

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**Schley Grange Hall**

Schley vicinity, Orange County, OR3148, Listed 4/23/2020

Nomination by Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc.

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, August 2018



Schley Grange Hall, façade, southeast oblique.



Auditorium, looking north.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Schley Grange Hall

other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number 3416 Schley Road

**N/A** not for publication

city or town Schley

☒ vicinity

stat North Carolina

code NC

county Orange

code 135

zip code 27541

e \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally  
☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

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 certifying official/Title

Date

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ removed from the National  
Register.

☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Schley Grange Hall

Name of Property

Orange County, NC

County and State

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
1	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
4	2	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

roof METAL

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

**Period of Significance**

1949-1970

**Significant Dates**

1949

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Graves, Charles M., engineer

Bradbury, A. Thomas, architect

Cole and Crumpacker, general contractor

**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:

Schley Grange Hall

Orange County Public Library, Hillsborough

Schley Grange Hall

Name of Property

Orange County, NC

County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 7.7 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

See Latitude/Longitude coordinates continuation sheet

1                                   
Zone Easting Northing

2                                 

3                                   
Zone Easting Northing

4                                 

☒ 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 Heather Fearnbach

organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc.

date December 27, 2018

street & number 3334 Nottingham Road

telephone 336-765-2661

city or town Winston-Salem

state NC

zip code 27104

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

### Photographs

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

### Additional items

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

## Property Owner

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

name Schley Grange, c/o Katherine Cheek

street & number 4701 Brock Drive

telephone 919-732-2760

city or town Hurdle Mills

state NC

zip code 27541

**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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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National Park Service

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Orange County, NC

## Section 7. Narrative Description

### Setting

Schley Grange Hall occupies a 7.7-acre parcel near Schley Road and NC Highway 57's intersection in Schley, a rural Orange County community approximately five miles north of Hillsborough's commercial center.<sup>1</sup> Neighboring crossroads communities include Caldwell about four miles northeast and Cedar Grove around the same distance northwest. The area's gently rolling topography, rich soil, and proximity to the Little River and its tributaries are conducive to farming. Although many agricultural tracts have been gradually subdivided to facilitate residential development, most parcels are still large enough to encompass dwellings, outbuildings, fields, pastures, and wooded areas. Payne's Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, a Modernist one-story brick sanctuary erected in 1987, fronts NC Highway 57 on the 3.41-acre lot immediately east of the Grange hall.<sup>2</sup>

The south-facing Grange hall's deep setback from Schley Road allows for an expansive front lawn that gradually slopes down to the southeast. West of the central entrance portico, the iron bell from the public school that served as Schley Grange No. 710's initial meeting place rests on a square brick plinth erected in 2002. Other site improvements that year included the installation of square painted-metal signs bearing the names of the Grange and American Legion Post 452 on metal posts close to Schley Road.<sup>3</sup> North of the sign post, an aluminum flagpole rises south of two deciduous trees. Two straight sections of post-and-three-rail white vinyl fencing delineate the lawn's northwest and northeast edges. Outside the fences, gravel drives provide access to the gravel parking lot west of the hall and the recreational complex to the north, which comprises a picnic shelter, concession building/cook house, baseball/softball field, restroom building, batting cage, and horseshoe pitching pits. Poured-concrete sidewalks lead from parking areas to the Grange hall entrances. A grass lawn borders the baseball/softball field. The lot's north perimeter is wooded.

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<sup>1</sup> Schley has not had a post office since 1907. Thus, the Hurdle Mills mailing address references a post office location just over ten miles to the north in Person County. North Carolina Postal History Society, "Orange County," postmark and postmaster compilation, April 20, 2014, p. 62, <http://www.ncpostalhistory.com/resources/north-carolina-postmark-catalog-update/> (accessed August 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Schley Grange conveyed 2.07 acres of its land east of the Grange hall to the Payne's Chapel A. M. E. congregation in 1951 with the stipulation that a sanctuary would be erected on the property. The deed was rerecorded in 1959. The acreage amount was not specified in the original deed, but a 2003 deed merging that lot with a second tract provides the parcel size. The 1987 building replaced the second of two weatherboarded sanctuaries that had been constructed on the site since the late 1950s. Both were destroyed by fire. Schley Grange also contributed to the church construction fund in the 1950s. Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," October 9, 1951, and January 13, 1959; Jessie Latta, "History of Schley Grange," 1956, pp. 3-4; Orange County Deed Book 171, pp. 431 and 433; Deed Book 2924, p. 333; Plat Book 92, p. 15; Carl Wilson, Schley Grange No. 710 oral history gathering session with Heather Fearnbach and Peter Sandbeck at Schley Grange Hall, October 25, 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Katherine Cheek, "Schley Grange Gets Facelift," undated (ca. 2002) article in the files of Schley Grange No. 710.

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## Resource List (in inventory order)

Schley Grange Hall, 1949, contributing building  
Well House, 1949, contributing structure  
Picnic Shelter, late 1980s, noncontributing structure  
Concession Building/Cook House, 1960, contributing building  
Baseball/Softball Field, 1956 through early-twenty-first century, contributing site  
Restroom Building, late 1990s, noncontributing building

## Inventory List

The inventory list enumerates buildings, structures, and sites beginning with the Grange hall and moving north. Each resource is designated as contributing or noncontributing to the property's historic significance and integrity. The designation criteria are based on age and degree of alteration. Resources are considered contributing if they were constructed before 1970 and retain architectural integrity from the period of significance. Noncontributing resources postdate 1970. Dates of construction are based on documentary evidence, oral history, and building technology, style, and form.

### Schley Grange Hall, 1949, contributing building

The long, low, one-story, side-gable-roofed, Colonial Revival-style building has variegated-red-brick walls executed in five-to-one common bond with soldier-course flat-arch door and window lintels and slightly projecting header-course window sills. Recessed parged panels beneath the windows have been painted deep red. All exterior wood elements (cornices, window surrounds, and portico posts, pilasters, ceiling, and pediment) were clad with vinyl in the late twentieth century. Simulated-divided-light vinyl windows and transoms and fixed louvered vinyl shutters were installed in the same project. The asphalt-shingle roof was replaced with a red corrugated-metal-panel roof in 2002.<sup>4</sup>

The five-bay south elevation is dominated by a central, projecting, hip-roofed, brick bay and a pedimented testrasyle portico with square posts and pilasters. Beneath the portico, pairs of pilasters frame two small restroom windows that flank a double-leaf, three-raised-panel wood door and transom. The portico's concrete floor abuts the sidewalk that extends to the west parking lot. Two large windows on the south elevation east and west of the portico illuminate the dining room and auditorium.

