

VLR-10/18/95 NRHP-1/22/96

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
other names/site number VDHR Site No. 129-123

2. Location

street & number 202 and 208 E. Third St. N/A not for publication
city or town Salem N/A vicinity
state VA code 775 county N/A code N/A zip code 24153

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets request does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant request nationally request statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Julia Nesmik 11-8-95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property request meets request does not meet the National Register criteria. (request See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

entered in the National Register. _____

See continuation sheet. _____

determined eligible for the National Register. _____

See continuation sheet. _____

determined not eligible for the National Register. _____

removed from the National Register. _____

other (explain): _____

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 the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category

Subcategory

RELIGION

religious facility

RELIGION

church-related residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category

Subcategory

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation CONCRETE
- walls WOOD
- roof METAL
- other ASPHALT

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.)

- X 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:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1922-1945

Significant Dates

1922

Ca. 1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mr. Graham (probably Milburn W. Graham)

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:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property approximately .34 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	17 583170	4127000	3	
2			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	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni</u>		
organization	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni, Preservation Consultant</u>	date	<u>June 28, 1995</u>
street & number	<u>PO Box 7825</u>	telephone	<u>(703) 366-0787</u>
city or town	<u>Roanoke</u> state <u>VA</u>	zip code	<u>24019-0825</u>

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name	<u>Richard H. Fisher</u>		
street & number	<u>1921 McVitty Road</u>	telephone	<u>(703) 389-9225</u>
city or town	<u>Salem</u>	state	<u>VA</u> zip code <u>24153</u>

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
Salem, Va.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting occupies the southeast corner of East Third Street and South Colorado Street in downtown Salem, Virginia. The two buildings that comprise the camp meeting--a 1922 tabernacle and a ca. 1926 dormitory--are plainly detailed frame buildings with novelty weatherboard siding and poured concrete basement levels. Surrounding the camp meeting are historic residential neighborhoods interspersed with late-twentieth-century buildings.

Tabernacle

The tabernacle is a large, one-story building (measuring approximately sixty by eighty feet) covered by a metal-sheathed front-gable roof with eaves supported by exposed rafter tails. On the north-facing front elevation are two entries, each with two-leaf paneled doors, that are reached by poured-concrete steps. In the front gable is a rectangular louvered vent. Running down the two sides of the building are tall nine-over-nine-sash windows with plain surrounds. Aligned with the windows on the east side are a basement entry and basement windows with modern window sash. The rear gable end has a door and two entries.

The tabernacle interior features rows of rough-sawn posts that support a wood truss roof. The formerly open structure of the walls and roof is now concealed behind unfinished plasterboard sheathing. The principal interior space is the auditorium (designed for a capacity of 2,000 people), the floor of which slopes down to a raised dais. In front of this dais runs a simple "altar rail," behind which extend rows of slatted benches. The dais is furnished with a heavy paneled wood lectern (which may have stood in the tabernacle that preceded the present building) and curtained alcoves. The back or north end of the auditorium was partitioned off in the late twentieth century to form a vestibule and restrooms. The present fluorescent light fixtures replace original pendant globe incandescent fixtures. The unfinished basement (used primarily as a store room) was formerly reached by a stair in the northwest corner and contained crude restroom facilities. Over the years, paper fans fell through the gaps in the floor boards above and formed an accumulation on the basement's mostly earthen floor.

Dormitory

The dormitory is a two-story building covered by an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof. Across the three-bay front extends a one-story porch with turned posts and balusters and a metal-sheathed shed roof. Other exterior features include a modern rear stoop, six-over-six-sash

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**Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
Salem, Va.**

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Description (continued)

windows, and a brick flue. The plainly finished interior has living rooms, bedrooms, and a modern kitchen on the first floor and bedrooms on the second floor arranged around a stair passage. Walls and ceilings have plaster, plasterboard, and paperboard finishes and doors are paneled. The second-floor stairwell is bordered by a simple railing that is a modern replica of a historic railing. The basement historically served as a kitchen and basement.

