

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 105 North Depot Street N/A not for publication  
city or town Cherryville N/A vicinity  
state North Carolina code NC county Gaston code 071 zip code 28021

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:) _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

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

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

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**  
0

**6. Function or Use**

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

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related

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

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum

**7. Description**

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

Craftsman

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
walls BRICK  
roof ASPHALT  
other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1924

**Significant Dates**

1924

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, architect

Elliott Building Company, contractor

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Cherryville Historical Museum

Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Name of Property

Gaston County, NC  
County and State

---

## 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreage of Property** 0.21 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

See Latitude/Longitude coordinates continuation sheet

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

---

## 11. Form Prepared By

---

name/title Heather Fearnbach

organization Fearnbach History Services, Inc. date 7/26/2016

street & number 3334 Nottingham Road telephone 336-765-2661

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27104

---

### Additional Documentation

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional items

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

---

### Property Owner

---

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

name City of Cherryville – Ben Blackburn, city manager

street & number 116 South Mountain Street telephone (704) 435-1711

city or town Cherryville state NC zip code 28021

---

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

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

## Section 7. Narrative Description

### Setting

Located five blocks east of Cherryville's principal commercial intersection at Mountain and Main Streets, the Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot occupies a 0.21-acre lot on the south side of the CSX rail line and right-of-way. The current tax parcel, which is only slightly larger than the building footprint, encompasses the acreage that CSX Transportation, Inc., conveyed to the Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., in February 1998. North Depot Street is to the east and East Main Street one block to the south.

A narrow strip of grass lawn surrounds the depot. The topography is flat. On the building's south side, a straight brick sidewalk spans the distance between North Depot Street and the U-shaped concrete sidewalk that provides access to two waiting room entrances in the east passenger services section. A chain-link fence delineates the lot's north edge and abuts the replacement loading platform that extends from the depot's north elevation. North of the fence, the railroad right-of-way encompasses twenty-one-and-one-half feet on either side of the track's center line. CSX also maintains right-of-way east and west of the depot flanking the rail corridor.

A gravel parking lot fills much of the space between the depot's south elevation and East Main Street. South of the building's east section, a chain-link fence encloses a tall, slender, steel cellular tower. A small, low-gable-roofed, metal utility building stands west of the fence. Farther west, the Model Railroad Club has installed a collection of historic train signals. A one-story mid-twentieth-century commercial building with a low front-gable roof, a brick veneered façade, and an attached three-bay concrete-block garage faces East Main Street south of the depot's west section. The surrounding area is characterized by commercial and residential development.

### Exterior

The one-story brick Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot accommodated passenger and freight traffic. The depot's narrow rectangular form, low hip roof, deep beadboard-sheathed eaves, and robust eave brackets reflect the influence of the Craftsman style. The building is fourteen bays (approximately 144 feet) long and two bays (approximately 27 feet) wide. The eight west bays functioned as the freight terminal, while the six east bays encompassed offices, white and African American waiting rooms, and restrooms. Hip-roofed square bays project from the north and south elevations at the passenger depot's center. The walls pierce the eaves to rise above the roof as dormers with two rectangular diamond-

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

pane sash. The grey asphalt-shingle roof was installed in 1998. The 1924 architectural drawings specified that the original roof sheathing should be green asphalt shingles.<sup>1</sup>

Masons veneered the exterior with rough-face red brick laid in running bond. A slightly projecting header-course water table wraps around the building beneath the tall windows, functioning as both a decorative element and window sills. Soldier-course lintels span the window openings, most of which contain double-hung six-over-one wood sash, and surmount the doors. At the depot's four corners, triangular brackets with ball finials ornament the seven-foot-deep eaves. Metal pendant lights hang from the beadboard-sheathed eaves. Two square interior stovepipe chimneys with corbelled stacks serve the waiting rooms and offices.

The majority of the window and door openings are concentrated in the east passenger services section. In the south elevation's easternmost bay, which is the white waiting room entrance, and the fifth bay from its east end, which provides access to the African American waiting room, original single-leaf wood doors with two raised horizontal lower panels and glazed upper sections are intact. Three-pane wood-frame transoms surmount each door. Four tall double-hung six-over-one wood sash windows fill the intermediary bays, two of which are in the projecting hip-roofed bay. In the eighth bay from the east end, a tall four-pane wood-frame transom tops the double-leaf four-horizontal-panel wood door that opens into the freight depot office. Two high, rectangular, double-hung, two-over-two wood sash windows flank the door.

To the west, two loading dock bays in the freight room's south wall retain original heavy-timber sills and diagonal-board sliding doors mounted on interior tracks. Aluminum-frame storm doors hang in a wood-frame glass wall installed at the openings' outer edges in conjunction with the depot's rehabilitation. Modern wood steps and railings lead to the wood landing that provides access to the east freight door. The west elevation contains one central loading dock bay with identical sliding and storm doors.

