

Excerpt on Architecture
(Includes use of American Chestnut timber for construction)

DEVOTION RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
DRAFT OF RESEARCH FOR APPLICATION TO

National Register of Historic Places
National Register of Historic Lands

Compiled by William Noah Reynolds

SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Register of Historic Lands – Long Creek Farms was managed as an agricultural farm and a natural resource preserve in conjunction with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1935-1965. The Reynolds family, along with the Vanderbilt family, was responsible for re-introducing the non-existent white-tail deer back into western NC in the 1920s and 1930s. The property also hosts one of the largest concentrations of American Chestnut carpentry as most of the buildings were constructed from fallen trees after the species was destroyed by blight in the 1920s as a result of the importation of Chinese Chestnut Trees. Many of the original farming and wildlife management plans are still in possession, and Long Creek Farms was a major agricultural facility supplying butter, milk, trout, grains, and other products to the surrounding area.

Register of Historic Places – Richard J. Reynolds, Jr. was significantly involved in the Democratic Party from 1930-1945 as the Mayor of Winston-Salem, NC and the Treasurer of the Democratic National Committee for Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s 3rd term election campaign in 1940. Long Creek Farms or “Devotion” was modeled as a private version of FDR’s WPA and other works progress initiatives and was begun in 1933 and completed in 1939. The construction employed all of the residents of the Mitchell River area in Surry County for a period of seven years during the Great Depression and all material (wood, stone, etc) were extracted and crafted on site. The property also boasts the “mini- Hoover Dam.” Richard J. Reynolds left Winston-Salem and Long Creek Farms in 1942 to become a Lieutenant Commander on an Escort Carrier in the Pacific during World War II.

2.1 HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE - NCDOT DEVOTION RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Long Creek Farms, proposed site, enjoys historical significance as the product of the son of R. J Reynolds of the tobacco family. The land and buildings have been recommended for application for placement on the National Historic Register by the North Carolina Historic Architecture Roundtable, and the NC Department of Transportation has labeled the property as the “Devotion Rural Historic District”¹

**Below from draft by Richard Silverman – NCDOT Historic Architecture Raleigh, NC September 2005.*

History & Description

Developed by Richard Joshua Reynolds, Jr. and Elizabeth Dillard Reynolds during the period 1933-1939, “Devotion” was designed as a self-sustaining rural estate and summer retreat set in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western Surry County. The estate is located about ten miles east of Roaring Gap, a traditional summer retreat destination for Winston-Salem industrialists, businessmen, and professionals and their families.²

On January 1, 1933, twenty-seven-year-old Richard Joshua Reynolds, Jr. (1906-1964), the eldest son and namesake of the founder of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, married Elizabeth “Blitz” McCaw Dillard. The young couple moved to Reynolda, the large house and 1,000-acre estate that the elder R. J. Reynolds and wife Katherine had completed in 1917. Having only enjoyed the estate for a few months, the senior R. J. Reynolds passed away in 1918 at age sixty-eight. After his death, R. J. Reynolds’ brother, William Neal Reynolds assumed the presidency of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. “Uncle Will” remained in that position until 1931, when he was succeeded by Bowman Gray, Sr. As the nation experienced its darkest days of the Great Depression, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company experienced brisk sales of Camel cigarettes and Prince Albert pipe tobacco. In addition to these two best sellers, R. J. Reynolds marketed forty-eight brands of chewing tobacco and twelve brands of smoking tobacco.³ During the 1930s the company’s greatest concern was not the downturn of the

¹ -Letter to W .Noah Reynolds from Richard Silverman (NCDOT – Historic Architecture) October 30, 2006: RE B-3911, replace Bridge No .38 on SR 1330 over Saddle Mountain Creel Surry County, NC.

² Roaring Gap was developed in the late nineteenth century in neighboring Alleghany County.

