

-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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Other names/site number: Ashworth-Bostic House

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1733 Charlotte Highway

City or town: Fairview

State: NC

County: Buncombe

Not For Publication: ☐

N/A

Vicinity: ☐

N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

 national

 statewide

X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A

 B

X C

 D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☒

District

☐

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: concrete block
Walls: wood: weatherboards
Roof: asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House is a neatly finished one-and-a-half-story Late Victorian frame dwelling located at 1733 Charlotte Hwy (US 74), in the rural community of Fairview, approximately 10 miles southeast of Asheville in Buncombe County, North Carolina. Built around 1892 for S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth, the house occupies a slightly elevated site of approximately 1.25 acres that overlooks the two-lane highway and gently rolling dairy pastures to the north. S. J. Ashworth began acquiring land in the area from family in 1888, and the small rural house was erected sometime in the 1890s. The house is one of the best local examples of a picturesque Victorian dwelling with a T-plan form, polygonal front bay, and bracketed cornice. The interior displays a comparable level of detail with its heavy molded door and window surrounds, fireplace mantels, stout newel posts, and turned balusters. The property was managed as a dairy farm after the death of S. J. Ashworth and was later home to Connie Bostic, an influential local Asheville artist, arts advocate, and community activist. The residual house tract is well shaded by mature vegetation and includes two non-contributing structures—a ca. 1950 well house and a shed built around 2000—located at the rear of the property. The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House retains good architectural integrity as an expressive Late

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

Victorian frame dwelling with asymmetrical massing, a polygonal front bay, original two-over-two wood-sash windows, and original interior features including molded window and door surrounds and detailed fireplace mantels.

Narrative Description

The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House stands on a sloping site overlooking the two-lane Charlotte Highway (US 74) in the rural farming section of Fairview in southern Buncombe County, North Carolina. The house is oriented to the north with wooded slopes rising through the property from the highway to an unnamed peak to the southwest. A wide, fertile valley on the northeast side of the highway descends from Hickory Nut Gap, two miles to the southeast, and is drained by Ashworth Creek, which joins Cane Creek less than a mile to the northwest. The gently rolling land is characterized by open dairy pastures and wooded hillsides. Mature trees, primarily oaks and maples, populate the Ashworth House property, and a row of hemlocks borders the west side of the house. At the front of the property, a paved semicircular driveway splits from the highway at its intersection with Spruce Way, a paved road forming the western edge of the Ashworth property, and forms the edge of the grass front yard. The crescent-shaped area between the highway and the driveway contains dense vegetation that largely obscures a low stone retaining wall near the edge of the road and concrete steps rising to the driveway and front walkway to the house. The steps are marked by square pillars with flat concrete caps.

The lawn to the north and east of the house is largely open and punctuated by a few trees. A fenced garden plot extends from the east side of the house. To the west side, an unpaved drive leaves the semicircular front driveway, passes along the row of hemlocks, and rejoins Spruce Way in the southwest corner of the property. A tree felled during Hurricane Helene in September 2024 has been removed, along with a stand of bamboo that occupied the area between Spruce Way and the unpaved drive. A wooden ramp extends east from the unpaved drive to an attached deck at the rear of the house, and a small rock-lined fish pond lies in the angle formed by the deck and the ramp. A paved parking pad is located at the rear of the house between the spring house and shed, and a second, short wooden ramp extends from the parking pad to the rear deck. The canopy of a towering oak tree at the southwest corner of the home's rear ell shades the rear portion of the property including the ell, rear deck, well house and shed, parking pad, and expansive bed of wildflowers located south of the house.

S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House, ca. 1892, ca. 1980

Contributing building

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House is a one-and-a-half-story, Late Victorian frame dwelling with an asymmetrical façade, center stair hall, and a one-and-a-half-story rear ell. The T-plan house rests on a concrete block foundation that replaced the original stone piers in the late twentieth century. The building is sheathed with weatherboards and protected by an asphalt-shingle side-gable roof with a gabled front dormer and prominent projecting front-gable wing. The house has an interior brick chimney rising from the roof line where it intersects the gable of the front wing. The house displays a bracketed cornice, wide fascia boards, and heavy gable returns. Two of the front gables and two rear gables have decorative sawn vergeboards.

