

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

J. J. Jones High School

Mount Airy, Surry County, SR1064, Listed 4/27/2021

Nomination by Laura A. W. Phillips

Photographs by Laura A. W. Phillips, May 2019



Overview of front of school in setting from across Jones School Road, view to southeast.



1947-1948 auditorium and 1956-1958 band room with entrance addition, view to southeast.

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 any 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 J. J. Jones High School

other names/site number Mount Airy Colored High School; J. J. Jones Elementary School; L. H. Jones Family Resource Center

2. Location

street & number 213-215 Jones School Road not for publication N/A
city or town Mount Airy vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Surry code 171 zip code 27030

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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
X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 Deputy SHPO

3/12/2021

Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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):

Surry County, North Carolina
County and State

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

N/A

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:	EDUCATION	Sub:	school
	RECREATION AND CULTURE		sports facility
	RECREATION AND CULTURE		auditorium

(Enter categories from instructions)

[illegible]

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

roof SYNTHETICS: Rubber

walls BRICK

other _____

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

J. J. Jones High School
Name of Property

Surry County, North Carolina
County and State

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.)

☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Ethnic Heritage : Black

Period of Significance

1940-1966

Significant Dates

1940

1945

1947-1948 (see continuation sheet)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Franklin, John Martin, architect, 1940 building with 1953 and 1955 additions

Crews, Hall, architect, 1961-1962 addition to 1940 building (see continuation sheet)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☒ Other

Name of repository: State Archives, Raleigh

J. J. Jones High School
Name of Property

Surry County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.75 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 _____
2 _____

Zone Easting Northing
3 _____
4 _____
X 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 Laura A. W. Phillips, Architectural Historian

organization N/A date August 28, 2019

street & number 59 Park Boulevard telephone 336/727-1968

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27127

12. 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name (see continuation sheet)

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 the 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 Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Surry County, North Carolina

7. Description

Setting and Summary

J. J. Jones High School is located on Jones School Road between North Main Street and Springs Road in the northern section of Mount Airy, North Carolina. Facing north, the 8.75 acres on which the school stands slopes gently from north to south. From Jones School Road, an asphalt-paved drive enters the property in front of the original, 1940, building and main entrance and circles around a planted area with two tall oak trees before exiting on Jones School Road. Shrubbery is planted along the west side of the drive and its sidewalk and in front of the 1940 section of the school. A square parking lot is located east of the circular drive and linear parking areas are located on the east side of the 1940/1950s classroom wing and west of the 1967-1968 building. A driveway runs between the 1956-1958 band room and 1940-1950s classroom wing and loops around the back of the school, continuing along the west side until exiting at Jones School Road. Another driveway turns east from the west drive and runs between the north side of the 1961-1962 gymnasium and a steep grass-planted embankment to a service entrance on the ground level of the 1961-1962 classroom wing. Steep steps run down the embankment to an entrance to the north end of the hall next to the gymnasium. At the east end of the embankment, next to the circular drive in front of the school, a brick retaining wall supported by a row of brick buttresses is topped by a chain-link fence. Small playgrounds, whose equipment dates from after the period of significance, are located east of the 1953 classroom wing addition and south and east of the 1967-1968 classroom building. Both are surrounded by chain-link fencing. A courtyard area is formed by the 1940 classroom wing, the 1961-1962 classroom wing and gymnasium, the 1967-1968 classroom building, and the breezeways that serve those buildings. The grass-planted space also currently has raised vegetable planters. The remainder of the property, comprising approximately the south half of it, is wooded.

The area surrounding the school is largely residential. Until a fire destroyed it several years ago, the frame Ararat Baptist Church faced the school immediately on the east. That lot remains vacant. Directly across Jones School Road to the north is a county-owned baseball field on approximately seven acres. According to tax records, it was established in 2006, and contains a playing field, bleachers, team shelters, reporting stand, concessions stand, light poles, a linear parking lot, and chain-link fencing. During the era of J. J. Jones High School, the then-private-owned property was an informal field used periodically by the school for playing sports. Along either side of Jones School Road east and west of the school are modest houses ranging from simple bungalows, minimal traditional houses and ranch-style houses.

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J. J. Jones High School campus consists of three buildings, and the narrative description will follow this order: 1) main building—the original 1940 school with the 1953 and 1955 additions to its south classroom wing and the 1961-1962 west addition that included another classroom wing and a new gymnasium; 2) the 1947-1948 combination gymnasium/auditorium with its 1956-1958 band room addition; and 3) the elementary classroom building designed in 1967 and probably built in 1967-1968. At the time these buildings and additions were erected and enlarged, Modernism was coming to dominate mid-twentieth-century school architecture. Architects and engineers in mid-century North Carolina followed principals such as simplicity, efficiency, affordability, and intrinsic material expression in designing educational buildings, often using masonry, glass, and steel that broke with tradition. To them, horizontal massing, spare detailing, and bands of steel-frame windows that created large, well-ventilated and well-lit classrooms and other instructional areas were all important.¹ The buildings at J. J. Jones High School reflect these design tenets. All buildings are brick veneered in some form of common or running bond. All roofs are flat, except for that of the 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium, which has a bow truss roof. The campus is essentially a collection of one-story buildings, although in some areas there is also a ground, or basement, floor level. Classrooms have long rows or blocks of large windows that allow in ample light and ventilation. The campus buildings are in very good condition and retain good overall integrity.

Main Building, 1940, 1953, 1955, 1961-1962

1940 – John Martin Franklin, architect
1953 – John Martin Franklin, architect
1955 – John Martin Franklin, architect
1961-1962 – Hall Crews, architect

Wilson-Covington Construction Company, general contractor
Community Plumbing and Heating Company, plumbing and heating contractor
Twin City Electrical Company, electrical contractor

Contributing building

When the 1961-1962 addition was built to the 1940 building, renovations were made to both the exterior and the interior of the 1940 building.

Exterior

When the original 1940 building was erected, it consisted of two connecting blocks: a taller, six-bay-wide and one-room deep auditorium and a shorter, three-bay-wide and six-bay deep main

¹ Heather Fearnbach, National Register of Historic Places nomination for Caswell County Training School, Yanceyville, NC, 2018, 8: 24.

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entrance and north-south classroom wing with two classrooms on the ground level at the south end. The whole was sheathed in six-to-one common-bond brick veneer, except for the ground level, which was stuccoed. Originally, the façade windows were the older-style six-over-six wood sash, and those on the auditorium section had transoms. The center bay of the auditorium had a double leaf door with nine-light upper halves above paneled lower halves and a four-light transom across the whole. There were also two rectangular louvered vents on the upper façade above the second and fourth windows from the east end. The auditorium entrance was repeated for the main entrance at the north end of the classroom wing. Neither entrance had a porch or sheltering canopy. Period photographs show that the west-side windows of the classroom wing appear to have been grouped, multi-pane sash like those on the facade. The present appearance of the façade dates largely from the 1961-1962 addition to the west side of the 1940 building. At that time, the main front entrance at the north end of the classroom wing was replaced with double-leaf steel doors with glass panels and a transom across the top. Brick walls were built out on either side of the entrance to support a flat roof providing shelter. Five concrete steps rise to the entrance. West of the entrance, one of the original windows was removed and the other was replaced with a metal sash window with four horizontal lights. The taller auditorium section of the façade was also remodeled. Since that section was then used as the library instead of the auditorium, an exterior entrance was no longer needed. It was removed, and all the multi-light sash windows were replaced with four-horizontal-light metal-sash windows. A small, low, two-light hopper window was added between the fifth and sixth windows from the east end. All the windows in the 1940 building date from the 1961-1962 remodeling and are of the type seen on the north façade of the former auditorium/library. All the windows of the 1940 building have rowlock brick sills. The two vents high on the north wall of the 1940 building were covered with slightly pyramidal metal panels during the 1961-1962 remodeling. The east end of the taller section of the 1940 building has a blank brick wall. The south elevation of this section, remodeled in 1961-1962, has three like windows (one replacing an original door) and two vents, one treated like those on the north façade and the other covered with plywood.

The original 1940 section of the north-south classroom wing and its 1953 and 1955 additions are easy to differentiate on aerial views. They are also easy to see on the exterior because of changes in the brickwork and on the interior because of various changes there. The east and west sides of the 1940 classroom wing retain their three sets of five windows, but instead of the original six-over-six wood sash, they are filled with the horizontal metal sash from the 1961-1962 remodeling. On the east side, in the corner formed by the merging of the classroom wing and the taller front section of the building, a one-bay concrete-block extension to the east with an east opening was built during the 1961-1962 remodeling. It sheltered an added stair coming down from the classroom wing and also connected with a breezeway (no longer extant) to the

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gymnasium/auditorium. Approximately halfway down the east side of the 1940 classroom wing, a brick smokestack rises between two banks of windows. North of the stack, concrete steps descend to a door to the boiler room. On both east and west elevations, a ground-floor classroom is evident in the southernmost bay of the 1940 classroom wing. Each side has a band of five, multi-light metal windows with hopper openings in the center of each. On the east elevation, the block of windows is covered by wood louvers. Immediately north of the block of ground-floor windows on the west elevation, a steel door with a narrow, vertical, rectangular light opens out to a breezeway that connects the 1940 wing with the 1967-1968 classroom building.

Because of the downward slope of the land from north to south, both the 1953 and 1955 classroom wing additions have exposed ground-floor levels. Both additions are sided with five-to-one common-bond brick veneer with every sixth row alternating headers and stretchers. Both additions also have blocks of three-part, multi-light metal-frame windows with hopper-style openings and concrete sills. On the ground level of the west elevation, the south end of the 1953 addition features a double-leaf metal door with solid panels in the lower half and four lights in the upper half. Adjacent to it, at the north end of the 1955 addition, is a single-leaf metal door of the same type. A slightly sloped metal canopy supported by metal poles shelters the doors. Large, multi-light, metal windows are on the main level of the west elevation, while matching, but smaller, windows are on the ground level.

On the east elevation, the main floor of the 1953 addition has two single, metal-frame hopper windows denoting restrooms on the interior. South of those windows is a bank of two three-part classroom windows separated by a brick post. The ground floor is very busy with a multitude of doors—all metal—and projections. At the north end, concrete steps rise to two doors, each with a solid-panel lower half and an upper half with a four-part light. One door opens to a stair to the main floor and the other to a stair to the ground floor. A flat-roofed canopy supported by metal poles shelters the doors. Moving southward from the doors to the stairs are two, low, four-light windows, followed by a door beneath the south main-floor restroom window that is of the same type as the two north-end stair doors, though narrower. South of it is an added brick projection with a door on its north side that has lights in the upper half. Two-light horizontal windows are high on the wall on the east and south sides of the brick projection. The brick projection and the door to its immediate north are covered by a flat roof with a pole support at the northeast corner. These doors open to the kitchen. Immediately south of the brick projection is a small, one-over-one sash window. The south end of the east elevation's ground floor is sheltered by a shed roof that slopes downward from beneath the main floor classroom windows. A pole supports it at the northeast corner. At the south end, it is supported by a small, vertical-board, frame addition that has a six-over-six sash window on the east side and door with a plain bottom half and solid glass

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pane in the upper half on the north side. Both of the doors sheltered by the shed roof lead to a preschool classroom with its metal-framed windows like those on the main level.