³ Nannie M Tilley, *The R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985) One reason given for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company’s success during the Great Depression was that

national economy but the fear of losing sales to competing cigarette brands such as Chesterfields, Lucky Strikes, and Old Golds.⁴ With millions of unemployed Americans smoking cigarettes, Reynolds and other tobacco companies continued to thrive. A 1931 *Fortune* magazine article celebrated R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's status as "America's most profitable tobacco concern" with profits of some \$300 million a year.⁵

The year 1933 was an auspicious one for the recently wed R. J. Reynolds, Jr., for he was about to take possession of a large inheritance that included stocks, bonds, real estate, and cash. Though R. J. "Dick" Reynolds was not formally engaged in the management or business operations of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, he managed his financial affairs well, increasing his \$28-million inheritance to some \$50 million by World War II.⁶ In Winston-Salem the couple's social life revolved around throwing and attending parties, participating in a skeet shooting club, and racing trotting horses. With inheritance now in hand, Dick Reynolds and his wife Blitz turned their attention to a new project. Selecting a site in rural Surry County, approximately ten miles east of Winston-Salem's "summer colony" of Roaring Gap, Dick and Blitz Reynolds began purchasing large tracts of land to assemble their own rural retreat. The couple named the retreat "Devotion" to symbolize the feelings they held for one another.⁷

Among the early purchases in Surry County was a ninety-acre parcel, which included the extant main lodge of the Long Creek Fishing Club.⁸ Set upon a rock dam and overlooking a lake, the rustic architectural character of the Lodge must have made a strong impression upon the young couple. As the land purchases continued, the Reynolds initiated a seven-year-long building campaign to create a magnificent 11,000-acre rural retreat, to include an expanded lodge complex, working farm with dairy and beef operations, fish hatchery, chicken and turkey houses, pheasant house, skeet field and office, bowling green, store and post office, a scenic concrete and rock dam, and several dwellings.

Set within a diverse natural landscape, the expansive property rises from the valley of the Mitchell River to gently rolling pastures and fields and continues upward into rugged hill country, replete with mountain streams, wide glades, and forested knobs. Man-made landscape features range from small farm and fishing ponds, shimmering lakes, to a stunning concrete, rock-faced dam.⁹ Buildings and structures were designed according to naturalistic rustic traditions of design, incorporating many native materials from the site, such as river rock, quarried milky quartz rock, pine, oak, and wormy chestnut wood.

The construction of the Devotion estate (1933-1938) has been described as a private version of the New Deal programs endorsed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt.¹⁰ As with comparable government-funded WPA projects of the 1930s, workers and craftsmen obtained many of the construction materials directly from the Devotion site. This practice resulted in the maximization of labor, and therefore provided much needed employment for approximately three hundred Depression-era workers who resided in Surry and its neighboring rural counties. With a combined labor pool and abundant sources of native materials, the resulting Rustic buildings and structures at Devotion display the care given to material selection, construction methodology, and architectural detailing.

they invested far more into advertising than did their three main competitors, American, Liggett and Meyers, and P. Lorillard. Tilley 363.

⁴ Tilley, 363.

⁵ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990) 448.

⁶ RJR, Jr. held investments in Coca-Cola, Monsanto, Eastern AirLines, and Delta AirLines. When RJR, Jr. attempted to be elected to the board of the RJR Tobacco Co., he was blocked by his uncle, William Neal Reynolds and RJR chairman Bowman Gray, Sr. Presumably this rejection was due to RJR Jr.'s relatively young age and lack of business experience. His reputation for youthful indulgences, cast in the roaring 1920s, certainly did not help his case.

⁷ Patrick Reynolds and Tom Shachtman, *The Gilded Leaf*. (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1989) 184.

⁸ North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Study List Application, "Devotion-Long Creek Farm", unpublished document, 1992; a second Study List Application was prepared by Marion F. Venable in 2000.

⁹ The dam was recently restored by Charles C. McKinney.

¹⁰ North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Study List Applications, 1992 and 2000.

As large-scale construction efforts wound down during the late 1930s, larger external influences would shape the future of this estate. After World War II, it appeared that the period of the grand old family estates of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was quickly coming to an end. Large estates required a large pool of labor to maintain a sprawling complex of buildings and to service the many needs of family members and their never-ending streams of guests. The most significant change at Devotion came in 1946 when Dick and Blitz Reynolds decided to end their marriage.¹¹ As part of the divorce settlement, Blitz Reynolds was awarded sole ownership of the rural estate. For the next few years, she and the four Reynolds sons -Josh, Will, John, and Zach- lived year-round at Devotion. After Blitz Reynolds' death in 1961, the property was divided equally among her sons.¹² To this day, William Neal Reynolds II and other heirs of the Reynolds family possess large parcels of Devotion.¹³ In the 1990s Raleigh resident Charles C. McKinney purchased a key portion of the estate. During the past decade, Mr. McKinney has undertaken a major restoration of more than a dozen buildings and structures on the site, including repairs made to the large scenic dam, built of concrete and faced with native river rock. Under McKinney's continuing stewardship, one is able to sense the original rustic architectural character of this rare 1930s-era mountain estate designed for R. J. Reynolds, Jr. and Elizabeth D. Reynolds.