The façade is organized with the projecting front wing located on the west side of a central entrance and an attached hip-roof porch sheltering the entrance and flanking window pair. The porch is carried on chamfered wooden posts, but the porch railing has been replaced. Brackets shown in photographs from 1979 have been removed from the porch cornice and flanking the posts. Wooden steps with a replacement wood railing rise to access the porch and single-leaf entry door, which surmounted by a single-light transom. The wooden door is composed of two lights over two panels with heavy molded frames and early brass hardware. The flanking windows to the east are two-over-two double-hung wood sash with a molded hood. A decorative gable located above contains a single window that is two-over-two double-hung wood sash with a molded hood. The narrow, gabled dormer above the entrance is clad with hexagonal wood shingles and has a decorative cutout in the gable end. The dormer window is two-over-two double-hung wood sash with a molded hood. The front wing has a projecting polygonal bay with two-over-two double-hung windows in the three fully exposed facets, a bracketed cornice, and hip roof. The gable end contains a single window that is two-over-two double-hung wood sash with a molded hood and sawnwork decoration in the gable peak.

The east elevation of the original house is single pile with two-over-two double-hung windows and molded hoods on both the first story and in the gable end. The cornice returns are supported by paired brackets. The west elevation, which represents the top of the T shape, is double pile with two large decorative gables, a bracketed cornice, and cornice returns. Two sets of single two-over-two double-hung windows are located on the first story and in the gable ends. The rear elevation of the T wing is similarly finished with two-over-two double-hung windows and molded hoods on both the first story and in the gable end, cornice returns supported by paired brackets, and sawnwork decoration in the gable peak. The gable-roof ell extends from the center of the rear (south) elevation and abuts the east side of the T wing. The ell displays a two-over-two window in the gable end and sawnwork decoration the peak.

In the early 1980s, the east and south sides of the rear ell were altered with the addition of a one-story hip-roof sunroom that wrapped around the rear of the house.¹ The addition is covered with weatherboards and includes a single skylight on the east slope of the roof, as well as two skylights on the south slope. A concrete block chimney flue rises against the rear wall of

¹ Mike Bostic, personal communication with author, August 28, 2024.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

the original ell. A single-leaf entry door is located on the east elevation directly behind the main block of the house. Windows throughout are single-pane casements that appear in groups of two or three and as singles in the curving southeast corner of the addition. The west side of the wraparound addition is blind, but the exposed west elevation of the rear ell has been remodeled with new weatherboard siding, a frosted-glass bathroom window, and a single-leaf entry door. The attached wooden deck adjoins this elevation at the rear of the house.

The interior of the house is organized around a central stair hall, which is given over to the stairs rising from the rear to the front. The turned newel post is capped by a turned finial, and the railing exhibits turned balusters. The interior of main house is finished generally with original hardwood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, tall baseboard moldings, and molded door and window surrounds with bullseye corner blocks. The first-story interior doors are typically four panels, but the closet door beneath the stairs consists of two vertical panels. The two front rooms have ceiling medallions. The fireplaces have milled mantels and paired brackets supporting the mantel shelves. The room at the rear of the T wing has been altered with a modern bathroom partitioned in a corner, which claimed the space of an original closet beside the chimney stack. At the end of the central hall, a portion of the original ell was remodeled as a bathroom in the late 1970s with a tile floor and sheetrock walls. A small dining room on the east side of the center hall is similarly finished to the front rooms and features a built-in corner cabinet of modest wood construction. Behind the dining room lies a completely remodeled kitchen, which would have occupied the rear portion of the ell. The sunroom addition that wraps around the ell displays wood floors, sheetrock walls and ceilings, a set of reclaimed wooden doors opening from the dining room, and an open passageway and pass-thru window from the kitchen. A wood stove rests on a stone hearth with stone veneer encasing the concrete block flue that vents the stove.