Two matching loading dock door openings pierce the freight room's north wall. Sanborn maps illustrate that the original loading platform wrapped around the freight room's north and west elevations. A large, square, covered freight platform extended west from the loading platform.<sup>2</sup> Brick and wood piers support the replacement frame loading platform that projects six-and-one-half feet from the north elevation and has a wide-board floor. A three-horizontal-board wood railing secures the west end.

---

<sup>1</sup> Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, "Proposed Combination Depot, Cherryville, N. C.," plans drawn by Office Engineer Buildings, Norfolk, Virginia, January 3, 1924, courtesy of the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railroads Historical Society, Inc., Leesburg, Florida.

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Map Company, "Cherryville, N. C.," February 1925 and February 1943.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

The fenestration of the passenger depot's north elevation is almost identical to the south elevation. However, on the projecting bay's east and west elevations, two tall four-over-one double-hung wood sash windows supplement the two windows on the bay's north elevation. This afforded the station agent an unimpeded view of the rail line. Original single-leaf wood doors, each with two raised horizontal lower panels and a glazed upper section, remain in the easternmost bay and the fifth and sixth bays from the east end that serve the passenger waiting rooms and the depot office.

Two tall six-over-one double-hung wood sash windows pierce the east elevation. Hand-painted wood signs hanging from the east and west eaves delineate the station's location in Cherryville.

## Interior

The depot's east section housed passenger services functions, complete with a central office flanked by separate waiting rooms, ticket counters, and restrooms for white travelers to the east and African American patrons to the west. Hardwood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, molded picture rails and crown molding, eleven-inch-tall baseboards, and four-foot-tall vertical-board wainscoting capped with a molded chair rail characterize the passenger depot interior. The flat-board window and door surrounds have mitered corners and narrow molding embellishing the outer edges. Textured translucent glass fills the ticket counter windows, screening the view into the office. The small employee entrance vestibule at the northwest corner of the central ticket agent's office features an identical window. Simple wood brackets support the wood-board counters that project beneath the ticket counter windows on both sides of the partition walls.

The dark-stained woodwork contrasts with pale green walls and the off-white frieze and ceiling. Wood doors with five raised vertical panels secure the restrooms, corridor, and the office employee entrance. The office door on the central corridor's north wall has three raised horizontal lower panels and a glazed upper section.

The white men's restroom occupies the white waiting room's southwest corner. An original vertical-board partition wall and louvered wood door encloses the stall. The white porcelain corner sink and urinal are also original. The white women's restroom is located on the south side of the short corridor west of the waiting room. The corridor initially terminated at the African American waiting room's east wall. In order to facilitate the building's use as a museum, the Model Railroad Club added a door opening to provide interior passage between the spaces. The stovepipe chimneys that serve the waiting rooms and office are exposed rough-face red brick.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

Although the finishes in the African American waiting room are identical to those throughout the passenger depot, the restrooms at the northwest and southwest corners are much smaller. Vertical boards cover the restroom walls and high windows illuminate the spaces. The fixtures have been removed and the rooms converted to closets.

The original light fixtures, waiting room benches, and heating stoves were removed prior to the 2002 rehabilitation. However, period-appropriate pendant lights have been installed throughout the passenger service areas. The east waiting room contains a bench salvaged from a Charlotte depot and a cast-iron stove donated by Mary Smith in 2005.<sup>3</sup> Museum exhibits line the walls.

The building's long west section, which functioned as the freight terminal, comprised an open baggage storage and freight room as well as a small office at its east end. The office now serves as a mechanical and storage room. Vertical boards sheathe the walls and the ceiling. Simple crown molding caps the walls. Flat-boards surrounds trim the north office window, the south exterior door and transom, and the door opening between the office and freight room. The office floor is elevated to the same height as the freight room and the exterior loading platform, requiring a short wood ladder to ameliorate access from the grade-level door at the office's south end.

The building's dimensional lumber frame is almost completely exposed in the freight room. Horizontal beaded boards cover the walls and ceiling of a small area at the room's southeast corner. Elsewhere, the entire roof system—wood joists, rafters, braces, and decking boards—is visible. Wide horizontal sheathing boards and fiberglass insulation have been added on portions of the north wall. Extensive water damage from roof leaks required the replacement of many decking boards and most of the wide floor boards in conjunction with the rehabilitation. An original scale remains near the south wall's center. The room, which was not climate-controlled until January 2015, contains an extensive model train exhibit. Several sections of open wall-mounted shelves have been constructed to provide additional train display.