The Rustic Tradition

In gauging the significance of Devotion's simplified version of Rustic architecture, a brief introduction to the wider, national Rustic tradition proves useful. The broad intent of Rustic design is to impart the impression that a building or object was made by hand with simple tools from locally available materials, and completed to the highest level of abilities of the maker. From the 1870s to the years leading up to World War II, Rustic design in America sprang from the wider tradition of the Arts and Crafts movement which promoted a pre-industrial craft aesthetic in all aspects of design, to encompass landscape architecture, architecture as well as interior furnishings. Distinguishing Rustic architecture from the larger pattern of the Arts and Crafts, is the Rustic's primary goal of integrating buildings within a carefully composed natural setting. In its ideal form, architects and designers selected native materials, considered the visual effect of varying textures, and for the large part limited themselves to a range of colors by nature itself. In the final quarter of the nineteenth century, Rustic architecture is likely to be associated with mountain, wilderness, or lakeside vacation retreats. With nature itself as a visual backdrop, a building's site orientation, plan, arrangement of rooms, and wide use of porches and other outdoor transitioning features are deliberately used to accentuate views to and from the building. At its best, Rustic architecture is meant to be a part of a larger picturesque scene rather to contrast with the surrounding landscape. Though inherently limited to a narrow range of setting types, Rustic design proved to be extremely adaptable in qualities of architectural scale and in usage. For example, Rustic design principles could be applied, often with equal success, to the design a large hotel or for a small camp in the woods.

Some of the earliest Rustic-designed retreats were built in the 1870s in the Adirondack region of upstate New York. There, growing economic prosperity and improved railway transportation during the Gilded Age led to the rise of rural retreats set in the northern woods. William West Durant, the son of a Union Pacific railroad magnate and large private landholder, designed Rustic style buildings that were adaptations of Swiss chalets he had seen in Europe. Durant's "Great Camps" primarily used notched log construction for walls, decorative brackets for porches, balconies, and even for some interior furnishings. Great effort was made to use materials drawn from the immediate surroundings. Native stone was quarried for constructing foundations, chimneys, retaining walls, and steps. Whether applied to the design of a health resort, hotel, guesthouse, or lakeside cottage, Durant's Rustic architecture appealed to wealthy industrialists and professional city dwellers who longed for the image of a wilderness escape. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the Rustic architectural approach developed in the Adirondack region of New York had become an accepted national model for wilderness retreat architecture.

Summer Colonies in Western North Carolina

¹¹ Reynolds and Shachtman, 231.

¹² Elizabeth D. Reynolds is buried at the site of the bowling green at Devotion.

¹³ Surry County, North Carolina, Interactive Geographic Information System Data Explorer.

Prior to the advent of the nationally popular Rustic architecture, vacation houses and mountain retreats in North Carolina often were clustered in “summer colonies” with Flat Rock in Henderson County perhaps being the earliest. Beginning in the 1820s Flat Rock primarily drew residents of Charleston, South Carolina who sought to escape the stifling low country summer heat.¹⁴ In nineteenth century Flat Rock, houses were built in a variety of nationally and regionally popular forms and often incorporated deep porches and the use of long windows. Later in the nineteenth century, new rail connections and improved road access led to the development of the summer mountain retreats of Blowing Rock in Watauga County, Linville in Avery County, and Little Switzerland in McDowell County. The rise of these summer colonies can be attributed to the emerging wealth of Piedmont industrialists who longed for picturesque scenery and refreshing mountain air. Generally, these summer mountain communities can be described as “colonies” in that residents from a particular city were drawn to build alongside members of their own class. For example, Linville attracted many of its families from Wilmington, whereas Little Switzerland drew many of its summer residents from Charlotte.¹⁵ Highlands was laid out in 1875 by Kansas entrepreneur Samuel T. Kelsey and others as a summer resort, and in 1888 Kelsey initiated development of another resort community, Linville. Roaring Gap was created in the 1890s as a retreat for Winston-Salem businessmen and their families.¹⁶

