

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bacova Historic District

Other names/site number: Village of Bacova; DHR #008-0014

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Jackson River Turnpike, Longview Drive, Lake View Drive, Riners Lane, Purkey Lane, Tidewater Lane, Post Office Drive

City or town: Bacova State: VA County: Bath

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title :</p>	<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>53</u>	<u>47</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>55</u>	<u>47</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling, secondary structure, mill housing

INDUSTRY / manufacturing facility, springhouse

COMMERCE / store

TRANSPORTATION / rail-related

RELIGION / church

SOCIAL / meeting hall

GOVERNMENT / post office

RECREATION AND CULTURE / playground, basketball court, baseball field

AGRICULTURE / agricultural field

EDUCATION / school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / single dwelling, secondary structure

INDUSTRY / manufacturing facility, springhouse

GOVERNMENT / post office

RECREATION AND CULTURE / playground, basketball court and baseball field

AGRICULTURE / agricultural field

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS /

Bungalow/Craftsman

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS / Commercial Style

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS / Colonial Revival

OTHER / Prefabricated Housing

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD: Weatherboard, Plywood/particle board,

BRICK, STONE: Limestone, METAL: Steel, Aluminum, ASPHALT, CONCRETE,

GLASS, SYNTHETICS: Vinyl

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Bacova Historic District encompasses approximately 85 acres in west-central Bath County, Virginia, just south of Mountain Valley Road (Route 39) roughly 5.5 miles west of Warm Springs, the county seat, and 7.5 miles north of Hot Springs, site of the Homestead Resort (VHDR # 008-0025) in the Alleghany Highlands. The village of Bacova is located in a small valley surrounded by mountains that are characteristic of Virginia's Western Highlands region, a four-county area that borders West Virginia. While some agricultural lands are immediately within the district, the community is surrounded by forested mountains and Lake Bacova, a man-made lake, to the south. The district is an intact example of a company town, and minimal demolition has occurred since Tide Water Hardwood Corporation began construction in 1920 and 1921. While not officially incorporated as a town, the village retains a post office (previously the Tide Water Hardwood office building), former church (now a residence), former commissary (now a residence), and the brick core of the c. 1920 sawmill operation. While the company may have created a plan for the community, it does not appear that a plat from the

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

1910s or 1920s is extant. However, mapping from the 1930s shows the addition of fire hydrants and other amenities to the village while confirming the final layout of the streets, park, residences, and industrial buildings. The houses are arranged with modest, even setbacks with both front and back yards consistently present throughout the residential area. All former industrial and business operations were located south and east along Jackson River Turnpike at the community's eastern entrance. Meanwhile, the school (moved in the 1960s and formerly located on the north side of Longview Drive) and church (VDHR #008-0014-0001) created a separate common community area on northeast edge of the residential section. Otherwise, the district is largely residential with primarily single-family homes, some of which have been modestly updated over time with vinyl siding, replacement windows and enclosed porches. Large additions are atypical and houses remain wood-frame residences of vernacular types such as American Foursquare or bungalow-influenced. Some residences and former Tide Water Hardwood buildings include Colonial Revival details. The primary road, Jackson River Turnpike, and neighborhood streets all follow the historic routes established in the 1920s. Of the primary resources in the district, there are 49 contributing and 4 non-contributing. The village includes a large, c. 1985 non-contributing warehouse (VDHR #008-0014-0052) that provides employment for the immediate area and formerly housed expanded operations of the Bacova Guild, a company founded in 1965 by Malcolm Hirsh – a New Jersey industrialist with ties to Bath County – in an effort to fill the employment void left after the sawmill ceased operations. Three residences constructed after the period of significance (1920-1972) comprise the other non-contributing resources. Vestiges of the former railroad bed, critical to the early-twentieth-century logging operations, are visible from Lake View Drive just north of Lake Bacova. The majority of the primary resources within the district are contributing. While many of the surrounding mountains have regained their tree cover since the logging era, the setting otherwise remains largely unchanged with no significant construction or other developments impacting the character of the valley. The district retains integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Setting and Location

The village of Bacova is located in a small valley within Bath County, part of Virginia's Alleghany Highlands region. The largely rural county borders West Virginia, and Bacova is in the west-central section with Richardson Gorge and Coles Mountain to the south, Little Mountain to the east, Bolar Mountain to the west, and Cobbler Mountain to the north. Jerry Run passes through the Bacova Historic District west to the Jackson River at the foot of Bolar Mountain.¹ The village is geographically isolated from the county seat, Warm Springs, approximately 5.5 miles to the east and Hot Springs with the Homestead Resort (VHDR # 008-0025) roughly 7.5 miles to the south. Jackson River Turnpike (Route 687) enters the district from

¹ Mark Miller. *Virginia's Mountain Treasures: Unprotected Wildlands in the George Washington National Forest*. The Wilderness Society. (Bridgewater, Va: Good Printers, Inc., 2010), 70-75

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

the west, makes a sharp turn south to bisect the village, and passes east to connect with Mountain Valley Road (Route 39), the east-west corridor connecting West Virginia and Warm Springs.

Bath County features significant natural resources and geothermally-heated springs that have drawn humans to the area well before recorded history. Browns Pond, a sinkhole in Bath County, is an archeologically-significant site providing insight into nearly 17,000 years of evolving vegetation which tracks the growth of deciduous forests in the area. Pollen samples from the sinkhole demonstrate the transition as area forests developed increasing numbers of oak, maple, chestnut and hickory trees that later became sought-after raw materials for industrial growth in the United States.²

Bacova is surrounded by mountains and ridges that define access to this community, and Jackson River Turnpike is the only through road. The nearby mountains are now covered in second- or third-growth forests following both the impact of the chestnut blight throughout the first decades of the twentieth century and intensive logging throughout the 1920s. As a result, much of the tree cover seen today would not have been present after 1930 with the slow hardwood regrowth process taking place in the latter half of the district's period of significance (1920-1972) and after. The development of the site responded to the topographic conditions with industrial operations for the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation sawmill (VDHR #008-0016/#008-0014-0002) located on level land accessible by rail with close proximity to Jerry Run. This land along the southeast side of the district is now in agricultural use as open fields. To the west of the fields and south of the village's residential core lies Lake Bacova, constructed in the 1960s. This level land was also part of the lumber yard which converted to agricultural use south of the village following the end of extensive timbering in the 1930s. The village's residential core is north of Jerry Run on land that has a moderately sloping grade upwards to the north from an elevation of 1824 feet to 1900 feet over a length of approximately 1850 feet from 11 Lake View Drive (VHDR #008-0014-0020) to 104 Longview Drive (VHDR #008-0014-0045). This is a modest rise when compared to the steep mountain transition zones nearby. This grade across the residential core creates exposed basements and the need for retention walls on some properties. Residences along Longview Drive are at the highest elevation overall, with the Bath County water tower at 106 Longview Drive (VDHR #008-0014-0053) sitting at an elevation of 1965 feet along a ridge that was once traversed by a road serving the logging operations.

Approaching the village from the east on Jackson River Turnpike, the former industrial area dominates the south side with the single brick building (VDHR #008-0014-0002) surrounded by open fields. A c.1985 warehouse that once housed the expanded operations of the Bacova Guild, a housewares company founded in 1965 by industrialist Malcom Hirsh to bring employment back to the village, sits at the foot of the ridge north of the road. Two non-contributing residences are west of this warehouse as Jackson River Turnpike enters the former commercial core of the community. Here, Jackson River Turnpike makes a sharp turn to the north as Lake View Drive continues straight. Riners Lane splits off to create a short north-south street between

² Edward Terrell Walters "The Rivers of Bath" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 8-10 and Charlie Grymes. "Archaic Indians in Virginia." *Virginia Places*. <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/nativeamerican/archaicindians.html>

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Lake View Drive and Jackson River Turnpike as it passes between the post office (VDHR #008-0014-0018) and the former commissary building (VDHR #008-0014-0020). Riners Lane is the dividing line between the western residential section of the community and the former commercial core to the east.

Jackson River Highway continues north past the basketball court on the post office property, and then makes a sweeping turn west near the former Bacova Chapel (VDHR #008-0014-0001), now converted to a residence, to continue through the cluster of single-family homes within the village. The road makes another turn north past the playground (VDHR #008-0014-51) that has served as space for baseball games and recreation since the founding of the community, but was formalized in the 1960s as Malcom Hirsh gradually upgraded many of the houses and invested in renovating the community prior to founding the Bacova Guild. At that time, Hirsh and community members installed metal playground equipment including a climbing cage, merry-go-round, and see-saw. Purkey Lane and Tidewater Lane intersect with Jackson River Highway at the playground, while Jackson River Highway continues another 275 feet north to intersect with Longview Drive and then proceeds due west out of the village. Both Purkey Lane and Tidewater Lane double as rear alley access for properties fronting either Jackson River Turnpike, Lake View Drive or Longview Drive. Meanwhile, a cluster of three houses each front Purkey Road and Tidewater Lane. Longview Drive follows a portion of the former logging road along the ridge, and the majority of that ridge is now covered in second-growth pine forest. While there is no welcome sign at the eastern entrance, the western entrance to the village has a large painted, wooden sign with the text “Welcome Village of Bacova.”



Figure 1 – Western entrance to the Village of Bacova. Photography by Laura Purvis, 2024.

Commercial and Industrial Resources

Bacova’s commercial and industrial resources are clustered east of Riners Lane along Jackson River Turnpike to take advantage of the most level land in the valley. While the creation of Lake Bacova has somewhat obscured the terrain’s appearance prior to the 1960s, this level area was

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

ideal for the terminus of the narrow-gauge railroad that brought logs from Tide Water Hardwood's large landholdings throughout Bath and Highland Counties to Bacova. The elevated earthen railroad bed is still visible along Jerry Run and in aerial photographs from Bacova southwest to Bacova Junction at the intersection of Main Street (Route 615) and the Jackson River Turnpike. Hot Springs Run also makes a sharp turn from traveling west to south at this intersection. This line connected to the C & O Railroad that opened from Hot Springs to Covington in 1891 and brought passengers to the Homestead Resort as Hot Springs developed and the guest facilities at Warm Springs entered a period of decline.³ A second lumber railroad ran through Richardsons Gorge to the west side of Back Creek Mountain. This railroad followed the low land west and south of Purkey Lane along Jerry Run to the lumber yard and is still visible from Lake View Drive.⁴ The narrow gauge lines terminated at a pond that is occasionally visible as a depression in the ground north of the sawmill. A photograph from c. 1921 shows the sawmill pond with the residence at 10540 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0005) in the background.



Figure 2 – Tide Water Hardwood Corporation sawmill pond with residence (VHDR# 008-0005, outside historic district boundaries) in the background. Jackson River Turnpike is to the left of this image.

Courtesy of Bath County Historical Society.

The remaining brick building from the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation's mill housed one of the large steam engines that powered the bandsaws. This two-and-a-half story c. 1921 building

³ "C&O Takes over Hot Springs RR" Newspapers.com. Richmond Dispatch, September 1, 1891.

<https://www.newspapers.com/article/richmond-dispatch-co-takes-over-hot-spr/190950536/>.

⁴ United States Geological Survey (USGS) Warm Springs Run, VA Quadrangle 1:24000, 1930 and Mountain Grove VA Quadrangle 1:24000, 1930.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

has lost the large wood frame building once connected to the south side housing conveyor belts and a second steam-engine building on the north side where there is now an open ell projection. The interior of the former power plant is supported by large wood beams; some sections rest on a poured concrete foundation while others are running-bond brick masonry. The building's gable ends, with distinctive stepped parapet walls and concrete caps, retain their six-light, metal-sash windows that pivot horizontally. There are twenty-light, metal-sash windows throughout. The glass panes are embedded with metal mesh, an additional safety feature when plate glass was the predominate window glass throughout the early decades of the twentieth century.⁵ The stepped parapets help identify the steam engine building definitively in early photographs. Other significant features include welded metal-panel doors, concrete sills, and concrete lintels. The northern ell has insulating, structural terracotta tiles and there are a significant number of lintels over infilled openings, indicating the constant change and reconfiguration of this building over time. On the building's south side there is a large, board-and-batten sliding door enclosing the nearly full-height opening on that elevation. Although a significant portion of the sawmill complex has been lost, the remaining brick core suggests the complexity of the machinery and processes that once occupied the site.

West of the sawmill building, the current post office at 23 Post Office Drive originally functioned as the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation's office when constructed in 1920-1921 (VDHR #008-0014-0018). While a concrete accessibility ramp has been added and the entrance door replaced with a modern plate-glass and metal-frame door, the building otherwise remains largely unchanged. The one-story, Colonial Revival building is a well-preserved example of the style in Bacova including a pedimented door surround and symmetrically placed eight-over-eight, double-hung wood sash windows. In addition, elements of the 1920s-era interior remain including the wood-paneled vestibule opening to wood French doors with ten lights and historic metal hardware. While the majority of the building is partitioned for post office use, the customer area retains historic wood moldings, chair rail, and hardwood flooring. Once Tide Water Hardwood Corporation left their offices, the building became a community store and post office.

The former commissary building at 11 Lake View Drive (VDHR #008-0014-0020), south and west of the post office, is the largest intact example of Bacova's early twentieth-century construction period. The imposing two-story building, now converted to a residence, has a full-height portico with large overhanging eaves, a denticulated cornice, and plain frieze. The denticulated cornice and moldings continue across all elevations. The portico shelters a double-leaf, four panel wood door that opens to a poured concrete foundation and stair with brick veneer. The original wood siding and windows have been replaced with fibrous cement boards and vinyl, respectively. However, these changes have not significantly detracted from the Colonial Revival elements of the building, including the full-height corner pilasters and overall symmetry of the façade. The louvered cupolas on the roof's ridge roughly correspond with the historic location of interior brick chimneys. This building provided space for the community's

⁵ Kenneth M. Wilson. "Plate Glass in America: A Brief History." *Journal of Glass Studies* 43 (2001): 141-53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24190904>.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

store, school, and post office when it opened and also housed club activities.⁶ After the Tide Water Hardwood era, the space hosted the annual 4H Bath County Fair and was used as storage until it became the headquarters of The Bacova Guild, Ltd., in 1965. A large rear addition constructed around 1970 was significantly damaged during a fire in November 2009 and eventually demolished.⁷ Following the fire, the building was renovated to become a residence.

While most of the houses in Bacova have remained single family dwellings throughout their history, the one-story residence at 46 Rinners Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0023) was converted to the Bacova Guild Showroom by 1967 for selling products with imperfections and was open to the public on weekdays. While the interior may have been modified, the only exterior change to this property that year appears to have been the addition of an exterior sign in the pediment of the front porch with the words "Bacova Guild Showroom."⁸ This building is immediately adjacent to the community's eastern half that was dedicated to industrial and commercial uses and is currently a residence again.

Institutional Resources

As Bacova developed throughout the 1920s, the village gained institutional buildings that provided even more services to workers and their families. By 1925, Tide Water Hardwood employees came together to construct the Bacova Chapel, also known as Bacova Church, Bacova Presbyterian Church, or Union Church (VDHR# 008-0015/008-0014-0001).⁹ This building sits north of Jackson River Turnpike and Rinners Lane overlooking the post office and commissary building. The one-story, wood-frame Colonial Revival building is the only example of a purpose-built religious structure within the village. The front-gable church, now a private residence, sits on a random-rubble rock foundation, which is an unusual feature within the village. The majority of Bacova's buildings sit on parged piers and stone is typically used as a hardscaping feature or material for masonry stairs accessing residences along Jackson River Turnpike. The church was converted to an art gallery in 1998 with exterior modifications that included asbestos abatement, vinyl siding, a wood deck, and double metal entry doors with faux panels.¹⁰ However, this renovation retained the distinctive arched, wood-sash windows as well as the fan light and transom above the entrance. The cupola, visible from much of the village, also remained intact despite work that took place on the roof. The building is now encircled by a gravel driveway with a rock retaining wall on the north and east side of the parcel to create level ground. A wrought iron fence surrounds planting beds along the foundation.

While the commissary building (VDHR# 008-0014-0020) falls well within the category of a commercial and industrial building, it also functioned as an institutional building when housing

⁶ Elizabeth McClung "Bacova—The Village" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 79

⁷ "Fire Destroys Bath Wellness Center" *The Virginian Review*. 20 March 2021 <https://virginianreview.com/26600/> and "Hot Springs Fire Dept. Marks 100th Year" *The Virginian Review*. 20 March 2021. <https://virginianreview.com/58444/>

⁸ "Bacova Guild Providing Employment, Income" *The Recorder*. Vol. 97 No. 33, 15 August 1974. <https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=TRE19740815.1.17>

⁹ *Riner Photographs*. Bacova File. Bath County Historical Society. Warm Springs, Va.