## Rehabilitation Scope

Cherryville Wood Products supplied materials for the roof structure and decking repair and asphalt shingle replacement executed by Beam Construction Company in 1998.<sup>4</sup> The Model Railroad Club undertook other repairs and installed exhibits prior to opening a museum in January 2001. Later that year, the North Carolina Department of Transportation awarded the City of Cherryville and Cherryville

---

<sup>3</sup> Ed Gumphrey (Model Railroad Club member), email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, February 4, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., 1998-2005 correspondence regarding the depot in the organization's files, Cherryville Historical Museum; Gaston County Deed Book 4355, p. 374; Deed Book 2753, p. 646, "Cherryville residents want to save depot to honor its service to town," *Gaston Observer*, December 3, 1995.

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

Historical Association a \$43,608 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to subsidize eighty percent of the depot's restoration cost. The project scope included door, window, floor, wall, and ceiling repair; restroom updates; electrical, plumbing, and HVAC system installation; insulation and gutter addition; interior and exterior painting; and grading and landscaping. Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects prepared plans for the rehabilitation work undertaken by Beam Construction Company, Wise Electric Control, Mabry Enterprises (HVAC), Alex Pearson and Sons (painting), Steven Hoskin Floor Sanding, and Michael Insulating Company in 2002. Daryl Carpenter oversaw the project's execution.<sup>5</sup>

## **Integrity Statement**

The Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot remains on its original site and the surrounding area appears much as it did during the station's function, thus allowing for integrity of setting, feeling, and association. The building retains high integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Character-defining features such as the narrow rectangular form, rough-face brick walls laid in running bond, low hip roof, deep beadboard-sheathed eaves, and robust eave brackets are intact. Paneled wood doors, double-hung wood-sash windows, and interior finishes have been meticulously restored. Replacement elements such as wood roof decking and floor boards in the freight room emulate original materials.

---

<sup>5</sup> Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., 1998-2005 correspondence; Ed Gumphrey (Model Railroad Club member), email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, February 4, 2016.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

## Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot at 105 North Depot Street in Cherryville meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion C for architecture. The one-story, hip-roofed, brick building is Gaston County's only extant historic Seaboard Air Line Railway station and epitomizes the company's functionalist approach to small-town combination depot design. The east section housed passenger services functions, complete with a central office flanked by separate waiting rooms, ticket counters, and restrooms for white travelers to the east and African American patrons to the west. Four windows on the office's projecting bay afforded the station agent an unimpeded view of the rail line. The building's long west section, which functioned as the freight terminal, comprised an open baggage storage and freight room as well as a small office at its east end. The efficient floor plan allowed for the depot's operation by one or two full-time employees.

The depot displays high integrity. The narrow rectangular form, low hip roof, deep beadboard-sheathed eaves, and robust eave brackets reflect the influence of the Craftsman style. Other character-defining elements include rough-face red-brick-veneer exterior walls laid in running bond, paneled wood doors, and double-hung wood-sash windows. Interior finishes such as hardwood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, molded picture rails and crown molding, tall baseboards, and vertical-board wainscoting are intact. The period of significance is 1924, the date of the building's completion.

## Historical Background

The abundant water supply, natural resources, and fertile soil of the southwest Piedmont's Catawba River basin proved attractive to English, Scots-Irish, and German immigrants. Although the region's settlement escalated in the mid-eighteenth century, Gaston County, constituted in December 1846 from Lincoln County, remained predominantly rural through the late nineteenth century. Given that many land grants and property acquisitions encompassed sizable tracts, residents typically lived at great distances from each other, meeting at churches and in crossroads communities and small towns to socialize, purchase goods, and address business matters. The vast majority of the county's occupants operated subsistence farms. Some entrepreneurs were able to sell or trade surplus crops and agricultural products for locally made and imported commodities in Dallas, the county seat, and other local markets. Others engaged in manufacturing endeavors to generate supplementary income, processing raw materials such as corn, wheat, flax seed, and logs to produce meal, flour, linseed oil, and lumber.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> David Leroy Corbitt, *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943* (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1987), 103; Robert F. Cope and Manly Wade Wellman, *The County of Gaston: Two Centuries of a North Carolina Region* (Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1961), 70, 75; J. D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads –

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

County residents advocated for rail service to facilitate connection to regional markets. In 1855, the newly formed Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad announced plans to extend its line through Gaston and Lincoln counties, but it was not until November 1862 that the tracks reached the northwest Gaston County community of White Pine, which would later become known as Cherryville. White Pine was a small settlement centered at the junction of the road between Charlotte and Morganton and the old post road that connected Spartanburg to Lincolnton. The 1860 federal census indicates that the vast majority of Gaston County residents who received mail at the White Pine post office were farm owners or laborers. The town benefited from increased activity following the line's arrival, as rail service provided the most expedient and affordable mechanism to ship and receive goods. The railroad corridor's location influenced road and building arrangement. Businessmen erected frame commercial buildings in the area bounded by the railroad and West Main, North Mountain, and North Mulberry streets. The small frame passenger and freight depot stood east of the principal commercial and residential areas on the railroad's south side. The cherry trees that lined the old post road inspired the community's 1865 renaming as Cherryville.<sup>7</sup>