Roaring Gap: Summer Colony for Winston-Salem

Roaring Gap, located in the Blue Ridge of Alleghany County, became the preferred summer destination for the growing class of wealthy industrialists and professionals residing in Winston-Salem. Developments like Roaring Gap were created as real estate speculations and mountain developments that worked in tandem with the interests of railroads to serve an emerging professional leisure class. The conception of Roaring Gap as a summer mountain retreat is attributed to Hugh Gwyn Chatham, an Elkin textile industrialist and president of the Elkin and Alleghany Railroad. He and a group of Winston-Salem businessmen organized a summer resort company, which led to the construction of the Roaring Gap Hotel, a three-story shingled building which opened in 1894. Among the guests from Winston were William Blair, Henry Fries, James A. Gray, and R. J. Reynolds. In *The Gilded Leaf*, a multi-generation social history of the Reynolds family, Patrick Reynolds states, “The Reynolds brothers now helped to found the summer colony of Winston. This was Roaring Gap, a resort of spectacular scenic beauty, high in the mountains ninety miles northwest of the city. The big hotel there was considered a fine one...”

At Roaring Gap summer vacation homes were simple, one- or two-story, wooden frame structures clad in weatherboards or in wood shingles and featuring deep porches or wraparound verandahs. By the 1920s, however, Rustic architecture had become an accepted and popular form of architectural expression for houses in mountain resort colonies. When Bowman Gray, the president of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, commissioned the Winston-Salem architecture firm of Northrup and O’Brien to design his summer home in Roaring Gap, a rustic design was developed. According to a National Register nomination prepared by Mattson, Alexander, & Associates, Inc. Bowman Gray’s 1929 “Rock House” is a rambling, rock and chestnut-bark-clad design that emphasizes the use of native materials.¹⁷ The residence displays such hallmarks of Rustic Revival architecture, including massive stone chimneys and fireplaces, exposed timber trusses, and porches, decks, and terraces that afford magnificent sweeping views of the Yadkin River Valley. Gray’s summer home survives among a collection of about a dozen other Rustic houses built in the picturesque environs of Roaring Gap.¹⁸ Many 1920s Rustic vacation houses and retreats in Winston-Salem’s elite summer colony of Roaring Gap prove to be a challenge to locate. Typically, houses were sited on private, heavily wooded lots and were not meant to be seen from a highway. While some architectural historians speculate that perhaps a dozen or so Rustic vacation homes

¹⁴ Mattson, Alexander, & Associates, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Rock House, Roaring Gap, North Carolina. Unpublished document in the possession of the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Section 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Section 8.

¹⁶ Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern and Jennifer F. Martin. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999) 373.

¹⁷ Mattson, Alexander & Associates, Rock House National Register Nomination, Section 8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

and retreats exist in Roaring Gap, additional field survey preceded by interviews with established families of the Winston-Salem's summering elite may prove insightful.

The Reynolds Estate at Devotion

The economic fallout of the Great Depression slowed the construction of Rustic retreats in Roaring Gap and throughout Western North Carolina. One family's fortunes, however, seemed immune to the national economic decline that spanned the decade of the 1930s. R. J. Reynolds, Jr. and Elizabeth D. Reynolds began purchasing land in western Surry County approximately ten miles east of neighboring Alleghany County's elite summer colony of Roaring Gap. During the years 1933-1939, the Reynolds developed a rare, Depression-era Rustic retreat that ultimately encompassed 11,000 acres of valley, hills, and wilderness.