¹⁰ Ozendine, Margo. "Bacova Chapel Revived." Bacova File. Bath County Historical Society. Warm Springs, Va.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

school classes prior to the construction of a dedicated building in 1922-1923.¹¹ Additionally, the large building provided club space for meetings and a soda fountain for residents.¹² After Tide Water Hardwood Corporation sold the property, the building remained largely vacant, with the exception of the 4H fairs, before housing The Bacova Guild in 1965.¹³

From its earliest period of construction, the village featured buildings and spaces that invited children and families despite the industrial purpose of the community. Bacova's playground remained an open, level field since the 1920s on a little over a half-acre bounded by Jackson River Turnpike to the south and Tidewater Lane to the north (VDHR# 008-0014-0051). With the layout of streets, this playground is centrally located within the residential core and walkable from every residence. Families remember playing baseball on this site and the metal play equipment including a climbing cage, swing and slide set, see-saw, and merry-go-round were added to the north edge in 1960.¹⁴ A modern playhouse is located at the playground's northeast corner and the area has been enclosed with a split-rail fence. There are several trees providing shade between the street and the playground, but the area is otherwise an open, grassy field.

Residential Resources

Currently, there are 48 buildings used as residences in Bacova. Two of those buildings historically served other purposes – the commissary building (VDHR# 008-0014-0020) and the Bacova Chapel (VDHR# 008-0015/008-0014-0001) – and three single-family dwellings are non-contributing resources to the district: 10083 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0017), 10245 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0019), and 50 Purkey Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0033). The two houses on Jackson River Turnpike were constructed in 1978 and 1979, respectively. Meanwhile, the house at 50 Purkey Lane was completed in 1997. These houses demonstrate the arrival of prefabricated and modular housing in Bacova following the district's period of significance.

The 43 contributing, purpose-built residential resources throughout Bacova overall convey a cohesive construction period from 1920 to 1922, with a few later additions. There are two principal vernacular-style types within the district, suggesting the use of a pattern or model throughout the village: American Four-Square, and a one-story vernacular residence with either a hipped, front-gable, clipped-gable, or side-gable roof. All of the residences have modest Colonial Revival details including moldings, friezes and overhanging eaves. The majority of residences have small sheds to the rear that are typically non-contributing. There are six residences of the American Four-Square type: 9832 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0014), 41 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0024), 106 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0027), 134 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0029), 154 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0030), and 32 Riners Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0022). The majority are clustered along Lake View

¹¹ "Attention Building Contractors" *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 18 April 1922. 4
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/794805632/>

¹² Elizabeth McClung "Bacova—The Village" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 79

¹³ Philip Hirsh. *Voices from the Hollow*. (Mariner Publishing, 2005). 217

¹⁴ Birchfield, Jim. "This Town is Private." *Evening Star*. 22 May 1960. 12

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Drive and tradition holds that these two-story residences were assigned to higher-ranking employees within Tide Water Hardwood Corporation. The fenestration of these houses varies somewhat with single-leaf entrance doors either centrally located on the first floor or to the side. One side elevation typically features a window between the first and second floors, likely lighting a stairwell. While 9832 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0014) has had a significant renovation and 134 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0029) has a large, two-story ell connected to the west side elevation, these residences largely retain their historic massing and one-story front porches. With the exception of the 9832 Jackson River Turnpike House, all of the American Four-Square residences are clustered along the village's southern edge from Lake View Drive to Riners Lane.

The remaining 37 residential resources are vernacular, one-story dwellings along Lake View Drive, Riners Lane, Purkey Lane, Tidewater Lane, Longview Drive, and Jackson River Turnpike. There are repeating elements throughout these residences; however, the buildings do not necessarily follow consistently replicated types or models. While houses with a hipped roof or hipped roof porch may have been constructed slightly earlier than others, construction appears to have been continuous throughout the first few years of Bacova's development based on photographs in the collections at Bath County Historical Society. The roof types in these one-story residences are hipped, clipped gable, side gable, and front-gable. The houses have some bungalow influences, which is especially apparent on residences with hipped-roof porches such as 9884 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0041) which retains its original Tuscan columns. The residences have applied Colonial Revival detailing with moldings, gable-end returns, and plain friezes like 46 Riners Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0023). All of the residences have front porches or integral porches, many with three corner posts supporting lattice work that dates to their 1920-1922 construction period such as 9894 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0042) and 9936 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0043). Some standard features include rear porches, brick chimneys with corbelled caps, and pier foundations. Every pier foundation received concrete block infill to create a continuous foundation in 1960.¹⁵

Construction materials are consistent throughout the village with renovations over time that include modern finishes. All of Bacova's residences are of frame construction with wood weatherboard siding that is often covered in, or replaced by, vinyl siding. The standard windows are six-over-six, double-hung wood sashes in either paired or single configurations. However, many residences have vinyl replacement windows to match the changes in siding material. Rear modifications include enclosed porches, additions, and new decks. However, these changes are usually modest with rare large additions like the rear porch on 10052 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0012) or rear wing on 10080 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0016). Due to the overall slope of the western half of the historic district, many of the residences have exposed basements with later twentieth- or early twenty-first-century modifications to create additional interior space. Those changes include additional metal doors, vinyl windows, and parging. A few residences, like 38 Tidewater Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0047), have tall porches either on the front or rear with significant storage underneath between supporting posts.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Overall, the residences have been well maintained with only a few residences showing deterioration such as the roof on 11 Riners Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0021) and the rear addition on 10080 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0016). Several of the residences along the south side of Jackson River Turnpike have stone stairs leading down from the road grade to the front of the residence, but there are no consistent sidewalks or walkways throughout the village. Despite any modifications, the residential resources remain largely intact and display many of the character-defining features of their early-twentieth century construction.

Integrity Statement

The Bacova Historic District maintains good overall integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. This company town remains in its original location with a continued mixture of commercial and residential resources divided roughly in two sections by Riners Lane. The village's western section remains wholly residential, and the eastern section includes the post office, former steam engine building for Tide Water Hardwood Corporation, former commissary building, and a modern, non-contributing warehouse. With the addition of the Bacova Chapel, these buildings continue to represent the full array of amenities constructed for residents and Tide Water Hardwood Corporation employees. There has been very limited infill development and the village still includes the original 43 residences from its construction in the first years of the 1920s. The streets continue to follow their historic routes, with Jackson River Turnpike as the only through-street connecting the village to Hot Springs and Warm Springs. Although Tide Water Hardwood Corporation sold the railroad tracks in the 1930s, the railroad beds are still visible south of Lake View Drive and north of Lake Bacova, conveying the importance of the railroad to both the development of the village and the location of the sawmill.

While buildings throughout the community have vinyl siding and replacement vinyl windows, the changes have not substantially obscured the overall massing and historic fenestration of residences. Moreover, no historic buildings have been moved. The only institutional building lost since 1960 is the former schoolhouse once located on the north side of Longview Drive. While the sawmill complex experienced a fire and demolition that removed all wood sections by 2000, the remaining brick building still conveys the industrial and commercial use of the site in the 1920s. The village is a visually and historically cohesive unit with no surrounding development or other alterations modifying the rural setting. While forests have re-grown in the years since the extensive timbering operations for the sawmill, the setting otherwise remains unchanged with only the addition of a large c. 1985 warehouse – and even that warehouse supported the growth of a single industry to provide employment to village residents. There are only three non-contributing residences, all built after the period of significance (1920-1972) in addition to the warehouse. As a result, there are only four non-contributing primary resources and 49 contributing primary resources in the district.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

INVENTORY

The following is the complete list of surveyed resources within the Bacova Historic District. Each resource is organized first alphabetically by street name and then, second, within each street by address number.

Jackson River Turnpike

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|
| -- Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0016 | Other DHR ID#: 008-0014-0002 |
| <i>Primary Resource: Commercial Building (Factory), Stories 1, Style: Commercial, c. 1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| -- Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0051 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Playground (Site), Stories n/a, Style n/a, c. 1925</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9832 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0014 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: American Foursquare, c.1920</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9858 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0015 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c.1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9874 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0040 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| <i>Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2005</i> | | Non-Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9884 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0041 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c.1920</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9894 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0042 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9936 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0043 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| <i>Secondary Resource: Carport (Building) c. 2000</i> | | Non-Contributing Total: 1 |
| 9946 Jackson River Turnpike | 008-0014-0048 | Other DHR ID#: |
| <i>Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921</i> | | Contributing Total: 1 |
| <i>Secondary Resource: Garage (Building) c. 2004</i> | | Non-Contributing Total: 1 |

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

- Secondary Resource:* Shed (Building) c. 2004 Non-Contributing Total: 1
- 9954 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0049** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1990 Non-Contributing Total: 1
- 9966 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0003** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Bungalow, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1
- 9978 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0004** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
- 9992 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0005** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building), c. 2019 Non-contributing Total: 1
- 9999 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0006** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
- 10006 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0007** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2000 Non-contributing Total: 1
- 10017 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0008** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
- 10024 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0009** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
- 10029 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0010** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
- 10038 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0011** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2019 Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2021 Non-contributing Total: 1
- 10052 Jackson River Turnpike 008-0014-0012** Other DHR ID#:

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1

10068 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0014-0013** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1990 Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Other (Structure - Platform) c. 2015 Non-contributing Total: 1

10080 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0014-0016** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Carport (Building) c. 1990 Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1990 Non-contributing Total: 1

10083 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0014-0017** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Ranch, c. 1978
Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1985 Non-contributing Total: 1

10101 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0015/008-0014-0001** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Former Church), Stories 1, Style: Colonial Revival, c.1925
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2015 Non-Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2018 Non-Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Garage (Building) c. 2022 Non-Contributing Total: 1

10245 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0014-0019** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, c. 1979
Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1995 Non-contributing Total: 1

10379 Jackson River Turnpike **008-0014-0052** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Warehouse (Building), Stories 1, Style: Commercial, c. 1985
Non-contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1985 Non-contributing Total: 1

Lake View Drive

11 Lake View Drive **008-0014-0020** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Colonial Revival, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1980 Non-contributing Total: 1

41 Lake View Drive **008-0014-0024** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: American Four-Square, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1990 Non-Contributing Total: 1

50 Purkey Lane **008-0014-0033** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernable style, c. 1997
Non-Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2015 Non-Contributing Total: 1

72 Purkey Lane **008-0014-0032** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1

Riners Lane

16 Riners Lane **008-0014-0021** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1

32 Riners Lane **008-0014-0022** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 2, Style: American Four-Square, c. 1922
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2010 Non-Contributing Total: 1

46 Riners Lane **008-0014-0023** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2013 Non-Contributing Total: 1

Tidewater Lane

17 Tidewater Lane **008-0014-0046** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1

20 Tidewater Lane **008-0014-0050** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1

38 Tidewater Lane **008-0014-0047** Other DHR ID#:
Primary Resource: Single Dwelling (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, c. 1921
Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 1990 Non-Contributing Total: 1
Secondary Resource: Shed (Building) c. 2005 Non-Contributing Total: 1

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
INDUSTRY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1920-1972

Significant Dates

1920
1925
1945
1959
1965
1972

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Tide Water Oil Company (Developer)
Tide Water Hardwood Corporation (Developer)
W. H. Smith, Jr. (General Contractor)
Bruce R Richardson (Civil Engineer)
Carpenter, Major Brothers & Co. (Railroad & Residential Contractor)

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

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

The Bacova Historic District is a locally significant company town that was once a small agricultural valley surrounded by dense forest in 1919 before Tide Water Hardwood Corporation, a subsidiary of the Tide Water Oil Company whose operations often rivaled John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company, constructed this company town for employees of their new timber yard and sawmill. The town's name is derived from condensing the first two letters of the words "Bath County Virginia" into a single word – a fact repeated in nearly every community account. The region's vast forests became a sought-after resource, particularly to companies needing raw materials for building construction or crafting wood barrels to store a variety of products, including oil. The Tide Water Oil Company gradually moved its operations north from Clifton Forge and Glamorgan in Wise County to forests in Bath and Highland Counties, acquiring timber rights, building narrow-gauge rail lines, and establishing a convenient sawmill for producing barrel staves in the middle of these landholdings by 1920, with offices, a commissary, and employee housing largely complete by 1922.

Tide Water Hardwood produced nearly two million board feet of sawn lumber annually for Tide Water Oil. The town grew rapidly, adding more housing along with company-supplied electricity in 1925. Bacova also had its own water and sewer system, which was likely the second of its kind in the county following the development of The Homestead's water system after the famous resort's fire in 1901. The town was largely self-sufficient until the Great Depression and popularity of metal barrels shuttered Tide Water Hardwood. The company sold the land in 1945 to local investors. Malcolm Hirsh, an industrialist whose father founded Lock Joint Pipe Company in New Jersey and whose family spent significant time in Bath County, purchased the town in 1959. Hirsh renovated the houses and partnered with artist Grace Boulton Gilmore to found the Bacova Guild, Ltd., which became a nationally-recognized company producing fiberglass goods, including its signature mailboxes. Hirsh incorporated the company in 1972, marking the transition of the company from a start-up, cottage-style industry to a growing business with expanded manufacturing. As a result, the period of significance for the Bacova Historic District begins with the start of the village's construction in 1920 and concludes in 1972 when Bacova Guild was incorporated, reviving employment in the community before the company added operations in Millboro and other locations. The Bacova Historic District is being considered under Criterion A, for Industry and Community Planning and Development, as well as under Criterion C for Architecture.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

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

Justification of Criteria

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The Bacova Historic District maintains a local level of significance under Criterion A in the area Community Planning and Development as a model company town developed by the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation, a subsidiary of the Tide Water Oil Company, during the 1920s. Bacova village remains an intact example of a single-industry dependent village in rural western Virginia in the Alleghany Highlands region. The community retains the original 43 residences, commissary building, office building, and a portion of the sawmill, all of which were constructed in a narrow timeframe from 1920 to 1922. The large commissary building housed a doctor's office, school classroom, and community meeting space – along with the company store – in the early years of operations. As more people moved to Bacova, the village added a school and the c. 1925 Bacova Chapel, also known as Union Church or Bacova Presbyterian Church. There has been minimal infill development within the village and the original layout with historic streets remains present. Railroad tracks connected the village to the nearby C & O Railroad at Bacova Junction, which also served the resort community of Hot Springs. Additional tracks carried logs from surrounding forests to the sawmill. While the tracks were removed in the 1930s, the railroad beds are still visible, conveying the planning involved in transportation for the village. Bacova was the first town in Bath County to have electrical power through the sawmill's steam-driven power plant. While the residences originally each had their own outhouse, the town introduced electricity along with a water and sewer system around 1925.¹⁶ The overall design and layout of the village remains from this early construction period.

When Malcom Hirsh purchased the town in 1959, a second phase in the village's planning and development began. Bacova had entered a period of population decline following the loss of the Tide Water Hardwood mill operations. Many of the residences suffered from deferred maintenance in the years that followed and the school was no longer in operation. Hirsh invested in renovating houses first and gradually selling them to families – some of whom had rented from Tide Water Hardwood originally. Hirsh's childhood memories of a vibrant village drove his investment planning. Rather than retaining the model of complete company ownership, Hirsh provided the opportunity for residents to own their home by renovating and selling each Tide Water Hardwood Corporation residence. Some renters became owners while other houses continued to be rentals. Then, in 1965, Hirsh re-introduced walkable employment in the form of Bacova Guild, Ltd, a fiberglass housewares company, working with artist Grace Boulton Gilmore. The commissary building's interior was modified to house the Bacova Guild in combination with White Oak Foundry, a side project that Hirsh brought from New Jersey to Bacova casting metal jockey statues. As a result, Hirsh worked within the community's historic layout to create a new version of the single-industry town model following his vision for the

¹⁶ Elizabeth McClung "Bacova—The Village" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 80 and "James A. Sanders Family" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. 345

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

community's revitalization. Bacova remains an intact early-twentieth-century company town unique to this area of Virginia with a distinct period of mid-twentieth-century revival that respected historic integrity and facilitated its survival. By 1972, Malcom Hirsh had completed significant renovations to residences throughout the village and grown Bacova Guild's business. That year, the Bacova Guild was incorporated and entered a new phase of growth that included adding facilities in Millboro as Hirsh gradually turned over daily operations to his son, eventually selling Bacova Guild in 1981.

