

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 5300 West Wendover Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town High Point N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Guilford code 081 zip code 28601

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J. Cross, Acting SHPO 10/30/95
Signature of Certifying Official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery
Name of Property

Guilford Co., NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1		sites
	1	structures
21	2	objects
23	4	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery
RELIGION/church-related residence

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery
RELIGION/church-related residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets.

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1803-1945

Significant Dates

1875

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sechrest, Samuel, head bricklayer
Church, Henry & Gossett, George T., brickmakers
Mr. Crouch, head carpenter
Jackson, Dave, laborer

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Deep River Friends Meeting

Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery
Name of Property

Guilford Co., NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 20.25 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	5 9 3 2 4 0	3 9 8 7 9 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 7	5 9 3 5 4 0	3 9 8 7 9 0 0

3	1 7	5 9 3 1 6 0	3 9 8 7 4 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 7	5 9 2 9 6 0	3 9 8 7 6 2 0

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Langdon Edmunds Oppermann

organization Preservation Planner date July 1995

street & number 1500 Overbrook Avenue telephone 910/721-1949

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Narrative Description

The Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery is a substantial landmark in Guilford County. Although built as a country church in this area of gently rolling hills, its present situation is surrounded by a rapidly-urbanizing area of High Point. The property is located on a slight rise in a triangle of land between NC Highway 68, bustling four-lane Wendover Avenue, and Penny Road. Visible from the south, east, and north, the building faces east. From Penny Road a drive passes through a lawn in front of the meeting house; north of the drive is the Friends cemetery which dates from the 1750s and contains graves and commemorative markers from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. No longer standing are the first meeting house, a ca. 1750 school (their sites are denoted by commemorative markers), an 1828 school across Penny Road from the nominated property, an 1857-1858 school near the northeast corner of the graveyard, and a 1926 log structure built south of the meeting house to serve as a Sunday School. Behind the meeting house today are a series of brick additions, a paved parking lot, an open pavilion built of logs, and the 1947 parsonage. The property is buffered from the busy modern roadways by lawns to the south and east, and by woods to the north and west.

The exterior of Deep River's meeting house retains its architectural integrity from its construction in 1875. Although the interior has been significantly remodeled, the exterior of the meeting house is remarkably unaltered and in good repair. The cemetery, with the nineteenth-century alterations reflecting its Quaker heritage and changes from a WPA-assisted clean-up, retains a high level of historical integrity from the period of significance and is kept in good condition.

A. Meeting House.**Contributing building. 1874-1875.****EXTERIOR**

A handsome brick building with simple Italianate details, the Deep River Meeting House was erected in 1874 and 1875 and its first service held in November of 1875. The designer of the building is not known, but several who made and laid the bricks and worked on actual construction are known from minutes and written recollections of former members. The meeting house is a rectangular brick building with brick foundation and composition shingle gable roof. The front (east) gable end of the meeting house is three bays wide with symmetrical facade. At the central entrance is a double-leaf front door beneath a raised brick hood mold. The door was recessed when a replacement door was installed recently. Twentieth-century concrete steps and metal railings lead to the front entrance. Centered high above the door is a plaque with the date, "1875." Side elevations are five bays wide with an entrance at the westernmost bay.

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A number of features typically associated with the Italianate style characterize this building, although their use is greatly simplified. In plan, the Deep River Meeting House more closely follows the Greek Revival style than the typical box-shape often associated with Italianate buildings; however, its brick construction and simplified Italianate detailing are notable stylistic hallmarks. The restrained ornamentation found on the building is focused on the building's fenestration. One of the few decorative elements of the meeting house are the raised brick hood molds above windows and doors.

Windows are tall and narrow with segmental arches typical of the Italianate style. Although most Italianate buildings have one- or two-pane glazing, Deep River has the more traditional, less up-to-date six-over-six sash. Today's congregation keeps the two-part, louvered wood shutters closed when the house is not in use; this has been the custom since a request of the Monthly Meeting in 1910.¹ As is generally found in Italianate designs, a small, segmental-arched window with louvered wood screen is centered in the upper gable end.

Another decorative element of the building's construction is its brick bond. It is laid in five-to-one common bond; the usual header rows are replaced by rows of Flemish bond. Earthquake bolts extend from north to south and east to west with bolt escutcheons near the corners. The building has been repointed in recent years with tinted mortar.

When built, Deep River Meeting House had at least one chimney at the rear (west) gable end, shown in a 1906 photograph. This was removed many years ago. Today, a later corbelled brick interior chimney projects from near the ridge line at the east (front) end of the building. The roof itself ends in a moderate overhang with simple eave treatment. Beneath the eaves are extended rafters with a plain fascia board covering rafter ends, and a plain frieze board. There is no evidence of Italianate brackets, but this eave may be a replacement. The front facade gives no indication of a porch, although two metal projections flanking the "1875" plaque may indicate there was at one time an awning suspended from metal pole supports. No mention of the awning has been found in church records and the awning is not in place in a 1906 photograph of the meeting house.

THE ITALIANATE STYLE

The architecture of Deep River's meeting house is of interest. The 1875 edifice was influenced by the Italianate style in its detailing, added to the simple front-gabled rectangle. Italianate buildings are not common generally in the South. They became the dominant style in the northeast and midwest but were in style at a time when the South was still beset from economic depression after

¹ Deep River Minutes.

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the Civil War. By the time the majority of the South was back on its feet, the Italianate style had succumbed to more lately popular styles.² In Guilford County, prices for farm products remained deflated for thirty or more years after the Civil War, so construction slowed until the economy began its recovery. Understandably, few buildings of distinction were built in the county during the immediate post-war period. This continued for a longer period in this area of small Quaker farmers generally uninterested in the latest stylistic trends. As a result the architecture of the area continued to be simple and modest throughout the nineteenth century, even when reflecting new artistic styles.³

Deep River's building, however, illustrates that even among Quakers, there was an interest in and awareness of contemporary decorative trends. The gable-front building employs the interesting use of features from a highly ornamented style, but simplified and placed on a simple Quaker structure giving no hint of ostentatious decoration. It was with the Italianate style that arched window tops and hooded crowns such as those at Deep River became common for the first time. Deep River's decorative hood molds are distinctive, and the use of a Flemish bond brick course in place of a header course is of interest. Nevertheless, the meeting house is a simple building, still no radical departure from Quaker tradition. The flirtation with the Italianate was principally cosmetic; Deep River did not embellish its church with unnecessary finery such as the ornamented brackets seen on even simple Italianate buildings. The major disparity of Deep River from other meeting houses was its orientation with the principal entrance at the gable end. Other meeting houses were entered from the long side with their interiors laid out accordingly; Deep River's end entrance had a significant impact on the interior plan, which remains today despite extensive remodeling. The size of Deep River's 1875 building was also a change from the small buildings found in other Quaker settlements. Even so, the meeting house is similar to earlier, traditional Quaker buildings in proportion, materials, and a simplicity which overrides the building's use of ornamentation.

UPKEEP AND INTERIOR ALTERATIONS

It appears from Deep River's minutes that the building was well-maintained. References are made to painting the building, to paying a caretaker for keeping the meeting house, to repairing the window blinds, buying locks, and cleaning the grounds. In 1911 the Meeting sold timber to raise monies for the "fund for caring for the meeting house." In the same year, the caretaker's salary increased from \$12 a year to \$18, and members were asked to contribute. In 1912 the platform for the facing benches inside the meeting house was enlarged, and racks for hymn books were added to

² McAlester, pp. 211-214.