Railroad commerce served as an economic catalyst during Reconstruction. The Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad Company reorganized in April 1873 as Carolina Central Railway Company. The concern extended its rail line to Shelby, Monroe, and Charlotte in 1874. However, the corporation went into receivership in 1876 and, after a May 1880 foreclosure auction, became the Carolina Central Railroad.<sup>8</sup>

On February 19, 1881, the North Carolina General Assembly incorporated Cherryville, which then had approximately 160 residents. Cherryville's commercial trade escalated as the nineteenth century progressed and fueled increased rail traffic. Businesses serving the town's 175 residents in 1889 included general stores operated by Beam and Company and W. J. McGinnis, S. S. Mauney's hotel, Dellinger and Carroll's sawmill, two tanneries owned by J. T. Carpenter and A. A. Mauney, physician

---

Central Carolina Railway" [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc\\_rrs\\_carolina\\_central\\_railway.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html) (accessed in December 2015).

<sup>7</sup> W. Tabor Robinson, "A History of Cherryville," in *Cherryville: Past and Present* (Cherryville: Ken Rollins, 1996), 10; North Carolina Postal History Society, "Gaston County," postmark and postmaster compilation, October 10, 2010, [http://ncpostalhistory.com/pdfs/counties\\_Gaston.pdf](http://ncpostalhistory.com/pdfs/counties_Gaston.pdf) (accessed December 2015), pp. 16 and 73; U. S. Census, Population Schedule, 1860; Cope and Wellman, *The County of Gaston*, 79-81; "Cherryville Originally Known as White Pines," *Lincoln Times-News*, Bicentennial edition, September 1976, p. 5-D.

<sup>8</sup> J. D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads," [http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc\\_rrs\\_carolina\\_central\\_railway.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html) (accessed in December 2015).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

A. W. Howell's office, and E. Alderholdt's flour, corn, and saw mill. Industrial complexes were located in close proximity to the main rail line or short spur lines that extended to the plants.<sup>9</sup>

Cherryville's economic base broadened to include the textile industry during the 1890s. On February 18, 1891, a consortium of investors—W. H. Houser, Samuel S. Mauney, William A. Mauney, John M. Rhodes, David A. Rudisill, M. E. Rudisill, and J. H. Rudisill—incorporated the town's first textile mill, Cherryville Manufacturing Company. The two-story brick building completed in January 1892 stood two blocks south of downtown adjacent to a railroad spur line. That year, Seaboard Air Line Railway acquired Carolina Central Railroad and its holdings including the Cherryville station.<sup>10</sup>

By the early twentieth century, Cherryville's rapid growth, bolstered by the creation of numerous mercantile establishments and industrial concerns such as Gaston Manufacturing Company, Vivian Cotton Mills, Melville Manufacturing Company, Cherryville Lumber Company, Cherryville Foundry, and Cherryville Brick Company, necessitated a larger depot. During the early 1910s, the town petitioned Seaboard Air Line Railway to replace the frame nineteenth-century station, which was in poor condition. In December 1916, the company announced plans for updating the depot, but town commissioners argued that repairs would not be adequate as the building was "not sanitary, nor suited to the needs of the public, nor in keeping with the progress and development of the community." Negotiations between the town and the railroad continued, with the company asserting in 1917 that it was necessary to wait until World War I's resolution to erect a new depot. During the war, the federal government assumed control of railroad operations throughout the nation. In September 1919, W. L. Stanley, assistant to Seaboard Air Line Railway Company's president, reported that as the federal railroad administration was not subsidizing depot construction, the company was waiting to erect new facilities. The Cherryville project finally moved forward in late 1923 with the understanding that a new depot's construction would commence within a year.<sup>11</sup>

In July 1924, agent W. D. Browne, who had managed the station since the mid-1910s, announced that Elliot Building Company of Hickory had been engaged to erect the depot. The new building was

---

<sup>9</sup> Levi Branson, ed., *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory 1890* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1889), pp. 301-304; David P. Dellinger, "First Brick Buildings," *Eagle*, July 20, 1955.