Criterion A: Industry

The Bacova Historic District meets Criterion A at the local level of significance in Industry for both its role in Virginia's timber industry as well as the creation and growth of The Bacova Guild, Ltd., a housewares company founded in 1965 in the village by Malcolm Hirsh and Grace Boulton Gilmore. The Tide Water Hardwood Corporation constructed a large mill complex featuring bandsaws and steam engine power (a notable upgrade from circular saws and other previous sawmill technology) in 1920 as their operations moved north from Wise County where the majority of accessible timber had already been cut. This small valley in Bath County included accessible water from Jerry Run and easy access to surrounding forests that the company had acquired either by outright purchase or through agreements securing timber rights. The industrial history of the site is represented by the remaining brick steam engine power building, the remaining railroad beds, the company office (now a post office), and the company commissary (now a private residence). The eastern half of the district is dedicated to both industrial and commercial buildings that date from 1920 through 1922. The 1920s were an era of rapid change in the timber industry as large forest tracts were cut before the Great Depression and shifts in industrial production reduced demand.

The timber industry changed rapidly just prior to and during the Great Depression and Tide Water Hardwood sold the remaining timber land, sawmill, company buildings, and residences – the entire town – by 1945 to local investors.¹⁷ Industrialist Malcolm Hirsh purchased the village when it was up for sale again by the end of the 1950s. Hirsch vowed to bring industry back to the community, which took shape with the 1965 founding of The Bacova Guild, Ltd. Hirsh partnered with Grace Boulton Gilmore, an established artist, to produce screen-printed fiberglass products in the former Tide Water Hardwood Corporation commissary. The products rapidly gained popularity and found a national audience, all from its production and employment base in Bacova.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Bacova Historic District meets Criterion C at the local level of significance as an intact company town planned in the early 1920s for a single industry. The district clearly represents a single construction era with uniform, vernacular housing types planned by Tide Water Oil and Tide Water Hardwood executives along with Bruce R. Richardson, a local civil engineer whose father guided the Homestead Resort in nearby Hot Springs through renovations starting in 1891 as well as reconstruction following the 1901 fire. The buildings throughout the town – whether

¹⁷ Deed Book 52 Page 437

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

of American Four-Square, bungalow-influenced or other forms – all have varied Colonial Revival detailing that can include Tuscan columns, wide cornices, porticos, overhanging eaves and door surrounds with sidelights. The best examples of the Colonial Revival style within the village are the post office (VDHR #008-0014-0018), the former Bacova Church (VDHR# 008-0015/008-0014-0001) and the former commissary building (VDHR #008-0014-0020). Additionally, the brick power plant (VHDR# 008-0016/008-0014-0002) remains an intact example of industrial sawmill architecture that has survived in this rural, remote setting. The building retains its metal windows, interior timber framing, and stepped parapet walls that are character-defining details of this building type.

Bacova's layout responds to the topography of the site to take advantage of level land for the industrial mill complex as well as the former railroad lines while placing residences on sloping land with roads that curve to maximize the routes along Jerry Run and Jackson River Turnpike. The shed and reservoir (VDHR# 008-0014-0053) at the top of Longview Drive supplied gravity-fed water and fire hydrants as the community grew, taking advantage of the steeply-sloping land north of the post office to provide this important safety feature. The streets continue to follow their historic routes and the village retains public amenities like the playground, which has been in continuous use since the 1920s. Built by Tide Water Oil in the early 1920s and renovated by Malcom Hirsh in the early 1960s, Bacova is a well-preserved example of a company town that included housing, services, and amenities for employees and their families in a rural area prior to the wide-spread availability of automobile transportation.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance

From Mineral Springs to Timber – Early Development in Bath County

The Bacova Historic District is located in what was once Virginia's eighteenth-century frontier. Native Americans including the Shawnee, Cherokee, Catawba, Seneca, and Delaware accessed the heated mineral springs and other natural resources throughout the Alleghany Highlands prior to the arrival of Europeans.¹⁸ The long valleys in the area feature rivers that, in combination with distinct mountain ridge formations, created natural landmarks and navigable paths within the region's deciduous forests thousands of years before the colonial era. In addition to the appeal of the area's hot springs, the valleys provided hunting grounds for animals like deer and bison which once ranged extensively in both western Virginia and West Virginia. Bison were known for maintaining well-worn paths throughout their territory, likely being the inspiration for the names of the Calfpasture, Cowpasture, and Bullpasture rivers.¹⁹ The Jackson River, which meets the Cowpasture River farther south below Iron Gate to become the James River, runs west of Bacova. Jerry Run flows into the Jackson River through the historic district joining this significant network of waterways carving through the mountains.

While Virginia's mountainous west was a significant barrier to European expansion, settlers eventually traversed the Shenandoah Valley to the Alleghanies in the constant pursuit of new land.²⁰ Scattered settlement had started in the 1740s and 1750s, but direct access from the east did not substantially improve until the Virginia legislature authorized the construction of a turnpike from Jennings Gap (west of Churchville in Augusta County) to Warm Springs in 1772, likely the first toll road in Virginia.²¹ However, a lack of roads did not prevent the early establishment of businesses and institutions. By 1750, there was a grist mill in Warm Springs and Reverend Alexander Craighead established Windy Cove Church for a Presbyterian, largely Scotch-Irish, congregation in 1749.²²

The French and Indian War accelerated construction in the area as the Virginia militia, under the guidance of commander George Washington, built a series of forts starting in 1755 for the defense of rivers in the Alleghanies and significant routes along the Shenandoah Valley. Fort Dinwiddie, roughly two miles north of Bacova, became the outpost on the Jackson River and there were several documented attacks at the fort, including one that lasted four days in

¹⁸ Edward Terrell Walters. "The Rivers of Bath." *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 8-9

¹⁹ "Tracing Bison in the Appalachian Forest" *Appalachian National Heritage Area*. <https://www.appalachianforestnha.org/america250-in-the-appalachian-forest-stories/tracing-bison-in-the-appalachian-forest>

²⁰ Presgraves, Jim. *Rockbridge County, Bath County: Families and History Reprinted from Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia Chicago, etc. 1884*. (Bookworm & Silverfish, 2001).

²¹ Nathaniel Mason Pawlett. *A Brief History of the Roads of Virginia 1607-1840*. (Virginia Highway and Transportation Research Council, 1977 Rev. 2003). 8 <https://vtrc.virginia.gov/media/vtrc/vtrc-pdf/vtrc-pdf/78-r16.pdf>

²² Presgraves, Jim. *Rockbridge County, Bath County: Families and History Reprinted from Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia Chicago, etc. 1884*. (Bookworm & Silverfish, 2001). 11-12, 186-187

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

September 1756. While the war officially ended in 1763, reminders of frontier warfare remained in the decades following and the fort system gained renewed importance during the American Revolution.²³

In 1791, the general assembly combined sections of Augusta, Botetourt, and Greenbrier Counties to form Bath County. Unlike just a few decades earlier when counties like Botetourt – formed prior to the American Revolution in 1769 – often extended to the Mississippi River, Bath County was clearly defined within the Alleghanias.²⁴ The county's first court was held that year on May 10th near the Warm Springs pools at Margaret Lewis's home, widow of early settler John Lewis who owned the land around the pools and what would become the courthouse town of Warm Springs.²⁵ The town soon became the county seat in addition to continuing as a healing destination for those seeking the mineral springs.

Virginia's roads and railroads expanded in the area throughout the nineteenth century even as rivers remained important thoroughfares. While farmers took advantage of the rivers to transport goods when water levels were sufficiently high, water transportation was often inconsistent and prone to flooding through the somewhat shallow rivers in Bath County. When accessible, waterways remained a favored option.²⁶ However, year-round access became a critical step in bringing both people and industry to Bath County. By 1830, the road to Warm Springs east from Craigsville and Staunton in the Shenandoah Valley had improved, with another road leading to Harrisonburg. Additionally, the Virginia legislature authorized a road survey in January 1830 from Warm Springs to Huntersville in what would become West Virginia following today's Route 39 or Mountain Valley Road.²⁷ This appears to be the first formal road improvement effort that connected the valley that now hosts Bacova to Warm Springs and larger towns to the east.

The land west and south beyond Warm Springs village became increasingly accessible with roads and rail arriving from Richmond and Covington. While roads wound their way west, trains were already ferrying people to the springs on mostly dependable, timed routes. In 1850, the Virginia Central Railroad Company offered through tickets from Petersburg, Baltimore, Washington DC, Fredericksburg and Norfolk to Staunton with connections by stagecoach to Warm Springs.²⁸ The Virginia Central also brought springs guests from Richmond to Warm Springs on a combined railroad and stage route leaving the state's capitol city at 6:30am and returning at 11:30pm.²⁹ While these routes required at least two days of travel, it became a more

²³ Walters. "Rivers of Bath" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. 9-10

²⁴ Presgraves 187

²⁵ Deborah McClane. *Warm Springs and West Warm Springs Historic District*. (National Park Service, 2018). 42-43

²⁶ Walters. "Rivers of Bath" 10

²⁷ "Virginia Legislature" *The Richmond Enquirer*. 19 January 1830. 3

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/884898441/>

²⁸ "Notice to Travellers Between Richmond and the Virginia Springs." *The Daily Richmond Times*. 18 July 1850. 4

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/900978876>

²⁹ Charles W. Turner. "Railroad Service to Virginia Farmers, 1828-1860." *Agricultural History* 22, no. 4 (1948): 239-48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3739521>. 243

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

direct means to arrive at the springs.³⁰ Road improvements continued, and the Warm Springs and Huntersville Turnpike had ongoing construction even in 1855, nearly 25 years after survey work began.³¹ The Virginia Central Railroad, which combined with the Covington & Ohio Railroad in 1868 to become the C & O Railroad, reached the newly constructed depot at Millboro in 1856 with the track stopping in 1857 “at Jackson’s river [sic] during the political troubles until 1867-68, when means were provided to complete the remaining ten miles to Covington...”³² With railroads readily moving people and new turnpikes expanding, transportation was a critical improvement for industrial growth in this relatively remote county.

Bath County, previously in the central part of the state, became part of the western edge in 1863 with the creation of West Virginia during the Civil War. Virginia’s economy recovered slowly following the war. While the courthouse remained in Warm Springs, the hotel and cottages surrounding the springs gradually fell into disrepair and visitors shifted their attention a few miles south to Hot Springs and the Homestead Resort. While connections to West Virginia remained important, the main routes through Covington overtook significant expansion that might have otherwise developed in Warm Springs or in the vicinity of Bacova. The arrival of new rail services came with the development of Hot Springs led by M. E. Ingalls, President of the C & O Railroad, who stated during an interview published in January 1890 that “...we have closed on an arrangement for the development of the Warm, Hot, and Healing Springs, and we shall begin the construction of a line to the Hot Springs, which is the central part of this rich mineral-water region.”³³ The line to Hot Springs opened and was carrying both passenger and freight trains by September 1891, which brought rail access within roughly three miles of Bacova’s future site.

Despite the arrival of continually improving transportation routes, Bath County’s economy remained largely recreational and agricultural during much of the nineteenth century. The 1890 *C & O Railway Directory* listed 21 flour and grist mills for the county’s entry, along with four distilleries.³⁴ Meanwhile, other natural resources gradually gained attention. Timber sawmills operated in the county by 1890, with five running in or near Millboro Springs, five in Warm Springs, one in Healing Springs, and one in Hot Springs. A local lumber dealer named Withrow & Nettleton conveniently located their business at Millboro Depot taking advantage of that rail line before the opening of the Hot Springs route.³⁵ Once the Hot Springs line opened, additional acreage along the Jackson River became accessible. The Hot Springs Lumber & Manufacturing Company, chartered in 1903, had a sawmill at Kincaid before 1905 along the new C & O Hot Springs railroad, approximately 10 miles south of Grose (which eventually became Bacova Junction) where the railroad made a hard turn east to cover the final three miles of the trip to Hot

³⁰ “Virginia Central Railroad” *Richmond Daily Times*. 20 April 1853. 4

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/895198202>

³¹ “House of Delegates.” *The Richmond Dispatch*. 4 December 1855. 2

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/79789202/>

³² J. H. Chataigne. *Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Directory*. (Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, 1881). 18

³³ Tokay. “The C. & O. System” *The Valley Virginian*. Staunton, Va. 2 January 1890. 1

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/315488847>

³⁴ Chataigne 290

³⁵ Chataigne 290-292

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Springs.³⁶ The mill cut 25,000 feet per day with the option to build a railroad 30 miles up the Jackson River to access Back Creek Mountain and the timber lands that Tide Water Hardwood Corporation workers based in Bacova would eventually cut in the 1920s. Even with the option of railroads to support the growth of these earlier sawmills, Hot Springs Lumber constructed “a dam across the Jackson river [sic] at that place [Kincaid], and have quite a force of hands at work logging and clearing the obstructions in Jackson’s river preparator [sic] to rafting.”³⁷ While they were not floating sawn lumber, the company was clearly preparing to float logs south to the mill using that early mode of transportation. The waterway worked well for the company until a flood not only swept away logs, but also destroyed the sawmill and lumber yard. The forests along the Jackson River had already been assessed for its high-value timber, and the area was poised for another operation to begin where Hot Springs Lumber had ceased.³⁸

Property Prior to 1920

With the east-west road improvements north of Bacova village along today’s Route 39 (Mountain Valley Road or, historically, Huntersville Pike) and the railroad’s progress moving north along the Jackson River, the area between Back Creek Mountain and Little Mountain became more accessible.³⁹ The small valley appears to have had at least one residence (VDHR# 008-0005, 10542 Jackson River Turnpike) by the 1820s or 1830s, with some estimates that log portions of the building may date to the 1790s.⁴⁰ This two-story farmhouse of log and frame construction clad in weatherboard siding still stands immediately east of the Bacova Historic District boundaries along the Jackson River Turnpike. The four-bay building, often called the George Mayse House or the Thompson House, has one large, exterior-end brick chimney on the northern elevation and a smaller interior-ridge chimney three bays over. A one-story, one-bay gable porch shelters the entrance. This chimney and porch configuration makes this building readily identifiable in 1920s photographs of Bacova. While some news articles from the early 2000s suggest that this building functioned as the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation commissary, photographs from the 1920s featuring the log pond that once existed north and east of the current brick power plant (VHDR# 008-0016/008-0014-0002) indicate that the commissary did not replace this house (neither in renovated form or through the use of previous foundations).⁴¹ While there may have been another building on the current site of the commissary near the modern intersection of Jackson River Turnpike and Lake View Drive, maps from 1901 do not indicate another residence nearby (See Figure 3).

³⁶ “The Granting of Many Charters” *Richmond Times Dispatch*. Richmond, Va. 28 June 1903. 16
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/827185005> and *The Highland Recorder*. Monterey, Va, 17 February 1905. 2
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/61371515>

³⁷ *The Highland Recorder*. Monterey, Va, 17 February 1905. 2 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/61371515>

³⁸ Walters. “Rivers of Bath” *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. 10

³⁹ Bath County Deed Book 32:301

⁴⁰ Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Architectural File #008-0005

⁴¹ Jessica Schwend. “Village of Bacova: A company town with character” *The Recorder*. Monterey, Va. 24 August 2001. 1 and “Bacova File” Bath County Historical Society.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

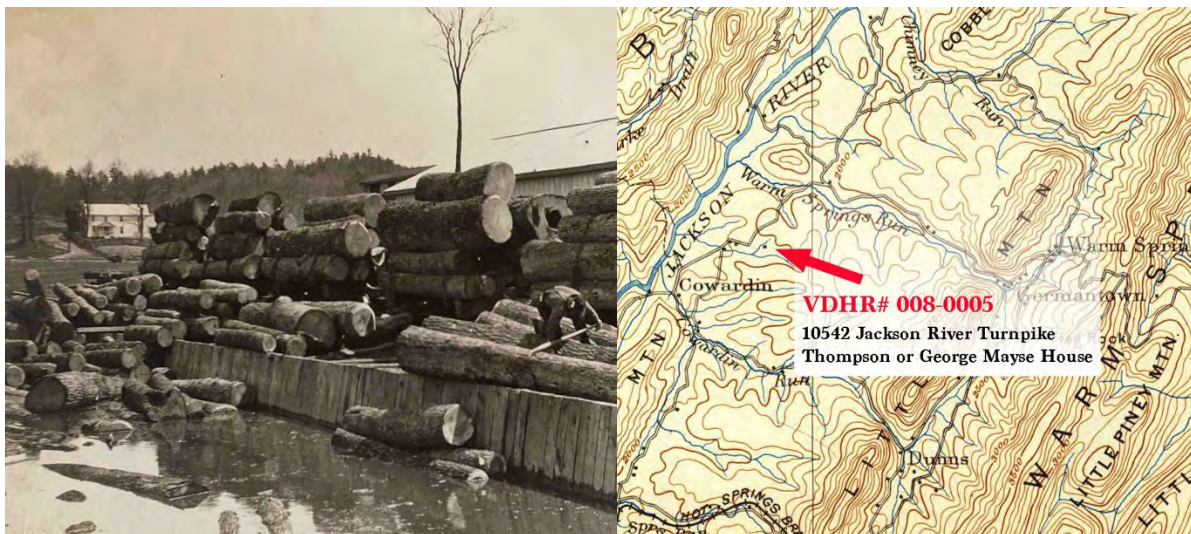


Figure 3 – Log pond of the Tide Water Hardwood Company Sawmill in the 1920s looking east with Thompson (George Mayse) house in the left background and 1901 Monterey Quadrangle USGS map (1:25000) with the likely inclusion of the house along a creek leading to the Jackson River – now Jerry Run.

