

## APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

**Preparing Your Application:**

Please type or use black ink and use paper no larger than 11" x 17" for the required supporting information. Lincoln County Historic Properties Commission (HPC) staff is available to provide advice in the preparation of this application.

**Filing Your Application:**

When completed, the attached application will initiate consideration of a property for designation as a local historic landmark. The application will enable the HPC to determine whether the property qualifies for designation.

Mail the application to Lincoln County HPC, 302 N. Academy St., Lincolnton, NC 28092. Submitted materials become the property of the HPC and will not be returned. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for revision. HPC staff will contact applicants after receiving an application to discuss the next steps of the designation process (see Landmark Designation Q & A for more information). Please feel free to contact HPC with any questions at 704-748-9090, or e-mail at [lcmh@bellsouth.net](mailto:lcmh@bellsouth.net). HPC can be found on the web at [www.lincolncountyhistory.com](http://www.lincolncountyhistory.com).

**Thank you very much for your interest in protecting HPC's historic resources!**

*\*The guidelines developed for this application are based on the evaluation process used by the National Register of Historic Places. National Register evaluation principles regarding criteria, category classifications, and integrity have been adapted for local applications.*

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**1. Name of Property**

Historic Name: General Robert F. Hoke Cottage

Current Name: General Robert F. Hoke Cottage

**2. Location**

Please include the full street address of the property, including its local planning jurisdiction. HPC Identification (PIN) and Real Estate Identification (REID) Numbers can be found at the Lincoln County GIS property information website at [www.lincolncounty.org](http://www.lincolncounty.org). Click on "County Government", then "Online Services" then click on "Lincoln County GIS System".

Street Address: 1200 General Hoke Drive, Lincolnton, NC 28092

Planning Jurisdiction: Lincolnton PIN Number: 15867 REID: 3632-02

**3. Owner Information (If more than one, list primary contact)**

Name: Roberta Borden Wilson

Address: 1200 General Hoke Drive, Lincolnton, NC 28092

Phone: 704-472-6324 Email: borden@charter.net

**4. Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Signatures**

*I have read the general information on landmark designation provided by the Lincoln County Historic Properties Commission and affirm that I support landmark designation of the property defined herein.*

**Owner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE USE ONLY: Received by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. General Date/Site Information**

A. Date of Construction and major additions/alterations: late nineteenth or early twentieth century

B. Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: A mechanical shed for the pool and a potting shed were added in 1965.

C. Approximate lot size or acreage: 4.716

D. Architect, builder, carpenter, and /or mason: Unknown

E. Original Use: Single-Family Dwelling

F. Present Use: Single-Family Dwelling

G. Significance for Landmark Designation: Architecture

**7. Classification**

**A. Category (fill in type from below): Building**

- **Building** – created principally to shelter any form of human activity (i.e. house, barn/stable, hotel, church, school, theater, etc.)
- **Structure** – constructed usually for purposes other than creating human shelter (i.e. tunnel, bridge, highway, silo, etc.)
- **Object** – constructions that are primarily artistic in nature. Although movable by nature or design, an object is typically associated with a specific setting or environment (i.e. monument, fountain, etc.)
- **Site** – the location of a historic event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archeological value, regardless of the value of any existing structure (i.e. battlefields, cemeteries, designed landscape, etc.)

**B. Ownership (check one):**  Private  Public

**C. Number of Contributing and non-contributing resources on the property:**

A contributing building, site, structure, or object adds to the historic associations, historic architectural qualities, or archeological values for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significance of the property, and possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period.

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Non-contributing</u>
Buildings	<u>1</u>	_____
Structures	_____	<u>2</u>
Objects	<u>3</u>	_____
Sites	_____	_____

**D. Previous field documentation (when and by whom): 1985, Marvin Brown**

*Please contact Jason Harpe at the Historic Properties Commission to determine if the property is included in the Lincoln County survey (704-748-9090)*

**E. National Register Status and date (listed, eligible, study list): N/A**

*Please contact Jason Harpe at the Historic Properties Commission at (704-748-9090)*

**8. Supporting Documentation (Please type or print and attach to application on separate sheets. Please check box when item complete.)**



#### **A. Required Photographs**

All photographs are required to be **digital, in JPEG (.jpg) format, and submitted on a recordable CD or DVD.**  
Please note the following requirements:

- **Minimum Standard: 6.5" x 4.5" at a resolution of 300ppi** (a pixel dimension of **1950 x 1350**)
- **File Size:** There is no maximum or minimum for the file size of an image; however, smaller file sizes may be necessary when emailing images.
- **Proof Sheet:** Proof sheets are still required to show what is on a CD or DVD without having to load to disk. Proofs may be printed in either color or black and white as long as the images are crisp and legible. There should be a minimum of four and a maximum of six proofs per 8.5" x 11" sheet, with no image smaller than 3.25" on its longest side. Proofs should be labeled as they appear on the disk.
- **Naming Images:** Please label image files for the Local Designation Application as follows:  
LN\_PropertyName\_Description.jpg (ex. LN\_ABCHouse\_front\_façade.jpg)

For buildings and structures, include all elevations and at least one (1) photo of all other contributing and non-contributing resources, as well as at least one (1) photo showing the main building or structure within its setting. For objects, include a view of the object within its setting, as well as a variety of representative views. For sites, include overall views and any significant details.