The east side of the 1955 addition projects eastward from the 1953 addition and has two banks of metal-framed windows at each level. At the south end of the long classroom wing, a double-leaf steel door with windows in the upper half and a cantilevered cover opens from the main floor to a metal stair that leads in two westward flights to the ground. Horizontal metal windows, like the regular classroom windows but only half the height, are positioned beneath the cornice level on the east side of the south-end exit and at ground-level height east and west of the exit stair. There is also a tall narrow set of four windows below the entrance door. East of it, an identical opening has been infilled with brick, but its concrete sill remains. A single support column is located beneath the stair. A partially open wooden shed is attached to the wall east of the metal stair. It is an addition, but its date of construction is not known.

The 1961-1962 construction at J. J. Jones High School added a classroom wing and a new gymnasium to the west side of the 1940 building in addition to remodeling some of the existing school. Like the other additions, this one is sheathed in five-to-one common-bond brick veneer with every sixth row alternating headers and stretchers. Dropping down about two feet from the original classroom wing, the 1961-1962 classroom wing projects forward to the north. Its east elevation has no fenestration. The north elevation of the classroom wing has six sets of paired metal-frame windows with horizontal lights and hopper-style openings. The ground level of the north elevation has three of the same type of windows, interrupted in the third bay from the east by a roll-up utility door with a metal canopy, probably installed after 2004 when the building became the L. H. Jones Family Resource Center. The ground level of the west two bays of the west wing projects forward along the east side of the projection of the adjacent gymnasium. Its east wall has two small metal-frame windows with terracotta tile sills, and the north wall features a recessed entrance with a double-leaf steel door and a flat cantilevered canopy. On the south elevation, the west classroom wing exhibits four large pairs of metal-frame windows with hopper openings on the ground level, while the main level has a mix of smaller, single and paired windows of the same type. At the west end of the classroom wing, the wall of the south elevation projects southward in line with the gymnasium wall to accommodate the stair and a hallway, and those two bays have single-width metal-frame windows on the main level and double-leaf steel-and-glass doors on the ground level leading to a covered walkway. At the west end of the 1961-1962 addition is the gymnasium, whose north, south, and upper west walls are completely blank. The lower half of the west wall projects westward to contain the locker, shower, and related rooms. It has four steel-and-glass doors. The two outer doors are double-leaf and have flat-roofed canopies supported by steel poles. The two inner doors are single and have canopies hanging

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from above. Five two-horizontal-light windows and one four-horizontal-light window accompany the doors on the west elevation.

Interior

Unless otherwise noted, the interior doors are wood. The taller section of the 1940 building was initially used as the school's auditorium. It consisted of one large room with a stage at the west end and short hallways along either side of the stage connecting the main entrance hall to the auditorium. After completion of the school's combination gymnasium/auditorium in 1948, this space was used as the school's library. Remodeled after 2004 when the building became the L. H. Jones Family Resource Center, the room is now used for conferences and workshops. It retains its original beaded-board wainscot, and the current hardwood floor is laid over the original floor. The walls have corkboard panels above the wainscot, and the ceiling is covered with acoustical tiles with light strips. During the 1961-1962 renovation, the stage of the former auditorium was converted to a book storage room, a work room, a conference room, and a first aide room. Some of these rooms are now used as storage rooms.

The main entrance at the head of the classroom wing opens to the north-south wing, the suite of offices to the southwest, and the west classroom wing. Floors are covered with low carpeting, walls are plastered or sheetrocked, and ceilings are covered with acoustical tiles and have lighting panels. Immediately south of the former auditorium is a restroom. South of it is a hall to the east that leads to the outside. From that point, the long center hall continues southward with classrooms on either side. The walls have a high beaded-board wainscot, and classroom doors have six lights over three horizontal wood panels. A door at the north end of the east side appears to have been replaced, date unknown, with a five-horizontal-panel door in which the two top panels have been replaced with glass. At the end of the 1940 section of classrooms, there is a partial enclosure of the hallway. South of it, within the 1953 addition, the treatment of the hall is much the same, except that the beaded-board wainscot is lower. Immediately within the 1953 section, a stair leads eastward from the hall of the main floor to the ground level. The walls of the stair hall are brick and the floor is covered with linoleum tile. On the east side of the classroom hall south of the stair are two restrooms and between their entrances are two work closets. These doors have five horizontal panels. Large classrooms on the west side of the hall are representative in their finishes of the 1940 and 1953 sections and feature corkboard panels (formerly chalkboards) with a chalk rail at the bottom above a beaded-board wainscot. A six-light transom for ventilation is on the hall wall, and windows fill the west wall. At the end of the 1953 addition, there is an abrupt transition to the 1955 addition, where the walls are concrete block. Although these rooms were inaccessible to the surveyor at the time the school was recorded, plans indicate that the walls were designed with chalkboards and coat racks.

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The cafeteria and kitchen are located on the ground floor of the 1953 addition. There, walls are plastered over concrete. The cafeteria floor is linoleum, while the kitchen floor is clay tile. A hall from the cafeteria leads northward to the two ground-floor classrooms in the 1940 section of the building. The hall has a high beaded-board wainscot and a long corkboard, originally a chalkboard. A vertical support pole is in one of the classrooms.

The main floor of the 1961-1962 west wing has a center hall with rooms on either side. The floors have low carpeting, the walls are concrete block, with some sections stuccoed over the block, and the ceilings are covered with acoustical tiles and lighting strips. On the south side of the hall are offices and a restroom. The north side of the hall is lined with built-in lockers, and there are two classrooms, each with two doors. The original doors are plain with a small window near the top of each. Near the west end of the hall, a pair of double-leaf metal doors with large single lights in the upper parts provides access from the south side of the hall to a steel stair to the ground floor. Beyond the stair at the end of the west hall is a long, narrow, storage room.

The ground floor of the 1961-1962 addition is divided into two parts by a north-south hall immediately west of the stair. The hall has a linoleum-tile floor and is lined on the west side with lockers. On the east side of the hall, near the bottom of the stair, are entrances to the two ground-floor classrooms—originally the home economics room on the south and the science lab on the north, but now used by the Yokefellow Cooperative Ministry Food Pantry. The south room has a linoleum-tile floor, concrete-block walls, and a stuccoed ceiling. The north room has a utilitarian-carpet floor, concrete-block walls, and an acoustical-tile ceiling. Farther north down the hall on the east side are restrooms.

On the west side of the hall, doors at the north and south ends of the building open to the gymnasium. The gymnasium has a linoleum tile floor, concrete-block walls, and a metal truss ceiling with numerous small skylights for additional illumination. Basketball goals are on each end and two per side. Fold-up wood and metal bleachers line the west wall. At the north and south ends of the west wall, openings lead to a series of locker, shower, basket, and laundry rooms. The rooms on the west side of the gymnasium were inaccessible at the time of the survey.

Gymnasium/Auditorium, 1947-1948, 1961-1962
Band Room Addition, 1956-1958

Contributing building

Hutchins and Adams, Architects and Engineers
1961-1962 renovations – Hall Crews, architect (see Main Building listing for contractors)

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The 1947-1948 building was constructed largely by J. J. Jones High School students under the direction of trowel trades instructor E. T. Sellars. No associated architect or contractor is known.

Exterior

The gymnasium/auditorium was built of running-bond brick veneer on concrete block. Facing west, the main body of the building rests atop a painted cement-over-brick basement. The bow truss roof is hidden behind stepped parapets topped by a metal cap at west (front) and east (rear) ends. The main body of the building measures approximately eighty-eight feet long by fifty-two feet wide. A lower projection with a shed roof at the rear of the building accommodates the dressing rooms behind the stage. A brick stack on the south side rises from the boiler room. Doors and windows have been modified. Windows have nine lights and appear to be vinyl fixed-in-place sash in the original openings. On the main level, there are three windows on the west façade, each with a metal awning. On the north elevation, there are five windows; two more at the east end have been enclosed with bricks. A concrete wheelchair accessibility ramp with metal railing rises from the front of the building to just past the fifth window, where it ends at a steel-door entrance, which is sheltered by a flat, suspended canopy. An earlier entrance was located under the fourth window, but it was later infilled with brick. On the south elevation, there are only four windows on the main level, because the smoke stack is in the position where the fifth window would have been. As on the north elevation, two additional windows at the east end have been enclosed with bricks. Matching the position of the wheelchair-accessible door on the north elevation, a steel door on south elevation is reached by a steel stair from the ground. Four replacement doors and two boarded-up windows line the basement level of the south elevation. On the ground level of the east elevation of the main body of the building, there are two air-conditioning units, one on either side of the rear projection. On the rear projection, a single original window remains on the main level of the north and south elevations. These are four-over-two steel sash. The east elevation of the projection has another air conditioning unit and two windows that have been enclosed with brick at ground level. The south elevation of the rear projection has a two-panel wood door surmounted by a grill.

The 1956-1958 band room addition spans the entire width of the 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium, but it is little more than half the height. Its brick veneer is five-to-one common bond with every sixth course alternating headers and stretchers. Its flat roof is banded by a flat metal cornice painted white and white gutters with two corner and one intermediate downspouts. The north-side elevation has a blank brick wall except for the signage "L. H. Jones Auditorium." The south-side elevation has a nine-light vinyl window at the top of the east edge and a single, six-panel metal door beneath it at ground level. The door, itself, may be a replacement, but its location is original. The west façade has one large, center, metal-sash

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window with three sections of twelve lights. Adjacent to it on the south was another such window, which was later enclosed with vinyl siding punctuated with two small horizontal windows. At the northwest corner of the band room is a concrete-block attachment with a shed roof that serves as the main entrance to it and the auditorium. Its west front has a double-leaf, two-panel door with concrete-block half side walls. A flat canopy projects from the roof to shelter the entrance. The north and south elevations of the projection originally had a single window, but these have been infilled with German vinyl siding. The concrete block projection was probably added at the same time, possibly 1961-1962, that the concrete projection from the 1940 building opposite it was built, with the breezeway, no longer extant, running between the two.

