

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR THEMATIC NOMINATION

1 NAME

HISTORIC Junior Order United American Mechanics National Orphans Home

AND/OR COMMON

Junior Order Home The American Children's Home

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER W side NC 8 1 mile N of jct. with SR 1272

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN Lexington

VICINITY OF

STATE

N.C.

CODE
037

COUNTY
Davidson

CODE
057

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input 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
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Ray Mims, Superintendent
Michelle DeLapp, Assistant Director

STREET & NUMBER
American Children Home, Route 8

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 27292

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Davidson County Courthouse
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

North Carolina

6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ruth Little, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Survey and Planning Branch

DATE

August 19, 1983

STREET & NUMBER

Archives and History

TELEPHONE

919/733-6545

CITY OR TOWN

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina 27611

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The campus of the Junior Order United American Mechanics National Orphans Home, located on a lovely 300-acre tract of rolling farmland just south of Lexington, is an ambitious complex of five major buildings built between 1925 and 1932. The buildings are laid out around a rectangular quadrangle, based loosely on the University of Virginia campus as designed by Thomas Jefferson, a concept also reflected in the Colonial Revival style of the individual buildings. The Administration Building, the first structure to be completed, is located at the east end of the quadrangle on a slight knoll, forming the focal point of the east-west axis. The campus is reached by a circular driveway on the west side of NC 8 which provides access to the east (rear) elevation of the Administration Building. Three dormitories and an auditorium form the north and south sides of the quadrangle; the west end is open with a view of the meadows and service buildings in the distance.

The Administration Building, completed in 1927, is a Colonial Revival style structure with a three-story center block with pedimented porticos flanked by long arcaded one-story wings and is finished with fine quality materials and craftsmanship. The main block, seven bays wide and three bays deep, faces the quadrangle to the south and is connected to the paved sidewalk around the quad by three flights of wide steps with two landings. A full-size Ionic quatrastyle portico, with a clock centered in the pediment, projects from the main facade. The rear elevation has an identical portico. The columns are constructed of limestone, the floor of slate, and the pediment of wood. At the second story level is a wide wooden entablature surmounted by an attic with a hipped slate roof. On the north and south sides of the main block is a pedimented pavilion, with windows with decorative iron grills. These pavilions balance the porticos and provide a transition into the wings, twelve bays in width, which are arcaded on the main elevation and fenestrated on the rear elevation. The walls are laid in Flemish bond brick on a concrete foundation, with twelve-over-twelve sash in the first story and eight-over-eight in the second story and attic. The windows are set in wide wooden surrounds, and brick flat arches with stone keystones surmount the openings. In the center bay of the front and rear elevations is an imposing entrance. Each is a trabeated stone surround with flanking pilasters and stained glass transom containing the emblem of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics executed in stained glass. The design consists of a man's arm holding a mallet inside the Masonic compass and carpenter's rule flanked by American flags. Each entrance has replacement plate glass doors. The interior of the main block has a cruciform plan, with wide hallways intersecting in the central rotunda. In the richly colored terrazzo of the floor is the same JOUAM emblem, executed in terrazzo.

The three dormitories, the Pennsylvania Building ("Pioneer Cottage") on the south flank of the quadrangle, the South Carolina Building (now the Children's Emergency Shelter) at the northwest corner, and the North Carolina Building on the north flank, were built between 1927 and 1929. All three are quite similar in detailing to the Administration Building, but have domestic massing in contrast to its institutional design. Each is a long two-story brick Colonial Revival style building articulated by projecting pedimented pavilions and attic dormer windows.

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The last major building on the campus, the Samuel F. Vance Auditorium, completed in 1932, is located on the south side of the quadrangle between the Administration Building and the South Carolina Building. Although smaller than the main building, its Neo-Classical design gives it more monumentality than the Colonial Revival style of the main building. The two-story main block, set on a raised basement, has a quatrastyle pedimented portico with large stone Doric columns reached by a wide ascending staircase of three flights with two landings. Three stone entrances with double wooden doors open to the lobby. Flanking arcaded wings, seven bays in width, contain classrooms. The main block extends seven bays to the south to accommodate the auditorium. A two-story rectangular rear wing with pedimented Doric entrance porticos on the east and west gable ends contains the gymnasium and swimming pool. The Auditorium is finished in the same fine quality brick, stone and wooden materials as the earlier campus buildings.

The service buildings (including a brick power plant, brick laundry building, brick "farmer's cottage," and engineer's cottage) and a large feed barn and dairy are located at the far west end of the campus. These were completed by 1930 and have the same expensive materials and workmanship but have functional designs.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

NATIONAL _____ STATE _____ LOCAL

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1925-1929 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Herbert Hunter

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Junior Order United American Mechanics National Orphans Home, known locally as the Junior Order Home, is a complex of Colonial Revival style brick buildings built between 1925 and 1932 on a 300-acre campus south of Lexington. The most ambitious public building project in Davidson County prior to the 1970s, the Home is a landmark to the public spirit and foresight of Lexington citizens in the 1920s. The quadrangle plan, based on Jefferson's concept for the University of Virginia campus, was designed by Herbert Hunter of High Point. Under a project begun in 1972, the buildings are being carefully restored to their original beauty, and the Home continues to be operated by the North Carolina Council of the Junior Order, although the emphasis has shifted from the original full-time residential care to placement services and community outreach.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. Derives its primary significance from the historical achievement of the state chapter of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics, under whose leadership the second orphanage of the national order was established and prospered in Lexington, North Carolina from 1928 to the 1940s.
- C. Architecturally significant as the most ambitious public building project in Davidson County prior to the 1970s.