#### **B. Floor Plan (for buildings and structures)**

Please include a detailed floor plan showing the original layout, dimensions of all rooms, and any additions (with dates) to the building or structure. Drawings do not have to be professionally produced nor do they need to be to exact scale, but should accurately depict the layout and dimensions of the property.



#### **C. Maps**

Include two (2) maps: one (1) clearly indicating the location of the property in relation to the local community, and one (1) showing the boundaries of the property. Tax maps with the boundaries of the property are preferred, but survey or sketch maps are acceptable. Please show street names and numbers and all structures on the property.



#### **D. Historical significance (Applies to all classifications)**

Note any significant events, people, and/or families associated with the property. Please clearly define the significance of the property in the commercial, social or political history of Lincoln County or of the local community. Include all major property owners of the property, if known. Include a bibliography of sources consulted.



#### **E. Architectural description, significance and integrity (for buildings, structures and objects)**

For **buildings and structures**, describe significant exterior architectural features, additions, remodeling, alterations and any significant outbuildings. For **objects**, describe the physical appearance of the object(s) to be designated in context of the history of the local community or of Lincoln County. For example, a building or structure might be a community's only surviving example of Greek Revival architecture or it may be a unique local interpretation of the Arts and Crafts movement. An object might be a statue designed by a notable sculptor. Include a description of how the building, structure or object currently conveys its historic integrity. For example, does it retain elements of its original design, materials, location, workmanship, setting, historic associations, or feeling, or any combination thereof? Please include a bibliography of sources consulted.



#### **F. Property boundary, significance and integrity (Applies to all classifications)**

Describe the land area to be designated, address any prominent landscape features. Clearly explain the significance of the land area proposed for designation and its historical relationship to the **building(s), structure(s) or object(s)** located within the property boundary or, in the case of **sites**, the historical event or events that make the land area significant. For **buildings and structures**, the designated land area may represent part of or the entire original parcel boundaries, or may encompass vegetative buffers or important outbuildings. For **objects**, the designated land area may continue to provide the object's historic context (i.e., a statue's historic park setting). For **sites**, the designated area may encompass a landscape that retains its historic integrity (i.e. a battlefield encompassing undisturbed historic view sheds).

**8 A. Required Photographs**



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Facade, South Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Southeast corner



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Southwest corner



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, West Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, North elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, North elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, East elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, East elevation, 1997 addition



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, East Elevation, 1997 addition (View from porch)



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, South Elevation, Front Porch



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, South Elevation, Front Entry



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, South Elevation, Front Porch



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Porch posts



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Outbuilding, ca. 1997



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, South Elevation, Central Entry, Interior



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Dining Room, East Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Kitchen, East Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Kitchen, East Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Den, North Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Family Room addition, ca. 1997, West Elevation