<sup>10</sup> "The Cherryville Cotton Factory," *Gastonia Gazette*, January 14, 1892, p. 1; "North Carolina," *Messenger* (Wilmington), March 17, 1893, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> The Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad purchased the depot tract from William Hoke, et. al. on February 18, 1856. The Black family relinquished their interest in the existing depot tract to Seaboard Air Line Railway Company on December 1, 1923. Cherryville Board of Commissioners meeting minutes, December 6, 1916, Minute Book 4, pp. 97, 99; Loose correspondence between the Cherryville Board of Commissioners and Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, 1917-1921, Minute Book 4; "The Cherryville Depot," *Charlotte Observer*, May 15, 1918, p. 4; Gaston County Deed Book 177, p. 320; Deed Book 732, p. 432.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

placed into service in November.<sup>12</sup> The depot represented the municipality's economic success as well as Seaboard Air Line Railway Company's progressive attitude. Farmers, merchants, industrialists, and other entrepreneurs who utilized common carrier shipping and receiving services to sustain their businesses benefited from the large freight room and loading platforms. Passengers enjoyed clean, comfortable, and heated lounges where refreshments, tobacco products, and reading materials were available for purchase. The white and African American waiting rooms each included restrooms. In addition to meeting transportation needs, Cherryville's depot functioned as a gathering place and information hub where the station agent received and distributed news via telegraph.

Beam Trucking Company's 1932 formation introduced local competition for freight transfer services. The concern began operating its first terminal, a frame building that included a warehouse, dock, maintenance shop, and offices south of the Shell service station at 117 North Mountain Street in 1938. By 1939, the company operated a fifty-three-truck fleet and leased terminals in New York, Jersey City, and Providence.<sup>13</sup>

However, Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, which became Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1946, sustained strong freight and passenger traffic. The Cherryville depot provided passenger service until around 1952. W. D. Browne remained station agent until his 1960 retirement after fifty years with Seaboard Air Line Railway. His residence at 501 East First Street, only a block away from the depot, allowed for constant oversight. Robert R. Dellinger managed the freight warehouse and assisted Browne in the office from around 1940 until 1952, when he moved to Birmingham, Alabama, and continued working for the railroad until retiring in 1971. Ken Gardo, who was the Cherryville station's last agent, ran the depot during the 1970s. Although freight service declined dramatically with the rise of truck transport, local industries utilized the depot to ship and receive freight through the 1980s.<sup>14</sup>

Seaboard Air Line Railroad and the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad had merged in 1967 to create Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, which, in conjunction with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad became Seaboard Systems Railroad in 1982. CSX Transportation, Inc., acquired the company in 1986

---

<sup>12</sup> "Seaboard Air Line Railroad Passenger Train Schedule," *Eagle*, August 7, 1919, p. 4; "New Depot for Cherryville," *Lincoln County News*, July 28, 1924, p. 1; Seaboard Air Line Railway Company, "Proposed Combination Depot, Cherryville, N. C."

<sup>13</sup> "Carolina Freight Carriers Corporation," *Gastonia Gazette*, April 17, 1971, p. 5J; Garland Atkins, *Carolina Freight Corporation: A History, 1932-1985* (Cherryville: Herald Publishing Company, 1985), 24, 33, 48-51, 61.

<sup>14</sup> William Davis Browne, born on September 29, 1885, died on December 16, 1963. death certificate; Susan Lewis (W. D. Browne Sr.'s granddaughter), telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, January 26, 2016; Daryl Carpenter (Robert R. Dellinger's son), telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, January 28, 2016.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

and still operates the line that passes through Cherryville.<sup>15</sup> The CSX corridor includes two long, narrow, undeveloped right-of-way parcels north of parking lots behind buildings on Main Street's north side.

After CSX Transportation, Inc., announced its interest in selling the depot in 1991, Cherryville residents and local history proponents Howell Stroup, Robert Browne, Boozie Dellinger, Bill Rippy, and John Seagle encouraged the city to acquire the building. However, it was not until February 3, 1998 that Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., purchased the property for \$10,000. Joe Putnam, John Seagle, and Cherryville city manager David Hodgins led the restoration committee. Beam Construction Company donated the 1998 roof replacement project's labor and materials cost of \$16,500 to the Cherryville Historical Association. The company later contributed \$14,000 in cash to the depot restoration fund.<sup>16</sup>

The Model Railroad Club, organized by John Seagle, Charles Sherrill, Charles Beckum, and Tyrone Beckum in 1998, undertook other repairs and installed exhibits prior to opening a museum in January 2001. Later that year, the North Carolina Department of Transportation awarded the City of Cherryville and Cherryville Historical Association a \$43,608 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) grant to subsidize eighty percent of the depot's restoration cost. Local entities were charged with funding the remaining twenty percent of expenditures. Cherryville residents and businesses contributed \$14,653 toward the rehabilitation and the Gaston Foundation for the J. L. Fraley and Frank Davis families donated \$15,000. The Cherryville Historical Association conveyed the depot to the City of Cherryville on September 14, 2007.<sup>17</sup> The Model Railroad Club still operates the museum in the depot.

