

VLR 10/14/15  
NRHP 11/20/15

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** Bellevue Rural Historic District  
**Other names/site number** Bellevue School for Boys, Trivium, Brook Hill Farm, Glenn Mary Farm DHR# 009-5296

**2. Location**  
street & number Bellevue Road not for publication N/A  
city or town Forest vicinity X  
state Virginia code VA county Bedford code 019 Zip 24551

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

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official  
**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**  
I, hereby certify that this property is:  
     entered in the National Register  
     See continuation sheet. Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
     determined eligible for the National Register  
     See continuation sheet. Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_  
     determined not eligible for the National Register  
     removed from the National Register  
     other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Bellevue Rural Historic District  
Bedford County, Virginia

**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**

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>7</u>	<u>15</u> buildings
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>13</u>	<u>15</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 13 (5 – Bellevue; 8 - Brook Hill Farm)

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

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary structure</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Institutional housing</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Hotel</u>
<u>Education</u>	<u>Schools</u>
<u>Education</u>	<u>Education related</u>
<u>Agriculture/ Subsistence</u>	<u>Animal facility</u>
<u>Agriculture / Subsistence</u>	<u>Agricultural Outbuilding</u>

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Domestic</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>Domestic</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u>Agriculture/Subsistence</u>	<u>Animal Facility</u>
<u>Agriculture/Subsistence</u>	<u>Agricultural Outbuilding</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

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### 7. Description

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**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

Early Republic / Federal  
Colonial/Jacobean  
Greek Revival  
Late Victorian/ Queen Anne  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American movements/ bungalow craftsman

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, Stone, Concrete  
roof Tin, asphalt/shingle, slate  
walls Brick, Wood, Stone, Glass  
  
other

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

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### 8. Statement of Significance

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

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

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture  
Architecture  
Education

Period of Significance 1790 – 1939

Significant Dates Bellevue: 1790  
Trivium: 1832  
Brook Hill Farm: 1904  
Glenn Mary Farm: 1939

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
Holcomb, James P.

Cultural Affiliation n/a

Architect/Builder unknown

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 411.18 acres

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing			
1	17	643000E	4136840N	2	17	643300E	4136040N	3	17	643800E	4136140N
4	17	644700E	4135860N	5	17	645065E	4136050N	6	17	644660E	4136930N
7	17	643670E	4137500N	<input type="checkbox"/> 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.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title: JoAnne Miller

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ date June 23, 2005

street & number: 7289 Bellevue Road telephone 540-586-7432

city or town Forest state VA zip code 24551

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**Additional Documentation**

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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)

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**Property Owner**

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

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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**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 Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## 7. Summary Description:

Bellevue Rural Historic District is located in eastern Bedford County in Virginia's Piedmont region. The nominated portion of the county is along a 1-mile stretch of Bellevue Road. It is unique in that it encompasses the development of farm practices and historic home styles from 1790 to present all within a 1-mile radius. All buildings are well preserved. The rural landscape containing open farmland with an assortment of domestic and agricultural buildings is pristine. The building types include Federal, Colonial Revival, Georgian, Victorian, Greek Revival, and Bungalow/Craftsman. The farms are linked together by open fields and a narrow, hilly, tree-lined road that was once an old buggy path. Most farmers in the district presently engage in cattle raising, horse industry, and hay as their principal activities.

### Setting

Bedford County is bounded by the James River to the north and the Staunton/Roanoke River to the south. The eastern region where Bellevue is located is hilly and consists mostly of open farmland. The land on the eastern side of the road is drained by Bertrums Creek, and the Western side borders the railroad. The impressive Peaks of Otter are clearly visible to the northwest.

### Architectural Descriptions

#### Bellevue

The earliest dwelling called Bellevue (VDHR # 09-3) is a two-story brick residence constructed in three phases beginning in the late eighteenth century and concluding around 1870. An addition was constructed around 1840 (2) that virtually doubled the size of the house and resulted in a symmetrical rectangular structure with a central hall plan. Though built in two phases, the overall appearance of the house is uniform, with symmetrical elevations covered by a low-pitched, standing-seam-metal hipped roof with flanking wings. The detailed cornice with its band of modillions is consistent on both sections. Windows, while regularly placed, are 6-over-6 double-hung in different shaped openings. The openings of the earlier section have brick jack arches and molded sills. The 1840 addition has wooden lintels detailed with paterae corner blocks and plain sills. There is slightly more space between the center bay and the north section than between the center and the south addition. The entire brick core rests on a brick basement. Two interior chimneys are located at the south section and there is a side chimney in the north portion. The earlier section is laid in common bond with three rows of stretchers alternating with a header row. The south section is laid in Flemish bond.