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Bedroom, East Elevation

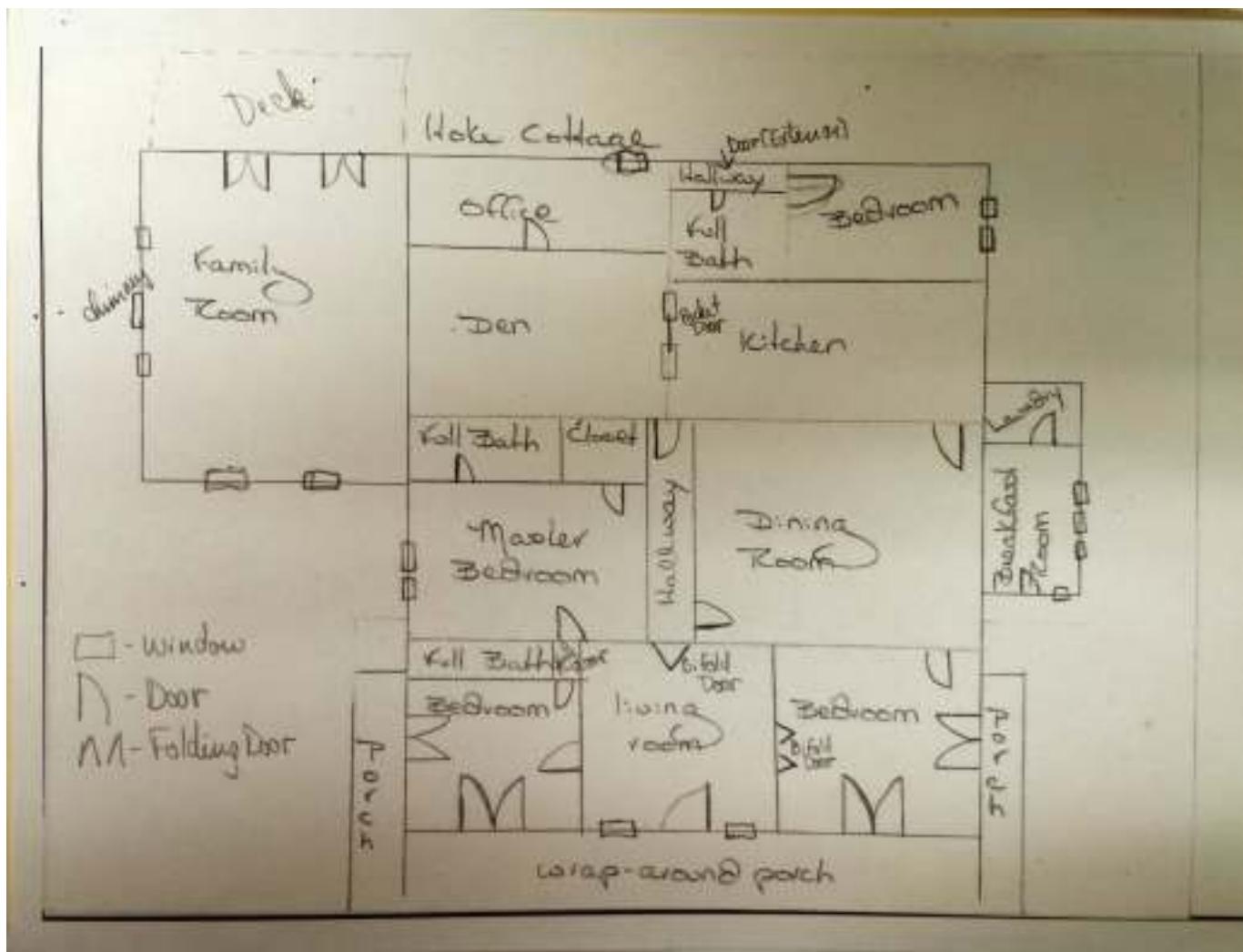


Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Central Hallway



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Bedroom, West Elevation

## 8 B. Floor Plans



Gen. Robert F. Hoke Cottage, Floor Plan by Roberta Borden Wilson

## 8 C. Maps



Landmark Map 1



Landmark Map 2

## 8 D. Historical Significance

The property on which General Robert F. Hoke built his cottage during the late nineteenth or early twentieth century was traced back by Lincolnton attorney Kemp Battle Nixon on April 28, 1945, to an original land grant for one hundred acres from King George III to John Lawn on December 25, 1763.<sup>1</sup> Over the next thirty years the property was conveyed to three different individuals, with Henry Smith purchasing the property from Martin Friday on June 18, 1793.<sup>2</sup> Henry Smith's ownership is significant to the associative history of this property because of his possible connection to Susanna Smith and George Smith, who are both buried less than forty yards to the west of the cottage. Henry Smith sold the property to Robert Williamson on August 16, 1811.<sup>3</sup> Robert Williamson sold the property to L. E. Thompson on December 29, 1842, and Thompson sold the property, which was described in the deed as "the tract of land whereon the said Robert Williamson resides, and known by the name of "Verdant Vale", to John Coulter in December 1843.<sup>4</sup> Coulter sold the property to Alexander Jacob Cansler on December 18, 1866, and Cansler conveyed the property to Major Henry W. Burton on January 7, 1867.<sup>5</sup> Henry W. Burton and his wife Sarah Burton acquired a tract measuring 93.5 acres from William Preston Bynum on May 7, 1875, which brought their total acreage to 266 acres.<sup>6</sup>

Henry W. Burton was born in Lincoln County on September 9, 1821, the son of Judge Robert Henderson Burton and Mary Fulenwider Burton.<sup>7</sup> Henry W. had ten siblings, two of which were Frances Burton, who married Colonel Michael Hoke and was the aunt of General Robert F. Hoke, and Augustus W. Burton, a local lawyer and successful business man.<sup>8</sup> Henry W. attended the University of North Carolina from 1837 to 1839, and married Sarah Hoyle on October 5, 1870, after both of her first two husbands, Martin Phifer and William J. Keenan (Union, South Carolina) died on March 9, 1853, and October 5, 1870, respectively.<sup>9</sup>

Henry W. Burton is the earliest owner of the property for whom there is documentation that the lithia water from the property's spring was sold for medicinal purposes. Five letters in the collection of the Lincoln County Museum of History in Lincolnton, North Carolina that date to 1875 and 1876 detail the written requests to Burton for his spring's water and the health conditions of the letters' authors. J. H. Rowell wrote Burton from Chester City, South Carolina

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<sup>1</sup> "Verdant Vale", Robert F. Hoke Cottage Reference File, Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Deed Book 45, Page 169 and Deed Book 45, Page 177. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>6</sup> Deed Book 58, Page 158. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>7</sup> William L. Sherrill, *Annals of Lincoln County, North Carolina; Containing Interesting and Authentic Facts of Lincoln County History Through the Years 1749 to 1937*. 1967, 126.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Kemp P. Battle, *Sketches of the History of the University of North Carolina, Together with a Catalogue of Officers and Students, 1789-1889* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Pub. by the University, 1889), 103; Sherrill, *Annals of Lincoln County*, 207. Davyd Foard Hood, "Eli Hoyle House," National Register of Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places Nomination, on file at the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, N.C., 1998, 15.

on December 20, 1875, explaining that he heard of Burton's "mineral water" and desired a case because he was "very much depressed in bad heath, feverish...low and dull spirits having taken so much medicine and [in] general bad health."<sup>10</sup> D. F. Cannon of Phifer and Cannon, Concord, North Carolina merchants, enclosed two dollars and fifty cents in a letter of February 29, 1876, for water that they purchased to sell in their store. He explained to Burton that he was "sending by Express to day my keg for 10 gallons of water."<sup>11</sup> On April 11, 1876, Cannon mailed a letter with a second payment of two dollars and fifty cents, and explained that he was sending a keg for Burton to fill because they planned to "divide with other parties." Cannon further explained that "I have improved some and also the parties that is using it."<sup>12</sup>