³ Smith, pp 17-21.

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the backs of the seats in the meeting house in 1914.⁴ Unidentified "changes" were made to the meeting house in 1915 when "another partition" was built of wood.⁵ In 1935, electricity was added to replace kerosene lamps.⁶ Woodburning stoves remained the source of heat until the late 1940s when an oil furnace was installed.⁷ Additional interior changes were made to the meeting house in the 1940s and 1950s.⁸

The grounds were kept as well. There is a reference in 1910 to hiring someone (not member volunteers) to clean the grounds, and in 1916 the grounds were cleared before Quarterly Meeting was held at Deep River, this time by members.⁹ At some time before Joseph Potts' death in 1910, he had planted ivy around the meeting house. Friends made particular note of this in the minutes of 1912. As early as 1916 members had to work to keep the ivy "in reasonable bounds," and in recent years the ivy was removed; after three-quarters of a century it was overtaking the building.¹⁰

When the church was built, it had the dividing partition of Friends meeting houses of that time. Women's and men's monthly meetings for church business were separated by moveable shutters in a central partition. Running the length of the seating area, where today is the central aisle, was a fixed partition about three feet tall. Above this were sectional shutters operated like window sash and which could be raised and propped open. These ran from the front of the meeting house to the foot of an elevated gallery at the rear and created two separate meeting rooms, one for men and the other for women.¹¹

⁴ This indicates the acceptance of music in services by this time. In 1909 the minutes report, "The subject of placing an organ in the Meeting House for the benefit of the Sabbath School was presented to the Meeting. After considerable discussion a majority of the members present expressed a willingness to try the experiment." While not a resounding approval, there is no further mention of music or the organ in the minutes for decades; the experiment must have been a success. Clay Briggs wrote in 1918 that, when singing in Sabbath School began in the nineteenth century, "it raised a storm too with the Monthly Meeting," but the music was not stopped.

⁵ Minutes 2/10/1916.

⁶ Haworth, p. 44.

⁷ Haworth, p. 55, reports the date as 1946. A 4/20/1952 article in the High Point Enterprise reports the furnace installed in 1951.

⁸ "History of DRMH," 1954 Bicentennial pamphlet; also High Point Enterprise, 4/20/1952.

⁹ Minutes 10/13/1910 and 5/11/1916.

¹⁰ Minutes 6/14/1916.

¹¹ At New Garden Meeting House, the shutters were raised and lowered by means of a winch in the attic.

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The Baraca (men's) and Philathea (women's) Classes of the Deep River Sunday School were organized in 1914.¹² The brief minutes of those years tell us that in late 1915 and early 1916, members of the Baracas took down the gallery and asked that "...the partition across the entrance be moved forward a few feet and make two rooms there, for the use of the classes. The Baracas propose to give necessary work if the meeting will furnish material."¹³ An article written in February, 1945, for The American Friend described the arrangement as "... entering the front door brings one directly into one of the Sunday School rooms which takes the place of the gallery that used to be right over the front door, where the drivers and other servants of the prominent families used to sit during the meeting hour. The high-ceilinged room itself has simple wooden benches and a floor of heart pine."¹⁴

The Baraca and Philathea classes took an active part in the upkeep of the meeting house and its grounds, scrubbing the floors, washing windows, and cleaning the grounds. They provided the money for painting the inside of the church and painted the exterior. Deep River's minutes report over the years that the meeting house was painted. It is not known whether this refers to the exterior wood trim, the interior, or perhaps to a redwash on the bricks. An interesting note in recollections of former members reports that the bricks were painted with "Maddar, a red powder, dissolved in home-made vinegar."¹⁵ In the early nineteenth century, brick buildings were painted with the redwash to give them a more uniform color. Deep River's twentieth-century application of Maddar represents an unusually late use of the red root dye.

As stated above, the interior of the Deep River Meeting House was unlike other meeting houses when built because its gable end entrance created a longitudinal axis more characteristic of other protestant churches. A typical meeting house plan had its entrance in the long side with seating arranged accordingly. Deep River's interior has been renovated and updated a number of times over the course of its history. The most recent was a major renovation in 1967 and 1968 which gave the interior the appearance of a modern church. The significant changes of the 1960s were: 1) the central part of the west wall was recessed to the west to expand the choir space behind the pulpit, and a new platform was built; 2) the folding doors to the classrooms of the Baraca and Philathea were taken down to increase the size of the meeting room, and a cloak room and "bride's room" were added at the back; 3) new benches, lighting fixtures, amplifying equipment, and carpeting were

¹² Minutes 11/12/1914.

¹³ Minutes 9/9/1915, 10/14/1915, and 1/11/1917. Also, "History of Philathea Class and Baraca Class."

¹⁴ Binford.

¹⁵ "History of Philathea Class and Baraca Class."

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installed; 4) the existing earthquake bolts were boxed in and recessed lighting installed.¹⁶ These remodelings have changed the character of the interior of the meeting house so that only the plan and envelope of the 1875 church remains, with its windows and sashes and heart pine floors. This is in stark contrast to the high integrity of the building's exterior.

Over the years the Meeting has expanded its complex to accommodate new uses and changing trends. In 1926 a "log hut" was built south of the meeting house to accommodate increasing Sunday School enrollment. By 1954, the log hut was determined to be inadequate for the growing activities of the meeting and plans were underway to build a new educational building. The log hut was demolished in 1956. The two-story, brick-veneered, gable-end building was completed in 1957 adjacent to the west (rear) elevation of the meeting house; it held classrooms, a kitchen and dining room, and pastor's study. A few years later a brick connector was built to join the new building to the west gable end of the meeting house. In 1990 a large brick-veneered, story-and-one-half, gable-end addition extending east to west was attached to the south gable end of the 1957 building, covering its eastern exposure. All of the additions are placed behind the west end of the 1875 building to limit their intrusion.

Deep River's handsome facade retains its architectural integrity and is in good condition. However, the exterior also has undergone major alterations including the series of brick additions to the rear, replacement of the front steps and railing, and the 1990s replacement and recessing of the double-leaf front doors with similar wood doors. These changes have compromised the overall integrity of the building; however, it retains its dominant proportions, its quite Quaker character and quiet Italianate detailing. The changes reflect the continued use and changing needs of the congregation. Services have been held in the meeting house continuously since 1875, with the only interruption being for four or five weeks in the fall and early winter of 1918 by quarantine order during the influenza epidemic when gatherings were not allowed.¹⁷

B. Uppin' Blocks

Contributing Object. 1830.

Just north of the meeting house on the lawn are the "Uppin' Blocks" which predate the 1875 meeting house. This stack of three large granite slabs bears the date 1830 and created a step for mounting horses and carriages.

¹⁶ High Point Enterprise, 3/24/1968. Also, interviews with Florence Allen and Dan Allen.

¹⁷ Minutes, 11/11/1918 and 12/12/1918.