Interior

The north quarter of the band room addition consists of the separate entrance and stair to the auditorium. The remaining south three quarters of the space includes a large, rectangular, north-south room that was used for band and other music practice and three smaller rooms along the east wall that were used for an office and two storage rooms. The band room was entered originally from the door on the south side. The band practice room has concrete-block and brick walls and a hardwood floor. During the 1961-1962 renovations, an L-shaped steel stair was placed in the northwest corner of the band room. It leads to the north-south lobby of the auditorium. After the J. J. Jones High School Alumni Association purchased the building in 2003, they converted the band room to a multi-purpose room. It now has a half-height ceiling of large acoustical panels and built-in lighting across the south part of the room, cabinets, a stove, and moveable chairs and tables.

The main entrance to the auditorium is from a hall at the north end of the band room addition. It has a linoleum-tile floor, concrete-block and brick walls, and an acoustical-tile ceiling with built-in lighting. Leading from west to east, the hall rises up a flight of eight double-wide steps to the north-south auditorium lobby, which has six-panel double-leaf doors of unknown date at each end that open to the auditorium. The auditorium, itself, features a linoleum-tile floor, concrete-block walls, and an acoustical-tile ceiling with hanging pendant lights. Seating is moveable, so that it can be arranged, with or without tables, to suit a variety of uses as needed. At the east end of the auditorium, three wooden steps rise to the stage with its red velvet curtain, and at each end of the stage, separate steps rise to plain, single-leaf wood doors that lead to either side of the stage. At the back of the stage, doors lead to two separate dressing rooms with accompanying restrooms that fill the projection at the east end of the building.

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The basement was a working area. It has a concrete floor and concrete-block walls. Most of the area beneath the auditorium was where the trowel trades were taught. Evidence of that survives, although much of the space is now used for storage. Areas of the concrete floor have painted red lines that mark student work areas. In a room on the north side, bricks are still stacked on wood pallets. On red-painted wood planks along the north wall are the painted silhouettes of tools with hooks showing where all were to be placed when not in use. A room on the south side by the brick stack still holds the boiler. Farther west was the shower room. Along its north wall, it retains pairs of vertical pipes that hooked to shower faucets.

Elementary Classroom Building, 1967-1968

Fred W. Butner Jr., architect

Noncontributing building

The 1967-1968 elementary classroom building is a well-designed Modernist structure. It is listed as a noncontributing building only because it falls outside the 1940-1966 period of significance for J. J. Jones High School. The school's significance lies in the role it played in black education and the black community in Surry County. The end of its period of significance came with the full racial integration of public schools in Mount Airy and Surry County in 1966. When the high school closed, the facility continued as an integrated elementary school, and it was soon thereafter that plans were drawn for this classroom building.

Exterior

The Modernist, one-story, flat-roofed building features five-to-one common-bond brick-veneer with alternating headers and stretchers every sixth row. It stands south of the 1961-1962 gymnasium and west of the 1940 classroom wing and is attached to these other two sections of the school by breezeways with narrow metal I-beam supports and a corrugated metal roof that dates from the construction of the 1967-1968 building or soon thereafter. The building is composed of three rectangular blocks in an L formation. Except for two corner walls that face north and east and are decorated with randomly placed glass blocks, all the rest are blank brick walls. Because on one side of each corner, and slightly lower than the tops of the otherwise joining walls, there is a steel-framed glass door with vertical windows along one side and a transom across the top, headed by a panel of vertical corrugated metal, the blank brick walls are left to look like they are standing on their own with no real support. The two main entrances on the east and south are recessed and open to hallways. Each has a double-leaf, metal-framed glass door with sidelights and a transom.

Interior

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The interior has three large classrooms and three hallways connecting all three. The floors are linoleum sheets, the ceilings are acoustical panels with built-in lighting, and the walls are concrete block, except for the hall-side walls north of the main east entrance that face a conference room and two restrooms. Each classroom has storage space. The halls are lined with elementary-sized wood cubbies.

Integrity

The J. J. Jones High School retains strong integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association for listing in the National Register. It remains on the site it has occupied since the first part of the school was built in 1940, and its setting still conveys an almost rural, uncrowded, residential environment on the northern outskirts of Mount Airy. The campus layout evolved between 1940 and the early 1960s, as a gymnasium/auditorium was built in 1947-1948 and additions were built in 1953, 1955, and 1961-1962, but these were all respectful of earlier construction. All were brick veneered, one story (though some with a ground floor or basement), and Modernist in design. Although at the time of the 1961-1962 addition, renovations to earlier buildings were made, these fit within the overall physical character of the school in terms of design, materials, and workmanship and are within the period of significance. The original room arrangements remain largely intact and many original finishes, or those dating from the 1961-1962 renovations, remain intact as well. Only one building on campus, the 1967-1968 elementary classroom building, is non-contributing, and that is because, although its Modernist design fits well within the overall design of the school, it was constructed after the period of significance and does not contribute to the significance of black education in Surry County that the school possesses. Its location, tucked behind the other contributing buildings, makes it not easily visible from the public right-of-way. Overall, the feeling and association related to the significance of the former J. J. Jones High School in the history of black education in Surry County, North Carolina, remains extremely high, and an active alumni association works diligently to see that it remains so.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

The J. J. Jones High School is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as debris that accumulated during operation of the school, infrastructural remains, remnant landscape features such as planting beds and paths, and structural remains of the earlier Ararat Rosenwald School and associated outbuildings which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the school. Information concerning institutional culture and African American identity, as well as the

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spatial organization of outdoor activities and the character of daily life at the school through time, can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the school. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

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8. Statement of Significance

Significant Dates, cont'd.

1953
1955
1956-1958
1961-1962

Architect/Builder, cont'd.

Wilson-Covington Construction Company, general contractor, 1961-1962 addition
Community Plumbing and Heating Company, plumbing and heating contractor, 1961-1962 addition
Twin City Electrical Company, electrical contractor, 1961-1962 addition
Hutchins and Adams, architect, 1956-1958 band room addition to 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium
Butner, Fred W. Jr., architect, 1967-1968 elementary classroom building

Summary

On invitation, Winston-Salem teacher John Jarvis Jones and his wife, Ora, moved to Mount Airy in 1914 to help better the education for black youth there. Jones established the Virginia Street Elementary School, and he, his wife, their daughter, Geraldine—all of whom were college graduates—and Fred Davis taught at the school, making great strides in improving the educational outlook for the black children in the area. Jones's ultimate goal was to create a high school, as there was not one for black students in all of Surry County and parts of neighboring Stokes County and Patrick County, Virginia. However, he died in 1933 before achieving his dream. The school continued, and in 1936, the Joneses' youngest child, Leonidas Harold, who had just graduated cum laude from West Virginia State College, was asked to organize a high school, first known as Mount Airy Colored High School, and serve as its lead teacher and then its principal. Established in 1936-1937, the high school remained on Virginia Street until the 1940-1941 school year, when it moved to a new location just north of Mount Airy, the site where Ararat School had burned in 1938. There, on a much larger site, the high school occupied a new, larger, modern brick school designed by Elkin architect John Martin Franklin. This became its proud home, with additions in 1953, 1955, and 1961-1962, due in large part to the periodic influx of elementary students from small, frame schools that had closed throughout the county. In 1947-

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1948, a combination gymnasium/auditorium, built largely by the students themselves under professional guidance, was built to enhance the high school experience of the 1940 school. During the years 1956-1958, a band room addition was built to the front of the gymnasium/auditorium to support the music program offered by the school.

In 1945, the name of the school changed to J. J. Jones High School in tribute to the man who had started Mount Airy and the surrounding communities in Surry and Stokes counties and Patrick County, Virginia, on the road to better education for black students and whose dream it was to establish a high school. His son, L. H. Jones, was the only principal the high school ever had, from its start in 1936 until 1966, when it closed due to racial integration. Although the school always had elementary students as well as those in high school, its name emphasized that it was a high school, because that was what was most significant about it. It was not only the first, but the only high school for black students that the whole of Surry County ever had. As such, it played a tremendously important role in the black community. The community came together to support the school in whatever ways it could, and it took great pride in the school's many accomplishments. Even now, more than fifty years after the closure of J. J. Jones High School, it retains a highly active alumni association, who purchased the 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium from the county in 2003, naming it the L. H. Jones Auditorium, and whose biennial alumni gatherings draw former students from all corners of the United States and abroad.

After the J. J. Jones High School closed in 1966, it served as the J. J. Jones Elementary School for nearly four decades, until 2004. At that time, it took on its present use—as the L. H. Jones Family Resource Center, a multipurpose facility for non-profit organizations and public agencies.

The J. J. Jones High School represents the struggle for improved educational opportunities for black youth in Surry County, North Carolina, during the period of twentieth-century racial segregation and the leaders and community that came together to make it happen. As such, it meets National Register Criterion A in the areas of education and black ethnic heritage. The school is locally significant for the period from 1940, when the original part of the brick school was built, to 1966, when it closed as a segregated black high school because the Mount Airy and Surry County schools became fully integrated.

Context: Black Education in Surry County, North Carolina

Black education in Surry County, North Carolina, generally followed the patterns seen elsewhere in the state, adjusted somewhat for population factors. Educational opportunities for black

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children prior to the Civil War were almost nonexistent, except through some religious groups, such as the Moravians and Quakers. During Reconstruction, the state's 1868 constitution mandated free public education for all children, but in 1875, the North Carolina General Assembly adopted an amendment that allowed for "separate but equal" schools. Because educational facilities depended on inequitably distributed local funding, this policy resulted in black students having inferior buildings and supplies, shorter terms, and fewer teachers. And although the state made subsidies available for public education beginning in 1897, legislators initially did not allocate funds for black schools.²

Around 1900, according to current Surry County Schools information, there were ninety schools in Surry County—seventy-six for white children and fourteen for black children. However, the figures of a local historian writing in 1935 differed and were more specific. J. G. Hollingsworth, in his *History of Surry County or Annals of Northwest North Carolina*, wrote that at the turn of the century, white children in the county had nineteen one-room frame schools, seventeen one-room log schools, and twenty-two districts without any school building at all. At the same time, among the fourteen school districts for black children, there were four log schoolhouses, two frame schools, and eight districts with no buildings.³

In 1912, the state tallied 2,226 rural and 105 urban black schools and 5,265 rural and 181 urban white schools in North Carolina. With great inequalities prevailing between the black and white facilities, prominent educators Nathan C. Newbold, James B. Dudley, and Charles H. Moore began to address the conditions of the black schools. In 1913, Newbold was appointed the Agent for Rural Black Schools, and when the Division of Negro Education was established within the Department of Public Instruction in 1921, he was named its first director. Highly lauded for the positive impact he had on education for black students in North Carolina, Newbold, with the support of philanthropic entities such as the Jeanes, Peabody, Rosenwald, and Slater Funds, hired supervisors and teachers for rural schools and orchestrated building improvements.⁴

Between 1915 and 1932, the Rosenwald Fund, established by president of Sears, Roebuck and Company Julius Rosenwald to improve schools for black children in the South, subsidized the completion of 813 education-related buildings in North Carolina, more than in any other state.