The second story of the interior is more simply finished and has wood floors, original plaster and sheetrock walls, and sloping ceilings. The stairs empty onto a small landing beneath front dormer, and a low balustrade continues the newel and baluster designs of the lower level. The east room has a replacement door and moldings, and the end wall has been covered with built-in shelves. The west room, above the first-story parlor, displays the most refined finishes with a four-panel wooden door, tall baseboards, and a five-panel wooden closet door. The fireplace mantel has chamfered posts and single brackets carrying the mantel shelf. A narrow, partitioned hallway accesses the rear room of the wing, which has a duplicate of the mantel in the front room, wood floors, tall baseboards, and a sheetrock-partitioned corner closet. The long, narrow room in the ell is plainly finished with patterned vinyl flooring and sheetrock walls. The second-story bathroom has been partitioned from a portion of this room.

Well house, ca. 1950

Non-contributing structure

The well house is a one-story, one-room structure located at the rear of the house. The structure is constructed of brick and has a front-gable roof with weatherboards in the gable ends and exposed rafter tails. The side walls are blind; the front wall is covered with a skim-coat

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

of stucco; and a single-leaf, solid wood door is located on the north elevation. A window on the rear (south) elevation has a cast-concrete sill and consists of a salvaged stained-glass wood sash framed by plain boards. The west side elevation is partially covered by a veneer of fire brick inscribed with a portrait of the artist Georgia O'Keefe.

Shed, ca. 2000

Non-contributing structure

Local builder and son of the recent owners, Mike Bostic constructed the one-story front-gable open shed, which is carried on square wooden posts and capped by a metal-clad roof.² The open roof structure has exposed rafters and oversized eave purlins. The roof projects beyond the support posts to the front and rear and creates deep overhanging eaves on the sides.

Statement of Integrity

The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House generally retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Built on this site around 1892, the one-and-a-half-story Late Victorian frame house stands on its original site, shaded by mature trees and overlooking the highway passing along the front of the property. The house retains its asymmetrical massing, bracketed cornice, polygonal front bay, and two-over-two wood-sash windows. The interior is similarly finished with original wood floors, plaster walls, central stairs, molded window and door surrounds, and elaborate fireplace mantels.

The additions and alterations that do compromise the property's design, workmanship, and materials occur primarily at the rear of the house and do not detract substantially from its overall integrity. The 1980s one-story sunroom addition that is the main exterior alteration to the house wraps around two sides of the rear ell but is generally not visible from the principal views of dwelling. The house suffers from some deferred maintenance due to its transitional ownership, but its condition is such that it does not affect the historic integrity of the building. The house retains a good amount of original materials and finishes, both exterior and interior, that convey the significant design elements from the Ashworth House's late Victorian period of construction.

² Bostic, personal communication, August 28, 2024.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
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 grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1892

Significant Dates

ca. 1892

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Built around 1892, the S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House is a notable example of a late Victorian rural dwelling in the Fairview section of southern Buncombe County, North Carolina. The one-and-a-half-story frame dwelling was built for Samuel J. and Rosedna Ashworth, who belonged to an extended family of farmers descended from pioneering eighteenth-century settler John Ashworth and were prominent in the Fairview community. S. J. Ashworth served as a county commissioner, and the family was active in local affairs. The T-plan frame house displays the asymmetrical massing that gained popularity in the late nineteenth century in contrast to the rigid, symmetrical forms associated with traditional building. The new variations were further embellished with mass-produced architectural elements and sawn decorations. The Ashworth House features bracketed cornices and gable returns, sawn vergeboards, a polygonal front bay, and original two-over-two windows with molded hoods. The interior of the house is similarly detailed with wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, paneled doors, heavy moldings, and turned stair newels and balusters. The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House is locally significant and meets National Register under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of Late Victorian architecture in rural western North Carolina. The period of significance is ca. 1892, when the house is believed to have been constructed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Architectural Context

Architectural trends in Asheville and Buncombe County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflected nationally popular styles and influences but developed out of traditional log construction and building forms found in the mountain region. Through the mid-nineteenth century, symmetrical designs were common as a result of heavy timber frame construction. In the latter part of the century, builders and carpenters repurposed log dwelling forms into center hall and hall-parlor plans that were one or two stories tall and one or two rooms deep and constructed of light wood framing. In the wake of Asheville's railroad connection in 1880, rural builders began expanding traditional forms into L and T plan dwellings with the addition of projecting wings or rear ells. The increasingly picturesque arrangements resulted from access to milled lumber, factory-made architectural elements, and the influence of pattern books and carpenter's guides. A popular L-plan configuration added a projecting front bay to one side of a central entrance. While the new asymmetrical forms proliferated,