Interior end brick chimneys centered on the east and west elevations contribute to the building's Colonial Revival appearance. On the west elevation, two windows flank the dining room chimney. The auditorium's east elevation has three windows, as its chimney stack is solely ornamental. Two louvered,

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<sup>4</sup> The longer original shutters extended from the parged panel bases to the top of the windows. Ibid.; Katherine Cheek, conversations and email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, August – September 2018.

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wood, half-lunette attic vents with header-course lintels and slightly projecting header-course sills pierce the gables of both elevations.

Two windows at the north elevation's west end light the dining room, while a pair of windows and a single-leaf wood door with a two-panel base, six-pane upper section, and transom illuminate the central kitchen. A single-leaf paneled replacement door has been installed in the mechanical room entrance east of the kitchen and most of its transom covered with vinyl siding. The tall, square, brick chimney with a corbelled stack that rises above the mechanical room roof vented the original boiler.

A short gabled wing at the north elevation's east end accommodates the auditorium stage. Although the steps leading to the single-leaf wood door on the wing's west elevation have been removed, the single-leaf wood door with a two-panel base and six-pane upper section remains behind an aluminum storm door. The door opening has a concrete sill. Beneath the door, the foundation has been parged and painted deep red. The wing's north elevation is blind. A louvered wood lunette attic vent with header-course lintel and slightly projecting header-course sill is centered in the gable. The recessed entrance vestibule on the east elevation provides access to the auditorium. The parged vestibule walls and ceiling are painted white and the concrete floor is unfinished. The original single-leaf wood door with a two-panel base and six-pane upper section is intact. The building was first air-conditioned in 2002 when the original heating system was replaced. The gas furnace is in the mechanical room and condensing units line the rear wing's north elevation.<sup>5</sup>

## *Interior*

The Grange hall floor plan comprises a south entrance vestibule flanked by restrooms, a spacious central transverse reception hall, a kitchen and mechanical room to the north, a west dining room, and an east auditorium. Character-defining features include plaster walls, vinyl-composition-tile floors, Celotex-tile ceilings, six-panel wood doors with brass hardware, tall baseboards, and simple molded wood chair rails, cornices, and door surrounds. Cornices are painted white to match the ceilings, but the dark wood trim and doors have a highly lacquered finish. Original "schoolhouse style" ceiling-mount light fixtures with antiqued brass bases and opaque globes are intact throughout the building.

The entrance vestibule is defined by a flat white-painted wood surround that frames the wide opening at its intersection with the reception hall. The surround's projection allowed for the installation of the coat racks and shelves that span the hall's south walls. Two single-leaf doors on the hall's north wall provide kitchen access. A white-porcelain water fountain is mounted on the wall west of the kitchen entrances. Double-leaf doors lead into the dining room to the west and the auditorium to the east.

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<sup>5</sup> Cheek, "Schley Grange Gets Facelift."



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As the auditorium functioned as a multipurpose space, it did not have fixed seating. A stage fills the large open room's north end. Dark wood trim with square corner blocks embellishes the proscenium arch. At either end of the stage, three wood steps with wood handrails and slender metal balusters provide access to the hardwood platform. Velvet and canvas curtains and valances are suspended from the ceiling on steel rods. The storage closet at the building's northeast corner is accessible from stage level. A door at the stage's west end allows exterior egress on the wing's west side. The door east of the stage at auditorium-floor level leads to the entrance vestibule on the wing's east side. A chair rail wraps around the walls beneath the windows. The replacement gypsum-board ceiling with a textured finish was installed in 2002 after a leaking roof caused significant water damage.<sup>6</sup>

The dining room's west elevation features a simple Colonial Revival mantel with a red-brick-stretcher firebox surround and a square red terra-cotta tile hearth. Narrow molded trim was utilized to create a panel-like effect above the mantel. South of the wide entrance on the east elevation, two wood-frame bulletin boards are built into the wall. The single-leaf door north of the primary entrance leads to the kitchen. The small square pass-through window opening north of the kitchen door that allowed for dish returns next to the sink has been filled with painted plywood.

In the kitchen, the serving line entrance is on the west wall and the exterior exit on the south wall. Two pantries flank the recessed area at the east wall's center. A kitchen island has been installed and the serving line counter replaced. The room has a red-terra-cotta floor.

The restrooms flanking the main entrance feature pale green square-ceramic-tile wainscoting with darker green bullnose and base tiles. The patterned floor comprises variegated green-and-beige octagonal tiles interspersed with smaller, lighter square tiles. Each restroom encompasses a narrow outer room with a wall-mounted white porcelain sink and two toilet stalls with six-panel wood doors.

## **Well House, 1949, contributing structure**

The well and pump northwest of the Grange hall's rear entrance are covered by a small six-foot-tall structure with a red corrugated-metal-panel side-gable roof. German siding sheathes the walls above a running-bond red-brick base. A plywood Dutch door pierces the east elevation. A concrete sidewalk surrounds the structure.

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<sup>6</sup> Katherine Cheek, conversations and email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, August – September 2018.

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## **Picnic Shelter, late 1980s, noncontributing structure**

The open frame shed between the Grange hall and the concession building/cook house serves as a covered parking area, auxiliary cooking space, and picnic shelter. Square bracketed wood posts support the low-gable, corrugated-metal-panel roof.

## **Concession Building/Cook House, 1960, contributing building**

The one-story, German-sided, side-gable-roofed building north of the picnic shelter encompasses a west concession sales room and an east room designed for cooking barbecue.<sup>7</sup> A substantial running-bond red-brick chimney with paved shoulders and a corbelled cornice rises on the east elevation. Deep eaves shelter concession windows on the north and west elevations. The northwest opening retains a drop-down German-siding shutter. Fixed German siding spans the northeast window opening, while plywood encloses the long west window opening. Two single-leaf doors pierce the south elevation. A paneled-wood door and a metal screen door secure the west entrance. A six-panel replacement door has been installed at the east entrance. Rafter and nailing board ends are exposed beneath the eaves. The building has a concrete-slab foundation and a corrugated-metal-panel roof.

## **Baseball/Softball Field, 1956 through early-twenty-first century, contributing site**

Planning for a baseball field began in fall 1955 and a rudimentary field was graded in May 1956.<sup>8</sup> The facility was greatly improved around 1960. Additional updates occurred through the early-twenty-first century, resulting in the existing complex of fences, dugouts, bleachers, and an announcer platform. The Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association has subsidized field maintenance and improvements since its organization in 1976.<sup>9</sup> Chain-link fences surround the playing field. Beyond the fence at the outfield's northwest edge, four light-bearing wood poles are evenly spaced along the tall fence paralleling the outfield perimeter. An aluminum flag pole rises at the outfield fence's center.