² Heather Fearnbach, National Register of Historic Places nomination for Cleveland County Training School, Shelby, NC, 2016, 8: 10, 12.

³ "History of Surry County Schools." <https://www.surry.k12.nc.us/domain/985> (accessed July 10, 2019). Laura A. W. Phillips, *Simple Treasures: The Architectural Legacy of Surry County* (Winston-Salem: Surry County Historical Society, 1987), 25.

⁴ Fearnbach, Cleveland County Training School, 8: 13.

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These included schools, teachers' residences, and industrial education shops built through a collaborative effort of Rosenwald funds, local school board money, and contributions from private citizens, both black and white. Most of these schools were one-story frame structures, but some were larger and brick. Four Rosenwald schools were built in Surry County. They were the two-room Sandy Level School in 1920-1921, the four-room Mt. Ararat (more commonly known as Ararat) School in 1921-1922, the four-room Woodville School in 1923-1924, and the two-room Combstown School in 1929-1930. Of these, none survive.⁵

In addition to the Rosenwald schools, there were eleven other elementary schools for black children in Surry County during the 1920s and 1930s. Only two of these survive. Probably representative of the frame schools that were built, the Pisgah School in the Cross Roads community of Dobson Township is a small, weatherboarded frame structure with a front gable roof and a row of windows down one side. The other school, in the Rockford vicinity, is also a one-story frame structure, but it was heavily remodeled when it was converted to use as a residence later in the twentieth century.⁶

At the same time, larger and much finer schools were built in Surry County during the 1920s and 1930s for white children. This was a part of the county's, and the state's push for consolidation, during which the many small one- and two-room frame buildings were abandoned and replaced with fewer, but much larger brick schools throughout the county. Built on the same plan, these consisted of a ring of one-story classrooms with a flat roof surrounding a taller central auditorium with stuccoed walls and a gable-on-hip roof. Among these were the schools at Shoals, North Elkin, and White Plains. Meanwhile, the two-story, Neo-classical Revival-style Pilot Mountain school opened for white students in the southeast area of the county in 1924 with an enrollment of 320. Eighty-six of those students were registered for high school classes.⁷

Public secondary schools for black students that offered several years of high school courses began to appear in North Carolina around 1918. Not surprisingly, they were located in highly populated counties such as Wake, Durham, Guilford, Forsyth, and Mecklenburg. This did little to help all the high-school-age youth in the state's many rural, or predominantly rural, counties, like Surry. By 1921, high school opportunities for black students were still extremely limited. By

⁵ Ibid., 14; Kyle Obenauer, Intern, with Claudia Brown, Survey and National Register Branch Supervisor, NCSHPO, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form for Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina, 2015, p. 44; Thomas W. Hanchett, "The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Volume LXV, Number 4 (October 1988), 387, 441.

⁶ Phillips, *Simple Treasures*, 26, 214.

⁷ Ibid., 26, 204.

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1924, the State Superintendent reported that among North Carolina's one hundred counties, there were eighty-five in which there was no accredited high school for any rural child, white or black. In thirty-five counties, there was no accredited rural or urban high school for any child to attend. For the many counties where there was no public secondary education for black students, the options were to enroll in the secondary department of state black colleges or attend one of several private boarding schools for black students in the state, if the students could afford them. One of these private schools was Palmer Memorial Institute (NR 1988) in Guilford County (where Leonidas H. Jones and his future wife, Eleanor Sellers, had attended), established in 1902 by renowned black educator Charlotte Hawkins Brown. Emmanuel Monty and Tinny McDuffie established another such school in Scotland County in 1904. The Laurinburg Institute still operates.⁸

In 1930, the population of Surry County was 39,749, made up of 37,033 white residents and only 2,716, or 6.8%, black residents. By 1958, Surry County's black population, at 2,605, or 5.7% of the total, was still among some twenty-seven counties in the state whose black population was less than 10% of the total.⁹

In 1935, 38%, or 364, of the total school-age black population in Surry County lived in Mount Airy. When H. L. Trigg, the Supervisor of Negro High Schools for the State Department of Public Instruction, wrote his report, "The High School Situation for Negroes in Surry County, December 19, 1935," he stated that much progress had been made toward black education in Mount Airy thus far in the 1930s, and he believed the time had come to organize a high school for black students. He claimed that many children remained in the seventh grade for two or three years in order to satisfy their desire to attend high school. According to Trigg, Surry County had a sufficient black school-aged population to support an accredited high school, and as Mount Airy was the point of concentration for that population, it was the most logical place for a new high school.¹⁰

In 1936, Leonidas H. Jones was hired to organize and serve as the lead teacher of the Mount Airy Colored High School at what had been the Virginia Street Elementary School established by his father John Jarvis Jones in 1914. That first year there were ninety students—forty-seven in the eighth grade, thirty-eight in the ninth grade, five in the tenth grade, and none in the eleventh

⁸ Fearnbach, Cleveland County Training School, 8: 13; G. H. Ferguson, "Some Facts about the Education of Negroes in North Carolina, 1921-1960" (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, December 1962), 7.

⁹ David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County, 1920-1966," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975; Edward McDaniels and Rodney Ray McDaniel, *Honor the Past Strengthen the Future*, 1999, Vol. 1, 76.

¹⁰ David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County, 1920-1966," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975.

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grade. The first graduating class was the following year, in 1937-1938, when there were three graduates. Sharing the facilities with the elementary grades caused great overcrowding, and for the first four years the elementary grades held morning classes, while the high school grades held afternoon classes.¹¹

After four years at its Virginia Street location, a major change came for the Mount Airy Colored High School. In 1938, after Ararat School, a Rosenwald school just north of Mount Airy, burned, the Mount Airy School Board decided to build a new high school on its site. A modern brick school designed by Elkin architect John Martin Franklin was built for the Mount Airy Colored High School, and it opened for the 1940-1941 school term with 121 students in grades eight through eleven. It also served 185 elementary-grade students. With its new building, ten classrooms, auditorium, faculty that had expanded to eight teachers, physical education classes for the first time, a term of not less than 160 days, four years of grades beyond the seventh grade, at least three teachers holding required certificates, not less than forty-five pupils in average daily attendance, a program of studies approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and equipment deemed necessary by the Superintendent, it met the state's requirements, and on July 1, 1941, the Mount Airy Colored High School was accredited by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.¹² This reflected not only the status of the Mount Airy school, but also the drive of the state's Division of Negro Education for accreditation of schools—elementary, secondary, and college—during the decade of the 1940s.¹³

In 1945, the name of Mount Airy Colored High School was changed to J. J. Jones High School as a tribute to John Jarvis Jones, the educator who had come to Mount Airy in 1914 to improve the education for black students there and who had laid the groundwork for establishing Surry County's first high school for black youth.¹⁴

During the decade of the 1950s, the state's Division of Negro Education gave much attention to the expansion of school plants and facilities at all levels. Not only was there much expansion, but there was also much consolidation of schools, which necessitated a significant expansion in

¹¹ Ibid.; Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12.

¹² David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County, 1920-1966," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975; Hugh Victor Brown, *A History of the Education of Negroes in North Carolina* (Raleigh: Irving Swain Press, Inc., 1961).

¹³ G. H. Ferguson, "Some Facts about the Education of Negroes in North Carolina, 1921-1960" (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, December 1962), 8.

¹⁴ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2, 14. Some secondary sources give 1948 as the year for the school's name change, but the 1944-1945 Principal's Annual Report (and thereafter) lists the name of the school as J. J. Jones High.

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transportation facilities.¹⁵ Once again, J. J. Jones High School reflected the Division's goals. During the 1940s and 1950s, many of the small, frame, elementary schools around the county closed, and those students were sent to J. J. Jones High School, which always had an elementary school component.¹⁶ This influx of elementary students created overcrowding, and to accommodate the larger population of students, the school added classrooms in 1953 and again in 1955. In 1961-1962, a major addition and renovation of the school that included new classrooms and a new gymnasium was undertaken.

From 1948 until 1966, no changes were made in the locations of schools for black students in Surry County. There were three elementary schools—in Elkin, the consolidated Ridge-Westfield School east of Mount Airy, which constructed a modern brick building in 1961, and J. J. Jones High School in Mount Airy.¹⁷ J. J. Jones High School remained the only high school in the county for black students.

As J. J. Jones High School moved toward its closure as a black high school with the coming of racial integration in Mount Airy and Surry County in 1966, several figures demonstrate the status it had attained. Not only had it grown physically and in the quality of its plant, but it had more than twenty-two teachers and twenty-two buses that brought students from throughout the county and northern Stokes County to the school. By 1964, all teachers held either graduate or "A" certificates. A graduate certificate meant that a teacher held a Master's degree, and six teachers at J. J. Jones High School did. In 1963, the school ranked seventeenth in the state among black school graduates enrolling in four-year colleges. In that year, sixteen of the thirty-seven graduates at J. J. Jones High School continued their education at a senior college. J. J. Jones High School progressed from three graduates in its second year of operation (1937-1938) to forty-eight graduates in its last year (1965-1966).¹⁸

After the 1954 U. S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the State of North Carolina, as did other Southern states, resisted desegregation. In 1955, the North Carolina General Assembly passed the Pupil Assignment Act that allowed local school districts complete latitude in deciding student placement. This worked to perpetuate segregation. By

¹⁵ G. H. Ferguson, "Some Facts about the Education of Negroes in North Carolina, 1921-1960" (Raleigh: State Department of Public Instruction, December 1962), 8-9.

¹⁶ David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County, 1920-1966," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.; McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 181, 228; High School Principal's Annual Report, North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1936-1937, 1965-1966.

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1964, most children in the South, including North Carolina, were still attending segregated schools, but that began to change rapidly after that year's passage of the Civil Rights Act. It made desegregation a pre-requisite for receiving federal funding for schools.¹⁹

Mount Airy initially adopted freedom of choice plans, and this continued until 1966, when the U. S. Office of Education declared freedom-of-choice plans unacceptable and required full integration of schools. On June 9, 1966, the Mount Airy School Board received a letter from the U. S. Office of Education ordering the formerly all-Negro J. J. Jones High School closed as a Negro school and ordering that the students be assigned to other schools. However, with the loss of students through the freedom-of-choice plan, the school board had already made the decision on May 11 to close the school as a segregated unit at the end of the 1965-1966 school year. Thus, the forty-eight-member class of 1966 was the last to graduate from J. J. Jones High School. When the Mount Airy schools reopened in the fall of 1966, all students were assigned to schools on a geographic basis, regardless of race. At the same time, the former J. J. Jones High School reopened as an integrated elementary school bearing the same name.²⁰

Historical Background

Initially called the Mount Airy Colored High School until it was christened the J. J. Jones High School in 1945, the brick school for African American students opened in 1940. However, two-and-a-half decades led up to that point when the black community in the Mount Airy area finally had a well-built and spacious school of which they could be proud.