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The central entrance of the front elevation (west) has a one-bay, one-storied entrance portico supported by two pairs of dark columns and embellished with full entablature. This portico rests on a brick foundation and has brick steps and a wooden floor. The entrance door contains a panel of wood and glass with a two light transom flanked by paneled pilasters. This entrance, like the windows of the north section, has a brick jack arch above the transom.

The fenestration of the rear elevation is identical to the front. A terrace with a modern iron railing is supported by tall brick piers and extends the width of this elevation. It creates a covered passageway that protects the windows and doors of the full basement, which on this elevation would otherwise be fully exposed.

The frame and wings were built between 1866-1870 (3), during the time that Bellevue functioned as a school. The wing to the north was a dining room while the corresponding room addition to the south served as a library and chapel. Both wings have hipped roofs with standing seam metal sheeting, rest on full basements, and have simple cornices. The south wing has a centered interior end chimney and a three-sided bay projection on the front (west) elevation. This bay rests on bracketed supports, has twenty-four light casement windows, and is adorned at the cornice by scroll brackets. A rear door, on the south elevation, leads from the terrace into the library that occupies the south wing.

The north wing has a slightly different configuration and consists of two sections, each with a hipped roof. The smaller section is to the west and is the location of the current kitchen. Behind this, to the east, is the longer dining room addition that was shortened in 1953. There is an exterior door on the north elevation of the kitchen wing that provides access to a stoop and step. There are three six-over-six windows and a door on the east elevation of dining addition; the door provides access to the terrace.

Four additional contributing buildings are located to the sides and rear of Bellevue. This includes a slave residence (Polk House), a frame pumphouse above the cistern, the dormitory called the Inkstand, and a frame smokehouse. The Polk House is a one and half storied building of log and frame construction with a standing seam metal clad gabled roof. There is a small single window just below the eaves of the south side elevation.

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The smokehouse is just to the rear of the main house and is a two-story frame building also with a metal-covered gable roof. It has six-over-six double windows and a wooden door with vertical planks. Positioned approximately halfway between the house and Inkstand to the south is the covered pump and cistern. The structure has a hipped roof capped by a cupola and walls of evenly spaced vertical slats. A low gate of wooden slats is located at the door opening. The Inkstand, the sole surviving structure built specifically as school building, is a one storied hip-roofed building currently used as a private residence. It has a rear shed addition, a side carport, and a central brick chimney. In addition to these sites there are also three archaeological sites where other old school related buildings stood: Siberia (dormitory), Rockaway (dormitory), and the schoolhouse Palais Royal.

### Trivium

Trivium (VDHR # 09-198) was built in 1832 (4) as a tavern in the Greek Revival style. It was originally two-stories (four rooms) with a kitchen outside of the house. The building was constructed of wood and brick built over an oak and chestnut log frame. It has an English basement, hipped tin roof, and a large porch with balustrades and Doric columns. The small porch consists of four octagonal Doric columns with the roof of the porch serving as a balcony for the second level. The front door has three side-lights on each side and the second story door is flanked by four sidelights on each side and a four light transom. The windows are six over six. There are four chimneys that feed eleven fireplaces. The original house was "squared" in 1907. (5) The east wing was added in 1937 and the west porch in 1938. (6) There are numerous brick walkways and a decorative brick drive consisting of a straight brick pattern edging around the herringbone pattern. The present kitchen is built over an 18<sup>th</sup> century stable of stone.

The guesthouse was built in 1850. (7) It is a frame structure 1-½ stories high with a low-pitched roof. It has six over six windows at both gable ends along with two dormer windows on the east side. The guesthouse has two entrances on the east side. Each entrance has French doors and a two-light transom. The windows on the main floor are four-over-four. It also contains a central chimney. The barn that was built in the 1930s has been demolished. A saddle notched two-story log structure is located in the woods on the property that was probably built during the mid 1800's. This building has a brick end chimney with side gable V-crimp metal roof. There are remnants of an old stonewall that formally surrounded the lawn on the south yard and two stone



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pillars flank the entrance drive and contain an etched sign with the home's title "Trivium." An old-fashioned well that was probably used by the tavern, is surrounded by stone, is located on the north lawn.