Dugouts and bleachers are south and east of the fence. Slender steel posts support the open dugouts' almost-flat roofs. The south dugout has a concrete floor; the east dugout floor is dirt. The wood dugout benches and aluminum bleachers were installed in the late-twentieth century. The flat-roofed, frame, elevated announcer's platform east of the cook house has been renovated numerous times. Textured

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<sup>7</sup> Grange members appointed a committee to oversee the construction of a barbecue and hot dog-roasting pit in November 1954, but it does not appear that the structure was built. Grange minutes mention efforts to raise funds for a barbecue pit through the late 1950s. On June 14, 1960, Charlie Mincey reported that a barbecue pit was being erected and solicited assistance with the roof construction. Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," November 22, 1954 – June 14, 1960.

<sup>8</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," May 8, 1956.

<sup>9</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," August 9 and 23, 1955; Katherine Cheek, conversation with Heather Fearnbach and Peter Sandbeck, August 17, 2018.

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plywood panels enclose three sides of the ground level storage area and serve as the announcer box's railing. A straight run of wood steps with open wood railings leads to the upper level. A mesh-enclosed batting cage is northeast of the fence. A horseshoe pitching area with a chain-link fence at its north end is east of the batting cage.

The Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association does not possess records regarding its late-twentieth-century site work at Schley field. Therefore, it has been impossible to determine exactly when elements such as the fences, lights, flag pole, dugouts, bleachers, announcer platform, horseshoe pitching area, and batting cage were installed. Although these modifications appear to post-date 1970, the end of the period of significance, the baseball/softball field remains a contributing resource as it retains its original configuration and has been an important community entertainment venue since the mid-twentieth century.

## **Restroom Building, late 1990s, noncontributing building**

The Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association funded the construction of the one-story, gable-roofed, rusticated concrete-block restroom building that stands east of the fence south of the batting cage. Single-leaf steel doors on the east and west elevations provide restroom access. The matching door on the south elevation serves the storage room.

## **Integrity Statement**

Schley Grange Hall remains on its original site and the surrounding area appears much as it did during the period of significance, thus allowing for integrity of setting, feeling, and association. The building possesses integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The central, projecting, hip-roofed, brick bay; pedimented testrasyle portico with square posts and pilasters; five-to-one common-bond red brick walls; soldier-course flat-arch door and window lintels; header-course window sills.; interior end brick chimneys, and half-lunette attic vents contribute to the building's Colonial Revival aesthetic. The installation of a metal roof, vinyl windows, and vinyl-cladding on wood elements did not diminish the building's overall appearance or function. Character-defining interior features include plaster walls, vinyl-composition-tile floors, Celotex-tile ceilings, six-panel wood doors with brass hardware, tall baseboards, and simple molded wood chair rails, cornices, and door surrounds. Original "schoolhouse style" ceiling-mount light fixtures with antiqued brass bases and opaque globes are intact throughout the building. The stage remains at the large open auditorium's north end. The dining room features a simple Colonial Revival mantel with a red-brick-stretcher firebox surround and a square red terra-cotta tile hearth. The kitchen retains a red-terra-cotta floor, while the restrooms' have patterned floors comprising variegated green-and-beige octagonal tiles interspersed with smaller, lighter square tiles and pale green square-ceramic-tile wainscoting with darker green bullnose and base tiles. The baseball/softball field orientation has remained the same since the mid-twentieth century. Post-1970 modifications necessary to facilitate the site's ongoing use do not appreciably diminish its integrity.

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## Archeological Potential Statement

Schley Grange Hall is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as remnant landscape features, infrastructural remains, trash middens, and structural remains associated with the former Schley School which may be present can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the property. Information concerning institutional culture, the character of special events and community gatherings, as well as the economic and cultural development of the Schley community can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the Grange hall. At this time no investigation has been designed 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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## Section 8. Statement of Significance

Built in 1949, the locally significant Schley Grange Hall meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion A for social history as the Orange County agricultural community of Schley's primary meeting place and recreational center. The building is the only dedicated Grange hall identified in the county's up-to-date comprehensive architectural survey and thus is recognized as the only extant historic example of this resource type retaining integrity to survive in Orange County. Schley Grange No. 710 has been the area's largest fraternal association since its 1931 creation at the height of the North Carolina Grange's twentieth-century revitalization. Subsidized by a \$50,000 national community service award from Sears-Roebuck Foundation, Schley Grange Hall replaced the decommissioned frame public school where the group had previously gathered. Grange members successfully executed five initiatives to win the competition, garnering a fully equipped building that quickly became the community's social hub. The Grange hosted educational and recreational events and encouraged the agricultural extension service, healthcare providers, American Legion Post 452, and the community at large to do the same. Facilities including a concession building/cook house, baseball/softball field, and horseshoe pitching pits were added by 1960 and supplemented through the early-twenty-first-century with a picnic shelter, restroom building, and batting cage. The period of significance begins with the Grange hall's 1949 completion and continues through 1970. The building's function after 1970 is not of exceptional significance.

## Historical Background and Social History Context

The small crossroads community three miles north of Hillsborough became known as Schley when the U. S. government initiated postal service in 1898. Residents received and posted mail at Charles Wilson and David S. Miller's general store. Miller was Schley's sole postmaster from August 22, 1898 until postal service was discontinued on June 15, 1907. According to oral tradition, he suggested the post office name to honor Spanish American War hero Rear Admiral Winfield Scott Schley, whose achievements had recently been celebrated during a national tour. The district's weatherboarded public school, formerly known as McKee School, was renamed Schley School in conjunction with the post office opening. The close-knit community primarily comprised farmers. Neighbors aided each other with farm operation and building construction and gathered for social activities and worship services.<sup>10</sup>

The Grange (officially the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry), a fraternal organization created in 1867, provided a mechanism for farmers to improve their economic and social position through community-based initiatives and to advocate for agricultural regulation. The association,

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<sup>10</sup> Schley School stood on Schley Road's east side in what is now the parking lot north of Schley Grange Hall. North Carolina Postal History Society, "Orange County," postmark and postmaster compilation, April 20, 2014, p. 62; <http://www.ncpostalhistory.com/resources/north-carolina-postmark-catalog-update/> (accessed August 2018); "Building Received by Grange," *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 7, 1949, p. 2; Natalie Sicuro and George Seymour Maisel, "Schley 1958: the story of a community and its people," UNC-Chapel Hill, May 1958.