Before 1915, the only school in Mount Airy available to the town's black students was the Mount Airy Colored Graded School, which occupied a poorly built two-room frame structure on Rockford Street south of downtown. It accommodated approximately sixty children, and its one teacher struggled, being, himself, barely able to read and write. This situation began to change in 1914.²¹ In that year, prominent Mount Airy citizen William Franklin Carter, who had a successful law practice in town for more than sixty years, served three terms as Mount Airy's

¹⁹ Heather Fearnbach, National Register of Historic Places nomination for Caswell County Training School, Yanceyville, NC, 2018, 8: 15; "The Troubled History of American Education after the Brown Decision." www.processhistory.org/american-education-after-brown/. Accessed August 17, 2019.

²⁰ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 269, 287, 290, 302, 312; Principal's Annual Report, 1965-1966.

²¹ Edward McDaniels and Rodney Ray McDaniel, *Honor the Past Strengthen the Future*, Vol. 2, 1999, 13; David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975, 2. Based on interview with L. H. Jones.

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mayor, and was on the local school board for fifteen years, persuaded John Jarvis Jones to come to Mount Airy to help improve the educational opportunities for the town's black children.²²

Both John Jarvis Jones (1862-1933) and his wife, Ora Ellington Jones, had received their bachelor's degree from Bennett College in Greensboro and were teaching in Winston-Salem. Upon moving to Mount Airy with their children, they began efforts to acquire a new school building and another teacher, succeeding at both. The new building was a three-room frame structure in a more centralized location on Virginia Street and was named Virginia Street Elementary School. Classes for approximately eighty students in grades one through seven began in the fall of 1915. Discipline was important to J. J. Jones, and he taught a broad range of subjects to the older students, including his favorite Latin and algebra. He encouraged them to continue their education beyond what they could get at the Virginia Street school, but this was difficult, as there was no high school for black students in Surry County. This meant that to continue their schooling, they would have to go out of the county to such places as Winston-Salem in neighboring Forsyth County, Palmer Memorial Institute (NR 1988) in Guilford County, or Mary Potter School in Granville County, or go out-of-state. Few were able take advantage of such options. Thus, Jones's goal was to eventually get a high school for black students in Surry County. Jones was not to see this goal achieved, for his health failed him, and he died in 1933. Thereafter, his widow, Ora, his daughter, Geraldine, and Fred D. Davis were left to continue working toward the accomplishment of J. J. Jones's dream. Geraldine Jones had received her master's degree from Columbia University after graduating from Winston-Salem State University. She continued to teach at what became J. J. Jones High School until it closed as a result of integration in 1966.²³

In 1936, Leonidas Harold Jones, youngest child of J. J. and Ora Jones, returned to Mount Airy after receiving his high school and college education. When his father died, he was a student at Palmer Memorial Institute, where he worked as head janitor, bus driver, president's chauffeur, and summer farm worker to earn his way through school. After graduating from Palmer, he attended West Virginia State College, where he again worked in various ways to pay for his education. In 1936, he graduated cum laude. He later received his master's degree from the University of West Virginia, with further study at Eastern Michigan University, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina. Jones's wife, Eleanor Sellers Jones, whom he

²² Laura A. W. Phillips, National Register nomination for W. F. Carter House, Surry County, NC, 1983, 8: 1.

²³ Edward McDaniels and Rodney Ray McDaniel, *Honor the Past Strengthen the Future*, Vol. 2, 1999, 13; Vol 1, 311; North Carolina Board of Health Bureau of Vital Statistics Standard Certificate of Death for John Jarvis Jones.

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married in 1941, was a graduate of Winston-Salem State University and later taught at J. J. Jones High School.²⁴

Leonidas Jones's return to Mount Airy coincided with the first school year, 1936-1937, in which Surry County's first high school for blacks, called Mount Airy Colored High School, was realized. Ninety students attended that first year, including forty-seven in the eighth grade, thirty-eight in the ninth grade, and five in the tenth grade.²⁵ L. H. Jones was hired to organize the high school and serve as its lead teacher, soon becoming its principal. From the start, there were serious problems to overcome, namely adequate facilities and transportation.²⁶

During the first year, classes were held in the vacated Oddfellows Lodge Hall on Virginia Street, but after one year, that facility was considered woefully inadequate. The following year, 1937-1938, high school classes moved to the three-room Virginia Street Elementary School. To solve the problem of inadequate space for both the elementary and high school classes, double sessions were held. The elementary grades used the building from 7:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and the high school classes met between 12:35 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.²⁷

The second problem was the lack of transportation to and from the school. During his first year at the school L. H. Jones solved that problem by picking up students from as far away as Pilot Mountain and Westfield in his own car. This obviously was not a tenable solution for the long term. A better solution, untaken in the second year, is an example of how throughout the history of the school, the black community had to come together to solve their problems in whatever way they could, because they rarely received adequate help from local and/or state government entities. At that time, the state maintained school buses, but local entities had to buy the buses. Surry County did not feel obligated to buy a bus for the black high school and Mount Airy said they did not have the money to buy a bus for the school. Instead, the determination of the black community built the bus. The P.T.A. raised \$150 to purchase an old truck, and local black citizens acquired an old bus body. Then the two were combined to create a bus to transport students to the school.²⁸

²⁴ Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 7; "Heritage of Teaching: Jones Family Has Had a Big Impact on Education in Surry," in McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 310; Typescript resume for Leonidas H. Jones.

²⁵ High School Principal's Annual Report, North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1936-1937.

²⁶ Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12.

²⁷ Edward McDaniels and Rodney Ray McDaniel, *Honor the Past Strengthen the Future*, Vol. 2, 1999, 14.

²⁸ Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12; David E. Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County," Surry Community College, May 19, 1975, based on interview with L. H. Jones.

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Several events occurred during Mount Airy Colored High School's third year, 1938-1939. First, two additional teachers were added to the faculty. Second, the first three students graduated from the high school program, which ended with the eleventh grade. Third, the misfortune of another school had a major impact on the future of the high school. In 1938, Ararat Colored Graded School, a Rosenwald school built just north of Mount Airy in 1921-1922, was destroyed by fire. Meanwhile, the city and state condemned the school building on Virginia Street. Funds for a new school came from combining money raised by local black organizations, funds from the Ararat School, and funding from the Mount Airy City Schools. Even the high school students donated small amounts of money for the new school. With the reputed added assistance of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a modern brick school was built on the site where the Ararat School had stood.²⁹ The new school is said to have cost \$14,000.³⁰

According to the 1941 yearbook of the Mount Airy Colored High School, the new school building was dedicated on December 10, 1940. The seniors for the year 1940-1941 were proud to be the first class to graduate from the new building. Their words—that “the school symbolized the fulfillment of the dreams of many far-sighted people”—probably reflected the feelings of the entire black community. With the completion of the school, students continued to contribute money toward its betterment, with every grade in the 1940-1941 school year giving small amounts of money toward the purchase of auditorium chairs.³¹

When built in 1940, the Mount Airy Colored High School was a modern, one-story, red-brick school with a flat roof and a multitude of windows. The building was composed primarily of ten classrooms and an auditorium. Facing north, the two parts were distinguishable from each other. The taller section on the east side with a central door flanked by tall windows was the auditorium. On the west side, the classrooms were aligned in a north-south wing that was shorter in height than the auditorium and had a central corridor. The entrance was at the north end of classroom block, and grouped windows carried along the east and west sides of the wing.

²⁹ Edward McDaniels and Rodney Ray McDaniel, *Honor the Past Strengthen the Future*, Vol. 2, 1999, 14; “Class History” from 1942 Yearbook in McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2. Assistance from the WPA is mentioned in a variety of secondary sources, including McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2, 14 and Diamont, “Black Schools in Surry County.” However, no direct information concerning the WPA’s role in the building of this school has been found in WPA records, in the City of Mount Airy School Board Minutes, or in an April 1939 newspaper article entitled “Surry County Has Twelve WPA Projects Valued at \$251,000.”

³⁰ Presentation to Surry County Commissioners by J. J. Jones High School Alumni Chapter, February 21, 2000.

³¹ “Class History” from 1941 Yearbook in McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2; “Class History” from 1942 Yearbook in McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2.”

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Toward the south end, because of the change in topography, there were rooms at ground level beneath the main-floor rooms.³²

According to the building plans, John Martin Franklin (1909-1993) of Elkin, Surry County, was the architect for the new school. A 1931 graduate of North Carolina State College in architecture and engineering, most of Franklin's work was in North Carolina, although he was also licensed in Virginia. In the AIA directories, he listed several schools among his work, including Franklin Primary School (1958) in Surry County, North Surry High School (1959), Surry Central High School (1961), and Elkin High School Auditorium (1963), but he did not mention his earlier work at Mount Airy Colored School. He was elected to membership in the American Institute of Architects in 1945. He retired at the end of 1976.³³

Mount Airy Colored High School was accredited by the state in 1941.³⁴ With the greatly enlarged school facility, which served elementary students as well as those in high school, the faculty was also increased to eight teachers. This was the only high school for black youth in Surry County, but it also served some students from Stokes County as well as from Patrick County, Virginia.³⁵ According to the High School Principal's Annual Reports in the State Department of Public Instruction, Division of Negro Education, during the 1941-1942 school year, the high school continued to offer grades eight through eleven. However, in the 1942-1943 school year, the eighth grade was eliminated from the high school block of grades, and the twelfth grade was added.

The Supervisor of Negro High Schools for North Carolina was tasked with visiting the various schools and reporting on their conditions, needs, proficiencies, and deficiencies in order to advise local superintendents and principals. On September 23, 1943, State Supervisor A. E. Manley reported on his visit to the high school in Mount Airy. According to Manley, Principal [L. H.] Jones was doing a good job, and he pointed out four commendable features: 1) a wholesome environment evidenced by attractive grounds and tidy classrooms; 2) the personal cleanliness of pupils; 3) the program of studies; and 4) teachers of both races hold grade level meetings to

³² Architect's plans and early photographs.

³³ George S. Koyl, ed., *American Architects Directory* (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1962), 225; John F. Gane, ed., *American Architects Directory* (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1970), 294; Alexander C. Robinson III, Letter to John Martin Franklin, April 10, 1945; John M. Franklin, Letter to The American Institute of Architects, June 20, 1978.

³⁴ "Accredited High Schools for Negroes in North Carolina for the School Year Beginning September 1956," State Department of Public Instruction.

³⁵ "The History of J. J. Jones School 1914-1966," McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2, 14.