In 1887, after being diagnosed with Bright's disease and receiving instructions from his physician to drink lithia water to improve his condition, Hoke returned to Lincolnton in search of this therapeutic water.<sup>13</sup> Hoke was undoubtedly familiar with Henry W. and Sarah Burton's endeavors at the Lithia springs and the distribution of the water for medicinal purposes because the Burton's were Hoke's uncle and aunt. Hoke and his family owned homes in Raleigh from 1875 through the 1890s, but Hoke's deteriorating health led him to seek the health benefits of the lithia water in Lincolnton.<sup>14</sup> He traveled back and forth between Lincolnton and Raleigh, as noted in the *Lincoln Courier* on August 2, 1895: "General Hoke who has been at the Lithia Inn for some time has returned to his home in Raleigh."<sup>15</sup>

Hoke formed the Lincoln Lithia Water Company in 1887, and on July 3, 1889 entered into a contract and agreement as the company's President with W. W. Wells of Lincolnton that "on or before the fifteenth day of October 1889 well and sufficiently prepare, make, kiln, and burn the brick necessary for the mason's work, and will well and sufficiently erect and furnish such masons work for the Hotel & Kitchen to be built at the Springs of said company situated two miles southeast of the town of Lincolnton, N.C. agreeable to the several drawing made by W. E. Ashley, Architect now of file."<sup>16</sup> The Lincoln Courier published an update on progress on the hotel on September 1, 1889:

"A new hotel which has been in course of construction for a while past will soon be completed. Already work has progressed sufficiently to convey an idea of the size and location of rooms both on upper and lower stories, also stairways, passages, etc. of the idea of the contract seems to be made it a very comfortable building from the fact that between the ceiling and weatherboarding they placed large sheets of paper double ply and press together with tar certainly will make

<sup>10</sup> J. H. Rowell to Henry W. Burton, December 20, 1875. Miscellaneous Archives Collection, Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>11</sup> D. F. Cannon to Henry W. Burton, February 29, 1876. Miscellaneous Archives Collection, Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>12</sup> D. F. Cannon to Henry W. Burton, April 11, 1876. Miscellaneous Archives Collection, Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel W. Barefoot, *General Robert F. Hoke: Lee's Modest Warrior* (Winston Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair Publisher, 1996). 342.  
<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> *Lincoln Courier*, 2 August 1895. This information was transmitted by email from Ann M. Dellinger to Jason Harpe on April 29, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> "Lincoln Lithia Water Company/Lincoln Lithia Inn", Reference Collection, Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

the walls air tight. Simply the mention of this is only one of the many cautions to be observed in construction to make a building serve the purpose for which it is intended, viz: the home for invalids during the winter months or colder part of the season. We learn that every room in the building has already been engaged and will be occupied as soon as it is ready to receive visitors. When contemplated, the place will be inviting indeed, and judging from the size and location of the hotel proper it will be a pretty place, affording a attraction for pleasure seekers those who occasionally take a vacation as a respite from business and the busy scenes of life."<sup>17</sup>

The date of the hotel's completion is unknown, but it *The Lincoln Courier* stated in an article from August 8, 1890, that the "Lithia Inn opened for business."<sup>18</sup> The hotel was also mentioned in the the 1891 Motz murder trial in Lincolnton.<sup>19</sup> The *Lincoln Courier* reported on July 24, 1891, "Mr. R. W. Farr, recently proprietor of the Lithia Inn, and his excellent family, expect to leave Lincolnton this week for Johnson City, Tennessee, at which place they will take charge of the Hotel Carnegie. Mr. Farr and family made many warm friends here and we are all sorry to see them leave."<sup>20</sup> The hotel was not frequented by tourists during the winter months, but it offered summer tourists a wide variety of entertainment and the pleasure of drinking the water from its spring. The *Lincoln County News* provided advanced publicity for the hotel's June 1, 1907 summer opening in their January 8, 1907 edition. The article explained that the hotel would "cater to summer visitors from all parts of the South," and give people a taste of what the "Government Medical Authorities [concedes] to be the second healthiest point in the United States."<sup>21</sup>

General Hoke traveled to Raleigh on October 7, 1907 to secure the charter for the Lincoln Lithia Club, and the *Lincoln County News* reported that the corporation's stockholders were scheduled to meet for the purpose of electing the club's officers and directors. Additionally, they would lay off lots on the property and determine which lot they would build their cottage.<sup>22</sup> The corporation received its charter from the Secretary of State on October 14, 1907, with the following incorporators: R. F. Hoke, W. A. Fair, W. E. Grigg, Claude B. Ramsaur, H. M. Victor, J. S. Wynne, and Ed. Chambers Smith. Their purpose was to "take over the property of the Lincoln Lithia Water Company and to bottle and sell the water of the Lincoln Lithia Springs and to conduct a hotel, etc."<sup>23</sup> The corporation held a stockholders meeting at the Lithia Inn on October 22, 1907, with stockholders present from Lincolnton, Raleigh, Durham, Charlotte, Greensboro, Wilmington, Alexis, Graham, Gastonia, Henderson, Kinston, Elizabeth, Clayton,

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<sup>17</sup> "Lithia Spring Hotel," *The Lincoln Courier*, 1 September 1889.