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

traditional forms and plans also persisted well into the twentieth century to which builders added as much stylish trim as budgets and taste allowed.³

In Asheville, the county seat and economic center of the region, the architectural trends were more directly influenced by the influx of wealthy visitors and transplants to the area who spurred a burgeoning tourist economy. With the coming of the railroad connection, new residents often fashioned architecture with romantic notions about mountain lifestyles. Architects and skilled craftsmen, who were frequently brought in to work on various projects, coexisted with local builders and craftspeople and together introduced rustic and picturesque interpretations of architectural styles that were suited to the mountain landscape and climate.⁴

Concurrent to the construction of the Ashworth House, George W. Vanderbilt, the scholarly and artistic-minded son of railroad magnate William H. Vanderbilt and grandson of Cornelius Vanderbilt, began putting his inherited fortune into the construction of a palatial estate just outside Asheville. Vanderbilt employed nationally renowned architect Richard Morris Hunt and landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted to plan and design Biltmore Estate, which drew other designers, stone masons, wood carvers, and artisans to the area to work on the massive project. Completed in 1895, Biltmore had a significant lasting impact on Asheville and the region and helped elevate the architectural identity of the city and surrounding area.⁵ The new prosperity of the region was reflected in the built environment, and simple, traditional house forms were increasingly supplanted by buildings constructed in popular national architectural styles such as the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival.

Engadine (NR, 2001), described as a “grand suburban house,” is a sophisticated Queen Anne design at Turnpike in the western part of Buncombe County.⁶ Built around 1885 for Capt. John K. Hoyt, the house is an elaborate two-story frame dwelling with a circular tower, multiple dormers, inset porches, and a cantilevered corner balcony. The first-story weatherboards transition to alternating rows of plain and scalloped wood shingles on the second story. The porches have bracketed posts and columns, sawnwork decoration, and balustrades composed of small running arches over a spindle row and molded railings. Originally surrounded by gardens and vineyards, Engadine was one of few elaborate Queen Anne style houses outside Asheville and one of the most fully realized homes of its time, equipped with central heating, a gravity-fed plumbing system, and electric power produced on site.⁷

³ Douglas Swaim, *Cabins & Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina* (Asheville, NC: Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1981), 76-77 and 85-87; Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 287-295.

⁴ Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 59-60.

⁵ Bishir, et al, *A Guide*, 287-291.

⁶ Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 85 and 135.

⁷ Wanda M. Carter, “Engadine” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Charlotte, NC, 2001, 4-9.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

More commonly, late-nineteenth-century domestic architecture in Buncombe County outside of Asheville was characterized by traditional box-like forms enlivened with up-to-date applied Victorian-era ornament and expanded by variations in massing. Architectural historian Randy Cotton, in his survey of neighboring Haywood County, wrote of this trend: "The tentative stops toward Victorian-era architecture, begun in the years before the railroad's arrival, proceeded in earnest when improved transportation brought an increased awareness of nationally-popular tastes and architectural fashions. Traditional I-houses sprouted bay windows and projecting bays, were decorated with scroll-brackets along the gable, eave and porch cornices, had decoratively-edged wood shingles applied to the gables, and doors and windows were enframed with wide, complex moldings. Most of these new elements were mass-produced and machine-made; scroll-saws, lathes, jigsaws and machine-presses made the new aesthetic possible and no doubt many of these architectural components entered the county via the railroad."⁸

The ca. 1878 Zebulon Baird House (NR, 2009), north of Asheville, is a T-plan frame dwelling embellished with mass-produced ornamentation that became more widely popular following the arrival of the railroad to western North Carolina in 1880. The Baird House exhibits gabled window hoods, paired roof brackets, a heavily molded cornice, and delicate scrollwork in the gable peaks. It appears to be one of the earliest examples of fashionable sawnwork decoration in the rural parts of Buncombe County. Once the seat of a 300-acre farm, the Baird House was moved a short distance from its original site around 2005 to save the structure from proposed commercial development.⁹ Since it was moved and subsequently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Baird House underwent substantial alterations including replacement of the exterior siding, replacement of the second-story windows, construction of a two-story addition, and removal of the fireplace and chimney that significantly compromised its historic integrity.¹⁰