### Brook Hill Farm

Brook Hill Farm (VDHR file # 009-0318), a 1 ½ story frame dwelling, is an usual variant of Queen Anne style architecture embellished with Federal and Greek Revival elements almost as though in an antiquarian spirit. The residence also strongly exhibits the broad, compact form of the bungalow craftsmen style of architecture. Built in 1904, (8) Brook Hill Farm is one of the earliest examples of the bungalow form to be identified in the area. The Bungalow form did not become common in the Bedford County area until the 1920s.

The residence is marked by its large wide steps that lead to a 63' long front porch that is 12' deep and wraps around the house on both sides. It has 12" diameter round Doric columns, which sit on brick piers and a heart pine floor. The original heart pine door retains its original oval beveled glass window. Four decorative engaged columns frame the door system, which include flanking thirty-six pane sidelights. Above the door is a fanlight. The second story window, with four decorative half-columns framing the window including thirty-six pane sidelights matches the door below. Most of the glass throughout the home is original. The front façade also has two large windows containing a wide expanse of original glass, one on each side of the front door. The asphalt shingle main roof was originally clad in a honeycombed pattern while the porch roof retains its original metal seam covering.

Brook Hill Farm contains four contributing buildings. The framed three-room schoolhouse (c. 1909) (9) is of saltbox style with a central stone chimney. It has a large porch that runs along the south side of the building and each large room contains individual, original entrances. Also, on the property are a framed icehouse (c. 1904) (10) and a framed hog barn (c. 1929) (11). A blacksmith shop (c. 1918) (12) is also present on the property. There are also a carriage house site, a barn site, and an unknown foundation on the property.

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**Glenn Mary Farm**

Andrew Gleason built the main brick farmhouse on Glenn Mary Farm in 1939. (13) (DHR# 009-5298) It contains a slate roof and has a porch chamber that seems to be taken directly from Criss Cross, New Kent County. Its parapet gables and corbelled cornice steps appear to take their form from an outbuilding at Brems Recess (Jacobean Revival). The diagonal chimneystacks are either drawn from Brems Recess as well or from Bacon's Castle. The front entrance way is Connecticut Valley colonial doorway style. The window treatment and modillion cornice both appear to draw their form from Sweet Hall, New Kent Co. Calder Loth, senior architectural historian of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, believes it is either the work of Stanhope Johnson or Gallison Hall, both Lynchburg architects of the time known for mixing different works and fully knowledgeable about colonial styles. (Personal Correspondence from Calder Loth)

Connected with this house is a 1-½ story frame guesthouse. This dependency is built in the same building style as the main house including a slate roof. The guesthouse has a double flue fireplace located in the center part of the house. It contains two front doors and one dormer window.

Also, connected with this property is a barn designed by Reed E. Graves, built in 1939. It is made of oak and fir and is two-storied. It has a gambrel tin roof. It is of post and lintel construction built upon concrete/metal reinforced foundations. The loft floor is of tongue and groove style. All of the wooden construction is hand cut and notched. Still existing from the original farm is an in-ground icehouse site dating from the 1790's. The original building that is no longer there was made of stone and was reinforced and restored in 1850. (14) The archaeological in-ground icehouse site remains undisturbed.

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**Inventory of Resources**

**Bellevue:** The 5 buildings were previously listed in the Bellevue nomination, 1989 (VLR), 1990 (NRHP)

- Main House – 1790-1870, 2 story Federal brick, 2 central chimney's, hipped tin roof (C)
- Smoke House – c 1800's, 2-story frame with metal gable roof (C)
- Cistern – c 1800's, vertical slat walls with hipped roof capped with cupola (C)
- Polk House – c 1800's, 1 ½ story log and frame metal clad gable roof (C)
- Inkstand – c 1866, 1 story frame metal hipped roof, (C)
- Siberia site - c 1866, dormitory (C)
- Rockaway site, c 1866, dormitory (C)
- Palais Royal site, c. 1866, schoolhouse (C)

**Trivium**

- Main House – c 1832 – 1907, 2 story frame Greek Revival, 4 chimneys, hipped tin roof, (C)
- Guest House – c 1850, frame, 1 ½ story, low-pitched metal clad roof, (C)
- Well (structure) – c. 1830's, surrounded by stone and metal hip roof (C)
- Barn site – c. 1930 (C)
- Log building – c. 1800's, saddle notched log, gable V-crimp metal roof, brick end chimney (C)

**Brook Hill Farm:** The 8 contributing resources were previously listed in the Brook Hill Farm nomination, 1996 (VLR), 1997 (NRHP)

