

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet ROLATOR PARK, CAVE SPRING Item number

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ROLATOR PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

Name: Rolator Park Historic District, Cave Spring, Floyd County, Georgia

Location:

An irregularly shaped tract situated south of Padlock Street, east of Cedartown Road and southeast of Little Cedar Creek, encompassing floodplain and hillside.

Acreage: 27 acres, approximately

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

The boundary of the Rolator Park Historic District is identified and described by a heavy black line on the attached map of the Cave Spring multiple-resource area. This boundary corresponds to the legal description of the property donated to the city in the 1930s for use as a public park. It also circumscribes the various natural, architectural, landscape architectural, and historical features that give the district its significance.

UTM Reference:

I	Zone 16	E653750	N3775260
J	Zone 16	E653625	N3774260
K	Zone 16	E653320	N3774890

Description:

The Rolator Park Historic District consists of a relatively large public park and preserve in the southeast part of the city. The district contains landscaped grounds and natural terrain, a cave and a spring, and a pond and swimming pool. The landscaped grounds extend along the floodplain between Little Cedar Creek and the spring; they consist of large hardwood and softwood trees, broad lawns, and paths and drives arranged in a casual manner. The natural terrain consists of wooded hillside to the southeast. The spring emanates from a cave at the edge of the hills and has been emphasized by a small, medieval-looking stonemasonry springhouse. The pond and swimming pool have been created adjacent to the spring; the former is very natural looking and the latter rather artificial. Also in the district are several buildings associated

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with Hearn Academy. They include an early-twentieth-century wood-framed Neoclassical classroom building, an early-twentieth-century wood-framed Neoclassical dormitory, and a simple mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival brick church. These buildings are free-standing and clustered together on the floodplain between the spring and Little Cedar Creek.

Significance:

Architecture. The Rolator Park Historic District is significant in terms of architecture because of its collection of disparate structures that are related by a series of events that took place over more than a century and that have given the district its present character and appearance. Oldest among them is the Baptist church, dating from 1851; it is an exceptionally fine example of the Greek Revival style, executed in brick and wood, applied to a religious building. Nearby are the two turn-of-the-century, wood-dramed, Neoclassical buildings, more or less facing each other, that are associated with the Hearn Academy; the classroom building has a functional simplicity about it, while the dormitory appropriately resembles a large house. More recent is the W.P.A. springhouse, whose rough stonemasonry walls and irregular form are reflective of the interest in the "picturesque" and the "rustic" for park architecture of the early-twentieth century.

Landscape Architecture. The Rolator Park Historic District is significant in terms of landscape architecture because it constitutes the largest public park and preserve in the city, and because of the way in which informal landscaping and the natural terrain combine to create a distinct park-preserve environment. The park is also related to the city's central historic institutions and is associated with an act of private philanthropy that gave the city this extraordinary asset.

Education. The Rolator Park Historic District is significant as the site of the first school organized in Cave Spring. Hearn Academy (originally Cave Spring Manual Labor School, and later Hearn Manual Labor School) was organized in 1838 and occupied the site until 1926, when the provision of a state-supported school in 1922 caused a decline in enrollment in private schools and academies. Two buildings that were associated with Hearn Academy are still standing in the park area. The park includes the only remaining intact acreage that was associated with the educational institution. Hearn Academy was typical of the educational institutions that were organized during the antebellum period of Georgia. The town of Cave Spring developed as a result of the establishment of Hearn Academy and other schools.

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Religion. The Rolator Park Historic District is significant as it was the site of the first school built in Cave Spring by a religious institution. The Baptist church in Cave Spring organized Hearn Academy (originally Cave Spring Manual Labor School, and later Hearn Manual Labor School) in 1838 and purchased 680 acres on which to establish the school. The only intact acreage associated with that venture is now known as Rolator Park. The first structure to be built by the Baptist church as its place of worship is also located in Rolator Park. This brick church building was built in 1851 near the Hearn Academy and served as the meeting place for the Baptists for many years.

Property Owner:

City of Cave Spring
City Hall
Cave Spring, GA 30124