The Malinda Payne House (BN0582) in the Sandy Mush community of northwest Buncombe County shares a number of traits with Ashworth House. Built around 1878, the original house began as a relatively simple hall-parlor-plan frame dwelling on a stone foundation. Local carpenter Wil Waldrop enlarged the house for Malinda Payne around 1890, constructing a one-and-a-half-story ell at the front, and added extensive decoration, including a polygonal bay window, scrollwork porch balustrade and brackets, bracketed eaves, and sawnwork decoration in the front gable end.¹¹

⁸ Randy Cotton, "The Built Environment of Haywood County, North Carolina," State Historic Preservation Office, North Carolina Natural and Cultural Resources, Raleigh, NC, 1983, 19.

⁹ Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 77; Sybil Argintar, "Baird, Zebulon H., House" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Bowers Southeastern Preservation, Asheville, NC, 2009, 5-7.

¹⁰ Clay Griffith, "Historic Structures Survey Report for US 19-23 (Future I-26) Improvements from Exit 24 in Asheville to Exit 13 in Buncombe County, TIP No. A-0010A," Report for North Carolina Department of Transportation, Raleigh, NC, August 2017, 190-198.

¹¹ Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 86-87 and 131; Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 288.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

The ca. 1880 Chrisley Wells House (BN0748) in the Leicester section of northwest Buncombe County is an imposing two-story front-gable frame residence with two-story gable-roof wings, an attached one-story wraparound porch, and one-story shed-roof porch additions at the rear. The porches have bracketed posts, sawnwork balustrades, and decorative cut-out panels between the slender porch posts. The gable ends, which are covered with narrow vertical wood siding, display fanciful sawn vergeboards and sunbursts in the peaks.¹²

The ca. 1900 L. A. Luther House (BN0513) near Leicester in northwest Buncombe County is a one-and-a-half-story saddlebag-plan dwelling with a tall projecting front bay to the side of the central entrance and attached shed-roof porch. A front-gable roof shelters the clipped corners of the bay. The house has been altered in recent decades with the partial removal of the central interior brick chimney, replacement windows, and replacement porch elements.¹³ Along with the Malinda Payne House, the Luther House is one of the more similar late Victorian dwellings to the Ashworth House, but also the most altered.

The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House is a particularly well-defined example of Late Victorian architecture in rural Buncombe County. The bookish design of the modest house embellishes an asymmetrical T-plan dwelling with gabled dormers, bracketed cornices, and decorative sawnwork in the gable ends. The projecting polygonal front bay, original two-over-two wood sash windows, and glazed-and-paneled wooden entry door exhibit distinctive molded frames. The interior retains many of its original architectural features including wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, paneled doors, turned stair newels and balusters, and fireplace mantels. Despite additions made to the rear in the 1980s, the main block of the Ashworth House remains one of the most intact examples of its type in the county. Engadine was envisioned as a much grander suburban estate, while the Malinda Payne House gained its Victorian details when the original dwelling was enlarged. The S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House, more so than other comparable houses due to their alterations and loss of historic materials, best embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type and period.

Historical Background

Pioneering members of the Ashworth family settled in southern Buncombe County after the Revolutionary War. The General Assembly officially formed Buncombe County in 1792 from land, which was occupied by the Cherokee long before European settlement, carved out of Burke and Rutherford counties. A commission charged with fixing the center of the county and locating a site for the courthouse chose a site on a plateau where two Cherokee trading paths intersected and a few settlers had already erected log structures for residences and commerce. Incorporated in 1797, the village became known as Asheville, and the site of the new town overlooked the French Broad River to the west and was bordered by mountains to the east.¹⁴

¹² Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 129.

¹³ Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 125.

