19 of 39. 87 Roberts Road; photographer facing northeast.

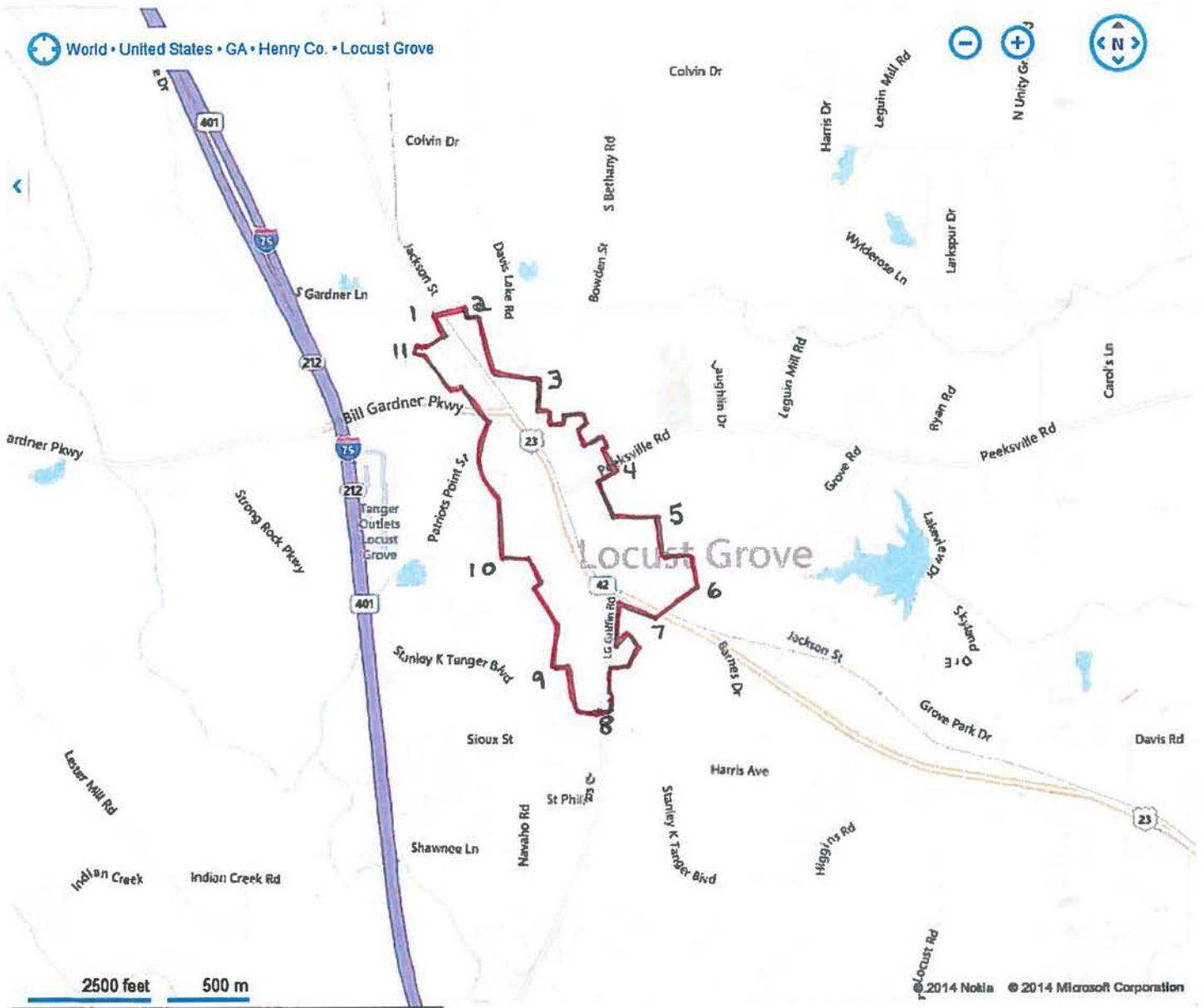
Locust Grove Historic District  
Name of Property