Integrity Statement

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting and its successor, the Salem Camp Meeting, made few alterations to the tabernacle and dormitory over the seventy-odd years of the buildings' religious use, except (possibly) for the removal of an original porch (see architectural analysis), the insertion of interior sheathing, and the creation of a vestibule and restrooms. In 1994, the present owner began rehabilitation work on the two buildings. The new uses of the tabernacle as a youth theater and the dormitory as apartments will necessitate few changes to historic fabric.

Architectural Analysis

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting represents an urban interpretation of the rural camp meeting form, both in architectural and experiential terms. American camp meetings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were largely open-air affairs, with rows of seats facing a preaching stand and a feature described by one observer as "a boarded enclosure filled with straw, into which the converted were thrown."¹ In Virginia, the more permanent camp meetings eventually brought their communicants under the shelter of large, airy tabernacles. Illustrative of the later arrangement is the Jonesville Methodist Camp Meeting in Lee County, Virginia, a gabled post-and-beam structure believed to date to the 1820s, with an earthen floor, a preaching dais and rows of seats, and side panels that can be propped open for ventilation.² Participants at Jonesville and other meetings camped in tents; over time, more permanent lodgings were constructed, and camp grounds began to resemble miniature cities with rows of simple log or frame cabins surrounding the tabernacle.³

The buildings of the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association share these characteristics, compressed into the narrow confines of an urban site. The tabernacle takes the broad, gabled form of its country cousins, with interior seating oriented toward a preaching dais. (As originally constructed, the tabernacle may have included a front porch and two wharf-like "platforms" extending into Third Street; these may have served for outdoor preaching.)⁴ Like

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
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Description (continued)

the rural tabernacles, the Salem building is designed for comfortable summertime use. Although technically it is an enclosed building--a concession to urban propriety--the tabernacle's tall windows, ventilated open roof, and floor boards laid with gaps between them ensured a steady flow of cooled air from outside and from the dirt-floored basement, and the slatted backs and seats of the benches added further to the comfort of communicants. Another old-time feature was the "altar rail" in front of the preaching dais, analogous to the "altar," "pen," or "mourner's bench" of earlier open-air camp grounds. Here the penitent kneeled during services, with the preachers standing above them and the communicants seated behind them. Like the tabernacle, the dormitory followed precedent, for it combined in one building the scattered accommodations typical of rural camp grounds, and like the tents and cabins of such grounds, it was used intensively only during meetings.

These traditional forms satisfied the longing of certain Salem urbanites for the comforting conventions of rural society, "old time religion" among them. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the phenomenal growth of the cities of Roanoke and Salem attracted a stream of emigrants from the surrounding countryside, a rural populace unaccustomed to the stresses of urban life. The resulting tension sometimes flared into racial strife, as Ann Field Alexander has documented in her study of the infamous Roanoke riot and lynching of 1893.⁵ In contrast, a constructive response to the rural-urban tensions of the period may be seen in the popularity of the Virginia Association for the Promotion of Bible Holiness and its successor, the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association. As the associations demonstrate, the distinctly rural experience of the camp meeting could be successfully adapted to an urban context in Salem.

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
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Description (continued)

Endnotes

1. Talbot, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe*, 319-320.
2. Heffelfinger, "Jonesville Methodist Camp Ground."
3. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 177-180.
4. Sanborn Map Company, "Salem." Because the Salem Sanborn map was published in December 1922--only four months after the tabernacle was described as being "practically completed"--it may be that it shows planned features that were never constructed. Mary Goodwin, a former treasurer of the association, remembers the period of the tabernacle's construction but does not recall the porch and platforms portrayed on the Sanborn map (Goodwin, personal communication). The features do not appear on the 1932 Sanborn map of Salem.
5. Alexander, "'Like an Evil Wind'," 176-180.

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
Salem, Va.

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting is a resource of religious significance to Salem and the Southwest Virginia region. The Association's 1922 tabernacle and ca. 1926 dormitory represent an urban interpretation of the rural camp meeting form, both in architectural and experiential terms. From the 1910s until services ceased in the early 1990s, the Association provided a traditional form of religious worship to Roanoke Valley urbanites and out-of-town visitors.