Photograph courtesy of Bath County Historical Society.

By 1872, George Mayse, whose large tracts of land from Warm Springs to the west appear to encompass the future village footprint, deeded two acres to Charles McDannald along Warm Springs Run, likely east of Bacova, where “the said McDannald is now about erecting a Saw Mill.”⁴² This smaller mill was an early indicator of the valuable timber in this area. Records of the Mayse family are scattered and there were several people with the name George Mayse living in the county from the late 1790s through the nineteenth century, including a manager of the Warm Springs Hotel prior to the Civil War.⁴³ A review of what records exist do appear to indicate that the George Mayse associated with the area around Bacova farmed the site with enslaved labor. After the Civil War, the property went through several ownership changes to eventually become part of the 1919-1920 campaign to purchase timber lands when representatives from Tide Water Hardwood arrived in Bath County.⁴⁴ The house and fields are part of the first tract listed in the land transaction that officially transferred parcels throughout Back Creek, Little Mountain, and Cobbler Mountain to the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation.⁴⁵

Oil and Timber – The Tide Water Companies

Building a new sawmill and associated railroad tracks – not to mention a fully functioning town of over forty residences – in a short timeframe required significant financial resources. In the case of Bacova, that investment ultimately came from the growth of the oil industry in the eastern United States. The Tide Water Hardwood Corporation was a subsidiary of the Tide Water Oil Company, with roots in Pennsylvania, offices in New York City, and refineries in Bayonne, New Jersey by the 1920s. However, the Tide Water Oil Company’s history reaches

⁴² Bath County Deed Book 32:287

⁴³ Deborah McClane. *Warm Springs and West Warm Springs Historic District*. (National Park Service, 2018). 45

⁴⁴ Bath County Deed Book 32:281

⁴⁵ Bath County Deed Book 32:279-347

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

into the very beginning of oil extraction during the first United States oil rush in Titusville, Pennsylvania that started in 1859.⁴⁶

Around 1865, Byron Benson and Robert Emmet Hopkins purchased land in Pennsylvania's recently-developed oil fields after spending a decade working together, first at a stove mill Oneida Lake in upstate New York near Syracuse and later moving to Enterprise, Pennsylvania. Benson, who had served as the sheriff of Onondaga County during the war, and Hopkins, a Union major who had been held in Richmond, Virginia, at Libby Prison, started a lumber business supplying nearby Titusville oil operations while also searching for oil. Their Enterprise Oil & Lumber Company merged with lawyer David McKelvy's operations to form D. McKelvy and Company in 1870, which soon struck oil on a tract that not only brought personal fortunes to each member of the company, but also shifted their collective focus to the oil industry. Rather than join the extraction side of the industry, the members of D. McKelvy and Company chose to shift the business to piping crude oil, which had already been tested in early lines running to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Meeting with nineteen oil producers in 1878, Byron Benson and his partners formed the Tide Water Pipeline Company.⁴⁷

The new pipelines soon ran into obstacles with public road rights-of-way while the John D. Rockefeller-owned Pennsylvania Railroad blocked new methods of moving crude oil. Additionally, Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company already owned most of the once independent pipelines by the late 1870s.⁴⁸ The Tide Water Pipeline partners approached the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad with the offer to build their new line to that railroad to reach the Atlantic coastal refineries and avoid Rockefeller. Known as Benson's Folly at the time, this 109-mile pipeline with a diameter of six inches (a new record) engineered by Benjamin Franklin Warren would cross a mountain and require strategically placed pumps to reach the Reading Railroad in Williamsport. The work ended in three months on May 28, 1879 with the first oil entering the pipeline and arriving at the railroad transfer just a little over a week later on June 4. Transporting oil became so profitable that the company expanded the line to the coast by 1888, where they had built two refineries and a lubricating plant (see Figure 4).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ James Fickle. "Commercial Oil Drilling Begins" *EBSCO Knowledge Advantage*.
<https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/history/commercial-oil-drilling-begins>

⁴⁷ Swigart, Edmund K. *An Emerson-Benson Saga: The Ancestry of Charles F. Emerson and Bessie Benson And the Struggle to Settle the United States*. Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, Inc, 1994. 56-58
<https://archive.org/details/emersonbensonsag00swig/page/n5/mode/2up>

⁴⁸ James D. Carl. "Opening the Western Adirondacks: How Byron Benson Financed Iron Mines and the Carthage & Adirondack Railroad, Part 1" *The St. Lawrence County Historical Association Quarterly*. Vol LIV No 4. : Canton, NY: The St. Lawrence County Historical Association, 2009.19

⁴⁹ Swigert 58-59 and Alfred Russell Crum and A. S. Dungan. *Romance of American Petroleum and Gas*. Oil City, Pa: The Derrick Publishing Company, 1911. 294

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

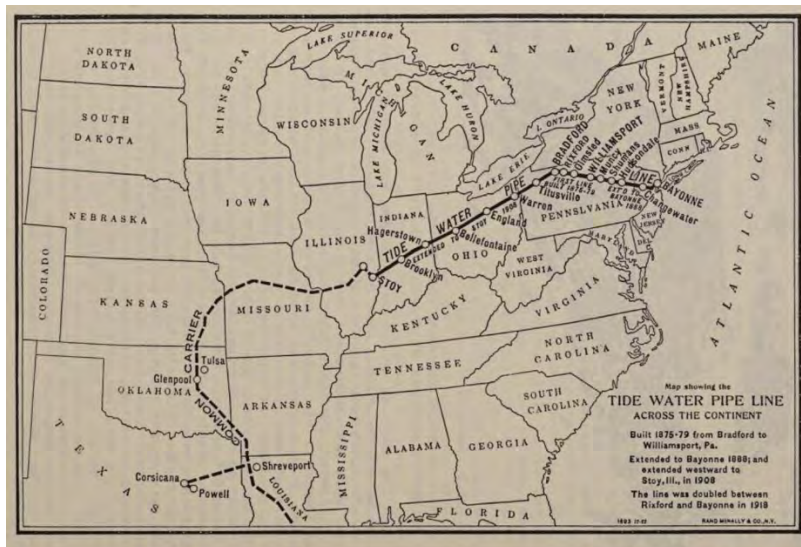


Figure 4 – Tide Water Pipe Line Route in the 1920s.

The first section from Titusville to Williamsport is in the upper right of the image.⁵⁰

The highly-publicized success of the Tide Water pipe in a 1879 *Scientific American* article, along with others honoring the first long-distance pipeline, drew the direct ire of the Standard Oil Company.⁵¹ In the process of construction, Benson had successfully challenged Rockefeller in court in order to place a culvert under a railroad intersection.⁵² Rockefeller and his business associates lobbied to prevent competitors' new pipelines with a full array of maneuvers from encouraging states to sign single-company pipeline agreements to blocking crude oil from coming to independent refineries. The affidavit of Henry Demarest Lloyd, journalist and author of *Wealth Against Commonwealth* that openly critiqued monopolies – and specifically Standard Oil – when published in 1894, stated that:

The last great act in the completion of this monopoly [Standard Oil] was the conquest of the Tide Water Pipe Line...the first trunk pipe line built to the seaboard, one of the most important developments ever made in the oil business, and due not to the oil trust but its competitors...[built] in their desperate struggle to escape the discrimination of the railroads...[Standard Oil] made war on the Tide Water.⁵³

⁵⁰ Reproduced from Swigart *An Emerson-Benson Saga: The Ancestry of Charles F. Emerson and Bessie Benson And the Struggle to Settle the United States*. 60

⁵¹ "THE TIDE WATER OIL PIPE LINE COMPLETED." *Scientific American* 40, no. 26 (1879): 400–400. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26063609>.

⁵² Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Standard Oil: American Corporation" *Britannica Money*. <https://www.britannica.com/money/Standard-Oil>

⁵³ Charles Austin Whiteshot. *The oil-well driller; a history of the world's greatest enterprise, the oil industry*. Morgantown, WV: The Acme Publishing Company, 1905. 682

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

The pressure succeeded, and Tide Water Pipeline Company sold a third of its stock to Standard Oil in 1882 and agreed to limit its business to 11.5% of the pipeline industry in 1884. Standard Oil secured the remaining 88.5% for themselves.⁵⁴

Despite Standard Oil's dominance, the Tide Water Pipeline Company refineries in Bayonne, New Jersey, remained outside of Standard Oil's grip as separate businesses. Benson reorganized and shifted the refineries under a new business, the Tide Water Oil Company, in 1888 with a five-million-dollar capital investment while occupying the president position. Benson's sons joined the business just before their father's untimely death the same year.⁵⁵ Although the company's leadership changed through tragic circumstances, the business continued to grow rapidly. The agreement between Standard Oil and Tide Water Oil was overturned in 1890 as part of growing anti-trust pressures, including the 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act.⁵⁶ In 1905, shares of Tide Water Pipeline stock were valued at \$2,000 with ten million dollars in capital.⁵⁷ Robert Dix Benson became president, the position held by his father, and promptly bought back control of the Tide Water Pipeline Company in 1908.⁵⁸ At that time, only the Tide Water and Standard pipelines reached the New York Harbor.

The need for barrels and timber continued to grow within the oil industry, even with the efficiency offered through pipelines. The Bayonne refineries stored oil in large wooden tanks prior to transport by ship, usually overseas.⁵⁹ World War I increased the demand for oil and timber as well. Tide Water Oil published *War History – Tide Water Companies* in 1920, reflecting on the impact of the war. The publication highlighted stories from returning soldiers as well as company accomplishments. E. H. Shelley, director of the Cooperage Department, summarized the work of the Currier Lumber Corporation which “furnished a very large quantity of oak ship timber, and also supplied considerable quantities of cooperage material for the use of the barrel factory of the Oil Company at Bayonne.”⁶⁰ The Bayonne factory also produced barrels and kegs to hold foodstuffs, varnish, paint and essentially anything to help feed soldiers or supply them with the ingredients to make explosives. Additionally, Tydol gasoline for airplanes and Veedol engine lubricant oil became commonplace.⁶¹ This publication was timely in light of the Bayonne refinery strikes in 1915 that brought significant negative press, but resulted in an eight-hour day for workers.⁶²

⁵⁴ Carl 21-22 and “Tide Water Oil Company” *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 102 Issue 2649. (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1916). 1255 https://archive.org/details/sim_commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1916-04-01_102_2649

⁵⁵ Carl 22

⁵⁶ Encyclopaedia Britannica. “Standard Oil: American Corporation” *Britannica Money*. <https://www.britannica.com/money/Standard-Oil> and “Tide Water Oil Company” *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 102 Issue 2649. (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1916). 1255

⁵⁷ Whiteshot 205-206

⁵⁸ Carl 22

⁵⁹ “Tide Water Oil Company” *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 102 Issue 2649. 1255

⁶⁰ Tide Water Oil Company. *War History: Tide Water Companies Told By Those Who Served Their Country and Tide Water*. Ed. Frances M. Buente. New York, 1920. 17

⁶¹ Tide Water Oil Company. *War History*. 19

⁶² “CONCILIATION WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, MARCH 4, 1913, TO JUNE 6, 1916.” *Monthly Review of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* 3, no. 1 (1916): 24–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41823028>.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Prior to and during the war, Currier Lumber Corporation operated in Virginia's Wise County from Glamorgan, 217 miles southwest of Bacova, for the Bayonne refineries. The extensive operation incorporated on January 5, 1908 had both stave and sawmills first built in 1909 under superintendent and general manager W. M Currier to "manufacture lumber and staves on the largest scale ever attempted in this part of the mortal vineyard, his company having more than 30,000,000 feet of standing timber here in Wise county [sic]."⁶³ The Tide Water Stave and Lumber Company, also a subsidiary of the companies managed by Richard Dix Benson, operated in Wise County and shipped timber to Glamorgan.⁶⁴ Tide Water Stave operated seven mills for cutting both staves and lumber by 1906 with 600 men employed, two company doctors, 100 company houses, and commissaries in Glamorgan, Birchfield, and Pound.⁶⁵ It is likely that both Currier and Tide Water Stave eventually merged or had overlapping operations. Their large mill was destroyed by fire in February 1913, including \$15,000 in machinery; however, the mill was reconstructed and operational by the time war broke out in 1914.⁶⁶ In six years, the company had cut all the timber from the Wise County tracts supplying both staves and timber for ship-building. By 1920, they purchased between 35,000 and 40,000 acres of timber land in Bath and Highland Counties. Tide Water Oil Company subsequently announced plans for the new site to include "housing facilities for workmen, and required mill and equipment, and have constructed four miles of standard gauge and will construct twenty miles of narrow gauge railroad to serve the property."⁶⁷ Currier Lumber Corporation changed its name to Tide Water Hardwood Corporation on January 21, 1921 with a new village to build – Bacova.⁶⁸

The Founding of a Company Town

Tide Water Oil Company officially announced their new Bath County sawmill and company town in their April 1921 *President's Report* by Robert Dix Benson, but the planning process started years earlier as they depleted the Wise County timber tracts.⁶⁹ Harry Alwin Cavendish, a superintendent for the Currier Lumber Company, worked in Glamorgan before scouting land in

⁶³ "Local Items" *The Post*. Big Stone Gap, Va. 8 December 1909. 3 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/71004132/> and United States Temporary National Economic Committee. *Investigation of concentration of economic power. Hearings before the Temporary National Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, Seventy-fifth Congress, third session*. Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1939. 7995 <https://archive.org/details/investigationofconc14aunit>

⁶⁴ "Wise County Progress – Tidewater Stone and Lumber Company Has Large Plant." *The Evening News*. Roanoke, Va. 27 November 1906. 4 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/911608405> and Jim Bolling. "Wise County's Other Industry (1887-1940)" *Historical Society of Southwest Virginia*. <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~vahsswv/historicalskechtes/wisecootherindustry.html>

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "Trying to Fix Loss Sustained by Currier Lumber Co." *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Richmond, Va. 19 February 1913. 2 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/827336964/>

⁶⁷ R. D. Benson. "President's Report" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 112 No 2910. (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1921). 1418 https://archive.org/details/sim_commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1921-04-02_112_2910

⁶⁸ Bath County Deed Book 52:66

⁶⁹ Benson. "President's Report" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. 1921. 1418

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Bath County around 1919.⁷⁰ Rather than purchasing directly under the Currier name, Tide Water Oil authorized Cavendish to scour the area buying lots with oak and other high-quality hardwoods throughout 1920. The deeds remained in his name, or in combination with his wife, Bessie, until December 31, 1921 when the couple transferred thousands of purchased acres in addition to a variety of timber rights and railroad rights-of-way to Tide Water Hardwood Corporation.⁷¹

Within the flurry of land transactions, construction workers were already carving a path to the site of the new sawmill. In July 1920, Carpenter and Major Brothers of Clifton Forge won the contract to build nine miles of railroad and approximately sixty houses.⁷² Meanwhile Bruce R. Richardson, whose father was the chief engineer at the Homestead Resort from 1891 to 1915 and responsible for the water system there, laid out the design of Bacova and surveyed the railroad routes serving the mill.⁷³ Construction did not start soon enough for details of the new company town to be listed in the January 1920 census, which shows only six households on Jackson River Road. One house carpenter, Will Giles, is listed along the road within the mix of farmers and laborers.⁷⁴ Tide Water Hardwood (then still operating under Currier Lumber Company) also leased 404 tons of rail and 1,552 pairs of angle bars from the C & O Railroad in July for three years as they built the spur from the passenger and freight line leading to Hot Springs to the new company town.⁷⁵ Tide Water Oil Company owned timber properties worth \$321,957 in 1919, which jumped to \$998,513 by the end of 1920.⁷⁶ The rapid expansion led President Benson to acknowledge to investors that the timber properties and construction of the Tide Water Hardwood's new mill had not yet turned a profit by the end of 1920. However, he had a strong forecast for 1921 and anticipated profits to return to their normal levels by the third quarter.⁷⁷

With construction well underway by early 1921, the town needed a name. Condensing the location – Bath County Virginia – into two letters per word, the name Bacova began showing up in local newspapers by January 1921.⁷⁸ The name is attributed to Clarence M. Hudson, who was listed as a cashier for the Currier Lumber Company at its Glamorgan location in 1920, but later

⁷⁰ 1920 United States Census, Gladeville, Wise County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Harry Cavendish," *Ancestry.com*. and Virginia, United States Birth Records, 1912-2015, Delayed Birth Records, 1721-1920, digital image s.v. "Harry Cavendish," *Ancestry.com*. and US World War 1 Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918, Wise County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Harry Cavendish," *Ancestry.com*.