<sup>18</sup> *The Lincoln Courier*, 8 August 1890.

<sup>19</sup> Ann M. Dellinger, "Lithia Inn," email message to Jason L. Harpe, April 29, 2008. "Lithia Inn" file in the Nancy Anthony Collection at the Lincoln County Historical Association, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>20</sup> *Lincoln Courier*, Friday, 24 July 1891.

<sup>21</sup> "Lincoln Lithia Inn To Open," *Lincoln County News*, 8 January 1907.

<sup>22</sup> "Club To Organize," *Lincoln County News*, 8 October 1907.

<sup>23</sup> "Lincoln Lithia Club," *Lincoln County News*, 15 October 1907. The purpose of the corporation was expanded in the *Lincoln County News*'s October 22, 1907 edition, including "the bottling of ales, and mining of tin and iron ores, together with the operation of such a hotel and amusement features as the company may desire."

Morganton, Hillsboro, Fayetteville, Lenoir, Newton, Wilson, Franklin, Statesville, Atlanta (Ga.), and Anniston (Ala.).<sup>24</sup>

The Lincoln Lithia Water Company sold the property to the Lincoln Lithia Club, Inc. on February 17, 1908.<sup>25</sup> The *Lincoln County News* reported on March 3, 1908, that "Three expert landscape engineers from the Vanderbilt Estate, arrived yesterday and have begun work laying off the lots at the Lincoln Lithia Club."<sup>26</sup> On May 15, they updated their previous report, stating:

"The lots at the Lincoln Lithia Club have been staked off and numbered and a large force of hands is now busy laying out the streets. There are 200 lots and everyone is in a desirable location. The engineers have done their work well and it is safe to say that every club member will be pleased, no matter what lot he draws. General Hoke reports that a stockholders' meeting will be held early in June, at which time the drawing for the lots will be made."<sup>27</sup>

The May 29, 1908 edition of the *Lincoln County News* provided the following note:

"Notice has been issued to the stockholders of the Lincoln Lithia Club, Inc. calling a meeting to be held at the Lincoln Lithia Springs on Tuesday, June 16th for the purpose of electing directors and the transaction of all other business necessary for the management of the incorporation. At this meeting it is proposed to draw for the lots that each stakeholder is entitled to. These lots are all staked out and numbered, and the streets are all cleared out so that each member can see the exact location of his lot. The lots all lie well and it is understood that a number of the members will soon erect their cottages. We feel that this is bound to be a great benefit to the town and surrounding country."<sup>28</sup>

General Robert F. Hoke died on July 5, 1912, at his cottage in Lincolnton, and he is buried at Oakwood Cemetery in Raleigh, North Carolina.

On October 26, 1920, a contract was filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse between Daniel E. Rhyne and the stockholders and officers of the Lincoln Lithia Club. The contract explained that Rhyne had "purchased a majority of the shares of the stock of said Lincoln Lithia Club and contemplates purchasing more shares," and there was a consideration for the stockholders that they would be able "to use and if they see fit carry away a reasonable amount of water from the spring on said premises for personal consumption without paying for said water or the right to enter thereon."<sup>29</sup> On October 28, 1920, Rhyne purchased the property from The Lincoln Lithia Club, with the exception of four lots in the proposed Lincoln Lithia Club development owned by

<sup>24</sup> "Lithia Club Incorporated," *Lincoln County News*, 22 October 1907. A full list of the stockholders is listed in this article.

<sup>25</sup> Deed Book 99, Page 303-306. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>26</sup> *Lincoln County News*, 3 March 1908. This short reference is listed in Local and Personal section of the Lincoln County News on this date.

<sup>27</sup> *Lincoln County News*, 15 May 1908. This short reference is listed in Local and Personal section of the Lincoln County News on this date.

<sup>28</sup> "Stockholders Meeting," *Lincoln County News*, 29 May 1908.

<sup>29</sup> Deed Book 133, Page 284. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Charles N. Evans of Cincinnati, Ohio, Bettie J. Houser of Birmingham, Alabama, R. P. Freeze of Hendersonville, North Carolina, and Mrs. Annie W. Southerland of Mount Olive, N. C.<sup>30</sup> These lots were denoted on a map of lots prepared in May 1908 for the Lincoln Lithia Club Community by Biltmore Nursery of Biltmore, North Carolina.<sup>31</sup>

Daniel E. Rhyne died on February 25, 1933, and on September 3, 1935, his executors, W. B. Rhyne, E. P. Rhyne, Paul C. Rhyne, Walter G. Rhyne, and H. A. Rhyne, sold the at public auction the Lincoln Lithia Club property to James A. Abernethy, Jr. (March 23, 1896 - December 27, 1973).<sup>32</sup> In September 1936, Abernethy and his wife relocated to Ft. Pierce, Florida because of failing health and his interests in Florida citrus farms.<sup>33</sup> Although maintaining ownership the hotel from afar, the Lithia Inn continued to operate under Abernethy's ownership. The Lithia Inn welcomed local civic organizations and politicians for anniversaries, celebrations, and commemorations, and secured notable performers to entertain its out-of-town guests. In 1937, they hosted Jack Wardlaw, former U.N.C. orchestra leader and performed with Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians, and welcomed Charles Brodt, a native of Chicago, as the Inn's chef.<sup>34</sup>