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with rituals and practices modeled on Freemasonry, had established a strong presence in North Carolina by 1875. Grange histories assert that the organization was the first of its type in the nation to afford full membership to all races and entire families. From its inception, women voted and served as officers and teenagers fourteen and older were encouraged to join. Youth between the ages of five and thirteen participated in Juvenile Grange activities. The Grange is a four-level organization. Consortiums of Subordinate Granges within counties or districts form Pomona Granges, which meet quarterly. The North Carolina State Grange, now based in Statesville, coordinates with the National Grange, headquartered in Washington, D. C. Delegates from Subordinate and Pomona Granges convene at annual State and National Grange sessions.<sup>11</sup>

Orange County farmers demonstrated enthusiastic support for Grange ideology by founding three chapters—Cedar Grove, Durham, and Red Mountain—in 1873 and nine—Bingham, Chapel Hill, Flat River, Red Mountain (two), Hillsborough (three), and one group identified only by charter number—the following year. Those chapters had consolidated into seven—Chapel Hill, Durham, Eno, Hillsborough, Little River, New Bethel, and Orange—by 1877. By the 1880s, approximately fifteen thousand North Carolina residents had established around five hundred Subordinate Granges. Demographics are unknown, but members were undoubtedly predominantly white as most North Carolina fraternal organizations were racially segregated during this period. Membership declined by 1890 and was almost nonexistent during the twentieth century's first decades. However, *Progressive Farmer* editor Clarence H. Poe and other agricultural leaders initiated a revival in 1929 that resulted in the formation of 125 Subordinate Granges in North Carolina with about five thousand members by fall 1931, including five Orange County Granges: Bingham (two), Cheeks (two), and Schley.<sup>12</sup>

Thirty Schley residents sought to further their common community-building goals by chartering Schley Grange No. 710 in September 1931. Prominent farmer J. Edmund Latta served as Schley Grange's first master, or lodge head. His wife Jessie, who filled the position of lecturer, overseer Garland F. Miller, secretary Eunice Wilson, and treasurer J. E. Walker executed administrative tasks. At the October meeting, the membership created a ten-person committee to raise funds to purchase Schley School, vacant since Orange County's 1928 school consolidation campaign, to house its meetings and events. Each member was asked to contribute four dollars to the building fund. On November 2, 1931, the Orange

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<sup>11</sup> Stuart Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina, 1929-1954* (Greensboro: Piedmont Press, 1954), 2-3; National Grange, *The Grange Blue Book* (Washington, D. C.: National Grange, 1955), 13-15, 24; David H. Howard, *People, Pride, and Progress: 125 Years of the Grange in America* (Washington, D. C.: National Grange, 1992), 16-17.

<sup>12</sup> Little information is available regarding Orange County Grange formation. National Grange records include only chapter names, numbers, and founding dates. Early North Carolina State Grange records were destroyed in a March 18, 1941 fire at the organization's Greensboro headquarters. North Carolina State Grange, *A Directory of the Granges in North Carolina 1877* (North Carolina: n. p., 1877), 7; Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina*, 4-5, 10, 58; National Grange, "North Carolina State Grange chapter creation roster," supplied to Heather Fearnbach by North Carolina State Grange membership director Katie Greene, Statesville, North Carolina, via email in December 2019.

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County Board of Education voted to sell Schley School to Grange representative Charles Wilson for \$122.<sup>13</sup>

The organization's membership grew steadily as prospective candidates' applications were vetted and voted upon. Members paid monthly dues, which were initially ten cents for women and youth and fifteen cents for men over the age of twenty-one. Monthly meetings comprised business discussions, literary programs, music, refreshments, and lectures. In 1932, topics included "how our Grange can help our community," "how to decrease the cost of living," and "milk for health." Speakers ranged from Grange members to county and state officials and North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service agents. Meetings averaged between thirty and fifty attendees, often including representatives from other Granges, some of whom traveled from neighboring counties. Schley Grange's April 30, 1932, meeting, for example, drew 58 guests from four Granges—Orange Grove (27), White Cross (15), Fairfield (13), Gravelly Hill (3)—as leaders from each gave presentations. Orange County's Grange contingent grew with the formation of two Eno chapters in 1932 and 1937. The Pomona Grange sponsored programs, events, and community service endeavors and manned an information booth at county fairs. Members attended annual North Carolina and National Grange meetings.<sup>14</sup>

As the twentieth century progressed, average Orange County farm size dropped but productivity increased in response to advances in farm machinery, soil conservation, crop rotation, pest control, and fertilizer availability. The Great Depression had severe economic repercussions, as farm owners were unable to pay property taxes or purchase necessary provisions for themselves or the tenant farmers and sharecroppers who cultivated their land, and many lost their property. Tenant farmers and sharecroppers, in turn, could not compensate farm owners for lodging, equipment, or supplies with cash or a portion of their harvest.<sup>15</sup> Grange members benefited from cooperative equipment and supply purchases and crop sales, but still suffered losses. As farmers struggled during the 1930s, the organization responded by sponsoring training for adults and youth and effectively advocating for emergency aide, rural electrification, telephone line installation, transportation improvements, and legislation that provided subsidies, market regulation, and tax reduction.<sup>16</sup> North Carolina Agricultural Extension agents Don S.

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<sup>13</sup> Orange County Board of Education, minutes for November 2, 1931, microfilm, State Archives, Raleigh; "Reunion Planned," *Daily Times-News* (Burlington), August 22, 1950, p. 3; Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," October 17, 1931- December 3, 1932; Sicuro and Maisel, "Schley 1958," 16.

<sup>14</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," October 17, 1931- December 3, 1932; "Hillsboro Fair Offers Numerous Attractions," *Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill), November 5, 1932, p. 1; National Grange, "North Carolina State Grange chapter creation roster."

<sup>15</sup> Guy B. Johnson, "The Negro and the Depression in North Carolina," *Social Forces*, October 1933, pp. 103-115.

<sup>16</sup> Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina*, 2, 12-13; Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," October 17, 1931 - March 6, 1937.

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Matheson and Joe N. Howard supported those endeavors, regularly spoke at meetings of the county's eight Granges, and visited member farms.<sup>17</sup>

Schley Grange was in need of a more suitable place to hold meetings and events by the early 1940s, but a dearth of funding followed by labor and material shortages during World War II impeded expansion plans. As veterans returned home and the economy improved, the membership began raising funds for a new Grange hall. In 1948, the group entered the National Grange and Sears-Roebuck Foundation's national community service competition, which had a \$50,000 prize of a fully equipped community building, in hopes of subsidizing the construction cost. With Don Matheson's assistance, sixty-four members led by Grange master Fred T. Reitzel analyzed local needs and orchestrated five initiatives that demonstrated the organization's mission to improve quality of life for area residents. They facilitated the provision of telephone service to fifty-one families by obtaining and clearing right-of-way, cutting cedar trees to create poles, and installing the poles and three miles of wire. The telephone company completed the lines and supplied phones and service. The Grange sponsored a home beautification contest, executed landscape improvements at Mars Hill Baptist Church, and collaborated with the agricultural extension service to hold a day-long soil conservation workshop on Milton Latta's farm. Finally, members equipped the Grange hall with amenities for youth, utilizing \$700 in proceeds from a barbecue dinner to purchase a ping-pong table, dart boards, board games, and a record player, and to grade the site for tennis and volleyball courts and horseshoe pitching pits.<sup>18</sup>