⁷¹ Bath County Deed Book 32:279

⁷² "Third Party Gossip" *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 8 July 1920. 2

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/794802485> The business is also sometimes listed as Carpenter, Major Brothers and Company

⁷³ "Bruce R. Richardson" *History of Virginia – Virginia Biography*. Vol 6. Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1924. 228

⁷⁴ 1920 United States Census, Cedar Creek, Bath County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Will Giles," *Ancestry.com*.

⁷⁵ Bath County Deed Book 34:223

⁷⁶ "Tide Water Oil Company and Subsidiaries" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 110 Issue 2858. 1434 https://archive.org/details/sim_commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1920-04-03_110_2858/page/1434

⁷⁷ R. D. Benson. "President's Report" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. 1419

⁷⁸ Aggregate record search for Bacova across Newspapers.com, ProQuest, and Virginia Chronicle and "Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Smith, Jr." *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 11 February 1921. 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/794806675/>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

became the bookkeeper for Tide Water Hardwood Corporation and moved to Bacova.⁷⁹ More people were moving to the area throughout 1921. Harry Cavendish was in Hot Springs by February of that year, and Tide Water Hardwood's temporary office was located there during construction of the mill and village.⁸⁰ By August of 1921, W. W. Major and other contractors were beginning to wrap up construction in Bacova and had only a few more weeks of work.⁸¹



*Figure 5 – First mill building under construction in 1920-1921.
This two-story building was located immediately south of the existing brick power plant building.
Courtesy Bath County Historical Society.*

The new sawmill operated with a steam-powered generator that drove a large band saw. The first building constructed in the mill complex held the saws with a system of ramps, tracks, and pulleys to guide logs through the cutting area.⁸² The heavily framed, two-story structure dominated the field as houses went up in the village. Once that building was completed, the brick power plant followed, along with the log pond to the north of the mill building. Band saws were a considerable advancement over earlier circular saw mills by providing faster sawing and reducing waste.⁸³

⁷⁹ 1920 United States Census, Gladeville, Wise County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Clarence Hudson," *Ancestry.com*. and 1930 United States Census, Cedar Creek, Bath County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Clarence Hudson," *Ancestry.com*. The common story, which shows up in 20th century newspapers and the *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*, is that Hudson created the name Bacova while at Anderson Cottage in Warm Springs.

⁸⁰ "Western Section Helps Near East" *The News and Advance*. Lynchburg, Va. 20 February 1921. 15
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/1015038807>

⁸¹ "Personal and Local News" *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 15 August 1921. 1

⁸² *Marie Pursley Photograph Collection File*. Bath County Historical Society.

⁸³ Roy B. Clarkson. "Sawmills." *e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia*. 18 June 2024.
<https://wvencyclopedia.org/entries/166>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State



Figure 6 – Bacova employee housing under construction in 1920 looking roughly north from the current location of Lake Bacova. Lumber is stacked on the left side of the image waiting to be assembled.
Courtesy Bath County Historical Society.

Meanwhile, the village housing along with the company office and commissary took shape. A handful of one-story houses appear to have been constructed first, with the two-story American Foursquare buildings following concurrent with another wave of single-story construction. Each house was finished with plaster walls and board walks kept people from walking through mud along the unpaved streets.⁸⁴ Even in early images, Jackson River Turnpike was visible following roughly the same route as it does today. The village was complete by 1922. During the early years, each residence had an outhouse until water and sewer could be installed.⁸⁵ Many of the company's Glamorgan-based employees moved to Bacova following the closure of the Wise County mill in 1920.⁸⁶ This included the company doctor, George Abbott Torrence. Dr. Torrence had worked at the company for six years in Glamorgan before moving to Bacova, likely working out of the residence at 41 Lake View Drive (VDHR# 008-0014-0024).⁸⁷ With the significant shift in Wise's timber industry, much of the machinery, buildings and even residences associated with Currier Lumber Company in that county were sold or replaced by subsequent development.⁸⁸

The new mill in Bath County drew considerable attention. In his 1921 annual report for *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*, Tide Water Oil Company president Benson reported on March 7, 1921 in the Coeperage Department section that:

⁸⁴ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

⁸⁵ *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society. and "James A. Sanders Family" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. 345

⁸⁶ McClung "Bacova – The Village." 79 Review of USGS Topo Maps for Glamorgan, Pound, and Birchfield reveal that the majority of industrial infrastructure and housing associated with the Currier Lumber Company period are no longer extant.

⁸⁷ "George Abbot Torrence" *History of Virginia – Virginia Biography*. Vol 6. Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, 1924. 222

⁸⁸ Residential and land use change assessed through USGS Maps for Wise and Pound, Virginia, from 1912 through 2019 <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

Tide Water Hardwood Corp., organized to operate the timber tract in Bath and Highland counties, Virginia, of which we told in the last annual report, has just begun operations. Owing to the depression prevailing last year, we delayed completion of the mill and our industrial town called Bacova, but they are now completed and in operation.⁸⁹

E. M. Shelley, who managed Tide Water Oil's Cooperage Department and served as President of Tide Water Hardwood Corporation, with Harry Cavendish, now Superintendent of the mill, travelled through the company's new timber lands in April 1922 – just over a year after the mill had opened. Shelley made repeated trips from New York to Bath County throughout the mill's operation, and it is clear that Tide Water Oil maintained oversight of Tide Water Hardwood's operations.⁹⁰ With the commissary and office building completed simultaneously with the residential construction, employees and their families settled into a town with the amenities to house, feed, and employ its new residents.

The Boom Years

Tide Water Hardwood Corporation amended its company charter to formally move the principal office from Hot Springs to Bacova in May 1923.⁹¹ Two narrow-gauge railroads brought timber to the site; one track wound its way north towards Highland County while the other took a western route along the edge of the village towards Back Creek and Mountain Grove. Sounds of train cars and whistles filled the town as the work day progressed, not to mention the hum of the machinery.⁹² In addition to the sounds of industry, activities of daily life only increased as more people arrived. Older children attended school in the new commissary building while the first three grades met in one of the company houses. The community hosted an ice cream supper on October 26, 1921 to raise money for the school library before the county advertised to build a four-room building in 1922 on the northern side of the village overlooking the residences (from what is now Longview Drive), separated from both the sawmill and railroad noise.⁹³ People shopped at the commissary with Tide Water Hardwood scrip which came in stamped aluminum tokens of five- or ten-cent denominations.⁹⁴ The store eventually boasted a candy display and

⁸⁹ "Tide Water Oil Company – 33rd Annual Report – Year Ended Dec. 31 1921" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 114 No 2961 (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1922) 1284

https://archive.org/details/sim-commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1922-03-25_114_2961/page/1284/

⁹⁰ "Star Chapel" *The Daily News Leader*. 15 April 1922. 6 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/315056293>, "Star Chapel" *The Daily News Leader*. 7 June 1921. 11 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/315366884> and Thomas Harringshaw. *The American Elite and Sociologist Blue Book – Progressive Americans Prominent in the Social, Industrial, and Financial World*. Chicago: American Blue Book Publishers, 1922. 443

<https://archive.org/details/americanlitesoc00herrich/page/442>

⁹¹ "Charters Granted" *The News and Advance*. 30 May 1923. 8

⁹² *Signal Sheet, Bacova, Virginia. June 18, 1923*. Bath County Historical Society

⁹³ Bath County Deed Book 36:167, "Attention Building Contractors" *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 18 April 1922. 4 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/794805632/> and "Warm Springs" *The Daily News Leader*. Staunton, Va. 27 October 1921. 6 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/315447312/>

⁹⁴ David E Schenkman. *Virginia Tokens*. The Virginia Numismatic Association. Hampton, Va: Signature Book Printing, 2015.19

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

soda fountain, and Dr. Torrence's office was just a short walk away. Employees and their families paid for medical appointments, insurance, and rent in scrip as well.⁹⁵

Production intensified and Bacova's population ballooned by the mid-1920s. Tide Water Oil's investment in timber land grew to \$1,472,542 by the end of 1922, increasing by nearly half in two years.⁹⁶ E M Shelley, as president of Tide Water Hardwood in 1923, also renewed their lease on the C & O Railroad's rails and angle bars until 1928 as narrow-gauge tacks brought timber to the mill and standard-gauge delivered the finished product to the C & O Railway lines.⁹⁷ When the full rail cars arrived at the mill, laborers off-loaded all of the logs into the mill pond to soak before chains hooked each log along a conveyor to the band saw.⁹⁸ The saw was in the second story of the mill building and required careful maintenance. The mill had employees dedicated to filing saws, oiling machinery, and providing near-continuous upkeep to make sure that the saws stayed both sharp and functional.⁹⁹

By 1924, the company's operations "were larger than at any time before" and timber was an essential part of that growth.¹⁰⁰ The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* noted for its capital-city readers that the village was a "model town" in a feature on Bath County's mineral springs.¹⁰¹ In 1924, the *Evening Leader* in Staunton, Virginia published an account of the company's products:

The staves that are trucked from here are loaded at Cleek's place [near Bolar, north of Bacova] on the narrow gauge cars and at Bacova are transferred to the standard gauge cars and sent to Bayonne, N.J. where the corporation works 144 men and turns out 3,000 barrels and 1,250 kegs per day. In order to get all possible out of the timber, the corporation cuts staves 24, 30, 20, 24 [sic], 22, 18, and 17 1-2 inches long.¹⁰²

While Tide Water had clearly rebounded from the 1920 depression in crude oil prices, other area sawmills did not fare as well. The J. E. Moore Lumber Company, which had a mill in the area of Mountain Grove (roughly four miles northwest of Bacova) in 1914, was cutting timber on land

⁹⁵ McClung 80

⁹⁶ "Tide Water Oil Company – 34th Annual Report – Year Ended Dec. 31 1922" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 116 No 3015 (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1923) 1530

⁹⁷ Bath County Deed Book 34:223

⁹⁸ McClung 80

⁹⁹ 1930 US Federal Census, Cedar Creek, Bath County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Harry Cavendish," *Ancestry.com*.

¹⁰⁰ "Tide Water Oil Company – 35th Annual Report – Year Ended Dec. 31 1923" *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 118 No 3067 (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1924) 1662

https://archive.org/details/sim-commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1924-04-05_118_3067

¹⁰¹ Earle Lutz. "Bath County Noted For Medicinal Hot Springs: Thousands of Pilgrimages Mad Annual to Health-Giving Fountains in Western Virginia" *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. 6 April 1924. 76

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/827581897>

¹⁰² "Bolar" *The Evening Leader*. Staunton, Va. 22 December 1924. 9

<https://ezproxy.virginiamemory.com/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/december-22-1924-page-9-12/docview/3280657105/se-2>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

around both Little Back Creek and Big Back Creek until the company went bankrupt in 1919. They closed their mill in 1922. Tide Water Hardwood purchased the timber property and added the Moore mill's equipment, including a Clark eight-foot band saw, to the Bacova sawmill in 1926.¹⁰³ This effectively doubled the capacity of the mill, pushing production to 20 million board feet per year with a typical 10-hour day resulting in 100,000 board feet.¹⁰⁴ Mill employees often stated that Bacova generated sawn lumber rather than staves, but both company reports and newspaper accounts always associate the mill with some level of stave production.¹⁰⁵ The operation took on its largest form as a double band-saw mill and added a second power plant to provide for the additional machinery (See Figure 7).



Figure 7 – Bacova's sawmill after the second power plant and band saw were added in 1926.

Meanwhile, the sawmill needed more laborers to manage both cutting timber in the lumber camps and processing at the mill. In 1925, the company built additional housing on the eastern edge of the village, outside of Richardson's original plan. Called Slabtown because the houses were constructed from the mill's timber slabs, this housing was in stark contrast to the original residences from 1920-1921. There were at least 13 houses in straight line roughly northeast and perpendicular to Jackson River Turnpike, and local family histories suggest that there may have

¹⁰³ William Price McNeel. *Logging the Greenbrier Valley – Chapter XIV – Mills Served by the Iron Mountain and Greenbrier Railroad (White Sulphur and Huntersville Railroad)*. Self-published.

<https://greenbriervalleylogging.net/chapter-xiv-mills-served-by-the-iron-mountain-and-greenbrier-railroad-white-sulphur-and-huntersville-railroad/>

¹⁰⁴ *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society. and McClung 79

¹⁰⁵ McClung 79

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

been up to 25 new residences.¹⁰⁶ The one-story houses were double-pile with side-gable roofs. Meanwhile, the two-story houses were single-pile with a one-story, shed-roof addition. These vernacular residences did not have any of the Colonial Revival detailing common to the first wave of construction.¹⁰⁷ Each Slabtown residence had a front porch and double-hung, wood-sash windows. Betty Anderson, who grew up in the village remembered that:

Most of the houses had four or five rooms and a bath. There were some houses, on the lower level of the village that had two stories. Most of the front porches had a swing and rocking chairs and lots of potted plants on them. Colorful flowers and rose bushes were planted in the yards and trees were in abundance.¹⁰⁸

The village also gained electricity during this construction phase from the new power plant and a gasoline dynamo. Most records indicate that the water and sewer system was installed at this time as well, the first of its kind for a remote residential community in Bath.¹⁰⁹ The mill powered lights from 4:00pm to 8:00am, and throughout the day on Monday for households to wash their laundry. Abe Pursley, born in 1930 and raised in Bacova, recalled family stories of bringing in wood each Saturday for the cookstove, which also connected to the water heater.¹¹⁰ The company installed wood boardwalks connecting the residential sections and an access road at the foot of the hill to the north overlooking Bacova that connected Slabtown to the at Jackson River past the company office near the newly-constructed Bacova Chapel (See Figures 8 and 9).¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Files in the Bath County Historical Society and McClung 80 indicate that there may have been 15 or more. The James A Sanders Family shared in their family history for the *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991* that there were between 20 and 25 houses (See page 345 of that publication). Given the number of households in the 1930 census, it is possible that there was more temporary housing in the community than the map suggests. The earliest map currently available for Bacova is the USGS Warm Springs Quadrangle from 1930 and shows 13 houses in the row.

¹⁰⁷ *Marie Pursley Photograph Collection File*. Bath County Historical Society. and USGS Topographic Map. Warm Springs Quadrangle. 1:24000. 1930 <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview>

¹⁰⁸ Betty S. Anderson. *Bacova On My Mind – Memories of a Place I Hold Dear*. Clifton Forge, Va: Mountain Empire Publications, 2000. 1

¹⁰⁹ “James A Sanders Family” *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991* 345 and McClung 80 The community had a reservoir just above Slabtown and the system eventually connected to Grose Spring, which remains a pump station for Bath County into the present.

¹¹⁰ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

¹¹¹ This road bed is still visible just north of the basketball court on the former Tide Water Hardwood office property, now a post office VDHR# 008-0014-0018.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

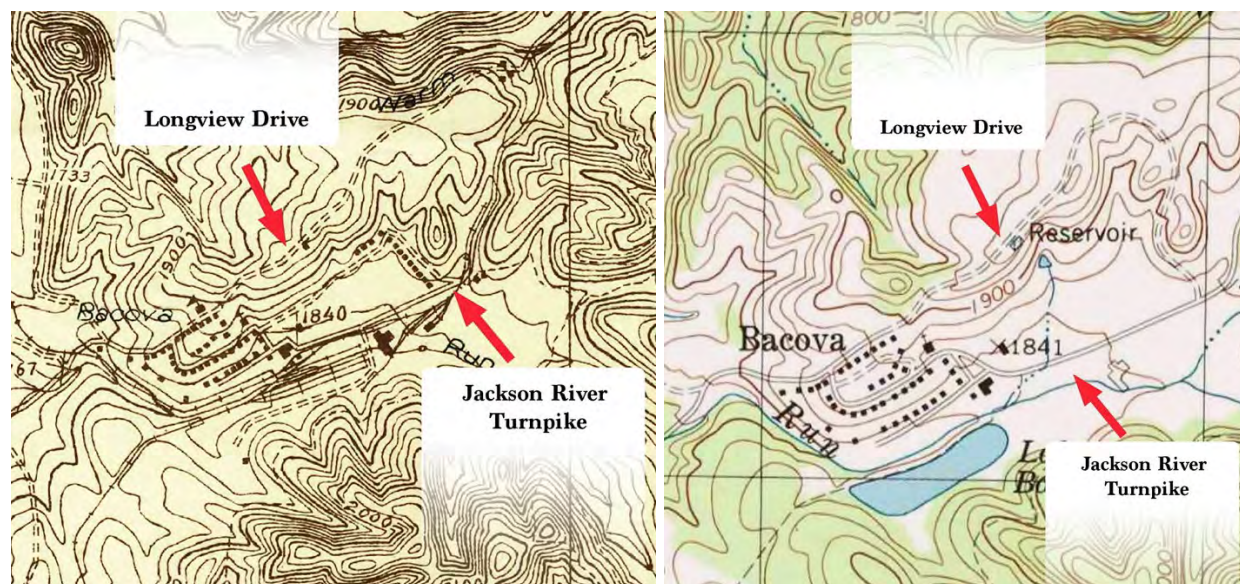


Figure 8 – Comparison of Bacova in 1930 and 1968.

