1. NAME

COMMON:
Propst House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Shuford Memorial Garden

CITY OR TOWN:
Hickory (Tenth Congressional District, The Hon. James Broyhill)

STATE:
North Carolina

COUNTY:
Catawba

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY OWNERSHIP (Check One)

Public Site
Private Structure
Both

OWNERSHIP:

Public Acquisition:
In Process
Being Considered

STATUS:
Occupied
Unoccupied
Preservation work in progress

ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC:
Yes:
Restricted
Unrestricted
No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural
Government
Park
Transportation
Comments

Commercial
Industrial
Private Residence
Other (Specify)

Education
Military
Religious
Scientific

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Hickory Landmarks Society, Inc.

STREET AND NUMBER:
P. O. Box 2341

CITY OR TOWN:
Hickory

STATE:
North Carolina

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Catawba County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Newton

STATE:
North Carolina

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

For NPS use only
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE:

North Carolina
Catawba

035
The Propst House is a story-and-a-half mansard-roof frame cottage with a mansard tower and interesting wooden ornament. The building presents an asymmetrical appearance; however, it is basically a center-hall plan, two rooms deep on the east and one room deep on the west. All three rooms are relatively similar in size but the west room is set back about midway along the hall, creating a "T"-shaped plan. A square tower rises two-and-one-half stories at the front of the hall in the right angle of the "T". The south (main) entrance is placed in the tower wall as is a second entrance located in the west wall of the tower. (Both doors open into the hall.). A shed porch begins above the main entrance and follows the angles of the house across the west portion of the main facade. The plain frieze of the porch roof is supported by paired, chamfered posts, each broken by a molded band in the upper portion. A scroll sawn balustrade forms an attractive, patterned boundary for the porch. Each of the three first floor rooms has a projecting bay. The room at the base of the "T" (west room) has a three-sided bay with one window of four-over-four sash in each plane. The south arm of the "T" plan has a rectangular projecting bay with similar, but double windows in the south plane only. The other room has a projecting bay on its east side quite like the west room. Each of the projecting bays has a bracketed frieze similar to that which carries around the house just below the slightly concave mansard roof. The remaining windows of the first floor have four-over-four sash, and frames with triangular-arched heads.

Patterned shingles cover the concave mansard roof, which is surmounted by a heavy, plain molded cornice. Piercing the roof are large gable dormers containing segmental-arched windows and ornamented sawn scroll work. At the second level of the tower, on each of the two exposed faces, is a tall round-headed window with a wide surround terminating in a gabled hood. As the tower breaks free above the roof line its ornamentation increases. Just beneath the bracketed cornice of the mansard roof are large quarter fans in each corner of the visible faces of the tower. The fans have large leaves, rounded on their outer edges, with a large hole piercing the tip of each leaf. Each side of the mansard roof of the tower (also concave with a molded cornice) has one round-headed dormer window with a similar surround terminating in a rounded hood.

The interior finish of the house features late Victorian symmetrically molded architraves, with large corner blocks accented by small roundels. A wainscot of narrow beaded vertical sheathing is found in the hall and southeast rooms. An open-string stair with wave-pattern brackets, molded hand rail, turned balusters and newel rises from near the rear hall door in an unbroken ascent. The elaborate late Victorian mantels may have been embellished by the builder, Propst, who was a carpenter. The mantel in the southeast room has wide, carved pilasters with paired brackets supporting a heavy shelf and four small raised panels in the frieze below. The overmantel has small raised panels flanking a large central one; four small fluted pilasters divide the panels. Shelves behind bands of spindlework on either side and above the central panel are joined by an arch across the top with carved fans in the spandrels. The mantel terminates in a ramped upper element featuring carved fans and a diamond-shaped cartouche in the frieze. Various geometric patterns and floral designs have been incised on
7. The entire mantel. The west room has a more delicate mantel, similar in form to the southeast room, but quite different in detail. Paired engaged turned posts support brackets which in turn carry an unadorned shelf. The frieze has a square center tablet with leaves radiating from a small boss or roundel. A graceful vine pattern springing from each edge of the center tablet is incised on the frieze. The overmantel has a small, beveled-edge mirror in the center with vertically gouged panels on each side. Shelves with spindle courses separate the upper and lower gouged panels. Carved fans and other ornament appear above the mirror. The mantel in the northeast room is plainer with a mirrored overmantel. The arches framing the projecting bays of the two parlors feature elaborate spindle and sawn scroll work. The second floor repeats the plan of the first but lacks the elaborate detail.
The Propst House is a handsome Second Empire-style cottage embellished by elaborate wooden ornament thought to have been executed by its first owner, a carpenter. It is one of the most architecturally interesting buildings in Hickory, and apparently the only example of its style. The purchase and planned restoration of the house by the Hickory Landmarks Society, Inc., has been a preservation effort of considerable local importance.

J. Summie Propst, contractor-carpenter, built his Second Empire cottage at 1819 Tenth Avenue (later renamed 723 Main Avenue, S.W.) shortly after he purchased the lot from Robert P. Dakin and his wife, A. B. Dakin, on October 17, 1881. Mr. Propst was recognized locally for his ability as a cabinetmaker; examples of his work exist in several Lutheran Churches of the area as well as in his own home. The Propst House is said to have been a favorite gathering place for friends to go for a social hour and singing after church services. Propst, in addition to his active participation in the religious affairs of his community, also figured prominently in municipal affairs. He is especially remembered for his prohibitionist stand while serving as a member of the Hickory Board of Aldermen.

Propst, who had no children, sold his house to Noah G. and Alda S. Deal, on November 22, 1937, with the restriction that the transaction not be consummated until his death, which occurred on June 15, 1940. The house became the "homeplace" for Noah G. and Alda S. Deal until their deaths; then, by the terms of their will, a daughter, Metta Deal, inherited the house, built by her uncle, J. Summie Propst. On April 10, 1968, the Hickory Landmarks Society, Inc. (formed to save the Propst House) purchased the house, which was falling into disrepair and faced destruction, from Miss Deal and moved it to its present location in city-owned, Shuford Memorial Gardens. Restoration is underway, directed by architect Philippe Gilissen and Hickory Landmarks Society. Miss Metta Deal and Mrs. J. E. Gregory donated furniture remaining in the house as a memorial to their mother, Mrs. Alda Deal.
### Geographic Data

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<th>Corner</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
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<td>81° 22' 45&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1 acre **

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>County:</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Form Prepared By

**Name and Title:**
Survey and Planning Unit

Office of Archives and History

**Street and Number:**
109 East Jones Street

**City or Town:**
Raleigh

**State:** North Carolina  **Code:** 37

### State Liaison Officer Certification

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

- [ ] National
- [ ] State
- [x] Local

**Date:** 6 February 1973

**Name:** H. G. Jones

**Title:** State Historian/Administrator

**Date:** 6 February 1973

### National Register Verification

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

**Chief, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation**

**Date:**

**ATTEST:**

**Keeper of The National Register**

**Date:**
Propst House
Shuford Memorial Garden
Hickory, North Carolina

State Highway Commission Map of Catawba County:
Enlarged Municipal Areas, Hickory
Scale: 2" : 1 mile
January 1, 1962