In 1938, there was local excitement over a visit to Lincolnton by an inspector of the Veterans Bureau in Washington to consider Lincolnton, among other cities, as the home of the new Veterans Hospital. Lithia Inn patrons and supporters felt it fitting to have the new Veterans Hospital in Lincolnton at the Lithia Inn to memorialize General Robert F. Hoke, a Confederate hero and visionary behind the Lincoln Lithia Inn and Lincoln Lithia Club property. The city formed committees on presentations, facilities, publicity, refreshments, arrangements, receptions, and roads to meet with the sub-committee of the Veterans' Hospital Committee.<sup>35</sup> The *Lincoln County News* was riddled in 1938 with articles of support from newspapers and individuals from Burke County, Catawba County, Cleveland County, and Gaston County. Lincolnton was not chosen by the Veterans Bureau, and James Abernethy, Jr. razed the Lithia Inn in 1940.<sup>36</sup> Abernethy held an auction to sell all of the old Lincoln Lithia Inn furnishings and fixtures on December 13, 1944.<sup>37</sup>

James A. Abernethy, Jr. and his wife, Edna Harris Abernethy, sold a portion of the original Lincoln Lithia Club property to local attorney Thomas J. Wilson and his wife Jane M. Wilson on June 12, 1952.<sup>38</sup> On September 15, 1994, Thomas J. Wilson and wife Jane M. Wilson sold the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Marvin A. Brown and Maurice C. York. *Our Enduring Past: A Survey of 235 Years of Life and Architecture in Lincoln County, North Carolina* (Lincolnton, N.C.: Lincoln County Historic Properties Commission, 1986), 144; Deed Book 101, Page 28, Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>32</sup> Deed Book 168, Page 467, Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

<sup>33</sup> "James A. Abernethy, Jr. To Move To Florida," *Lincoln County News*, September 24, 1936.

<sup>34</sup> "Jack Wardlaw Playing For Inn Dance Aug." *Lincoln County News*, January 26, 1947, and "Lithia Inn Has New Chef; Widely Experienced," *Lincoln County News*, July 1, 1937.

<sup>35</sup> "Committees for Lithia Inn Functioning in Big Way for Tuesday," *Lincoln County News*, May 5, 1938.

<sup>36</sup> "Lithia Inn Attracted Fashionable People," *Lincoln Times-News*, 20 April 1979.

<sup>37</sup> "Auction Sale of the old Lincoln Lithia Inn Furnishings and Fixtures, Wednesday, Dec. 13, Beginning at 10 a.m.," *Lincoln County News*, 7 December 1944.

<sup>38</sup> Deed Book 288, Page 591-592.

property to their son Thomas J. Wilson, Jr., and on May 29, 2013, Thomas J. Wilson, Jr. conveyed the property to Robert Borden Wilson.<sup>39</sup>

## 8 E. Architectural description, significance and integrity

The General Robert F. Hoke Cottage is located at 1200 General Hoke Drive in Lincolnton, Lincoln County, North Carolina at the southern end of the Lincoln Country Club property, near the intersection of Lithia Inn Road and General Hoke Drive. The property, rectangular in shape, is 4.72 acres and is located on both sides of a right-of-way owned by the City of Lincolnton that extends north from the cottage's paved private driveway through the Lincoln Country Club property. The property is bordered on the north and east by brick Ranch style homes of the Lincoln Country Club development, and Timberlake Drive bisects the development and terminates at the northeast edge of property on which the cottage is situated. A heavily wooded area located to the east of the cottage shades one of the property's original lithia springs. (The spring is enclosed by a cinderblock building built after Daniel E. Rhyne acquired the property in 1920, and bottled and sold the water through Lincoln Lithia Water Company.) A 1930s concrete shuffleboard court is located to the west of the house between the house and brick Ranch style house and a small pond at the property's western boundary.

The General Robert F. Hoke Cottage meets National Register Criterion C for architecture as a rare local example of a summer vacation cottage built during the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century. General Hoke built the cottage with a deep and commodious porch that wraps around three sides of the house at the crest of a hill two miles east of downtown Lincolnton near a natural lithia spring. Two bedrooms at the house's facade have two pairs of tall glass doors with divided lights and tall transoms that provide a plethora of natural light, and they open at each elevation to the gracious porch.

A paved, private driveway leading to the cottage's facade, south elevation, splits from General Hoke Drive as General Hoke Drive curves to the south and winds to an adjoining neighborhood at the property's southern boundary. The property slopes drastically to the west, towards the nineteenth-century gravestones of Susannah Smith and George Smith (both died before 1810), a 1930s shuffleboard court, a pond of the Lincoln Country Club golf course, and the City of Lincolnton's right-of-way. A brick walkway leads from the driveway at the house's southeast corner to the front porch and central entry at the house's south elevation, and a side porch and exterior entrance to the house's breakfast room at the east elevation. A brick wall to the east of the brick walkway at the house's east elevation is the property's largest hardscape feature, and set of seven brick stairs is set into the wall near the breakfast room at the house's northeast corner. This brick walkway runs the full length of the house and terminates at the house's north, rear elevation, where stone pavers lead to a bedroom and office at the house's northeast corner, and a family room built by the current owners in 1997 at the northwest corner. A small brick wall with four brick steps flanked by brick piers at the house's rear elevation reinforce a small natural area and lead to an in-ground swimming pool added by the Wilson family in 1965.