The 1930 map shows the location of the c. 1925 Slabtown residences at Jackson River Turnpike across from the Mayse/Thompson House and road connecting back to the c.1921 residences.

USGS Topographic Maps. Warm Springs, Virginia Quadrangle. 1:24000 1930 and 1968



Figure 9 – View of Slabtown after 1925.

Courtesy of the Bath County Historical Society.

By the mid-1920s, Bacova had all the amenities of a town with one notable exception; the community did not have a church. The Bacova Chapel became the final community space completed under Tide Water Hardwood Corporation's ownership in 1925. Employees raised money while their families organized bake and craft sales to support the new building. Some of the company's workers even took paycheck deductions to cover the material costs. The new Colonial Revival church was non-denominational with both Presbyterian and Methodist ministers providing services.¹¹² The church became a site for boxed lunches and social

¹¹² Edna J. Helmtoller. "A History of Bath County Churches." *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 40 While some newspaper articles suggest that there were churches in the town prior to 1925, there are no physical or documentary evidence to support these summaries, which are only in newspapers outside of the immediate Bath County area. It is possible that employees and their families organized religious services in other buildings until the completion of the chapel in

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

gatherings as well. Families in the community also took turns providing meals for the visiting preachers.¹¹³

With the new church and residences, Bacova had largely become the self-sufficient town that Tide Water Hardwood and regional newspapers advertised. Families hunted and fished in the area to supplement what they purchased at the commissary. Employees shared garden plots and utilized the community barn with pasture for cattle. Local farmers sold meat and other produce to the company store. A barber shop operated near the company office, offering 25-cent haircuts to keep everyone tidy. The volunteer fire department watched for any sign of problems and the post office, operating in the commissary building, helped people stay connected beyond the confines of Bacova. The commissary also held the club house and other social spaces. As more workers arrived, some families welcomed lodgers until housing became available. Despite the focus on work at the sawmill, there were recreational days. Tide Water Hardwood organized holiday events like the annual Easter egg hunt and formed a company baseball team.¹¹⁴

Tide Water Oil purchased controlling shares in California-based Associated Oil in 1926 to form Tide Water Associated Oil Company as the business continued to expand its reach nationally, and Richard Jones replaced Shelley as President of Tide Water Hardwood.¹¹⁵ The company's pipeline already reached the Gulf Coast through oilfields from Oklahoma to Texas. Bacova's lumber company was part of an increasingly national corporate group with subsidiaries covering most aspects of the oil industry. Harry Cavendish, officially Vice President of Tide Water Hardwood by 1925 while continuing his roles as village postmaster and mill manager, became increasingly active in both the county and the region. He worked with the Virginia Forestry Department, founded in 1914, to create an association dedicated to fighting fires on active timber lands. He travelled regularly and gifted twenty waxed hardwood specimen boards sawn at the Bacova mill to the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Arts and Industries and Division of History in 1927 for their wood technology collection.¹¹⁶ When he was acquiring timber rights for the company in 1920, Cavendish typically set the end of the agreement for 1945 to secure lands for potentially 25 years of operations. However, changes in the oil industry soon eliminated the need for the high quantity of sawn timber Tide Water Hardwood produced annually, impacting life and industry in Bacova.

1925, or they may have travelled to nearby churches a few miles away either in Warm Springs or west on Jackson River Turnpike near Grose Spring.

¹¹³ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

¹¹⁴ McClung 80 and *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society

¹¹⁵ *The Annalist: A Journal of Finance, Commerce, and Economics*. Vol 29 Iss 745. New York: The New York Times Company, 29 April 1927. 618 https://archive.org/details/sim_annalist-a-magazine-of-finance-commerce-and-economic_1927-04-29_29_745 and *Poor's Register of Directors of the United States* Babson Park, MA: Poor's Printing Co., 1928. 770 <https://archive.org/details/poorsregisterofd00poor>

¹¹⁶ Smithsonian Institution. *Report on the Progress and Condition of the United States National Museum for the Year Ended June 30, 1927*. Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1927. 112

<https://archive.org/details/reportonprogress1927unit> and *Copartnership and Corporation Directory Boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx*. New York, NY: R. L. Polk & Co. Inc. 1926. 1847 https://archive.org/details/bwb_T3-CBT-981_69 The accession number for the Bath County wood specimens was 92422.

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

The beginning of the Great Depression with the market crash in 1929 brought significant, but not necessarily immediate, change to Bacova. The 1930 census recorded 368 people living in the village including 175 children under the age of 18. Two families had servants (both white) and only one head of household, Nellie Sharp, was not working at the mill either directly or along the railroads, in the lumber camps, or at the commissary. Sharp operated a boarding house in 1930 where three lumber mill workers were staying at that time. There were 68 households in Bacova, supporting oral histories that there were more residences in Slabtown, or indicating some company houses had been divided into units. The census captures a full company town still active with an operating mill. The company doctor, William Hatcher, was living in the village and had the assistance of Edith Jarrett, listed as a doctor's office maid. Dr. Torrence had moved his growing practice to Hot Springs by 1925 and the company hired several different doctors in the years following his departure.¹¹⁷ There were two teachers in town, Besse Jerrett (public school) and Glayds Massie (music). Harry Cavendish was still listed as superintendent and Clarence Hudson as bookkeeper. Tom Robinson was the company fireman and other specialized employees included mechanic James Loughrie, machinist Kenneth Scott, and engineer Addie Grogg.¹¹⁸ Many of the families that had followed the company from Wise County still remained, but the employment they had depended on for years would soon evaporate.

Sawmills Silenced – Bacova in the Depression Era and World War II

Complicating the impact of the Depression, the oil industry increasingly used metal barrels, first patented in 1905 and popular by the mid-1920s.¹¹⁹ Additionally, Tide Water shifted oil refining for their Texas and Midwest fields to the Gulf Coast at Huston, reducing the demand for both the Bayonne cooerage and New Jersey-based tankers.¹²⁰ With diminishing demand and economic uncertainty, the sawmill became a subsidiary that could be liquidated. There were leadership changes within the company as well with the death of current president Richard Jones in 1930 and past president Robert Dix Benson in 1931.¹²¹

Before the sawmills were permanently silenced, Bacova was part of an ongoing debate to re-route the Covington-Hot Springs Highway (modern US Route 220 or Sam Snead Highway) in 1929 and 1930 "from its present location through the Falling Springs Valley. They would leave

¹¹⁷ "Dr. George A Torrence – The Country Doctor" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Bath County Historical Society (Heritage House Publishing, 1991). 374

¹¹⁸ 1930 US Federal Census, Cedar Creek, Bath County, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Harry Cavendish," *Ancestry.com*.

¹¹⁹ B.A. Wells and K.L. Wells "Remarkable Nellie Bly's Oil Drum." American Oil & Gas Historical Society. 2006. <https://aoghs.org/transportation/nellie-bly-oil-drum> and Andrew Higgs "Deconstructing Ubiquity: The Interpretive Value of Metal Drum Containers." Northern Land Use Research Alaska, LLC. Fairbanks AK, 2017. https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/publications/Ubiquity%20Drums_v5%203x4pdf.pdf

¹²⁰ *The Refiner and Natural Gasoline Manufacturer*. Vol 8 Iss 5. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company, 1929. 157 https://archive.org/details/sim_hydrocarbon-processing_1929-05_8_5

¹²¹ "Robert Dix Benson, Oil Financier, Dead" *New York Times*. New York, Ny. 4 September 1931. 19 <https://www.nytimes.com/1931/09/04/archives/robert-dix-benson-oil-financier-dead-retired-president-of-tide.html> and "Hits Wife, Kills Self" *The Evening Leader*. Staunton, Va. 25 February 1930. 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/316027406/>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

the present route at Warm Springs, go down Warm Springs Gap to Bacova, thence south to Bacova Junction, proceeding...to Covington.”¹²² While the main road did not ultimately shift to pass through Bacova, Jackson River Turnpike was added to the State system and improved.¹²³ With the improved road, people living in areas like Bacova reduced their dependence on rail transportation, which would soon be necessary with the closure of the mill.

Tide Water Hardwood Corporation closed most mill operations in 1931. Only nine employees remained on the Tide Water payroll to fill orders until the entire stock of lumber was sold.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, people living in Bacova continued to pay rent to Tide Water Hardwood until December 30, 1933 when the subsidiary formed in 1908 “to secure aid in supplying hardwood for the manufacture of barrels” was formally absorbed by Tide Water Oil.¹²⁵ The parent company continued to collect rents and employ a handful of people. Harry Cavendish became a local banker and Clarence Hudson remained in Bacova as the new manager and superintendent of remaining assets. Tide Water Oil Company began the process of removing all lumber operations from Bacova and the community entered a period of decline as families gradually relocated. Many who stayed travelled to the Homestead to work at the resort in Hot Springs while a few farmed in the immediate vicinity as the former lumberyard returned to farmland. Tide Water Oil retained 700 acres for cattle and employed four men to maintain the farm while liquidating the mill infrastructure.¹²⁶ However, Bacova did not disappear with the industry that drove its founding.

Bacova’s school remained busy during the early years of the decade with 66 students during the 1933-34 academic year. However, the loss of employment that workers could access by foot had clearly made an impact just a year later in September 1934, when enrollment dropped to 49 students – even as enrollment increased overall in Bath County.¹²⁷ At that time, the school taught up to seventh grade. Another enrollment count published in October 1934 indicated that 73 students attended Bacova’s school in the 1933-1934 season compared to 53 in 1934-1935 as the school board considered moving one teacher along with the sixth and seventh grade students from Bacova to the school in Warm Springs to alleviate overcrowding in other schools within the system.¹²⁸ The discrepancy is likely due to late matriculations. Each student received a health exam, including a dental checkup, prior to the start of school. For example, the State Field Nurse from the Virginia Department of Health visited the Bacova school on May 9th, 1935 from 8:30am to 10:30am to provide checkups for the 1935-1936 school year when enrollment there

¹²² “Efficient Work by Alleghany Men at Capital: Effort to Reroute Hot Springs Road Met Bitter Opposition” *Covington Virginian*. 19 February 1930. 1

¹²³ *Ibid* 6

¹²⁴ McClung 80

¹²⁵ United States Temporary National Economic Committee. 7995

<https://archive.org/details/investigationofconc14aunint>

¹²⁶ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

¹²⁷ “Bath county Schools Face Nice Outlook: Are Holding Own, and That’s Great at This Time” *Covington Virginian*. 20 September 1934. 6

¹²⁸ “Bath School Enrollment is Shown Herein: Thirty More Pupils Attending This Year” *Covington Virginian*. 4 October 1934. 2

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

fell to 28 students “due primarily to removals from the community.”¹²⁹ Ashwood School absorbed the seventh-grade class from Bacova that year and a teacher moved to a different position leaving only one teacher managing the community’s school.¹³⁰ Attendance at the Bacova school steadily decreased to the point that the school board considered relocating the building to the Thomastown School in 1937, but abandoned the proposal at the request of Bacova residents and Tide Water representatives.¹³¹ Bacova’s school closed in August 1940 and the school board voted to deed back the land in December 1940 to the Tide Water Oil Company for a dollar – the same sum paid for the land in 1926.¹³²

There were 20 households in Bacova by 1940, and ten of which were working in farm labor. Only Allen Eskins, mechanic, and Clarence Hudson, superintendent, still worked for Tide Water Oil. Two people had found jobs with the WPA and two were unemployed.¹³³ There were 29 children under the age of 18 and a total of 78 people now living in Bacova, a dramatic drop from the population of 368 just a decade earlier. Tide Water Oil also began selling off former timber lands around this time and had sold the remaining rails, railroad cars, engines, and nearly anything with salvageable metal to a scrap company in New York in 1937. That company then sold the railroad components to Japan.¹³⁴ Fortunately, public electricity came through in 1938 to replace the power once generated at the sawmill.¹³⁵ Although Tide Water Oil survived the Depression, the company began a series of expansions and reorganizations through holding companies like Tide Water Associated Oil Company that ultimately led the business to become part of the Getty Petroleum Corporation in the decades that followed.¹³⁶

By 1944, all of the Slabtown houses were gone, but the c. 1920 plan Richardson outlined remained in place.¹³⁷ More families continued to move out of Bacova as Tide Water Oil sold their remaining land holdings, much of it to the U.S. Forest Service.¹³⁸ S. R. Pritchard announced an auction sale of goods from his home in Bacova in October 1944 that included household items and tools for logging, blacksmithing, and farming. The advertisement featured a variety of kerosene lamps, canning supplies, a Home Comfort cook stove, horse-shoeing supplies and log

¹²⁹ “Hot Springs” *Covington Virginian*. 4 May 1935. 2 and “Textbooks Sale In Bath County Shows Increase” *Covington Virginian*. 19 September 1935. 6

¹³⁰ *Ibid*

¹³¹ “Bath County School Board Decides to Operate School at Bacova for Coming Term” *The Covington Virginian*. Covington, Va. 29 July 1937. 5

¹³² “Abandon Bacova School” *The Daily News Leader*. 9 August 1940. 10

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/315455773> and “Sale Not Confirmed by Court, Refund of School Purchase Price Is Ordered” *Staunton News-Leader*. Staunton, Va. 15 December 1940. 5 and Bath County Deed Book 36:167.

¹³³ 1940 United States Federal Census, Cedar Creek, Bath County, Virginia, digital image s.v. “Clarence Hudson,” *Ancestry.com*.

¹³⁴ McClung 80

¹³⁵ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

¹³⁶ United States Temporary National Economic Committee. 7708, 7995 and McClung 80

¹³⁷ Aerial Single Tile Image courtesy of the U.S. Geologic Survey and EarthExplorer. Captured 28 April 1944. Scale 1:43,100. Roll 2 Frame 09.

¹³⁸ McClung 80

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

chains as well as a piano and a guitar.¹³⁹ Items that were all part of life not only in a rural sawmill town, but also in a transitional period with the arrival of automobiles and electricity. As many people were cleaning out their homes and moving, the commissary was empty and the former sawmill became a barn.

Tide Water Oil fully divested from Bacova in 1945 and Clarence Hudson moved to Alexandria, Virginia, sometime before 1950 to become Chief Clerk at Wholesale Oil Company.¹⁴⁰ The company sold the town and immediately surrounding acreage, including the Mayse/Thompson House (VDHR #008-0005) to Charles Loving, Frank G. Thompson, and Walter P. Farnsworth, who formed a partnership called "The Bacova Company."¹⁴¹ Charles Loving was serving in the Virginia House of Delegates at that time, after previous terms as both a state senator and member of the Bath County Board of Supervisors, and Frank Thompson was Loving's son-in-law who became a trial judge for Bath County in 1952.¹⁴² Farnsworth also served on the county's Board of Supervisors.¹⁴³ The transaction included the water and sewer system to Grose Spring, approximately one mile southwest of Bacova along Jackson River Turnpike before its intersection with Dunn's Gap Road.

The Bacova Company continued renting houses and managed properties for two years until the initial partnership dissolved when Thompson purchased the Mayse/Thompson House and associated farmland wrapping to the north, east, and south of Bacova village, which included the former sawmill. The land deal included transferring the village's water and sewer system at Grose Spring to Loving and Farnsworth with the agreement that Thompson could access up to 1500 gallons of water per 24-hour period.¹⁴⁴ Moving forward with just two partners, Loving and Farnsworth sold a few lots over the years, including the Bacova Chapel, which the Lexington Presbytery purchased on December 2, 1947.¹⁴⁵ The partners formed the Bacova Realty Corporation in 1951 as they continued to rent houses in the village.¹⁴⁶

Many buildings in Bacova were vacant in the 1940s and 1950s. Fewer residents meant houses often sat empty. Those that did live in Bacova travelled to work in the surrounding area, some at The Homestead Resort or as farm laborers.¹⁴⁷ The 4H fair moved to the commissary in 1953, but the space often remained empty for months.¹⁴⁸ The former Tide Water office building became

¹³⁹ "Public Sale" *Covington Virginian*. 20 October 1944. 2

¹⁴⁰ 1950 United States Census, Alexandria, Alexandria City, Virginia, digital image s.v. "Clarence Hudson," *Ancestry.com*.