At the national convention of the Junior Order of United American Mechanics in 1923, the North Carolina delegation gave \$250,000 to establish a branch of the National Junior Order Orphans Home in North Carolina. The citizens of Lexington raised \$35,000 to purchase the 300-acre R. A. Taylor farm, three miles south of the city, for the home.¹ The property was deeded to the National Council of the JOUAM on January 16, 1924.² The JOUAM, a patriotic fraternity, was founded in Philadelphia in 1853. Among the pledges in the foundation charter of the order were declarations "against foreign combination and foreign competition to American labor," and to "beware of foreign influences," indicating that the organization functioned as an early labor union. The North Carolina chapter was organized in 1892, coinciding with the industrial renaissance in the state following the postbellum depression. The strength of the JOUAM among Lexington citizenry was probably related to Lexington's prominent position as a center of textile and furniture manufacturing. By 1929 there were thirty state orders throughout the country.

The North Carolina Orphans Home in Lexington was the second orphanage established by the national order. The first, the Home at Tiffin, Ohio was begun in 1896, and by 1929 it had 1,035 children on an 850-acre campus.³ Both homes followed prevailing philosophy on foster care, with children housed in "cottages," and an emphasis on vocational education. Both orphanages were financed by contributions from various state chapters, and individual structures were named for the states which capitalized them.⁴

With J. W. Stout & Company of Sanford as the contractors, the cornerstone of the first structure, the Administration Building, was laid in 1925 with completion of the structure on June 4, 1927.⁵ In the latter year, the first two dormitories, the Pennsylvania Building (also known as the "Pioneer Cottage") and the South Carolina Building (now the Children's Emergency Shelter) were also completed.⁶ The first dozen children arrived in 1928, and by 1929 the home had about 140 orphans in residence.⁷ The fourth major structure, the North Carolina Building, another dormitory, was constructed by Goode Construction Company of Charlotte in 1929. Between 1927 and 1929 most of the service buildings were completed. These included the power plant, a brick laundry building, a large feed barn and dairy, a "farmer's cottage," and an engineer's cottage.⁸ The last major unit in the complex, the Samuel F. Vance Auditorium, which included a gymnasium and swimming pool, was built in 1932.⁹

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 225 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	5 6 6 7 0 0	5 9 5 7 1 5 0	B	1 7	5 6 6 6 1 0	3 9 5 8 3 9 0
	ZONE EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE EASTING	NORTHING		
C	1 7	5 6 3 5 3 0	3 9 5 8 2 4 5	D	1 7	5 6 4 5 5 0	3 9 5 7 1 2 0

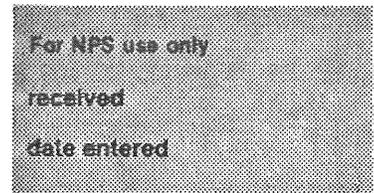
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That part of Map 8, Davidson County Tax Office, contained in Lot 8, bounded on the north by Map 8A and Lots 25, 3 and 4, on the east by NC 8, on the south by SR 1130, and on the west by Lot 1, as outlined in red on map.

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In the 1930s, a large farm was put into production, supplying the needs of the Home and giving the boys practical training. Boys were trained in the dairy and print shop, and girls learned household, nursing and library skills. All education was provided in the Home during the early years of operation; later the children were sent to Davidson County public schools. By 1939, with 250 children in residence, all dormitory space was full and the Junior Order Home had reached the height of its growth. In 1940 the North Carolina Council took over control of the home from the National Council, and still owns and governs the home.¹⁰

The growth, decline, and redirection of the Junior Order Home throughout the course of the twentieth century has paralleled national trends. Between the 1940s and 1970s, enrollment at the Home dwindled as the psychology for treatment of orphans and foster children changed from a long-term institutional emphasis to an emphasis on permanent adoption by individual families. In the early 1970s the buildings reached a low state of repair; but in the past decade the program has been revitalized by redirection toward temporary foster care and community outreach and the entire campus is being carefully restored to its original condition. The Junior Order Home is still a vital institution in the foster care program in Davidson County.

Footnotes

¹"An Achievement of The North Carolina Juniors," Junior Order United American Mechanics History (Western Section-North Carolina, 1929), pp. 55-67.

²Davidson County Deed Book 96, page 44, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, N.C.

³"A Short History of the Junior Order United American Mechanics," Junior Order United American Mechanics History, 1929, pp. 4-21.

⁴"What The Junior Home Stands For," Junior Order United American Mechanics History, 1929, pp. 8-31.

⁵"An Achievement of The North Carolina Juniors."

⁶"Duke Endowment Report," 1982, prepared annually by the Junior Order United American Mechanics Children's Home, Inc. Copy on file at JOUAM Home.

⁷"An Achievement of The North Carolina Juniors."

⁸Ibid.

⁹"Duke Endowment Report," 1982.

¹⁰M. Jewell Sink and Mary Green Matthews, Pathfinders Past and Present: A History of Davidson County, North Carolina (1972), pp. 170-171.

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"Duke Endowment Report," 1982. Prepared annually by the Junior Order United American Mechanics Children's Home, Inc. Copy on file at JOUAM Home, Lexington, North Carolina.

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Sink, M. Jewell, and Matthews, Mary Green. Pathfinders Past and Present: A History of Davidson County, North Carolina (1972).