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discuss educational problems they have in common; these meetings serve to promote better understanding and good will.³⁶

During the two decades following the opening of the Mount Airy Colored High School—which always served elementary grades as well—most black elementary schools throughout the county closed and consolidated with the school in Mount Airy because of its far superior facilities. These schools included Combstown (2 teachers/53 students), Sandy Level (2 teachers/73 students), Devotion, which had burned earlier, Little Richmond (1 teacher/31 students), Pilot Mountain (1 teacher/26 students), Pisgah (1 teacher/24 students), Red Brush (1 teacher/26 students), Rockford, and Shoals. Eventually, the only elementary schools for black children in Surry County other than the one in Mount Airy were the schools in Elkin and Ridge-Westfield. The school in Mount Airy remained the only high school for black students in the county.³⁷

In 1945, city officials changed the name of the school for black students in Mount Airy from the Mount Airy Colored High School to the J. J. Jones High School, although it also included the elementary grades. This was a tribute to John Jarvis Jones, who had developed the foundation for better educational opportunities for black youth in Surry County and whose goal had always been to establish a high school. Although J. J. Jones had died before that goal was achieved, his son, Leonidas H. Jones, carried forward the torch, serving as the widely respected principal of the school from 1936 until the high school closed with racial desegregation in 1966.³⁸

Through the years, most improvements at the school were achieved only through a great deal of effort exerted by the school, itself, or by the school and Mount Airy's black community working together. In this, the school was fortunate to have the creative leadership of its ever-resourceful Principal Jones. One of the best examples of this was the building of the school's first gymnasium, which doubled as an auditorium.

Prior to the late 1940s, the school's football and basketball teams practiced on a dirt field and court next to the school. If the weather was bad, they simply couldn't practice. Games had to be

³⁶ Supervisor's Report for the Month of September 1943, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Negro Education.

³⁷ Diamont, "Black Schools in Surry County;" Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, June 30, 1954.

³⁸ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 2, 14. Some secondary sources give 1948 as the year for the school's name change, but the 1944-1945 Principal's Annual Report (and thereafter) lists the name of the school as J. J. Jones High.

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played in a warehouse.³⁹ Beginning in 1947 and continuing into the 1948 school year, the high school undertook a project that was not only impressive at the time for its scale and purpose, but remains perhaps the most talked about event associated with the school nearly three quarters of a century later, continuing to elicit a strong sense of pride in the black community. The project, to build a separate concrete-block and brick-veneer structure on campus for a combination gymnasium/auditorium, was intended to provide much-needed recreational and cultural facilities for both the Jones students and Mount Airy's black community.⁴⁰

When first planning their project, school officials found that no money would be available to them from Mount Airy, Surry County, or the state. Consequently, they raised \$2,000 themselves in the black community through popular subscriptions. The Mount Airy School Board later allowed \$4,000 from the sale of an abandoned elementary school building to be used for the proposed building. In addition to the total capital of \$6,000, in-kind materials and labor made up the difference in what was needed to realize the building. To save money, lumber was either salvaged from abandoned buildings at the fairground or was purchased directly from local sawmills. A local automobile dealer, who was excavating large amounts of rock to enlarge his building, donated much of the rock to the school, which students then broke up to use in the concrete.⁴¹

The use of student labor provided great savings on the project. Except for the roof, the gymnasium/auditorium was built primarily by the students—mostly juniors and seniors. Principal Jones arranged with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to hire E. T. Sellers, a mason and retired brickmaster from Chapel Hill, to serve as a vocational instructor of “trowel trades,” as it was listed in the 1946-1947 Principal's Annual Report. Mr. Sellers taught the students to make concrete blocks, which were used for the base of the building and as the support for the brick veneer, and to lay bricks. He supervised all the work, much of which had to be redone until it met his standards of skilled quality. In the basement of the building today can be seen stacks of bricks and painted boards and hooks on one wall showing exactly where each tool was to be stored when not in use.⁴²

³⁹ Mac Heffner, “L. H. Jones Auditorium Benefited Many Students in the Area” (newspaper article, name of paper, place, and date not given [2003 or after]).

⁴⁰ As built in 1940, the school already had an auditorium, but by including an auditorium in the proposed building, the original space could be devoted to the library. The project was underway by June, 1947, but the Annual Principal's Report provided to the state did not note until the 1948-1949 school year that the school had a gymnasium.

⁴¹ “Surry High School Pupils Build \$30,000 Gymnasium,” *Winston-Salem Journal and Sentinel*, June 8, 1947, 2B.

⁴² Ibid.

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The resulting building, valued at \$30,000, had a gymnasium/auditorium on the main floor measuring eighty-eight feet long and fifty-two feet wide with collapsible bleachers that could provide seating for 800 people. A twelve-by-thirty-foot stage was built at the east end, and a balcony with two classrooms was built at the west end.⁴³ (When a new gymnasium was built in 1961-1962, the auditorium in this building was remodeled.)

With completion of the gymnasium/auditorium, another problem presented itself that the school was left to solve on its own—the lack of a reliable water supply for the gym. The school's well was inadequate, and the school was located beyond the city's water line, with no money available to make the connection. So Principal Jones and male students hand-dug a trench and laid pipes from Springs Road to the gym to provide water for the new building.⁴⁴

Three additions to J. J. Jones High School were built in close succession in the 1950s. As elementary schools for black children around the county closed and sent their children to Jones School, it required more classroom space. Two additions initially addressed this need in the 1950s, both designed by the school's original architect, John Martin Franklin. Both were extensions to the south end of the classroom wing. Franklin designed the first, which consisted of four classrooms, two on either side of a continuation of the center hall, and a stair on the main floor and a cafeteria and institutional kitchen on the ground floor, in June 1951. However, by the end of July 1952 the plans still had not been advertised for bids due to the architect's delay in completing the plans for the heating and lighting. This resulted in the school board instructing the superintendent to contact Mr. Franklin to discuss the situation with him. This apparently took care of the matter, for the first addition was built soon thereafter, being completed during the 1952-1953 school year.⁴⁵

Only a short time after the first addition was built, the need arose for more classrooms for the elementary grades. Both the Sandy Level and Pisgah schools in the county were closing, and those pupils needed a new school home. The Surry County Board of Education wanted them to attend J. J. Jones High School. In June 1954, the Mount Airy City Board of Education agreed to this, on the condition that the County Board provided funds to construct the necessary additional classrooms. The agreement was made, and the Mount Airy Board proceeded to have plans drawn for the project, once again engaging architect J. M. Franklin for the work. However, as before,

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12.

⁴⁵ J. M. Franklin, Addition to Mount Airy Colored School, June 1951; Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, July 28, 1952.

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there were problems with the timeliness of Franklin's work. At their meeting on January 27, 1955, the Board expressed displeasure at the architect's slowness in preparing the plans and instructed the Superintendent to inform Franklin that if he could not do the work at an early date, it would be necessary to employ another architect. As with the project for the first addition, this nudging of the architect worked, for by April, he had completed his plans, the project had been advertised for bids, and the contracts had been awarded.⁴⁶ The 1955 addition, built at the south end of the classroom wing, consisted of two classrooms and a continuation of the central hall on the main floor and two classrooms with two small restrooms on the ground floor. Since it was at the end of the building, an exterior fire stair led from the end of the hall to the ground.⁴⁷

The last construction in the 1950s came with the addition of a band room to the front (west end) of the gymnasium/auditorium. At their meeting on February 10, 1956, the Mount Airy School Board approved the tentative plans submitted by Hutchins and Adams, Architects and Engineers, of Statesville.⁴⁸ Thomas H. Hutchins studied at North Carolina State College in 1937-1940, at Stanford University in 1944, and then finished up at North Carolina State College in 1946-1947. After working for several firms, he established his own firm in 1949. Many of his projects were for schools and a variety of public buildings.⁴⁹ For the band room addition at Jones School, he estimated that the materials would cost about \$5,000; the school was to supply the labor. As they had done for the gymnasium/auditorium itself, students built the majority of the one-story, brick-veneered band room, this time under the supervision of industrial arts teacher Levi Gee.⁵⁰ Apparently the work began in 1956 and continued into the 1957-1958 school year, for in his annual report to the state for the year 1955-1956, Principal Jones reported, "Building band room." For the year 1956-1957, he commented, "Constructing band room." Finally, in the 1957-1958 report, he was able to write, "New music room."⁵¹

The building of the gymnasium/auditorium and the addition of the band room addressed the importance of extracurricular activities at J. J. Jones High School, particularly athletics and music. These brought enjoyment to the students and were a source of pride to the school and to the black community at large. After playing in various tobacco warehouses, the student-built gym drew capacity crowds, and during two years the football team played in the state

⁴⁶ Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, June 30, 1954, September 21, 1954, January 27, 1955, April 25, 1955.

⁴⁷ J. M. Franklin, Alterations and Additions No. 2, Mount Airy Colored School, February 1955.

⁴⁸ Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, February 10, 1955.

⁴⁹ George S. Koyl, ed., *American Architects Directory* (New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1956), 266.

⁵⁰ Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, February 10, 1955; "Students Build a Gymnasium," Text for exhibit on J. J. Jones High School at Mount Airy Museum of History.

⁵¹ Principal's Annual Report, 1955-1956, 1956-1957, 1957-1958.

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championship. Both the marching band and the concert band received awards in competition. The marching band, which consisted of fifty instrument-playing members, was invited yearly to participate in Winston-Salem's Christmas parade—the only band in the area to receive this honor. The band also played in the Hillsville and Galax, Virginia parades.⁵² The J. J. Jones High School campus had tennis courts that were located in different places over time, depending on what space was available. At least one was built by hard-working students. Alumnus Bobby Scales, who helped built the gymnasium/auditorium, said that in the late 1940s or 1950, he and other students helped build a tennis court where the present 1961-1962 gymnasium stands. Tony Carter, another alumnus, says that he remembers there being two tennis courts across the road at one time.⁵³

Both the athletic and music programs came with expenses that required the generosity of many people to support. Students did their part, too. For example, in 1962, the football team held a scrap paper drive in the community to raise the money needed for purchasing two football training slides. In order to pay for band uniforms, the faculty members initiated a fund. Each teacher paid for one uniform, an act of tremendous generosity and loyalty on their part, given their salaries and the cost of the uniforms. The rest of the money came from fund-raising events in the community. Starting in 1959, the Lions Club of Mount Airy, a white organization, began to hold an annual barbeque chicken dinner at the school. Since this was still during the time of segregation, there were actually two dinners held on consecutive nights—one for white patrons and one for black patrons. The money raised helped provide band uniforms and instruments for the school. In 1960, the Lions Club raised \$650 for the J. J. Jones Athletic Association. The following year, \$600 was raised to buy new French horns. In 1964, the \$700 proceeds from the barbeque dinners paid for new band uniforms. Local support for programs at J. J. Jones High School helped it achieve its goals.⁵⁴

In 1960-1962, toward the end of its period as a segregated school, J. J. Jones High School undertook a major expansion and remodeling that cost approximately \$275,000. According to Bruce Tharrington, Superintendent of Mount Airy Schools, the work had been needed for some time due to the increased student enrollment. Speaking in the summer of 1961, he said that there were then around 650 students at the school.⁵⁵

⁵² Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12.