The concept for Devotion combined several broad aspects of large estate development found in North Carolina. At one end of the spectrum was the tradition of the gentleman's hunting and fishing lodges. In the late nineteenth century, recreational hunting and fishing continued to be popular pastimes among well-to-do individuals. Many wealthy businessmen wanted to escape industrialized cities for the relatively undeveloped countryside where large tracts of woodlands and fields created an ideal setting for their outdoor pursuits.¹⁹ Architecturally, hunting lodges, fishing lodges, and country estates, though serving somewhat specific purposes, shared common elements of planning. Generally they were situated in rural areas, contained spacious residences, and were designed to accommodate leisurely recreation as well as elaborate entertainment.²⁰ At the top of the social hierarchy, these lodges and rural estates required a staff of servants, contained abundant technological conveniences, and displayed a unified design of house and landscape that exhibited the owner's tastes.²¹

During the period in which R. J. Reynolds, Jr. and Elizabeth D. Reynolds conceived of Devotion, there also existed two large Reynolds-owned estates with which the young couple would have maintained intimate familiarity. Tanglewood Farm, the country estate of R. J. Reynolds' uncle, William Neal Reynolds, followed the model of the gentleman's rural estate and equestrian farm. Tanglewood's Manor House, originally built in 1859, with additions by Reynolds in the 1920s, is the focal point of what was an 1,100-acre estate.²² The surviving equestrian area and barns, horse track, gardener's house, meadows, paddocks, bottom lands, woodlands, maple and boxwood allees, and greenhouse recall a fleeting, though historically significant, period of twentieth-century rural estate development by a wealthy North Carolina tobacco entrepreneur.

Reynolda, the primary residence of R. J. Reynolds and Katherine Smith Reynolds, followed the Philadelphia country house model. Built to the designs of architect Charles Barton Keen and landscape architect Thomas Sears, this country house and estate was conceived as principal residence, blending private luxury with a concern for progressive paternalism and agricultural and social reform.²³ A working "farm" expressed the idea of a "model, producing country estate" to provide a healthful family home. The farm also served to demonstrate modern agricultural methods and domestic science to rural men and women. Reynolda's spacious grounds also included an ideal "village" with a school, church, housing, and landscaped gardens accessible to the community.²⁴

In concept, Devotion borrowed from aspects of the country estate model, hunting and fishing lodge design trends, and the equestrian features of a gentleman's farm. Like Reynolda, Devotion was designed to be all encompassing

¹⁹Heather Fearnbach, Vanessa Patrick, and Richard Silverman, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report for U-2913 A & B, Guilford County, North Carolina. Unpublished document in possession of the Historic Architecture Section, March 2001. See Richard Silverman's "Historic and Architectural Context for Project Area" 10-15.

²⁰ Bishir, 445.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Richard Silverman, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report for B-3835, Davie and Forsyth Counties, North Carolina. Unpublished document in possession of the Historic Architecture Section, November 2002.

²³ Bishir, 445-446.

²⁴ Ibid.

and self-sustaining, especially with respect to the development of infrastructure, utilities, and the idea of including a working farm. As with Reynolda, Devotion included a functional dairy farm that exhibited the image of a “model, producing country estate.” While Devotion began with these ideals in mind, it eventually expanded to become a large-scale Depression-era construction site in which workers and craftsmen lived onsite in bunkhouses that were later converted to guest houses. The centerpiece at Reynolda is a modestly presented “mega-bungalow” rendered in wood, stucco, and green tiles. At Devotion, the Long Creek Lodge is the closest approximation of a main building. Enlarged by the Reynolds to approximately 10,000 square feet, Long Creek Lodge, like Reynolda House, makes no attempt to appear palatial. Rather, it embraces the natural setting and complements, without overtaking, the scattering of smaller recreational and agricultural buildings designed to sustain the broader activities taking place on the estate. Given the importance of natural site features at Devotion, it makes sense that the most impressive structure on the estate is a seven-hundred-foot-long by ninety-foot-high scenic dam boldly constructed of poured concrete and masterfully lined in river rock.

Land Acquisition and Estate Development

According to a pair of North Carolina Historic Preservation Office study list applications, a thirty-acre tract, purchased on September 19, 1933 was the first of at least forty-five acquisitions in Surry County made between 1933 and 1942.²⁵ When Dick and Blitz Reynolds purchased Devotion, there stood an existing lodge building constructed in the 1920s by the Long Creek Fishing Club. Among those who formed the fishing club’s corporation were the Chathams, the family who had founded the resort community of Roaring Gap in the 1890s.²⁶ At Devotion, the Reynolds expanded the Long Creek Lodge and began a decade-long campaign of piecing together acquired properties and constructing buildings in a naturalistic Rustic architecture reminiscent of the original lodge.