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Guilford County, NCSection number 7 Page 7**C. Cemetery****Contributing site.**

North of the meeting house is Deep River's cemetery. While it is documented to date from the 1750s, the earliest physical evidence remaining above ground and legible is an 1803 gravestone. The cemetery contains unmarked graves from the eighteenth century and a large number of gravestones reflecting Quaker tradition through three centuries: the first graves were unmarked, or marked with crude stones later removed; later, graves were marked with simple stones no higher than twelve inches. Despite Quaker dictates against taller stones, a number of gravestones exceeded the stipulated limit--these were cut off or buried deeper in the mid- and late-nineteenth century by righteous members. An example is the stone of Richard Marion Beeson who died in 1835. His stone was sawn off just above Beeson's name because of the twelve-inch specification; the original marker is supplemented by a later granite pillar that gives additional data on Beeson.¹⁸ Later, however, gravestones of Friends could more closely echo the styles of other protestant religions. Deep River's collection of Quaker funerary art reflects these changing attitudes of the Quakers and are a mirror to the assimilation of the group's political and social attitudes into the society and culture around them.

Deep River's cemetery contains graves of people significant in the development of the region and of the Quaker religion, including Elihu Mendenhall (died 1906), and both his first and second wives (Ann Mendenhall, d. 1856, and Abigail Mendenhall, d. 1913), who also held leadership roles in the community. Other significant individuals whose gravestones still stand in the graveyard here were several members of the Beard family, who were well-known hatmakers in the community, the subject of a popular children's book, and from whose land came the brick for the 1857-1858 school house and the current meeting house. Among these are William Beard (d. 1839) and the later William Beard (d. 1888) who made the bricks for the two buildings. Also in the cemetery are the gravestones of twelve members of the State Legislature. These individuals are discussed on pages 8.18; the legislators are listed in footnote #54. Among the post-1945 gravestones in the cemetery is that of Clay Briggs who wrote several memoirs and articles about the early history of Deep River. While significant to the chronicling of the Friends' community, his death at 1947 is less than fifty years ago and thus his gravestone cannot yet be considered as a contributing features of this nomination.

No evidence remains of a wire fence and gates put around the graveyard in 1908. The cemetery does retain evidence of a WPA project there in 1933 when many stones were removed, the rolling topography was flattened, and overgrowth was replaced with mowed grass. More recently in an unfortunate effort to clean gravestones, many stones were sandblasted. The cemetery continues its

¹⁸ Cemetery survey, in *Guilford Genealogist*, Summer 1986.

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historic and active use as a burying ground for Quakers and others, with new stones positioned among the old in family plots rather than separated in old and new sections of the graveyard. The cemetery retains its wooded and parkland setting.

The boundaries of the cemetery have expanded a number of times since its origins and encompass the sites of earlier buildings associated with the Meeting. In addition to about 1350 graves, the cemetery contains two commemorative markers:

D. School House Marker **Contributing Object. 1932.**

A granite marker was erected in 1932 at the location of the first school house in Guilford County. It is today in the northeast portion of the cemetery.

E. First Meeting House Markers **Contributing Object. 1934.**

Small square markers of local soapstone were placed by the congregation in 1934 to mark the corners of the 1758 meeting house. They are situated just above ground level among gravestones, across the entrance drive from the 1875 meeting house.

F. Parsonage **Non-contributing Building. 1947.**

Behind the meeting house is the parsonage. As early as 1914 the minutes reference the need for a "minister's home in our meeting." This was two years before Deep River had a paid pastor.¹⁹ The parsonage finally was built in 1947. It is a one-and-one-half-story brick dwelling built in the minimal traditional style. Located on a tree-shaded spot a few hundred yards southwest of the meeting house, it was built by members of the meeting, volunteers, and day-labor, and named Peele House in memory of former pastor Joseph H. Peele who had initiated fundraising for the Parsonage Fund. At a side stoop of the parsonage is a large blue flint stone said to have been a door-step at the 1758 meeting house. Because it is less than fifty years old, the building is noted as a noncontributing element of the nomination. It does not detract from the overall character of the property.

G. Pavilion **Non-contributing Structure. Post 1945.**

Northwest of the church behind the parking lot is a modern open log pavilion. Like the parsonage, it is a non-contributing element because of its age.

¹⁹ Minutes, 4/9/1914 and 6/11/1914.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

Deep River Meeting House and Cemetery were established in the 1750s by Quaker settlers of Guilford County. The current brick meeting house was built in 1875 and with its cemetery is a significant Friends Meeting House in the county. The property qualifies for the National Register under Criterion A. The congregation of Deep River is among the oldest Quaker congregations in the county, having begun by English and Welsh Quakers who settled the area in the 1740s and 1750s. The property is nominated under the contexts of Religion and Social History. The Deep River Meeting has a rich history involving many Friends who were prominent in early Quakerism, and has served as a social, religious, and community center for generations.²⁰ For a relatively small country church, a notably high number held positions of leadership in the Quaker movement which had significant influence on the county's history, particularly on the issues of education, temperance, simplicity, slavery and war. A list of family names of those buried in the cemetery includes most of the Quakers significant to the early development of this part of the county. Members of Deep River helped to shape Quaker attitudes in the county and state, and had a significant impact on slavery and secession issues in Guilford County. Levi Coffin and his cousins helped spearhead the anti-slavery movement in Guilford County, operating out of the Deep River and Jamestown communities. Several individuals of the Deep River community, who were members of the Meeting House and who are buried in its cemetery, were significant to the development of the region's Quaker history, settlement, education, social issues, and religious history. Among these were several members of the Mendenhall family, including Elihu Mendenhall, and the Beard family, as well as Levi Coffin's cousins who helped establish stops on the underground railroad. Twelve members of the State Legislature are also buried in the cemetery, a substantial number from a small rural meeting house. Deep River also played significant roles in the development of education there. Deep River's second meeting house with its Italianate detailing; and its rural cemetery are both in good condition; changes to both over the years reflect growth and changing Quaker attitudes as the community of Friends became more assimilated into the more mainstream practices of the region. Deep River has been used continuously as a meeting house for 110 years since its construction in 1875, and the cemetery has been in use since the period of Quaker settlement in the 1750s. Its earliest remaining gravestone was erected in 1830, which therefore serves as the opening date for the period of significance for this nomination. The meeting house and cemetery continue to serve their original purposes today. The period of significance, however, will end at 1945, the fifty-year cut-off date for National Register eligibility. Criteria

²⁰ Smith, p. 132.

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Consideration A (for religious properties) will apply since Deep River derives its primary significance from the history of its Quaker congregation and its association with the settlement of the Deep River area; the movement of the Friends into this area had an important impact on the development of Guilford County.