The group's efforts were successful. The North Carolina Grange awarded Schley Grange first place at the state-level judging of the competition, and Schley advanced to win top honors at the National Grange's November 1948 meeting in Portland, Maine. Approximately 1,400 Granges from thirty-seven states had submitted applications. Schley Grange members immediately commenced planning, appointing a building committee on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and debating design and location through spring 1949. North Carolina Recreation Commission chairman Harold D. Meyer and his staff assisted with the planning process. On February 23, 1949, Grange members W. Odie and Sadie B. Mincey and Lucy P. Wilson donated two tracts comprising 5.72 acres on Schley Road's east side adjacent to the former Schley School/Grange hall. Site preparations included that building's demolition. In early June, the Grange executed a \$39,384.00 contract with Durham contractor Cole and Crumpacker for the construction of a one-story, brick, gable-roofed, Colonial Revival-style building with a large auditorium, dining room,

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<sup>17</sup> Don S. Matheson and Joe N. Howard, "1939 Narrative Report, Orange County, North Carolina," Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks, and Recreation, Hillsborough, North Carolina.

<sup>18</sup> The weatherboarded Grange hall was sold at a public auction on October 1, 1949. Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," March 12, 1946 - December 6, 1949; Bryan Haislip, "Schley Grange Proves That Neighborliness Pays," *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 28, 1948, Section 4, p. 1; Fred Bailey, *Country Gentleman*, July 1949, pp. 52, 55; Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina*, 39-40, 47.



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kitchen, and restrooms.<sup>19</sup> Grange members selected furniture, appliances, draperies, lighting, a one-hundred-place-setting gold-rimmed floral china service, glassware, and accessories from Sears-Roebuck catalogs.<sup>20</sup>

Although a full set of architectural drawings has not been located, a façade rendering appears in a community service contest promotional booklet created by the National Grange and the Sears-Roebuck Foundation. To minimize cost, the design was simplified and square footage reduced during Schley Grange's planning process.<sup>21</sup> The title block indicates that Atlanta engineer Charles M. Graves, a widely published parks and recreation designer who served on the American Recreation Society's administrative council, and Atlanta architect A. Thomas Bradbury collaborated on the design.<sup>22</sup> As both men headed independent firms, the nature of their partnership on this project is unknown. Graves appears to have been most actively involved in the Schley project, as Schley Grange minutes indicate that he attended meetings and the dedication.<sup>23</sup> His firm's other North Carolina commissions included designs for community buildings in Mooresville (War Memorial Center, 1949) and Thomasville (conversion of an existing building, 1952), and master plans for recreational facilities for Lumberton's African American residents (1952); and in Statesville (two recreation centers, swimming pools, and a golf course (1955); Gastonia (1956); and Charlotte (1966).<sup>24</sup> Much of A. Thomas Bradbury and Associates' work was in Atlanta, where the firm designed five state government office buildings in the capitol complex in the mid-1950s; Rich Electronic Computer Building (1955) and the Skiles Classroom Building (1959) at Georgia

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<sup>19</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," March 12, 1946 - December 6, 1949; Orange County Deed Book 131, pp. 272 and 274; "Contract Let for New Grange," *News of Orange County*, June 9, 1949, p. 1; "Speakers Heap Praise on Schley," *News of Orange County*, December 8, 1949, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Ruby Wilkerson Tilley, Schley Grange No. 710 oral history gathering session, October 25, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> In the executed Grange hall design, the proposed seven-bay-wide central hip-roofed projection became a much less prominent three-bay-wide feature, a smooth cornice replaced the modillion cornice, and the portico railings were removed. The exterior end chimneys became interior end chimneys and a central interior chimney was added to vent the boiler in the mechanical room. Other additions included parged panels beneath full-size window openings and tall louvered shutters flanking the windows and panels on the east, west, and south elevations. National Grange and the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, *For the Common Good* (Washington, D. C.: National Grange Public Relations Department, 1950), 22.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.; "Weekley Is Selected to Represent South on 12-Man Council," *Daily Times-News*, October 18, 1947, p. 2; Graves, Charles M., "The Community Center Building," and "the Outdoor Swimming Pool," pp. 152-188, in M. Alexander Gabrielson and Caswell M. Miles, eds., *Sports and Recreation Facilities for School and Community* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1958).

<sup>23</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," March 12, 1946 - December 6, 1949.

<sup>24</sup> Carol G. Stratton, "Treasured Building Celebrates 65th Anniversary," *Mooresville Weekly* (Mooresville, NC) October 10, 2014 (accessed August 2018); "Building Suitable for Center," *High Point Enterprise*, March 7, 1952, p. 1; "Negro Recreation News," *The Robesonian* (Lumberton), December 15, 1952, p. 7; "Miniature Golf Course Planned," *Statesville Record and Landmark*, August 18, 1955, p. 1; "Recreation Man Will Be Here Tomorrow," *Gastonia Gazette*, March 14, 1956, p. 15; The Charles M. Graves Organization, *Charlotte-Mecklenburg County Master Plan for Recreation*, Atlanta, 1966; Brian W. C. Sturm, "The Evolution of Green Space: A History of Urban Landscape in Charlotte, North Carolina, 1890-1990," Honors Thesis, Department of History, University of North Carolina, 2000.

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Tech; the Lakewood Branch of the Atlanta Boys' Club (1958); Georgia Mental Health Institute (1963); Yaarab Shrine Temple (1965); Georgia Archives (1965); and the Governor's Mansion (1967).<sup>25</sup>

North Carolina Grange master Harry B. Caldwell presided at the Schley Grange Hall's December 6, 1949, dedication. Media outlets reported that almost five hundred people attended the 2:00 pm ceremony. North Carolina governor W. Kerr Scott, Schley Grange master J. R. Latta, National Grange master Albert S. Goss, and Sears-Roebuck Foundation president and Sears-Roebuck and Company vice-president Edward J. Condon were among the speakers. Milton and Georgia Latta hosted a noon luncheon for the Sears-Roebuck contingent. Many prominent state and local officials, politicians, and Grange members including North Carolina Grange master Harry Caldwell were present.<sup>26</sup>

Schley Grange immediately put its new hall into service, hosting the annual North Carolina Grange youth conference at the end of December. The award also garnered international attention. In July 1950, thirteen German agricultural leaders on a federally sponsored eleven-state tour spent four days studying North Carolina Grange organization. The group visited Schley to view the Grange hall and community improvements. They also travelled to Wayne County to see Belfast Grange No. 963's 1949 hall, a clipped-front-gable concrete-block building.<sup>27</sup>