In creating Devotion, the homes and farms of the Pardue, Thompson, and Wrenn families were absorbed into the Reynolds’ holdings. These land acquisitions included a five-mile trail, named the Thompson Gap Trail, which begins at the front of the property at 1,500 feet above sea level and travels up the mountain to access Roaring Gap at 3,000 feet. This trail was used by early settlers who wished to travel to the top of the mountain and is still passable today. Today, a nineteenth-century farmhouse and cemetery are still found on the Devotion property. These remnants form an interesting historical and visual counterpoint to the 1930s stylized, architect-designed Rustic buildings which, ironically, were meant to convey a sincere expression of dwelling within a rural mountain setting.

The large scale of Devotion’s property, the need to develop associated infrastructure, and the desire to engage in a variety of recreational and farming uses, required the labor and skills of at least three hundred workers, craftsmen, farm laborers, and servants. During a seven-year construction campaign, workers and servants lived in small residences arrayed on an estate which combined aspects of a rural retreat and seemingly perpetual construction site. With an estate-controlled general store, post office, dairy operation, chicken house, pheasant house, fish hatchery, stables, cattle farm/slaughter house, scenic concrete and rock dam, power house, carpenter shop, movie theater, large hunting lodge complex, and houses, the wide diversity of uses gathered on this site had no precedent in rural Surry County.

Many of the principles that underlay the development of Devotion can be attributed to the philosophy of Roosevelt’s WPA programs. To provide labor for as many workers for as long as possible, construction materials, if at all possible, were obtained from the immediate site. Interestingly, the development of the property in the 1930s coincided with the demise of the now extinct native wormy chestnut tree. Rather than allowing this wonderful natural resource to die off and rot on the forest floor, workers at Devotion were able to harvest the chestnut and use this valuable wood to construct many of the buildings on the property. Along with the local harvesting of trees, all of the rock for foundations, walls, and chimneys was blasted or collected from the

²⁵ See footnote number eight, this report.

²⁶ Ibid.

property. River rock was harvested from the Mitchell River and other streams and creeks that course through the 11,000 acre property.²⁷

Architectural Description & Inventory

The well-designed collection of modestly built, Rustic designs at Devotion maintain a consistent architectural appearance of simple forms which incorporate a limited palate of natural materials. As a rule, the majority of roof forms are gabled, or as an alternative, formed by an offset gable in which the rear pitch is generally foreshortened. In either case, all roofs display a projecting eave treatment to provide an appropriate means of shedding water in this oftentimes damp climate. Walls are covered in natural materials, with either a combination of board-and-batten and weatherboard or simply weatherboard alone. Most buildings are lit by single unit (rather than double or ganged) six-over six, double-hung-sash windows. Deeply recessed porches, primarily of engaged type, provide comfortable spaces to transition from indoors to outdoors.

In conceiving the image of a rural wilderness retreat, architect and builder Augustus Constantine and Roy P. Wallace gave much attention to the relationships of building components, selection of materials, textures, and finishes. Broad and prominent gable and offset-gable roofs, for example, were given additional visual interest with the use of shed, and more often gable dormers. Typically covering roofs were wood shingles, a natural material that added yet another layer of rusticity. While today all roofs are covered with asphalt shingles, parcels controlled by Charles McKinney display a shade of dark brown asphalt shingle that works to compliment the color of the dark-stained weatherboards covering the walls below.

Interestingly, there are no 1930s-era log-constructed buildings to be found at Devotion. Far more than any other material, log became the most recognizable and identifiable image within the canon of early twentieth century Rustic architectural design. At Devotion, a literal, graphic, and often exaggerated expression of the rustic is not seen. Rather, the architects developed a more subtle and understated depiction of Rustic design principles, perhaps inspired by the extant 1920s Long Creek Fishing Lodge. In place of the more typical, early-twentieth-century program of Rustic log construction, buildings at Devotion are covered in finely milled and finished chestnut weatherboards. At the base of each building, stone quarried from the site reflects the character of the natural setting. Rock chimneys, which complimented the natural qualities of the weatherboard walls, are located internally as well as on building exteriors, depending on the particular building plan. At the Long Creek Lodge, the fireplaces and chimneys are scaled to create a recognizable “backwoods” Rustic lodge image. Prominently located chimneys also added a visual break to what are fairly plain rooflines.²⁸ Stone foundations, retaining walls, steps, and landscape edging allowed buildings to gracefully integrate with a variety of natural landscape conditions.