**RELIGION CONTEXT, SOCIAL HISTORY CONTEXT, AND
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND****Settlement and the First Meeting House**

While the eastern part of North Carolina was settled mainly by English Anglicans, early settlement of Guilford County was in a great migration which took place largely from the 1740s to the 1770s, not from the more populous, eastern part of the colony, but from the north, mainly down the Great Wagon Road from Pennsylvania. The county was settled by three distinct groups: the German Calvinists and Lutherans, who settled for the most part in the eastern portion of the county; the Scotch-Irish (Ulster Scots who had settled in Ireland for a century and were staunch Presbyterians now fleeing) in the north and central part of the county; and the English and Welsh Quakers, or Friends, who settled the western part of the county.²¹ Thus, most of the county's religious life was non-Anglican. Political, religious, economic and social conditions in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries prompted the Quaker William Penn and his followers to move to Pennsylvania. Many then took the Great Wagon Road and settled in piedmont North Carolina. They came from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, as well as from Virginia. This migration to the Piedmont region was no accident; Governor Spotswood of Virginia launched a campaign in 1716 to populate the Shenandoah Valley. The governors of North Carolina offered as enticement fifty acres free, as well as attractive prices in the Granville estates. Granville sold 640 acres for three shillings at a time when the heirs of William Penn were charging fifteen pounds for 100 acres in Pennsylvania.²² In addition, a large group came to today's Guilford County from Nantucket in part due to a depression in the whaling industry.²³

²¹ N.C. Guide, p. 205.

²² Hilty, p. 2.

²³ Arnett, p. 12, and Sharpe's New Geography, p. 809. The 1972 Tercentenary of Friends in Carolina reports that the first religious service of record in North Carolina was a Friends meeting, held in May of 1672. Friends had first arrived in the state in 1665 and were responsible for the first meeting house in the state and the first school house.

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By 1750 there were several communities of Friends in the Piedmont, mainly in what is now Guilford, Alamance, and Randolph counties.²⁴ As a rule, Friends held meetings first in private houses, later building small, simple meeting houses, generally of log construction. In 1751, the first monthly meeting in the Piedmont was established at Cane Creek in today's Alamance County. Three years later, a monthly meeting was set up at New Garden and became the center of Quakerism in North Carolina.²⁵ Even before New Garden became fully established, Friends in Deep River had requested to hold their own meetings at a member's house.²⁶ It is believed settlement of the Deep River neighborhood began around 1740, and minutes of meetings show that Friends in the Deep River area were holding meetings at different houses in the community by 1753.²⁷ In November of 1754, New Garden's minutes report, "Friends of Deep River requested a meeting for worship on a First Day [Sunday] at the house of Benjamin Beeson, which this meeting grants..." The next year there was approval for additional meetings, apparently dispersed through the area to enable Friends from a broad geographic range to attend meetings. By March of 1758, the Deep River community had apparently erected their first meeting house, for New Garden's minutes state, "Friends conclude that the meeting of Deep River now held at several places shall for the future be held only at the Meeting House there, except the meeting at Richard Beeson's which is continued till further orders."²⁸ Although a Preparative Meeting at Deep River was authorized in October of 1758, it was not until twenty years later in 1778 that the Monthly Meeting was officially set up by permission of the Quarterly Meeting held at New Garden, and it wasn't until 1809 that the deed to the forty acres of land, used since 1758, was executed.²⁹ This first meeting house was of log and remained in use until 1875 when the present brick meeting house was constructed. The 1758 building was demolished the next year.

Friends from a broad geographic area attended meetings at Deep River. Those living near Jamestown chose between Deep River, about four miles to the north, and Springfield to the south. However, in certain months of the year roads in the area were impassible so that Friends were

²⁴ High Point Enterprise, 3/24/1968. Also, "History of DRFM," Bicentennial pamphlet 1954.

²⁵ High Point Enterprise, 3/24/1968.

²⁶ Minutes of Cane Creek Monthly Meeting, 11/4/1753. According to Deep River Meeting's histories, the area, with its plentiful supply of water and many springs, was named not by the settlers but by the Indians who had given it the name Hua Sapona, or Deep River.

²⁷ Minutes of New Garden Monthly Meeting.

²⁸ Minutes, 11/30/1754, 1755, and 3/25/1758. Perhaps Beeson's house was far from the meeting house and served those far away.

²⁹ "First Schools in the DR Community," typed essay by Etta Borum written in 1958 and later. Also "History of DRFM," Bicentennial pamphlet 1954.

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unable to attend either meeting. Therefore, in about 1810 or 1820 a small brick meeting house was built at Jamestown. Its purpose was to serve during those times when attendance at one of the other meeting houses was impossible. Jamestown became a preparatory meeting in association with the Deep River Friends Meeting.³⁰

Military Occupation

An event early in the history of Deep River Friends Meeting was its occupation by Cornwallis's Army. In March of 1781, Cornwallis and his British army camped at the meeting house for two days. One of the primary reasons that Cornwallis chose Deep River was Mendenhall's grist mill; his first order after reaching the meeting house was to send soldiers to take possession of the mill, where they seized all the grain as well as the provisions of nearby families. Cornwallis left on the morning of March 15 to fight the Battle of New Garden, which involved about a thousand men, and continued to the Battle of Guilford Court House that afternoon. Cornwallis was fighting American Nathaniel Greene (himself a disowned Quaker from Rhode Island.)³¹ There is no question that Cornwallis camped at Deep River. Cornwallis reported after the Guilford Battle, "...I had encamped on the 13th Inst. at the Quaker Meeting between the forks of Deep River....I marched with the rest of the Corps at daybreak on the morning of the 15th to meet the enemy or attack them in their encampment..." Greene's report states, "We marched...and arrived at Guilford on the 14th. The enemy lay at the Quaker Meeting House on Deep River 8 miles from our Camp...." Tradition among Deep River families was that Cornwallis's troops were encamped in and around the old church and his tented headquarters were under four white oak trees a few hundred yards south of the future site of the 1875 church, towards the yard of William Beard. The trees were local historic landmarks for many years until they fell.³²

For some years in the early twentieth century the tradition took hold that British soldiers from the armies of Cornwallis were buried in Deep River's cemetery. There have been attempts to correct this since the 1930s. According to the corrected version, three of Cornwallis's soldiers died in camp

³⁰ Personal communication with Sherri Simon, Director of High Point Museum. Also, Smith, pp. 15, 66, 76. The side-gabled brick building and its graveyard are today part of High Point's City Lake Park. At Springfield in south High Point, another antebellum brick meeting house remains. Built in 1858, it is a side-gabled building with early cemetery.

³¹ Newlin, "The Revolutionary War..."

³² Briggs, "Short Sketch." Briggs reports that British troops were stationed not only at Mendenhall Mill but also at Wheeler's Mill on west prong of Deep River and at the "Burnt Mill" on the east prong.

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(not in battle), and because the members of Deep River objected to soldiers' being buried in the cemetery, they were buried behind the graveyard.³³

The Revolutionary War (and the Civil War later) was a difficult time for Friends. Under their statement of faith, Friends could not give aid to either side. When North Carolina required all men to make an oath of allegiance to the revolutionary government, the North Carolina Yearly Meeting immediately warned its members that this would mean support of one side and Friends should therefore not comply. Thus while refusal to take the oath carried the penalty of confiscation of property, taking the oath would cause a Friend to be disowned by the Meeting. Friends therefore had the suspicion, distrust, and hatred of both sides during the War. Deep River disowned several of its members during this time.³⁴

Deep River School

Quakers have always put great value on education, and Deep River's long history of support for education dates from soon after settlement when they built their first school house. The Deep River School is believed to have been the first school in the western part of today's Guilford County, and one of the first in the region. There have been four school houses at Deep River. The first was a log building, probably built in the 1750s when the first meeting house was built. It stood in what is now the northern part of the cemetery. The second was frame, built about 1828 or 1830 across today's Penny Road from the first, and replaced in 1857 or 1858 with a brick school.³⁵ This third school house was a few hundred feet north from where the present meeting house stands, near the northeast corner of the graveyard, and is generally held to have been the first Free School for western Guilford County. The County built the school on five acres of land donated by the Deep River Meeting with the provision that the land would revert to the Friends if the Free School closed.³⁶ Because the Civil War stopped the school, the property reverted to the Monthly Meeting.