⁵³ Bobby Scales and Tony Carter, Interviews by Laura A. W. Phillips, Mount Airy, NC, July 23, 2019.

⁵⁴ Eleanor Jones, "J. J. Jones School Carries on a Rich Tradition," (*The Mount Airy News*, May 26, 1992), 12. McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 97, 112, 148, and 253.

⁵⁵ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 128.

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In February 1960, the Mount Airy School Board voted to secure the services of Winston-Salem architect Hall Crews (1894-1966) for the project. Crews attended Columbia University for a year, followed by a brief internship with New York architect Edward L. Tilton. He then returned to Winston-Salem, where architect Willard Northup hired him in 1917. In 1923, Crews became the first architect to pass North Carolina's new licensing exam. He remained with the firm of Northup and O'Brien until 1925 and later established a sole proprietorship that he operated until his death.⁵⁶

The project included a new west wing with a gymnasium with bleachers and accompanying locker rooms, showers, and restrooms; a science department, a home economics department—all on the ground level—and two classrooms, administrative offices, hall lockers for high school students (for the first time), and restrooms on the main level that corresponded with the main level of the older school. In the 1940 building, the original auditorium was remodeled for use solely as the library. Since exterior doors were not needed for the library, the north (front), east end, and south (rear) doors were removed and replaced with windows. Where the stage had been at the east end of the former auditorium, a book storage room, a work room, a conference room, and a first aid room were all created. The previous gymnasium/auditorium built in 1947-1948 was renovated with a new stage and dressing rooms to make it a dedicated auditorium. A covered walkway was built connecting the auditorium with the 1940 building. According to the plans, this was to be an enclosed walkway, but as built, it was a covered breezeway. In addition, a new, greatly needed, sewage disposal system was built. (The current capacity at the time handled 3,500 gallons per day, whereas the needed capacity was 7,500 gallons per day, the result being an odor nuisance.) Sidewalks were also laid around the driveway. Initially, renovation of the kitchen and cafeteria had also been scheduled, but they were dropped from the schedule due to lack of funds.⁵⁷

Architect Crews's plans are dated August 1960. An advertisement for bids for the project appeared in the Mount Airy paper on September 9, 1960, and bids were reviewed by the School Board on the fifth of October, when Wilson-Covington Construction Company was selected as the general contractor. Community Plumbing and Heating Company was chosen for the plumbing and heating contracts, and Twin City Electrical Company was selected for the electrical work. According to Emma Jean Tucker, the west wing and new gymnasium had not

⁵⁶ Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, February 3, 1960; Heather Fearnbach, *Winston-Salem's Architectural Heritage* (Winston-Salem: Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission and City of Winston-Salem, 2015), 652.

⁵⁷ Hall Crews, Addition to and Changes in J. J. Jones High School, August 1960; Tony Carter, interview by Laura A. W. Phillips, Mount Airy, NC, July 23, 2019; Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, August 29, 1960; McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 128.

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been built when she graduated in 1961. However, much of the work must have been going on in 1961 and completed in the 1961-1962 school year, for in his 1961-1962 annual report to the state, Principal Jones was finally able to list all the changes that had taken place in the big project.⁵⁸

For several years immediately following the completion of the expansion and renovation project at J. J. Jones High School, both students and faculty were able to enjoy the new and upgraded facilities. However, other events were underway that had a profound effect on the future of the school. Ever since the 1954 U. S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racial segregation in public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the State of North Carolina, as did other Southern states, resisted desegregation. At the local level, school boards often funneled money and supplies to existing black schools and constructed new schools to dispute claims that they were underfunded and to quell any desires among the black community for integration.⁵⁹ As much as the 1961-1962 work at J. J. Jones High School had been needed for some time due to increased enrollment, as stated by Superintendent Tharrington, it may also have been, in part, an effort to discourage thoughts of desegregation in the black community. By 1964, most children in the South were still attending segregated schools, but that began to change rapidly after that year's passage of the Civil Rights Act that made desegregation a pre-requisite for receiving federal funding for schools.⁶⁰

Mount Airy initially adopted freedom of choice plans. In 1963, thirty-eight black students—thirty-seven of whom were from J. J. Jones School (five from the high school grades)—transferred, at their request, to other previously white schools in Mount Airy and the county. This continued until 1966, when the U. S. Office of Education declared freedom-of-choice plans to be unacceptable and required full integration of schools. On June 9, 1966, the Mount Airy School Board received a letter from the U. S. Office of Education ordering the formerly all-Negro J. J. Jones School closed as a Negro school and ordering that the students be assigned to other schools. However, with the loss of students over several years through the freedom-of-choice plans (even with the greatly improved facilities), the school board had already made the decision on May 11 to close the school as a segregated unit at the end of the 1965-1966 school year. Thus, the forty-eight-member class of 1966 was the last to graduate from J. J. Jones High School.⁶¹

⁵⁸ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 107; Minutes of the Mount Airy School Board, October 5, 1960; Emma Jean Tucker, Interview by Laura A. W. Phillips, Mount Airy, NC, July 23, 2019; Principal's Annual Report, 1961-1962.

⁵⁹ "The Troubled History of American Education after the Brown Decision." www.processhistory.org/american-education-after-brown/. Accessed August 17, 2019.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 290, 302; Principal's Annual Report, 1965-1966.

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With the closure of J. J. Jones High School, the career of Principal Leonidas H. Jones was far from over. As the principal of the school during its entire history as a high school, he had gained a reputation as a solid, innovative leader in the Mount Airy community. From 1966 to 1980, he served as Director of Special Programs for the Mount Airy city schools. Appointed by Governor Bob Scott, he was the first African American to serve on the North Carolina Board of Elections. In addition to serving as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Yadkin Valley Economic Development District, he served as an officer, member, or advisor to numerous local and state boards and councils. Jones's wife, Eleanor, went on to be librarian at Mount Airy High School and a member of the Surry County Community College Board of Trustees, at one time serving as chairman of the board. Jones's sister, Geraldine, continued teaching elementary grades at Flat Rock Elementary School and home economics at Mount Airy High School.⁶²

When J. J. Jones High School closed in 1966, that was not the end the campus's use as a school. Of the elementary schools in Mount Airy, it had the only modern facilities, especially after the renovations of 1961-1962. Most of the other schools had been built early in the century. For the 1966-1967 school year, the school board decided to use the campus as an elementary school in the new, totally integrated, school system. They wisely chose to retain the school's name, except that it became the J. J. Jones Elementary School.⁶³

In August 1967, only one year after J. J. Jones converted to an integrated elementary school, Winston-Salem architect Fred W. Butner Jr. (1927-2001) drew plans for a new classroom building at the school. This was the last addition to the campus. Butner was a 1949 graduate of North Carolina State University's Architectural Engineering program. He established his own practice in 1952, was president of the NCAIA in 1971, and became an AIA Fellow in 1974. Specializing in educational, religious, and governmental buildings, he designed more than 300 structures throughout the Southeast.⁶⁴

The one-story, brick-veneered, Modernist building is located south of the 1961-1962 gymnasium and west of the original classroom wing. A separate structure, it is attached to the other two sections of the school by covered breezeways. Consisting of three classrooms with halls between them, it appears to be three rectangles in an L formation. Two of the walls are decorated with

⁶² McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 311, 318; Typescript resume for Leonidas H. Jones.

⁶³ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 312; Tony Carter Interview.

⁶⁴ Fred W. Butner Jr. Associates, Classroom Addition, J. J. Jones Elementary School, Mount Airy, NC, August 1967; Heather Fearnbach, *Winston-Salem's Architectural Heritage* (Winston-Salem: Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission and City of Winston-Salem, 2015), 650.

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randomly placed glass blocks. Like the rest of the school, except the 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium, it has a flat roof.

The J. J. Jones Elementary School continued at its original campus until April 2004, when a new elementary school was built on Riverside Drive, retaining the same name.⁶⁵ To take its place, the Surry County Commission came to an agreement with the Yadkin Valley Economic Development District, Inc. (YVEDDI) in which YVEDDI would take over management of the campus. As a result, in September 2004, the former school re-opened for use as the L. H. Jones Family Resource Center, which it remains today. The multi-purpose facility, which is heavily used, provides needed space for a wide variety of non-profit organizations and public agencies that deliver and coordinate services for families, adults, and children. One program it serves is Head Start, for which it is the headquarters. This provides a link to the period of J. J. Jones High School, when in 1965, the school was one of two in Mount Airy to start the interracial preschool classes (Jones had two) in the federal program.⁶⁶

More than 600 students graduated from J. J. Jones High School during its thirty-year existence from 1936 to 1966. Many were there for all twelve years, which built a strong sense of solidarity in the community. On July 4, 1981, the alumni had a reunion to which approximately 350 former students came from places as far away as West Germany, Nebraska, California, Florida, Maryland, and New York. Other reunions followed, and in 1995, organizational meetings for an alumni association began. In 1998, the J. J. Jones High School Alumni Chapter, Inc. was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Since then, alumni meetings are held every two years, with 125 or more former students attending.⁶⁷ After more than a year of working toward an agreement, the Surry County Board of Commissioners conveyed the old gymnasium/auditorium to the J. J. Jones Alumni Chapter on February 6, 2003, to renovate, maintain, and use for alumni and community events. The building was being used for storage, and the alumni wanted to ensure its preservation into the future (along with the school). To them, it is a symbol of the hard work that always went into J. J. Jones High School and the immense pride that the students and the black community felt for the school when it was a high school and

⁶⁵ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 316.

⁶⁶ Wendy Byerly Wood, "A New Face for Old Jones School," *The Mount Airy News*, November 2, 2006; Eleanor Powell, "Old School Provides New Resource." (paper, place, and date not known).

⁶⁷ McDaniels and McDaniel, Vol. 1, 305, 306; "J. J. Jones High School Alumni Chapter, Mount Airy, NC." jjjoneshsalumni.org/aboutus.html. Accessed March 27, 2019. Emma Jean Tucker, Phone interview by Laura A. W. Phillips, August 17, 2019.

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still feel in retrospect. The building was named the L. H. Jones Auditorium for the school's only principal.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Surry County Deed Book 919, p. 907; J. J. Jones High School Alumni, Inc. Class Reunion Schedule of Activities for August 29-31, 2003.