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<sup>39</sup> Deed Book 881, Page 495 and Deed Book 2397, Page 776-780, Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

The cottage is a single-story wood frame vacation home built by General Robert F. Hoke during the late nineteenth or early twentieth-century in a proposed community of the Lincoln Lithia Club development. The cottage was built on an exposed basement at its west elevation, with brick, asphalt, and wood as its basic materials. It stands atop a small hill with a north-south orientation, and is shaded on its north, south, and east elevation by large pines, cedars, oaks, and a monumental Dawn redwood tree planted on the property in 1993. The front yard has a large tulip poplar tree that arborists have dated to the early nineteenth century. Various historic resources such as two early nineteenth-century gravestones, a cinderblock springhouse (ca. 1920s), and an outdoor shuffleboard court (ca. 1930s) encircle the house.

## **Exterior**

The cottage measures 3,363 square feet and has a truncated hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles with a simple asphalt-shingled gable roof over a deep and wide, flat-roofed porch at the house's facade that also partially surrounds the house's east and west sides. The exterior is sheathed in wood weatherboard siding, and there are exposed rafters under the deep open eave overhangs. The cottage's foundation is laid in a running bond brick pattern, consisting entirely of courses of stretchers with the bricks in each successive course staggered by half a stretcher. Originally, the house rested on brick piers located at each of the house's corners and at the midpoint of each elevation, and the one of the house's previous owner's infilled the foundation with bricks between each of the original brick piers. A gable roof section extends north from the house's main body, and two gable roof wings built by the current owner in 1997 are located to the east and west of this section.

Two interior brick chimneys with corbeled caps rise from the house's interior, and a stone exterior chimney is located near the house's northwest corner at the gabled-roof wing that was added in 1997. The Wilson family removed an original interior chimney that was centrally located in the living room after they purchased the property in 1950, and they rebuilt all mechanical systems, covered the original plaster walls with wallpaper, and enclosed the back porch. In 1965, they installed the in-ground swimming pool, and an accompanying frame side-gabled pool house at the house's northwest corner.

The south facade is dominated by a deep and spacious front porch supported by square columns with curved brackets and a balustrade of square banisters painted white. A simple gable roof covered with asphalt shingles, sheathed with wooden siding painted yellow, and housing a pair of divided light casement windows surmounts the front porch. Eight wide brick steps painted white lead to the front porch from a brick walkway connecting the house to the driveway. A four-light wooden casement window that provides light to the basement is located to the east of the porch steps, and two six-over-six double hung wooden sash window that provide additional light to the basement are located to the west of the steps.

The central entry features a glass-and-wood front door flanked by large glass-and-wood sidelights. The door and sidelights are surmounted by rectangular transoms of twelve lights, and each have simple surrounds capped by simple molding. The porch floor is decked with pine tongue-and-groove boards painted blue that the current property owner installed in 2010 after a windstorm toppled a large tree damaging the porch's roof. The owner was able to salvage all of

the original damaged materials and reuse them to rebuild the porch's balustrade at the west elevation and entire porch floor. Pairs of glass-and-wood doors with sixteen-pane transoms surmounted by plain frieze and simple molding flank the central entry and open from the porch to bedrooms at this elevation. Each of these pairs of doors has wooden louvered shutters painted blue that rise the full height of the doors and transom.

The east elevation is partially covered at its southern corner by the porch, under which is a pair of glass-and-wood doors with divided lights with a sixteen-light transom and wooden louvered shutters that match the pairs of doors at the central entry and the west elevation. These doors provide a secondary entrance to the bedroom at the house's southeast corner. To the north of the porch is a ribbon of four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows that provide light to the dining room at this elevation. A gable roof wing built by the current owner in 1997 to house a breakfast room and laundry room extends from this elevation. The wing is covered with asphalt shingles and has wood clapboard siding. The current owner planted an English knot garden outside the formal dining room at this elevation, and the 1997 breakfast room wing encloses the northern side of the garden. A French door at the wing's south elevation opens to the breakfast and laundry rooms, and a four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows is located to the east of the door. A ribbon of three four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows are located at the east end of the wing, and a pair of four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows are located to the north of the window on the gable roof extension at the north of the main body. This window provides light to a bedroom at the house's northeast corner.

The north, rear elevation has a glass-and-wood door surmounted by a small gable roof eave supported by square wood columns and a small wooden deck. This doors opens to a bathroom and bedroom at the northeast corner. A four-over-four double-hung wooden sash window is located to the west of the door at this elevation. A side-gabled wing added by the current owners as a family room in 1997 extends from the house's northwest corner. The wing has two pairs of divided-light French doors with screen doors that are surmounted by two pairs of transoms with three lights. These doors open to a wooden deck that leads to the in-ground pool at this elevation.