¹⁴ John Ager, "Buncombe County: A Brief History," in Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 9-13.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

John and Nancy Ann Ashworth settled southeast of Asheville in the Fairview section where they farmed and raised six children near Hickory Nut Gap, which was along the stagecoach road between Rutherfordton and Asheville. The Ashworths, who accumulated over 2,000 acres of land extending from Cane Creek to the Broad River, lived near the gap in a log house that was later incorporated into Sherrills Inn (NR, 1975).¹⁵ S. J. Ashworth's grandfather, John Ashworth Jr. (1775-1827), grew up in the cabin and later married Celia Nettles (1778-1855) in 1798 and raised 13 children. The couple's tenth child (and eighth son), Johnson W. Ashworth (1818-1895), married Mary Estelle Merrell (1821-1904) around 1839 and raised 11 children. The Ashworths were prominent farmers and respected members of the community and Cane Creek Baptist Church.¹⁶

Sidney Johnson Ashworth (1863-1924) was the tenth of 11 children born to Johnson and Mary Estelle Ashworth and the sixth of seven sons. S. J. Ashworth grew up in a farming family and in 1888 purchased 142 acres from his parents for \$1,000.¹⁷ The land adjoined property owned by his brothers Alexander (1853-1897) and Benjamin (1867-1941). Benjamin L. Ashworth, prior to studying to become a physician and surgeon, acquired 123 acres from his parents, although the deed allowed Johnson and Mary Ashworth to retain use of the property until their deaths.¹⁸ S. J. Ashworth subsequently purchased this parcel from his brother in 1893 for \$1,900.¹⁹ It is reported that when Benjamin Ashworth moved away, he sold his uncollected accounts to his brother, which S. J. Ashworth redeemed in the form of work on his house.²⁰ He married Rosedna Sledge (1868/69-1950) of Raleigh in December 1895.

S. J. Ashworth was a prominent and progressive farmer and well-respected member of the community. In the late 1890s, he served as a county commissioner alongside his brother Jason and was a member of the committee studying a potential new courthouse in the early twentieth century.²¹ When neighbor James G. K. McClure organized the Farmers Federation, a cooperative business enterprise of Fairview farmers, in 1920, S. J. Ashworth was elected vice-president.²² Rosedna Sledge came to western North Carolina as a teacher, taking positions at schools in Boone and Franklin. She taught at Judson College in Hendersonville in the early

¹⁵ Robert Tompkins and Charles G. Suttlemyre, Jr., "Sherrill's Inn" National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, Survey and Planning Unit, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, NC, 1975; Trevor Freeman, "Recap and Notes for Ashworth Cemetery and Sherrills Inn," Asheville Museum of History, September 7, 2023, <https://www.ashevillehistory.org/ashworth-cemetery-and-sherrills-inn/>, accessed August 15, 2024.

¹⁶ "Johnson Ashworth's Death," *The Asheville Citizen*, November 18, 1895, 4; "Tribute to the Late Johnson Ashworth," *The Asheville Citizen*, November 19, 1895, 2.

¹⁷ Deed book 67, page 271, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

¹⁸ Deed book 67, page 273, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

¹⁹ Deed book 94, page 518, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

²⁰ Swaim, *Cabins & Castles*, 146; Bishir, et al, *A Guide*, 307-308.

²¹ "Will Inspect Court House," *The Asheville Citizen*, June 22, 1901, 1.

²² John C. Ager, *We Plow God's Fields: The Life of James G. K. McClure* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1991), 220 and 248.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

1890s, but by 1894 she was teaching at Fairview College, working with one other teacher and assisting the principal, Prof. A. B. Justice.²³

Once married, S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth had three children, two of whom lived to adulthood. Their children were Gladys (1896-1988) and Vernon (1899-1971); the third child, Thomas, died as an infant. Gladys attended Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and worked as a missionary in China from 1920 to 1935. After graduating college, Vernon distinguished himself as a colonel in U.S. Army during World War I. He returned to Asheville after the war, helping his father on the farm and serving as a milk inspector in the city health department. He moved to California in 1930, where he lived the rest of his life and worked as a real estate broker.²⁴