³³ The faulty account may have started from confusion with New Garden's cemetery, where a number of soldiers were buried during the same period.

³⁴ Cane Creek Meeting (Alamance County) disowned more than thirty of its members.

³⁵ Haworth, pp 46-47, and Briggs. According to Clay Briggs (1909) and others, the 1828-1830 school was moved to Florence during the Civil War and converted to a gun shop or factory for the manufacture of small arms and ammunition storage. It was burned by Stoneman's Cavalry near the close of the Civil War, in Stoneman's Raid. The third school was demolished in 1956.

³⁶ Haworth, p. 47; also Clay Briggs, "Deep River Cemetery" (1934).

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It then became the first and the last of the Free Schools until long after the Civil War.³⁷ With the help of the Baltimore Association of Friends, discussed below, the Deep River Friends in 1866 built a large frame addition onto the west end of the brick school which doubled its size from one classroom to two, and enrollment hit its peak, estimated at one hundred fifty students.³⁸ The people of the community subscribed money and labor to supplement assistance from the Baltimore Association. The next year, in 1867, one of the first Normal schools for teachers was held for eight weeks, with students staying in private houses throughout the community.³⁹ During the worst of the post-war depression, the Baltimore Association took over Deep River's and others' ailing educational programs until 1872. In 1892 the Meeting again deeded the school property to the county, this time with no restrictions. The frame part of the building was moved across the road and later sold and demolished. Deep River Friends ran subscription schools as well during this period, with teachers receiving their pay directly from parents. These schools ran for only six to eight weeks and supplemented the education children received from the three- or four-month Free School.⁴⁰ A fourth school building, this one frame, was built in 1904.⁴¹ It closed when school consolidation began in the 1920s and was used for several years as a house. The 1858 school was demolished in 1956 and its bricks used in construction of a house on its site that is now gone.⁴²

Anti-Slavery Efforts and Migration

Deep River Meeting and its members had a significant impact on Guilford County on the issue of slavery. As a result of their activities and those of other Friends, the county was the focal point of anti-slavery activity in the South during the seventy-year period prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. The underground railroad, the North Carolina Manumission Society and the North Carolina Chapter of the Free Produce Association had their origins in Guilford County. Guilford was, as well, the location of the Greensborough Patriot, the state's only abolitionist newspaper.⁴³

³⁷ High Point Enterprise, 3/24/1968; also Briggs, "History of Deep River School," 1909. Briggs wrote that William Beard made the brick and David Beard built the walls. The wood work was done by Joshua Thornton. The desks were made by Billy Wright and James Carmmack. Milton Raper taught the first Free School here.

³⁸ Haworth, pp. 39 and 47-48.

³⁹ Briggs, "A History of Deep River School," 1909.

⁴⁰ Borum, "First Schools."

⁴¹ Briggs, "History of DR School," 1909.

⁴² Etta Sullivan Borum, "First Schools." Borum was a teacher in the Deep River School in its last years.

⁴³ Greensboro Daily News, May 29, 1971.

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The anti-slavery movement was spearheaded by Friends, and slavery had developed slowly due to their strong anti-slavery commitment. In 1860 Guilford's slave holdings totaled only twenty percent of the population because of its firm anti-slavery core.⁴⁴ Levi Coffin, noted Pennsylvania abolitionist, operated from Jamestown and around Deep River and Guilford College. He with some of his Deep River cousins created effective stations on the underground railroad which enabled sympathizers to transport slaves secretly from one hideout to another until they reached free states or Canada. As further evidence of the Friends' zealous struggle against slavery, the county voted 2,771 to 113 against secession, perhaps the strongest vote against secession in the State.⁴⁵

Many Friends left Guilford County as they were recruited to migrate to free states in the American midwest. The slavery question and the anticipation of armed conflict convinced many Friends to move. This mass out-migration had a significant impact on the county's population. It is believed that about thirty families from the Deep River area moved to Indiana, Iowa and Ohio. This exodus began early in the nineteenth century and continued through and even after the Civil War. Deep River documents indicate that Indiana was the most popular destination. This is supported by Steven Weeks' finding that one-third of the population of Indiana in 1850 was made up of native North Carolinians.⁴⁶ The start of the war caused a new exodus: many Quaker men subject to military duty left the Piedmont.⁴⁷ Once again, war put Friends in a difficult position, for to follow Quaker Discipline they could not support the war, yet to refuse meant risking their property. In 1864, before the war's end, property taxes were imposed to help pay for the war. Thirteen men were arrested in Deep River, some for failure to pay the tax, others for failure to join the military.⁴⁸

After the devastation of the Civil War an awareness of the destitute condition of Southern Friends prompted Francis T. King, a Quaker of Baltimore, to form an organization in 1865 called the "Baltimore Association to Advise and Assist Friends of the Southern States." The organization helped send food, clothing, and money to the South, with all other American yearly meetings contributing funds to the effort. King was a wealthy businessman of Baltimore, the first president of the Board of Trustees of Bryn Mawr College and of Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is said to have made forty trips to North Carolina from 1865 to 1881 to examine the situation and direct the work of the Association. The Association sent Ezra Meador to Deep River from Maine.

⁴⁴ Sharpe, p. 813.

⁴⁵ Sharpe, p. 813.

⁴⁶ Weeks, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Undated, untitled, anonymous 4-page essay, typed on legal paper; in collection of Florence W. Allen.

⁴⁸ Haworth, pp. 39-40.

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With the help of the Association, the tide turned for struggling Guilford County after the Civil War. Although slavery had ended with the close of the Civil War, the Friends' migration to the west continued, but slowed. In 1868, the Association of Friends in Baltimore convinced a number of Quakers not to leave the area. During and after the war, freed slaves, having heard of Friends' tolerance, flocked into the county to settle, so that from 1860 to 1870 the African-American population almost doubled.⁴⁹ The Association also financed a "model farm" to demonstrate how modern agriculture in the area would pay. And in 1875, the first Grange chapter in North Carolina was organized in the county.⁵⁰ North Carolina agriculture as a whole recovered its pre-war volume of production by 1880.

It was in this framework that the Deep River Friends decided to build a new meeting house. The log building, in use since 1758, had served the Meeting for 113 years when a building committee was formed. The movement for a new meeting house was started.

The New Meeting House

The Deep River Meeting House was built near the end of Reconstruction at a time when the Friends' exodus to the west was subsiding and slavery had been brought to an end. Deep River's own enrollment at its school had decreased in the 1870s; nevertheless, the members of Deep River felt the need to replace their 1758 building, and did so with a handsome brick building built by members of the Meeting.