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Evelyn Scales Thompson – July 23, 2019
Emma Jean Tucker, July 23 and August 2019

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Surry County, North Carolina

10. Geographical Data

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 36.530958 Longitude: -80.603483

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses Surry County tax parcel 502112859833 (8.53 acres – 215 Jones School Road – the main body of the school) and tax parcel 502112950958 (0.22 acres – 213 Jones School Road – the L. H. Jones Auditorium now owned by the J. J. Jones Alumni Association that is within the boundaries of the larger property) indicated by the heavy solid line on the boundary map. The total acreage of the two properties is 8.75.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property encompasses the historic buildings associated with J. J. Jones High School and the current tax parcels totaling 8.75 acres on which they stand that provide the appropriate setting for the historic school.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Name of property: J. J. Jones High School

City or vicinity: Mount Airy

County: Surry State: North Carolina

Photographer: Laura A. W. Phillips

Date photographed: May 19, 2019

Description and number of photographs:

1. Overview of front of school in setting from across Jones School Road, view to southeast.
2. 1940 school façade, view to south.
3. Overview of front of school from 1961-1962 gymnasium eastward to 1947-1948 auditorium, view to southeast.
4. 1947-1948 auditorium and 1956-1958 band room with entrance addition, view to southeast.
5. View to west, showing parts of east side of 1940, 1953, and 1955 sections of classroom wing and west side of 1947-1948 gymnasium/auditorium with 1956-1958 band room.
6. West side of 1940, 1953, 1955 classroom wing, view to southeast.

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7. West side of 1967-1968 elementary classroom building (noncontributing) and 1961-1962 gymnasium, view to northeast.
8. Hallway, 1940 classroom wing, view to north toward front entrance.
9. Classroom in 1953 addition, view to north.
10. Hallway, 1961-1962 classroom and administrative wing addition, view to east.
11. Interior of gymnasium, 1961-1962 addition, view to south.
12. Interior of 1947-1948 auditorium/gymnasium, view to east toward stage.
13. Interior of original auditorium in 1940 building (converted to library after 1948 and remodeled in 1961-1962), view to west toward former stage.

PROPERTY OWNERS

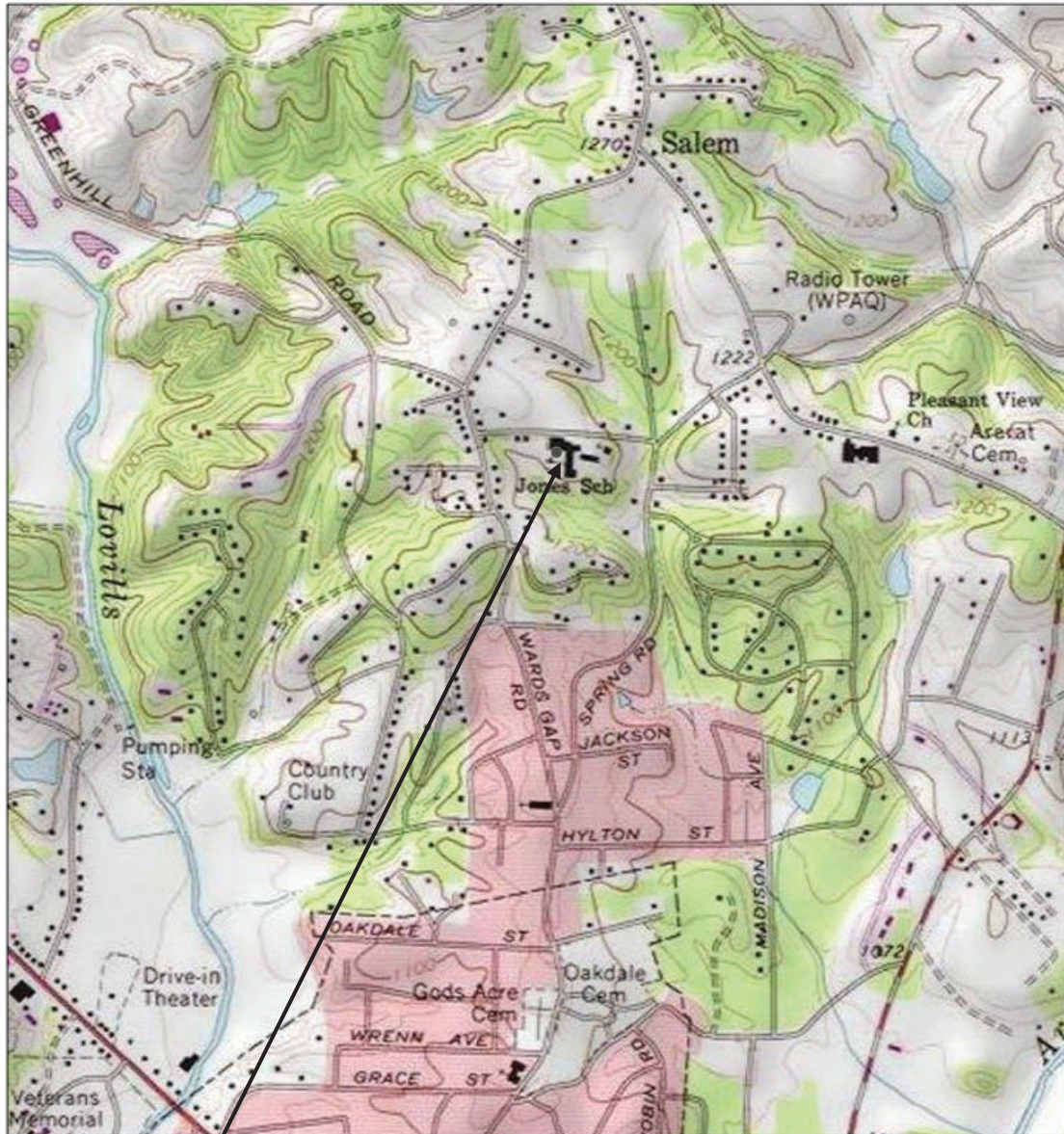
(215 Jones School Road)
Surry County
118 Hamby Road, Suite 333
Dobson, North Carolina 27017-0000

or
c/o Chris Knopf
Surry County Manager
114 W. Atkins Street
P. O. Box 1467
Dobson, North Carolina 27017
(336) 401-8201
knopfc@co.surry.nc.us

and

(213 Jones School Road)
J. J. Jones High School Alumni Chapter
P. O. Box 6753
Mount Airy, North Carolina 27030-6753
or
c/o Nancy Bowman-Williams, President (as of September 2020)
1425 Chesapeake Avenue
Annapolis, Maryland 21403
(410) 267-7814
Bowmanwilliams.nancy@verizon.net

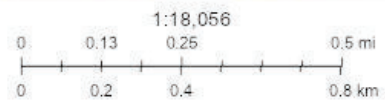
NATIONAL REGISTER LOCATION MAP



8/3/2020, 5:23:35 PM

J. J. Jones High School
213-215 Jones School Road
Mount Airy, Surry County
North Carolina

Map created by Laura A. W. Phillips,
Architectural Historian, 8-3-2020
Base map source: HPO HPOWEB,
U. S. Geological Survey map



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Latitude/Longitude: 36.530958/-80.603483

North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
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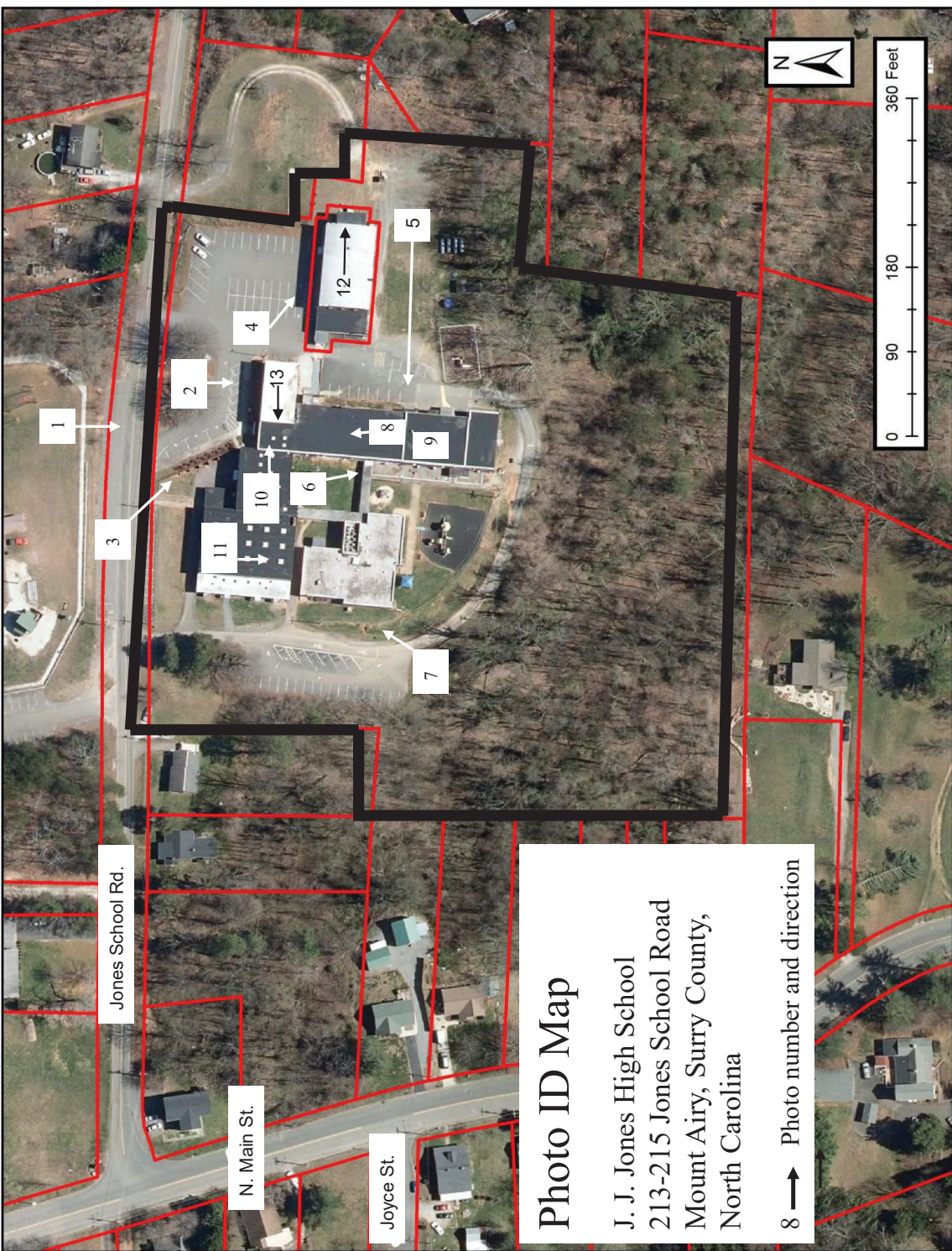


Photo ID Map

J. J. Jones High School
213-215 Jones School Road
Mount Airy, Surry County,
North Carolina

8 —> Photo number and direction

Map created by
Laura A. W. Phillips
Architectural Historian
August 2019
Base map source:
Surry County GIS Aerial
2018
gis.surryinfo.net/maps/