- Main House – c. 1904, 1 ½ frame bungalow variant of Queen Anne, shingle roof, (C)
- Ice House – c. 1904, frame (C)
- Hog Barn – c. 1929, frame, metal roof (C)
- Blacksmith Shop – c. 1918 – frame, metal roof (C)
- Schoolhouse – c. 1909 – frame, 3-room saltbox style with central chimney, (C)
- Carriage House site – c. 1904 (C)
- Barn site – c. 1900's (C)
- Foundations site – unknown date, (C)
- Barn – c. 2004, (NC)

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**Glenn Mary Farm**

Main House – c 1939, 1 ½ story colonial revival brick, diagonal chimneystacks, slate roof (C)

Guest House – c 1939, 1 ½ story brick, center chimney, slate roof (C)

Small dwelling – c 1950's, frame (NC)

Barn #1 – c. 1940's – (NC)

Barn #2 – c. 1939 – frame, gambrel tin roof, (C)

Barn #3 – c. 1939 – frame, gambrel tin roof, (C)

Small dwelling #1 – c. 1980's frame (NC)

Small dwelling #2 – c. 1970's frame (NC)

Small dwelling #3 – c. 1930's frame (NC)

Shed row structure – c. 1940's frame (NC)

Ice House Site – c 1790's, (C)

**Other**

7688 Bellevue Road: Main House - c 1990's colonial brick 2 story (NC)

Shed row– c 1990's frame shed, (NC)

7070 Bellevue Road: Main House – c 1960's, brick ranch (NC)

7053 Bellevue Road: Main House – c 1990's, frame Cape cod, (NC)

Garage – c 1990's, frame, (NC)

Shed – c 1990's frame, (NC)

7111 Bellevue Road: Main House – c 1940's, frame (NC)

Garage – frame (NC)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Summary and Justification of Criteria**

The Bellevue Rural Historic District is significant under Criteria A, B, and C. It is significant under Criterion A as a well-preserved rural community reflecting important agricultural practices in the region. The agricultural history of the region after 1790 is indicated by farm locations and boundaries. Farm practices can be seen by existing fields, barns, and land use. Within the boundaries are outbuildings and dwellings used throughout the period, as well as housing and work sites for laborers. It is also eligible under Criterion A because of its association with the broad national theme of education. The district includes two schools that show two different types of educational practices in our history. One, Bellevue High School, a private, classical academy for boys that was primarily attended by the sons of famous men, was established in 1866 and drew students from all over the nation, especially the deep south. The other schoolhouse at Brook Hill Farm was a typical private small school building for the resident children of Brook Hill Farm. Under Criterion B, Bellevue was the home of James P. Holcomb, a member of the Confederate congress, Jefferson Davis's cabinet, a Professor of the University of Virginia, and the founder of Bellevue School for Boys. The district also meets Criteria C. It contains a wonderful variety of architectural home styles dating from the period of significance— 1790 to 1939, encompassing Federal, Victorian, Georgian, and Bungalow/Craftsman styles in a well-preserved rural setting, all within a one-mile radius.

The agricultural history of the region after 1790 is indicated by farm locations and boundaries.. During the early 1800's "Farm families grew corn, wheat and tobacco and raised cattle and hogs." (15) Farm practices can be seen by existing fields, barns, and land use. Within the boundaries are outbuildings and dwellings used throughout the period. Buildings for the laborers and middling farmers are also a part of this district and are at each of the four sites.

The district includes two schools that show two different types of educational practices in our history. One, Bellevue High School, a private, classical academy for boys that was primarily attended by the sons of famous men, was established in 1866. Its first session was in 1866 and had seventy boys in attendance. (16) The school drew students from all over the nation, especially the deep south.

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“Bellevue High School attracted students from all over the country, mostly from the South and Virginia. Among its young scholars were John Singleton Mosby Jr., the son of the Confederate guerilla leader, and Eppa Hunton, whose father and namesake was a Confederate general and, between 1892 and 1895, a United States Senator. The younger Hunton became a member of the Virginia House of Delegates as well as a delegate to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1901-1902. Another student at Bellevue was Edward Watts Saunders, of nearby Franklin county, who served as Speaker of the House of Delegates, was a member of the United States House of Representatives (1906-1920), and served as judge on the Virginia Supreme court of Appeals (1920-1921).” (17)