Although we know little of the source of the building's design or its designer, much is known of the details of its construction. Deep River's minutes reflect that an interest in a new building began in earnest in March of 1871 when a committee was formed to look into building a new meeting house. By May they had decided the building should be of brick, sixty-five feet by thirty-five feet, and the building was authorized the following month. However, they had raised only \$600 of the necessary \$2,000 by August when the issue appears to have been laid aside. A year and a half later, in March of 1873, a new committee was appointed with Elihu Mendenhall as its chairman. Mendenhall was a doer; in the same year he became a Trustee of Guilford College, and in 1875 he became the Chairman of the Board. Mendenhall's building committee was active, with reports in several months of 1873; by June they had procured "wood for burning the brick and have 38,000 in the kiln, 8,000 more ready." Deep River members Henry Church and George T. Gossett are credited with making the bricks, using William Beard's mud mill and clay from his land. It must have been a hot summer

⁴⁹ Sharpe, p. 810.

⁵⁰ Sharpe, p. 815.

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for these two: by August the building committee reported they "have 133 thousand brick burned, supposed to be enough to build the house."⁵¹

We know from the minutes that the meeting house was built primarily by members with the help of day labor, and that construction took place in 1874 and 1875. Dave Jackson wheeled the dirt to the mud mill. Samuel Sechrest was boss brick layer. Mr. Crouch was boss carpenter. It took the better part of two years to make the brick, saw the lumber, and gather the materials necessary; then the building was completed in late 1875 with the first service held the first Sunday of November. The dedication service was held on New Year's Day of 1876.

The new building foreshadowed the increasing pace of change at Deep River. The old meeting house was demolished early in 1876, soon after the new house went into use. Cemetery gates and fencing were erected, formal policies for the cemetery were developed, and the first paid pastor arrived. The gallery was removed and partitions added to accommodate adult classes, a new front stair and railing were added, and in 1926 the "log hut" was built for Sunday School. In the 1930s the meeting house was electrified; later a furnace was installed. In the 1950s an education building was built and the log hut demolished. A decade later brought a connector and major remodeling of the interior. In the 1990s a large new education building was completed. And throughout these years the cemetery continued to expand.

The People of the Deep River Meeting

The cultural and religious influences of Friends, together with the geographical limits on trade, caused the Piedmont to develop as an area of small farms with few slaves. Despite its name, Deep River was a small stream, as are all in Guilford County. Although unsuitable for navigation, the creeks were decisive factors in settlement since they were more than adequate to power mills. Numerous grist mills and sawmills were a vital part of Deep River's agrarian economy. Started at first to serve their owners and neighboring communities, these mills would later become the center of industrial development of Guilford County. While the Friends of Deep River generally ran small, self-sufficient farms on which they raised corn, wheat, flax, wool, and cotton, the community

⁵¹ Deep River minutes; also Haworth, p. 52; also "Facts about the Meeting House," and other essays in the collection of Florence W. Allen. Deep River's minutes included ample detail about construction of the brick school in 1857-1858, and tradition maintains that work on the brick church seventeen years later was similar. The bricks for the school were made by William Beard on his property across the road (now Wendover Avenue) from the meeting house, and his brother David built the walls. It has traditionally been assumed that many of the workers and materials were similar for the meeting house, though the minutes are silent on some details. William Beard was probably too old by 1873 to have actually helped make the bricks for the meeting house, though it is believed that his clay and mud mill were used. A small pond on the Beard property may be the clay pit--the source for the Deep River bricks.

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included those skilled in many trades.⁵² Millers ran the important grist mills and saw mills. Like the mills, the crops grown on Friends' farms were for their use and the community's, not for outside trade. There were also in the community potters, tanners, plow-makers, a famous family of hatters, and makers and sellers of wagons, looms, spinning wheels, furniture, shoes, saddles, and guns. Twentieth-century tradition holds that no Friends made guns although this area was rich in good gunsmiths; historians now believe that Friends did indeed not only make but use guns, though strictly for hunting (rather than military) purposes.⁵³

Many of these Friends, who are buried at Deep River's Cemetery, influenced Guilford County's development and were prominent in education and in the Quaker church. Deep River was a small community; however, its members played significant roles in public service and participation in government. Among those buried here were at least twelve who were members of the Legislature. It is possible that no other country graveyard in the State has as many former legislators buried in it.⁵⁴

The high number of legislators is of interest. The Society of Friends had discouraged serving in public office and, in fact, disowned members for it, especially when an oath was taken in the swearing-in ceremony. In 1809 the North Carolina Yearly Meeting forbade members to serve in public office.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, in 1805 Richard Mendenhall became the earliest member of Deep River Meeting to serve in the state legislature. His brother George C. Mendenhall was a widely-known attorney who also served several terms between 1825 and 1843. Two of Richard's sons also served, Cyrus Mendenhall in the 1860s (who later became mayor of Greensboro), and Nereus Mendenhall in the 1870s. Other families served in the 1860s, 1870s, and the early 1900s.⁵⁶

⁵² Arnett, p. 14.

⁵³ Frequent references to the Quakers' abstaining from making guns are found, such as in High Point Enterprise 3/24/1968, and "History of DRFM," Bicentennial pamphlet 1954.

⁵⁴ The twelve listed by Clay Briggs in 1934 were: Barzilla Gardner, Dr. Jas. R. Gordon, John Gordon, Jonathan Harris, Stephen G. Horney, John Howell, George C. Mendenhall, Dr. Nereus Mendenhall, Richard Mendenhall, J.S. Ragsdale, Cyrus J. Wheeler, and William Wiley. Briggs reported that George C. Mendenhall was one of the leading lawyers of the state in his time; Dr. Nereus Mendenhall was a physician, civil engineer and educator of note; William Wiley was a well-known civil engineer; and Professor J. M. Weatherly was one of the best-known school teachers in this section of the state. The earliest names of those buried in the graveyard reflect the earliest settlers, including Beard, Beeson, Chipman, Coffin, Cook, Folger, Gardner, Gordon, Haines, Hiatt, Horney, Howell, Iddings, Macey, Mendenhall, Mills, Starbuck, Stuart, Thornton, Thornborough, Wheeler, Wilson, and many others whose names appear in the early minutes of Deep River Monthly Meeting.

⁵⁵ Haworth p. 105.

⁵⁶ Stephen G. Horney, Jonathan Harris, and James R. Gordon, respectively.

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Mendenhalls served again in the twentieth century: Otis E. Mendenhall, Elihu's son, served three terms in the 1920s.⁵⁷

Another of Deep River's contributions to the area in the nineteenth century was the involvement of its members in the development of education. Deep River Meeting was very much involved in the founding and development of New Garden Boarding School which later became Guilford College. Half of the school's original committee in 1831 were members of Deep River. And Deep River's members made up more than half of the committee to choose a site and erect buildings.⁵⁸ When the Boarding School got underway, several of its members were on the faculty; when it was chartered as Guilford College in 1889, a third of the faculty were members of Deep River Meeting.⁵⁹

Among the more prominent of Deep River's members was Elihu Mendenhall. He was head of the North Carolina Yearly Meeting, the Deep River Quarterly Meeting, and Deep River Monthly Meeting, as well as being named chairman of Guilford College in its formative years, and serving longer than any trustee in the history of the college.⁶⁰ An enterprising businessman, his influence over the entire Yearly Meeting was great. He is of particular interest to this nomination as chairman of the committee to construct the 1875 meeting house. His involvement with the Deep River congregation began much earlier, and he and both of his wives held several responsible positions in the Monthly Meeting.⁶¹ All three are buried here. It was Elihu who introduced the annual budget to Deep River's management in the 1850s and led its temperance movement in the 1860s. He also served on the Board of Trustees of Florence Female School (located on today's Penny Road).