Following the death of S. J. Ashworth in 1924, his wife and children entered into a contract to sell 2,000 acres of land on Little Pisgah Mountain, east of the homeplace, for \$60 an acre to Charles H. Fleming, although it is unclear if the deal, which was subject to a survey and "a good and sufficient deed," ever went through.²⁵ In real estate matters, Rosedna Ashworth acted as an agent on behalf of her daughter, who was living in China. The family divested themselves of the home tract in 1932, selling 269.5 acres to Fairview Farms, Inc., a dairy operation.²⁶ Original shareholders J. D. Reid, Charles A. Thrasher, and Mrs. M. F. Welch organized Fairview Farms to pursue, among other things, raising livestock and poultry, especially purebred cattle; maintaining a dairy operation to process, pasteurize, and prepare to sell milk in bulk; and establishing an operation to process, store, grind, and mill grain.²⁷ On the same day she sold the farm, Rosedna Ashworth purchased, on behalf of Gladys, a house at 805 Reed Street in Biltmore belonging to Charles and Hannah Thrasher and moved away from Fairview. Gladys Ashworth returned to Asheville from China in 1935, and mother and daughter resided together on Reed Street until the death of Rosedna Ashworth in 1950. Both women remained active teaching in Bible classes and Sunday school at area Baptist churches.

The Fairview Farms property was sold at auction in 1958, and the corporation officially dissolved in 1961. Penny Brothers of Charlotte handled the sale, which consisted of 300 acres of farmland on both sides of US 74 in Fairview, including 100 acres of pasture and 40 acres of alfalfa, three houses, dairy barns, silos, milking equipment, and 130 dairy cows.²⁸ J. Arvel McAbee, Marvin W. Camby, and their wives purchased all of the lands belonging to Fairview Farms "located South of the center line of the Fairview road" in September 1958, being the

²³ "Judson College," *The Asheville Citizen*, July 30, 1892, 4; "From Fairview," *The Asheville Citizen*, April 28, 1894, 1; "Alex. Ashworth Dead," *The Asheville Citizen*, February 19, 1897, 1; "Mrs. Ashworth, Former Teacher, Taken by Death," *The Asheville Citizen*, November 10, 1950, 10.

²⁴ John Ager, "Fairview's Ashworth/Bostic House," *The Fairview Town Crier*, May 2024, 5; "Gladys Ashworth," *The News-Journal* (Daytona Beach, FL), December 9, 1988, 4C.

²⁵ Deed book 314, page 115, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

²⁶ Deed book 452, page 227, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

²⁷ Certificate of Incorporation C013, page 290, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

²⁸ Penny Brothers advertisement, *The Asheville Times*, July 25, 1958, 12.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

same property acquired by Fairview Farms from S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth in 1932.²⁹ McAbee and Camby, fellow area farmers, presumably continued to use the land for agriculture. Arvel and Ethel McAbee eventually sold the Ashworth House and a residual 2.8-acre tract to George and Connie Bostic in January 1971.³⁰ The Bostics and their five young children moved into the house, which they dubbed "Mayhem Manor."³¹

Cornelia "Connie" Harrill Bostic (1936-2024) grew up in Spindale, North Carolina, a small town in Rutherford County. When her father left to serve in World War II, Connie, her mother, and her younger sister moved in with her mother's parents. After the war, the family returned to their small Spindale home and the family grew, which prompted Connie to move back in with her grandmother, an avid flower gardener who also raised chickens. Connie graduated from Gardner-Webb Junior College in Boiling Springs, North Carolina, in 1954, and married George Bostic. The couple then lived outside Charlotte, where George worked as a mill manager and their five children were born. In 1971, the family moved to Fairview. George worked as a principal for a freight company, while Connie not only raised their children but also raised horses and whippets, became active in dog shows, and wrote about horse shows for a local newspaper. The couple took an interest in revitalization of downtown Asheville, investing in and helping run two businesses: Craig's, a popular gay bar on Wall Street, and later the Asheville Music Hall. They bought a commercial building on Biltmore Avenue, which they transformed into an artist's studio for Connie and an art gallery.³²

Connie Bostic began to pursue her artistic ambition in the early 1980s and joined a group of women studying with local artist Janie McWhirter at her rustic studio in Swannanoa. Bostic earned a bachelor's degree in studio art from the University of North Carolina Asheville in 1989 and a Master's degree in painting from Western Carolina University in 1990. She began exhibiting her work in 1987 and participated in over 85 solo, group, and juried exhibitions by the time of her final retrospective in 2023. Connie Bostic died in January 2024, leaving a formidable legacy in Asheville's local art community, which she had helped nurture since the late 1970s. She was predeceased by her husband George and two of her children.³³