Another trait that Devotion’s buildings share with the tradition of Rustic design is the masterful integration of buildings into a highly desirable scenic landscape. The Lodge complex, in particular, is quietly tucked into a secluded sylvan tract alongside a mountain stream. Other structures, such as the original Turkey Hatchery, now converted into a guest cottage, are set within a terraced slopes that offers quiet views of the Mitchell River and the valley floor. The tended agricultural fields and rolling meadowlands at Devotion filled the gap between the buildings and the surrounding wilderness. A variety of trees and landscape plantings, fences, a stone root cellar, and a stone bridge are all advantageously placed to populate and enliven the gaps and spaces between buildings. Together, these designed landscape features work to “improve” the raw natural landscape without seeming imposed or visually disruptive. Hemlocks, pines, oaks, and mountain laurels are a sampling of the varieties that provide shade as well as natural variations in color and texture.

The interiors of the buildings at Devotion were meant to excite the senses with warm, mellow, rich character resulting from the selection of fine materials, such as pine wall finishes, stone fireplaces, exposed roof trusses,

²⁷ See footnote eight, this report.

²⁸ In comparison to the wider pool of vernacular architecture to which Rustic design ultimately refers, architectural features and components such as chimneys are often over-scaled to provide a more intense visual effect while still harmonizing with the natural surroundings.

and craftsman-like hardware presumably from the estate's Blacksmith Shop, and casement windows fitted with delightful, hinged, "swing-out" copper screens. Woodwork and cabinetry, likely a product of Devotion's woodwork shop, illustrated the attention to detail and interest in natural finishes and exposed joinery elements that express the nature of the materials selected onsite. Accepting that many elements were machine-finished, the building components at Devotion are more often than not well conceived, sturdily built, highly evocative, and impressive.

The following annotated site plan (SP-1) and historic architectural resources inventory is a record of buildings and structures identified and photographed by the NCDOT survey team in February 2005.

Conclusion

During the mid-1930s, Devotion took on the appearance of a large-scale construction project, with stone and wood buildings rising in the mountainous Surry County landscape. As the site began to take shape, another construction project began to capture the attention of Dick Reynolds. In 1936 Reynolds purchased from Howard Earle Coffin a twelve-mile-long island located off the coast of Georgia called Sapelo.²⁹ Coffin lived in a mansion called South End House, which had been rebuilt according to the plans of a previous owner. After Reynolds acquired Sapelo, he undertook extensive renovations and expansions to this property.³⁰

Back in Winston-Salem, architect Luther Lashmit, who had only a few years earlier completed the historicist Greylyn for R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company executive Bowman Gray, now provided a house design for Dick and Blitz, now in their seventh year of marriage and busily raising four sons. Their new house, charmingly named "Merry Acres," was sited adjacent to a golf course. Counter to the image suggested by its charming name, Merry Acres' brash, modernistic design marks a sharp departure from the established legacy of Reynolds properties. Until its demolition by Wake Forest University, Merry Acres stood as a Dick Reynolds' bold, personal statement.³¹

In 1946, after a marriage lasting thirteen years, Dick and Blitz decided to divorce. As part of the divorce settlement, Dick negotiated to keep Sapelo, where he could continue his love of yachting and racing. Blitz gained possession of Devotion, where for several years she raised the four Reynolds boys. Following Elizabeth D. Reynolds's death in 1961, Devotion was divided into quarters, with each of the four sons receiving his share.³² Since the 1960s, large parcels of the estate have remained under the ownership of Reynolds heirs. An important part of the estate is now owned by Charles C. McKinney, a Raleigh resident who has undertaken a major, decade-long campaign of restoration and expansion in the Rustic tradition established by R. J. Reynolds, Jr. and Elizabeth D. Reynolds in the 1930s.

²⁹ Coffin had made his fortune building Hudson Motors.

³⁰ Reynolds and Shachtman, 194.

³¹ Bishir, 454; see also Reynolds and Shachtman.

³² Reynolds and Shachtman, 227-231.