Henry County, Georgia  
County and State

- 20 of 39. Former Locust Grove Methodist Episcopal Church, 60 Ridge Street; photographer facing west/southwest.
- 21 of 39. Field in front of Brown Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 22 of 39. 281 North Jackson Street; photographer facing east/northeast.
- 23 of 39. 377 North Jackson Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 24 of 39. 70 Bethany Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 25 of 39. 527 North Jackson Street; photographer facing southeast.
- 26 of 39. Field at South Davis Lake Road; photographer facing west.
- 27 of 39. Woman's Club, 74 Club Drive; photographer facing southeast.
- 28 of 39. 95 Peeksville Road; photographer facing north/northwest.
- 29 of 39. 63 Peeksville Road; photographer facing north/northwest.
- 30 of 39. 37 Peeksville Road; photographer facing northwest.
- 31 of 39. 747 Highway 42; photographer facing northeast.
- 32 of 39. 863 Jackson Street; photographer facing north/northeast.
- 33 of 39. 960 Highway 42; photographer facing north.
- 34 of 39. 122 Cleveland Street; photographer facing west.
- 35 of 39. Rear of 170 Cleveland Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 36 of 39. 276 Ridge Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 37 of 39. 276 Shoal Creek Road; photographer facing north.
- 38 of 39. 27 Ridge Street; photographer facing east.
- 39 of 39. 250 Cleveland Street; photographer facing north/northwest.

**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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



**Locust Grove Historic District**  
Henry County, Georgia

1. Latitude: 33.359577	Longitude: -84.118833
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10. Latitude: 33.344875	Longitude: -84.114169
11. Latitude: 33.356987	Longitude: -84.119251









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Small white sign with illegible text.

Small white sign with illegible text.







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A photograph of a tiled floor in front of a yellow door. The floor is composed of small, light-colored hexagonal tiles. A decorative border of black and white Greek key tiles runs along the edges of the floor. In the center of the floor, the name "J.L. GARDNER" is spelled out in large, black, block letters. The letters are filled with a grid pattern of small white tiles. The door is yellow with two dark rectangular panels. The walls are white with vertical wood paneling. There are some small pieces of debris on the floor, including a pink flower petal and a brown leaf.

J.L. GARDNER









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IN MEMORY OF  
JAMES  
B. GOMES  
Born Aug. 10, 1850  
Died Oct. 10, 1910

IN MEMORY OF  
C. F. CRIGGS  
Born Aug. 10, 1850  
Died Oct. 10, 1910

KNOTT

WALKER

MOTHER

SMITH

SMITH





DICKSON  
AUG. 9, 1877  
OCT. 30, 1911

**DICKSON**

PRICE

PRICE

FATHER  
WILLIAM JEFFERSON  
1857 — 1930

MOTHER  
LILLA WALKER  
1862 — 1925

**COMBS**

**COMBS**

WM PALMER GAILLARD  
DEC. 22, 1879  
APR. 13, 1955

M. HESTER COMBS  
GAILLARD  
AUG. 3, 1891  
SEPT. 9, 1973

MARGARET GAILLARD  
HOLMES  
NOV. 22, 1918  
FEB. 5, 1973





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TUES & THURS  
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WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914  
REST HERE AT THE FEET OF THE CROSS

WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914

WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914

WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914

WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914

WILLIAM BROWN  
1845  
OCT 13 1914





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*Christian Growth Center*



Pastor, Roger Aikens  
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It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.  
Ephesians 2:8-9

Sunday 10:00 A.M.  
Wednesday 7:15 P.M.

























CITY OF  
LOCUST GROVE





64











63









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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Locust Grove Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: GEORGIA, Henry

DATE RECEIVED: 6/03/16      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/27/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/12/16      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/19/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000451

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    7-18-16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION

MARK WILLIAMS  
COMMISSIONER

May 31, 2016

J. Paul Loether  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, N.W. 8th floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

DR. DAVID CRASS  
DIVISION DIRECTOR  
**RECEIVED 2280**  
REC JUN - 3 2016 280  
Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for **Locust Grove Historic District in Henry County, Georgia** to the National Register of Historic Places.

- Disk of National Register of Historic Places nomination form and maps as a pdf
- Disk with digital photo images
- Physical signature page
- Original USGS topographic map(s)
- Sketch map(s)/attachment(s)
- Correspondence
- Other: Letters of support

COMMENTS:

- Please insure that this nomination is reviewed
- This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ constitute a majority of property owners.
- Special considerations:

Sincerely,



Lynn Speno  
National Register Specialist

Enclosures