The original 2.8-acre home tract purchased by George and Connie Bostic in 1971 was first subdivided in 1995, when the couple transferred a 1.07-acre parcel to their son, George Michael Bostic Jr.³⁴ Mike Bostic built a house for himself on the property, located immediately south of his parents' home. An additional half-acre strip of land on the east side of the property

²⁹ Deed book 804, page 303, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

³⁰ Deed book 1032, page 324, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

³¹ Ager, *The Fairview Town Crier*, May 2024, 5.

³² Arnold Wengrow, "Connie Bostic – Biography," UNC Asheville Art and Art History, <https://aah.unca.edu/exhibitions/s-tucker-cooke-gallery/2024/connie-bostic>, accessed November 14, 2025; Zoe Rhine, "Artist Connie Bostic Made Her Mark on Asheville," *Mountain Xpress*, February 9, 2004.

³³ Wengrow, "Connie Bostic – Biography," Rhine, *Mountain Xpress*, February 9, 2004; Ager, *The Fairview Town Crier*, May 2024, 5.

³⁴ Deed book 1877, page 27, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

was sold to a neighbor and friend of the family, Rocky Lee Smith, in 2025.³⁵ The remaining 1.26-
acres of land surrounding the Ashworth House was sold to the current owners in February
2025.³⁶

³⁵ Deed book 6470, page 512, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

³⁶ Deed book 6470, page 833, Buncombe County Register of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

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Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

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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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☒ University
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): BN0236

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.26 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

A. Latitude: 35.508193 Longitude: -82.388611

B. Latitude: Longitude:

C. Latitude: Longitude:

D. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: 17 | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: 17 | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: 17 | Easting: | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The eligible boundary is shown by a thick dashed line on the accompanying Buncombe County tax parcel map. The boundary encompasses the full 1.26 acres containing the house, outbuildings, and landscape features [PIN 9695-17-7088-00000]. The boundary follows the legal parcel lines shown on a 2024 plat of property, which depicts the northern edge of the tract drawn to the centerline of US 74 (Charlotte Highway) in front of the house.³⁷

³⁷ Plat book 246, page 77, Buncombe County Registe of Deeds, Asheville, NC.

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House
Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC
County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The eligible boundary for S. J. and Rosedna Ashworth House encompasses all of the historic resources associated with the dwelling on its 1.26-acre site. The parcel is the residual portion of the Ashworths' original rural homesite containing the main house, well house, and shed. The legal boundary extends to the centerline of the highway in front of the property to include portions of the driveway, approach steps, and rock retaining walls historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Clay Griffith
organization: Acme Preservation Services, LLC
street & number: 825 Merrimon Ave., Ste. C, #345
city or town: Asheville state: NC zip code: 28804
e-mail: cgriffith.acme@gmail.com
telephone: 828-281-3852
Date: July 17, 2026

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Ashworth, S. J. and Rosedna, House

Name of Property

Buncombe County, NC

County and State

Photographs

The following information pertains to each of the photographs:

Name of Property: S. J. Ashworth House
Location: 1733 Charlotte Hwy, Fairview, North Carolina
County: Buncombe
Name of Photographer: Clay Griffith / Acme Preservation Services
Date of Photographs: August 28, 2024 (unless otherwise noted)
Location of Digital Master: Historic Preservation Office
North Carolina Division of Archives and History
109 E. Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807

Photographs:

1. Overall view to southwest
2. Façade, view to south
3. East elevation, view to west
4. Oblique rear view to northwest
5. Oblique rear view to northeast
6. Entrance detail, view to south
7. Interior, parlor, view to south
8. Interior, central stair hall, view to south
9. Interior, living room, view to northwest
10. Interior, 1st floor rear bedroom, view to northeast
11. Interior, view west from sunroom to dining room
12. Interior, 2nd story hall, view to southwest
13. Interior, 2nd story front bedroom (above parlor), view to south
14. Interior, 2nd story rear bedroom, view to north
15. Approach steps and stone retaining wall at front of property, view to west

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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.