## Railroad Depot Architecture Context

As railroad companies developed lines during the mid-nineteenth century, rudimentary platforms, open-sided heavy-timber-frame sheds, and small frame buildings accommodated freight and passengers. By the late nineteenth century, prospering railroad concerns began replacing these temporary structures with specialized buildings. Companies employed architects and draftsmen to render station prototypes that could be easily replicated and modified with site-specific details. Utilization of these standardized plans expedited construction and reduced cost.

---

<sup>15</sup> J. D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads,"

[http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc\\_rrs\\_carolina\\_central\\_railway.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html) (accessed in December 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., 1998-2005 correspondence regarding the depot in the organization's files; Gaston County Deed Book 4355, p. 374; Deed Book 2753, p. 646, "Cherryville residents want to save depot to honor its service to town," *Gaston Observer*, December 3, 1995.

<sup>17</sup> Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., 1998-2005 correspondence; Ed Gumphrey (Model Railroad Club member), email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, February 4, 2016.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

Civil engineer Walter G. Berg included numerous depot plans and elevations rendered for a wide variety of railroad companies in his 1893 publication *Buildings and Structures of American Railroads*. Efficient function was paramount, but aesthetics were also important. Municipality size dictated depot scale, style, and finish. Despite regional building material variation, the plans were remarkably consistent. Berg delineates four types of depots: flag, combination, local passenger, and terminal passenger. Flag depots were simple platforms or modest buildings in rural communities where travelers and shippers signaled trains to stop by waving a flag. In small towns, combination depots with minimal architectural embellishment accommodated both freight and passenger traffic. These buildings encompassed waiting rooms, offices, restrooms, freight and baggage storage rooms, and loading platforms. In some cases, combination depots included living quarters for station agents and other railroad employees.<sup>18</sup>

Densely populated cities contained multiple depots erected by competing rail lines. Freight depots were simply executed, with function dictating form and finish. Large passenger stations, often called union or terminal depots, were more architecturally sophisticated and often featured masonry exteriors, high-quality interior finishes, and multiple stories. Elements of nationally popular Italianate; Spanish, Tudor, and Classical Revival; and Craftsman styles imbued these stations with distinctive character. Some depots included restaurants and hotels. Regardless of size, stations promoted a railroad company's corporate identity and served as community landmarks.

As the twentieth century progressed, passenger and freight depots executed in myriad architectural styles served North Carolina communities. Notable examples include five similar Spanish Revival-style passenger depots designed by architect Frank P. Milburn for the Southern Railway and erected in Winston-Salem, Asheville, Durham, Charlotte, and Salisbury between 1904 and 1908. Winston-Salem's Union Station, completed in May 1904, was the first of the series. The building featured a tall hip-roofed tower, a shaped façade parapet, stuccoed walls, and a red terra-cotta barrel tile roof. Finished in May 1904, the depot became obsolete when the Beaux Arts-style Union Station opened in 1926. The older station was razed in 1929. Asheville, Durham, and Charlotte's Milburn-designed depots have also been demolished, but Salisbury's station has been rehabilitated for commercial use.<sup>19</sup>

The Seaboard Air Line Railway Company erected hundreds of modest passenger and freight depots to serve small towns throughout the nation. Early twentieth-century stations—typically one-story,

---

<sup>18</sup> Walter G. Berg, *Buildings and Structures of American Railroads* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1893), 246.

<sup>19</sup> Daniel J. Vivian, "Frank Pierce Milburn," *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, 2009, <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000085> (accessed January 2015); Jeff Miller and Jim Vaughn, *The Winston-Salem Southbound Railway, including the High Point, Thomasville, and Denton Railroad* (Winston-Salem: Miller and Vaughn, 1981), 10.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

narrow, rectangular, hip- or gable-roofed, brick or frame buildings with deep bracketed eaves and large multipane double-hung windows—resembled late-nineteenth-century depots in form and plan. Most displayed minimal ornamentation, with functionality driving the design. Stylistic influences ranged from Queen Anne to Craftsman. Textured or variegated brick walls and corbelled masonry cornices, belt courses, and water tables heightened aesthetic appeal at nominal expense. Brick veneer afforded a much greater degree of fire resistance than weatherboard siding and lowered long-term maintenance costs. Projecting window bays added dimension and enhanced visibility. Improved interior amenities stimulated passenger traffic.

The Cherryville station's form and finish reflect the early-twentieth-century popularity of the Craftsman style promoted by Gustav Stickley, an American stonemason, furniture maker, and metalworker. Stickley visited England in 1898 and, upon his return home, espoused the tenets of the English Arts and Crafts movement—a reaction against the loss of manual skills and traditional crafts due to the mechanization of the Industrial Revolution—through his magazine, *The Craftsman* (1901-1916). The publication emphasized the use of natural, handcrafted materials and low, horizontal massing to allow for harmony between a building and its surrounding environment.<sup>20</sup>

This philosophy translated well to depots. Seaboard Air Line Railway stations such as Cherryville feature Arts and Crafts-inspired low hip roofs, deep beadboard-sheathed eaves, and robust eave brackets that served pragmatic as well as decorative purposes. The long, narrow, rectangular form maximizes the use of often limited right-of-way adjacent to the railroad corridor. Low hip roofs with deep eaves shelter loading platforms. Oversized triangular eave brackets supply structural support for the projecting eaves. Large windows with multipane upper sash provide interior and exterior connectivity and ample light. Many other Seaboard Air Line Railway depots throughout North Carolina manifest the same characteristics.