¹⁴¹ Bath County Deed Book 52:437 and 56:19

¹⁴² "Charles Nicholas Loving" and "Frank Gault (Coonie) Thompson" *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. 260, 373

¹⁴³ "Wilson Speaks at Meeting of Bath County Republicans" *The Covington Virginian*. 23 October 1935. 8
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/797353758>

¹⁴⁴ Bath County Deed Book 56:19

¹⁴⁵ Bath County Deed Book 56:23

¹⁴⁶ Bath County Deed Book 68:413

¹⁴⁷ Curtis (Abe) Pursley. *Bacova-Bath County History Interview*. Warm Springs, Va: Alleghany Mountain Radio, 2002.

¹⁴⁸ "Bath Farm Fair Opens" *The Covington Virginian*. 4 September 1958. 16
<https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=CTV19580904.1.16>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

the village's store and post office. The church continued to host both religious services and community gatherings throughout this period, but the small schoolhouse fell into disrepair. By the end of the 1950s, some houses suffered from deferred maintenance and many needed upgrades in addition to the work that Loving and Farnsworth had completed during their ownership. After years of owning a company town that lacked a company to employ residents, Bacova Realty Corporation made the decision to sell.

A Mid-Century Revival and Malcom Hirsh

Bacova was back on the market and needed a significant investor. News broke in 1959 that Malcolm Hirsh purchased the entire town with plans to upgrade houses and revive the community.¹⁴⁹ Although born and based in New Jersey, Hirsh had fond memories of summers in Bath County with his family who owned Meadow Lane Farm and Folly Farm. These farms were on either side of Bacova, and he would pass through the village as a child.¹⁵⁰ His father, Allan Mortimer Hirsh, grew up in Richmond, Virginia's Jewish community and founded Lock Joint Pipe Company in 1905 after moving to New Jersey. Allan married Ellen Hughson Reid in 1906 and distanced the family from any Jewish heritage.¹⁵¹ The Lock Joint Pipe Company grew quickly and the reinforced concrete pipe was used in everything from high-pressure lines to culverts throughout the United States and Canada.¹⁵² The Hirshs amassed a significant fortune and lived in a large home in Montclair, New Jersey. Malcom Hirsh joined the family business after briefly attending Washington and Lee University, serving in World War II with the Army Air Corps, and working for the Raymond Concrete Pile Company.¹⁵³ Eventually, Hirsh went into land development in Montclair, New Jersey.¹⁵⁴ Although he spent most of the year in New Jersey, Hirsh was dedicated to Bath County. When he heard that Bacova was up for sale, he moved quickly to purchase the town because he "...thought it was a darn good investment, you can't deny that...I know all these people, and they all know me. It was a challenge to see what could be made out of it."¹⁵⁵ He also shared that, "no matter where I was on the globe, the

¹⁴⁹ While many articles indicate that Hirsh purchased the property in 1957, the sale from Bacova Realty to Hirsh was finalized on August 1, 1959. The deed does not indicate the final sales price as the recorded transaction was for ten dollars. Newspapers suggest it was between \$125,000 and \$150,000 for the deal. See Bath County Deed Book 68:413

¹⁵⁰ Brian Kelly. "Town for Sale – A Christmas Gift Suggestion" *The Washington Star*. Washington, D.C. 9 December 1962. 5

¹⁵¹ Phillip Hirsh. *Voices from the Hollow – What Happened When the Blue Bloods Met the Blue Ridge*. Buena Vista, Va: Mariner Publishing, 2005. 17*18, 38, 45-46

¹⁵² Lock Joint Pipe Company. "Lock Joint" *Reinforced Concrete Pipe*. New York, NY: Lock Joint Pipe Company, 1918. <https://archive.org/details/lockJointReinforcedConcretePipePressureSewerCulvertAndSubaqueous>

¹⁵³ Phillip Hirsh 17 and "June Brides to the Altar" *The Montclair Times*. 29 May 1946. 15

¹⁵⁴ Mary Bland Amistead. "He's watched His Village Grow." *The Roanoke Times*. Roanoke, Va. 26 November 1978. 23

¹⁵⁵ Brian Kelly. "Town for Sale – A Christmas Gift Suggestion" *The Washington Star*. Washington, D.C. 9 December 1962. 5

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

memories of my boyhood in and around Bacova stayed with me.”¹⁵⁶ Just prior to the finalization of the sale, Malcolm brought his family to Folly Farm for the summer in 1959.¹⁵⁷

When Hirsh’s purchase of Bacova became public there was little infill development and a significant portion of the former sawmill remained intact. The sawmill continued to be part of the Thompson farm as a barn and was not part of Hirsh’s redevelopment plans. The *Covington Virginian* reported that “Hirsh’s Bacova is every bit a full-fledged town resplendent with 43 houses, a church, a general store, post office, industrial building, school house” on 132 acres as he planned to bring a new industry to the village and “the two hundred citizens fervently hope his plan succeeds.”¹⁵⁸ The news reached across the country with articles showing up in newspapers from California to New Jersey. Most of those stories highlighted Hirsh’s desire to not only fix up the town, but also bring an industry back to the old commissary building. The *Southwest Times* interviewed Hirsh in August 1959 when he stated that “my one motive in buying Bacova was to try to attract an industry which might pump some new life in the village....We have an excellent site waiting for the right firm.”¹⁵⁹ The work started quickly.

By the spring of 1960, workers were enclosing each house’s pier foundation with concrete block and replacing roofs. Malcolm’s mother donated playground equipment for the park, which was installed in May of that year. However, the most distinctive improvement (or at least the most talked about) was the purchase and use of 500 gallons of paint. To brighten the village and soften the uniformity of the similarly-constructed houses, Hirsh had each exterior painted in varying pastels of blue, green, and yellow.¹⁶⁰ He continued renting the houses while also gradually selling to residents who wished to purchase. The houses sold from \$7,500 to \$9,500 each, often with 100 percent financing. Other aspects of the community also needed upgrades. The work undertaken from 1959 through 1965 included modernizing the water and sewer system to meet state standards, improving village roads, and making repairs to the former office and commissary buildings.¹⁶¹ Crews built Lake Bacova immediately south of the village in what was the former lumber yard and added the basketball court north of the post office. Hirsh also made sure the community had its own fire truck, and regularly drove it around himself.¹⁶²

Postmaster Marvin Pursley, who had lived in Bacova most of this life, reported that mail had doubled to the village post office by 1962. Attendance at Bacova Chapel improved as the repairs

¹⁵⁶ “Boyhood Recalled – Virginia Industrialist Buys His Home Town” *Richmond News Leader*. Richmond, Va. 11 August 1959. 4 <https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=RNL19590811.1.4>

¹⁵⁷ “Warm Springs Personal Mention” *The Daily News Leader*. Staunton, Va. 12 July 1959. 5 and “Real Estate” *The Montclair Times*. Montclair, New Jersey. 21 July 1960. 30

¹⁵⁸ Johnny Gazzola. “Hirsh Buys Bacova” *Covington Virginian*. 10 August 1959. 1

¹⁵⁹ “New Landlord Seeks Industry for His Village” *Southwest Times*. 11 August 1959. 1 <https://www.virginiachronicle.com/?a=d&d=TSWT19590811.1.1>

¹⁶⁰ Jim Birchfield. “This Town Is Private.” *The Star Magazine*. Washington DC. 22 May 1960. 12-13 and Brian Kelly. “Town for Sale – A Christmas Gift Suggestion” *The Washington Star*. Washington, D.C. 9 December 1962. 5-6

¹⁶¹ McClung 80

¹⁶² Hirsh 19 and Ben Beagle “Man Who Bought a Village Has No Cause for Regrets” *The Roanoke Times*. Roanoke, Va. 22 March 1961. 9 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/914721558>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

were ongoing, and the new town council began implementing regulations like prohibiting automobiles in the park area. The town council president, Richard Simmons, planted flowers throughout the community and around his own home. Tilson Taylor, another long-term resident whose father moved his family in 1921 to work for Tide Water Hardwood, filled roles as “police chief, fire chief, town engineer, park commissioner, and overall chief of all-around maintenance” and had been a caretaker since 1945 when Tide Water Oil sold the village.¹⁶³ There was increasingly more local interest in Bacova as Malcolm Hirsh had invested \$50,000 in renovations while charging \$32 per month for those who continued renting. The Tide Water Hardwood-era schoolhouse on Longview Drive was moved to Mitchelltown rather than repaired on site.¹⁶⁴ With all of this effort, Hirsh considered selling everything or moving forward with his goal to bring new industry to Bath County.¹⁶⁵

The Bacova Guild – Building Community through Fiberglass and Art

The commissary remained vacant even with the nation-wide newspaper appeal and input from the Virginia Economic Development Board.¹⁶⁶ No one came forward with a business that fit the space, and Hirsch ultimately decided, working with partners, to create one himself. Malcolm Hirsh met artist Grace Boulton Gilmore and her husband William, of New Bern, North Carolina, through common friends, and they formed a partnership in 1965 to found Bacova Guild, Ltd., a housewares company specializing in screen-printed fiberglass products. Hirsch had purchased White Oak Foundry that he “just happened to have in his Peapack [New Jersey] barn” as a starting point. The foundry produced jockey posts. With the idea to form a product line, the next step was creating a partnership with Grace Boulton Gilmore.¹⁶⁷

Grace Boulton Gilmore with her husband, William, formed Gilmore Limited in 1955 as an apparel business with \$40,000 in capital.¹⁶⁸ Grace hand-painted silk neckties for Abercrombie and Fitch from 1945 to 1955 and became interested in the screen-printing process as a result of the endless repetition of fabric painting.¹⁶⁹ She also accepted local oil painting commissions and completed portraits for Eastern Carolina College (now University) and the New Bern Museum.¹⁷⁰ The couple began experimenting with fiberglass laminating kits around 1960,

¹⁶³ Kelly 5

¹⁶⁴ Jessica Schwend “Village of Bacova: A Company Town With Character” *The Recorder*. Monterey, Va. 24 August 2001. 6

¹⁶⁵ Kelly 6

¹⁶⁶ “Buys Town in Virginia; Hopes to Bring it Prosperity” *Verona-Cedar Grove Times*. Verona, New Jersey. 14 January 1960. 25 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/539389796>

¹⁶⁷ “Man Who Bought Bath County Town Makes It an Industrial Success; Most Homes Sold to Occupants.” *The Bee*. Danville, Va. 11 October 1965 3 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/47396460> and Amistead E-16 The details surrounding the partnership formation and the Gilmore’s move to Bacova are vague. At this time, no letters, oral histories or written accounts have been found that detail who introduced the Bacova Guild’s founders.

¹⁶⁸ “New Corporations” *The News and Observer*. New Bern, NC. 13 July 1955. 25 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/652053805>

¹⁶⁹ Clare White. “Industry Slips Into Rural Village” *The Roanoke Times*. 20 August 1967. 13 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/915359596/>

¹⁷⁰ “City Museum at New Bern Sets Opening” *Hickory Daily Record*. 15 June 1957. 6 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1009199494> and “Umstead Portrait Unveiled” *The News and Observer* 7 September 1958. 4 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/651737179>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

combining them with her previous experiments in screen printing. Following World War II, industrial and commercial uses of fiberglass had proliferated in everything from insulation to cars to art.¹⁷¹ Magazines offered kits to use at home, and artists had begun adding the material to their practices. William was an engineer, and the two worked together on how best to combine the various media together into a new product.

There was now a business concept to fit Bacova's unique circumstances. Hirsh modified the commissary to fit the production floorplan the Gilmores outlined, and the couple moved to Bacova in January 1965. The partners developed a product line that eventually included fiberglass trays, plates, tables, ice buckets, outdoor thermometers, waste baskets, furniture, lamps and mailboxes. Grace Boulton Gilmore was responsible for the development of the nature- and resort-inspired motifs and managing the screen-printing process. Although she was a career artist trained at the New York School of Design and the French Institute of Art in New York City, Gilmore's most well-known work found its way into homes across the nation through Bacova Guild products, and the majority of the 1960s and 1970s production included her signature. Her studio was located in the second floor of the commissary building where she painted original design concepts and produced the color separation sheets necessary to translate artwork to the screen-printing process. The company started with three employees in 1965 and mailboxes soon became their signature product. William Gilmore advised on scaling the process until his death in 1966. Within two years, the company had sold \$200,000 in screen-printed fiberglass products (almost two million dollars in sales adjusted to 2025) and employed 15 people.¹⁷²



Figure 10 – Bacova Guild, Ltd fiberglass panel detail with Grace B. Gilmore's signature. This image also shows the color separation from the screen-printing process.

The Bacova Guild operations filled the commissary. Grace's studio was on the second floor with dedicated space for the screens directly across from her. In the screen-printing process, a thin skin of light-sensitive emulsion is flooded from a tray onto fine mesh (or silk) stretched in a

¹⁷¹ Michael Lamm. "The Fiberglass Story" *American Heritage's Invention & Technology – The Magazine of Innovation*. Vol 22 Iss 4. Spring 2007 <https://www.inventionandtech.com/content/fiberglass-story-0>

¹⁷² "Industry Slips Into Rural Village" *The Roanoke Times*. Roanoke, Va. 20 August 1967. 13 and CPI Inflation Calculator *US Bureau of Labor Statistics* https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

frame. The frame is then exposed to light, hardening the emulsion everywhere that light can reach while unexposed areas covered by the color-separated design remain water-soluble. The color separations are created on acetate sheets with black paint.¹⁷³ The screen is washed, creating a pattern of openings that ink can be forced through with a specialized squeegee. The screen is then placed over a printable material – in this case transparent paper – and the print is “pulled” by evenly dragging the ink-loaded squeegee across the screen.¹⁷⁴ Bacova Guild designs often took nine to fourteen screens – each pulled with an individual color – to create the images that were encased in fiberglass and resin. The new business drew a significant number of female employees to the point that *The Roanoke Times* reported in 1967 that “a corps of women saturates sheets of fiber glass with the special resin, sandwiching between the layers colorful designs of birds, fish, flowers and all sorts of sporting motifs.”¹⁷⁵ In the 1965, the first floor was dedicated to Hirsh’s foundry operation producing “andirons, foot scrapers, cast iron jockeys, door knockers, and lamps.”¹⁷⁶ Eventually, the fiberglass products took over the first floor as well with an array of lathes and sanders in addition to packing for mail distribution and an automatic paint booth with a conveyor belt that painted each mailbox matte black before the fiberglass was applied.¹⁷⁷



Figure 11 – Mailbox production at Bacova Guild, Ltd., in the former Tide Water Hardwood commissary.
Photography Courtesy of Bath County Historical Society.

¹⁷³ *Bacova Guild File*. Bath County Historical Society

¹⁷⁴ “Medieval Success in the Space Age” *Rural Virginia*. March 1967. found in *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society.

¹⁷⁵ White 13

¹⁷⁶ “Man Who Bought Bath County Town Makes It an Industrial Success; Most Homes Sold to Occupants.” *The Bee*. Danville, Va. 11 October 1965 3 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/47396460>

¹⁷⁷ Hirsh 21

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

By 1967, the Bacova Guild had showrooms in Dallas, Texas, and Los Angeles, California and were selling through Abercrombie and Fitch stores, Grace's former employer. Visitors noted the distinct smell of resin throughout the town when going to the new showroom in the converted house at 46 Riners Lane (VDHR# 008-0014-0023). The White Oak Foundry supplied jockey posts to the 21 Club in New York City and racing horse stables throughout Kentucky.¹⁷⁸ Grace moved out of Bacova in 1966 and purchased property in Dunn's Gap nearby, where she lived and maintained another home studio until 1978.¹⁷⁹ The business continued to grow and Malcom Hirsh formally incorporated Bacova Guild, Ltd., in 1972.¹⁸⁰ The business he had dreamed of bringing to Bacova had filled the commissary. Hirsh had sold most of the houses he once owned in Bacova and saw many of his original promises to fruition. The community built by Tide Water Hardwood Corporation had not only survived the Depression, but also the loss of employment and dramatic change that followed. Supported by investment that came from a pipeline (this time it was the concrete pipe industry rather than an oil pipeline), Bacova now had a town council, updated homes, and an industry that crowded the once-vacant spaces.



Figure 12 – Bacova Guild, Ltd sign and mailbox display at Abercrombie & Fitch's Madison Avenue location in New York City in 1976.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Jessica Schwend "Village of Bacova: A Company Town With Character" *The Recorder*. Monterey, Va. 24 August 2001. 6

¹⁷⁹ Bath County Deed Book 77:282 and 95:676 and "Medieval Success in the Space Age" *Rural Virginia*. March 1967. found in *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society.

