

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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received

AUG 7 1985

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National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic

and/or common Bowersville Historic District

2. Location

street & number Along East and West Main Streets

N/A not for publication

city, town Bowersville

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia

code 013

county Hart

code 147

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Owners. (Fewer than 50)

street & number

city, town

vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Hart County Courthouse

city, town Hartwell

state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Structures Field Survey:
Hart County

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date n.d.

federal state county local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta

state Georgia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Bowersville Historic District includes the historic residential and commercial resources in the small town of Bowersville. The community is laid out in a linear manner along both sides of the railroad track which follows a prominent ridge line through the area. Flanking the railroad are sixty-foot, park-like rights-of-ways which run the length of the town. The principal streets in the district are East and West Main Streets which parallel the tracks on either side. A simple gridiron is established by a few cross streets. Lots, which are primarily rectangular, vary considerably in size with the largest located near the edge of the district. Commercial structures are located on both sides of the railroad at the center of the district; residences spread out to the north and south facing the tracks. Structures date from the late 19th and early 20th centuries with none built after 1925. Commercial buildings include a row of four one-story stores with party walls built between 1908 and 1910; a two-story store with a meeting hall used as a Masonic Lodge on the second story and an attached one-story store (1889-1907); and two warehouses in the right-of-way, one historically used for storing cotton, the other cotton hulls. With the exception of the wood-framed hull house, these are all load-bearing brick structures. The stores are detailed with simple brick corbeling at the cornice, sign plates, and intact storefronts. Residences are constructed of wood which is used both structurally and decoratively. They are primarily modest one-story residences with prominent front porches. The most elaborate have Victorian Eclectic detailing including gable ends trimmed with decorative shingles, porches trimmed with turned, chamfered, or classical columns, sawnwork brackets, and spindle friezes, and, in one instance, a sunburst design in a porch-roof pediment. The simplest houses, frequently with gable roofs and "L"- or "T"- shaped plans, have no detailing except for attic vents placed in gable ends.

Landscaping is very informal. Individual front yards are planted with grass, shade trees, and limited amounts of shrubbery. The Cannon House located at the corner of West Main Street and Schaefer Street is set far back from the street and is surrounded by a 1920s pecan grove. A few street trees are scattered throughout the district. The broad open space of the railroad right-of-way creates a park-like center to the town. The district is extremely intact and contains only four non-contributing structures: two mobile homes, a brick ranch house, and a small concrete block building.

Boundary: The boundary of the district, outlined with a heavy black line on the enclosed maps, encompasses the intact contiguous historic properties in Bowersville. Most of the remaining historic commercial and residential resources in the town are included in the district. Non-historic buildings and farmland surround the district in all directions.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1878 - 1925 **Builder/Architect** Multiple

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Bowersville Historic District is historically significant in terms of community planning and development, transportation, architecture, landscape architecture, and commerce. These areas of significance support National Register eligibility under National Register criteria A, B, and C.

In terms of community planning and development and transportation, Bowersville is significant as an example of a Georgia town laid out as a speculative venture in conjunction with the arrival of the railroad. Its small size is representative of numerous railroad communities around the state which developed as local cotton shipping centers at a time when the railroad provided by far the most satisfactory means for transporting goods to market. Bowersville is significant, too, for its historic town plan that survives intact today. Its linear plan that stretches out along the railroad tracks and the broad swath of open land through the center of the community formed by the railroad right-of-way are typical of many such railroad towns.

Bowersville owes its existence to the Elberton Air Line Railroad, completed through what is now the community in 1879. In 1878, William F. Bowers (1825-1905), farmer, merchant, Baptist minister, state senator, and publisher, capitalized on the planned route of the railroad through his land and had the town laid out. The post office from nearby "Bowersville Post Office," located at the home of William Bowers' father, Job Bowers, was transferred to the new community. A depot was constructed in 1879. Lots were sold to merchants who established cotton and fertilizer businesses and several general stores. Houses were built facing the tracks on both sides of the centrally situated commercial areas. In 1881, the railroad was deeded sixty feet on either side of the tracks as a right-of-way. In 1883, the growing town was chartered. The town continued to develop and prosper in its small way through the first quarter of the twentieth century. Its population increased from 275 in 1890 to an all time high of 398 in 1910. The boll weevil, followed by a great drought in 1925, resulted in a drastic decline in Bowersville's cotton economy and an end to the town's growth. Today the town remains much as it did in 1925 except for the loss of two depots and a hotel and the construction of a few new homes and churches.