The North Carolina State Grange's twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in 1953-1954 inspired the formation of new chapters including St. Mary's Grange (1953) in Orange County. In 1954, the State Grange reported that approximately twelve thousand North Carolina residents were members of two hundred Granges in fifty-five counties. Orange County farmers organized four more chapters—Cheeks (1957), Little River (1957), Eno (1960), and Bingham (1960)—as the decade progressed.<sup>28</sup> Schley Grange was quite active during the 1950s and 1960s, hosting myriad educational and recreational events and encouraging American Legion Post 452, the local home demonstration club, agricultural extension

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<sup>25</sup> Charles M. Graves's other 1950s and 1960s commissions included Dekalb County and Fulton County public schools and apartment complexes in Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee. "New Classrooms for Tech," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 3, 1958, p. 26; "New Boys Club Branch," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 6, 1958, p. 6; Robert M. Craig, "A. Thomas Bradbury," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/arts-culture/thomas-bradbury-1902-1992> (accessed December 2018).

<sup>26</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," December 6, 1949; "Grange Hall, Given to Town, Is Dedicated," *Asheville Citizen-Times*, December 7, 1949, p. 22; "Speakers Heap Praise on Schley," *News of Orange County*, December 8, 1949, p. 1; Arthur Johnsey, "Schley Grange Hall Called Monumental to Rural Effort," *Greensboro Daily Record*, December 6, 1949, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>27</sup> "Youth Conference, December 31, 1949 - January 1, 1950," program in Schley Grange minute book, December 6, 1949; "Grange Work in Conservation of Natural Resources," *Statesville Record and Landmark*, January 16, 1950, p. 3; "Grange Setup to be Studied By 13 German Farm Leaders," *The Robesonian* (Lumberton), July 20, 1950, p. 10; "German Leaders Entertained," *The National Grange Monthly*, undated (circa July 1950) clipping in the Schley Grange minutes book, July 12, 1950; J. Daniel Pezzoni, ed., and Penne Smith, *Glimpses of Wayne County, North Carolina* (Durham: B. Williams and Associates, 1998), 82.

<sup>28</sup> Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina*, 1; National Grange, "North Carolina State Grange chapter creation roster."

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service agents, and the community at large to do the same. The group supported youth organizations including 4-H Clubs and the Future Farmers of America. In collaboration with University of North Carolina's School of Public Health and the Orange County Health Department, the Grange offered wellness clinics and programs, free chest x-rays, and transportation to doctors' appointments. Members were urged to obtain medical, property, and crop insurance. The Grange organized benefit dinners for those with sizable unanticipated expenses and provided assistance as needed during planting and harvest seasons. Fundraisers also subsidized building repair and maintenance, youth summer camp participation, and state and national Grange meeting and conference attendance. The hall was a popular venue for social activities such as square dances; card, shuffleboard, and table tennis games; and community suppers. Members held an annual Fourth of July fish fry and picnic and cooked enormous quantities of Brunswick stew outdoors in large cast-iron pots at fall gatherings. Facilities including a concession building/cook house with a room for preparing barbecue, a baseball/softball field, and horseshoe pitching pits were added by 1960. Baseball teams were initially loosely organized contingents of male area residents ranging in age from sixteen to fifty.<sup>29</sup> However, a coalition of local churches began sponsoring youth baseball teams in the 1960s. This initiative, which became the non-profit, volunteer-administered Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association in 1976, continues to oversee co-ed baseball and softball teams that play at four fields including the field at Schley.<sup>30</sup>

Less regimented and shorter Grange meetings facilitated membership recruitment and retention during the late twentieth century, when Schley Grange welcomed its first African American member Renee Price. As all of the other Orange County Granges gradually closed during the late twentieth century, some members joined Schley Grange. In 2019, the chapter is Orange County's only Grange and the largest of North Carolina's remaining 31 lodges, with 158 members, 47 of whom are farmers. The group continues to undertake service projects, host informative lecturers at monthly meetings, and promote issues important to the community. Katherine Cheek has served as president since 1983.<sup>1</sup> American Legion Post 452 subsidized much-needed building repairs in the late-twentieth century and leases meeting space. Area residents frequently rent the hall for meetings, workshops, reunions, wedding receptions, fundraisers, and other events.<sup>31</sup> Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association added a restroom building and batting cage to the athletic complex during the late-twentieth century, maintains the field, and supplies concessions. Schley Grange and the Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks, and Recreation are sponsoring the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Schley Grange Hall. The building is the only dedicated Grange hall identified in the county's up-to-date comprehensive

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<sup>29</sup> Schley Grange, "Minutes of the Schley Grange," November 8, 1949 - June 14, 1960; Jessie Latta, "History of Schley Grange," 1956, pp. 3-4; Sicuro and Maisel, "Schley 1958," 2; Ruby Wilkerson Tilley, Schley Grange No. 710 oral history gathering session, October 25, 2018.

<sup>30</sup> Katherine Cheek, et. al., Schley Grange No. 710 oral history gathering session, October 25, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Katherine Cheek, Bonnie Hauser, Rachel Hawkins, and Norma White, conversation with Heather Fearnbach and Peter Sandbeck, August 17, 2018.

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architectural survey and thus is recognized as the only extant historic example of this resource type retaining integrity to survive in Orange County.

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## Section 10. Geographical Data

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 36.153660 / Longitude: -79.062940

### Verbal Boundary Description

Schley Grange Hall's National Register boundaries encompass all of 7.7-acre Orange County tax parcel number 9887142992, as indicated by the bold line on the enclosed map. Scale approximately  $5/8" = 100'$

### Boundary Justification

The tax parcel that serves as the National Register boundary contains all of the property historically associated with the Grange hall built in 1949.



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## Additional Documentation: Historic Photograph



### SCHLEY GRANGE

The new, fully-equipped Grange hall won by Orange County farmers as first prize in nation-wide contest sponsored by Sears, Roebuck Foundation.