Bellevue High School operated until 1909. Its decline was due to the immergence of “free education” that was mandated in 1869, and the Mann High School Act of 1906 by which secondary schools were funded. (18) Private schools such as Bellevue were forced to compete with schools that offered more varied curricula and physical plants, therefore Bellevue closed and became a private residence. The other schoolhouse at Brook Hill Farm was a typical private small school building for the resident children of Brook Hill Farm. In 1909 Joseph and Annie Coleman bought Brook Hill Farm and erected the three room private schoolhouse as a school for their two children that also housed the governess. (19) Later the schoolhouse was turned into a dependency for the help and the future children would attend the public school nearby called Brook Hill School named for the farm, that opened in 1909. Brook Hill School was started by Jane Henderson residing at Trivium which is still in operation today as a private Christian school. (20)

Bellevue was the home of James P. Holcombe. Holcombe was born in Powatan County in 1820. He grew up in Lynchburg, Virginia and chose a law career. In 1854 he became a full professor at the University of Virginia. He served on both the First and Second Confederate congresses, and it was at this time that he purchased Bellevue. (21) On February 19, 1864 he was appointed by Confederate President Jefferson Davis as a special commissioner “to go Nova Scotia to defend the men who without Confederate commissions had captured the United States vessel Chesapeake on the high seas, and to claim the vessel as a Confederate prize.” (22) Although the case had already been settled at his arrival, he stayed in Canada as Confederate commissioner to the Canadian government

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until September 1864. It was in 1864 war that Holcombe returned to Bellevue and decided to continue his teaching career and open Bellevue High School for boys. (23) Mr. Holcombe would rely on the neighboring farms and the nearby tavern to help support his school. Trivium would welcome many a weary traveler providing food and shelter to visitors of Bellevue.

“ They gave us a most hearty reception and there was soon a delicious breakfast ready for us, which included a cup of strong, real coffee! There were three girls staying there: Alice Smith, of Alexandria, who is related to us through Jacquilins, Sally Robertson, of Charlotesville, and Lucy Landon Minor. I sold the dress Mrs. Callahan made to Mrs. Holcombe for two barrels of flour, - enough to last Mrs. Callahan a year!” (24)

Mr. Holcombe also relied on the help of I. H. Adams that owned the property that is divided into the present two properties; Brook Hill Farm and Glenn Mary Farm.

(Mr. Holcombe would send) “ the schoolboys (from Bellevue) ... to help Mr. Massie and his sturdy sons cut ice on the pond, haul it to the ice house and pack it tight with old leaves. Massie and Sons were near neighbors who lived up the lane on the old Adams farm.” (25)

### **Bellevue Community Historical Context**

Bedford County was formed from Lenenburg County in 1754. Bellevue, as we know its environs today, was once part of a twelve hundred acre grant to Charles Callaway, Sr. In 1791, William Callaway deeded a portion of this land to Samuel Smith of Pittsylvania County. Mr. Smith is thought to have constructed a dwelling on the property that is now the eastern part of the present house, Bellevue.

The property that became Bellevue was acquired by Robert C. Steptoe in a division of the estate of James Leftwich, Steptoes’s father-in-law, in 1824. (26) In 1840, Steptoe enlarged the house, probably doubling its size by the construction of a central passage and flanking rooms on each floor.

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He sold the property in 1858 to Dr. James G. Kent, who in turn conveyed it to James Philemon Holcombe in 1863. (27)

James P. Holcombe, a native Virginian, became a well-respected lawyer that earned him a position as a professor of Law at the University of Virginia in 1854. He was a member of the first and second Confederate Congresses and during this time he purchased Bellevue. He played an important role in the Confederate Congress serving as an emissary to talk to the government of the North as well as to talk to the North American Colonies of Great Britain in Canada. (28)

During Hunters Raid in Lynchburg in 1864, Bellevue, the home of the notorious rebel, James P. Holcombe, was marked for destruction. The Yankee officer Dr. Sorrel, had a brother that was married to Mr. Holcombe's sister, and had previously asked Mr. Holcombe to show his brother, a sick prisoner of war some kindness. Mr. Holcombe did this and in return Dr. Sorrel spared Bellevue. (29)

In 1832, Trivium was built by Spottswood Brown as a tavern because of its location at a crossroads with three converging roads, one to Lynchburg, one towards Goode, and the third back to Bellevue. It originally contained more than 800 acres, many originally part of Bellevue. This three-roadway convergence gave the tavern its present name. (30) This tavern served as a convenient stop for visitors and families who would later come to the Bellevue School for Boys. Once the war ended Holcombe decided to continue teaching by opening a high school for boys at Bellevue with the motto "Disce aut Discede" (Learn or Leave). It held its first session between 1866-1867 for seventy boys. Between 1866-1870 he constructed two wings; one served as a dining room and the other as a library and chapel. He also built the three dormitories: Siberia, Rockaway, and Inkstand. In addition, he built the schoolhouse, Palais Royal. (31)