Most small stations had only one or two full-time employees, making a floor plan with clear visibility and easy access between rooms essential for efficient operation. The agent's office, a secure central administrative area, was separated from the flanking passenger service areas by partition walls that included ticket and refreshment sales windows. At the Cherryville depot, textured translucent glass fills the ticket counter windows, affording privacy by screening the view into the office. The small employee entrance vestibule at the northwest corner of the central ticket agent's office has an identical window. Bracketed wood-board counters beneath the ticket windows on both sides of the partition walls provided a surface for conducting paperwork and resting personal belongings during transactions. The office features another common design element: a projecting three-sided bay from which the agent had an unimpeded view of the rail line, operated signals, and sent telegrams. Waiting

---

<sup>20</sup> Paul Duchscherer and Douglas Keister, *The Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Home* (New York: The Penguin Group, 1995), 2, 7-8, 14-15.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

rooms, ticket windows, and restrooms for white and African American patrons were separate in all southern depots of the period. Many interiors, like those in the Cherryville station, were finished with dark-stained woodwork that contrasted with painted plaster walls and ceilings. Paneled wood doors, often with glazed upper sections, predominated.

Freight depots contained scales for weighing shipments and sliding loading dock doors on multiple elevations. Open interiors accommodated baggage and freight handling. As this use did not require finished walls or ceilings, dimensional lumber framing is typically almost completely exposed in freight rooms, as seen in Cherryville. Thick, wide, wood boards span floor joists. Platforms adjacent to the depot allowed for freight transfer.

The Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot in Cherryville, which is the company's only extant historic Gaston County station, epitomizes the company's functionalist approach to small-town depot design. The depot retains excellent integrity, with character-defining elements including rough-face red brick exterior walls laid in running bond, paneled wood doors, and double-hung wood-sash windows. Interior finishes have been meticulously restored.

The one-story, hip-roofed, rectangular, pressed-brick Seaboard Air Line Railway passenger station built in 1906 at 100 Smith Street in Monroe, Union County, is similar in form to the Cherryville depot. However, rather than exhibiting Craftsman characteristics, the Monroe depot has flared eaves with robust triangular brackets and Queen Anne-style multi-pane windows. Ornamental terra cotta panels surmount the windows in the central projecting bay. Tall chimneys embellished with recessed arched panels and corbelled stacks pierce the roof. Although the depot's exterior is intact, the interior has been significantly altered.<sup>21</sup> Seaboard Air Line Railway utilized this Queen Anne-influenced prototype through the 1910s, as seen in the 1917 passenger station at 11 East Fourteenth Street in Roanoke Rapids, Halifax County. Decorative masonry includes segmental-arched window and door openings and a window-sill-level rough-face-granite string course that contrasts with the red brick walls. The Roanoke Rapids depot is smaller than the Cherryville station, as it only has a baggage room rather than a freight terminal.<sup>22</sup>

Two earlier Cleveland County Seaboard Air Line Railway Company depots relate to the Cherryville station in terms of form, function, and western North Carolina location. Lattimore's one-story, board-and-batten-sided, side-gable-roofed passenger and freight depot was built in 1882 and moved in the

---

<sup>21</sup> Suzanne S. Pickens, *Sweet Union: An Architectural and Historical Survey of Cleveland County, North Carolina* (Monroe: Union County Board of Commissioners, Monroe-Union County Historic Properties Commission, Union County Historical Society, 1990), 154.

<sup>22</sup> Henry V. Taves, Allison H. Black, and David R. Black, *The Historic Architecture of Halifax County, North Carolina* (Halifax: Halifax County Historical Association, 2010), 669-670.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

late 1950s to its current location at 205 West Main Street to serve as a museum. The one-story, side-gable-roofed, brick passenger and freight depot at 536 North Washington Street in Shelby was constructed in the late nineteenth century. The Cherryville depot resembles both buildings, as they all have a long, linear form and deep eaves supported by oversized brackets.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Art Peterson, Tony Reevy, and William L. Dowdy, compilers, *A Directory of North Carolina's Railroad Structures, Second Edition* (Raleigh: Old North State Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, 2002), 40-41; Brian R. Eades, *Architectural Perspectives of Cleveland County, North Carolina* (Shelby: Cleveland County Historic Preservation Taskforce, 2003), 90-91.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 15 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

## Section 9. Bibliography

Berg, Walter G. *Buildings and Structures of American Railroads*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1893.