Stuart Noblin, *The Grange In North Carolina, 1929-1954* (Greensboro: Piedmont Press, 1954), 47

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## Additional Documentation: Conjectural Façade Rendering



National Grange and the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, *For the Common Good* (Washington, D. C.: National Grange Public Relations Department, 1950), 22

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## Current Photographs

A large, single-story brick house with a red metal roof. The house features a prominent white portico with four square columns supporting a triangular pediment. The main body of the house is constructed of red brick, with white-painted window frames and shutters. A white downspout runs vertically along the side of the house. The house is situated on a well-maintained green lawn, with a white picket fence visible in the foreground. Large, mature trees are in the background under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

**1. Southeast oblique (above) and 2. Northwest oblique (below)**





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3. Entrance vestibule flanked by restrooms, looking south (above) and  
4. Central reception area looking east into auditorium (below)



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5. Auditorium, looking north (above) and 6. Dining room, looking west (below)





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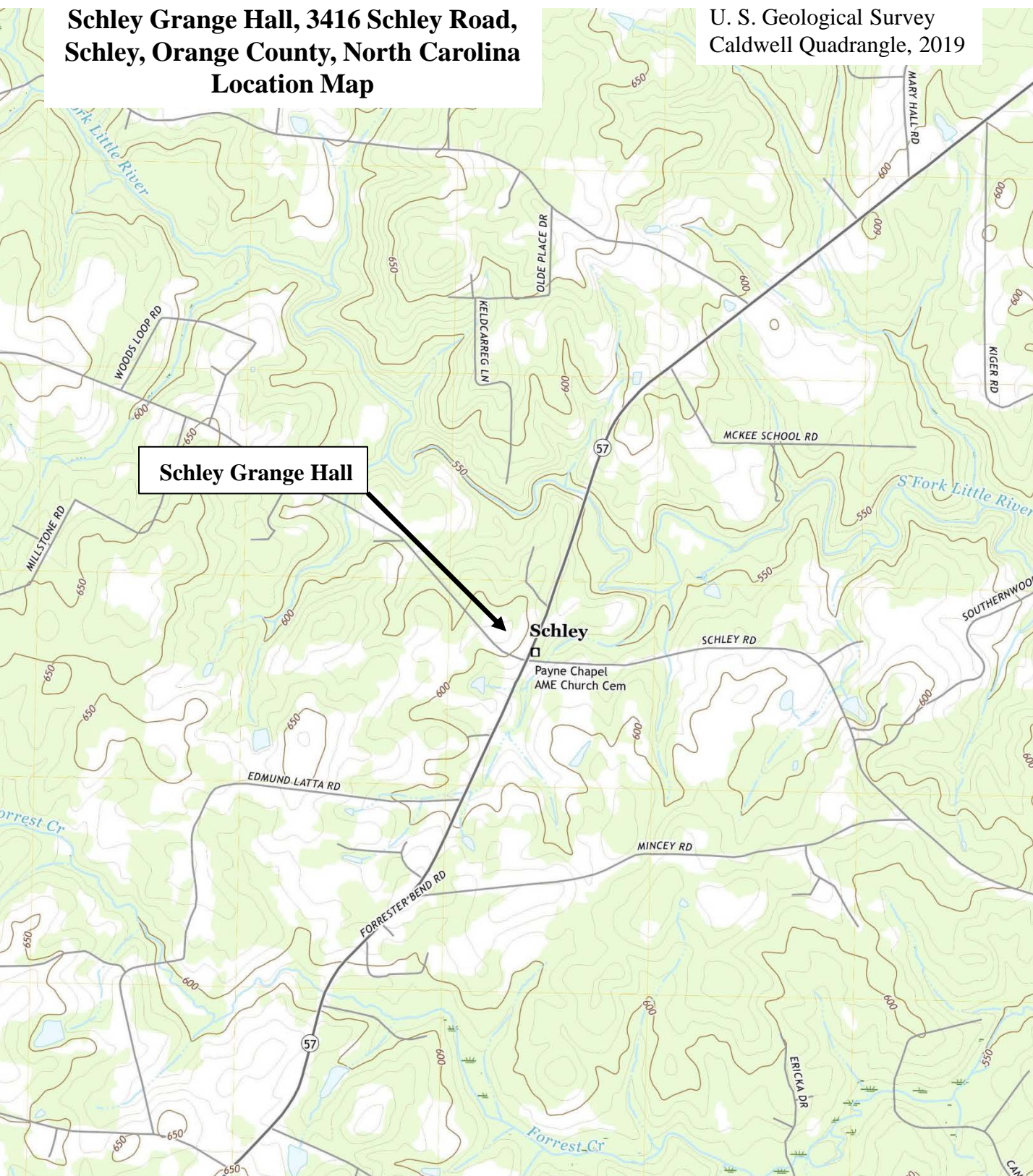
7. Concession building/cook house (left) and picnic shelter, looking northeast (above) and  
8. Baseball/softball field and restroom building, looking north (below)