Bellevue High School became renowned and attracted students from all over the country, mostly from the South and Virginia. It attracted several sons of decorated Confederate officers. It was attended by Eppa Hutton, son of Confederate General of the same name, who was a member of the United States Senate from 1892-1895. Another famous alumnus of Bellevue was Edward Watts Saunders, who became Speaker of the House of Delegates (a position once held by Mr. Lacey Putney, current resident of Glenn Mary Farm located within the Bellevue Rural Historic District), a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1906-1920, and was a judge on the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals from 1920-1921. (32)



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William R. Abbot was the assistant principal of the school under Mr. Holcombe. With Mr. Holcombe's death in 1873, Mr. Abbot became the principal of the school and later purchased the school in 1882. (33) Mr. Abbot's daughter Lucy fell in love with one of the teachers at the school, Daniel B. Henderson. After being married in the chapel at Bellevue in 1887 they moved around for several years before settling in at Trivium in 1901. They expanded Trivium and their descendants occupied the home until the 1960's. (34)

When Mr. Abbot bought Bellevue in 1882 he did not buy all of the land of the original Bellevue plantation. From 1882-1904 some of the land was bought by Mr. I. H. Adams. (35) The land had a pond that was used for ice for the school, and the ice was stored in an icehouse, probably the icehouse site on the present day Glenn Mary Farm.

the schoolboys [from Bellevue], liked nothing better than to be given holiday, to help Mr. Massie and his sturdy sons cut ice on the pond, haul it to the ice house and pack it tight with old leaves. Massie and Sons were near neighbors who lived up the lane on the old Adams farm. (36)

Mr. Massie served as a worker for Mr. Adams and possibly lived on the farm site. Mr. Adams sold the land (342 ½ acres) in 1904 to a pair of brothers, Samuel and Leonidas Webb, from Tennessee who divided the land into two tracts. (37) The Webb brothers and their families resided at Glenn Mary Farm and in 1904 began construction on Brook Hill Farm in order to create a residency for Samuel Webb and his family. (38)

Bellevue High School operated until 1909. Its closure was brought about by the free public education system that was mandated by the Virginia Constitution of 1869. The reason for the delay was that the original funding by the state focused upon elementary schools. It was not until much later that the state funding was pushed towards secondary and high schools. By the early 1900's, private schools such as Bellevue had to compete with public high schools that had more varied curricula and better facilities. (39) In 1916 Mr. Abbot died and the Henderson family (his daughter Lucy and her husband) descendants remained at Bellevue using it as a private residence until the 1990s. (40)

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The original Bellevue farm split up to form Trivium, Glenn Mary Farm, and Brook Hill Farm. Each of these homestead's histories became intertwined with the history of the Bellevue School for Boys. Whether it was to serve as agricultural land to support the school and the neighboring community as did Glenn Mary Farm and Brook Hill Farm, or it was to provide a comfortable bed and good food to the families traveling to the Bellevue School, all of these properties joined to make one working community. With the decline of the Bellevue School for Boys the properties and their owners were forced to change many aspects of their lives. The land split into several more farms but the district hubs remained intact and continued to pursue agricultural goals and helped form an area rich in history. It still provides a picturesque example of rural Southwest Virginia.

**ENDNOTES**

- (1) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, September 29, 1989.
- (2) Will book 1, p. 230, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
- (3) Bedford County Deed Book V22, p. 239, Bedford county Circuit Court, Bedford, Virginia.
- (4) Virginia Landmarks File # 09-198, p. 1.
- (5) Ibid. p. 1.
- (6) Ibid. p. 1.
- (7) Ibid. p.2.
- (8) Bedford County Deed Book 86, p. 351, Bedford County Circuit court, Bedford, Virginia.
- (9) National Register Nomination VDHR #009-0318, Brook Hill Farm, Section 8-6, September 18, 1996.
- (10) Ibid.