¹⁸⁰ "Evolving Bacova" *BARC Electric & Cooperative Living*. Bath County, Va: BARC, 2016. 32 in *Bacova File*. Bath County Historical Society

¹⁸¹ "Comeback?" *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. Northampton, MA. 18 November 1976. 9 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/833655493/>

Bacova Historic District

Name of Property

Bath County, VA

County and State

After Incorporation

Bacova Guild entered another period of transition by the end of the 1970s. Malcolm Hirsh had gradually sold cottages until only four remained in his ownership and his son, Doug, was running Bacova Guild in 1978 as president.¹⁸² There were 40 employees with a payroll of \$200,000 with profits of nearly one million dollars. The following year, the company payroll appears to have dropped to 30 employees, but there was still at least a three-week waiting list for mailboxes.¹⁸³ Patrick Haynes and Benjamin Johns, tennis pros at The Homestead, purchased Bacova Guild from Hirsh in December 1981.¹⁸⁴ The new partners added door mats to production in 1983, and the company rapidly expanded. Johns and Haynes added automated heat-transfers to the process of design application and contracted Rexrode Masonry of Monterey, Virginia, to construct a new manufacturing plant at 10379 Jackson River Turnpike (VDHR# 008-0014-0052).¹⁸⁵ Bacova Guild became the third largest employer in the county by 1984 after The Homestead and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The company sold products through 75 mail order catalogs including Orvis and Spiegel and held 3000 retail accounts.¹⁸⁶ Johns and Haynes filed to patent the fiberglass mailbox design in March 30, 1988 and were awarded the patent on March 21, 1989.¹⁸⁷ With a national audience and rapidly increasing production, Bacova Guild eventually drew the attention of national housewares companies. The Guild opened another location in Millboro, Va in eastern Bath County, but it was not enough to keep up with demand. Haynes and Johns sold the company to Burlington Industries in January 1995 and developed a 350,000-square-foot facility in Low Moor, 33 miles south of Bacova.¹⁸⁸ The mailbox product line sold in 1997 to Bluegrass Woods, Inc., a small business in Highland County, Virginia.¹⁸⁹ For a few years, the mat and carpet products continued to grow under Burlington Industries until Bacova Guild was absorbed by the Burlington House Area Rugs division in 1999. Benjamin Johns, who was still working with the company, left soon thereafter.¹⁹⁰ Once the Low Moor plant opened, most of the manufacturing jobs in Bacova transferred to the new facility. By 1998, the town had again lost much of its industry. However, the art department remained in the commissary until 2003.¹⁹¹

¹⁸² Armistead 53

¹⁸³ "Detailed Bird Design Sells Mailboxes" *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. 23 August 1979. B2

¹⁸⁴ McClung 80

¹⁸⁵ "Bacova Guild Adds New Products, Takes New Marketing Direction." *The Recorder*. 12 September 1985. 24 and "History" Ronile – Bacova Guild. 2024 <https://www.bacova.com>

¹⁸⁶ Carla Malcolm Pace. "Birds, Foxes, or Mallards – It's Bacova – Firm's Silk Screened Articles Signal of State Success Story" *The Daily Progress*. Charlottesville, Va. 19 January 1984. D1

¹⁸⁷ "Patents Assigned to The Bacova Guild, Ltd. – Mailbox for receiving decorative overlays" *Justia Patents*. 21 March 1989. <https://patents.justia.com/assignee/the-bacova-guild-ltd>

¹⁸⁸ Leigh Anne Larence. "Bacova Grows Up" *The Roanoke Times*. 26 March 1995. 69 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/919695657> and Sandy Hevener. "Bacova Guild Expanding Into Alleghany County." *The Daily News Leader*. Staunton, Va. 11 May 1995. 1 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/288805225>

¹⁸⁹ Jeff Sturgeon. "Bacova to Open Its 1st Outlet; Seeks Roanoke-area site for 2nd." *The Roanoke Times*. 25 April 1997. A10 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/920403821>

¹⁹⁰ "Briefs" *The High Point Enterprise*. High Point, NC. 8 May 1999. 21 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/1287273981>

¹⁹¹ Joe Kennedy. "A Hardy Village With A Heart" *The Roanoke Times*. 7 March 2005. 7

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

When Burlington Industries moved Bacova Guild art department to the Low Moor facility, the commissary housed a community and business center that include the Bath Community Rehab and Wellness Center, an outpatient clinic for the Bath Community Hospital, along with a variety of other businesses. A large rear addition had been added to the building during its time housing the Bacova Guild, providing ample space to lease. In 2009, the large rear addition caught fire and was demolished.¹⁹² The commissary was renovated and became a private residence.

The village entered a period of relatively consistent population in the 1970s and 80s, and houses continued to be maintained after Hirsh's renovation initiative. After the Lexington Presbytery sold Bacova Chapel in 1971, the church became a community center from 1973 until 1998. The original fixtures went to the c. 1859 Williamsville Presbyterian Church following that renovation.¹⁹³ William Grover bought the church in 1998 and converted the space into an art gallery.¹⁹⁴ At that time, the entrance to the church was modified with the addition of a new deck and metal doors, but the windows and other distinctive features remained intact. The former church became a residence in 2016. With the conversion of both the Bacova Chapel and the Tide Water Hardwood commissary into private residences, the only public building remaining in the community was the former company office, now converted entirely into a post office. However, all of the buildings from the first period of construction in 1920-1922 remained largely intact. The former sawmill also suffered a fire while being used as a barn, which left the brick power plant on the site. The property still conveys its founding as a company town built for a single industry over a century later.

¹⁹² Heather Niday. "Bath Wellness Center Opens Monday at New Location in Mitchelltown" Allegheny Mountain Radio. 29 January 2010. <https://www.alleghenymountainradio.org/bath-wellness-center-opens-monday-at-new-location-in-mitchelltown/>

¹⁹³ Crysta Stephenson. "Williamsville Presbyterian Church Endures 250 Years. *The Highland Recorder*. 7 June 2002. 8

¹⁹⁴ Margo Oxendine "Bacova Chapel Revived" *The Recorder*. Monterey, Va. 15 January 1999. 6

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

A Brief History of the Tide Water Companies as Told in Speeches at the Tide Water Dinner, January 17th Nineteen Hundred and Thirteen. No publication information. 1914.
<https://archive.org/embed/briefhistoryofti00tide>

“Attention Building Contractors” *The Daily Review*. Clifton Forge, Va. 18 April 1922. 4
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/794805632/>

Bath County Historical Society. *The Bicentennial History of Bath County, Virginia 1791-1991*. Heritage House Publishing, 1991.

Bolling, Jim. “Wise County’s Other Industry (1887-1940)” *Historical Society of Southwest Virginia*.
<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~vahsswv/historicalsketches/wisecootherindustry.html>

"C&O Takes over Hot Springs RR" *Richmond Dispatch*. September 1, 1891.
<https://www.newspapers.com/article/richmond-dispatch-co-takes-over-hot-spr/190950536/>.

Carl, James D. “Opening the Western Adirondacks: How Byron Benson Financed Iron Mines and the Carthage & Adirondack Railroad, Part 1” *The St. Lawrence County Historical Association Quarterly*. Vol LIV No 4. : Canton, NY: The St. Lawrence County Historical Association, 2009.

Charlie Grymes. “Archaic Indians in Virginia.” *Virginia Places*.
<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/nativeamerican/archaicindians.html>, accessed on September 9, 2025.

Chataigne, J. H. *Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Directory*. Richmond, Va: Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, 1881.

“CONCILIATION WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, MARCH 4, 1913, TO JUNE 6, 1916.” *Monthly Review of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* 3, no. 1 (1916): 24–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41823028>.

Crum, Alfred Russell and A. S. Dungan. *Romance of American Petroleum and Gas*. Oil City, Pa: The Derrick Publishing Company, 1911.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

- Fickle, James. "Commercial Oil Drilling Begins" *EBSCO Knowledge Advantage*.
<https://www.ebSCO.com/research-starters/history/commercial-oil-drilling-begins>
- "Fire Destroys Bath Wellness Center" *The Virginian Review*. 20 March 2021
<https://virginianreview.com/26600/> and "Hot Springs Fire Dept. Marks 100th Year" *The Virginian Review*. 20 March 2021.
- Hirsh, Philip. *Voices from the Hollow*. Buena Vista, Va: Mariner Publishing, 2005.
- "House of Delegates." *The Richmond Dispatch*. 4 December 1855.
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/79789202/>
- McAllister, Jean Graham. *A Brief History of Bath County Virginia*. Staunton, Va: The McClure Co., Inc., 1920
- McClane, Deborah. *Warm Springs and West Warm Springs Historic District*. (National Park Service, 2018). https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/008-5025_Warm_Springs_HD_2018_NRHP_FINAL-1.pdf
- Miller, Mark. *Virginia's Mountain Treasures: Unprotected Wildlands in the George Washington National Forest*. The Wilderness Society. Bridgewater, Va: Good Printers, Inc., 2010.
- Morton, Oren F. *Annals of Bath County Virginia*. Staunton, Va: The McClure Co., Inc., 1917.
- National Petroleum News "Forty Per Cent Growth In Business During 1921" Vol 13 Issue 37, September 14, 1921. https://archive.org/details/sim_npn-national-petroleum-news_1921-09-14_13_37/page/28/mode/2up?q=tide
- "Notice to Travellers Between Richmond and the Virginia Springs." *The Daily Richmond Times*. 18 July 1850. 4 <https://www.newspapers.com/image/900978876>
- Pawlett, Nathaniel Mason. *A Brief History of the Roads of Virginia 1607-1840*. Virginia Highway and Transportation Research Council, 1977 Rev. 2003.
<https://vtrc.virginia.gov/media/vtrc/vtrc-pdf/vtrc-pdf/78-r16.pdf>
- Presgraves, Jim. *Rockbridge County, Bath County: Families and History Reprinted from Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia Chicago, etc. 1884*. Wytheville, Va: Bookworm & Silverfish, 2001.
- "C&O Takes over Hot Springs RR" *Richmond Dispatch*. September 1, 1891.
<https://www.newspapers.com/article/richmond-dispatch-co-takes-over-hot-spr/190950536/>.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Swigart, Edmund K. *An Emerson-Benson Saga: The Ancestry of Charles F. Emerson and Bessie Benson And the Struggle to Settle the United States*. Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, Inc, 1994. <https://archive.org/details/emersonbensonsag00swig/page/n5/mode/2up>

“THE TIDE WATER OIL PIPE LINE COMPLETED.” *Scientific American* 40, no. 26 (1879): 400–400. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26063609>

“Tide Water Oil Company” *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle*. Vol 102 Issue 2649. (William B. Dana Company Publishers, 1916). 1255
https://archive.org/details/sim_commercial-and-financial-chronicle_1916-04-01_102_2649

Tide Water Oil Company. *War History: Tide Water Companies Told By Those Who Served Their Country and Tide Water*. Ed. Frances M. Buente. New York, 1920.

“Tracing Bison in the Appalachian Forest” *Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area*. <https://www.appalachianforestnha.org/america250-in-the-appalachian-forest-stories/tracing-bison-in-the-appalachian-forest>

Turner, Charles W. “Railroad Service to Virginia Farmers, 1828-1860.” *Agricultural History* 22, no. 4 (1948): 239–48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3739521>.

United States Geological Survey (USGS)
1930 Mountain Grove, VA Quadrangle Scale 1:24000
1930 Warm Springs Run, VA Quadrangle Scale 1:24000. Editions 1930, 1961.
1933 Warm Springs Run, VA Quadrangle Scale 1:31680. Editions 1933, 1945.
1946 Warm Springs Run, VA Quadrangle Scale 1:62500. Editions 1946, 1962, 1966.
1949 Warm Springs Run, VA Quadrangle Scale 1:62500.

White, Clare. “Industry Slips Into Rural Village.” *The Roanoke Times*. 20 August 1967. 13
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/915359596>

Whiteshot, Charles Austin. *The oil-well driller; a history of the world's greatest enterprise, the oil industry*. Morgantown, WV: The Acme Publishing Company, 1905.

Wilson, Kenneth M. “PLATE GLASS IN AMERICA: A BRIEF HISTORY.” *Journal of Glass Studies* 43 (2001): 141–53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24190904>.

“Wise County Progress – Tidewater Stone and Lumber Company Has Large Plant.” *The Evening News*. Roanoke, Va. 27 November 1906.
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/911608405>

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 85 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38°03'14.54"N | Longitude: 79° 50'55.46"W |
| 2. Latitude: 38°03'07.25"N | Longitude: 79° 50'47.37"W |
| 3. Latitude: 38°03'13.71"N | Longitude: 79° 50'10.40"W |
| 4. Latitude: 38°03'26.09"N | Longitude: 79° 50'30.51"W |

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

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

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

The boundary follows the modern parcel lines and roads that roughly encompass the entire historic village and the modern warehouse that once housed the operations of the Bacova Guild. This boundary includes all neighborhood roads while excluding farms north, east, and west of the historic district.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries roughly match the historical extent of the village to cover the former lumber yard, reservoir, and historic extent of Longview Drive along the northern edge. The western edge follows the historic railroad bed along Jerry Run which once brought logs from Back Creek Mountain to the sawmill. Additionally, it encompasses most of the 132 acres purchased by Malcolm Hirsh in 1959, with the exception of land later transferred to Pat Haynes and developed as both a farm and townhouses north of Longview Drive.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Laura Purvis, Architectural Historian
organization: Purvis Historic Preservation
street & number: 635 Chestnut Avenue
city or town: Waynesboro state: VA zip code: 22980
e-mail purvishistoricpreservation@gmail.com
telephone: 434-293-9380
date: January 2026

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Bacova Historic District

City or Vicinity: Bacova

County: Bath State: Virginia

Photographer: Laura Purvis

Date Photographed: December 8-10, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0001
West entrance into Bacova Village looking east along Jackson River Turnpike with sign.
- 2 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0002
Overview including playground looking southeast.
- 3 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0003
Tidewater Lane and playground equipment looking northeast.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

- 4 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0004
Overview from Jackson River Turnpike looking northeast to Longview Drive and Tidewater Lane.
- 5 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0005
Merry-go-round and one-story houses along Jackson River Turnpike looking south.
- 6 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0006
Post Office with the intersection of Jackson River Turnpike and Riners Lane in the foreground.
- 7 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0007
Riners Lane from Jackson River Turnpike looking south.
- 8 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0008
Former commissary building and Riners Lane with basketball court in foreground looking southwest.
- 9 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0009
Overview of Bacova Chapel looking northwest.
- 10 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0010
Intersection of Riners Lane and Lake View Drive looking west from Jackson River Turnpike.
- 11 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0011
One-story company houses looking northwest from Jackson River Turnpike with playground.
- 12 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0012
Riners Lane looking northwest with two-story residence and former Bacova Guild Showroom.
- 13 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0013
Jackson River Turnpike looking west at its intersection with Tidewater Lane
- 14 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0014
Tidewater Lane looking south to Jackson River Turnpike.
- 15 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0015
Rear of houses fronting Jackson River Turnpike from Purkey Lane looking northeast.
- 16 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0016
Lake View Drive looking east to the post office.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

- 17 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0017
Overview with commissary building from Jackson River Turnpike looking east.
- 18 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0018
Overview of Bacova Chapel and Riners Lane looking northwest from the post office parking lot.
- 19 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0019
Tidewater Lane looking north from its intersection with Jackson River Turnpike.
- 20 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0020
Façade of Bacova Chapel
- 21 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0021
Tide Water Hardwood Corporation brick power plant for the sawmill looking southeast.
- 22 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0022
Overview of the Tide Water Hardwood Corporation sawmill land with the remaining brick building and former lumber yard looking southeast from Jackson River Turnpike.
- 23 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0023
Tide Water Hardwood Corporation brick power plant with brick bond and structural terracotta tile visible.
- 24 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0024
Tide Water Hardwood Corporation office building, now post office, looking northeast
- 25 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0025
Overview of Bacova from Jerry Run looking northwest.
- 26 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0026
Tide Water Hardwood Corporation commissary building, now a residence, looking southeast.
- 27 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0027
Example of a one-story residence and a two-story residence on Lake View Drive looking northeast.
- 28 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0028
Two-story, American Four-Square company house at 154 Lake View Drive.
- 29 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0029
One-story company houses on Longview Drive looking east.

Bacova Historic District
Name of Property

Bath County, VA
County and State

30 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0030

Longview Drive looking southwest with 60 Longview Drive in the foreground.

31 of 31. VA_Bath_BacovaHistoricDistrict_0031

Overview of the eastern half of Bacova with the post office and brick Tide Water
Hardwood building.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.


Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

BOUNDARY MAP

Bacova Historic District
Bath County, VA
DHR ID# 008-0014


 Nominated Boundary

0  800 Feet



BOUNDARY MAP

Bacova Historic District
Bath County, VA
DHR ID# 008-0014

 Nominated Boundary

0  800
Feet