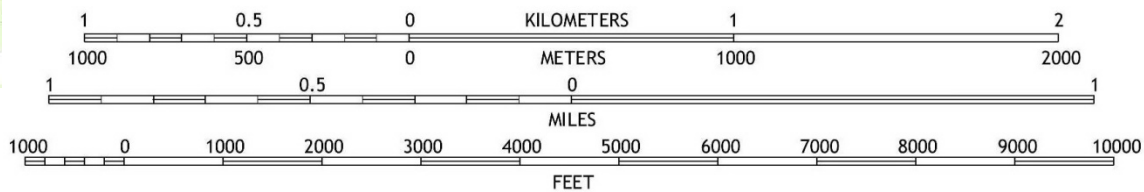


**Schley Grange Hall, 3416 Schley Road,  
Schley, Orange County, North Carolina  
Location Map**

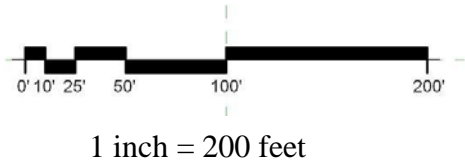
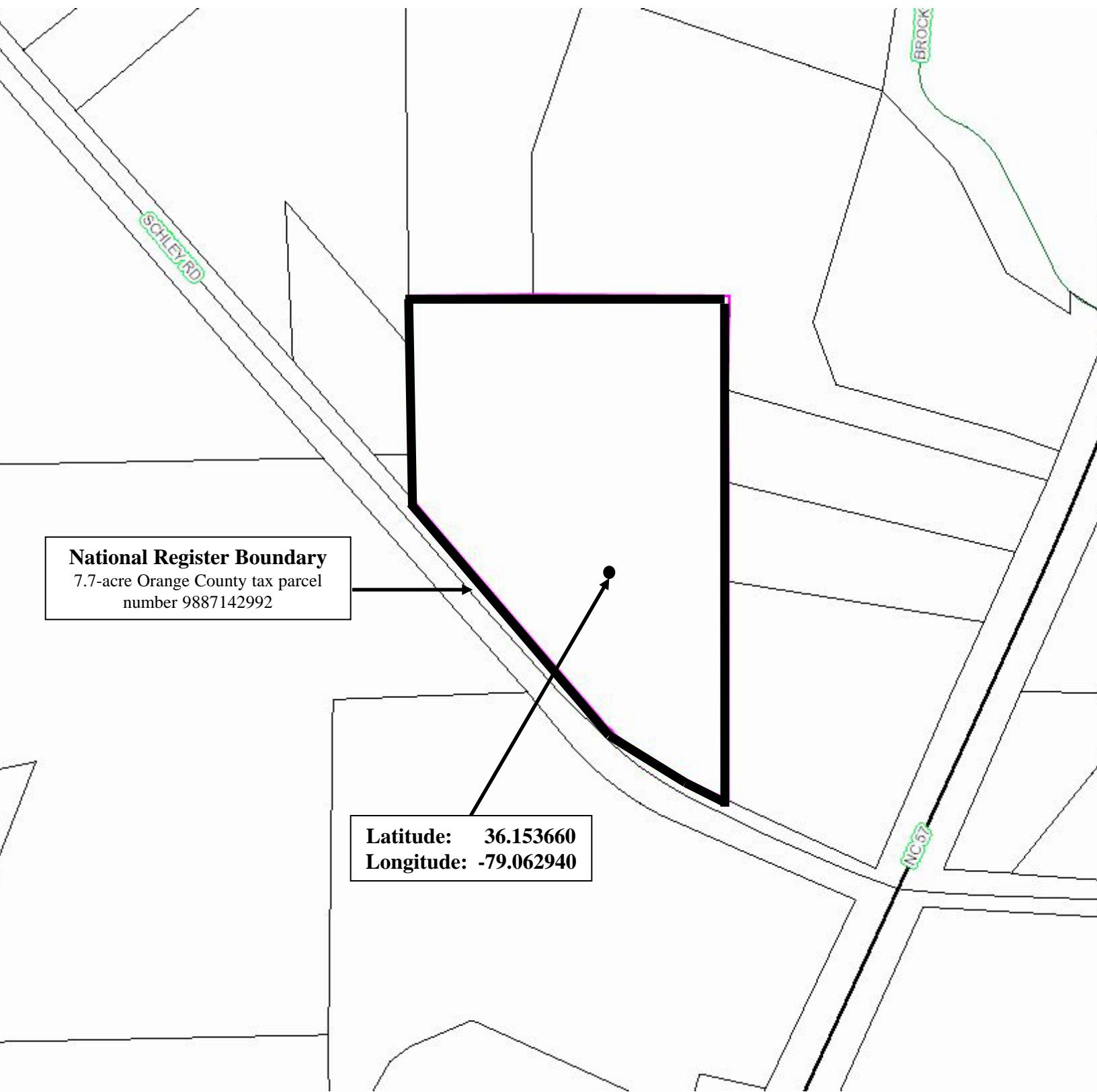
U. S. Geological Survey  
Caldwell Quadrangle, 2019



SCALE 1:24 000

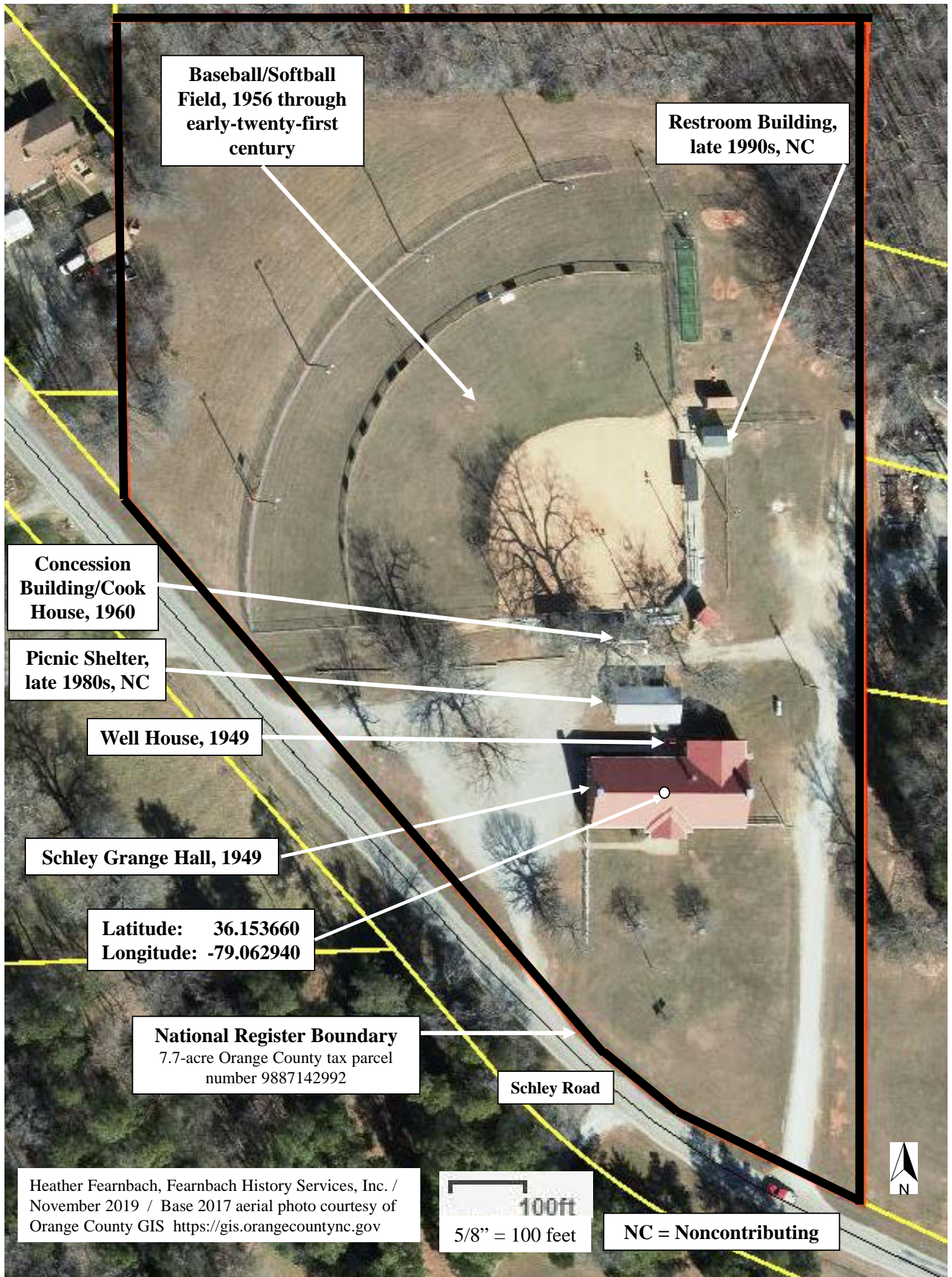


Schley Grange Hall, 3416 Schley Road, Schley, Orange County, North Carolina, National Register Boundary





Schley Grange Hall, 3416 Schley Road, Schley, Orange County, North Carolina, Site Plan



**Schley Grange Hall, 3416 Schley Road,  
Schley, Orange County, North Carolina  
Floor Plan and Photograph Key**