Branson, Levi, ed. *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory 1890*. Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1889.

Carpenter, Daryl. (Robert R. Dellinger's son). Telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, January 28, 2016.

*Charlotte Observer*

Cherryville Board of Commissioners meeting minutes, May 11, 1915-July 5, 1960, Minute Books 4-8, Cherryville City Hall.

Cherryville Historical Association, Inc. 1998-2005 correspondence regarding the depot in the organization's files, Cherryville Historical Museum.

Cherryville History Committee. *Cherryville: Past and Present*. Cherryville: Ken Rollins, 1996.

Cope, Robert F., and Manly Wade Wellman. *The County of Gaston: Two Centuries of a North Carolina Region*. Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1961.

Corbitt, David Leroy. *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943*. Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1987.

Duchscherer, Paul, and Douglas Keister. *The Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Home*. New York: The Penguin Group, 1995.

Eades, Brian R. *Architectural Perspectives of Cleveland County, North Carolina*. Shelby: Cleveland County Historic Preservation Taskforce, 2003.

*Eagle* (Cherryville)

Gaston County Register of Deeds. Deed and Plat Books. Gastonia, North Carolina.

*Gaston Observer*

*Gastonia Gazette*

Gumphrey, Ed (Model Railroad Club member). Email correspondence with Heather Fearnbach, February 4, 2016.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   16   Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

Lewis, J. D. "North Carolina Railroads."

[http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc\\_rrs\\_carolina\\_central\\_railway.html](http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html)

(accessed in December 2015)

Lewis, Susan. (W. D. Browne Sr.'s granddaughter.) Telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach, January 26, 2016.

*Lincoln County News*

*Lincoln Times-News*

*Messenger* (Wilmington)

Miller, Jeff, and Jim Vaughn. *The Winston-Salem Southbound Railway, including the High Point, Thomasville, and Denton Railroad*. Winston-Salem: Miller and Vaughn, 1981.

North Carolina Postal History Society. "Gaston County," postmark and postmaster compilation, October 10, 2010, [http://ncpostalhistory.com/pdfs/counties\\_Gaston.pdf](http://ncpostalhistory.com/pdfs/counties_Gaston.pdf) (accessed December 2015).

Peterson, Art, Tony Reevy, and William L. Dowdy, compilers. *A Directory of North Carolina's Railroad Structures, Second Edition*. Raleigh: Old North State Chapter of the National Railroad Historical Society, 2002.

Pickens, Suzanne S. *Sweet Union: An Architectural and Historical Survey of Cleveland County, North Carolina*. Monroe: Union County Board of Commissioners, Monroe-Union County Historic Properties Commission, Union County Historical Society, 1990.

Sanborn Map Company. "Cherryville, N. C." February 1925 and February 1943.

Seaboard Air Line Railway Company. "Proposed Combination Depot, Cherryville, N. C." Plans drawn by Office Engineer Buildings, Norfolk, Virginia, January 3, 1924, courtesy of the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line Railroads Historical Society, Inc., Leesburg, Florida.

Taves, Henry V., Allison H. Black, and David R. Black. *The Historic Architecture of Halifax County, North Carolina*. Halifax: Halifax County Historical Association, 2010.

United States Census, Population Schedule, 1860. Microfilmed and digitized images accessed through [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com) in December 2015.

Vivian, Daniel J. "Frank Pierce Milburn." *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*, 2009, <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000085> (accessed January 2015).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 17 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

## Section 10. Geographical Data

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

1. Latitude: 35.381018 Longitude: -81.374578

### Verbal Boundary Description

The Cherryville Depot's National Register boundaries are indicated by the bold line on the enclosed map. Scale approximately 1" = 100'

### Boundary Justification

The current 0.21-acre tax parcel, which is only slightly larger than the building footprint, encompasses the acreage that CSX Transportation, Inc., conveyed to the current owner of the building, the Cherryville Historical Association, Inc., in February 1998. The acreage minimally provides a historic setting adjacent to the railroad right-of-way and a public street.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 18 Seaboard Air Line Railway Depot  
Gaston County, NC

## Additional Documentation: Photographs

Photographs by Heather Fearnbach, 3334 Nottingham Road, Winston-Salem, NC, in November 2015, January 2016, and June 2016. Digital images located at the North Carolina SHPO.

1. North elevation, looking west
2. Northwest oblique
3. Southwest oblique
4. Southeast oblique
5. White waiting room, looking southwest
6. White waiting room, looking northeast
7. Station agent's office, looking southwest
8. African American waiting room, looking southwest
9. Freight office, looking south
10. Freight room, looking west