Elihu was appointed to the New Garden Boarding School Committee by the Yearly Meeting and was subsequently elected to the Board of Trustees in 1873, the same year he became chairman of Deep

⁵⁷ Haworth, pp. 105-106.

⁵⁸ Haworth, p. 79.

⁵⁹ Haworth, p. 118. Another Deep River member, Mary Mendenhall (granddaughter of Elihu) taught history and philosophy of education at in Pakistan in the 1950s, and later served as dean of women at San Diego State Teachers College in California. Her sister Annie was dean at High Point Central High School. Another Deep River member taught at Oak Grove Seminary in Maine, at Whittier College in California, and at Earlham College in Indiana. A large number of members were teachers in local elementary and secondary schools.

⁶⁰ Haworth, p. 80.

⁶¹ Haworth (pp. 98-99) reports that Elihu's first wife Anna was appointed a representative to Quarterly Meeting in 1848 and to other committees. His second wife, Abigail, was principal teacher at Florence Female School in the 1850s. She was clerk of Women's meeting. For several winters after the close of the Civil War Abigail Mendenhall taught Freedmen in a house in her own yard.

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River's building committee. He became chairman of the board two years later and remained chairman for over twenty-six years.⁶² New Garden Boarding School enrollment was only fifty-eight in 1874 and the school considered closing. Mendenhall rejected the idea of closure and offered to pay for food until the school's finances improved; ten years later enrollment had increased to 122 and efforts soon began to create a college. The Charter for Guilford College was received in 1889 while Deep River's Elihu Mendenhall was chairman.

Members of Deep River played leading roles in the North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends. Because of its location near New Garden, Deep River's leaders were leaders of Yearly Meeting as well. The first half of the yearly meeting was often held at Deep River "and there would be thousands of people here on Sunday."⁶³ Eight members of Deep River served as clerk to Yearly Meeting from 1803 to 1871. Deep River also had great influence on Quarterly Meeting, sharing responsibility with Springfield Meeting for supplying the clerk.⁶⁴

In the twentieth century many Friends meetings adopted a pastoral system. Deep River's first movements to a pastoral system had been in 1880 when a Pastoral Committee was appointed. It was a large committee of twelve with Elihu Mendenhall serving as chairman.⁶⁵ Joseph Potts became the Meeting's first pastor in 1891, though he was not paid. He did receive payment, however, for his care of the meeting house. Deep River's first paid pastor was a woman, Bessie Field, who began in 1916. Among the pastors at Deep River have been several who were professors at Guilford College, including Samuel L. Haworth, who was Professor of Religion, and Joseph H. Peele, who had been minister at New Garden Meeting House and taught English at Guilford College from 1911 to 1916.⁶⁶

Cemetery

The Deep River Cemetery probably dates back to the 1750s and was the main burying ground within the area. Friends began to settle in this area in about 1740 and to hold meetings in private houses in 1754. It is not known when they began to bury their dead in the graveyard, but it is likely the graveyard began to be used around the time of the 1758 construction of the original meeting house

⁶² Haworth, p. 102.

⁶³ Clay Briggs, "Some Things Remembered," 1918.

⁶⁴ Haworth, pp. 80 & 118.

⁶⁵ Haworth, p. 96.

⁶⁶ 1937 Guilford College Alumni Directory; also, interview with Elizabeth Cudworth (Peele's daughter).

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or earlier. The oldest grave markers of the Deep River Cemetery are no longer in existence. Friends kept records of births, marriages, and some deaths; however, no records of burials are known to exist. It is probably safe to assume that a large number of Deep River Meeting members were buried in the Deep River Cemetery. The earliest graves were either unmarked or marked with simple field stones with no marking, or with initials or a date being the only marking. During the early period of Quakerism, Friends did not believe in marking graves. At Deep River the earliest remaining legible stone is that of P. Chipman, who died in February, 1803. A later edition of the Discipline, which was the Monthly Meeting's orders, had specified twelve inches as the maximum height for a stone in a Friends burying ground. When larger gravestones began appearing in Friends burying grounds, efforts were increased to reinforce Quaker ways. In fact, as late as 1869, more than one hundred years later than the earliest use of this graveyard, the Discipline admonished, "Friends are also enjoined to maintain our testimony against affixing superfluous monuments, of any description, to graves." As a result, Friends "corrected" gravestones at Deep River that were too tall, cutting off the tops of some and burying others deeper into the ground.⁶⁷ Richard Beeson's 1835 gravestone is one of many nonconforming stones in the Deep River Cemetery that were cut off. His was cut just above his name, but later, as evidence of changing Quaker attitudes towards burial and Quaker adaptation of other more widespread protestant practices, his family erected a granite marker next to his headstone on which additional details of Beeson's life were engraved.

Throughout the twentieth century the members of Deep River Meeting have recorded their history and placed memorial stones to commemorate portions of their history. As early as 1908, an endowment fund was created with the interest to be used solely for the upkeep of the cemetery. In 1909 a history of the school was read to Monthly Meeting.⁶⁸ In 1932 the site of the first Deep River school house was marked outside of the old boundary of the graveyard. At that time the remains of the chimney were still visible. Through the efforts of member Clay Briggs (who wrote the 1909 school history), R. A. Cockran of Southern Stone Company of High Point donated and lettered the marker stone. In 1934 the corners of the first meeting house were marked with small stones. These were soapstone from an abandoned quarry about one and one-half miles west of the meeting house, on Ralph Thornton's farm, and were lettered "through the kindness of" Mr. Fred G. Barbae of High Point.⁶⁹

The members of the Deep River Meeting have made efforts to maintain the cemetery since the early years of this century. In 1908, "The subject of a memorial association was discussed in the meeting

⁶⁷ Deep River's 1954 Bicentennial history. Also, undated, untitled, anonymous, 4-page typed essay on legal paper.

⁶⁸ The text is in church files today.

⁶⁹ Briggs, "Deep River Cemetery," 1934 rewrite of 1932 article.

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Guilford County, NCSection number 8 Page 22

for the care and improvement of the graveyard." By 1915 they had raised \$1,000, and by 1920 \$1,500. In 1909 printed notices were placed at all the gates of the graveyard giving notice that "all persons wishing to dig Graves or to bury in said Grave Yard to first apply to N.L. Gossett Custodian." A few months later the Meeting recommended selling lots in the graveyard and "let the proceeds go towards keeping up the Cemetery and towards the endowment fund." Thirty years later in 1937, Deep River formed the Memorial Association to supplement the Endowment Fund. Still today, many of the contributions come from those who are not Friends but who are friends of the cemetery.⁷⁰

In 1933 the WPA assisted in a major project to "clean up" the cemetery. Honeysuckle and other overgrowth was cleared, sunken places were filled and levelled, grass was planted, and rocks and stones were removed so that mowing machines could be used. It is not known whether some of the "rocks" removed were early, unmarked, gravestones, or where they were put. They are believed either to have been thrown into the woods to the north, or perhaps used in a stone fence no longer standing. During this time the drive was constructed from the south gate to a walkway, then branching east and west. By 1934 the burying ground had been enlarged three or four times in one man's memory.⁷¹ It expanded to include the former location of the first school, and later grew to envelope the site of the first meeting house.