The west elevation is partially covered at its southern corner by the front porch, under which is a pair of glass-and-wood doors with divided lights and a sixteen-light transom and wooden louvered shutters that match the pairs of doors at the central entry and the east elevation. These door provide a secondary entrance to the bedroom at the house's southwest corner. To the north of the porch is a pair of four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows with wooden louvered shutters painted blue that provide light to the master bedroom at this elevation. A six-over-six double-hung wooden sash window provides light to the basement at this elevation, and a steel roll up door is located to the north of the window. The gable end of the family room extends from this elevation's northwest corner. This wing has a single-shouldered stone chimney flanked by six-over-six and two-over-two double-hung wooden sash windows. A paneled metal door leading to the basement is present under this wing.

## **Interior**

The Robert F. Hoke Cottage retains some of its original interior details that include windows, doors, base and crown molding, wainscoting, flooring and plaster walls, but also has other interior renovations from the 1950s and 1997. The central entry opens to a large living room that measures eighteen feet two inches by fifteen feet. Bedrooms are located to the east and west of the living room, with access provided by paneled wooden doors with simple door surrounds. The living room has dentil crown molding, wainscoting, chair molding, and tall base molding with molded caps painted white and unpainted quarter round molding. An original interior chimney that rose from this room was removed by the Wilson family after they purchased the property in 1950. A paneled wooden door at the north end of the living room opens to a hallway that extends beyond the house's main body to the gable roof rear section. The hallway measures fifteen feet five inches by four feet ten and one half inches, and has its original crown, chair, and base molding, as well as its original pine flooring.

A formal dining room, kitchen, laundry room, breakfast room, full bathroom, and bedroom are located at the house's east elevation. The dining room measures eighteen feet three inches by fifteen feet five inches, and has its original pine flooring, dentil crown molding, wainscoting with applied molding to resemble raised panels, chair molding, and tall base molding with molded caps and unpainted quarter round molding. A tall and thin paneled wooden door is located at the room's southeast corner and opens to a closet. A paneled wooden door at the room's southwest corner opens to the hallway, and a second paneled wooden door leads to the kitchen, laundry room, and breakfast room. The current owner built the wing that includes the breakfast room and laundry room in 1997.

The kitchen measures twelve feet by fourteen feet and has pine flooring, walnut cabinetry, and modern appliances. The six feet by fourteen feet laundry room and the eleven feet three inch by thirteen feet eleven inch breakfast room have ceramic tile floors, and the walls are covered with sheetrock. The windows on the breakfast room's east wall, and the window and French door at its south elevation allow for ample sunlight.

Located to the north of the breakfast room and laundry room, at the house's northeast corner, is a bedroom that measures thirteen feet two inches by twelve feet three and one half inches. The bedroom has pine flooring, simple crown molding, and base molding with molded caps and unfinished quarter round molding. A pair of four-over-four double-hung wooden sash windows are located on the bedroom's east wall. A full bathroom measuring eight feet two inches by five feet three inches is accessible from the bedroom through a small rear hallway.

A small bedroom measuring thirteen feet by thirteen feet four inches is located at the house's southwest corner, and has paneled wooden doors that open to a living room at the bedroom's east wall, and a small hallway at its north wall. This bedroom has pairs of divided light doors on its south and west walls that open to the front and side porches. The small, four feet eleven inch by four feet three inch hallway leads to a five feet by eight feet by six inch full bathroom and a eighteen feet six inch by thirteen feet four and one half inch master bedroom. The master bedroom has original pine flooring, dentil crown molding, tall base molding with molded caps and unfinished quarter round molding, and paneled wooden doors on its north and south walls that lead to the hallway and a full bathroom that measures seventeen feet six inches by seven

feet. The bedroom's west wall has a pair of large four-over-four double hung wooden sash windows. A paneled wooden door opens to a closet at the master bedroom's northeast corner.

To the north of master bedroom and full bath is a den that measures nineteen feet eight inches by eighteen feet eleven inches. The den has a fireplace on its south wall between paneled wooden doors leading to the hallway and kitchen, respectively. The fireplace has a brick firebox, trim panels, and hearth with a wooden mantel and overmantel with applied molding to resemble raised panels. The den has crown molding, tall base molding with molded caps and unfinished quarter round molding, and pine flooring.

The current owners created an office that measures twelve feet four inches by nine feet six inches by adding a wall at the den's north elevation, and built a gable roof wing off the den at the house's northwest corner to house a twenty-four feet three inch by nineteen feet two inch family room. The owners purchased old pine lumber for the family room's flooring to match the flooring in the house's oldest sections, and they matched stylistically a portion of the crown molding and base molding with these sections. A large stone fireplace is located on the family room's west wall, and a pair of French doors with divided lights and transoms are located at the room's northwest and northeast corners. The doors open to a deck at the house's north, rear elevation.

## **8 F. Property boundary, significance and integrity**

### **Verbal Boundary Justification**

The local landmark boundaries follow the parcel lines of Parcel 15867 as shown with a heavy black line on the Lincoln County GIS map at one inch = 100 feet.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundaries encompass 4.716 acres on General Hoke Drive in Lincolnton, which is a small portion of the acreage historically associated with the Lincoln Lithia Water Company, Lincoln Lithia Club, and Lincoln Lithia Inn, but this acreage does include the cottage, the two early nineteenth century gravestones of Susanna Smith and George Smith, the 1920s concrete block building that surrounds a lithia spring, and the 1930s shuffleboard court. The acreage provides an appropriate setting.