Justification of Criteria

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of religion as a representative of a rare resource type--the camp meeting--and as a notable urban interpretation of a traditionally rural form of religious experience. The period of significance extends from 1922, the year the tabernacle was built, and ends at 1945, covering the early years of the Association's activities. The resource possesses local significance.

Acknowledgements

Several individuals aided in the preparation of this report. Richard H. Fisher, the owner of the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting tabernacle and dormitory, sponsored the project and provided many insights into the history of the property. Mary Goodwin, a long-time Association participant and officer, shared her recollections of meetings dating back to the 1920s. Others who assisted the project included Mary Hill of the Salem Museum, Linda Miller of the Roanoke College Archives (Salem), and Salem historians Warren Moorman and Norwood "Woody" Middleton.

Historical Background

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting has its origins in the Holiness Movement, a mid-nineteenth-century offshoot of Methodism. Adherents of the movement dedicated themselves to living perfect or "holy" lives according to the teachings of scripture.¹ Central to the movement's activities was the camp meeting, an ecstatic form of worship with deep roots in the religious life of rural America. Named for its often remote and forested setting, the camp meeting developed as a response to low population densities in the American

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
Salem, Va.

Statement of Significance (continued)

backcountry. The interdenominational summertime meetings attracted preachers and worshippers--sometimes by the thousands--from a wide hinterland, providing several weeks of intense emotional experience as well as opportunities to socialize and conduct business.²

By the mid-nineteenth century, the camp meeting had become associated primarily with Methodism, a fact that contributed to its adoption by the Holiness Movement's organizational arm, the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness, formed in 1867.³ In the South, despite the region's Methodism and strong camp meeting tradition, the antebellum schism of the Methodist church into southern and northern branches at first worked against the Holiness Movement. The movement experienced its earliest growth in the Mid-Atlantic states, concentrating in New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, and Maryland during the latter 1800s, with scattered occurrences in New England and the Midwest; few meetings were established in Virginia and other Southern states.⁴ The city of Salem, Virginia, located well outside the Holiness heartland, nevertheless offered fertile ground for the movement, which was most popular among the formerly rural residents of rapidly growing urban centers such as Salem. In the alienating environment of the city, the Holiness Movement reinforced traditional rural values through the distinctly rural form of the camp meeting.⁵

Salem industrialist Demetrius Bittle Strouse (ca. 1830-1915) was the chief sponsor of the local movement. When he was in his sixties, Strouse became convinced of the evils of tobacco--a hard realization considering he was then president of two cigarette machine companies. "Satan held me back," he later wrote, but in 1896 he resigned from the companies and devoted his life to religious work. "I was filled with the Spirit and sanctified," Strouse wrote, echoing Holiness phraseology. "I had peace with God before, but then a sense of purity of heart came to me that was restful--the peace of God."⁶ In December 1900, Strouse, his son Clarence, and three others, trustees of the Virginia Association for the Promotion of Bible Holiness, purchased several lots on the Boulevard in Salem for the construction of a tabernacle, the headquarters of what by then had grown into a nationwide ministry.⁷ The barn-like frame building--known simply as the Tabernacle--opened in September 1901 for a ten-day revival.⁸

After Strouse's death in 1915, the Tabernacle was torn down, and his ministry--reorganized as the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association--met at different locations, including a livery stable and the Salem Town Hall.⁹ In 1921, the association purchased property on Colorado and Third streets across from the Colorado Street Methodist Church, the church of the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association's first president, Rev. J. L. Early.¹⁰ The association hired a Mr. Graham to build a new tabernacle modeled on the original Tabernacle, and it held its first meeting there

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Statement of Significance (continued)

in September 1922. A choir of young people from various Roanoke Valley churches and a string orchestra numbered among the "attractive features" of the first meeting.¹¹

The Southwest Virginia Holiness Association continued the work of its predecessor. The ten-day meetings were generally held in July or August, and the association supported foreign missions, as had the Virginia Association for the Promotion of Bible Holiness.¹² Ties with the Methodist church remained strong, but the association emphasized interdenominationalism, welcoming Wesleyans, Nazarenes, and Episcopalians into its ranks. Not welcome, as stated in the meeting's constitution, were "Pentecostal or Tongues People, the Latter Day Saints, 'Holy Rollers,' Spiritualists, and such like [and also] those who do not believe in church organization."¹³ Pentecostalism was a radical branch of the Holiness Movement that garnered many adherents in Appalachia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁴

Circulars were used to advertise the Association's annual meetings, and participants arrived by car or train (Salem's Norfolk & Western depot is located several blocks south of the tabernacle). Most attendants were residents of the Roanoke valley, but others came from elsewhere in Southwest Virginia, and the guest preachers hailed from Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, and other Southern states. Typically, the meeting's daily agenda began with an early-morning prayer service, followed by bible study, and, at ten or eleven in the morning, an evangelistic service. A missionary service was held at three in the afternoon, and the regular service began at seven in the evening, starting with a song service and concluding with a preaching service. The Krause family of Wilmore, Kentucky often supplied music for the song services. In later years, missionaries presented slide shows on their work at informal sessions that occurred after the evening services. Out-of-town participants stayed with local families or, beginning in 1926 or 1927, in a two-story dormitory located beside the tabernacle on Third Street.¹⁵

In 1953, the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association officially changed its name to the Salem Camp Meeting Association, in part to further dissociate the meeting from Pentecostalism. In its new constitution, the rechristened association stuck to its earlier hard line by stating that it would "never be associated or affiliated in any way with the sect known as 'Pentecostal Fellowship' or any organization which declares that speaking in tongues is essential evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit." The Salem Camp Meeting Association also reaffirmed its interdenominational mission, and avowed that it would "at no time assume the dignity or authority of a church."¹⁶

These last two tenets expressed a conservatism that ran counter to nationwide developments in

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
Salem, Va.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

the Holiness Movement. Other associations moved towards "full-fledged denominationalism," an evolution that reflected "the transition the Holiness people themselves made as they adjusted to city ways and improved their socio-economic status." Institutionalization also manifested itself architecturally, as the movement's "crude wooden tabernacles became brick and stucco churches," but unlike other associations, the Salem Camp Meeting preserved its simple tabernacle virtually unchanged.¹⁷

In 1993, diminished participation in the Salem Camp Meeting prompted the cancellation of the annual meeting. In 1994, the tabernacle and dormitory were sold to Richard H. Fisher of Salem, who is in the process of rehabilitating the dormitory as apartments and the tabernacle as meeting space for a youth theater.¹⁸

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Salem, Va.

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Statement of Significance (continued)

Endnotes

1. Brown, *Holy Ground*, xiii; Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion*, 2.
2. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape*, 231-238; Dieter, *Holiness Revival*, 111.
3. Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion*, 16.
4. *Ibid.*, 18-20, 48.
5. Dieter, *Holiness Revival*, 110-111; Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion*, xviii.
6. Middleton, "Misunderstood 1880's entrepreneur turned to religion." *Salem Times Register*, February 21, 1985.
7. Roanoke County Deed Book 23, p. 46.
8. Middleton, "Misunderstood." The Tabernacle also served as a public assembly hall during off months.
9. Goodwin, personal communication. According to Goodwin, Strouse's daughter was eager to sell the property for house lots.
10. Roanoke County Deed Book 110, p. 60; "Brief History."
11. Goodwin, personal communication; "Brief History;" and *Roanoke Times*, August 20, 1922. The newspaper reported that the association planned to meet in the tabernacle, which was "practically completed." Mr. Graham, the contractor, was likely Milburn W. Graham of Salem, the only Graham listed as a contractor in business directories of the period (*Hill . . . Roanoke, Salem and Vinton [Virginia] City Directory, 1926*, 873). Salem builder J. J. True, who was elected president of the association at its first meeting in the new tabernacle, probably assisted Graham with the construction of the building.
12. Goodwin, personal communication.
13. Southwest Virginia Holiness Association constitution, ca. 1920, Middleton Papers, The Salem Museum, Salem, Virginia.

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
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14. Hughes, "Restorationist Christianity."