In terms of landscape architecture, the district is significant for its typical informal late 19th- and early 20th-century residential landscaping which documents landscaping practices nationwide of this period. Individual front yards are planted with grass, shrubs, and shade trees that merge together to create a park-like environment. One house is surrounded by a grove of pecan trees, a common early 20th-century landscaping element in small rural communities in Georgia. In addition, the district is significant in terms of landscape architecture for its siting along a prominent ridge and for its wide stretch of open land forming the railroad right-of-way that so strongly affects the visual character of the town.

Architecturally, the Bowersville Historic District is significant for providing representative small-town examples of modest late 19th- and early 20th- century

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jaeger, Dale. "Historic District Information Form: Town of Bowersville Historic District". March, 1984. On file at Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Ga.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property Approximately 35 acres

Quadrangle name (1)Lavonia, GA - S.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References (2)Royston, GA

A

1	7	3	0	8	8	2	0	3	8	0	5	5	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	7	3	0	8	3	2	0	3	8	0	4	8	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	7	3	0	8	0	9	0	3	8	0	4	8	1	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	7	3	0	8	2	8	0	3	8	0	5	6	1	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary, outlined with a heavy black line on the enclosed maps, is described and justified in Section 7.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

(1) Carolyn Brooks, National Register Researcher

name/title (2) Dale Jaeger

(1) Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources

organization (2) Jaeger and Associates

date 7-22-85

(1) 270 Washington Street SW

(1) 404/656-2840

street & number (2) P.O. Box 1526

telephone (2) 404/536-4610

(1) Atlanta

city or town (2) Gainesville

state Georgia (1) 30334
(2) 30503

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/25/85

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register

date

9/5/85

for *Delores Byer*
Keeper of the National Register

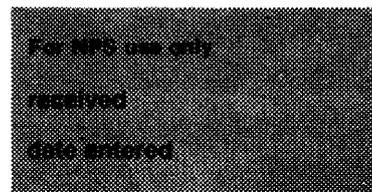
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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



Continuation sheet Significance Item number 8 Page 2

residential and commercial structures in northeast Georgia. These illustrate typical building materials, technologies, types, and styles of the period. The residences are typical examples of late Victorian houses, some with modest Victorian Eclectic detailing. All are wood-framed with front porches and gable or hipped roofs often pierced with intersecting gables; the majority are one story. Detailing such as vents and/or decorative shinglework in gable ends, and in one instance a sunburst design, and porch finishes which include sawnwork brackets, turned, chamfered, and classical columns, and spindlework friezes are common. Bowersville's equally modest commercial buildings document small-town stores, banks, and warehouses. The corbeled cornices and sign plates of the brick store buildings are typical features. Their intact storefronts, found more and more infrequently, add to their importance as good examples of building types. The brick and wood-framed warehouses increase the variety of commercial building types represented in the district.

In terms of commerce, the district is significant for containing the historic commercial center of Bowersville which served the town and the surrounding countryside as a provider of basic retailing, banking, and professional services. The town's two extant warehouses, one for the storage of cotton, the other for cotton hulls, a cotton by-product, document the main function of the town as one of Georgia's many small agricultural marketing and shipping centers.

BOWERSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT
Bowersville, Hart County, Georgia

DISTRICT MAP

Source: Georgia Mountains Planning and
Development Commission Map

Date: 1978

Scale: 1" = 400'

North: ↑

District Boundary: 

Contributing Properties: 

Intrusions: 

RD 