The cemetery dates from the community's original settlement and was the site of the meeting's everyday life as well as of military occupation during Cornwallis's encampment in 1781. The 1933 WPA-assisted clean-up of the graveyard certainly destroyed much integrity of eighteenth-century remains still present at that time. Therefore, its period of significance begins in 1803 which is the date of the earliest physical evidence on the site. The Friends' alterations to the cemetery in response to the 1869 Discipline serve as an expression of their collective religious identity. In addition to the graves of individuals, the cemetery contains the two commemorative markers denoting the locations of earlier buildings. Interments still occur today.

⁷⁰ Minutes, 9/10/1908, 4/8/1909, 5/13/1909, 11/11/1909, 3/11/15, and 1920; also, Florence Allen & Dan Allen, personal communication; also, untitled, undated essay.

⁷¹ Clay Briggs 1934.

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Guilford County ACL Tax Map No. 7005-1022-11.

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Florence W. Allen, lifelong member of Deep River Monthly Meeting and congregation's historian.

Elizabeth Peele Cudworth, daughter of Joseph H. Peele and lifelong resident of Guilford College.

Sherri Simon, Director of High Point Museum.

Carole Treadway, Director, The Friends Historical Collection, Guilford College Library.

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Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery
Guilford County, NC

Verbal Boundary Description

The property to be nominated is all of lot 11 described generally by Guilford County Tax Map #7005-1022-11. The nominated area is shown in bold on the attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses all of the property retaining integrity that is historically associated with the Deep River Meeting, its cemetery which was begun in the mid-eighteenth century and contains grave markers from as early as 1803, and its 1875 Meeting House. Included in the nominated area are significant resources including the meeting house, Uppin' Blocks, cemetery, and commemorative markers of earlier buildings. Also included are the parsonage and log pavilion which are non-contributing due to age. The 1947 parsonage will be eligible with the passage of a few years.

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Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs accompanying this nomination.

1. Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery
2. High Point, North Carolina (Guilford County)
3. Langdon E. Oppermann, photographer
4. Photographed April and June, 1995
5. Original negatives located at the N.C. Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER

1. East (front) elevation, Meeting House, looking W.
2. East (front) and north elevations, Meeting House, looking SW.
3. West and south elevations, looking NE.
4. 1875 Uppin' Blocks, looking E.
5. Cemetery, looking NE.
6. Corner marker of first meeting house.
7. Parsonage, looking NW (non-contributing).

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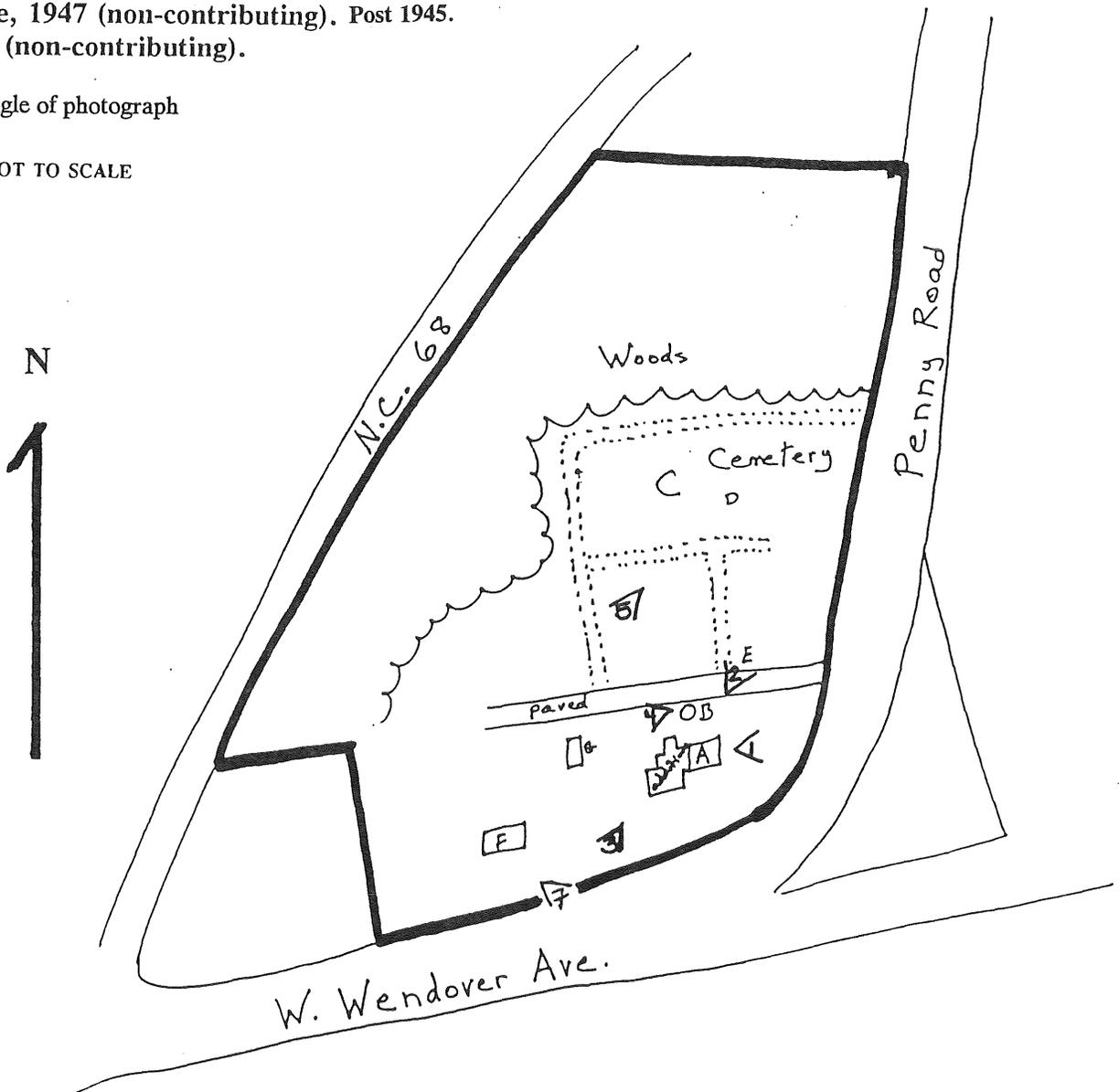
Deep River Friends Meeting House and Cemetery
Guilford County, NC

DEEP RIVER FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE AND CEMETERY

- A. Meeting House, 1875.
- B. Uppin' Blocks, 1830.
- C. Cemetery, established 1750s, earliest extant stone 1803.
- D. School House Marker, 1932.
- E. First Meeting House Markers, 1934.
- F. Parsonage, 1947 (non-contributing). Post 1945.
- G. Pavillion (non-contributing).

↗ indicates angle of photograph

NOT TO SCALE



Deep River Friends
Meeting House and
Cemetery
Guilford Co., NC
Guilford Quad
Zone 17

- ① N/3987920
E/593240
- ② N/3987900
E/593540
- ③ N/3987480
E/593160
- ④ N/3987620
E/592960