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- (11) Ibid. Section 8-7.
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) Daughters of the American Revolution, Bedford, Virginia. Bedford Villages Lost and Found, Volume 2. p. 16.
- (14) Preliminary Information Form by Mary Graves Conley, January 19, 2005
- (15) The Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide p. 11 [www.vanationally.com/chapter1.pdf](http://www.vanationally.com/chapter1.pdf)
- (16) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, Section 8 p.2. September 29, 1989.
- (17) Ibid.
- (18) Link, Willeam A., *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, Society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 129-130, 137-138.
- (19) National Register Nomination VHDR #009-0318. Brook Hill farm, Section 8 p. 6, September 18, 1996.
- (20) Interview with Jane Henderson, Spring 1992.
- (21) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, Section 8 p.2. September 29, 1989.
- (22) Leonard, Cynthia M. *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619 - January 11, 1978 A Bicentennial Register of Members* (Richmond: Published for the General Assembly of Virginia by the Virginia State Library, 1978), 474, xxx: Allan Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1928 – 1937, 9:134 – 135, (biographical sketch of Holcombe)
- (23) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, Section 8 p. 2, September 29, 1989.

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- (24) Blackford, Susan Leigh and Charles Minor Blackfield. *Letters From Lee's Army*. Charles New York: Scribner's and Sons, 1947.
- (25) Southall, James P.C., *Memoirs of the Abbots of Old Bellevue*. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Va., 1955, p. 174.
- (26) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, Section 8 p. 2, September 29, 1989.
- (27) Bedford County Deed Book, 1858-1859, Reel 17, pp.203-204; VSL&A  
Bedford County Deed Book 42, 1861 –1865, Reel 18, p. 246, VSL&A.
- (28) Leonard, 9:134 – 135.
- (29) Daughters of the American Revolution, Bedford, Virginia. Bedford Villages Lost and Found Volume 2. p.14
- (30) Ibid. p. 15
- (31) Auditor of Public Accounts, land Tax Books, Bedford County, 1865 – 1871 VSL&A
- (32) National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue, Section 8 p.3, September 29, 1989.
- (33) Bedford County Deed book 55, 1882 – 1883, pp. 71 – 73, Bedford County Court House, Bedford, Virginia.
- (34) Bedford Villages, Lost and Found, p. 15
- (35) Bedford County Deed Book 55, 1882 – 1883 p. 400, Bedford County Court House, Bedford, Virginia.
- (36) Southall, James P.C., *Memoirs of the Abbots of Old Bellevue*. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Va., 1955, p. 174.

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(37) Bedford County Deed B Book 86, p.351, Bedford County Circuit Court, Bedford Virginia.

(38) National Register Nomination VHDR #009-0318. Brook Hill Farm, Section 8 p. 6.  
September 18, 1996.

(39) Link, 129 – 130, 137 – 138.

(40) Bedford Villages Lost and Found, p. 15

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*Volume 2.* p.14

Leonard, Cynthia M., *The General Assembly of Virginia, July 30, 1619 – January 11, 1978: A Bicentennial Register of Members* (Richmond: Published for the General Assembly of Virginia by the Virginia State Library, 1978), 474, xxx.

Allan Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds, *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1928 – 1937), 9:134 – 135, (biographical sketch of Holcombe)

Link, William A., *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1870-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 129 – 130, 137 – 138.

Southall, James P.C., *Memoirs of the Abbots of Old Bellevue*. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Va., 1955, p. 174.

National Register Nomination VDHR #09-3, Bellevue.

National Register Nomination VHDR #009-0318. Brook Hill Farm.

The Virginia Natural Resources Education Guide p. 11, [www.vanationally.com/chapter1.pdf](http://www.vanationally.com/chapter1.pdf)

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### 10. Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated district includes the following parcels according to the Bedford County real estate assessor's maps:

114 2 2, 2A, 2B, 2C  
114 4 A, B, C  
114 11 1 through 13  
114 A 82, 83, 84A, 85A, 86, 117, 118, 119, 120, 120B

#### Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated district encompasses the remaining undeveloped parcels of the four farms in the district during the period of significance, and outlines the parcels as listed above.