15. Goodwin, personal communication; "Brief History." Some accounts give 1928 as the date for the dormitory. William and Jessie Galliher lived in the dormitory in 1966. Other occupants included John, Sadie, and Maesie Woods. The "Brief History" contains a list of individuals who participated in the meeting as ministers, singers, and missionaries. The dormitory also served as a caretaker's residence.

16. "Constitution of the Salem Camp Meeting Association."

17. Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion*, xviii.

18. Goodwin and Fisher, personal communication.

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**Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated parcel are depicted on the accompanying 1:200 scale map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated parcel correspond to the property lines of the lot on which the nominated resource stands.

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Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting
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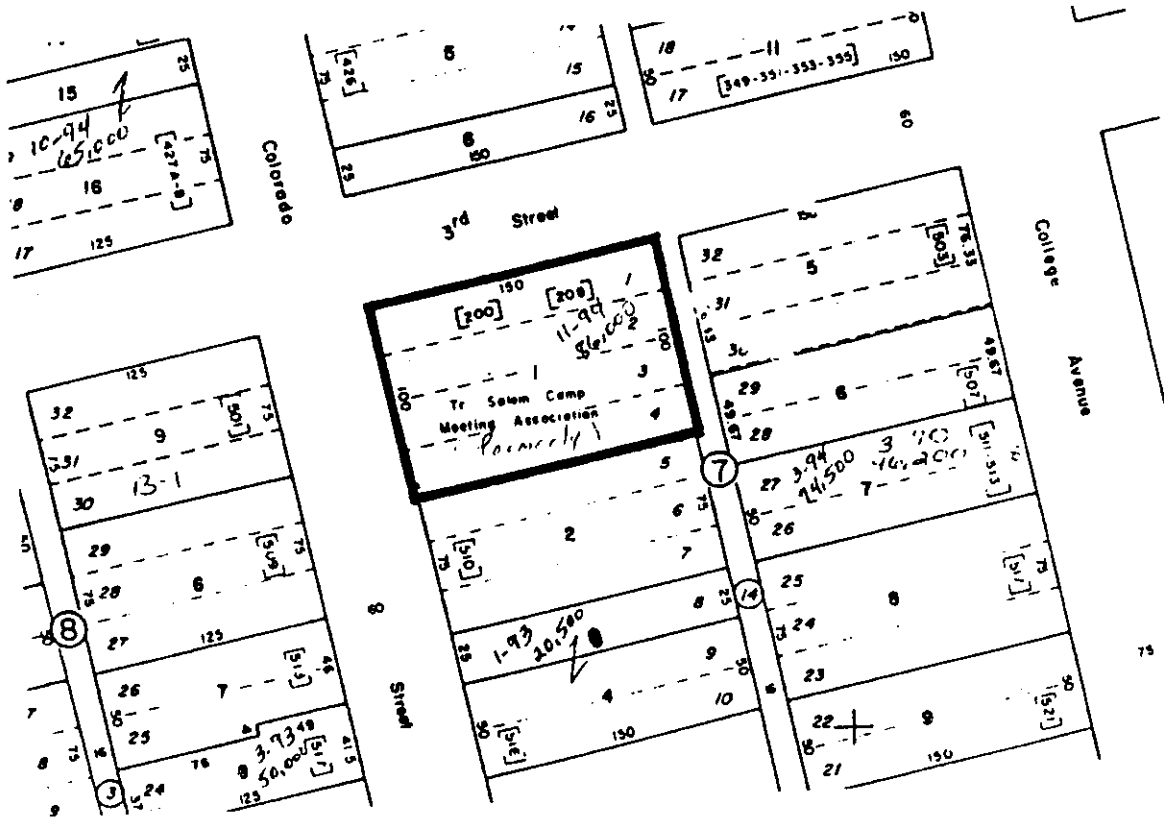
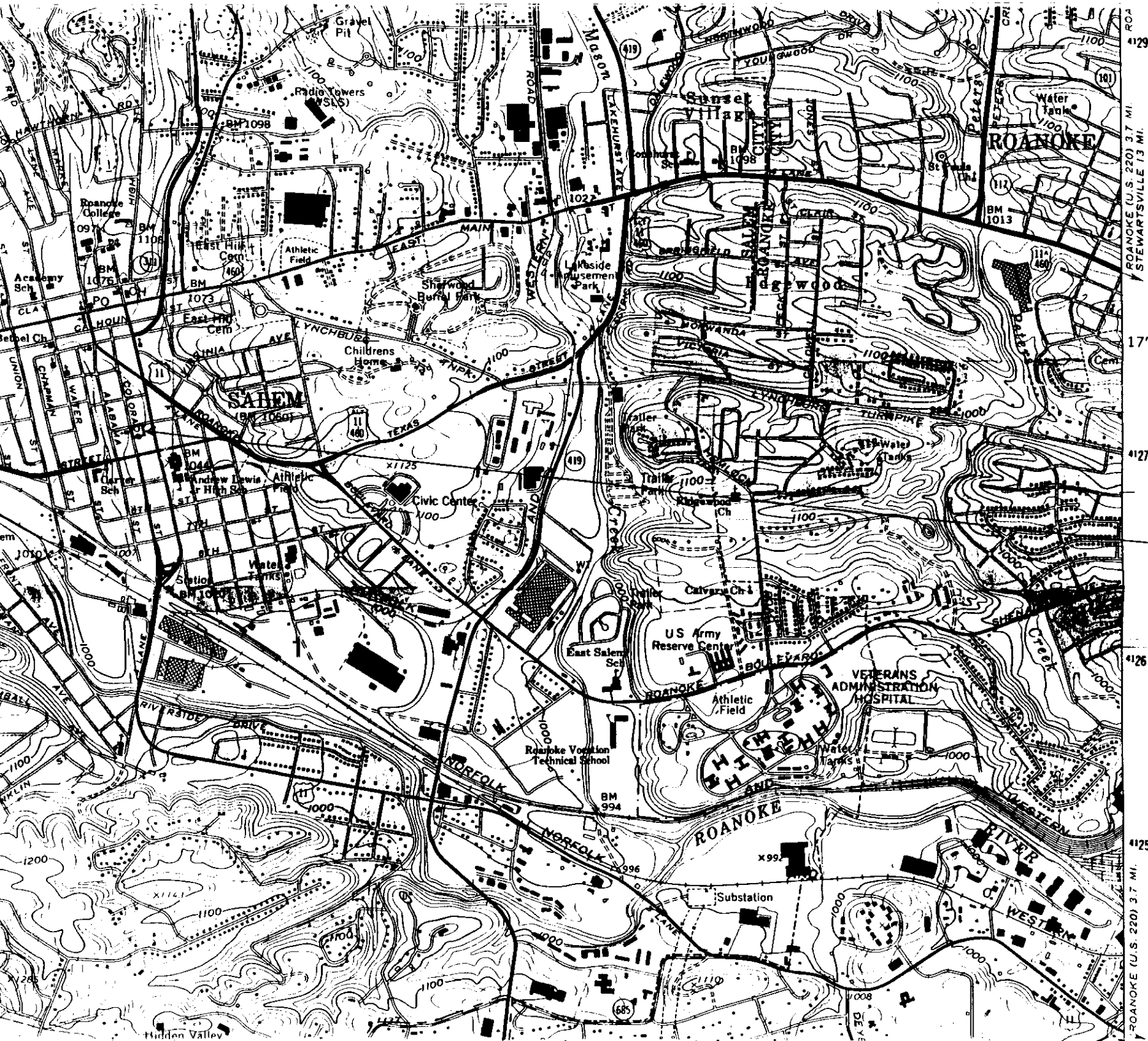


Exhibit A: Boundaries of the Southwest Virginia Holiness Association Camp Meeting nominated parcel. Map prepared from City of Salem tax parcel map no. 145. Scale: 1" = 200'. North is up.



ROANOKE (U.S. 220) 3.7 MI.
 STEWARTSVILLE 13 MI.
 4129
 17'30"
 4127
 4126
 4125
 ROANOKE (U.S. 220) 3.7 MI.

Southwest Virginia
 Holiness Association
 Camp Meeting
 Salem, VA

UTM reference (zone 17)
 E 583170
 N 4127000