#### The following is the same for all photographs:

**Bellevue Rural Historic District, Bedford County, Virginia**

**Location of Negatives: DHR, Richmond**

**Negative Number: 22039**

**Photographer: Michael J. Pulice**

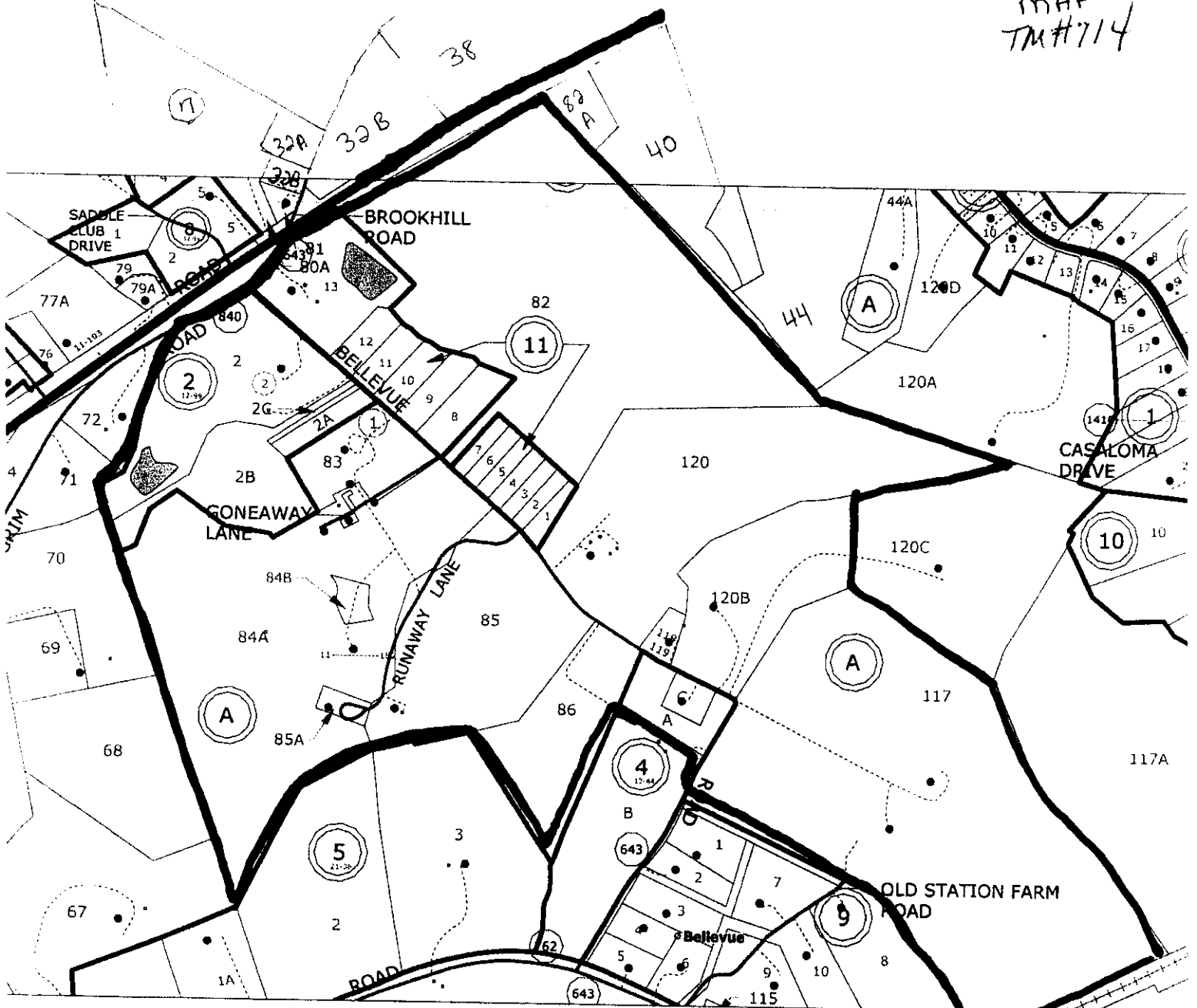
**Date Taken: July, 2005**

<u>Photo</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>View</u>
1	Bellevue	Northwest (front) elevation of main house
2	Bellevue	Smokehouse
3	Glenn Mary Farm	Northeast (front) elevation of main house
4	Glenn Mary Farm	South (side) elevation of main house
5	Glenn Mary Farm	North elevation of guest house
6	Glenn Mary Farm	Barn #1 and setting
7	Trivium	West elevation of main house
8	Trivium	Southwest elevation of guest house
9	Brook Hill Farm	Oblique view of main house, facing northeast
10	Brook Hill Farm	South elevation of main house
11	Brook Hill Farm	South elevation of schoolhouse

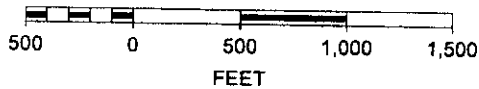


# BELLEVUE RD

MAP  
TM#714



SCALE 1 : 10,980



# 114A - 113



Bellevue Rural  
Historic District  
Boundary Lines

DNR#  
009-5296

JUNE 2005



